

Vemionshire's only river port lies in Nenda, a sedate town with a distinctively Jarin heritage. It is a trading post for trappers and timbermen, and the occasional fortune seeker bound for the ruins north of the Selene River. Nenda lies in Grimruld Hundred and is considered the "mouth of all Vemionshire" by the locals. Much of Vemionshire's wool passes through Nenda on its way to larger markets down river. Carriage by river is far more usual than the road through Athelren. Nenda is also the home of a group of Ilvir worshippers called the Order of the Lame Adder.

HISTORY

There have been fishing villages along the Selene since the early days of the Jarin settlements. By the first century TR the river was at the heart of the kingdom of Tanor, and Nenda was just one of a score of similar settlements.

Tanor survived the Foulspawn Wars relatively well, but in 125TR Hain Parlis of Arwn annexed the kingdom south of the Selene, and Nenda and surrounding villages eventually became part of the Kingdom of Pagostra. The nobles of northern Tanor eventually acknowledged Calsten of Serelind as their king, rather than accept Hain as overlord.

Northern Tanor collapsed in the face of Taeldan incursions during the Migration Wars, the trees reclaiming the streets and fields of its villages and duns. Taelda still live in the woods, and only they and the occasional trapper ever see the old ruins which mark the passing of a once-proud kingdom.

Nenda grew in importance as a trade town after the union of Pagostra and Serelind in 237TR, but it was not until 320TR, when Aidrik I granted a licence to its manorial lord, Amasin Hirnen, that the first keep was built. It is said that the Hirnen clan has lobbied for permission to bridge the Selene since Habta Tower was finished. "When there's a bridge at Nenda" has become a local by-word for "never".

Clan Hirnen became Barons by default. For many years they were de facto spokesmen of the former Tanoric villages on the Selene. The creation of the barony (at the same time as the building of the keep) formalised their unofficial authority.

By the time of the Civil War in 377TR, Habta Tower was falling into disrepair. Aidrik III, recognising the strategic importance of the town, granted the Hirnens the right to build a tollhouse outside the town so they could use the revenues to rebuild the keep. Most of the present day stonework dates from this era.

Nenda has continued its importance as a trading town to the present day. There is a ferry capable of carrying wagons across the river, and talbars frequently ply the river down to the Kald basin, often to Kiban, but sometimes as far as Tashal.

GOVERNMENT

Baron Erelar Hirnen is the sole governor of Nenda. In the past, a council consisting of six local guildsmen helped the baron with economical affairs, but that is no longer the case. Three years ago, at a time when trade was abnormally slow, the baron presented a plan to this council to increase trade. There were several fundamental flaws in the plan, and one council member, a master salter, mockingly described the plan as the work of a fool. In a fit of rage, the Baron drew his sword and slashed at the man. The salter attempted to dodge the blow but stumbled and received a serious cut across the abdomen. Although the salter received the best available treatment, the wound became infected and he died in agony four days later. The local chapter of the Mangai immediately dissolved the council and relations between local guildsmen and the Baron have been severely strained ever since.

LOCATION: Grimruld Hundred, Vemionshire, Kaldor
LEIGE: Earl of Vemion
GOVERNMENT: The Baron of Nenda
POPULATION: 350 (Approximately)

CREDITS

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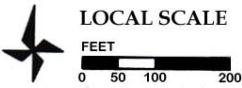
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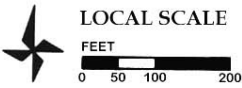
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NENDA



NENDA



ECONOMICS

Nenda's only economic importance to Vemionshire is as a river port. The majority of the shire's raw wool and woollen products are shipped from its wharf to central Kaldor. It is much cheaper, easier, faster and safer than sending the goods by wagon overland through Athelren, Nubeth and Ternua. This means work for the townspeople and revenue for the baron. The tollhouse also provides revenue for the baron, who may keep half of all he collects. Nenda used to be a major source of salt for Kaldor, but since the death of the salter council member three years ago, the trade has ceased. Salt is now processed in Minarsas.

TAXES

Property: 6% per annum (residential)
Property: 6% per annum (business)
Hawking: 9% goods value
Bonding: 2% goods value per month

RELIGION

The religious climate of Nenda is somewhat different than the rest of Kaldor. The Laranian and Peonian faiths are dominant but the strong Jarin heritage and the innate conservatism of its people means there are a considerable number who worship Ilvir. A small temple has been built in the town by an Ilviran cult. Worship of any other religion is discouraged and followers of any of the three dark churches face execution.

CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION

The current Baron of Nenda, Erelar Hirnen, 45, is not a popular man, both within and without his own court. The baron's sour disposition and bursts of rage fuel much of this feeling. Erelar has few friends and he seems to take no notice of those he has left. Even his very capable brother, Tarkin, 41, the Lord Chancellor of Kaldor, seems reluctant to visit Nenda. He has seen his brother make a fool of himself so many times that he prefers to maintain a measure of distance between them. To be frank, the Baron of Nenda is not especially bright.

Several of the major lords in the kingdom have been insulted by the baron's behaviour, but the king, who is the baron's uncle, has refused to allow any formal challenges to take place. It is often the Earl of Vemion who smooths the ruffled feathers of the aggrieved parties and who calms the baron when his temper would lead him astray. The baron has taken to seeking the advice of the earl in most matters. Their relationship has become almost of lord and vassal, even though both are tenants-in-chief of the king.

Through his relationship to the king, the Baron of Nenda has a small claim on the throne. He has yet to decide exactly where he stands on the issue of his claim. No doubt he will consult the Earl of Vemion about such an important matter.

1. **Caer Nenda**

The keep is possibly the finest fortification in all Vemionshire, after the castle in Minarsas. A low but very defensible wall surrounds the keep and the outer buildings. Plans of the keep can be found on the following pages. [a] bonded ostler Hebbert of Gwynar, [b] bonded weaponcrafter Aerych of Lagos, [c] animal dens.

2. **Miller (Ollin of Fult)**

Size: 3 Quality: **** Prices: Average

The local miller is a quiet man who enjoys working alone. He employs a journeyman and an apprentice to mill grain while he bakes bread and sweetmeats for sale in the town market. Ollin is in love with the daughter of Bules of Doyn [10] and wants to marry her, but her father seems to have other plans for her.

3. **The Sword & Axe (Jyrin of Halver)**

Size: 6 Quality: **** Prices: High

The finest inn in Nenda is also the only one with stables. Jyrin is tall but very thin and many refer to him as "Broom". He is very tolerant and is well liked by most of his customers, who come to the inn to partake of his darkly potent ale. The ostler, Larond of Melod, owns a quarter share of the inn.

4. **The Crooked Finger (Wealan of Dwebin)**

Size: 3 Quality: *** Prices: Low

Wealan is heavily influenced by Jarin culture and often treats his customers to songs and poetry of great deeds of the past. Wealan's wife is considered the greatest beauty of all Vemion and her black raven hair, green eyes and broad smile has enchanted more than one customer who often buy an additional ale just to catch a glimpse of her. Wealan is a member of the Order of the Lame Adder.

5. **Bonding House**

Kilrin of Headyn [17] manages the bonding house where all goods are stored. Kirlin enjoys his work and bondmaster and lets his son manage his own clothier's franchise. There is a soldier from the baron's garrison on guard in the bonding house day and night. There is a small room in the building with a cot, table and chair for this purpose.

6. **Seamans' Guildhall/Hostel**

Those bargemen who don't pass out in one of the local taverns usually sleep here. The guildhall functions as a meeting place and hostel. Needless to say, the hostel can sometimes be quite rowdy.

7. **The Toad and the Wench (Iliriana of Dyresa)**

Size: 7 Quality: ** Prices: Average

Iliriana is notorious, known for her sharp dealings with customers. Besides serving drinks and cold food, the tavern has a number of prostitutes, who keep a third of the money they earn. One of the more popular forms of entertainment is watching the frequent brawls which erupt in the tavern. Should the fighting start to get out of hand, however, the problem is dealt with by Iliriana's two brothers. Both served in the Army of Chelmarch for several years and are highly respected fighters, especially with a short club. Combatants are usually encouraged/forced to take the fight outside.

8. Mercantylor (Flabnol of Fhul)

Size: 3 Quality: ***** Prices: High

The richest guildsman in Nenda, Flabnol has formidable business acumen. He is well known in the shire and has numerous important friends and contacts throughout the kingdom. Flabnol has a very healthy relationship with the wool merchants in southern Vernionshire.

