

THE LORD OF THE RINGS
ROLEPLAYING GAME



ISENGARD

THE LORD OF THE RINGS ROLEPLAYING GAME

'There is evil afoot in Isengard, and the West is no longer safe.'

—Aragorn, *The Two Towers*

Stronghold of Dark Designs...

From the White Hand's lowliest Orc to its mightiest general, from Orthanc's deepest chamber to its highest pinnacle, from Saruman's blasting fire to the rings of power crafted by his own hand, the *Isengard* sourcebook provides everything the Narrator needs to know about this ancient stronghold. Bring this wealth of new challenges to your *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* chronicle and let your players pit themselves against this fortress of the fallen Wizard!

The Isengard Sourcebook includes:

- ◆ In-depth history stretching back to the days of Isengard's construction by Gondorian master builder Curugond of Lamedon.
- ◆ Detailed physical descriptions of the tower of Orthanc, the Ring-wall of Isengard, the labyrinthine caverns beneath both, and many other locations throughout the Wizard's Vale, including 9 full-colour maps.
- ◆ Exhaustive statistics for the soldiers, servants, slaves, spies, and more in the employ of the White Hand—including Saruman himself and his inner circle.
- ◆ All-new information about the spawning tunnels where Uruk-hai, Half-orcs, and other Orc-spawn are created, including new flaws like Orc-ancestry and Ill-made.



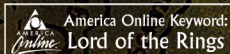
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ISBN 1-58236-963-1



No. 103584



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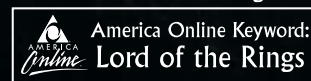
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THE ROAD TO ISENGARD

*'[B]ut mighty works the men of
Westerness had wrought there of
old, and Saruman had dwelt there
long and had not been idle.'*

— *The Two Towers*



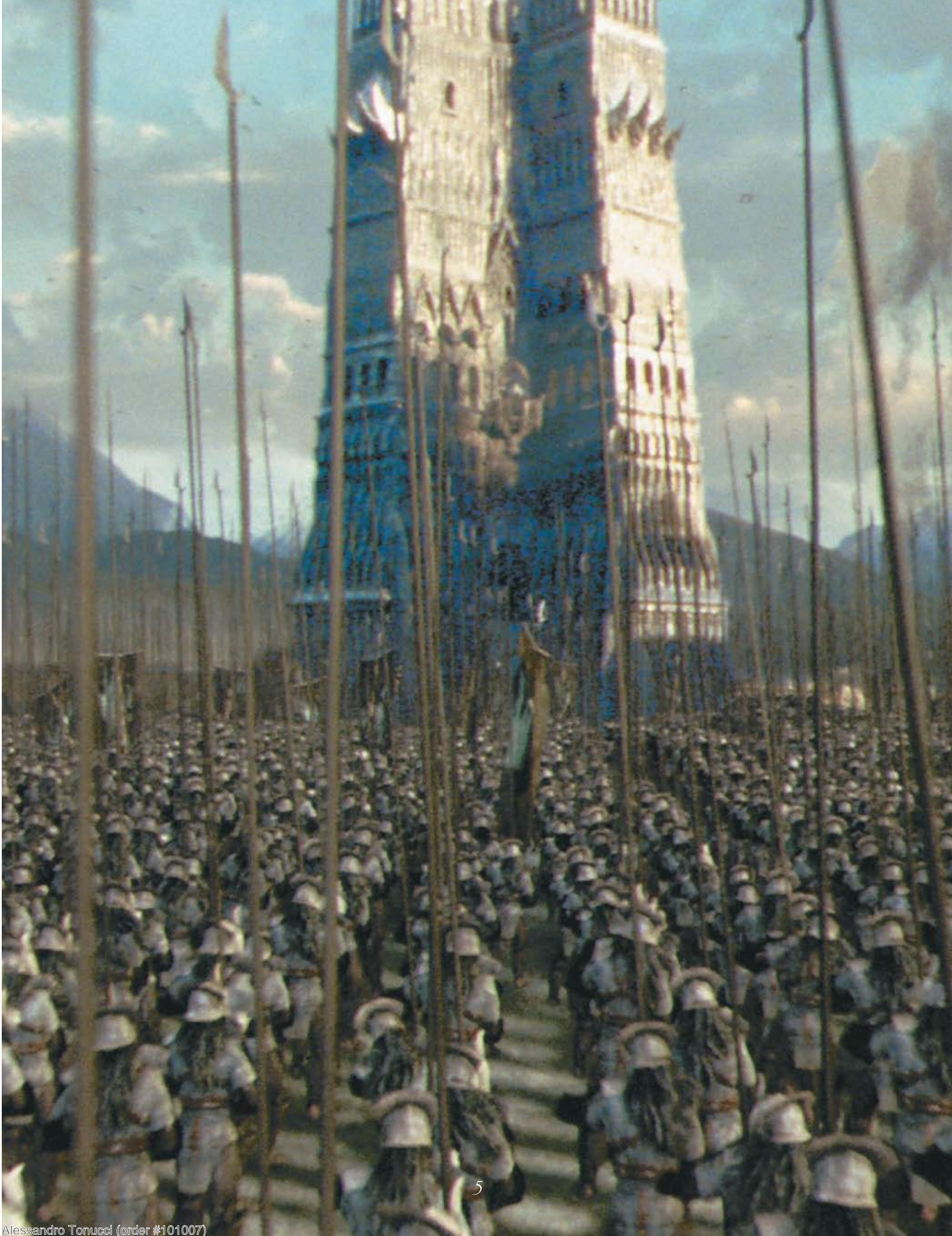
Loftiest of all the peaks in Middle-earth are the Misty Mountains, a chain raised in the early days of the world. So impressive are these summits that anyone who looks upon them cannot imagine a mortal work to rival them. However, south of the Last Peak the race of Men dared to try. Carving four great slabs of rock from the centre of a vast stone Ring, the clever children of Númenor hewed, shaped, and erected a conjoined spike of black granite, the greatest tower of its day. This tower was called *Angrenost* ('The Fortress of Iron'). Due to its proximity to the river Isen, the fortress as a whole came to be known as *Isengard*. This huge spike, thrust upward from the valley floor, dominating its surroundings as a symbol of the might of its builders and a warning to their enemies.



This tower was built to shield the kingdom of Gondor from Orcs and Hill-men, but time can corrupt even the noblest of motives—and places. The fate of Isengard became linked with that of the wizard Saruman, who persuaded the stewards of Gondor to pass custody of the tower into his White Hand. When Saruman became an agent of evil, so too was Isengard transformed into a

citadel of darkness, the perfect staging ground to embark on a campaign of conquest.

Secure within the great stronghold of Nan Curunír, the Wizard's Vale where the river Isen was born from the southern glaciers of the Misty Mountains, Saruman laboured in deep caverns. Fuelled by wood from nearby Fangorn Forest, baleful furnaces belched smoke day and night.





These furnaces powered factories that constructed engines of destruction, and assisted the Wizard in even darker designs. Saruman proudly called it 'progress.'

Such thirst for power led Saruman to commit his greatest blasphemy: cross-breeding Men with Orcs and perfecting Sauron's Uruk-hai. These monstrous hybrids became the vanguard of his armies, which at the end of the Third Age were bent on overthrowing the kingdom of Rohan. Agents of his White Hand travelled throughout western Middle-earth, from Gondor to the Shire, spying on their defences, establishing themselves (by coercion or bullying) in positions of authority as Saruman vied to become sovereign over all of Western Middle-earth.

Saruman's army was bolstered by the Hill-men of the neighbouring region of Dunland, who, besotted by the words of the Wizard, had rekindled their ancestral hatred of Rohan and unthinkingly marched side-by-side with the Uruk-hai on a crusade into glory. This alliance nearly toppled the Rohirrim and plunged the world into an age of Shadow, but thanks to the efforts of many heroes—some celebrated, some unheralded—it failed and ultimately took them into darkness. The Orc-wrought destruction of Isengard's nearby forests angered his neighbours, the Ents of Fangorn,

who finally rose against the Circle of Isengard and tore it apart, slaying all upon which they laid their hands. Simultaneously, the armies of Rohan won a great, unexpected victory at Helm's Deep, slaughtering Saruman's Half-orcs and putting the Hill-men to flight. Lastly, Gandalf the White came forth, and with the Power of the West he ended Saruman's authority and broke his staff. Thus Saruman's ambitions came to nought. At the end of the Third Age, Isengard was nothing but a flooded ruin.

GUIDE TO THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE VALE

Isengard rests in the shadow of Methedras, the Last Peak of the Misty Mountain chain, which lies due north of the fortress. On its west, it is bordered by the foothills of Dol Baran, while on the east by the foothills of Fangorn, which form the Isen Vale. Beyond the eastern hills is Fangorn Forest, home to the Ents, the Shepherds of the Trees. To the south are the grassy plains of Calenardhon, now called Rohan.

The River Isen, which is formed by melting snows from the Last Peak, flows from the western hills of the valley, south from Orthanc, and crosses

the Great West Road at the Fords of Isen, located approximately thirty miles south of the Circle of Isengard. Before Saruman was corrupted, this vale—Nan Curunír, the Valley of the Wizard—was a green and pleasant place whose light woods were nurtured by mountain rains. Prior to the War of the Ring, these forests were razed and the valley became a more desolate place.

A mile from the steep southern face of Methedras stands the Ring of Isengard. Even if Orthanc did not exist, this would itself be a marvel; a defensive ring nearly six and a half miles in circumference, whose eighty foot high walls are nearly sixty feet thick. A single tunnel was drilled into the southern face of the wall, providing one (heavily guarded) route of access for visitors, which was secured by a network of guardrooms and storehouses.

From the edge of the Ring, eight pillar-lined avenues converge on the central tower of Orthanc. The tower,

FURTHER ADVENTURES IN ISENGARD

In the course of producing this *Isengard* sourcebook, more material was written and developed than could be fit within this book's covers! An adventure entitled 'The Eagles are Missing,' along with a number of other adventure and chronicle seeds, were omitted due to space constraints. These materials, however, are available in PDF format on Decipher's *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* web site. Just point your browser at <http://lotr.decipher.com> and download these supplemental materials for free.

made from polished black granite and sandstone, rose over five hundred feet tall, crowned with four great stone horns at its peak. At the bottom, a long stair lead up to a heavy stone door, the only visible entrance into the tower. Saruman addressed his people from a balcony high above door level, and well above the balcony was the chamber of the *palantír*, the ancient Gondorian seeing-stone that was the tower's greatest treasure. At the summit of the tower was a flat rooftop of polished stone, on which Saruman inscribed magical runes. It was here that he imprisoned Gandalf the Grey.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Isengard is a complete guide to one of the greatest fortresses of Middle-earth. Most of the descrip-

tions in this book details Isengard and the Wizard's Vale as they were near the end of the Third Age, just before Gandalf's imprisonment in the first half of TA 3018. Of course, historical information is also plentiful and some suggestions about the state of Isengard after the War of the Ring are also provided.

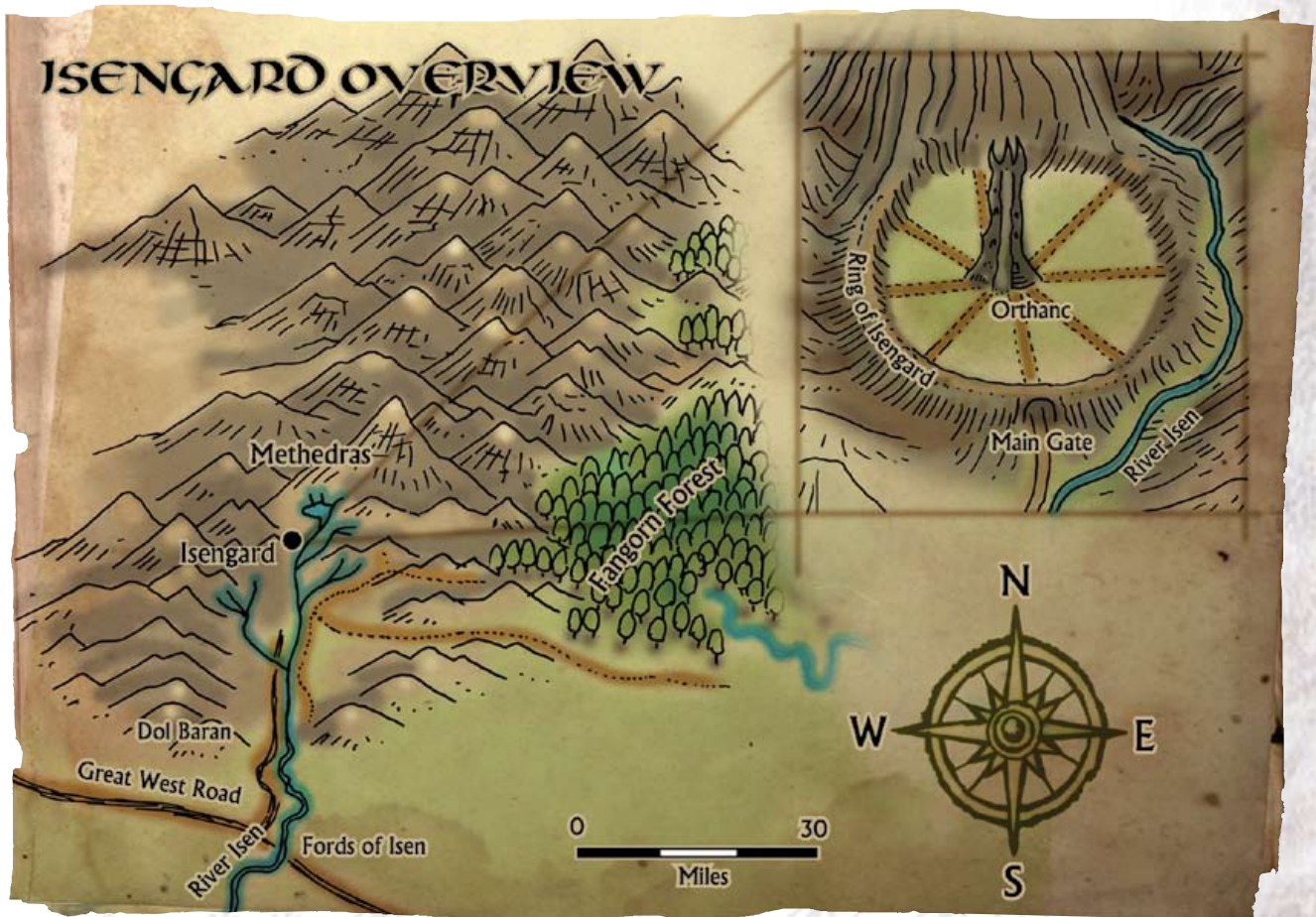
CHAPTER ONE: THE HISTORY AND LIFE OF ISENGARD recounts the tale of Isengard's creation and development, and tells the story of its people at the end of the Third Age and beginning of the Fourth. Isengard has stood as a great monument since the early Third Age, and has weathered many battles; its historical importance needs to be understood by those who roleplay characters from the region, as well as any who are interested in the ancient lore of Middle-earth.

CHAPTER TWO: THE FORTRESS OF IRON details the chambers and passages of this great fortress,

including the great stone Circle of Isengard, the tunnels beneath it, and the proud fortress of Orthanc itself, including its magical treasures such as the *palantír*.

CHAPTER THREE: NAN CURUNÍR describes the Valley of Saruman beyond the Ring of Isengard including the Fords of Isen; Dol Baran the last hill; the work camps of Saruman's Orcs, Half-orcs, and Uruk-hai; and more. Isengard entails much more than the tower Orthanc, and the magic of Saruman is both subtle and far-reaching.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE WHITE HAND describes Saruman's minions. Saruman's evil is not composed only of vast armies and fell creatures: his agents and spies are numerous, and they spread Saruman's corruption through a diverse host of faces.



THE HISTORY AND LIFE OF ISENGARD

*'A strong place and wonderful
was Isengard, and long it
had been beautiful. . . .'
— The Two Towers*



Throughout its history Isengard has been a place of both profound splendour and evil. In the latter days of the Third Age only a fool would dare set foot in Nan Curunír. Sometimes from such fools, however, great narratives are born.



HISTORY

Isengard is a mighty fortress, but its long history holds bitter tales that presage its disastrous fate. From its inception, Isengard was a place of both majesty and darkness. Few went there willingly, for it was distant from the centres of power, and almost as desolate a watch as the Morannon. The Angrenostim were known as 'the dour men' in the South, for they did not easily see hope, or take comfort in worldly pleasures. Yet in the days before the Wizards, the steward of the tower had a reputation as a seer of things hidden from the eyes of Men,

and his voice was well-regarded in the councils of the Wise.

CIRYANAR

In the four hundred and fifty-third year of the Third Age, the Orcs of the Misty Mountains marshalled their strength and attacked Gondor's settlements in the plains of Calenardhon. The area was ill-prepared for an assault of such magnitude. The Orcs sacked and burned Minadol and Ambarbad, the largest of Gondor's settlements. Hundreds were slaughtered; thousands were displaced. Prince Ciryantar of Gondor



quickly issued north with a force of Men and avenged the defeat. Upon looking on the ruins he wept. 'No slaughter of Orcs can still the widows' lament,' he said.

Determined never to allow such a slaughter to happen again, Ciryanar and his doughtiest men ventured into the Misty Mountains seeking Orc-holes. They were not hard to find, for the High Chief of the Goblins had moved many Orcs into caverns beneath Methedras. Orcs without number fell beneath the blades of Ciryanar and his men. However, the Prince moved too ambitiously, and the Goblins ultimately lured him into a trap. Bereft of his men, Ciryanar survived, but the price he paid was high, for an Orc-poison burned in his veins. Staggering onto a ledge near the peak of Methedras, Ciryanar gazed upon the ruins of Minadon in the Valley of Isen as the poison stole the sight from his eyes.

An eagle came to Ciryanar and took him in his talons and bore him southward. 'It was folly to pursue the Orcs into their own holes,' the prince said.

'Perhaps, highness,' the eagle answered. 'But thy realm must be protected.'

'I saw the vale below Methedras,' Ciryanar said. 'And I envisioned a great tower there set within the ring of rock, a rampart of stone unequalled since the fall of the Barad-dûr. Such a place would guard against the Orcs.'

'A tower as fair as the white towers of Númenor?' the eagle asked, for none remained in Middle-earth that were as fair as those of the land of the Star. But Ciryanar laughed in a fell voice that could be heard even on the plains below.

'Such would be a marvel in the hearts of men, but Orcs would not fear it. Nay! The tower of the Vale must be tall and terrible, a keep of fang and stone, dark as storm-clouds, sharp as mountain crags, a reminder to the North of the wrath of Gondor and the puissance of its armies! Only in the shadow of an iron fortress shall Calenardhon find safety.'

'So be it,' the eagle said. The eagle laid him down at the feet of Gondor's north-most garrison, and the prince instructed that his words be passed on to the king. Then Ciryanar died and was laid to rest in the hall of princes, but his vision would echo in unforeseen ways until the end of the age.

THE BUILDING OF THE TOWER

There was but one choice for the Master Builder of Angrenost, and that was Curugond of Lamedon. He had overseen the building of Minas Anor nearly thirty years earlier, and though old, was the most cunning builder that the Dúnedain had produced since the days of Númenor. Great friendship he had with the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm, who shared their arts with him, but Curugond gleaned even more from their teachings than they guessed, and as his knowledge grew, so did his pride. Curugond's thought was fixed on the Barad-dûr, which had been the greatest tower of its age. Why, he thought, should Gondor not build a fortress of such stature, an answer to the darkness of the previous age?

When he travelled to the vale to survey it, he discovered Ciryanar's vision of a tower within a ring was not mere fancy. Only half-buried beneath the soil deposited by the Isen, was a rough, natural ring of black stone, the lip of some ancient volcano laid low by time and nature. Curugond's designs were greater than they ought to have been, a mark of pride. He made plans to carve four great slabs of black stone from the centre of the ring, forming the tower's apartments and chambers from them, and then hoisting them together to fit into a virtually impregnable tower. To carve the sides, he enlisted the aid of the dwarves of Moria, while crews recruited from Dunland performed the task of hoisting the slabs. This latter labour was far more dif-

ficult than Curugond had promised, and when the Hill-men attempted to raise the third slab, the lines broke, and many Dunlendings were crushed. Curugond cared not for their misfortune, but fretted about the tower, which was undamaged. This slight was remembered in Dunland, whose people nurse grudges like a dragon's horde, and the people of Gondor would later come to rue the callousness of their chief builder.

Ten years after the death of Ciryanar, the tower was finally completed. Upon its lofty roof, enchantments were set to protect it from harm, from fire and stone and the natural forces that weather stone to its roots. Prince Thinyarpher, Ciryanar's son, took the keys of Orthanc and became its first steward, bringing with him a *palantír* of Elendil. He served Gondor faithfully, as did his descendents, the Angrenostim, for in those days there was trust among the royal houses of Gondor and love between its brethren, and kings did not fear that a rival would use Angrenost as a citadel to supplant them. But such days were not to last forever.

As for Curugond's fate, one tale says that he promised the Dwarves of Moria a great jewel of Númenor in exchange for their service, but besotted by a pretty granddaughter, he gave her the jewel and substituted a lesser gift in its stead. It is further said that the Dwarves of Khazad-dûm, who had no love for deception, seized Curugond and slew him in the dark.

KIN-STRIFE

The dour descendents of Cirygorm continued to maintain their faithful watch over Angrenost. During the reign of Minalcar, in 1245, a force of Easterlings crossed the Anduin and entered the Valley of the Isen, hoping to seize and plunder the tower. Angrenost endured a yearlong siege before a force led by Minalcar broke it, but in the aftermath it seemed clear that the fortress

The History and Life of Isengard

stronger defences. The stone ring that surrounded the tower was thus excavated to create an unbroken circular wall 60 feet thick and 80 feet tall. A thoroughfare was bored through the south-most curve of the circle and the dwarves wrought a gate of iron so that the wall might prove impenetrable to the enemies of Gondor.

Minalcar used Angrenost as the northern strongpoint for his war against the Easterlings. Following his victory, Minalcar Rómendacil reached out to the tribes of the North, seeing in them a worthy ally. Many embassies were met in Angrenost, which (along with the lesser fortress of Duinmenos in the Emyrn Muil) became pillars of Gondor's northern defence.

Unfortunately, the king's son Valacar, sent as an ambassador to the Northmen, fell in love with one of their royal house. When his son Eldacar came to the throne in 1432, Gondor rebelled rather than accept one who was not of full Númenorean blood. Led by the king's cousin Castamir, they murdered Eldacar's son and razed the Gondorian capital of Osgiliath. Eldacar was forced to flee northward.

In those days the steward of Angrenost was an old man named Angrehin who had spent the better part of his youth in Arnor, where he saw that kingdom come to ruin thanks

in large part to the thinning of their blood. Though he despised Castamir and thought the men of Rhovanion honourable, Angrehin felt the rebels were the lesser of two evils and thus gave his support to the usurper.

But Angrehin's two sons, Menehin and Tarohin, thought otherwise. These twins were Orc-hunters without peer who walked without fear in lands whose names made other Men quiver. They cared nothing for politics, but continued to hunt Orcs even as blood flowed in the streets of Osgiliath. One day, travelling near the Misty Mountains, they were waylaid by a great party of Orcs and would have perished had it not been for Prince Wulfstan of Rhovanion, who rode in with a force of horsemen and scattered their foes. At the twins' invitation, Wulfstan escorted them back to Angrenost, where they hoped to pledge their friendship. Unfortunately Castamir had sent a troop of men to secure the tower, and thus Wulfstan was met at the gates not with gratitude but with arms, and he was thrown into the depths of Angrenost and held as a hostage.

Angrily, Menehin and Tarohin went to their father and demanded his release. 'Since when,' Menehin asked, 'did the gratitude of the Dúnedain become less dear than the politics of princes?'

But Angrehin responded with anger. 'Gratitude?' he snapped. 'What gratitude have you two wanderers ever shown thy father? Shall his blood now flow instead of the blood of Northern wildmen?'

'Perhaps,' Tarohin said, and the twins departed before they were dismissed, leaving their father in wrath.

The twins realized that only they could remove the stain of shame from their house, so they descended into the dungeons of Angrenost, slew Castamir's guards, and aided the prince in his escape. Unfortunately, though Wulfstan managed to ride from the gates, the guards seized the twins and the captain showed them no mercy. When Angrehin was roused from slumber to behold his dead sons' faces he turned to the murderous captain and cried: 'Gondor! Thou hast become a charnel-house, and wolves lick the blood from thy stones! Let them be stained with blood no more, save one!'

Then the fey steward took the *palantír* of the tower, through which Castamir had instructed him to seize Wulfstan, and climbed the many steps of Angrenost. Long he stood on the parapet as the wind swirled around him, and the world seemed to turn. 'Castamir!' he cried, calling the usurper, daring him to look upon the Stone. The king came. 'Behold the

ISENGARD

fate of thy realm!' Angrehin shouted, and he leapt from the tower.

Thus perished the last of the line of Ciryanar. Though the Stone did not break in the fall as Angrehin had intended, the sight of his fall burned itself into the *palantír* so that for years none could use that Seeing-Stone without beholding it, and Castamir could never again use any Stone except to see his downfall.

ORNACAR AND THE STONE

Gondor survived the Kin-Strife, but at great cost, for its southern provinces were seized by the family of Castamir and the Black Númenoreans. But Angrenost was quickly seized by Eldacar and remained loyal to the line of Gondor.

King Eldacar gave Angrenost to his cousin Ornacar, though the reputation of the tower made the honour seem less than it ought to have been. But Ornacar cherished the sight of the forests and the mountains and was healed by them, for he had shed blood during the kin-strife and longed to assuage the guilt of his misdeeds. In that time Saruman returned from the East of Middle-earth and Ornacar welcomed him into Isengard and profited from his advice. Above all else, Saruman urged Ornacar to strengthen the defences of Isengard (wise words, for those were the early days of Angmar) so Ornacar further fortified the ring wall, delving guard posts and storehouses into its walls that soldiers might always stand ready to defend it against enemies. Elsewhere many resented it, and some whispered that 'Eldacar builds a fortress for the Northmen.' Ornacar, hearing these lies, took care to keep his distance from the princes of Rhovanion, so that the Northmen complained that the courtesy of the

tower was scarcely greater than it had been during the days of Angrehin.

Then one day, Saruman came to the gates in a driving rainstorm and was admitted. Brushing aside the retainers, Saruman came to Ornacar and begged a boon.

'Much advice have I given thee, and thou hast profited from it,' he said.

'What boon dost thou ask, my friend?' Ornacar inquired, guessing at his purpose.

Saruman was allowed to use the Stone. Some have said that if Ornacar had refused the request much evil might have been averted. But Saruman's need was genuine, and few could deny the power of his voice, so it was unlikely Ornacar could have resisted his call. Saruman used the Stone, and though none know whether he succeeded in his purpose, it became clear that from that day Saruman desired to possess the Stone, and thus a seed of great evil had been planted in Angrenost.

PLAGUE

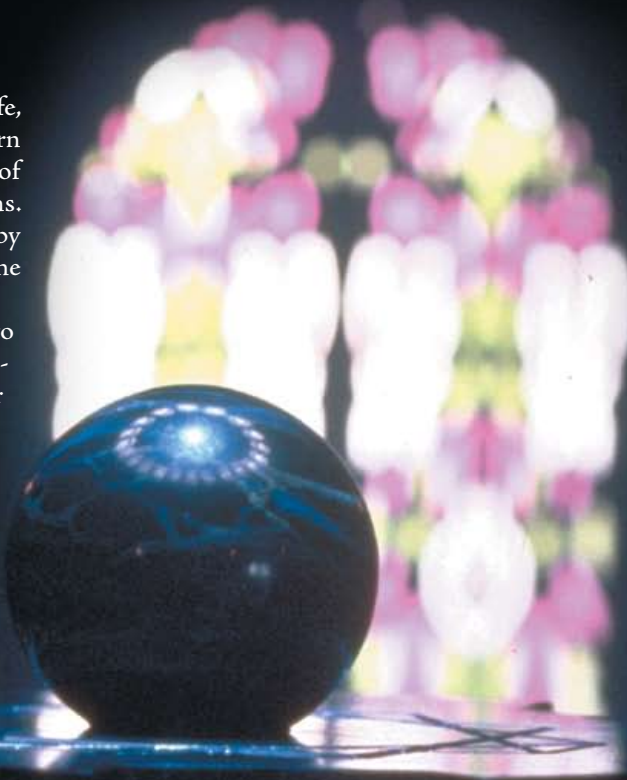
In 1636, a terrible plague broke out in Middle-earth, originating in the East but cutting a sickening swath that reached even the westernmost shores of Eriador. All of Calenardhon was ravaged. In those days, Baradil, great-grandson of Ornacar, was Master of the Tower. When the first word of plague came to Gondor, by chance Saruman had returned from a long journey in the East and was resting in Isengard. The

Wizard advised Baradil to take the peoples of the villages of the surrounding lands and seal the Circle of Isengard. The advice seemed wise to Baradil (though many thought otherwise) and so Isengard became a refuge. But Baradil also had a wife whom he greatly loved, Andolien of Duinmenos, who was visiting her parents in the Emyrn Muil. When word came of the sickness that was killing thousands in Ithil Vale, Andolien and her household immediately rode westward. But Saruman urged Baradil to bar the gates against her, to safeguard those who had taken refuge in the keep.

'One of my brethren in the East has long been missing,' the Wizard explained. 'The perils of those lands are great. The Seeing-Stone of Elendil might lift whatever veil hides him from our sight.'

Ornacar was silent for many long minutes. 'It is no small thing thou asketh,' he finally replied. 'Nothing in my charge is as precious as the Stone, not even the key to the tower.'

'Yet he who hides a treasure in the hour of need possesses no true treasure,' Saruman replied. Then Ornacar relented, and for the first time



‘Dost thou dare tell the Master of Isengard what shall be done in his own keep, with his own wife?’ Baradil replied. ‘Wouldst thou be master of this tower?’ He raised his hand to strike the Wizard, but Saruman lifted his staff and Baradil recoiled.

‘A choice I give thee, fool!’ Saruman snarled. ‘If the gates of Isengard hold fast then thee and thy family shall indeed govern here for many years to come. But if thou doth open the gates the day will come when I shall indeed be master in Isengard!’

But Baradil thought of Andolien and it hardened his heart. He dismissed Saruman with angry words and opened the gates to his wife, embracing her as the departing Wizard watched.

‘Thou shalt pay dearly for such tender caresses!’ Saruman snapped. He went into the East of Middle-earth and did not return again for many years. As the Wizard feared, the plague wind did accompany Andolien into Angrenost, and many who might have been saved perished in their beds. Duinmenos was ravaged and abandoned, as were many of Gondor’s north-most settlements. In Calenardhon, many villages lay empty and abandoned, and the proud Princes of Rhovanion who had settled there in the days of Eldacar returned to their homes in the North.

DRAGONS AND OTHER PERILS

The plague was not the end of Angrenost’s woes, for soon after came two invasions of Orcs, and on the second occasion came the worst menace that Isengard had yet seen—the dragon Helgrádh, a winged black worm who descended from the North and ventured further south than any dragon had dared to go. Both times, the faltering realm of Gondor mustered its heroes and Isengard weathered the attacks. But the dragon ravaged the lands beyond

Isengard’s protection, and the plains of Calenardhon grew empty.

Furthermore, north in Moria, Angrenost’s old Dwarf-allies fell silent, victims of a nameless horror that no steward would willingly look upon. Likewise the Ents, who in earlier years had been friendly to those brave enough to venture into Fangorn, withdrew into the depths of the forest and rarely came forth.

Yet for many long years Isengard held firm, and though Gondor dwindled and menace after menace beset it, still Angrenost remained a symbol of strength. In 1810 the Wainriders came out of the East and sent a large force across the river to attack Angrenost, but upon their first sight of the impregnable Ring of Isengard they retreated without giving battle. In 2003 the Witch-King, having conquered Minas Ithil, sent a huge force of Orcs against Isengard in the hope of seizing a second of Gondor’s mighty fortresses. But neither Orc nor Troll could withstand the wrath of Prince Eärnur, who led the defence that day; indeed, more Orcs perished than in any battle since the fall of Sauron. The victory gave comfort to Gondor in what then seemed its darkest hour.

Nonetheless, the dwindling of Calenardhon continued. Plague was so frequent that some called the region Engwador; the Sickly Lands. This was the design of the Enemy, to weaken that which they could not conquer, and corrupt what they could not weaken. And it was by corruption that the fortress eventually fell into the hands of the Enemy.

ROHAN

In 2510 invaders from the East again threatened Gondor. The lords of Angrenost once again prepared for a bitter siege, for few were now left to defend Calenardhon. But unexpected help came from the North when the Éothéod, a tribe descended from the

lords of Rhovanion, arrived to lend aid. Eorl the Young rode to the field of Celebrant and saved Gondor from the Easterlings. Calenardhon was given to them in thanks by Cirion, Steward of Gondor, and became known as the kingdom of Rohan. Unfortunately there was confusion about Isengard. One of the sons of Eorl came to the doors of Angrenost and claimed it for the Rohirrim, demanding that the warden surrender the keys. Isengard, however, was beyond the agreement of Cirion and blood was spilled before the gates of Isengard that day. Though Eorl and Cirion soon set things right, little love did the Rohirrim receive at Isengard from that time onward.

In the years before the Long Winter (2758), Dunland sensed the weakness of the Angrenostim and launched frequent attacks against the tower, so by 2750 it was under a continuous siege. Gondor and Rohan were both too weak to lift it; in 2758, the Dunlendings also overthrew the Rohirrim, and Breca the Half-dunlander sat in the seat of Eorl. Gradually, the Angrenostim were killed off one by one in a series of desperate sorties against the Dunlendings, until only a handful remained. But in the end, Rohan defeated the Dunlendings and drove them from Edoras, and the forces of Beren, Steward of Gondor, triumphed over his enemies from Umbar and rode north to lift the siege. But few survived to celebrate the victory, and Beren feared neither Gondor nor Rohan could hold Angrenost if the Orcs or the Dunlandings attacked it again in force.

Then an unlikely deliverer came to Minas Tirith—Saruman the Wise, who had not been seen for many generations in Gondor. He spoke fair words to the Steward, and yet forcefully alluded to great perils threatening the West.

‘It is the duty of Gondor, as the last kingdom of Númenor, to shield the West in its struggle against the Enemy. Too long hast thou languished without allies, while old men sat and watched. Now the storm comes and we may



watch no longer. Give me the keys to Angrenost and I shall hold Isengard against the storm, so thou needest not fear the shadow of the North.'

Beren needed no reminder of Gondor's peril. But he looked into the Wizard's face and wondered at his true purpose. 'Wilt thou swear to faithfully serve the White Tower, to govern it as a steward and not a master?'

Saruman smiled and feigned humility, though such an oath was contrary to his designs. 'I swear as sure an oath as the one which Eorl swore to Cirion.' Then Beren surrendered the keys to Saruman.

THE ROAD TO UDÛN

Saruman immediately took control of Isengard and made it into a reflection of himself. At first, it was a fair and beautiful place; the Ring of Isengard was lined with trees and lamps and birds, and Saruman gathered to himself the scholars of Gondor and the bards of Rohan, and he mentored them, so that Angrenost became known as Orthanc ('The Cunning Mind' in the tongue of Rohan). From Imladris to Rhûn, many made pilgrimages just to hear Saruman speak, for, as one prince of Gondor said, 'his tongue is wisdom

itself, and his voice alone shall deliver us from the Enemy.'

But wise Saruman was greatly troubled. North in Mirkwood, the citadel of Dol Guldur had long been a stronghold of evil, and Saruman, along with the other members of the White Council, had feared that its true master was Sauron, who once was thought to have perished at the end of the Second Age. By 2850 this fear had finally been confirmed. The Wizard Gandalf, whom Saruman disliked, urged the White Council to drive Sauron from Dol Guldur at once. But Saruman urged caution, knowing neither the extent of Sauron's strength nor his purposes for being there.

After 2850 Saruman's mood grew darker and visitors became less welcome in Orthanc. Constrained by oath and caution, Saruman did not use the *palantir* of the tower, but instead expanded his network of spies. He persuaded Radagast to teach him the secret of speaking with birds and recruited crows to his service. He also recruited the Hill-men of Dunland, finding them more malleable allies than the dour Rohirrim.

In 2868 one of Saruman's Hill-men spies captured a train of Orc-slaves and brought them to Saruman as a prize. The Wizard was filled with

loathing at the sight of them, but one Orc-slave knelt and kissed the stones at his feet and said in a halting voice. 'Do not kill us, us lowly *snaga*, great *Sharkû*. We are beasts, but strong and cunning, and you would make a better master than the Uruk-hai.'

