

Dreg and Shantywood Isle

IIIIO—Rowdy Hameth port-town and the neighbouring isle of ill-repute.

OVERVIEW

A rough port-town and fishing village founded amid the marshes and mists of the River Hameth's banks. Tall, wonky houses clad with tarred wooden planks against the damp. The place feels as if it is slumping inexorably into the bog and the river. Dreg has a seedy reputation as a haunt for thieves, charlatans, and rascals of all stripes.

Inhabitants (300): A majority of local folk of High Woldish descent who have plied the river here for many generations. As a centre of trade and transit, Dreg is also home to a significant population of folk from other regions, including a number of shorthorn goatfolk.

Ruler: Dreg is notionally ruled by the goat-lord **Malbleat (p66)** and his representative in the village, the **Berkmaster Monocleese (p101)**—a mayor of sorts). **Madame Shantywood (p103)**, although she has no legally recognised position in Dreg, practically runs the port, due to her economic clout.

Religion: Ostensibly devotees of the Church, the rowdy folk of Dreg have a tendency towards godlessness. The rogue friar **Brother Hogbeard** and his flock of yellow-smocked zealots seek to reverse this trend.

The River Trade

The River Hameth runs wide and shallow at this point and is rich with fish and floating debris from the forest. Boats and barges carry goods and passengers along two routes:

East-west: The 7-mile river journey between Dreg and the Woodcutters' Encampment forms a vital part of the trade route between Castle Brackenwold (in the east) and High-Hankle and Lankshorn (in the west).

North-south: Trade between Dolmenwood and the lands to the south travels along the Hameth, via Dreg, the Woodcutters' Encampment, and the wondrous ship-conveyor at the Falls of Nyf (see hex 1112).

The Atacorn's Miasma

Unknown to the people of Dreg, an Atacorn—one of the spawn of Atanuwë—has dwelt hidden in the town for some decades, infusing the town's smoked fish with its corrupting miasma (see **Crewithyant, p102**). As a result of the Atacorn's insidious influence, violence, treachery, and discord are on the rise in Dreg.

Brother Hogbeard—Rogue Friar

A plump, red-faced man in his fifties, with bushy beard and eyebrows. Dressed in the hessian robes and tonsure of a friar, with a holy symbol swinging from a chain around his neck. Hogbeard came to Dreg five years ago, to aid the poor, but has become the leader of a band of religious vigilantes who dispense justice in the town.

Demeanour (Neutral): Magnetic, wide-eyed religious fervour. (Hogbeard was previously Lawful, but the Atacorn's influence has swayed him to increasing passion and violence.)

Speech: Bombastic, doom-laden. Woldish, Liturgic.

Desires: For Dreg to be freed of sin. To be canonized.

Hogbeard's Zealots

Yellow-smocked converts to Hogbeard's cause who patrol the town, preaching the word of the One True God. Of late, the zealots have taken to kidnapping "sinners" for nighttime exorcism in the woods.

Famed Bog-Swine Sausages

Dreg is known for its fine sausages, made from the flesh of the swine kept in the bogs to the north of the village. The bog-swine of Dreg are huge, bristly, black creatures fed on detritus from the river.