9. Litigant (Pendrec of Irion)

Size: 1 Quality: *** Prices: High

The local litigant supports more than the town of Nenda. His services are required all over the north of the shire and he can often be seen travelling the roads on his mule. Pendrec is a devoted follower of Ilvir and is a member of the Order of the Lame Adder. His primary business is arranging shipping contracts for the wool trade.

10. Chandler (Bules of Doyn)

Size: 4 Quality: **** Prices: Average

Although his store sells all manner of goods, Bules is particularly good at candle-making. He specialises in making candles from beeswax, which are known for their durability and sweet smell. His daughter, Lodani, is in love with the metalsmith Chorlyn of Saward [11] and she has her father's blessings to marry him if he proposes.

11. Metalsmith (Chorlyn of Saward)

Size: 2 Quality: *** Prices: Average

Chorlyn is a kind and gentle giant of a man who always seems to be in the best of moods. Although not particularly handsome, he has a very pleasant personality that many women find attractive. He is considering asking Lodani, the daughter of the local chandler [10] to be his wife. His apprenticeship is probably the best fed in the whole kingdom.

12. Embalmer (Dyfudd of Geroln)

Size: 3 Quality: **** Prices: High

There are very few embalmers in Vernionshire and Dyfudd is very competent. He seldom appears in public and prefers the cool, damp cellar where most of his work is done. If there is work to be done outside Nenda he usually sends one of his two journeymen, providing them with detailed instructions of how to handle the assignment. Only the highest of fees will persuade Dyfudd to leave his precious cellar. The embalmer is not evil or dangerous but most of the population considers him to be a bit spooky.

13. Physician (Trostyll of Akhman)

Size: 1 Quality: *** Prices: Average

Trostyll hails from Azadmere, the son of a bonded physician. Although a reasonably competent physician, his father lacked compassion and empathy, and Trostyll gladly left his birthplace behind when he had finished his apprenticeship. He arrived in Nenda some thirteen years ago, purchasing the franchise from the previous owner only two years ago and business has been very good since then. Trostyll has developed a very soothing bedside manner, in stark contrast to his father.

14. Potter (Steffen of Berel)

Size: 4 Quality: *** Prices: Low

The local potter is a merry man, often seen at the Crooked Finger singing along with the innkeeper. Steffen is very good with the lute and has more than once been offered money to perform. Since he has no wish to antagonise the Harpers' Guild he always rejects such offers, no matter the price. Like the innkeeper, Steffen is a member of the Order of the Lame Adder.

15. Timberwrights' Guild

This hostel, which serves timberwrights in northern Vernion, is a very busy place. Fine timber is cut east of Nenda and floated down the Selene river, and many of the guildsmen work in large gangs to reduce the dangers of the wilderness, especially gargun. There are usually about a dozen men in this building. Some of the most entertaining brawls at The Toad and the Wench are between timbermen and bargemen.

16. Tentmaker (Rathen of Edyrn)

Size: 2 Quality: *** Prices: High

Rathen is a very short man, standing just over five feet in height. He is known for his quick wit and ability to turn any conversation to his own advantage. Many who have made disparaging remarks about his height have often come away feeling they are overtaill, not that Rathen is under-height. He specialises in making pavilion tents for local lords.

17. Clothier (Kirlin of Headyn)

Size: 5 Quality: *** Prices: Average

Kirlin's only child, Ryllin, is also a master clothier and manages the business while his father tends the bonding house. The shop produces ordinary linen and woollen cloth. They also produce some ready-made clothing, like cloaks, caps and gloves. When trade is slow in winter and early spring, Kirlin helps his son prepare for the new wool, which they buy at the Minarsas Wool Fair.

18. Hall of the Mangai

At the moment there is no Mangai Master but several guildsmasters are considering nominating Kirlin as head of the local Mangai Chapter. Kirlin, who is often preoccupied with his other duties, is flattered by the nomination. He has yet to say whether he will accept the position. His appointment would go a considerable way to easing tensions between the local merchants and the baron.

19. Order of the Lame Adder

One of the strangest cults of Ilvir on Hârn is not a clerical order, but a congregation of devoted followers who have taken it upon themselves to serve the serpent god in Vernionshire. The name derives from Ilvir but with a small twist of humour to it. The members explain that while Ilvir is a god and the clergy are his servants, they are only the third part of the cycle. They refer to themselves as lame adders while the clerical followers are true serpents. A single young priest from the temple of the Order of the Yellow Hand in Tashal, Brunte of Anas, fulfils all the priestly duties. He enjoys the relationship he has with his flock. The parishioners of Nenda have a way of worshipping that seems to Brunte to be more basic, more primitive than that practiced by the Order of the Yellow Hand back in Tashal. He has become smitten by these primitive rituals and is considering the possibility that a real clerical order may be possible, with himself as high priest.

