

PETROC HILLS

TUCKED AWAY IN THE CENTRAL NORTHERN PART OF ALARIUS ARE THE NORTHERN HEADWATERS OF THE ELM RIVER, WHERE THAT GREAT RIVER VALLEY LIES SHELTERED FROM THE WORST OF THE ICY NORTHERN CLIMATE BY HUGE MOUNTAIN RANGES ON ITS NORTHERN, EASTERN AND WESTERN SIDES. ON THE NORTHERN FRINGE OF THIS VALLEY, WHERE THE FERTILE AGRICULTURAL LOWLANDS BEGIN THEIR CLIMB INTO THESE HIGHER SURROUNDING MOUNTAIN CHAINS, ONE TINY SEGMENT IS KNOWN AS THE PETROC HILLS. THIS NAME DERIVES FROM THE LOCAL DIALECT TERM FOR A GIANT EAGLE, SOME OF WHICH ARE INDEED TO BE FOUND IN, OR MORE OFTEN SEEN FLYING ABOVE, PARTS OF THE REGION. WITH A LATITUDE AROUND 56 DEGREES NORTH, WINTERS ARE LONG, WITH SHORT DAYS, WHILE SUMMERS ARE SHORT, BUT WITH LONG DAYLIGHT HOURS AND BRIGHTLY TWILIT NIGHTS, SINCE THIS LOCATION IS ONLY NINE DEGREES OR SO SOUTH OF NIBIRUM'S ARCTIC CIRCLE.

AS THE MAP SHOWS, THE AREA IS ONE OF LOW-LYING FARMLANDS AND SETTLEMENTS TO THE SOUTH, RISING INTO INCREASINGLY HIGH HILLS FURTHER NORTH, TERRAIN WHICH IS CUT BY RIVERS AND SMALL STREAMS THAT FLOW SOUTHWEST EVENTUALLY TO THE UPPER ELM, OR SOUTH TO THE ELM'S NEAREST MAIN TRIBUTARY, THE LOCUST RUN. SCATTERED SMALL WOODS, WITH A FEW LARGER FORESTS, CAN BE FOUND AMONG THE MOORS, SCRUBLAND AND CRAGGIER SLOPES, AS WELL AS IN THE MORE SETTLED AREAS. LARGELY UNPAVED ROADS LEAD OFF MAP EAST FROM SPRINGDAY TOWARDS RIVERTON, 100 MILES (160 KILOMETRES) AWAY BY THE LOCUST RUN'S HEADWATERS, SOUTHWEST FROM TALKING TREE TO HUMMEL ON THE UPPER ELM, AROUND 80 MILES (130 KM) TO THE WEST, AND SOUTH FROM THIS VILLAGE TOO (NOT SHOWN ON THE MAP) TO ENDERS, WHERE THE LOCUST RUN AND ELM RIVER MEET, SOME 60 MILES (100 KM) DISTANT.

EACH OF THE DIAMOND-SHAPED FIELDS ILLUSTRATED OVER THE MAP'S SOUTHERN QUARTER REPRESENTS THE AGRICULTURAL LANDS OF, AND AROUND, A SINGLE FARMSTEAD, OR A FAMILY GROUP OF SMALL-HOLDINGS, WHERE VARIOUS CROPS AND DOMESTICATED LIVESTOCK MAY BE FOUND, ALONG WITH SETTLEMENTS AND MINOR TRACKS TOO SMALL AND NUMEROUS TO BE SHOWN AT THIS SCALE. SOME OF THESE FARMLANDS CONTINUE INTO THE LOWER HILLS AND RIVER VALLEYS AS ROUGH GRAZING LAND FOR HERDS OF SHEEP AND GOATS, ALTHOUGH FEW OF THESE EXTEND NORTH BEYOND THE LINE OF THE NEARER SLOPES OF SALMONIC AND EVENSIDE.

ONE NOTABLE FEATURE OF THIS MORE DENSELY POPULATED ZONE IS THE PROFUSION OF SMALL BREWERIES AND DISTILLERIES, WHICH PRODUCE A CONSIDERABLE VARIETY OF WHISKIES ESPECIALLY, AN EXPORT THE PETROC HILLS AREA IS NOTED FOR WELL BEYOND ITSELF. ALMOST ALL THE MARKED SETTLEMENTS HAVE AT LEAST ONE SUCH PLACE, AND EVEN SOME OF THE SMALL FARMSTEDS ARE, IF ONLY LOCALLY, FAMED FOR THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIQUOR PRODUCTION. BARLEY AND OTHER GRAIN CROPS ARE A FREQUENT SIGHT IN THE FIELDS ALL ACROSS THIS REGION AS A RESULT.

FEW SETTLEMENTS ARE PRESENT ACROSS THE HILLIER PARTS OF THE NORTHERN THREE-QUARTERS OF THE MAP, MOST OF WHICH ARE OF THE SOLITARY HUNTER'S LODGE OR HERDER'S COTTAGE TYPE, TOO SMALL TO BE SHOWN. THE GEOLOGY OVER THESE HILLS IS PRIMARILY FOLDED SEDIMENTARY ROCKS THAT FORM MUCH OF THE LOWER, LESS RUGGED, HILLS, WITH ANCIENT VOLCANIC INTRUSIONS HAVING CREATED MOST OF THE MORE UPSTANDING, CRAGGIER, TERRAIN. SOME METAMORPHIC ROCKS OCCUR TOO, AS A RESULT OF THIS DIVERSITY, WHILE THE MIXTURE OF ROCK TYPES AND STRUCTURES HAS HELPED CREATE MANY SMALL CAVES IN PLACES, INCLUDING SOME EXPANDED BY MINING, BEYOND THE FEW CAVES SPECIFICALLY MARKED ON THE MAP. THERE ARE STILL SOME DESCENDANTS OF THE OLD HILL DWARF FORMER MINERS LIVING HERE IN PLACES, ALONG WITH EVIDENCE OF STILL MORE ANCIENT OCCUPATION IN THE LONG-FORGOTTEN PAST.