Then Saruman, who had never thought before of taking Orcs into his service, smiled. 'Rise, faithful *snaga*, and serve the Red Eye no longer! I will take thee and mould thee into a better creature with my firm white hand.' And thus Saruman began to recruit the Orcs of the mountains into his service, and they brought him many secrets.

Saruman sent the Orcs to scour the Gladden Fields where Isildur had fallen, in hopes of finding Sauron's Ring, which he desired above all else. In 2939, Saruman learned from them that Sauron, too, was searching the Gladden Fields, and had bent much of his thought to that purpose. This alarmed Saruman, so in 2941 he went to the White Council and—though he was loath to do so—humbled himself before his rival. 'Thou wert correct, Gandalf,' he said. 'The Enemy has abided too long in one place, too close to Lórien and Rivendell. His Orcs gather near the river where such an assault would be best staged. The time is overripe to break Dol Guldur to its foundations, and show him that the West still has teeth.'

Then the Council put forth its power and Sauron seemed to be overthrown. Saruman returned to Isengard in triumph. But it was marred by the news that King Thengel of Rohan had set a watch on Isengard, for he feared Saruman's closeness with the Hill-men. Saruman was livid, but Thengel did not relent. In 2948 when Thengel's son Théoden was born, for the first time Saruman was not invited to the christening of a Prince of Rohan or asked to offer his blessing. Saruman could not contain his fury. He rode to the gates of Edoras, pounded on the door with his staff, and threw them open.

'Is the friendship of Isengard such a small matter that it is spat upon by mongrels?' he snarled at the king. 'Or are the pains I suffered in casting the evil from Dol Guldur for thy race of ingrates so easily dismissed?'

Thengel bowed his head. 'Little hast thou seemed to be our friend of late, or shown us any care of late,' he said.

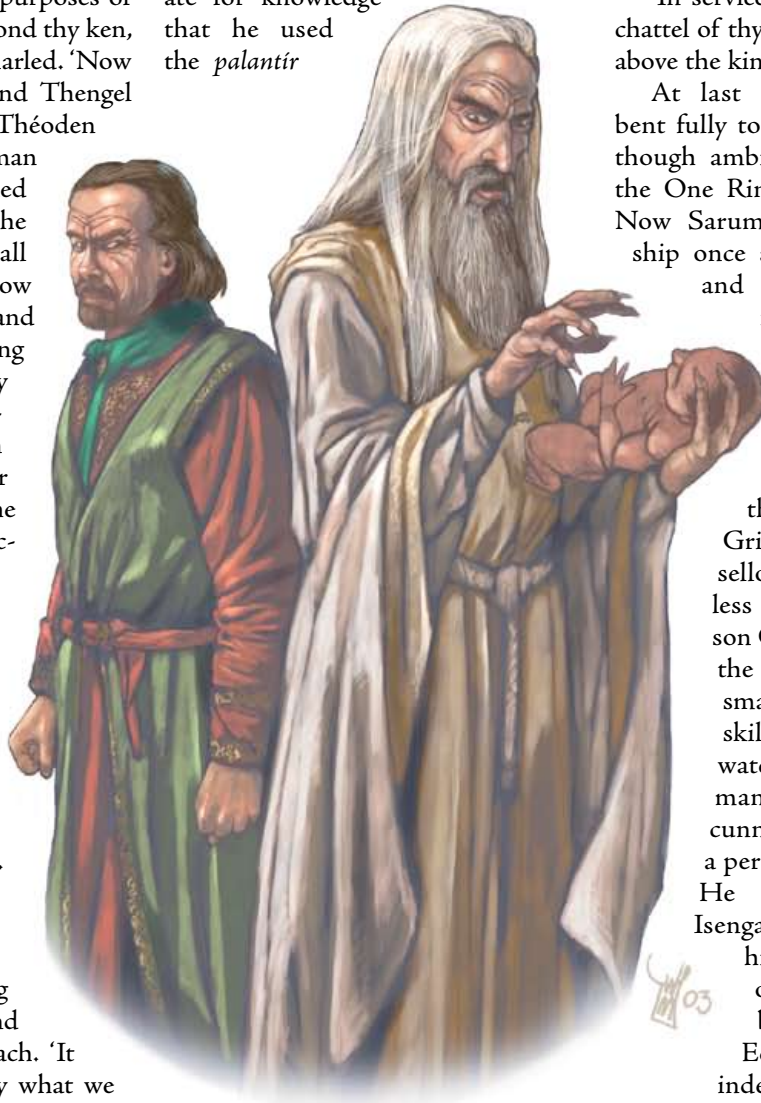
'Do not interpret the purposes of Wizards, for they are beyond thy ken, son of Eorl!' Saruman snarled. 'Now bring forth thy child.' And Thengel restrained his anger, and Théoden was presented, and Saruman looked upon him and smiled as he placed his hand on the babe's forehead. 'He shall redress thy insult, and know the cares of my white hand more clearly than any king of Rohan before him. Pray that is offered in friendship!' Then Saruman turned and departed for Isengard, plotting, for the first time, Rohan's destruction.

SARUMAN OF MANY COLOURS

In 2951, the heralds of Barad-dûr went forth and proclaimed that Sauron the Great had returned to Mordor. The White Council met once more and Saruman declared that he had discovered that the One Ring had gone to the sea and was beyond Sauron's reach. 'It is now our task to fortify what we can,' he said, 'but the burden is chiefly upon the kingdoms of Man to endure this trial. There is little else we can do except to harvest the seeds we have planted.' Then Saruman returned to Isengard and fortified it. He repaired the Ring, tore down its gardens and trees, dug deep delvings, and for the first time, axe strokes were heard on the edge of Fangorn Forest. He did

not consult Gondor in any of these things, and thus broke the oath he had sworn to Beren.

Saruman sent many spies after Gandalf, for he sensed that the Grey knew more than he was telling about the One Ring, but ever the prize he so desperately sought eluded him. Finally, Saruman became so desperate for knowledge that he used the *palantír*



ting over minor matters. What doth thou seek?'

Saruman resisted, but Sauron compelled the truth from him, and laughed. 'Nay! That Ring is too big for thee. Thou might wear one fit for thy stature if thou wouldst bend to me.'

'A ring, or a chattel's collar?' Saruman asked.

'In service of Sauron the Great a chattel of thy stature would be raised above the kings of Middle-earth.'

At last Saruman yielded and bent fully to the service of Mordor, though ambitions and the lust for the One Ring still gnawed at him. Now Saruman offered his friendship once again to the Rohirrim, and sought to take them into his service. Again they proved unreceptive, except for the *healfblod*, Rohirrim of mixed Rohan and Dunland ancestry. Of these the greatest was Grimfold, a faithful counsellor of King Thengel. But less faithful was Grimfold's son Gríma, a boy scorned by the youth of Rohan for his small stature, and lack of skill in warcraft. Saruman watched Gríma grow into manhood, resentful and cunning, and thought him a perfect tool for his designs. He often took him to Isengard in secret, and taught him how to work his will on others, so he might be Saruman's voice in Edoras. And Gríma did indeed grow great in the counsels of Théoden.

and scoured the world for signs of the Ring. Instead of finding what he sought, he was ensnared by the Lidless Eye of Mordor.

'Little Saruman!' Sauron mocked, compelling his attention. 'Often I have watched thee wander in the East, fret-

One day when Gríma was still a youth, and Orcs secretly in Saruman's service had failed to dislodge Rohirrim scouts near the Fords of Isen, Gríma watched Saruman curse his Orcs and wish aloud that he commanded vassals as resolute as Men, but as malleable as Orcs. Gríma replied: 'Could not a Wizard of thy stature mix the

twain?’ Then Saruman smiled, for an evil thought had been born. Saruman descended into the bowels of Isengard and laboured in his pits, and thus the race of Half-orcs was born. Saruman sent them as spies into Eriador, and took them into his armies, which became mighty indeed. And Sauron was pleased too, and upheld his bargain, teaching Saruman some of his ring-craft. Saruman thus forged a Ring of Power. But though he was proud, Saruman knew his ring was but a trinket compared to the One he sought.

Théoden succeeded Thengel as king, and though he was a valiant soldier in his youth, as he grew older, he fell under the spell of Gríma Wormtongue. The lords of Rohan suspected the wizardry of Saruman was responsible, but Gríma was cunning, and no blame stuck to him. He could not, however, master the insolence of the Horse-lords. In the year before the War of the Ring, Théodred son of Théoden came to Isengard as an ambassador from his father, and once again Saruman extended the White Hand in friendship. He pre-

sented a kingly gift for Théoden, an ancient shield of the North that had once been scorched by dragon fire. ‘Is it not fortunate that no worm has come from the North since the time of Helgrádh?’ Saruman asked.

‘Art thou certain of that?’ Théodred replied, and he departed without accepting the gift. From that time onward, there was open war between Isengard and Rohan. Gríma Wormtongue bent the will of the spell-enfeebled King Théoden, all but delivering Rohan to Saruman. In truth, only Théodred stood between Saruman and the complete domination of Rohan, so Saruman marked him for death in the first battle of the Fords of Isen. When Théodred fell, Saruman forsook the mantle of the White Wizard, choosing instead the name ‘Saruman of Many Colours.’

DOWNFALL

Elsewhere, much is written of Saruman’s fall—how he openly declared himself to Gandalf, and imprisoned him on the summit of

Orthanc; how Gandalf escaped with the help of the eagles; how Saruman’s lust for the One Ring led to the breaking of the Fellowship that protected it (and yet kept it out of Sauron’s grasp); how Gandalf the White overthrew the spell of Gríma Wormtongue, and freed King Théoden from darkness; and how Saruman’s hosts assailed the great Rohirrim fortress of Helm’s Deep and almost overcame it, but for the valour of its defenders.

But in the end it was the Ents, angered by the destruction of their forests at the hands of Saruman’s Orcs, who finally rose against Isengard and overturned its power. The Ring of Isengard and its fortifications were torn down and flooded, so that only the tower remained. Then Gandalf and Théoden rode to Isengard, and in desperation Saruman cajoled them, but neither were swayed. Théoden proclaimed that there would be peace between Isengard and Rohan only when Saruman hung from a gibbet for the sport of his own crows. Less proudly, Gandalf offered Saruman one last chance for



redemption, but the Wizard angrily scorned it, so Gandalf dismissed him from the Order of Wizards, and broke his staff.

Escaping from Isengard after the destruction of the One Ring, Saruman and Gríma fled to the Shire. So great was his fall, and so petty his wrath, that there Saruman plotted to avenge themselves on Gandalf's beloved Hobbits. Even the Shire rose against him, though, and in the end a knife stroke from Gríma Wormtongue ended the great wizard's life.

Then King Elessar came to Isengard and scoured the tower, discovering many treasures that Saruman had stolen and acquired over the ages. He gave Isengard to the Ents, who planted a wood around Isengard to watch it. Thereafter, Isengard became fairer than it had ever been, a spike of jet-black set in rich green, a place where eagles nested on the parapets and watched as the younger races took control of the world.

LIFE IN ISENGARD

'[W]hat he made was naught, only a little copy, a child's model or a slave's flattery . . . the Dark Tower . . . suffered no rival, and laughed at flattery. . . .'

— *The Two Towers*

Isengard at the very end of the Third Age is a very different place than it had been during most of its history. Before 3018, the vast majority of the inhabitants of the tower were humans, either Dunlendings or half-Dunling *healfblod*, and those few Orcs in Isengard lived underground, connected via tunnels to a vast network of Orc-holes beneath Methedras. The majority of Orcs to be found in Isengard were either *snaga* slaves who operated Saruman's

engines, or Uruk-hai used as breeding stock for Saruman's Half-orcs. Most of Saruman's human servants didn't understand the full extent of their master's designs, and believed only that the great Wizard had enslaved a few Orcs to perform his most dangerous labours (a practise which the Dunlendings themselves had done on numerous occasions). This allowed Saruman to maintain the deception that he was still a friend to Men (though he was far more concerned about the Council's reaction to his Orcs than the Rohirrim's). Orc-traffic greatly increased throughout the region after 3010, but this was blamed on the Orcs of Sauron, an excuse that seemed quite plausible at the time, and the White Hand was not openly displayed on Orc-banners until just before the first battle of the Fords of the Isen in 3018.

Long before Saruman openly declared himself, however, Isengard was on a war footing. Large supplies of grain were purchased from farming villages on the outskirts of Isengard. To facilitate this, Saruman employed an extremely clever piece of deception—he prophesied massive starvation due to Orc-raids and



famine unless the Rohirrim made preparations. Even those who mistrusted him, respected him as a magician and seer. Saruman even offered to use his wizardly arts to preserve more grain in case of famine—an offer the Rohirrim did not refuse, and which greatly increased the storehouses of Orthanc.

Saruman took care to shield the most productive villages from Orc-raids until 3016, by which time his storehouses were nearly full. Large quantities of grain, wine, and dried meats were imported from Dunland, Tharbad, the farming villages of central Eriador, and even from the Shire (though when Saruman learned of the appetites of Hobbits, he marvelled that the land was not in a perpetual famine). Also, at least some of the losses suffered by horse herds in the Eastmark, which were attributed to incursions by Mordor-Orcs, were actually caused by the perpetual hunger of Saruman's Orcs and Wargs for the taste of horseflesh.

Life in the region prior to the War of the Ring was harsh and anxious. Areas that had not fallen under Saruman's direct control were so heavily influenced by his agents that it was hard to tell the difference. Conflict between the Rohirrim and the Dunlendings who worked at Isengard was frequent and often bloody, and even when Isengard was quiet, Orc-raids, originating either in Mordor or the Misty Mountains (the latter of which secretly served Saruman), could happen at any time, during any season. Wargs roamed the plains in winter, feasting on horses, livestock, and (when folk were careless) children.

The wisest folk of the villages near Nan Curunír had mistrusted Saruman since the reign of Thengel, and that mistrust turned into suspicion by 3010. Saruman's deception was so cleverly engineered, however, that no one knew the full extent of his designs until shortly before the First Battle of the Isen.

Player characters from the Wizard's Vale would most likely come from outlying villages. They would probably be frustrated by the increased influence of foreigners on the local townships, be fearful of Orc raids, and feel abandoned by Edoras (since King Théoden, under Wormtongue's spell, provides little support for the Rohirrim). Such PCs could be asked to spy on Isengard, investigate the disappearance of horses, battle Orc-raiders, hunt roaming packs of Wargs, oppose Dunlendings and half-Dunlendings who have inserted themselves into positions of power, and protect the weak and oppressed during a time when such folk rarely received such protection. Éomer is Marshal of the Eastmark at this time, and as he harbours suspicions about Saruman (as did his cousin, Prince Théodred), he could be a primary patron of such activities.

Player characters of a more mercantile bent could establish trade between Isengard and their home community, and perhaps stumble upon the trade networks connecting Isengard and the North. In fact, this could connect PCs from Rohan with Hobbits from the Shire, or with other PCs hailing from northern regions.

LIFE IN ORTHANC

In TA 3018, Orthanc is a mostly empty place, a tower of deserted chambers and shuttered windows. Saruman has come to greatly despise intrusions, interruptions, or anything that might challenge his absolute authority over this domain. Within the tower, most labours involve carting and cataloguing the supply trains that continuously pour into Isengard from lands both near and foreign.

Servants from underground (particularly Orcs) are only permitted to enter on urgent business, though Saruman's favourites—the members of his Inner Circle, enumerated on pages 76–8—are allowed free run of

Isengard excepting the High Level, Secret Level, and Star Chamber of Orthanc.

When Saruman accepts—or presses—someone into his service and stations him in the tower, he is seldom permitted to leave for fear of betrayal. The servants of Isengard have little purpose but to serve Saruman; in what little spare time is permitted, rivalry flourishes, and games of the pettiest sort are played. More than a few servants have 'accidentally fallen' from high tower windows, and few people are important enough for Saruman to be concerned over their fate.

Saruman has a strict code of conduct for all his servants, including the commanders of his armies and even the members of his Inner Circle. No one may enter his presence, save messengers in the uttermost need, in a dishevelled state. No one may speak in his presence unless directly addressed, nor look him directly in the face when doing so. Raising one's voice in Saruman's presence is also forbidden, so most conversations are spoken in whispers, even when he is not physically present. The punishment for incurring the wrath of Saruman is severe, and as the War of the Ring approaches, he rarely restrains his temper.

Merriment is discouraged in Isengard, for Saruman has come to see music and art as frivolous pursuits, diversions from the road to power. Those who use strong drink do so in secret, or are given it on occasions when Saruman feels it necessary to reward his followers for service. Since TA 3010 (the first year that Saruman's trade with the Shire arrived at Isengard), pipe-weed has also been given as a reward, though only Saruman's favourites (usually spies coming in from abroad, or his bodyguard of Uruk-hai) are permitted to smoke in Orthanc.

Invited guests to Isengard are treated well by Saruman, who prides himself on setting a fine table.



ISENGARD

However, most visitors think it a dour and loveless place, whose sole virtue is its solitude. None are permitted to enter Isengard—not even Saruman’s most trusted spies—without being placed under constant watch.

THE LANGUAGES OF ISENGARD

Within Isengard, the language most commonly spoken is Westron, at Saruman’s insistence. Among the servants the most common language is Dunlendish. Most Orcs and Half-orcs have been taught both the Black Speech and Westron. Most also know the Isengard-dialect of Orc-speech.

In the manner after the loremasters of old, Saruman once planned to devise a tongue of the White Hand for all his servants, which would have been a degenerate version of the Black Speech (if such a thing is possible); but beyond a few watch-words, such a language was never codified or widely used.

BELOW ISENGARD

If life within Isengard is tedious and treacherous, then life in the Orc-pits and furnaces below Isengard is brutal and short. Beneath the ground, furnaces forge weapons of war for the Orc-armies being amassed to assault Rohan. These forges are extremely dangerous, and the *snaga* who work them die on a daily basis, often killed on whim by bullying Uruk-hai or Half-orcs.

The tunnels beneath Isengard connect to a network of Orc-warrens located under Methedras, where the majority of the Orcs dwelled prior to 3018. These tunnels also provide a convenient route for supplies to be secretly delivered into Isengard; much wood from Fangorn Forest came into Isengard by this route.

Saruman imported the largest and fiercest canines from the south and

ISENGARD: THIRD AGE TIMELINE

- c. 50 Gondor builds settlements in the Vale of Isen. Orcs destroy the settlements of Isen. At the behest of Prince Ciryanar, Gondor begins to construct a fortress to defend the region. Angrenost, the fortress later known as Orthanc, is completed. Thinyarpher, son of Ciryanar, is named its first steward. A great siege of Easterlings is repulsed. The Kinstrife. The last of the House of Ciryanar die tragically.
- 1448 Ornacar is named Steward. Angrenost is reoccupied.
- 1450 Saruman is given the friendship of the tower and uses the Palantír.
- 1636 The Great Plague. Isengard and the surrounding lands are devastated. Battle of the Ring of Isen. Prince Eärnur defends Isengard from a great Orc army. Battle of the field of Celebrant. Rohan is populated by the Rohirrim, who do not get along well with the Angrenostim.
- c. 2700 Dunlendings renew their attack on Isengard.
- 2710 Dunlendings occupy the Ring of Isengard and besiege Orthanc.
- 2713 The last of the Angrenostim dies from starvation. Angrenost is empty but secured. The Long Winter. Isengard is used as a base to invade Rohan. King Fréaláf defeats the Dunlendings. Gondor retakes Isengard. Saruman is given the keys to the Tower. Saruman begins to take Orcs into his service.
- 2941 Sauron is driven from Dol Guldur.
- 2948 Birth of Théoden. Last meeting of the White Council. Saruman takes Isengard and openly declares himself its lord.
- c. 3000 Saruman uses the *palantír* and is ensnared by Sauron.
- c. 3010 Saruman’s Orcs begin felling trees in Fangorn Forest.
- 3018 The War of the Ring begins.
- 3019 The Ents overrun Isengard; Gandalf overthrows Saruman. Saruman and his servant Wormtongue eventually sneak out of the tower, and harrow the Shire before they are slain.

eastern parts of Middle-earth (the black wolves of Rhûn and the jackals of the Harad lands) and interbred them with Wargs, hoping to develop even more vicious breeds of Wargs. The worst of these Warg mongrels could not be tamed for riding; these Battle-wargs (see page 95) are sent ahead of the armies to rip apart advance scouts or endure archer fire, for they are bred to fight more viciously when wounded, and will not fall until maimed or killed.

One of the favourite pastimes of those who live below Isengard is wagering on Warg-fights. Some Wargs are specially bred by the kennel masters to rip each other apart, and they are placed in pits so Orcs

can wager on the outcome. The cruelest game, however, is 'rip apart the *snaga*,' when a misbehaving *snaga* Orc is blindfolded and placed in a pit with only a dagger to defend himself against two hungry Wargs. The *snaga* rarely survives.

The worst practice of the Orcs beneath Isengard and Methedras is worship of the White Hand. When they take prisoners (usually Rohirrim) they cut off their hands, paint them white, and place them on pointed sticks. Then, when the moon (which the Uruk-hai associate with Saruman) shines directly over the sacrificial pit, they display the severed hands to the captives and burn them alive. Food offerings and treasures are often offered to the severed hands, which are then taken with great ceremony to the spawning tunnels and presented to the breeding pit tenders, who use them as one component of the vile stew in which Uruks are quickened.

Even Saruman finds this practice distasteful, but he allows it because it venerates him and encourages loyalty among his Orcs. The Half-orcs and Uruk-hai who serve him are forbidden to participate in these practices, for they are expected to be loyal to Saruman himself and not to crude tribal representations of him.

Saruman rarely visits the underworks of Isengard except to monitor the production of weapons, and oversee his cherished breeding programs. He certainly never associates with Orcs, which he regards as beneath even the race of Men. The forges of Isengard, however, Saruman views with a special pride, and his servants devote an extraordinary amount of time and effort to ensure they are properly maintained.

Above all else, Isengard in TA 3018 is a place of war. The Host of Isengard constantly trains at arms under the command of Móg, Isengard's General of Arms. Orcbands continuously parade through the tunnels between Isengard and Methedras, developing battle skills and endurance. The best Half-orcs have been taught captains' skills, and pour over records of ancient battles to learn strategy and tactics.

When Saruman addresses his Orcs, he cultivates a hatred of the Rohirrim, drawing on their ancient loathing of Elves and Dwarves. He also does his best to encourage rivalry with the Mordor-orcs of the Lidless Eye, whose soldiers (the Isengard-orcs constantly told) are far inferior to those of the White Hand. This prejudice, zealously encouraged by Saruman, would later come back to haunt the wizard.

Life beneath Isengard at the end of the Third Age is as barbaric as in any place in Middle-earth. Saruman has come to consider himself as a more enlightened version of Sauron, but beneath Isengard one can find the truth—the White Hand is but a mockery of the Eye, and Isengard, far from being the bastion of progress its master envisioned, is (like the Barad-dûr) a citadel of tyranny, torture, and barbarism.

THE FORTRESS OF IRON

*'But Isengard is a circle of sheer rocks
that enclose a valley as with a wall,
and in the midst of that valley is a
tower of stone called Orthanc.'*

— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*



Isengard is unique, defying simple labels just as its master's robes defy colour. One thing, however, is certain of Isengard—it is not a place to be ignored, or slighted, or approached idly. Isengard is composed of four areas. First is Orthanc, the tall black spire that is the geographical and practical heart of the Wizard's Vale. Second is the Ring of Isengard, the circular wall that protects the tower. Most of the Men who dwell within Isengard—soldier, servant, and slave alike—live in the chambers riddling the stone of the ring-wall. Third is the circular plain bounded by the Ring, often referred to as Isengard's basin. Under Saruman's stewardship this area is divided into eight areas by pathways radiating from Orthanc like the spokes of a wheel. Finally, the fourth area of Isengard is hidden from view. This is the underground region, comprising the caverns and passages infested by Saruman's host of Orc-spawn.



As noted in the Introduction, the descriptions that follow concentrate on defining Isengard just before Saruman imprisons Gandalf. Other time periods are also discussed in the pages that follow, but where no additional qualification is given, the

descriptions pertain to TA 3018. From the information presented in the previous chapter, as well as from what is said of Saruman's plans and followers in Chapter Four, the Narrator can easily extrapolate information about other periods.



ORTHANC

*'A peak and isle of rock it was, black
and gleaming hard; four mighty piers
of many-sided stone were wielded
into one. . . .'
— The Two Towers*

In the Sindarin tongue 'Orthanc' means 'Forked Height,' and so does the tower appear. In the language of the Rohirrim the same word means 'The Cunning Mind,' a name well suited to both those who crafted it and the Wizard who now occupies it. The tower of Orthanc stands at the very centre of Isengard both literally and figuratively, dominating the landscape with austere majesty. It is from this imposing structure that Saruman rules over Isengard and the Wizard's Vale.

Orthanc is fashioned from black stone that glistens in the light, almost as metal highly polished. The tower comprises four giant spires joined together into a single edifice. At their tops the spires curl away from

each other, creating an open space between them. Many have thought this crown resembles a four-fingered claw, reaching toward the sky as if the sun itself could be plucked from the heavens.

GENERAL FEATURES AND APPEARANCE

*'It was not made by Saruman, but by the
men of Númenor long ago; and it is very
tall and has many secrets; yet it looks not
to be a work of craft.'*

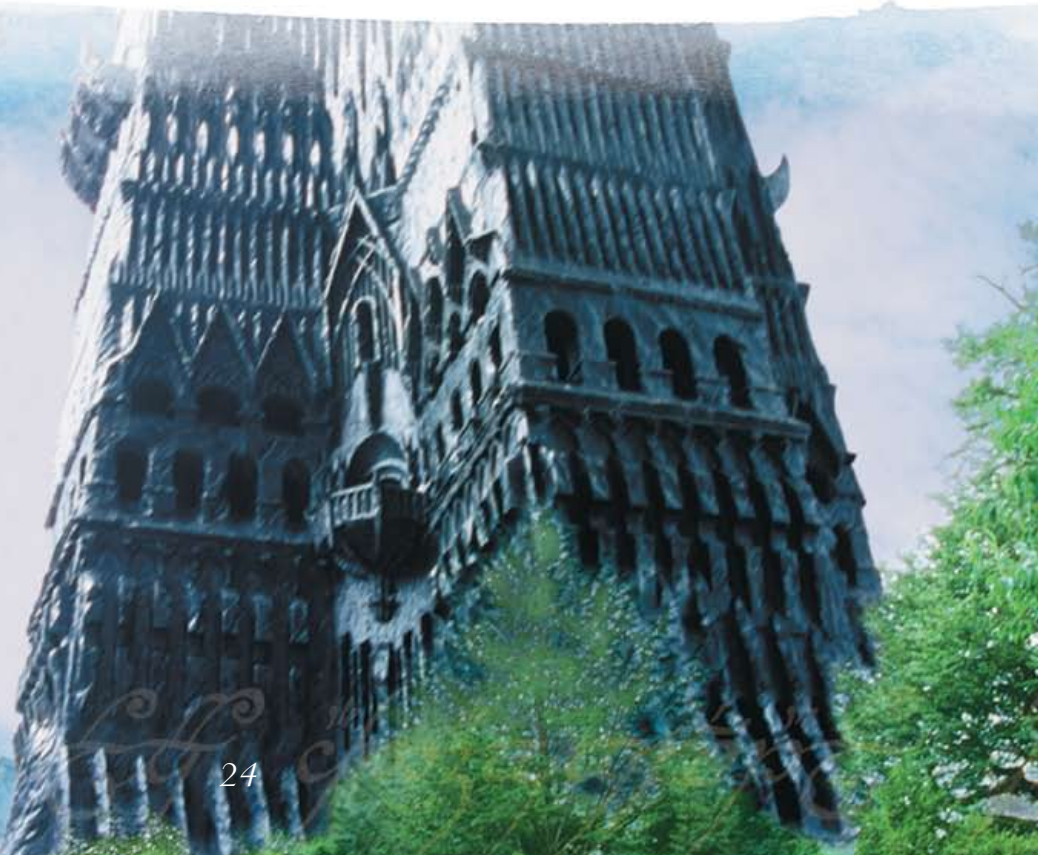
— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Curugond of Lamedon, the Master Builder of Angrenost, was a superb craftsman. Part of his gift lay in his appreciation of nature and his ability to enhance natural gifts without destroying them. In the four great slabs that became Orthanc he saw the stark dignity of stone and was loath to tame the natural contours and existing hollows of the rock. Thus, the exterior of Orthanc is bare of decora-

tion save only the front doors, their archway, the various windows and sills, and the black iron rails guarding the balconies.

Curugond also desired for those who entered the tower to feel as if they had stepped into a natural edifice, one shaped more by wind and rain than hammer and pick. Thus, Orthanc's floor plan is neither orderly nor regular, as most fortresses are. Its walls slope with natural imperfection. Its staircases cut at strange angles as often as they run straight, and steps connect chambers whose floors could not easily be made level with one another. The ceilings were carved with even less refinement, and in many rooms great natural arches support columns and beams, and occasionally protrusions make it appear as if the ceiling were dripping black liquid toward the floor.

As a rule, Orthanc's permanent interior fixtures are functional rather than ornamental. The black iron doors and rails within the tower are simple and elegant, with lines clean and unadorned. While many doors are oddly shaped to match the contours of the rock, they are otherwise utilitarian. In addition to doors (or



sometimes in their place), some portals in Orthanc have iron grilles made of vertical bars ending at the top and bottom in sharp points. In fact, the only elaborate ornamentation within the tower are the sigils carved into the floors of some of the tower's rooms. All predate Saruman's tenure, created by craftsmen in Curugond's employ. These sigils strengthen by magic the structure of Orthanc and keep the tower from harm; even the Ents, who eventually reduced the ring-wall to rubble, proved unable to break the tower's stone. How these sigils work their magic is a mystery even to Saruman, but he sees no reason to conduct an exhaustive investigation while pressed with more urgent matters.

While they dwelt at Angrenost, the Men of Gondor lined many of its walls with tapestries, their rich weave providing sharp contrast to the dark walls. The Dunlendings preferred furs, but the notion was much the same. Saruman, however, enjoys the unflinching strength of the stone and has removed all hangings except those in the private quarters of his servants and followers.

Many of the rooms in Orthanc were formed from natural hollows in the rock, but most abscesses weren't large enough to be fashioned into rooms of their own. These smaller natural hollows, where they were adjacent to planned or discovered rooms, were left as nooks instead. With carefully fitted doors of the same black rock as the tower itself and swinging on black iron (and sometimes ingeniously concealed) hinges, most nooks are difficult to spot and some are virtually invisible to the casual observer. Indeed, some have lain undiscovered for centuries. The difficulty of discovering hidden nooks with *Observe* or *Search*, tests ranges from TN 5 to TN 20.

Even the largest nooks would only accommodate the smallest Hobbits—and far from comfortably—so nooks are used for storage. The Men of

Gondor stored food, clothes, bedding, personal items, and even weapons. Although the Dunlendings discovered some of the nooks, they generally did not store their belongings behind the black stone for superstitious fear the tower would consume them. Saruman largely ignores the nooks, having not only the whole tower but also the vast underground to store things.

The stone of Orthanc is black as night, and—as might be assumed—the interior of the tower is also, save in rooms with windows or where the tower's occupants kindle fire in lanterns, or bring torches with them.

Most windows on the lower levels are small, while the upper levels have larger windows, since they are safely beyond bowshot. Regardless of height, lattices of black iron protect all of Orthanc's windows. The windows in some rooms, such as the Lord's Study, also have thin hides of oiled leather stretched across them. These admit light while frustrating prying eyes.

Lanterns are more common than torches in Orthanc, as they produce more light, burn longer, and do not present the danger of open flame. In some rooms, lanterns are carved from the rock of the walls, but in most places they are wrought of black iron and hung from long poles set in heavy floor stands. Some are also wedged into crevices and alcoves in the walls. Saruman has commanded that his servants keep some of the lanterns within Orthanc, such as those in the Foyer of Orthanc, lit at all hours of the day and night. In other areas, they are only lit when needed.

Orthanc is unusual among fortresses in that, among all its chambers, only its kitchens have a fireplace or hearth of any kind. Even so, it is rarely cold within the tower: the walls and floors themselves radiate dull warmth as if they stood above a great fire, and no chill can penetrate the thick walls.

Fresh air is a rare commodity within Orthanc, for even rooms with windows always bear a faint odour of smoke and ash and something akin to rotten egg. The air leaves grit upon the tongue and in the nostrils. The dust that settles on floors and furniture within Orthanc is strange as well, more black than grey, like dark ash. In fact, staying within Orthanc for more than a week can produce a persistent cough, despite the warmth of the place, and an itching sensation in eyes, nose, and mouth. Those among the Free Peoples (including the Hill-men but none of the various Orc-spawn of Saruman) who dwell within Orthanc for a week, must make a TN 10 Stamina test to resist the cough. A new test must be made each week, and the TN increases by 1 for every week past the first. This malady brings with it a -2 to all Social skill tests. It can only be healed in those who leave the tower, and doing so requires a TN 15 Healing test. Those not under the care of one skilled in leechcraft can make a Stamina test once per week, beginning at TN 15, but reducing by 1 each week until the test is passed.

Most permanent residents of Orthanc have become used to living in this diminished state. Those who leave the tower permanently, however, to serve in the ring-wall or elsewhere in the Wizard's Vale, are pleasantly surprised by the health that returns to their lungs. Saruman either does not notice the foul air or does not care. It seems not to affect him as it does others.

It is unknown whether Orthanc's poor ventilation and unhealthy vapours have persisted since the tower was created—a feature of the strange black rock, perhaps—or whether this state only descended when Saruman's stewardship began. Such academic questions are of little interest to Orthanc's residents, in any case.

THE ENTRANCE

'Up to the threshold of the door there mounted a flight of twenty-seven broad stairs . . . of the same black stone. This was the only entrance to the tower. . . .'

— *The Two Towers*

Orthanc's entrance stands at the juncture of two of its piers, facing due east. The entrance is not at ground level but at the stop of twenty-seven broad stairs made of the same black rock as the tower itself. The massive arched doors are twice the height of a Man, and made not of stone but black iron. They are cunningly built, and move easily on their hinges so that even a child can push them open with a touch. On their interior the doors support three mighty bars of iron, one each at top, centre, and bottom. These can be thrust across when the doors are shut, barring all from entry.

Once these doors bore upon them the flowering tree and seven stars of Gondor, but the Dunlendings defaced that image when they claimed Orthanc for themselves. After Saruman came to dwell here the doors were reworked with his symbol, an open hand upright with palm forward. The hand itself was wrought in silver so

that it gleamed white against the dark metal and stone.

The only entrance to Orthanc, other than this main entrance, is through caverns beneath the ground, at the Long Stair's Foot (see 'Access' on page 47).

THE LEVELS OF ORTHANC

Orthanc stands five hundred feet from base to crown, yet within its thick walls only five levels exist. This relative dearth of chambers would come as a surprise to some, as many visitors judge the height of the tower, the height of a Man, and assume dozens of levels and hundreds of room must lie within. In fact, however, Orthanc's levels do not stand one immediately atop the other, nor are they sized from floor to ceiling as normal dwellings are. Scores of feet lie between one level and the next, and many rooms have ceilings forty or more feet above their floors. Further, none of the habitable levels occupy the entirety of Orthanc's footprint; dozens of feet of solid rock often separate rooms, even on the same level. These architectural features combine with the dark stone, twisting stairs, and uneven halls, to distort all sense of distance and height with-

in the tower. Those unfamiliar with the stronghold's layout, must make TN 10 Wits tests when navigating within it to avoid becoming lost, or to find their way back even to chambers where they have already been.

Each of Orthanc's five levels has a common name used by the residents of the tower. The lowest floor is the *Ground Level*, and while it lies at the level of the surrounding basin, this is actually one floor below the level upon which the main entrance opens. Rather, the main door of Orthanc leads to the Foyer of Orthanc on the *Entry Level*. Immediately above the Entry Level lies the *Lord's Level*, where the Great Hall, Dining Hall, and lord's administrative chambers

THE KEY OF ORTHANC

Control of Orthanc has been symbolically transferred through the ages by the presentation of the Key of Orthanc, an intricately shaped key nearly twelve inches long, and made of the same black rock as the tower itself. By virtue of possessing the Key, the Master of the Tower can more readily command those who have pledged themselves to Isengard's service. Similar to the effects of a legendary weapon (see page 90 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*), the Key of Orthanc grants a +2 bonus to Inspire or Intimidate tests against those who recognise the Key, and fall under the rightful authority of its master. In addition to its symbolic value, the Key of Orthanc opens many of the secret recesses of the tower. In the late Third Age, Saruman possesses the Key of Orthanc.



are arranged. Above this, the *Living Level* contains quarters of some of Saruman's most favoured servants, as well as Orthanc's Council Chamber, now largely unused. Above the Living Level is the *High Level*, where lie Saruman's own quarters and a maze of twisting tunnels that lead to the chamber where the *palantir* of Orthanc is secreted. The highest level within the tower is the *Secret Level*, accessible only by the Long Stair, and known to few within Isengard. The Secret Level contains Saruman's private workshop, library, and treasury.