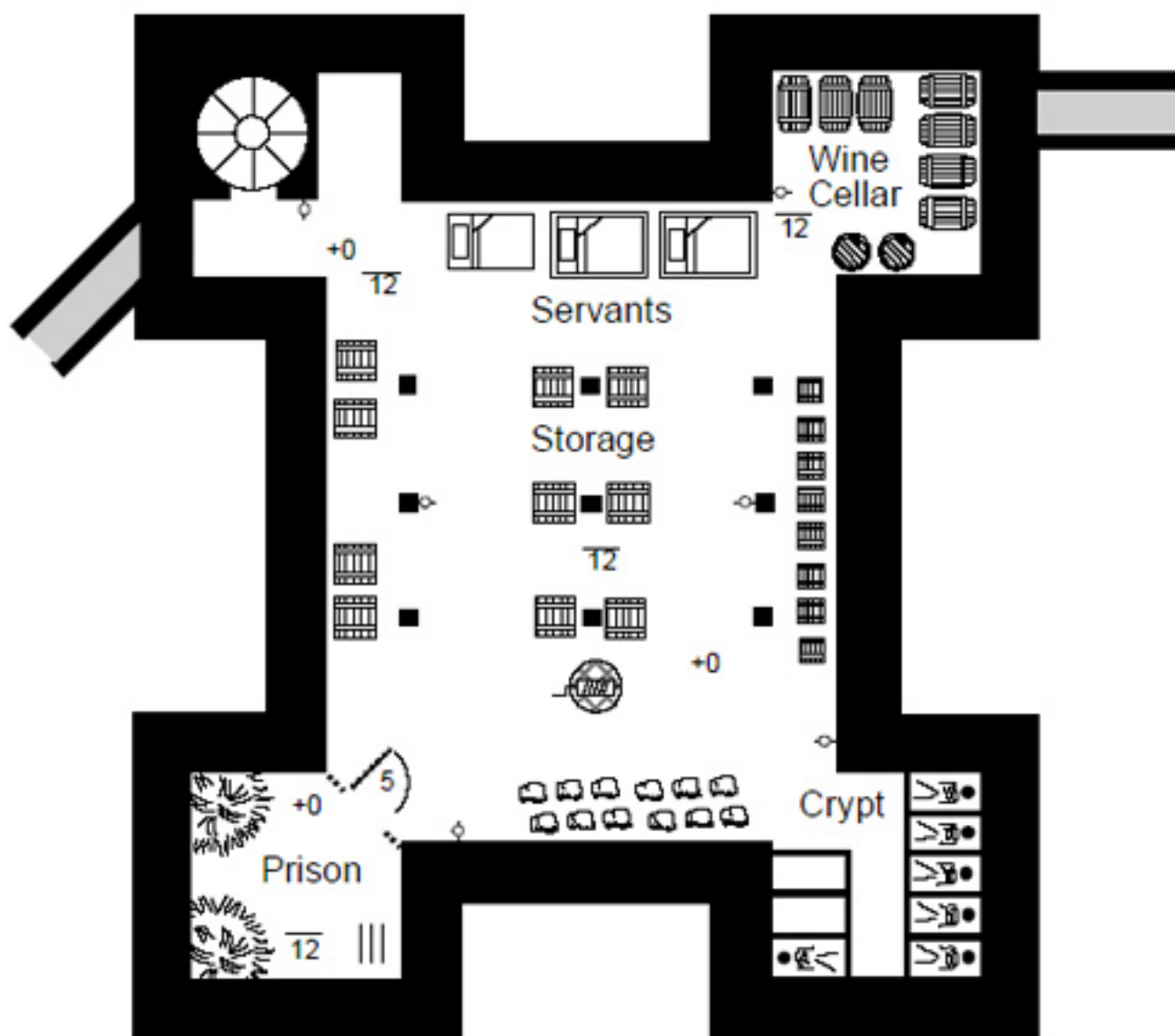
20. Teamster (Avan of Orsylv)

Size: 7 Quality: *** Prices: Average

Avan and his sons run a carting business between Nenda and Athelren. They transport goods to and from the wharf on the Selene River, travelling around the year, except the deepest winter. Avan has been doing this for the better part of fifty years, and his sons, now with their own children of working age, have expanded the business to include a total of three wagons. It takes seven days to make the round trip. There is always at least one wagon on the road.

