

Write-up – 11/09/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Stephen, Renée, & Trevor

The Party: Floriana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

Leave Castle Heilgrund. Travel North to Gregorstädt to visit Wilhelm's family.

The road to Gregorstädt travels along a heavily wooded road. Around a blind bend a few miles from Gregorstädt, the party finds the stripped remains of a large wagon. All the cargo, the crew, the horses, & even the side-planks of the wagon are gone. The tracks of about one dozen Gargoyle cover the site. The attack seemed to have occurred the day before. From the remains in the wagon, it looks (& smells) like the wagon was shipping Sandalwood, an expensive & aromatic wood. The pieces from the crates indicate it was from Vendel. Since dusk is coming, the party decides to press on to Gregorstädt.

Joseph in particular is checking the ever-darkening woods. He thinks he sees yellow eyes peering at them. Soon others see them and Wilhelm confirms that at least half a dozen Gargoyles are following them. They accelerate. Galloping around a bend, Wilhelm barely sees a trip-cord (made from the wagon's reins) across a narrow part of the road. He pulls up and stops his horse & yells. Rupert & Joseph can't stop in time, but the others do. Six normal Gargoyles (dog-sized) attack from the back, while three greater Gargoyles (man-sized) attack from the front.

Floriana slays 2 Greater Gargoyles without a wound.

Rupert slays 1 Greater Gargoyle, but is wounded.

Wilhelm kills 2 Lesser Gargoyles without a wound.

Paolo kills 1 Lesser Gargoyle, but is wounded.

Joseph was also wounded falling off his horse.

When the 3 Greater Gargoyles are slain, the 3 remaining Lesser Gargoyles fly back into the woods. Wilhelm is concerned they are waiting for reinforcements. Joseph's horse is critically wounded and has to be killed. Rupert's horse is wounded, but healable by a vet. The party doubles up and ride to Gregorstädt, which is just a short way ahead. Wilhelm takes one of the Gargoyle heads.

They ride as best they can to the walled city of Gregorstädt. Outside (and down-wind), a forest of Gargoyle heads sit on pikes. Wilhelm adds his to the set. The party enters the open Southern Gate and find an Eisen man a few years younger than Wilhelm dressed in black with blue piping (the uniform of Pösen's Swamp Dogs) and wearing a large metal of valor from Seiger. At his side, he held a Zweihander (6' greatsword). Wilhelm recognized him as Josef Zeigler, a Gregorstädt native. Although not overly friendly, the two exchanged pleasantries and Zeigler lead the party to The Dragon's Tooth, the Mallory family inn. On the way, Zeigler brought Wilhelm up to date:

- Kurt Geduld and Wilhelm's sister Ursula were talking marriage. Zeigler didn't approve, since the Gedulds usually lived in the mountains. Wilhelm also guessed his disapproval was because he had an interest in Ursula also.
- Hildegard Geduld was Erich Reinhard's new apprentice to be Drachen-Jaeger.
- More than 50 Gargoyles of the Red-Claw Clan (so called for the red talons that they all have) had been slain so far, but they kept coming. This implies an unusually large Gargoyle Clan.

At the Dragon's Tooth, Paolo & Rupert had their wound tended to with a pumice which cures the disease in Gargoyle saliva.

<End of Session 1>

Write-Up 11/15/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Renée, & Trevor

The Party: Floriana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

Small ret-con as extra items were brought up with Zeigler on the way to the Inn.

- Floriana and others pointed out that these Gargoyles were using unusually intelligent tactics. Zeigler agreed and said that the Town Council was discussing it.
- The party told Zeigler about the ruined wagon. Zeigler said he knew about it and stated that it would be removed the next day. He said he had met the wagon's owners, who were merchants from Insel. They had dropped off their usual load of wares in Gregorstädt and were on the way to Freiberg, where they were going to deliver the Sandalwood to the person who ordered it. They were excited, because it would net them a huge profit.

At the Dragon's Tooth Inn, Baudric Mallory took Wilhelm to one side so that his son could speak to him privately. Wilhelm told his father all that had happened to him, except for the Vesten ritual he witnessed and the Great Machine.

While father & son spoke, the rest of the party was entertained by Wilhelm's older sister Dagmar, who actually ran the Inn day-to-day. She told the story of The Dragon's Tooth Inn's name.

- Hundreds of years ago, a monster-hunter named Gregor was lent the Emperor's own red dracheneisen shield to deal with the huge dragon known as Storm-Mother. He traveled into the nearby mountains (later known as the Gregorskorn). Weeks after leaving, he stumbled into the town that would eventually be named for him, badly wounded, but carrying a dragon's tooth. The local inn owner eventually nursed back to health. As part of the fight, he lost the Emperor's Shield, which had never been recovered. Rupert asked what had happened to the tooth, but Dagmar had started about dracheneisen.
- Dagmar explained that only a small amount of red dracheneisen was ever found & it was used to make a single suite of armor with a matching sword for the Emperor, ruler of all Eisen. Most of the armor was distributed over the years to the Eisenfürsts, while other pieces have been lost since the last Emperor's death. Eisenfürst Pösen still carries the red dracheneisen sword.
- Dagmar asked if the party members had ever seen or touched dracheneisen. When she heard mostly "no", she went to a back room for several minutes & came back with a locked box. From within, she pulled an elaborate signet ring with the distinctive blue'ish tinge of dracheneisen. The ring's face had a detailed rendering of a ship. Paolo was able to trace its riggings and even read its name "xxx". Although large for a ring, it was light as cork and didn't feel cold, despite the winter chill. Also, there was no hammer-work to be seen. When asked about this, Dagmar said that no one knew how the Order of the Neigelum forged dracheneisen.
- Dagmar explained that the ring had belonged to Ritter Josef Reisen, Gregorstädt's noble until his death 2 years ago. At the time, he was over 90 and had outlived 2 wives, but had no heirs. His death was caused by his house burning to the ground, from which only his ring & dracheneisen shield survived. The Town Council (on which Baudric Mallory sits) is holding the ring & shield until Eisenfürst Pösen assigned a replacement. They were also leaving the site of Reisen's house, the choicest in town, open for the next Ritter to build upon. The Town Council had tried to use the ring as a seal, but the wax tended to stick to its many raised decorations. Rupert thought that the ring reminded him of a key.

Wandering around the Inn, Rupert came across the skin of a boar-like creature, except that it had 8 tentacles for a head. When asked, Wilhelm came over to explain that he and Erich Reinhardt had slain it when they were about 12. Baudric was leading a tour to *Werner's Rest*, the nearby location where the last known dragon (called "Gaunt") was slain 80 years ago. The two boys had wandered away from the group during lunch and had been set-upon by the ruin-beast. According to Wilhelm, Erich had frozen and would have been slain if Wilhelm had not pried the beast off of him. By the time Baudric and the tourists made it to them, Erich had recovered and the two were finishing off the creature with sword. Wilhelm never told of his friend's failing,

but the relationship soured anyway. The two had not seen each other for years. Wilhelm had heard that Erich had apprenticed under Heinrich Roche, Herr Drachen-Jaeger (The Dragon Hunter) and had taken over the title when Roche died. The party had heard Reinhardt's name before as a legendary monster slayer. In fact, the Defeat of the River Leviathan had been attributed to Reinhardt more than once (though Blaise always corrected the error). Wilhelm had no doubt that Erich was taking credit again where none was due.

