

# Bergsburg Castle



Above the city, the Temple and Shallya's Falls, on an island in the middle of the Drakwasser, is Bergsburg Castle, seat of the Tussen-Hochens. Construction was commenced by Roland von Hochen around 1500 IC and over the following centuries, successive Barons added to the structure, modifying defences and extending the walls to fill the land of the island.

Most notable was the major rebuild commissioned by Baron Gerhardt, paranoid that Middenland was poised to assault the city. He oversaw the construction of a new great hall on the site of the original keep, a reinforced barbican and additional height to the original dwarf-constructed walls. As a result, the castle is a patchwork of different stone - hard Middle Mountains granite and limestone of the original construction give way to brick in the more modern buildings.

## 1 The Hoist

The ingenious dwarf lifting device brings people and goods alike to the castle from the wider city. Previous to the installation of the Hoist, travel to the castle from the city came from a long route around the cliffs to the east, with the (formerly more substantial) East Bridge the only entry to the walls.

## 2 The Hunting Grounds

Several square miles of land to the west of the Drakwasser is set aside for the Tussen-Hochens and their guests to hunt deer on horseback. About half a mile from

the castle is a gamekeeper's hut, where Jan Lensill works for the Baroness to keep poachers at bay. Unbeknownst to him, in the past few days a small group of beastmen have wandered onto the western fringes of the hunting grounds and are subsisting on the Baroness' deer.

## 3 The West Bridge

The main entrance to the castle, the West Bridge consists of two stone arches onto which a wooden platform is lain. Should the castle need to be defended from attack, the wooden platform splits into two halves which can be raised.

## 4 The Barbican

A fortified gatehouse, the Barbican is the first line of defence for the castle proper, as well as the guardhouse. It is here that the Captain of the Castle Guard is stationed, along with any of his men who are not currently on patrol.

## 5 Servant's Hall

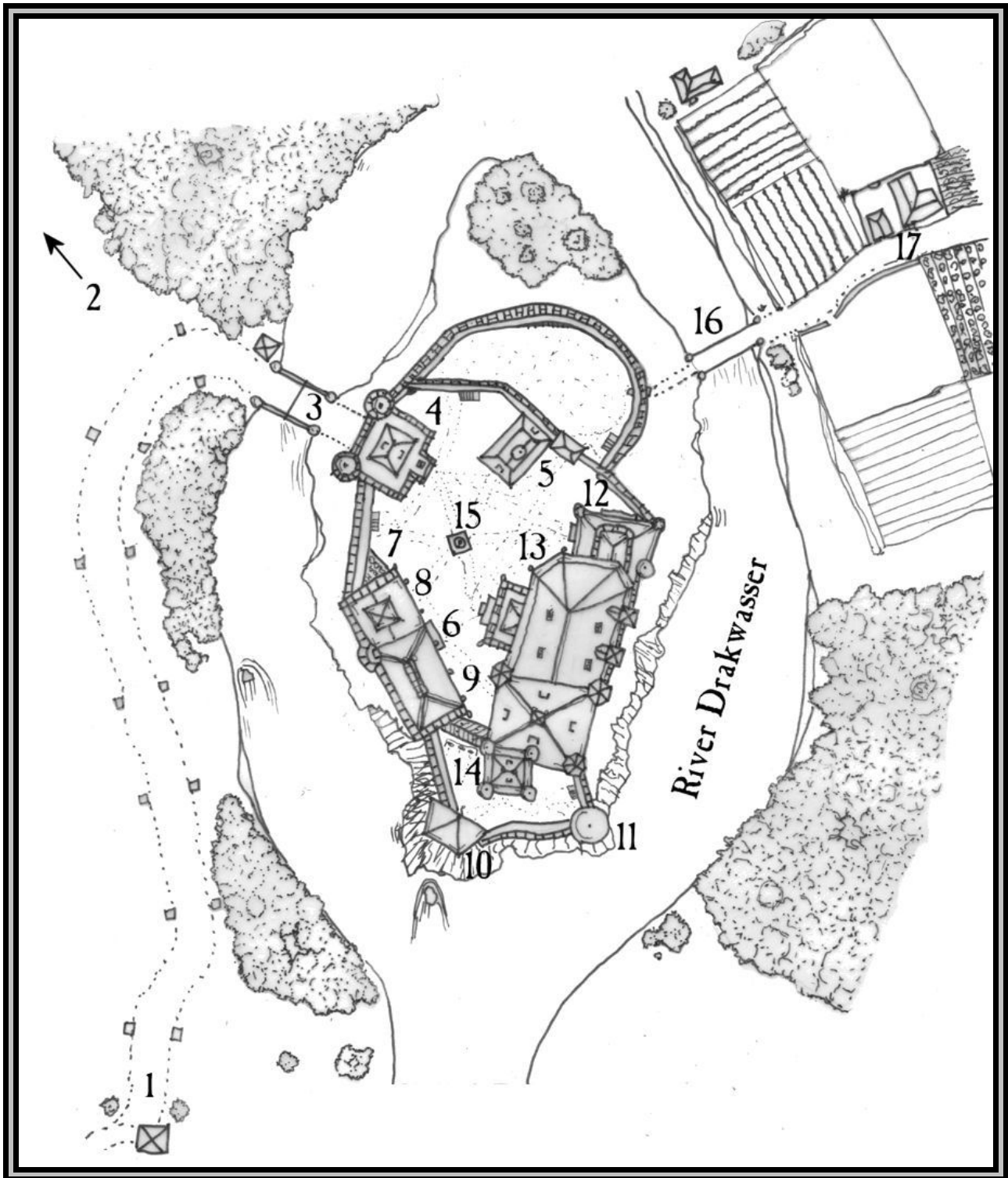
Formerly the squire's quarters when the Barons of Hochland surrounded themselves with knights and their immediate household, the Servants Hall is a 4 storey building in the inner courtyard now used for any of the castle's servants who are not senior enough to dwell in the Great Hall. The atmosphere in here is convivial, driven by gossip and a degree of good-natured grumbling about the life of a servant.