A FURTHER IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THIS WHOLE AREA IS THE PREVALENCE OF INTELLIGENT, SOMETIMES MOBILE, VEGETATION, NOTABLY TREES AND SHRUBS, WHICH SEEMS TO BE RELATED TO THE UNUSUAL NUMBER OF DRUIDS AND DRUIDICAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN AND AROUND SOME OF THE SETTLEMENTS. EVEN AMONG THE SCATTERED FARMS, MANY FOLK HAVE SOME LIMITED DRUIDICAL MAGICAL ABILITIES. IT IS NOT CLEAR IF THIS IS INHERENT IN THE LOCAL POPULACE, OR IF IT DERIVES FROM THE LAND ITSELF. ALARIUS IS A NOTABLY MAGICAL CONTINENT IN GENERAL, SO THE LATTER IS PERHAPS THE MORE PLAUSIBLE.

LABELLED PLACES

APPLEBY: A HAMLET WHOSE POPULATION CHIEFLY CONSISTS OF HILL DWARF FARMERS AND BREWERS, LOCATED AT THE MAIN ON-MAP CROSSING OVER ROUGH RIVER, BY THE MAP'S LOWER-CENTRAL BORDER. UNPAVED ROADS RUN EAST TO WINDYRIDGE, NORTHWEST TO PETROC'S GROVE, AND WEST TO TALKING TREE. SOUTH OF THE ROAD FROM THE HAMLET LIE THE APPLE ORCHARDS IN THE SHELTERED RIVER VALLEY WHICH GIVE THE PLACE ITS NAME. UNLIKE THE TYPICAL WHISKY DISTILLERIES FOUND ELSEWHERE LOCALLY, APPLEBY IS NOTED FOR ITS BREWED APPLE CIDER, DISTILLED APPLE SCHNAPPS, AND ITS RANGE OF NON-ALCOHOLIC APPLE PRESERVES.

ASHWOOD: NORTH OF WINDYRIDGE IN THE MAP'S LOWEST CENTRE, THIS IS AN ANCIENT PATCH OF FOREST OF, MOSTLY, ASH TREES. ORDINARILY, THIS MIGHT HAVE BECOME A MANAGED WOODLAND FOR TIMBER, ASH BEING AN EXCELLENT WOOD FOR MAKING FENCEPOSTS, WEAPON AND TOOL HAFTS AND HANDLES. ITS WILDNESS INDICATES OTHERWISE, BECAUSE IT IS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A GROUP OF DRYADS, WHO DO NOT ALLOW SUCH ACTIVITIES, AS THE FOLK OF THE NEARBY FARMS AND SETTLEMENTS WELL KNOW. THERE ARE WAYS TO RESPECTFULLY ASK FOR AND TAKE WOOD FROM HERE, THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF THE NEARBY DRUIDS, HOWEVER.

BEECHGROVE: THIS IS A PREDOMINANTLY HUMAN HAMLET BY THE NORTHERN EDGE OF A SUBSTANTIAL BEECH FOREST THAT EXTENDS OFF THE MAP'S SOUTHEASTERN EDGE FROM HERE. ROUTES RUN NORTHWEST TO STRAWBERRY FIELDS, EAST THEN SOUTHEAST TO SPRINGDAY, AND SOUTHWEST OVER THE FORD ON THE (UNLABELLED) BEECHY STREAM BY THE HAMLET TO WINDYRIDGE. NOTABLE FOR ITS PIG FARMS, WHICH ANIMALS ENJOY THE BEECHMAST IN THE WOODS IN AUTUMN.

CAIRN PETROC: ONE OF THE SMALLER, CRAGGIER, VOLCANIC-ROCK HILLS IN THE MAP'S NORTHEAST, THIS, DESPITE ITS LESSER SIZE, IS A POPULAR PERCH FOR THE REGION'S GIANT EAGLES, MOST OF WHICH PREFER TO NEST FURTHER EAST, ON THE HIGHER SLOPES OF TARKET, EAST FELL, OR WILD BOAR EDGE. SUCH EAGLES, OR *PETROCS*, ARE A COMMON SIGHT IN THE AIR NEARBY TOO.

CASTLE DELL: THE UPPER REACHES OF THE STRAY ARROW RIVER NEAR THE MAP'S EAST-CENTRAL EDGE, BRINGS TOGETHER A COLLECTION OF STREAMS IN THIS BROAD VALLEY, WHICH IS SURROUNDED, EXCEPT TO THE SOUTH, BY HILLS. ITS NAME IS TAKEN FROM THE OVERGROWN, TUMBLED CASTLE RUINS TOWARDS ITS SOUTHERN EDGE, SOUTHWEST OF THE FOOT OF EAST FELL. NORTHEAST OF THESE RUINS, BY THE WESTERN BASE OF EAST FELL'S CRAGS, IS AN ARTIFICIAL, ROUNDED, GRASSY HILL, INTO WHICH A SERIES OF THREE CONCENTRIC TERRACES HAVE BEEN CUT. NO TREES OR SHRUBS GROW ON THIS HILL. OPPOSITE IT, ON THE LOWER SLOPES OF GREENSTONE TOP, IS A SOLITARY GRANITE MENHIR, RAISED IN THE ANCIENT PAST, JUDGING FROM ITS WEATHERED APPEARANCE.

CLAMSHELL: HIGHEST OF THE LOWER, SEDIMENTARY-ROCK HILLS IN THE WEST-CENTRE OF THE MAP. PRESUMABLY, ITS RIDGES AND HOLLOW (MOSTLY RESULTING FROM INTRUDED VOLCANIC DYKES) LOOKED LIKE A CLAMSHELL TO SOMEONE IN THE PAST.

CRACKED SHIN: A LARGE BUT LOWER HILL IN THE MAP'S NORTHWEST QUARTER, WEST OF THE UPPER ROCKY LYN'S COURSE, MADE FROM A MIXTURE OF ALL THREE OF THE REGION'S ROCK TYPES.