At this point, the party retired to their rooms. Wilhelm left to go to his own house, where he was reunited with Astrid after 9 months away. He told her what had happened to him, except for the Vesten ritual he witnessed, but including the Great Machine

After dreaming of Gargoyles, Rupert woke to a scratching on the door. A low voice said, "room-service". Knowing that this was how the Calagari's ghost had first approached Wilhelm, Rupert said that he hadn't ordered anything. The voice insisted, "room-service. I have something for you". Rupert saw the door-lock disengaging, so he pushed a chair under the door handle. Water was seeping under the door as it was being forced open. A soaking wet figure with long dripping hair over its face stood in the doorway, asking Rupert if he wanted the room-service. Rupert insisted that he didn't. The figure took off the lid from the tray and said, "But the scrambled eggs are good." Sure enough, there were some tasty-looking eggs. The figure began to shake with laughter and removed the wig. He looked like a younger version of Wilhelm, which identified him as Otto, Wilhelm's joker of a brother. Otto said "shhhh...", resoaked the wig, and then started scratching on Floriana's door while Rupert watched. Moments later, Floriana removed the wig with her sword-tip. At this point Otto decided to stop, since the noise had woken most of the floor.

In the morning, Paolo took a walk around Gregorstadt's plaza before breakfast. He saw Zeigler practicing with his greatsword and saw a young, muscular man with a hand-shaped scar on his throat (later identified as Gunter Geduld) watching. Continuing around the plaza, Paolo identified the naked foundation of a house on a small rise, a raised podium, a town's church (whose windows were being bricked up), and what looked like a funeral pyre. Having never heard of Eisens burning their dead, Paolo investigated & found the remains of shackles & bones in the ashes. Zeigler rapidly approached. Paolo asked what had happened.

Three days ago, the Town Council stood before the populace on the podium to discuss the Gargoyle crisis. A local cooper named Hans Kester jumped from a 2nd story window onto Bishop Arthur Vertrauen and tried to bite out his throat. When Kester was pulled off, he was found to have a mouth full of pointed teeth & raved unintelligibly. The Bishop tried to excise the demon from him, but with no effect. He then ordered Kester to be burned immediately, which was carried out. Zeigler, who had known Kester his whole life, feels bad about what occurred, but doesn't know what other choice they had.

Paolo returned to the Inn for breakfast. As the party enjoyed the meal, Wilhelm entered with a staggering beautiful Vesten woman & two children. Wilhelm introduced them as Astrid, his wife, and his two children Erika & Jarmir. Floriana was the first to ask how they met, to which Astrid replied, "Wilhelm woke up in bed next to me and asked my name." Red-faced, Wilhelm explained Astrid was helping in a hospital ward where he was recovering from a major wound.

Paolo told the party about Kester being burned. Baudric indicated that he was sorry it happened. Floriana asked if the Bishop was being watched, & Baudric said that he was in the company of the Council Head, Ingrid Heldig.

Kurt Geduld arrived, and Ursula left the room quickly. Baudric looked at both with concern, but didn't say anything. Kurt avoided Wilhelm's questions by asking about his adventures. This led to the telling of the Leviathan story, and then the Siren story. Soon, the Inn was full of townspeople anxious to hear. Blaise nudged Wilhelm outside & onto a chain so everyone in the plaza could hear. Wilhelm told about catching a ghost in mirror, and ended telling the first stories again. By the end, the plaza was filled with people and applause. When Wilhelm stepped down, Otto took his place and started a cheer for his brother. At this point,

Wilhelm first noticed the ache in his head that usually means that evil is near. It was not strong & he was unsure how long it had been with him, unnoticed in the background.

Ingrid Heldig came over from the Church and leads the party to the Town Council building. On display in the room was the dracheneisen shield that belonged to the old Ritter. It was shaped like a scallop shell, with engravings of ship & sea on the front. Earlier, Wilhelm had explained that his father and Niklaus Geduld, a Gargoyle authority, had each been presented the shield during a time of the town's need. Each had returned it when the town was again safe. Ingrid asked the party about their thoughts on the current troubles. There was a discussion about what might be riling the Gargoyles (unknown), how long it has been going on (unclear since the pattern was not recognized immediately – probably 2 to 4 months), and whether Gargoyles were trainable (unlikely, but not impossible). Ingrid mentioned that the Gargoyles had even laid pit-traps, which was inconceivable before it happened. Wilhelm asked whether Niklaus Geduld had been asked to come to Gregorstadt, but Niklaus apparently had been traveling for months and no one knew where he currently was. He had been in Insel four months earlier & Freiberg two months after that. Some thought that he had returned to his family's hidden home in the Gregorskorn Mountains known as Dragon-Watch.

An alarm sounded at the outside wall. The Council building emptied as the sentry yelled that riders were approaching with Gargoyles in pursuit. Wilhelm & Paolo ran to their horses to lend help, while the others found vantage points on the wall or in tall buildings. Everyone could hear ruffles being fired by the riders and see Gargoyles falling from the air. Wilhelm & Paolo met 2 mounted Swamp-Dogs at the gate and all 4 galloped towards the riders. More bullets were fired and more Gargoyles fell. As Wilhelm got closer to the riders, he recognized them as Erich Reinhardt and Hildegard Geduld. Erich raises his distinctive dracheneisen spear high and the town folk on the walls cheered. The remaining Gargoyles broke off their attack and headed back to the woods. All six rode through the gate unharmed. Wilhelm & Paolo noticed that all the ruffles are on Hildegard's horse.

Erich rode straight to the podium and stood before the town people. He pulled off his helmet, revealing a very handsome, clean-shaven face. Erich started a de facto pep rally, talking about how the people of Gregorstadt would never be defeated by the monsters around them. With practiced ease, Erich got everyone excited and worked up. Paolo decided to test Erich. He and Blaise worked their way into the crowd and started asking for stories. Erich didn't resist for long:

- He was hunting Gryphons in the Wisenburg Mountains recently. He located the nest, but knew that the bear-sized winged beasts would not die from just bullets. Instead, Erich brewed an ointment from Death's Head Mushrooms that attracted Gargoyles. He shot vials of the ointment around the nest with a crossbow. Soon, the Gryphons & all the local Gargoyles were at each other's throats. By the time Erich came in for the kill, all of them were exhausted and badly wounded. Erich used this story as an excuse to pull out his ornate, collapsible dracheneisen telescope.
- Erich was asked to help free the city of Himmelstadt, which had been taken by Objectionist forces during the War of the Cross. He snuck past the patrols into an abandoned guardhouse near the city wall. For two weeks he hid there under the noses of the Objectionist patrols until he worked out the sentry schedule & defenses of the town. Under his direction, von Wieshe's troops took the town easily. Erich compared it to "stalking a Drachen".

During the speech, Kurt approached Wilhelm and asked if he thought Erich might make a good new Emperor, since the last one had killed himself without heir. The Eisenfürsts clearly would not accept each other without war, but an independent of great reputation (particularly if he slayed the last dragon) might be acceptable as a figurehead & conflict resolver. Over time, tensions could resolve themselves to the point that Eisen could be a unified country again. Wilhelm was taken off-guard by the whole idea and didn't comment.

