

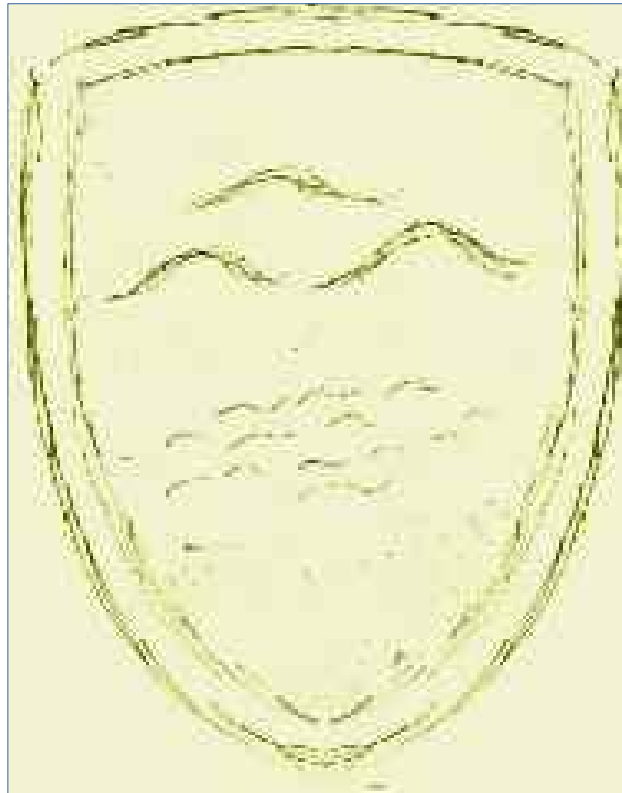
Secomber

A non-official game accessory for the AD&D 2nd edition Forgotten Realms Setting.
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Designed and written by NineLizards, c1997...2006.
(v40, 12.08.2006)

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*I am only exercising my right of free speech and fantasy.
Feel free to blame or credit me. Sue somebody else.*



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Introduction.

I believe it was way back in 1992 or 1993 that I had my first experiences with Role Playing Games, and although I have awful little chance to enjoy playing the game, in whatever form, I love to browse through those made-up worlds.

One of the nicest worlds is probably the Forgotten Realms, that we have to thank Ed Greenwood and TSR / WOTC / Hasbro for. This world is incredibly detailed, and one would certainly go broke trying to buy all products that have ever been dealing with this setting.

The little document you have in front of you is my own small contribution to the setting. It's unfinished, and it's doubtful it ever will be *completely* finished. But it's a good way to whittle away some time, and perhaps it just might be of any use to you or somebody else.

Why Secomber? Well, I was looking for a little, out and away town, that wasn't described too much, yet would provide me with many links to other places. It couldn't be too big or I would be unable to handle, and there had to be a number of reasons why adventurers would ever come here. On top of that, it had to be of a sufficient *low level*, as I'm not that much into epic gaming or munchkinizing. I hope I succeeded, if only a little bit..

Versions and news...

The last major update was v37. Included since the last major update:

- Sir Thronthgar 'Skullsplitter' and Vastan Keep / Vastan Village
- Grey Unicorns, Unicorn Riders
- working in some information from older TSR products, such as Jingleshod and Dire Wood
- Luiren Embassy
- secrets on Traskar Selarn
- more plans and secrets of Kelvin Thryst

- some re-edits

If you're looking for the most recent version, try www.ninelizards.com, or use a search engine and look for the keywords 'ninelizards' and 'secomber'. I have not been doing much roleplaying since 2001, so chances are there are no updates. Sorry about that.

The images in this document are not all of the highest possible quality (they're only here so you can find the relative spots on the map, and even that map does need more than a little reworking...). On the website you'll find a more detailed map, ready for use.

If you run into little segments marked with << and >> (that even may contain some dutch words)... well... that's stuff I'm working on... there's a lot of it, you will see. I must get a life! I wonder how dear Ed could come up with a complete world when I have trouble detailing a single village... oh well. That's what makes him a professional and leaves me... you figure it out.

Help?

Well, I'm still looking for more canon material on Secomber and some of the key players... I found quote a bit over the years, either on paper or in digital form, but haven't worked it all into this document yet.

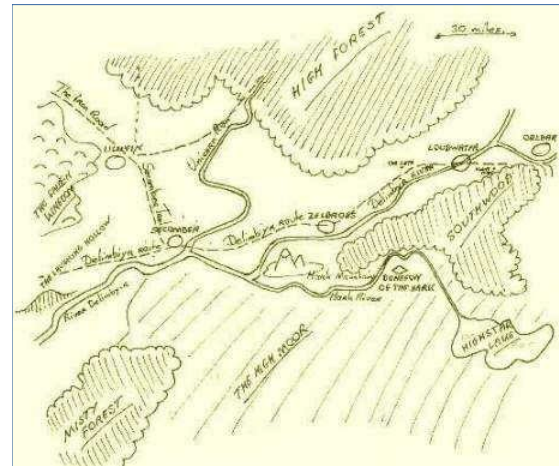
Any additional info on the following subjects would be appreciated:

- Secomber
- Amelior Amanitas
- EreK
- Dire Wood
- Jingleshod
- Wulgreth
- Luiren
- Jingleshod

I found some undocumented and uncredited information on the Internet about Jingleshod, if anybody could confirm it's canon (or not!) and who was the author, I would appreciate that. I've also seen some conflicting information in TSR's products (but if you look at the wealth of material out there that is not surprising), so perhaps, in a way, you cannot go wrong as there is always more than one side to the story.

More information.

Scourge the Internet, or look for older TSR products (all long out of print)...



- *Volo's Guide to the Sword Coast*
- *FR1 Waterdeep and the North*
- *1142 The North*
- *9179 GDQ Queen of the Spiders (?)*
- *9221 DQ1 The Shattered Statue (?)*
- *9233 FR5 The Savage Frontier*
- *9388 FR16 The Shining South*

Many thanks...

... to J.A. Jones and Peter Storm for stuff on the Grey Unicorn Riders (that don't exist, hehe)...

I. Secomber.

Secomber has always been a small sleepy town in the middle of nowhere. In Delimbiyr vale, to be more precise, there where the Unicorn Run flows into the River Shining (River Delimbiyr). Secomber is mostly a town of farmers, stonecutters, and fishermen, and a welcome moment of relief for Adventurers wandering the High Moors on the south.

It's also a place where caravans can hire guards and guides. Jobs that offer stuck adventurers a good way out, and bored locals a chance to 'break free'.

The most important characteristic of Secomber is the bridge, that allow travellers to cross the river without getting their feet wet. Caravans too large, too greedy, or (more often) warbands or adventurer groups (with a desire for staying unnoticed) often opt to cross the Unicorn Run a bit farther to the north.

Only during high summer the Unicorn Run can be safely crossed by wading, as currents are changing and tricky. In the deepest of winter one can try and walk over the ice, but be aware: the ice is notoriously thin and unreliable, no matter

how strong the winter.

According to many, Secomber has only two remarkable features: the high number of halflings living here, and the fact that sages and mapmakers cannot decide on Secomber's size and if it belongs to the North or the Western Heartlands.

To the inhabitants it doesn't really matter. They are (mostly) content with the current situation.

<< werkpunt >>

Population.

Secomber has between 200 and 1600 inhabitants, depending on your way of counting and if you are given to exaggeration.

Secomber town itself counts roughly 400 permanent inhabitants. Half of them live directly around Rumble Market and The Dip.

Remarkably, the number of official citizens aka. taxpayers is higher than the number of inhabitants... An explanation is easy to find. In the nearby hamlets and lonely farms another 800 people live of the land, of which several pay their taxes. Then there is the Waterdeep Garrison located in Secomber itself, varying in size depending on the season and the number of incidents. There's Keep Vastan and it's inhabitants 30 miles off, then there are the irregular adventuring bands that have a base in Secomber, and there are several 'out of town residents' living in Waterdeep or elsewhere who still have kept their Secomber citizenship (or, in other words: still pay Secomber taxes).

With Secomber citizenship, you are entitled to cross the bridge without paying a fee, you can vote, and you can claim Secomber protection, as far as possible.

Defining the borders of Secomber is slightly more difficult. Secomber town is easily defined, and comprises of the three hills and the immediate surroundings.

The problem lays outside the town's borders. Some hamlets nearby may act as if they are independent of Secomber (and have their own laws), while a lone settler along the Unicorn run could proudly claim the protection of the Secomber Militia and the Waterdeep Garrison. For example: Keep Vastan claims to be 'part of Secomber' and is 30 miles away!

Complicated? Well... just keep in mind that most elven strongholds (fortified farms) north of Secomber are more or less independent, even though some of them pay taxes and thus can claim Secomber's protection. Rules can differ, depending on household, so be careful who you visit, and offend, as the law (their law!) might not be on your

side.

Almost half of the inhabitants of Secomber are human (45%), almost the same number of halflings (40%) live here. The remainder consists of dwarves, elves and gnomes. Again, everybody disagrees on these numbers... What is sure though is the percentage of gnomes is rising, and the overall number of people living in the Secomber area is increasing.

Floodside and Dipside.

There are two directions in Secomber... (Well, there are more, but two are rather distinctive.) Besides using terms like 'north, south, east, west' the inhabitants of Secomber have adopted two additional terms, called 'Floodside' and 'Dipside'. The meaning is rather simple, but can be confusing to newcomers. 'Floodside' means the side of, or in the direction of the bridges or 'The Tear' in the middle of the river. 'Dipside' means in the direction of 'The Dip'.

When you don't know where you are in Secomber (even though it's so small, the less intelligent strangers do get lost sometimes) it's not much help if a local tells you to: 'go Dipside, Floodside, and head for the Flanks, can't miss, third house from Younder's'...

1. Going to Secomber.

The obvious way to go to Secomber is to follow the Secomber Trail from Ulubin, or the Delimbiyr Route from Laughing Hollow or Zellbros.

Some travellers cross the High Moors, but this is not advisable. None are known that travelled *through* the High Forest...

By Caravan...

Secomber is spread out over three hills, build next to the River Delimbiyr.

Coming from the east, you will first pass a few hills supposed to cover the ruins of the capital of the long ago human realm of Athalantar (11), Kingdom of the Stag. Extensions of this old city should have covered the hills where Secomber is now located.

This could be true. Sometimes, when building in Secomber, old cellars or walls are found, and inadvertently freed gargoyles are a recurring problem.

The hills have been checked out by adventurers, but there has not been found much.

People stay away from the hills as much as they can. There are many stories, but rarely verified. And most of those turned out to be false. Nevertheless, nearby caravans prefer to cross the river and camp nearby or west of Secomber.

