Thirsk, A Revised History

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n the bank of Lake Fjalding stands Thirsk, a grand mead hall that serves as the home and center of operations for a most valiant clan of Nord warriors.

Long ago, a small group of Skaal decided to leave the main village, and free themselves of their brethren's strict adherence to nature worship. They sought to live life as their ancestors had in Skyrim -- free to kill what they wanted when they wanted, free to worship in any manner they chose.

The group braved the harsh weather and traveled south toward Lake Fjalding, where they found the perfect location for a new settlement. There they decided to construct a grand mead hall that would serve as their new home and hunting lodge. After several months of building, the companions had completed the task, and named the mead hall Thirsk.

The settlers looked upon all they had accomplished, and were truly proud of their accomplishment. But their happiness was short lived, and the settlers soon learned that not everyone celebrated the construction of Thirsk. As the mead hall was being erected, so too was the noise and commotion of construction disturbing an ancient creature that lay dormant under the ice. It was a tragic twist of irony, therefore, that as the last beam of the great hall was nailed in place, the slumbering beast did finally awaken. His ancient name was the Udyrfrykte, though the settlers knew him only as death. The Udyrfrykte came to the newly completed mead hall and wreaked vengeance upon those who had shattered the peace of his long, cold sleep. He killed without warning, without mercy, reducing the Thirsk Nords to half their number. It was the valiant sorcerer Eldrid Ice-Light who finally drove the beast back to his lair beneath the frozen lake, and used his magicka to seal the entrance with a great wall of ice. The horror was over, but the price was great. It took the settlers two months to fix the damage done by the Udyrfrykte, and with so many strong hands now gone, it was slow and tedious work.

Finally, Thirsk stood tall and proud once more. But even though the settlers had worked together to construct the mead hall and drive away the threat of the Udyrfrykte,

tensions quickly grew over who would serve as their leader. Most of the men considered Hrothmund the Red their de facto chieftain, as he was the strongest and most capable of the lot. But one warrior, Drengr Bronze-Helm, disagreed. He thought himself most capable to rule over Thirsk, and loudly voiced his opposition to Hrothmund. Knowing that conflict and discord would only serve to destroy the new life they had worked so hard to create, Hrothmund the Red exercised his only true option - he swung his great axe and beheaded Drengr Bronze-Helm where he stood. The Nords appreciated more than anything a warrior's prowess in battle, and Drengr's slaying proved to them that Hrothmund was indeed most worthy to be Thirsk's chieftain. So that the other Nords would never forget he had proven his right to lead, Hrothmund placed Drengr's head on a pedestal in the center of Thirsk's main hall, for all to see.

And so began Thirsk's most time-honored tradition. Any warrior, regardless of race or sex, could claim leadership of the mead hall by displaying the most impressive battle trophy on the great hall's pedestal. So long as the spirit of Hrothmund the Red consented, that warrior would be named chieftain.

Hrothmund's Bane

For twenty-one years Hrothmund the Red ruled over Thirsk and its residents as chieftain. With his soft voice and great axe, Hrothmund brought peace and prosperity to Thirsk. But peace proved to be Hrothmund's undoing, for the mighty Nord grew restless in the warmth and safety of the mead hall. He longed for battle and adventure, to feel the frost in his veins once more, and could ignore the call of valor no longer. When word spread of a giant, bloodthirsty white wolf terrorizing travelers in the Moesring Mountains, Hrothmund took up his great axe and set out to defeat the beast alone. The men of the mountains named him Ondjage, the Fell Wolf. The beast measured as large as an ox, with fur as white as new-fallen snow, and it was said no man or woman alive could bring Ondjage down. The words of the mountain folk proved true, for while Hrothmund did hew one leg from the Fell Wolf, Ondjage devoured the mighty Nord whole, leaving only his great axe as a grim reminder of man's failure against beast. Filled with sorrow and rage, the residents of Thirsk marched to the mountains in search of the wolf, called by them Hrothmund's Bane. Only together did they manage to slay Ondjage, and as family they feasted on his roasted flesh.

The following is a list of Thirsk's chieftains, since Hrothmund first ruled:

Hrothmund the Red. Nord male. Slew Drengr Bronze-Helm and presented his head as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for twenty-one years. Slain and devoured by Ondjage, the Fell Wolf.

Isgeror White-Wave. Nord female. Slew the necromancer Hildir Worm-Heart and presented his heart as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for four years.

Einarr. Nord male. Slew the frost giant Guolog and presented his foot as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for six years.

