

Masterwork Maps

Buckbray Tower

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This Masterwork Maps sourcebook showcases a fantasy medieval fortress and estate. It includes detailed maps and floor plans, a comprehensive overview of the estate and its workings, story plots and suggestions for incorporating the estate into existing campaigns, and encounters to challenge characters of varying levels.

INTRODUCTION

Night was coming. The heat of the day had been stifling, and the strong smell of rain only worsened it. By mid-

afternoon a blanket of storm clouds had masked the sun. The sky darkened to dusk, but the heat remained.

Ermer Traist was utterly miserable. His gauntlet scraped lightly against the crenellations as he quietly surveyed his surroundings. There was no trace of wind, and Buckbray’s pennant hung limp. Still, the rooftop was better than the tower’s muggy interior. Traist gazed skyward. For a week the clouds had spat lightning but held the rain at bay. Not that it mattered; earlier storms had turned the ground into mud. Thankfully, he did not yet have to don his coif, but the chain shirt was nearly intolerable. Traist shook his head again as sweat stung his eyes. The padding beneath his armor was soaked and the wet leather of his boots blistered his feet.

A young child played unenthusiastically in the courtyard below. As Traist watched, she spied one of Buckbray’s hounds and, forgetting her mud pies, immediately waddled over to her newfound playmate. The dog lay sprawled listless in the wet earth, mindless of the swarm of gnats that buzzed about it. Its belly was rising and falling with labored breath, and it paid no attention to the child’s prodding.

Winter rains had pounded the estate. The flooding river had spilled into the tower’s cellar, ruining three month’s of dry stores. The damaged foundation wall required two weeks to repair, but Merthat’s farm along the shallow marsh had endured worst. Ironically, it was the rainfall that had spared Buckbray from the worst of the initial assault.

The attacks began on the new moon nearly a month ago. There were some four hundred acres of forest and farmland under Lord Buckbray’s charge. As tower captain, Traist was responsible for the safety of his lordship’s holdings and people. He had failed.

Traist stared at the distant, blackened field. They had been lucky. Orcs had set it afire during the night, and the flames had grudgingly consumed the damp cornstalks. The blaze had not swept into the adjacent fields, and the mill was not yet in danger. Next winter’s food stores would be lean, but the priestess had promised Lord Buckbray that she could help keep the people fed.

Orcs were stupid, vile creatures, and of no real threat in small numbers. But like rats in a granary, they were thriving. They were elusive and organized, and their brutal attacks were relentless. Traist led the patrols himself, but they could find no sign of an encampment in the neighboring forest.

In the past fortnight, nearly a dozen families had fled their homes for the tower’s protection. Thus far the garrison had held the roads and the southern lands remained unscathed. For weeks Lord Buckbray stubbornly refused to hire more guardsmen. Two days ago he reluctantly dispatched a rider, but Traist knew many would die before the orcs were beaten.

As the last bit of sun sank beneath the trees, Traist could see movement on the outer fringe of the dark field. As the sentry rang the tower bell, he exhaled slowly and pulled on his coif. They were coming.

Buckbray Tower



BUCKBRAY TOWER

Buckbray Tower safeguards a small estate of 421 acres and a hamlet of 344 citizens. The estate includes farmland, woods, hills, and marsh that yield a diverse mixture of resources. Buckbray lies on its nation's border, and only a river's half-mile breadth separates it from a hostile neighboring state.

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

Buckbray Estate is set in the backdrop of a feudal system. It is the smallest of the noble estates comprising Kessing, a fiefdom of the Barony of Chasbin in the Duchy of Welgredd. Buckbray stretches along the Chadene River, and serves Welgredd as a watchtower against the neighboring Grellusk Province.

Thirty miles northwest of Buckbray is Hate's Heart, a massive stone bridge spanning the Chadene River. The Duchy of Welgredd maintains an uneasy peace with the Grellusk Province, and the bridge is a vital trade artery to the Governorship of Trendst, which lies north of Grellusk. Chasbin Keep, seat of the Barony, is fifty miles west of Buckbray.