INTERIOR OF KEEP

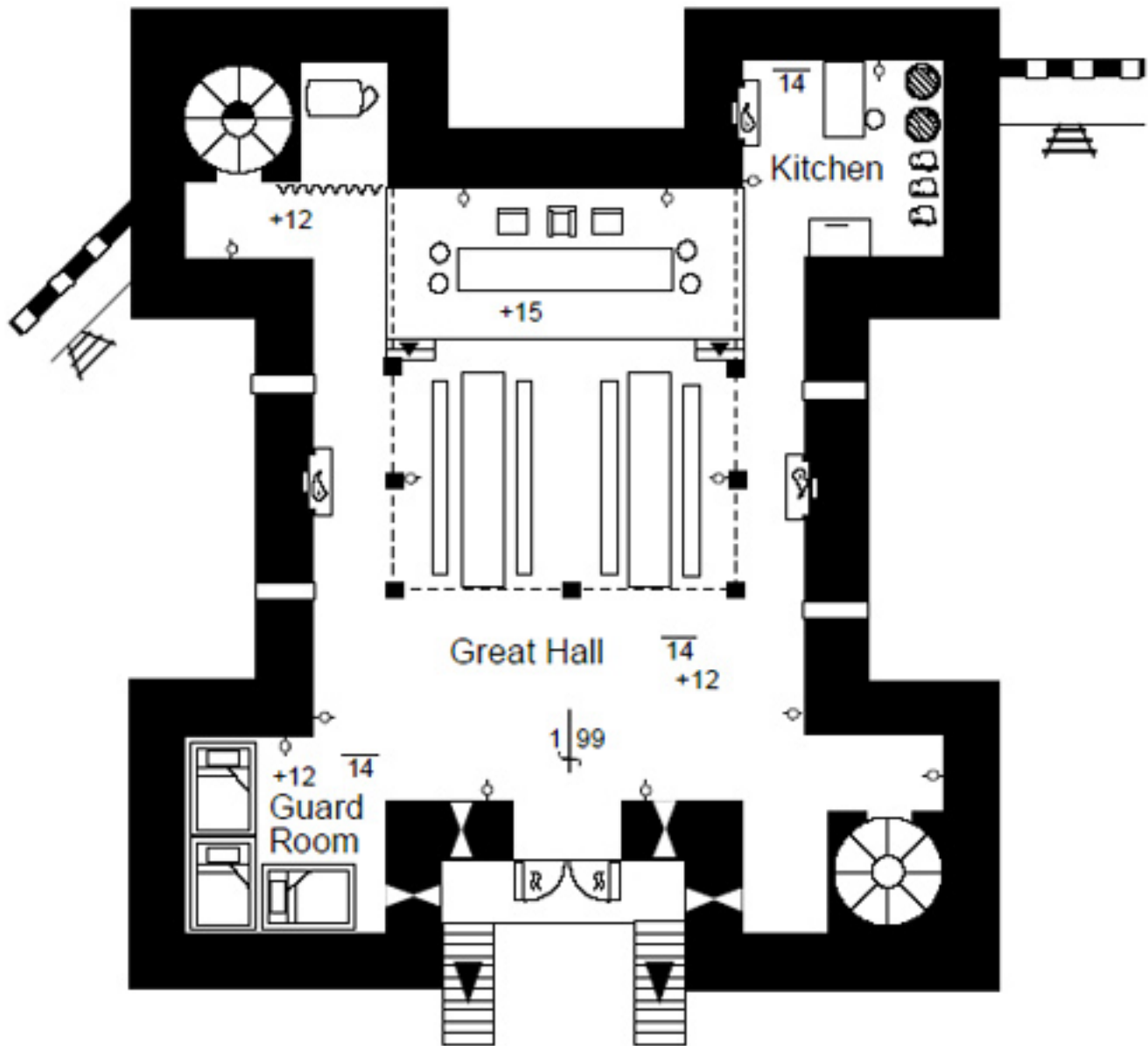
GROUND FLOOR



With not direct access to the outside, the ground floor is the main storage area of the keep. It contains the baron's precious wine cellar. He is fond of collecting wine from all over Hårn, storing it here until he feels it is the right time to consume it. The well was moved here from the courtyard

