

# CHRONICLES OF THARDA 1

## Before 720 T.R.

In the years before 720, the kingdoms of western Hârn fought many wars, and when not engaged in open conflict, intrigued against one another on many levels. Most states were young, and lacked deep roots of stability. The Thardic Republic dated to 674 when Aglir, the last Autarch of the Thardic League was assassinated, and the Shiran and Coranan republics voted merged. The Kingdom of Rethem, founded by a Kuboran barbarian sweeping down from the north in 635, had as recently as 715, endured a bloody, contested dynastic succession. The oldest of the three states, the Kingdom of Kanday, dating back to 589, was ruled at this time by a weak and vacillating king who enjoyed respect neither at home nor abroad.

Conflict was endemic. Rethem and Kanday had engaged in Ezar's War from 682-697. It began when the Grandmaster of the Agrikan Order of the Copper Hook laid siege to Imiden keep, but was repulsed by the Laranian Order of the Checkered Shield. Over the next 15 years, the battle raged back and forth, with neither side achieving a lasting advantage. Two monarchs on both sides died during the war, and at the signing of the Peace of Selvos in 697, the border remained largely the same, except for Selvos and Menekod which were seized by Kanday. Rethem did not forget.

In 712 the Kandian Earl of Kuseme became involved in a skirmish with the Thardic Marshal of Ramala. The Thardic senate used this pretext to seize Kuseme

Castle across the Thard from Coranan which had been lost a generation before in the Five Year War. Also seizing Eidru keep, the Thardic Senate was pleased to make peace with King Andasin IV, who had no stomach for war.

The weakness and conflict of the region was ripe for exploitation, and the intrigues of the great nobles and families provided an irresistible opportunity for the restless second son of the late King of Melderyn.

## Early Nuzyael, 720 T.R.

On New Years Day King Chafin III of Rethem was in the city of Golotha. This was unusual, for although his Queen lived in Golotha year-round, the King preferred Shostim to the dark streets of the city. But this year was different as the Queen had recently born his son and heir, Prince Puril, and Chafin III found himself spending more time in his citadel in the perfidious city. It would not have mattered. Unbeknownst to the King of Rethem, two of his three earls had intrigued to betray him, and the third - who had perhaps the most reason to do so but had declined - found that troops hidden in talbars and niviks had sailed up



the Thard and were at this moment investing Caer Techen. Golotha itself saw soldiers landing in great numbers at the

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wharves and seizing key points in the city. The few who resisted were put to the sword. Later, the city would grow to fear the soldiers of the I Legion almost as much as they feared the Agrikans and Morgathians who truly ruled. But not this night - this night they tactfully withdrew to their temples and allowed the despised Araku dynasty to collapse.

Collapse it did, and swiftly. The second son of the late King Chunel of Melderyn, refusing to accept that he must bow before his elder brother for all his life, had determined to conquer a kingdom of his own. As King Chafin withdrew to his bedchamber that evening, he became aware that he was not alone. Against the Deryni grandmaster, he stood no chance, and Arren of Melderyn murdered his rival with a thought. No one knows how he entered the citadel that night, but when they were finished, the King of Rethem, his Queen, his heir, and all his officials were dead. With his troops in control of the city, Prince Arren proclaimed himself King by right of conquest.

## Later Nuzyael to Agrazhar 720 T.R.

With the Araku Dynasty destroyed, most of the great nobles of the kingdom swore fealty to the new monarch, who styled himself Arren I. One of his followers, Sir Osric Jothysan, a younger son of the Melderyni Baron of Ontur, continued to besiege the Earl of Techen in his castle. Techen's major vassals all abandoned him, and went over to the new King. For most in Rethem, life went on as usual, although King Arren almost immediately

began recruiting troops.

In Kelen, Techen Castle fell, its gates having been given up by treachery, and Sir Osric captured the Earl, Revi Lenesque, and had him publicly tortured and executed in Techen town square to the great delight of the people upon whom the Earl had visited much of the same. A grateful King Arren granted Sir Osric the Earldom of Techen. King Arren and his followers spent much of the spring and summer of 720 consolidating their new kingdom. Arren handed out offices, replacing the sheriffs and surviving Royal Officials with his own men, but the only title he granted was to the new Earl of Techen. He had no desire to displace the existing nobles and courted them with favors. He paid particular attention to the Earl of Tormau, whom he suspected of harboring cousins of Chafin III, children who might one day challenge his throne.



Meanwhile, he continued to raise troops. By mid-summer, he had augmented his first two legions with five more, and four of them were at full-strength. It was at

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this time that King Arren issued an decree suppressing the Agrikan Church within his lands, seizing by surprise their largest strongholds, and executing all Agrikans who failed to vacate the kingdom within 24 hours. Most went underground, including Sir Klyrdes Bisidril, the Agrikan Primate and leader of the Golothan Heptarchial Council.

## **Azura 720 T.R.**

Throughout the summer of 720, both the Thardic Republic and the Kingdom of Kanday looked upon the events in Rethem with growing horror. King Andasin IV sent an embassy to his brother-in-law King Darebor II of Melderyn asking him if there were nothing he could do to restrain his reckless brother. The Thardic Senate debated the issue endlessly, and the Expansionist, Imperialist, and Monarchist factions all believed the time had come to strike a blow against Rethem. They were largely unaware of steps King Arren had taken, and also his military buildup. It did

not occur to the Senate that the usurper could so rapidly gain the loyalty of the fractious Rethemi nobles, and they believed that the rapid victory achieved over Kanday in 712 could be repeated in the west to even greater gain.

Accordingly, The Senate voted to invade Rethem at the end of Agrazhar, and the Thardic Legions marched towards Techen and Menekai at the beginning of Azura.

Techen, held by Osric Jothysan, Earl of Techen, proved more resilient than the Legions of the Republic had anticipated. Menekai, recently seized by the crown from the Agrikan Order Red Shadows of Herpa, was garrisoned by the IV Arrenic Legion. The initial assaults of the Legions of the Republic proved ineffective, and King Arren himself took the field with his Queen, Marada in command of his II Legion. By the end of the month, the VI and VII Legions were also engaged along the Gomisen River.