When Sir Errond Kessing awarded the estate to Harold Buckbray sixty-three years ago, two tasks were placed before Harold: Build a watchtower to maintain vigilance against the Grellusk Province, and prevent ships on the Chadene River from transporting slaves into Grellusk. In recent years, hostilities between Welgredd and Grellusk have eased and Buckbray's importance has lessened. Buckbray Tower still

serves as a watchtower, but ships sail unchallenged on the Chadene River.

None of the three Buckbray generations have truly prospered. The tower's construction depleted the family's wealth, while garrison salaries and annual taxes are a constant drain upon the coffers. In years past, Buckbray's yearly obligation to Kessing was largely waived due to the tower's military role. However, the estate no longer enjoys this luxury.

Armond Buckbray has little cash reserve remaining and the last winter's storms wrought considerable damage while making early planting impossible. Life on the estate has never been easy, but matters are worsening. Now, in the face of mounting problems, Lord Buckbray must quell the turmoil in his land and raise a crop harvest for taxes at year's end, or likely lose his holdings.

Buckbray shares its border with three other estates: Burfield to the southeast, Dreyamar to the northwest, and Verghist to the west. It does not enjoy good relations with any of its neighbors. The lords of all three adjacent estates watch Buckbray's troubles with greedy interest, for if Lord Buckbray fails, one of them will likely inherit the estate.

INHABITANTS

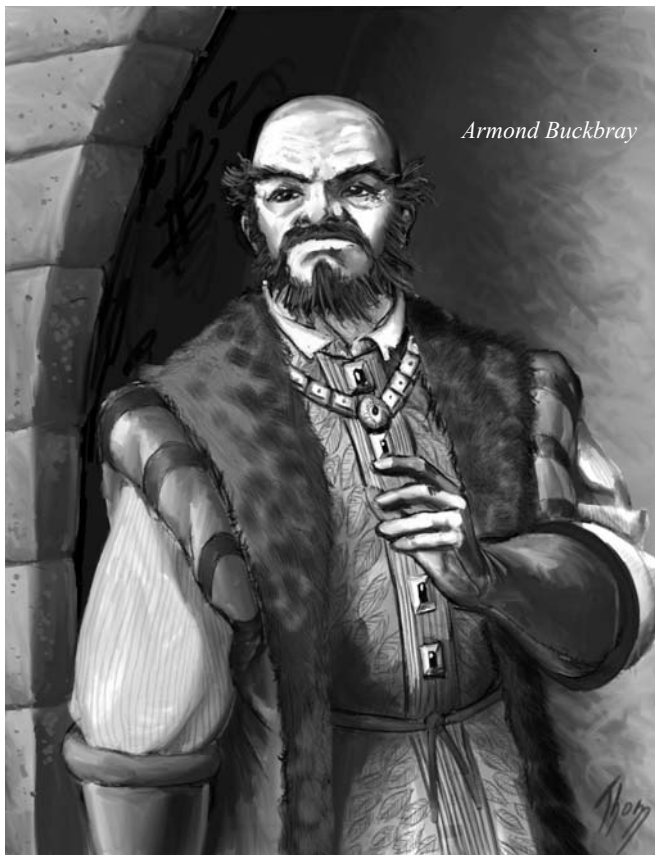
Armond Buckbray, Lord of the Tower, Male Human Aristocrat 3: CR 2; Medium Humanoid; HD 3d8+6; HP 23; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19 (+7 half-plate armor, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8+1/19-20, masterwork longsword) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); SA —; SQ —; AL LG; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +2; STR 12, DEX 11, CON 14, INT 11, WIS 9, CHA 15. Ht: 5' 8"; Wt: 190; Age: 45; Hair: black; Eyes: black; Skin: pale. Languages: Common.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10 (6), Diplomacy +8 (2), Gather Information +5 (3), Intimidate +12 (6), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5 (5), Ride +4 (4), Swim +5 (4); Persuasive, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: masterwork half-plate armor, masterwork heavy steel shield, masterwork longsword (with *continual flame* spell cast upon the blade), light crossbow, 20 bolts, *potion of eagle's splendor*, noble's outfits (x2), signet ring, gold ring (10gp), black velvet mantle embroidered with gold thread and bejeweled with silver pearl (380gp), silver pendant inlaid with turquoise (130gp), gold brooch inlaid with bloodstones (110gp), 5pp, 52gp, 10sp.

