

CRUENTI DEI:
Sahul
The Chronicle

VOLUME 1: 1445 TO 1500



Thom Rying



Sardarthion Press
Tacoma
2009

For Francine my love

Who is absurdly tolerant of my unhealthy fascination
with imaginary worlds and marsupials.

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Cruenti Dei Chronicle, Volume 1. (CDC01)

(v1.1)

The Sahûl Chronicle

Turn 7

1481–1485 SA

Cutting through crisp air / The sword our scripture in steel / Leaves before the wind (Master Bo)

REMEMBER: THE DETAILS ARE IMPORTANT! If you are expecting resources from another player, tell me how much from who. Tracking these things down is both time-consuming and irritating. If you are moving from point A to point D, be sure to write down your route (B and C). If you're doing multiple Spell Crystal exchanges, please please *please* write out a summary at the end of your orders showing clearly who is getting what from whom, and what you expect everybody to end up with. I am easily confused. Also, please do not assume that I read everything on the boards. I certainly try to, but in the heat of processing, I *will* miss things if they're not right in front of my nose. If we've exchanged PMs or e-mail to fix a stat sheet problem, you must note that on your orders. My memory isn't what it used to be.

There is continuing confusion about trade and movement in the Byrrin River. The *Lower Byrrin* runs from the Western Gulf of Iphil to the city of Adndar. The *Upper Byrrin* runs from Adndar to Sardarthion. So, for example, if your only outlet to the sea is on Lake Sardath, you *cannot* trade by sea with someone whose only outlet to the sea is the Western Gulf of Iphil, no matter how much you may want to.

NEXT TURN DUE: MONDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 2008.

FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.

COMPANY OF THE BLACK CLAW—3sc 25hi 19mc
Captain: Tirabinis Arantes (L995w) YG age 63
Location: Tichiir, Iantier Province
Min. Bid: 45gp/Turn

WHITE LOTUS COMPANY—10hi 24mi 25li 20lc
Captain: Mistress Exata (L993i) IL age 39
Location: Plormel, Biralis Province
Min. Bid: 60gp/Turn

DAREIN'S DESTROYERS—3hc 35mi 22li 19mc
Captain: Darein Gorthes (LA84w) TR age 31
Location: Einandhu, Sardior Province
Min. Bid: 50gp/Turn

RED DRAGON COMPANY—10cv 15pk 30mi
Captain: Tarrid the Fiercer (LA69s) UR age 40
Location: Somewhere in Ingazi
Min. Bid: 30gp/Turn / HIRED

TRANG'S FLEET—3cr 22wt 13tr
Commodore: Neris Carantes (L956w) YG age 36
Location: Cappargarnia City
Min. Bid: 50gp/Turn

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

IMPERIAL BANK OF EINANDHU
Location: Einandhu
Available to borrow: 500 GP
(No single borrower may borrow more than 700 GP)

Investors may purchase shares in the Imperial Free City of Einandhu for 200 GP each, all profits to be divided by shares. Rule 10.5.2 investment income accrues normally. The four chief shareholders, together with the Tiger King of Arms, form the board of directors (indicated * below).

Shares:

House Gwariva of Ingazi 2*
House Pangku of Araxes 3*
House Sakkath of Zarkhandu 2*
Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds... 3*
Guilds Council of Adndar 3*
Printers Guild of Zadres 1

Loans: Araxes (360/t8), Ingazi (910/t8)

BANK OF ITAXIK
Location: Itaxik
Available to borrow: 1050 GP
Loans: None outstanding

Western Sahul

THE KIT'IXI COAST

COUNTY OF TOKATL (13 I/TA)

Her Excellency, Tinikatua v, Mistress of the Totek Hive, Countess of Tokatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, CM, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None

Tinikatua V invested the usual amounts in the usual things. Tokatl's siege rating improved, as did the general quality of life throughout the tiny county.

DUCHY OF TANEKI (13 I/YG)

Her Grace, Toktoka III, the Mistress of Akeltl, Duchess of Taneki, Baroness Ketatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, Itaxik, Kachar, Pexiki, Sakkar, Tokatl, Yax'te

DP: None

Taneki found itself oddly at peace. Not knowing what to do with themselves, they did nothing. The treasury groans with gold, while many are without work or bread. Sorcery quality improved.

THE CHURCH MILITANT (13 I/IL)

Her Holiness Aketika VII, Iluvarian Matriarch of the Wešt, Archemandrite of Tikata.

Trade: Araxes, Averon, Tokatl

DP: None

The Church continued to be paralyzed by indecision and inaction as the aging hierarchy aged further. Some new blood was injected as the very oldest died at their desks, but the Church Militant seems to have become the *Church Bureaucratic*.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (23 SI/IL)

Her Gracious Majesty, Jera III, Lady of Clan Drax, Countess of Darida, Lord Admiral of the Green, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon.

Tiketua III of Tishrak, Margrave of the North.

Trade: Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, CM, Taneki, Thaced, Tokatl

DP: Kib (F), Sish (F), Khorassan (see below)

The wildly popular (and beautiful and witty and clever) Grand Duchess Jera concluded a definitive treaty with the Duchy of Thace, thanks to some timely imperial diplomacy. The *Treaty of Korassan (1482)* provides for recognition of Jorun and the town of Korassan as Averese, while Averon cedes all claim to Sandír and its town of Drannhír to the Duchy of Thace. The Baron of Sandír was most certainly *not* amused at the turn of events. Nevertheless, he saw which way the wind was blowing and paid tribute to the Urdan Duke. Similarly, the Urdans of Korassan dutifully accept their Iluvarian Burgrave, though few of them embrace the religion of their new masters.

Averon built the port town of Mardahn on the South Muleen Road in Tueteen.

The usual lightning storm accompanied the summoning of the Deva Thuban in Kongros in 1483. Shortly afterwards, several blocks of tenements in the older parts of the city are evacuated and the buildings themselves are partially torn down, revealing an ancient marble arch in the style of the First Empire. Almost three stories tall, the arch is stout enough to have been a portion of a city gate complex, but it is strangely far from the ancient walls. The site remains under military control.

Averon extended their Lake Muleen autobahn into Selid in the north and Kib in the south, leaving the only gap in the high deserts of Pantun.

Naval and sorcery quality both improved.

COUNTY OF PEXIKI (19 I/YG)

Her Excellency, Ixix IV, Mistress of the Coactoka Hive, Countess of Pexiki, Lady Amoxcali.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None.

Countess Ixix IV proved that genius does not necessarily mean action. Indeed, the Pexiki were eerily silent and still.

ELECTORAL PRINCIPALITY OF ITAXIK (28 I/UR)

Lady Tis'chak Yautlatoaya, Regent of Itaxik.

Trade: Kachar, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki, Yax'te

DP: Ormic Hills (downright hostile),
Ymoski (F), Tatia (F), Omei (F),
Chilyohan (F)

Princess Chass'ika was appointed Chancellor of the Empire In 1481. One of the younger and more promising hive princesses was named Regent, and the Princess sailed to Sardarthion. The new Regent is a ruthlessly efficient bureaucrat.

Itaxik continued their program of sending heavily armed diplomatic legations through the Miçtian River valley with mixed results. The new Regent was most disturbed to hear that one of her legations was kicked out of the Ormic Hills by the secretive Saurian monastic brotherhood that rules there.

In Chilyohan (where things went very well indeed), Itaxik envoy Lady Notekua was met by a chattering envoy from the Countess of Pehuatoka. The meeting was extremely polite, but the undercurrent of barely-disguised hostility was hard to ignore. The Pehuatokan envoy (in very circuitous language, the nature of which can only be somewhat demonstrated here) indicated that her Countess considered all of the recent Itaxik diplomacy in the Miçtian River valley—lands that had been “under the protection” of Pehuatoka since the formal dissolution of the Miçtian Federation in 1313, even if precious little of it have been actually *controlled* by them since the Kin Strife and subsequent rebellions of the early fifteenth century—to be the hostile act of an expansionist government bent on an unwarranted hegemony in lands to which they had no historical claim. *Furthermore*, the County of Pehuatoka, despite its limited influence in those territories over which however they had never relinquished claim, would not sit idly by while (at this point an aide had to poke Lady Notekua as she was beginning to nod off) the *naked* aggression of the running dogs of Itaxik, under the clear *delusion* that a fancy title and an enormous army somehow exempted them from exhibiting the *decency* and *courtesy* of ...