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## Troop Positions at the Beginning of the Rethem – Republic War



(See Key at the end of this document)

### Order of Battle 721

#### Forces of King Arren I:

I Legion  
II Legion  
IV Legion  
V Legion  
VI Legion  
VII Legion  
VIII Legion  
IX Legion  
Earl of Techen

#### Forces of the Republic:

The Red Guard  
Coranan Legion  
Eidel Legion  
Gerium Legion

Kom Legion  
Ramala Legion  
Shiran Legion

#### Forces of King Andasin IV:

Prince Anaflas  
Earl of Heroth  
Earl of Selvos  
Order of the Checkered Shield

### Nuzyael 721 T.R.

The campaign season began afresh in the Spring of 721, with the Kingdom of Kanday joining the fight alongside the Republic. Old enemies, the Senate and King Andasin united to meet what they considered the greater threat. It could also be said that Andasin did not wish to

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stand by while the Republic carved off huge slices of Rethem. However, it took some time for the forces of Kanday to move into position, and they played little role in the spring campaign.

With Marshal Kronas Elernin in command, the Gerium and Eidel legions launched an attack across the Gomisen against the Arrenic II and VI Legions, with several cohorts of the Eidel Legion crossing the river under the cover of darkness to seize the bridge and enable the rest of the army to cross. The VI Legion was commanded by Sir Cedric Arlen and the II Legion by Queen Marada. The IV Legion and the forces of the Earl of Techen covered the flanks. King Arren himself had taken the field in overall command.

King Arren pulled his advance force back, allowing the Eidels to cross the river, and to begin to make their way into the town from the bridge. As they entered Senun, troops of the II Legion attacked from all directions, butchering the Eidels. King Arren then had a few companies of his own men use the shields and weapons of the Eidels to pretend the bridge was in their hands.

Meanwhile, the Earl of Techen ferried his army over the Gomisen to Themeson which was held by a small garrison. The VII Legion held in reserve and to forestall and move by Kanday across the Thard.

The battle joined in the morning and the remaining cohorts of the Eidel Legion crossed the bridge in the belief that their

comrades held the far bank. Before the deception was discovered, two full cohorts of Eidels had crossed and were trapped on the other side. With heavy fighting on the bridge, the Eidels in Senun were easily killed or captured by the Arrenic forces. When the Earl of Techen appeared south of the Republican position in late afternoon, and Marshal Elernin realized he had been outflanked, he broke off the engagement and marched his troops away in the night. The next day, King Arren crossed the Gomisen with three legions. The Arrenic legions immediately began to harry the Republican legions as they retreated in the direction of Imrium. The VI Legion successfully drove the surviving Eidels off, splitting the Republican formation and forcing the Eidel Legion to retreat towards Geminost.

## **Peonu to Kelen 721 T.R.**

The newly formed VIII and IX Legions moved into position with the VIII securing the line near Menekai, and the IX forming the vanguard of the assault on Geshtai. The IX was commanded by Sir Alcar Stanley, a general in the service of King Arren. All through Kelen he drove his troops towards Geshtai and inflicting defeat after defeat as he skirmished with the Coranan Legion. The light cavalry of the IX proved especially effective as they interdicted the Corani retreat, at one point capturing their baggage train which included the legion's paychest.

Meanwhile, the troops of the Earl of Techen won a victory over Marshal Elernin and the Gerium Legion, which

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withdrew to Imrium. With the Eidel Legion already mauled, the Republican forces were ill-positioned to stem the tide of the Arrenic Legions.

## **Nolus 721 T.R.**

Early in Nolus, Sir Alcar Stanley and his IX Legion repulsed an ill-advised and hasty counter-attack by the Coranan Legion near Geshtai. Realizing that his strength was insufficient to press the attack, the commander of the Coranan Legion decided to withdraw to the city which his legion was pledged to protect. Sir Alcar entered Geshtai, and the castle garrison surrendered after token resistance. Rethem had taken its first castle in the Republic.

## **Larane 721 T.R.**

Meanwhile, the Arrenic V Legion moved towards Selvos. The battle lines in Kanday had been quiet, and Sir Lotho Carsten, commanding the V Legion, marched his troops towards Selvos. The aged Grolis Chahryn, Earl of Selvos had charged his son and heir Sir Temiran Chahryn with raising the feudal levy of the earldom. However, by this time, only a handful of knights and men-at-arms had responded. When the V Legion marched into Selvos, it was virtually unguarded and the Earl was forced to flee. The Earl, furious, gathered his power in the Tesien Marshes and waited his chance.

## **Agrazhar to Azura 721 T.R.**

During the summer months, the Gerium Legion continued to retreat towards Shiran, and when it linked up with the Kom Legion was able to stabilize a line

along the Pech River. Meanwhile the Shiran Legion mobilized to come to their aid.

In the south, King Arren marched with the IX Legion towards Coranan, leaving a small garrison at Geshtai. With but one legion, King Arren lacked the strength to assault the strong walls of Coranan, but he was able through a series of maneuvers to force the Coranan Legion to retreat further and eventually take sanctuary within the city itself. King Arren declared that he would have the city, and promised the burghers and citizens that they would be spared provided they gave no resistance to him or his troops.

## **Halane 721 T.R.**

In Halane, Queen Marada, in command of the II Legion, took Imrium. The forces of the Earl of Techen and the IV Legion had bypassed Imrium, but the II and the VI had invested the castle. Defended by the Gerium legion, but without sufficient supplies to withstand a siege with so large a force, the Geriums were forced to sally from the castle and withdraw to the north. With them was Marshal Kronas Elermin, who for this failure was relieved of his command by the Senate and returned to Kuseme. The Senate debated for several weeks on a replacement, and ultimately decided on one of their own – Senator Barane Khonary. The new Marshal took command of the Coranan Legion but never actually left the capitol.

## **Savor 721 T.R.**

Combat operations wound down early in 721 and the Arrenic forces regrouped, the

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Republic legions awaited orders from their new commander, and the forces of

Kanday finally came on line.

## Troop Positions at the End of 721



## Order of Battle 722

### Forces of King Arren I:

- I Legion
- II Legion
- III Legion
- IV Legion
- V Legion
- VI Legion
- VII Legion
- VIII Legion
- IX Legion
- Earl of Techen

### Forces of the Republic:

- The Red Guard
- Coranan Legion
- Eidel Legion
- Ramala Legion

### Forces of King Andasin IV:

- Prince Anaflas
- Earl of Heroth
- Earl of Selvos
- Order of the Checkered Shield

## Nuzyael 722 T.R.

The military position of the Thardic Republic at the beginning of 722 was precarious. The senate was openly

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divided, with the Imperialist and Monarchist factions openly advocating surrender and acceptance of Arren of Melderyn as their king, and the Consolidationists opposing. However, the Expansionist faction, which held the balance of votes, was starting to waver and many of its members – though by no means a majority – were inclined to try to offer terms. It was rumored that Arrenic agents were everywhere, and, perhaps more importantly, Arrenic gold was finding its way into very important purses. As the armies of the Republic lost ground, support for the Republic waned within the Republic's own senate.

