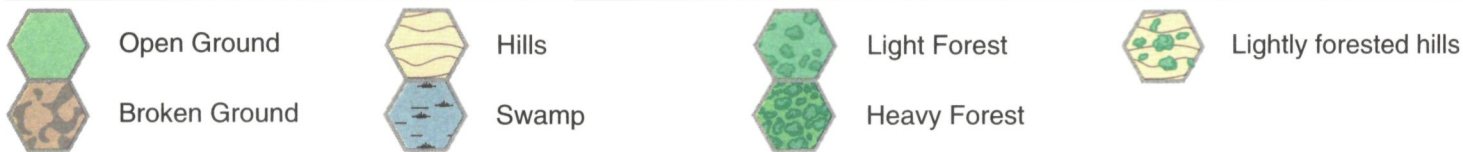
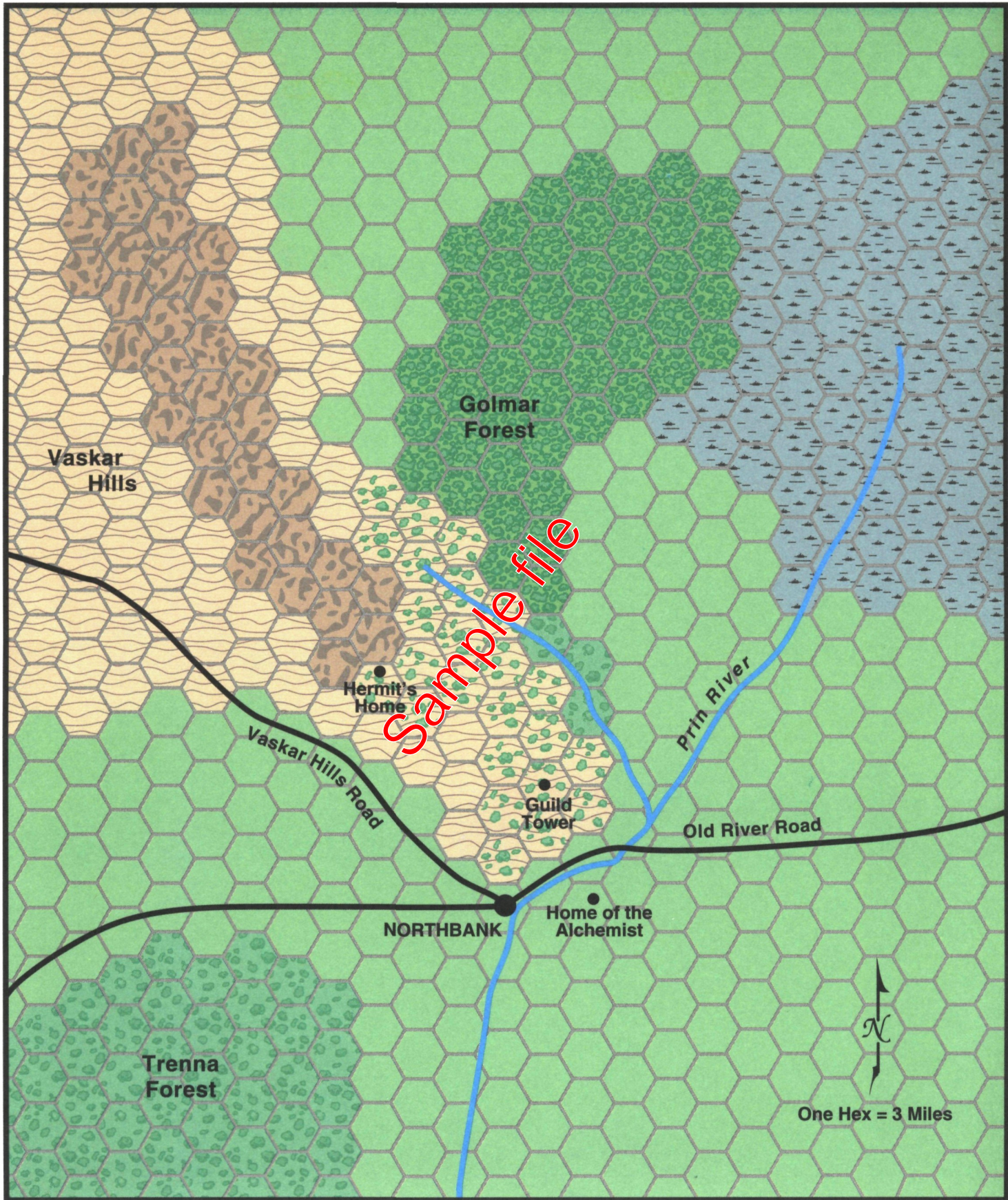