CRYSTAL TOR: A SUBSTANTIAL, VERY RUGGED, VOLCANIC-ROCK HILL, ONLY THE SOUTHERN BASE OF WHICH EXTENDS ONTO THIS MAP, FROM BEYOND THE CENTRAL-NORTHERN MAP EDGE. IN COMMON WITH MOST OTHER VOLCANIC PEAKS ON THE MAP, ITS ROCK IS MICA-RICH, GIVING ITS OUTCROPS AND CLIFFS A GLASSY, SPARKLING QUALITY WHEN THE LIGHT STRIKES IT. DEAD MAN'S SPIRE IS AT ITS SOUTHEASTERN FOOT.

DEAD MAN'S SPIRE: AT THE SOUTHEASTERN BASE OF CRYSTAL TOR IN THE MAP'S CENTRE-TOP, IS A LARGE, OVAL BURIAL MOUND, WITH ITS LONG AXIS ALIGNED SOUTHEAST-

NORTHWEST. IT HAS A CLOSED, SEALED STONE DOORWAY AT ITS SOUTHEASTERN END. AROUND 150 FEET (45 METRES) TO THE NORTHWEST IS A 40 FT TALL (12 M), NARROW, NATURAL VOLCANIC STONE, SPIRE OF HEXAGONAL-SECTION COLUMNS. THE SITE SEEMS AS IF IT WAS CHOSEN SO THIS SPIRE COULD MARK THE SPOT AS OBVIOUSLY AS THE MOUND ITSELF.

EAST FELL: JUST THE LOWER WESTERN SLOPES OF THIS MAINLY VOLCANIC-ROCK HILL LIE ON THE MAP'S EAST-CENTRAL EDGE. AT ITS FOOT IS CASTLE DELL'S SCULPTED MOUND AND THE CASTLE RUINS. ITS HIGHER LEDGES AND CRAGS ARE USED AS NESTING GROUNDS BY THE REGION'S GIANT EAGLES.

ELFHEAD: THIS VOLCANIC-ROCK PEAK'S SOUTHEASTERN BASE FORMS THE NORTHWESTERN EDGE OF THE RIVER ESROC VALLEY IN THE MAP'S NORTHWEST CORNER. THE HILL EXTENDS SOME WAY OFF BOTH THE NORTH AND WEST SIDES OF THE MAP.

EVENSIDE: A LOWER, SEDIMENTARY-ROCK HILL WEST OF THE STRAY ARROW'S VALLEY, NORTH AND NORTHEAST OF STRAWBERRY FIELDS IN THE MAP'S SOUTHEAST-CENTRE.

FENCEPOST HILL: SMALLEST OF THE NAMED HILLS HEREABOUTS, THIS ONE LIES NORTH OF RASPBERRY END AND NICKY'S PONDS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN MAP QUARTER. IT IS SAID LOCALLY TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN ITS NAME, AS IT MARKS THE NORTHERN END OF THE AGRICULTURAL FIELDS NEAR IT, WHERE THE ROUGH GRAZING UPLANDS BEGIN. A RIDGE FROM ITS SUMMIT RUNS NORTHWEST INTO THE LOWER-MID SLOPES OF SALMONIC TO ITS NORTH.

FUR RISE: A FOOTHILL LEADING UP TO THE NORTHWESTERN SIDE OF WILD BOAR EDGE FROM THE UPPER COURSE OF THE ROCKY LYN IN THE NORTHEASTERN MAP CORNER. ITS NAME - AND SPELLING - DERIVE FROM THE NEARBY SETTLEMENT OF FURZEHOLM.

FURZEHOLM: NESTLED IN A FORK OF THE UPPER ROCKY LYN, IN THE VALE BETWEEN GRIFFON HILL WOODS AND FUR RISE IN THE MAP'S NORTH-CENTRE, THIS IS A SMALL HILL DWARF SETTLEMENT. IT CONSISTS OF ONLY A COUPLE OF INTACT DWELLINGS, THE LAST SURVIVORS OF AN OLD MINING COMMUNITY, WHOSE INHABITANTS ARE NOW FARMERS AND HUNTERS. GIVEN THEIR SURROUNDINGS (SEE THE STONEMAN VALE AND GRIFFON HILL WOODS DESCRIPTIONS ESPECIALLY), THEY ARE A TOUGH FAMILY CLAN OF HARDY FOLK, WHO RARELY VENTURE SOUTH TO THE MORE INHABITED LANDS. WHEN THEY DO, IT IS ALMOST ALWAYS TO THEIR DISTANT KINFOLK AT APPLEBY ONLY.

GLASS TREE: THIS LOW HILL'S NAME, LYING NORTHWEST OF CAIRN PETROC IN THE NORTH-CENTRE OF THE MAP, COMES FROM THE CURIOUS, PURPLE, CRYSTALLINE PETRIFIED TREE ON ITS MID SOUTHEASTERN FLANK. THIS TREE IS REMARKABLY INTACT, AS IT IS AS HARD AS STEEL. THE WIND PLAYING THROUGH ITS FOLIAGE SOUNDS LIKE DELICATE, MUSICAL, WIND-CHIMES, NO MATTER HOW HARD IT BLOWS. THE RUINS OF GOLDENSHAW LIE AT THE WESTERN FOOT OF THE HILL.

GOLDENSHAW: A RUINED VILLAGE AT THE WESTERN BASE OF GLASS TREE HILL, NEAR THE EAST BANK OF THE UPPER ROCKY LYN. THE BUILDINGS WERE ALL MADE OF PALE MARBLE, QUARRIED FROM THE SCALLOPED-OUT HILLSIDE OVER THE RIVER, WHERE GORSE MOOR AND THE SOUTHERN PART OF GRIFFON HILL WOODS NOW LIE.

GORSE MOOR: FROM THE LOWEST SOUTHEASTERN SLOPES OF THE HILL VARIOUSLY KNOWN AS STONY HEIGHTS (NOTABLY OVER ITS WESTERN HALF) OR GRIFFON HILL (ON IT EASTERN SIDE, WHERE THE EPONYMOUS WOODS ARE), AND EXTENDING TO THE WESTERN BANK OF THE UPPER ROCKY LYN OPPOSITE GOLDENSHAW, IS THIS LARGE, OPEN, SCRUBBY AREA, SCATTERED ALL OVER WITH A GREAT MANY GORSE BUSHES. IN SEASON, IT SEEMS TO GLOW GOLDEN-YELLOW FROM ALL THE MANY GORSE FLOWERS, WHILE THE VERY SPINY NATURE OF THE BUSHES MAKES IT A HAVEN FOR SMALL BIRDS AND OTHER SMALLER ANIMALS. MARBLE USED TO BUILD GOLDENSHAW WAS ONCE QUARRIED HERE, EFFECTIVELY FLATTENING-OUT THIS PART OF THE HILL.

