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VILLAGE BACKDROP:  
ASHFORD



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A Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Compatible Mini-Campaign Setting by Creighton Broadhurst

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# VILLAGE BACKDROP: ASHFORD

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A Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GM's RESOURCE supplement by Creighton Broadhurst

Once a prosperous village, Ashford now stands as a decayed shadow of its former self. A year ago, it was a busy place; its streets and gardens echoing with the sounds of life, love and commerce. Then the stranger came and death followed upon his heels. Plague had come to Ashford. In his wake, he left the hacking coughs and pain-filled moans of the dying and the wails of the survivors mourning their dead. Over half the population died, and many of the survivors packed and fled.

A few folk yet dwell in Ashford among the abandoned, deserted homes of their friends and neighbours, but it is now a quiet, mournful place. Weeds choke its abandoned gardens and untilled fields. Wolves, foxes and other less natural predators gnaw at the weathered bones filling the village's open plague pit. The surviving villagers are distrustful of strangers, shunning them whenever possible, and few find welcome, cheer or solace in Ashford.



## CREDITS

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Thank you for purchasing *Village Backdrop: Ashford*; we hope you enjoy it and that you check out our other fine print and PDF products.

## CONTACT US

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## ERRATA

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We like to think *Village Backdrop: Ashford* is completely error free, but we are realists. So in that spirit, we shall post errata three months after release on [ragingswan.com](http://ragingswan.com). We aren't going to be correcting typos and spelling errors, but we will correct any game mechanic or balance issues that come to light.

## ABOUT THE DESIGNER

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Creighton lives in Torquay, England where, apparently, the palm trees are plastic and the weather is warm. He shares a ramshackle old mansion with his two children ("Genghis" and "Khan") and his patient wife. Famed for his unending love affair with booze and pizza he is an enduring GREYHAWK fan.

An Ennie Award winning designer (*Madness At Gardmore Abbey*) Creighton has worked with Expeditious Retreat Press, Paizo and Wizards of the Coast. He believes in the Open Gaming License and is dedicated to making his games as fun and easy to enjoy as possible for all participants. Reducing or removing entry barriers, simplifying pre-game prep and easing the GM's workload are the key underpinning principles of the products he now releases through Raging Swan Press. You can read his thoughts on game design at [raging-swan.livejournal.com](http://raging-swan.livejournal.com).

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## FOREWORD

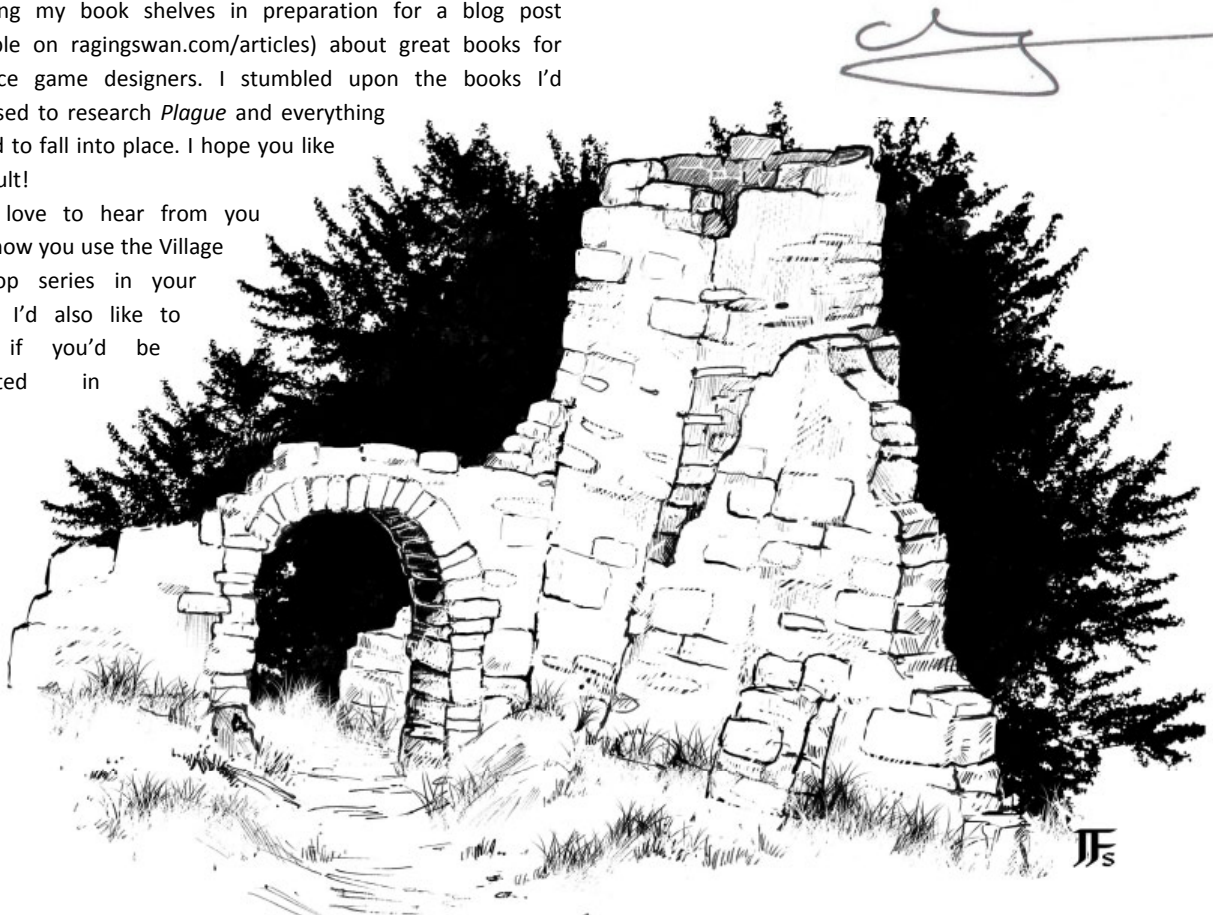
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Several years ago, I wrote a 4e supplement for Expeditionary Press entitled *Plague*. I have always been fascinated with the Black Death and read several books on how it savaged Europe in the Middle Ages as research for the project.