## 6 Granary

This plain 5 storey building is where the castle stores grain and dried foodstuffs, while the remainder are kept in cool cellars below the Great Hall. In the event of a siege, on reduced rations the castle could hold out for several weeks before starvation became a serious threat.

## 7 Kitchen Garden

Adjacent to the stables is a small garden for the cultivation of herbs and vegetables, as well as couple of foul-tempered pigs and hens. Manure from the horses next door is used to fertilise the earth, so the crop is fairly substantial. Unbeknownst to the kitchen maids, in the past few days a small mole has burrowed into the kitchen garden and is subsisting on the Baroness' radishes.



**8 Stables, Coach House and Dovecote**

**9 Kitchens**

There are two coaches in here - one a practical stage for longer journeys and the other a more ornate affair used for official occasions and parades. The horses live here and are exercised around the inner courtyard, while the attic houses a dovecote and the Baroness' carrier pigeons.

Separate from the Great Hall are the kitchens, presided over by Jem Hollyburr. This is where food for the castle is prepared - from great banquets to daily fare for the servants. A covered walkway provides sheltered access to the Great Hall.

## **10 The Amber Tower**

At the southern extreme of the castle, overlooking the sheer cliffs of the island and Shallya's Falls is a substantial 7 storey tower of robust construction. Primarily defensible, in recent centuries this has become the residence of the Baroness' representative on the Council of Five, who can use the tower's position and elevation as a literal and figurative means to overlook the city. As such, it is here that Simone Tussen-Hochen has her chambers, a small library and chapel.

The tower takes its name from the fact that the entrance hall is decorated with Ostland amber, a gift to the Barony from some forgotten Elector Count in the distant past. It has also been suggested that the tower gets its name from the period when it was the occasional dwelling place of the High Amber during the C24th, who arrived at the castle demanding 'a place to keep the rain off my head', pulled rank and then stayed intermittently for 10 years, leaving the tower practically derelict inside.