Continuing over the Delimbiyr route, you'll approach a section of marsh alike, often flooded land, called The Wet (between 9 and 10 on the map). A small stone tower stands here, guarding the entrance to the New Bridge.

Soldiers with disciplinary problems are often sent to The Wet for some extra guard duty. In the summer the area is invaded by bugs, in the spring and autumn it's damp and wet and uncomfortable, and in the winter the cold winds from the High Moor to the south cross the river and attack the little tower without any mercy.

The wooden New Bridge (9) has been built by early rulers of Waterdeep. After so many years and countless repairs, being partially burned down a few times, the thing got unsafe, dangerous.

The stone Old Bridge (8) dates further back, and details have become vague. The bridge must be partially enchanted, because repairs are minimal and seldom necessary, and spells often fizzle when casted on or nearby it. Investigations into the nature of the magic of Old Bridge are heavily discouraged.

That even a sturdy and somewhat magical bridge can deteriorate over time is proven by the Stump, a remnant of a section of the Old Bridge that has been washed away in the Delimbiyr currents. Kelvin Thyrst had the small island in the middle of the river enlarged to its current tear shape (hence the name) and build his New Bridge from the north side of The Tear.

The Stump is a small, left over section of the Old Bridge, that shows the river Delimbiyr followed a different route in the past.

Nowadays, the Stump is a favourite hangout for old man fishing (and telling tales).

The halfling Kelvin Thyrst happily charges anybody crossing the bridges. He made a deal with the town council four years ago, and then completely rebuild the New Bridge.

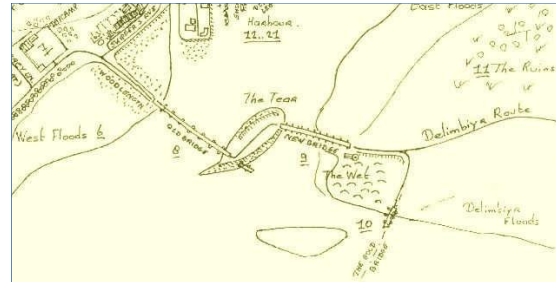
People using the bridge often can buy a permit. People officially living in Secomber pay nothing, and officials and representatives from Waterdeep (if they can prove to be such) pass for free as well.

(Actually, people *officially* living in Secomber *do* pay, because the fee for passing the bridge is included in the taxes they pay...)

The small town militia (not the garrison) assists Kelvin in inking the fees. The town council sees the bridge as a 'strategic asset to the

community' (in other words: it provides money).

Most people assume Kelvin is losing money on these bridges, but he's about to break even, in spite of the taxes he hands over to the town.



Just before you pass The Wet and cross the New Bridge and the Old Bridge, you can see the remnants of another bridge, plunging into the River Delimbiyr, towards the High Moors. This is another Kelvin Thyrst project, but he ran out of gold before it was finished, and most of the (partially completed) bridge has been washed away.

Most people call this 'The Gold Bridge' (10) or 'Kelvin's Doom'. The halfling has stated in public, and more than once, that one day this new bridge will bring new prosperity to Secomber.

The question is: what would people want from the High Moor, besides some blocks of pink granite? And who would use this bridge, except the occasional band of adventures, venturing into the High Moors? (Sometimes to be never seen again.) Yet odds or logic have not yet stopped Kelvin, and if he stays alive long enough, that bridge will come. Besides... he just *might* be up to something... For the moment, it appears he has put this bridge out of his mind to pursue other interests.

After passing the bridge you can turn right towards Secomber's small harbour, or you can follow the road, over Floodway (5) and Halfling's Causeway (4) to continue on the Delimbiyr route to the west.

Note the large metal statue (163) nearby Skipper's Ave (6). This is actually not a metal statue, but a metal golem created by Secomber's Mage, put there to protect the town.

Caravans that camp nearby Secomber are kindly advised to do so southwest of the town, on the relative flat area between the Slush and Lord's Hill (2). Large caravans are not welcome to camp *inside* Secomber itself, or on or next to Floodway or Halfling's Causeway.

Smaller groups can park their wagons etc. between dawn and dusk on the Daycamp (7) nearby Mercy Lane and Skipper's Ave.

North and South...

Very few people arrive from the north, beyond the local farmers. If any, these are adventurers or visitors from the High Forest. A rare event indeed. More people depart to the north (over land to the High Forest) or south (by boat to the High Moors) than ever come back...

But, if you are eager, to the north: enter Secomber, go to Floodway, turn to No Mercy Lane, follow Pool Lane towards the Dip. There you'd best drink a few in The Seven Stringed Harp (as these could be your last) and then you follow Pool Road to the northeast, followed by North road...

To the south: go to Floodway, walk along the river bank northeast, you'll pass Skipper's Ave, cross the Troll Bridge. You're now in the harbour. At the end, overlooking Big Leg, is The Knee. It's not as good as The Seven Stringed Harp, but then again your chances to return from the Moors might be better than returning from the High Forest...

There might be some small boats nearby Skipper's Ave or Dead Leg, belonging to fishermen willing to help (for a small fee, of course). There is also a sort of ferry that takes off from Big Leg. It is used to fetch the pink granite that the stonecutters use, and visits the Moors three to five times a week. There's always space for adventurers willing to protect those foraging for the pink granite in the High Moors. So you could not only get a free ferry, but payed for it as well!

Sometimes there's a boat nearby The Gold Bridge, waiting for adventurers coming back from the High Moors. It's expensive, though. If there is one at all. But if you are in a hurry, you can afford to pay...

2. Areas.

Secomber itself is built upon and between three small hills. Southwest there is Lord's Hill or Lordshill, northwest is the High Hill or Highhill, and to the east there is Goodhill.

Lord's Hill is where you will find the garrison from Waterdeep. The south foot of the hill is encircled by brambles. (And a hidden trench covered by the same brambles directly behind it. A cheap, yet very effective method of defense you'll spot in more places.)

South of Lord's Hill you'll find the Halfling's Causeway and the Slush. The Halfling's causeway is an attempt to stop the erosion of the hills by the River Delimbiyr. The Slush is a small, nasty swamp that needs to be cleaned up on a regular base. The whole area from West Floods up to and including the Slush is often called Westbank.

Goodhill, to the east, is mostly covered by the low, wide, half burrowed houses of halflings.

East of Goodhill you'll find the Unicorn Harbour, Secomber's only (more than one is hardly possible!) harbour being rebuilt by the never tiring halfling businessman and opportunist Kelvin Thryst.

Nearby is Harbour Hill, an artificial hill with Secomber's only mill. The Flanks are close to Harbour Hill and this is where most of the Gnomish community lives.

High Hill is not the highest place in Secomber (actually, Lords Hill is). On the top of High Hill you'll find Secomber's most famous individual, Amelior Amanitas. (Note that Kelvin Thryst might dispute this statement.)

In the south section of High Hill you'll find Shorty's Groove, the place where Secomber's small Dwarf community dwells. This (former) mine has been extended into several underground houses and shops, and when you see smoke billowing up it's either Amelior Amanitas' laboratory, or the forge of Rivelyn Ironeater, the female dwarven smith of Secomber.

Right in the middle of the three hills you'll find the two most urban areas, Rumble Market and the Dip.

Rumble Market is the market place for Secomber. It is surrounded by most shops and 'official' buildings in Secomber.

A bit further north, on the lowest part between the three hills (hence the name) lies the Dip. It's the name of the area, and the name of the pond. Some people try to call it 'Swan lake' but there haven't been many swans lately.... (actually none, and nobody can remember there have been any ever) so that name is not very popular (and probably never will be). The Dip is where you find the Seven Stringed Harp, a well known tavern all over the North and the Western Heartlands, at least to bards.

Westbank.

Westbank, the area from the west going Delimbiyr route up to and including West Floods (6) and Skippers Ave, is all that hurried travellers will see of Secomber. That, and the city militia collecting a small fee for crossing the Secomber bridge, of course.

In the south there is the foul Slush (3), a swamp that seems to gather all evil that washes up on the shores of the River Delimbiyr. Caravans don't like it, but this (2) is about as close to Secomber as they are allowed to camp and stay overnight.

The Halfling's Causeway (4) protects Secomber against extreme erosion, caused by the

bend in the Delimbiyr River. Even though the river is not flowing that quick, the relentless masses of water were slowly eroding this part of Secomber. The halfling's causeway was originally built by the first halfling immigrants in Secomber, to show their good intentions. Kelvin Thryst claims that there was a relative of him involved. Looking at the scope of the project: no doubt about it.

Following Halfling's Causeway is Floodway (5). This is the place to stroll along with your loved one on a warm summer eve, looking out over the West Floods (6) and Delimbiyr River, with the last fishing ship coming home.

On Floodway, you can turn left into No Mercy Lane (also known as Goblin's Splat) and go into Secomber. Or you just walk on towards the Daycamp (7).

The Daycamp was the former camping place for caravans, but not anymore. Some of the caravans made a mess of nearby Secomber, cut down all the trees in their surroundings, and, in general, behaved like unwelcome guests. This is why nowadays it is illegal to stay overnight in Daycamp. And why it's called Daycamp nowadays.

However, if you are passing through Secomber, and you would like to do some quick shopping, you can stay here from dusk to dawn. For a small fee, of course. An overnight stay is not allowed, no matter how much you offer. At least, nobody offered enough thus far, and the few merchants that consider Secomber a worthy stop have found other places to spend the night.

At Daycamp, there's a shack where you they can buy wood and coal, and there's a small (sometimes even occupied!) guardhouse. The Daycamp is surrounded by a low (2 foot) wall, and some people whisper that it is actually a ward in disguise. That is the reason why some Caravan leaders choose to stay outside Secomber and not risk any 'northern' magic, not even or a short stop.

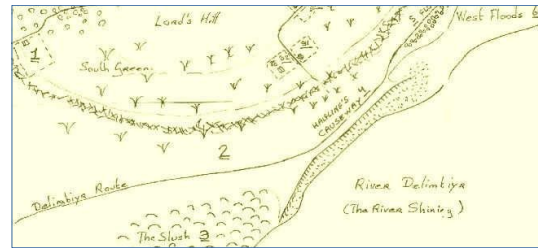
Skipper's Ave.

An extension of Floodway is Skipper's Ave, running parallel to the Floodway from Woodlength to Troll Bridge. (18). (Thingz for Boatz (23) is not considered part of Skipper's Ave, but part of Unicorn Harbour.)

On Skipper's Ave you'll find a lot of small houses huddled together, the middle ones leaning against one another. Fisherman live here (165, 166, 167, 168, 171), but here you'll also find Kurgen's (169, 170) and The Oar (172).

Note the metal statue at the beginning of Skipper's Ave (163) nearby Woodlength. It's a public secret that this is actually a metal golem, controlled by Amelior Amanitas, or by the Waterdeep garrison, if Amelior is out of town.