When I realised there was a hole in the Village Backdrop schedule and that I had the time to fill it, I cast about for an interesting hook for my village. At the same time, I was searching my book shelves in preparation for a blog post (available on [ragingswan.com/articles](http://ragingswan.com/articles)) about great books for freelance game designers. I stumbled upon the books I'd purchased to research *Plague* and everything seemed to fall into place. I hope you like the result!

I'd love to hear from you about how you use the Village Backdrop series in your games. I'd also like to know if you'd be interested in

future instalments focusing on non-human settlements – small dwarven holds, elven tree villages and so on. You can email me on [creighton@ragingswan.com](mailto:creighton@ragingswan.com).



## ASHFORD AT A GLANCE

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Once a prosperous village, Ashford now stands as a decayed shadow of its former self. A year ago, it was a busy place; its streets and gardens echoing with the sounds of life, love and commerce. Then the stranger came and death followed upon his heels. The stranger – a well-travelled bard – stayed at the Jolly Farmer and regaled the assembled guests with many tales and songs as he walked among them. The next morning, he awoke with a high fever and coughed up blood over his bed-partner, one of the tavern's serving wenches. Plague had come to Ashford.

Within a week the bard was dead and the serving wench lay dying. Within a month, the sound of hacking coughs, the pain-filled moans of the dying and the wails of the survivors mourning their dead echoed through the village. Before the winter snows began to fall, over half the population was dead, and many of the survivors had fled.

A few folk yet dwell in Ashford among the abandoned, deserted homes of their friends and neighbours, but it is now a quiet, mournful place. Weeds choke abandoned gardens and untilled fields while wolves, foxes and other less natural predators gnaw at the weathered bones filling the village's open plague pits. The surviving villagers are distrustful of strangers, shunning them whenever possible, and few find welcome, cheer or solace in Ashford.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

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**Ruler** Baron Aelfgar Stannard

**Government** Overlord (anarchy)

**Population** 75 (68 humans, 4 half-elves, 3 half-orcs)

**Alignments** Neutral

**Languages** Common, Elven, Orc

**Corruption** +3; **Crime** +1; **Economy** -5; **Law** -6; **Lore** +0; **Society** -8

**Qualities** Strategic location

**Danger** +18; **Disadvantages** Impoverished, plagued

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**Lingering Plague** Every day a traveller spends in Ashford, there is a 5% chance he is exposed to plague. This chance rises to 20% if the character explores any abandoned building containing the corpses of plague victims. Such folk must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or contract the plague:

- **Bubonic Plague:** DC 17 Fortitude [2 consecutive saves]; *onset* 1 day; *freq.* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Con damage and 1 Cha damage and target is fatigued.

### NOTABLE FOLK

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Most of the population are nothing more than hardworking peasants. A few, however, are of interest to adventurers:

**Baron Aelfgar Stannard** (location 1; LN male human warrior 1/aristocrat 2) Ashford's liege lord, Aelfgar has not been seen in the village since the plague struck.

**Dunn Frewin** (location 6; CE male ghoulish cleric 2) Once one of Ashford's priests, Dunn has returned from the grave to revenge himself upon Waldere.

**Waldere Elvery** (location 3; LN male human cleric 3) Radicalised by Ashford's horrific fate, Waldere is a raging alcoholic.