It was at this point that Lady Notekua began snoring. The puffed-up Pehuatokan envoy feigned not to notice and continued to lecture the sleeping Itaxik diplomat for a further forty minutes before

someone mercifully brained her with a tankard. The Itaxik delegation rolled the Pehuatokan envoy into the barn and went back to the inn to sleep in peace. By the morning, she had departed. The innkeeper groused that not only did she give new meaning to the word “drone”, she hadn't tipped, either.

Widespread investment resulted in advances in infantry and naval technology. The Princely Engineers attempted to build a road from the capital into nearby Notekua. They stopped when a local farmer pointed out to them that there was *already* such a road, and in fact, they were standing on it. The Regent fired her engineers and saved the assigned resources while her new engineers figure out where to build the next road. She also fired some of her bureaucrats when she discovered that the town of Yautiua hadn't paid their taxes in several generations.

The weather improved markedly. Even so, Itaxik is starting to get better at building those glass houses. At least they don't break nearly as often.

COUNTY OF KACHAR (15 I/UR)

Her Excellency, Kassa v, the Wily, Mistress of Calpolli, Lady Tchantli, Countess of Kachar, Protector of the Fair Isles.

Trade: Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki, Tokatl, Yax'te

DP: None

Kachar continued to focus their time and energy on their navy. Much time and money was spent searching for that elusive breakthrough in shipbuilding technology.

The Church reforms reached Kachar in the person of Reverend Mother Verilia, who spent some time in Yankuik Cathedral. After shaking things up there, she visited the city of Kana, where she proclaimed a great feast. She then left for parts unknown, reportedly to the east.

BARONY OF SAKKAR (11 IS/IL)

Baroness Neallatalah III of Sakkar, the Vehement, Mistress of Nelhuayotl, Heir of the Prophet, Beloved of the Light of Iluvar.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki, Yax'te

DP: None

The frugal and pious Sakkar expended some portions of their treasury in careful investment. They have yet to see much of a return.

ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (13 S/IL)

Margrave Tillein the Silent, Grand Master and Knight-Commander of the Champions of the Renewal.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Sakkar, Taneki

DP: Onisba (T)

The Icemark planted a colony in the Aramond Greenwood that quickly prospered (2131)S. Thanks to heavy investment, sorcerous learning advanced, as did air tactics. Diplomacy continued in the Urdan north and west.

Yax'te's weather continued to improve, so much so that much of the grain they'd set aside in their granaries ended up used to brew a particularly hearty ale, which Brewmaster Ninkasi Seraku dubbed "Gorrne's Blackbeer" after the Margrave's Clan. This same brewery also produces "Icemark Ale", a lighter beer popular north of the Choloa.

Tillein's heir, Tillein the Loquacious, died of natural causes in 1483. The Gorrne Clan Mothers (both of them) agreed on the youngest member of the small clan as the new heir, Tillein's grandnephew Cleon.

To the north, the twenty atheist goat herders of Zanisba reportedly converted to Urdanism.

Thacia & Aret

THE HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (32 I/YG)

Her Most Puissant Majesty, Antaxi IV, Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Duchess of Chax and Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Electoral Queen of Chi'tixi, &c., &c.

Her Excellency, Tannix III, Lady Ch'tort, Countess of Cærrat, Vice-regent of Western Chi'tixi.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Girkkah (T)

The mighty Chi'tixi continued their regimen of investment. This time, the effects were markedly different, as naval and air tactics improved, and sorcery advanced.

As part of Chi'tixi's doctrine of "diplomacy in force" an army of 100,000 (including elephants for emphasis) visited Girkkah. They had a tremendous time there as guests of the martial Girkkahs, what with the drinking and dancing and war stories and comparing weapons. Somewhat hung over, they progressed into Torikkah, where the mountainous terrain proved both difficult and irritating.

The Chi'tixi navy came to the Emperor's support in the War of the Cappargarnian Chastisement. Chi'tixi financed the bulk of the Imperial Reform.

DUCHY OF THACE (17 S/UR)

His Grace, Biard XIV, Lord Goshtikka-Ourane, Baron of Brennadein, Duke of Thace.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Averon, Chi'tixi, Ingazi, Hyrágec, ID, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Tigers, Urdraháhn

DP: Anderim (F), Enrid (F), Sandír (T), Lahai (A), Apéric (F), Senetar (F)

Duke Biard concluded the *Treaty of Khorassan* with Averon. Thace gave up claim to Jorun, including the Urdan town of Khorassan, while Averon relinquished Iluvarian Sandír. Both sides were fulsome in their praise of the Imperial diplomats that helped broker the deal.

More work was done on the grand bridge being built across the Húrn to connect Ourane with Herroc. The pylons remain hidden behind scaffolding and canvas to keep away prying eyes.

A huge expansion was undertaken at the Library of Ourane. Once completed, the addition was sealed off from the general public, with access controlled by the Duke himself.

The Duke's heir, Lord Willor Agröeš, went on a pilgrimage. To celebrate, three priories were built.

The Duchy's government expanded (again), and Ourane was definitively established as the capital.

A state visit from the charming Lord of Corinn to tributary Nottesan was strained. Although the young Urda Lord there was eager to become an ally of Thace, the older Iluvarians in the region would have nothing to do with it. Peasant rebellions were threatened, and the Prefecture was subject to several one-day general strikes to make the point. Fearful of losing his precarious throne, the Lord of Nottesan backed down and remained a tributary.

ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (22 S/UR)

His Moř Excellent Majeřty, Ebalondrir IV, the Lax, Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Marshal of Thacia, Governor of Thacia Maior & Minor, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averno, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, Tigers, Urdraháhn

DP: None

Ebalondrir Lax (as he is known to his subjects) pursued no agenda higher than drinking, playing at cards, and pursuing assorted amorous encounters with the ladies of his court. He has consistently refused to meet with the Tiger peace envoys, or anybody else “boring”.

Captain-General Brakus, the leader who defeated and killed the Tiger Sar Gortahn in open battle, died at age 70 in 1484 in Carcë. He was buried with full honours in the cemetery at Tíogar.

THE TIGERS OF URDA (3 S/TU/UR)

Sar Tahník the Wise, Master of the Horseclans, Scourge of Urda the Fierce.

Trade: ThaceD, ThaceE

DP: Herrek (F), Slazjun (F), Temmel (F), Zimrandrim (T), Drazjun (T)

Treaty negotiations continued with little sign of a breakthrough. There was much trade through the Holy Abbey of Tíogar, and Sar Tahník called for a conference of priestesses, nuns, monks, and

holy warriors to meet in the Holy Abbey in 1490 to dispute and discuss the theologies of Urda. The town of Shandú rose in Nemelyssa.

Reverend Mother Berthilde continued leading the Nöenian Order's healing works throughout the Tiger lands¹. The Order adopted both the new habit decreed by the Church, and the motto “by works alone”.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE SIX

After many strange journeys with nights full of troubling dreams, five pilgrims converged in the lonely scrublands of Harza Prefecture before the great rock of Ranarádu. Two were Saurian: Sar Tahník of the Tigers and Lord Willor Agröeř of Ducal Thace; two were Wenemet: Reverend Mother Lasiora and Gwariva Razhim, former Count Palatine of Ingazi and now simply a Captain of the East Riding (wherever that is); there was a single Malebolge: Lady Nabari of Itaxik,

In deference to Tiger sensibilities, both Lady Nabari and Captain Razhim had dressed in high desert garb, concealing their features beneath voluminous hooded robes. Sar Tahník and Lord Agröeř wore similar robes, much mended and worn with a lifetime of riding the vast steppe. Reverend Mother Lasiora wore the pale blue burka-like habit of the Nöenian Order.

In accordance with the ancient tradition, they had left their horses and their retinues at the nearby village of Dhúl. They had walked through the open desert for much of the night. Come mid-morning, this place would be unbearably hot.

Together, the five approached the towering rock—more of a plateau or a rounded mesa than a mere rock. It glowed orange red in the sunrise, a deep and brilliant hue, so bright it was almost painful to look at. The Pilgrim's Path passed by a small stone hermitage before ascending. Outside sat a hunched and hooded Saurian on a stone, tracing figures in the dust at her feet. She gave them

¹ The Nöenians are quickly becoming the largest and most popular Order in the West. There are even rumours that one or more of the daughters of the Grand Duke of Araxes are considering entering the Order.

no notice. As they came closer and the sun rose, the quality of the light changed. Now, at least, they could look upon Holy Ranarádu without shading their eyes. The old Saurian hermit raised her head.