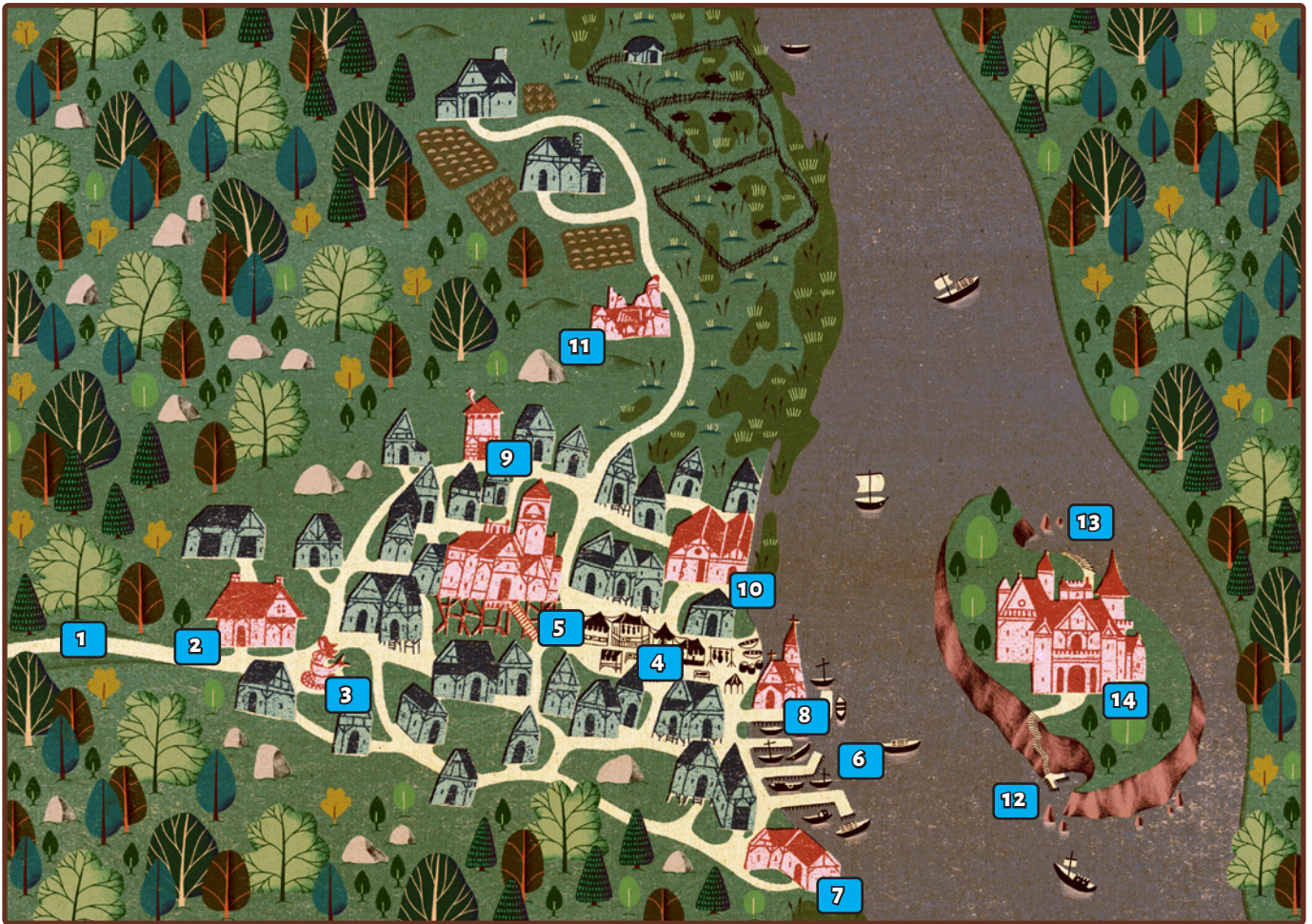
Shantywood Isle

A cliff-sided island that divides the River Hameth for nigh half a mile. The island has long been inhabited and its surface consists of gentle woods and pleasure gardens surrounding the fabulous Chateau Shantywood—a notorious manor of ill-repute. Coves at the island's north-eastern and south-western corners give access, via steep stairways, to the interior.

By a quirk of legal history, the island is technically an independent country and has the right to arbitrate its own laws. (In practice, the law is dictated by the whims of Madame Shantywood.)

EQUIPMENT AVAILABILITY

Standard equipment is available in Dreg at the normal price, with vehicles and mounts at 50% higher than usual. Mercenaries can only rarely be hired here, and unusual specialists (e.g. sages, spies) cannot be located.



Map Key

1. The Ditchway
2. The Mermaid's Arms (Inn)
3. Young Merble
4. Fish Market
5. Berkmaster's Manor
6. Port

7. Shodgery's Shack (Inn)
8. Church of St Wick
9. The Smokehouse
10. The Spawning Salmon (Inn)
11. The Boghouse
12. South Cove
13. North Cove
14. Chateau Shantywood

The Dreg Constabulary

Clad in mail with black tabards bearing the silver fish emblem of the Berkmaster. The constabulary is a small body of town guards commanded by the Berkmaster.