**Janaela Fiselond** (location 5; N female half-elf wizard [abjurer] 5) Consumed with her magical research – and little empathy with the common folk – Janaela rarely emerges from her tower.

**Praen Alston** (location 2; N male human expert 1) The village miller, Praen hates Waldere – blaming him for his family's painful death – and stymies him whenever possible

**Ailred Lewin** (location 4; LN female human expert 2) Landlady of The Jolly Farmer, she is never seen without a vinegar-soaked mask about her face.

### NOTABLE LOCATIONS

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Most of the village comprises peasant homes. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Ashford Manor:** Abandoned by its lord, Ashford Manor is thought unoccupied by the villagers. Unbeknownst to them, three plague survivors lurk within.
2. **Mill:** Although the mill's wheel still turns, Praen Alston spends most of his time looking after, and protecting, his young daughter.
3. **The Wailing Hall:** The village church is rarely visited now, except by a few fanatical worshippers who are led in their devotions by Waldere Elvery.
4. **The Jolly Farmer:** Little cheer is to be found at the village's inn. Guests are served in their rooms and almost no villagers now drink there.
5. **The Burning Tower:** Home to the enchantress Janaela Fiselond, the tower stands amid the shattered ruins of a castle thrown down after its lord rebelled against his liege.
6. **Plague Pits:** While the plague savaged Ashford, the villagers dug two plague pits and dumped the dead within. Feral dogs, woodland predators and Dunn Frewin have uncovered these grizzly reminders of Ashford's fate.

### MARKETPLACE

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**Resources & Industry** Farming, fishing

**Base Value** 220 gp; **Purchase Limit** 2,500 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd; **Minor Items** 1d4; **Medium Items** 1d2; **Major Items** –

When the PCs arrive in Ashford, the following items are for sale:

**Scroll (Arcane)** *arcane sight* (375 gp)

**Wands** *call lightning* (12 chgs.; 2,700 gp); *find traps* (37 chgs.; 1,665 gp)

**Weapon** +2 *hand crossbow* (8,400 gp)

## VILLAGE LORE

A PC making a Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check may know some information about Ashford. A successful check reveals all information revealed by a lesser check.

**DC 10:** Ashford was a prosperous village until last year when the plague struck. Now most travellers avoid the village.

**DC 15:** A handful of folk still live in the village. The few travellers to visit Ashford have spoken of quiet, distrustful folk and strange religious practises.

**DC 20:** At the height of the plague, terrible deeds were wrought. Some families were burnt alive in their homes in a desperate attempt to halt the contagion's progress.

## VILLAGERS

**Appearance** Of sullen countenance, most villagers have long, dark brown or black hair and either brown or grey eyes.

**Dress** The villagers wear old, muddy clothes. Most wear thick fur cloaks, believing such garments ward off the plague.

