

# HOUSE BANNON

THE HOUSE BANNON SUPPLEMENT FOR THE ELDRITCH LIVE ACTION ROLEPLAYING GAME

The ELDRITCH Live Action Roleplaying game is a lovingly crafted work of fiction created by John Kozar, Faye Ferguson, and Spencer McGhin, with additional input from, and content created by Megan Durham, Jessica Sills, Thomas Marshbanks, Galen Hall, and Joe Meyer. Special thanks to Lehanna Allen, Carl Holzbog, and anyone else who ever listened to us prattle on about the project. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this strange dream a reality.

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All art by William Weird, Mel De Carvalho

Art direction by Spencer McGhin and John Kozar.

# HOUSE BANNON

## WELCOME TO ARNESSE...

Eight great houses vie for control amidst a world in ruin after centuries of conflict and war. Ancient institutions scheme amongst the rulership of the land for their own small piece of the empire. This is the world of Eldritch. With this guide, you hold the key the gates of a world rife with bitter conflict, political turmoil, and mysteries both arcane and unseen. Ancient alliances are broken as quickly as they are forged. Lines are blurred between ally and enemy. Heroes are found in the most unlikely of places. The world is awakening anew. Where will you find your place in this forgotten dream?

## USING THIS GUIDE

The player supplements for Eldritch are intended to provide detail information beyond that which is known to the general player population. All information in this guide is to be taken as in-play information, known by you and others in your corresponding faction. You may over the course of Eldritch events discover new information that corresponds to your faction, however you will be able to share this information as you wish.

## SUMMARY

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### CREED

"Never Yield"

### CASTLE

Caer Cadwyn

### PROTECTORATE

The Sovereignlands

### MAJOR FAMILY MEMBERS AND HOUSE FIGURES

Giles Bannon II

His Majesty, Giles Bannon II, King of the Ardan, Lord Sovereign of the Seven Protectorates and Defender of the Vale

Age: 31

King Giles II is the King of Arnesse and sovereign of the Seven Protectorates. Giles II is brilliant and idealistic, a true visionary that wants the best future for his kingdom. Giles became obsessed with the Aurorym prophecy at an early age

and it is said that he speaks often of some unknown doom that is coming to the land. It was this that led him to embrace the Aurorym faith and take a lady of house Blayne as his wife when he ascended to the throne. Over time it has become clear that Giles II genuinely believes in the power of the Aurorym and the teachings of Magnus. He has also spoken often of having visions that the world is in the midst of a great change and that his people need to change to survive it. While the King has not yet named the Aurorym faith as the official religion of the realm, some say he is merely waiting for the right time. Giles is an extremely moral individual that enforces his puritanical worldview on others in a way that is often despotic. While his advisors have done a good job at hiding it, the Grand Court is well aware that the king sees threats everywhere. While some of these have been real dangers, more than a few have found themselves arrested and even executed for plots and moral transgressions that had little basis in fact. Giles' paranoia and high intelligence make him extremely dangerous and even more unpredictable. It has also made it exceedingly difficult for his enemies to get enough of an edge to remove the King from power.

Aline Bannon

Her Majesty, Aline Bannon, Queen of the Ardan, Queen of Flowers

Age: 30

Aline Bannon is the daughter of the Lord Paragon of House Blayne, Frederick Blayne. She is considered very beautiful, but unlike her husband, Giles II, she is neither very bright nor very political. Due to her great affection for flowers, Aline is known to many as the Queen of Flowers. Floral patterns are commonly part of any garb she wears and she frequently demands flower petals be thrown during royal processions. The Queen also insists on flowers being prominent in decor both in the palace and any places she stay or visits. Queen Aline is known to be a very moral person and even a bit naive in the ways of the world. Unlike Giles, she is well loved by all who know her and is frequently seen giving charity to the less fortunate and needy of Arnesse. In Court, she is often a champion of the downtrodden and those without a voice, which has led to no end to conflicts between her and other Bannon nobles, including the King. Despite her innocence and lack of political experience, the Queen has become quite strong willed during her decade in Highcourt and many nobles in the Grand Court have found out, much to their dismay, that she is no pushover when it comes to fighting for whatever she believes in.

Charles Bannon

His Grace, Charles Bannon, Lord Paragon of the

## Sovereignlands and Warden of the West

Age: 55

Charles Bannon is Lord Paragon of the Sovereignlands and the head of House Bannon. He is the Uncle of Giles II and brother of his father King Giles I. Lord Charles was known to have fought against King Giles II at the battle of Lanton and by all accounts should have died a traitor. The King, at the behest of his Queen, showed Lord Charles mercy in the hopes that he could persuade the other Bannon Lords loyal to Giles I to bend the knee to Giles II. Lord Charles was able to do this and thus earned a place in Giles II's court. Since then he has been placed in charge of House Bannon's affairs in the Sovereignlands and proven himself loyal to his nephew. From all accounts, Lord Charles is the penultimate elder statesmen and patriarch of his family. He supports the House Bannon without question and is often the arbiter of disputes among others in his bloodline. Due to the fact that the Lord Paragon has not converted to the Aurorym faith there are rumors that he is in fact the leader of a faction that seeks to oppose the King's attempts to spread the religion throughout Arnesse. To date, Lord Charles has vehemently denied that any rift exists within House Bannon and that even if there was, he would see those disloyal to the Crown brought to justice. By all accounts, Lord Paragon Charles is a master politician and does a superb job of managing the affairs of the Bannon's lands. If he had a flaw it was that the Charles seems to have an overwhelming need for perfection in all things. The growing level of division caused by the Aurorym faith and their expanding presence in the Sovereignlands threatens to upset the perfectly laid structures and plans he has for the Bannon family.

Emma Hale, Formerly Emma Bannon

Lady Hale, Lady of Grimfrost

Age: 28

Lady Emma Hale is the half sister of Giles II, daughter of Queen Elysande, the wife of Giles I executed for adultery. She is married to the Lord Paragon of House Hale, Talbot Hale and she has four children by him. From an early age, she went to join Giles II in the North and has lived there most of her life. It was Giles II that arranged her marriage to Lord Talbot as a way to affirm alliances between Hale and Bannon. In the years since Giles II took the throne, Emma has grown more and more distant from him and the throne and has not been seen in the South for over five years now. Considering the rising concerns that the Hales may have begun to turn on their old alliances, some fear that the Lady Emma may either be in danger herself or that she is complicit to what is going on. There is no doubt that she harbored some level of

resentment toward the death of her Mother, but she has always shown herself to be loyal to the Crown. Lady Emma is wily and smart like her brother and shares his penchant for seeing threats all around her. In the years since the Lady of Grimfrost took the seat with her husband, the Winter Court has become a place rife with political intrigue and suspicion.

Jocelyn Corveaux, formerly Jocelyn Bannon

Lady of the Crossing

Age: 30

Lady Jocelyn Corveaux is the daughter of Lord Paragon Charles Bannon, the sister of Ser Blake Bannon, and the wife of the Lord of King's Crossing, Lord Garamond Corveaux. Lady Jocelyn is much like her father and even more so than her husband, is a master at the art of politics. King's Crossing is a huge, thriving city that is the hub of trade for nearly the entire kingdom. Reports are that Lord Garamond is struggling with managing King's Crossing and that the Lady Jocelyn is heavily involved in helping him. Those who work with her find that she is demanding, stern, but fair to all who show loyalty. Much as her father relentlessly seeks perfection, she shows a singular focus on tasks and work that many times crosses into obsession. It is said that to be the focus of her attentions can be either very good or very bad. With her as Lady of the Crossing and Lord Charles in the seat of Lord Paragon of the Sovereignlands, both the Bannons and the Cirque have made a great deal of money in taxes, tariffs, and trade along the Vermilion and Aurean Roads. It is also said that Lord Garamond, certainly with the encouragement of his wife, has his eye on the seat of the aging Lord Paragon Desmond Coveaux, who's sickly daughter may not long live and his son, a knight, could very well lose his life in battle.

Blake Bannon

Sir Blake Bannon, Knight Master of the Ordo Rosarius

Age: 25

Sir Blake Bannon is Cousin to Giles II, son of Lord Paragon, Charles Bannon, and sister of the Lady of the Crossing, Jocelyn Corveaux. Sir Blake is currently the head of House Bannon's armies and a fine knight in his own right. He trained under Lady Victoria Holt and is a fine swordsman and regarded as an even finer man. He is not political like his father and his sister, but he is a great leader of men. From all anyone can see, his men love him and he's a knight carved from the very essence of chivalric code. Sir Blake cuts a handsome figure and is also unmarried, making him one of the most eligible bachelors in Arnesse. He is said to have very few rivals or enemies, but his failure to convert to the Aurorym is said to have hurt his standing in the eyes of the

King. It is rumored that Arthur Bannon, Lord of Coventry, seeks to replace him as commander of Bannon's military. Lord Arthur was over Sir Blake to put down Alion Cornwall's armed rebellion at Lanton. The Lord of Coventry's overwhelming victory has fueled rumors that it is only a matter of time before the Knight Master is replaced as commander of the army.

Honorius

Master Honorius, Archmagister of the Apotheca  
Age: 42

Honorius was born Stephen Bannon, the cousin of Lord Arthur Bannon of Coventry. From an early age, with few options to ever inherit, he joined the Apotheca and has been a Magister in service to the order for the better part of twenty years. Given House Bannon's general stance on the Apotheca, it would make sense that the one chosen by the King would be someone from their own blood. From all that anyone can tell, Honorius is an honest and forthright individual whose knowledge of the history of the world, specifically the history of the noble houses, is almost unparalleled. He serves as the personal historian, librarian, and physician to the royal family. Honorius has also converted to the Aurorym faith and was recently promoted to the rank of Archmagister. It is said that with the King's favor, Honorius' star is on the rise and that he is destined to join the Apotheca's Inner Council as soon as a seat becomes available.

Cabal of the Veiled Tower

Iriel

Reverend Mother of the Fayne Moirai  
Age: 41

The Veiled Tower cabal has served the House Bannon for almost twenty years. The cabal is led by Reverend Mother Iriel, a woman as beautiful as she is mysterious. Little is known about her save that she is certainly a Sister of the Eyes for there is little she does not seem to know. There are rumors that the Reverend Mother runs a spy network that gathers information from all corners of the Kingdom but has particularly keen eyes in and around Highcourt and the Sovereignlands. Iriel is also the head of the Fayne Moirai who serve the households of the Bannon family and their vassals. While the tasks of coordinating her order's affairs and training often take her far afield from the capital, she is a regular at the Grand Court and considered by most to be extremely formidable. The decline of the Fayne Moirai's

influence in the Grand Court in the last few years has put Iriel increasingly on the outside, but the wise know better than to underestimate her or think she is without a plan.