THE GROUND LEVEL

The Ground Level of Orthanc stands below the level of the main entrance and has no windows. Indeed, many who enter the tower believe the main entrance opens upon the lowest floor and that all below is foundation of solid rock.

Storerooms

Two storerooms, referred to as the North Storeroom and East Storeroom by those who must differentiate, are the chief chambers of the Ground Level. A narrow stair descends to the North Storeroom from the kitchens, above. Dark and gloomy, the storerooms typically remain unlit, and as they have no windows, servants descending must carry torches or lanterns. Pillars connect ceiling and floor at semi-regular intervals, forming natural divisions for the storage of various types of items.

The stores kept here are primarily consumable: wine, beer, ale, and other liquids in bottles and kegs line the East Storeroom, while dry stores including salted meat, flour, grain, dried fruit, and the like are kept in the North Storeroom. Although those who serve Saruman and oversee these stores are directed to keep careful inventories of these rooms, their very age means that many forgotten items lurk within the storerooms' stockpiles.

Chamber of Chains

The Chamber of Chains is one of the great secrets of Orthanc. It stands at the exact centre of the tower, and is perfectly circular in shape. A single door allows access, but from the outside, the door so perfectly resembles the unfinished stone of the North Storeroom, that only its keyhole is visible. The Key of Orthanc is required to open this door, but once unlocked, it swings inward at the slightest touch.

Inside, the smooth, dark walls rise to meet the domed ceiling at a height of 20 feet. The walls are pierced in 16 places, and through these holes run the chains linking the pillars along the eight paths that run from the ring-wall to the tower (see 'The Paths' on page 44). Each chain's end is wrapped around a great iron wheel with a crank of black iron that is fitted with a lock only the Key of Orthanc will open.

The wheels are arranged so a single individual may stand in their midst with the wheels surrounding him on every side. When the cranks are unlocked, the chains can be tightened or loosened at will. If drawn taut and reeled in further, the chains will pull the pillars from their foundations and cause them to crash down on the paths, blocking approach along those routes and injuring anyone standing thereon. Anyone caught on a path when its pillars are collapsed must make a TN 10 *Swiftness* test to avoid being hit by chain or pillar for 2d6+3 points of damage.

THE ENTRY LEVEL

The Entry Level is the one upon which the great doors of Orthanc open, and is one of the most active levels of the tower.

Foyer of Orthanc

The great doors of Orthanc open upon this diamond-shaped hall. Its ceiling rises twenty feet, capped with graceful arches and a smooth, pol-

THE LONG STAIR

Not part of any single level of Orthanc, the Long Stair is a single passage that spans them all. A secret from all but Saruman's inner circle of masters, this long flight is in most places a narrow, spiralling iron staircase bolted to the walls of a natural fissure that runs most of the height of the south-east pillar. At other times, however, it runs (more or less) straight to follow the fissure before resuming its spiral.

In some places the stair's fixtures are loose, and the steps sway alarmingly when trod upon. Because the stairway does not fill the irregularly shaped fissure at many points along its reach, it would be possible for a careless traveller to misstep and fall past several twists and switchbacks before either striking jagged rock, or landing elsewhere on the iron stair. Those who ascend quickly must make TN 5 *Nimbleness* tests, or fall 1d6 x 5 yards, suffering damage corresponding to the distance fallen.

The Long Stair penetrates to Orthanc's underground and ends (or so Saruman believes; see page 55) in a chamber known as the Long Stair's Foot. Within Orthanc, the Long Stair can be accessed only from the library on the Lord's Level, and through the twisting corridors of the Secret Level.

THE TOWER OF ORTHANC

Ground Level



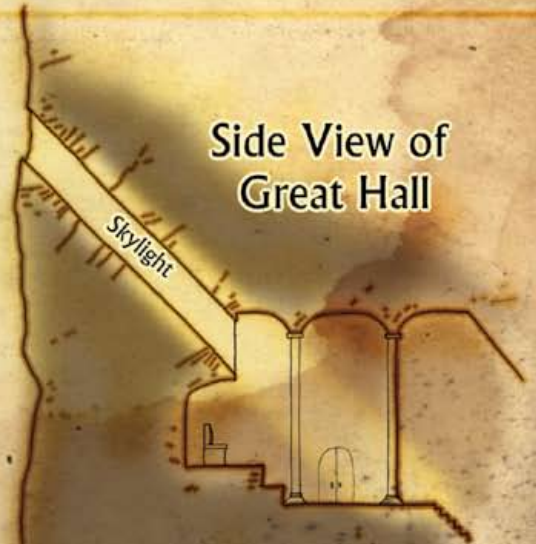
Lord's Level



Entry Level



Side View of Great Hall

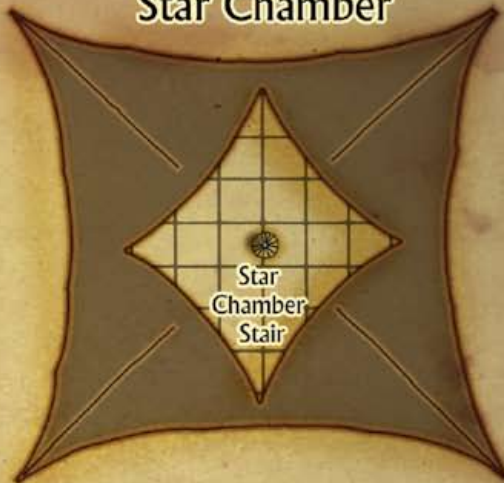


One Square = 10 Feet

Living Level



Star Chamber



High Level



Secret Level



Twisting Corridors
culminate 75 feet
above Lord's Chamber



ished vault. Directly across from the imposing doors, a massive, grand staircase sweeps up to the Great Hall on the Lord's Level. Two lanterns are kept ever-burning at the base of the stair, one to either side. To the left of the staircase stands a single iron door, leading into the kitchens.

Kitchens

Behind the foyer and grand staircase, lie Orthanc's kitchens. They are not large, as some might suppose, for the tower has never hosted many. A narrow stair in the back corner descends into the ground level storerooms, though the servants more commonly bring fresh food from the ring-wall each day. A second stair, equally narrow, leads up to the Dining Hall.

Orthanc's kitchens are arranged in normal fashion, with great hearths for cooking, large basins for cleaning, and wide tables for food preparation. The smoke of the hearths is carried away through fissures in the rock, and disperses in thin plumes outside the tower. Shelves and cabinets line the walls and store ample bowls, plates, platters, mugs, and utensils. Pots, pans, and jugs hang from iron hooks above the hearth and the preparation tables. The nooks of this room overflow with foodstuffs, spices, and other ingredients, their doors sometimes propped open or completely removed.

Wine Cellar

The floor of this small chamber is a foot higher than the floor of the kitchens. Upon, opening the door one must step up, ducking to avoid the top of the doorframe. The cellar is long and narrow, its far wall lined with wooden racks upon which rest bottles, jugs, and small casks. These hold wine for the lord of the tower and his guests, and the stock is replenished from both the ring-wall and the Ground Level storerooms.

Well

More an alcove off the kitchens than a room of its own, this well supplies fresh water from one of the underground streams that runs from the Crescent Lake. A simple rope-and-bucket hangs on a wall hook. It is a simple matter—though not a glorious one—to lower the bucket to bring up water. A trough next to the well is used to store several bucket-fuls at once so the bucket need not be thrown down each time a small bit of water is needed.

Servants' Quarters

Small doors line the hallway leading to the kitchens, and these open on small chambers for the servants of the tower (see 'Dunlending Servants' on page 83), and one larger room where Gálwa, Saruman's Doorwarden and Steward (see page 76), sleeps. Each room contains a bed or cot, one or more chests, and perhaps a chair. Hooks and nooks along the walls hold clothes and shelves, provide additional storage as needed.

THE LORD'S LEVEL

While the Lord's Level contains neither the quarters of the Lord of Orthanc, nor his most private sanctum, it is called such because it is where the Master of the Tower receives those who visit, and—in times past, anyway—it was where he carried out the administrative work of the fortress.

Great Hall

By far the grandest room in Orthanc, the Great Hall was designed as the place where its lord might hear both news from retainers, and entreaties from his subjects. Since Saruman's tenure, the Great Hall has become even more clearly a throne room, where warriors and workers alike pay homage to their ruler.


As one ascends the great staircase from the Foyer of Orthanc, light

streams from a great skylight shaft opposite the stairs, above the stepped alcove where the iron throne sits. For most of the late afternoon and early evening, it is almost impossible for one facing the throne to see its occupant, for the sunlight that shines from above him.

The floor in the Great Hall is etched with strange glyphs and symbols. Lines bisect them in an intricate pattern, but it is unclear whether Saruman traced the lines, or whether the original builders engraved them. The walls throughout the room are meticulously polished, a task to which many of the tower's servants dedicate much time. The ceiling of the Great Hall rises some eighty feet above the floor. A series of vaults adorn the lower portion of this height, but above them a maelstrom of arches, spires, cracks, and spikes fill the twisted and strangely beautiful space. Although servants ascend to dust them from time to time, they are otherwise unused for any purpose. Even so, many of the spaces in the high ceiling could easily hide even a full-grown Man in easy earshot of all below.

The Great Hall has no furnishings save the throne, and a great iron chandelier in the centre of the room. The throne, made of wrought iron, is quite uncomfortable, and Saruman will allow not even the smallest cushion to detract from its stern facade. The rock above the throne has been carved to resemble a great canopy. The chandelier, also of wrought iron, was cast to resemble the shape of Orthanc's spire, blossoming into four horns that sprout thick candles.

Four doorways—two framing single and two framing double doors—lead off the hall. The double doors to the north open on the Dining Hall, and are usually left open. Those to the south provide access to the lord's inner chambers, and are usually shut and locked, even though Saruman typically uses chambers higher in the tower for his most secretive endeavours. Two doors in the east wall—one



on either side of the grand staircase—lead to the balcony over Orthanc's entrance, and to stairs that ascend to the Living Level. These are usually closed but unlocked.

Dining Hall

The Dining Hall is a long room with a platform at one end raised two steps above the main floor. The high table stands upon this platform, providing space enough for five in high-backed wooden chairs to dine with their backs to the wall. Before the platform stand four longer tables whose heavy tabletops are made of the tower's black stone, supported by trestles of iron. Each table's benches are made wholly of stone.

When Men of Gondor ruled here, the lord and his retinue took their meals in this hall. The same was true for the Dunlendings. Saruman, however, rarely uses the Dining Hall, preferring food be brought to him in a place more suited to studies or other pursuits. Saruman's inner circle some-

times use the hall to impress or intimidate subordinates, especially when these inferiors are ring-wall dwellers unused to being in Orthanc.

In addition to the ornate doors that open on the Great Hall, a small door behind the high table's platform leads down a narrow flight of stairs to the kitchens, so food can be delivered directly.

Lord's Study

The Lord's Study is a small room, roughly circular in shape, and surprisingly cosy for a chamber of dark stone. This is due to the furnishings: a heavy desk of wood stands against one wall, its warm golden-brown hues ornamented with carved knotwork. A similarly decorated table stands nearby, though its surface is hidden beneath scrolls, tomes, unbound leaves, and letters. A large chair, its thick cushions green as new grass and stuffed with down, sits between desk and table so Saruman might reach either easily. Behind the table stands

a small bookshelf containing administrative journals and a few other books Saruman frequently consults.

The ceiling is low—a mere ten feet—and has rounded corners rather than squared. This increases the sense of security and comfort. The Men of Gondor covered the ceiling with beaten and polished gold, which was restored at Saruman's command, so that this room alone in Orthanc has a roof of sunlight, for the smallest candle creates a powerful reflection from above.

Although this chamber is strictly off-limits, Saruman keeps only the most trivial administrative records in this room. Even so, he spends much time in this chamber in thought and meditation, considering the events of the world, the deeds of the Free Peoples, and the machinations of Sauron. He prefers this chamber for such because it is closeted from immediate distractions, yet near enough the Great Hall that he may appear the instant a messenger or sentry arrives with tidings.

Library

The Men of Gondor placed as much stock in knowledge as they did in warfare, and so collected many books and scrolls. Most of their keeps and castles had libraries, and Orthanc was no exception.

The walls of the library of the Lord's Level (Saruman also keeps a private library on the Secret Level) bear great shelves that reach the fifteen-foot ceilings, some as deep as three feet, carved from the living rock of the tower. Ladders allow scholars to reach the highest tomes. The room's temperature is comfortable: warm enough to keep bindings from cracking, but cool enough that ink does not fade too quickly.

Several large, free-standing podiums of stone and iron stand in a circle at the centre of the room. A few stuffed chairs have been shoved against the wall; Saruman reads while standing, and usually leaves the tomes he has most recently consulted upon the book-stands.

When the Men of Gondor quit Orthanc, they took some of their books, but left many behind. The Dunlendings destroyed much of what they left, but Saruman has accumulated a great deal of recorded

knowledge since his arrival. The texts here at the end of the Third Age are of a general nature, including much of Middle-earth's history and geography as well as much information on the various crafts of Men. For those seeking specific knowledge, this room counts as a large, well-organised library. (See 'Answering Questions in Libraries' on page 79 of *Paths of the Wise*.) Nothing regarding wizardry or enchantments is kept here, however. Such knowledge is secreted in the tower's higher levels.

Because learning is a powerful thing, any of Saruman's vassals who wish to consult the works in this room must receive his explicit permission. Even when his leave is granted, these lucky few are observed in their studies by one of Saruman's henchman of appropriate rank and skill. Although Saruman once allowed the Wise and their allies to study here free of supervision, by the end of the Third Age such permission is unheard-of.

Though it contains much lost lore, this room's greatest secret may be the cunningly hidden secret passage to the Long Stair, accessed by lifting a portion of one shelf that appears burdened by heavy tomes. The tomes can be removed and consulted with-

out the shelf's secret being guessed. Finding the passage's trigger by accident is impossible; even one who knows the trigger lies somewhere in the room must make a TN 25 Search test to discover it.

Balcony

Past a narrow passageway off the Great Hall lies a set of doors consisting of an iron latticework with thin leather stretched across it. The light from beyond shines through the leather, giving the far end of the otherwise pitch-dark tunnel a warm golden glow. The doors open onto the balcony above Orthanc's main entrance. The balcony itself is organically composed of the same stone as the rest of the tower, and a waist-high iron railing skirts its edge. From here, Saruman or another of his followers may address visitors to Orthanc before they ascend its 27 steps.

THE LIVING LEVEL

This level sits a good deal above the Lord's Level, being reached by a wide staircase that switches back upon itself many times before ascending to this height. The Living Level

contains quarters that have served alternately to house members of the lord's household, his personal retainers, his bodyguard, members of his extended family, visiting dignitaries, and—in the latter days of Saruman's reign—virtually no one.

Foyer

This room was once particularly ornate, serving as a focal point for this level's activities. Although wooden chairs still line it and sconces and lanterns of iron adorn its walls, it is largely unused in the late Third Age, as Saruman does not travel frequently to this level.

Living Chambers

Each suite of living chambers consists of a number of rooms, typically a bedroom and a sitting room. The precise arrangement of each suite has varied through the ages of Orthanc's occupation as partitions of wood and fur and screens of wood, iron, paper, and leather have often been erected to section off areas as required by the occupants. Each living chamber also has an alcove containing a garderobe or wardrobe, often covered by a tapestry.

The suite closest to the stairs is claimed by Móg, Saruman's General of Arms (see page 77). It is the rare night, however, that Móg can be found within it, for when Móg sleeps he usually lays his head among whatever Men—or Orcs—he has been training most recently. Valecarn, Saruman's apprentice (see page 78), has claimed the two suites furthest from Móg's as his own, not because he particularly needs two for his rest and possessions, but because he feels it is his right. Those suites without occupants have been raided of their best furniture by those of Saruman's followers who feel they are entitled to such comforts. Saruman fosters such petty competition among his vassals by ignoring it.

Council Chamber

This oval-shaped room stands at the precise geometric centre of the level. It has no windows and its walls are more perfectly smooth than most chambers in Orthanc. The middle of the room is dominated by a long oval table, around which five chairs sit. The table itself is of the same black stone as Orthanc, and its surface is etched with lines and sigils. Before each seat is a rune, with a matching rune carved in the headrest of the chair before that place. The runes show the names of the Five Wizards in the language of the Valar. This table was created by Saruman—or to his specifications—for meetings of the Council of Wizards. Above the centre of the table hangs a chandelier similar to that in the Great Hall.

The great double doors of this chamber are wrought not from iron, but from the same stone as the walls, unornamented and so smooth that, when closed, they can only be distinguished with a TN 25 Search test. The Men of Gondor most likely used this room as a place for council, but the Dunlendings never used this place, for they were unaware it existed.

Workshops of Old

These irregular (but geometric) rooms were most likely living chambers at one time, either for servants or lower-ranking members of the lord's staff, but Saruman converted them for his own purposes, making them workshops where visiting Wizards (and other craftsmen) could conduct their studies and works undisturbed for as long as they wished to remain in Isengard. Each has a long table, series of stone cupboards, book-stand, and comfortable chair. Two also have small forges, well-vented to the outside. Although it has been long since the doors of Orthanc were open to other Wizards, Saruman has not bothered to alter these rooms. He has more than enough space in the

tower for his own activities, and is not concerned that these workshops sit empty and unattended.

THE HIGH LEVEL

The High Level stands a bit more than halfway up the tower. From the outside of the tower this floor is distinguishable from the others, for here the four piers bulge outward slightly. The High Level revolves around the Lord's personal chambers and secrets.

Lord's Chambers

The personal suite of the Master of Orthanc occupies much of this level. Off a small foyer at the top of the main switchback staircase, Saruman's geometric sitting room contains some of the most opulent furniture in Rohan. Although cleaned and aired meticulously every day by his servants, it is almost never used, for Saruman is always at work in other portions of his demesne. South of this room, Saruman's bedchambers contain furnishings to rival those anywhere in Middle-earth. They, too, are cleaned and their linens laboriously carried out of the tower every day to be aired. (This may have something to do with Saruman's resistance to the cough that afflicts the other residents of the tower.) Though Saruman sleeps here, and sundry items such as his extensive wardrobe are kept here, that is the extent of it. The two small rooms to the north of the sitting chamber were once bedchambers for other members of the lord's family—children, perhaps, or favoured brothers. They are unused by Saruman.

Servants' Quarters of Old

This long room, once partitioned by wood and leather into small areas for the servants who saw to the lord and his family, has lain unused since Saruman's arrival at Isengard. Saruman has no wish—or trust—that would allow servants so close to

his bedchamber. The doors are usually kept locked. The only element of note these days is a garderobe, once shared by all the High Level's servants, at the end of the hallway just outside the room.

Palantír Room

Two doors on the High Level—one in the lord's bedchamber, and one off the High Level foyer—open upon a labyrinth of narrow, twisting passages that turn, drop, and double back upon themselves before meeting one another, and opening about 75 feet above the other chambers of the High Level onto the circular room that houses the *palantír* of Orthanc. Left behind by the Men of Gondor, and apparently untouched by the Dunlending occupiers out of fear, stupidity, or ignorance, this stone came into Saruman's possession when he occupied Isengard. He chose not to disclose this fact to the other members of his Order, however, and hid his possession of the *palantír* until after the Battle of the Hornburg.

The *Palantír* Room is a small chamber, and circular. Columns of dark rock along the walls stand as if supporting a great weight. These are faceted like long, narrow gems of some strange dark mineral. In the centre of the room stands a similar column, shorn at the height of a Man's waist, its top flat except for a faint bowl carved into the centre, where the *palantír* rests. A single cushioned chair sits before the pedestal so Saruman may sit while he gazes upon it, searching its depths for lore and knowledge.

THE SECRET LEVEL

The highest level of Orthanc, the Secret Level, is only three-fourths of the way up the tower. Few are even aware of its existence; it can only be accessed by the Long Stair, which itself can only be entered from Isengard's underground, and the secret passage in the library, on the



Lord's Level. The uses to which the Men of Gondor and Dunlendings put the rooms on the Secret Level are lost to history. With Saruman's arrival, these chambers—whose walls together describe a square aligned perfectly with the tower's piers and cardinal directions—became the Wizard's private sanctum, oriented to his work and study. It is not unknown for Saruman to disappear to the Secret Level for a month at a time, though because the Long Stair penetrates to the underground, and from there one may leave Isengard entirely by secret ways, it is possible that stories of such periods of uninterrupted study are exaggerated, since Saruman may have left the tower completely rather than simply sequestered himself.

Private Library

Saruman's private library houses Saruman's collection of lore pertaining to magic, sorcery, enchantment, Rings of Power, the Enemy, and the works of industry. Although relatively large, this room does not contain a great many works, nor a great many furnishings. Other than a massive stone pedestal upon which a book may be propped for reading, the only other fixtures are bookshelves of dark

wood, with wooden doors, and iron grilles and hinges. These doors can be securely locked (and usually are, even when Saruman is present), and the Key of Orthanc is necessary to open them.

Saruman knows the precise contents of his library to the very least scroll and sketch. Should even a single volume be removed or go missing, his wrath would be extreme, for it would represent a gross violation of his most private sanctum, in addition to the theft of his most valuable property.

Personal Workshop

Saruman's private workshop is a shrine to industry, and Saruman's obsession with mechanization and craft. The room is filled with the tools of every trade known to Man, Dwarf, and Elf, including a forge, an elaborate system of bellows, many apparatuses of clockwork machinery, and even vats of slime and body parts used in breeding experiments. Most importantly to Saruman, however, are the tools of ring-making found here: moulds, crucibles, castings, and more. For it is here that Saruman has, for long years and uncounted, practised that art to further his understanding in hopes of fashioning his own Ring of Power.

Treasury of Orthanc

The stout door of this room is similar to those of the Council Chamber, so well-crafted it can only be detected when closed with a TN 25 Search test. The Men of Gondor made this chamber to contain gold, gems, and relics of their families, items they desired to make secure against prying eyes and greedy hands. When they departed, the chamber was emptied of its treasures. The Dunlendings did not discover the room. Saruman found it easily, however, and uses it to store his most precious valuables: rings.

The room contains a number of small tables. On each table rests a velvet cushion, and on each cushion lies a single ring. These are not ornamental jewellery, but magical rings, each enchanted for a different purpose. The Wizard often comes to this chamber and paces it, admiring his treasures. The last few tables are empty, awaiting his next acquisitions—or creations.

LINNAR'S RING: The first ring—a heavy gold band with a square diamond—is one of the lost Dwarf-rings of Power, which Saruman acquired during his travels through the Misty Mountains many long years ago (see page 75). It is enchanted to aid its wearer at finding, refining, and working metals, and to increase his skills at appraisal and crafting. Anyone who wears it is affected as with the *Crafting-spell*, and gains the Hew Earth, Hidden Minerals, and Mastery of Stone order abilities of the Miner elite order for as long as it is worn. (See pages 30–1 of *Dwarves of Middle-earth* in the *Moria* boxed set.) This ring is Corrupting (TN 10) as described on pages 71–2 of *Paths of the Wise*—its wearer must make a Corruption test each time one of its magical abilities is exercised.

RING OF FLAME CONTROLLED: The second ring, of silver with a blood-red ruby, grants its wearer control over fire—the ability to cast *Fireshaping* and *Kindle Fire* as often

as he will, without making Weariness tests. It is Corrupting (TN 7), and its origins are lost.

WILD-LORE BAND: The third ring, of gold and silver twined together, holds power over the wilderness. One who wears it in the wilds has the lore of plant, and bird, and beast revealed to him unerringly; he cannot fail a Lore/Wilderness test as long as he does not re-enter the world of Men. This ring's origins are unknown, but it was owned by an Elf who gave it to Saruman as a gift after an hour of his persuasion.

IRON-BLADE: The fourth ring, an iron band with a sword design carved around it, is a warrior's ring, and makes its owner a master of the blade. In addition to providing a +2 bonus to all Armed Combat: Blades tests, the wearer may cast *Bladeshattering* as often as he wishes without making Weariness tests. This ring was once held by a great king of Men in the East who cast it aside in favour of a bauble offered to him by Saruman.

THE FALSE ONE: The fifth and final ring is a simple gold band with no stone or marking, fashioned by Saruman himself after the One Ring. Saruman's version lacks the grace and simplicity of the true One Ring, however, and seems ostentatious despite its lack of ornamentation. Though enchanted,

this ring possesses no magical virtues other than being Corrupting (TN 15), with tests made every time the ring is slipped on or off.

THE STAR CHAMBER

'Between them was a narrow space, and there upon a floor of polished stone, written with strange signs, a man might stand five hundred feet above the plain.'

— *The Two Towers*

Orthanc's highest 'chamber' is less a room than a platform standing at the tip of the tower, nestled between the four spires, and open to the air on all sides. Some have compared Orthanc to Barad-dûr, and if that is a fair comparison, the Star Chamber must resemble that peak where the Eye of Sauron looks out upon Mordor. Saruman would be pleased by such a comparison, and would take it as a great compliment for his own eyes to be compared to that great lidless eye of fire.

Originally a military lookout, the Star Chamber can be reached only by a precise spiral staircase of many hundred steps that rises from the centre of the Secret Level far below. Perfectly smooth, the platform's surface has been etched with symbols similar to those in the Great Hall and Council Chamber. Though one part of their magic is structural, binding the four pillars and protecting the structure from harm, they have other powers as well. First, these enchantments increase the range of sight for any who keep watch from the Star Chamber; from these heights, one can observe almost any point in the Wizard's Vale without a test penalty. Second, they imbue the rightful holder of the Key of Orthanc with the ability to cast a number of powerful spells from these heights without making Weariness tests, once each between sunrise and sunset and once each



between sunset and sunrise. These spells are *Power of the Land*, *Fog-raising*, and *Wind-mastery*, and making this ability even more powerful is the fact that, when cast from the Star Chamber, all of these spells have their range extended to affect any point in the entire Wizard's Vale. The third—and considerable—effect of the Star Chamber's magic is that no one other than the holder of the Key of Orthanc may cast spells, or use any magic at all, for as long as he remains here. For this reason it was here that Gandalf was held captive, far above the basin and far from help of any kind; no chains were necessary to bind him, as no escape was deemed possible.

THE RING OF ISENGARD

'It cannot be reached save by passing the circle of Isengard; and in that circle there is only one gate.'

— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

In addition to providing for Isengard's defence, the ring-wall's chambers house a great portion of those who serve the Master of

Orthanc. The following sections describe the ring-wall itself, and the structures that are part of it.

THE RING-WALL

'A great ring-wall of stone, like towering cliffs, stood out from the shelter of the mountain-side, from which it ran and then returned again.'

—*The Two Towers*

The ring-wall of Isengard describes an almost perfect circle, with Orthanc in its precise centre. This symmetry leads many to assume the wall was man-made, but this is not entirely the case, for the ring was discovered—albeit, in a more natural state—when the first surveying teams arrived to scout locations for the fortress Ciryanar has envisioned. That such a ring would occur naturally suggests to many that Isengard was once the peak of a volcano, long since sunk into the earth so that only the barest tip of its cone juts above the ground.

No matter its origin, the rock of the ring-wall is dark, though not precisely the same as the stone of Orthanc. This material is closer to

slate in colour, grey and with a subtle blue tinge. It bears a faint odour of chalk, and when shattered splits into thin sheets with razor-sharp edges. The surfaces of the ring are smoother than those of Orthanc, though not perfectly so. They bear no sharp angles or facets, and the curve of the ring is clean and fluid, almost as if the rock were moulded rather than chiselled.

The wall is more than 60 feet thick, narrowing only slightly as it rises. It stands roughly 80 feet tall, though it dips in some places as low as 70 and rises to 90 at the towers above the main gate. Where the change in elevation is, steep steps have been carved, producing a series of higher platforms at irregular intervals around the ring. The top of the wall is not level from inner to outer edge, but instead gently depressed, lower at the middle than at either edge. Black iron rails guard both the inner and outer edges of the wall; where the wall is less tall than average, the outer rails are thicker and their posts more densely set for better defence. Both rails have many hooks and rings to support torches, quivers, spears, and other supplies useful for both sentry-duty and defence. Along the inside of the wall—especially where the wall is lowest—ladders of black iron ascend to the heights, anchored with heavy spikes.

Although the ring-wall appears solid, it is not. Its interior is honeycombed with passages, even more so than Orthanc's four piers. Even so, the shortest distance through stone from the outer edge of the ring-wall to any catacomb within, is 12 feet, ensuring that—even if attackers knew precisely where to concentrate their attacks—it would be extremely difficult to breach the rock to the spaces within.

Though the exterior face of the ring-wall is breached only by the main gate, the interior face is broken by a multitude of windows and doors. Likewise, trapdoors, chimneys, and vents pierce the top of the wall. Each trapdoor is Man-sized, but the vents



and chimneys range in size from just a few inches across, to just big enough for a Hobbit to squeeze through, to large enough for even a Large creature—though the last also correspond to the largest fireplaces and forges. Smoke rises all around the ring-wall from the fires within, particularly on cold nights.

THE MAIN GATE AND TUNNEL

‘One entrance only there was made in it, a great arch delved in the southern wall.’

— *The Two Towers*

When the Men of Angrenost improved the natural ring around Isengard to form the ring-wall that stands today, they chose a spot in the southern wall under the highest

peak of stone and carved an archway there, shaping a tunnel to the interior wide enough for ten horsemen to ride abreast. This became the sole entrance to Isengard, and the only passage to Orthanc.

The main gates of the ring-wall are made of black iron. The outer pair were once adorned with the tree and stars of Gondor, but the Dunlendings removed those images and for many years the doors stood bare of decoration. After Saruman acquired Isengard they were emblazoned with the white hand and S-rune that are his trademarks. Beyond decoration, however, the gates have not been altered, and still stand the same as when first they were cast, their powerful hinges embedded deep into the rock of the archway.

The archway above the gate bears the only decoration upon the outer surface of the ring-wall. Here in the ancient language of Númenor is carved the message: ‘In this place, craft

bows to nature.’ Meant to honour the majesty of nature that created the ring-wall, Saruman privately considers the inscription an ironic statement of his forerunners’ inadequacy.

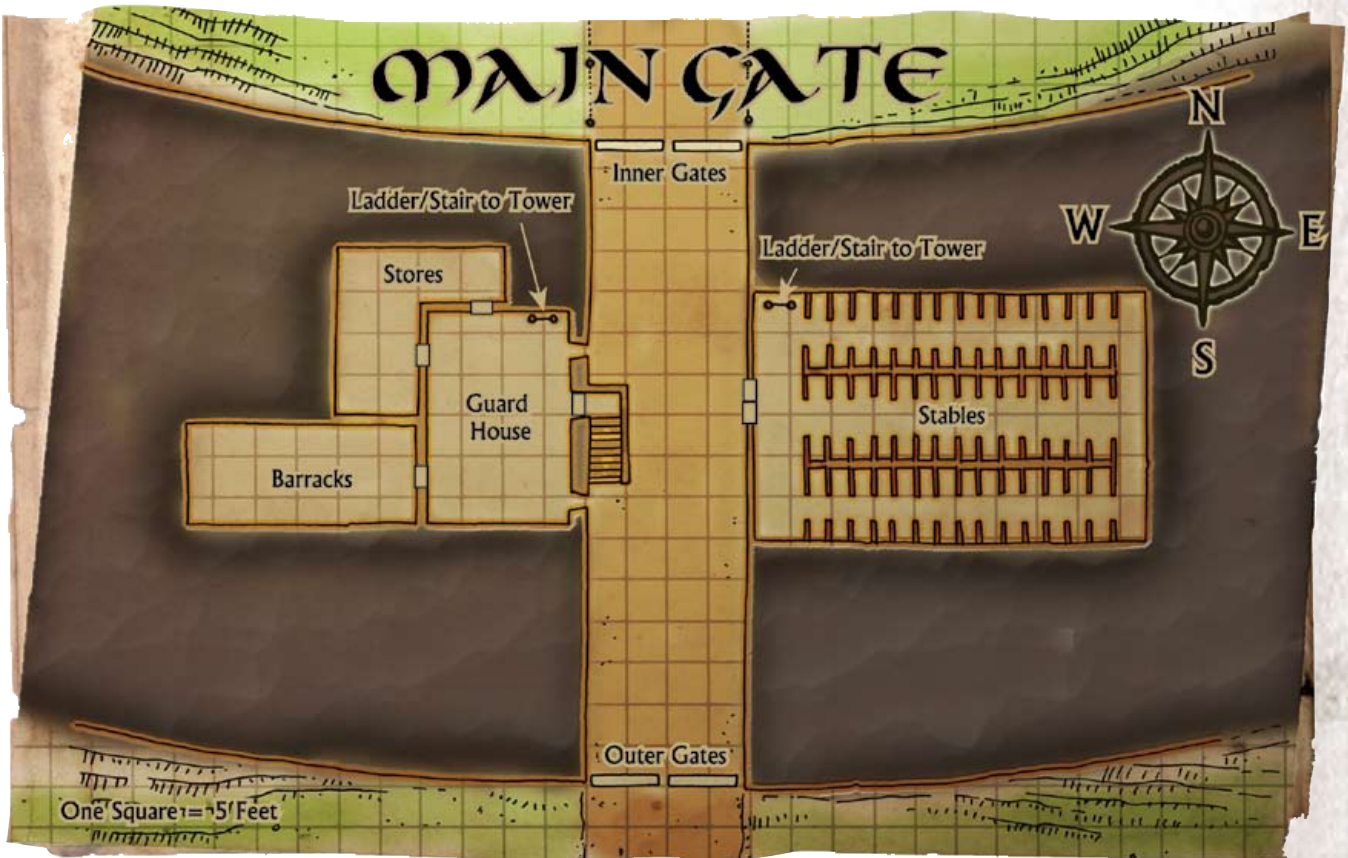
As the ring-wall is 60 feet thick, so the tunnel is 60 feet long. At the midway point, the Tunnel Guardhouse and Tunnel Stables face each other across the passage.

TUNNEL GUARDHOUSE

‘[T]hey... came to a wide door upon the left, at the top of a stair. It opened direct into a large chamber...’

— *The Two Towers*

The Tunnel Guardhouse houses a guard contingent of forty Dunlending wall guards (see page 83), and is surprisingly comfortable. A huge hearth dominates the main hall of the guard-



house. This room contains many tables, chairs, benches, racks, and hooks, for it is here that the guards assigned to this station both live, and carry out many of their duties. A wide window in the wall next to the door opens onto the tunnel so guards within can look down upon any who pass by. Stout shutters can be closed to seal the window if necessary. An iron ladder affixed to the north wall leads up through a trapdoor, and from there to a series of additional ladders and stairways, eventually emerging on top of the west guard tower.

Past the main room are two other chambers. The first is a long barracks, furnished with rows of cots and chests. Few soldiers spend time here other than to sleep, so this room is rarely lit with anything more than a few candles. The second is an L-shaped storeroom. Its deep wooden shelves are lined—and the floor stacked—with all manner of food-stuffs and other materials needed by the guards stationed either at this guardhouse, or atop the guard towers above it.

TUNNEL STABLES

Straw lines the ground of the Tunnel Stables, and the large room is divided into wooden stalls. Above the stalls, a lattice of wooden beams hold bales of hay, and sacks of oats and grain, with a ladder connecting this platform to the lower level. A trap door above the platform at the north-west corner of the room leads to a series of stairs and ladders that provide access to the east guard tower. The stables are typically quite dark, flame being kept to an absolute minimum around so much loose straw. At least one guard is stationed here at all times, in addition to the servants and stableboys, who both tend to the horses and live with them in this chamber.

The Tunnel Stables can quarter as many as eighty horses at need, but usually contain only half that

many, enough for the immediate needs of the guards of the Tunnel Guardhouse and towers above, as well as a number of speedy horses kept ready for messengers.

THE TOWER PLATFORMS

Above the main gate, the ring-wall rises to its greatest height—approximately 90 feet—in two tall crags, one above, and to either side of the entry tunnel. Atop each, a rectangular platform runs the full 60 feet of the wall's depth, but stretches only about 30 feet from side to side. The change in elevation from the top of the adjacent ring-wall to the tops of the towers is severe, so rather than the steps which connect other areas of different elevation on the ring-wall, the change here is bridged by iron ladders. Access to each platform is also possible through interior ladders and stairwells that ascend from the Tunnel Guardhouse, and Tunnel Stables, respectively. The towers are about 20 feet from each other, the gap between them dropping about 30 feet to the average ring-wall height of 60 feet. This gap is bridged by a wooden span that can be pulled back on either side in case one tower or the other is taken by invaders.