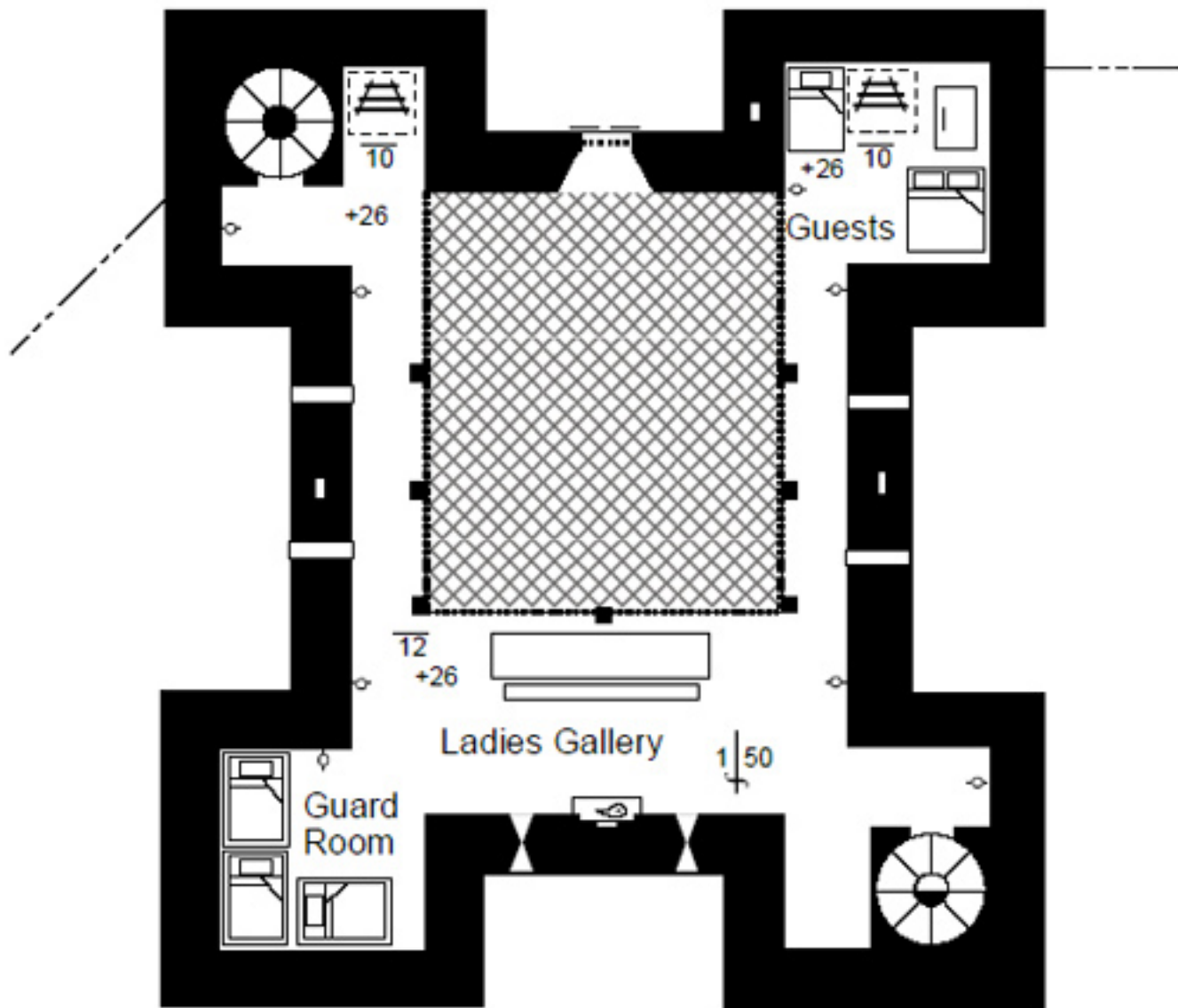
some thirty years ago for reasons of defence. The prison cell is currently unoccupied, but a few weeks ago contained a two-time poacher, whom the baron hanged. The family crypt contains all former lords of Nenda. The plainest crypt is that of the baron's father, who died in 704TR.