Desma

Mother of the Fayne Moirai  
Age: 35

Mother Desma is a Sister of the Shears and it is rare that any member of the Cabal of the Veiled Tower is seen in public without her present. She is still regularly in the company of the King and the Queen or other important Bannon leaders as a bodyguard or escort. Mother Desma does not talk often and some say that she's a mute or taken a vow of silence. It is rare that she fights, but the few times she has been drawn to blows, it is clear she is a master of the Wylding Hand. With her bare hands, Desma fought the swordmaster Lady Victoria Holt to a standstill and has taken on three armed and armored knights and won, killing all of them in seconds. Desma is surprisingly small in stature, barely standing at five foot three inches. She keeps her dark black hair cut very short and her demeanor is dour to say the least. It is a running jest in Highcourt that a writ of lordship will be granted to anyone can make Mother Desma smile,

Amara

Mother of the Fayne Moirai  
Age: 38

Mother Amara is the most mysterious of the Cabal of the Veiled Tower and that is almost certainly because she is a Sister of Fate. Though she is not used often these days, it is actually Mother Amara whom many of the the nobles of Bannon use most often to consult the Fates. Rumors about this has caused friction between her and Reverend Mother Tessia, the Fayne who sits on the King's Council, who is also a Sister of Fates and feels it is she who should be chosen for these things. Amara was once said to be a beautiful woman, but some horrible accident or injury has scarred her. She speaks in a bit of a raspy voice and hides herself in a veil and heavy robes. Amara used to make her home at the Grand Court, but since the Fayne have been less welcome of late, she has taken up residence in Caer Cadwyn with the Lord Paragon Charles Bannon. There is a rumor that Lord Charles has taken her as a lover and that together they consult the Fates as to how best to deal with King Giles II and rise of the Aurorym faith.

## HISTORY

The following section details that common historical information known to the members of the faction. While there is certainly more history to the faction, it will need to be discovered via the proper in-game channels.

### THE GREAT WAR - 441 A.S. - 451 A.S.

House Bannon had been a powerful force in the rulership of Arnesse long before the Great War. Myth and legend have named the Bannons as the rightful rulers of Arnesse and despite the dubious authenticity of some of the stories, they have used these tales to gain power and influence over the centuries. All members of House Bannon know the tale of the monarchy's founding, of the First King, Edric Bannon I. That In 440 A.S., the Magistrat Council, the rulers of Arnesse, was rocked by a massive explosion, killing most of their number. It was discovered that this tragedy was perpetrated by radical members of the Eldra faith, worshippers of the Old Gods, who sought to destabilize the government and end the restrictions that had been placed on their dangerous religious practices.

Prime Consul Edric Bannon, the leader of the Magistrat, survived the explosion and moved quickly to declare martial law as well as passing the Faith Separation Act to forbid the practice of religion of any kind in Arnesse. By 441 A.S. Prime Consul Edric had rallied five houses, Bannon, Castellan, Hale, Rourke, and Richter to join him in destroying the Eldra Gods. Using immensely powerful magic, they bound these immortals to physical form and killed them with mighty enchanted weaponry. Fundamentally disagreeing with the cause to slay the Gods, House Athan, the ancestors of House Innis, join with House Aragon, and rose to stop Bannon's army. House Athan is soundly defeated by the forces of House Richter and Hale in the Battle of Thornwood. Shortly after, House Aragon is forced to retreat by a Bannons and Castellan army armed with terrible siege weapons that decimate their dragons at the Battle of Redwick. Within a year the victorious army led by Lord Edric Bannon had destroyed all the Old Gods of the Eldra.

In reward for his glorious victory, Edric Bannon was to be crowned as King of Arnesse, supported by all the great houses as the rightful ruler. During his coronation, Edric's reign was cut short as he was murdered by assassins from Houses Aragon and Athan. Lord Edric's daughter, his heir Lady Catherine, is coronated Queen Catherine Bannon I. Her retribution against those who killed her father would plunge the land into civil war for the next eight years. Seeking revenge for the death of their King, the forces of Bannon,

Castellan, and Richter attack Thornwood, and during the Second Battle of Thornwood, decimate House Athan. Seeking to liberate House Athan, Houses Rourke and Aragon attack the Midlands and destroy House Castellan, killing the entire family. House Bannon, Richter, and Hale meet the Aragons and the Rourkes at Belburn and crush them in battle. In retribution for the death of her father, Catherine orders four thousand prisoners of war crucified every quarter mile along the Vermillion Road from Belburn to Highcourt. From that day forward she is known as the Crimson Queen. Both the Aragon and Rourke retreat to their homelands, but Thornwood is occupied by the forces of House Bannon in a period known as the Bitter Harvest.

It is in the last days of the Great War, House Aragon, House Athan, and House Rourke, desperate to win against insurmountable odds, summon incredible magics that bring about the Eldritch Cataclysm. Arnesse is plunged into a dark age and the land descends into chaos.

### THE AGE OF KINGS - 451 A.S. - 760 A.S.

House Bannon takes leadership of a land in crisis during the Age of Kings. Magic formed a basis of society in Arnesse and in the wake of the Eldritch Cataclysm without it, the people were lost. Many nobles took this disorder as a chance to betray their oaths and attempt to seize power over the land. The first decade of the Age of Kings was marked by constant strife in the newly formed monarchy. Queen Catherine rises as a mighty ruler who capably manages her remaining vassals to defend the throne. Some nobles come willingly, others come at a price, and still others only come at the point of a sword. Those who would speak ill of House Bannon would come to call Queen Catherine's methods as cruel and even tyrannical, but there are few who challenge the fact that she was one of the greatest monarchs to have ever lived. By the time Queen Catherine's son Edric II takes power in 497, the lands from the Thornwood to the Midlands have been brought to heel.

Edric II marries a noblewoman of House Hale, Thyra, and while his reign is also marked by a great deal of strife and war, he manages to bring Everfrost under the control of the crown. He rules unto 515 A.S. when his son Richard I takes the throne. Richard proves to be equally as capable as his grandmother as a warrior but also a master at diplomacy and administration. He divides the Kingdom into Protectorates and establishes the position of Lord Paragon. Richard I made several sweeping revisions to the law, including the standardization of taxes and better treatment for Commonfolk. He formed the King's Council to advise the monarch and

created Kingdom's treasury, the Royal Exchequer. He empowered both the Grand Bank and the Cirque to have more control over trade and banking. If there was a monarch who was made the Kingdom into what it is today, it was Richard Bannon I.

The reign of Richard I's son, Richard II, was marked by a time of civil war and unrest. The treacherous snakes of House Aragon reveal their plan to take the Throne and, stirred by a thirst for revenge, invaded the Sovereignlands. In 610 A.S. Led by the self proclaimed God King, Hector Aragon, they manage to find disloyal members of House Corveaux to form an alliance with. At the same time, a new faith rises in the Midlands, driven by a man named Magnus Blayne. When Richard II rightly orders Blayne's execution in 609 for insurrection, his fanatical followers manage to assassinate the King. His brother James is coronated King James I shortly after but reigns for only a year. James I calls for his allies to support him in war and many do not respond. King James and his troops fight valiantly, but he is defeated at Caddock Tor. Hector's son Roland is crowned the first non-Bannon monarch in the history of the Kingdom, King Roland I. He makes several sweeping reformations to Arnesse including reversing the ban on worship that was put in place by Queen Catherine. King Roland also restores the remnants of House Athan to good standing and gave them land. They rename themselves House Innis, rulers of the Protectorate of the Northern Reaches. He also raises House Ulster, a rebellious vassal of Corveaux loyal to the teachings of Magnus Blayne and the Aurorym, to a great house under the name House Blayne.

As expected, the rule of House Aragon is short as Roland's son Doran Aragon is murdered at his wedding shortly after his coronation, supposedly by Rourke brigands. The son of King James I, Richard, is crowned King Richard III and marries Helena Richter. The couple fail to have children and King Richard adopts John Bannon of Caer Dorston as his heir. Though rumours abound that their failure to have children is due to a loveless marriage, they have a son, Edwin. When Richard III dies to illness John and Edwin spend the next decade in a conflict known as the Brother's War to determine who will rule. With the aid of House Richter and Rourke, Edwin is able to best his brother and is crowned King Edwin I in 673 A.S. King Edwin takes a Bannon bride, Queen Margaery and focuses much of his almost two-decade reign on improving infrastructure in the Kingdom. He constructed edifices such as the Rose Bridge across the River Ard, the Pontus Aqueducts, and the Arelate Amphitheater in Highcourt.

King Edwin I's reign comes to an end in 692 A.S. under

suspicious circumstances. His daughter and heir, Lady Eleanor seeks the throne, but a number of rivals to her claim emerge in the form of at least four bastard children who say that King Edwin was their father as well. For the next six years Lady Eleanor fights what will come to be known as the Bastard War. She is able to defeat two of the claimants, but in an effort to resolve the dispute without further bloodshed, she offers to marry one the strongest of the remaining bastards, Lord Royce Wolf, her half brother. Despite the controversy behind their union, Queen Eleanor I is crowned in 698 A.S. and with the strength of Lord Royce's army, she is able to bring all her rivals to heel by 700 A.S., thus ending the Bastard War. Though it is widely rumored that Queen Eleanor and the newly named King Miles detest each other, a child is born from their union, Giles. King Miles had a fairly public affair with Lady Lesha Aragon, from which a son, Charles is born. King Miles accepts him as his own son and gives him a Bannon name. This action leads ultimately to a duel with a disloyal Aragonese champion that costs the King his life.

Giles comes of age in 727 A.S. and takes the crown amid a time of famine and want in the land. He spends most of his twenty five years as king improving the administrative structure of Arnesse. He would break most of the protectorates into subdivisions known as boroughs and encourage the use of local officials such as castellans and sheriffs to regulate the flow of commerce and taxes. Giles also worked to restore and improve much of the trade and commerce infrastructure within the Kingdom and encouraged an expansion of power among the guilds. More towns and cities were founded during the reign of Giles I than by all the kings for the last century. Giles took Lady Rosalind of House Bannon to be his queen and she bore him a son, Giles. Giles I also reworks much of the legal system in Arnesse, including the ability for spouses to annul their marriage. Rumors of malcontent between he and Queen Rosalind become reality when he annuls their marriage. She and her son flee North, there to take residence with House Hale.