Her eyes were a milky grey. Though she was blind, she stared at the pilgrims and cocked her head slightly.

"I had," she croaked in an ancient and gravelly voice, "expected six."

The pilgrims gathered around her in silence, taken aback by her statement. Finally, Reverend Mother Lasiora found words. "We were expected?"

The hermit nodded. "Indeed. The prophecies are fragmentary. Six are to climb the Holy Rock when the stars are right."

Sar Tahník interrupted. "Who are you? Perhaps you are the sixth?"

"I will serve if no others arrive. Already my successor has been dispatched, should it prove necessary. I am Sister Birra, the 285th Keeper of Ranarádu from the first, who was appointed by the Emperor Belesar XXII of blessed memory. I succeeded Sister Nera, who succeeded Sister Adair."

"What is here?" asked Razhim. "What are you keeper of?"

The old, blind Saurian smiled. "Go and see. None who come to holy Ranarádu leave unchanged, but to those who fulfill the prophecy, to the six who climb when the stars are right, wonders are shown."

The Malebolge Nabari chattered, "And are the stars right?"

"The stars circle and come around time and again. Tonight they will be right."

And so the six of them waited through the day. In late afternoon, a figure was spotted in the distance. It proved to be a Saurian dressed exactly as Sister Birra. She introduced herself as Sister Talia, of the Harun Order.

"I've served the Church since I was a cub, and I've never heard of the Harun Order," said Reverend Mother Lasiora.

"We are an old order, Reverend Mother, with but a single priory a day's walk east of here. Our mis-

sion is to continuously pray for the emperor and to provide Keepers for the Holy Rock."

The sun set behind Ranarádu, and the world fell into sudden darkness.

"Come," said Sister Birra, "we shall be six together." And with that, the blind old hermit began climbing the steep path towards the summit of the great rock. The others wordlessly followed, leaving only the young Sister Talia at the stone hermitage. The path wrapped around the rock, and they were soon in sunlight again.

"We shall see the sun set twice this day," gasped Reverend Mother Lasiora.

"Most of us, at least," replied Sar Tahník, gesturing at the blind Sister Birra.

They continued on in silence.

The pilgrims arrived at the top of the rock astonished by the beauty of the desert vista spread out before them in the twilight. They could see the long shadow of Ranarádu stretching across the desert towards two nearby villages and the Priory of Harun in the distance. The colours of the desert were rich with golds and reds, and the five sighted members of the party spent some time in simply looking out over the vast, stark beauty of the place. Sister Birra waited, occasionally scratching figures in the dust with the end of her staff.

As the sun set in the desert, the visions began. Shadowy Saurian figures moved in and around them. They were insubstantial, like vapours, and one would occasionally walk *through* one of the pilgrims, as though they weren't there. Their dress was archaic, and their manners were formal. Though they spoke amongst themselves, no sound did they make. Gradually, shadowy buildings and streets could be made out, and a small formal garden there on the top of the rock of Ranarádu, and a tower, almost like a lighthouse, stretching upwards to the sky. The pilgrims gasped and walked about, trying to take it all in. Several tried to speak with the shadows, or gain their attention, but to no avail.

Twilight turned to night, and the visions faded, to be replaced by a sky of stars so bright that the pilgrims cast shadows on the rock.

Razhim spoke first. “What the *hell* was that?”

Sister Birra looked up and answered him. “That was the Empire that was. You saw the shadows of what was here three millennia ago. You are now sensitive to these shadows. In places of power throughout Sahûl you may be able to see them, see the world as it was under the First Empire at its height. If you do this long enough, you will soon see them everywhere. You will live in two worlds, the hard reality of the Empire of today, and the shadows of the mighty Empire that was.”

“And then?”

The old Saurian shrugged. “Eventually you will be blind, like me.”

GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (26 w/UR)

His Grace, Pangku Tramandes the Valiant, Baron Pinyerrel, Grand Duke of All Araxes.

Sir Ronnel Rannes, Lord Protector of the Realm.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averon, Chi'tixi, CM, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: None

The Araxean Parliament continued in its state of paralysis while Grand Duke Tramandes remained in the western steppes. He visited Tigerheld Pivrassa briefly for a pilgrimage to the Priory of Saint Nöena. Tramandes the Younger entered the Naval Academy in 1484; he is reportedly excelling at his studies. Sorcery improved.

COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (18 I/YG)

Her Excellency, Xant'ki IX, Lady Tchac'at, Countess of the Kicitchat Hive and Associated Dominions.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None

Xant'ki mobilized her Realm at the request of the Emperor. Thousands, nay, tens of thousands of zombies shambled southwards towards

Cappargarnia. They shambled mighty slowly. Some of them are still shambling.

Cavalry and siege quality improved.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (22 w/YG)

His Gracious Majesty, Adhanggar Challik III, Count of Odol, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk, Imperial Governor of Ardebon.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Ardhchi (F)

Challik mobilized his Realm at the request of the Emperor. Fleets and armies were dispatched into Cappargarnia, firmly reminding the Atuburrk why they usually stay on their island. Mountainous Kurrch fell to the inexorable Atuburrk advance.

Two priories were built, and infantry and siege quality improved. In order to better govern his expanding realm, the government was expanded. A sizeable donation was made to help the Imperial Reform.

Central Sahûl

THE HEART OF EMPIRE

THE CRUSADE OF THE SIX KNIVES (1479–1485)

(also the War of the Cappargarnian Chastisement)
Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, and Kicitchat, acting on behalf of the Emperor; Duedhyn vs Cappargarnia

1481: Emperor Onin Zho, after consulting his advisors and the ancient laws of the Empire, issued the *Armourer's Decree*, declaring the Cappargarnian Prince Steene Dronex guilty of numerous offenses against Imperial justice. (See the *Gazette for the official text*.) Prince Dronex was incredulous and more than somewhat incensed. He was, perhaps, not the only one. The Electoral Prince sent an open letter to the Great Clans of the Empire:

When the fanatical Raven cult called for holy war against the Sublime Republic of Cappargarnia, our

forces went into action. Our intelligence agency anticipated the war and we issued conditional orders that were executed (almost) flawlessly by our defensive forces. Which of you would not do the same?

We see the actions of Araxes and Thace against their fellow Urdan Tigers as a clear precedent for our justified actions to eradicate the fanatical Ravens. In private talks, the Emperor Deric agreed to the use of the Admiralty of the Blue for blockading purposes, and he clearly condoned our reactionary actions to put down the aggressors.

With holy war called by Duedhyn, the Sublime Republic sought out the chieftain of our new enemy and executed him, invaded his lands, and destroyed his property. Should Duedhyn choose to cease the war, we will withdraw our forces. Until such time, we will continue to grind their oppressive anti-Tarotist regime into the dust.

The Sublime Republic holds no ill-will towards the Church of Urda. We will endeavor to leave all Urdan holy sites intact, unless they are a bastion or launching point of aggression for the fanatical Raven cultists.

Regardless of their bravado, the Church reported that the Cappargarnians were beset with Curses. Due sacrifice was tendered to each of the Hidden Lords, which mitigated the problems a bit, but Cappargarnia remained stupendously unlucky as the war progressed. Their enemies, however, fared little better.

One good example is the matter of the overlapping assassination attempts. While no one knows how many mysterious strangers skulk around Cappargarnia on a regular basis, it was obvious even to the casual observer that there were considerably more than usual. Given the horrible bad luck afflicting Cappargarnia's normally elite intelligence service, no one was surprised that they couldn't catch the would-be assassins. Several attempts were made against Prince Dronex, but each time the sheer number of competing killers would trip each other up and prevent any deadly blow from landing. On one occasion, a knife-wielding would-be assassin jumped down from a balcony only to get in the way of a perfect shot from a crossbow sniper on

a nearby rooftop. The knife-wielder took the bolt to the head and died instantly.

By the autumn, the Prince was refusing to come out of the palace. Even so, the increasingly theatrical and desperate attempts on his life continued, on one occasion burning down the palace kitchens, killing two cooks, a baker, and an unknown Wenemet clutching a vial of poison.

The army of Jareb, Swordmaster of Cappargarnia, complete with 55,000 troops, the Banner of Malygris, and an angry Efreet, stormed into Dramul with the intention of liberating that Tarotist region from Raven control. The weakened Duedhyn garrison proved unable to hold back the onslaught.