## **11 The South Tower**

A 5 storey, round-turreted tower on the south-eastern wall, this is primarily as defensive construction, designed to keep a watch over the eastern bank of the Drakwasser.

## **12 Castle Chapel**

Accessed from the Great Hall, the castle chapel is not devoted to one god, but to the Old World pantheon as a whole. Each of the major gods has a small sub-chapel with an altar, whereas gods less relevant to Hochland life (e.g. Manaan, Myrmidia) are represented by individual paintings or idols:

**Shallya** - The focus is a stained glass window depicting Roland von Hochen being blessed by the goddess, which bathes the small stone altar in many-coloured light. The walls are decorated with a repeated heart motif and the fixtures carved from pale wood with doves perched upon them.

**Verena** - A statuette of the goddess in the Classical style stands on an austere altar fashioned as an open book. A plain glass window gives a truthful and clear view of the world.

**Ulric** - A fully-enclosed chamber within the chapel is fashioned as a small temple of Ulric, complete with battlements and dome. Inside is a stone pillar topped with a perpetual flame and the walls are hung with wolfskin and the weapons of Tussen-Hochen's past.

**Sigmar** - Celebrating the martial aspect of Sigmar, this sub-chapel is dominated by a large and ornate altar, which depicts major events in the god's life. A stained glass window shows the gods hammer radiating light over an outline of the Empire, while supplicants and warrior priests bow in servitude.

**Morr** - A carved raven perches on top of a stone gateway in this gloomy unlit alcove. Within the gateway is a small door which leads down the crypt where the deceased Tussen-Hochens are laid to rest.

## **13 Great Hall**

The dominating building of the castle is the Great Hall, a red brick construction housing the Baroness and most of her family. The southern portion has several more storeys than the northern part. Within the walls are the state chambers, where the Tussen-Hochens receive visitors in formal circumstances, as well as entertain in the adjoining ballroom.

The dining hall is located in the northern end of the building, a cavernous oak-panelled room dimly lit by candles and overlooked by portraits of Barons past. Upstairs in the southern part of the Great Hall are the chambers of the family themselves, along with service rooms for their personal staff and the senior household servants. Beneath the building is a network of cellars and crypts, with the inevitable rumours of tunnels that lead into the city itself.

## **14 Great Tower**

Dominating the skyline, the Great Tower is a colossal 10 storeys high and affords magnificent views of northern Hochland and the foothills of the Middle Mountains. It was built from red brick under the order of Baron Gerhardt, who spent many of his days using it as a look out for the inevitable invasion from Middenland. The upper floors are still used to provide a view of the immediate surroundings, with a map room on the top floor dominated by a large map of Hochland. Faustus Asprill intends to use this a war room should Bergsburg come under attack and the Baroness has provided living facilities for him and his lieutenants should they request to stay for an extended period of time.

Between the map room and the lower floors is the castle library, spread over three floors and accessible from the upper floors of the Great Hall. The lower floors of the tower house the Barony's collection of art and artefacts acquired over the centuries as gifts or brought back by travelling members of the family. Of particular interest is a large circular iron plate of crude manufacture - although it resembles a large shield, Baron Gerhardt (the Baroness' husband, rather than the deceased paranoid) believes that it once belonged to a savage ogre that used it to protect his capacious belly.

## **15 The Well**

In the centre of the inner courtyard is the castle well. The well is also accessible from the cellars underneath the ground.

## **16 The East Bridge**

The smaller bridge was built to replace the former entrance to the castle when the Hoist was constructed for Baron Heinrich von Hochen in 2345. It is made from stone, but the section closest to the island is arranged in such a way that it can be collapsed by hammering wooden wedges into the stonework.

## **17 Castle Farms**

On the track to the east are the castle estates, where a number of farmers provide food for the castle under vassalage to the Baroness. In the event of attack, these farmers can easily retreat to the castle island and take refuge - as has happened in the past.

## **The Tussen-Hochens**

The ruling family of Hochland and Bergsburg are the Tussen-Hochens, a dynasty that has traditionally had little influence on Imperial politics. Hochland is not an electoral province, and the Tussen-Hochens are in fact vassals of the Duchess of Talabheim - a relationship which has not always been particularly harmonious, largely due to the religious preoccupations of the descendants of Roland von Hochen.