King Giles I declares his intent to marry Lady Elysande of House Corveaux 734 and the Queen bears Giles a second child, Emma. But by 742 rumors of Elysande's infidelity to the King force him to take action. She is tried and found guilty of adultery and put to death. Queen Elysande's cousin, Alice, comforts the King and they soon fall in love. He weds her in 743 but she dies less than a year later in childbirth. Struck by grief, the King's health begins to fade. It is during this time that he takes more serious action against the rise of the Aurorym faith. It is said that King Giles I has a vision that the Aurorym will lead to the ultimate demise of the Kingdom of Arnesse and he tries to place a series of restrictions on

religion once again. This causes unrest among much of the populace and when he takes Lady Maeve Innis as his bride in 748, rumors spread that she has bewitched him to turn him against the Aurorym.

When Queen Maeve is announced to be with child in 750, the fear of an Innis heir to the throne fuels the rumors that the King and Queen are both involved in witchcraft. These rumors are further fanned by his son, Giles, who, unbeknownst to his father, has converted to the Aurorym faith. In secret, Giles gathers troops from House Blayne, House Hale, and rebellious factions within House Bannon to march on Highcourt. Giles meets his son on the field of battle at Lanton and is defeated soundly. The King and Queen are taken captive and put on trial for witchcraft. Supposedly during the conflict, Maeve bears the child who comes to be known as the "Witch Prince" Reynard. Maeve tries to have the child secreted away, but he is hunted down and killed by Knights of the Five Towers. King Giles and Queen Maeve are both found guilty of witchcraft and burned alive for their crimes. Some say that it was less Giles' involvement in any kind of sorcery and more the string of broken alliances and oaths in pursuit of the love that caused his undoing. His son is crowned King Giles II in 751 A.S. Giles II promptly cements his alliance with House Blayne by marrying the beautiful Aline, daughter of Lord Frederick Blayne. The King also grants a portion of the Midlands known as The Troth to House Blayne as the Hearthlands Protectorate.

## THE PRESENT

King Giles II has sat on the throne of Arnesse for twelve years. In that time he has proven to be a capable ruler but his relentless focus on faith and morality threaten much of what the Bannons have worked three centuries to create. While King Giles has stopped short of making the Aurorym faith the official religion of Arnesse, many feel that it is only a matter of time before he does. Some have blamed his wife, Aline, House Blayne, or even the Aurorym itself, but from all accounts, Giles is acting of a sound mind and genuinely seems to believe in the faith.

Giles is a brilliant strategist but he has neglected to attend to many of the diplomatic duties of a King and as a result House Bannon's relations with the other Great Houses have grown more distant. Even traditional allies such as House Corveaux and House Hale are seen less frequently at court; rumors persist that their the relations have soured of late. Traditional threats to the throne like House Aragon and House Innis have grown quiet and there is a very real concern they are plotting something.

King Giles has been one of the most divisive monarchs in the history of the Kingdom. He brings to him those who are loyal to the Aurorym faith, creating a seat on the King's Council, the Lord Patriarch, for a priest. He is regularly seen the company of priests and commanded that all his immediate household and retainers convert. This has created a growing division within the ranks of House Bannon. On one side is King Giles and those who support the growing faith. On the other are those Bannons who have chosen to not convert. Rumors in the house are circulating that not a few of the latter faction view Giles' actions and rulership as a threat to House Bannon and that there are plans to do something about it. This sentiment was only exacerbated when in 760 the King passed an addendum to the law that made certain moral transgressions illegal and punishable. The decree has been met with extremely mixed feelings Kingdomwide and has been controversial, with some nobles even refusing to enforce it within their realms.

The Lord Paragon of House Bannon is Charles Bannon, the bastard son of King Miles I. Charles Bannon sided with King Giles I when Giles II rose to challenge him but was shown mercy by the King in exchange for helping to reunite the Bannon nobility under their new king. The Lord Paragon is considered to be Bannon's patriarch and for all intents he is the penultimate elder statesman. Charles also has not converted to the Aurorym faith and this has done nothing but fuel wild rumors that he may in fact be the leader of the faction in opposition to the King's desire to grow the strength and influence of the Aurorym. Lord Charles has shown no signs that this is true and is for all that anyone can see or has been told, he is completely devoted to both his family and the King.

King Giles' focus on affairs of faith and morality has not just cost the Kingdom diplomatically but many of the hard won changes put into place by his father Giles I in areas of trade and commerce have been forgotten or left by the wayside. This has caused a general decline in the prosperity of the realm and while times are not desperate yet, there are many who fear that they will be soon. In the wake of the monarch's neglect of these things, guilds like the Cirque and the Apotheca have stepped in and as a result, grown in strength. There have been instances of both those groups challenging the authority of nobles of late and members of House Bannon are eager to find a way to bring them to heel.

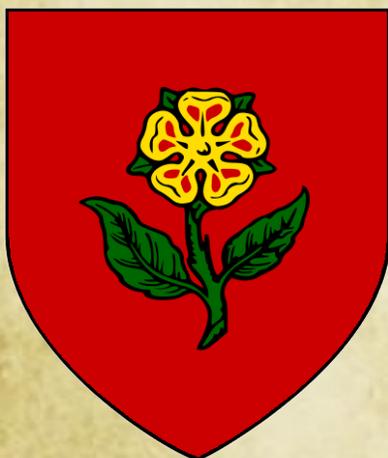
Among the family a rumor has also begun to spread. It was said to have been a portent, given by the Fayne Moirai, which stated that a darkness was growing in the land that would shake the very foundations of House Bannon and perhaps

even bring it's noble line to an end. In response, the King has begun to look first within his own house in fear that there are those who were disloyal. This paranoia has spread throughout the entire family and everyone is taking great care in who they trust. While there have been no arrests yet, some feel it is only a matter of time before that happens. The King has scattered scouts to the four corners of Arnesse to find any information on the darkness. The disappearance of Ser Ewan Bannon and the discovery of this new land known as the Annwyn has led many to speculate that they may be linked to the dark prophecy.

## THE ORDERS OF BANNON

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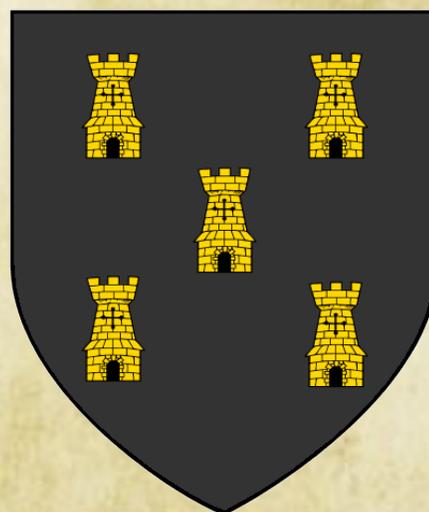
### ORDO ROSARIUS



Legend tells that the Ordo Rosarius were once a knight order in the service to the ancient noble house of Castellan, rulers of the Midlands in ages past. The Rosarius are, in true form to their legacy, commensurate knights paragon; noble, gracious, and extremely capable in combat, specifically small group engagements. They train extensively in the use of shields to defend a charge but are also considered among the finest duelists in the realm. Often, when their charge is challenged to a duel, it falls to them to face that challenger on the field. The Order of the Rose wears a distinctive, rose-red lacquered plate armor with golden leaves in filigree. Their heraldry is that of a golden rose wrapped in emerald green leaves on a field of rose red. A knight of the Ordo Rosarius is entitled to wear one to five roses upon their personal heraldry and coat of arms, depending on rank. The Order is small, consisting of several hundred highly trained knights that operate mostly in or around Highcourt. Few nobles of House Bannon go anywhere without several Ordo Rosarius escorts close at hand and the King has a squad of one hundred Knights of the Rose that serve as his personal guard.

Life in House Bannon's courts have changed the Ordo Rosarius over the years. They've been forced to sacrifice many of their high-minded chivalric values in the name of their new Bannon lieges, yet have not abandoned them entirely. In addition to a chivalric code, the Ordo Rosarius swear to defend their charge, even at the cost of their own lives. They also all take an Oath of Secrecy that they will never share what they learn or do, in the name of their Lady or Lord. This has led to situations where the Ordo Rosarius are privy to information that is potentially treacherous, treasonous, and even dishonorable. So, while a member of the Ordo Rosarius will not reveal what they know, even on pain of death, they also will not break their chivalric code on behalf of a liege. Many have walked a fine line over the years to maintain their honor and stay in the good graces of a noble. Some have privately said that the Knights of the Rose are the sole moral compass that keeps House Bannon's rulers from spiraling into total tyranny. The leader of the Ordo Rosarius is Knight Master Phillip de Barrin, widely regarded as one of the finest duelists in all the Kingdom. Sir Philip also serves as the Commander of the King's Guard in Highcourt.

### KNIGHTS OF THE FIVE TOWERS



Heavily armored, well trained, and feared like few other things on the field of battle, the Knights of the Five Towers are named for the Five Towers of High Keep. At the center of Highcourt, the seat of the King and Queen is High Keep, built around a ruined tower that was once the ancient city of Thrantis. The Lords of High Keep have, since then, constructed additional towers to represent their expanding power. Today, there are five towers and these Knights are an extension of Bannon growth and dominance over the years

they have ruled. The knights are ranked from one to five, with a Knight of the First Tower being lower rank than one of the Fifth Tower. The heraldry of this order are is five golden towers upon a blackened field. A Knight of the Five Towers is entitled to wear one to five gold towers upon their personal heraldry and coat of arms, depending on rank. The Knights of the Five Towers serve the Bannon nobles as guards and champions but are most often seen doing their liege's will on some task or mission of importance. On the battlefield, they are considered so capable in combat and so ruthless to enemies in defeat that many quit the field rather than face them in fight.