Arrival on the scene: If word of a crime is called out in the town, 1d3 guards will arrive within 1d12 minutes (1d4 turns at night). A further 1d3 guards may arrive 10 minutes later (1d4 turns later at night), if reinforcements are called for.

Bribery: The guards will often turn a blind eye to minor crimes for a 5gp consideration.

AC 5 [14] **HD** 1 (4hp) **Att** 1 × weapon (1d6 or by weapon) **THACO** 19 [0] **MV** 120' (40') **SV** D12 W13 P14 B15 S16 (1) **ML** 7 **AL** Neutral **XP** 10

DREG ENCOUNTERS—DAY

d6 Encounter

- 1 **1d4 longhorns** (*DMB*)—knights in the service of **Lord Malbleat** (*p66*)—charge into town, bearing urgent news to **Berkmaster Monocleese**.
- 2 **Brother Hogbeard** and **1d3 zealots** approach PCs asking for a donation to their cause.
- 3 **2d3 fishermen** come to blows outside the Smokehouse over a disagreement about who owns a batch of fish.
- 4 **1d4 town guards** chase a pickpocket through the streets. Onlookers jeer and throw fish guts.
- 5 **1d4 shifty lads** (members of the Boghouse Boys—see *p103*) staking out the Berkmaster's manor.
- 6 **1d3 Hogbeard's zealots** pulling a "sinner" to the church.

DREG ENCOUNTERS—NIGHT

d6 Encounter

- 1 **1d4+1 thugs** (stats as bandits—*OSE*) follow an old lady (*Tamrin Tweede*, *p100*) into a dark alleyway. Loud cursing ensues, as the thugs are caught in her *web*.
- 2 **1d4+1 thugs** (stats as bandits—*OSE*), looking for victims.
- 3 **1d3 farmhands** drunkenly bragging about witch-hunting, on their way to a secret meeting in the Boghouse.
- 4 A rowdy fistfight between **3d6 sailors** (2 rival gangs).
- 5 **2d3 Hogbeard's zealots**, bearing torches, dragging a blindfolded "sinner" into the woods for exorcism.
- 6 Folk stumble indoors as a thick mist rolls off the river.

1. THE DITCHWAY

The east-west road, known to locals as the Ditchway, winds through a broad channel with sandy banks on either side. The road is frequented by much trade, leading to the market-town of Lankshorn (hex 0710).

2. THE MERMAID'S ARMS (INN)

The only reputable inn in Dreg, the Mermaid's Arms is little more than a cottage, but is homely and well maintained. The inn is known colloquially as the "Mermaid's Arse".

Sign: A mermaid on the seashore, bashfully hiding her modesty with her immaculately braided blonde hair.

Common room: Dark beams, floorboards decked with round woollen rugs, the scent of wood polish, and a cheery fireplace conjure an atmosphere at once welcoming and intimate. A sign reads "No gambling, lewdness, or sea shanties!". Customers are served by **Ogham Tweede**, the bar tender.

Guests: A courteous mix of travellers and locals wishing for a quiet drink away from the crowds. There is a 1-in-6 chance per evening of the inn's proprietor, **Tamrin Tweede**, sitting in a corner drinking quietly by herself.

The attic suite: A ladder and trapdoor (kept locked) in the upper hallway lead to a suite of rooms in the attic, beneath the thatched roof. These chambers are the private residence and research laboratory of the inn's proprietor, the magic-user **Tamrin Tweede**.

Services at the Mermaid's Arms

Common lodgings and food: See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*. The inn has only three 2-bed rooms and a single private room.

Tweede's fish pie: Said to be the best in Dreg. Baked fresh every day. 3sp a meal.

3. YOUNG MERBLE

A bawdy marble statue of a busty mermaid at the centre of a fenced pool. Dreg folk throw coppers into the pool for good luck. Local down-and-outs sometimes engage in a nighttime bath to filch whatever pittance lies in the pool. "Pool dredger" is a common insult in Dreg.

