Mittelland AD

Manual

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The technical Part

1. A brief Background on the Game's history

In 1996, Matthias Kriesell and I released a PC game through Sunflowers Interactive Entertainment Software GmbH that is now considered a classic in the genre of medieval trading simulations exclusively released in German language: Die Fugger 2 – the predecessor of 2002's Europa 1400 – The Guild.

What made the game special was that players, much like in a board game, would sit together in front of a single PC and take turns trying to help their digital alter ego achieve wealth and prestige through trade, politics, and intrigue – all while making life as difficult as possible for their opponents in the game world starting in the year 1600. Friends, family, cola, and chips, along with plenty of fun and schadenfreude, were the perfect companions for entertaining evenings, as a game with multiple players could be played and won in just a few hours using the secretly drawn task cards – or end in disgrace in the debtors' prison.

Unfortunately, distribution had to be discontinued a few years later due to a naming dispute with the Fugger family, which meant that the game was not legally available for more than 20 years.

After giving interviews about the game to several retro gaming sites starting in 2021, I received numerous requests for a re-release. In the fall of 2023, I then met Lennard Beers and Ben Korinth, computer science students and fans of medieval trade and life simulations. With Matthias Kriesell's consent, we decided to revise and legalize the original game.

And here it is: the revised version of the classic, featuring improved music, but most importantly, free of several bugs, but most importantly, stripped of all references to the Fugger family in the game and manual. The game is now fully legalized and can provide many hours of enjoyment to fans and those who might become fans, under its new title.

Have a great time with "Mittelland AD"!

- Lars Martensen, autumn 2025

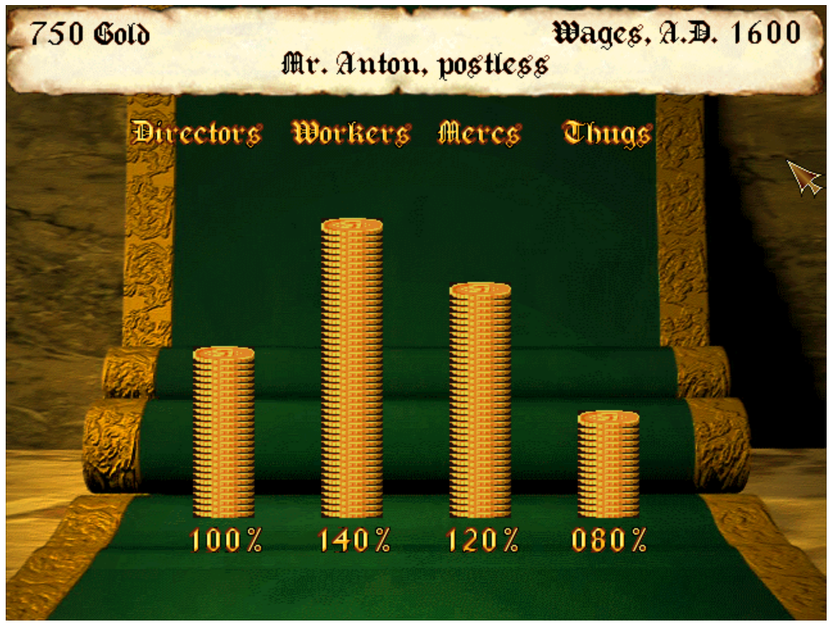
2. The Controls

"Mittelland AD" is controlled almost entirely with the mouse. The keyboard is only used in a few cases: when entering a name, during an auction (to place a bid), or during an ambush (to change the tactics of your men). Additionally, cutscenes can be skipped using the Escape key. *Every action in the game is triggered by pressing the left mouse button.*

ICONS – A mouse click on a graphic icon either performs an action or opens a new window.

CLICKABLE ELEMENTS – For example, if you move the mouse over the desk in the office, the word *Chancery* will light up in golden text. If you move the mouse away from the desk, the text will disappear again. Such interactive areas open a new game screen.

WAGES – Move the mouse over the chest in the office – *Wages* will light up. Click the left mouse button. You will enter the *Wages* game screen and see four stacks of coins.



Move the mouse to the upper half of the ones digit on one of the numbers below the Workers column. A “+“ symbol will appear in the mouse pointer. Click the left mouse button. You have just increased your workers’ pay by 2 percent. Now move the mouse to the lower half of the tens digit; a “-“ symbol will appear. Click the left mouse button again. The pay for your workers is now reduced to 92 percent of the normal wage. Numbers are adjusted entirely with the left mouse button: if the mouse pointer is in the upper half of the number, the corresponding digit is increased, and if it is in the lower half, the digit is decreased.