### **Origins of the von Hochens**

Shortly before his death, Grand Duke Talgris II of Talabecland bequeathed most of his lands north of River Talabec to his younger son Friedrich, who was the only child of Talgris II's second marriage to a Reiklander princess. As his father, Friedrich belonged to the von Brunckhorst dynasty, but when Talgris II passed away in 743 IC, and Friedrich received the newly formed Barony of Hochland, he took the name von Hochen for himself and his successors.

During the following centuries, Friedrich's successors used a handful of large Baronial manors spread over Hochland as homes, moving around their land every few months. Verenan annals in Talabheim state that one Baron Erich von Hochen tried to establish a permanent court at Heedenhof during the 13th century, finding the constant moving costly and annoying, but little seems to have come of this. Some two hundred years later, Baron Roland von Hochen had his miraculous victory near Bergsdorf and decided a new attempt at establishing a permanent court as well as a grand temple to Shallya.

### **The Cost of Construction**

Very few people in Bergsburg today know the full story of how Baron Roland raised the funds to build the castle and Temple. It is certain that taxes were levied

from the people of Hochland, and the local nobility made substantial donations of gold in turn for certain privileges. Most notable was the granting of certain land right and privileges to the von Ludenhof family of southern Hochland in exchange for a substantial lump sum towards the construction of the castle. The relative autonomy of the von Ludenhof family continues to this day.

Monies were also raised by loan from a number of sources. Some of the wealthier Reikland noble families granted Roland with funds, as did at least one gnome financier. These debts were eventually repaid by Roland's ancestors over the following centuries, with one exception. During construction of the castle, Roland was advised that he did not have sufficient funds to complete the building. One of the dwarf stonemasons heard tell that the Barony was near destitute, and arranged a meeting with a delegation of the Dwarf Engineers' Guild from Karak Norn. It was agreed that the Guild would cover the wages of all the dwarfs employed in the constructions on the understanding that the Baron, or his ancestors, would repay the entirety of the wage expenses, with interest.

### **Show Me The Money**

Hochland has never been a wealthy province, and over the intervening centuries, the Tussen-Hochens struggled to settle their debts. Through taxes levied in the burgeoning town, the nobles and gnome bankers were paid off, but the loan from Karak Norn remains unsettled. The 'Big Rush' brought prosperity to Bergsburg, but failed to fill the Baronial coffers; for the first many years, the Barons received 20 per cent of all gold discoveries from the Prospectors' Guild (the so-called Baron's Fifth), but most was spent directly on mercenaries and fortifications, as the Dark Ages was a time of war and unrest.

The situation worsened when the rather weak and paranoid Baron Gerhardt ordered a major and costly rebuild of the castle, only to get involved in armed disputes with Middenland. On the brink of bankruptcy, the Baron eventually settled his increasing debts with the Prospectors Guild, his main creditor, by offering a severe, permanent reduction in the Baron's Fifth.

The interest payments on the dwarf loan are considerable, and Roland swore that the loan would be repaid within 1000 years. As an oath-bound race, the dwarfs consider this binding agreement inviolate. Recent years have seen the dwarfs of Karak Norn eager to raise funds for the reclamation of dwarf lands in the Grey Mountains, and the Tussen-Hochen debt is being called in, exactly 1000 years after it was incurred.

This leaves the current Baroness in dire straits. She has a moderate income from taxation and tithe from her vassals and in the immediate hinterland. But this is insufficient to repay the Dwarf Engineers' Guild from Karak Norn, and it has become clear to her that the only option is to marry off her daughter Simone to a wealthy noble able to settle the debts.

