
How do the Holds and Halls Interact?

by Lynne Brigant

The Crafthalls make up one of the three legs which support Pern. The holds provide food and other products to supply halls and Weyrs; the Weyrs provide protection for all from Thread; and the halls provide knowledge, tools and entertainment for the holds, and the Weyrs, and each other.

By the terms of the original Charter which still governs Pern (even though no written copies of the document have survived to the present time), the crafts are entirely autonomous, even though their halls are located on hold territory which technically belongs to the Lord Holder. A Lord Holder agrees to allow a Hall to be located on his hold, and gives up his traditional control over that particular area, under a fairly standardized Hold-Hall agreement. This agreement provides that the craft will pay a tithe to the Lord Holder for the use of the land. The amount of that tithe will be determined between the Mastercraftsman and the Lord Holder at the time the Hall is set up, and the same applies whether it is the main Crafthall or a smaller Hall.

So where do the crafts get the money to pay the tithes? As is common in Pernese society, most things are paid for in barter rather than with marks. A craft will typically pay its tithe to the Lord Holder in goods and services. However, the Lord would have the right to demand payment in marks if he preferred to go to another Hall for the products of that Craft (for whatever reason). The crafts earn money from several sources:

When they post a journeyman, the person benefitting from the journeyman's services usually pays him with room and board, and also pays a tithe to the Hall for his services. The journeyman himself gets to keep a portion of that tithe; the Hall keeps the rest (similar to income tax).

The sale of goods and services made by Hall residents during a gather. (Again, the crafter himself would get to keep a portion of the profit, and would pay a portion to the Hall, similar to income tax.)

In some cases, some crafthalls take in paying students who might not necessarily be good enough to be apprentices. This is most frequently the case in the harpercraft.

The Hold benefits in two ways: there is a certain amount of status associated with having a major crafthall located within your territory; and the tithe paid for having a hall located within hold territory is generally paid in the first and best products of the Hall.

The crafts pay tithes directly to the Weyr without going through the Hold on which their Hall is located. The minor halls submit their tithe to the main crafthall and the main crafthall pays the Weyr the tithe for the entire craft. In order

that the Weyr can benefit from the products of those crafts whose major Halls are not located within Kadanzer territory, the Weyr Compact specifies that the products of those Halls form part of the tithe to be received from the holds which have minor halls of those crafts located in their territory. Thus the minor crafthall would pay its tithe to the Lord Holder for the use of the land, and the Lord Holder would in turn pay part of his tithe with the product of that hall. If he did not receive enough product from the hall to supply his own needs and fulfill his tithe requirements, he would negotiate with the Hall to provide extra product in return for whatever terms they wished to negotiate (there is very likely to be an exchange of foodstuffs and other Hold products for the goods and services of the Hall as the Hall is not able to produce that sort of thing for itself.)