Early in Nuzyael, the legions of Rethem marched. The XII Legion crossed the Thard and seized Ewen Keep from its garrison of 20 men at arms. In the north, Stimos and Dumon fell without a fight as the Kom and Gerium legions fell back to Shiran.

## **Peonu 722 T.R.**

By Peonu, the army of the Earl of Techen had entered Parnan. The Mangai informed the district legar, Barogar Turistas that they intended to open the city gates before the invaders. With his defending cohort already taken to augment the Gerium Legion, the Legar had no choice. After assenting to the Mangai demand, he retired to his chambers and committed suicide.

Meanwhile, the II, IV, VI, and VIII, Legions invested Shiran. Of the Republic legions, the Shiran and Kom were at full

strength, but the Gerium was reduced to just over a cohort.

## **Kelen to Nulus 722 T.R.**

By Kelen, the Earl of Selvos had gathered his power, and sought to retake his castle from the III Legion. Marching his army towards the castle, the III Legion attempted to bring him to battle.

However, the Earl of Selvos stuck to the marshes, and feinted with a small portion of his army. The III Legion pursued, and, caught in the marsh, were mauled by the forces of the earl who lay in wait. As the III retreated, the knights of the Earl of Selvos attacked, inflicting heavy losses on the III Legion.

King Arren joined his legions investing Shiran and personally led the attack. Although the defending forces had expected an assault, they were unprepared for the rapid breach of the city gates, and some suspected that treachery had aided the Arrenic forces. In any event, King Arren quickly seized two gates entering Shiran, with the IV Legion entered one and the VIII another. The II Legion prevented egress from the other gates and the VI Legion stood in reserve. The city inhabitants stayed indoors and the fighting raged from street to street. Heavily outnumbered, the Republic legions fell back, continually giving ground, and attempting to make a last stand at the citadel. However, King Arren had anticipated this, and sent the heavy foot of the IV Legion to prevent access to the citadel. In the end, the battle raged in the streets and squares of Shiran, not in its castle. Rumors swirled through the ranks

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of the Republican legions that treacherous senators had sold them out, and the greater

numbers and morale of the Arrenic legions soon told. By the beginning of Nolus, all resistance had been quelled, and Shiran was in the hands of the King of Rethem.

## Larane to Savor 722 T.R.

With the fall of Shiran and the destruction of the Gerium, Kom, and Shiran legions of the Republic, there was little to stand in the way of King Arren and his men.

Manor, keep, and castle fell as the legions of Arren of Melderyn marched unopposed across the northern part of the Republic. Meanwhile, King Arren himself took command of the I, II, and VI Legions and marched to Coranan. By the end of Halane, Telen had fallen, and Firis by the end of Savor. The entire north belonged to King Arren, and the sporadic efforts of the Republic to call up its reserves had failed – due in large part to so much of its territory having been lost and the continuing debate in the Senate over whether to continue to fight

## Troop Positions at the End of 722



## Order of Battle 723

### Forces of King Arren I:

I Legion  
II Legion  
III Legion  
IV Legion

V Legion  
VI Legion  
VII Legion  
VIII Legion  
IX Legion  
X Legion  
XI Legion

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Earl of Techen

## Forces of King Andasin IV:

King Andasin IV

Prince Anaflas

Earl of Heroth

Earl of Sarkum

Earl of Selvos

Order of the Checkered Shield



## Nuzyael to Nulus 723 T.R.

The spring campaign in 723 was strangely quiescent. The Republic had lost most of its territory the year before, retaining only Coranan, Kuseme, and Moleryn. The Eidel and Ramala legions held Moleryn with the Coranan Legion and the famed Red Guard garrisoning Coranan. Very little fighting took place.

At this time, the Earl of Selvos reentered Selvos to the acclaim of his people. For the octogenarian Earl, it was the moment of a lifetime. The III Legion withdrew to Hyen to lick its wounds, but in fact it had suffered such casualties, that it would need to be reorganized and reinforced.

In these months, King Arren moved amongst his legions. He was in command of the VII Legion when Heroth fell in Nulus. Although the Earl of Heroth and Prince Anaflas had attempted to defend the region, King Arren stole a march on Prince Anaflas, engaged his army, and forced him to withdraw. His opponents divided, King Arren then turned to face the Earl of Heroth and inflicted a decisive defeat at the Battle of Ravinath, afterwards seizing Heroth Castle.

## Azura to Halane 723 T.R.

After Heroth, King Arren resumed command of his legions besieging Coranan. Also by this time more members of the expansionist faction in the Thardic senate had switched to the side of King Arren. This included the commander of the legions in Coranan – Senator Barane Khonary. With three full-strength legions outside the gates of the city, King Arren received the delegation from the senate and their surrender. Although the senators attempted to make preservation of the senate itself a condition of surrender, King Arren rejected any such notion. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of Azura, 723, the Thardic Senate voted to end the Republic and offer the crown of Tharda to Arren of Melderyn. The Thardic Republic eased to exist. Certain influential senators were knighted the next day, including Barane Khonary, last Marshal of the Republic. One senator, Quarli Jeredosta, was created Baron of Hediro. Other honors would be dispensed over the next few months and the transition from republic to monarchy was unexpectedly smooth. Nevertheless, the Eidel and Ramala legions held out at Moleryn.

King Arren entered Coranan in triumph at the head of the I Legion on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Azura. His troops marched through the

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streets, and he himself, mounted on a jet-black charger rode into the courtyard of the Palace of the Red Domes. There the gathered members of the senate of the Republic tendered their formal submission and homage. King Arren pardoned all those who had been in arms against him who had laid them down, and pledged to be a good lord to the people of Tharda. A proclamation was issued, and the capitol of the kingdom was transferred to Coranan from Golotha. Although Arren of Melderyn was still formally titled “King of Rethem,” it was at this time that the phrase “Kingdom of Tharda” first began to be used in common parlance.

## **Halane 723 T.R.**

The new capitol secure, and the rest of the kingdom peaceful, the Arrenic legions marched against Moleryn, where the two Republican legions – both under the command of Kronas Elernin – held out. Before the battle joined, King Arren offered Elernin the honors of war and allowed that his position as magistrate might be continued (as sheriff), provided he and his soldiers laid down their arms. Elernin, a wily, ambitious survivor, who knew that his troops were bloodied and demoralized from the rapid conquest of the Republic, quickly assented. Some soldiers of his legion rebelled at what they considered to be this treason, but Kronas Elernin himself put them down and executed the rebels under his command. He then marched his remaining troops out of Caer Moleryn and stacked their arms before the dread Deryni monarch. King Arren was well pleased and keeping his word to the Elernin, he knighted him and

appointed him sheriff. Sir Kronas himself, ever ambitious, immediately began plotted a further rise in the service of the conqueror.