GREENSTONE TOP: ONE OF THE LARGER, LOWER HILLS, NEAR THE MAP'S CENTRE, THIS ONE HAS DISTINCTIVE GREY-GREEN SILTSTONE OUTCROPS OVER IT. TO THE EAST, IT SLOPES

DOWN TO CASTLE DELL, WITH AN ANCIENT GRANITE STANDING STONE ON ITS LOWER SLOPES THERE. ITS WESTERN FLANKS HAVE A LARGE AREA OF SHRUBLANDS AND LIGHT WOODS, WHICH RUN DOWN TO ITS BASE. THESE SURROUND A TALL, POLISHED GRANITE, FOUR-SIDED OBELISK-LIKE COLUMN, WHICH IS CARVED IN LOW RELIEF WITH INTERTWINED WYVERNS ACROSS ALL ITS SURFACES, ON THE HILL'S MID-LOWER SLOPES. MANY OF THE SHRUBS ARE INTELLIGENT AND MOBILE, ABLE TO CONVERSE AND MOVE ABOUT FROM TIME TO TIME. A FEW CAN USE DRUIDICAL MAGICS.

GRIFFON HILL WOODS: THE EASTERN SLOPES OF THE LARGEST HILL ON THE MAP, ALSO KNOWN AS STONY HEIGHTS (ESPECIALLY ACROSS ITS WESTERN HALF), ARE COVERED WITH HEAVY SPRUCE WOODLAND THAT CONTINUES DOWN TO THE UPPER ROCKY LYN VALLEY, INCLUDING TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF FURZEHOLM, IN THE CENTRAL-TOP PART OF THE MAP. PARTICULARLY IN THEIR HIGHER REGIONS, THESE WOODS ARE INDEED HOME TO GRIFFONS, GIVING THE NAME TO THIS SIDE OF THE HILL AS WELL AS THE FOREST THERE. THE GRIFFONS RANGE QUITE WIDELY ACROSS THE STONY HEIGHTS AREA, ALTHOUGH THEY TYPICALLY TRY TO AVOID THE GIANT EAGLES, SINCE THERE IS A STRONG ANTIPATHY BETWEEN THE TWO. ON THE GROUND IN THE SOUTHEASTERN PART OF THE WOODS ARE SIGNS OF THE OLD MARBLE QUARRIES, WHICH EXTEND ROUND TO GORSE MOOR, WHICH WERE ONCE USED TO BUILD GOLDENSHAW ON THE OPPOSITE RIVER BANK TO THE MOOR.

LASH: ONE OF THE SMALLER CENTRAL-MAP HILLS, COMPOSED LARGELY OF SEDIMENTARY ROCKS. IT LIES NORTH OF GREENSTONE TOP, AND ITS EASTERN SLOPES FORM PART OF THE WESTERN SIDE OF CASTLE DELL.

MARCHER: EXTENDING ONLY A LITTLE WAY INTO THE MAP'S NORTHEASTERN CORNER ARE THE LOWER RIDGES OF THIS STRONGLY FOLDED SEDIMENTARY-ROCK HILL, MOST OF WHICH LIES OFF THE MAP. AN ARETE FROM IT LINKS INTO THE NORTHERN SLOPES OF WILD BOAR EDGE, EAST OF WHERE FUR RISE JOINS THE EDGE.

NICKY'S PONDS: A CLUSTER OF FOUR LAKES AND SEVERAL SMALLER (UNMAPPED) MARSHY PONDS AND STREAMS THAT RUN INTO THE UNLABELLED NICKY'S STREAM THAT FLOWS PAST RASPBERRY END, IN THE MAP'S SOUTHWESTERN QUARTER. THE STREAM IS AN EASTERN TRIBUTARY OF THE ROCKY LYN. BOTH PONDS AND STREAM FORM THE NORTHWESTERN EDGE OF THE AGRICULTURAL FIELDS AND FARMS IN ITS VICINITY. NOBODY NEARBY SEEMS TO KNOW WHO NICKY WAS, HOWEVER.

PETROC'S GROVE: ORIGINALLY THE NAME OF THE MAGICALLY-SACRED DRUIDICAL YEW GROVE ON THE EAST BANK OF THE ROCKY LYN RIVER, IN ITS ANGLE CONFLUENCE WITH THE (UNLABELLED) NICKY'S STREAM TO THE NORTH, IT HAS SINCE BEEN ADOPTED BY THE LARGELY HUMAN-POPULATED HAMLET ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE ROCKY LYN TOO. THE YEW GROVE IS AN IMPRESSIVELY LARGE SITE, AS THE YEWS (OR POSSIBLY JUST THE ONE YEW, NOW SPREAD OVER THE ENTIRE AREA) ARE VERY ANCIENT, MAKING IT MORE LIKE A SMALL WOOD IN SIZE. AN AVENUE OF TWO ROWS OF SIX STANDING STONES EACH LEADS UP TO ITS ENTRANCE FROM THE ROAD FORK, AFTER THE ROAD HAS CROSSED THE ROCKY LYN BRIDGE FROM THE HAMLET. THE SOUTH FORK ROAD CONTINUES AFTERWARDS TO TALKING TREE, THE SOUTHEASTERN ROUTE TO APPLEBY. ANOTHER ROAD NORTHEAST FROM THE HAMLET CROSSES THE ROCKY LYN NORTH OF ITS CONFLUENCE WITH NICKY'S STREAM BY A SECOND BRIDGE, ON THE WAY TO RASPBERRY END. ONE MORE PATH, THIS TIME A NARROWER DIRT FOOT-TRAIL, LEAVES THE NORTHWESTERN SIDE OF THE SETTLEMENT, FOLLOWING THE (UNLABELLED) ROCKY RILL STREAM AS FAR AS ROCKROSE SHRINE, A COUPLE OF MILES AWAY (THREE KILOMETRES OR SO). THE SETTLEMENT HAS TWO SMALL, YET NOTABLE, WHISKY DISTILLERIES, ONE KNOWN FOR ITS *ROSY DEW*, THE OTHER FOR *PETROC'S MALT*. WILD CATTLE FROM ACROSS THE ROCKY RILL WEST OF THE HAMLET SOMETIMES MAKE THEIR WAY HERE. THEY CAN BE AN ESPECIAL HAZARD IF THEIR DOMINANT BULL IS WITH THEM.