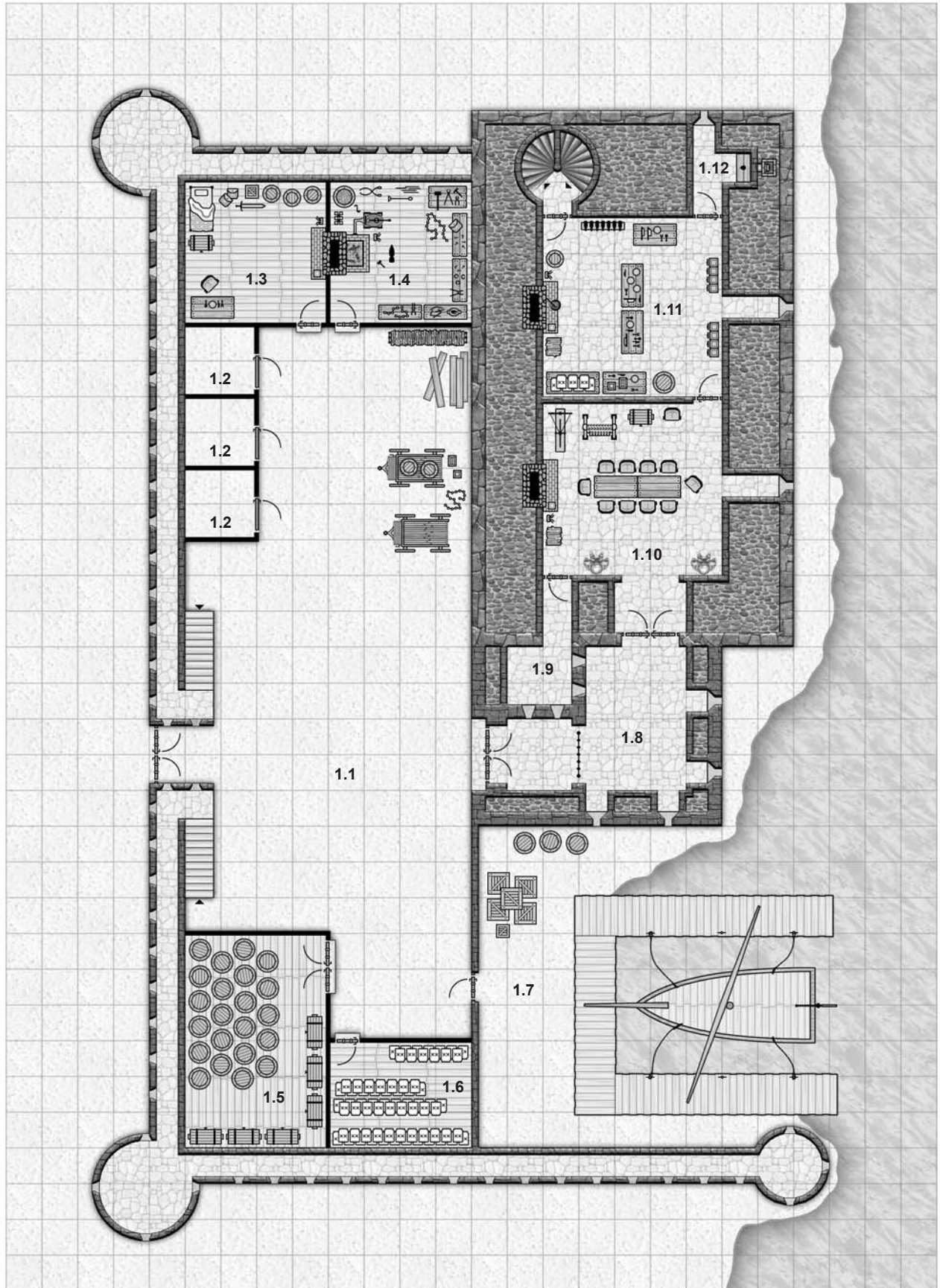
Armond Buckbray is an unimposing, stocky, middle-aged man of average height. The hair from his balding scalp seems to now be springing from his unruly eyebrows and beard. Armond appreciates the finer luxuries of life and has a pronounced fondness for rich apparel. His estate has yielded scant profits in recent years, however, and there has been little money for extravagances. His dwindling wardrobe suffers from neglect, and shows substantial signs of wear.