After Moleryn fell, it became clear that the army under the command of the King of Kanday and his father the Earl of Sarkum would attempt to take advantage of the situation and strike as soon as they could gather their forces. King Arren placed Queen Marada in command of the legions at Moleryn and tasked her with opposing the advance of the Kandaysian troops. With the VI, IX, and X Legions, the Queen beat back a probing attack by King Andasin, and established a line south of the river Teb.

At the same time, the newly reinforced III Legion counterattacked against the troops of the Earl of Selvos and defeated them in a pitched battle outside the town. Once again, the Earl was forced to withdraw, and once again, the III Legion entered the town and the castle. However, casualties were such that the III Legion had fewer than 100 effectives – mostly light and medium foot. Losing his castle a second time proved too much for the aged Earl, and he suffered a stroke, lingered for several weeks, and finally withered away, his son and heir at his bedside. Sir Temiran, now Earl of Selvos, withdrew what was left of his army towards Dunir, vowing revenge for the loss of both his patrimony and his *pater*.

## **Savor to Morgat 723 T.R.**

King Arren returned to his capital, Coranan, and reviewed the laws of the old

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Republic, confirming many of them but striking others. He also formally ended the patronage system of the Republic and appointed officials who would “feudalize” Tharda. The clans that had supported the conqueror would retain their lands, but there were many manors and castles now

in Royal hands which could be distributed as rewards and favors to the King’s men. To aid in this, King Arren ordered a census of his new lands to be conducted at the earliest opportunity.

## Troop Positions at the End of 723



## Order of Battle 724

### Forces of King Arren I:

I Legion  
II Legion

III Legion  
IV Legion  
V Legion  
VI Legion  
VII Legion

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VIII Legion  
IX Legion  
X Legion  
XI Legion  
Earl of Techen

## **Forces of King Andasin IV:**

King Andasin IV  
Prince Anaflas  
Earl of Heroth  
Earl of Sarkum  
Earl of Selvos  
Order of the Checkered Shield

## **Forces of King Haldan III:**

King Haldan III  
Earl of Vemion  
Lord Dariune

## **Nuzyael to Kelen 724 T.R.**

By the beginning of 724, the new King of Kaldor, Haldan III, looked west with growing dread. He knew that King Arren – whom he called “Arren the Archfiend” would have as little trouble conquering Kanday as he had the Republic and Rethem and resolved to intervene. Accordingly, he gathered an army and with the Earl of Vemion and Lord X Dariune commanding the forces of the Earl of

Balim, he met the Arrenic legions just east of Moleryn. Queen Marada met him in battle. The Queen held off the army of Kaldor, but at the cost of her own life.

Meanwhile, King Arren in command of three legions met King Andasin in battle near Ibinost, the ancestral stronghold of clan Kand and utterly routed the Kandaysian forces. King Andasin and his father the Earl of Sarkum both escaped the battle along with a handful of knights, but the major field force of the King of Kanday ceased to exist.

In the west, the V and XII Legions held the line against the Earl of Selvos and Prince Anaflas. The VII Legion fought several skirmishes with the Earl of Heroth.

## **Nolus to Savor 724 T.R.**

The campaign in Kanday was quiet for much of the rest of 724. King Haldan III withdrew as King Arren feinted towards his army, and King Andasin IV withdrew to Dyrisa to try to rebuild his army. King Arren I took advantage of the lull to deepen his control over Rethem and Tharda.



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## Troop Positions at the End of 724



### Order of Battle 725

#### Forces of King Arren I:

I Legion  
II Legion  
III Legion  
IV Legion  
V Legion  
VI Legion  
VII Legion  
VIII Legion  
IX Legion

X Legion  
XI Legion  
Earl of Techen

#### Forces of King Andasin IV:

King Andasin IV  
Prince Anaflas  
Earl of Heroth  
Earl of Sarkum  
Earl of Selvos  
Order of the Checkered Shield

#### Forces of King Haldan III:

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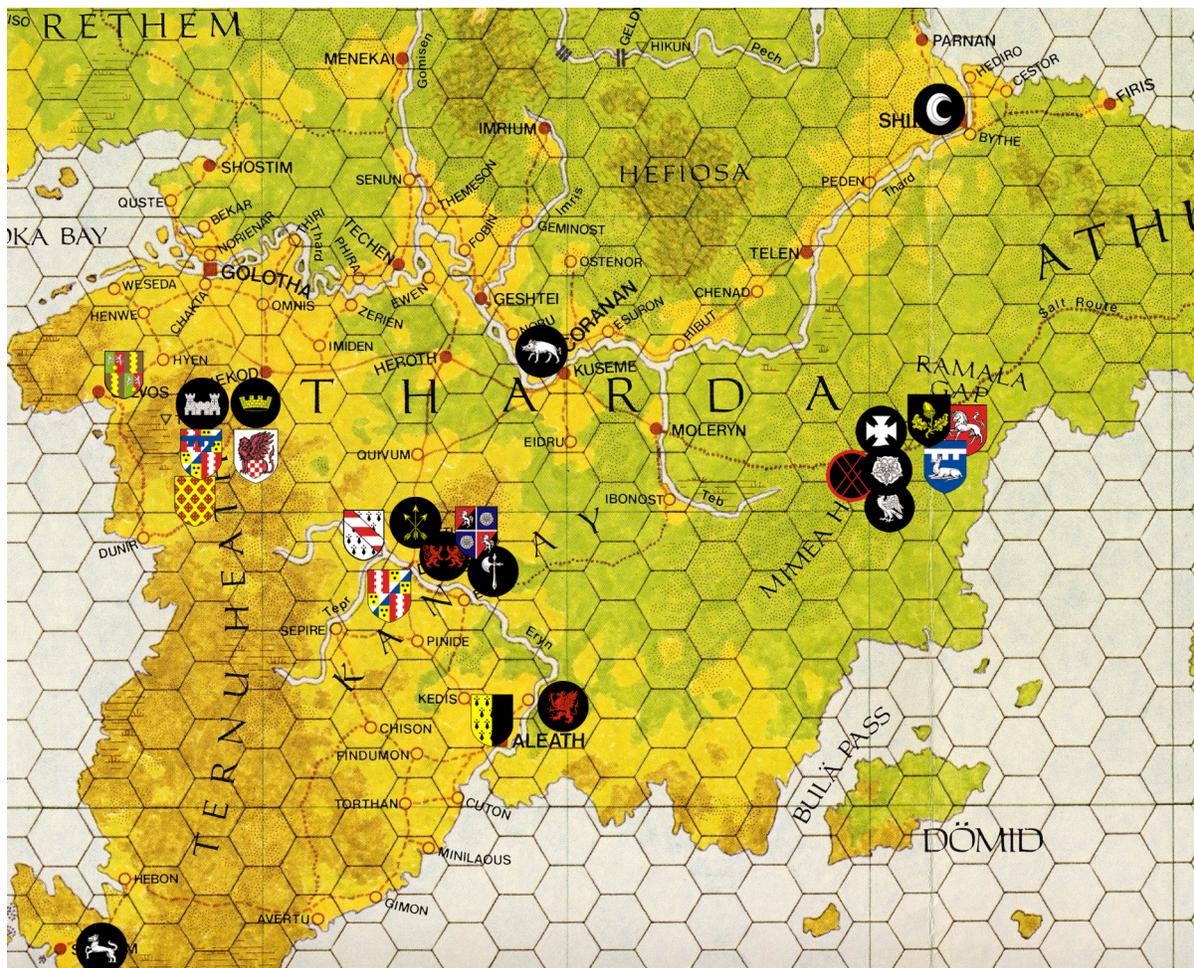
King Haldan III  
Earl of Osel  
Lord Dariune