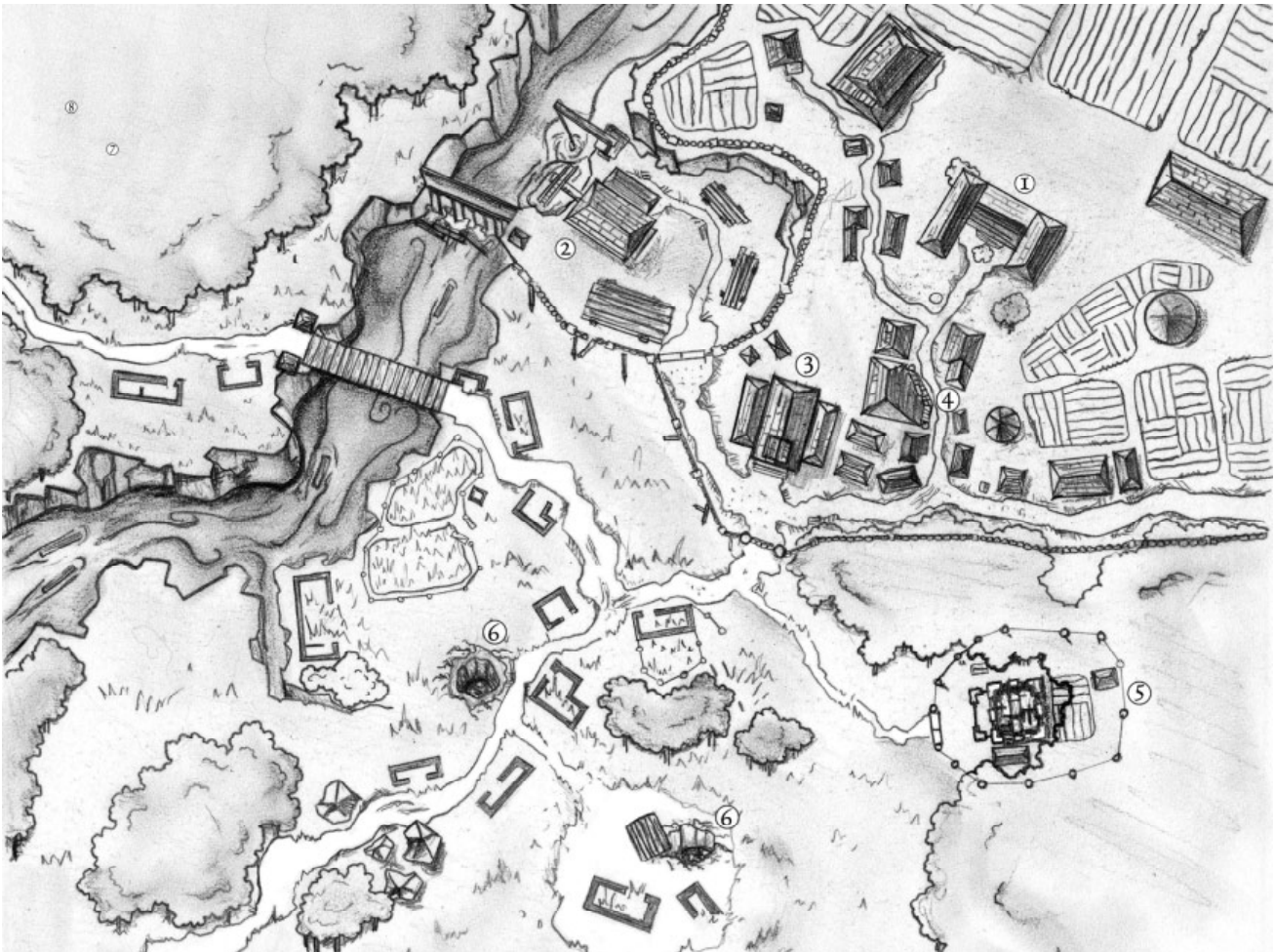
**Nomenclature** *male* Ahfred, Ceol, Daela, Gyric, Praen; *female* Bebbe, Hild, Oshild, Saeith; *family* Burch, Eanith, Isgar, Sirett.

## WHISPERS & RUMOURS

A PC can use Diplomacy to gather information about Ashford and its surroundings. This takes 1d4 hours and requires a DC 10 check. A PC exceeding this check gains one additional rumour for each 5 points by which he exceeded DC 10. Use the table below to determine which rumour(s) the PC learns.

D6	RUMOUR
1	Janaela Fisolond (a local wizard) slew several villagers with her magic when they tried to break into her tower.
2*	The village was cursed by a witch!
3	The local priest, Waldere Elvery, survived the plague – although most of his congregation died. He is a drunk.
4	The old burnt-out Eanith home is haunted by the vengeful spirits of those that died within.
5	Something unnatural has been disturbing the plague pits.
6*	A necromancer lich desires some ancient treasure buried deep beneath the village. He sent the plague to kill everyone, so he could search for it undisturbed.

\*False rumour





## NOTABLE LOCATIONS

### 1: ASHFORD MANOR

When the plague came to Ashford, its lordling (Baron Aelfgar Stannard [LN male human warrior 1/aristocrat 2]) panicked. Having lived here for only a decade or so, he felt no compulsion to stay and help his people. Packing up his wealth and jewels he fled along with his family, men-at-arms and trusted family servants to a secluded hunting lodge. He has not returned, and none of the villagers have bothered to learn his fate.

Ashford Manor thus stands abandoned and has remained unlooted simply because the villagers assume Stannard will one day return. Unbeknownst to them, three villagers who escaped their burning homes (and subsequently survived the plague) skulk in the manor.

### 2: MILL

The mill wheel stills turns, but little grain is ground here anymore. The miller, Praen Alston (N female human expert 1), lost his wife and all but one of his children to the pestilence. He dwells here with his young daughter Saeith (N male human commoner 1) because he has nowhere else to go. Saeith is only ten-years-old, but worries about the anger consuming her father. He blames Waldere Elvery (Area 3) for his loved ones' deaths, and doesn't understand why anyone would still believe that misguided charlatan. He stirs up trouble for the priest

#### ABANDONED HOUSES

Many of Ashford's buildings stand empty and abandoned, their owners having either died of plague or fled the village. Some homes yet contain the decomposing corpses of the plague's victims. The surviving villagers do not enter these buildings believing certain death lingers within. Common belief holds the spirits of many of the dead yet live in their homes and infect or drive mad any venturing into their "tomb."