Gisl Round-Gut. Nord male. Slew Einarr and presented his sword as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for two months.

Einarr the Younger. Nord male. Slew Gisl Round-Gut and presented his stomach as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for seven years.

Grjotgaror. Nord male. Slew the white witch Ratla and presented her staff as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for two years.

Amelie Bontecou. Breton female. Slew Grjotgaror and presented his head as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for three years.

Thorormr Storm-Killer. Nord male. Slew the brothers Ani and Ali and presented their enchanted hammers as battle trophies. Ruled over Thirsk for sixteen years.

Aegilief. Nord Female. Slew Oddny the Unfaithful and presented her hand as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for eight years.

Caccino Aurelia. Imperial male. Slew the Imperial hero Claudius Anzione and presented his sword as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for three weeks. Fraud.

Eldjar Bear-Skinner. Nord male. Slew the Imperial fraud Caccino Aurelia and presented his tongue as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for five years.

Falki the Fat. Nord male. Slew a pack of six rabid wolves and presented their claws as battle trophies. Ruled over Thirsk for three months. Succumbed to madness and death as a result of rabies.

Svana the Knife. Nord female. Slew Gretta Wolf-Child and presented her sword as a

battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for four years.

Beinir White-Beard. Nord male. Slew three Orc raiders and presented their eyes as battle trophies. Ruled over Thirsk for twenty-two years.

Skjoldr Wolf-Runner. Nord male. Slew the wizard Griss the Yellow and presented his head as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for three years. Slain in the mead hall.

There is, here, a period of unrecorded histories. At some point, the Udyrfrykte was dealt with once and for all, but the leader of Thirsk in this time is unrecorded. There were, apparently, several other chieftains who came and went before the resumption of record. The Thirsk devotion to oral tradition means these names may forever be lost to history.

Girgun the Colossus. Nord male. Slew Thjold the Ill-Minded and presented his brains as a battle trophy. Ruled over Thirsk for six years.

Vibeke the Stone. Nord female. Slew seven Imperial pirates and presented their helmets as battle trophies. Ruled over Thirsk for three years.

Hjarknir Green-Hand. Nord male. Slew an entire grove of Spriggans and presented their taproot hearts as battle trophies. Ruled Thirsk for twenty-seven years.

Bujold the Intrepid. Nord female. Slew the great beast of Ilfark and presented its stomach as a battle trophy. Rules Thirsk as of this writing.

Expansion:

The Thirsk mead hall is nearly the same today as it was at its founding, a testament to the quality of its construction. But while Thirsk itself did not grow, its inhabitants did, and before long the grand mead hall could not house all who wished to dwell within. So, over the years, many Nords have left Thirsk to establish their own private dwellings out in the wilderness of Solstheim, relying on the island's many caves and natural shelters. But those who left are always welcome back at Thirsk, and many return frequently to enjoy the mead hall's hospitalities. It is also important to note that although much time has passed since the group first left the Skaal village, the Skaal and Thirsk Nords have always remained civil to one another, and even trade resources on occasion.

Relationship with Raven Rock:

The Thirsk Nords hold the same relations with Raven Rock that they once held with the Empire when its presence was more known on Solstheim: a deliberate disinterest and lack of complication. Both sides remain happy if they can plausibly believe the other doesn't exist. Which is not to say there is any cause for enmity; rather, there is simply no cause for fellowship among these two very differing cultures.

Law and Order Within Thirsk:

Within the Mead Hall, the Chieftain serves as judge, jury and executioner if necessary. The reality is that Thirsk has always been a fairly peaceful place, with camaraderie and goodwill the norm. Solstheim can be a harsh home, and the Nords of Thirsk have long realized that fighting each other isn't nearly as productive as battling the island's bears, wolves, draugr, Rieklings, and whatever other fell creatures may roam the land. Still, there is the occasional disagreement - which more often than naught ends in bloodshed - and every few years someone gets it into his head to challenge the chieftain to a blood duel to try to gain possession of Thirsk. Generally speaking, the Nords of Thirsk are one big, happy barbarian-like family. And, like any family, they have their squabbles.

The Ashtimes:

Since the eruption of the Red Mountain, the southern portion of Solstheim has been lost to waste and Dark Elf occupation. Thirsk sits just above the desolated area, though, and happily escaped the destruction that fell over much of the land. In the years since, Thirsk has taken its role as "haven" all the more seriously. They focus on hospitality, and on welcoming outsiders whether they seek respite from the southern ashlands or the northern chill.
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