Wilhelm, Rupert, & Paolo all noticed that Erich's tactics seem to always involve sitting back and staying out of trouble. Wilhelm still believed that Erich is a coward.

- Paolo finally asked about the River Leviathan. Erich told the story in the 3rd person with great detail (he had probably spoken with a member of *The Sea-Mist* crew personally). The audience, having heard the story from Wilhelm just hours before, seemed a little confused, but went with it. Erich ended the story with "And do you know who slew the Leviathan?" Naturally, the audience

answered, “Yes!” Erich continued, “My friend, Wilhelm Gregor Mallory!” Erich called Wilhelm up to the podium and gave him a hearty hug. Wilhelm noticed the smell of Sandalwood on him & remembered smelling it on Hildegarde too. He also knew that his feeling of danger was stronger than before, but no clear idea what specifically was giving him the feeling.

Erich finally excused himself from the crowd and the principles move to the Inn. Up close, the party could see that Erich’s *heiligen* (i.e., representation of a person’s “hero”) was not a red shield (the sign of St. Gregor) like the rest of Gregorstädt, but a barrel – the glyph of Leopold Weidenhammer, who had choked the Drachen Gaunt to death 80 years earlier at Werner’s Rest with a small keg. Erich showed off his dracheneisen spear Blood-Letter, which had a hollow dracheneisen shaft that Erich said was for letting the poisonous dragon’s blood drain out. The party also noticed Hildegarde’s dracheneisen-headed axe named Skinner. Erich said that all the dracheneisen he had collected... he meant to say “earned”... had resulted in Eisenfürst von Wische’s Regent naming him Graf (roughly equivalent to a Count), although there was no land associated with the title. Erich also managed to work into conversation that he had studied for a while at the Steil Academy, which teaches oration, leadership, & strategy.

Up close, Paolo saw a pin that indicated that Erich was a Sponsor of the Rose & Cross (a nominal membership for a price). Erich explained that many monsters had treasure troves. In addition to tithing to the Vatacine Church, he became a Sponsor as an additional way to give away money. Although still unsure about Erich, Paolo felt obligated to not speak out against him, though he didn’t stop the others.

When asked his opinion about the Gargoyle attacks, Erich said that he believed the last of the Drachen was stirring. His order had keep careful track of all sited Drachen and there was one unaccounted for – Gloaming, a Great Wurm that had only been seen occasionally at dusk in the horizon & hadn’t been seen at all for centuries. The only description was that its wings were black on top and gray on the inside. Erich was determined to be the Last of the Drachen-Jaeger because he would slay the Last of the Drachen.

While this is being mulled around, Erich had Hildegarde give him a shave with a dracheneisen straight razor. Rupert, concerned that the Bishop might be infected by Hans Kester’s attacked, asked Erich for ways to detect lycanthropy & possession. For the first time since meeting him, Erich stopped acting like he was campaigning and became involved in the intellectual discussion. He opened various pouches filled with bottles & powered and pulled out a Mandrake Root, which he said would pull blood from an open wound of someone infected with lycanthropy, and bottle of crushed Yellow-Bell Flowers, which are supposed to make a possessed person sneeze (due to a more powerful sense of smell). He handed both over to Rupert, who was impressed with his level of knowledge.

When asked his next step, Erich said that he would be traveling to the Gregorskorn Mountains to search for Gloaming. He tried to instruct Hildegarde to prepare the horses, but she had stepped outside to “converse” with Gunter, her mute brother. In response to his gestures, Hildegarde requested an hour to catch up with her family. Erich grumbled, but agreed.

<End of Session 2>

Write-Up 11/29/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Renée, & Stephen

The Party: Floriana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

- Erich is having the horses loaded
- Paolo decides to go with Erich & Hildegarde. Blaise gives him a blooded journal so he can be tracked down.
- Party checks out the Ritter's house. No basement. The top stones of the support columns seems to be shattered.
- Reverend Helga crosses the plaza to the Town Council building to discuss the eaten animals. The Bishop's call for all towns-people to go to the church goes out.
- Hildegarde asks Wilhelm privately about Ursula's intentions. She says that their father will choose mates for them.

- People are already filling the darkened church. Young Acolyte Klaus directs the party to the Bishop's office in back next to the altar.
- The party enters the office just before the Bishop comes up the steps with more candles. Wilhelm helps him with these & Josef helps straighten his clothes. The candles get passes to Klaus, who it told to follow the Bishop's earlier instructions.
- Rupert spreads around Yellow-Bell Flowers & the Bishop coughs.
- Flori leaves and talks to towns-people, trying to stir them up.
- Talk to the Bishop about Legion's invasion. He closes a book, but not without Josef noticing.
- Bishop starts his sermon. Josef reads the book entry. Wilhelm notices all the smoke and opens the door to the basement. He and Rupert go down there and find a fuse lit in a barrel of gun-power. Wilhelm defuses, but realizes there must be more in other rooms next to support struts.
- Flori moves to back of the church but finds that Klaus is in the vestibule keeping everyone in.
- Joseph manages to get the back door open. He tells Zeigler what has happened and runs around to the front. He gets in and bonks Klaus on the head, unblocks the doors, and helps Flori get people out.
- Rupert loops around and starts running across the pew tops to get at the Bishop, who grabs Rupert with both hands and throws him to the side casually. Rupert picks up a 4' candlestick & fights with it. The Bishop yells that by killing the people's bodies, he is saving their souls.
- Wilhelm can't get to the last bomb, so he runs out of the basement & tackles the Bishop. To his surprise, he sees the Bishop has grown back his lost hand.
- In the plaza, Josef & Flori are attacked by townspeople who show signs of possession (Hans the ???, & Ester, the farmer).
- The bomb goes off. One side of the church begins to buckle.
- Flori defeats her attacker and gives him a coup d'grace. She then chases down Josef's attacker and kills her too.
- The Bishop gets a clear opening to bite Wilhelm, but holds back. Wilhelm uses the opportunity to decapitate him. Rupert & Wilhelm run from the church as one side collapses.

- Wilhelm climbs the podium & says that the Bishop was overwhelmed by Legion, but was now free. Baudric walks away. Wilhelm, taking a page from Erich's book, does a pep-rally for the stunned town.
- Baudric returns with the Ritter's shield. He asks Wilhelm if he believes the town is under Legion's attack. Wilhelm answers yes. Baudric asks if Wilhelm will take up the shield and fight in the town's name. Wilhelm answers yes. The town cheers. On Josef's suggestion, Wilhelm disperses the crowd. He then speaks with the families of the other two victims.
- Joseph buys a beer for Klaus.
- Joseph & Rupert check out the Bishop's office. Rupert finds a drawing of a twin waterfall & the phrase "serpent's tongue".
- Wilhelm speaks with the Town Council. Rupert shows him the drawing, which he says is somewhere in Gregorskorn.