The Raven Crusaders were an unruly lot. On the east side of the river, the Prophet Barugh was easily able to motivate his forces, but organizing them proved more difficult. Eventually, other Duedhyn troops had to be brought in to herd the crusaders together as they ambled their way towards the Cappargarnian front.

On the west side of the river, Sir Spennenn Wynn tried a different tack. He brought in drill sergeants. By the end of the year, the crusaders were no longer an untrained barely-controlled mob dressed in rags, they were a well-trained, disciplined mob wearing actual armour². Still, their enthusiasm for battle was much greater than their senses of discipline or self-preservation, and he could do little more than hope that some of the training had stuck and point them at the enemy.

The Emperor, meanwhile, marshalled the forces of his Yagnarist brethren from all over Sahul as "the Twilight March" against Cappargarnia and issued orders for the recall of the Blue Fleet.

1482: Cappargarnia, confident that it was in no way in violation of Imperial law (and not about to start) indicated that it would comply with the recall of the Blue Fleet. Accordingly, Sir Sevas Psu was dispatched with a small flotilla to fetch the Blue Fleet

² The Prince ordered special breastplates for Spennenn's forces, featuring an insignia of a raven between crossed swords.

and bring it back to Sardarthion, while Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya was to maintain the blockade of Pareis with only Cappargarnian vessels. It was a solid military plan, with much to commend it. Unfortunately, the Emperor had sent the Colonel of the IVth Regiment of the Emerald Watch to personally deliver the summons to the Vice-Admiral. She received him graciously aboard the Imperial flagship *HIMS Dauntless*. Colonel Mattahonga Lazar proved the very image of Wenemet courtesy (and persuasion), and the two spoke deep into the night. In the morning, the Vice-Admiral ordered the withdrawal of the Blue Fleet to Sardarthion.

The army of Jareb, Swordmaster of Cappargarnia, withdrew from Tarotist Dramûl back into Tythyen. Free Dramûl decided it wanted no part of war; they raised an army for their defense and then joined Adndar instead.

1483: A Chi'tixi flotilla of about 150 warships arrived in the Upper Byrrin River to blockade Cappargarnian trade. Their commodore reportedly grouched about being a "customs agent".

The Blue Fleet arrived in Sardarthion, and its Vice-Admiral was summoned before the Emperor. Before she responded, however, she did her duty by the Republic and relinquished command of her 200 Cappargarnian warships to Sevas Psu to supplement the 85 or so he already had. Sevas had just missed the Chi'tixi flotilla in the Upper Byrrin, and he had no desire to face it now. He continued on to Lake Sardath to resume the blockade of Pareis.

The Interview

Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya arrived in the ancient imperial audience hall known as the Blue Chamber wearing the full dress uniform of an admiral of the Cappargarnian Republic's Navy, including its tall hat with ostrich feather. The dress of those in the Emperor's Court was far more sober, reflecting the style of Zarkhandu. Onin Zho sat on the great iron throne, flanked by its golden lion statues, surrounded by a corps of bureaucrats

each bearing stacks of paperwork in their arms. He was speaking to each in turn, examining papers as presented.

The Vice-Admiral waited, clutching her hat and standing at attention, for a very long time indeed.

Suddenly, there was a flurry of activity at the throne, and the bureaucrats vanished through side doors in a display of synchronization rarely seen outside of formal dance.

The Vice-Admiral was announced, and as she had been instructed, she strode forward to the pale yellow stone set in the floor about five yards from the throne and sunk down on one knee in a profound bow.

The voice from the throne was surprisingly reedy. "You may rise, Admiral."

She stood and saw Colonel Mattahonga just to the right of the throne. The Emperor was consulting a single piece of paper, probably the Colonel's report of their meeting on the *Dauntless*.

The Emperor handed the paper back to the Colonel and dismissed him with a wave. He took two steps backwards and then spun on his heel with a click, vanishing out one of the many side doors of the great hall.

"Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya of our Realm of Cappargarnia, please come forward," the Emperor said as he stood. A Saurian page appeared, gingerly holding the great Sword of State. "For your service to the Crown, it is our intention to create you an Imperial Knight. Do you accept?"

The Emperor drew the great jewelled sword, and Tiribissi hesitated. The Emperor waited a long moment, smiling slightly at the indecision playing across the Admiral's features. Finally she bowed her head.

"Your imperial majesty, I cannot."

"Hoom." It might have been a laugh. "Explain yourself." He handed the sword back to the Page, who gratefully retreated from the chamber.

"Your imperial majesty, my House of Tiribissi has served the Republic since the time of the Crusades. We were Princes of Erphan for a time, and we have served in her army, airfleet, and most es-

pecially her navy. The last four generations of my House have produced Admirals of the Republic, and I have eight nieces and nephews in just my immediate family serving as officers in her navy.”

“So you would rather serve a criminal regime than the Empire.” There was no hint of emotion in his voice. It wasn’t a question, but a statement.

“No, my Emperor.” She was speaking very fast now, trying to get it all out before she was silenced. “I would rather save my country from the tyrant now ruling it, than help you destroy it. Would you destroy one of the oldest realms in the empire for the crimes of its prince? It is Steene Dronex,” she practically spit the name, caught her breath and began again. “It is Steene Dronex you want destroyed, not Cappargarnia.”

An uneasy quiet filled the Blue Chamber. The eyes of two dozen or so Imperial functionaries shifted rapidly from the Admiral to the Emperor and back again. The Admiral clearly hadn’t thought she would be allowed to speak her mind, and she didn’t appear to have rehearsed much beyond this point. The Emperor regarded her in silence from the throne.

And then, the Emperor Onin Zho laughed.

Suddenly, the throne’s clockworks were set into motion. Tree branches of bronze, complete with chirping mechanical birds, unfolded from the sides of the throne as it rose majestically into the air on unfolding works of steel. The golden lion statues on either side rolled their eyes and roared with opened mouth and quivering tongue.

The audience was over, and the Admiral was ushered out of the chamber and out of the palace, apparently free to go.

In the south, Sir Spennenn Wynn’s ability to contain the enthusiasm of the crusaders finally succumbed to the inevitable. Nearly 100,000 holy troops crossed the border from Tiogyon into Avalow, liberating that region for Duedhyn. There was little fighting, as the mercenary Knights of Saint Jarrod (under continued Cappargarnian con-

tract) had left the area some time before on their way to Sansoleth.

The mercenary Knights of Saint Jarrod conquered Sansoleth (except for the Urdan cathedral there, whose name bore an uncanny resemblance to that of one of the Raven crusader leaders). They proceeded to loot the region, reducing them from poverty to penury.

The army of Jareb, Swordmaster of Cappargarnia rendezvoused with reinforcements, including a siege train. The assault of Balyow commenced immediately. It was a brief affair, as the Efrete Rejmoos and the Cappargarnian siege engineers conducted a contest to see who could tear down which walls first. Some casualties were taken, but nothing terribly serious.

1484: Tarotist missionaries in Bufalein and Tewynn were unable to convert the local Urdans. Syghor was strengthened in its newly adopted faith.

Sir Spennenn Wynn’s crusaders and the mercenary Knights of Saint Jarrod converged in Tewynn in the early spring. Neither side had any particular reason to avoid battle, and so battle was joined.

The Battle of Senn Darghor (Tewynn)

The Knights of Saint Jarrad were outnumbered some six to one, but the crusaders had incompetence as their ally. Sir Balorri Withini led a cavalry charge straight into the bulk of the light infantry that made up the overwhelming majority of the crusader force. Despite the odds (and some bad luck), they still inflicted enormous casualties on the Raven forces. Again and again they pounded them, but the enemy numbers seemed limitless.

Finally, the crusader cavalry also engaged, and the tide began to definitively turn against the mercenaries. Seeing his cause was lost, Balorri attempted to surrender. By the time Spennenn finally received the message, it was too late. The remaining mercenaries had been torn from limb to limb. The heralds account the crusader losses at more

than 30,000, but the Knights of Saint Jarrod are no more.

Sansoleth reverted to Duedhyn control.

A Chi'tixi fleet of 390 ships landed the White Lotus Company in Cappargarnian Plormel. The fleet then withdrew, leaving the mercenaries to fend for themselves. With nothing in the way of instructions, they ate, drank, and raised their prices.

