
Ierne Island Hold

Creator Name: Whitney Ware; revised by Janet Bell

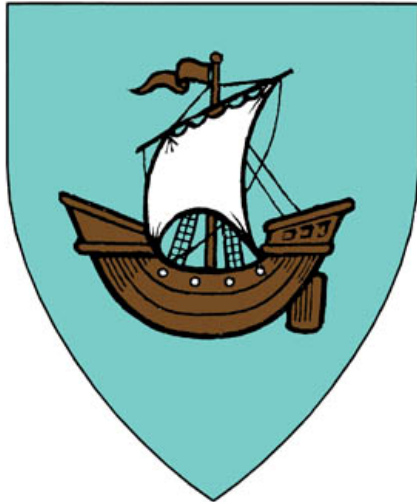
Hold Contact: Janet Bell

Current Holder: Lord Heln

Badge and Colors: A brown ship against a sea-blue field

Minor Holds Beholden to Hold: Peninsula Seahold, Great Bay Seahold, Illani Hold, Central Hold, Dilmet Hold, Spiderclaw Seahold, Carmiley Hold and others tbd

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Heraldry by Holly Hutchison

CLIMATE & ECONOMICS

Ierne Island stretches northward from 50° below the equator to just beyond 40°. The island is approximately 130 miles long and 50 miles across at its widest point. It enjoys a very moderate marine climate. Lots of precipitation -- rain and fog mostly. The more severe winter storms might bring some driving sleet with them but never very much. Winds coming in off the Great Bay temper the summer heat so that it doesn't often become oppressive. Those same winds can cause storm surge devastating to low-lying coastal Holdings. Where the waters cannot be kept out, the Holders have learned to keep their stores on the upper levels and wait for the water to go down. Warning beacons mark the tips of the island and the point where the channel between Ierne Island and Dawn Sisters Hold is at its narrowest. Coast Watchers, usually those unfit for heavy labor, are posted at these points and others along the coastline to warn of approaching storms, Threadfall, shipwrecks, or persons attempting to land on the island without the Lord's leave.



HOLDINGS

The main hold is rather traditional and is located halfway down the west side of the island below a large bulge that protects it from the sea side of the Great Bay just where the land makes a sharp tuck eastward. It has a small natural harbor capable of hosting a large trading vessel or two though mostly it is home to a few fishing vessels, including the Lord's own ship and several small craft kept for pleasure and for travel between the island's coastal Holdings. Manmade levees protect the harbor from storm damage. There are several slate-roofed wooden craftcots, stables and small cots clustered beyond the stone storehouses forming the top of a large open square that begins down at the stone pier. Beyond this area, stone stairs on the northern edge lead halfway up the side of a bluff to the doors of the main Hold within the bluff itself. The corridors and rooms are heavily shored up and walled with polished wood giving the impression of being inside a huge ship rather than a hillside. The construction of this Hold hundreds of Turns ago nearly wiped out the island's hardwood forests. Several back corridors and a few private rooms have stairways opening out on top of the bluff where there are more cotholds and fields for both crops and beasts. The ladies' quarters open out onto a small terrace of land two thirds of the way up the bluff that has been made into a garden with no access from above or below. The Lord's quarters overlook the harbor and are reputed to have more entrances than meet the eye. With the return of Thread, quarters for the Hold's required watchrider were hastily hollowed out high up in the bluff with an adequate landing ledge, dragon couch and sleeping and bathing rooms for the rider. The only entrance other than the ledge is a trapdoor in the floor and a ladder leading down into the middle of the Hold's guardroom. This circumstance was allegedly unavoidable due to the conformation of the bluff itself and the layout of the rooms within it. On the south side of the Great Square a trade road leads up a far gentler slope to the top of the bluff before continuing inland.

Peninsula Seahold is built predominantly of wood and was hastily roofed in slate in recent Turns. It lies on the northernmost promontory of the island and is mostly involved in fishing. The fishing fleet takes refuge from Threadfall in a series of small sea caves with limited access from the shore. Frequent storm damage keeps this hold from truly prospering. Holder Zoharn and his wife Leti (firstborn legitimate daughter of Lord Heln) have six daughters. All of these people are available to anyone wishing to create a CIS for them. See important persons listed below for Leti's age.

Great Bay Seahold is on the northwestern coast right before the coastline plummets sharply southward, roughly twenty miles directly north of the main Hold. It has several stone buildings in addition to storehouses built back into the hillsides that slope down to the harbor. In addition to being a fishing center, this Hold is the chief port for trade traffic with the mainland. It boasts a manmade harbor behind the

shelter of a seawall. A large sea cave provides shelter for the shipyard where Ierne's most profitable exports are built. It is easily the largest and busiest hold on the island and has the most contact with the outside world. Large, shaggy canines based on the Newfoundlands bred to work the Bay of Fundy on Earth are a major facet of life in the harbor itself. Important persons here are Captain Reylin, the illegitimate firstborn son of Lord Heln whose ship, the *Ierne Lady*, is based out of Great Bay; and Natlin, Lord Heln's youngest son who is his father's liaison to the woodcrafters who build the ships that are the island's lifeblood.

