

Raven's Herald

Vol. 12 Number 2

Honor and Integrity

June, 600

Ravenholt Towns Return Safely

The town of Two-Roads itself, as well as several other "missing" towns (Shalott and Falcon's Reach in Cumberland, Aerryn's Brook in Eastwyck, Bluestone and Knob's Hill in Westmarch, and Northill in Capulus) have all reappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they had left.

The peoples of these towns all tell similar versions of a fantastic tale: all describe their common disappearances as beginning with the opening of dozens of Rifts, several of which were more powerful than

those commonly seen. From these Rifts poured forth what were revealed to be Dream and Nightmare Elementals, which descended upon the terrified peoples of the Duchy, tearing at them with wicked claws and hurling bolts of raw elemental energy. Citizens that attempted to flee into the woods surrounding their towns instead found themselves surrounded by "pockets" of Dream, to be chased and tormented by yet more Elementals. Even when the Elementals were not attacking tooth and claw, the peoples of Ravenholt

describe experiencing sudden, intrusive images and sensations, many of which confounded and terrified the populace. It was not until the late afternoon of January 3, 599 that the blanket of Dream was lifted from the towns of Ravenholt - the citizens describe falling into a deep, sudden slumber, then awakening to everything restored to normal. In hindsight, students of the mystical arts now describe what occurred to the Ravenholt towns as "the tearing of time and space": they theorize that the sheer amount

of Rifts opened between Dream and Tyrra caused a brief conjoining of the two Planes. Where the Planes touched, the towns appeared to vanish, replaced by natural growth (it is now supposed that the Planes will not tolerate a "blank spot", and will attempt to fill vacuums). His Grace, Duke Maximillian Greystone, has ordered a full investigation as to what caused this strange turn of events, and is rumored to have expressed interest in finding a way to prevent this from occurring ever again.

Reward for Enemy of the Duchy Increased

Let it be known that a reward in the amount of 1000 gold has been posted by His Grace, Duke Maximillian Greystone for the capture of the number one Enemy of the Duchy, Nork. Once a Knight to Duke Alaric Malinruin, Nork had his title stripped by Duke Malinruin for his part in the Skane incidents in which many of Ravenholt's finest died. He all but vanished from the public eye towards the end of Duke Malinruin's tenure.

More recently, Nork is wanted for questioning with regard to the group simply referred to as "The Resistance," which has been blamed for recent damaging raids in and around Ravenholt.

Nork is considered well armed and extremely dangerous. He is to be captured alive and brought to Captain Greymeir of the Dark Ravens. Extreme care should be taken in capturing this dangerous criminal.

Concerning the Highlanders

Submitted by Harold MacDonald

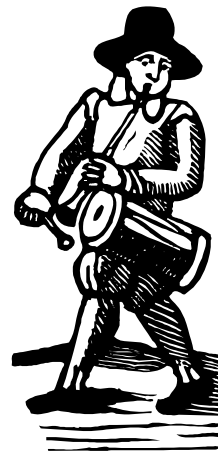
(This article is an editorial and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Raven's Herald)

There is a drum, a Great Drum of the World, the Everdrum, which will continue to beat until the end of time. At certain times of crisis, this drum can be heard by the Cruaighan, and it guides them into actions given to them by whatever lies beyond this realm of awareness. The Cruaigh Harold MacDonald, myself, had started hearing this drum, and what must happen was slowly revealed to me. Lochinvar MacLeod, established as the field leader of the Highlanders in Ravenholt, was informed of these things, and took a vow of silence in order to carry out one of the aspects of this action. At the time he took the vow, he ceased to be Lochinvar MacLeod, and became the vessel for the facet of Highlander Law we know as the Sword Arm of the Highlanders. We knew there was someone whose spirit was not supposed to be active on this world, and needed to take it's place in the Maze of Life, that peculiar place where the spirit of a Highlander goes when it can no longer be

resurrected. This person is known to most as Corwin; Corwin Greylor of the clan MacEinrig. On Friday, at Midnight, the justice was carried out. At this time, Lochinvar's vow was nullified, as the reason for it had passed.