(Quite often.) The town council has requested Amelior to transfer control to them if the wizard is out of town. Without results so far.



Two houses on Skipper's Ave (169, 170) have been combined to become a shop. It is run by Ferdy Kurgen, an old, silent and tall man. Ferdy came into town twenty years ago, bought some property and opened shop. He hasn't left Secomber since.

Most first time visitors of Secomber won't even notice that there is a shop here, as Ferdy Kurgen mostly provides the locals., and there's not even a sign out front.

(Most rumours about Ferdy have died out by now, but there is still a large, two handed broad sword above the entrance in his shop, and on one occasion a thief was found, decapitated, laying next to his own head...)

The last building on Skipper's Ave is The Oar (172). This small, dimly lit tavern mostly caters to fishers and the few sailors.

The Oar's single room is almost divided in two by the bar, allowing the silent drinking local fisherman and there more rowdy sailor counterparts to stick to themselves. The Oar is not a place to get drunk or party, it's a place to get drunk and pounder. Or probably just to get drunk.

There's a small alley separating Kurgen's and The Oar, called Wooden Leg. It confuses the hell out of visitors, who expect all 'legs' grouped together in the harbour. A special expression in Secomber is 'catching the boat on Wooden Leg', indicating a dumb person or big mistake.

Unicorn Harbour.

On every moment, day or night, you can run into patrols of the Secomber militia, the Waterdeep Garrison, or even guards coming from or going to the warehouses. (Or The Knee...)

Finishing Skipper's Ave, you'll pass 'Thingz for Boatz' (23), the second shop in Secomber dealing with materials for boats. 'Thingz for Boatz' is considered part of the harbour, not part of Skipper's Ave.

Actually, there's a lot more you can buy in

this overlarge shop, from sturdy timber to raw iron strips to caskets, bottles, crates, mining tools, etcetera. If you can use it for a boat, you can buy it here. If you can't use it for a boat, you can probably still buy it here.

The place belongs to Kelvin Thryst, but is managed and run by Yath Blackhand. Yath has been a pirate, many, many years ago, and though most people are not aware of his shaded past, nobody appears to trust him.

Yath is a keen merchant, making sure people pay 'the right price' (whatever that is). Yath's income is partially based on commission, and Kelvin's bookkeepers are too good to cheat upon. Besides, Yath's assistant is a halfling, and also an employee of Kelvin...

Although Yath is feeling uncomfortable because business isn't as good as it should be, he sticks around. Hoping that Kelvin's plans do work and he can ride with Kelvin on the wave of money...

(Most of the local fishermen go for Ferdyn Kurgen's, simply because 'Thingz for Boatz' is slightly more expensive, but most of all it belongs to Kelvin Thryst. And the little guy owns a bit too much.)

From Skipper's Ave you cross Big Dock using the Troll Bridge (18). Big Dock is not that big, its name derives from the pier next to it, called Big Leg.

On the steep east edge of Goodhill stands the low (6 meters) Kelvin's Tower (22). An underground tunnel connects it to the large boathall (21), that is partially built into the hill. Even the extension of Big Dock bears his name: Kelvin's Dock (20), and it is clear that this is the heart of Kelvin's little empire.

Kelvin is planning on extending the harbour and its repairing facilities, and thus serving customers normally handled in (far away, too far away, as Kelvin claims) Daggerford or even Waterdeep.

The other two 'larger' harbours on the shores of the Delimbiyr (Loudwater and Daggerford) have no (large) repair facilities, so Kelvin sees this as his chance. His calling, Secomber's destiny. And whatever in between.

Nearby Kelvin's Dock, between the dock (20) and the large boathall (21) there's a new, small, unfinished building (173). Recently some priests of Gond were visiting Secomber, and they brought one of their machines with them. It's unclear what Kelvin's intention is with whatever they have brought him. (It is actually a Gond's pump. Kelvin bought two, one is installed in the small building nearby the dock, the other one is still in crates inside Kelvin's boathall.)

When you have crossed Troll Bridge (18) you're standing on Big Leg. Turn to the right and you'll see four warehouses. Nearby is Theronsten's Warehouse A (14), the major CSSC warehouse in Secomber.

Theronsten Warehouse B would come directly next to it, and the ground is levelled, fundamentals laid out, and ready to be build upon, yet there has not been enough demand yet. Theronsten also owns the ground next to B, so he could build a number C if demand rises...

(Theronsten has not been known for his creativity with names. He probably would have numbered his children, if he had any...)

In the curved warehouse at the end of the pier (15) the stonecutters of Secomber work on their 'big' projects. Water is nearby, so bringing the rough pink granite in, and shipping the ready to admire statues out, is easy.

The biggest warehouse (16) belongs to Clovis Sturgeon, a merchant from Waterdeep. It isn't used often, and currently the Stonecutters Guild is renting it for some large customer.

Kelvin Thryst only owns a small warehouse (17). It's enough for the moment, and mostly empty. All the normal CSSC goods are handled through the Theronsten Warehouse A. Some special goods (mostly food, wine, magical stuff, etc.) are brought into Kelvin's, to be immediately dispatched to the specific customers..

The twin dwarven brothers Jonson Stonefist live nearby (24) and guard the warehouse and deliver the goods. They are known to sleep in the building itself sometimes, to guard it at night. One of them supposedly has a romantic affair with Rivelyn Ironeater, the smith (102) but no one is telling.

Overseeing Big Leg is The Knee (19). This three stories rectangular building is owned by Melissa Thryst, a halfling. (Although she 'mothers' Kelvin, she is not related.)

Melissa runs the Knee with iron hand. On the ground floor you'll find a tavern, simple but satisfying, with good fare and decently priced drinks. Ask for the 'special menu', and you'll be surprised what kind of exotic dishes The Knee's cook can prepare for you!

On the ground floor you'll also find the kitchens, some staff living quarters, and (with its own entrance on the side of the building) a small barber shop.

Most of the second floor is occupied by guest rooms, and four of these are rented (semi permanently) by the Four Hammers. They are not in often. One other guest room is permanently reserved for CSSC guests. There aren't many.

The third did contain storage and guest

rooms, originally. The storage rooms are still there, but the rest has been reserved for the CSSC. Both Kelvin and Theronsten have their own private offices. (Theronsten is seldom in, except when voting 'no' against anything that costs money... and Kelvin appears to use his office as some sort of expensive yet uncomfortable sleeping room... He once rented a room somewhere in town but apparently has forgotten where it was...)

When Jingleshod is in town he sleeps in one of the storage areas on the third floor. Melissa has a soft spot for this unlucky human man and lets him stay for free, and it's highly unlikely that anyone will try to break in with Jingleshod under the roof..

There has been another adventuring band that had permanent rooms, but they moved to the High Lodge. Melissa Thryst used the occasion to remove the last stables. There's still a horse rack outside where you can tie yours, but don't complain to her if you stay overnight and find your dear steed missing!

(Melissa Thryst doesn't like horses at all. Except on a plate. Her horse steak is perhaps the best in the whole Western Heartlands. You might run into the story about the missing horse, and it's actually true. But since then the Lord Mayor (adventurers like their horses, you know) and Kelvin (disappearing horses are bad for business, you know) have had a talk with Melissa. It doesn't stop her from eying fresh horseflesh and sharpening her knives in public though.)

Passing the Knee and following Big Leg (that halfling sense of humour...) you will pass Long Leg and Short Leg, two wooden piers (13).

Part of Long Leg has been blasted to rabbles last summer (making Long Leg shorter than Short Leg), when two rival wizards exchanged a few fireballs. There was not enough of either of them left to revive to fine them for the damage incurred...

At the end of Big Leg, we turn left onto Mill Road. You can see from here Dead Leg (12) and the small fire house, that is sometimes used during summer when the boats are out late. During winters, the Secomber patrols use this as a lookout post, and a place to warm up.

Harbour Hill, the Flanks.

Following the Mill Road, you'll pass between a group of small houses (24, 25, 26, 27). In one of them you'll find the brothers Jonson Stonefist (24). Two surly looking dwarfs that nobody can keep apart (one is called Brand, the other Korn, but who knows who is who?) They

have some troubles with the Ironmaster clan, and the few Ironmaster family members that decided to stay in Secomber, stayed very short... and often needed some help from the militia or the garrison to leave town safely. Why they stay in Secomber is unknown, but without a doubt the Ironmaster family is in some way involved.

The Mill Road leads up to an artificial hill, Harbour Hill (28), with the only mill in Secomber. 'Deadhead' Jason Grateful is not the most intelligent man in Secomber, but he's strong as an ox and his beautiful elven wife Kenya Silverspear left the High Forest for this tree of a man. They have two children, and she sometimes brings them along to her work at the Knee.

(Every year, during Winterfest, the strongest men (and women!) in Secomber compete in armwrestling. The longest game ever was between Jason Grateful and Iljin Tsjorin, more than one hour they struggled. In the end, Iljin won the match, but had to stop before he could reach the finals.)

Follow the Flanks, and you end up in the neighbourhood with the same name. The Flanks is nowadays often called Gnometown or Glittertown, even by the people living there.

In Gnometown you'll find the only alchemist in Secomber, Younder Truestone (39). His house is set a little bit apart, as he (just like Amelior Amanitas) now and again manages to blow up 'something'.

If it would depend on other inhabitants of Secomber (non-gnomes) Younder Truestone would be quickly 'out of business'. Yet Amelior Amanitas always speaks in favour of the small gnome. (Perhaps so he can claim he's not the only one blowing up things...)

There's also a small tower, dedicated to Gond (29). The gnomes appear to have taken a liking to this deity of mechanical things and inventions, and openly worship him.

The rest of the houses in Gnometown, ehm, excuse me, the Flanks, 'differ' from each other, as each gnome tries to outdo his neighbours, modifying his or her house in sometimes unexpected ways (30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38).

The Circle, Winterstay.

Northwest of the Flanks you'll find The Circle (41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47). It is a place to worship the gods.

The circle is a round plaza, with in the middle a clearwater pond. It is supposed to have

magical properties and strengthen those wounded who drink from it.

Surrounding the circle are a number of stones, statues, shrines, representing the gods of the realms. Tymora is quite popular, so is Llira (not surprising when you know that the road from The Flanks leads to the Twin's Festhalls on top of Goodhill).

There is still a shrine to Waukeen, and Kelvin Thryst openly worships her. He is one of the few in Secomber.

Four small stone statues on the north side of the circle, flanking the road towards Winterstay, are dedicated to Tempus, Torm, Helm and Tyr. It is said that the four gods will descend upon anyone destroying another's shrine, as long as there are believers in Secomber. Fact or fantasy, everybody knows that the charred remains of unknown individuals have been found in the circle.

If you visit the Circle, you might run into one of the members of a small adventuring band called the Four Hammers.