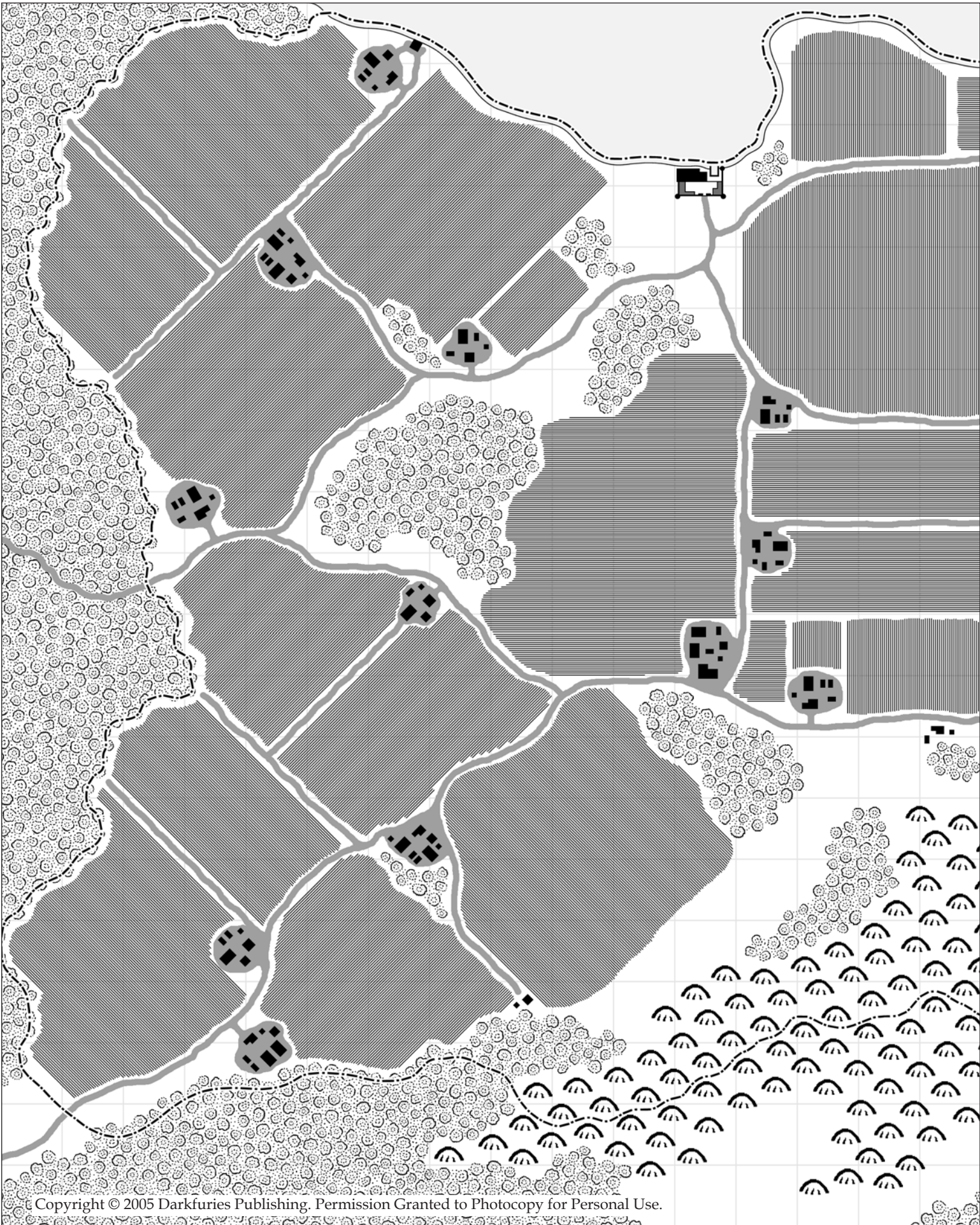
A headstrong man of modest intellect and education,