# Northbank and Vicinity





## Wizard's Challenge

Introduction .....	1
Plot Synopsis .....	2
Chapter One: The Village of Northbank .....	3
Personalities .....	4
Places of Interest .....	6
Chapter Two: Wizards of Northbank .....	12
Chapter Three: Surrisk's Trap .....	15
Chapter Four: The Alchemist and Hermit .....	18
Chapter Five: Tower of the Ghost Prince .....	22
The Ghost Prince .....	25
Chapter Six: Side Adventures .....	26
New Magic .....	31
New Monster .....	32

### Credits

Design: Tim Beach  
 Editing: Anne Brown  
 Cover Illustration: Erik Olson  
 Interior Illustrations: Karl Waller  
 Cartography: John Knecht  
 Typography: Angelika Lokozec  
 Special Thanks to Teeuwyn

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and AD&D are registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.

The TSR logo is a trademark owned by TSR, Inc.

© 1992 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

Random House and its affiliate companies have worldwide distribution rights in the book trade for English language products. Distributed to the book and hobby trade in the United Kingdom by TSR Ltd.

This product is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or other unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of TSR, Inc.

TSR, Inc.  
 POB 756  
 Lake Geneva  
 WI 53147  
 USA

TSR Ltd.  
 120 Church End  
 Cherry Hinton  
 Cambridge CB1 3LB  
 United Kingdom

ISBN 1-56076-365-5  
 9359XXX1501

### Introduction

*Wizard's Challenge* is a one-on-one adventure. It is designed for campaigns involving only a few PCs (player characters) or as a means to give a PC some experience before placing him in an existing campaign.

The adventure is suited for a wizard of 2nd to 5th level. A multi-class wizard would also be appropriate. Characters of other classes may succeed as well, though the DM may have to make modifications to get them involved (see the plot synopsis).

In this adventure, references are made to PHBR4, *The Complete Wizard's Handbook*. It is not required to run the adventure, but would help add interest and variety.

*Wizard's Challenge* is a mystery adventure that stresses role-playing and problem-solving more than combat. Role-play each NPC's personality as skillfully as possible, so that clues are discovered through conversation rather than being given to the PC. Because there is little combat, DMs are encouraged to offer experience points for other activities. Though some suggestions are offered in the text, DMs may wish to review the rules on Individual Class Awards and the optional rules on Individual Experience Awards (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 48).

Keep in mind that since only one PC is involved, the margin for error is slim. Be prepared to give the player a break. If the player is acting intelligently but is plagued by bad die rolls, go easy on him. Instead of the PC being killed, an enemy might capture or rob him instead. Similarly, if a PC is doing things right but is not understanding a clue, the DM might be a bit forward about it.

The first chapter of *Wizard's Challenge* describes the town of Northbank (the setting for the mystery) and many important NPCs found there. Three master wizards are detailed in Chapter Two. Chapters Three, Four, and Five describe the plot and its resolution. Chapter Six offers some nonessential side plots.

# Plot Synopsis

## Plot Synopsis

The village of Northbank is small but prosperous. It sits on the bank of the Prin River, at the junction of two minor trade routes. Northbank was once the home of a wizards' guild. Though the guild dissolved almost nine years ago, Northbank still has more than its fair share of wizards.

The last leader of the wizards' guild was a man named Kyristan. He led the guild well, but enjoyed power and magic too much. Kyristan eventually decided to become a lich so that he might grow even more powerful and continue his magical research for eternity.

As the guildmaster searched for the materials and arcane lore to learn the process of becoming a lich, he discovered several spells. He tested many of these spells on his fellow wizards, eventually creating a new form of undead which he called the *spectral wizard* (see the "New Monsters" section). These creatures are undead spellcasters.

After Kyristan became a lich, he continued to study magic, but also decided to create an army of undead creatures that would answer only to him. In his hidden lair, Kyristan has created several spectral wizards and other undead minions to do his bidding.

Kyristan (also known as the Dead King) does not directly affect the outcome of this module. His full description is left to DMs who wish to expand this adventure. Instead, *Wizard's Challenge* deals with one of Kyristan's servants, a spectral wizard named Surrisk.

Surrisk was an apprentice to Kyristan and a member of the Northbank wizards' guild. When Kyristan left the Northbank area, Surrisk also left, building a small house in the nearby hills and becoming a hermit. A few months ago, Kyristan asked Surrisk to visit. The former apprentice was "rewarded" by being transformed into a spectral wizard.

At the bidding of his secret master, Surrisk has taken up residence in the old headquarters of the wizards' guild: a tower located just a few miles from Northbank, its location all but forgotten by

most of the townspeople. The Dead King ordered Surrisk to watch Northbank, particularly its spellcasters. Kyristan plans to convince the spellcasters to join him, preferably as spectral wizards. If they resist, Surrisk must kill them.