A small contingent of a dozen Dunlending wall guards (see page 83) are responsible for each tower. These 24 men live permanently upon their respective platform in tents whose iron spikes are anchored into the living stone of the wall. Their only true responsibility—other than to defend the fortress in the unlikely event of an attack—is to keep a watch on the highway that approaches Isengard, and convey news to Orthanc of any who come near. A rivalry has sprung up between the guards of the two towers as each camp struggles to be the first to report any new information. Although their masters and commanders attempt to keep a tight rein on outright hostilities they are

not always successful, and bloodshed has erupted on the wooden bridge on more than one occasion.

MINOR GUARDPOSTS

Guardposts (other than the tower platforms) atop the ring-wall are generally located where the wall is highest and offers the best view. They are similar in appearance to those atop the guard towers, with semi-permanent tents giving those who watch respite from the sun and protection from the elements. Minor guardposts do not, however, have permanent garrisons. Rather, soldiers rotate through a series of postings as the day progresses, returning to their barracks at the end of their shifts.

THE EAGLE'S NEST

The highest guardpoint—higher even than the 90-foot guard towers above the main gate—is not technically part of the ring-wall at all. At its northernmost point the ring-wall merges with Methedras, and high on this cliff the Men of Númenor carved an alcove into the rock of the mountain. This is the Eagle's Nest, a full 160 feet above Isengard's basin. Long—and dangerous—stairs descend to the ring-wall, providing the only access to this highest of lookouts (save the Star Chamber of Orthanc, of course.)

There is only enough space in the Eagle's Nest alcove for a pair of guards—the space is oblong, approximately eight feet by four—and so two are stationed here at all times. Through torch and horn they are able to signal those below if they spy any approaching the fortress.

RING-WALL CHAMBERS

*'Many houses there were. . . cut and
tunnelled back into the walls upon their
inner side . . . the open circle was
overlooked by countless windows
and dark doors.'*

— *The Two Towers*

The ring-wall is honeycombed with chambers, many linked together by tunnels and halls to form suites, 'houses,' and even small complexes. It is possible, in some places, to travel hundreds of feet of the ring-wall's circumference without emerging into the light of day. With the exception of the Tunnel Guardhouse and Stables, all ring-wall dwellings open directly (or indirectly, though other rooms) on the interior face of the ring-wall, which is riddled with doors and windows. The vast majority of doors are wooden, but some are carved from the stone of the ring-wall itself. Most of the windows have iron grilles for protection. Some also have wooden or metal shutters to protect against rain and cold.

The eight paths that cross the basin divide the ring-wall into eight portions. The First Portion—each is known by a number—is the one immediately to the west of the main gate, and the rest are numbered clockwise from it. Saruman has organized the chambers in each portion to have a similar function, be it housing for servants, barracks for warriors, storage for supplies, or workshops for craftsmen. In addition to making it easier for the ruler of Isengard to know where his subjects are, and what they are doing, this scheme also segregates Men from their cultural—or racial—rivals. It serves an additional purpose as well, keeping Saruman's more wretched servitors from easy sight, so visitors see only the most prosperous occupants, and thus form a more favourable view of the place.

THE RING OF ISENGARD



When the Men of Gondor held Angrenost, nearly all the ring-wall chambers were barracks for soldiers, and quarters for the farmers, animal-handlers, and servants who saw to the warriors' needs. The Dunlendings followed a similar pattern, though they had fewer craftsmen, and more slaves. Saruman quartered no warriors at first, but as his ambitions deepened, he drew more armed men to his banner. Likewise, though at first he had no slaves, once he acquired a few, their numbers swelled as his plans required more and more labour.

Specific maps and details of each portion are not presented. The chambers are too many and varied for such treatment. Instead, a general sense of the inhabited spaces of each portion is given, which, along with the general descriptions above, can be easily used to create detailed maps if needed.

FIRST PORTION: ARMOURIES

The First Portion contains two great, curving armouries. Each was originally a massive fissure in the stone, long since widened and fitted with great, deep shelves that reach to the natural ceilings of these chambers, which vary in height from fifteen to forty feet above the flat floor. Stairs and ladders connect wooden catwalks that allow the quartermasters who live here to access even the highest stores. And what stores! Somewhere within these armouries lie collections of every weapon of warfare ever conceived: swords, daggers, axes, clubs, staves, bows, crossbows, spears, slings, javelins, bolts, arrows, and more can be found here. Even siege weapons—most at least partially disassembled—can be requisitioned by Saruman's armies.

When Saruman's armies are not on the move, the corps of servants and craftsmen here spend their days making sure each edge and point is sharp, the better to harry the enemies of the White Hand. Although detailed

records of each weapon stored here are kept, Saruman's system of accounting—in which the quartermasters are well schooled—is exceedingly cryptic. Making sense of them in order to find anything specific requires a TN 15 Wits or Lore/Realm: Isengard check even for those familiar with the administrative methods.

SECOND PORTION: BARRACKS

The Second Portion provides barracks for Saruman's Mannish warriors. In a traditional fortress, these soldiers—the elite guard—would be housed in the keep itself at their lord's side. As Orthanc lacks such quarters (and as Saruman would not have it), these warriors are quartered here.

In the days of Gondorian rule, the Men stationed here took their meals in Orthanc, with their lord. The same was true for the Dunlendings. Saruman, however, will not have such uncouth and rough-spoken folk traipsing in and out, so those of the Second Portion cook and eat their meals in great common rooms where most also sleep and pass the hours when they are not performing martial duties. A number of smaller chambers and suites, most located above the common rooms and accessed by stairs or ladders, house the lieutenants and commanders of these soldiers. The highest such suite is home and sanctum of Dúach, Captain of Guards of Isengard (see page 76).

Most of the chambers of the Second Portion, whatever purpose they serve, have been chiselled square by the hands of Men, though the occasional naturally occurring space can also be found. Many of the warriors housed here practise crafts, so many implements, pieces of furniture, and even walls have been carved, created, or decorated over years of off-hour craftwork. Knotwork patterns are the most common.

THIRD PORTION: LABOURERS

The Third Portion consists of quarters for Mannish labourers and servants. The men and women who live here till land, care for animals, and perform other menial tasks within the basin. The chambers here are generally smaller than the barracks of the Second Portion. A typical arrangement features a series of small chambers housing an extended family. These suites are often arranged vertically, with individual chambers connected by stairs, ladders, or steeply sloped passages. Where larger chambers exist, they are usually partitioned off to serve several smaller groups.

Many rooms have hearths, but some are without a direct source of heat. Every chamber on the inside edge of the ring-wall has at least one window, and some deeper chambers are lit—a bit, anyway—by shafts. Although few labourers have much energy when their work is done, some families expend the extra effort to whitewash the walls of their chambers. Some walls even feature murals—many harkening back to less grim times in Isengard—painted over generations. The servants of the Third Portion have meagre possessions, and most of the furniture in these chambers is hand-made by their occupants.

FOURTH PORTION: SLAVES

The Fourth Portion is one of the two that lies opposite the main gate, and the comings and goings of those who dwell within it are largely hidden from casual visitors to Isengard (who, themselves, are much fewer than they once were). Because of this, the Fourth Portion is where Saruman quarters the slaves he has taken in raids and acquired by other means. The slave quarters are similar to the barracks of the First Portion, in that they consist of large rooms where many individu-

als are quartered. This, however, is where the similarity ends. The slave 'pits' are awful, squalid affairs, with only the most rude furniture and implements. Floors are uneven stone and dirt and walls are rough and jagged. All windows have stout shutters permanently bolted shut to thwart both escape, and the scrutiny of outsiders who might realise the extent of Saruman's wickedness.

Although the slaves in Isengard have little hope of escape through the remote main tunnel, small groups of Mannish guards (who have been given this duty as punishment or drawn it because they lack seniority) are in evidence at all of the entrances to the slave quarters. Although many of the guards remember clearly the days before Saruman kept slaves in Isengard, the first guards foolish enough to raise objections found themselves enslaved, setting an example for the rest.

The Fourth Portion of the ring-wall is unique from the others in that a mountain stream flows down Methedras and over it. A channel in the stone contains the resulting waterfall, and a small pool has formed at the base. From it, water flows across the basin and into the Crescent Lake, where it evaporates or flows into underground streams.

FIFTH PORTION: MIXED USES

The Fifth Portion, like the Fourth, lies far from the main gates. It is the only portion of the eight assigned for more than one use, serving to hold overflow from any of the other seven portions when their capacity is exceeded.

Because the Fifth Portion is so removed from the main gate and its proximity to the slaves, it is typically where the meanest individuals, and shoddiest stores are sent when overflow occurs. The lowliest labourers, who must have housing but for whom there is no room in the Third Portion, are given places here. Those

warriors tasked with guarding the slaves, or who are being punished for whatever reason, are quartered here. Weapons particularly old or inferior—and the quartermasters assigned to look after them—are holed up in the Fifth Portion. And so on. The Fifth Portion is often referred to as 'the dregs' among the residents of Isengard, for obvious reasons.

The chambers of the Fifth Portion are a completely mixed lot. Large rooms are interspersed with small chambers, some of which are little larger than a closet or even a large cupboard. It is for this reason that the Fifth Portion was chosen for its role; no matter what manner of people or materials it must house, there is likely to be an appropriate space somewhere.

SIXTH PORTION: STOREROOMS

The Sixth Portion houses Isengard's general storerooms. Though Orthanc has a few small storerooms, as does the Tunnel Guardhouse, the stores of the Sixth Portion outstrip them by an order of magnitude.

The storerooms are large rectangular chambers of various sizes. Their floors are created from wooden pallets, while heavy beams make platforms and lofts above. Food and drink are generally kept separate from other goods, though this is not always possible. Throughout the storerooms devoted to food, one might find a wide variety of grains, meat, and fish (fresh, dried, or salted), dried fruit, vegetables, and cheese. Fresh fruit is not typically stored; it is usually consumed within a few days of its harvest. Likewise, breads are almost without exception baked daily by individual households, or the servants of a particular barracks, and eaten before nightfall.

In addition to edible stores, tools for farming, animal tending, and craft-work are stored here. Raw materials such as wool, cotton, silk, wood, and iron are also kept, though in the case of tools and certain raw materials,

supplies adequate for immediate use are usually kept in the workshops of appropriate craftsmen in the Seventh Portion. Finally, finished goods such as clothing, horseshoes, tack, saddles, pots, implements, and so forth are stored when there is no immediate use for them elsewhere in Isengard.

As with the armouries, those tasked with keeping oversight and tally of the stores, live among them in small apartments. Most who perform such work do not have families, and dwell either individually, or communally. Each individual is tasked with administration of some particular portion of the stores, and Saruman expects each to keep detailed logs in a very specific manner. Those who keep poor records are typically whipped, or, for particularly egregious violations, mutilated. Those who steal from the stores (or who allow others to do so, by collaboration or negligence) are executed without exception. Because the consequences can be so dire, most of the quartermasters who live here keep the paper records not needed for a given days' work locked away in their living quarters.

SEVENTH PORTION: CRAFTSMEN

The Seventh Portion contains both the quarters and workshops of the Mannish craftsmen who labour for Saruman. Each cluster of chambers is organised around a single master craftsman and his trade, with his household, apprentices, labourers, and servants living and working together. As in the other portions, the chambers of a group are often arranged vertically, with living quarters located above workshops and common rooms.

The arrangement of given workshops depends entirely on the nature of the craft. Blacksmiths have forges which belch smoke through the day and night, as do weapon makers and armourers; carpenters keep stores of wood and appropriate tools along-

side wide, low workbenches; potters require wheels and kilns; and coopers, leatherworkers, and others have arrangements appropriate to their specialties. One thing common to all workshops and living spaces in the Seventh Portion, however, is that they are the most beautiful in all of Isengard. Most rock and wood surfaces have been chiselled over the years with pleasing designs. Nearly all the furniture is well-crafted. Tools and implements are beautiful as well as practical. Knobs, hooks, and other items forged from black iron are often cast to resemble leaves, flowers, or animals. Over the years, and in all of the fortress' historical periods, the craftsmen housed here have been most capable of making their dwellings lovely.

When the Men of Gondor lived in Isengard, the tradesmen of the Seventh Portion sold their products not only to the local lord but also to the people of the vale beyond, setting their own prices, paying a portion of their earnings to the tower, and keeping their profits. The Dunlendings were more clannish, with everyone working for the good of the family. Saruman, however, claims ownership of everything within Isengard, and the tradesmen here produce their crafts only for him, and, occasionally, for those he designates. They receive no money for their work, but are housed and fed, and can requisition the items they need from the stores of the Sixth Portion, and from other craftsmen.

EIGHTH PORTION: STABLES

The final, Eighth Portion of the ring-wall stands directly east of the main gate, and contains stabling for all of the horses of Isengard. (Warg pens are located underground; see 'Pens' on page 53.) Most stabling chambers are located close to the interior face of the ring-wall rather than deep within its stone. Many, in fact, are long chambers with only



three walls, open for their length onto the basin itself. This arrangement is ideal for horses that might otherwise become uneasy in underground confines. Some open stables have wooden fences that section the stables from the open ground of the basin, but this is not the rule. The stables of Isengard are rarely full to capacity. Although horses and other beasts of burden can be useful for toil, Saruman has turned his attention to other creatures of labour—Orcs and Half-orcs.

THE BASIN

'[A] great circle, somewhat hollowed like a vast shallow bowl. . . . Once it had been green and filled with avenues. . . .'

— *The Two Towers*

Within the ring-wall lies not only the tower of Orthanc, but also the great shallow basin that surrounds

it. This space measures a mile across, and is almost perfectly round. It is slightly bowl-shaped, but so subtly that the incline is easy to miss. When the Men of Westesse first began shaping Isengard this basin was filled with ash, a fine loose grey dust that floated upward with every footfall. Dirt was laid atop it, and trees and flowers planted. The ash provided the soil with rich nutrients, and the vegetation flourished.

When the Dunlendings claimed Isengard, the flora grew wild and untamed, the basin full of thick bushes, dense plants, ponderous trees, and tall grasses. They ignored it all, using the roads to traverse the bowl. These Men were warriors rather than farmers, and had no interest in taming the plant life.

When Saruman came to Isengard, he brought a love of elegant order. Wild shrubs were pruned, trees cut back, grasses trimmed, and whole sections reseeded with flowering plants. Under his guidance, the basin

ISENGARD

reclaimed its beauty, the flora given just enough free reign to suggest the hand of nature. Many who visited Isengard remarked upon the refinement and splendour of its gardens, and this increased Saruman's reputation as a wise and patient Wizard, and a good neighbour.

This changes as the events of *The Fellowship of the Ring* begin to unfold. Saruman's Orcs and Mannish servants begin to bring the industry previously limited to areas outside the ring-wall within it, uprooting trees to feed the fires of Saruman's ambitions. Although these activities will eventually scour the basin of all plant life whatsoever, for the moment, credulous visitors passing from the main gate to Orthanc, who step not off the main road, may still convince themselves all is well in Isengard. Those willing to look past the obvious, however, cannot help but sense something is wrong.

THE PATHS

Eight roads connect Orthanc to the ring-wall, regularly spaced, running straight and true from tower to wall. The surface of each road consists of dark stone flags of the same slate as the ring-wall, smooth and flat and perfectly square. The Men of Númenor set these paths so Men and horses might pass through the gardens without disturbing grass or leaf, and they have not been significantly changed in all the long years since.

Once trees grew along each path. Saruman replaced these with pillars roughly four feet high and two wide, cylindrical, and rounded at the top. Heavy chains connect the pillars one to the other, passing through holes in the centre of each. The outermost pillar in each series is roughly twenty feet from the ring-wall. The innermost appears to end the chain roughly twenty yards from Orthanc, but rather than ending, the chains plunge down through the pillar and follow an underground course leading to the Chamber of Chains (see page 27).

Although similar to one another, the roads are not identical. The first difference among them is their width. The south road, running from the main gate to Orthanc, is the widest by far. The narrowest roads are those to the north. These are barely wide enough for two Men to pass abreast. The other roads are all roughly the same, wide enough for four to pass.

The second difference in the roads is more vivid: the pillars that line each are composed of a different material. In fact, it is by these materials that the roads are named. The southwest walkway is the Path of Iron. To the west, lies the Path of Metal, with pillars of alternating copper and iron. Northwest is the Path of Stone, with pillars of granite dug from the mountainside. Due north, the Path of Slate divides slaves from dregs. The Path of Limestone lies to the northeast; east, the Path of Copper, and south-east the Path of Marble. The main road is known merely as such, and its pillars are the same black stone as Orthanc itself, glittering like steel but dark as night. Those who dwell in Isengard often refer to the paths by their materials alone, shortening their names to Iron, Metal, Stone, and so on. Although Stone and Limestone each have a small bridge spanning the stream that feeds the Crescent Lake, the Path of Copper is unique in that the Crescent Lake interrupts it. Over those waters the road runs across a low bridge, also fashioned of copper, mottled green from age and exposure.

Saruman insists his followers use the paths when approaching Orthanc and crossing from one ring-wall portion to another. It suits his love of order, and allows him to more easily observe their movements. However, the paths are also the safest routes. Because the chains offer guidance, taking the paths ensures one does not accidentally walk across a vent, or fall down a shaft; even in darkness and pouring rain it is impossible to stray from a road once one has set foot past the first pillar.

LAND-USE

The wedge-shaped spaces between the roads are put to a variety of uses, with each area reserved for a specific purpose.

The area before the ring-wall's First Portion is largely unused to suggest Isengard's earlier ages to visitors who come to Isengard to take counsel with its lord.

The area before the Second Portion serves as a training and assembly ground for the warriors quartered before it. Its grasses are much-trampled, but the warriors are (thus far) forbidden from harming the trees and shrubs nearest Orthanc.

Before the Third Portion lie food plots where fruits and vegetables are grown by the workers housed in the ring-wall's Third Portion.

Before the Fourth and Fifth Portions—among the few trees that remain—are the tents and pavilions of a host of Men recently come to the banner of the White Hand, for whom there is no room the ring-wall's chambers. A small number of Uruks have also taken to dwelling among the Men here. Saruman encourages this, so the two groups will be able to fight side by side without trouble when the time comes.

The Sixth and Seventh Portions see mixed use. The families of many craftsmen keep garden plots here, but the business of both the Sixth and Seventh Portions spill out into these areas as well. When inventories are taken, the goods stored in the Sixth Portion are brought into the sunlight so a full accounting can be made of their numbers and state. Many craftsmen use the area before the Seventh Portion to perform work (like tanning hides, mixing dyes, and assembling great engines of war) that require more ventilation or room than their workshops can provide. Of course, the Crescent Lake also occupies a sizable portion of this eastern quadrant of the basin.

The ground before the Eighth Portion stables is reserved for animal pens. These house pigs, cows, sheep, and chickens. Workers tend to the animals each day, feeding, milking, shearing, and collecting eggs. Alongside the Path of Marble stands a square wooden slaughterhouse, with double doors seven feet high, and enough space for two

cows to stand alongside one another, with a Man before and behind each. Blood and other remains are collected in buckets, and these tossed into the Crescent Lake, where the viscera sinks from sight.

SHAFTS AND VENTS

New to Isengard, and a product of Saruman's industry, are the shafts and vents that pierce the ground in every part of the basin, drilled through dirt, ash, and solid rock by Men and Orcs using wide shovels and heavy picks. The shafts and vents vary in purpose and design. Some are intended to allow passage from the basin to the underground areas, while others vent the Orc-forges beneath the earth, and still others provide ventilation for Orc-warrens, Warg-pens, and spawning tunnels.

Few of the shafts and vents penetrate straight down (though some do), for the rock below the basin varies in strength, and in some places could not be shattered. Many drive straight, and then suddenly angle sideways before resuming their descent. Some enter the earth at an angle shallow enough for a Man to simply walk down them. Others have steps or spiral staircases. Those that vent steam and smoke billow the stuff frequently.

When Saruman first ordered shafts and vents dug, he was concerned they remain hidden. Each was covered with a low dome of iron, copper, or stone. These were hinged on one side by iron, with a handle opposite to allow them to be easily opened and closed.

No clasps or locks hold the domes in place, merely their own weight and the iron will of Isengard's master.

ISENGARD

As Saruman casts aside subterfuge in favour of expediency, many domes are removed or simply left open all the time. During the period of Gandalf's imprisonment, many shafts are enlarged greatly. The time for careful craftsmanship is gone; crude expansion that creates great gashes in the ground, through which carts can pass and entire trees thrown down, is the order of the day.

THE CRESCENT LAKE

Water flowed from Methedras and into the basin long before Men came to the place, and they found a shallow pool covering much of its area. Rather than divert the stream that fed this pool, the artisans of Gondor saw that the fortress' residents would benefit from a supply of fresh water within the ring-wall. As they covered the ash with dirt, they shaped the pool into a crescent-shaped lake east of Orthanc. This is the Crescent Pool of Isengard, more commonly called the Crescent Lake.

The Crescent Lake is not large, nor deep. Fed by the mountain, however, it is both cold and clear. A tall Man could wade across, the waters reaching no higher than his chest. The pool empties into the caverns below, feeding underground streams that flow beneath the Wizard's Vale to destinations unknown even to the Orcs inhabiting the underground warrens.

Fish find their way into the lake, carried by the stream. Most are long and silvery, and often blind, born in deep caves before the stream thrust them into the light. Many are caught and eaten, though by decree the lake may never be completely emptied.

Smooth rocks line the bottom of the lake, the accumulation of centuries, worn smooth by the gentle motions of the waters. Clams, brine, and other small seafood occasionally appear, though these are plucked and cooked without mercy or conservation.

Of all the basin's natural and architectural features, the Crescent Lake



alone is undisturbed by Saruman's ambitions. Some believe the Wizard recognises the value in fresh water close at hand. Others imagine it is a single concession to his old love of beauty and nature. Cynics suspect the mage leaves it untouched for some more sinister reason. Yet all the Men in Isengard appreciate the decision, for the lake is calm and serene. Many sit along its bank, or perch on the bridge at their work's end—especially those who are unhappy with Saruman's 'progress'—seeking a few calm moments to cast their minds back to the days when Isengard was more beautiful, and less industrious.

UNDERGROUND

*'Iron wheels revolved there endlessly. . . .
plumes of vapour steamed from the vents,
lit from beneath with red light, or blue, or
venomous green.'*

— *The Two Towers*

For sheer volume, the largest portion of Isengard proper is not Orthanc, the ring-wall, or even the basin of Isengard. The majority of Saruman's domain lies, instead, below the ground in caverns that riddle the rock. Though the builders of Angrenost discovered many of these

holes and caves, they thought little of them, or when they did attend to them—such as when Curugond descended to handle the *bandúrthoth* he discovered beneath the earth (see page 96)—resolved to do so as infrequently as possible.

So the caverns were ignored for long centuries—at least by the Men above. But over time, Orcs migrated from the mountains into the tunnels beneath the fortress, and made homes in their twisting passages, hidden from the light of day. These creatures found no way up into the basin, though, and saw no reason to search for one, so they lived below and the Men above, neither race really aware of the other's presence.

Even when the Dunlendings claimed Isengard, the Orcs remained hidden. By this time they had discovered that Men lived above, but without knowing their strength or comportment, it was judged safer to avoid encounters than risk being chased away or slaughtered.

When Saruman first took Orcs as slaves and servants (see 'The Road to Udûn' on page 14), these alerted him to the presence of the existing Orcs in the depths. He quickly dominated those as well, and for many years all his Orc-chattel remained hidden even from the Men of Isengard, doing little for Saruman beyond mining, scouting the caverns, and protecting their warrens from interlopers.



But as Saruman's ambitions grew, he required more and more, and organised the under-warrens to support his aspirations to power. The Orcs did not resist his increasing demands, for their kind was bred for obedience.

Eventually, Saruman could keep the Orcs a secret no longer, at least from his other workers, and revealed their existence to the Hill-men who were his servants and soldiers. They were not pleased to discover Orcs lived and worked beneath them, but they dared not protest. Saruman assured them he would prevent the Orcs from committing atrocities, just as he protected the Orcs from the Men. And so the activity beneath Isengard became an open secret throughout Saruman's domain, and materials were transferred openly between those living above the ground, and those who dwelt beneath the surface.

UNDERGROUND ENVIRONS

The caverns under Methedras are natural caves, rough and uneven, with walls and floors of granite, limestone, marble, and other cool grey rocks. But

the caverns below the area described by the ring-wall are different. The rock here is redder in hue, with slate-grey veins. Some walls are dense, while others have a myriad of tiny pockets as if an army of insects had pierced the stone. The floors in many chambers resemble sand dunes, with gentle swells and mild depressions. Near walls and arches the floor bubbles up like tree roots, twisting and piling about itself. No stalactites hang here—the ceilings of most chambers are smooth, a bit bumpy, but without sharp edges.

The underground of Isengard is a warm, moist place, where water beads on the walls and food spoils rapidly. The heat comes in part from the great forges, but even before those were fashioned the atmosphere was always warm, and the floor in many chambers is too hot to cross without footgear. Damage varies from 1 point per minute to 1d6 points of damage per round for those without footgear. (Hobbits, of course, are considered to be wearing footgear even while barefoot.) Small pools litter the caverns, many of which steam constantly and are used to boil food and leather.

Heat generally increases with depth, and below the first layer of caverns the heat is such that even the Orcs cannot live comfortably. A few have ventured into deeper chambers and returned burnt as if from exposure to strong sunlight or flame. One Orc-explorer told tales of rock that glowed as new-forged metal, and cavern floors soft like clay rather than solid stone.

ACCESS

There are three ways Orcs or Men can enter (and exit) the caverns under Isengard. The first are the tunnels that connect Isengard's labyrinth to the secret underways of the Misty Mountains. Some such are large, and can accommodate several Orcs standing side by side. Others are so narrow only a single Orc can squeeze through. Still others are even smaller, though rats can still scurry through and bats fly overhead. Waters flow through some, filtering down from the mountains, cutting channels over centuries.

The second route of access is by way of the shafts sunk from the basin. See 'Shafts and Vents' on pages 45–6 for more information, though note that no shafts or vents exist beyond the ring-wall.

The third entrance to the underground is through Orthanc itself. The Long Stair descends below even the Ground Level of Orthanc into a rough-hewn chamber known as the Long Stair's Foot. Saruman shattered the west wall of this hidden place to gain access to the underground caverns, and has since fashioned a mighty archway in that place with a pair of great iron doors to close off the room when he so desires.

AREAS OF THE UNDERGROUND

Although Isengard's underground is a labyrinth, its various portions are largely segregated from each other. Each area is addressed below, in turn.

ISENGARD

ORC-WARRENS

The Orcs below Isengard were firmly ensconced when Saruman first entered the caverns. Because they came from beneath Methedras, the areas where the Orcs make their homes—the Orc-warrens—exist not only below the area described by the ring-wall but also underneath Methedras.

The Orc-warrens are rough and irregular, turning back upon themselves constantly; they comprise small chambers connected by channels widened enough for Orcs to pass easily, but have not otherwise been crafted for beauty or even utility. Thus, one warren-room may house twenty Orcs, but connect to another where only two can fit comfortably.

Orcs live tribally and share space with no concern for privacy. They don't bother much with furniture; piled furs suffice for beds and rock serves as chairs or even tables. After all, warrens are for sleeping, and perhaps eating, little more.

MINES

As Saruman's designs broadened he knew he would need weapons and armour. But purchasing such from lords of the land would reveal his ambitions and expose his plans, so he set about fashioning such tools within Isengard. To conceal his purposes, he also needed his own source of raw materials. To this task he set his Orcs, tunnelling and burrowing into the mineral-rich rock under Methedras. They followed the veins where they led, shoring up their delvings with timbers to prevent them from collapsing beneath the mountain's weight. For the most part, Isengard's mineshafts lead north, away from Isengard and ever deeper into the core of Middle-earth. Although these tunnels sometimes link into the system of Orc-warrens, they are deeper beneath the surface.

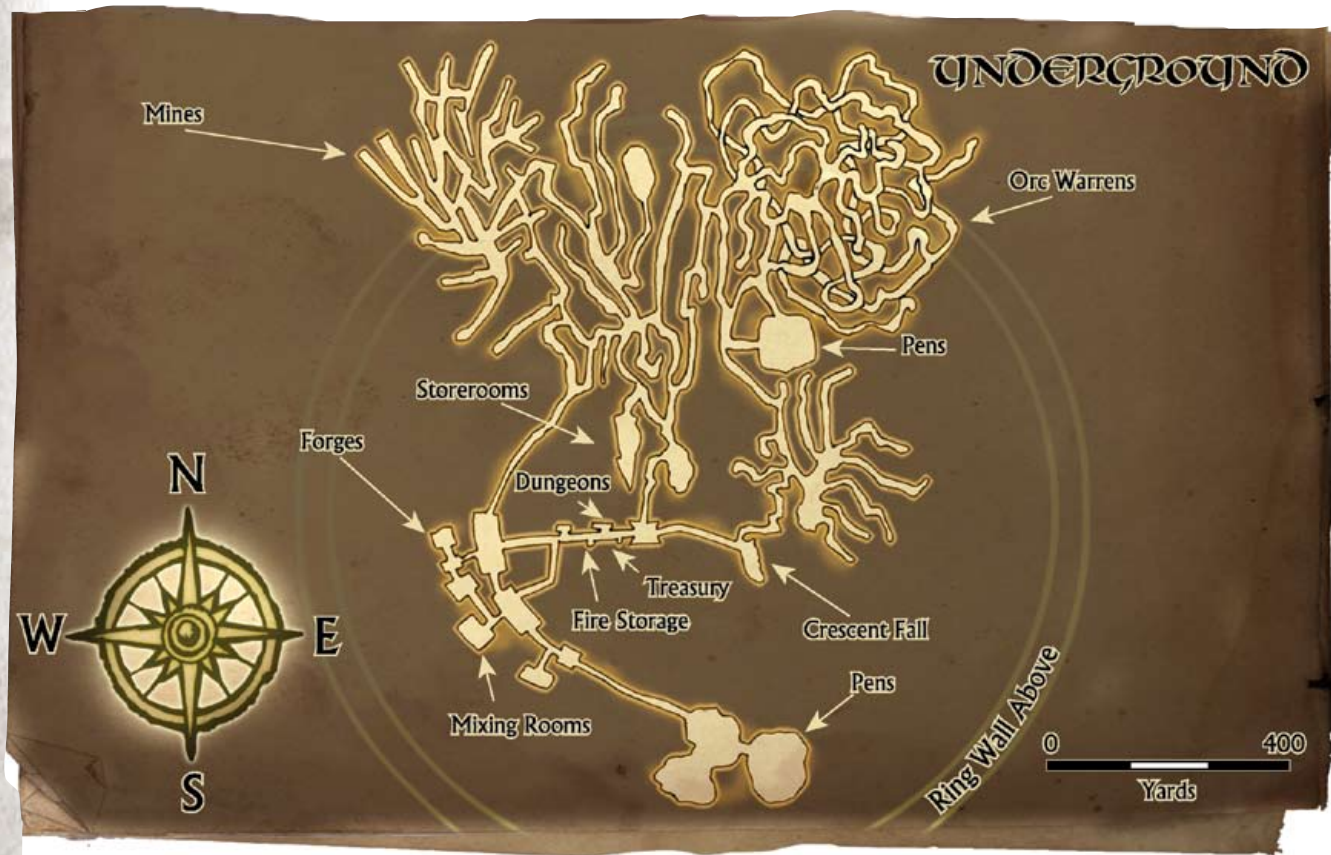
STOREROOMS

Aside from personal items kept by Orcs in their warrens, three large caverns near the Long Stair's Foot

have been set aside for Orc-stores. Although the Orcs' natural tendency is to disorder and filth, Saruman has directed that these supplies be ordered and clean, and after a dozen or so who were derelict in this duty were put to the sword, his directive has taken firm root.

Each storeroom is naturally shaped, save the floors, which have been levelled by the tools of Orc-miners and craftsmen, and covered with wooden planks to keep the stores from becoming damp. The walls and ceilings sprout thick iron hooks for hanging.

The north-most storeroom contains foodstuffs, for Saruman has ordered that the Orcs keep enough food to survive two weeks without hunting or fishing. Each day fish are caught in the pools under the mountain, and much of this catch is salted and hung to dry. Bats are brought down with slings and darts, and a portion of these are salted and hung as well, as are other small creatures hunted and trapped deep under-





Alongside each forge, towering iron racks hold heavy stone moulds for breastplates, greaves, gauntlets, helm, shields, swords, axes, and spearheads. Each set of moulds has heavy iron loops and massive Orcs, four to a side, use hooked poles to catch these loops, and carry them to and from the rack. Once cracked open, the newly-forged implements are removed with wood-handled tongs and cooled in long, wooden troughs of water.

After cooling, the armour and weapons are carried to anvils, some of which are located in the same chambers as the forges themselves, others of which are located in smaller rooms nearby. Here Orc-blacksmiths work the metal, hammering cutting edges onto blades, fastening handles and guards and hafts to weapons, and adding rivets and straps to armour. Any piece that shatters, refuses to take an edge, or cannot be fitted is tossed onto the scrap pile to be melted down and re-moulded.

The skilled blacksmiths are among the most respected Orcs, and command instant obedience from every Orc except the most senior. Of course, those blacksmiths who turn out inferior work are killed and replaced, so only the most strong and crafty are Orc-blacksmiths for long.

Before his disappearance, Khidiz (see page 76), Saruman's Master of Craft, kept a suite of small chambers off the largest of the forge chambers. In the days before the War of the Ring, they have been unceremoniously converted to store the tools of craftwork.

ground. Saruman provides flour and grain milled aboveground. The Orcs make ale from a portion of this, and casks of this thick brew are stacked here as well.

The western storeroom contains arms and armour forged in the underground. Breastplates and greaves hang here, as do helms and shields, and swords and axes and short, broad-bladed spears.

The third, south-east storeroom holds other durable goods, as well as overflow from the other two storerooms. Coils of rough rope are stored here, hinged iron ladders for scaling walls, and short stout battering rams with iron heads and thick leather straps. Heavy metal traps are stacked carefully, for use in mangling horses or other steeds. Torches are piled next to heavy iron lanterns. Thick metal grappling hooks hang from the rafters, waiting to be cast over walls and doors. All of this gear is intended for war, and as Saruman's ambitions grow, this storeroom becomes more full.

FORGES

The heart of Isengard's underground is its forges, a series of giant caverns under the basin wedge before the Second Portion of the ring-wall. The forges are relatively close to Orthanc, and a single long corridor leads from the Long Stair's Foot directly to the largest of these chambers, opening on a gallery above the work floor where Saruman may stand to witness the weapon, and armour-making process.

The largest of the monstrous forges stands fully one hundred feet high, fashioned of black iron with rivets the size of an Orc-fist. Each can produce enough iron in a single batch to fashion twenty breastplates and ten broadswords. They require massive amounts of fuel, and for this the trees of Isengard are being torn down, their trunks and thick branches feeding the forges' fires. Coal is also used, mined from the mountains and carted here at every hour, for the forges of Isengard are never silent and never still. Orcs tend the fires with long iron-tipped poles, churning the coals, always feeding more fuel with wide shovels.



MIXING ROOMS

The hinges of the doors to the mixing rooms are leather, and the great rings used to pull them open are leather-wrapped wood. No metal at all is permitted inside, for in them the Fire of Orthanc is mixed by senior Orcs entrusted with the formula by Saruman himself, and even a single stray spark could cause great disaster.

Large wooden tables dominate the first mixing room, and mortars and pestles sit atop these surfaces. Minerals dug out of the mountainside or mined within the caverns themselves are brought here and ground into fine powder, then collected in large glass bowls. Each table but one is assigned to a particular mineral, and these are kept well separate to prevent accidental combination. At the final table the craftiest Orcs combine the components, measuring each carefully, mixing slowly with long wooden spoons. The result is Blasting Fire, which is collected into small barrels bound with leather rather than iron.

When one cask has been filled—and no more than one is ever open at a time—its lid is attached and it is carried either to the second mixing room for further refinement, or to the fire storage room for safekeeping. Three Orcs transport each barrel. Only one is needed to carry it, but the other two march alongside to ensure no one runs into the carrier, and that no metal or flame nears the volatile concoction. In the second mixing room—which contains tools and implements similar to those in the first—raw Blasting Fire is refined and manufactured into Fire of Orthanc, Brightfire, Rockets, and Thundershells (see box).

The Orcs of the mixing rooms receive as much respect as the Orc-blacksmiths of the forges, and perhaps more, for their job is as important and much more dangerous. Mixing-orcs may not be disturbed while sleeping, on Saruman's direct order, for they need all their wits about them while working.

FIRE STORAGE

Until Saruman had need to store Blasting Fire and its derivatives below Isengard, this chamber was unused by the Orcs. It is roughly oval-shaped, with a low ceiling. Water from an underground stream bubbles up from the rocks to one side and drains back out somewhere else, but so slowly that the floor of the room is submerged. Because of the water the air is very moist, and droplets bead the walls. The room is also colder than most of Orthanc's underground.

