

Of MORIA AND the Delvings of the DWARVES

In which the Delvings of the DWARVES ARE described in brief, each in the
ORDER of their founding.

The oldest of the DWARVEN Delves, the 1st Deep lies AT
the bottom of GREAT NATURAL STAIR. A GREAT FORT of
polished obsidian guards the passages leading to the
GREAT Abyss.

Dimrill Gate was built AND fortified ABOVE the GREAT
Descent to protect the 1st Deep. At the foot of the
mighty STAIR the abandoned Elder Mines were later
expanded AND adorned with many statues AND
CARVINGS of DWARVEN LORDS.

The Bridge of Khazad-dum was ever a symbol of
MORIA. The natural stone arch provides the only
means of passage from the 1st Deep to the west.

Lying beyond the Bridge of Khazad-dum, 1st Hall served
as the seat of DWARVEN power, housing the Citadel of
Kings AND the main Meet Hall of the realm.

The echoes of a GREAT RIVER, the Silversong, drew the
DWARVEN miners to the caves that would become the
2nd Hall. Few pass through the Cave of Voices without
hearing their own fate in the river's song.

The DWARVES followed the outflow of the Silversong
to the great lake known as Black Waters. There
they built the Citadel of Blood AND founded 2nd Deep

while digging the great veins of coal, copper and iron discovered in nearby caverns.

Copper veins from above lead to the 3rd Deep, where rich veins of copper crossed a vast silver lode in the Vale of Dust. It was here the Dwarves first found Mithril, memorializing the discovery in a great Silver Arch.

With the discovery of Mithril, Khazad-dûm's place as the home of the Dwarves was secured. The 3rd Hall was begun as a great clan hall and market, a place where the Dwarves could gather and trade with each other and outsiders.

During excavations for the 3rd Hall, a great icy pit was uncovered in the depths. Exploration of the Chill Deep, as it was named, uncovered rich deposits of gemstones and other metals. These mines formed the heart of the 4th Deep.

Beyond the Chill Deep a great underground lake, its shores lined with giant fungal growths became the core of the 4th Hall. It was here the Citadel of Bells was built, its great chimes tolling the hours throughout the depths.

With work on the 3rd and 4th Halls almost complete the Dwarves began work on the great shafts that would provide additional light and air to the depths. In their upward digging they encountered a vast cavern filled with more of the strange fungal growths. The

5th Hall was created overlooking this woodland, and many of the wealthiest Dwarves dwelt here.

The 5th Deep was discovered during the great westward excavation, which followed a thin trail of Mithril to a vast underground lake. The blind cave fish of the Deep Lakes provided additional food for the Dwarven population, while additional deposits of silver, copper and tin drew them ever deeper.

Built within a curiously regular array of natural caverns, the 6th Hall was a relatively minor dwelling. Its chief attraction was the Well of Night, a near perfect vertical shaft leading into the depths.

Pursuing the ever desirable Mithril, the Dwarves opened the 6th Deep, one of the deepest Delves in Khazad-dum. There they built the Citadel of Bronze, a mighty fortress to serve as a last retreat should the worst happen.

Natural caverns discovered during earlier excavations led to the 7th Deep, an ill fated Delve containing The Bog, a hidden wetland of slime and decay.

The 8th Deep was founded as part of the westward expansion of Khazad-dum, many of its halls overlook the vast depths of the Obsidian Gulp, a dreadful cavern of razor sharp rock.

The last of the great clan halls, the 9th Hall was founded overlooking the Vasty Cavern, a beautiful

limestone grotto filled with vast natural sculptures of flowstone, stalagmites and stalactites.

Continuing the western push, the 9th Deep was dug over vast deposits of iron and silver. Additional deposits of Mithril cemented its place despite a series of unfortunate deaths involving the exploration of a series of natural caves uncovered nearby.

Exploration of the Well of Night in the 6th hall led to the 10th Deep, a rather dismal Delve full of smoke and fume.

While digging upward from the 10th Deep to clear the foul fumes from that Delve, the Dwarves encountered a wealth of copper, silver, tin, iron and coal. This mine complex eventually became the 11th Deep.

Excavations beneath the 2nd and 3rd halls led to the founding of the 12th Deep and the start of the Great Ore, a huge shaft following a rich vein of Mithril beneath Celeboil.

The Great Ore continued to the 13th Deep, where it eventually played out in a maze of natural caverns. Eventually shafts from both the 12th and 13th Deeps were opened into the lower levels of the Abyss.

The 14th Deep represented further work in the drive west. It was a relatively unimportant Delve, known

primarily as a crossroads between more important locations.

Part of the western expansion, the 15th Deep turned into a full-fledged Delve when great deposits of fine marble and granite were discovered along the rim of a great chasm known as The Void.

The 16th Deep represents the culmination of the great westward drive. Lady's Tears, the river some say is the source of the Sirannon, flows through this great Delve. The fortified passage leading to Hollin Gate also passes through this region.

The 17th Deep was founded near the 16th, and formed the core of the Dwarves' western workshops and forges. The great fire vents that provide the furnace heat for this great smithy are unmatched save perhaps by the fires of Mordor itself.

Hollin Gate is the western exit from Khazad-dum. Its opening provided an easy trade route between the Dwarves and the Noldor.

Rich veins of Mithril leading westward and down from the 6th Deep lead to this Delve, the 18th Deep. It is one of the deepest points in the Mines.

One of the upper Delves, the 19th Deep was opened after exploration of natural caverns lead to discoveries of vast gem deposits here. The fame, a vast field of burning lava, provides heat for a vast forge here as well.

The 20th Deep was opened as a source of marble and granite for fortifications and sculpture. It eventually housed the Great Arena where contests of strength and daring were held by the Dwarves.

The 21st Deep was the last of the Great Delves. It is a relatively minor site, noted only for rich deposits of coal, and vast tar pits.