<End of Session 3>

Write-Up 12/7/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Renée, & Stephen

The Party: Florianana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

- The party researches the Bishop's books, with Blaise contributing with his knowledge of Vodacce. They come to the conclusion that Myrmidon is spreading a lycanthropy-like possession.
- Father Joseph thinks that Gargoyle bites cause the spread of the possession. The party uses the Yellow-Belle Flowers to test itself & finds that Rupert is showing the signs. The infection doesn't seem to be so far that he is under control, yet... The party realizes that the "smart" Greater Gargoyles may be humans that have been fully changed.
- Wilhelm rides out to the field of pikes with Gargoyle heads. All are rotting quickly from an internal pestilence. He finds the one that he placed there and examines it carefully – the teeth were no longer pointed like they were when he cut off the head, the ears were more natural, etc. He confirms that this is a human skull. He also finds others "Gargoyle" heads that were probably human.
- Wilhelm goes to his father, who is directing the controlled demolition of the unsalvageable part of the church, and checks him with the flowers – he is clear. Wilhelm then asks to check the whole council, which Baudric immediately goes to arrange. Wilhelm also asks if Baudric approves of Kurt & Ursula's relationship. He doesn't, since the Gedulds are an insular family that has people join it, but doesn't join other families.
- Joseph notices that there is a thin seam in the dracheneisen shield. He gets the party into Dagmar's office in the Inn and has her get the Ritter's ring. Naturally, it opens the panel, revealing the loose pages of Ritter Risen's book on Drachen. Scattered in the pages were two important finds:
 - An unfinished letter to Heinrich Roche saying that Drachen blood was purifying, not poisonous and that Drachen might exist to fight Taint, not cause it.
 - Notes from a lecture where an apprentice learned that Sandalwood sap has an anesthetic quality & Sandalwood smoke would help keep a dragon asleep.
- Based on these notes & various references to "Serpent's Tongue Falls", the party decides to go after Erich immediately with an armed contingent from Gregorstädt. They ask for Kurt Geduld, but he is one of the people missing (along with his brother Günter) that maybe buried under the collapsed church. Zeigler & 19 other troops are chosen & checked for possession.
- At the first "camp-ground" in Gregorskorn, the party locates a mark left by Paolo. There is a long discussion about whether Blaise should drink the Blooded journal he gave to Paolo. They finally decide that they should do it without further delay. According to the entries (written in Theán except for religious comments aimed at Blaise), he was stuck on the far side of an impassable canyon after a rope bridge collapsed as he crossed it. He was taking a long way back to Gregorstädt. In a following entry, he saw two hooded riders following Erich & Hildegard's path. The party assumes that there were Kurt & Günter.
- As the expedition goes deeper into Gregorskorn, they are attacked by Gargoyles. They defeat the first wave, but then are hit by a second & third. The group backs into an enclosed area where wings won't be effective, but can't advance. Zeigler says that the troops will stay behind and keep the Gargoyle attention on themselves while the party travels to the falls. Zeigler gives the party all the scent-masking ointment & then covers himself with Death's-Head Mushroom extract, which he knows attracts Gargoyles. The party sneaks away as the Gregorstädt troop give battle.
- Traveling through the canyons of Gregorskorn, the party could see more Gargoyles flying to the battle. In time, they arrived at the collapsed rope bridge that Paolo had written about. They examined the ropes and agreed with Paolo's assessment that they had not been cut, but had broken due to age (as unlikely as that was). Father Joseph received a flash of insight and told the party about the von Drachen family, who had ruled Eisen long ago. They were Numian-born sorcerers who had bargained for the power of Zerstorung (aka, Withering). The family of despots had been wiped out centuries ago for their evil practices, but there were always rumors that a few still survived in the mountains. If this were true, such families would have to be insular and careful not to join other families who might betray their secret. With new concern, the party moved on.
- The cliff-sides were covered with caves & mine shafts, probably people looking for dracheneisen. Once cave made Wilhelm & Florianana feel sick as they approached it. Exploring, the party found that the granite at the back of the cave had a rounded hole worn in it 2 feet wide and about 3 feet deep. The sides were

dripping a blood-like substance at a slow rate. Rupert collected a sample. The party hypothesized that someone / ones had been looking for dragons beneath the hills.

- Around a bend, the party finds itself looking at Serpent's Tongue Falls. They follow the path to the top of the mountain the falls spews from. There they locate the cave where Erich & Hildegard's horses are tired up, along with the two horses that Paolo saw ride by. All are doused with Gargoyle repellent. The party followed a well-worn path to a cave on the cliff-face 50 feet above where the falls comes out of the cliff, falling almost 100 feet to a pool below.
- Floriana & Wilhelm felt extremely ill when entering the cave. They followed deeper into the mountain until they found a crevasse in the floor that extended all the way to the underground river that fed the falls. Sandalwood smoke was in the air. Down the crevasse, they could see a gloved hand extending from a deep crack. They lowered a rope with a loop and managed to pull Erich up. The left side of his head was aged and withered, with the hair having turned white and the left eye being milky with cataracts. A white hand-like scar was clear on the side of his head. Gravely injured, Wilhelm determined Erich was stable, but probably wouldn't survive the night. Erich pressed his dracheneisen straight-razor into Wilhelm's hand. Wilhelm asked who had done this & Erich nodded to the name "Niklaus". They covered him and moved on.
- At the end of the tunnel was a block of marble that Wilhelm knew was not native to the Gregorskorn range. In the center was a tunnel "to hell". The walls were like looking through a waterfall, wavering and not totally solid. On the other side seemed to be a place of fire and chaos. Down the tunnel the party could hear voices and smell sandalwood smoke. Wilhelm crawled through first with the Ritter's shield before him.
- Wilhelm came out on a ledge. Before him, a dragon hung upside-down from a salagmite. Instead of a floor, the cave had ledges and an underground river the flowed under the passage to the cliff face. A set of ropes and wagon wheels had been strung around the room to form bridges. One wagon wheel was hanging below another right next to the dragon. The lower was level with its neck. On this one, Hildegard sat with Blood-Letter pressed against the dragon's throat. The upper wheel was at mid-chest. Niklaus sat on this one with the ax Skinner, which has heavily coated with sap. He was gently sawing through the dragon's chest to reach its heart. On a salagmite near the waterline, Kurt was tending a sandalwood fire. Günter stood on a ledge near his father & sister. See Diagram 1.
- Kurt was asking "Why?" & Niklaus was saying the plans changed. Later it is clear that Myrmidon promised to make Niklaus Emperor instead of him arranging for Hildegard to marry one.
- Wilhelm notices that the dragon has black outer wings & gray inner wings, which matches Erich's description of Gloaming. He also sees that it is missing a tooth whose size matches the one in the Inn that was brought by Gregor when he defeated Storm-Mother.
- Wilhelm shoots Niklaus, who drops Skinner, but it is tied to the wheel.
- Flori & Blaise run to the left and fight Günter. He grabs Flori's sword Serpent's Tooth with his bare hand and starts trying to dissolve it.
- Joseph & Rupert run to the right. Kurt climbs up the ropes, yelling for everyone to not fight. He tries to convince Wilhelm that they don't need to fight. Niklaus says that this is impossible, since Kurt knows how Wilhelm's sister Dagmar actually died.
- Wilhelm goes around Flori, Blaise, & Günter and crosses the plank to the 1st wagon wheel. Hildegard uses Zesterung to rot the plank between that wheel & her own. Unable to approach any farther safely, Wilhelm shoots Niklaus. Hildegard then shoots him.
- Flori releases Serpent's Tooth & takes Blaise's silvered sword. Günter was forced to drop Serpent's Tooth before finishing its destruction to fight off Flori. Blaise picked up Serpent's Tooth and attacked. Günter hits Flori in the head with the pick-axe in his right hand. Although badly injured, she and Blaise eventually beat Günter into unconscious.
- Joseph manages to "talk down" Kurt to the point where he doesn't attack when Rupert goes by to put out the Sandalwood fire. Kurt seems very upset by the change in plans – Hildegard was supposed to marry Erich, who in turn would be made Emperor, thus returning their family to a leadership role. By trying to kill Erich, Niklaus has thrown that all away on some vague Myrmidon promise that Niklaus himself will become Emperor.
- Wilhelm throws a flask of flammable liquid on the torch set next to Niklaus, which sets his & Hildegard's wagon wheels on fire. Niklaus ignores it and hacks on Gloaming, breaking through her ribs. Hildegard's hair catches and fire & she jumps into the water below. Blood-Letter is still tied to the wagon wheel, so it