In the centre of the room a large rock juts up, its uneven surface only a few feet above the water. Upon this rock sits a wide wooden pallet supported by sturdy wooden legs. Upon this pallet are stacked casks of Blasting Fire, Fire of Orthanc, and other incendiaries produced by Saruman's Orc-mixers, for here sparks are difficult to create, and a cask which opened by accident would quickly become too damp to ignite. The Orcs must wade into the pool to



THE FIRE OF ORTHANC

'How? How can fire undo stone? What kind of device can break down a wall?'

— *Gríma Wormtongue, The Two Towers*

Saruman has long known the secret of the Fire of Orthanc (or Blasting Fire), having helped invent it while working with Dwarves of the East. Blasting Fire (*baraznâd* in Khuzdul) is a potent mixture that combusts and explodes when touched with the slightest spark or flame. Since his return from the East, Saruman has devised new applications of this craft.

All the substances below can be created using the Craft: Alchemy (Mixing) skill, if ingredients are available. Appropriate TNs are listed for each form, along with a time to prepare a given quantity. A mysterious red ore found only at Baraz-lagil (shipped in quantity to Orthanc by Vigdís' kin) is one crucial ingredient. Sulphur, phosphor, bat droppings, and other ingredients are also used. Mixers of Blasting Fire must take care: a disastrous failure results in an explosion that can cause from 2d6 to 12d6 points of damage. (Roll 2d6, then roll that many dice for the actual damage.)

BLASTING FIRE

'Several of the Ents got scorched and blistered. One of them . . . got caught in a spray of some liquid fire and burned like a torch. . . .'

— *Pippin, The Two Towers*

A thick, tarry substance, Blasting Fire is described in the core rulebook on pages 242 and 245. There are great devices among the engines under Isengard that can spray streams of this hellish concoction. (TN 15 to mix one ounce in a day.)

FIRE OF ORTHANC

'A gaping hole was blasted in the wall . . . "Devilry of Saruman" cried Aragorn. . . .

"[T]hey have lit the fire of Orthanc beneath our feet."

— *Aragorn, The Two Towers*

A refined, concentrated version of Blasting Fire, the Fire of Orthanc does not adhere and burn, it instead explodes with tremendous force. A pound of Orthanc-fire inflicts 5d6 damage to any within 3 yards of the explosion, reduced by 1d6 per 2 yards distance away. The Fire of Orthanc inflicts 10 points of Structure damage per pound to fortifications. At Helm's Deep, Saruman employed a great mine filled with 20 pounds of Fire to breach the Deeping Wall. Fire of Orthanc is difficult to make and dangerous to store. Saruman rarely mixes it in quantity, and he used most of his supply at Helm's Deep. (TN 20 to refine one ounce of Blasting Fire into one-quarter ounce of Fire or Orthanc in one day.)

BRIGHTFIRE

'Dwarves can make a fire almost anywhere out of almost anything, wind or no wind...'

— *The Hobbit*

This thin, grainy mixture is combined with resin and applied to the end of brands. It ignites when struck forcefully or scraped on a rough surface, burning with an intense white sparking flame. An application of Brightfire burns about one minute, but neither rain nor immersion in water can quench it. Brightfire inflicts $2d6+2$ damage at a touch, and ignites as a burning torch (see page 245 of the core rulebook). The Uruk berserker who ignited the Fire of Orthanc in *The Two Towers* film carried a Brightfire torch. (TN 5 to create one application from two ounces of Blasting Fire in four hours.)

ROCKETS

'The finest rockets ever seen: they burst in stars of blue and green...'

— *Samwise, The Fellowship of the Ring*

Similar to the Gandalf's fireworks (described on page 92 of *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*), rockets are narrow tubes filled with small quantities of the Fire of Orthanc, lit by fuses. Rockets are fired using the Siegecraft (Rockets) skill, and their explosive power causes $1d6$ Structure damage to fortifications.

Rockets can be fired at individuals using the Ranged Combat skill, but are wildly inaccurate (-10 penalty to all shots). When used this way, rockets have range $1/15/80/200/+100$ and inflict $2d6+6$ points of damage to all within 3 yards of their impact, who must also make a TN 15 Swiftess test or be deafened for $1d6$ rounds. A disastrous failure inflicts the victim permanently with the Dull-eared flaw. (TN 20 and Craft: Fireworks TN 5 to create one rocket from one ounce of the Fire of Orthanc in four hours.)

THUNDERSHELLS

*'There was a roar and a blast of fire. The archway...
crumbled and crashed in smoke and dust. The barricade was scattered as if by a thunderbolt.'*

— *The Two Towers*

These fearsome weapons consist of a small quantity of Fire of Orthanc held within an iron globe, which is coated with Brightfire and lit just before being hurled from a catapult. Thundershells explode on impact, doing great damage to fortifications ($+8$ to the Structure damage done by the catapult). Characters standing within 3 yards of the impact suffer $3d6+6$ points of damage and must make a TN 15 Swiftess test or be deafened for $1d6$ rounds. A disastrous failure inflicts the victim permanently with the Dull-eared flaw. (TN 15 and Smithcraft TN 10 to create one shell from three ounces of the Fire of Orthanc and three Brightfire application in two days.)

set their payloads upon it, a task they loathe but dutifully carry out.

Two Orcs always stand guard before the fire storage chamber, and the door here is made of wood and leather just as the mixing room doors are. The door has neither lock nor keyhole. No one except the Orc-mixers, Móg, and Saruman himself are allowed to pass the doors of this chamber (Khidiz was also permitted before he disappeared), and the guards have strict orders to kill anyone else who tries to pass them. The only other way into the fire storage chamber is through the underground water supply, and those channels are so narrow even small fish cannot slip through them.

DUNGEONS

Near the mixing rooms stands a long hallway with many alcoves, each a small cell with thick iron bars and a sturdy iron door. The bars have enough space between them for food and cups of water to be shoved through, but are close enough to prevent even a Hobbit from wriggling free. These are the dungeons of Isengard, fashioned so upon Saruman's command.

The dungeons are relatively new, carved from the rock in fits and starts in the decades leading up to the War of the Ring. Most prisoners have been Men, Dunlendings and others who once served Saruman, but could not abide his obvious and growing corruption. These Men were placed in the dungeons to keep their discontent from spreading, and tortured to death by the Orcs.

Saruman has had no important prisoners save Gandalf the Grey, held atop Orthanc because of its magical protections. Apparently Saruman expects to have more in the future, however, and intends for them to be held by the Orcs, for he has ordered

that the dungeons be cleaned of old bones and other debris, and that the Orcs refrain from killing their prisoners in the future.

The Orcs have little use for the dungeons, with the last of their original captives dead, but are prepared to oversee any new prisoners their master sends to them. In the meantime, they occasionally use the cell alcoves to separate quarrelling Orcs who would fight if allowed back into the warrens together. As Saruman is a powerful Wizard, it may seem likely that his dungeons would be ensorcelled, but this is not the case. Thick bars and solid walls are the power behind these cells, and few can break free once locked within.



TREASURY OF ISENGARD

Saruman is not much enamoured with material wealth for its own sake, but he recognises its power over others, and so maintains much that is valuable. The Orcs who mine the mountains find not only iron, copper, and coal but also gold, silver, and precious gems. The gold and silver ore is brought to the forges and cast into coins and heavy bars, while the gems

are cut by Orc-craftsmen. Despite their large size and crude manners, Orcs can be deft with their hands, and the gems they fashion are well-cut and polished until they reflect torchlight off every facet.

The treasury is a small, circular chamber with a high arched ceiling, and a thick iron door. Two guards stand here at all times, allowing workers to deposit treasure, but only Saruman or one bearing a writ from him to remove anything. Within the room, the valuables are not kept in any order. Gold and silver are tossed onto the floor in great mounds. Bars are set to one side, but not neatly, resulting in a haphazard pile that slides into the coins, and has coins woven within it. Gems are kept in great tall barrels stood on one end. The Orcs do not sort the rocks, however, and the gems are mixed within the barrels—and many miss the barrels altogether.

Much as Saruman loves order, he has never reprimanded the Orcs for keeping so untidy a treasury, nor attempted to organise the room's contents. Most likely it amuses him to have so much wealth that it can be strewn so carelessly about, showing how little such things mean to him, when most would kill to possess even a portion of the room's contents.

PENS

Although the Orcs who originally migrated from beneath the Misty Mountains did not bring Wargs with them, once Saruman discovered them and began to hatch his plans, he parlayed with many packs of the highly intelligent wolf-creatures, enticing them to Isengard to play a role in his army. As Wargs are known creatures of darkness, they were brought to Isengard by underground ways. Most

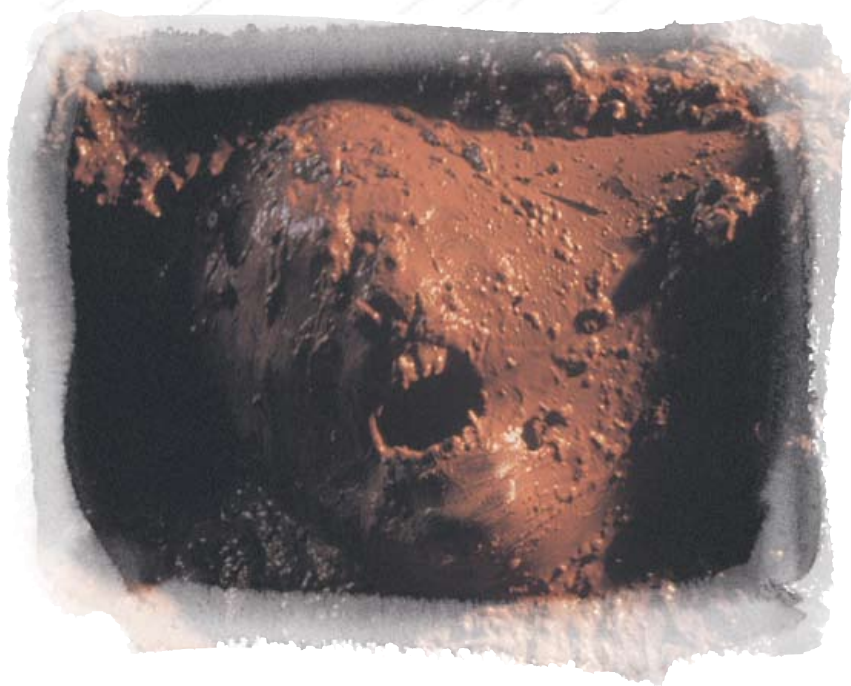
Men of Isengard still are unaware such creatures are kept in great pens underneath the ground.

The Warg-pens are large, roughly circular dome-shaped caverns, each of which holds many dozens of beasts. They live in the same packs they knew before they answered Saruman's call, and are not confined with gate or chain. Although the Wargs allow Orcs to ride them, Saruman has allowed the Wargs of Isengard to retain autonomy from them, decreeing only that they must bow to Radlúk the Beast-master (see page 77). Radlúk lives in a small cave in the north-most pen's wall near the Orc-warrens.

Wargs are not the only beasts kept in the underground pens. Other dark creatures that might make Men nervous are also housed here and cared for by the Orcs: wolves, great-tusked boars, snakes, and other creatures less easily named. These are all kept behind fences and bars, for they are not intelligent, as Wargs are. The pens are also home to great clouds of bats. Although bats can be found throughout Isengard's underground, the high ceilings of the pen-chambers are where the majority congregate, and their chirps and squeaks fill the day and night.

CRESCENT FALL

The Crescent Lake's waters drain from the basin slowly, carried away underground in small rivulets and streams. But at one point in the rock beneath the lake, a shelf onto which some of these waters ran collapsed some centuries ago, and now a sheer drop exists between the remains of that shelf and the cavern floor below it. This is known as the Crescent Fall, for the water pours down in a smooth sheet, seeming like a silk banner, so evenly are the waters spread. At the base of the Fall, the stone has been carved into a wide, shallow basin, and here the water pools before continuing its journey. The Orcs casts nets here, for fish



from the lake above are often caught up in the pull of the waters, and dragged below ground.

SPAWNING TUNNELS

In the tightly twisting Spawning Tunnels of Orthanc, Saruman carries out a program of breeding in imitation of his dark master, mixing together Orcs, Men, Uruks, and even the spawn of earlier experiments, to create a wide variety of creatures to carry out his bidding. Lughúr, Saruman's Breeding Master (see page 77), always accompanies the Wizard when he enters these tunnels, and the pair are also frequently followed by Uruk-hai carrying forms wrapped in cloaks and bound with chains. Throughout the Spawning Tunnels, dozens if not hundreds of small alcoves protect filthy, moist breeding pits, each a motley stew of filth whose ingredients include the ground and pulverised bodies of Men and Orcs alike. From these pits spring full-grown Orcs, Half-orcs, and Uruks; see *'Quicken Orc-spawn'* on pages 73–4 for more information on this process.

Saruman has experimented with many different ingredients and proportions. From each a different sub-breed of Half-orc is created, from those who look nearly identical to Men to those Saruman calls his own Uruk-hai in imitation of Sauron's bred Orc-race. The speed with which new creatures can be bred varies between a week and full year based on many variables that Saruman himself sometimes is at a loss to explain. Even alcoves seeded with identical 'stew' can vary many months in the time it takes them to ripen fully.

The Spawning Tunnels are a true labyrinth, and only Saruman, Lughúr, and his assistants know their twisting ways. Unlike the Orc-warrens, it is impossible to enter the Spawning Tunnels without passing through one of a series of doors of wood and iron, the keys to which are held only by Saruman and Lughúr. Lughúr keeps his personal chambers within the Spawning Tunnels, though none of the Orcs who work under his supervision have ever been able to find them.

THE BLACK DOOR AND HEART CHAMBER

The Long Stair does not end where Saruman believes it to end, at the Long Stair's Foot. In fact, none since Curugond's time have known that a cunning secret staircase—TN 40 to detect—continues hundreds of yards down a twisting shaft and ends in a mighty, arched Black Door covered with sigils of power. No knob, ring, or keyhole is apparent, and there is none, for the only way to enter is to destroy the door's power, a task requiring 20 points of Structure damage (which would likely also collapse the shaft) or the application of an unique *Opening-spell* known to no living spellcaster, and recorded only in the White Tower of Minas Tirith.

Past the door lies the Heart Chamber of Morgayamar, the *bandúrboth* of Isengard. This chamber, crafted even before Curugond's time, is a perfect dome of the same dark grey of the ring-wall, planed so carefully, a silken thread could be run along the walls and never snag. The floor is perfectly level, and

made of the same glossy black stone as Orthanc. The centre of the dome rises to twice the height of a Man, but seems low because the room is twice that in diameter.

For the narrative of Curugond's discovery and imprisonment of Morgayamar, see 'The Bandúrboth of Isengard' on page 96, and 'Demons' on pages 16-7 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.

THE ENTS' WRATH

*'The great arch still stood, but it opened
now upon a roofless chasm: the tunnel
was laid bare. . . .'
— The Two Towers*

Isengard is a mighty fortress, the material of its thick walls fashioned by Middle-earth herself, honed and fitted by the genius of Men when that race was great. Yet even such strong walls could not stand against the wrath of the first race, the eldest creatures of Middle-Earth—the Ents.

Long did Isengard and the Ents stand beside one another. The men of Westesse, while more expert in stone than in wood, valued the beauty and strength of the forests and respected the power and wisdom of the treeherders. Saruman wandered often through Fangorn Forest, speaking on occasion with Fangorn himself, the two exchanging stories and knowledge. In this way the Wizard was counted a friend, and a good neighbour.

But as Saruman's hunger for power increased, his love of beauty left him, his imagination taken more by metal than wood, more by device than nature. As his industry required more and more fuel, he sent crews into the Wizard's Vale to chop down trees for burning. By the time Gandalf is rescued from atop Orthanc, every tree inside the ring-wall has fallen to axe and fire. This violence against

beech, oak, chestnut, and ash—more than any other of Saruman’s betrayals—angered the Ents and drove them to action.

When Fangorn led his fellow Ents to Isengard, they immediately set to work. Ents have great strength in their gnarled limbs, and portions of the ring-wall were torn away, as pages ripped from a book. Saruman’s army had gone to lay siege to Helm’s Deep. Only servants, slaves, workers, and a handful of guards remained, and these fled when they witnessed how poorly the walls protected against Ent-rage. Many Men were allowed to escape, but the Orcs were caught in the Huorn forests that came behind the Ents, and from those dark woods never returned.

Though destroying the walls was simple work, Fangorn and his kin knew Orthanc’s real danger lay in Orthanc and the caverns below. The tower proved resistant to their attacks, showing no damage past a few small chips, and the underground areas were impossible for the Ents to enter. So the Ents put the River Isen to work, diverting it in the mountains above the ring-wall to pass into the

basin, its waters crashing with the force of armies. They flowed down through shafts and vents into the caverns, flooding those places beneath the surface so that penned wolves died and furnaces smoked and collapsed. Orthanc remained undamaged, but was surrounded by water on every side. Saruman was trapped in his tower, unable to escape, though Gríma Wormtongue and a number of other servants were with him in his imprisonment.

This was the scene when Gandalf, Aragorn, and their companions arrived at Isengard after the Battle of the Hornburg. The archway of the main gate stood open, its doors ripped away, lying on a pile of rubbish. The tunnel through the wall was open, its roof and arch ripped clear, though the Tunnel Guardhouse survived. Most of the southern portion of the ring-wall had been torn down completely, as had large sections elsewhere. The flagstones of the eight paths remained, but the pillars were shattered and uprooted. Within Orthanc the Chain Room was in ruins, its chains yanked free and wheels wrenched loose. The basin of Isengard was flooded, the waters up

to waist-deep. Around the edges the ground was damp, and a Man could walk without getting the tops of his boots wet. The entire underground was a shambles. Every cavern and passage was filled with water and flotsam. The Long Stair’s shaft had filled with water to the height of the Ground Level, and showed no sign of emptying. Though Orthanc was undamaged, the water and watchful eyes of the Ents had isolated it.

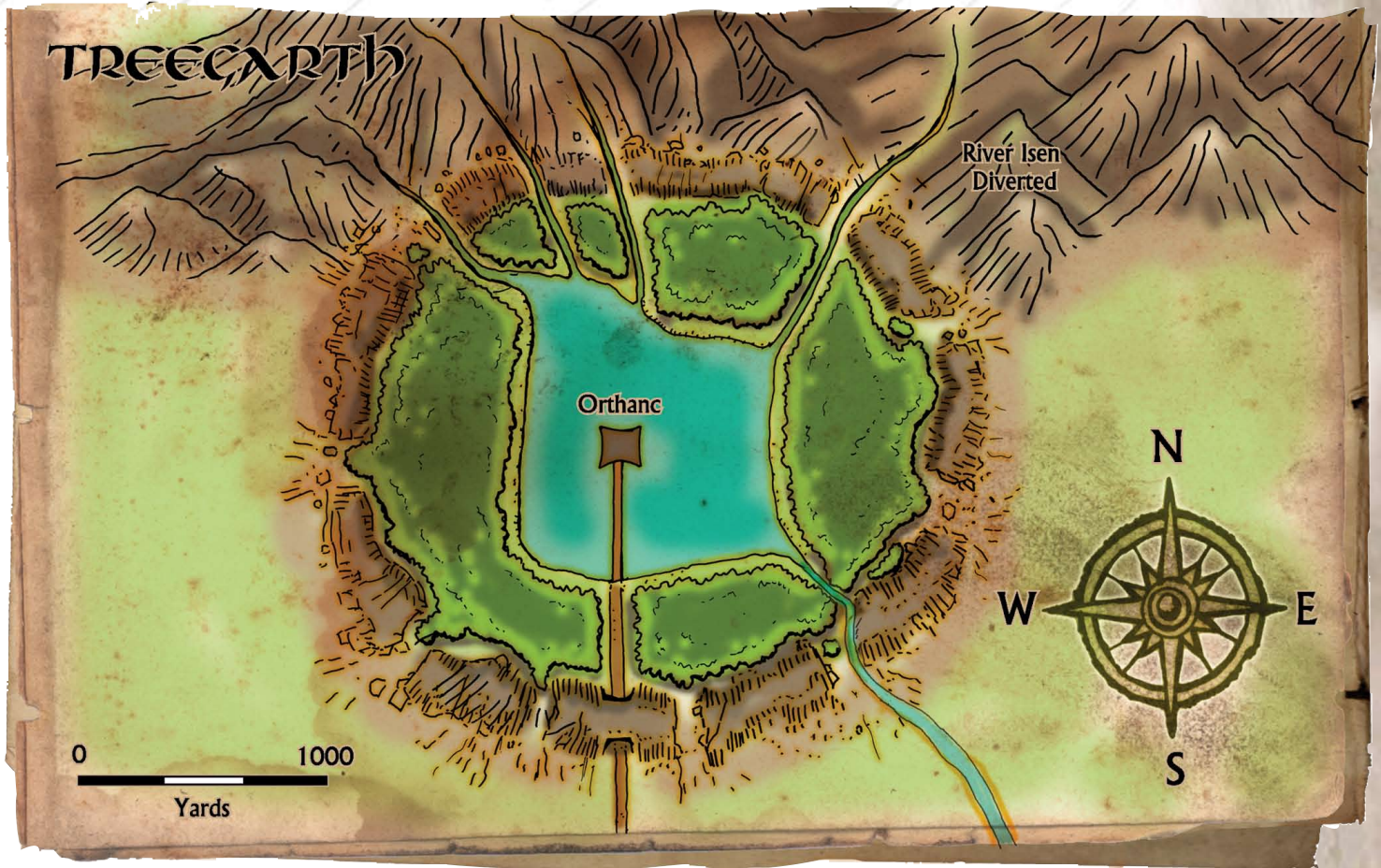
THE FOURTH AGE

All the stone-circle had been thrown down and removed, and the land within had been made into a garden... ?

— *The Return of the King*

Ents are slow to rouse, but once their anger is unleashed it burns steady for longer than most Men live, and their plans may not fully unfold until generations of Men have passed. So it is with Isengard. Once





the Ents rallied against Isengard, they determined to remove its threat once and for all, and to restore it to its former beauty. The ring-wall had already been partially destroyed, but after Saruman fled it was torn down completely. The shores of the Crescent Lake were expanded until the lake became not a crescent but a full moon, surrounding Orthanc permanently. The stream that flowed from the mountain still fed the lake, along with a number of others the Ents diverted. The Isen they returned to its former course. The basin was covered in fresh soil and grass planted all across its surface, with trees and bushes all about. Trees ringed the basin as stone walls once did, and where the guard towers stood to the south were now two tall trees, marking the start of a path toward the tower. This became the Treethearth of Orthanc.

Except for Orthanc itself, the Ents removed every dwelling within Isengard. The ring-wall and its hollowed-out houses were gone, as were the basin's tents, pavilions, and buildings. The caverns beneath were flooded with water and mud time and again. In this way the underground was filled in slowly and carefully until even a Dwarf could not find a way under Isengard without pick and shovel.

After the War of the Ring, King Elessar and Gandalf the White and their companions returned to Isengard. There, Fangorn gave to Elessar the Keys of Orthanc, for the tower once more belonged to the king, but he in turn gave the Treethearth to the Ents, provided they kept watch over Orthanc and permitted none to enter it without his leave.

For many years the tower sat empty while the Ents tended the trees and ensured no one snuck

inside. Elessar finally gave the Keys of Orthanc to his ally and neighbour, Éomer King of the Mark, who sent Rohirrim to live in the tower, and keep watch upon the northwest corner of Rohan. A bridge was fashioned to span the waters of the lake, with railings of silver and planks of some silvery-white tree, light but strong, for the bridge was a gift from Legolas and his kin. There, Rohirrim of the Fourth Age dwelt, doors thrown open to sun and wind. Tapestries covered the bare stone, giving the dark tower warmth and colour. The Star Chamber in particular proved useful, and a sentry was posted there always to watch for anyone entering the Mark from the north or west. In this way Orthanc became again what it had once been, a watchtower of the kingdom and a symbol of strength and vigilance.

NAN CURUNÍR

*'The Ents . . . stood upon the summit,
and looked down into a dark pit: the
great cleft at the end of the mountains:
Nan Curunír, the Valley of Saruman.'*
— *The Two Towers*



Like Saruman himself, the land around Isengard goes by many names: Nan Curunír, the Vale of Angrenost, the Valley of Saruman, or the Wizard's Vale. Long ages have passed like shadows across this once-fertile stretch at the southern terminus of the Misty Mountains.

Many Men, Elves, and Dwarves—and other creatures of more fell nature—have laid eyes upon the valley as they crossed from Dunland to Rohan and back again, for the Vale lies just north of the well-travelled Gap of Rohan.



Over the eons, the Wizard's Vale has served as a resting point, a natural shelter, a Gondorian outpost, and a hidden shrine of high and nefarious wizardry. In many ways, Nan Curunír rests at the very heart of Middle-earth.

As the War of the Ring grows nigh, the Valley of Saruman darkens, becoming a place of gathering power, and that of degenerate evil: The White Wizard has forsaken his vocation, joining instead with the Great Enemy in Mordor. Orcs, Uruks, Half-orcs, Wargs, and lesser Men defile the place with their very presence, and other unnatural beings rove the brambled

plain, spying for the Master of Orthanc and destroying any who dare to trespass in the land of Curunír. In short, the Vale has become a dangerous place for the Free Peoples, a natural well-spring turned into a poisoned trough.

This chapter provides a tour of the Wizard's Vale, detailing its features both natural and man-made. As with other chapters, this chapter describes the region as it exists immediately prior to Gandalf's imprisonment atop Orthanc. From this information and the history set forth in Chapter One, Narrators can extrapolate to other time periods as well.





GEOGRAPHY

The Misty Mountains run some nine hundred miles from their northern-most point all the way down—past the fortresses of Gundabad, Rivendell, and Moria—to Methedras, the ‘Last Peak’ of the mighty range. There, a great, sheltered valley lies between the eastern and western spurs of Methedras, bordered on the south by the Gap of Rohan. The river Isen runs southward through this vale, also called Nan Curunír, fed by many springs and lesser streams from the rain-washed foothills of the Misty Mountains.

Nan Curunír was once green and fair, a pleasant and fertile land; of late the region has grown into a rugged wilderness choked by weeds and brambles, overrun with rank grasses, riddled with caves inhabited by small beasts, increasingly devoid of trees save the burned and hewn stumps of once mighty groves.

Only within the great Ring of Isengard remains some testament of the natural grandeur of the Vale, for

here streams still feed a few acres of green grasses, blooming gardens, and copses of giant oak trees. Yet even this last remnant of nature bears a secret taint, for it is tended by the slaves of Saruman, who are bent beneath his overpowering will.

ROADS AND TRAILS

‘[T]he highway became a wide street, paved with great flat stones, squared and laid with skill. . . deep gutters, filled with trickling water, ran down on either side.’

— *The Two Towers*

The most-travelled road in the region is the Great West Road, known as the South Road past the Gap of Rohan in Dunland, and also the Westfold Road where long-dead Masters of the Westfold paved it with broad stones in its course through their land. The Great West Road continues southward from the Fords

of Isen—the point where it crosses the River Isen—toward Helm’s Deep, on to Edoras, and, eventually, to Minas Tirith.

The second most important travel-way in the Wizard’s Vale is the ancient highway known to the denizens of Isengard simply as ‘the road.’ It begins just outside the gates of Isengard, where the ground is firm and level. Here it more resembles a wide street than a road, for it is constructed of massive slabs of stones, so skilfully joined that not a blade of grass shows in any joint. As it leads southward, the road becomes rougher and eventually meets the Isen, thereafter following its western bank for some thirty miles to the Fords of Isen, where it intersects with the Great West Road. Upon crossing the Great West Road, the road from Isengard becomes not much more than a trail that continues southward along the edge of the White Mountains, joining a network of footpaths that cross Drúwaith Iaur, Old Púkel-land.

To accommodate his ever-growing armies of soldiers and servitors, Saruman widened and fortified a network of roadways leading eastward from Isengard. Damming the Isen created a fordable stretch of river in the north of the Wizard’s Vale, and a trail known as the High Path crosses there, passing in switchbacks over the high hills south of Methedras and skirting the southern edge of Fangorn Forest. Another track, the Low Path, branches from the High on the eastern side of the ford and heads south before turning east to the Eastern Outpost of the White Hand (see pages 63–4) and beyond.

Of course, many lesser roads and trails also cross Nan Curunír, most created not by design, but by the daily tramp of the boots and naked feet of hundreds, if not thousands, of Saruman’s soldiers and slaves going about their master’s business.

NAN CURUNÍR: THE WIZARD'S VALE



ISENGARD

DOL BARAN

'It opened southward, leaning back into the slope of round Dol Baran, the last hill of the northern ranges, greenfooted, crowned with heather.'

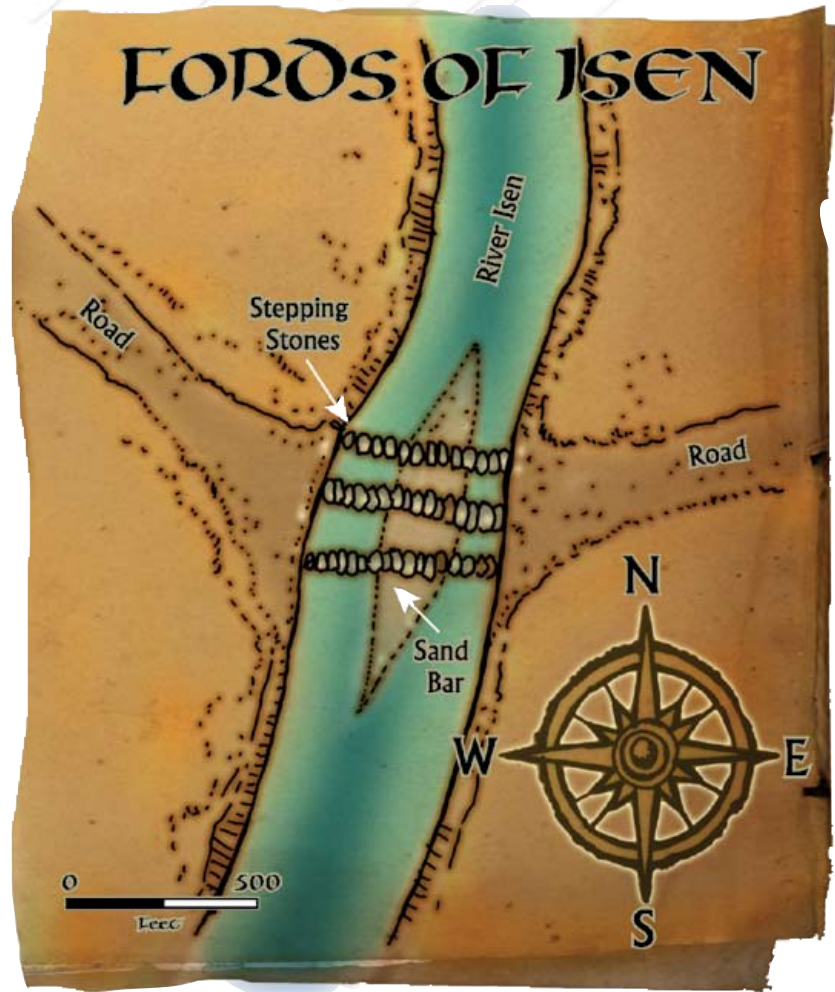
— *The Two Towers*

The last hill of the Misty Mountains, Dol Baran ('Golden-brown Hill') stands as the western gate of the entrance into Nan Curunír. The rounded hill is skirted in green vegetation, topped with heather, and dotted with thornbushes.

Wolves, as well as forces of the White Hand, often prowl this hill, keeping watch over all who pass into the Vale, or through the Gap of Rohan. As the War of the Ring grows nigh, Saruman labours to establish a permanent outpost here, creating a first means of defence and surveillance for the western 'gate' of Nan Curunír. Once complete it will resemble the Eastern Outpost (see page 63–4), but for the time being the site is little more than a clearance harbouring a collection of planks, tents, labourers, and the soldiers that oversee them.

THE RIVER ISEN

Fed by the Misty Mountains, the River Isen (Rohirric for 'iron') flows from Nan Curunír south, through the Gap of Rohan and then west, joining with the Adorn approximately 50 leagues southwest of Isengard, before finally spilling into the Sea between Enedhwaith and Drúwaith Iaur. The Isen marks the western boundary of Rohan, often defended against the steady tide of Dunlendings from the west. The Isen has no bridge anywhere along its length, but may be crossed at the Fords of Isen thirty miles south of Isengard (or, more recently, just north of Isengard on the High



Path). During the War of the Ring, the Ents divert the Isen's waters to flood the Ring of Isengard.

FORDS OF ISEN

'[T]hree lines of flat stepping-stones across the stream, and between them fords for horses, that went from either brink to a bare eyot in the midst.'

— *The Two Towers*

Those wishing to cross the Gap of Rohan find themselves blocked by the raging river Isen. No bridges span this mighty waterway, and all must travel to the fords to gain passage. The Rohirrim patrol this area as best they

can, for it marks the main entrance into their lands from the west, and the Men of Dunland have often taken control of the fords, demanding payment in exchange for passage, especially during the time of the Dunlending occupation of Nan Curunír. Also called the Crossings of Isen, the fords were the site of a battle between King Helm and Wulf in TA 2758. Later, during the War of the Ring, Saruman's forces and the Rohirrim waged two fierce battles here.

Three rows of broad, flat stepping-stones proceed straight across the waters, with graded fords between them for horses. The path leads over a sandbar lingering in the centre. The rushing waters usually babble and churn over the stones, offering only a minor impediment to those keeping to the ford. During Saruman's rise to

power however, he dammed the Isen near Orthanc, diverting much of its flow, reducing the current at the fords to a mere trickle and eliminating the river as a viable defence against invasions from the west.

THE PILLAR OF THE WHITE HAND

‘It was black; and set upon it was a great stone, carved and painted in the likeness of a long White Hand.

Its finger pointed north.’

— *The Two Towers*

After his renunciation of the White Council in TA 2953, Saruman adopted the heraldic emblem of a white hand on a field of black. His armies carry banners bearing the symbol, which is also emblazoned on their shields and helmets. The most prominent and permanent display of this device takes the form of a great pillar of black stone carved in the likeness of a hand and painted white. Its finger angles northward, toward the gates of Isengard, some five leagues beyond.

Some have speculated that Saruman has a subtle connection with the pillar, enabling him to sense the presence of any who pass within some distance—ten miles, many guess—of the structure, thereby alerting him to unwanted visitors in his land. This belief is true in a certain respect. Whenever any being of power comes within four leagues of the Pillar of the White Hand, Saruman may automatically make a free Observe (*Sense Power*) test to detect the being’s presence. In essence, the Pillar acts as the emanation point of a powerful form of the *Sense Power* spell, with a range of four leagues. The difficulty of the Observe test varies

based on the target’s power as listed on Table 7.4: Sense Power Difficulty on page 186 of the core rulebook.

EASTERN OUTPOST OF THE WHITE HAND

Along the eastern edge of the Wizard’s Vale, near the point where the south-eastern spur of Methedras comes to an end, Saruman has established a small garrison. The outpost consists of a barracks, a training ground, and a short and hastily constructed tower.