An aura of neglect and decay hangs over these homes. Weeds choke the gardens and yards; no smoke issues from their chimneys. Feral dogs use some of the buildings as shelters, but the apathetic villagers have not bothered to root them out.

#### BURNT OUT HOMES

At the height of the plague, as hysteria gripped the populace and the pestilence raged through the village, hotheads desperate to contain the contagion took to burning down the homes of the infected with their inhabitants within). Although this practise only lasted a week, it has left an indelible scar on the village. Although most of the perpetrators subsequently died of plague, several murders resulted from this practice as the relatives of those burnt alive exacted their bloody revenge.

whenever he gets the chance. Praen is out of his depth bringing up a young daughter and worries about everything. He is overprotective of Saeith; she is not allowed to meet strangers and is rarely seen playing with other children. She loves swimming, though, and often plays in the river.

#### DUNN FREWIN

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This humanoid's hairless skin is pallid and drawn tightly over its almost skeletal frame. Black, boil-like splotches oozing puss cover its neck. It has long, sharp teeth, an unnaturally long tongue and madness-filled red-hued eyes.*

Male ghoulish cleric 2

CE Medium undead

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10, Sense Motive +3

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Acrobatics +5, Climb +9, Stealth +10, Swim +6

**AC** 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **CMD** 20 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge], +2 natural)

**Immune** mind-affecting effects, death effects, disease, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, stunning, nonlethal damage, ability drain, energy drain, damage to physical abilities, exhaustion, fatigue, massive damage, any effect requiring a Fortitude save (unless it affects objects or is harmless)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9 (+11 vs. channelling)

**hp** 36 (4 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +6

**Melee** bite +6 (1d6+4 plus bubonic plague [DC 15 Fortitude {2 consecutive saves}; onset 1 day; freq. 1/day; effect 1d4 Con damage and 1 Cha damage plus target is fatigued] and paralysis [DC 15 {elves are immune}; 1d4+1 rounds]) and 2 claws +6 (1d6+4 plus paralysis [DC 13 {elves are immune}; 1d4+1 rounds]) or

**Melee Touch** bleeding touch (6/day) +6 (1d6 bleed [1 round])

**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes

**Special Actions** channel negative energy (7/day; 1d6; DC 15), copycat

**Copycat (Sp [move; 6/day])** Dunn can create an illusionary double of himself (as a single *mirror image*); duration 1 round (or until destroyed).

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +5; spontaneous casting [*inflict* spells]; death, trickery

1st—*cause fear*<sup>D</sup> (2; DC 14), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*

0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *purify food and drink*, *stabilize*

**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 18

**SQ** evil aura (moderate)

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Dodge

**Skills** as above plus Knowledge (religion) +6

**Languages** Celestial, Common

**CR Note:** Due to his lack of equipment, Dunn's CR has been adjusted by -1.

**Variants:** **Ghoul:** Because Dunn was "reborn" in a plague pit his bite inflicts bubonic plague and not ghoulish fever.



### 3: THE WAILING HALL

Once known as the Chapel of Song, this church was at the centre of the villagers' attempts to save themselves from the plague. Here, at Waldere Elvery's (LN male human cleric [Darlen] 3) urging, the populace gathered daily to sing praises to Darlen so that he might cast out the plague. The effects of this were predictable and plague swept through the congregation, killing over half. The survivors of this insane practise renamed the church for the laments of those who mourned their dead within.

Before the plague, the church had two priests. One, Dunn Frewin, died of the plague. Ignoring his last request to be buried in the church, Waldere cast Dunn's body into one of the plague pits. This betrayal will cost Waldere dearly; Dunn Frewin has returned as a ghoul (Area 6).

#### JANAELA FISFELOND

CR 4 (XP 1,200)

*This tall slender half-elven woman has pale skin the colour of parchment and deep bags under her eyes.*

Female half-elf wizard (abjurer) 5

N Medium humanoid (elf, human)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +9, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0

**AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; **CMD** 14

(+2 Dex, +1 dodge [Dodge])

**Immune** *sleep*; **Resist** fire 5

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5; +2 vs. enchantments

**hp** 35 (5 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +2

**Melee** dagger +2 (1d4/19-20)

**Special Actions** protective ward

**Protective Wards (Su [standard; 7/day])** Janaela creates a 10 ft. radius field of protection centred on herself (duration 4 rounds). Janaela and all allies in the area gain a +2 deflection bonus to AC.