Illani Hold lies on the eastern side of the island across the bay from the Dolphincrafthall in Riverdance Hold. It is an excellent swinehold but was poorly prepared for the return of Thread. Most buildings are made of wood or sod. Many were lost to either Thread or panicking groundcrews too ready with flamethrowers during Illani's first Threadfall. All the surviving buildings were hastily roofed with slate. The official records indicate that only one building was determined to have actually sustained Thread damage. The remainder were destroyed by men who at that point in the Pass had never seen real Thread.

Central Hold is exactly where it sounds like: in the center of the island just south of its widest point where the land is somewhat marshy and ideal for raising watergrains. Buildings are made of wood and either stand on short stone pilings or deeply sunk beds of piled stone that create artificial hillocks.

Dilmet Hold lies further south inland on the west side of the island. Where the hold itself is built against a rocky hillside, the holders have begun to burrow back into the relative safety of solid earth. Progress is slow but sufficient to meet the needs of a growing holding. The land is rich and this Hold grows more than enough to support itself. Flax for weaving and for oil is a major crop. Important persons at this hold are: Holder Nocreel and his wife, Elna, who is the illegitimate daughter of Lord Heln.

Spiderclaw Seahold is located on the southeast coast of Ierne across the channel from a bump in the coastline below Riverdance Hold. Its primary sustenance is derived from fishing. There is virtually no farming, with only a few crop fields and some vital livestock. Agricultural goods are gotten in trade mainly from inland farming Holds such as Carmiley and Dilmet. This seahold benefits from the occasional trade ship stopping on its way to and from the inland waterway south of Ierne and has developed some services specifically geared toward these passing ships. They weave sailcloth for trade and tithe as well as for their own use and make a unique dye from seaweed harvested in the area. Important persons at this hold are: Holder Osmund, Steward Thurstan, Headsecond Shika, and Healer Shand. This hold is the creation of Amanda Kear.

Carmiley Hold lies inland from Spiderclaw Seahold and slightly to the north of it where the land is better for farming. The soil is good here and the holding is prosperous. This hold is the creation of Amanda Kear.



NATURAL RESOURCES

The earth here is rich and dark, excellent farm land. Good for root vegetables, grain farming and some herding (particularly pigs, some cows for milk and cheese). There are some softwood forests still clinging to the inland hillsides. They are carefully maintained so that they will continue to meet the needs of the inhabitants for firewood and wood products for use in their homes. Hardwoods have thus far failed to thrive in any useful number and must be imported where required for the shipbuilding industry. The land becomes somewhat marshy in the center of the island -- excellent for rice and other water grains. Sea salt is readily available and easily harvested for use in curing and seasoning the various swine and fish products that are staples of everyone's diet. There are some blackwater (crude oil) seeps on the island but they are not a resource Heln is interested in exploiting in any way just now. Their existence is not common knowledge. The island's many seamen harvest the few pearlbeds in the area but the pearls themselves mostly remain on Ierne to adorn its women. Another harvest of the sea is a deep purple dye extracted from the shellfish in the area. Only limited amounts of dye are made available for trade. The method by which the dye is extracted is extremely slow, but if it is done correctly it does not harm the individual shellfish, leaving them alive and able to continue producing their unique harvest.



ECONOMICS:

Lord Heln tries to make the island as self-sufficient as possible and has the best possible climate for that goal. The minor Holds are small and each one is expected to meet its own needs. All off-island trade is reported to the main Hold. An effort is being made to bring in woolly herdbeasts for use in cloth production but that endeavor hasn't had much success as of this time. Clay deposits for use in making pottery are another thing lacking on the island. One lack that is considered fortunate is a near lack of tunnelsnakes. In an effort to keep it that way, there is a bounty on the destructive vermin. Only local youths, however, are allowed to collect the bounties to prevent some enterprising seaman from bringing snakeskins in from the mainland for the bounty. A new trade agreement with Maori Hold for the hardwoods required by the shipbuilders is expected to increase the Hold's profits as new vessels are commissioned to replace those lost to the increasing number of searaiders. Maori was chosen over other, nearer sources of timber due to the

excellent price being offered and the lack of political entanglements woven into the agreement. The island isn't wealthy by any means but it isn't beholden to anyone but the Weyr at this time.



SPECIAL EVENTS:

Gathers are rarely announced to the rest of the continent. Minor gathers happen at irregular intervals. The main hold hosts major gathers at Turn's End as well as at the Winter Solstice, Springtime and Harvest. Sailing races are the most popular event. There is a great deal of interhold competition in these races and other contests.