Rumors abound that the Knights of the Five Towers have a dark side and even darker purpose. They have a code, like most Knight orders, but some have whispered that they hold both a public code that espouses chivalric values and a secret code that encourages tyranny, intimidation, and murder. Their actions would certainly lend that credence as the Knights of the Five Towers are among the most brutal and murderous knights in any realm. They rarely give quarter to those who surrender to them and even the defenseless and innocent are given no respite. There is more than one tale of a village put to the sword by this order and it is well known that House Bannon uses them to keep their hands clean of acts of villainy. To better intimidate others, the Knights of the Five Towers wear black armor, decorated to look strange and monstrous and each are masters of combat, typically preferring large, two handed weapons like great swords and axes. This, coupled with the fact that they have some of the best equipment of any military force in the Kingdom, makes them terrifying to face in a fight. The leader of the Knights of the Five Towers is a beast of a man known as Viktor Krey, Lord of House Krey. Lord Viktor is massive specimen, often dressed in midnight armor with a savage wolf helm. He is known to be deadly on and off the field of battle and his cruelty serves as an example to the other knights in his command.

## INDUSTRY AND ECONOMY

The great houses of Arnesse have remained in power throughout history due in no small part to the leverage granted them by their industrial and economic influence. This section details the current state of their affairs in these realms.

### INDUSTRY

While one might assume that such an insular house as Innis The major exports of the Sovereignlands are wood, iron, and precious metals. Kingswood provides an abundant source of live wood of high quality and the Golden Axes of Caer

Dorston ensure that cutting is regulated and that young trees are replanted to replace the fallen. The foothills of the Worldspine Mountains support a vast mining operation that yields iron and other precious metals used in coins throughout the realm. This trade is carefully overseen by the forces of the Bannon military to ensure that none of the valuable cargo goes missing.

Being as the towns and cities of the Sovereignlands are so separated, there is little in the way of true industry in this land. Instead, many of the smaller communities such as Archdale, Arkendale, Mistdale, and Silverdale rely on artisans and artificers to produce finished goods. One of the major imports of the Sovereignlands is raw materials to turn into a variety of practical and decorative items. The quality of these works is often so high that they can demand a premium price in other markets. A piece of furniture made from King's Oak in the Sovereignlands can sell for a small fortune in the North of Arnesse. Those who seek to hone their skills as Artisans often seek to apprentice in the Sovereignlands as the skills taught there can be found nowhere else in the Kingdom.

### ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS

House Bannon's relative isolation and relationship with House Aragon have forced it to consistently be creative with its trade agreements. House Corveaux has been the Sovereignlands primary trading partner for the last two hundred years. The Vermilion Road leads directly to King's Crossing and from there, Bannon goods move throughout the land. Only House Aragon has a better relationship with the Free City of Orn and the Bannons use that port regularly to offload goods that can't be found in the Southern wastes. Highcourt's bustling port also receives goods from all over the continent bound for sale in the King's Market the capital's other markets.

Given the Bannon's position and past affiliations, they have elected to have much of the trade out of their land be brokered and facilitated by the Cirque. The Bannons are one of the few realms that does not have some kind of economic group to manage its affairs. It has placed all trust in the Cirque to manage this on their behalf. Thus, it is often hard to tell if one is buying is actually from Bannon lands. This has enabled them to make a profit on items without the inherent bias that one might levy if they knew it was from the Sovereignlands.

One interesting fact is that most merchants are not welcome in Bannon lands. It is said this is because the locals can't stand the presence of strangers in their town and while markets are popular in almost every part of the Kingdom, towns in the Sovereignlands don't host moon markets or regular trade

gatherings. The Cirque has managed this by sending special caravans every month to the major trade hubs to collect goods. This caravan is known as the Royal Coaster and is guarded by a renowned mercenary company - the Red Wolven.

## THE SOVEREIGNLANDS PROTECTORATE

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The Sovereignlands Protectorate rests within the wide valley between the Worldspine Mountains to the North and the Vokun Mountains to the South. The Kingsvale as it is often called is a heavily wooded region and dominated by three major forests: the Kingswood, which is by far the largest, Wolfwood, and Hartwood, far to the West and North of Highcourt. The Hartwood is also considered the King's personal hunting ground and home to Cardington Manor, the King's private Summer estate. Those found in the forest without leave of the Crown are punished harshly. The River Ard runs through the middle of the Sovereignlands and provides a vital trade artery that runs all the way through to the city of King's Crossing in the Midlands. The second largest river, known as the King's Vein, runs South from the Worldspine, through Kingswood and into the River Ard.

Collectively, the towns in the Sovereignlands are called 'The Dales' as many are very remote, isolated villages in heavily forested regions. Even though the noble seat of power may not be far away, many towns developed a sense of autonomy and in many ways their own culture. The people of the Sovereignlands are an industrious lot that can be xenophobic and superstitious when facing outsiders or change. All the Sovereignlands has been divided among the nobles loyal to House Bannon, then divided further into boroughs, each ruled by a castellan administrator who is loyal to the noble owner of that land. A noble often is the ruler of at least two boroughs.

Due to its close proximity to the sea and its rather high elevation, the Sovereignlands can be quite cool most of the year. Being as it sits between two mountain ranges, rainfall is very common during all seasons and the skies are frequently overcast and grey. This can make the region feel a bit dreary and dark. The dale rarely gets very hot during the Summer and on those few days it does, one can often find respite in a cool sea breeze from the coast. Fall tends to be a mild and wet allowing for an extended growing season. The cold temperatures of Winter bring unrelenting, heavy snows. Most towns in the Sovereignlands stock up on supplies as most major routes of trade and resupply are cut off for months. This harsh season increases the general isolation of the region and

it is a struggle to keep even the main roads clear during the Winter. Spring is wet and cool and the snows are replaced by flooding in the lowland wood as the heavy rains combine with melt from the mountains.

### HIGHCOURT

The largest city and capital of Arnesse is home to approximately four hundred thousand people. Within lies High Keep, the seat of power in the Kingdom as well as the Grand Court, where most of the duties of running Arnesse are carried out. The Apotheon, home of the Apothea, and the finest library in the realm, rises high against the skyline. The city is divided into quarters with the wealthy and privileged living on a raised rocky outcropping above the city in either the King's Quarter or the High Quarter. Surrounding the wealthy on the lower tier is the Artisan's Quarter, the Low Quarter, and home to the poorest residents of Highcourt, Beggar's Alley. The River Ard actually runs through a part of the lower city and is criss-crossed by a number of bridges, the greatest of which is the Rose Bridge. One of the largest markets in Arnesse sits between the Artisan's and Low Quarter - the King's Market, bringing in goods from all over the continent for trade and sale. Sitting at the far end of a deep, natural harbor the city's ports are always busy, ensuring that Highcourt is not only the seat of power but a one of the major trade hubs in Arnesse.

### SILVERDALE

The next largest town in the King's Vale is located along the Vermilion Road where the River Ard meets the Lyonesse River. Home to forty thousand people, it is a major trade hub, collecting goods from the surrounding dales and towns for shipment East along the Vermilion Road. The Cirque has a strong presence in Silverdale, hosting a second Guildhall run by a Ringmaster known as "Fingers" Gillan. Clara Bannon, daughter of Lawrence Bannon, Lord of Caer Dorston, serves as the city's castellan and is known as a capable administrator and a fair individual. But she has been plagued by rumors of torrid extramarital relationship with "Fingers" Gillan and that he has convinced her to let the Cirque have their way with the town. She has denied any wrong-doing but the growing criminal element and crime rate does not make her look good. Some fear it's only a matter of time before the King personally intervenes. Silverdale is an anomaly among towns in the Kingsvale, it is a fairly open and even cosmopolitan town that is quite welcoming to outsiders.

### LANTON

To the North and East of the Kingswood lie the Silver Hills, home to a vast mining operation that helps ensure the wealth

of House Bannon and the Kingdom. This town was once the site of the famous battle between Giles I and the now king, Giles II which saw the latter rise to the throne by defeating and executing his father for witchcraft. This area is ruled by the Lord Astor Cornwall and has recently been a source of unrest and rebellion. Some have said that it was Aurorym agitators that have stirred up the populace, but Lord Cornwall's own son recently led an armed insurrection against the Kingdom which was brutally put down by the Lord of Coventry, Arthur Bannon. The King has ordered Arthur Bannon to remain in the region and Lanton is now an occupied city under martial law, ensuring that its silver and goods will continue to flow to the Kingdom's coffers without issue.

### TWO RIVERS

Sitting at the junction of the King's Vein and the Widow's Wash, Two Rivers serves both as a collection hub for outbound trade and an intake for goods bound upriver to Coventry Castle, Silverheart Castle, Arkendale, and Archdale. This town is ruled by the Catherine Blackwood, the Lady of Caddock Tor. Two Rivers is less of a town and more of a work camp where goods are transported, sorted, and stored. Serfs laborers make up most of the population and are often treated poorly. The Blackwoods are harsh masters and have appointed a castellan from the Knights of the Five Towers named Ser Killian Ironhand who ensures that the required work gets done, no matter the cost. While there is coin to be made here, there are also dangers. People go missing on a regular basis and rumors abound that black market uses this place to gather slaves for sale. This town also sits amid the Whispering Marsh and it's said that not a few are claimed by the whatever horrors lie with the depths of that fetid bog.

### HOLLOWMERE

Founded in 729, shortly after Giles I ascends to the throne Hollowmere sits on the border of House Bannon and House Richter lands, just on the edge of the Vale of Shadow. In 742 a border dispute erupts between House Richter and House Bannon when a surveyor claims that the dividing line between their territories was incorrectly drawn. Both sides are unable to come to a resolution, tensions rise, and both sides send armies to the area. When House Bannon moves to occupy the town, the Richter army moves to block them and what results is the Battle of the Vale, a bloody multi-day battle that costs the lives of over four thousand soldiers on both sides. The Richters, unwilling to continue the bloody fight for territory, meet and agree to a new dividing line that splits Hollowmere in two along the river known as the Dread Run. House Bannon owns the South bank and Richter the North. Hollowmere is the gateway to the Vale of Shadow and the

Annwyn. The people living there have made the best of living so close to their neighbors and in some ways this has brought the almost ten thousand residents closer together. Given the long tradition of craftsmen between both Houses, this is one of the best towns to find a particular item. The Annwyn presents an interesting quandary for House Bannon in that the only way it can get goods out of Hollowmere and the Vale of Shadow without paying tax to Houses Richter or Blayne is down Dread Run and into the sea. If they do not ultimately control the Annwyn, they could be taxed for sending goods through that territory as well.