4. FISH MARKET

A cobblestoned square rammed with tarpaulin-draped market stalls. The raucous cries of hawkers and the reek of fish—fresh and smoked—permeate all.

Hogbeard's zealots: During the day, **Brother Hogbeard** (p98) and **2d4 zealots** patrol the fish market, preaching.

Ogham Tweede—Mermaid's Arms Bar Tender

A burly, rough-faced man in his forties, with dense black stubble covering his face and head. Dresses in utilitarian leathers and white apron. Ogham is a reformed thief, tasked with running the Mermaid's Arms by his aunt, **Tamrin Tweede**.

Demeanour (Neutral): Charming, with an edge of cautionary bravado. Clenches his fists on the bar.

Speech: Consciously hushed, bursts of loud guffawing. Woldish.

Desires: Knowledge of the current whereabouts of his ex-flame, **One-Eyed Gil** (p93), whom he has not seen in 15 years, since the night they fled the grounds of Redwraith Manor (0709) following an aborted burglary.

Tamrin Tweede—Mermaid's Arms Proprietor (5th Level Magic-User)

An elderly woman with a frizzy mane of white hair and tiny spectacles balanced on a pinched, mouse-like visage. Tamrin is the owner of the Mermaid's Arms, having inherited the inn from her grandmother. She has lived in the seclusion of its attic for the last 20 years, since retiring from the adventuring life.

Demeanour (Lawful): Wistful, private. Happy to converse with erudite visitors. Near-sighted.

Speech: Hushed, considered. Woldish, Caprice.

Desires: To uncover the cause of the growing violence and unrest in Dreg (see *The Atacorn's Miasma*, p98), which she suspects to be of magical origin.

Possessions: An obsidian ring of fire resistance. Spell book: *read languages, sleep, detect invisible, web, invisibility 10' radius*.

TODO: Illustration

5. BERKMASTER'S MANOR

A tall, ungainly building clad with stained wood shingles and topped with a tall bell tower. The manor is an odd structure that has been extended many times by former Berkmasters over the centuries.

Raised on stilts: The current Berkmaster's predecessor, envious of Madame Shantywood's power and influence, had the manor raised up on high stilts, setting it directly facing Chateau Shantywood, across the river.

The berk-bell: A great, goat-faced copper bell shines at the summit of manor's bell tower. A hereditary bell-polisher buffs it daily, but it is only rung upon the arrival of a goat-lord in Dreg.

Inhabitants: The current Berkmaster is Maximilian Monocleese ("His Lordship"), who lives here with his sickly wife Hilda. The title of Berkmaster is bestowed by the lord of Dreg (currently Lord Malbleat), but it tends to be hereditary, passed from father to eldest son.

Berkmaster Maximilian Monocleese

A short, slender man in his late fifties, with elegantly oiled and curled black hair. Dresses in black silk shirts and slacks and wears the silver fish's head medallion hereditary to his station. Monocleese considers himself nobility, although none of noble blood would concur.

Demeanour (Neutral): Self-important, carefully cultivated air of nobility.

Speech: Snide drawl. Woldish, patchy Old Woldish.

Desires: Tired of his wife's long illness, wishes for her to either be healed of her afflictions (both physical and mental) or to pass peacefully. If Hilda's fate is death: to marry **Madame Shantywood** (p103), whom he admires and secretly lusts after.

TODO: Illustration

6. PORT

A ramshackle assortment of piers, fishing boats, and river barges. Passage by water to nearby destinations can be bought here.

Hogbeard's zealots: In the evening, **Brother Hogbeard** (p98) and **2d4 zealots** stand beside the docks, preaching.

To the Woodcutters' Encampment: Passage on a boat or barge along the 7-mile stretch of river to the Woodcutters' Encampment can be bought for 2sp per foot passenger, 5sp per horse, and 2gp per vehicle. The journey takes 2 hours.

To Shantywood Isle (south cove): Boats are not permitted not land directly on the island, but women in Madame Shantywood's employ operate red-lanterned barges ferrying foot passengers (no animals or vehicles) back and forth from Dreg, free of charge. The barges only operate during the evening and night.