says, though the rope is burning. Wilhelm managed to hook Blood-Letter as the rope burns through. He then swings his wheel to get close enough to Niklaus in order to stab him with Blood-Letter. This infuriates Niklaus enough that he uses his sorcery on Wilhelm. In the wink of an eye, Wilhelm aged 20 years and had to collapse onto the wheel. The delay was all that was needed, though. Between his non-surgical attacks & the clearing of the Sandalwood smoke, Gloaming came to her senses. With a swipe, she grabbed Niklaus from his wheel and ate him in one swallow. Then she turned her attention on Wilhelm, Blood-Letter still in his hand.

- Myrmidon let out a scream of frustration that was finished by Rupert, who suddenly sprouted Gargoyle wings...

<End of Session 4>

Write-Up 12/14/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Renée, & Stephen

The Party: Floriana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

- The action commences with an aged Wilhelm looking into the eye of Gloaming and Rupert sprouting wings.
- Leaving Blaise to guard the unconscious Günter, Floriana runs over to where Wilhelm is sitting on a wagon wheel and reconnects its plank to the ledge. Wilhelm lowers Blood-Letter so as not to threaten the 100' dragon in front of him. Although waved back by Wilhelm, Flori runs across and drags Wilhelm to the ledge. The dragon follows, pulling itself onto the ledge. Wilhelm can clearly see that it is breathing hard and blood is freely flowing from its deep chest wound.
- From a rock in the underground river, Hildegard yells in an old variant of High Eisen (later identified as Draconic). When asked by Father Joseph, Kurt says that she is telling Gloaming that Wilhelm is trying to kill it.
- Under Myrmidon's direction, Rupert knows where the weapons that will be effective against Gloaming are. It files towards Blood-Letter. Kurt, seeing the "gargoyle", runs to the center ledge to get his musket, with Father Joseph following saying to only "shoot to wound".
- Wilhelm hands Blood-Letter to Blaise (who returns Serpent's Tooth to Flori) and starts trying to communicate with Gloaming. Rupert-goyle swoops at Blaise, who hides Blood-Letter in a Porté pocket to keep it safe. Flori attacks Rupert-goyle, who flies off. Kurt shoots Rupert-goyle, but the shot bounces off. Flori gives chase around the outer planks.
- Blaise, remembering the story about "The One who Hunts for Dragons" at Steil, guesses that the Drachen Blood will help Wilhelm. With hands empty, he approaches Gloaming, which is now entirely on the ledge, talking about how unthreatening he is and probably bad tasting. She glances at him and then returns her attention to Wilhelm, who is singing an old Eisen tune. Blaise soaks up some blood with a scarf, goes back to Wilhelm, and dabs the blood on his face and arms. Immediately, Wilhelm feels his strength returning and even Blaise can see that his withered flesh is returning to health. Again strong enough to stand, Wilhelm approaches Gloaming & asks if he can help. She rolls on her side, exposing the deep wound. Getting out his medical kit, Wilhelm applies some Sandalwood sap (for pain) and starts trying to sew closed the main bleeder. Joseph realizing that person who knows the most about Drachen is Erich, crawls through the tunnel to get him. Blaise collects some more of the spilled blood into a bottle with the hopes of throwing it at Rupert-goyle.
- Meanwhile, Rupert-goyle has landed on a ledge 10' above the far right ledge (above the fire) & was trying to dislodge a bolder. Flori climbs up to it and barely is missed by the bolder. Rupert-goyle grabs an Avalon-style short sword that had been unearthed. Flori gets in a good stab before it flies back towards Gloaming. Kurt takes a shot with a cross-bow, inflicting even more damage on the abomination. It lands on the pulley-platform for stability.
- While he pulls Erich through, Joseph can clearly see Myrmidon extending itself through the tunnel's mouth to control Rupert-goyle. In a moment of divine inspiration, he understands how to close the breach. On the other side, he lies down Erich and yells for Blaise to bring over the bottle of blood. As Erich watches Wilhelm doing surgery on a dragon, Blaise runs over with the blood. Rupert-goyle changes course immediately and flies towards the tunnel, with Joseph putting his body in its path. Blaise gets there first and throws the bottle in. Contact with the dragon's blood immediately "scabs" over the breach and Rupert-goyle collapses. Within moments, its wings & horns start to fade.
- Wilhelm yells for Erich to come over and help. Erich replies that he hunts dragons, not heals them. Wilhelm starts pointing out all of the things that Erich believes that are wrongs, such as dragon blood being poisonous (Wilhelm was covered with it). Blaise pours some dragon blood on Erich, which also heals him enough that he could stand. Finally convinced, Erich is helped over and starts working on Gloaming's wound with surgery & some dragon-helping herbs.
- Flori turns her sword on Kurt, who was reloading and tells him to drop it, which he does. A blood-doused Rupert seems to be fully restored and is given some clothes from Kurt's pack.
- Hildegard is nowhere to be found & is believed to have left the cave system.
- While Erich & Wilhelm work, the difficult question of what to do about what to do with Kurt & Günter and if the populace of Gregorstädt should be told about the dragon and/or the existence of the von Drachen

family. When asked, Kurt said that he did not possess the “gift” of Zestörung, though there was no way to prove this one way or the other.

- Blaise did not want to see Kurt (or even Günter) burned as “sorcerers” in Gregorstädt.
- Joseph felt that the most culpable was Niklaus & least was Kurt. Joseph believed that it was hard to know Günter’s attitude as a young man under a father’s domineering control. As for Hildegarde, she took an active roll, but didn’t directly attack Wilhelm until he shot her father in front of her.
- Wilhelm was not feeling merciful.
- Floriana felt sympathy towards Kurt and his obligation with father, but Günter’s use of his sorcery made her interested in having him tried in Gregorstädt, except one couldn’t be tried without the other.
- Rupert reserved comment.
- Erich was too busy updating his world view to care.
- One of the stories that Wilhelm used to convince Erich (and the others) was that Gloaming was the Drachen that Gregor fought (aka Storm-Mother), since its missing tooth matched the one that Gregor brought back to the inn. This implies that Gregor wasn’t fighting it, but something else. Since the story states that he had a “useless arm”, it seemed reasonable that it was a cabal of von Drachens. When asked by Erich (who spoke High Eisen) to Gloaming, she indicated that she & Gregor did fight evil sorcerers. The story interested Erich quit a bit, since the dragon blood had only partially healed him (and Wilhelm), but that the Dragon Tooth-Cup might finish the job.