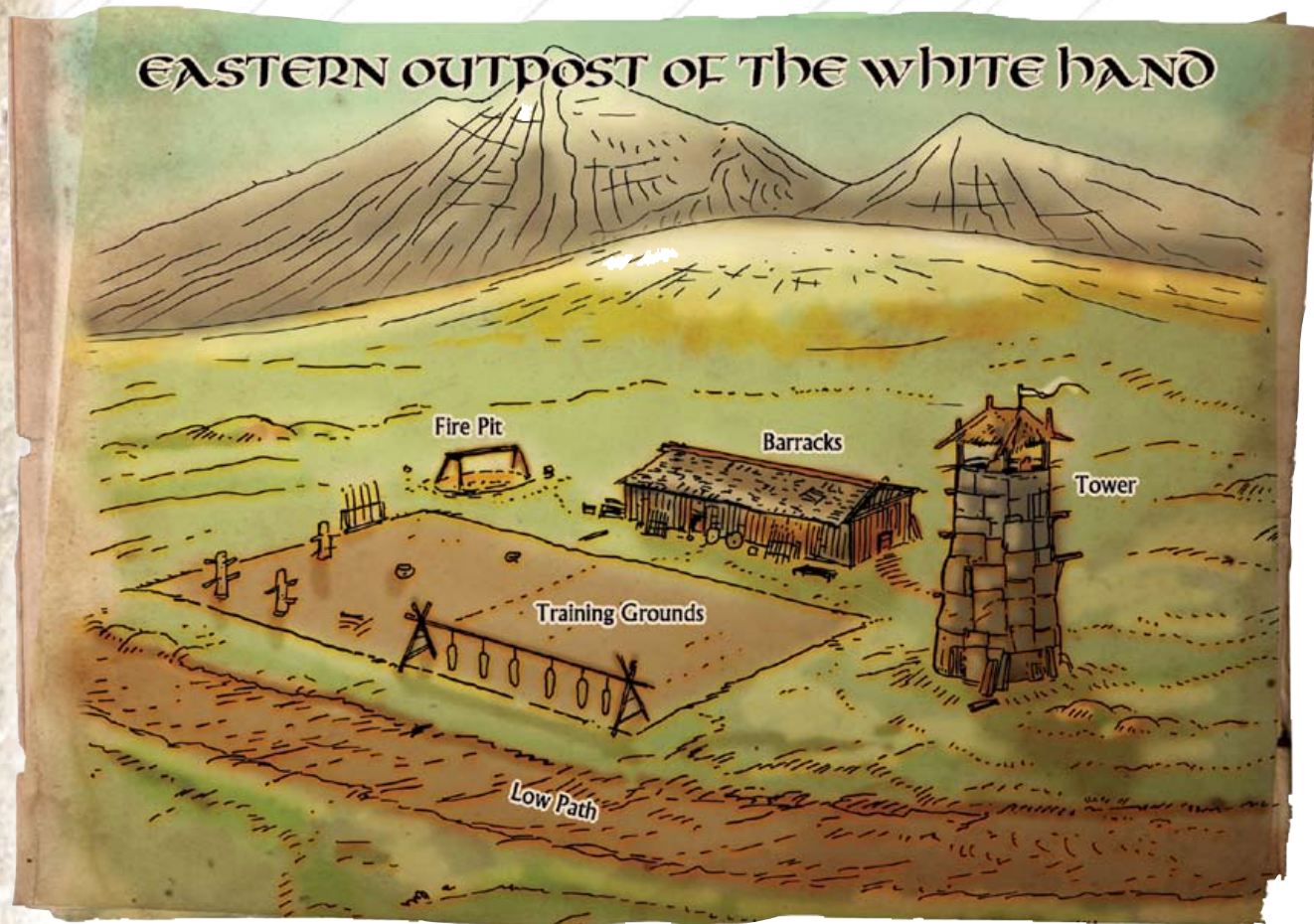
At any given time, nearly 100 Orcs, Uruks, Half-orcs, and Dunlending Hill-men work and train at the eastern outpost, which is commanded by three especially cruel Uruk-hai Captains who report directly to Móg, Saruman’s General of Arms. As each group becomes more skilled in the ways of hand-to-hand combat and more disciplined in the ways of waging war, they are rotated out and replaced by a new group from Isengard. If ever the Men of Rohan pass close to the Eastern Outpost, however, those of Orc-ancestry are sent into their barracks, for Saruman does not yet wish for any outside Nan Curunír to discover his alliance with dark forces.

In addition to the soldiers stationed here, about a dozen slaves reside at the outpost, preparing rank food, fetching water from streams, washing down the hillsides, and cleaning the barracks. The slaves feed the soldiers by cooking meals over large pits of fiery embers. While the Uruk captains are served their meals directly, the Orcs and Half-orcs must line up for their ration, a situation that results in constant shoving matches and, occasionally, outright brawls.

The main structure of the outpost, the three-storied watchtower, provides a good view of the surrounding area, allowing the Isengarders to spot travellers up to ten miles away on clear days. The three-story tower is always manned, as the lands of Rohan must ever be watched, for the Horse-lords are swift upon their steeds and deadly with their blades. The three interior levels of the tower house various supplies, including blankets, torches, half-rotten grains, Orc-draughts, rope, weapons (including clubs, Orc-daggers, spears, Orc-longswords, and whips), armour (mostly leather with a few suits of Orc-chainmail and a dozen large shields) and the like.

The barracks is a fifty by twenty foot building composed of a single room crammed with uncomfortable pallets used as beds. The Uruks and their trainees sleep here during

EASTERN OUTPOST OF THE WHITE HAND



the day, engaging in the majority of their activities during the night time hours, when they are spared the debilitating light of the sun. Most training exercises are conducted on a large, open field, complete with straw dummies, tilting devices, and racks for holding various sorts of weaponry and armour.

In addition to the outpost's functions as a training ground and watch post, various Orc-forces from Mordor and the Misty Mountains also come to meet with the Isengarders in order to devise plans, exchange reconnaissance, and provision patrols. The mix of races and allegiances—though all serve the Shadow in the end—creates much tension. If not for the power of the Uruk-commanders, skirmishes between these groups would undoubtedly occur much more regularly and with far greater casualties.

WORK CAMPS

Work camps can be found throughout the Wizard's Vale, operating continuously day and night. Many of these camps devote themselves to gathering of wood to fuel the great furnaces Saruman has constructed beneath Isengard. Others, however, work the mines on the slopes of Methedras, the main source of the iron ore needed for crafting the arms and armour for the armies of the White Hand. A few rare camps are charged with the assembling of the ingredients for the Fire of Orthanc that cannot be gotten underground.

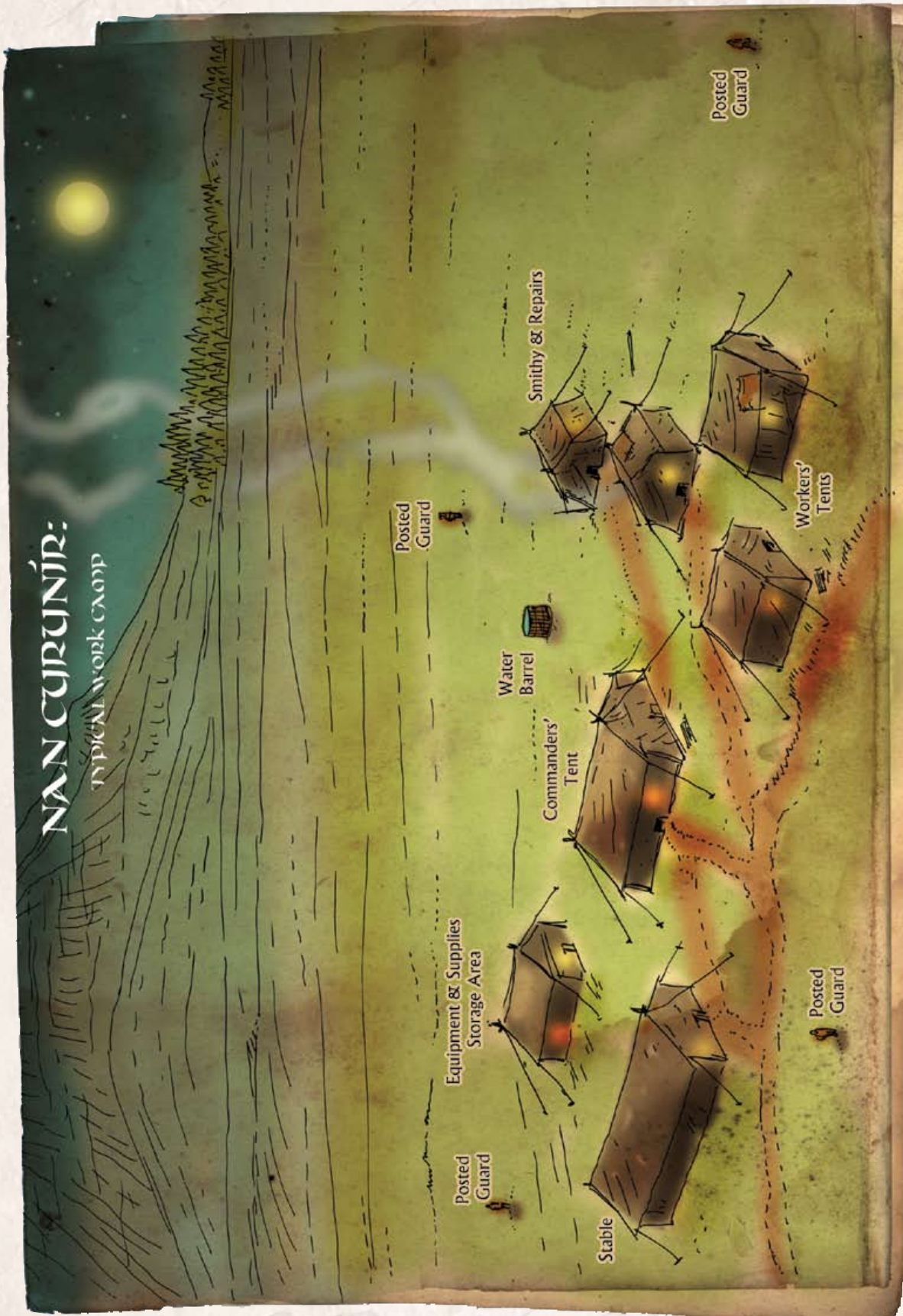
The majority of the camp workers are Orcs and Hill-men, with some Half-orcs filling out their ranks. Half-orc and Uruk overseers command these workers by tongue and lash, to enforce the cruel will of their unforgiving master Saruman.

Work camps dot the landscape throughout Nan Curunír. These are torn down or abandoned when they have deforested or thoroughly mined a given area, and new ones raised where resources are more plentiful. Though several dozen camps may be in operation at any given time, no specific locations are denoted on the map (see page 61), because of their itinerant nature. The Narrator is left to determine the specific locations for work camps at any given time.

A typical work camp outside the Ring of Isengard is comprised of a series of tents or wooden structures, depending on the particular camp's intended longevity. Mining camps, for example, usually remain viable for longer periods of time, and are therefore constructed to last for several months or more. Tents, used for the shorter-term logging encampments, are made of thick, grey can-

NAN CURUNÍR:

TYPICAL WORK CAMP



was supported by poles cut from the surrounding woods or brought to the site by the work detail. Wooden structures are shabbily built, mortarless cabins with dirt floors. They are usually erected without peg or nail to facilitate tear down, after which the materials can be dragged across the Vale by horses or Orcs, and then reassembled in a new location.

Most tents and buildings serve as housing and storage, though some also function as smithies and tool-repair workshops, stables, and guard posts. The number of workers manning these camps ranges from ten to fifty, depending upon its assigned task. Long-term details working far from Isengard also retain a transport team responsible for hauling the camp's yield to Orthanc, and returning with replacement supplies and fresh workers.

The camps operate primarily during the night time hours, although workers may be forced to work through the daylight hours when Saruman's projects require more materials.

BARROW OF THE FORGOTTEN KING

In the decades before the War of the Ring, Saruman has spent much energy gathering new allies, spies, and guardians. Though he believed himself safe within the impenetrable tower of Orthanc, he knew Nan Curunír itself must be protected so that he might amass and equip his fell armies without interruption.

To that end, he made pacts with many evil creatures, not the least of which include a Barrow-wight from the Barrow-downs in the far north. Saruman created a new barrow in the hills along the eastern side of the Wizard's Vale and had the ancient, mummified noble transported to it in secret.

Since the arrival of the Wight, tales have circulated among the Men and Orcs of Nan Curunír of disap-



pearances along the south-eastern plains of the valley in the deep of the night—lone travellers as well as entire squads of the White Hand have gone suddenly missing, never to be heard from or of again.

Enemies and allies of Saruman alike have much to fear from the entity known only as the Ghast, a being of great evil and power bedecked in old ceremonial armour, with the ability to travel the earth without even touching the ground. Of those lost in eastern Nan Curunír, no trace has ever surfaced, their fates forever secreted away in the night.

Those unfortunate enough to be victims of the Ghast are lured or dragged to its barrow, there made the victims of dark rites that sap away their very strength, until no life remains. Their flesh eventually decomposes, leaving only their possessions to recall their presence in the deep barrow. The Ghast takes no interest in these items, save as a measure of his kills. His mound of treasure ever grows.

The Ghast's statistics are those of a typical Barrow-wight, as described on pages 294–5 of the core rulebook and pages 14–5 of *Fell Beasts and*

Wondrous Magic, with the following adjustments. In addition, the Ghast knows all of the additional spells listed in the basic Wight statistic block.

CREATURE ADVANCEMENTS: +9

STATISTICS: +2 Stamina, +2 Willpower, +5 ranks Unarmed Combat: Brawling (Drain), +4 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Longsword), +2 ranks Intimidate (Fear), +1 point Courage, additional special ability: Flight (see page 78 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*), additional unique special ability: Drain (see below)

DRAIN: The Ghast can wring the strength from a victim's body by means of an evil ritual it can only attempt within its unhallowed barrow. To do so, the Ghast must make an attack test to grab the target (see 'Grab' on page 229 of the core rulebook). Each round the Ghast may spend a full-round action to drain a held target of 4 Strength. Victims reduced to 0 Strength must make a TN 10 Stamina test each round to avoid death, though they otherwise regain lost attributes normally.

TN EQUIVALENT: 20

THE BLACK POOL

As head of the Order of Wizards, Saruman the White delved into all manner of wizardry. As the Third Age progressed, the Wizard, failing to quickly attain the degree of power he sought, began to experiment with dark and evil sorceries, secretly performing incantations that were atrocities to the Order. Many of these experiments went awry in one manner or another, and a few left behind foul and spoiled creations, manifestations of evil magic that Saruman knew not how to destroy or unmake.

In the northwest of the vale, some three miles from Isengard, lies a dark, brackish pool surrounded by a trio of tall but sickly and blackened oakwoods. The water is fetid, stagnant, and murky, and sheds a pale luminescence visible from a thousand yards after nightfall. Those who come within a few dozen feet of the pool and its strange trees immediately sense the profanity of the place.

The pool has a will of its own, a result of Saruman's channelling of fell sorcery into it. The water itself is now perverted and unnatural, a rare occurrence in all of Middle-earth. The oaks were once Huorns, but are now twisted and fouled and under the powerful sway of the pool.

When living creatures come within a few feet of the pool, the tainted oaks attempt to knock them into the ensorcelled water, which is highly toxic to all living crea-

tures. Any who come into contact with a cup or more of the foul liquid (either by ingestion or contact) must make a Fortitude reaction test to resist its toxic effects.

The water has the following attributes.

TYPE: Ingested or contact
ONSET TIME: 1 round
POTENCY: +20 TN
TREATMENT: none

EFFECT: 2d6 Vitality loss
SECONDARY EFFECT: 1d6 Vitality loss

STAGES: 1

In addition, anyone who ingests a cup or more of the liquid gains 1 point of Corruption as he assumes some of the evil nature of the ensorcelled water.

The pool itself cannot be harmed or destroyed by physical means. Only powerful wizardry in the form of the *Land-healing* spell (see insert) has any hope of extinguishing its evil flame. The Black Pool has a strong taint, requiring a TN 25 Healing test to purify with that spell. Success turns the pool into a normal pond of murky water.

The tainted Huorns use the statistics presented on pages 31–2 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* with the following modifications.

CREATURE ADVANCEMENTS: +7
STATISTICS: +3 Strength, +2 Vitality, additional special ability :Terror (see page 80 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*)

THE VALE'S MALAISE

While the visible effects of Saruman's industry upon the once-beautiful Wizard's Vale are enough to dampen the spirits of most, there are also a number of concrete effects of the malaise that affects the very land of Nan Curunír.



LAND-HEALING

CASTING TIME: 1 hour**RANGE:** Special**DURATION:** Permanent**WEARINESS TN:** 15**COST:** 3 spell picks**METHOD:** Standard**SPECIALTY:** Secret Fire

EFFECT: Areas of Middle-earth may become infused with dark power as a result of evil sorceries, the committing of large-scale vile acts, or the long-term presence of servants of the Enemy like the Witch-King of Angmar. This spell, which must be cast within the afflicted area, sanctifies them, freeing them from the evil taint. Upon the completion of casting, the caster may make a single Healing test to remove the taint from the area against a TN determined by the Narrator.

SMOKE

'Over all his works a dark smoke hung and wrapped itself about the sides of Orthanc.'

— *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Saruman has turned his attention to building furnaces, forges, armouries, and smithies beneath Isengard. To accomplish this great task, literally hundreds of fires burn at any given time, requiring Saruman's servants to continually cut down the valley's trees and transport them into the deep bowels of Isengard. When they are burned, grey smoke billows from the shafts and vents within the Ring, spreading out over the Vale at the whim of the daily winds. As a result, massive clouds of smoke hang over Nan Curunír and besmirch every-

thing within the Vale. Travellers may find themselves in open air during one moment, and enshrouded by noisome, choking smoke in the next.

Each hour heroes remain within Nan Curunír, roll 1d6 and consult Table 3.1: Nan Curunír Smoke Conditions, to determine the condition of the air within a hundred-yard radius of the group. If they are within two miles of the Ring of Isengard, add +2 to the result.

Smoke affects vision, makes it difficult to see opponents in combat, and may cause injury when inhaled. Refer to Table 3.2: Smoke Condition Effects, for game effects. 'Stamina TN' specifies the difficulty of a Stamina test that must be made each minute spent in the smoke. Failure results in the temporary loss of one point each of Strength and Vitality, which can be recovered at the rate of one point per hour, but only when breathing clear air.

MORGAYAMAR

Morgayamar, an ancient force bound to the Wizard's Vale by Morgoth in the First Age, remains imprisoned beneath the rocky ground even in the late Third Age. Though imprisoned in his Heart Chamber behind the hidden Black Door, his maleficent power nevertheless pervades Nan Curunír. As described on page 96, Morgayamar's Baleful Influence and Beguiling Shadow special abilities cause the following test and roll modifiers to all those within the bounds of the area, even while he remains imprisoned:

- +2 TEST BONUS** to all Weariness tests to cast Sorcery spells.
- +2 TEST BONUS** to all fear tests made against the Free Peoples.
- 5 TEST PENALTY** to all Corruption tests made by those who have spent more than a month in the area.

FAUNA

At one time Saruman entreated with animals and plants, as did his fellow Wizards. As works of iron

TABLE 3.1: NAN CURUNÍR SMOKE CONDITIONS

ROLL	SMOKE CONDITIONS
1-2	Clear
3-4	Hazy
5	Medium
6+	Dense

TABLE 3.2: SMOKE CONDITION EFFECTS

CONDITION	OBSERVE (SPOT) PENALTY	ATTACK PENALTY	STAMINA TN
Hazy	-1	-	5
Medium	-3	-1	10
Dense	-5	-3	15



gradually won Saruman's affection, however, his communication with the elements of nature diminished. Saruman now uses his ability to speak with animals to dominate their wills and use them as his spies. Though these creatures may be dangerous for this reason alone, not all will go so far as to risk attacking intruders. Physically harmless animals found in Nan Curunír include badgers, birds (ducks, geese, grass grouse, great green pheasant, and swans), deer, dogs, foxes, and squirrels.

While within the Wizard's Vale, heroes must be cautious of several predators. Of particular concern are bears (usually brown, but some black), bats, bees (in Spring and Summer), birds of prey (eagles, falcons, and hawks), boars, snakes, spiders, wolverines, and wolves. Saruman may send such beasts against the weak or foolhardy, or simply to delay the approach of travellers or deplete their resources and energy. See Chapter Two: Beasts of the Land in *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* for statistical information regarding all of these creatures.

THE HARROWING OF ISENGARD

'One would say that all the Wizard's Vale was burning.'

— Aragorn, *The Two Towers*

During the course of the War of the Ring, the Wizard's Vale undergoes a great many changes at the hands of different beings, and therefore, in the Fourth Age, Nan Curunír becomes a vastly different place than it was even at the time of Gandalf's imprisonment. Destroyed are nearly all of the trees within the valley, resulting in the damaging and oftentimes complete eradication of the habitats of the various animal denizens. For that reason, few natural creatures roam the valley in the early years of the new age. The Ents tear down the dam holding back the Isen in the north of the valley and, under the aegis of King Aragorn, plant new forests both within the Ring of Isengard (see page 57 for more information) and throughout Nan Curunír. As the woods grow, animals slowly return, repopulating the Vale over the course of the Fourth Age's first fifty years. The Isen once again rushes loudly, making the Fords of Isen more treacherous but still passable. The Crossings are patrolled by the forces of Gondor and Rohan, as well as the few Ents remaining in this part of the world; in that sense, the Fords are far less dangerous.

Nan Curunír thus becomes once more a budding valley of nature, peace, and stability. The Free Peoples may pass through, or stop for rest, as they did in ages past, when Gondor of old controlled the area. In fact, many come solely for the chance to look upon the Treegarth, the last working of the ancient Ents in Middle-earth.

THE WHITE HAND

*'But there were many other folk
in Isengard. Saruman kept enough
wisdom not to trust his Orcs.'*

— Merry, The Two Towers



hough vast and subtle, Saruman's power alone is insufficient to maintain a holding as great as Isengard. The White Wizard employs many servants to do his bidding, and greed for power has seen him muster a terrible host of creatures and Men.



For years, Saruman kept his forces well-hidden from peers and neighbours. But while Gandalf was a prisoner atop Orthanc, Saruman tried to cow him with a show of force, ripping up the ground and opening the warrens beneath Isengard to the air above, revealing his armies in all their terror. A place devoted to study had become the extension of Saruman's hidden soul, a place of dark industry and fearful obedience, where freedom was meaningless and hope had no home.

Isengard's inhabitants are divided into four castes: Masters, Servitors, the Host, and Beasts. The Masters include Saruman and his trusted lieutenants. The Servitors are those who serve beneath them. Saruman's army of Orcs, Uruk-hai, and fallen Men make up the Host of Isengard, and the White Wizard has spawned or tamed many fell Beasts to support them.



THE MASTERS OF ISENGARD

'[W]e must have power, power to order all things as we will, for that good which only the Wise can see.'

— Saruman, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Saruman serves as the undisputed master of Isengard, ruling with pitiless authority. However, he cannot personally oversee his many schemes and designs. Many tasks are entrusted to an inner circle. Though they have earned Saruman's favour, no servant has earned his trust: Saruman scrutinizes all of their efforts, and informants help police their fellow servants.

SARUMAN THE WHITE, KEEPER OF ORTHANC

'[H]e is great among the Wise. He is the chief of my order. . . . His knowledge is deep, but his pride has grown with it, and he takes ill to any meddling.'

— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

RACE: From across the Sea

RACIAL ABILITIES: Agelessness (Saruman suffers no effects from illness or aging, though he appears to age at a very slow rate)

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 16 (+5), Nimbleness 12 (+3)*, Perception 14 (+4), Strength 8 (+1), Vitality 10 (+2), Wits 16 (+5)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +5, Swiftmess +4, Willpower +8*, Wisdom +5

DEFENCE: 14 (18 when wearing his robe, see below)

ORDERS: Magician, wizard, artificer (see *Paths of the Wise*, pages 40–1)

ORDER ABILITIES: Spellcasting 7, Artificer Masterwork (see *Paths of the Wise*, page 41), Craft Imitation (see *Paths of the Wise*, page 41), Cross-order Skill (Smithcraft), Final Strike, Imposing, Mastery of Magic, Robe of Authority (see *Paths of the Wise*, pages 25–7), Sanctum (Isengard), Sense Power, Staff, Staff of Power (see *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, pages 88–90), Wizard's Heart, Wizardly Power, Wizard Spellcasting 8

ADVANCEMENTS: 38

SPELLS: *Animal Messenger*, *Bane-spell*, *Beast Speech*, *Beast Summoning*, *Blade Preservation*, *Blessing of Aulë* (see *Paths of the Wise*, page 50), *Break Binding*, *Crafting-spell*, *Create Light* (2 picks), *Display of Power*, *Evoke Awe*, *Farspeaking*, *Fortify Works* (see *Paths of the Wise*, page

54), *Guarding-spell*, *Imitation-spell*, *Kindle Fire*, *Lightning*, *Mind-speech* (ability), *Opening-*

spell, *Quench Fire*, *Quicken Orc-spawn* (see page 73), *Resist Fear*, *Shatter*, *Shutting-spell*, *Slumber*, *Spellbinding*, *Spoken Thoughts* (ability), *Sundering*, *Transformation*, *Uncanny Industry* (see page 74), *Veil*, *Victory-spell*, *Voice of Command*, *Voice of Suasion* (ability), *Wizard's Fist* (see *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*, page 56), *Wizard's Guise*, *Wizard's Hand*, *Word of Command*

SKILLS: Appraise (Gems) +3, Armed Combat: Clubs (Staff) +1, Craft: Alchemy (Fires of Orthanc) +6, Craft: Breeding (Orcs, Uruks) +6, Craft: Industry (Wheels and Gears) +6, Debate (Negotiate, Parley) +12, Healing (Treat Wounds) +3, Inquire (Interrogate) +4, Insight +8, Intimidate (Power) +10, Language: Easterling (Balchoth) +3, Language: Elvish (Quenya) +8, Language: Elvish (Sindarin) +8, Language: Ents (Entish) +4, Language: Haradric (Umbar) +2, Language: Khuzdul (Angerthas Baraz-lagil) +3, Language: Late Adûnaic (Dunlendish) +6, Language: Late Adûnaic (Rohirric) +4, Language: Mordor (Black Speech) +4, Language: Orkish (Isengard dialect) +5, Language: Westron (Westron) +8, Lore/History: Elves (The Second Age) +10, Lore/History: Men (Dúnedain) +10, Lore/History: The Second Age (Rings of Power) +4, Lore/Other: The Enemy (the Necromancer, Sauron) +6, Lore/Spellcraft: Enchanted Items (Rings of Power) +6, Lore/Races: Dwarves (Var's Folk, Vigdís' Folk) +4, Lore/



SARUMAN FALLEN

To bring this description current with the events of the War of the Ring, make the following adjustments:

ADVANCEMENTS: 41

SPELLS: Add *Command*, *Enslave Beast*, *Possession* (see page 73), *Shadows and Phantoms*, +2 picks to *Uncanny Industry*

SKILLS: +2 ranks *Conceal (Hide Weapon)*, +2 ranks *Guise*, +4 ranks *Lore/Spellcraft: Enchanted Items (Rings of Power)*, +6 ranks *Lore/Spellcraft: Sorcery*

EDGES: Replace *Friends (the Wise)* with *Friends (spies)*

FLAWS: Replace *Secret with Hatred (Gandalf)*, add *Grasping*

GEAR: Replace Saruman's *Robe of Authority* with his *Robe of Many Colours* (see 'Saruman's Items of Power' on page 76), add *Saruman's Ring* (see page 77 of *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*)

CORRUPTION: Corrupted

+8, *Mimicry* +4, *Observe (Spot)* +8, *Persuade (Charm, Fast Talk, Oratory)* +12, *Siegecraft (Blasting Fire)* +1, *Smithcraft (Goldsmith, Jewellerysmith, Weaponsmith)* +10, *Stonecraft (Building)* +3

EDGES: *Clear Speech* (see *Paths of the Wise*, page 27), *Craftmaster*, *Fair*, *Foresighted*, *Friends (the Wise)*, *Hoard 5*, *Honey-tongued*, *Strong-willed*, *Wise*

FLAWS: *Arrogant*, *Dark Heart* (see *Paths of the Wise*, page 28), *Oath* (his mission for the Valar, forsworn), *Proud*, *Secret* (his growing obsession with *Rings of Power* and the *One Ring*)

HEALTH: 12

COURAGE: 4

RENOUN: 23

GEAR: *Staff of Power*, *Ring of Command*, *Robe of Authority*, *Familiar* (all under 'Saruman's Items of Power' on page 76). Additionally, Saruman has two treasuries (see 'Treasury of Orthanc' on page 35 and 'Treasury of Isengard' on page 53).

CORRUPTION: 12

SARUMAN'S MAGIC

Saruman has learned many secrets over the course of his studies and travels. Many long-forgotten spells are still known to the White Wizard, and he has devised enchantments of his own.

Possession (S)

'It is as I feared. This wizard has bewitched you.'

— *Gríma Wormtongue, The Two Towers*

CASTING TIME: 1 minute

RANGE: Line of sight

DURATION: Concentration, and see below

WEARINESS TN: 15

COST: 3 spell picks

REQUISITE: *Willpower* +6 or greater, *Voice of Command*, *Command*

METHOD: Standard

SPECIALTY: Sorcery

EFFECT: This spell allows the caster to impose his will and thought upon any target he can see, taking control over him. To establish dominance, the caster engages in an opposed *Willpower* test against the target. As with *Command*, the caster gains a +10 bonus to the test result. If the caster wins, he places his awareness within the mind of the target. While the spell lasts, the caster sees through the target's eyes, speaks with the target's voice, and moves the target's body.

The mind of the possessed is robbed of all senses, locked in a dark dream. While possessed, the target uses the caster's *Wits*, *Bearing*, and *Willpower* scores. The caster gains no access to the target's skills or order abilities, but may use his own skills and abilities, modified by the target's physical attribute modifiers as appropriate. While possessing a target, the caster must lie or stand still with eyes closed. *Possession* is considered *Demanding* for purposes of *Weariness*, and the caster's *Stamina* ultimately determines the spell's duration.

This spell can be broken with the *Break Binding* spell, though the caster receives a +10 bonus in the opposed *Willpower* test. A physical attack on the target or caster can also serve as a potential distraction: if either is damaged in combat, the caster must make a TN 15 *Wits* test to maintain control.

Quicken Orc-spawn (S)

'[T]hese creatures of Isengard, these half-orcs and goblin-men that the foul craft of Saruman has bred . . .'

— *Gamling, the Two Towers*

CASTING TIME: 10 minutes

RANGE: Touch

DURATION: One month

WEARINESS TN: 5

COST: 1 spell pick

METHOD: Standard

Races: *Ents (Customs)* +4, *Lore/Races: Elves (Realms, Kindreds)* +10, *Lore/Races: Men (Realms, Kindreds)* +10, *Lore/Race: Orcs (Breeding)* +7, *Lore/Race: Urukhai (Breeding)* +7, *Lore/Region: The East (Geography)* +4, *Lore/Region: Nan Curunír (Geography)* +6, *Lore/Region: The Shire (Trades)* +2, *Lore/Spellcraft: Other* +6, *Lore/Spellcraft: Secret Fire* +6, *Lore/Spellcraft: Sorcery* +2, *Lore/Wilderness: Star Lore* +6, *Lore/Wilderness: Wild Beasts*

ISENGARD

SPECIALTY: Sorcery

EFFECT: Saruman uses this spell to raise fell legions at incredible speed. The spell is cast upon an infant Orc, Half-orc, or Uruk, placing them in a dormant state, dramatically increasing their rate of growth. Once entranced, the infant is wrapped in a cocoon made from entrails and buried in specially-prepared pits of filth (see 'Spawning Tunnels' on page 54). If kept warm and properly tended, in a month's time the ghastly cocoon will burst, and from it rise a fully-grown Orc-spawn. They are strong and sometimes berserk, their minds still empty, though the spell leaves them impressionable and quick to learn. Quickened Orc-spawn know only one thing when they are re-born: that they serve Saruman.

Though well-suited to Saruman's purposes, the quickening process is not perfect: when quickened, Orc-spawn must make a TN 10 Vitality test. If they fail, some aspect of their growth has gone awry and they must take the Ill-made flaw (see page 80).

Uncanny Industry (S)

'We have work to do.'

— Saruman, *The Fellowship of the Ring* film

CASTING TIME: 5 hours

RANGE: Touch

DURATION: One day per point of Bearing

WEARINESS TN: 12

COST: 3 spell picks

REQUISITE: *Crafting-spell*, *Blessing of Aulë*, any Craft skill 6+

METHOD: Standard, Song

SPECIALTY: Sorcery

EFFECT: Saruman incorporated into this spell many secrets of craft and toil learned among the Dwarves of the East. A corruption of the *Blessing of Aulë* spell (see page 50 of *Paths of the Wise*), this spell weaves a subtle enchantment over a region one half-mile in radi-

us per point of the caster's Bearing. When the spell is cast, the caster must specify one profession to be affected. 'Profession' in this case refers to a single type of skilled or unskilled labour corresponding to a skill specialty: miners, masons, farmers, or weaponsmiths are all appropriate examples.

Those from the specified profession within the area of effect find their efforts more productive. The rate at which they work is increased by 10% for every point of the caster's Bearing modifier. Workers require less sleep and nourishment, and ignore all effects of Weariness for the duration of the spell. This spell cannot be cast more than once on the same region at the same time for increased effect.

One drawback of *Uncanny Industry* is that only raw, crude efforts are improved by the spell. Skilled craftsmen often find their efforts diminished by their haste. All those using a Craft skill (including Smithcraft, Stonecraft, and Siegecraft) while affected by the spell have their skill ranks temporarily capped at a maximum value equal to the caster's Bearing modifier.

The enhanced productivity of *Uncanny Industry* bears a heavy price. Whatever works are raised while this spell is in effect scour the region affected. In their fervour, the labour force despoils their surroundings by pulling down trees, ravaging stone, fouling water, and ruining soil. A caster may only use this spell in a given area a number of times equal to 100 divided by his Bearing modifier before the region is laid waste. (Multiple consecutive casters with different Bearing modifiers each contribute a number of 'points' equal to their Bearing modifiers each time one of them casts the spell. When a given region's total points equal 100 the region is despoiled.) The enchanted vigour also takes its toll on the workers. When the spell expires, all who toiled under its effects must make a TN 15 Vitality test or lose 6 Weariness levels. A Disastrous Failure results in the death of the labourer.

Each additional pick spent on this spell allows the caster to add an additional profession to the group affected by the spell. The statistics above apply to Saruman as of the dissolution of the White Council in TA 2951, 49 years before his fall from grace, and nearly 60 years prior to the War of the Ring. Though not yet wholly corrupt, bitterness and envy have a deep hold on the Wizard's heart, and Saruman is dangerously close to leaving the light forever. The influence of Linnar's Ring, (see 'Treasury of Orthanc' on page 35) and Morgayamar (see 'Morgayamar, the Shadow Under Orthanc' on page 96), combined with his own dark heart, make Saruman's doom inevitable.

SARUMAN'S BACKGROUND

Saruman was first of the five Istari to arrive in Middle-earth. Of all the Wizards, Saruman was ablest in lore and craft; he studied long in the archives of Gondor, and earned the name Curunír ('Man of Skill') among the Elves. Wherever he went, Saruman sought knowledge of Sauron, and of the bitter struggles against him and his servants that dominated the Second Age. Those in Gondor humoured the White Wizard, assuring him that the Shadow was defeated. The Elves thought otherwise, but said little.

Saruman suspected that some tether bound the spirit of Sauron to Middle-earth. After all, the fall of Númenor had not destroyed him, so how could the Last Alliance? Saruman watched as the Witch-king rose, and learned of the Rings of Power. From Elrond, Saruman coaxed the tale of the Ruling Ring. Was this the answer, the key to Sauron's vulnerability? The White Wizard learned all he could of Rings of Power, and asked the Wise to examine one of the Three. The Elf-lords refused him, and would not reveal where the rings were hidden. Saruman did not take this lightly, and bitterness took root in his heart. Pridefully, Saruman believed that he alone had the craft to forge a counter to Sauron's Ring.

When Gandalf drove Sauron from Dol Guldur in TA 2063, Saruman followed the Enemy into the East. Saruman found the Dark Lord entrenched in Nargubraz, mansion of the Dwarves of Var's line. As is recounted in *Dwarves: The Seven Houses of the Khazâd* in the *Moria* boxed set, Saruman reconciled the feuding houses of Var and Vigdís, aided Vigdís' clan in devising blasting powder, and helped drive Sauron from Nargubraz in TA 2460. Sauron returned to the West, and Saruman followed.

When the White Council was formed in TA 2463, Saruman convinced its members to place him at its head. Who better knew the Enemy's ways? Who had won a decisive victory against Sauron? Even Elrond and Gandalf could not rebuke Saruman's arguments. Galadriel felt misgivings, but could not give her fears a name.

None of the council suspected the truth. In the rubble of ruined Nargubraz, Saruman had found a Ring of Power, pulling Linnar's Ring from the dead hand of Isin, traitor-king of Var's folk. At last, Saruman had the chance to study a Ring of Power and divine its secrets. His early attempts were fruitless, and Saruman

was loath to enlist the aid of any other. The hold of Linnar's Ring grew, and he suspected his brethren of spying on him, growing afraid they might seize Linnar's Ring for themselves. A new ambition took root in him: Saruman longed to fashion a Ring of his own.

Distrust and bitterness led Saruman to shun his fellows, and he continued his efforts in secrecy. The citadel of Orthanc seemed a perfect place: strong, ancient, and close to Dol Guldur. There, Saruman might watch and check the workings of the Enemy (or so he argued to the White Council). The temper of Isengard seeped into Saruman's spirit, the malaise of Orthanc hastening his corruption. Saruman watched agents of the Enemy carefully and pieced together Isildur's fate. Watching Sauron's activities, Saruman divined their purpose: to find the One Ring, thought forever lost. Saruman mounted searches of his own, desperate to discover it himself. He hoped at this stage to keep it from the Enemy, though as years passed, darker thoughts took hold, and the wizard wondered what world he might make should the One Ring come to him.

Saruman is also described on pages 287–8 of the core rulebook, pages 75–8 of *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*, and pages 61–4 of *The Two Towers Sourcebook*.