### The von Ludenhof Dynasty

Thanks to the political concessions granted to the von Ludenhofs in the 16th century, this family has gained considerable wealth and lands in southern Hochland. South of Bergsburg and its immediate hinterland, a lion's share of Hochland is under the rule of the von Ludenhofs, although they are nominally vassals of the Tussen-Hochens. Beyond Hochland, the family is well regarded in Talabecland and Talabheim - unlike the Tussen-Hochens. Most nobles in these provinces consider the Baroness a nonentity in Imperial politics. Her potential influence would go through her liege lord in Talabheim and her seat in the Talabheim Peerhaus, but both the Duchess and the Peers see the Tussen-Hochens as eccentric, Shallyan, liberal and untraditional, so she has few allies and little influence. The von Ludenhofs, on the other hand, fit the Talabec idea of nobility perfectly. The family has traditionally been staunch followers of Taal and Ulric, and the present head, Count Albrecht, is a keen hunter and a distinguished army commander - both pursuits viewed by the nobility of Talabecland and Talabheim as the epitome of aristocratic behaviour.

Count Albrecht von Ludenhof is unmarried, and conspicuously wealthy. He has influence within Talabheim, where he has a seat in the Peerhaus, and owns vast fiefs in southern Hochland. He has a large castle just

a few miles from Herzig, the Talabecland capital (conveniently located on the border to his Hochland fiefs), and he is on good terms with Grand Duke von Krieglitz. Baroness Tussen-Hochen is an intelligent woman, and although she realises Albrecht would not make a compassionate husband, she is determined that Simone will marry him. This would provide the family with funds sufficient to settle their debts with the dwarfs of Karak Norn, and would buy the Tussen-Hochens respect and influence within Talabheim and Talabecland.

Together the two dynasties would hold almost the entire province, and the near-autonomy of the von Ludenhofs would no longer be a problem.

### The Current Family

There are five living members of the Tussen-Hochens resident in Bergsburg. The oldest sister (and would-be heir) Erika died several years ago in a hunting accident. She was never a 'typical' Tussen-Hochen, with a tendency towards Ulricanism and a frustration with the Shallyan tendencies of the dynasty. Other relations and associates of the Baronial family will often be found staying at the Palace from time to time.

### Baroness Hildegarde Tussen-Hochen

The Ruler of Hochland, Matriarch of the Dynasty

Hildegarde is a sturdy woman of middle age, with a noble bearing and distinguished head of grey hair held in an impeccable bun. She speaks in an authoritative and non-nonsense way, occasionally softening her tone when addressing a child or Priest of Shallya. Although she only really shows it in private, Hildegarde has quite a sense of humour and is actually fairly empathetic. She is deeply in love with Gerhardt, and the feeling is mutual. Hildegarde has an uncharacteristic but deep-seated dislike of elves.

Hildegarde grew up in the city, fully aware of the responsibilities that awaited her. She spent 20 years on the Council of Five, honing her skills as a ruler. Her contemporaries regarded her as astute and intelligent, although prone to hiding her real personality behind a facade that she seemed to think was more fitting of a Baroness.

As the Baroness of Hochland, Hildegarde is often occupied with political matters. Although she is partly excluded from the politicking of Talabheim, she tries to stay abreast of developments in the Peerhaus.

Events in the city do concern her, but she trusts her daughter Simone, and the advice of her husband to oversee and keep her informed of any developments.

Meeting Hildegarde: It will be rare that the PCs spot Hildegarde, as she does not spend her time wandering the highways and byways of the city. She may be glanced

<b>Baroness Hildegarde Tussen-Hochen</b>							
Female Human							
Politician (ex-Noble)							
<b>Main Profile</b>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
53	37	38	35	50	53	48	62
<b>Secondary Profile</b>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	3	3			
<b>Skills:</b> Academic Knowledge (Law, Heraldry), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Disarm, Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Follow Trail, Gossip, Intimidate, Performer (Dance, Musician, Singer), Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel)							
<b>Talents:</b> Etiquette, Excellent Vision, Luck, Public Speaking, SWG (Fencing), Sixth Sense, Suave							
<b>Armour:</b> None							
<b>Armour Points:</b> Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0							
<b>Weapons:</b> Rapier							

riding her stagecoach through the city occasionally, or even returning from a trip to Talabheim. The city temples (especially the Temple of Shallya) will receive her from time to time. She does not tend to venture out socially within the city, although she does patronise the Tiegel Theater for the first night of better plays. Finally, she will be present during major festivals within the city guarded heavily by Fautus Asprill's men.