All four members are clerics of respectively Tempus, Torm, Helm and Tyr. Each cleric is armed with a battle hammer and neverending faith. They are known to patrol the moors and the Delimbiyr route, helping out adventurers in need. They are not often in town, but sometimes they show up, drink and eat and spread their faiths, and then go out again for weeks or months. They have a nasty habit (depending on your point of view) showing up on The Circle when somebody tries to damage or disgrace one of the statues, altars or shrines...

If you're looking for them, they have (semi permanent) rooms in The Knee.

(People whisper that the four are Avatars, looking for lost goddess, but nobody dares to say that out loud.)

From The Circle a small steep path descends to Winterstay (40). The two long, low barns house the sheep and cattle during the worst parts of the winter. John the Stout and his family live on Winterstay, and they have turned the house and the barns into a real fort with thick stone walls and very solid wooden doors and window panels. To protect the inhabitants and the flock against wolves and other hungry animals (or monsters!)

Although everybody is a bit nervous about The Circle, and nobody wants to live nearby (except the gnomes in the Flanks) John the Stout claims that the Circle is what keeps the worst dangers away. "The gods take care of the monsters, what they leave, I take care of," he claims.

He hasn't lost a sheep in the last fifteen years.

Goodhill.

A small twisted path joins the Flanks on its way up to the Twin's Festhall. The path, known as Tripper's Run (48), is said to be haunted at full moon nights.

An infamous thief, Jack from Waterdeep, had a habit of setting up traps, then scaring his victims and letting them run to their doom. (Financial or more definite.) One day, when setting up another trap, he was caught by members of the Waterdeep garrison. He tried to run away, only to trip over the tripwire he had installed himself, and thus he broke his neck.

(When the ghost of Jack is encountered, he'll be telling anybody who wants to listen that he wasn't *that* bad, and that it is all due to his namesake, a case of mistaken identity, and a judge with serious dyslexia. The ghost normally doesn't answer any questions, and if he does the answers mean nothing.)

On top of Goodhill stand the Twin's Festhalls (54). Two large converted barns, with kitchen, bars, and elevated stages, serving all 'group' events.

The Twin's Festhalls cater from visiting feasting nobles after a good hunt, to feasting adventurers after a rich find, to feasting locals after a good wedding, to feasting... You got the picture.

During summer and autumn they are open all day, when not reserved for any parties. You can get a simple serving of solid food (mostly stew) and drink your local wine or bear. Cheap. Not bad.

But it might not be your taste.

Everywhere else on the hill you'll find the houses of halflings and humans (49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60), all white with black roofs, surrounded by neat gardens. The halflings tend to live more underground, using sections of the house for storage. The human inhabitants appear to prefer it the other way around.

Lord's Hill.

The Lord's Hill is mostly covered with grass. On the west side you'll find the Lord's Wood, a patch of wood that's very tempting to caravan's to chop some wood for the evening cooking. Better don't! Not only are you fined with illegal wood chopping, but also you have to pay for planting (and taking care of) a new tree, and *that* adds up if taking care of a tree takes 25 years...

Actually, the only person allowed to chop woods in public areas within Secomber borders is Iljin Tsjorin, a huge man living in his small

farmhouse on the South Green (1). He lives there with his wife and two daughters, and takes care of all the public green in and around Secomber. He is allowed to fine people when things go to far, and the town council follows his advice.

Several humans and halflings live on Lord's Hill (90, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 97, 105). It is at the moment not allowed to build new houses on this hill, as the current commander of the Garrison (Lord Mayor Traskar) prefers to have a clear sight from their fortification, as far as possible.

(If it was up to Traskar Selarn, Lord's Wood (99) would change into 'Lord's Green', a grassy, empty hill provides additional tactical advantages...)

On the crest of Lord's Hill is the Fort (93), a fortification where the Waterdeep Garrison (about 30 soldiers) dwells, lead by Lord Traskar Selarn.

The garrison trains about a 50 to 100 locals or visitors in fighting and basic combat tactics, and some of these (part-time) swingswords rent themselves to passing caravans.

The wooden palisade around the Fort is being rebuilt in stone. Inside the Fort you'll find three barracks, stables, an exercise field, and a large tower. 2 barracks are in use, the third is currently empty.

There's a second palisade inside the fort, set up as a last defense. Inside there are two small towers and a low building containing storage, administration, and officer quarters. There is also a small waterpump.

Even though Lord Traskar is an official Secomber inhabitant (in other words: he pays tax) and although he has his own apartment in the High Lodge, you'll often find him here. With his wife and kids back in Waterdeep, there's not much (besides the safety of the area) that appears to interest him in Secomber, and he's not the jolly feasting drinking kind. Being a former adventurer, he does have a soft spot for adventuring bands though...

On the east edge of Lord's Hill, nearby No Mercy Lane, Dead End Street and Rumble Market, you'll find the Jade properties. Llana Jade is an half elf adventurer with more enthusiasm than sense. Her parents own the Jade Orchard (89) and the opposing Jade House (88).

The Jade Orchard produces the best fruit in the Secomber region.

Jade House is an 'extended' farmhouse with a stable, a small pasture and a veranda. It is mostly shielded from inquisitive looks by a stone wall and a row of trees, surrounding the property. Llana Jade rents it from her parents.

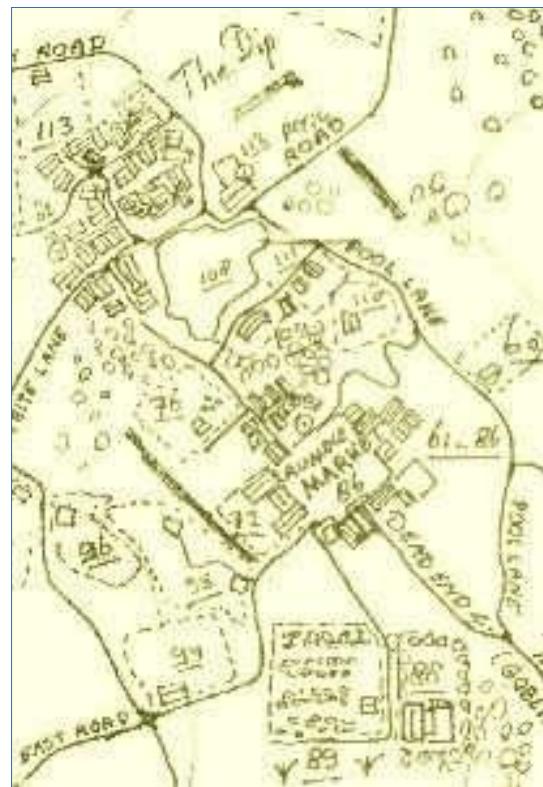
Big, spacy rooms provide space for Llana

Jade's numerous guests, and the Jade Swords (a loose group of adventurers, often changing members, centred around Llana) use Jade House as their home base. The Jade Swords have a habit of bringing back weird items or animals back from adventuring trips, giving the Jade House its second name: Llana's Zoo.

(Be aware that some of those animals brought back still live on the Jade properties, and that there's always somebody (or something) around to catch unwelcome visitors. More than once, the garrison had to help out during 'incidents' involving Llana Jade's 'trophies'.)

The South Green and the Green are often used to feed the garrison's horses.

Rumble Market.



From the Floodway you take No Mercy Lane (87). The lane ends in a fork. If you want to go to the Dip, stay to the right and follow Pool Lane. To go to Rumble Market, you take the right Dead End Street. Dead End Streets ends up on Rumble Market.

The names derive from a swift but deadly fight in Secomber many winters ago. One evening a small horde of goblins left the High Moors and crossed the River Delimbiyr in small boats and canoes. They landed on West Floods and wend straight for the city centre, killing, burning,

destroying everything on their way, and they almost reached the merchant quarters on Rumble Market.

Secomber would have suffered a lot of damage, if not for the Hunting Hawks, a band of adventurers that was staying overnight in Secomber. Suddenly several small kegs blocked the way, and a fireball turned former Rumble Street in a dead end. The Hawks stopped the goblin attack, and held them up long enough to give the Secomber militia time to retaliate. Not a single goblin was spared that night.

After this event Amelior Amanitas decided to settle down, and it eventually to the installation of Traskar Selharn as Lord Mayor of Secomber.

Rumble Market is a mid sized, cobblestoned square. This is where you will find all (semi) official buildings, and most of the merchants.

The biggest building on Rumble Market is the Town Hall (72). The Town Hall in Secomber is used for many different purposes. You'll find there the Secomber Militia, A small library, the home of the Townkeeper, a meeting room for the town council, the town's archives, a school, and just recently, an embassy!

Originally, this building belonged to a Waterhavian Nobleman with big ideas and a small wallet. He gave orders to build this, paid most of it in advance, yet to never show up again (if he would, he would be charged severely, if only for the principle). So the town now uses it for whatever is of common interest.

Ground floor left wing (Floodside) of Town Hall is where the Secomber Militia resides in their 'watchhall'. Most of the time there is somebody in, day and night, but you might get unlucky and find a closed door. (Fairly rare since Traskar Selarn took over, but still...)

Only four people are on a permanent payroll. Any others are community members that serve in turn, or members of the Waterdeep Garrison. Anybody interested is trained by that same garrison. Now and again one or more adventurers assist, if only for the fun of it, as one once stated.

The backside of the left wing contains a few stables, a small armoury, and a jail. The jail doesn't see much use, potential violators that once visited it know not to make the same mistake twice... One wall of the jail borders the dungheap outside...

The stables have recently been enlarged with a wooden structure, as the new lessees from the south have brought some small winter-ponies and two wagons. The roof above it has been extended and now covers the whole area between

the left and right wing, offering enough space for firewood, unwanted statues, and so on.

The two floors in the left wing above the watch, and part of the middle section, have been rented out to an official delegation from Luiren, the halfling land far away to the south. What an official delegation of halflings ever would like to do in a sullen town like Secomber is everyone's guess. The currently most favourite explanation is that the newcomers couldn't find Waterdeep so settled for something smaller. The delegates just smile.

There have been some rivalries between the local halfling community and the newcomers from the south, but most of this has been settled. While for outsiders (read: non halflings) the question 'why here' seems the one, the local halflings more wonder about 'why them' as three of the members of the delegation are semi-barbarian Ghostwise halflings. Nobody has explained anything yet, and the only outsider who might know (Lord Mayor Traskar Selarn) isn't telling.

The southern halflings have yet to use all the floorspace they rented, but it's doubtful they ever use the rooms on the backside (yes, the ones nearby the dung heap).

<< werkpunt >>

<< werkpunt 61..87 >>

The Dip.

<< werkpunt 106..109,112,134..162 >>

Shorty's Groove.

There are a few houses on Shorty's lane, nearby Shorty's Groove. The last house on the left side (101) has been bought by Rivelyn Ironeater, and this is where she and her father shoe horses and repair ploughs and wagons.