RASPBERRY END: NORTHEAST OF PETROC'S GROVE, ALONG THE ROAD BY THE NORTH BANK OF NICKY'S STREAM (UNLABELLED), ARE SOME SCATTERED FARM COTTAGES NEAR THE SOUTHWESTERN END OF A HUGE REGION OF FARMED, SEMI-WILD, RASPBERRY CANES THAT EXTEND FOR NEARLY TWO MILES (3 KM) ALONG THE STREAM AND BY NICKY'S PONDS, RIGHT TO THE FOOT OF FENCEPOST HILL. VAST AMOUNTS OF FRUIT ARE COLLECTED FROM THEM

EACH SUMMER, AND TRANSPORTED TO VARIOUS PLACES, WITH SOME BEING BOTTLED OR MADE INTO JAMS HERE, WHILE OTHERS ARE USED TO MAKE AN ESPECIALLY TANGY *RASPBERRY END GIN*, ALSO KNOWN AS *THE SHARP END*.

RIVER ESROC: IN THE MAP'S NORTHWEST CORNER, A SHORT STRETCH OF THIS RIVER IS VISIBLE IN THE VALLEY BETWEEN ELFHEAD AND STONY HEIGHTS. WHILE QUITE MINOR HERE, IT BROADENS AS IT FLOWS FURTHER SOUTHWEST, AND EVENTUALLY JOINS THE ELM RUN MANY MILES DISTANT.

ROCETTE: ONE OF THE LESSER HILLS IN THE MAP'S NORTH-CENTRE, SOUTHWEST OF CAIRN PETROC. THE STONE BELL IS NEAR ITS WESTERN FOOT, AND ITS EAST SIDE FORMS CASTLE DELL'S NORTHWEST END.

ROCKING DOME: THE EASTERN PART OF THIS HIGH, CRAGGY, VOLCANIC-ROCK HILL EXTENDS INTO THE MAP'S CENTRAL-WESTERN SIDE. IT IS HEAVILY RIDGED, WITH A COUPLE OF DEEP VALLEYS. AT ITS EASTERN FOOT, TOWARDS THE BANK OF THE ROCKY LYN, IS WHISTLING QUOIT, WHILE AT ITS SOUTHEASTERN BASE IS ROCKWELL.

ROCKROSE SHRINE: IN THE MAP'S SOUTHWEST, AN OLD FOOTPATH LEADS NORTHWEST FROM PETROC'S GROVE HAMLET ALONG THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE UNLABELLED ROCKY RILL TO THIS ANCIENT ELVEN SHRINE TO SEVERAL NATURE DEITIES. ALTHOUGH NO LONGER IN ROUTINE USE, IT IS MAINTAINED IN GOOD CONDITION BY THE LOCAL DRUIDS, AND IT REMAINS A MAGICALLY VERY PEACEFUL SPOT, IDEAL FOR THOSE WISHING TO QUIETLY CONTEMPLATE.

ROCKWELL: AT THE SOUTHEASTERN FOOT OF ROCKING DOME, NEAR THE MAP'S MID-WESTERN EDGE, IS AN OLD, LARGE, SQUARE, STONE-BUILT WATER TROUGH, WHERE A SPRING OF FRESHWATER FLOWS DIRECTLY OUT FROM A ROCK OUTCROP ON THE HILLSIDE INTO IT, AND THEN OUT ALONG A CHANNEL AT THE START OF THE UNLABELLED ROCKY RILL, WHICH THEN FLOWS AWAY SOUTH, EVENTUALLY JOINING THE ROCKY LYN RIVER NEAR THE MAP'S SOUTHERN BORDER, NORTH OF TALKING TREE. THE AREA AROUND THE WELL FOR MANY YARDS/METRES IS FILLED BY TALL PLANTS WITH BLUE-COLOURED, EYE-SHAPED FLOWERS, WHICH MOVE AND POINT TOWARDS ANY LARGER LIVING CREATURES THAT PASS CLOSE-BY. QUITE HARMLESS, THOUGH SOMEWHAT UNNERVING, AND BELIEVED BY MANY TO BE MAGICAL, THEY ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE LOCAL DRUIDS.

ROCKY LYN: LONGEST OF THE LABELLED WATERCOURSES ON THE MAP, THIS FLOWS FROM ITS RISINGS IN THE CENTRE-TOP TO THE LOWER LEFT ALONG ITS VALLEY, PASSING A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT NAMED LOCATIONS AS IT DOES SO. ITS UPPER TRIBUTARIES AND REACHES CAN BE FORDED FAIRLY EASILY MOST OF THE TIME, ALTHOUGH ITS BROADER STRETCHES, BELOW GREENSTONE TOP AND SCOWLING CRAG ARE RISKY TO SWIM, AND CANNOT BE SAFELY FORDED. THERE ARE THREE BRIDGES ALONG ITS LOWER STRETCH HERE, AT PETROC'S GROVE AND TALKING TREE. IT FLOWS ON BEYOND THIS MAP TO JOIN THE LOCUST RUN AROUND 20 MILES (30 KM) FURTHER SOUTH.