### THE REVERIE

Sitting amid the Worldspine Mountains, little is known of this place other than that it is the home of the Sisters of the Fayne Moirai. It is said there are three great stone pillars there which are sacred to their order. The wise know that to travel there uninvited is to likely never return and all manner of tales and stories are told of the mystic and forbidden rites which are practiced high in the mountains on moonless nights. Few have seen the Reverie and even fewer have lived to tell the tale or are willing to speak of what they saw.

## BANNON HIGH HOUSES

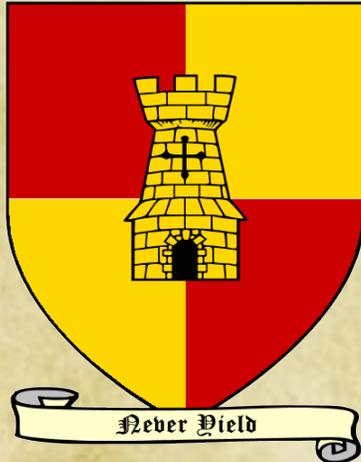
### HOUSE BANNON OF CADWYN

Castle: Caer Cadwyn

Ruler: Charles Bannon, Lord Paragon of the Sovereignlands and Warden of the West

Fief: Wolfhome

Motto: "Never Yield"



Home of the Lord Paragon, Charles Bannon, Caer Cadwyn is the ancestral home of House Bannon and has been for the better part of over seven hundred years. Located along the Western Coast of Arnesse it sits above a sheer cliff several miles from the Coast Road leading into Highcourt from the South. Caer Cadwyn has the distinction of being the closest castle to Highcourt and also one of the largest fortresses in all Arnesse. The castle is said to be unconquerable or at least the cost to take it would be more than most lords would be willing to pay in time, resources, and troops. From here, the Bannons administrate the Kingdom and the Sovereignlands. Caer Cadwyn also impressively overlooks the sea, making it only able to be attacked from one direction and giving the surround an impressive view of the majestic cliffs and the ocean hundreds of feet below. The only notable town in Wolfhome is Falder's Krays. Once a small fishing village it's position near the Coast Road and Highcourt have seen it grow into a major source of seafood. Fish and crabs are popular in the Sovereignlands, especially in the West, and the markets of Highcourt are filled with some of the finest seafood in Arnesse. Wolfhome is also a noted vacation destination for many in the Kingdom. Its proximity to the Grand Court,

natural beauty, and mild Summers have encouraged many to build manors that are often used only a few months out of the year.

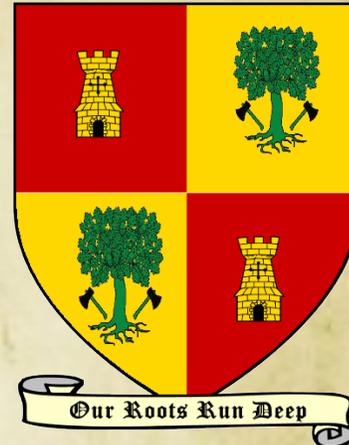
### HOUSE BANNON OF DORSTON

Castle: Caer Dorston

Ruler: Lawrence Bannon, Lord of Dorston

Fief: Eistwald

Motto: "Our Roots Run Deep"



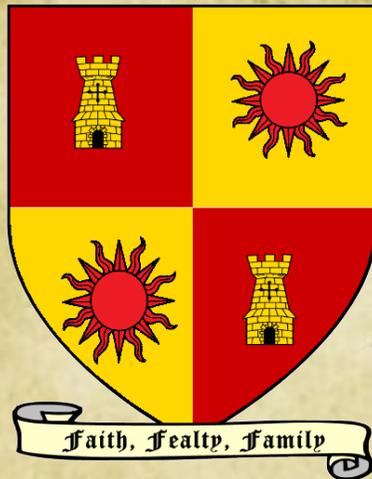
Lord Lawrence is descended from the bloodline of Lord Nathaniel Bannon, brother of the late King Richard III. The Lord Lawrence is an aging nobleman who is known for his patience and wisdom. He is also known to be a bit of a perfectionist to the point where if something is not as he wants it, he can fly off the handle. He is the Lord of Caer Dorston and have been given ownership of the fief known as the Eistwald along the Vermilion Road and West of the Gatewatch. The land is rich in timber and the Lord of Dorston has focused much of his attention on foresting. He formed a group known as the Golden Axes, who serve to gather lumber as well as ensure that the land is revitalized for future cuttings. Lord Lawrence is also the ruler of the town of Silverdale, one of the wealthiest villages in all the Sovereignlands. He assigned his daughter, Lady Clara as the Castellon of the town. Lady Clara is known to be young and very ambitious. It's also rumored that she's involved the Bannons in quite a bit of the Cirque's less than legal business and that she's sleeping with the head of the Cirque in Silverdale, a man named "Fingers" Gillan.

## HOUSE BANNON OF COVENTRY

Castle: Coventry Castle

Ruler: Arthur Bannon, Lord of Coventry

Fief: Northwall



The Bannons of Coventry are descended from the line of Queen Margaery Bannon and the Lady Margaret Bannon, daughter of the King Richard I. Since the death of King Edwin I in 692, many blamed their line for the Bastard War and the ensuing chaos that followed and the House fell out of favor with the throne. It is only in the last five years that the star of Coventry Castle is again on the rise. Lord Arthur Bannon was given the Lordship upon the death of his father Henry Bannon and made the bold decision to convert to the Aurorym faith. He was welcomed with open arms by the King and in the years that have followed, Arthur has been given increasing responsibility and command in the King's armies. There are persistent rumors that the King is seeking a potential replacement for Sir Blake Bannon, the son of the Lord Paragon, if he does not convert. The Bannons of Coventry control the fief of Stonewall and the town of Archdale, a place well known for its high-quality textiles and jewelry. Stonewall sits at the edge of the Northern Barrows, supposedly haunted hills where the tombs of

the long-dead kings of ages past now lie.

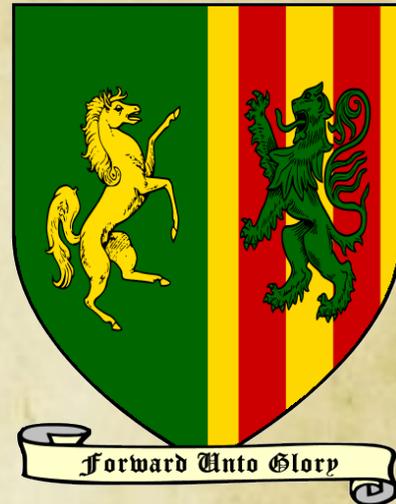
## HOUSE MARSTON

Castle: Lyonhall

Ruler: Edward Marston, Lord of Lyonhall and Warden of the South

Fief: Lyonesse

Motto: "Forward Unto Glory"

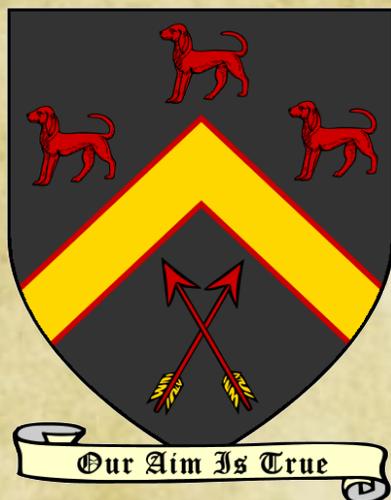


House Marston is a High House ruled by the Lord Edward Marston, a renowned horsemaster that has grown the Lyonesse into one of the primary sources of cavalry for House Bannon's armies. House Marston makes no secrets that it hires and uses retainers from Corveaux lands to increase the quality of its horses. There is said to be a running rivalry between House Marston and House Perryn as to who has the finest steeds in Arnesse. This rivalry extends to tournaments and has even turned from a friendly competition to outright violence when one side's honor is questioned. There are also persistent rumors that the Perryns have even stolen horses from Marston lands to increase the quality of their steeds, but no one has ever been able to prove this. Lord Edward is also the Warden of the South and as such he is charged with the primary defense of the borders into Tarkath. Mounted outriders on patrol are a common sight in the Southern Barrows and along the Aurean Road. Those who pass through these lands are often subject to inquiries from Bannon forces as to their nature and business. Those from Tarkath face a lot of scrutiny and

the real risk of being turned back.

### HOUSE BLACKWOOD

Castle: Caer Caddock  
Ruler: Catherine Blackwood, Lady of Caddock Tor  
Fief: Caddock Tor  
Motto: "Our Aim is True"



Catherine Blackwood, or the Lady of the Wood as some call her, is the regent of Caddock Tor and ruler of House Blackwood. The Blackwood family were originally vassals to House Urquhart of the Midlands, but a failed coup sixty years ago against the then ruler of House Urquhart, Lady Elena resulted in the family fleeing to the Sovereignlands, fueling rumors that the coup was funded with Bannon coin. Since then, the Blackwoods have proven to be loyal vassals to House Bannon and their archers have been an invaluable addition to the King's armies. The Blackwoods are hunters by trade and oversee most of the fur and meat trade within the Sovereignlands from their castle at Caddock Tor, high above the River Ard. They also control the town of Wolfstone, a small village between the Misty Grove and the Wolfwood. Wolfstone is little more than an outpost during the Winter, but during the Spring and Summer hunting season, it's population grows to almost five thousand, turning it into a destination for hunters and trappers. It is said that Lady Blackwood is the finest hunter in all of Arnesse, better than even the Knights of the Ivy and the Woodwards. Some say that Catherine's beauty hides a darker, sadistic side and that she hosts hunts each cycle of the moon for more lively, human prey. The House's reputation as hunters attracts the wealthy from all over the Kingdom to come to Caddock Tor and have a

Blackwood guide take them into the Wolfwood seeking one of the great stags that live there.