Rivelyn Ironeater is a young female dwarf gifted with the talent for the forge. She is the daughter of Faurgar Ironeater. Faurgar brought his family here a decade ago and has worked the forge ever since, although he leaves the 'real' stuff (weapons, battleaxes and similar things) nowadays to his daughter.

They run actually two forges. A simple one outside, the other one somewhat inside the hill.

'Shorty' Faurgar keeps mostly to himself. He frowns at the outgoing manners of his daughter, but she's longer, bigger and stronger than him, so who is he to complain?

Shorty is again one of those with a misty past he doesn't talk about. Secomber sees many of the like of him, but as the locals say: "yesterday is silent, today does the talk, tomorrow will tell" they let Shorty's actions speak and don't bother too

much with his personal history.

<< werkpunt 100..104 >>

High Hill.

<< werkpunt 113..133 >>

3. Mindset.

We're living in the savage frontier. We are, really. Are we?

Though this is the North, the 'savage frontier', there are monsters to the south and mysteries to the north, Zhentarim forces are creeping closer and the winters can be horrible cold, this still is Secomber. It's a rather relaxed place, where many halflings found a home, and where the dangers seem to be... under control, or at least at a safe distant.

Mostly hard working people they prefer the plough over the sword, but their weapons are ready when the need arises, and they are not afraid to fight. They just need a darned good reason before doing so.

Unfortunately, the Zhentarim forces have put this quiet community on the edge. The town is too small to resist an organized, coordinated attack, in spite of the Waterdeep Garrison and Amelior Amanitas his golems. This is worrying people, yet it hasn't stopped the growth of the town. And some of the new settlers have a sense of grim determination not to let anything, *anything or anybody*, take away their newfound homes.

Worried, cautious, carefully, and yet self confident. That's Secomber.

II. Other places.

As usual, the inhabitants of a place consider themselves the centre of the universe. At least, in Secomber they know they live at the heart of a rather backwater universe, but none the less... there are *other* places...

1. Vastan Keep.

West of Secomber, halfway between Ulubin and Julkoun stands a small keep atop a high hill, overlooking a fertile but often forgotten area of Delimbyr Vale. To the west there are the Forlorn Hills, covering the last remains of the Fallen Kingdom. Thirty miles to the east, through soft

sloping hills, lies Secomber.

In the eyes of the locals, this fortified stronghold named 'Vastan Keep' is a castle. And perhaps it just is that... Visitors will see a well built and sturdy stone keep. Experts will notice the dwarven craftsmanship. The keep is surrounded by a wooden palisade and sits on top of a large hill, overlooking the village down below. After years without much activity, new construction works are now in progress, and it looks like Sir Thronthgar is planning to have a stout stone wall surrounding his major property, effectively making it a small 'real' castle.

It's location on top of a large hill is well defensible, and the walls of the keep have kept all attackers out thus far, and here, out in the north, several have during the starting phases of the construction...

The security provided by Sir Thronthgar and his well trained man has attracted the attention of the farmers living in this area of the Vale, and several have moved. Subsequently, the small village of Vastan was founded at the foot of the hill.

Vastan village numbers 40 people. The majority consists of human farmer families, but a number of Thronthgar's men have decided to live outside the keep in a small house of their own. Vastan village is a small and quiet place that aligns itself with Secomber. Mostly because Sir Thronthgar does so.

This extreme fertile area of the Vale is responsible for a good portion of Secomber's farming exports. Since Thronthgar decided to put his keep out here, more and more farmers have settled down and cultured the land, much to the chagrin of some Elven farmholds in these lands.

The name of Thronthgar's castle ('Vastan' means 'gray' in some old language) has sparked discussion and rumours. In the areas around Secomber, there is a group of gray clad riders that appear from nowhere and disappear again. They appear to be fighting evil creatures and forces, but their behaviour is almost random. Sometimes they're called the Unicorn Riders, sometimes the Grey Riders, sometimes the Grey Unicorns. Well, with a keep called 'Keep Vastan' or 'Keep Grey' it's easy to be mistaken... So far, Sir Thronthgar has denied any connection to the 'Unicorn Riders' who are known to be wearing grey. Rumours still fly high though...

Vastan Village.

<< werkpunt Vastan village >>

Appendices.

Here is some more detailed information about the groups, persons, creatures, locations and items you might encounter.

A. Politics and security.

Secomber, far away from what civilization considers civilization (no one except perhaps Elminster is going to make a point of that), still suffers (or enjoys?) politics. There are the small petty politics, the games that the different landholders play, the disagreements between greedy merchants. There is the overall threat of the savage North that, while not politics perse, certainly influences daily life.

And then, there are the ever continuing power plays of all the different power groups in the region. The independent cities (yeah, right). The Harpers and the Zhents. Cults. Mercantile leagues. Monsters. Mad wizards. And mixtures and combinations of any of the above.

And you thought Secomber had to be boring...

Basic Law.

The Law of Rights: Everyone has the right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. (Yes. There were halflings involved.)

This is the law that rules all laws. In fact, Secomber doesn't have any laws but this one. Jurisdiction, yes. Laws, no. All other laws are considered regulations, and subject to the above.

The Secomber people and their court are rather straightforward minded. If there is ever such a thing as a 'legal dispute' it's probably about what is included in 'pursuit of happiness' and what isn't.

(Clearly, bashing somebody's skull and running away with the same person's money might be your idea of pursuing happiness, but opinion differs, and if you get caught, you'll swiftly find out what the Court thinks of it. Without the bashing you still wouldn't get away with it.)

The Court.

Any legal issues or disputes in Secomber are handled by the Lord Mayor or the Court of Secomber.

The Lord Mayor may choose to decide on any case brought to his attention. If the involved

parties do not accept his judgement, the Court will take the final decision.

A word of note: becoming a Secomber citizen is like placing yourself under Secomber jurisdiction, wherever you are. At least, that's how the Secomber Court sees it.

<< werkpunt court >>

Town Council.

<< werkpunt council >>

The Waterdeep Garrison...

... doesn't exist.

Oh. It is what everybody calls it. It basically *is* a Waterdeep Garrison. It just simply isn't. *Officially*.

It's obvious that the different independent cities would like to expand their influences, or at least 'secure' their interests. Some follow a course of expansion, aggression, intimidation or intrigue. Others simply prefer to stabilize and prolong the existing situation.

Under normal circumstances, the city of Waterdeep would not have interfered with local affairs. The situation in this case, however, proved to be slightly different. The current mayor is a *former* employee of the Waterdeep forces, and numerous men in the *independent* Secomber Garrison have had some experience in Waterdeep. And quite a number of them return to the Waterdeep forces when they're done here.

Strictly spoken, Waterdeep pays Secomber a monthly fee for security services, and this is how the small town of Secomber can afford a reasonable effective militia.

Though some of the money is redirected at fortifications and road repairs, and another bit is poured into a 'security fund', most of it is used to pay the men. Of course, Waterdeep has been more than willing to lend some men to Secomber, for a reasonable price, of course.

Currently, the Waterdeep Garrison consists of 30 soldiers. When the need arises, all adventurers within the Secomber borders are expected to answer the call to arms and help defend the town. With an additional 50 to 100 locals and /or visitors 'in training' the fighting power is quite surprising for such a small town.

Note that, against a certain fee, applicants can be trained in the use of arms by members of the Garrison. However, prices are not standard, and could range from free (for example: local taxpayers) to a year serve with the Garrison! On top of that, more than one applicant has been

refused without a reason (but often on suspicion of evil intents).

Although some people would claim otherwise, in the end it is Secomber's town council and Lord Mayor Traskar Selharn who control and direct the garrison. And although Waterdeep pays for the security services, this does not mean the garrison is always and immediately at their whim available. This has caused some uncomfortable moments in the past, and surely it will cause some more in the future... yet nobody dares to guess what would happen during a real conflict of interest...

Secomber Militia.

Captain Maelin is the head of the small Secomber Militia. Besides him, the Militia has 4 permanent members and fills the other four spots with members of the community. The Militia avoids any serious violence, instead calling on the help of the Waterdeep Garrison.

B. The CSSC: The Combined Secomber Shipping Companies.

The CSSC is another project by Kelvin Thryst, this time together with Theronsten Llothar.

Theronsten Llothar is a mage merchant with a disputable past, about which he doesn't like to talk. Sometimes his business methods lack style, but they always improve *his* position or gain.

Theronsten used to own three boats that travelled along the Delimbiyr, and of the cost up to Waterdeep, but several unforeseen events took out two. (One was Theronsten's own fault, though he will never admit that.)

Kelvin, looking for ways to improve or forward his harbour plans, saw a possibility and offered the old Merchant a partnership. It's a loose partnership, with both partners keeping a weary eye on the other.

All boats operating for the CSSC (one is fully owned by Theronsten, three are semi-independent) use the CSSC for administration, coordination, and repairs. The CSSC has a small office in Waterdeep and representatives in Loudwater, Zellbros and Daggerford. The merchant captains of the boats have to carry all goods the CSSC asks them to, on fixed routes set by the CSSC, but are allowed to do their own bit of trade or transport with the free capacity left.

CSSC ships.

The four ships of the CSSC are:

The Theronsten Two, captain Baldur Lothar (a nephew of Thorenston). A heavy, slow vessel used to transport large amounts or heavy objects. You're not in a hurry when taking this ship. A lot of the work of the Secomber stone cutters is transported using the Theronsten Two. The ship is big enough to travel all the way over sea to Waterdeep, although Theronsten doesn't like to risk his ship in the (infamous but overrated) Lizard Mash.

The Unicorn's First, under captain Joalna T'Dassault. A slim, rather small vessel with just six sailors. It's small enough to be men (or elf) powered. This is the ship that takes care of most 'special' transports, and it has visited the High Forest, Orllbar and Llorckh. Note that the Unicorn's First is the only ship known to have travelled into the High Forest, fighting the falls and wildwater and the perils of the High Forest itself, *and return!* This ship is too small to take on the Sword Coast, although it has been seen once in Waterdeep.

The Dragon's Breath is owned and run by a gnome family FromWayDownUnder. It is relatively new and powered by two Steam Dragonettes (a kind of steam engines build by the priests of Gond) but has run into a lot of problems. The Dragon's Breath is noisy, but the new technology means it doesn't care about faltering winds. Only about failing machinery... Kelvin's plans for Secomber's harbour where exactly what the gnomes were looking for: a place to repair their ship and test new ideas. The Dragon's Breath has done a few Waterdeep runs, but only when accompanied by the Sailor's Dream.

Sailor's Dream is a midsized ship under the command of captain 'Slick' Moander. It's the most profitable ship with the worst administration. Actually, all the penalties keep Moander's net profits low, but he doesn't seem to care much. Moander doesn't care much about the Lizard Marsh and travels on a regular base to Waterdeep. 'Skinning some Lizards' as he calls it. He sometimes loses a few sailors on these trips, and adventurers get reduced rates, especially archers and priests...