**Wizard Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +9; arcane bond [ring])

3rd—*displacement, fireball* (DC 17), *fly*

2nd—*false life, fox's cunning, glitterdust* (DC 16), *protection from arrows*

1st—*alarm, hold portal, mage armour, magic missile, shield*

0—*acid splash, detect magic, read magic, resistance*

**Combat Gear** *scroll of resist energy* (2), *scroll of stoneskin, wand of fireball* (5 chgs.)

**Abilities** Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 8

**SQ** resistance (5)

**Feats** Alertness, Craft Wondrous Item<sup>B</sup>, Dodge, Scribe Scroll<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (Perception)<sup>B</sup>, Toughness

**Skills** as above plus Appraise +10, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Spellcraft +12

**Languages** Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

**Gear** as above plus 15 gp, traveller's robes, spell component pouch

**Spellbook** (enchantment, illusion) as above plus GM determined

Most no longer visit the church, but Waldere yet holds sway over a small, but fanatical, congregation. The dozen members, led by an inebriated Waldere, parade daily through the village singing hymns to ward away the plague.

### 4: THE JOLLY FARMER

Ashford's inn was once a happy place. Although the landlady, Ailred Lewin (LN female human expert 2) still accepts paying customers she has closed the common room and serves guests (meagre and bland) food and drink in their rooms. Whenever meeting newcomers, she wears a rudimentary mask over her face soaked in vinegar for protection.

### 5: THE BURNING TOWER

The so-called Burning Tower is the only intact portion of the castle that once protected Ashford. The demesne of a rebellious lord the castle was sacked two decades ago. The villagers carried off much of the stone to use in rebuilding their own homes and the castle's shattered ruin remained uninhabited until the wizardess Janaela Fiselond (N female half-elf wizard [abjurer] 5) claimed it as her own. A skilled but aloof practiser of magic, when the plague ravaged Ashford, Janaela simply locked herself in her tower and made no effort to aid her neighbours. As they died by the score, and their moans and hacking coughs echoed through the village, Janaela became wholly obsessed with her research and paid their suffering no mind.

At the plague's height, a few villagers tried to storm the tower – convinced her research had brought the pestilence to Ashford; she incinerated them with a *fireball* before returning to her work. Their blackened bones still lie nearby amid the tangled weeds choking the castle's ruined courtyard.

### 6: PLAGUE PITS

At first, the plague's victims were buried like normal in the church graveyard, but as death swept through the village, it became impossible to honour the dead in the proper way.

Two burial pits were dug and filled with plague-ridden corpses but were not properly filled in. Feral dogs and other predators promptly dug up the graves and no one as yet has the inclination, courage or strength to re-bury them. Thus, the long grass and incongruous wild flowers growing about the pits hide the plague's grizzly flotsam.

**Dunn Frewin:** One of Ashford's priests, Dunn Frewin (CE male ghoul cleric 2) died of the plague and was betrayed in death by his friend and colleague Waldere (Area 3). He has risen as a ghoul and now lurks in the southernmost pit, in a cramped burrow among the suppurating corpses of his dead congregation. As yet, he does not trouble the villagers or his former friend; plenty of meat yet remains to be had from the plague's decomposing victims before he dines on Waldere's succulent, warm flesh.

## LIFE IN ASHFORD

Life in Ashford bears little resemblance to that of the more prosperous (and plague free) neighbouring villages.

### TRADE & INDUSTRY

Trade and industry have virtually ceased. Few people travel to Ashford and those that do rarely stay long. The villagers do enough to keep body and soul together, mainly by tending their gardens and scattered plots in the fields surrounding the village, but little else.

#### WALDERE ELVERY

CR 2 (XP 600)

*This dishevelled man has long, tousled hair and a beer belly. He wears stained white vestments.*

Male human cleric (Darlen) 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** -1; **Senses** Perception +3, Sense Motive +9

**Speed** 20 ft., base speed 30 ft.; **ACP** -3; Acrobatics -4 (-8 jumping)

**AC** 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; **CMD** 12

(+7 armour [+1 *breastplate*], -1 Dex, +1 shield [mwk light steel])

**Fort** +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +7

**hp** 23 (3 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3

**Melee** mwk longsword +4 (1d8+1/19-20)

**Special Actions** channel positive energy (6/day; DC 12 2d6), spontaneous casting (*cure* spells), resistant touch, touch of law

**Resistant Touch (Sp [standard; 6/day])** Waldere touches an ally to grant it a +1 resistance bonus for 1 minute. When he uses this ability, he loses his resistance bonus for 1 minute.

**Touch of Law (Sp [standard; 6/day])** By touching a creature, Waldere enables it to treat all attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and saving throws as if rolled a natural 11 on a d20 for 1 round.