### HOUSE HAWTHORNE

Castle: Hawthorne Hall  
Ruler: Roderick Hawthorne, Lord of Hawthorne Hall and Warden of the North  
Fief: Shadowvale  
Motto: "Always Vigilant"

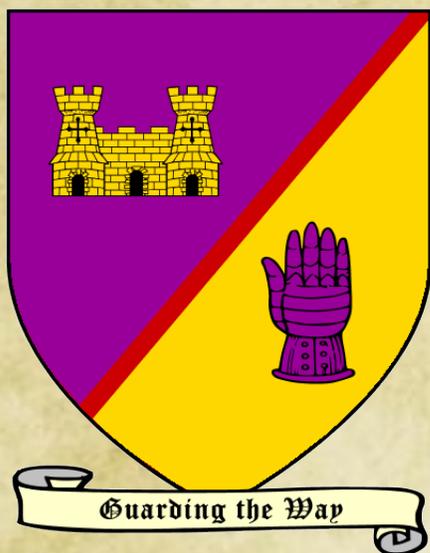


House Hawthorne's a noble family in it's last days. Led by the aged Lord Roderick Hawthorne, this house has been plagued by tragedy in the last twenty years. Once the Shadowvale was well protected by the Hawthornes, trusted by King Giles I to guard Bannon's holdings in the North. But the locals say that a darkness has come to the Vale of Shadow and brought with it the chill winds of death. Several years ago, Lord Roderick's son and heir, Darion was killed under mysterious circumstances while on patrol. A Hexen from the Hearthlands was called in to investigate and from what they could tell, the young Lord and his knights came under attack by some mysterious force that they were unable to defeat. Lydia Hawthorne, Roderick's daughter, died to a strange wasting sickness that same year. The long, cold Winter of 760 took the life of the Lady of Hawthorne Hall, Lena, but it is said her true cause of death was a broken heart. The ghosts now outnumber the living in that ancient manor and Lord Roderick himself has slipped into a deep depression; an ennui that few can rouse him from. The King has contemplated replacing Hawthorne, but his inaction indicates he may merely be waiting for old Lord Roderick to die. Speculation has circled as to which noble would be brave enough to take the seat of a house

that from all appearances seems to be cursed.

### HOUSE HOLT

Castle: Caer Stormholme  
Ruler: Victoria Holt, Lady of the Watch and Warden of the East  
Fief: Eastwatch  
Motto: "Guarding the Way"

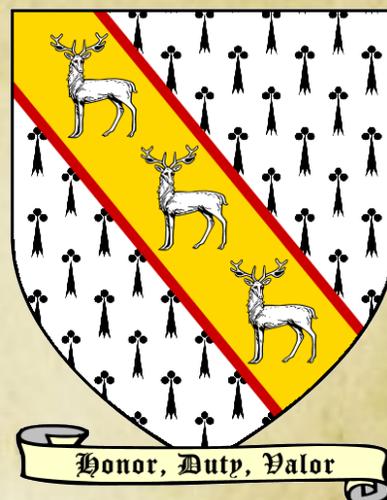


House Holt is the newest noble house in Bannon lands and was formed by King Giles II after his coronation. It is led by Lady Victoria, once a Knight of the Five Towers who distinguished herself on the field of battle of Lanton, earning the nickname the Black Banshee for how much death she brought to the field. Lady Holt is aging, but she is said to still be one of the finest blades in all Arnesse. It is not uncommon for students to come from all around to seek training from her. She formed a group of knights known as the Wierguard whose duty is to secure the Vermilion Road in and out of the Sovereignlands. The Wierguard also is tasked with collecting a road toll from all travellers. Eastwatch has been embroiled in a bit of controversy of late and Lady Victoria's allegiances to the Lord Paragon Charles have come under some scrutiny. Despite her early loyalty to Giles II, it is said that the Lady Holt has some private reservations about the Aurorym faith and thus has become more loyal to the Lord Paragon in recent years. This has caused some friction with her neighbor Lord Cornwall in Caer Weatherstone. Lady Victoria and Lord Astor also do not get along well personally and there is a concern that the Eastern Sovereignlands is one misunderstanding away from an all-out conflict between

the two noble Houses.

### HOUSE LAURENT

Castle: Silverhart Castle  
Ruler: Evelyn Laurent, Lady of Silverhart  
Fief: Silverhold  
Motto: "Honor, Duty, Valor"



House Laurent was once the First House in Bannon lands. It was the home of a line of great knights that leads back to Sir Tristan Laurent, the King's Blade, who's legend and skill were rivaled by few others. But history has not been kind to the Laurent family. Once Silverheart was a place of renown and valor, a castle where legends were born. In recent years, the house fell on hard financial times when Giles II discovered that Lord Valmont Laurent was skimming silver from the mining operation in the Silver Hills. He took the mining operation from the Laurents and gave it to House Cornwall. Lord Valmont paid for the treachery with his life and his heir and daughter, Lady Evelyn Laurent has struggled to restore the family's good name. This effort is complicated by the fact that Arkendale is still headed by a powerful and corrupt castellan appointed by her father named Hugh de Vec. He does not see eye to eye with the Lady of Silverheart and he's influential enough that removing him from power is not easy. In the hopes of winning favor with the King, Lady Evelyn converted to the Aurorym faith and has been encouraging her people to do the same. Given Lord Cornwall's recent fall from grace in the eyes of the King, Lady Evelyn sees this as her chance to restore Laurent. She has also opened up talks with Lady Victoria Holt, and given how they both feel about Cornwall, this has further fueled speculation that the Sovereignlands is poised for a potential civil

war.

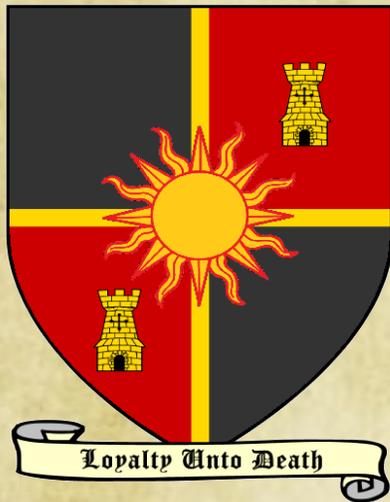
### HOUSE CORNWALL

Castle: Castle Weatherstone

Ruler: Astor Cornwall, Lord of Weatherstone

Fief: Highroad

Motto: "Loyalty Unto Death"



House Cornwall rules the Northeastern section of Bannon lands including the Silver Hills and the town of Lanton. When the forces of House Blayne allied with Giles II and defeated his father at the battle of Lanton, many Blayne stayed behind and chose to make their home there. They founded a chantry which has grown to be the largest in the Sovereignlands. Lord Astor Cornwall was the first Bannon noble to convert to the Aurorym faith shortly after King Giles II took the throne and his lands have become a haven for the Aurorym. This earned him a great deal of favor King Giles II. So much favor that when the King discovered that Valmont Laurent was skimming extra weight from his silver yield, he awarded the right to oversee that operation to the Cornwalls. This made the Cornwall family very wealthy and by proxy the town of Lanton prospered. All was going well until Cornwall placed his son, Alion as the castellan of Lanton. While there, the young man was heavily influenced by radicals rumored to be Aurorym and was convinced to try to start an armed uprising to annex Higheoad as part of House Blayne. Alion raised an army of two thousand soldiers, mostly peasants supported by mercenaries hired with silver from Bannon's own mines. The force was defeated by Arthur Bannon, Lord of Coventry Castle and Alion was put to death for treason. The King expressed his displeasure at Lord Cornwall by

ordering Lord Arthur into Lanton to occupy the town in the name of the King. Lord Arthur has the town under martial law and is now overseeing all mining operations until Giles II can decide where the Cornwall family's allegiances lie.

## THE TRADITIONS OF BANNON

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### HOUSE LEGENDS

#### BANYN THE BRAVE

Stories are told of Banyyn the Brave, a legendary hero and the greatest general to have ever lived. Banyyn waged war against the ancients in times long forgotten and was never defeated in battle. It was Banyyn that led the forgotten tribes out of the darkest age and made the first settlement within the city of Thrantis. Banyyn is said to have passed great wisdom and knowledge to the early men, allowing civilizations of old to flourish and grow into mighty kingdoms. The blood of Banyyn the Brave is said to have coursed through the veins of Miles Bannon, First Lord and the founder of House Bannon.

#### THE RUINS OF HIGHCOURT

It is said that the seat of power in Arnesse, Highcourt is built upon the ruins of a city even more ancient. If one travels deep into the sewers of Highcourt they might find the entrance to long-lost catacombs filled with deadly traps and other unspeakable horrors. At the heart of the catacombs is said to be a labyrinthine maze, the heart of which is the prison for some unspeakable, evil from the dawn of time. Tales abound of intrepid adventurers travelling to the undercity of Highcourt in search of treasure and wealth only to never been seen again.

#### THE DRAGON, THE HAWK, AND THE WOLF

A myth is often told of the dragon, the hawk, and the wolf. In the story, the mighty warrior Aras conquers the throne of his brother and condemns the king's daughter, Lisena, to live as a virgin. Lisena is visited by the God Critas, the Eldarch who makes her with child. When she gives birth to triplets King Aras is enraged and sends the children down the river Ard in the hopes they are killed by the waters. Spared by fate, each of the three is taken in by a fabled creature of Arnesse and taught to be a great warrior. When the three siblings meet and try to overthrow King Aras, two of them fail to defeat him. It is the son, Edryn, trained by wolves, who unites his sister and brother to defeat the wicked Aras. Edryn, son of the wolf, is acknowledged by his siblings to be the greatest leader among them and takes his place as the rightful ruler. House Bannon claims lineage to the line of Edryn and use it as a symbol of

their right to rule over the other great houses such as Corveaux and Aragon.

### THE BLADE OF KINGS

In the days of and myth, long before the Age of Kings, a mighty blade was forged from the shards of Angrist, the World Hammer. This legendary sword would come to be called Auranthis, the Blade of Kings. It was said to have only been able to held in the hand of a true and rightful sovereign and used only in the defense of their Kingdom. Auranthis was known to have been wielded by Banyn the Brave as well as the First King, Edryn Wolfson. No one knows what happened to the sword or where it went, but it has not been seen in centuries. Quite a few believe the weapon was never real in the first place and is only a story. Auranthis was said to have a mystic connection to the land and legends say that when Arnesse is most in need, it will appear again and find its way to the hand of a King who will lead the people out of the darkness.

### HOUSE AND GUILD RELATIONSHIPS

The Age of Kings has marked a new era for Arnesse. Each great house struggles to maintain its power and legitimacy through navigating the mazes of power. This process has led many to form unlikely alliances with old enemies and make new and bitter enemies where before there were none. The following details the current state of each relationship as they correspond to this faction. This information is to be taken as in-play by you and other members of this faction.