The final part of Corwin's spirit chose to resurrect, regardless of his knowledge that this action was to be a permanent remedy to his situation, and he sought redress in the laws of Ravenholt duchy. This brought the matter to the attention of the Ducal court, and Lochinvar, Voltreg and I were brought under suspicion of murder. At this point, Corwin was considered dead, and he was not to be recognized as a living entity. However, since this was a Highlander action, and not known publicly, Corwin found enough ears to listen to his story, and so Lochinvar was judged to be guilty of his murder. As no legal verdict had ever been brought against the em-

bodiment of Highlander Judgment, it fell on each of us to take the punishment meted out to Lochinvar, and after he had been formally executed I called for any who align themselves with us and our spirit to take this punishment.



When all present had been given the opportunity to continue on our path, or to take it up anew, I signaled the punishment as having been met. Corwin was

among those present, and was the first after Lochinvar to join his blood with ours and, although he was as a dead man to us, the blood of his sacrifice became once again part of the blood of the Highlanders, and the inaudible Call of the Blood, which brings balance in the world, was satisfied. The Blood wove itself around the remaining spirit of Corwin and brought him back to us as a new-born child. All his debts have been paid, and he is not held responsible for

the death of Lochinvar, as The Call of the Blood, the Sword Arm of the Highlanders and the Everdrum had come together, for reasons we cannot tell, to make this balance and revitalization of the man who was once Corwin. We do not know the wisdom, but we follow the course set out for ourselves. If anyone plans to harm anyone for their part in this matter, please be advised you attack us all if you attack one.

We have followed our way, and one has been given back to us. We are allowing this information, which may not be totally understandable by some, in an attempt at sharing with the public some parts of our life that we usually keep to ourselves, as they pertain to things we know and have learned about, but many people do not know. Since this happened in a public forum, I wanted to address this matter so the average man or woman can have at least a little better understanding of what has happened. If there, are any other questions, please contact me about them.

Lowdown on Lowtown

An elite squad consisting of members of His Grace's Dark Lions, commonly known as "the Pride," and some of the cream of Ravenholt's militia, have been seen practicing their moves against the undead of Ravenholt. These specially trained few are referred to as the Undead Hunters, and they have been the driving force in clearing out first the area surrounding the capital city, and making forays out to other towns to clean them as well. Damon Gerd, the strikingly handsome tactician of the group, is often seen drilling his men in the early morning hours.

Theseus, of the Clan Runigate, has been seen talking up the town of late...we wonder what a handsome young bull like that wants with members of the Guilds and various area mercenaries. And speaking of the Mintotaurs, we rate that macho man, Tariq, as a top catch, if you can ignore the sharp horns and snout for a while. Being Baron Zomar's brother, and his second in command, puts him on the fast track to nobility.

Public Notices

Come one, come all to Hear of the Dangers of Time

Whether you follow a Path or not, you won't want to miss hearing about what the most powerful of all Elements can do to you and yours. Attend this private seminar and hear what Oberon Anduin, Archmage of Time and Travel, can do to save your spirit!

Saturday, July 22nd, 600 at Hardwick's Farm

No skeptics, please. The end may be near.

Wanted: I am interested in recruiting new adventurers to the lands of Ravenholt as bodyguards for my shop. Please contact Amra Asland Al-Quadim at the House of Al-Quadim, located in front of the Healer's Guild Circle. Safe Journey to You!

Nothing to do now that the war's over? Why not join the Ducal Army and receive training from the Duchy's most exceptional combat-active instructors. Housing, food, and small stipends will be given for those in training.

Wanted, Ritual components of the second power! Please contact Amra Asland Al-Quadim at the House of Al-Quadim, located in front of the Healer's Guild Circle. Safe Journey to You!