Meanwhile, just outside the port of Cappargarnia City, the mighty Atuburrkan Armada hove into view. Commanding the 300 caravels, 125 warships, and 150 transports was Admiral Jannes, a venerable and experienced veteran of the Pirate Campaigns. His already considerable force was augmented by the mercenary fleet of "Mild Trang". Aboard the Admiral's flagship *HMS Count of Erran*, a conversation takes place.

"My Lord Admiral."

"Captain Stiels, how fare we?"

"My Lord, the enemy's defenses are in place, the Prince's flag still flies over the ramparts, and there are no disturbances in the city."

"None at all?"

"None my Lord. And no sign of any allied arms whatsoever."

The old Admiral rubbed his whiskers a moment in thought. The younger captain, always nervous in the Admiral's presence, shifted his weight from one foot to the other. It was subtle; no one not looking for it would have noticed. The Admiral noted it absentmindedly, along with the speed and direction of the wind, the strength of the river's current, and the angry cry of distant jara-birds. The Admiral grunted.

"Can't be helped. Captain, signal the fleet. We shall proceed as planned. I expect the enemy air-fleet presently."

"Aye, aye, my Lord."

"Mister Chillik!"

A midshipman appeared at the Admiral's elbow.

"My compliments to Colonel Nimmithes, and have him ready his marines. And Mister Chillik..."

"Yes, my lord?"

"Send a boy for that damned sorceress."

The Assault of Cappargarnia City

Just after noon on the 23rd of Sextilis, the Atuburrk Armada and their mercenary auxiliaries sailed into Cappargarnia harbour under heavy fire. Signalling was at a minimum as the superbly-trained Atuburrk navy manoeuvred into position. The small Cappargarnian fleet, scarcely 100 warships, moved to intercept. They were soon burning. Shouts rose from the Atuburrk lookouts—the vaunted Cappargarnian airfleet was rising from the city. Although they had expected many more than the 65 airships they now saw, the Atuburrk were prepared. Two fire bolts issued from the deck of the flagship, and within minutes the reportedly invincible Cappargarnian airships were falling in flames to the city. A third firebolt tore apart a section of the city's impregnable walls.

Then the Efreet appeared. Confident their luck was turning at last, the Cappargarnians cheered as their Efreet hurled balls of fire into the Armada, shattering a score of warships and setting fire to many more. From *HMS Count of Erran*, however, a single signal flag was raised, and hundreds of flatbottomed boats dropped into the water, loaded with 13,000 marines. They herded 5,000 mercenary marines, who were much more dubious about the whole affair. All charged directly into the Efreet firestorm. Few survived. The venerable Trang was himself among the dead.

The marines, however, were just the tip of the spear. The fleet itself followed them directly to the docks. The fighting there was fierce, as the Cappargarnians put every soldier they could find into repulsing the assault. A handful of knights led 13,000 pike and an additional 10,000 mixed cavalry and infantry against the invaders. At one point, the Cappargarnian Efreet picked up one of the landing craft and used it as a club, sweeping aside whole platoons at a time.

The Armada continued to disgorge troops into the desperate fighting while great siege engines on both sides rained indiscriminate destruction on the developing dockyard battlefield. By late after-

noon, it was obvious that the first wave of the assault was being repulsed. Amidst horrific casualties on both sides, the invaders clung to the smallest possible beachhead. And then, a great cry went up amongst the Cappargarnians as Captain Deirn Erates fell to a well-placed crossbow bolt. Instantly, the Efreet spun around in mid-swing and, spying Deirn's limp body, he howled in laughter. While the soldiers on both sides looked on in horror, the Efreet spun itself into a tornado of fire, sucking up soldiers, sailors, boats, shacks, and a horse into a whirling inferno.

And then it was gone. In the stunned twilight, the fighting slacked off and then stopped. As the sun set, both sides built barricades and tended to their wounded and their dead.

During the night, the comical parade of attempted assassinations finally came to an end. Steene Dronex II was done in by a fairly fetching Wenemaiden who spiked his wine with something painful and ultimately deadly. It's hard to say which was more terrifying to the shopkeepers of Cappargarnia, the continuation of the Atuburrk assault, or the prospect of an election. As the news filtered through the Great Houses of Cappargarnia, an exodus of aristocracy occurred.

With both of the city's defending leaders now dead, military preparations fell into the hands of a little-known career military Wenemet by the name of Captain Senessi Ardane. With little left to work with, Senessi did the best he could to both calm the defenders and to put them in some sort of order. He sent messengers to what Senators had not already left the city and urged them to do so immediately, both for their own safety and to guarantee the continuance of the Republic.

The invaders began the second wave of their assault shortly after dawn. While the remaining marines and infantry concentrated on the fixed defences, including the city walls from which the Cappargarnians continued to rain death, a force of 5,000 cavaliers charged into the city. Within hours, it was over. The defenders fell quickly, and Captain

Deirn was captured during the final Atuburrk attack on the city's citadel.

At precisely noon, the Cappargarnian flag flying over the Senate Building was lowered by a contingent of Atuburrk marines. Moments later the Atuburrk naval ensign was raised in its place. Admiral Jannes took possession of the Prince's Palace as his headquarters in the city and tried to figure out how to put a defense together with his few remaining forces and virtually no walls.

The acclaimed Cappargarnian airfleet—some 150 vessels all told—was discovered in the city, unpowered and still in their berths. Admiral Jannes claimed them as spoils of war.

1485: In the Western Gulf of Iphil, Chi'tixi fleets took up positions to capture or reroute all Cappargarnian trading vessels.

The dispirited Cappargarnian Senate convened across the Byrrin in Croubal and appointed a fifteen-member Collegium. A hasty election followed. Given the gravity of the situation, the Collegium made the only realistic choice now available to them and elected Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya as Electoral Princess of Cappargarnia.

In the south, the Raven crusaders (finally) struck Tythyen. They did so with great enthusiasm, but not much competence. They met the Cappargarnians before the shattered walls of Balyow.

The Second Battle of Balyow

The Cappargarnians numbered 10,000 dragoons, 23,000 pike, 5,000 engineers, and some 16,000 mixed auxiliaries. They were commanded by the cream of the Republic's military genius in the person of Jareb, Swordmaster of Cappargarnia, and by the wizard Anabrin Thornley. The Efreet Rejmoos was a constant fiery presence, and the mystical Banner of Malygris was carried at the head of the army.

On the Duedhyn side was the full weight of the Order of the Raven—some 65,000 knights in full regalia, plus 9,000 cataphraḡti, almost 10,000 longbowmen, an additional 31,000 auxiliaries of vari-

ous kinds, 25 airships, and 92,000 crusaders: a total force of over 200,000 under arms, commanded by the Prophet Baraugh and Dhanos Allyn, Grandmaster of the Order of the Raven. They were even aided by the battle magics cast by a visiting Ingazi sorcerer.

Although outnumbered nearly four to one, the addition of the Efreet (and some other assorted magics), as well as the superior quality of their forces, filled the Cappargarnians with resolve.

Battle was joined with a crash of arms so loud, that it was said in later days that the Emperor himself heard it in Sardarthion.

The crusaders were decimated. And then things started going horribly wrong for Cappargarnia. Scattering the Tarotists with a well-placed firebolt, the Raven Knights struck hard, and there wasn't anything on the Cappargarnian side that could stop them. The great Efreet waded in and slaughtered thousands, tens of thousands, and yet they kept coming. By mid-afternoon, they brought down the Efreet, taking many, many thousands of casualties when his body exploded into white-hot fire³. So overwhelming was the final charge, that there were few Cappargarnian survivors. Even the great Swordmaster Jareb was slain.

The Banner of Malygris was lost in the battle, but Balyow itself remains in Cappargarnian hands.