Kyristan the Dead King considers Surrisk a loyal lieutenant, and has named him the Ghost Prince. Surrisk has let his power and position go to his head, and when confronting anyone but his master, he refers to himself as the Ghost King.

Despite his ego, Surrisk will follow orders, though he will also interpret them. He will try to coerce all the local wizards to join Kyristan, will kill a few, and will eventually approach the PC, threatening death unless the PC joins. Chapter Three details Surrisk's actions.

*If the PC is not a wizard:* The Ghost Prince will be watchful of other spellcasters, such as priests and bards and will try to kill them or drive them away. Multi-class and dual-class wizards will be lured in the same manner as standard wizards.

Warrior and thief PCs will be largely ignored by the Ghost Prince, so the DM must work a little harder to draw them into the plot. For instance, the PC might be given a reason to talk to one or more of the wizards, or one of them might befriend the PC or hire him as a guard. Eventually, the Ghost Prince should attack someone known to a nonspellcasting PC.

Once any PC starts investigating the Ghost Prince, he will turn his attention to the PC. Non-wizards will be threatened with death unless they leave Northbank. In any case, the Ghost Prince will continue trying to convert or kill all the local wizards.

If characters of other classes are to be successful in the adventure, they may need magical items or spells from the local wizards.

## Chapter One: The Village of Northbank

Northbank is home to about 500 people. It sits on the northern bank of the Prin River.

Almost three decades ago, a group of adventuring wizards decided to make Northbank its headquarters. At that time, the village was home to only about 100 people. Despite its strategic position at the junction of two rivers, Northbank was an unwelcoming town. It had a reputation for bandit attacks, bands of drunken sailors, and general unrest.

Knowing they could clean up the town, the wizards decided to settle permanently and form a guild. Within the wizards' guild, they could share ideas, conduct research, develop new magic, and teach new wizards.

The former adventurers quickly set the town in order and improved Northbank's commerce. As word of the guild spread, craftsmen settled in Northbank, responding to the wizards' demands for finely crafted objects suitable for enchantment. Many people traveled to the village, hoping to consult the wizards or study magic.

Northbank grew, becoming a center for magical research and fine crafts, both magical and non-magical.

Then Kyristan joined the guild. With his skills and drive for power, he quickly ascended to the seat of guildmaster. Once he decided to become a lich, he began magical experiments, using other members as test subjects. The guild suffered several mysterious deaths before Kyristan was implicated.

About 11 years ago, Kyristan was driven from the guild. Suspicion, disillusionment, and the lack of a leader destroyed the guild within two years.

The guild's tower has been empty for six years. Only one former member, Dar Malson, still resides in Northbank, though rumors persist of a former member who is now a hermit in the nearby hills.

Northbank is still home to several wizards, a few fine craftsmen, and a nicely stocked spell component shop. Its name is still linked with magic, and many adventurers travel there to discuss or learn magic.

### Personalities

Northbank's most interesting people are described here. The DM may make changes as needed to fit the campaign.

Equipment listed includes only that which is commonly carried. Other items may be found at the NPC's home or business.

**Oswald the Kind (F3):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 15; AL NG; THAC0 18.

Weapon Proficiencies: long sword, dagger, sling, club, halberd.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: etiquette 15, blind-fighting, gaming 15, reading/writing 14.

Equipment: *dagger* +1, purse with 20 sp.

Oswald is a retired adventurer and mayor of Northbank. He is cautious, kind, and a good leader. He will aid the PC in small ways if convinced there is a threat to the town.

Oswald grew up in Northbank, so he knows some of the history of the wizards' guild. He knows that the guild disbanded about 10 years ago because of problems with its power-hungry leader, Kyristan. Oswald knows that Dar Malson is the only guild member still in town. He has heard of the hermit in the hills, but does not believe him to be connected with the guild.

**Darrin (F4):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 26; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 9; AL NG; THAC0 17.

Weapon Proficiencies: long bow, battle axe (specialized), spear, footman's mace.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: blind-fighting, endurance 15.

Equipment: chain mail, long bow, 20 arrows, *battle axe* +2.

Darrin is an honorable and trustworthy mercenary; once hired, he will fulfill his contract in letter and in spirit. He may be hired at a cost of 2 gp per week. He enjoys combat, seeing it as a chance to prove himself.

## Chapter One: The Village of Northbank

**Vel Marka (W1):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 3; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon or spell; Str 10, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 11; AL CG; THAC0 20.

Weapon Proficiency: dagger.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: reading/writing 17, spellcraft 14, herbalism 14, local history 11.

Vel is a pudgy, balding, middle-aged man. He is easy-going and quite cowardly.