### Baron Gerhardt von Pirkheimer

Husband of the Baroness

Tall and thin, Gerhardt has a peculiar loping gait and almost birdlike appearance. He wears his medium-length dark hair in a centre parting pulled away from his face.

He wears a thick black moustache that is waxed into points in a style popular in the eastern Empire 30 years ago. His expression is inquisitive and his voice slightly higher than one might expect.

Gerhardt is the third son of the deceased Baron von Pirkheimer of Ostland, who married into the Tussen-Hochens at any early age, despite the disapproval of his siblings and family. His relationship with Hildegarde was (and is) a rare example of genuine love in a noble marriage.



Gerhardt has long fancied himself as a gentleman scholar, with diverse interests in the arts, sciences and sorcerous affairs. Although lacking any real talent in any of these areas, he is a keen patron of those who practice these disciplines. Gerhardt is less busy than Hildegarde with the government of the Barony, which allows him more time to involve himself in good works and the business of Bergsburg.

Meeting Gerhardt: Gerhardt spends time hunting the Palace hunting grounds, visiting wealthy friends within the city, and travelling with Hildegarde. He can also occasionally be seen talking in a patronising but fascinated way to the city's artisans, workers and academics, asking them about their jobs and life. Gerhardt is a Sigmarite who believes strongly in the unity of the Empire, and he worships at the Cathedral of Sigmar. He also pays his respects to Shallya and Verena on a regular basis, and may be seen in these temples from time to time. Gerhardt will always be accompanied by several guards and his secretary Karl, who records anything that his master instructs him. "Write that down, Karl!" is a common expression heard when Gerhardt is about in the city.

### Lord Hubert Tussen-Hochen

The Weakling Son

Hubert is a pale youth with a distant expression and a permanent cough. His posture and quiet voice betray his sickly constitution, while his ash-blond hair and watery blue eyes. When not confined to his bed, Hubert dresses in simple finery befitting his status.

Hubert is the younger brother of Simone. He has been a sickly youth since birth, when the Baroness had complications in childbirth. Many within the city believe that he will not live to see his 21st birthday, despite the constant attentions of a stream of physicians and clerics of Shallya.

<b>Baron Gerhardt von Pirkheimer</b>							
Male Human							
Scholar (ex-Noble)							
<b>Main Profile</b>							
WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
44	43	28	26	37	42	41	55
<b>Secondary Profile</b>							
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	13	2	2	4			
<b>Skills:</b> Academic Knowledge (History, Cartography, Heraldry), Blather, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Disarm, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail, Gamble, Gossip, Performer (Dance), Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel, Classical)							
<b>Talents:</b> Etiquette, Public Speaking, SWG (Fencing, Parrying), Suave							
<b>Armour:</b> None							
<b>Armour Points:</b> Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0							
<b>Weapons:</b> Rapier, Buckler							

**Lord Hubert Tussen-Hochen**

Male Human

Noble

**Main Profile**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30	36	22	24	37	28	33	30

**Secondary Profile**

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	2	2	3			

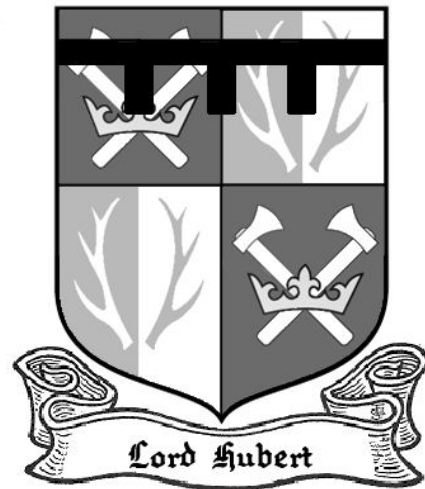
**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Heraldry), Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Performer (Musician), Read/Write, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Excellent Vision, Etiquette,

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** None



Meeting Hubert: Although he spends most of his time confined to his chambers in the Palace, twice a day Hubert descends to the Temple of Shallya to take the waters with his physician. Although he is carefully supervised, PCs may see him if they are in the pools at the time. On the rare occasions that he is feeling fit enough, Hubert has been known to venture to the Tiegel Theater, and PCs may spot a sickly-looking youth in the Baroness' Box.