Daily control of the CSSC ships is in the hands of the merchant captains themselves. Routes, business deals, and general company decisions are made in the Secomber office. All captains have 1 vote, the Secomber town council has one, and Theronsten and Kelvin have each 3 votes.

Anybody can 'transfer' his vote to somebody else, who can vote in their place in the CSSC meetings (this is especially important as the captains normally can never attend.). Joan Dassault

and the FromDownUnder family have transferred their votes to Kelvin Thryst, and Baldur Lothar (ofcourse) transferred his vote to his uncle.

'Slick' Moander transferred his vote to Elisa, the daughter of Lord Mayor Traskar Selharn, and sometimes a six year old girl (when she's on a holiday from Waterdeep) upsets the CSSC meetings by claiming that all of this is so boring, and can she go outside and play now and get that icecreme that somebody promised...

Under normal circumstances, the Secomber town council refrains from voting, and doesn't even attend the CSSC meetings. (Neither does the mayor's daughter, but sometimes the Mayor has had enough and needs to enlighten his day.)

The CSSC is growing... Theronsten Llothar is considering buying another ship, a new Theronston One. And Kelvin Thryst is talking to more 'independent operators', and hopes to bring them under the CSSC flag. The problem is: there is just limited demand on the Delimbiyr, so further expansion is almost impossible, unless ships go outside and travel to Waterdeep...

You will find the CSSC office on the second floor of The Knee (19) overlooking Big Leg. Kelvin Thryst is known to sleep overnight in his office, sometimes. Nobody dares to disturb him the next morning, when this happens... he has something of a (rather bad) morning temper when he wakes up on his desk...

C. Persons.

Amelior Amanítas.

This section contains material taken from from TSR's 1142 The North and 9233 The Savage Frontier.

Long ago, when a large group of goblins managed to sneak into Secomber and was stopped at the last moment by a brave band of adventurers (the Hunting Hawks), the Town Council of Secomber decided that they would need more and better protection. They approached the leader of the Hunting Hawks, one Traskar Selharn, to improve Secomber's security.

He declined.

However, another member of the band, Amelior Amanítas, decided to stay and settle down, being tired of adventuring. Although this mumbling and forgetfull wizard was not exactly what the Town Council had in mind, at least his very presence would deter some threats.

Amelior is an alchemist-at-large and busy

body, which is a kind way of saying that he is not welcome in most places. Secomber is home and he always returns there. He is a tall man, chunky, with brown but graying curly hair and beard, one eye, spectacles, and simple clothing like a common craftsman. Except for his eyepatch: he wears a variety of handsome patches over the socket of his lost eye, some silk, some tasseled, some vividly patterned, and one bearing his sigil.

He likes to 'poker-about-after-secrets' making him unwelcome in many places, though not in Silverymoon, where he's a close friend of High Lady Alustriel. How close is yet to be seen...

Although he does not appear so, Amelior is a powerful wizard, a learned sage whose major area of study is the Physical Universe (Chemistry & Physics) and whose minor field is the study of the Supernatural & Unusual (which gives him nightmares) and a master alchemist, noted more for his peculiarities than his prowess. He comes across as a bumbling, good-natured eccentric who has an unreasoning fear of evil and is outrageously absent-minded. Amelior is straight in his dealings, though he may actually forget he's hired someone. And he is constantly hiring, asking adventurers to carry out odd tasks for him, often paying more than the task is worth.

He rarely uses magic to defend himself, relying on Ereka (LN hm F4), his irritable sharp tongued bodyguard with equally sharp swords. For those real occasions, Amelior can call up a djin and a pair of magical ogres.

Amelior's home looks a lot like a cluttered halfling delving. It's connected to a tiny, leaning stone tower located above, in and on one of the hills in Secomber. When visiting, you're bound to run into several golems and a dozen, brightly colored red, green, fuchsia, flame-orange, mint blue, sun yellow, and so on cats.

He has the matching eyepatches...

Amelior might not be liked by many, but there is one that does admire the mage: a gnome: the self styled alchemist Younder Truestone. What Amelior thinks of his biggest fan, or if he even knows he has a fan, is unknown. Probably the old mage sees the gnome as just another source of decently priced distilling equipment... and yes, Younder does give the mage a heavy discount.

See also:

- 1142 The North

- Volo's Guide to the Sword Coast

- 9233 FR5 The Savage Frontier.

Ereka.

<< werkpunt ereka >>

Jingleshod.

*Further development of material from
9233 FR5 The Savage Frontier.*

Jhingleshod, known as the Iron Axeman (he once had another name but can no longer remember it) appears to be a man covered from head to toe in exotic plate armor. He lightly wields a mighty axe that most men could not even lift. Upon closer inspection, he appears to be a cross between a living being and an animated suit of armor, his skin formed of lightly rusted overlapping plates of iron. Over the armor, he wears a tunic and cloak of forest green, and only his face shows he is or once was a human. If you know where to look.

Jhingleshod seeks to destroy his former master, Wulgreth, a once-living wizard who is said to dwell in the heart of the Dire Wood, a mystical area within the High Forest. Jhingleshod's own life is tied to Wulgreth's. He cannot die until Wulgreth is destroyed, or at least he believes so. The Iron Axeman has tried to kill himself a few times, only to wake up somewhere else in whole again. Reason would have it for him to simply look up his old master, but the Dire Wood is an area that Jinglesod simply cannot enter... the moment he steps into the circle of the Dire Wood, he disappears, only to reappear at the other, opposite site of the circle... It might be that his existence is connected to the Dire Wood in some other, more mystical way than he believes.

In the same way, he is unable to leave Toril, gates don't transport him, plane crossing magic doesn't affect him. Even a simple teleport spell doesn't work for him. His 'metal skin' makes him too heavy for horseriding and thus he has to take many long, interesting walks.

The Iron Axeman has tried different things, but so far even the strongest magic hasn't solved his dilemma. Polymorphing... alignment changes... jumping into a sphere of annihilation... charmed and turned into an undead by an evil wizard... Someday Jingleshod wakes up again with a grudge, and if somebody has tried to use him he'll make up for that first, before returning to his major goal in life: killing Wulgreth. Was the Iron Axeman once totally obsessed with Wulgreth, nowadays he goes a bit easier on himself and his fate. After all, the protection against magical weapons that was once upon his skin has worn thin over time...

The ongoing struggle for eternal freedom (as Jingleshod sees death, either his own or that of Wulgreth) has made him somewhat cynical and a bit loony. He is in his heart a friendly man but given in to sombre moods at unpredictable moments. As a powerful fighter with his innate

armor he is a force to be reckoned with. He often acts before he thinks about the consequences, but it appears he has eternity to set things straight after making yet another mistake...

History.

Jingleshod started as a fighter, a bodyguard for the young wizard Wulgreth, they adventured together and became friends. Scorched in the line of duty by fire magics, he begged his employer and friend for relieve. To keep him alive, Wulgreth made a pact with the dark powers, selling his soul (throwing Jingleshod's in the bargain as well), and replaced all Jingleshod's burned skin with living armour. When Wulgreth went to Karse, Jingleshod followed. He had won back his skin, but lost his mind.

Jingleshod found redemption when he found a woodcutter with a broken leg in the woods around Karse. He fell in love with Willowfern, the daughter of the woodcutter, and they had two children. Wulgreth, all focussed on the Pillar and the Heart within, appeared to have forgotten about Jingleshod, or the Iron Axeman as he came to be known by then.

Unfortunately, Wurgreth did not forget what the wizard saw as Jingleshod's betrayal. When Jingleshod came home one day, he found his family, his loved ones, slaughtered. Wurgreth had left his mark.

He returned to Karse and gathered the villagers, and they attacked the wizard. It was the axe of the Iron Axeman that finally killed Wurgreth. That should have been the end of it, as Jingleshod could feel himself falling apart, the magical ties between him and his former master dissolving. He lost consciousness.

There is no telling how long Jingleshod was in this dead, or near dead, state. When he finally woke up, the world had changed. Everywhere were dark, sombre trees, emanating an aura of evil. This Dyre Wood was everywhere, expanding. Deep in his soul, Jingleshod knew Wulgreth had to be responsible. He started cutting down each and every dark tree he could find. He fought strange beasts and dark enemies, and every time he went down he stood up again, felling more and more trees.

Until, one day, he found himself back outside the Dyre Woods, unable to enter, in his mind the ringing laughter of Wulgreth.

*See also:
- Wulgreth*

<< werkpunt >>

Jingleshod's secrets.

- Have Wulgreth destroyed. Well, it's not exactly a secret that he wants to *kill* Wulgreth, but recently he found out that that's no longer possible as Wulgreth is already *dead*. A group of adventures went into the Dire Wood and found out that the former wizard is now some sort of lichlike being. Only three of the six made it back to Secomber to tell the tale.

Destroying the lich will take quite some force, so the Iron Axeman is trying to save enough money to finance such a force. How much isn't that important, nor how long it would take him. He has asked Kelvin to invest some money for him, which the halfling has done reluctantly. Not that the halfling is worried about the money, but a massive invasion of the High Forest by armed forces would certainly meet with resistance, and be bad for business...

- Find *another* way into the Dire Wood. Jingleshod has puzzled out that there might be a reason why it's so difficult for him to use a portal or to enter another plane... it just might be another way in!

Jingleshod has heard the rumours of the planes, something called an endless staircase, and the gods who dwell there. If somebody could show him the way to and around the great ring, he would be extremely thankful. The logical step would be to go to Amelior Amanitas, an expert on extraplanar stuff, but Jingleshod distrusts mages, and who can blame him.

- Even if you can't die, you still can lose something... In Jingleshod's case it's his memory. Every time he dies, he loses something. At first it didn't scare him, but when he realized it might hamper his quest for revenge, he became a bit more careful and reluctant to put his life (or its current incarnation) on the line. Yet he's still Jingleshod, and he would still fight to the death for any cause he considers worthwhile.

Is there such a thing as a cynic paladin? In Jingleshod you find one...

Kelvin Thryst.

One of the major players in Secomber politics. Kelvin is a young halfling that settled down in Secomber six years ago, starting his 'bridge' project. Nobody could stop him since.

His wife and two children went back to Waterdeep, telling him to visit them 'when he had the time' and he sometimes does (six times a year or so he leaves for Waterdeep, but they have yet to see him once). The rest of the time he's working, working, or, on a lazy day, working...

Kelvin's activities can be divided into

three categories...

1. Thinking. If he's in town, you'll find him most of the time in The Knee. And when he's awake, he's most likely on the ground floor, thinking and drinking. He likes the Secomber black beer. (He's probably the only person in Delimbiyr Vale that likes Secomber black beer.)