Vel is the proprietor of Northbank's herb and spell component shop. He stocks almost every mundane component (rose petals, crystal beads, feathers, and so on) and usually carries more exotic items, such as dragon blood (the DM should decide what is available in the shop). When not in his shop, he may be found at the inn or visiting with any of the master wizards in town. Vel listens well and sometimes repeats what he has heard. He is a good source of information about Northbank.

Vel knows the history of the wizards' guild and suspects that Kyristan was trying to become a lich. He knows Surrisk, the hermit, because Surrisk used to buy and trade spell components. Vel has not seen Surrisk for months, but that is not unusual.

**Varni (Weretiger):** AC 10(3); MV 12, Int 6 +2; hp 30; THAC0 20(15); #AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1-4/1-4/1-12 or by weapon; AL N; Str 12(19), Dex 13, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 15. Statistics in parentheses are for Varni's weretiger form.

Weapon Proficiency: dagger.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: reading/writing 15, singing 15.

Equipment: dagger, book of songs, empty spellbook.

A pretty young woman in her late teens, Varni is the orphaned daughter of a pair of weretigers who once lived near Northbank. She knows no life but that of a lycanthrope, but understands that humans are afraid of werereatures.

She is a determined young woman who has decided to make a better life for herself by learning magic. Varni has been too shy to approach the local masters for help, but will eventually approach the PC and ask to become an apprentice.

**Aldar Storm (T3):** AC 5; MV 12; hp 14; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 15; SA Backstab; PP 70%, OL 25%, F/RT 25%, MS 25%, HS 25%, DN 15%, CW 80%, RL 0%; AL CG; THAC0 19 (18 with rapier). Weapon Proficiencies: rapier, main-gauche, short bow.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: etiquette 15, tumbling 17, disguise 14.

Equipment: leather armor, short bow, 20 arrows, rapier, main-gauche.

Aldar is a handsome, 19-year-old swashbuckler (if the DM does not have PHBR1, *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* or PHBR2, *The Complete Thief's Handbook*, substitute long sword for rapier and dagger for main-gauche). Aldar is charming and carefree.

Aldar is eager to be an adventurer, and often approaches people new to town, asking them to hire him as a man-at-arms. He is a witty companion, but not a very skilled thief.

**Nine-Finger John (T4):** AC 6; MV 12; hp 17; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9; SA Backstab; PP 15%, OL 50%, F/RT 50%, MS 35%, HS 35%, DN 15%, CW 75%, RL 0%; AL N; THAC0 19.

Weapon Proficiencies: short sword, sling, club.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: reading/writing 11, fishing 11, forgery 15, swimming 11.

Equipment: leather armor, sling with 15 bullets, short sword, club, pouch with 20 sp.

Nine-Finger John is a local fisherman who makes a living by stealing. He is a shady character who will hire himself out for burglaries if the price is reasonable and the potential employer discreet. He often goes to the inn to listen for "job opportunities" and he keeps a close eye on comings and goings in town. He may try to rob a rich-looking PC.

If asked, he will say that he lost his finger to a catfish in the river, but in reality, it was removed by a trap he missed.

**Norada (W3):** AC 10; MV 12; hp 8; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 17,

## Chapter One: The Village of Northbank



Wis 15, Cha 12; AL N; THAC0 20.

Weapon Proficiency: dagger.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: brewing 17, cooking 17, healing 13, herbalism 15, reading/writing 18, spellcraft 15.

Equipment: *ring of cantrips*.

Norada is a sly, 48-year-old alchemist who lives a short distance from town. She visits Northbank twice a week to get supplies or make deliveries. Norada talks constantly, but reveals very little.

The alchemist has fond memories of the wizards' guild and can tell endless (and boring) stories of the adventures of its spellcasters. She will tell the story of how Kyristan tried to woo her years ago, giving her the *ring of cantrips* (see the New Magic section at the end of this adventure) as a token of his love, but her heart belonged to another. She remembers "Kyri" as nice but pushy.

Norada has never met the hermit and knows nothing about him.

Kendrick (F0): AC 6; MV 12; hp 4; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 14; AL NG; THAC0 20.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: artistic ability 17, gem cutting 18, metalsmithing 16.

Kendrick, a stout man in his late fifties, owns "Beautiful Baubles," Northbank's jewelry shop. He is a skilled craftsman who came to Northbank 20 years ago. Kendrick quickly became popular with the wizards of Northbank and was often hired to make jewelry suitable for enchantment.

Kendrick is a pleasant fellow who likes to converse as he works. He knows a lot about the history of the wizards' guild, and can relate several tales about members' escapades in trying to make magical items.

The jeweller remembers Kyristan as an arrogant fellow who was kicked out of the guild for murdering fellow wizards. Everyone except an apprentice, Surrisk, turned against Kyristan. The former guild leader left the area, but swore vengeance on the other wizards.