### Lady Eva Tussen-Hochen

Child Prodigy

A tow-headed sweet little girl, Eva has an intense and serious disposition. She is highly articulate and intelligent and learns frighteningly quickly. She is dressed in the fussy clothes of an Imperial aristocratic child, which clearly cause her some degree of discomfort.

Eva has been quite a revelation to her parents. Born relatively late in their life, she has turned into a pleasant child of phenomenal intelligence. In her 10 short years she has burned through no less than 5 tutors, extracting what she can learn from them before exhausting them with her incisive questioning and superior understanding. Although serious and deprived of company her age, she has picked up on subtleties within the Palace and the politics of the city that have passed her elders by.

Meeting Eva: Much of Eva's time is spent in the Palace, attending lessons or spending time with her family. When out and about, she may be accompanied by a tutor to the library at the Temple of Verena, or with her mother or father attending religious services. She has recently been on her first hunt in the hunting grounds around the Palace.

**Lady Eva Tussen-Hochen**

Female Human

Noble

**Main Profile**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
21	24	25	24	35	65	38	27

**Secondary Profile**

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	9	2	2	4			

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Performer (Musician), Read/Write, Speak Language (Reikspiel, Bretonnian, Tilean, Kislevan, Classical)

**Talents:** Linguistics, Super Numerate

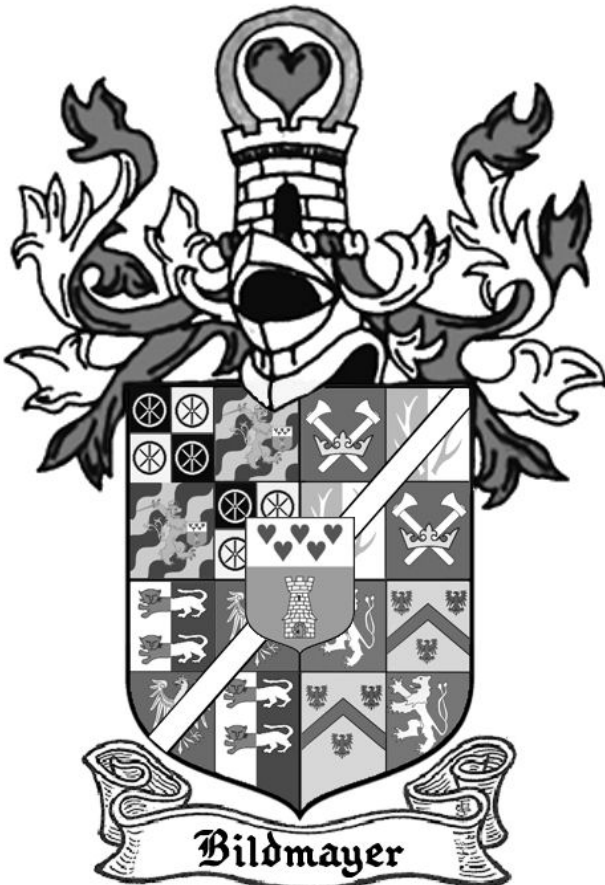
**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** None

# Ludwig Bildmayer

Bergsburg Keeper of Arms, Supreme Master of the Hochland College of Arms



Ludwig looks older than his forty-two years and cultivates a scholarly air. He takes great care to make his heraldic robes look effortless, but it is clear that he takes real pride in their appearance. Under his formal powdered wig he is completely bald. He has wooden teeth that are slightly too small for him. He wears a strong scent derived from pine wood.