## Nuzyael to Kelen 725 T.R.

With the beginning of the campaign season for 725 King Arren launched his armies at Kanday determined to end the war this year. He knew that King Andasin could not hold out much longer, and with several legions under the command of Sir Cedric Arlen holding Haldan III off in the east, Arren himself launched an assault against Dyrisa while the Earl of Techen attacked Selvos.

Selvos had changed hands several times during the war, but now, Techen had his own forces plus two full-strength legions at his disposal. Against this, the weary forces of the Earl of Selvos stood no chance. Selvos counted on the Order of the Checkered Shield to support him, but they had been undermined by the religious tolerance that King Arren had instituted throughout his kingdom. Although most of the knights fought with Selvos, many – a significant number – were absent from the battle and this told. The Earl of Techen was able to push through Selvos and past Menekod.

## Troop Positions at the End Spring 725



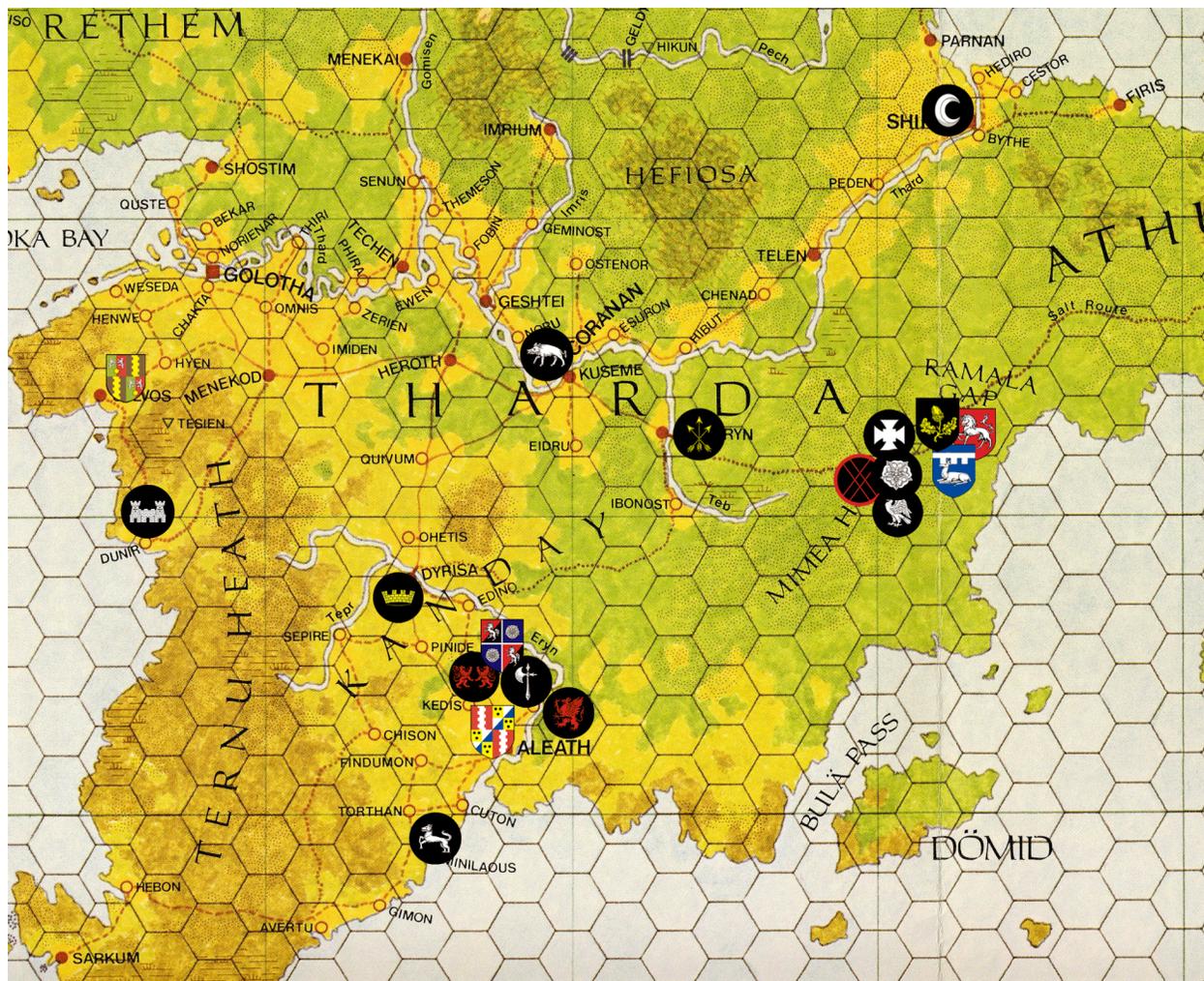
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## Nolus to Agrazhar 725 T.R.

In summer, near Dyrisa, the final battle took place. His father and advisors pleaded with King Andasin to seek the safety of Dyrisa castle, but he would not hear of it. Determining to meet the invader on the field, and joined by Prince Anaflas and the Earls of Heroth and Selvos, King Andasin rode against King

Arren. Outnumbered, out-generaled, the army of Kanday was destroyed. Prince Anaflas and the young Earl of Selvos were among those slain during the battle, while the Earls of Sarkum and Heroth managed to convince Andasin IV to withdraw once the battle was lost. They retreated towards Aleath.