ROSEBUD: CENTRAL HILL ON THE MAP, IF ONE AMONG MANY OF THE LOWER, MAINLY SEDIMENTARY-ROCK, KIND. THE ENTRANCE TO ROSEBUD CAVERNS IS SET INTO ITS LOWER SOUTHERN SLOPES. ITS WEST SLOPES RISE FROM THE ROCKY LYN VALLEY, AND ITS EAST SIDE RUNS INTO THE SOUTHWEST END OF CASTLE DELL.

ROSEBUD CAVERNS: A SERIES OF CAVES UNDER ROSEBUD HILL IN THE MAP'S CENTRE, THESE ARE THE SUBJECT OF A SEPARATE ATLAS MAP.

ROUGH RIVER: ONLY A SHORT STRETCH OF THIS RIVER FEATURES IN THE LOWER SOUTH-CENTRAL THIRD OF THE MAP. ONE OF ITS TRIBUTARIES IS FORDABLE BY STRAWBERRY FIELDS, ALTHOUGH ITS OWN BROADER COURSE IS CROSSED BY JUST A SINGLE BRIDGE, AT APPLEBY. IT JOINS THE ROCKY LYN SOME SIX MILES (7 KM) SOUTH OF THE MAP'S BORDER.

SALMONIC: A CRAGGIER LOWER HILL NORTH OF FENCEPOST HILL (A RIDGE ON ITS MID SOUTHERN SLOPES LINKS WITH FENCEPOST HILL'S SUMMIT) AND RASPBERRY END IN THE

MAP'S SOUTHWEST QUARTER, ITS NAME MAY RELATE TO THE SALMON'S DANCE ANCIENT SITE ON ITS EASTERN FLANK. POSSIBLY THOUGH, THE NAME MAY HAVE BEGUN FROM THE GLEAMING MICA-RICH INTRUDED VOLCANIC VEINS AND NARROW DYKES THAT FORM MUCH OF ITS UPSTANDING RIDGES, WHICH VISIBLY SPARKLE IN THE LIGHT, THAT MAY HAVE SEEMED TO SOMEONE LIKE GLISTENING FISH-SCALES.

SALMON'S DANCE: SET ON THE LOWER EASTERN SLOPES OF SALMONIC, ON A NATURAL, LOW, ROUNDED, DOME-SHAPED RISE THERE, IS A RING OF EIGHT VERY OLD STANDING STONES, FORMING A CIRCLE ROUGHLY 60 FT (18 M) IN DIAMETER. THE STONES ARE OF THE SAME MICA-RICH, SPARKLING, VOLCANIC ROCK THAT CAN BE SEEN IN THE UPSTANDING RIDGES ELSEWHERE OVER THE MAIN HILL.

SCOWLING CRAG: TALLEST OF THE FULLY ON-MAP VOLCANIC-ROCK HILLS, THIS IS A DISTINCTIVE, STEEP, RUGGED HILL WEST OF THE ROCKY LYN VALLEY IN THE NORTHWEST MAP QUARTER. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF CAVES IN ITS HIGHER REGIONS, WITH THAT MARKED ON ITS SOUTHEASTERN SIDE A POPULAR OVER-WINTERING SHELTER FOR THE CAVE BEARS THAT ROAM THIS PEAK AND THOSE NEARBY, AND WHICH SOMETIMES MAY BE FOUND FORAGING ALONG THE VALLEY AS WELL.

SPARKLE: ANOTHER HIGHER, VOLCANIC-ROCK, CRAGGY HILL ON THE NORTHWESTERN MAP EDGE, THIS ONE'S NAME COMES DIRECTLY FROM THE GLEAMING, MICA-RICH ROCKS EXPOSED OVER MUCH OF ITS UPPER SURFACES.

SPRINGDAY: IN THE MAP'S LOWER RIGHT CORNER, THIS IS A HUMAN-DOMINATED VILLAGE ALONGSIDE THE ONLY ON-MAP BRIDGE OVER THE STRAY ARROW RIVER, WHERE THE ROAD FROM BEECHGROVE CROSSES IT. THE ROAD CONTINUES EAST, OFF-MAP, FROM HERE, ALONG THE FOOT OF THE HILLS, AND FINALLY INTO THE UPPER LOCUST RUN VALLEY, AND RIVERTON, AROUND 100 MILES AWAY (160 KM). ITS MAIN DISTILLERY PRODUCES THE *STRAIGHT ARROW* WHISKY.

STINGBAT CAVE: SET INTO THE LOWER SOUTHEASTERN SLOPES OF ONE OF THE RIDGY RISES ATTACHED TO CLAMSHELL NEAR THE MAP'S CENTRE, IS ANOTHER OF THE CAVES SCATTERED OVER THE PETROC HILLS. THIS ONE CONTAINS A NOTED LONG-TIME ROOST OF BLOOD-SUCKING STINGBATS, FLYING CREATURES VERY LIKE THE STIRGES OF SOME VERSIONS OF D&D. THEY DO SOMETIMES CAUSE PROBLEMS FOR FOLKS ON THE FARMS NEAREST TO THE SOUTH, INCLUDING THOSE AT STRAWBERRY FIELDS. THE LOCALS TEND TO GIVE THE SPOT A WIDE BERTH.

STONE BELL: LYING ON ITS SIDE BY THE EAST BANK OF THE UPPER ROCKY LYN AT THE FOOT OF ROCETTE, A COUPLE OF MILES (3 KM) SOUTHWEST OF GOLDENSHAW IN THE MAP'S NORTHERN CENTRE, IS A LARGE, ANCIENTLY-MADE, TUBULAR STONE BELL. HOW IT GOT HERE NO ONE KNOWS, NOR ARE THERE ANY MARKINGS ON IT TO SUGGEST ITS ORIGINS OR PURPOSE. IT IS NOT UNLIKE SOME FORMS OF TEMPLE BELL IN SHAPE AND SIZE, HOWEVER. AS IT IS PARTLY BURIED BY SOIL AND PLANT GROWTH, IT CANNOT BE SOUNDED CURRENTLY.