Ludwig is a snob. He crawls to his social betters and expects the same in return from those he considers socially inferior. His title is a fraud, but used at every opportunity. In conversation he uses facts and trivia about the nobility and heraldry to establish himself as the most knowledgeable party on any topic (GM tip: use this to subtly divert any line of questioning). He loves to mention his correspondence with the historians of the Emperor's court in Altdorf. When he is uncomfortable he tugs at his right earlobe.

**History:** Born and raised in the Tussen-Hochen court, Bildmayer worked as an apprentice to his father, who held the same position as Master of the College of Arms. This

## Lord' Ludwig Bildmayer

Male Human

Herald (ex-Scribe)

### Main Profile

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	39	32	39	48	53	42	56

### Secondary Profile

A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	3	3	4			

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry, History), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire, Tilea), Evaluate, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel, Breton, Tilean, Classical), Trade (Calligrapher)

**Talents:** Etiquette, Linguistics, Master Orator, Public Speaking

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Dagger, Sword

**Trappings:** Fine Robes complete with Badge of Office and Heraldic Devices, Large Number of Scrolls, Sealing Wax and Rings, Ornamental Sword, Dusty Wig

is a small office within the castle with responsibility for the recording and granting of heraldry and armorial bearings within Hochland. The Bildmayers have been Keepers here for many centuries and a little tampering with the historical record by Ludwig's great-great-grandfather ensured that they were in office from 1695 onwards. The College consists of a high ceilinged room with shelves stacked with scrolls to the ceiling and two rickety ladders. Bildmayer sits at a high desk with two scribes, his son Pieter and daughter Gretel.

Modern visitors to Bergsburg are often struck by the large amount of heraldry on display within the city. A visitor from Nuln once noted that "it seems everyone from the lowliest dung collector to the most exalted lord bears some type of arms." Although this is an exaggeration, there are many more coats of arms than one would expect – all thanks to Ludwig Bildmayer.

Fifteen years ago he was approached by Ruprecht Gutgenug who was seeking to improve his position within the city. He proposed that Ludwig granted him an



armorial bearing to help improve his status. Although this broke various conventions and statutes, Ludwig twisted various historical precedents to create something to Gutgenug's taste, for a small 'administrative' charge. Before long, he was approached by numerous social-climbing merchants with similar proposals and a small semi-legal business developed, bringing in cash for Ludwig and a small flow of revenue for the Barony.

Across northern Hochland there are coats-of-arms created by Bildmayer with the tacit agreement of the Tussen-Hochen family – any doubts they had were easily overcome by the production of a 'genuine' letter from the Baron Boris von Hochen dated 1923 explaining his own mania for heraldry and granted various rights to the College of Arms within the province.

Ludwig's methods vary from fabricating ancient documents of entitlement to outright lies, but as the keeper of the most comprehensive historical record of Hochland nobility he has never been found out. More importantly, he is very good at creating plausible arms with a believable historical precedent. His only flaw is an over-fondness for the inclusion of skulls as a heraldic device, but there is a general agreement that this makes them look more imposing and grim.

Ironically, it was his own title (the product of his grandfather, twenty minutes with a quill and some mouldering documents 'found' in the castle cellars) that has brought him closest to discovery – a visit to the city by a celebrated historian from the Altdorf College of Arms leading to an uncomfortable challenge. This was resolved by Ludwig's astute promise to cut the historian in on the deal.

## Adventure Hooks

### Ludwig gets Sloppy

A minor noble from Ostermark appears in Bergsburg and demands to know why he shares a coat-of-arms with a dog breeder in Garssen. Ludwig fears exposure and recruits the adventurers to (discretely) recover some documents from the Temple of Verena and help him in a series of staged events to establish the prior history of the dog breeder's noble line. In return they can expect a financial reward and a coat-of-arms each, on the house.

### Alternative Sources

Count Aldebrand von Ludenhof is building an extension to Castle Schloss and in demolishing part of one of the curtain walls he uncovered an extensive library dealing with the history of Hochland. Along with various interesting land grants and records of forgotten battles, it has some fascinating family trees tracing the noble lineages of the region. Ludwig's complete authority is looking less certain. If only he could find someone willing to replace certain documents...

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