#### HOUSE RICHTER

It is said that the road to the throne passes through the Dusklands and the Bannons long ago found this to be true. Bannon nobles know that in order for a monarch to gain and hold the crown, they must have the backing of the Richters. As much as it pains them to admit it, House Richter's army is likely the only one that could best the Bannons on the battlefield. Fortunately for the House of Kings, the Richter's have been a very reliable ally for centuries. This alliance has largely been cemented by the fact that the Richters have been well paid in gold over the years, but it has also been secured through marriage; Richter blood has been infused into the royal line a number of times. The current Lord Paragon, Charles Bannon is married to Sabine, sister of the Lord Paragon of the Dusklands, Hawken Richter.

Despite this, the Bannons know that the Richters will only back winners and for now, they are winners. They are well aware that if they were ever to stumble, they may not be able to rely on the House of Iron. This was demonstrated less than

a decade ago when it was said that Giles I had an agreement with House Richter to join him at the Battle of Lanton, a move that would have almost surely secured victory over his son, but when the time came for the armies of the Dusklands to join battle, they were nowhere to be seen. Giles I lost the battle, the throne, and his life. The Bannons know that in order to keep power, they must ensure that the Richters support them. Twenty years ago, as the Dusklands struggled in the wake of the explosion of the Shardmount, Bannon gold and supplies were quick to help that realm. King Giles II has also turned a blind eye to House Richter's aggression in Western Thornwood, despite pleas from other houses to stop those attacks. Some in House Bannon are extremely concerned that King Giles II's growing level of unpopularity with the people could be enough of a sign of weakness that the Richters may break their ties and back a stronger contender for the throne. Worse yet are the rumors from the Dusklands that some of his vassals are dissatisfied with Lord Paragon Hawken's rule. Given their recent aggressions this could mean a war in the North, a civil war within House Richter, or both. The Richters were always a reliable, constant source of stability. To see them potentially slipping into chaos is as unsettling as it is dangerous.

#### HOUSE ROURKE

Outwardly, there are few Houses who claim to dislike the lawlessness of the Rourke's more than the Bannons. The monarchy has made many declarations denouncing the crimes and piracy committed on the high seas and is frequently offering bounties for Rourke Captains. No Rourke is welcome in the Grand Court and it is said that if a Rourke sets foot on Bannon soil, that foot will be forfeit.

Privately, matters are a bit different. The Bannons know the Rourkes are easy to pay to do a task that one does not want talked about. For the last half a century, the rulers of Bannon have kept some number of Rourke Captains quietly on their payroll. In exchange for coin and leads on ships to raid, the Rourkes have dealt with numerous threats and rivals to the throne. While they have dealings, this is purely a business transaction and the Bannons have kept this fact extremely quiet for fear of how it would look publicly. House Bannon would treat House Rourke poorly in public but in private seek them out if a less than legal matter needed to be handled. The Bannons would never trust a Sea Lord beyond the fact they will generally uphold a deal if well paid. Even then they have realistic expectations that even if paid, the Rourkes may not

uphold their end of the bargain.

### HOUSE CORVEAUX

If there is a single House in Arnesse that House Bannon trusts, it likely is Corveaux. Primarily this is because the Bannons know the rulers of House Corveaux are a very honorable lot and hold to their word faultlessly. This is a fact that the House Bannon rulers have used to great effect over the years to secure House Corveaux's aid and backing. House Bannon kings and queens have married into the Houses of Corveaux for centuries and apart from a few times in history when various rulers have had disagreements, these two have acted largely in each other's best interests. To put it simply House Bannon expects that House Corveaux and its vassals will be loyal to the Crown as they have always been.

This is not to say that House Bannon is naive on the fact that House Corveaux may never be disloyal. King Giles II made his displeasure with House Corveaux clear when he took a large swath of their land and created the Hearthlands Protectorate in 451 A.S. Giles claimed this was because of the humiliation suffered by his mother, the Lady Rosalind, when House Corveaux allowed Lady Elysande and Lady Alice to marry his father, Giles I. This chilled relations between the two Houses, a chill which has persisted given that the Corveaux family has yet to accept the Aurorym faith. As a result Giles II has made few efforts to rekindle relations with their long time ally.

### HOUSE BLAYNE

House Blayne is a fairly new alliance for the Bannons and it has caused a fundamental fracture in the House of Kings. The very ideas that House Blayne represents flies in the face of the traditional way that the Bannons have done things for centuries. The very concepts that the Aurorym preach are a threat to the way the Bannons keep power and control. Yet, King Giles II has made a very convincing argument to his vassals and family that times in Arnesse are changing and that the Aurorym not only represent a religion, but a changing mindset among the people. He's argued that the Bannons can resist this tide or they can be swept away by it. This has forced many within the house into the uncomfortable position of having to choose if they should support change and the Blayne family or stand by the traditional values that have been in place for as long as any can remember.

Those who do not favor House Blayne are quick to cite that their blood is thin and that they regularly marry or promote those of common stock. With some, it is hard to find what they dislike more about the Blaynes - the fact that they are

religious or the fact that they would never deign to dilute the Blood of Kings by marrying into their family. Ultimately, how House Blayne is treated depends on what side of the argument one falls. Those who back the King and his Queen are ardent supporters of House Blayne and many have already converted to the Aurorym faith. They are doing all in their power to ensure that Giles II has a long reign and that the Aurorym faith becomes a power in Arnesse. Those who cannot fathom any alliance with the Blaynes sit in another camp entirely. Most Bannons in this camp are doing their best to avoid the topic of how they feel on House Blayne in the hopes that it will be dealt with by some outside force. Giles II has made a long list of enemies and they feel it's almost certain that one of them will see him taken care of, thus opening the door to restoring the balance in the family. Even those Bannons who feel this way would not treat House Blayne poorly in public as they fear of retribution from the King. Also, it would make their family look weak by revealing there is any division in the Bannon ranks.

### HOUSE HALE

House Bannon has its second closest relationship with House Hale. The Hale family was founded ages ago by nobles of Bannon and Corveaux that traveled North to domesticate the clans of Everfrost. While they were successful in their mission to subjugate them, time and exposure to the harsh ways of the North have changed those once refined Southern nobles into something very different. Still, the words that bound House Hale and its vassals in service to House Bannon are as true today as they were centuries ago. So long have these words held true that the Bannons simply expect the Hales to serve loyally. The whispers are that the Hales are little more than dogs to their Bannon masters and those whispers are not far from the mark. The average Bannon noble will expect that a member of House Hale will do what is asked of them and that they will do it without question. House Bannon often takes advantage of the Winter Lords' reputation for violence and cruelty as many nobles will cower at the very threat of facing a Hale army in battle. The Bannons often bind Northmen into long-term oaths that take advantage of the Hale's propensity for almost faultlessly honoring their word.

But not all has been as it always was. In the fight for Giles II to take the throne from his father, Giles I, the forces of House Hale rose up and joined the rebel army against the forces of the Crown. This took many by surprise as House Hale has always been loyal to the King. How or why this happened is unclear, but it has left many in House Bannon now wondering exactly how loyal the dogs are to their masters. Giles II's focus on affairs at home have cast his gaze far from Everfrost.

Little has been heard from the Winter Lords save that the Fayne Moirai were recently dismissed from the service of Lord Talbot Hale and replaced by a bone witch known only as Ynglinga. A long-held fear is now beginning to be realized the courts of the South. That this decision is the first sign that the Winter Lords have finally turned their back on the ways of the civilized world and embraced the savagery of the ancient clans.

### HOUSE INNIS

Members of House Innis have a long-standing and confrontational relationship the Bannons. This has been offset by the fact that in House Bannon had occupied Innis lands for the better part of a century and a half following the Great War and during that time sowed much of it's nobility with their own blood. This led to many unions between loyal Bannon and Corveaux nobles and formerly disloyal Innis nobles. The result was whole family lines that are loyal to the monarchy.

The Innis have now been restored to a Great House but the Bannons know that there are elements of House Innis that hold a deep animosity toward the Kingdom's rulership as a result of years of oppression. It's also is no secret that House Innis is looking for ways to improve it's standing among the Great Houses. Most Bannons will treat the Innis cordially and well as long as they make their intention to remain loyal to the Crown clear. That still does not mean any Bannon will trust or seek to empower a member of House Innis to any authority or position where they can do them harm. It's likely that any Bannon leaders would seek to gain as much information as they can on the inner workings of the Innis in their local region to ensure that they were not seeking to return to their wayward, rebellious ways.

### HOUSE ARAGON

House Bannon has no love for Lords of Tarkath. The Snakes of the South have long slithered into the affairs of the Northern Lords and if the Bannons had it their way they would see Aragon and it's vassals exiled from the Kingdom, even if that meant losing Tarkath. But this is not a practical as the Aragons are a popular lot and have a great deal of political sway in courts of the North, mostly purchased through drugs in other exotic items that have proven extremely popular with the wealthy of the Kingdom. They have massive influence with the halls of the Apotheon possibly the mostly highly trained army in all the Kingdom. While the Bannons have proven they can soundly defeat the Aragons in the past, they also know that Tarkath cannot be invaded by an army. Should they go to war, Tarkath would become an neigh unassailable base of operations with which they could harry and harass the

Sovereignlands. Worse yet, they would likely be joined in that war by the Free City of Orn, a longtime ally of House Aragon. Trade from the South would grind to a halt, crippling portions of the Kingdom.

Unable to directly confront their foe, the Bannons are forced to play a game of cat and mouse with the wiley Aragons. The snakes are schemers and unafraid to use poison or the blade to resolve a matter, making them a dangerous adversary. To date, the Bannons have put an end to every attempt House Aragon has made to seize power and while they likely can't eliminate their foe, they can see that they never gain the upper hand. The goal of House Bannon is to get House Aragon to show it's hand and then be ready to counter them. All in House Bannon assume that a Lord or Lady of Tarkath has a plot they trying to further. The challenge is getting them to reveal and being sufficiently prepared to deal with the consequences. Once the snake has shown itself, it is easy for the mailed fist of House Bannon to crush it.