<End of Session 5>

Write-Up 12/20/00

Players: Mike, Julie, Renée, Stephen, & Trevor

The Party: Floriana, Wilhelm, Paolo, Father Joseph Thornton, Rupert, Blaise

- Paolo finds where Ziegler and the troops are making their last stand. He joins them in their defensible cave and does some surgery on the injured. Suddenly the Greater Gargoyles fall from the sky and begin reverting back to humans. The Lesser Gargoyles begin to kill each other. The troop collect the transformed humans & break into two parties: Paolo, Ziegler, & 3 others travel into Gregorskorn to find the party; the remaining (& most injured) troop escort the humans back to the town.
- The restored Rupert examines his sword, which is named “Last-Laugh”. It is an Avalon short sword with an oddly unfinished looking blade, which likely identifies it as of MacEachern manufacture. He returns to the location where he found the sword and locates a wrapped body. From it he takes a dragon-skin satchel which holds an amber containing a small wildflower, a lock of blonde hair tied with a ribbon, & note stating that the writer vows to “free Imogene from Lord Underhill & retrieve the Ash, or die trying”.
- Wilhelm & Erich finish their surgery on Gloaming, who has the party collect up rope for her. She sends everyone else out of the cave & blocks the entrance. She then digs a giant egg out the stalactite she was hanging from and has Wilhelm & Erich tie the egg to her underside with the rope. She quickly collects sundry objects from hidden crevasse, places them in a bag, & passes it to Wilhelm. Finally, Gloaming moves the blocking boulder & sends the two Monster-Hunters out to where the party was waiting. She then blocks the cavern entrance again.
- At a later point, Wilhelm studies the objects and finds:
 - 3 unit of raw Dracheneisen.
 - A steel dagger with an engraved drachen tooth as a grip that gives “toughness” to its carrier.
 - A small stone tablet with draconic runes & high eisen on it.
 - A few minor gems.
- The party hurries out. Behind them is a loud rumble. Looking out of the mouth of the cave, they see Gloaming’s back as she flies out of the waterfall mouth into the night. There is a crash & then the waterfall stops as its feeder river becomes clogged with rubble from the collapsing cave. The party listens for wildlife (to see if there are gargoyles around) and hear an owl flying off along with other life. They climb up the hill to where their horses were stored, but find them gone (probably stolen by Hildegarde).
- As they watch the torches from Paolo’s rescue party ridding towards them, the characters quickly discuss Kurt, Günter, Hildegarde & Gloaming. Agreement is quickly reached that the party won’t tell the citizens of Gregorstädt about the Dragon, since she would only be hunted for her blood and the immortality her heart would bring. It was understood that members of secret societies would have the option of telling some details since no one had any idea where Gloaming had gone to hide. The Gedulds were a more difficult question. Blaise proposed that Hildegarde be branded a coward (running away while her father “valiantly died” fighting Legion) and a thief (for taking the dracheneisen axe Skinner). It was eventually agreed that Kurt & Günter would left to the mercies of the Gregorstädt Town Council.
- Paolo arrives and the combined group rests for the night. Floriana & others help keep a quiet watch on Kurt & Günter during the night. On the way back, a private side trip is made to seal the breach found on the way up (the bleeding rocks in the cave) with some of the Dragon Blood Blaise hoarded.
- A day & a half later, the full group returns to Gregorstädt. Wilhelm stands before the town and says that Legion has been driven back. He then carries the Ritter’s Shield back to the Council Chamber & hangs it on the wall. The citizens cheer, since this means that the crisis is over.

<End of Session 6>

10 Quintus, 1664

My dear Heinrick,

You are absolutely wrong about Drachen Blood being poisonous. I am not sure where that myth started. If anything, the absolute opposite is True!

I don't share this with many people, but my father & I secretly ate the Heart of the Drachen Gaunt. I have no doubt that it is the cause of my long & healthy life. Who knows how long my father would have lived if it hadn't been for that canon ball! I am also sure that in making my body stable and perfect, it somehow removed my ability to have children.

Drachen Blood doesn't just have a stabilizing effect on people. Look at Werner's Rest. Before Gaunt's Blood was spilled there, it was Tainted. It looked like Legion's Own Garden! Now it is healing, with straight green trees and rabbits that do not try to rip out your throat. Perhaps that is why Drachen Bones are always left where they fall?

This brings me to my next issue. I've been asking others about this and I am interested in your opinion. Gargoyles and Kobolds are Tainted Beasts who always arrive before a Drachen shows up, but disappear when a Drachen is slain. We have always assumed that the Drachen sends the Beasts to Taint an area it wishes to conquer and they flee if their leader is killed. But what if the Drachen are there to fight the Taint, not cause it!!! It may be that the Drachen's Purifying Blood is actually driving the Fell Creatures away! That would mean that your title of "One who Hunts for Dragons" actually means

On that woeful day, Emperor Stefan III returned to The Stien to find his troops had been pressed into Legion's service. Loyal soldiers stationed on that polluted site had grown talons & fangs, and even wings, and had been reduced to gibbering madness. Father Warren spoke the name of our enemy – Myrmidon, the demon who spreads its evil through the claws and bites of our brothers. The Emperor was forced to hold off Legion's new Hoard with flaming spears while his catapults leveled the outpost.

Then, in the waning light, came the Fearful Beast, a Great Wyrms whose golden wings caught the setting sun. The lap-dog of Legion landed among its followers, crushing them without a care. This is how the followers of Legion are repaid. Under cover of darkness, the Emperor wisely pulled back his troops to a position where his soldiers could focus their siege weapons on the Monster in the glow of dawn. Oh, but the night was filled with wailing and howling from the cursed town.

When light returned to the night sky, we beheld the most amazing of sights! The Wyrms lay dead across Der Rotstrom River, with the ground and water stained red with its blood. A lone man covered in ichor walked from the site carrying a strange spear. Our guide identified him as One Who Hunts For Dragons. The Emperor considered having him killed, since he had been in contact with those possessed by Myrmidon, but the local troops said that they would not raise a weapon against the man. Through our translator, the man said that the Wyrms, whom he named Sun-Fire, must be left where it fell, and that the site was cleansed. The Emperor offered the hero praise and fortunes, but he walked away in sadness without a word.

Gregorstädt Cheat-Sheet

- Walled town in Eisen near the Drachenberg Mountains.
- Run by a Town Council since the death of its designated noble a few years ago.
- Took the Vatacine side in the War of the Cross.
- Has a long history of Monster-Hunters.
- Most residents wear a charm with a red shield on it for luck.

Residents Met or Discussed

Baudric Mallory – Wilhelm’s father and member of the Town Council. Owns *der Drachen-Zahn Gasthof* (“The Dragon’s Tooth Inn”).

Dagmar Malloy – Wilhelm’s older sister who runs the Inn.

Ursula Mallory – Wilhelm’s beautiful younger sister who may be engaged to Kurt Geduld. She is a skilled veterinarian.

Astrid Mallory – Wilhelm’s Vesten wife.

Sergeant Josef Zeigler – A “Swamp Dog” (member of Pösen’s internal security force) who wields a *zweiander* (Eisen Greatsword) and met the party at the gate when they entered. Seems interested in Ursula & does not approve of Kurt.