STONEMAN VALE: THIS IS A BROAD, SOUTH-FACING VALLEY THAT RUNS UP NEARLY TO THE SUMMIT OF STONY HEIGHTS (ALSO KNOWN AS GRIFFON HILL, FROM THE GRIFFON-OCCUPIED WOODLANDS OVER ITS SCALLOPED EASTERN SIDE). AT ITS NORTHERN END IS A TALL, MONUMENTAL STANDING STONE, SURROUNDED IN THE SLOPES ABOUT IT BY A SERIES OF CAVE-MOUTHS. THESE CAVES ARE HOME TO SEVERAL FAMILIES OF STONE TROLLS, INTELLIGENT LIVING TROLLS THAT PRIZE STONES, ROCKS AND GEMSTONES THAT SEEM TO THEM ESPECIALLY ATTRACTIVE (SOMETHING THAT MAY NOT EQUATE DIRECTLY TO WHAT OTHERS MAY CLASS AS ATTRACTIVE). THEY SOMETIMES HUNT GRIFFONS IN THE NEARBY WOODS, ALTHOUGH THEY GENERALLY AVOID THE LOWER VALLEYS OFF THE HILLS, INCLUDING THAT WHERE FURZEHOLM LIES. MOST OF THEIR HUNTING IS DONE NORTH AND WEST OF THIS MAP. AROUND THE MIDDLE OF STONEMAN VALE IS A MOST UNUSUAL, MAGICAL JEWEL TREE, WHICH FRUITS GEMSTONES IN THE LATE SUMMER, AND WHICH THE TROLLS JEALOUSLY PROTECT AND REVERE. ONE OF THE LESSER TRIBUTARIES TO THE UPPER ROCKY LYN FLOWS DOWN THIS VALE AS WELL.

STONY HEIGHTS: A LARGE, PARTLY VOLCANIC-ROCK HILL IN THE MAP'S NORTHWEST QUARTER, INTO WHICH IS SET STONEMAN VALE, AND SOME OLD MARBLE QUARRIES IN ITS SOUTHEASTERN PART, WHERE GORSE MOOR AND THE SOUTHERN PART OF GRIFFON HILL WOODS NOW LIE, WHICH STONE WAS USED TO BUILD GOLDENSHAW, BEYOND THE UPPER ROCKY LYN FROM THIS HILL. IT IS SOMETIMES KNOWN AS GRIFFON HILL INSTEAD OR AS WELL.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS: THIS NAME APPLIES GENERALLY TO THE LANDS AND LOCATIONS WITHIN THE AREA BOUNDED BY THE UPPER ROUGH RIVER TO THE WEST, THAT RIVER'S EASTERN TRIBUTARY (THE UNLABELLED SANDY LYN) WHICH RISES ON THE SOUTH SLOPES OF EVENSIDE TO THE SOUTH AND EAST, AND EVENSIDE TO THE NORTH. ACRES/HECTARES OF FARMLAND HERE PRODUCE A PROFUSION OF NATIVE STRAWBERRIES IN SEASON, WHICH ARE COLLECTED AND FARMED BY FOLKS FROM THE SMALL SETTLEMENTS IN THE AREA, AS WELL AS BOTTLED AND MADE INTO JAMS. UNUSUALLY, THERE ARE NO BREWERIES OR DISTILLERIES, BUT THERE IS A GLASSWORKS, WHERE ARE MADE THE BOTTLES AND JARS USED THROUGH THE PETROC HILLS DISTRICT. FINE-QUALITY SAND IS QUARRIED AND CRUSHED FROM THE SANDSTONE ROCKS IN THE LOW HILLS IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF EVENSIDE. THIS GLASS IS EXPORTED TO ALL PARTS FROM HERE. THERE IS A SMALL CASTLE AND MORE HOMES BY THE FORD ON THE SANDY LYN, WHERE THE ROAD FROM BEECHGROVE CROSSES IT, WHICH IS ALSO WHERE THE MAIN GLASSWORKS IS SITUATED. MOST OF THE POPULACE IS HUMAN, ALTHOUGH A SIZEABLE HILL DWARF COMMUNITY DO MUCH OF THE QUARRYING AND ROCK-CRUSHING, AND SOME OF THE FINEST GLASSBLOWING.

STRAY ARROW: THE STRAIGHTER OF THE TWO LONGER RIVERS ON THE MAP, THIS FLOWS DOWN THE EASTERN SIDE FROM CAIRN PETROC, THROUGH CASTLE DELL, UNDER THE BRIDGE AT SPRINGDAY, AND OFF THE MAP'S SOUTH EDGE. IT JOINS THE LOCUST RUN ROUGHLY 20 MILES (30 KM) FURTHER SOUTH. ONLY ITS NARROWER TRIBUTARIES AND UPPER SECTIONS ARE SAFELY FORDABLE.

TALKING TREE: THIS IS A PREDOMINANTLY HUMAN VILLAGE IN THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE MAP. IT HAS TWO WHISKY DISTILLERIES, *TREETOP* AND *FABLED CLOVER*. THE SETTLEMENT FORMS A CROSSROADS, WITH ROUTES LEADING NORTH TO PETROC'S GROVE, EAST TO APPLEBY, SOUTH (NOT SHOWN ON THE MAP) TO ENDERS, AROUND 60 MILES (100 KM) AWAY, AND WEST OVER THE ROCKY LYN BRIDGE, THEN SOUTHWEST TO HUMMEL, ROUGHLY 80 MILES (130 KM) DISTANT. THERE IS A REGULAR MARKET IN THE VILLAGE. ACROSS THE BRIDGE, IN THE LIGHT WOODS ALONG THE HUMMEL TRAIL, SOME OF THE TREES ARE MOBILE AND INTELLIGENT, SO THESE WOODS ARE NOT USED FOR TIMBER, EXCEPT UNDER VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. THE LOCAL DRUIDS HELP EDUCATE ABOUT, AND ENFORCE, THIS PROHIBITION AT NEED, AND THEY HAVE A PERMANENT RESIDENCE AND COUNCIL CHAMBER IN THE VILLAGE, WHICH MAY, AT LEAST IN PART, EXPLAIN THE SETTLEMENT'S NAME.