TODO: Illustration

7. SHODGEREY'S SHACK (INN)

A low-roofed, single storey doss-house favoured by the numerous sailors who find themselves in Dreg for a night. The cheapest place to stay in town, but hazardous for non-sailors.

Sign: A leering moon ringed with grimacing stars.

Common room: A draughty, hall, rammed with a jumble of rickety stools. An old fishing boat hangs from the rafters, keel down, its nets dangling at head height, festooned with crab shells and fish bones. The landlord, **Lyren Shodgerrey**, serves patrons from behind a stockade of barrels.

Guests: Itinerant sailors and bargemen. Raucous sea shanties and tussles over dice games are regular fixtures, of an evening.

Trouble: Non-sailors are almost guaranteed to meet with trouble in Shodgerrey's. Outsiders who appear weak or cultured may be targeted by louts or pickpockets.

Services at Shodgerrey's Shack

Hammocks: All guests must sleep in a long, windowless hall, lined with hammocks, nautical style. 2cp per night.

Poor food: See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*.

Beverages: Only *Pilston's heartbreaker* and (for the customer with loot to spend) *barrowblaster* are served. See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*. Inquiries after spirits or wines invariably meet with incredulous laughter.

Pipeweed: Sailors trade pipeweed in the common room at 50% of the normal price. Only adventurers whom the sailors take a shine to will be offered pipeweed at this reduced rate. All common pipeweeds can be found for sale here.

Lyren Shodgerrey—Shodgerrey's Shack Landlord

A squat, muscular man in his late thirties, with a shaven head and half his teeth missing. Covered from head to toe in tattoos of malignant beings (harpies, crook-horns, ogres, etc.). Lyren turns a blind eye to thievery in the Shack in return for a small cut of the profits.

Demeanour (Chaotic): Oafish, relishes violence. Wipes sweat from his head and face in a single motion.

Speech: Sneering, mocking laughter. Basic Woldish.

Desires: Easy money—willing to go in on any crooked scheme. To found a rival thieves' guild in Dreg.

8. CHURCH OF ST WICK

A mouldering wooden church beside the port, built upon a pier above the river. The church is dedicated to St Wick (patron saint of ferrymen and amputees). The church's meagre size and poor state of repair indicate the esteem in which the folk of Dreg generally hold organised religion.

Entrance: A once-solid door of oak, now weathered and battered. The door is only unlocked during the mornings, until the elderly vicar—**Father Hadlewreath**—retires for the day at lunch time.

Interior: Dusty, musty wooden walls and pews. A tarnished pewter icon on the velvet-cloaked altar depicts St Wick with eyes raised to heaven, impaled with a horrid array of spears, arrows, and axes.

Populace: A handful of pious locals. **Father Hadlewreath** sits to one side, reading.

Prayer: A cleric or friar of the One True God who prays for 1 hour receives the blessing of St Wick: the ability to cast *cure serious wounds* once within the next 24 hours.

9. THE SMOKEHOUSE

A tall, windowless building topped with a conical roof and a rusted iron chimney. The smokehouse is a communally owned facility for preserving fish by smoking.

The cellars: Towering stacks of firewood and smoking racks of various sizes are stored in extensive cellars beneath the smokehouse.

The polluter in the dark: Unknown to the folk of Dreg, the Atacorn **Crewthyant**—spawn of the Nag-Lord—lurks in the dark recesses of the smokehouse cellars. After dark, the Atacorn dissolves into a gaseous form and infuses the smoking fish in his corrupting miasma (see *The Atacorn's Miasma*, p98). During the day, he sleeps.

Crewthyant—Atacorn

A naked, emaciated, gangly (6' tall) man-thing with warty, ashen skin and the decaying head of a unicorn. Crewthyant is a child of the Nag-Lord (pXXX), sent out into the world to spread discord and woe.

Demeanour (Chaotic): Wretched, hunched over skulking. Utterly craven.

Speech: Coughing and wheezing. Woldish, Gaffe.

Desires: To corrupt mortals. To eat human children. (A pleasure in which he only occasionally indulges, so as not to draw attention to his presence in Dreg.)