## Troop Positions at the End of Summer 725



## Azura to Savor 725 T.R.

By the summer, Haldan III and his army withdrew to Kaldor and the legions

scattered throughout Kanday were engaged in mopping up the last resistance. Aleath was briefly besieged but

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realized the hopelessness of their position and surrendered. Andasin and his

remaining nobles went into hiding.

## Troop Positions at the End of Fall 725



### **Navek 725 T.R.**

Towards the end of 725, the Kingdom of Kanday was no more, but Andasin IV and a number of his nobles remained at large. King Arren I planned to resume the campaign in the spring, but before that could happen, a herald appeared at his court in Coranan with a challenge to him and his followers to meet in ten days on the Norea Plain to settle the matter in

single combat. Although King Arren's nobles advised against it, he determined to meet the challenge. Accordingly, he and his peers rode to meet Andasin and his men.

The two kings jostled and broke a lance against each other's shields and then another as King Arren unhorsed King Andasin. The High Deryni Prince then

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dismounted, drew his sword and advanced on Andasin. Sparring, the two kings fought back and forth until they drew apart for a moment. King Arren rearmed with a ball and chain and the two monarchs clashed again. At one point, King Andasin took a blow to the hip and went down. As King Arren drew back to strike the final blow, Andasin slashed upwards with his sword, wounding Arren in the upper chest who yet completed the deadly arc of his swing and the spiked ball connected with King Andasin's head, crushing his skull. The last King of Kanday was dead, but the first King of Tharda was mortally wounded. Dropping to his knees, King Arren seemed to stagger and then he raised his arms as if casting a spell and disappeared.

For the moment there was silence on both sides, and then the nobles fell upon each other. The outnumbered Kandaysians were slaughtered and when finished, the Thardan nobles realized that their king was dead. Prince Arabar of Kuseme and Prince Arren of Shiran both claimed the throne. The Thardan nobles divided – most alongside Prince Arren – and left the field.

## Morgat 725 T.R.

Prince Arren declared himself King in Coranan as King Arren II, and declared that no half-breed Deryni should sit on his father's throne. Prince Arabar, who had retreated to Golotha, declared himself king as the elder son. However, both princes were convinced that their father's

nascent kingdom might not survive a protracted struggle and that the only solution was for them to meet in single combat. This they did and met one the Norea Plain, not far from the walls of Coranan, and engaged in the Deryni Duel Arcane. Prince Arren was victorious and upon the death of Prince Arabar was acclaimed by all King Arren II.

## Nuzyael 726 T.R.

Suddenly, the fifteen year old prince found himself King. He had always expected it would be so – not because his father had indicated which of his two older sons should succeed him, but because he knew from an early age that he was more capable than his older brother. As a young prince, Arren II had attended upon his father in all things: he had learned the art of war and the art of state at his father's knee. That this also stemmed from his full Deryni heritage, and the union of two powerful bloodlines in him, he took for granted. Still, Arren II was not prejudicial in his appointments or his favors, merely in his fitness to rule. This confidence – not misplaced as soon became apparent, would serve the young King well in the first few months of his reign.

The first order of business was to take control of his father's government. The King called the nobles and officers of the Crown to attend upon him in the Palace of the Red Domes in early Nuzyael, and addressed his court. He confirmed all officials in their positions until further notice. Then he had every noble and

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official, including all the commanders of the legions, come forward and one by one, kneel, place their hands between his, and swear fealty and homage to him, Arren II, King of Tharda.

At the time of the conquest of the Republic, Arren I dismissed his Lord Chancellor – the Earl of Techen – and replaced him with the newly created Earl of Daenshire. Though human, Daenshire had also been responsible for the education of Arren II, and there was a bond of friendship and trust despite their age. It was clear to all that Daenshire would be the first man in the kingdom after the King.

The Earl of Techen, married to the daughter of Arren I, Gwenolyn, Prince Arabar's sister, made a bid for a regency suggesting that the King's Majesty must have guidance for one of such tender years to rule so great a state. But while his own vassals murmured agreement, the majority of the great lords disagreed, fearing that Techen had too great a claim to lead a regency council, and given his sons were the grandchildren of Arren I, that he might even arrange an accident for the King and take over the government during the long minority of his own children. That the Earl of Techen had considered himself as the most worthy candidate for Regent was true, although any further designs were inchoate and might not have fully formed in the event.

However, Techen's play did cause Arren II to begin his reign suspicious of the Earl, and he determined that Techen – entitled

by rank to a great office – would play no major role in his government. Thanking him for his many years of service to his father, he suggested that his eyes on the eastern border would be most valuable to the Crown, if he would be willing to serve as Warden of Ramalmarch. Techen immediately understood he had been outmaneuvered – Ramalmarch was only a term, the office had never been filled, and the Warden had no troops, no purse, no stronghold, and no authority over the Legions who actually guarded the frontier. It was, in effect, an empty office designed to marginalize the Earl. Techen also understood that if he refused he would be offered nothing else. Thus he bowed low, and thanked His Majesty for entrusting him with so great an honor. A lesser man might have begun to plot against the King at that point, but Techen had come far in the world for a younger son of a baron. Instead of the knighthood and perhaps honor of being a bailiff of a manor, he had become a mighty earl, married a princess, and was now a man of enormous wealth. Further, he truly revered the lost Arren I, and he would never raise his sword against his son. And so, the Earl of Techen retired to his estates, to await the time when he could serve his King and prove himself worthy of his trust.

King Arren had planned to elevate the Baron of Peden – his father's best general and the Lord Marshal of the Kingdom to the Earldom of Menekai, but now he decided that the time had not come for that. Save Daenshire, he did not know these men as his father had, and Techen

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had surprised him. Though not inexperienced, he recognized that he was very young compared to these veteran counselors. He understood it was better to learn more about these men he had inherited before trusting them solely on the strength of their association with Arren I.

Accordingly, he summoned the Dowager Queen, and asked the she and his brothers appear before him. She came, radiant and lovely, and many of the men in that hall wondered if she would remarry. At just 25, and the mother of two princes, she would be a valuable prize, although she could not remarry without the King's consent. With her were her two sons: Doriath and Lodros, both still infants. Arren II rose from his throne and descended partway to embrace Queen Meghann, called her "mother," and placed a hand on the head of each of his half-brothers. "Know you all," he said, "that these are our brothers and heir to our throne in their turn. So that they are worthy and held in regard by the peers of this land, I create my brother, Doriath Gemril Shelir Parkhurst Duke of Golotha. I also create my brother Lodros Dakarion Imadain Parkhurst Duke of Aleath. Each of them shall be granted lands and incomes in accordance with their station, and shall be wards of the Crown until they come of age." The fifteen year old King, now clearly of age, did not see fit to specify at what age his brothers would cease to be wards. The entire court bowed, no one doubting that their young King had made a most impressive first showing.