After literally *years* of purposeful shambling, Kicitchat armies finally crossed the Cappargarnian border. It was a grand army in the uniform of the Twilight March⁴. Many of the Kicitchat soldiers also bore grey shields with a red (setting) sun⁵. In

3 The Ingazi sorcerer Lamorak was among those killed..

4 Grey tunic, grey woolen cloak lined in blood red silk, red tabard with white chess piece tower.

5 The Heralds were in conniptions about the Twilight March having two separate arms. After much consultation, they disallowed the shield design (which violated the rules of heraldry anyway), and granted *gules, three towers in bend argent*. The simpler *gules, a tower argent* was already taken by a certain Sir Besar Trandes of the little-regarded village of Trouserdale in Upper Ingazi. Although amused at the request (and quite drunk as well), he nevertheless refused to yield the arms borne by eight generations of the proud

Krittix they numbered 43,000 knights, 50,000 pike, and 55,000 assorted auxiliaries. They were supported by a small airfleet and considerably hampered by more than 50,000 zombies. Resistance consisted of twelve hive forts. They did indeed *try* to resist, but the Yagnarists had a little trick up their sleeve: a two-story whirling cuisinart⁶ of pain known as the Demon Beherit. He took apart the hive forts (and the nearby Tarotist monastery of Xix) stone by stone. The port city of Inyib remains in Cappargarnian hands. Not a single zombie was harmed in the conquest of the region.

In Thichat, the Kicitchat attack was not nearly so impressive. The 6,000 pike (and double that number of zombies) had some trouble reducing the hive forts there, and several thousand zombies gave their un-lives to the cause. Eventually, their lifeless forms were simply stacked against the walls like cord wood, and the pike climbed over them.

ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (23M/TA)

Her Sublime Maješty, Tiribissi Enya, Electoral Princess of Cappargarnia.

His Great Holiness, Carberic VI, the Obscure, Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Golluz.

Trade: Adndar, Zadres (3)

DP: No.

Steeene Dronex survived fourteen assassination attempts and fared less well on the fifteenth. The government was partially scattered and partially destroyed in the assault of the city, and the Senate and its new Princess are meeting in Croubal across the Byrrin. Although Cappargarnia had not suffered the dismemberment that many had feared, it was grievously wounded. With the election of Tiribissi Enya, there is some hope within the Republic that peace is possible.

Meanwhile, the realm is neatly bisected by the Byrrin River, and if the Chi'tixi blockade becomes

Lairds of Trouserdale to "a bunch of damned zombieherders". The gouty and grumpy old gentleman proffered some other colourful opinions, which (alas!) we simply must omit for the sake of brevity.

6 No doubt a brand of windmill popular in Golthoth before the Fall.

a little more effective, trade and communications between the two halves will become impossible.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF ADNDAR (21 M/TA)

His Excellency Tiribissi Lanharnes, Guildmaster of the Innkeepers, Chancellor of the Guilds Council, and Hereditary Burgrave of Adndar.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zadres (3)

DP: Dramúl (A)

Adndar's army outfitted all of their heavy infantrymen with shiny new pikes. The fine old city of Hunnychar expanded. Otherwise, Adndar attempted with some success to lay low and hope nobody noticed them.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU (4 M/UR)

Sir Graxes Aratan, Tiger King of Arms.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Elphárec, Golmath, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Tiryowglas

DP: Constantly

The Tiger King of Arms spent much of his time sorting out the whole "Twilight March" fiasco and corresponding with the irritating Laird of Trouserdale.

THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE (12 M/UR)

His August & Imperial Maješty, Onin Zho, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglion, Electoral King of Zarkhandu, Sovereign of Sahúl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World.

Her High Maješty, Princess Chass'ika II, Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Elector of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the Wešt, Chancellor of the Empire.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Elphárec, Kicitchat, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC,

Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None

IIP: 26

For appointments, see Gazette.

Onin Zho decreed a far-reaching reform of the creaking Imperial bureaucracy. Unfortunately, much of the joy that might otherwise herald this effort was lost in the uproar over the Cappargarnian War. Nevertheless, a top-down audit of Imperial administration and finances began in Sardarthion. All documents and council reports were seized in a well coordinated sweep by special Auditors, accompanied in many cases by soldiers of the Emerald Watch to ensure that the various departments and agencies complied with the "requests". Several accidental fires were put out by the Watch, who for some reason were carrying about sacks of earth. What the Auditors found was simply a mess. After (in some cases) five hundred years of layered regulations and agencies, it was virtually impossible to make any sense of what was actually going on in the government. Monastic tutors were brought in for the Emperor's son, and there is talk of a comprehensive education system in Sardarthion.

Reform was not limited to the central bureaucracy. Auditors were sent to the Provinces of Aradaun, Keirmon, Jumarand, Narchoal, and Tepalis with instructions to investigate and streamline the bloated and inefficient civil service. As part of the reform, offices were open to any who would pass a series of examinations, designed to recruit suitable candidates regardless of social class. Of course, in practice, only the wealthy could afford the tutors required to pass the initial exams. Nevertheless, the Auditors reported that several sons and daughters of peasants had passed the exam and were admitted into the Imperial Civil Service⁷. Sardarthion being what it is, the Auditors have become essentially a new branch of the Civil Service.

After his traditional pilgrimage to the Shrine of Master Moroko, the Emperor began a new phase

⁷ This was particularly true in Aradaun and Narchoal.

of the reform, concentrating on the economic development of the Imperial Demense. Public works were built to redevelop the worst of the ruined and abandoned parts of the capital. The port town of Sakkarah was built in Sondrim.

Emperor Onin Zho was not the only one investing in the long-neglected city of Sardarthion. First Matriarch Ardona began gathering funds and personnel in the city, preparing for a herculean effort to refurbish the Urdan holy places. She warned that a tithe of material and resources might be necessary to bring forth the grand structure now planned. Many church workers were ordered to Sardarthion to begin building up the area around the ruined walls of Iurdana in order to house pilgrims, as well as those working on the project. In addition, nuns and monks were sent into the surrounding neighborhoods to help feed, clothe, and house all those employed in the work of restoring the site “for all of Sahûl to enjoy”. As part of these ongoing projects, the Priory of All Saints was built.

The Emperor sent a scientific and cultural expedition to the Imperial Preserve of Wanangi. The Imperial Geographical Society sent writers and sketch artists along. They produced a fascinating and extremely popular pamphlet titled “Humans in the Mist”.

PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN (9 S/RA)

His Highness, Prince Dallyn III, the Young, of Duedhyn, Baron Dhanos, Hereditary Marshal of the Order of the Sacred Raven.

Trade: Adndar, Kommolek

DP: None.

Prince Dallyn attended the Sorcery Academy in Pareis, where he met a lovely little sorceress. They were married shortly after graduation and already are expecting their first child in early 1486. Meanwhile, Duedhyn struck back against the invading Tarotist bastards™. A representative of the Church Universal & Triumphant spent some time with the young Prince and his advisors.

BARONY OF FELL KOMMOLEK (20 W&S/YG)

Baron Goesek Terthynn of Kommolek, Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsûnd.

Trade: Aradéc, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Kicitchat, Hyrágec, ID, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

Fell Kommolek responded to the Emperor’s call in the form of large piles of cash in small, easy-to-carry bags. Great sacrifices to the Dark Father rang out throughout the Barony, strengthening the faith of the lukewarm. Relatively large investments into the Barony’s sorcery proved beneficial.

The soldiers of the Baronial army were outfitted with the uniforms of the Twilight March.

Prince Andel, tired of being in the shadow of his twin brother Prince Annavas, left to seek his fortune in Sardarthion.

COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (19 S&W/IL)

His Excellency, Count Sarrik II, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryouglas, Defender of the Faith.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Murali

DP: None.

Eight priories were built throughout Tiryouglas, greatly edifying the people and sparking a resurgence of popular piety. They were named after the seven virtues, except the one in Sennow. This one, in the shadow of the Imperial Free City of Deriháhn, was named *Amity*.

The Count’s eldest son was given command of the Army of the Antean, and its former commander, his mother the Countess Tesenn, rode with all haste back to her husband’s court at Bronnow⁸. After twenty years of separation, Sarrik and Tesenn fell into each other’s arms amidst a great celebrations. The couple retired to their palace chambers soon after. To the surprise of many, the Countess bore the couple’s seventh child in 1484. The Countess is well past her childbearing years, and it was a difficult egg-laying. The doctors were worried that she

⁸ Rumour has it that she killed four horses in her haste.

would die, but the Countess proved them wrong. Little Lady Dalleshmyr is lively and healthy.

Oldest daughter Dulaga was married in 1481 to the Lord of Búkleth. They gave the Count and Countess their first grandchildren in 1482 and 1485. There's mounting pressure for Lord Kerens to marry as well. He's not getting any younger, you know.

ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (22 IL)

His All Holiness, Pope Sanguine XIV, Pontiff of Siſtrameides, Archemandrite of Ilúbir.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Einandhu, Elphárec, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Tiryowglas

DP: None.