2. Travelling. Kelvin is out of town quite a bit. He visits Waterdeep, or looks for other potential business opportunities.

3. Running the CSSC.

Kelvin has big plans. Some are obvious, some are not. Some are public, some are not. Some are viable, and some are certainly not! He's planning to expand and improve the Unicorn Harbour, to make it a 'small Waterdeep along the Delimbiyr'. So far progress has been... well... marginally promising.

Kelvin's secrets...

- The larger picture. Whatever you think of the enterprising halfling, Kelvin does things big. Big. BIG. Everything Kelvin does is based upon a larger picture. All his activities, although they might seem unrelated, are based upon a long term vision, inspired by the expansion of the High Forest and the continuing Zhentarim threat. Combined with a good sense of making profit, of course.

- Kelvin is aware of the treants' expansion plans. Via one of his captains, Joalna T'Dassault, Kelvin has heard of the expansion plans of the treants. Although a rumour, he went out to Hellgate Keep to get first hand experience. He even went so far as trying to get hold of the Mistmaster, but wasn't allowed into the Citadel of the Mist. Kelvin sees this as confirmation, and is trying to decide on the impact... The Upvale nearby Hellgate Keep is now blocked by avalanches. And likely the High Forest will be expanded southwards and westwards, effectively blocking land based trade routes here, isolating Loudwater, and cutting off Orbar and Llorck.

- New trade routes. With the expansion of the High Forest, Kelvin sees a few possibilities for new caravan routes, as the Dawn Pass trail. Either by river all the way to Llorck then following the old trail, or land based, past the Hark Mountains, along the Hark River, south of Southwood, passing through the High Moor. From there, the new route would either lead through the Bleached Bone Pass or even further south, avoiding the Greypeak Mountains all together and going perhaps through Everska, although that realm is a rather unknown factor. Either way, he's going to establish, guide and guard these new routes, and definitely make a profit.

Currently, the quickest route east / west would be using the Black Road straight through Aunorach. In the future, a viable alternative might be to pass Aunorach on the southside, north of the Stormhorns, all the way to Tilverton.

- Zhentarim occupation of Orllbar and Llorckh... With these two towns now under Zhent control, what will stop them from taking over Loudwater and then Secomber? Secretly, Kelvin has been financially supporting adventurers to hinder the Zhent's expansion. In effect, he does not see the expansion of the High Forest as a bad thing in this regard. He's even been considering helping the treants, but it's unclear if they would accept his help (or even talk to him), how he could help, and how it would affect the relation with Loudwater.

- Recently, Kelvin has purchased a Gond pump for his intended dry dock. He had a pump house build for it, so that is not much of a secret.

That he has a second pump in crates is less known. That he's not planning to use that pump at all, no one knows, not even the temple of Gond that sold him the pumps. In fact, Kelvin wants to take this pump apart and copy and reproduce the design, with the help of the FromWayDownUnder gnome clan. He has collected some more Gond inventions, wants to copy and sell them, undercutting the prices of the Gond temples.

It's actually *not* Kelvin's intention to end his business with the Gond temples, but he would like to have some commercial leverage so he can obtain their help with his other projects (such as flying). Kelvin wants to make his money in trade, not in production.

- Kelvin is reserving CSSC money for setting up CSSC overland travel caravans, from Secomber, up to Ulubin, Bargewright Inn, down to Amphail and then into Waterdeep. This will give him the necessary background on setting up his own caravans to the east, and bring in more cargo for his ships.

- Cleaning out Lizard Marsh. Travelling by boat would be a lot easier if that pesky Lizard Marsh wouldn't be there. Well, cleaning out is perhaps a bit drastic, but if some carefully lobbed fireballs and the right application of shining steel would certainly discourage the lizardmen raiders there.

- Cleaning out The Dungeon of the Hark. If a new caravan route is to be established south of Southwood, then it will be an essential to stop the wererats that harass the caravans in this area.

- Airships. Kelvin has seen the mage Shaldaran's floating house (Volo's Guide to the

North, p61), and he's now collecting magical and non-magical items that 'float' or 'fly'. If he would be able to set up a commercial 'float' line between Waterdeep and Secomber, perhaps even downwards to Sornubel or Baldur's gate, now *that* would certainly put Secomber on the map!

Flying ships would mean he would be able to offer an alternative to the Zhentarim controlled Black Road straight through Aunorach.

- Portals. Now, the safest way would be instant transport, from Secomber to anywhere. But arranging a few private portals is even beyond Kelvin's reach, and he knows... but one can always hope...

Maelin.

<< werkpunt maelin >>

Traskar Selarn.

A regal, handsome and good natured man with a history of fierce adventuring is Traskar Selarn, current Lord Mayor of Secomber.

Once the leader of the adventuring band The Hunting Hawks, he was weaned on the High Moor and the Grey Peaks with several sojourns into the High Forest as well.

He rules by enforcing the Law of Rights (everyone has the right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness) and allowing people to do as they choose beyond that. Visitors sometimes think him lax, until they cross that inviolable border and experience the Lord Mayor's swift justice.

Over the years, the threat of the Zhentarim and rumours of Illithid undercover agents started to worry the Lords of Waterdeep. Although Secomber is backwater country, it still is located along a trade route, and it's a good 'forward' position when one takes into account the rumours that fly about the former Hellgate Keep, returning elves in the woods of The High Forest, and mysterious events on the other side of the Greypeak Mountains, in the Aunorach desert. Enough to have the more careful voices in Waterdeep pay attention to the outside world. Simply 'walking in and taking over' would leave a bad impression on the neighbours... (Politics, you know.)

This all led to Traskar Selarn (who was at that time on Waterdeep's payroll) being sent to Secomber. He grudgingly agreed to accept the temporary 'advisory' function in Secomber, if only to meet his old comrade Amelior, and talk about the old days.

Halflings, being the practical folk they are, immediately voted for him as their new mayor,

and the human and gnome community immediately followed their example. Turning Traskar Selharn, former adventurer, leader of the Hunting Hawks, then advisor, into *Lord* Traskar Selharn, Lord Mayor of Secomber.

Waterdeep was incredibly quick to confirm and support his election.

Although he has been away from Secomber for most of his life, Traskar Selarn still is 'one of the people' and can be seen frequently among the people that he has been chosen to protect. He frequents The Seven Stringed Harp and the Dell on market days. When asked he speaks freely about the High Moor and other areas, yet never talks of the High Forest. Some say it is because he met a lovely elf there in his adventuring days and doesn't wish the place disturbed, others say it is because of a near fatal adventure into a ruin near where the Unicorn Run exits the woods. Whichever, he will not speak of it, and carefully sidesteps the subject or, when pressed, simply falls silent. But he can point would-be explorers to plenty of sites in the High Moor.

Traskar loves his wife and daughter dearly, and is torn between his sense of responsibility for the place where he grew up, the love he knows in Waterdeep, and his deep love of the forest as a ranger. His wife and daughter visit him often, but a careful observer will notice some of the stress he's undergoing.

His wife is happy Traskar has given up his adventuring days, but rumours have it he has been adventuring with an old comrade on the sly, and the name of Amelior Amanitas has come up more than once. It's perhaps better his wife doesn't know about these rumours, regardless if they are true or not.

Traskar's secrets.

- Traskar might not exactly 'know' about the Unicorn Riders and the role Maelin (the captain of the Secomber Militia is playing) but at least he has certain 'suspicions'. He listens carefully to any 'hints' by Maelin then makes sure the Unicorn Riders (whoever they are) and his own Waterdeep Garrison are not getting in eachothers way.

It's now and again handy to have a hidden partner that can deal with issues that are slightly beyond your... legitimate... reach. A hint sometimes suffices to solve a lingering problem.

- Traskar is worried about Kelvin's activities regarding the Zhentarim. The little halfling could bring a real war upon Secomber before Secomber is ready to handle it.

- Both Luiren and Waterdeep have pledged money and manpower to build out

Secomber's defenses, but Traskar is looking for another option. He doesn't want to turn the peaceful village into a warzone. He's looking for other options, but hasn't come up with any thus far. He doesn't know about the planned expansion of High Forest, but if he did, it is doubtful he would ask the treants or the returning elves for help, due to personal reasons.

- Love can hurt or even kill. Traskar had a short but stormy affair with an elven girl from High Forest. She broke off the affair when she found out he was already married, then killed herself.

It was only then Traskar found out she was married to, to an elven nobleman. In the following duel, Traskar killed the man, and although it was recognized as self defense, he was told not to return to High Forest. Ever.

Sir Thronthgar 'Skullsplitter'.

Based upon J.A. Jones original character.

Sir Thronthgar 'Skullsplitter' (Paladin of Chauntea, Duke of Vastan, Castigan of Waterdeep) came to the Delimbyr Vale some 18 winters ago. It's unclear why he settled down here. It's even a bigger question how he got the help of a large contingency of dwarves that helped him build the core of his stronghold at that time. His keep stands on Vastan Knoll, a large hill to the northwest of Secomber, perhaps half a day on horseback, just beyond sight of those traveling the trail between Ulubin and Secomber.

Sir Thronthgar pays his Secomber taxes, and is considered a citizen of Secomber which either he or his spokesmen clearly voice when visiting.

Thronthgar himself is a bit of an enigma. He is rarely seen in Secomber, sending his vassals to speak with Selharn on most matters of region business. In fact, Thronthgar hails from this area yet history is vague but claims that he lost both his parents when he was still a child.

People claim that Sir Thronthgar of Vastan Keep is captain of the Unicorn Riders. He himself has denied such.

Thronthgar's secrets...

- Thronthgar's father and mother was slain in a bugbear raid many years ago. He turned to the only thing left, his father's church, Chauntea. After adventuring in the Heartland's, he returned to Secomber to enact revenge. As most know, revenge is a dish best served cold, and Thronthgar is a bit unstable for it.

- Thronthgar recently had priestly visitors of the church of Chauntea, who came to warn him that he is about to lose his Paladin status, sliding away from LG into LN.

- Thronthgar has trained an elite force of cavalry that he patrols the countryside with. He has kept this secret from Selharn, as he believes his primary objective should be the eradication of Bugbears. He fears that should his fighting force be discovered, other, less glorious, jobs would be required by the Lord of Secomber. (And he's pretty much right about that.)

There are a total of 20 soldiers (F2), two captains (F5) and Thronthgar (P11) himself in the 'Grey Unicorns'. The all ride light warhorses, except for Thronthgar, who rides a magnificent heavy steed.