Later in the month, several decrees were issued, but the most significant was the one lifting the ban on the Church of Agrik. Tharda was now the only Harnic state with full religious freedom. The King did not see fit, however, to return the lands, manors, and castles of the Agrikans, although he did order their temples to be restored. As the temples in most cases had only been sealed, there was no practical effect on the Crown. The Laranians were upset, as they had assumed the Arren II, a Laranian, would be more ruthless against the Agrikans than his father had been. However, the King calculated that the displeasure of the Laranians would be temporary and nothing compared to the underground agitation which he knew the Agrikans had been plotting. Neither party was fully satisfied, but both had received enough that they would not be inclined to offer resistance to the Crown. It was as good a solution as was possible at the time, and allowed Arren II to consolidate his hold on the government without having to immediately address religious strife.

## Peonu 726 to Kelen 728 T.R.

Over the next year and a half, Arren II consolidated his government. The Legions were quietly reduced in strength although inducements were to the most veteran troops to retain their service. The King traveled about the entire Kingdom in this period, visiting almost every castle and most keeps.

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Coranan attracted many scholars and practitioners of the esoteric arts, and the old magisterial palace in Kuseme was granted to a new university chartered to provide instruction in many subjects.

## Larane, 728 T.R.

### The Capture of Ithiko

On the 3rd of Larane, the Earl of Tormau appeared before the walls of Ithiko with an army and put it under siege. The castle garrison was unprepared for the siege, and fell thirteen days later on the 16th of Larane. Herrin Barzak, the earl, and his eldest son, Sir Geyal Barzak, were captured by the Earl of Tormau.

### The Royal Council Meets

The King lost no time responding to Tormau's treason. Baron Cedric of Findumon, commander of the I Legion inspected his troops and made preparations for the arrival of the VI Legion. Those two would form the core of the Royal Army that would march against Tormau, while the II Legion would garrison Coranan. Meanwhile, the Earl of Techen returned to his estates and called together his knights with the Earl of Gerium doing the same. The Earl of Daenshire would remain at Coranan *in loco regis*. Lastly, the knights of the Duchy of Shiran would assemble under the command of Sir Tomas Eltham.

Messengers were dispatched to both Shostim and Golotha with orders for Sir Hadas Nyvall, commander of the VIII Legion to defend both places.

### The Gates of Golotha Close

After Sir Hadas took some of the Golotha garrison to the defense of Shostim, the remnants of the Agrikan fighting orders – many of whom had been in hiding – reentered the city, joined those already there, and with the help of forces loyal to the Earl of Tormau from Henwe, clashed with the legionnaires in the streets of the city. The hard-pressed legionnaires took refuge in Caer Chaftar where they were safe, but with less than 200 effectives.

### The Royal Army Assembles

On the 10th of Larane, the Royal Army, which included the I and VI Legions as well as knights and men at arms from the Duchy of Shiran, marched out of Coranan south through Kuseme to Heroth where it was met by the Earl of Gerium and his forces. Arriving at Menekod on the 14th, the Royal Army was there met by the Earl of Techen and his vassals, the Baron of Omnis and the Baron of Thiri. At this time the Royal Army's effective strength stood at nearly 500 knights and more than 3000 men at arms. After listening to the counsel of his nobles, the King ordered that the army would march against Golotha first to secure its loyalty. The Royal Army laid siege to Golotha on the 18th of Larane.

### The Siege of Shostim

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On the 21st of Larane, after marching from Ithiko, the Earl of Tormau besieged Shostim. Sir Hadas Nyvall, with most of the VIII Legion at his disposal, rode out to engage Tormau.

The VIII Legion had the advantage of freshness over the Tormauri, but the Earl's army was flush from its quick victories over Winen and Ithiko. Greatly outnumbered, the Legionnaires fought until dusk and were forced to retreat to the castle after suffering nearly 80% casualties. Where 700 men had rode against Tormau scarcely 150 returned. Yet the Earl of Tormau lost approximately the same number.

## Agrazhar, 728 T.R.

### The Fall of Golotha

Chakta keep on the south bank of the Thard was still held for the King by Sir Blors Manfrungtane, the Sheriff of Zabinshire although a token attempt had been made to seize it by the Agrikans. Troops ferried across the river were quickly able to secure the outlying villages of Golotha and lay effective siege from all landward sides of the city. The Earl of Gerium took command of the troops in Caer Chaftar, the rest of the VI Legion remained to the south at Caer Chakta under Sir Helt Mogens along with Sir Blors and knights he had been able to summon from Zabinshire. The forces of the Earl of Techen and part of the I Legion assembled to the east under the

command of the King. The Baron of Findumon, with the remainder of the I Legion, took command of the seaborne element.

On the 5th of Agrazhar the assault was launched. Sir Helt and Sir Blors attacked the Dedergon Gate from the south across the Dedergon Bridge. Some of the best archers in the VI Legion were stationed on the walls of Caer Chaftar and provided covering fire for the Baron of Findumon and his I Legionnaires to assault the Northaven Wharf by sea. At the same time, the Earl of Techen and his forces assaulted the Kalphor Wharf and the rest of the I Legion stormed the Gate of Chafin with the King himself leading the charge across the bridge.

The Agrikans, knowing that the eastern half of the city was the most vulnerable, had stationed the majority of their forces in that area. The fighting was very heavy, with the King and his troops managing to break through the gate, but being unable to secure the gatehouse, were forced to withdraw. Lord Findumon, with the aid of the archers, secured the Northaven Wharf, and tried to fight his way down Khi Way to the Chafin Gate. The Earl of Techen by contrast, after gaining control of the Kalphor Wharf, was unable to make headway along Kalphor Street and thus was forced to fight up Oraena Street. The fighting was particularly intense in this area, and the Earl, after taking Chafin Square, found himself fighting with his back to the canal. Many of his men were killed, and some were forced into the pool, including the Earl himself. Dozens

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drowned, though the Earl and some others clambered onto nearby barges, fighting their way back to the Kalphor Wharf. The men remaining in Chafin Square were annihilated.

The next day the assault was renewed with elements of the VI Legion reinforcing the Earl of Techen on the Kalphor Wharf and the Baron of Findumon continuing to fight his way to the Chafin Gate. Once more, the King led the charge across the bridge, and once more battered his way through the gate. This time, the two halves of the I Legion hooked up with each other, and when that happened, the entire northeastern part of the city fell before them and with the Earl of Techen fighting up from the Kalphor Wharf again, by nightfall, the entire eastern portion of the city was in the hands of the King. The Chafin Gate was renamed the 'Arren Gate' by universal acclamation of the army.