USING SARUMAN IN YOUR CHRONICLE

Stories set before TA 3000 can make great use of Saruman. Though proud, arrogant, and strange, the White Wizard is not yet evil by any means, and serves as an ideal hook for adventures.

SARUMAN AS PATRON: Saruman has many concerns: he hungers for news of distant countries, he needs to gather intelligence of the Enemy's movements, and his labours require all manner of components, materials, and ingredients, some of which may only be found in lands far from Nan Curunír. He would make an admirable patron, gathering companies of heroes to serve as his agents. Saruman's errands could take them to the farthest corners of Middle-earth, through all manner of perils.

SARUMAN AS MASTER: The White Wizard might take a pupil or two. His

CARU THE CROW

Saruman learned bird-speech from Radagast the Brown Wizard. Saruman's own familiar Caru is a *cre-bain*, a carrion bird like those described on pages 57–8 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, but with +2 Perception and another 7 points in skills. Familiars are described on pages 72–5 of *Paths of the Wise*; Caru himself can be found on pages 74–5 of that book.

SARUMAN'S ITEMS OF POWER

The White Wizard bears powerful items he has enchanted, tokens of his office as head of the Order of Istari. Each corresponds to a new wizard order ability: Saruman's Staff and Ring are described on page 77 of *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*. Robes of Authority are described on pages 25–7 of *Paths of the Wise*. Saruman's white Robe of Authority is attuned to his power and only he may use it; it is imbued with the Blinding Light and Defence abilities. Once he casts it aside, Saruman crafts a new many-hued robe, which has only the Hue Shift ability.

knowledge of art, craft, and lore make him an ideal mentor for magicians and loremasters. Imagine Orthanc as a shadowy academy where students strive to master their will while resisting temptation and avoiding their master's subtle influence. How long can students stifle their curiosity about Saruman's secretive efforts?

SARUMAN AS ADVERSARY: As the chronicle progresses, the heroes might begin to suspect Saruman's motives, or curiosity might send them into endeavours that provoke Saruman's wrath. How can they escape the White Wizard's revenge? Who can they go to for help? Will any of the Wise believe them?

DÚACH, CAPTAIN OF GUARDS OF ISENGARD

A Dunlending warrior famous around his folk's campfires, Dúach, the Captain of Saruman's guards, was born in the shadow of the Ring of Isengard. He was subverted by Saruman, who saw his potential as an ally. Though few in Isengard are informed of Saruman's great schemes, Dúach was brought into the inner circle to better serve the White Wizard. His basic statistics are those of a Dunlending chieftain (see page 91), with the following adjustments.

ADVANCEMENTS: +15

STATISTICS: add elite order Captain; add order abilities Air of Command, Battle-hardened, Leadership, Tactics 2; Warwise +1; change Favoured Weapon to Longsword; change Preferred Weapon specialty to Longsword; add edge Rank 1 (Captain of Guard of Isengard); add flaws Arrogant, Fealty (Saruman); change Armed Combat subskill and specialty to Blades (Longsword), +2 ranks Armed Combat, +9 ranks Inspire, +6 ranks Intimidate, +1 rank Observe, change Ranged Combat specialty to Crossbow, +3 ranks Ranged Combat, +5 ranks Ride, +6 ranks Siegecraft, +1 rank Survival, +4 ranks Unarmed Combat: Brawl; +2 Bearing, +1 Strength

EQUIPMENT: Masterwork longsword, masterwork dagger, masterwork chainmail corselet with plate, masterwork shield, fine clothing, badge of the Captain of the Guard, horn

RENOUN: 2

KHIDIZ, MASTER OF CRAFT

A Dwarf of the house of Vigdís, Khidiz has a keen mind for invention and efficiency, though his strange ways and stern temper earned him little esteem among his own folk. Exiled by his people, the Dwarf found a home in Isengard where Saruman gave him the opportunity to pursue craft and industry on a grand scale. Khidiz is a master of gears and cogs, components of machines to aid in the speedy production of metalworks. Khidiz taught Saruman much of machines, blasting fire, and other devices, and the renegade Dwarf was instrumental in shaping this new ideal of craft. By TA 3000, the strange Dwarf is noticeably absent from the forges and foundries he helped design. Perhaps his Dwarf-conscience could not stomach working beside Orcs, or perhaps he learned of Saruman's secret Dwarfing and vied for it, to his doom. Whether Khidiz has perished, fled Isengard, or is imprisoned deep under Orthanc the Narrator must decide. If located, Khidiz could provide much information about Saruman's schemes and devices.

KHIDIZ: Male, Dwarf (Vigdís' line), Craftsman: 25 adv, Armed Combat: Clubs (Hammer) +9, Craft: Industry (Wheels and Gears) +12, Craft: Alchemy (Incendiaries) +12, Smithcraft +12, Stonecraft +10, Hatred (Var's folk), Renown: 4

GÁLWA, STEWARD AND DOORWARDEN

The thin, nervous son of a Dunlending chieftain, Gálwa is charged with discerning the nature of guests, opening the door to them when appropriate, and alerting Saruman when company calls. Given the unenviable duty of interrupting the White Wizard when guests arrive,

Gálwa fears his master will one day take exception to an interruption, and pulverize him into raw material for the breeding pits. Gálwa also holds the title of Steward of Orthanc, the person in charge of bookkeeping and routine administration. Gálwa's statistics are as a standard Dunlending Servant (see page 83).

GRÍMA WORMTONGUE

Counselor to King Théoden, Gríma son of Gálmód—called 'Wormtongue'—was easily swayed to evil by Saruman the Wise. Now Gríma works Saruman's will upon his liege-lord Théoden, poisoning thoughts and inflicting foul leechcraft towards the King's ruination. Wormtongue spends most of his time in Meduseld administering venomous counsel to the King, but he visits Orthanc frequently. Gríma's history with Saruman is detailed on pages 15–6 and his statistics can be found on page 289 of the core rulebook and pages 76–9 of *The Two Towers Sourcebook*.

LUGHÚR, BREEDING MASTER

Master of the breeding pits beneath Isengard, Lughúr is an old and crafty Orc-shaman. He is unusually tall, and stands unusually upright for one of his race. Also rare for his folk, he wears a long, stringy beard, resembling in manner and form an Orc-version of Saruman. Lughúr sees that Saruman's breeding pits work to full efficiency and aids Saruman in other breeding experiments. Lughúr's statistics are the same as the Mountain-breed Orc-magician described on page 40 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, with the addition of the Orc breeding pit tender template on page 85.

MÓG, GENERAL OF ARMS

First among Saruman's Half-orcs, Móg has been trained to lead troops into battle, and has rigorously studied strategy and tactics from ancient volumes of lore. Additionally, Móg learned the scant battle-craft of his own folk, and has gleaned enough from study and practice to become a cunning, capable general for the Host of the White Hand. He labours to ensure that Saruman's forces are properly trained and disciplined, and that production of the army grows at the rate it must to achieve the White Wizard's goals. Móg's statistics are those of a Half-orc captain, as described on page 90, with the following adjustments.

ADVANCEMENTS: +10

STATISTICS: add order abilities Air of Command, Leadership, Tactics; +2 levels Command edge (total Command 4); +1 rank Armed Combat: Blades, +4 ranks Armed Combat: Clubs, +2 ranks Inspire, +5 ranks Lore/History: Great Battles, +2 ranks Ride, +1 rank Siegecraft, +2 ranks Weather-sense; +1 Perception, +1 Strength, +2 Wits; +2 Wisdom, +1 Willpower

EQUIPMENT: Masterwork chainmail hauberk with plate, masterwork longsword, masterwork dagger, general's war-scepter, horn, seal of the White Hand

RENOUN: 3

RADLÚK, BEAST-MASTER

A fearsome and grizzled Isengard Orc, Radlúk is chief of Saruman's beast-masters, and was chosen for his natural ability to breed, tame, and train wolves, Wargs, and other beasts. Older than many Orcs, Radlúk has served the Dark Powers for centuries, breeding Wargs in Mount Gundabad for the Great Goblin. Radlúk is heavily scarred, and a few of his fingers are missing from wayward bites from

his fierce charges. Thick-bodied and stout, he is a great, fat one-eyed Orc, with a long scar across his missing eye, and a piece of leather riveted over the empty socket. Lamé in one leg, he leans on a twisted staff of black wood. Living with beasts all the time, he has learned the *Beast-speech* spell as a magical ability. Radlúk's statistics are those of a standard Orc breeding pit tender (see page 85) with the following improvements.

ADVANCEMENTS: +10

STATISTICS: add edge Command 1 (beast-masters of the White Hand); add flaw Crippling Wounds (lame, half-blind); add magical ability *Beast-speech* (ten advancement picks); +4 ranks Armed Combat: Other (Whip), +6 ranks Craft: Breeding (Wargs), +6 ranks Craft: Animal Training (Wargs), +4 ranks Healing (Treat Wounds), +4 ranks Intimidate (Fear), +4 ranks Language: Warg-speak, +6 ranks Lore: Fell Beasts (Wargs), +5 ranks Mimicry (Beasts)

EQUIPMENT: Masterwork whip, leather armour, walking staff, whistle

REOWN: 2

VALECARN, SARUMAN'S APPRENTICE

The ancient bloodlines of Númenor flow true in the veins of this stern-eyed scholar from Umbar. He spent his youth exploring Umbar's ancient ruins, and there found lost legacies of the Black Númenoreans. When older, he practiced the arts of sorcery and took the name Valecarn ('Red Power'), eventually seeking out Saruman and asking for admittance to the Order of Wizards. He was already a gifted magician, and the store of ancient grimoires he brought as gifts won him a place as Saruman's apprentice.

Valecarn is obsessed with sorcery and spells of shadow and illusion. He longs to look into the *palantír* and gaze upon the past glories of

lost Umbar, but Saruman has forbidden it. After twenty years, the White Wizard still refuses to name Valecarn a Wizard, delegating him to lesser tasks. As his patience wanes, Valecarn may act on his own accord.

VALECARN: Male; Man (Black Númenorean); Magician, Loremaster: 20 adv; Insight +10, Lore/History: Umbar (Black Númenoreans) +12, Lore/Spellcraft: Enchantments +10, Lore/Spellcraft: Sorcery +10, Search +10; Expertise: Black Númenoreans, Scroll Hoard, Spellcasting 6 (*Finding and Returning, Forgetfulness, Mind Speech, Misdirection, Spoken Thoughts, Shadows and Phantoms, Slumber, Veiling Shadow, Wizard's Guise*), Spellcasting Specialty: Sorcery, Wizard's Heart.

WRNACH, SPY-MASTER

Despite his title of Spy-master, Wrnach does little spying and rarely leaves Isengard, save under the most extreme of circumstances. Instead, he serves as a clerk, coordinating Saruman's reconnaissance activities. Working from a small chamber in the fifth portion of the ring-wall, Wrnach writes reports that consolidate scraps of information from the spies, messengers, envoys, and message-birds from afar. Wrnach also listens carefully to the words of the informants who maintain discipline in Isengard, and uses them to weed out any betrayal from within. Wrnach's statistics are equivalent to those of a Half-orc spy (see page 86) with the additional edges Command 2 and Rank 1 (Spy-master of Isengard).

A SPY IN ISENGARD

*'It is difficult with these evil folk to know when they are in league,
and when they are cheating one another.'*

— Aragorn, *The Two Towers*

The Lidless Eye of Sauron is not blind to Saruman's designs. When their minds are linked through the *palantír*, Sauron can penetrate the White Wizard's defences and discern his hidden agenda. The Lord of Barad-dûr is no stranger to spy-craft and infiltration, and has placed a spy in Isengard to watch Saruman's efforts and alert him to any treachery. As this agent is unknown to Saruman, the Narrator must determine his identity. To individualise this villain, add the following template to an existing NPC, adjusting inconsistencies as appropriate and redistributing skill points required to qualify for order abilities and edges.

MORDOR-SPY

ADVANCEMENTS: +5-7

STATISTICS: additional elite order spy; additional order abilities Friends in Low Places, Watchful Companion (message-bird); add edge Ally (Sauron); add flaw Dark Secret (allegiance to Sauron); +2 ranks Inquire, +2 ranks Language: Black Speech, +1 rank Lore/Other (Sauron), +1 rank Observe, +2 ranks Search, +4 ranks Stealth

EQUIPMENT: Message-bird, Morgul-knife (see page 197 of the core rulebook and page 93 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*)

ORCS IN ISENGARD

*'He has taken up with foul folk,
with the Orcs.'*

— Treebeard, *The Two Towers*

Orcs are everywhere in Isengard. Some serve as scouts, soldiers, and Warg-riders, while others work as craftsmen in the forges under Isengard or as keepers in the breeding pits. Several different breeds of Orcs can be found in Isengard, as detailed below. Where the descriptions in this chapter do not specify one breed or another, assume the Orc in question is an Isengard Orc.

Isengard-orcs

The majority of Saruman's Orcs are Mountain-breed Orcs, recruited from the Misty Mountains and from Mount Gundabad. Their resilience serves them well in forges and battlefield alike. Mountain-breed Orcs are described on page 39 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.

Orcs of the Red Eye

The Lord of Mordor has sent Mordor-orcs to aid his new ally, but Saruman has little interest in them. He finds them inferior to his Isengard-orcs and suspects them as spies. Mordor-orcs are described in the core rulebook on pages 290-1 and in *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* on pages 38-9.

Orcs of the Deep

A few Orcs who originally dwelt under Methedras still remain in Isengard, though many have fallen to toil, to their peers, or to Saruman's temper. Discomforted by daylight more than other Orcs, Deep Orcs rarely leave Isengard's caverns. Deep Orcs possess the characteristics of Moria Orcs, found on pages 76-8 of the *Khazad-dûm* book in the *Moria* boxed set. Narrators can also use standard Orcs from the core rulebook (pages 290-1), or *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic* (pages 38-9), by assigning an additional -2 penalty in daylight.

URUK-HAI OF ISENGARD

'We are the fighting Uruk-hai! . . . We are the servants of Saruman the Wise, the White Hand: the Hand that gives us man's-flesh to eat.'

— Uglúk, *The Two Towers*

The emergence of Uruks from Mordor in TA 2475 terrified Saruman, who had just won a victory against Sauron in the East. Saruman devoted himself to obtaining captive Uruks, learning their nature, and devising a means of combating this new threat. As the Shadow took root in Saruman's heart, however, he began to admire the Uruks. He contemplated raising an army of them to oppose Sauron, using the weapon of the Enemy against him, and eventually began breeding Uruk-hai in greater numbers than ever in Mordor. By the time of the War of the Ring, Saruman had bred a new strain of Uruk-hai, one he considered to be the paragon of the breed. The following sections detail the various types of Uruk-hai that can be found in Isengard and its environs.

NEW ORC FLAWS

*'But there were some others that were horrible: man-high,
but with goblin-faces, sallow, leering, squint-eyed.'*

— Merry, *The Two Towers*

ORC-ANCESTRY

In some of Saruman's Half-orcs the Orc-bloodline runs strong, and they look unlike Men. These so-called Goblin-men have sharp teeth, black eyes, pointed ears, stooping gait, and are coloured more like Orcs than Men. Natural animals do not willingly tolerate the taint of darkness, so dogs bark at those with this flaw, horses shy away from them, and hunting birds avoid them when possible.

EFFECT: Half-orcs with this flaw are unable to pass for Men, unless hooded and cloaked or similarly disguised. Any Guile attempts made while trying to pass as a Man suffer a -5 penalty. This flaw also invests the character with a point of Corruption. Unless an animal has been trained to tolerate Orcs and Half-orcs, any Ride or Teamster tests attempted by the character have $+5$ TN.

IMPROVEMENT: This flaw may be taken a total of three times, with each additional level making the Half-orc more Orc-like in appearance and demeanour. The penalties are cumulative, doubling or tripling depending on the number of picks. At three picks, the Half-orc is practically an Orc, and can mingle freely among them.

ILL-MADE

Saruman's methods are imperfect; the filth of his breeding pits and randomness of his crossbreeding often results in Half-orcs or Uruk-hai who are lopsided and misshapen, more hideous than their kin. The breeders are under orders to slay any offspring whose deformities hinder their capabilities, but minor abnormalities and irregularities of appearance are ignored, and they are described by this flaw.

EFFECT: The Orc-spawn—Half-orc or Uruk—has some physical irregularity such as unusual coloration, large spots of irregular pigment, or misshapen physical features including missing ears or noses, slack jaws, misaligned shoulders, or missing or extra digits. The deformity has no effect on physical attributes, though if it is visible it lowers the affected individual's Bearing by 2.

IMPROVEMENT: With an additional pick, the flaw is more pronounced, with a -2 modifier to two appropriate skills determined by the Narrator.

REQUIREMENTS: Only Orc-spawn of Saruman may have this flaw.

Mordor Uruk-hai

Mordor Uruk-hai have the Uruk-hai characteristics on page 291 of the core rulebook or pages 48–9 of *Fell*

Beasts and Wondrous Magic. They are few in Isengard, either sent by Sauron as allies and spies, or captured by Sauron for his breeding program.

Uruk-hai Perfected

Perfected Uruk-hai emerge from their quickening pits larger and stronger than Mordor Uruks. They are given important positions in Saruman's armies, and assigned crucial duties. Saruman cannot yet breed Perfected Uruk-hai in great numbers. Perfected Uruk-hai possess the following adjustments to the basic Uruk-hai statistics given on page 291 of the core rulebook or pages 48–9 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*:

ADVANCEMENTS: $+2$

STATISTICS: additional edges Hardy, Tireless, Valour; $+2$ ranks Run; $+2$ Stamina

Feral Uruk-hai

Immediately after they emerge from their birth cocoons, Uruk-hai are filled with mindless rage and often attempt to slay anything they perceive with their dim awareness. Feral Uruk-hai possess the basic Uruk stats on page 291 of the core rulebook or pages 48–9 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, modified as follows:

ADVANCEMENTS: none

STATISTICS: remove order, order abilities, and all skills but for Track, add flaw Battle-fury 3 (this passes in a few minutes), -2 Perception, -5 Wits

EQUIPMENT: Naked, smeared with filth and slime

HALF-ORCS OF
ISENGARD

Saruman's breeding program has been extensive and long. His efforts have given rise to many half-breeds who possess various combinations of the traits of Orcs and Men.

Standard Half-orcs

Saruman has bred Uruks with wild Men of Dunland to create these typical Half-orcs. Although they vary widely in appearance, ranging from



swarthy, squint-eyed 'Southrons' to near-total Orc-hood, all have similar statistics. These are given on page 292 of *The Lord of the Rings* core rule-book, and on page 29 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.

Men of the White Hand

So far, Saruman has bred only a few Men crossed with Half-orcs. These 'Quarter-orcs' bear only a taint of Orc-ancestry, though they share the Orc-tendency towards ill-doing. The mongrel Men of the White Hand cannot be distinguished from ordinary men by appearance, so Saruman uses them to infiltrate courts across Middle-earth where Half-orcs would be noticed. Saruman intends to use Men of the White Hand as ambassadors once Sauron is overthrown. Men of the White Hand have the same statistics as standard Half-orcs, modified as follows:

ADVANCEMENTS: +3

STATISTICS: +2 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Daggers), +2 ranks Guise, +2 ranks Insight, +2 ranks Persuade, +1 rank Stealth, +1 Bearing, +1 Wits

EQUIPMENT: Fine clothing, disguise, dagger, kingly gifts (if on errands for Saruman), riding horse (if away from Isengard)

Dûr-edain

These Half-orcs, whose name means 'Dark Men,' are bred from Uruk-hai and Men. They bear little resemblance to Men, exhibit more cunning than Uruk-hai, and suffer none of the Orc-hatred for daylight. Their statistics are like those of standard Half-orcs with the following modifications.

ADVANCEMENTS: +3

STATISTICS: replace initial order with barbarian, replace initial order ability with Hard March, add flaw Orc-ancestry, replace Appraise skill with Climb, replace Conceal

skill with Jump, replace Guise skill with Intimidate, replace Persuade skill with Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +3 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Scimitars), +2 ranks Intimidate, +2 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +1 rank Run, +2 ranks Track, +1 Strength, +1 Vitality, +1 Wits

Drú-uruk

The Drúedain of the Drúwaith Iaur are a primitive race, ancient and secretive. Saruman, fascinated by their nature, ordered his Orc-scouts to capture some, and then interbred them with his other creations. The results were ugly and squat, more primitive than either race but possessing great woodcraft and vigour. Saruman let the breed continue, though he has had little luck capturing further Woses to expand his handful of Drú-uruk, or 'Wose-goblins.' These creatures are described by standard Half-orcs statistics modified as follows.

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ADVANCEMENTS: +5

STATISTICS: replace initial order with barbarian; replace initial order ability with Hard March; add order ability Walk Without Trace; add edges Night-eyed, Woodcrafty; add flaw Orc-ancestry; replace Appraise skill with Climb, replace Conceal skill with Jump, replace Guise skill with Intimidate, replace Lore/Race: Men specialty (Dunlendings) with (Half-orcs), replace Persuade skill with Ranged Combat: Spears (Javelin), +4 ranks Armed Combat: Clubs (Club), +4 ranks Ranged Combat: Spears (Javelin), +5 ranks Survival, +6 ranks Track, +3 ranks Weather-sense; -1 Bearing, +1 Perception, +1 Vitality, +2 Stamina



THE SERVITORS OF ISENGARD

*'Many houses there were. . . .
Thousands could dwell there, workers,
servants, slaver. . . .'
— The Two Towers*

Whether captured by his forces, sold into slavery, or born into service, the Servitors are the living gears of Saruman's machine of progress and industry. All accounted for, the servitors number in the hundreds. Most of his servants are Dunlendings, refugees from Minihiriath and Enedwaith, or Orcs and Half-orcs. In the early days of his fall, Saruman keeps his slaves and Half-orcs hidden from view, but later he relaxes such efforts. The Servitors are divided into three castes: Servants, Craftsmen, and Agents.

SERVANTS

*'Beneath the walls of Isengard there
still were acres tilled by the slaves of
Saruman. . . .'
— The Two Towers*

The engines of war require wood and coal for the furnaces, stone for fortifications, and food and shelter for the many soldiers and workers. Servants make up the greatest portion of the Servitors, and life among them is harsh. The Master of Orthanc demands efficiency and productivity, and ever-increasing quotas have reduced the servants to work-weary thralls. A cruel social order emerged as Saruman imposed rules and regulations on his servants. Informants became quick to report suspicious behaviour from their fellows in hope of gaining scraps of favour. Paranoia flourishes: the slightest misstep results in beatings, loss of property or privilege, or outright enslavement.

DUNLENDINGS

*'He had Men to guard his gates: some of
his most favoured servants, I
suppose. Anyway they were favoured
and got good provisions.'
— Merry, The Two Towers*

Dunlending Hill-men were the first to serve the White Wizard in number, and took residence in Isengard soon after he arrived. Saruman plied their chieftains with promises of wealth and iron weapons, and they gladly returned to the vale they regarded as their own. As the War of the Ring draws near Dunlendings are delegated to baser duties as Half-orcs and Uruk-hai gain Saruman's favour. Dunlendings are stationed throughout Nan Curunír to allay the suspicions of visitors. Statistics for these types can be found on pages 289-90 of the core rulebook.

Additionally, the following packages can be applied to the basic Dunlending statistics to create different types of Dunlending NPCs. Each package consists of advancements, skill improvements and/or statistic changes, and equipment.

Dunlending Craftsmen

Skilled labourers, these craftsmen tend to the needs of the servant population. Their ranks include weavers, carpenters, tanners, woodcarvers, metalsmiths, and stable masters.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

STATISTICS: change order to craftsman, change order ability to Speedy Work, add edge Craftmaster, change Armed Combat subskill to Clubs (Hammer), +3 ranks Appraise (Cloth, Woodwork, or Metalwork), +4 ranks Craft (Weaving, Tanning, or Carpentry) or +4 ranks Smithcraft (Blacksmith) or +4 ranks Stonecraft (Building), +2 ranks Observe (Spot or Listen), +2 ranks Teamster (Horse or Ox)

EQUIPMENT: Appropriate craft tools

Dunlending Labourers and Slaves

Outcasts, prisoners, refugees, slaves, and any others who lose their freedom through rule-breaking—these pitiful Men engage in the heaviest labour. Felling trees for the furnaces and quarrying stone are their usual tasks. Slaves also till the fields around Isengard, enduring terrible hardship until they drop. Those who falter become fodder for Wargs.

ADVANCEMENTS: none

STATISTICS: additional flaw Craven, +2 ranks Craft (Farming)

EQUIPMENT: Tools (axes, picks, hoes, or rakes), chains and manacles

Dunlending Servants

Highest among Saruman's Dunlendings, these servants work in Orthanc performing a variety of roles: groundskeeping, cooking, cleaning, or attending Saruman personally. The servants revel in their privileged positions, though close proximity to Saruman can be hazardous.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

STATISTICS: change order to craftsman, change order ability to Speedy Work, add edge Friends (servants),

change Armed Combat subskill to Clubs, +3 ranks Appraise (Grounds, Food or Cleanliness), +2 ranks Conceal, +3 ranks Craft (Cooking, Cleaning, or Gardening) or +3 ranks Smithcraft (Blacksmith) or +3 ranks Stonecraft (Building), +2 ranks Debate (Bargain), +2 ranks Observe (Spot or Listen), +3 ranks Persuade (Charm)

EQUIPMENT: Fine garments, cleaning or gardening materials

Dunlending Wall Guard

These sentinels guard the Ring of Isengard, and are critical to its security. As such, they bear fine arms and equipment, and receive decent food and supplies. They watch over Isengard and Saruman's other strongholds in Nan Curunír.

ADVANCEMENTS: +5

STATISTICS: change order to warrior; change order ability to Favoured Weapon (Spear); add order ability Evasion; additional edges Accurate, Dodge, Wakefulness, Warwise, Wary; +6 ranks Armed Combat: Polearms (Spear), +5 ranks Intimidate, +4 ranks Lore/Realm: Isengard (Fortresses), +5 ranks Observe (Spot), +7 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow), +1 rank Ride (Horse), +1 rank Run, +3 ranks Siegecraft (Defence); +1 Swiftmess

EQUIPMENT: Spear, large shield, chain-mail hauberk, longbow

Dunlending Children

Though he discourages fraternization, Saruman's servants occasionally bear children. Saruman demands they be kept from his sight, raised quietly and far from his person. Parents are wise to obey, as Isengard's breeding-masters are merciless when gathering new material for the pits. Children do not thrive in the gloom of Orthanc, and are doomed if they venture unescorted into areas frequented by Orcs or Uruk-hai. Saruman does not

permit his subjects to 'waste' time training children, so few learn any skills until designated for servitude.

ISENGARD CHILDREN: Male or Female; Man (Middle Man: Dunlending); no order: 0 adv; Conceal +1, Observe (Spot) +2, Stealth (Sneak) +1. Many children of Isengard have the traits Furtive and Craven.

HALF-ORCS

I wonder what he has done? Are they Men he has ruined, or has he blended the races of Orcs and Men? That would be a black evil!

— Treebeard, *The Two Towers*

Bred through dark craft, Half-orcs are the favoured servants of the White Wizard. Saruman trusts them more than Dunlendings, and he enjoys the air of reverence they show their maker. These sallow louts are becoming Saruman's principle subjects, carrying out his business outside the Ring of Isengard. The following templates can further modify the statistics of any of the sub-types of Half-orcs on pages 81-2.

Half-orc Overseers

These taskmasters drive Dunlending labourers and slaves as they scour the surrounding land, and oversee the production of goods and gear needed for the great endeavour. They serve as record-keepers and ensure that quotas are met and resources are not wasted. Overseers usually motivate their charges with harsh insults and threat of the lash.

ADVANCEMENTS: none

STATISTICS: change to warrior order, change order ability to Evasion, change favoured attributes to Bearing and Strength, change favoured reaction to Willpower, +2 ranks Armed Combat: Clubs

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(Club), +3 ranks Armed Combat: Whip, +2 ranks Intimidate, +1 rank Observe, +1 rank Search, +2 ranks Unarmed Combat: Brawling
EQUIPMENT: Whip, club, clothing, horn

Half-orc Woodsmen

Charged with gathering fire-fuel, Half-orc woodsmen travel in gangs across the Vale of Nan Curunír, and into Fangorn Forest. They hew trees new and old and see that Dunlending slaves drag the wood back to Isengard.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

STATISTICS: change to barbarian order, change order ability to Marking-signs, change favoured attributes to Strength and Vitality, change favoured reaction to Stamina, add edge Woodcrafty, +3 ranks Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe), +2 ranks Climb, +2 ranks Survival (Forests), +1 rank Weather-sense

EQUIPMENT: Axe, clothing, whistle

CRAFTSMEN

'The old world will burn in the fires of industry. The forests will fall.

A new order will rise. We will drive the machinery of war.'

— Saruman, *The Two Towers* film

Beneath Isengard, new technologies and methods are being developed. No longer do craftsmen labour on pieces of gear, each an expression of artistry. Now teams of labourers use great machines to speed production, and objects are hammered out uniformly, fashioned by rote. Function, practicality, and efficiency are valued above aesthetics and quality. Equipment from Saruman's foundries is crude and abhorrent to the

eyes of any master craftsman, but it serves his purposes adequately.

ORC CRAFTSMEN

'I looked on [Isengard] and saw that, whereas it had once been green and fair, it was now filled with pits and forges.'

—Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*



Though not as skilled as Elves or Dwarves, Orcs are cunning craftsmen, and Saruman saw they would serve him in this regard. Their corrupt nature makes Orcs well-suited to Saruman's industry. Stooped, singed, and scarred from their work, Orcs tend the furnaces and boilers under Isengard, and help Saruman fashion Blasting Fire and other weapons of war. Orcs employed by Saruman as craftsmen are split almost evenly

between Isengard-orcs and Orcs of the Deep. Very few Mordor-orcs are placed in such positions.

Orc Armourers

Grizzled and iron-thewed, these Orcs work endlessly, banging out armour, shields, and weapons for the armies of the White Hand. The armourers take great pride in their work, for they give the White Hand its claws of iron. They also produce the cogs, chains, and other special parts required in Saruman's war-machines.

ADVANCEMENTS: +4

ATTRIBUTES: added edge Craftmaster, +3 ranks Craft: Industry (Gears and Wheels), +3 ranks Lore: Other (Metallurgy), +5 ranks Smithcraft (Weaponsmith, Armoursmith or Blacksmith), +1 rank Smithcraft (Weaponsmith, Armoursmith or Blacksmith)

EQUIPMENT: Hammer and tongs, other tools as appropriate. Armourers carry only long knives as weapons, and wear no armour.

Orc Builders

An army of builders is responsible for construction detail throughout Isengard. They level entire forests (eventually clearing the basin of trees), assemble Saruman's machines, build scaffolding and towers, and direct the delving of shafts, mines, and tunnels.

ADVANCEMENTS: +4

ATTRIBUTES: add edge Doughty, +3 ranks Craft: Industry (Gears and Wheels), +3 ranks Lore: Other (Mining or Architecture), +6 ranks Stonecraft (Building or Delving) or +6 ranks Craft: Carpentry (Woodwork)

EQUIPMENT: Whip, tools as appropriate

Orc Mixers

Mixers tend carefully to the brewing, refining, and mixing of the alchemical substances in Saruman's mixing rooms, including various forms of the Fire of Orthanc. Some also work in the spawning tunnels, concocting the filth used to quicken Orc-spawn.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

ATTRIBUTES: +3 ranks Craft: Alchemy (Mixing), +2 ranks Observe (Spot)

EQUIPMENT: Long stirring poles and various scoops, vials, and urns of reagents. Orc mixers carry no armour or weapons.

Orc Beast-masters

These rugged brutes breed the Wargs Saruman's Orcs use for mounts, training them for ferocity. As a result, beast-masters often lose fingers, hands, and even lives to the Wargs they keep.

ADVANCEMENTS: +3

ATTRIBUTES: +3 ranks Armed Combat: Other (Whip), +4 ranks Craft: Breeding (Wargs), +4 ranks Craft: Animal Training (Wargs), +2 ranks Lore/Wilderness Lore: Fell Beasts (Wargs)

EQUIPMENT: Whip, leather armour, bucket of Warg fodder

Orc Breeding Pit Tender

Least-esteemed of their kind in Isengard, Breeding Pit Tenders prepare and stir the filth quickening Orc-spawn gestate in, and assist when Saruman's creations emerge screaming, into terrible new life. For whatever reason, this role is assigned almost exclusively to Deep Orcs.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

ATTRIBUTES: +2 ranks Craft: Alchemy (Mixing), +3 ranks Observe (Spot)

EQUIPMENT: Long stirring poles and little else

ORC FOOD AND DRINK

'I will not . . . touch Orc's meat or anything else that they have mauled.'

— *Gimli, The Two Towers*

Orcs' foul medicine and fiery liquor are detailed on page 96 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, but Saruman has also helped create other varieties of enchanted provisions for his Orcs.

ORC-RATIONS

Specially cut and prepared, these raw strips of flesh smell vile and taste worse. Those without Orc-blood who eat them must make a TN 10 Vitality test or retch and sicken, suffering one level of Weariness and a -2 penalty on all physical tests for 2 hours. They serve Orcs and Half-orcs far better: a single strip of flesh can sustain an Orc for an entire day of hard labour, and grants a +2 bonus to Stamina tests to resist Weariness.

ORC WAR-WINE

Saruman's Uruk-hai berserkers use War-wine to provoke their battle-frenzy. This thick, milky liquid is brewed from mushrooms sprouting around the breeding pits, as well as other foul ingredients. To those who are not Orc-spawn it acts as a poison similar to serpent's venom (see 'Sample Poisons' on page 246 of the core rulebook). Orc-spawn, however, find their blood enflamed by the brew, which fills them with a feral rage and deadens the sensation of pain. For 1d6 hours, drinkers reduce all wound penalties by 3 (this stacks with the Hardy edge), and suffer the equivalent of the Battle-fury 2 flaw. This effect is cumulative with any levels of Battle-fury the drinker already possesses.

Orc Leeches

Orc Leeches serve as physicians to Saruman's forces. They use tribal remedies, Orc-medicine (see page 96 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*), and brutal surgery, (often sewing or nailing pieces of metal and leather over more grievous injuries) to keep Saruman's troops alive. They are also adept poisoners, who can concoct toxins and venomous broths as well as dispense them.

ADVANCEMENTS: +4

ATTRIBUTES: add order ability Brew Poison (two improvements: any onset time, brew damaging poisons), +3 ranks Craft: Alchemy (Orc-brews), +3 ranks Healing

(Treat Wounds), +2 ranks Lore/Wilderness Lore: Herbs (Curative Herbs)

EQUIPMENT: Orc-medicine and Orc-liquor (see page 96 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*), various talismans. Orc leeches also typically carry a variety of wicked knives, bone-saws, etc.

Orc Shamans

Powerful magicians, Orc Shamans have learned much of their craft from Saruman. They cast beneficial spells on Uruk soldiers and help brew Orc-liquor and War-wine. They are feared and revered by their fellows.

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Orc Shamans possess the statistics of the Mountain-breed Orc-magician described on page 40 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.

SPIES AND AGENTS OF THE WHITE HAND

*I do not know how it will all end,
and my heart misgives me; for it seems
to me that his friends do not all dwell
in Isengard.*

— Éomer, *The Two Towers*

Late in the Third Age, Saruman creates a network of spies and agents to infiltrate and influence the Free Peoples, leading them into darkness and servitude to Mordor. Saruman's eyes are far-reaching, his subtle and sinister agents turning up in the most unexpected of places.

SPIES

The White Wizard's spies are less baleful than Mordor's, mere eyes or ears in places where Saruman might not otherwise have them.

Dunlending Spies

Clever for hillfolk, Dunlending agents were tutored by Saruman himself. Free to come and go from Isengard, they travel about Middle-earth, their Mannish blood letting them move unhindered in civilized lands. This template should be applied to the Dunlending statistics described on pages 289–90 of the core rulebook.

ADVANCEMENTS: +8

STATISTICS: change favoured attributes to Nimbleness and Perception; change favoured reaction to Swiftiness; add order Rogue; add order abilities Lurking in Shadows, Lockpicking; add elite order spy; add order ability Friends in Low

Places; add edges Furtive, Curious, Honey-tongued; add flaws Craven, Dark Secret (Spy of the White Hand); +3 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Dagger), +2 ranks Appraise (Documents), +3 ranks Conceal (Documents), +4 ranks Guise, +4 ranks Inquire (Converse), +1 rank Legerdemain (Open Lock), +5 ranks Observe (Hear), +6 ranks Persuade (Charm), +4 ranks Search, +8 ranks Stealth (Sneak)

EQUIPMENT: Nondescript clothing, dagger, token of the White Hand

Half-orc Spies

Saruman's Half-orcs are adept at spying, rumour-mongering, bullying, and ferreting information. Born and bred in Isengard, they have difficulty infiltrating tight-knit communities and prefer areas where travellers from afar are common. They sometimes serve as heralds, though Saruman rarely parleys with foes. Statistically, these are standard Half-orcs and Men of the White Hand, both described on page 81.