**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 3rd; concentration +6; law, protection)

2nd—*augury lesser restoration, shield other*<sup>D</sup>

1st—*bless, protection from evil, remove fear, sanctuary*<sup>D</sup>

0—*detect magic, guidance, light, resistance*

**Combat Gear** *scroll of eagle's splendour, scroll of lesser restoration, silversheen*

**Abilities** Str 12, Dex 8, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 17, Cha 13

**SQ** lawful aura (moderate)

**Feats** Extra Channel, Persuasive<sup>3</sup>, Toughness<sup>B</sup>, Martial Weapon Proficiency (longsword)<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** as above plus Diplomacy +9, Heal +9, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Infernal

**Gear** as above plus silver holy symbol (Darlen), cleric's vestments, spell component pouch, 3 gp, 15 sp

### LAW & ORDER

With the (rapid) departure of Baron Stannard, law and order broke down in Ashford. Luckily, most of the villagers are too apathetic to commit any serious crime. Waldere Elvery sees himself as the moral guardian of the village and his congregation is the only organised group left in Ashford. Thus, issues of law and order now fall to him.

### EVENTS

While the PCs are in Ashford, one or more of the below events may occur. Choose or determine randomly:

#### D6 EVENT

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | A villager suddenly starts to cough and hacks up a great globule of phlegm. Other nearby villagers draw away, fear etched on their faces.   |
| 2 | A sudden wailing from one of the houses shatters the quiet. (A villager has just discovered the signs of plague upon her body).   |
| 3 | Two feral dogs bark at the party from an overgrown field. Once holds a human leg bone in its mouth.   |
| 4 | Two villagers are loudly talking about "the hungry man." Apparently, he was seen again last night gnawing on the bones of the dead.   |
| 5 | With a wet thump, an abandoned building's roof collapses.   |
| 6 | Waldere Elvery and his deranged congregation parade through the village, singing. If they see the PCs, they march toward them as their singing grows ever louder and more frenzied. |

#### VILLAGER

CR 1/3 (XP 135)

Human commoner 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +0; **Senses** Perception +1, Sense Motive +1

**Speed** 30 ft.; **ACP** 0; Climb +5, Swim +5

**AC** 11, touch 10, flat-footed 11; **CMD** 11

(+1 armour [padded])

**Fort** +2, **Ref** +0, **Will** -1

**hp** 6 (1 HD)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +1

**Melee** dagger +1 (1d4+1/19-20) or

**Melee** spear -3 (1d8/x3)

**Ranged** sling (range 50 ft.) -4 (1d4+1)

**Combat Gear** bullets (10)

**Abilities** Str 13, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 9

**Feats** Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Skill Focus (farmer or similar)

**Skills** as above plus Profession (farmer or similar) +6

**Languages** Common

**Gear** as above plus belt pouch, 2d4 cp, peasant's outfit

## READING STAT BLOCKS

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*Village Backdrop: Ashford* includes all necessary stat blocks; these notes explain how to read them. Unless otherwise noted, all listed scores include all the creature's normal modifiers. Stat blocks appear in four sections: basic, defensive, offensive and supplemental.

### BASIC

**Name, CR and XP:** The monster's name appears first followed by its CR and how many experience points it is worth. If more than one creature is encountered, a bracketed number lists how many appear.

**Appearance:** The GM can read aloud or paraphrase this section. If a picture depicts the creature, this section may be omitted.

**Sex, Race, Class and Level:** If the monster has class levels these appear here along with its race and sex. The first noted class is the creature's favoured class.

**Alignment and Type:** The creature's abbreviated alignment and its type (including applicable subtypes).

**Init and Senses:** This creature's initiative modifier appears before any special senses (such as scent or darkvision) and the creature's Perception and Sense Motive scores. If the creature has special Perception-based abilities, such as trapfinding or stonecunning, these appear here.

**Speed:** The creature's modified land speed appears first along with any other relevant speeds (such as climb or fly). If the creature's base land speed is different to its modified speed this is also listed.

**ACP and Movement Skills:** ACP presents the creature's normal armour check penalty modifier. If the creature's Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist, Fly, Ride, Stealth or Swim modifier differs from the relevant ability modifier minus its armour check penalty, these skills appear here.

### DEFENSIVE

**AC:** The creature's normal, touch and flat-footed AC along with its CMD; additionally this section lists any defensive powers or abilities that affects the creature's AC.

**Immune, Resist and Weaknesses:** If the creature has immunity, resistance or a vulnerability to an effect or condition it appears here.

**Fort, Ref and Will:** The creature's saving throw modifiers along with any conditional modifiers and defensive powers (such as evasion) and spell resistance appear here.

**HP:** The creature's full, normal hit points along with the number

of hit dice it possesses. A bracketed hit point total indicates that the creature is injured. If the creature has damage reduction or hardness it appears here.