Sanguine XIV pursued a Concordat with Tiryowglas. Unfortunately, Count Sarrik forgot to sign. Mawali was inundated with missionaries, Iluvarian and otherwise. Most of the Urdans there decided they'd rather be Iluvarian than Tarotist.

Carrying on the new tradition of travelling Popes, Sanguine made the difficult journey to Murrugapa to hobnob with the Baron there.

MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (27 W/IL)

His Grace, Eparreb Caranthes IV, the Pious, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Tiryowglas

DP: None.

Duke Caranthes the Pious fell ill in 1482, and he accomplished very little as he recovered. Unemployment is endemic. The treasury, however, grew in leaps and bounds.

Baron Ilkurr Valdiss, the Toymaker of Mungg, experimented with various automata of his own invention. So far "Madame Mad, the Soothsayer" is really raking in the silver at the local fairs. The chess-playing machine is proving more difficult.

KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (22 W/UR)

Her Valiant Majesty Irrjir Sardira, the Virgin Queen, Reigning Queen of Hyrágec, Beloved of Urda.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Elphárec, Golmath, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdráhahn

DP: Tregerieg (F)

Queen Sardira designated the ancient city of Pahasar as her kingdom's official capital. Six priories were constructed throughout the kingdom, bringing a noticeable increase in vocations to the religious life.

In 1481, the Emperor Onin Zho teleported to the Shrine of Moroko to make the traditional Imperial pilgrimage. A courteous welcome was provided by Lord Whirripi Mendathes of Endani, who was 71 at the time, but still hale. The Emperor spent some time at the Shrine in deep contemplation of the simple but elegant tomb of the ancient Master. In the gardens of the Shrine, he engaged in a poetic exchange with the current guardian of the shrine, Master Bo. The Emperor offered,

*That which ſtriketh!
what is this which ſtriketh!
Ah, who ſhall convey to thee what the Striking is?
The Day when men ſhall become like ſcattered moths,
And the mountains like tufts of carded wool,
Then as to him whose ſcales are heavy
He ſhall enter into paradise;
And as to him whose ſcales are light
The Abyſs ſhall be his dwelling place!
And who ſhall convey to thee what the Abyſs is?
A pillar of fire!*

To which Master Bo replied,

*Cutting through crisp air
The ſword our ſcripture in ſteel
Leaves before the wind*

Just then, a gust of afternoon wind scattered autumn leaves through the garden, covering the asters and the chrysanthemums. The Emperor teleported back to Sardarthion soon after.

Thanks to large investments (and a fair bit of luck), Hyrágec's cavalry, airship, and sorcery quality all improved. The government also expanded.

The Gawan Peninsula

THE FEUDAL NORTHEAST

COUNTY PALATINE OF INGAZI (24 w/UR)

His Most Urdan Excellency, Gwariva Laharnes v, the Farsighted, Overlord of Gawan, Captain of the East Riding, Count Palatine of Ingazi.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, IOC, Kitchat, Murali, Murrugapa, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

DP: Gawanyi (F), Prándhi (F)

Count Laharnes continued the economic development of the County Palatine through copious investments in public works and the expansion of the towns of Istahn, Ednbon, and Regwynn to cities. In addition, infantry quality improved.

One dark and moonless night, some merchant airships, supposedly en route from Abijar to Isahn, crossed the Yali River and flew over the Cathedral of Saint Mirra. Suddenly, a lightning bolt launched from the ground somewhere nearby struck the cathedral. It struck near to the storehouse, causing considerable damage and starting a raging fire in the cloisters. Moments later, a second lightning bolt arced from one of the vessels and actually struck the storehouse, which inexplicably exploded in a great roiling fireball. The awakened locals scrambled to put out the fires, but they were ultimately unsuccessful. The ancient structure blazed for two days before finally burning itself out. Nothing remains but ruins and ashes.

Ingazi's northern airfleet under the command of Air Marshal Lord Gwariva Trememeres in Apha-ranggal scrambled to intercept the "merchants" responsible for the attack. A dramatic chase soon developed, as the invaders tried to escape to the open ocean. Ingazi's superior tactics eventually brought the perpetrators into range. The battle was short and sharp: the "merchants" were outnumbered five to one and didn't stand much of a chance.

Lord Trememeres and, later, the Abbess of Din-kumbi investigated the wreckage that could be salvaged from the waves. There was no trace of a sorcerer or a Spell Crystal. The vessels flew Aradéc colours, but based on crew manifests, Trememeres believes they were of Cappargarnian origin.

Amazingly enough, nobody was painted blue.

CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (45.1 UR)

Her All-Holiness Jerröe IX, the Cry of the Owl, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahûl.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kitchat, Murali, ThaceD, ThaceE, Zarkhandu

DP: None

First Matriarch Ardona put in place what would prove the last of the Ardonan reforms, instituting a new style of dress for the clergy:

The habits of the people change and therefore those of Urda's clergy must too change in the literal sense. The face and hand coverings We proclaim for all clergy go into effect due to our respect for all sophonts and our view of equality among them as Urdans. We will show only our eyes and the dark veils we wear serve to unite us all under one face. The Face of Urda.

Adoption of the new habit was greeted enthusiastically in the West, where the Nöenian Order in particular is contending with the presence of Wenemet and Malebolge sisters amongst the insular Saurians of the steppe. In the East, some of the more progressive Orders are dragging their feet.

The great First Matriarch Ardona XIV, Claw of the Dragon, died peacefully in her sleep one warm summer's night in 1482. The Sibyl came out of her ritual trance with the name of the Abbess of Adeni in Hyrágec on her bloody and foam-flecked lips with the murmured motto "the cry of the owl". The new First Matriarch was quickly fetched back to Urdraháhn, but in the interim, disaster struck at Saint Mirra. Some of the more ardent Urdans immediately urged holy war against the perpetrators of this outrage against the Church, but for the moment cooler heads prevail.

In 1484, the Holy Office of the Inquisition effected the arrest of a junior cleric in Urdraháhn. The charges against him are sealed, and Reverend Mother Tareina of the Holy Office has thus far declined comment.

Many investments were made. The government expanded, and a breakthrough was reported in sorcery, perhaps one that could change the course of history. Or not. Yet again, Mount Pupini erupted several times.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF GOLMATH (45 w/TA)

His Gracious Maješty, Walarri Sardhan III, the Glorious, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Imperial Governor of Kaparis, and Elector & Grand Duke of Golmath.

His Great Holiness, Mordican II, Hierarch of the Fellowship of Connate Tarotists and Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Serri.

His Excellency, the Volpel Zhogian the Fearless, Baron Volpel & Count of Runazar.

Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Murali, Sidith (2), ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: Dalawathi (F)

Grand Duke Sardhan the Glorious was appalled at conditions in his Realm of Runazar, and set out to correct them as quickly as he could. The scale of the public works projects undertaken were truly phenomenal. Villages that once had dirt commons and a single well now have cobbled plazas and stone fountains. The walls of Morcannis were rebuilt, and the great stadium of Volpel was built there. Rugby, Golmath's national sport, proved equally popular in Runazar.

Golmath's other investments fared less well, though Thunarr in Daryis expanded.

Just for a bit of fun, the Grand Duke gathered up about 35,000 soldiers and plundered the crumbling ruins of time-eaten Parrkulu. There's hardly anything left now.

One morning, the inhabitants of Madran awoke to the sight of a new fortress, that had mysteriously appeared overnight. The army quickly moved in to take control, and they named it Laksmih.

His Great Holiness Mordican I died in Morcannis. His successor was elected in Serri.

The final game of the 1485 All-East Rugby Championship was between the heavily favoured Thunarr *Thunder* and the upstart Callam *Kilted Maniacs*. The game ended with an 8–4 Thunarr victory and a riot in the streets. A splendid time was had by all, and the pubs of Golmath City actually ran out of whiskey.

The Grand Duke sent Distahn the wandering mendicant and all of his whoopee cushions, seltzer, and pies in the direction of Urdraháhn in hopes that he would meet a peaceful, quiet death somewhere en-route. Instead, he vanished.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (38 w/IL)

His Royal Maješty, Sansollen Dirharn I, Baron of Wanumarra, Electoral King of Aradéc, Imperial Governor of Arador.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Murali, Murrugapa, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: Failed!

