

Skalla-Otryggsden Jarldoms

These four jarldoms have both an uneasy alliance against all outsiders, especially the Celtic nation of Fionnula to the north, and Serkbergen to the south. But just as often, there are skirmishes and sometimes outright warfare between them. None are very centralized – the lesser settlements still have a fair degree of autonomy. And successors to the late ruler are often ‘usurpers’ rather than direct descendants. It nevertheless, is a fertile and resource rich region, particularly with the silver mines in the eastern mountains.

There are four Jarldoms; Sondheim in the north; Freisburg in the south; Marieltorn in the centre; and Dresburg in the east.

Sites of interest:

Sondheim:

This is the northernmost jarldom. It frequently sends reaving fleets of longships against the southern jarldom of Freisburg, each ship carrying an experienced member of the Seers’ Council, the magic-wielding arm of the jarl’s military forces. The present jarl is only the second of his line – his father usurped the jarldom from the previous cruel jarl. There is a rebel group loyal to the previous jarl’s family hiding near the hills surrounding the Two Sisters.

- ***Sondheim City*** (pop: 11,250) lies at the mouth of the Faeronen River. Its architecture is Norse-like with a large Hall as the seat of government – the Golden Hall of Garoldheld, the seat of Jarl Jomsvik the Reaver.
- ***St Voruld’s Retreat***: A cluster of buildings dedicated to Thor, the Thunderous, and his martyred acolyte, Voruld. It has the biggest library of the region, and is the home of famed seers, who, apart from their prophetic powers, act as protectors of the jarldom from dangerous monsters. Their current project involves the clearing of the Siddalir fens.
- ***Thorin’s Circle***: An ancient place of worship and sacrifice, including human, dedicated to Thor. It is still in use, though human sacrifices are no longer carried out. It is reputed to be haunted though, with the ghosts of sacrificial victims arising every midwinter, the Day of Sacrifice, to bring back the sun and warmth.
- ***The Two Sisters***: Two huge piles of stones, rising 50’ above the plain. Although there is reputed to be treasure under the piles, the legend states that it was two seeresses that gave their life to entrap a fearsome demon.
- ***Iseir Lake***: The lake surrounding an impressive mountain island. It is the home to the famed Goldenfish – whose gily scales have covered the Hall at Sondheim – they are not gold, but reflect a brilliant golden hue, visible from long distances.
- ***Siddalir Fens***: A dangerous breeding grounds of a nest of catoblepas, and Will o’ the Wisps.

Freisburg: This is the southernmost jarldom and the richest and most powerful. It has the most stable government, and the present Godburd family has held the jarldom for the last 87 years.

- ***Freisburg City*** (pop: 23,000) at the mouth of the Lethlo River, has large stave-buildings, and is mainly a wooden building town, but has a large stone citadel, the seat of government of Jarl Thaksil the Stout.
- ***Krislind Citadel***: A stronghold run by the semi-autonomous and fearsome Order of the Blood Bererkers. Despite their name, they are careful managers of the surrounding land and the thralls working it. In battle, though, they are the incredibly effective shock-troops of the jarldom, and are possibly the main reason the jarldom is the most powerful.
- ***Jotingurd Poisoned Swamp***: A miasmatic stinking place of treacherous ground and stagnant waters and poisonous gaseous fumes. Dead warrior corpses, perfectly preserved, lie in the waters, and are reputed to drag down the foolhardy adventurer to their watery grave. However, it is undeniable that the bodies hold much treasure, and so the adventurers are still willing to brave the dangers of the swamp.
- ***Heimskringla Barrows***: The resting place of olden kings who ruled the whole region before its fragmentation over three centuries before. They have been looted to some extent, but the ghouls of the ancient kings and their retainers have prevented all the treasures being carried off by the tomb plunderers.
- ***Aeslingde Guardians***: Large stone cairns, with faces of great ferociousness facing the sea. They have been ‘enchanted’ by the present jarl’s seers to ward off any reaving from the Sondheim jarldom and outlaw ships. It is reenchanting at the accession of each Jarl.
- ***Asgard Shoals***: These shoals are both dangerous, with a number of shipwrecks to its ‘credit’, but also a blessing for the large amounts of fish that provide a plentiful bounty for the region’s fisherfolk.
- ***Mona Isle***: This is the seat of the jarldom’s Seers, dedicated to Njord, God of the seashore.

Marieltorn lies on the southern border, inland from Freisburg. It is a fairly prosperous jarldom – but would be far wealthier if not cursed with almost perpetual squabbles about who should rule – rarely does any family hold the jarl’s seat for more than two generations.

- ***Marieltorn City*** (pop: 13800), close to the Hislunar Hot Springs. It is a hodge-podge of Elven and Norse and even Gothic architecture. The Jarl’s Tower is the seat of the present Jarl, Beornskil the Nervous. And like all his predecessors, he is indeed nervous about holding the jarldom – after all, he murdered the previous jarl to gain power.:
- ***Osmund’s Citadel***: This sturdy Citadel guards the plains to the east from raids by outlaws and the Freiburg jarldom. However, there have been rumours that the sheriff has designs on the jarldom himself, and has been building up the

‘defensive’ forces as a prelude to an attack on Marieltorn City.