### OFFENSIVE

**Space, Base Atk and CMB:** The creature's space, base attack bonus and CMB.

**Melee:** This section lists a creature's melee attacks. If the attack has a reach that is not 5 ft. it is listed here. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Power Attack), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

**Ranged:** This section lists the creature's ranged attacks. It always includes the attack's range. Each attack includes attack bonus and damage information. This line also lists any specific feats a creature can use with the attack (for example Point Blank Shot), but the effects of these feats are not included in the attack's statistics. If the attack has the default critical hit characteristics (20/x2) this information is omitted.

**Atk Options:** This section lists any abilities or feats that can affect more than one of the creature's attacks, unless it has already been presented with the creature's specific attacks. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in depth.

**Special Actions:** This section lists any useful abilities that a creature could use in battle. Subsequent listings describe all but the most basic abilities in more depth.

**Spells and Spell-Like Abilities:** The creature's caster level, along with its concentration modifier and domains appears in brackets before the main spell listing. If one or more of the creature's spells require a touch attack, the relevant attack bonus is included. Spells available appear in reverse order from highest to lowest level. Spells denoted <sup>D</sup> are domain spells. If applicable, a spell's DC is also provided.

**Combat Gear:** This section lists any combat-related equipment the creature possesses.

### SUPPLEMENTAL

**Abilities and Special Qualities:** These sections list the creature's ability scores and any special qualities that do not appear anywhere else in its stat block.

**Feats:** An alphabetical listing of all the creature's feats.

**Skills and Languages:** These sections list any skills the creature possesses that have not already appeared in the stat block and all languages spoken or understood. Any language-based special abilities also appear here.

**Gear:** This section lists any gear not already listed in the creature's stat block. This section hardly ever contains weapons or armour as they usually appear in the relevant sections above.

**Spellbook:** The contents of the creature's spellbook and its opposition schools.

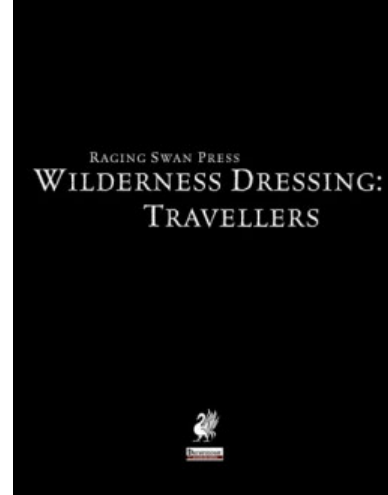
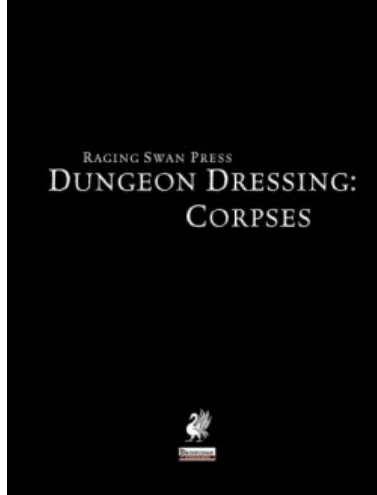
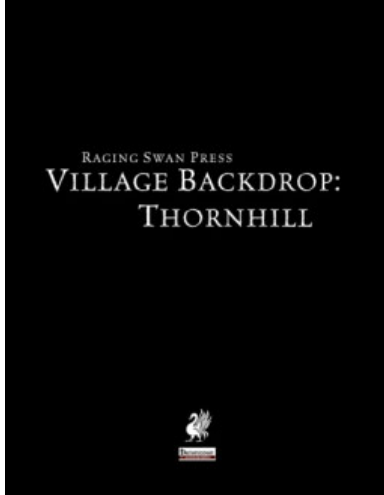
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### SPECIAL ABILITIES

Special abilities appear in the section to which they are best suited. Thus, offensive abilities appear with a creature's attacks while defensive ones appear with its other defences. Full write-ups of irrelevant powers (such as those that could not affect combat) are omitted. The effects of abilities that factor into a creature's normal attacks or defences have already been included in the relevant calculations.

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Once a prosperous village, Ashford now stands as a decayed shadow of its former self. A year ago, it was a busy place; its streets and gardens echoing with the sounds of life, love and commerce. Then the stranger came and death followed upon his heels. Plague had come to Ashford. In his wake, he left the hacking coughs and pain-filled moans of the dying and the wails of the survivors mourning their dead. Over half the population died, and many of the survivors packed and fled.

A few folk yet dwell in Ashford among the abandoned, deserted homes of their friends and neighbours, but it is now a quiet, mournful place. Weeds choke its abandoned gardens and untilled fields. Wolves, foxes and other less natural predators gnaw at the weathered bones filling the village's open plague pit. The surviving villagers are distrustful of strangers, shunning them whenever possible, and few find welcome, cheer or solace in Ashford.

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