Casualties in the assault had been heavy, and of those men who had fallen into the canal, including the Earl of Techen, fever and dysentery had begun to take hold. Many men were sent outside the city due to illness, including the Earl of Techen and the Baron of Omnis.

On the third day of the assault, resistance was light as most of the rebel forces were either killed or in hiding. As a result, the rest of the city fell quickly, the only exception being the northern section, which was completely walled. Access was limited to one small bridge across the Rusu Canal or the causeway from Caer Chaftar. At this time, word came that the

Earl of Tormau had lifted the siege of Shostim and was marching south to Golotha.

Rather than be caught in the city, King Arren decided to march north to meet Tormau in the field. He ordered the Sheriff of Zabinshire and Sir Helt Mogens to continue the siege of the northern part of the city. To march against Tormau the King took the entire I Legion, now numbering some 780 men, the knights of the Duchy of Shiran, the rest of the VI Legion with nearly 500 men, the remnants of the Earl of Techen's army under the Baron of Thiri numbering no more than 100 men, and the full force of the Earl of Gerium which had suffered no casualties, perhaps 1800 effectives in all.

The Earl of Tormau received word that the King had raised an army against him and had marched to capture Golotha. On the 7th of Agrazhar the Earl marched south with all but 300 of his men who were left behind to besiege Shostim.

## **The Battle of Retu**

By the evening of the 8th, King Arren and his army had reached the outskirts of the village of Retu, which stood on a small neck of land with the Golotha-Shostim road running north-south. Boka Bay lay to the west and the large Lake Meril to the east. King Arren deployed his troops along the narrowest place in the neck such that he would have wider terrain to his rear. At the same time, he denied such terrain to his opponent so that if Tormau was forced to retreat, he would have

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nowhere to go but back up the neck. In such a confined place, his troops would be extremely vulnerable in any retrograde action. Further, the marshy, uneven terrain to the east of Lake Meril would prevent the Earl from marching around to the rear of the Royal force. The army of the Earl of Tormau – twice as large as the King's - arrived late in the day to discover the Royal quarry blocking its path. As a result, both armies settled into a defensive posture for the night; combat was all but certain the following morning.

On the morning of Agrazhar 9, 728 the two armies drew up across from each other. There was a light rain, and the day was overcast. The Earl of Tormau, seeing his numerical superiority would not help him as much in the narrowness of the neck, put his best knights in front, promising baronies to the ones that distinguished themselves best, and an earldom for the one that killed Arren, “the whelp of the murderer of good King Chafin.” Behind these knights went the men at arms and the feudal levy. To the right and to the left, Tormau put small numbers of mounted archers.

King Arren divided his army into three wings with the Baron of Findumon in command of the right wing, the Earl of Gerium in command of the left wing, and himself in command of the center. He placed all of the archers to the rear to provide them the cover of the army so that they might fire without interference. Before the battle, King Arren addressed his soldiers, reminding them of the great victories of his father, and telling them

that although they were few in number, the greater the share of honor it would be for each of them.

The battle raged throughout the day, with the King's archers raining death upon Tormau's host. Many of Tormau's troops, despite their recent successes, still lacked experience, and proved no match for the trained and veteran troops of the King, especially in such close quarters. The heavy foot of the I Legion, most of whom had fought with Arren I, butchered Tormau's men at arms while the great part of the feudal levy fled the field. The Baron of Thiri did battle with the Earl of Tormau himself and was slain. The Baron of Zaza was killed by the Earl of Gerium. Lord Findumon captured both the Baron of Quiso and the Baron of Quste. Sensing his forces ebb, the Earl of Tormau sought out King Arren in desperation. The two fought savagely, neither High Deryni able to gain an advantage against the other. Eventually, the King's youth, quickness, and power told, and the Earl of Tormau was slain amidst the crackling energy of the king's magical onslaught. When his troops saw the Tormau standard go down, they surrendered, the troops dazzled by the display. The day belonged to the King.

## Azura, 728 T.R.

### Aftermath

After the Battle of Retu, King Arren marched his army north, first to Ithiko, and then to Tormau. All of the remaining Tormauri forces surrendered before the

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royal host. The Earl of Ithiko was restored to his lands and titles and Ithius keep, which the Earl of Tormau had seized years before, was also restored to Ithiko. Zaza was reintegrated with the Earldom of Ithiko.

The Earldom of Tormau was dissolved by the King, and in its place, the Earldom of Westmarch was created and bestowed upon Cedric Arlen, the Baron of Findumon who had so distinguished himself during the campaign. The Barons of Quiso and Quсте, after submitting to the King, were pardoned and restored to their lands and titles.

Word of the results of the Battle of Retu had meanwhile reached Golotha, where the Heptarchial Council, in a sudden display of energy, “arrested” the ringleaders of the rebellion and surrendered them to Sir Blors and Sir Helt, claiming to have been loyal to the crown all along. King Arren II returned to Golotha, and consulted with the Lady Marliese Tansel, the Laranian Bishop of Perinore and his Chancellor of the Exchequer, as well as the Earl of Daenshire who rode from Coranan. With the new Earl of Westmarch in agreement, the King rescinded his decree abolishing the Heptarchial Council and reinstated its ancient privileges. It was clear that that city could not be ruled without the Morgathians who had held sway there for centuries, and that any Lord Mayor would be quickly assassinated. The only alternative would be to live himself in the city, and this the King was not prepared to do. The Haleans were given back their

seat as was the Agrikan Order of Mamaka, which had not, in theory, participated in the revolt. The King considered a Laranian member of the council, but Bishop Tansel advised that no pious Laranian could possibly serve in good conscience. The Morgathians would be allowed their traditional privileges, but with a Royal constable in Caer Chaftar. The King appointed Sir Hadas to the post.

## Savor 728 T.R.

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## Military Forces Map Key

### Kingdom of Rethem (Tharda)



King Arren I



Queen Marada



Earl of Techen



I Legion



II Legion



III Legion



IV Legion



V Legion



VI Legion



VII Legion



VIII Legion



IX Legion



X Legion



XI Legion



XII Legion



XIII Legion

### Thardic Republic



Red Guard



Coranan Legion



Eidel Legion



Gerium Legion



Kom Legion



Ramala Legion



Shiran Legion

### Kingdom of Kanday



King Andasin IV



Prince Anaflas



Earl of Sarkum



Earl of Selvos



Earl of Heroth



Checkered Shield

### Kingdom of Kaldor



King Haldan III



Earl of Vemion



Earl of Osel



Lord Dariune