FIRST FLOOR



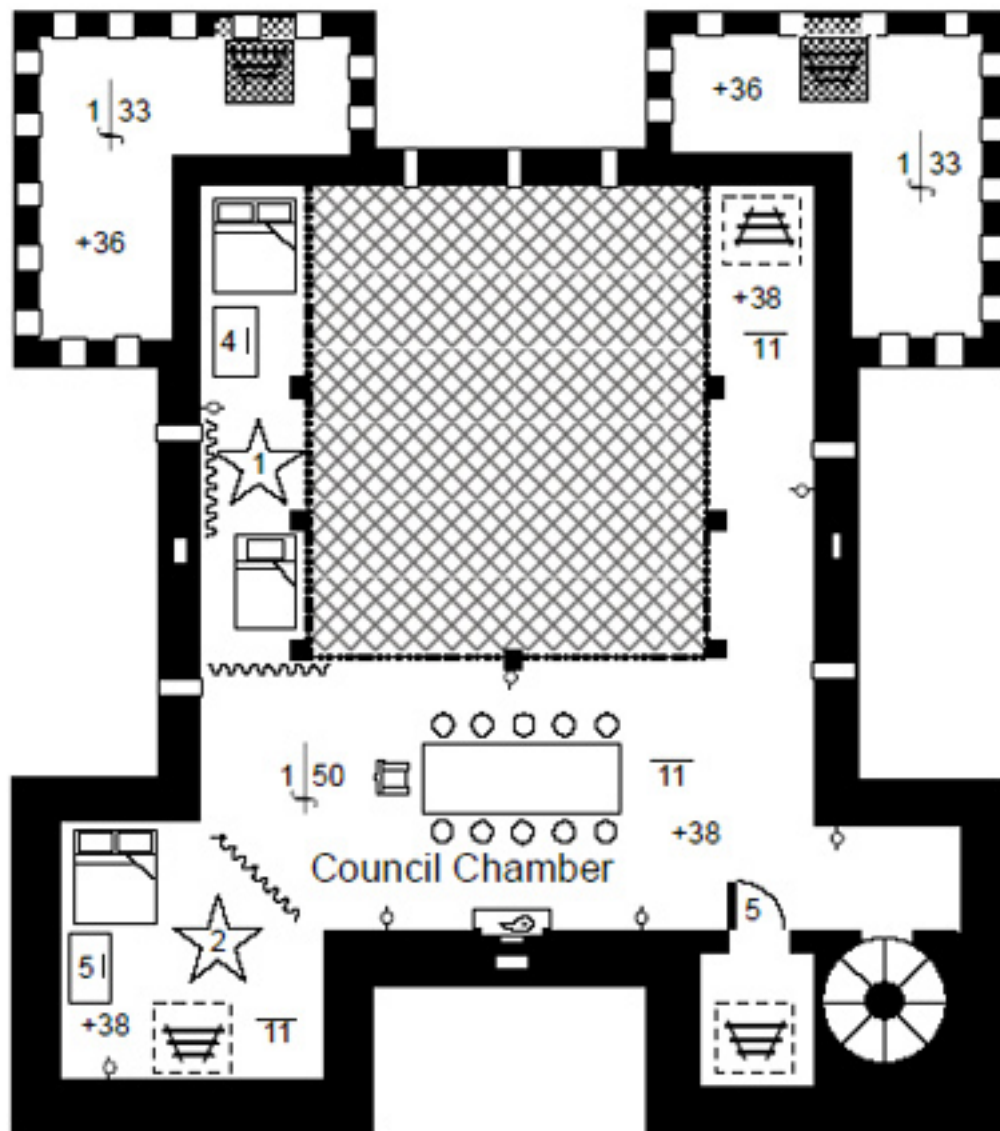
The high table dominates the Great Hall, looming a few feet over the benches and trestles of the low table. As feasts are not common, almost the entire population of the keep dines here. The guardroom in the southeast tower sleeps nine men-at-arms. The castle cook who is helped by six servants manages the kitchen. They all sleep in the beds in the storage area on the ground floor.

SECOND FLOOR



The lady of the keep dines here with her chaperone and the female servants. They are not allowed to eat in the great hall below, especially during feasts. Lady Yrene Neresa, 39, is a very unhappy woman. She is often the target of her husband who mocks her for her ugly appearance, and when he is the wrong mood, beats her endlessly. She has been close to death once but miraculously survived. Only by the hope of her children and the support of Miama, her chaperone, does she willingly continue to live.