Armond Buckbray

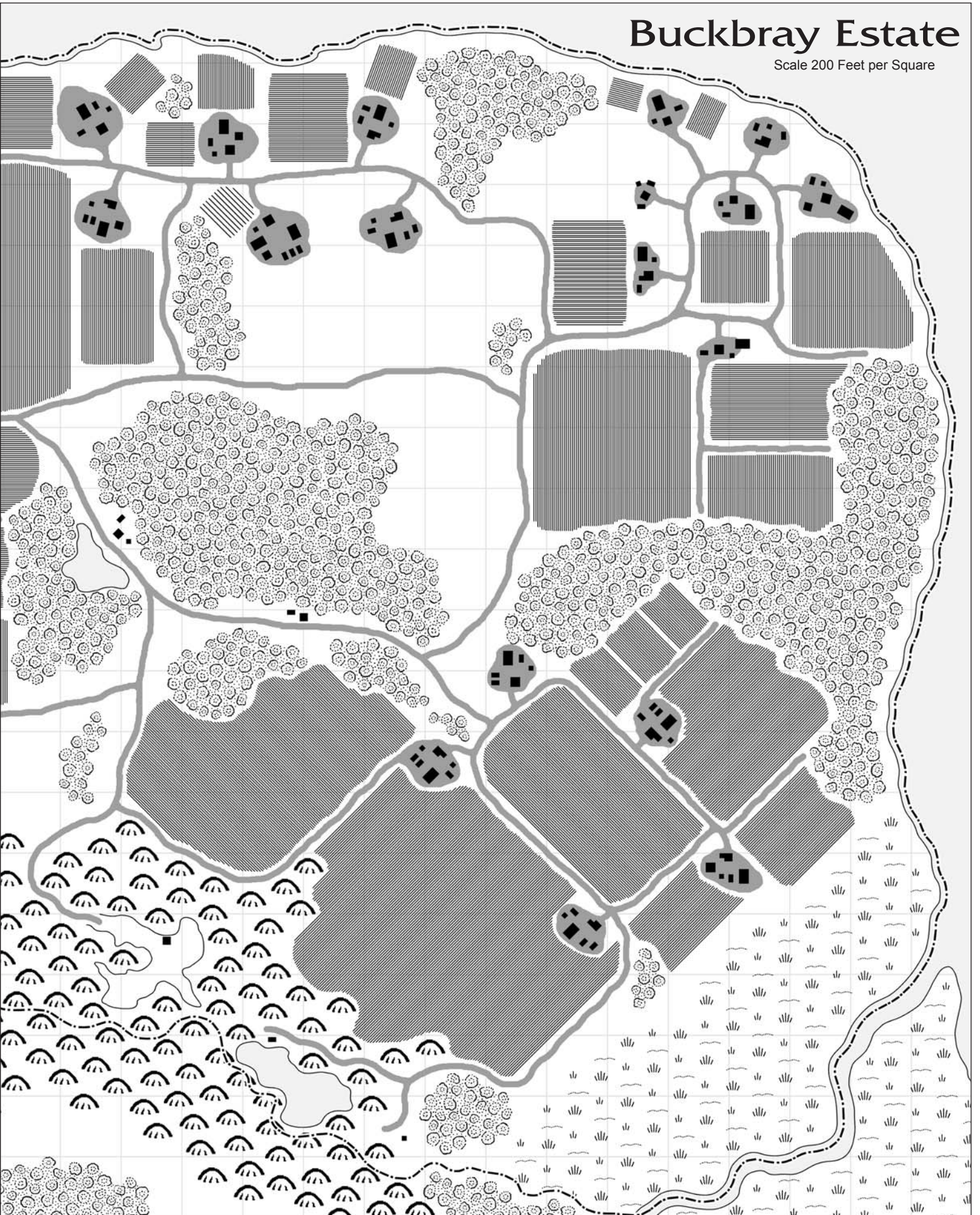
Buckbray Tower - ground floor (Scale 5 Feet per Square)





Buckbray Estate

Scale 200 Feet per Square





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