POLITICS:

Heln dislikes being beholden to anyone and before the return of Thread was very much in favor of breaking ties to the Weyr. Since the return of Thread, he's changed his tune somewhat. He can't protect his people from this menace. The dragons can. He views his tithes as payment for services rendered and tithes fairly, but he doesn't like doing it. Dragonmen find cold welcome and are regarded with suspicion. Young people are often hidden from Searchriders, and those who are invited to become candidates are rarely allowed to accept. He allows crafters to his island simply because he must, but strongly prefers to have his own folk who've gone to the Halls as apprentices returned to him. Most of the Mastercraftsmen respect this. He is suspicious of everyone not bound to him by blood. In the face of the growing power of his neighbor, Lord Morgav of Cibola Hold, Heln became uneasy enough to allow his son, Jarel, to accept an offer to become Steward at Windsong Hold in 2857. It gives his son some much needed experience and ties that might one day help them all in conclave. Only one Turn later, Lord Heln found himself outmaneuvered as much by chance as by Morgav. In order to protect his own eldest son from an accusation of piracy, Heln was forced to promise a daughter in marriage to Lord Morgav's son Varen.



IMPORTANT PEOPLE

Lord Heln - M, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'5" Born 2795. This slender, paranoid man is easily the most cautious of the Lord Holders. While passionate and quick to act when it comes to the needs of his lands and people, when it comes to Conclave Heln reaches political decisions at a glacial pace. This is partially because Heln is not a particularly bright fellow - and partially because he knows the other Lord

Holders and Mastercraftsmen will manipulate him if he allows it. Heln is an isolationist and has been working to make Ierne Island as self-sufficient as possible. He dislikes any having strangers around his Hold (holdless traders are particularly unwelcome) and Hold guards are often posted around docksides to keep them under close scrutiny. He allows Searchriders only because the Weyr insists. He would never leave his island if he could manage it.

Lady Patroga - F, H=gray, E=blue, HT=5'1". Born 2798. Married 2820. A slight, spirited woman who captured her Lord's heart. She has a quiet wisdom. She will never disagree with Heln in public but in the privacy of their rooms her opinions are listened to and often agreed with. She doesn't push and introduces small changes slowly. She is capable of lending a hand domestically but mostly leaves tasks to her well-trained staff. She allows herself few illusions and acts to temper her husband's rash side with her own clear and tempered observations. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Steward Halley - M, H=brown, E=brown, HT=5'10". Born 2812. Married with children of his own. Steward of Ierne since 2847. A well organized man who knows when to keep his mouth shut and when to quietly offer suggestions. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Elna - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'6" Born 2817. Lord Heln's illegitimate daughter is formally recognized by her father. He arranged her marriage to Holder Nocrel of Dilmet Hold. Both she and Dilmet have prospered. Mother of 7 sons and 8 daughters. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Reylin - M, H=black, E=gray, HT=5'8" Born 2821. Heln's illegitimate son, recognized as such from birth. Twin to Reyeln. Captain of a small coastal trading vessel based in Great Bay Seahold. Married father of 4 sons, 2 daughters. No matter how much he has it is never quite enough in his own eyes.

Reyeln - M, H=black, E=gray, HT=5'8" Born 2821. Heln's illegitimate son, recognized as such from birth. Twin to Reylin. He is a member of the Hold Guard. A discreet homosexual, he is married with 2 sons and 1 daughter all sired by his twin - who he believes is the only one aware of his secret. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Leti - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'3" Born 2821. Legitimate daughter of the Lord. Married to Holder Zoharn of Peninsula Seahold. 6 daughters. **Entire hold and family available for adoption. They require CISes.** (*Entire hold & family available for adoption; they require CISs.*)

Hetri - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'0" Born 2823. Legitimate daughter of the Lord. Widow with 5 sons living in her parent's household. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Patreln - M, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'6". Born 2830 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. Widower with two small daughters. As for first legitimate son of Lord Heln he was recognized to be the Hold Heir. Handsome and aware of it, he's spoiled and irresponsible, enjoying luxuries his Hold cannot afford and ignoring warnings that he's on thin ice with Lord Heln. Negotiations are in the works for a marriage to Wella, daughter of Lord Korys of Maori. (*Adoptable: requires creation of a CIS.*)

Jarel - M, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'5" Born 2833 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. He's a capable manager but restless. Unmarried. Became Steward of Windsong Hold in 2857 but retains ties to the hold of his birth.

Roella - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'2" Born 2836 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. Betrothed to Lord Morgav's son Varen of Cibola in 2858 and not too happy about it.

Natlin - M, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'4" Born 2838 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. Nimble of body and mind, he's very involved in the shipbuilding and would've apprenticed to the woodcraft if it had been allowed. Unmarried.

Neyani - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'3" Born 2840 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. Unmarried. Currently a student on a husband hunt at Calendryl Harper Hall.

Heleni - F, H=black, E=blue, HT=5'2" Born 2843 to Lord Heln and Lady Patroga. Her father's favorite, she has been taught more about managing a Hold than is proper for a girl -- including how to defend herself with a variety of weapons. Most people privately consider her unmarriageable.

Tebed, Rolf and **Josan** are all guardsmen who have been with their Lord many turns and are as close to friends as he allows himself. (*Available for adoption: require CISs.*)