Wanted, multiple low circle celestial scrolls. I need to purchase multiple scrolls to fulfill an order. Please contact Amra Asland Al-Quadim. Safe Journey to You!

The Mages' and Healers' Guilds of Ravenholt seek apprentices to study both Celestial and Earthly arts. If you have prior experience or are considering a new course of study, please see Guildmistress Keylandra Dirath of the Mages' Guild, or Guildmaster Kainon Andrews or Assistant Guildmistress Iasthai Tearlach of the Healers' Guild.

Wanted: A Destroy Undead Focus: Please contact Amra Asland Al-Quadim at the House of Al-Quadim, located in front of the Healer's Guild circle. Safe Journey to You!

The Battlehammer Memorial Academy seeks instructors of all courses of study. If interested, please contact Headmaster Runnellsonn.

Wanted: Production components utilized for the strengthening of a weapon. Please contact Amra Asland Al-Quadim. Safe Journey to You!

Citizens of Ravenholt Awaken

In a related story to the re-emergence of the missing towns of Ravenholt, reports are coming into the Raven's Herald of Ravenholt citizens awakening from their months-long slumbers. We reported a few weeks ago the terrifying story of Duchy citizens which had gone to sleep, and been unable to be awakened the next morning by any means. Celestial Identification had revealed that, while the bodies of the sleeping citizens were apparently unharmed and in good health, their spirits were in fact missing from their bodies; one Guildmistress who Identified one of the afflicted described their spirit as "...Pulled away from their form, attached to their bodies by what could be imagined as a slender string of their spirit-energy."

As these citizens awaken, they tell horrifying tales of having gone to sleep as they normally would, and having been "kidnapped" by their

worst fears and nightmares. Their stories differ in the details of their torment, but a pattern had emerged which suggests that the Elementals of Dream somehow gained the power to capture not only the mind, but also the spirits of sleeping people. These kidnapped spirits were then held hostage by Nightmares in terrifying prisons of their own fear's devising; tormented for weeks on end without any hope of escape.

Although all of those so captured are now physically free, many of these citizens are currently under the care of Stone Elf volunteers, which have stepped forward to offer their healing services to those traumatized by their experiences. His Grace, Duke Maximillian Greystone of Ravenholt has requested that we at the Raven's Herald post publicly his thanks to these brave volunteers, for their selfless offer of aid.

Ducal Caravans Raided

A caravan of guarded Ducal wagons was ambushed in the Barony of Cumberland after leaving Longhope Castle bound for Gadren Castle last month, loaded with supplies for the garrison there. Sheriff Wolfstar, magistrate of Ravenholt City announced the surprise raid upon the caravan after the start of opening ceremonies at the latest gathering of Nobles here. No lose of life was reported amongst the defenders, members of Baron Alan Moonwind's militia, as all were struck down & then stabilized by their unknown assailants. All goods within the wagons were offloaded by the thieves or brigades responsible for the bold daylight raid and quickly disappeared before any of the guards revived.

Baron Moonwind asked for any information to be forwarded to sheriff Wolfstar, whom was handling the investigation at His Grace's request.



Hightown Rag

Local would-be-nobles are already showing the effects of Lady Samara's presence as the men seem to be dressing more carefully and washing more often, and the women take on some of the fashions she brings from Niman. His Grace is imminently attentive, finding time to walk the paths of town with her, his ever-present guards a step behind to stay out of the way. It's reported he was seen picking spring bouquets of wild poppies and morning glories for her.

Lady Alyssa Antecris may be the only one not thrilled with the arrival of Lady Aislain. It's reported that she's been by His Grace's side less and less each month, and those rare times they are seen together, she has something of a prissy look on her face. Jealous, perhaps? Could be she's just twice as busy organizing the Ducal Household as she used to be.

Baron Johann and the lovely Lady Shardon's upcoming Feast and Baron Alan Moonwind's Gathering festivities are the talk of the town, and everyone's planning ahead. Area seamstresses are busy copying Lady Samara's style for everyone from Knights to farmers' wives in preparation for the event.