AC 7 [12] **HD** 4** (19hp) **Att** 1 × horn (1d6 + disease) **THACO** 16 [+3] **MV** 120' (40') **SV** D8 W9 P10 B10 S12 (8) **ML** 6 **AL** Chaotic **XP** 175

Disease: The victim suffers 1d3 damage per day, their flesh erupting in grey lumps. (**Save vs poison** to resist.)

Gaseous form: Crewthyant can dissolve his physical form—including clothing and equipment—into a sooty vapour at will. The process takes 3 rounds, as does re-coalescing. In gaseous form, he is immune to mundane damage and can seep through small cracks.

Father Simeone Hadlewreath—Vicar of Dreg

An elderly, flabby man with white, combed-over hair and a scratched monocle. Hadlewreath has abandoned hope for the spiritual salvation of the people of Dreg and wishes to spend his last years in peace, writing his memoirs and drinking *Porrid's full moon* (DPB).

Demeanour (Lawful): Dodderly, weak-willed, aloof but kindly at heart.

Speech: Timid droning. Woldish, Liturgic.

Desires: To be left in peace and not be dragged into the unrest in Dreg.

10. THE SPAWNING SALMON (INN)

A squat, converted warehouse, now the favoured gambling establishment in Dreg and secret headquarters of the thieves' guild.

Sign: A bright pink salmon leaping out of a stream, its mouth gaping after a dangling sausage pie.

Common room: A wide hall packed with gambling tables. The smell of roasting meat wafts from the grill at one end, mingling with the reek of pipesmoke. A stage at the other end of the room frequently hosts bawdy performances.

Viewing balcony: For an entrance fee of 2sp, one may ascend to the balcony that overlooks the common room. The balcony is served by its own bar and features plush leather couches. The landlord, **Sidley Crump**, often surveys goings-on in the common room from this vantage point.

Guests: River workers, mercenaries, locals, and travellers congregate in the common room to gamble, carouse, and eat grilled meats, while merchants lounge and drink above.

The thieves' guild: The Dreg thieves' guild operates from secret headquarters in the cellars of the Spawning Salmon.

Services at the Spawning Salmon

Common lodgings and food: See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*.

Grilled sausages: A trio of bogswine sausages fresh from the grill, served in a bowl of ale gravy. 3sp.

Common and uncommon spirits: Only served from the bar on the viewing balcony.

Sidley Crump—Spawning Salmon Landlord

A tall, wiry man in his forties, with bulging eyes and long, greasy hair. Dresses in smart shirts and black leather trousers. Though not himself a practicing thief, Crump is a member of the thieves' guild and conceals the guild's presence from the law.

Demeanour (Neutral): Feigned amicability. Callous. Habitually rolls up his shirt sleeves.

Speech: Jovial, boisterous. Woldish.

Desires: To ascertain the true purpose of his wife Elmine's trips to Lankshorn "to visit her ailing cousin". (She is in love with *Sydewich Maldwort*, p117.)

The Boghouse Boys—Secret Society

Purpose: To protect the people of Dreg from the evil forces that lurk in the forest. (e.g. witches, the Drune, the Nag-Lord, wicked fairies, etc.)

Membership: 20 Dreg men, mostly farm workers. They are largely well-meaning and of lawful alignment.

Current scheme: The group's leader, **Brigg**, believes that **Berkmaster Monocleese** (p101) plans to sacrifice his wife to the profane deity of a coven of evil witches in return for a demon servitor. The Boghouse Boys plan to infiltrate the Berkmaster's manor, rescue the poor lady, and bring the Berkmaster and the witches to justice.

Brigg "Hollowhand" Meagre—Leader

A stocky, broad-shouldered man in his late thirties, with shaven head, mop-like beard, and one wooden hand. Brigg owns one of the more profitable bog-swine farms north of Dreg. Of late, his dreams have been haunted by false visions of great evils afoot in Dreg (the insinuations of the **Atacorn Crewithyant**, see p98).

Demeanour (Lawful): Quiet but firm. Shifty-eyed.