- ***Greenholm Circle***: A mysterious site that is revered by all the jarldoms. It is surrounded by green hills, and ultra-fertile lands, where all sorts of crops grow seemingly without care. But they are not tended, and apart from a small group of priests, the whole region is uninhabited – any who try to make their home here mysteriously disappear – seemingly to become part of the fertile land itself.
- ***Hislunar Hot Springs***: Healing springs with a high mineral (and sulphur) content. The waters are reputed to have healing powers. Several small ‘spa’ villages have sprung up around, although the ground is fairly unstable, and rumbles all the time.
- ***Faramild Ruins***: The remains of a settlement totally destroyed by the Dragon-Demon Veriloxik. Rumour has it that the dragon could not find all the fabulous treasure the town had made from the now destroyed silver and gem mine. And also, that the lost treasures are hoarded by the undead of the doomed village.

Dresburg: The most easterly and most mountainous of the four jarldoms, it is very prosperous, owing much of its wealth to its silver mines. Unusually, the current jarl’s family have kept the seat for 4 generations now, and the jarldom has largely recovered from the destructive civil wars of yesteryear.

- ***Dresburg City*** (pop: 19700) on the upper reaches of the Faeronen River, is the seat of Jarl Hrothgar the Cunning. It is influenced greatly by dwarven architecture, and the seat of the jarl is a rather ugly squat building, with much of it below ground level.
- ***Dresmund, Jarldorn and Grondlo Silver Mines***: These three silver mines are the source of the wealth of this Jarldom. However, the silver lodes seem to be running out. So far, the mine managers have kept this secret from the jarl, but it soon will become obvious, and when it does, the jarldom is in for much civil strife,
- ***Lake Salmonella***: A seemingly clear lake with pure waters. It is the home to plentiful massive salmon whose flesh is much prized, as is their skin with rainbow reflective scales much sort after as ornaments, but fishing is very dangerous. Swallowing any of the water is likely to bring on massive bowel disturbances and severe griping pain. As a result, the catch is always low, and only a small hamlet of hardened fisherfolk remain.
- ***Mt Garilid***: This is the tallest mountain in the jarldoms, and is rumoured to be the home of frost giants, though none have seen them. In fact, it is riddled with lava caves, as it once was a volcano.
- ***Gormsir Glacier***: This huge glacier shines with an unearthly blue light. And in the grips of the ice are seen the blue corpses of huge humanoids – the origin of the rumours of the frost giants. One such corpse was partly uncovered when a rift appeared in the glacier – and upon its body was found much unusual jewellery and other items. However, despite earnest digging the ice over the

other 7 bodies, none has been uncovered to date, and the origin, or even the race of these corpses has yet to be determined. One heretical group is calling them the Lost Gods of Ragnarok.

- ***Mt Mendelgrim***: Another tall mountain, dotted with springs and small falls.
- ***Bifrost Falls***: All these small falls amalgamate into the amazing Bifrost falls, with its permanent rainbow. Behind the falls are caverns, small and large, home to some peculiar creatures. And they guard a most precious thing – the body of a larger than life man, and his twenty four liegemen, and four Warrior maidens.
- ***Hardrada Battlefield***: This was the battlefield, now haunted, where the last King of the region met his fate and the four jarldoms were formed by the rebellious and treacherous subject jarls. However, it is said King Hardrada will rise again to smite all the lands enemies when the need is greatest. His resting place is unknown, though legends abound of travellers who have accidentally been transported to the caverns where he and his knights lie, waiting for the call.
- ***Mimir's Pool***: This is reckoned to be the place where Odin gave up his eye in return for wisdom. It is also the place where King Hardrada entrusted his last surviving liegeman to cast his legendary Warhammer into the lake, where the tales tell of it being caught by a half seal, half maiden spirit of the lake.
- ***Nidir Marsh***: In this place of noisy bird and insect life, is hidden the ceremonial drum that, when beaten, will summon King Hardrada to restore the land – of course this is only a tale???

Others:

Veriloxik the Demon-Dragon: A fearsome hybrid creature – an evil cross between a powerful demon who has possessed an ancient Black Dragon. The region around has been largely abandoned – luckily, the creature spends most of the time sleeping on it bed of acquired treasure.

Hagendort Dwarven Halls: This is the abode of gifted craftsmen, dwarves of the Svirniblung Clan. Their specialty is in amazing works in silver producing fabulously beautiful silver objects; and also weapons of great durability, and armour of almost invincible protection, made from an alloy of silver and another 9 minerals – a formula that is a closely guarded secret. Not many of these products are made – but it has made these dwarves very wealthy as the armour alone is worth a king's (or jarl's) ransom. They trade willingly, mainly their silver jewellery, with the jarldoms, but do not recognize their authority.

Aesiridir Elves: A reclusive settlement of Wood Elves, renowned for the fine garments they spin out of spider webs – very special spiders that produce silk that is luminescent, and totally water and fire-proof. They also do not recognize the jarls' authority.

Three Norns:

- **Odin's Temple (abandoned)**: These desolate islands were once the site of

bloody quarterly human sacrifices to Odin. The Triple death was carried out, mainly on criminals and escaped thralls – death by stabbing, death by strangulation and finally, death by drowning. The bodies of the victims were then buried in the bog on the islands – and many have arisen as vengeful undead. The place was abandoned after the jarls combined to put an end to human sacrifice – the last sacrifices being the blood-stained priests themselves.