TARKET: ONE OF THE HIGHER, CRAGGIER, VOLCANIC-ROCK PEAKS ON THE NORTHEASTERN MAP EDGE, NORTHEAST OF CASTLE DELL AND EAST OF CAIRN PETROC. IT HAS SOME ESPECIALLY HIGH CLIFFS, AND IS A PARTICULARLY POPULAR NESTING GROUND FOR THE PETROCS, THE GIANT EAGLES, OF THE DISTRICT.

WEST END: A LOWER, SEDIMENTARY-ROCK HILL IN THE MAP'S EAST-CENTRE, SOUTHWEST OF CASTLE DELL. NAMED FROM ITS LOCATION AS PERCEIVED IN THE STRAY ARROW VALLEY FROM THE DELL, GIVEN IT ACTUALLY LIES ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE RANGE OF LOWER HILLS HERE.

WHISTLING QUOIT: SITUATED NEAR THE WEST BANK OF THE ROCKY LYN, TOWARDS THE EASTERN BASE OF ROCKING DOME AND SOUTH OF SCOWLING CRAG, THIS IS A 60 FT DIAMETER (18 M) HENGE RING-BANK, IN THE CENTRE OF WHICH, ATOP A RAISED EARTHEN MOUND, IS A LARGE, THICK, DISC-LIKE PIECE OF GRANITE, APPROXIMATELY 6 FT IN DIAMETER (1.8 M), WITH A NATURAL, ROUNDED HOLE THROUGH ITS MIDDLE. THE DISC HAS BEEN PLACED ON ITS EDGE, LIKE AN UPRIGHT PLATE, WITH ITS FLAT FACES ALIGNED MORE OR LESS NORTHEAST-SOUTHWEST. THE HOLE IS AROUND NINE INCHES ACROSS (20 CENTIMETRES), AND IS ALMOST 3 FT (90 CM) ABOVE THE TOP OF THE CENTRAL MOUND'S SUPPORTING SURFACE. THE WIND DOES WHISTLE THROUGH THE HOLE WHEN BLOWING IN THE

RIGHT DIRECTION, AND THE QUOIT IS SAID BY THOSE LOCALS WHO CLAIM TO KNOW, TO HAVE VARIOUS MAGICAL POWERS, GRANTED TO THOSE AT THE SITE UNDER PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES (ALBEIT THESE TEND TO VARY GREATLY, ACCORDING TO EACH DIFFERENT TALE-TELLER).

WILD BOAR EDGE: NAMED BOTH FROM THE PINE FORESTS ON ITS WESTERN AND SOUTHWESTERN FLANKS, AS WELL AS THE WILD BOARS THAT ROAM ITS MORE ACCESSIBLE SLOPES, THIS IS ANOTHER LARGER, RUGGED, VOLCANIC-ROCK PEAK ON THE MAP'S NORTHEASTERN EDGE. LIKE OTHERS OF THE HIGHER CRAGS NEARBY, IT IS A FAVOURED HAUNT OF THE LOCAL GIANT EAGLES, TOGETHER WITH TARKET, EAST FELL AND CAIRN PETROC CLOSE-BY. STEEP CLIFFS FORM ITS HIGHER SLOPES BEGINNING JUST OFF-MAP.

WILD BOAR FOREST: EXTENSIVE PINE WOODS THAT COVER MUCH OF THE LOWER SLOPES OF THE CRAGGY WILD BOAR EDGE NEAR THE MAP'S NORTHEAST CORNER. THEY ARE HOME TO NUMEROUS WILD BOARS. THE GIANT EAGLES OF THE REGION HUNT THEM, AS DO OCCASIONAL PARTIES OF HILL DWARFS FROM FURZEHOLM. ONLY RARELY WILL OTHER HUMANOID HUNTERS FROM THE MORE SETTLED LANDS VENTURE THIS FAR NORTH, HOWEVER.

WILD CATTLE: WEST OF PETROC'S GROVE AND THE (UNLABELLED) ROCKY RILL STREAM, ROBUST WILD CATTLE ARE TO BE FOUND. THEY CAN BE A MENACE TO TRAVELLERS AND FARMERS, ALTHOUGH CROSS-BREEDING WITH THE DOMESTICATED CATTLE HEREBOUTS HAS MEANT BOTH MEAT AND MILK FROM THIS DISTRICT ARE PRIZED FOR THEIR QUALITY. THE CATTLE DO SOMETIMES CROSS THE STREAM, SO THE SETTLEMENT AT PETROC'S GROVE IS NOT UNFAMILIAR WITH DRIVING THEM OFF, SHOULD THEY BEGIN TO CAUSE PROBLEMS.

WILD HORSES: SOUTH OF THE WILD CATTLE'S DOMAIN IN THE LOWER LEFT MAP CORNER, WILD HORSES ROAM AS WELL. THESE HAVE IMPROVED THE STOCK OF THE LOCAL DOMESTICATED HORSES, WHICH QUALITY HORSES ARE VERY POPULAR WITH THOSE KNOWLEDGEABLE IN SUCH MATTERS. THE WILD HORSES RARELY TROUBLE THE FARMSTEADS IN THEIR VICINITY, EXCEPT WHEN THEY OCCASIONALLY CAUSE CROP DAMAGE LOOKING FOR FOOD.

WINDYRIDGE: RIGHT ON THE MAP'S SOUTH EDGE, AND EXTENDING A SHORT WAY OFF IT, IS THIS PRIMARILY HUMAN-OCCUPIED VILLAGE. IT HAS A CENTRAL MARKET GREEN, AND ROADS RUN FROM IT WEST TO APPLEBY, EAST TO BEECHGROVE, AND SOUTH (NOT SHOWN) TO THE LOCUST RUN RIVER A LITTLE OVER 20 MILES (30 KM) AWAY. THERE IS A DRUID MEETING-HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE, AND THE LOCALS ALL KNOW BETTER THAN TO TAKE WOOD, OR HUNT, IN ASHWOOD TO THE NORTH, WITHOUT SHOWING GREAT CARE AND RESPECT TO THE DRYADS THERE FIRST. THE STREAM HERE IS CALLED ASHWOOD BECK (UNLABELLED), OVER WHICH THERE IS A FORD CARRYING THE BEECHWOOD ROAD.