Aradéc did what they do best: they built. Three new port towns were constructed: Kefinar in Bidigapa, Mikalas, in Darrayi, and Lisamet in Pagirri⁹. Aradéc's road network was extended, connecting the cities of Yaliháhn and Monithirri to Kefinar. The Academy at Darnuldeis became the University of Darnuldeis, and the Military Academy was expanded as well.

Capacity crowds watched the fireworks during summoning of the Deva Dorett in Darnuldeis in 1481. People picnicked, and vendors plied their wares. It's become more popular than the Pranyi Prefecture Fair, and that's saying something.

⁹ Lisamet is on both the Crinmi River and the Syrinais Coast; Mikalas is on the Azure Coast, and Kefinar is on the Sea of Arad.

A diplomatic duel in Derridon was indecisive.

An Imperial expedition arrived on “tributary” Wanangi just in time for the annual yam-giving ceremony. They brought tools and cloth, and they impressed the natives with minor magic tricks, including flying and three card monte. Several of the expedition members seem convinced that these ba-boons possess a rudimentary language.

BARONY OF MURRUGAPA (1 w/IL)

Baron arYarwain Didrel of Murrugapa.

Trade: Aradéc, Ingazi, Murali

DP: None.

Baron Dirdel welcomed a visit from Orthodox Pope Sanguine XIV. He gladly signed a pledge on behalf of himself and his Barony to the Orthodox Pope rather than to the Aradécian Abbot.

COUNTY OF MURALI (13 w/TA)

His Excellency, Kilyara Torthes 1, Baron of Karrka, Count of Murali, Lord Admiral of the Red.

Trade: Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, Murrugapa, Sidith (2), Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: Treal (T), Shékon (F)

Baron Torthes ordered a port town built in Inzana at the mouth of the Antean, just across the river from Pundraki. It’s called Antraki.

Due sacrifice was tendered to the Lords of the Balance, and shortly thereafter, a most prodigious display was seen in the eastern skies, including strange glowing green clouds and flashes of violet lightning. In Mandri, a goat was born with three heads. What it all means, none can guess.

Vice-Admiral of the Red Narynn Yustomon took the fleet out for a little spin in the Bay of Ebalon. He ran down some pirate vessels¹⁰ and captured and interrogated their captains. The remains, he sent to Sardarthion in small boxes tied up with bows as a gift for the Emperor.

¹⁰ No, he literally ran his ships over theirs. There’s less mess that way.

IATHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIBÆLD

Peace prevailed in the lands of Iathedek. At least, if it didn’t nobody knew about it. Trade continued bustling along the Antean River.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (40 s/YG)

His Maješty, Sakkath Sharret Radohl the Very Young Yet, Prince-Regent of Zarkhandu.

Vahl, Margrave Draconis, Commander of the Horse Guards.

Trade: Golmath, Ingazi, Kommolek, Murali, Sidith (2), Urdraháhn

DP: Mekellan (F), Zahn (F), Tyldek (T), Yannek (T), Zodrek (F), Ganteth (A)

Queen Kwadan stepped down as Vice-Regent, though she continued to have a voice in the administration of the Realm. In Mlideen, Zarkhandu built the river(s) port town of Dornath. Government expanded, and the city of Zarkhandu became the permanent capital. Sacrifices were made to Yagnar’s glory. These culminated in late 1481 with the ritual summoning of the Demon Kehturak. Few were allowed to see the rites, and fewer still allowed to live through them.

The Church Universal and Triumphant continued to lobby the nearby Urdan Prefectures to join Zarkhandu’s Draconic March. They promised roads, granaries, and priories. Zarkhandu rebuilt the ruins of Vænor into a port town. It’s still only a shadow of the great city it was, but it’s a start.

A diplomatic duel in Derridon was indecisive.

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Imperial Gazette

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Emperor Onin Zho

APPOINTMENTS

To Chancellor of the Empire: Electoral Princess Chass'ika of Itaxik.

To Governor of Ariador: Electoral King Dirharn of Aradéc.

To Governor of Anabreis, Aradaun, Dorthacia, Kanapad, Kiermon, Kumarand, Narchoal, Nauatidran, Tepalis, Thebia, Yann: *by exam.*

OPEN OFFICES

Due to death or incapacitation of the previous office-holders, the following are now vacant:

Lord Admiral of the Blue and governors as indicated.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

Province	Governor	Province	Governor
Agador	bureaucrat	Kembul	bureaucrat
Anabreis	bureaucrat	Kiermon	bureaucrat
Aradaun	bureaucrat	Kinsidan	bureaucrat
Arador	Aradéc	Kordier	bureaucrat
Ardebon	Atuburrk	Kumarand	bureaucrat
Artier	vacant	Lambris	bureaucrat
Balashan	bureaucrat	Larloc	bureaucrat
Belegaridor	bureaucrat	Mondahan	bureaucrat
Biralis	bureaucrat	Muralis	bureaucrat
Chos	Itaxik	Narchoal	bureaucrat
Dorthacia	bureaucrat	Nauatidran	vacant
Dranchoal	vacant	Orinos	bureaucrat
Dranmul	Averon	Sachon	bureaucrat
Drazhan	bureaucrat	Sardior	vacant
Endior	bureaucrat	Sistramidior	bureaucrat
Iantier	bureaucrat	Tepalis	bureaucrat
Iasedior	bureaucrat	ThaciaMaior	ThaceE
Kaidu	bureaucrat	ThaciaMinor	ThaceE
Kanapad	vacant	Thebia	bureaucrat
Kanmul	bureaucrat	Tramelis	bureaucrat
Kaparis	Golmath	Withidan	bureaucrat
Kassaria	bureaucrat	Yann	vacant
Kastier	vacant		

The Armourer's Decree

OF EMPEROR ONIN ZHO

HEarken Heralds and brand this to your mind's eye. Let it be known throughout Sahûl that *His August & Imperial Majesty, Onin Zho, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglion, Electoral King of Zarkhandu, Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World* has pronounced this Doom. That heretofore the peaceful and law-abiding Cappargarnians did unlawfully invade the peace-loving and diplomatic Principality of Duedhyn in the year 1477. The following judgments have been pronounced:

FIRST, that in Fourteen Hundred and Seventy-Seven that Mercenaries known as "The Knights of Saint Jarrad" did under Cappargarnian employ *foment, support, and with force of arms cause a rebellion* to occur under direct orders and support from *the Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia* and *His Sublime Majesty, Steene Dronex II, Lord Admiral of the Blue, Electoral Prince of Cappargarnia*, and that rebellion was similarly fomented in the prefecture of Dramul by the aforementioned Steene Dronex II.

SECOND, that in 1478 the Electoral Prince put himself in *Dereliction of his duties* as Admiral of the Blue by deploying the fleet against a lawful Imperial Clan.

THIRD, that in 1478 the city of Pareis was infiltrated by means of a society of secret agents who dwelt in unknown number lurking to foment and cause *Revolution* which is a direct violation of the Golden Edict.

FOURTH, that in 1478 in the same city of Pareis did these selfsame Cappargarnian agents commit *Regicide* and did assassinate in base fashion the sitting, legitimate, and lawfully inherited Prince Tewas III.

STEENE DRONEX II, HAVING BEEN JUDGED GUILTY of all these acts by the divine and lawful right of His August & Imperial Majesty, Onin Zho, Sovereign of Sahûl, *etc.*, the Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia is deemed to have on these Four Counts attacked the basis of Sahûl which is Law. Having chosen to work outside the law, the Cappargarnian punishment is to remain there.

KNOW THIS, SAHÛL: the Cappargarnians are engaged in a *Trial by Combat*. They have chosen to run against the Empire, in defiance of the Empire, and in defiance of their Honor. *Be it known that the Cappargarnian War is declared illegal*, that any and all who wish to do themselves honor in support of the Empire may enjoin against Cappargarnia in any way they see fit excluding Genocide. There is no Cappargarnian Innocence here but there may be Survival. If Cappargarnia on their own manages to defeat all those clans who choose to defend the Honor of the Empire then they may continue. Any who intervene on the side of the Cappargarnians will be held to be outside the law as well. *We instruct* also that any city, soldier, dragoon, serf, prefecture, or holy place that does not wish to share this fate may escape it by flying the Imperial Colors and putting themselves under the temporary care of the Emperor and the Emerald Watch.

WE ALSO DECLARE that the *Church of the Illimitable is not to be harmed* in its Prefectures of Aretar or Djarden unless it is by other Tarotist Clans. Such is the reverence and esteem with which our Most Pious Emperor views the Church of the Illimitable.