### THE APOTHECA

The Apothea has long been a source of frustration for House Bannon. The Magisters are extremely useful. Their skills with lore, healing, apothecary are a boon to any noble that has them by their side. But the Bannons also know that the Apothea's largest benefactors are two houses that wish no good for them - the Aragons and Innis. So this leaves most Bannon nobles in the unenviable position of having to decide how close to bring a Magister to their plans and their household. The very real fear is that any Magister could be a spy for their rivals and while this isn't even terribly common to be the case, the Bannons sense that the Magisters are playing some kind of longer, larger game with Arnesse.

Regardless, House Bannon employs the Apothea, much like other Houses, but they tend to keep them more at arm's length and, in general, trust them less than some other houses might. The Bannons would be more satisfied with the Magisters if they could make them swear an Oath of Fealty, but the Guild Compact protects any Guildsman from having to swear an oath, save those sworn to their own group or order.

### THE FAYNE

The Kings of Arnesse have rarely not had a Fayne by their side and no House in Arnesse is closer to the Sisters of the Fayne Moirai than House Bannon. There are some who speculate that this is because the House of Kings is a position of authority, but the Bannons feel that the connection runs deeper. Often, the Sisters of the Fayne have provided the Bannons with unique insight that have allowed them to

maintain their edge over rivals. In a world where a House's power and status are reflected in the number and rank of Fayne that a House has in their service, the Bannons have more sisters in their service than any rival by quite a number. Even House Bannon's High Houses often have full cabals, a privilege that is normally reserved for Great Houses or very wealthy and powerful vassals. It is rare for a noble of Bannon to be seen going anywhere without a Fayne or two by their side. They serve as a noble's advisor, counselor, bodyguard, and it is said, occasional lover. Each noble's relationship with their Fayne is different and each has different expectations.

The Fayne Moirai are relied up by many nobles, but the Bannons have an almost manic level of obsession with their visions. Call it paranoia or superstition, but House Bannon rulers insist on 'Consulting the Fates' when faced with even small decisions. This can create issues as Fate is often not clear and prophecy can make more questions than they answer. More so than any faction in Arnesse, the Sisters have earned the trust of the House of Kings due to years of loyal service and proving they have the interests of the Bannons in mind. If you believe the tales, this began with an ancient tie that monarchs have with the Fate. Stories are told that even the great Kings of old such as Eldryn Wolfson were counseled by powerful Oracles that gave them special insight into the workings of Fate. Other noble Houses tend to frown on how much the Bannons rely on these soothsayers to determine their course of action, but the House of Kings looks upon those leaders who do not consult the Fayne Moirai and listen to their words as too weak minded to understand and use the powerful augury and wisdom that comes from their lips.

In very recent years, with the ascension of the faith to a place of prominence among the Bannons, the Sisters have found their roles in the Grand Court increasingly marginalized. King Giles II is well aware of the narrow rope he walks and while it has been extremely subtle, the King has relied less and less on the consult of the Sisters and more and more on that of his wife and the priests of the Aurorym. It began with the appointment of the Lord Patriarch to the King's Council and there are very real fears that soon, the Fayne could find their roles in the King's Court reduced in a much more public way.

### THE CIRQUE

The Bannons long ago learned that trying to run a trade empire and manage a kingdom would be virtually impossible. Therefore, they invested heavily in their relationship with the Cirque. In the earliest days of the monarchy, the Cirque was granted a monopoly on all trade and commerce by the throne. The Bannon kings since then have maintained this monopoly in exchange for preferential treatment. The arrangement is

further enforced by the fact that the Cirque brokers most of the Bannon trade in and out of the Sovereignlands, gaining a significant cut of the profits. While both sides of this deal have been made immensely wealthy as a result, they are aware that the king's generosity here is merely to ensure that all trade and commerce is regulated by a single source that the Bannons have some control over.

The Bannons and the Cirque have a mutually beneficial relationship but neither of them are under the illusion they are friends. The Cirque is far too shady for the Bannons to trust them or even publicly call them friend. The leaders of House Bannon have made it clear that because their dealings with the Cirque are very public that House Bannon will not be involved in any manner of illegal trade or the black market. House Bannon has also made it clear to the Cirque that while they can look the other way now and then, they will take action against illegal activity as they see fit. This has not always sat well with the Cirque, but the Bannons know they need to keep themselves well and clear of appearing to be both political tyrants and morally compromised. In recent years, King Giles II's morality laws have placed an unusual amount of pressure on the illicit markets in Arnesse, a point that House Bannon knows is causing friction with the Cirque.

### THE HEXEN

For all their uses, the Hexen largely move beneath the notice of most of House Bannon. Given that the order itself is barely a force in politics, the Bannons to see them as largely a sect of very specialized mercenaries. Most Bannon leaders would know and call for a Hexen if there was some threat to their land that could not be dealt with through traditional military means. That Hexen would likely be well paid and then sent on their way.

Given the increasing number of reports of unnatural creatures coming out House Hawthorne's lands near the Veil of Shadow, the Bannons have had to employ the services of the Hexen more than in previous years. This has brought more Hexen into the Sovereignlands and while the people of the Kingswood are distrustful of strangers, these lone warriors have managed to earn the trust of many local towns and villages with their heroics. The Sovereignlands has been conditioned to love heroes and their ability to deal with monsters and protect the innocent has won the hearts and minds of many. More so than the sermon of any Auron, this has made enough of an impression among the Commonfolk to

keep people interested in and converting to the Aurorym.

## THE AURORYM

Depending on where you sit in House Bannon, the Sovereignlands either has a savior or a real problem: the Aurorym faith. Those who are opposed to the direction of the King and his alliance with House Blayne see the Aurorym as a direct threat to their power. The teachings of Magnus Blayne and the Litanies directly oppose the method of rule that House Bannon has imposed on the people for centuries. Unfortunately for those who feel this way, the Aurorym faith continues to grow in popularity among the people and the King's conversion to the faith and his marriage under the Auspices of Dawn only cemented his popularity among the Commonfolk. While the faith has not caught fire in the Sovereignlands, towns like Lanton and Silverdale already have Aurorym chantries in them and an ever-growing group of worshippers. In the Veil of Shadow, the town of Hollowmere has become a refuge for those plagued by darkness beyond the city's walls. The Aurorym have set up a camp for these refugees where they not only feed and shelter people, but train them to take up arms and defend themselves.

Those who want to see the Aurorym faith spread have to do little more than the show the people that their leaders accept the Dawn. Arthur Bannon, the Lord of Coventry Castle has converted to the faith and reaped the rewards by being promoted to second in command of the Bannon army. Most members who oppose the faith do so in secret and if they are working to undermine it, they are taking their life into their hands. No one in the immediate Bannon family has been arrested yet, but there are very real concerns that the King and those loyal to him will take more serious action, especially if a plot against him is found. When it comes to religion, the Bannons are rapidly lining up on one side or another and it's getting increasingly difficult to sit on the fence. Those who oppose what is going on in the monarchy have been forced to consider the unthinkable: in order to save the very soul of House Bannon they may have to find a way to ally with those very forces which would see it undone and cast down into ruins.

## PLAYING A BANNON

*"Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it; and this I know, my lords: that where law ends, tyranny begins."*

- William Pitt

House Bannon is the House of Kings and their line has been the dominant force in the rulership Arnesse for over three hundred years. Most within House Bannon consider themselves not only capable of rulership but ordained by history and myth to be rulers. Most Bannon associated characters, especially their gentry, will seek leadership roles and expect that others will yield to them. True to their motto, 'Never Yield' the Bannons tend to be very stubborn, rarely giving ground, even if it means great risk or their death. Most Bannon characters are extremely resource driven, meaning their world view is centered around the things being either usable or disposable. A Bannon is rarely generous and is often willing to make any sacrifice to accomplish desired ends.

Having lived in the eye of public expectation for so long, most Bannons are extremely traditional and conservative. In addition, the Sovereignlands are fairly isolated from the rest of the Kingdom and as a result, they tend to not change or adapt quickly. This results in a society that is often very superstitious and distrustful of others. This leads many in House Bannon to become masters at the art of acquiring secrets and keeping them. Many display an unhealthy level of caution that borders on outright paranoia. For House Bannon, maintaining control is a full-time job. Bannon leaders often spend more time sustaining what they have than celebrating new accomplishments. For those who can rise no further the only path forward is down. House Bannon fiercely protects what it has and tries to encourage others to maintain the status quo for the good of the Kingdom.

As rulers the Bannons maintain a rigid circle of control and manipulation that operates on multiple levels. This is highly effective against uneducated commonfolk and is complex enough to still be effective against the most experienced courtier. Outwardly, the Bannons claim to be acting in the best interest of the Kingdom; that they are keepers of the peace and prosperity and without them present, the land would spiral into chaos. This is supported by a series of myths and legends that name the Bannons as the chosen rulers of Arnesse. These stories have been sown among the populace to create dependence and elevate Bannon leaders to heroic status. When none of the above methods work, the Bannons resort to oppression, tyranny, and rule by fear, a tactic at which they excel. It is not uncommon for them to skip more subtle manipulations and skip directly to rule by intimidation.

The Bannons may be tyrannical and manipulative but in general they are not a treacherous or duplicitous lot. House Bannon is generally honorable and holds to its oaths, especially if they are to their advantage. They also are fiercely

loyal to their own family and will do all in their power to defend those who are under their charge. Some have argued this makes them predictable, but the Bannons refuse to stoop to a level where their words and oaths lose their meaning.

The wolf has a special place of respect within House Bannon. Many members of the family see themselves as wolves - fierce, cunning, and capable of working as a pack to overcome their enemies. Myth and legend have tied wolves to the Bannon family. Wolves are popular pets among Bannon nobles and while wolf imagery is not part of the Bannon heraldry, it is present in the coat of arms of many of their vassals and knights as well as being a favored theme among the Knights of the Five Towers. Wolves are sacred animals in Kingswood and hunting them is forbidden by a royal decree. This leads to a larger than usual amount of deaths to wolf attacks. When someone goes missing mysteriously in the Sovereignlands they are said to have been 'fed to the pack'.

#### THE MOUTH OF MADNESS

Over the years the Bannons have had one trait which has in some ways defined their family: madness. Almost without fail, all those descended from the bloodline of Bannon as well as their vassals have suffered from some manner of mental affliction. This affliction can be mild, moderate, or severe, but seems to be present from birth. The Bannons have done their best to downplay or hide this affliction, but it is well known among members of the House and those close to them. The cause of the madness is not well known but many have speculated that it is the result of the weakening of their line and is the result of too much intermarriage among their blood.