THIRD FLOOR



The baron seldom uses the council chamber, as he prefers the great hall where he has a better view of his vassals. The few meetings that are held here from time to time are often very noisy as the baron often loses his temper. Most of his vassals including many family bailiffs, dislike their liege who they consider an ignorant and impossible man.

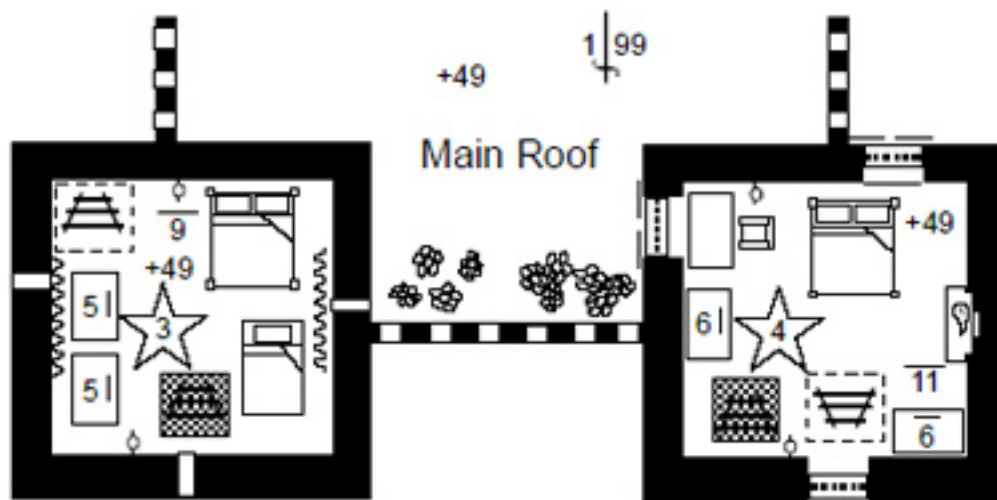
1. Knight Commander and Constable.

Gorlas Enaged, 28, is the third son of a vassal lord and probably the only one in the vicinity who can endure the baron for a longer period of time. The knight is appointed constable and commander of Nenda Keep, a service he performs with great skill and care. He is very loyal to the Hirnen clan and would not betray them even if given the opportunity. A squire, Heber Caldeh, who is a relative to the earl of Minarsas, currently occupies the smaller of the two beds. He is due to be knighted in the following year.

2. Daughter to the baron.

Young Ithina, 14, is trained by her mother to become a lady of great skills. She has not her mother's ugly looks but is not considered a beauty. Ithina is very afraid of her father who rarely pays any attention to her. She has fled her room several times in the past when her mother was feeling the back of her husband's hand. Before entering the squirehood young Arlbis, 18, lived here with his sister. Arlbis is currently stationed in Minarsas and only last year married Lady Pretherela Sothina. The only son of Erelar, dislikes his father and hopes to return as a more powerful knight to protect his mother from his father's wrath.

FOURTH FLOOR



Fourth Floor

3. Lady of the Keep.

Lady Yrene and her chaperone sleep in this part of the keep. Her personal gowns and jewellery are stuffed in two sturdy and locked chests. At winter this tower is very cold and a brazier is brought up from below to heat it up.

4. The Baron's Quarters

Erelar Hirnen sleeps all by himself in the other of the two towers of the keep. All his treasury, armour and clothing are contained in two locked metal bounded chests. Erelar is perhaps the most hated man in the whole kingdom, and the reason for his sullen and arousing temper is twofold. When he was young, Erelar was rather clumsy and often made a fool of himself and his family. His father was a very stern man and often rebuked his son with beatings and harsh punishments. Also when Erelar was a squire in Tashal he fell in love with a young lady who was the daughter of a knight in the royal guard. Although her father was more than interested in a union of the two youngsters, Arlin Hirnen, the father of Erelar, had other plans. He rejected his son's request and forced him to marry an ugly wench who he considered more appropriate. Erelar has to the current day blamed his father for his choice in marriage but since the former baron is now dead, most of his anger is directed to his wife. His counterpart in the small romance he had in Tashal later married a Chybisian knight and moved south. The baron has not forgotten her and often stands on the roof dreaming that she returns.