Kurt Geduld – Apparently interested in marrying Ursula. His family lives in the Drachenbergs, not Gregorstädt.

Hildegarde Geduld – Kurt’s twin sister. According to Zeigler, she is an apprentice to Erich Reinhardt, *Herr Drachen-Jäger* (“The Dragon-Hunter”).

Niklaus Geduld – Kurt & Hildegarde’s father. He is an expert on Gargoyles and helped train Wilhelm when he was young.

Erich Reinhardt, *Herr Drachen-Jäger* – Up and down Eisen, you have heard about the monsters killed by the Last of the Dragon-Hunters, though no slain Dragon yet. The defeat of the River Leviathan is often attributed to him before Blaise makes the correction. Wilhelm becomes quiet at the mention of Reinhardt’s name.

Gregorstädt Cheat-Sheet – part 2

Otto Mallory – Wilhelm’s younger brother, who is a joker.

Ritter Josef Reisen – The last noble of Gregorstädt, who died at age 90 in a house fire two years ago. His oyster-shell-shaped dracheneisen shield is on display in the Town Council Hall, while Baudric Mallory has been storing his dracheneisen ring.

Günter Geduld – Younger brother of Kurt & Hildegarde. Very muscular, but mute from a claw-like wound to his throat received during a Gargoyle attack three years ago. Has been busy re-bricking the church windows.

Bishop Arthur Vertrauen – Local Vatacine Priest, who performed Wilhelm & Astrid’s marriage, as well as Wilhelm’s parent’s marriage. The Bishop was attacked three days ago by Hans Kester, whom he had burned at the stake. Since then, he has been holed up in the church under “medical supervision”.

Ingrid Heldig – Head of the Gregorstädt Town Council. She also runs the local general store and does most of the town’s import & export. For the last few days, she has been keeping an eye on Bishop Vertrauen.

Hans Kester – A Gregorstädtian native who grew fangs and attacked Bishop Vertrauen three days ago. He was burned at the stake.

Gloaming – The Last of the Drachen, according to Erich Reinhardt. It has been spotted occasionally flying at dusk over the centuries, but not seen for a century or two. Believed to have been sleeping in the Gregorskorn Mountains near Gregorstädt. Described as a huge dragon whose wings are black on top and gray underneath.

Werner’s Rest – Named after the last person eaten by a dragon, this tainted area near Gregorstädt is where the Drachen Gaunt was killed by Leopold Weidenhammer 80 years ago. It was also where Wilhelm Mallory & Erich Reinhardt slew a ruin-monster at the age of twelve.

Gregorstädt Personalities, as relayed to Wilhelm

Erich Reinhardt

In one corner of the Dragon's Tooth Inn stands a pony-sized stuffed ruin monster with a boar-like body & eight tentacles for a head. A nearby plaque indicates it was slain by Erich Reinhardt and Wilhelm Mallory in 1650.

Wilhelm and Erich, childhood best-friends, slew the beast while visiting the Werner's Rest, the location where the last known Drachen (which was known as "Gaunt") was slain 80 years ago. Only the two of you know that Erich froze when the monster attacked and would have died if you had not pulled it off of him. By the time your father came into sight, Erich has recovered and was helping you stab the creature to death. You never told anyone, but you quietly arranged to never be his Rücken again, which eroded your friendship.

When Wilhelm went to a "standard" military academy, Erich went directly to the Gelingen Academy and trained in monster-hunting. While there, Erich was chosen to have one-on-one training by Heinrick Roche, one of the last Drachen-Jägers ("Dragon Hunters"). Since there are no dragons left to fight, it takes very difficult personal training to learn Exploit Weakness (Drachen).

A few years ago, you heard that Herr Roche & Erich had gone out to slay a bog monster and only Erich had returned. As per tradition, he had taken the title Drachen-Jäger, along with Roche's dracheneisen spear Blut-Dürstige ("Blood-Thirsty") and dracheneisen axe Pelzhändler ("Skinner"). You also heard that during the War of the Cross, Erich had joined an army and hunted people.

Josef Reisen

The late Josef Reisen was the last Ritter of Gregorstädt. He died in a house fire in 1664. At the time, he was almost 90 years old. As a boy, he has ridden with his father to hunt down Gaunt, the last of the Drachen. Seeing the majestic creature's body at Werner's Rest cause an obsession that lasted a life-time. He attended the Gelingen Academy and stayed in regular correspondence with any researchers or hunters who knew anything about Drachen, including a long friendship with Heinrick Roche. Later in life, he actually hosted Gelingen students on "field-trips" to the Gregorskorn mountains.

As a noble, Josef made an excellent academic. Fortunately, he understood his own the lack of interest and aptitude at leading and delegated all the real work to the Town Council. This left him free to do his letters and lead the occasional troop training sessions.

The last years of Josef's life were spent writing a definitive history on Drachen & the Gregorskorn (the two histories were intertwined), but his manuscript was destroyed in the blaze that took his life.

Ingrid Heldig

Frau Heldig is the head of the Gregorstädt Town Council. Although in her 50's, she is still healthy and active. When Ritter Josef Reisen died, she was the one who took his dracheneisen shield Austen ("Oyster", which is oyster-shell shaped and has etchings of sea life on it) from the smoldering ruins of his home and hung it behind the Town Council's meeting table. Since the Town Council had been running the day-to-day affairs of Gregorstädt for years, there were no complaints.

Frau Heldig does not lead the Council so much as moderate it. She seems to have no personal ambition and apparently only desires a safe & stable town. Her two sons and husband were slain fighting Objectionists in battles outside of Pösen. The way that Ingrid stoically carries on is an inspiration to all.

Twice she has presented the shield Austen to someone. The first time, Gregorstädt was under threat of attack by Objectionist Forces (one of the only times the War came to Gregorstädt). The shield was presented to Baudric Mallory, who led the local defenses and drove the invaders off. Once the town was safe, he immediately walked back to the Council Chamber and hung the shield back on the wall.

The second time the shield came down was during the Gargoyle attack of '65. Niklaus Geduld, a noted expert on Gargoyles, was presented the shield to lead the defense. Once finished, he also returned it.

The Geduld Family

Wilhelm went to the Gelingen Academy with two other Gregorstädtians: the 20 year old twins Kurt & Hildegard Geduld. Their father Niklaus is a respected expert on Gargoyles that sometimes teaches at the Gelingen Academy and led Gregorstädt's defense during the Gargoyle attack of 1665. Mostly, he and his family live in Gregorskorn mountains itself (as the Geduld family has done for centuries), watching for Gargoyles, who are often the harbingers of Drachen. In fact, Niklaus' grandfather Werner Geduld is believed to be the last person ever slain by a Drachen.

Kurt & Hildegard were two of the students that joined Wilhelm in hunting the Gargoyle clan who attacked Gregorstädt to extinction. Niklaus was off helping another town at the time, but provided the raw materials for the scent-covering ointments that were used to sneak up on the monsters. The twins recently graduated, making them prime marrying material if they stay in Gregorstädt instead of living in the mountains.

The twins have a younger brother named Günter, who was rendered mute in the same Gargoyle battle in which Giselle Mallory was slain.