- Sir Thronthgar is very disturbed about some rogue 'Grey Unicorns' out there. He suspects these are his own men pursuing other interest, or some imposters using the identity of the Grey Riders as a cover. He knows about the rumours of the 'Unicorn Riders' but has dismissed them as the products of an overactive imagination. Captain Maelin, captain of the Secomber Militia and supposedly also the captain of those fabled Unicorn Riders, is nothing more but some sort of local constable and thus not capable of leading real men into and out of battle. An opinion only further strengthened by recent statements of the Lord Mayor of Secomber, who denied any official involvement.

Wulgreth.

Wulgreth, the former master of Jinglehod, is nowadays a lich. He resides (hard to use the word 'lives' when a lich is involved) in a large, black pyramid inside Dyre Wood, and area in the High Forest north of Secomber.

<< werkpunt wulgreth >>

Dyre Wood.

Modified based upon material found on the web. It is unclear if this is canon or not, and who to credit for the original material.

It is impossible to talk about Wulgreth and not look at the Dyre Wood. Or at Jinglehod.

According to legends, and mind you, the are legends and thus there is not a small chance of them being partially or wholly untrue, the small city of Karse grew up around the 'Pillar', the

pretrified remains of the demi god Karsus, unrecognizable as such due to wear and tear of the elements. Inside the Pillar the essence of Karsus still existed, beating like a heart.

The wizard Wulgreth the Wondrous settled down in the city, bringing with him some unusual followers, dogs (dire wolves), an exotic lady (doubleganger) and a tall man of seemingly living armour (Jinglehod). Nobody saw the demons that stayed out of sight.

Wulgreth had heard the legends of the Pillar of Karsus and through demonic acquaintances and magic he gained knowledge about the mythical heart within, and the powers that its blood could confer.

Wulgreth soon found entrance into the Pillar and explored the maze of tunnels, natural or created by the kobolds that lived within, which he quickly turned into slaves. With their enforced aid he found the Heart inside the Pillar. He and his demon companions (servitors? masters?) took blood from the Heart. Wulgreth managed to process the blood into a potion that would keep him alive forever, as long as he continued to take it. With life pouring out of the Heart, the countryside around the Pillar withered, sick, twisted.

For reasons only known to him, Wulgreth left Karse and the Pillar, and visited the home of his bodyguard Jinglehod. There he performed a dark ritual and slayed Jinglehod's family, perhaps only to revenge Jinglehod's 'betrayal'.

Jinglehod took revenge. He told the remaining citizens about Wulgreth's deeds, of his demonic worship, his wounding of The Heart. Enraged, the townspeople stormed the mages hewn and slew or drove off the mages servitors, trapping the wizard in his laboratory. It was only Jinglehod's axe that finally killed him.

Yet, on the rising of the next moon, Wulgreth arose as a lich. He tried to regain the potions, but his undead form was repelled by the last life of The Heart. Denied access to life, Wulgreth gathered his remaining servants, and disappeared...

In later years, sturdy seedlings of a dark black colour grew up on the graves of the citizens slain by Wulgreth. They grew out to become the Dyre Oaks. This grove of the 13 original Dyre Oaks still stands, now called the Dark Glade, it is the center of the Vale of Karsus. This glade is consecrated to the powers of Darkness. It is unholy ground, a tangle of dark trees, wraithgrass and weathered tombstones. The souls of the 13 original victims are still trapped in the glade, suffering eternal torment.

Elsewhere in the Dyre Wood, unable to approach or even enter the Pillar or the Heart, and unwilling to leave the area, Wulgreth had a large black pyramid raised. He withdrew inside, to play

dangerous games with the defenders of the Heart and whoever enters his domain, as he has become to see the Dyre Wood.

When Wulgreth first heard of the Jingleshod's return, he was baffled and perhaps a bit amused. He quickly send out his servants to 'correct' the Iron Axemen. They killed him. Yet Jingleshod did not stay dead. They had to kill him again. And again...

Until, one day, the Iron Axeman disappeared.

Over the years, the Dyre Oaks have spread throughout the valley and beyound, affecting the areas where they grow. Inside the Dyre Wood different rules apply. Time does not run smoothly, magic behaves differently. Even distances are, somehow, distorted.

Yet there is hope. A young stone giant, a healer named Girundrial, escaped the claws of Wulgreth and came to the Pillar and tried to heal the Heart. He succeeded, but not entirely. It is said that these unlikely allies, the giant and the kobolds that once were Wulgreth's slaves, still live in and nearby the Pillar, looking for a way to heal and fully restore the Heart.

Although the Dyre Wood expands ever more slowly since the partial healing of the Heart, it never stopped, and it might one day cover all of the world we know.

And so the Vale of Karse has remained. And while the Dyre Oaks spread, Wulgreth broods. And waits.

D. Creatures.

With Llara Jade's hobby it's not difficult to run into about anything, and a lot of it could be nothing you've ever encountered before. Yet some species are exclusive to Secomber.

Minilisk.

<< werkpunt: minilisk >>

E. Magic.

Those looking for powerfull magic have come to the wrong place. The major wizard of Secomber (Amelior Amanitas) is often out of town. His small house and tower are somehow somewhat protected.

(Mostly by reputation: the wizard's scribbles are illegible to anybody but himself. And even when he's *not* in, things in and around his

tower and home still have a tendency to explode...)

However, there is some magic that you can run into...

Guardstones.

Everywhere in and around of Secomber you will find small, pink colored boulders. Most of them are roughly ovoid without any specific markings, but the surfaces are smoothly polished. These 'Guardstones' are made of leftovers by the Stonecutter's Guild.

A warning is in it's place! The inhabitants of Secomber take a *very* dim view of (unauthorized) people messing around with their Guardstones!

Using Guardstones.

Guardstones are used to mark areas belonging to a certain owner. The stones relate to the owner, and alarm him when 'something unwanted' is happening, such as a house on fire, a thief breaking in, and similar events.

(There is no exact description of 'unwanted'. Warnings are given on a case by case basis, differing from person, guarded area, any objects in the area, etc. In general: events that the tuned person does not like. Often: damage or theft of property, trespassers, etc....)

Guardstones have several limitations. In pite of this, almost all houses or gardens in Secomber do have Guardstones. The limitations are:

1. They guardstones can only be linked to one person at a time (only one person receives the warning).
2. A person can only be linked to one set of guardstones at a time.
3. Their reach is limited (about two miles, further away you won't receive a warning). Hoeweever, if you are linked to the stones, you will notice it when you enter or leave this range.
4. The area they guard may not be 'fragmented' (so you can't guard two houses in two different parts of town).
5. The guarded area cannot be too big (maximal size depends on the number of stones, and the shape of the area, but a small house plus medium garden can be covered by four stones).
6. They guardstones don't tell you *what* is happening.
7. Bringing *other* Guardstones into 'guarded' areas blocks both warnings (after sending

out a last alarm)..

8. All Guardstones must be of the same 'batch' (they must be created or tuned at the same time).

Ofcourse, when something happens that would stop the working of the Guardstones, change the tuned person, a dispell magic, etcetera, the guardstones will send out a warning just before they stop working.

Tuning Guardstones.

Tuning a Guardstone to a specific person is remarkably easy: first you collect the stones you want to tune, and cast the first level spell 'Tune Guardstones'. That's all.

Amelior's Tune Guardstones.

2nd level wizard spell, Abjuration / Evocation.

Range: 10 yards, touch
Components: V,S,M
Duration: permanent
Casting time: 1 round per stone
Area of effect: 2 stones + 1 stone per level caster
Saving: none

This spell tunes a number of guardstones. (The 'tuned' stones will send their alarm to the specified person.) The material components needed are the stones. These must be roughly round, made of granite or marble, with a smooth polished surface. A good guardstone weighs about eight pounds. The first person touched by the spellcaster, after completion of the spell, will be the person the stones 'tune' to.

Guardstones can be any size, but larger stones take more time to enchant.

All Guardstones must be tuned in one 'batch'.

Creating Guardstones.

The process of creating Guardstones is simple, yet not completely without risk. The original spell was devised by Amelior Amanitas. His original version created 'exploding' guardstones, something his gardener didn't like.

Amelior managed to tune down the nature of the alarm, yet during creation the stones still may go 'boom'. (This is why most mages prefer not to enchant too big stones, or too many stones at once, or even create Guardstones at all...)

Only the normal Create Guardstones spell is well known by the mages in Secomber. Both other variatons are only known by Amelior himself, and perhaps some of his apprentices.

Amelior's Create Guardstones.

4th level wizard spell, Alteration.

Range: 10 yards.
Components: V,S,M
Duration: permanent
Casting time: 1 round per stone
Area of effect: 1 stone per level caster
Saving: special

This spell creates a number of guardstones. The material components needed are the stones. These must be roughly ovoid, made of granite, with a smooth polished surface. Guardstones can be any size, but larger stones take more time to enchant.

All Guardstones must be created in one 'batch'. After creation, they still have to be 'tuned'.

There is a 5% chance per (normal sized) stone that the spell fails. If this happens, each stone in the batch explodes, causing 1d4 damage to a person within 20 yards. In other words: enchanting 4 stones means there is a failure rate of 20%. If the spell fails, each (normal sized) stone inflicts 1d4 points of damage. Spread the damage if more people are within range of the exploding stones.

Amelior's Create Milestones.

5th level wizard spell, Abjuration / Evocation.

Range: 10 yards.
Components: V,S,M
Duration: permanent
Casting time: 1 round per stone
Area of effect: 1 stone per level caster
Saving: none

This spell creates a number of Milestones.

Instead of warning a 'tuned' person, these stones explode when something 'unwanted' happens, each stone causing 1d4 points of damage to individuals within reach (spread damage over multiple characters).

Although the damage is not extremely large, the explosion can be heard for a mile around (hence the name).

You cannot 'tune' Milestones. Only the creator can move the stones around. Obviously, the stones will only explode one time. Milestones are not 'linked', and a person can set up as many milestones as he likes. Milestones can be dispelled.

Further details as in the Create Guardstones spell.

Amelior's Create Rollingstones.

6th level wizard spell, Abjuration / Evocation.

Range: 10 yards.
Components: V,S,M
Duration: permanent

Casting time: 1 round per stone
Area of effect: 1 stone per level caster
Saving: none

This spell creates a number of Rollingstones. This is a variation on Amelior's Milestones.

Instead of exploding, all stones involved start rolling around for four rounds. Anybody stepping on a stone (throw an ability check for dexterity every round) will fall down. (Make saving throws for all items carried, spells will fail, etc.) If large boulders are enchanted, these will roll over the targets, causing additional damage.

During the first three and a half minute, a wave of noise will sweep over the area. During the last thirty seconds of the spell, you will hear a lot of people applauding and cheering while the stones return to their original positions. Nobody knows why.

You cannot 'tune' Rollingstones. Only the creator can move the stones around without triggering them. Although the stones will return to their positions, they will only roll one time per day. After 'rolling', the stones can be destroyed, moved, or the magic dispelled. Further details as in the Create Guardstones spell.

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