Speech: Dour, conspiratorial. Woldish.

Desires: For Dreg to be ruled by common folk of good sense and upstanding morality (e.g. himself).

11. THE BOGHOUSE

The shell of a burned-out farmhouse, now used as the meeting house of a secret society who have dubbed the ruin "the Boghouse" and themselves "**the Boghouse Boys**".

Interior: Collapsed beams and the blackened remnants of a few walls remain. Bracken and nettles crowd the space.

Tracks and secret trapdoor: Upon close examination of the ruin, bootprints in the mud and a slight disturbance of the undergrowth mark a subtle path to one corner. Under a mound of carefully arranged rubble is a locked trapdoor.

Cellar: The ruin's cellar is decked out as a secret meeting house, complete with 12 stools, a rickety table for scheming at, a rough map of Dreg and the surrounding woodland, and a keg of ale and set of pewter tankards.

Inhabitants: In the day, the ruined farmhouse is empty. At night, there is a 3-in-6 chance of **2d6 local menfolk** ("**the Boghouse Boys**") hiding out in the cellars, scheming.

12. SOUTH COVE

A small dock located in a wide cove in the cliff-ringed Shantywood Isle. Boats other than the barges operated by Madame Shantywood are not permitted not land directly.

Red banners: Banners bearing Madame Shantywood's coat of arms—seven golden coins encircling a black rose—hang from the cliff walls.

Stairs up: A steep stairway leads up the cliffside to the island's interior and the fabulous Chateau Shantywood.

Barges to Dreg: Women in Madame Shantywood's employ operate red-lanterned barges ferrying passengers back and forth from Dreg, free of charge. The barges only operate during the evening and night.

13. NORTH COVE

A broad, undecorated dock in a small cove at the north-eastern corner of Shantywood Isle, used for ferrying goods.

Stairs up: A steep stairway leads up the cliffside to the servants' entrance at the rear of Chateau Shantywood.

Guards: 2 **soldiers** (as 1 HD veterans—*OSE*) guard the dock at all hours, ensuring the legitimacy of arrivals.

14. CHATEAU SHANTYWOOD

A manse of ostentatious turrets and flamboyant minarets at the summit of Shantywood Isle. The chateau is a much-frequented manor of ill-repute and home of the seductive and ruthless **Madame Shantywood**.

Common room: A stone-flagged hall with gaudy tapestries, crystal chandeliers, and a sea of gambling tables. Scantly clad wait staff serve tables.

Guests: Boorish, drunken locals, ogling at the staff. A smattering of wealthy merchants, minor nobility, and successful adventurers.

Ballroom: Exclusively reserved for well-to-do patrons who wish to avoid the riff-raff. Elegant music accompanies refined dances and dalliances.

Services at Chateau Shantywood

Common food: See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*.

Fancy lodgings: See the *Dolmenwood Player's Book*.

Companionship: The private company of staff in Madame Shantywood's employ can be bought from 5sp per hour.

Madame Chandilore Shantywood

A bewitching woman in her forties, with cascading, raven locks and eyes of striking green. Dresses in an antiquated style of black lace dresses, many-layered petticoats, tightly strung corset, and heavily powdered face. As Lady of Shantywood Isle (a hereditary position passed from mother to daughter), she is the wealthy ruler of an independent micro-domain.

Demeanour (Neutral): Self-assured, calculating. Has a taste for cruelty. Merciless in punishing those who cross her. Habitually gazes into an ivory hand mirror, reapplying her face powder with a feathery puff.

Speech: Eminently refined, mischievously demeaning, callously frank. Woldish, Old Woldish.

Desires: The amorous attentions of the sorceress **Myrrisian** (hex 1110), whom she has spied in the ballroom on occasion. The painful death of **Lord Murkin** (p67) who brutalised and slew her eldest daughter many years ago. To keep the identity of her children's father (the gentleman in the mirror—see *Possessions*) secret.

Possessions: A magic mirror granting access to a dusty, dreamy shadow manse ruled by a spectral gentleman.

Family: 2 adult daughters—Heremine and Ayla.

Servants: 12 soldiers, several dozen hospitality staff.