Bishop Arthur Vertrauen

Bishop Vertrauen is the Vatacine leader of Gregorstädt. As such, he sits on the Town Council. His devotion to the Vatacine church has helped keep the town morally sound and safe at night. He is a muscular, gray-haired man in his 60's who has presided over the marriages of two generations of Mallorys.

During the War of the Cross, Vertrauen lost his left hand in the battle lead by Baudric Mallory. He later said that one hand was a cheap price to defeat a Hoard of Objectionists.

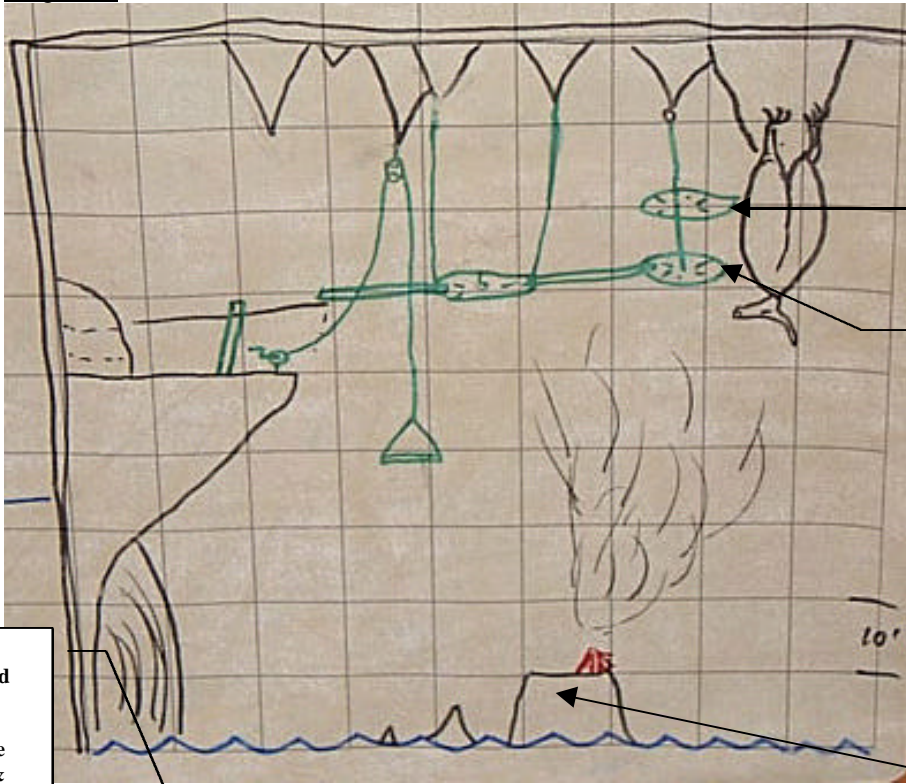
It was Bishop Vertrauen who officiated at the wedding of Wilhelm and Astrid. He was very resistant to an Eisen marrying a Vesten, particularly one that was not even a follower of the Prophets. Wilhelm, Astrid, and Baudric eventually ~~were him down~~ won him over. Since then, he has kept a close eye on the Mallory household, but has not indicated any displeasure.

Josef Ziegler

Josef and Wilhelm are similar ages and even spent some time together in an Academy in Pösen, though you were never really friends. Josef was a slavish follower of everything your father ever said and tried to live his life as a perfect Eisen Soldier. He even went to the Gelingen Academy for a while. Not being as bright as Wilhelm, Josef had to drop out and decided to make up for it by studying Zweihander with the Drexel School. As soon as he was competent, he was immediately recruited to fight in South Eisen. He didn't even show up when the Gargoyles attacked (later you heard that Josef claim he did not find out until long after).

While you were away, Wilhelm has heard that Josef is back in Gregorstädt along with other "retired" soldiers. He earned a citation from Eisenfürst Sieger for taking out an enemy canon site. As such, he apparently has the status to be lead the city guards.

Diagram 1

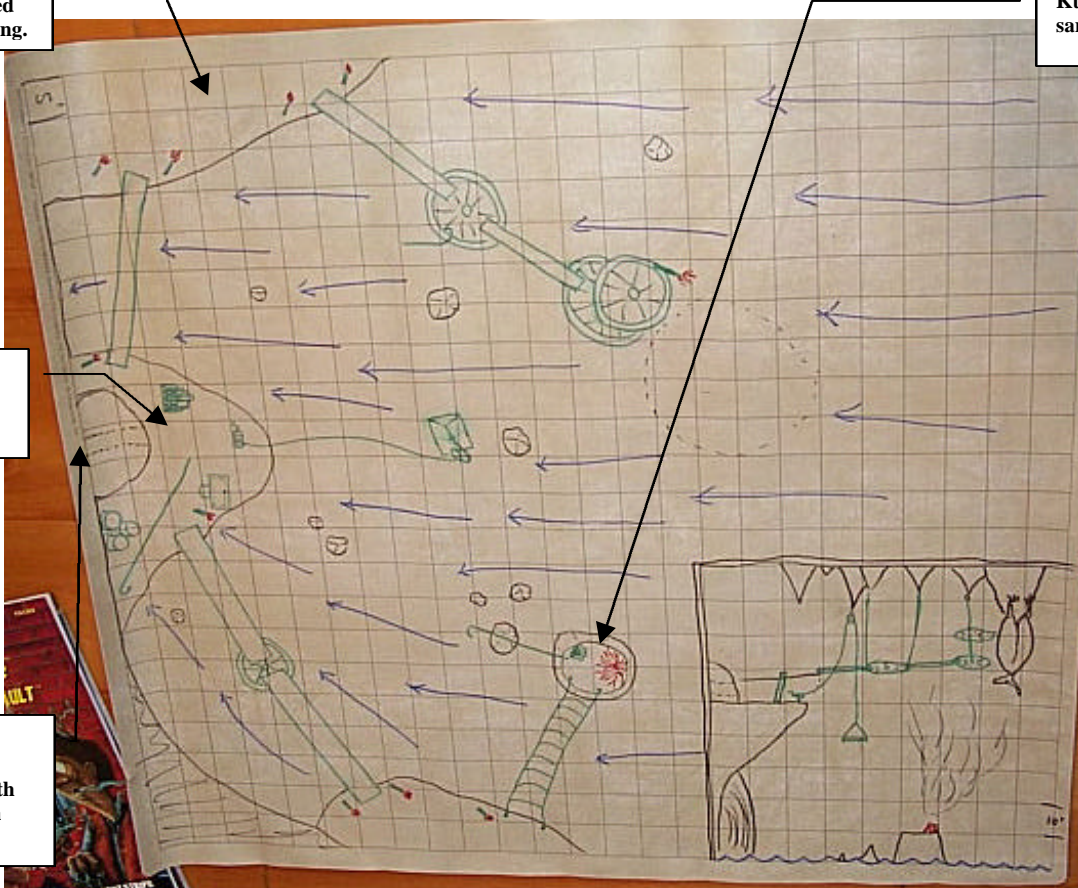


Niklaus using Skinner.

Hildegard holding Blood-Letter.

Where Günter and Floriana fought. Also where Wilhelm & Erich sewed up Gloaming.

Kurt and the sandalwood fire.



Party's starting location.

Granite boulder with path through "hell".