Informants

Saruman's spy-master monitors all the servants and slaves of Isengard, and within Nan Curunír his many informants act as the fingers of the White Hand. All informants are Half-orcs (of any variety) or Dunlendings, hand-picked to spy on their underlings, peers, and bosses. Those who report wrongdoing and criminal misdeeds receive special favours and preferential treatment, so their ranks grow steadily. The following package can be applied to nearly any set of statistics in this chapter.

STATISTICS: add flaw Dark Secret (Informant), +2 ranks Stealth (Sneak)

AGENT TEMPLATES

Far more insidious than his spies are Saruman's agents, who use pow-

ers of persuasion and other, less subtle means to do his bidding. While spies observe and gather information, agents influence and subvert those who Saruman deems troublesome.

Assassins of the White Hand

Even Saruman cannot always rely on persuasion, and he must occasionally smite rivals from afar with subtlety, instigating an untimely death or accident to prevent further obstruction. To handle these matters, Saruman has trained several Half-orcs (both standard Half-orcs and some Dûr-edain) in assassination. These assassins employ subtle poisons, keen blades, or even foul magic in the pursuit of their craft.

ADVANCEMENTS: +10

STATISTICS: add order ability Treacherous Blow; add elite order spy; add order ability Poisoner; add edges Fell-handed 2 (Men), Quick-draw, Wary; add flaw Dark Secret (Assassin of the White Hand); +4 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Short Sword), +1 ranks Climb, +2 ranks Conceal (Hide Weapon), +2 ranks Guise, +2 ranks Observe (Spot), +4 ranks Persuade (Fast Talk), +4 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +1 rank Run, +4 ranks Stealth (Shadow); +1 Nimbleness

EQUIPMENT: Nondescript clothing, masterwork dagger, shortbow, various currencies, area maps, various poisons (see page 246 of the core rulebook)

OTHER UNUSUAL GUESTS

The White Hand enjoys a long reach, and its influence spreads far and wide. At the Narrator's discretion, Isengard may entertain guests far stranger than Half-orcs and their ilk. Gold flowed freely between the Shire and Orthanc, and Saruman's agents proliferated in Bree and elsewhere. While establishing these

arrangements, Saruman may have brought delegates from far away to be schooled in his scheming enterprises.

Though Saruman's tenure in Isengard has seen a decline in dispensation of lore and knowledge, some still go there to consult ancient tomes or to seek counsel from Saruman. Loremasters, craftsmen, and magicians might all be found in Isengard, either independent or enthralled to Saruman.

Some other unusual guests might include a frightened Sackville-Baggins Hobbit held hostage against ill-dealings from his kinfolk; imprisoned Woses kept for study; hapless scholars who learned too much in Orthanc's libraries; captive children of Dunlending, or Rohirric nobles held to ensure loyalty; delegates from the East or South; or subjects from early experiments with the *palantír*—senseless wretches mad from exposure to the Lidless Eye—still kept deep below Orthanc and questioned for insight gleaned from exposure to Sauron's power.

THE HOST OF ISENGARD

I saw the army go: endless lines of marching Orcs; and troops of them mounted on great wolves. And there were battalions of Men, too.

— Merry, *The Two Towers*

The Host of Isengard consists of many different troops—Orcs, Uruk-hai, Half-orcs, and Dunlendings—each serving Saruman in different roles. At the height of its power, the Host of Isengard contains roughly 10,000 Orcs, Uruk-hai, and Half-orcs; approximately 3,000 Dunlending Hill-men; and a few hundred beasts of battle. Troops of various types are frequently shifted between roles, so the proportions indicated in the sidebar on page 88 are ideal rather than typical. Of the troops listed, the Orcs divide nearly evenly between Isengard-orcs, and Mordor-orcs: the

Uruk-hai are almost all Perfected Uruk-hai, and the Half-orcs constitute a motley assortment of every type Saruman has bred.

Groups of soldiers are classified by purpose: a *gang* is a group of foot soldiers; berserkers come in *farrows*; Warg-riders are grouped by *wings*; scouts work together in *squads*; and the engineers are lumped into *crews*. Saruman is fond of the *dozen* and the *gross*, and his soldiers are grouped in units of a dozen individuals or a gross (a dozen dozen—144 soldiers). His battle-beasts are lumped together in *broods*, numbering a dozen individual creatures. Saruman lets the Dunlendings remain allied by clan, and wastes no time organizing them further.

Because the arms and armour of Isengard are mass-produced, no Orc or Uruk bears special or exceptional equipment, nor do they wear badges, emblems or other indicia aside from the White Hand emblazoned across breastplates, helmets, or their features. The only exception is that some of Saruman's captains bear the S-rune that is his sign.

HOST OF ISENGARD BREAKDOWN

ORCS

- 600 Light Archers
- 400 Medium Archers
- 300 Light Cavalry
- 200 Medium Cavalry
- 900 Light Infantry
- 600 Medium Infantry

URUK-HAI

- 500 Light Archers
- 300 Medium Archers
- 200 Heavy Archers
- 300 Berserkers
- 300 Medium Cavalry
- 200 Heavy Cavalry
- 200 Engineers
- 1,000 Light Infantry
- 1,000 Medium Infantry
- 2,000 Heavy Infantry

HALF-ORCS

- 200 Engineers
- 800 Light Infantry

DUNLENDINGS

- 500 Light Archers
- 350 Medium Archers
- 200 Heavy Archers
- 900 Light Infantry
- 700 Medium Infantry
- 350 Heavy Infantry

BEASTS

- 800 Wargs
- 100 Wargs with riders
- 200 Battle-wargs
- 300 Wolves
- 150 Wolves with riders

URUK-HAI OF THE WHITE HAND

*'You do not know pain. You do not know
fear. You will taste Man-flesh!'*

— Saruman to his Uruk-hai troops,
The Fellowship of the Ring film

Saruman's Uruk-hai are arrogant and self-confident, filled with contempt for all. They despise lesser Orcs, even those who arm and equip them, and sneer at Sauron's Mordor-orcs, for Saruman has bred his Uruk-hai to replace them. Birthed in unnatural fashion, they refer to themselves as maggots. The following packages can be applied to the Uruk-hai Perfected statistics described on page 80.

URUK-HAI BERSERKERS

Large and bestial even for Uruk-hai, berserkers are shock troops, sent over walls and on suicide mis-

sions to dismay foes with the cruel power of Saruman's will. In *The Two Towers* film, Uruk-hai berserkers rode atop siege ladders at the siege of Helm's Deep.

ADVANCEMENTS: +1

STATISTICS: add edge Fell-handed (Men) 2; add flaws Battle-fury 2, Reckless; +1 Strength

EQUIPMENT: Orc longsword, helmet, loincloth, Orc War-wine (see page 85).

URUK-HAI CAPTAINS

Elevated for their prowess and cunning, these brutes lead Saruman's Uruk-hai. Lurtz (see pages 74–5 of *The Fellowship of the Ring Sourcebook*) and Uglúk (see pages 75–6 of *The Two Towers Sourcebook*) are two of Saruman's Uruk-hai captains. The following template modifies the description of Uruk-hai Perfected on page 80.

ADVANCEMENTS: +6

STATISTICS: add elite order captain; add order abilities Battle-hardened, Tactics; add edge Fell-handed 2 (Men), +3 ranks Armed Combat, +3 ranks Intimidate, +3 ranks Ranged Combat, +3 ranks Siegecraft, +3 ranks Unarmed Combat

EQUIPMENT: As Uruk-hai soldier (below), horn

URUK-HAI SOLDIERS

The backbone of Saruman's army, Uruk-hai soldiers are greatest among his troops. As such, Saruman produces them as rapidly as his breeding pits can spit them out. Their statistics are as standard Uruk-hai Perfected (see page 80).

EQUIPMENT: While on special missions, Uruk-hai soldiers are equipped with Orc-longswords, Orc-longbows, large shields, Orc-chainmail, and helms. When at war, they are equipped according to their unit designation.

URUK-HAI WARG-RIDERS

Smaller than most Uruk-hai, these jockeys ride dread Wargs into battle or on scouting missions. They prefer to sleep near the Warg pits and sometimes end up as Warg-food. Sharku is chief of the Warg-riders and is described on pages 65–6 of *The Two Towers Sourcebook*. Warg-riders can be created by applying the following template to the Uruk-hai Perfected statistics presented on page 80.

ADVANCEMENTS: +3

STATISTICS: +2 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Scimitar), +1 rank Observe, +2 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +5 ranks Ride (Warg), +2 ranks Survival (Forest), +2 ranks Track (Men)

EQUIPMENT: Scimitar, Orc-shortbow, small shield, Orc leather armour and helm, Warg mount



ORCS OF THE WHITE HAND

'Great Orcs, who also bore the White Hand of Isengard: that kind is stronger and more fell than all others.'
— Éomer, *The Two Towers*

Orcs are less hardy and reliable than Uruk-hai. Though still useful to Saruman, he views Orcs as outdated, contemptible, and disposable. Most of the Orcs in Saruman's host have been replaced by Uruk-hai, though Orcs still find service on the battlefield.

ORC CAPTAINS

Leaders of Orc-bands, their cowardly nature and inability to thrive in daylight limit their capability. By night they keep their charges intim-

idated and ready for battle. Orc Captains (of both the Isengard Orc and Mordor-orc types) use the statistics from page 40 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.

ORC SCOUTS

Quick and furtive, small bands of Orc scouts roam the countryside at night, staying ahead of Saruman's armies, learning the lay of the land, and spying upon his foes. The following template may be applied to either Isengard-orcs or Orcs of the Eye.

ADVANCEMENTS: +3

STATISTICS: add order ability Walk Without Trace: Hills, +3 ranks Lore/Realm: Rohan (Westfold), +3 ranks Observe (Spot), add Observe specialty (Listen), +5 ranks Track

ORC SOLDIERS

Too weak and craven to serve at the vanguard of Saruman's armies, most Orc soldiery acts in support roles, carrying and assembling siege engines and helping maintain gear.

ADVANCEMENTS: +2

STATISTICS: +2 ranks Craft: Carpentry (Siege Engines), +1 rank Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +3



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ranks Siegecraft (Siege Engine), +1 rank Smithcraft (Weapon Repair)

EQUIPMENT: Tools

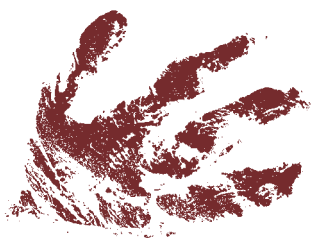
ORC WARG-RIDERS

The most reckless of Saruman's Orcs serve as Warg-riders. Warg cavalry remain fast-moving scouts by day or night, and terrify troops in combat. Warg-riding is the most dangerous post in Saruman's army. Some Orcs ride wolves instead of Wargs, but otherwise possess identical characteristics.

ADVANCEMENTS: +2

STATISTICS: add edge Hardy, +1 rank Intimidate (Fear), +4 ranks Ride (Warg or Wolf), +1 Courage

EQUIPMENT: Leather armour, small shield, scimitar, Orc shortbow, Warg or wolf mount



HALF-ORCS OF THE WHITE HAND

'There were battalions of Men, too... some... were horrible: man-high, but with goblin-faces, sallow, leering, squint-eyed.'

— Merry, *The Two Towers*

Half-orcs possess the wit and bearing of Men, and are given leadership over Saruman's armies or other special duties. The packages that follow can be applied to any of the basic types of Half-orcs described on pages 81–2.



HALF-ORC CAPTAINS

The generals of Saruman's armies, these Half-orcs have the presence to command even the Uruk-hai. They make cunning warriors and brutal masters.

ADVANCEMENTS: +10

STATISTICS: change starting order to warrior; additional order captain; change edge Furtive to Hardy; additional order abilities Battle-hardened, Favoured Weapon (Sword), Swift Strike, Hero's Strength; add edges Command 2, Warwise 2, Weapon Mastery (Sword); change Appraise skill to Ride, change Conceal skill to Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), change Guise skill to Observe (Spot), change Stealth skill to Inspire, +11 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Sword), +1 rank Healing, +1 rank Inspire, +8 ranks Intimidate (Fear), +10 ranks Siegecraft (Unit Leadership)

EQUIPMENT: Chainmail hauberk with plate, large shield, longsword, horn

Dodge, Wakefulness, Warwise, Wary; add flaw Orc Ancestry; replace Appraise skill with +1 rank Ride (Horse) and +1 rank Run, replace Conceal skill with Siegecraft (Unit Leadership), replace Stealth skill with Intimidate, +6 ranks Armed Combat: Blades (Sword), +3 ranks Lore/ Realm: Isengard (Fortresses), +5 ranks Observe (Spot), +6 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Longbow); +1 Swiftiness

EQUIPMENT: Chainmail hauberk with plate, large shield, longsword

DUNLENDINGS OF THE WHITE HAND

'Not in half a thousand years have they forgotten their grievance...'

That old hatred Saruman has inflamed.

[Dunlendings] are fierce folk when roused.'

— Gamling, *The Two Towers*

HALF-ORC SOLDIERS

Half-orcs that cannot pass for Men serve as officers and elite soldiers.

ADVANCEMENTS: +5

STATISTICS: change starting order to warrior; add order abilities Evasion, Favoured Weapon (Sword); change edge Furtive to Accurate; add edges

Saruman has encouraged the Dunlendings' ferocity, and stoked their hatred of Rohan and Gondor. Promises of treasure and terrible tales about the evil of the 'straw heads' have stirred the Hill-men into a frenzy. Apply the following packages to the

Dunlending write-up on pages 289-290 of the core rulebook.

DUNLENDING CHIEFTAINS

Many clan chieftains were infamous before allying with Saruman, and most used his patronage to enslave or destroy their rivals. These chieftains hold power through their own prowess, and the plunder they give their henchmen. Thus, they are all too ready to go to war for Saruman.

ADVANCEMENTS: +10

STATISTICS: initial order barbarian; additional order warrior; add order abilities Battle-hardened, Champion (+3 vs. Rohirrim), Hard March (Hills), Preferred Weapon (Battle Axe), Swift Strike, Warrior-born; additional edges Command 2, Hardy, Lion-hearted, Warwise, Woodcrafty; additional flaw Battle-fury; +8 ranks Armed Combat: Axes (Battle Axe), +3 ranks Climb, +2 ranks Inspire (Rally), +3 ranks Observe (Spot), +4 ranks Ranged Combat: Bows (Shortbow), +3 ranks Run, +2 ranks Siegecraft (Tactics), +6 ranks Stealth (Sneak), +3 ranks Survival (Mountains), +4 ranks Track

EQUIPMENT: Masterwork battle axe, large shield, chainmail corselet

DUNLENDING CLAN ELDERS

Shamans and advisors to their clans, these were the first who Saruman plied with promises of lore and power, so that they would urge their chieftains to follow the White Hand.

ADVANCEMENTS: +8

STATISTICS: change favoured attribute to Wits; additional order Loremaster; additional order abilities Expertise (Dunland), Secretive, Spellcasting 2 (*Evoke Awe*, *Healing-spell*, *Victory-spell*); additional edge Honey-tongued; +2 ranks Debate (Negotiate), +4 ranks Healing (Treat Wounds, Treat Illness), +5 ranks Insight, +3 ranks Lore/Race: Dunlendings (History),

+4 ranks Lore/Region: Dunland (Clans), +3 ranks Lore: Spellcraft (Superstitions), +4 ranks Observe (Spot), +6 ranks Persuade (Oratory), +2 ranks Weather-sense; +4 Wits

EQUIPMENT: Arcane talismans, colourful robes, facial tattoos

DUNLENDING HILL-MEN SKIRMISHERS

Boldest of the Hill-men, these warriors flocked to Saruman's service, eager to kill *forgoil*. Though able in battle, they are too unruly to follow commands, and serve as skirmishers whom Saruman sets loose to burn and pillage at will. These troops require no modifications to the basic statistics on pages 289-290 of the core rulebook.

UNIT STATISTICS

'Upon their shields they bore a strange device: a small white hand in the centre of a black field; on the front of their iron helms was set an S-rune. . . .'

— *The Two Towers*

The unit entries that follow describe the Host of Isengard according to the mass combat system presented in the *Helm's Deep* sourcebook. The unit statistics are summarized on Table 4.1 Isengard Units, located on page 92.

ORC UNITS

Most of Saruman's Orcs are Deep-orcs (see page 79) from beneath Isengard, or Mountain-breed Orcs from the Misty Mountains. Their statistics and special abilities appear on Table 4.1.

URUK-HAI UNITS

Uruk-hai are fearless warriors, able to move at speed in daylight, fiercer than Orc or Man, and utterly devoted to the will of Saruman. Uruk-hai statistics and special abilities appear on Table 4.1.

HALF-ORC UNITS

Half-orcs are used sparingly as soldiers, being more typically pressed into service as engineers, and as the captains of other units. Half-orc unit statistics and special abilities appear on Table 4.1.

DUNLENDING UNITS

Inflamed by hatred and promised a chance to crush their racial enemies, Dunlendings in Saruman's service remain an unruly mob, united by clan and family rather than organized into rank and division. Dunlending statistics and special abilities appear on Table 4.1.

BEAST UNITS

Though Saruman's wolves and Wargs serve as mounts for Orcs and Uruk-hai, he sees no harm in sending riderless beasts out to further assail his enemies. Beast unit statistics and special abilities appear on Table 4.1.

NEW MASS COMBAT OPTIONS

Saruman and his general Móg have created an army untried in the field. Despite this, cruel discipline and intimidation have shaped it into the one of the greatest armies in Middle-earth. The sections below describe several new tactics and manoeuvres this force has conceived for use in battle.

TABLE 4.1 ISENGARD UNITS

UNIT TYPE	C	R	ME	T	S	MO	EV	SPECIAL ABILITY*
ORC UNITS								
Orc Light Archers	7	10	7	10	4	10	50	Cave-dweller
Orc Medium Archers	7	12	7	12	4	8	52	Cave-dweller
Orc Light Cavalry	8	6	11	11	4	16	61	Wolf-mounted
Orc Medium Cavalry	8	6	14	14	4	14	65	Warg-mounted
Orc Light Infantry	7	6	8	9	4	8	44	Cave-dweller
Orc Medium Infantry	7	6	10	12	4	6	47	Cave-dweller
URUK-HAI UNITS								
Uruk-hai Light Archers	8	9	8	11	5	12	53	Fighting Uruk-hai!
Uruk-hai Medium Archers	8	11	8	13	5	10	55	Fighting Uruk-hai!
Uruk-hai Heavy Archers	8	13	8	15	5	8	57	Fighting Uruk-hai!
Uruk-hai Berserkers	4	0	18	18	0	8	48	Berserk
Uruk-hai Medium Cavalry	10	10	14	15	4	14	58	Warg-mounted
Uruk-hai Heavy Cavalry	10	8	16	16	4	12	66	Warg-mounted
Uruk-hai Engineers	8	6	8	8	10	6	46	Blasting-fire
Uruk-hai Light Infantry	8	5	9	10	5	10	47	Fighting Uruk-hai! Run, Curse You!
Uruk-hai Medium Infantry	8	5	11	13	5	8	50	Fighting Uruk-hai! Run, Curse You!
Uruk-hai Heavy Infantry	8	5	14	16	5	6	54	Fighting Uruk-hai!
HALF-ORC UNITS								
Half-orc Engineers	6	6	6	8	12	8	46	Blasting-fire
Half-orc Light Infantry	7	7	13	13	6	8	44	—
DUNLENDING UNITS								
Dunlending Light Archers	6	8	6	8	5	10	43	—
Dunlending Medium Archers	6	10	6	10	5	8	45	—
Dunlending Heavy Archers	6	12	6	12	5	6	47	—
Dunlending Light Infantry	6	4	7	7	5	8	37	—
Dunlending Medium Infantry	6	4	9	10	5	6	40	—
Dunlending Heavy Infantry	6	4	12	13	5	4	44	—
BEAST UNITS								
Battle-wargs	2	0	16	15	0	14	47	Beast
Wargs	3	0	14	13	0	15	45	Beast
Wolves	2	0	12	11	0	18	43	Beast

***UNIT SPECIAL ABILITIES**

BEAST: Beast units cannot perform manoeuvres.

BERSERK: These Uruk-hai are never affected by the Dismayed, Exhausted, Outnumbered, or Recently Beaten conditions.

However, they can never attempt to execute Command or Support manoeuvres.

BLASTING-FIRE: These units gain a +10 bonus when attempting the Assault Fortification manoeuvre.

CAVE-DWELLER: These units suffer no penalties from fighting in 'Caverns' terrain.

FIGHTING URUK-HAI!: See Table 2.4: Uruk-hai Units on page 72 of *Helm's Deep*.

RUN, CURSE YOU!: When the tactical combat system is being used, a formation with this special ability may take a +4 bonus to any Move manoeuvre test. If this is done, however, all units in that formation suffer -1 to all Toughness tests for the remainder of that round.

WOLF-MOUNTED: Wolf-mounted units gain a +2 bonus when testing to attempt the Flank manoeuvre.

WARG-MOUNTED: Warg-mounted units gain a +3 bonus when testing to attempt the Flank manoeuvre.

NEW SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS

Orcs and Uruk-hai are born in pain and hate, and Saruman has instilled in them a deep contempt for life. His industry is pitiless, and he views all parts of a whole as replaceable. Thus, Saruman's armies may elect to assume the Suicidal Action situational modifier, which is not allowable to the armies of Men.

Suicidal Action

Saruman's Orcs and Uruk-hai rage with willingness to die in service to their master. During each mass combat round's Terrain and Situation step, each of these units may individually choose to assume the Suicidal Action situational modifier. A unit embarking on a Suicidal Action has Toughness -3, Command -2, and Support reduced to 0, but has Melee Combat +4.

NEW MANOEUVRES

The following new manoeuvres are available only to Saruman's forces.

Corpse-ladder

MANOEUVRE TYPE: Support
TN: 15

EFFECT: Grimpest of the White Hand's tactics, in this a company of Orcs or Uruks—Men will not be pressed into such madness—is sent rashly at a well-defended wall with little hope of doing damage. Instead they are expected to die wave upon wave, their bodies providing a platform for subsequent troops to attack a wall's defenders face-to-face. Units executing this action suffer -5 Toughness, but each unit slain in the Determine Casualties step gives a cumulative +1 bonus to future attempts any of its allies make with the Assault Fortification manoeuvre. If the tactical system is being used, the Corpse-ladder manoeuvre can only be used by units in a Fortification arena.

Dead-man's Ambush

MANOEUVRE TYPE: Command
TN: 15

EFFECT: Lying amongst corpses of the fallen, a small group of Orcs can use the opportunity to strike in ambush. It is a cowardly tactic, and only Orcs attempt it. Its effects are the same as the Outflank manoeuvre (see page 80 of *Helm's Deep*), but the element of surprise allows a smaller unit of Orcs to have greater effect. The manoeuvre TN modifier from *Helm's Deep* Table 2.9: Manoeuvre Modifiers (see page 78 of *Helm's Deep*) based on formation size is one degree lower than it would otherwise be. For example, a target formation up to twice the size of the formation executing Dead-man's Ambush would result in a -5 TN, rather than the usual +5 TN, when executing this manoeuvre.



Scales of the Dragon

MANOEUVRE TYPE: Movement
TN: 10

EFFECT: A formation executing this manoeuvre forms an armoured mound of shields like the great scales atop a dragon's back. This is done to shelter another formation up to half the size of the manoeuvring formation inside. As long as the sheltered unit does not attack or execute any manoeuvres other than Support or Movement manoeuvres, the sheltered unit gains Toughness +4 and suffers Movement -2.

CREATURES OF ISENGARD

'Wolves and orcs were housed in Isengard, for Saruman was mustering a great force on his own account.'
— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

Creatures and beasts both wild and fell live in Isengard, serving Saruman's growing war machine or feeding off its refuse. Explorers who brave Nan Curunír will face many foes—crows, *crebain*, Wargs, wolves, and fouler things still.

CROWS AND CREBAIN

'Regiments of black crows are flying... they are crebain out of Fangorn and Dunland... I think they are spying out the land.'
— Gandalf, *The Fellowship of the Ring*

The hills of Dunland teem with *crebain*, large crows renowned for keen eyes and cunning, more sinister than the talking ravens of Erebor. Saruman saw their potential as spies and messengers, and brought many *crebain* into his service. One of them, Caru, serves Saruman as a familiar, rallying great flocks of crows and gathering rumours for his master. *Crebain* use the Carrion Bird statistics on pages 57–8 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*. Caru is described on pages 74–5 of *Paths of the Wise*.

BATS AND VERMIN

Once the skies in Nan Curunír were thick with clouds of bats taking wing in the evening, but the coming of Orcs to the caverns under Methedras

ISENGARD

diminished their numbers. Saruman's transformation of the caverns under Orthanc has driven most bats to seek new lairs, far from heat and clamour of the forges. Saruman has been careful to ensure that some bats remain, allowing several swarms to roost in abandoned caverns. Orcs now harvest their droppings, which are crucial ingredients in the Fire of Orthanc. Nourished by Saruman's craft, these bats have grown large and dangerous.

The caverns under Orthanc also teem with rats that feed upon garbage and carrion. As the underground population grows and Saruman's corruption intensifies, the vermin grow larger, fouler, and more cunning. Large swarms descend upon any—even Orcs—who wander into the more obscure caverns and tunnels.

SWARM OF BATS

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 3 (± 0), Nimbleness 6 (± 0)*, Perception 4 (± 0), Strength 0 (-3), Vitality 10 (+2)*, Wits 0 (-3)

REACTIONS: Stamina +2*, Swift-ness ± 0 , Willpower -1, Wisdom ± 0

DEFENCE: 10

MOVEMENT RATE: 6

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite) +3, Observe (Hear, Scent) +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Disease, Feral Scent, Fire-fear, Flight, Swarm

SIZE: Tiny (2 wound levels)

HEALTH: 4

TN EQUIVALENT: 5 (swarm)

COMMON RAT

Common rats travel in swarms of dozens or hundreds, and prey upon the weak or injured.

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 4 (± 0), Nimbleness 8 (+1)*, Perception 6 (± 0)*, Strength 2 (-2), Vitality 6 (± 0), Wits 2 (-2)

REACTIONS: Stamina ± 0 , Swift-ness +1*, Willpower ± 0 , Wisdom ± 0

DEFENCE: 11

MOVEMENT RATE: 3

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite) +3, Climb +5, Observe (Spot, Hear, Scent) +6, Stealth (Hide) +4, Track (Scent) +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Disease, Feral Scent, Fire-fear, Mass Attack, Natural Weapon (bite, 1d6-2)

SIZE: Tiny (2 wound levels)

HEALTH: 4

TN EQUIVALENT: 5 (swarm of ten)

GIANT RAT

Giant rats are the size of small dogs, and will attack the weak and maimed, gnawing flesh from bones in moments. Giant rats are usually encountered in packs numbering 1d6 x 5 individuals.

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 4 (± 0), Nimbleness 8 (+1)*, Perception 6 (± 0), Strength 3 (-1), Vitality 7 (± 0)*, Wits 2 (-2)

REACTIONS: Stamina ± 0 , Swift-ness +1*, Willpower ± 0 , Wisdom ± 0

DEFENCE: 11

MOVEMENT RATE: 3

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Bite) +3, Climb +5, Jump +3, Observe (Spot, Hear, Scent) +3, Stealth (Hide) +4, Track (Scent) +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Disease, Fangs, Feral Scent, Fire-fear, Natural Weapon (bite, 1d6), Overwhelm

SIZE: Small (4 wound levels)

HEALTH: 6

TN EQUIVALENT: 5 (pack of four)

Bats and Vermin Special Abilities

DISEASE: While the bites of bats and vermin inflict relatively little injury, their bites are unclean and carry disease. A character suffering even a single point of damage from a rat's bite must make a TN 5 Stamina test or fall sick. Characters need only make one test per encounter with rats. If the character's Stamina test fails, a day later they become feverish, suffering chills and weakness. They suffer a -2 penalty to all tests for 2d6 days, and

lose one point of Vitality every two days afflicted. A TN 10 Healing test will remove the penalty for one day, but it will return if the sick character loses any Weariness levels. The *Healing-spell* cures the disease entirely.

FERAL SCENT: Rats are drawn to the scent of blood. They gain a +4 bonus on all Observe or Track rolls used to hunt a bleeding target.

FIRE-FEAR: Rats are panicked by fire. If a torch or other open flame (including a *Blinding Flash* spell) is used in conjunction with an Intimidate test, the rats suffer a -4 penalty to their Willpower tests to resist.

MASS ATTACK: Rats are weak individually, but their small size and speed make them dangerous in large numbers. A swarm of rats may attempt a Mass Attack against a target: each rat involved in the attack spends a full round action to swarm the victim. The rats scurry all over their target, worming their way under armour and clothing, scratching and biting. The rats make a single attack against their target, with a +1 bonus for every 5 rats in the swarm. A Mass Attack cannot be dodged or parried. If the rats hit, the damage ignores all armour except that provided by the Armour of Heroes edge. Victims of a Mass Attack can, as a full-round action, shake off a number of rats each round equal to their Nimbleness modifier (with a minimum of one). Other characters can assist in dislodging rats. Once dislodged, rats scurry away.

OVERWHELM: Giant rats employ a variant of the Mass Attack ability, attacking in great numbers, scurrying over a target and attempting to pull it prone. The rats make a single opposed Strength test with a +1 test result bonus for every five rats contributing a full round action. If the target fails, he falls prone and suffers the usual penalties (see page 230 of the core rulebook). To stand up, prone characters must make another opposed Strength test against the rats, modified as above.

SWARM: Normal weapons do not affect a swarm of bats, and they ignore the Nimbleness portion of their target's defence. A swarm cannot be dodged or parried. If the swarm hits, it inflicts 1d6–1 points of damage from scratches and bites, ignoring half the target's armour (save for natural armour or Armour of Heroes). Loud noises, significant quantities of smoke, or open flames cause the swarm to make a TN 8 Bearing test or flee. Spells that affect an area, such as *Burning Sparks*, can damage the swarm.

WOLVES AND WARGS

The Orcs of the Misty Mountains have long nurtured wolves and Wargs for strength, size, and ferocity. They live and fight alongside them, and even ride them into battle. The basic statistics for Wargs and wolves are found on pages 51–2 and 65 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*, respectively, though wolves bred for riding have Strength 12 rather than the Strength 8 listed there. Additionally, Saruman and his followers have bred a greater and more terrible form of Warg called the Battle-warg.

BATTLE-WARGS

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 10 (+2), Nimbleness 10 (+2), Perception 9 (+1), Strength 14 (+4)*, Vitality 11 (+2)*, Wits 3 (-1)

REACTIONS: Stamina +6*, Swiftiness +3, Willpower +1, Wisdom -1

DEFENCE: 12

MOVEMENT RATE: 6

SKILLS: Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Fangs) +7, Armed Combat: Natural Weapons (Claws) +5, Intimidate (Fear) +7, Jump +5, Observe (Smell) +6, Run +10, Stealth (Sneak) +2, Survival (Forests) +2, Track (Scent) +6

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Armour (2), Ferocious in Injury, Natural Weapon (fangs, 2d6+3), Natural Weapon (claws, 2d6-1)

SIZE: Large (6 Wound Levels, 2 Healthy)

HEALTH: 15

TN EQUIVALENT: 15

Unique Special Abilities

FEROCIOUS IN INJURY: Rather than being debilitated by wounds, Battle-wargs fight more fiercely as they are injured. Instead of suffering a penalty based on their Wound Level, Battle-wargs

gain a bonus to combat tests equal to one-half the penalty (rounded up) that would normally apply.

Description

Battle-wargs represent the pinnacle of Warg-breeding; they are war-beasts able to wreak terrible destruction and dismay upon their prey. These foul beasts, originally intended as mounts for Uruk-hai, were too wilful to accept riders. Their ferocity is unprecedented, and for this they were spared and put to other use. Saruman has yet to utilize them in open combat, and rarely lets them roam free *en masse*. Instead, Battle-wargs are loosed on prisoners or incompetent servants, a practice that sharpens their ferocity and amuses Saruman's Orcs. Unlike Wargs, Battle-wargs cannot use Warg-speak.

WEREWOLVES

Just as Sauron invested fierce Wargs with evil spirits, Saruman is attempting to breed Werewolves of his own. In fact, he has gathered a pack of Werewolves and lets them roam the Wizard's Vale. Werewolves are described on page 297 of the core rulebook, and on pages 52–3 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.



THE BANDÚRHOOTH OF ISENGARD

'[W]hispers of a nameless fear...'

— Galadriel,

The Fellowship of the Ring film

Ill-omen has always hung about Orthanc, from the time it was raised to the end of the Third Age. Saruman is a potent force for evil, but there is another power in Isengard, a shadow far older. The Black Chamber in the tunnels beneath Isengard holds an accursed tenant, a prisoner who longs to loose its wrath upon the world again.

MORGAYAMAR, THE SHADOW UNDER ORTHANC

ATTRIBUTES: Bearing 16 (+5)*, Nimbleness naught, Perception 12 (+3), Strength naught, Vitality 15 (+4), Wits 15 (+4)*

REACTIONS: Stamina +7, Swiftiness +3, Willpower +10*, Wisdom +6

SKILLS: Conceal (Hide Treasure) +5, Intimidate (Power) +12, Language: Warg-speak +6, Language: Orkish (Isengard-dialect) +6, Observe (Sense Power) +5

FLAWS: Grasping, Hatred (living things)

SPELLS: *Sense Power* (ability), no others while bound. If loosed, *Fog Raising*, *Misdirection*, *Power of the Land*, *Shadow of Fear*, *Wind-mastery*

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Baleful Influence, Beguiling Shadow, Bound

COURAGE: 3

RENOUN: 1 (The Dúnedain who raised Orthanc deliberately destroyed all record of the demon that plagued the building of Angrenost. Even Saruman himself is only vaguely aware of its existence.)

TN EQUIVALENT: 15

Unique Special Abilities Description

BALEFUL INFLUENCE: Morgayamar's malice taints the very air of Nan Curunír, imparting a +2 bonus to all Weariness tests for casting Sorcery spells within the bounds of the Wizard's Vale. Nan Curunír also counts as a place of darkness with a +2 bonus for purposes of fear tests, as described in the core rulebook on page 233, Table 9.20.



BEGUILING SHADOW: While the *bandúrthoth* cannot speak or make any physical manifestation, its presence lures astray the hearts of the virtuous. Anyone who dwells in Isengard for over a month finds their judgement clouded by Morgayamar's malice and suffers a -5 to all Corruption checks.

BOUND: Trapped in an enchanted prison, Morgayamar has less freedom of action than other *bandúrthoth*. It cannot see or sense anything in Nan Curunír save through the use of *Sense Power*, and cannot cast spells or directly communicate with any living thing. Should the Black Door be opened, however, the demon will immediately be freed, gaining the ability to cast all of its spells, and to call out to Orcs and Wargs for aid.

In the First Age, Morgoth charged Morgayamar ('Dark Abiding Dread') with standing watch at the southern end of the Misty Mountains. Morgayamar was bound to his post by Morgoth's power, and could not depart even after his master was thrown down. Over centuries Morgayamar diminished, finally losing form and becoming a *bandúrthoth*, a hateful spirit that broods over the Wizard's Vale. Indeed, its lingering presence first drew Orcs to dwell beneath Methedras. (For more information on *bandúrthoth*, see pages 16–7 of *Fell Beasts and Wondrous Magic*.)

When Curugond raised Angrenost, Morgayamar plagued the effort at every turn with foul weather, accidents, and enraged beasts. When Curugond discerned the source of Orthanc's woes, he led a force of magicians and craftsmen into the caverns under Nan Curunír, where they found Morgayamar's Heart Chamber. The Dúnedain could not drive the demon out, but rather bound it with spells, rendering it impotent behind the Black Door (see page 55). Curugond was careful to keep the demon's existence secret, but a single account of its presence survives in the archives of the White Tower, along with the unique *Opening-spell* that could unlock the Black Door.

The Angrenostim never discovered Orthanc's secret tenant, though the demon's influence cast a shadow over their destinies. Dunlendings shunned Orthanc's masters as practitioners of dark magic, and the Rohirrim sensed foulness in the Wizard's Vale. Saruman is the latest master of Orthanc to fall into Morgayamar's dark web.

If the demon is freed, it will terrorize the Wizard's Vale, trapping all who enter, tormenting them with spells, and calling wolves and Orcs to its service. To defeat the *bandúrthoth*, someone must venture to the deepest caverns, enter the Heart Chamber once more, and best the demon in a contest of will.