TEXTS – Similar to numbers, texts can also be adjusted. If a text is editable, it will light up when you move the mouse pointer over it: golden texts light up in yellow-gold, and black texts light up in red. Instead of the “+“ symbol, a text will show an upward-pointing arrow in the mouse pointer when hovered over the text’s upper half. This indicates that clicking the left mouse button will switch to the next text. In the lower half of the text, a downward-pointing arrow will appear in the mouse pointer. Clicking here will display the previous text.

Every window is closed by pressing the right mouse button – every game screen is exited by pressing the right mouse button!

Move the mouse over the statistics board above the chest in the office. Left-click. The Score window will open. There is no visible icon to close the window. Right-click. The window will close. Move the mouse over the cross on the wall. Left-click. An image of a church will appear. Right-click. The “Church“ screen will be exited, and you will return to the office.

You can’t go wrong with a right-click! If you right-click in the office, you will end your turn. For this reason, you will be asked as a precaution whether this was your intention.

3. Let's get started – Starting a Game

When you start "Mittelland AD" for the first time, you will be asked how many players want to join the game. A game can be played with up to six players. Next, you will be asked how challenging your tasks should be.

You can also play the game without any tasks, meaning that after a few generations, your dynasty might produce a duke – or perhaps a bandit leader who wreaks havoc across the land. However, in this mode, there is no specific game objective – you simply play for fun or to practise the game mechanics. If you choose to play the game with tasks, your choice can mean the following:

EASY: You might receive a task to become the mayor of a city or to achieve a certain title.

MEDIUM: Perhaps you will be tasked with owning a castle complete with vast lands, a park, and outbuildings. Alternatively, you might take a criminal path and be required to break specific laws of Mittelland.

HARD: You might be tasked with becoming the Grand Chancellor or acquiring ownership of all three toll castles – formidable challenges await your efforts.

You can find the digital Task Cards in the game folder and may want to print and cut them out, so every player can physically draw one from the deck.

Whatever the case, if you choose to play with tasks, the game will, in many ways, take on the feel of a board game – even if it's just that you decide to grab a coffee but quickly turn back to take your task card to the kitchen. After all, the other players will figure out your task goal soon enough!

After providing these details, the players will take turns specifying their *name*, *gender*, and *faith*. Since, in the 17th century – during the Thirty Years' War – the German-speaking region was primarily divided between Catholic and Protestant (Lutheran) faiths, the choice of religion at the start of the game is limited to these two options. However, over the course of the game, you will also have the option to leave the church...

You now choose your *COLOR*. This color will represent you throughout the game – whether it's your flag being displayed at your branches or your mercs or thugs fighting in your colors.

Next, you choose your so-called "*Hot-Key*". This is a key that you can use later in the game on certain occasions. During auctions, pressing your Hot-Key allows you to place a bid, and during an ambush, you can use it to change the tactics of each unit under your command.

Now, *your uncle* enters the scene. He *bequeaths you a branch* in one of the less prominent cities of Mittelland. You will then be asked if you are satisfied with your inputs. It's worth noting that only four of the six cities available at the start of the game have access to navigable waterways. This means that no trade via ships can be conducted from Moortal and

Falkenhorst. However, this is not a significant disadvantage.

If you are playing with tasks, you will be asked to draw a task card corresponding to the difficulty level you selected. Enter any of the three secret codes; your PC will now know which task you have and can later recognize when you have completed it.

4. The Banner

The banner at the top of the screen is visible on most game screens. It shows the current year, your cash, your title, and your office.

4.1 Bribes and other Misdeeds – Selecting an Office

Whenever the banner is visible on the screen, you have the opportunity to offer bribes. To do so, click on the gold display in the top left corner: a map of the principality will appear. Above the map, the location where you wish to bribe someone is displayed. You can select any of the *ten cities*, one of the *three counties*, or *the entire principality*, as well as a *customs fort* or a *bandit camp*. A frame will appear around the selected target. For example, if you click on Fürstenbrück in the center of the map, a hierarchy tree of offices will be displayed, showing the political relationships within the city.
(For *selecting the entire principality:* Move the mouse over the large lake in the center of the map and left-click; this will display a hierarchy tree of the highest princely offices.)

At the top stands the mayor, followed by the builder, judge, and treasurer, and at the bottom, the three councilors. Below each office is a black bar indicating the level of respect you enjoy with the officeholder. The wider the bar, the better for you. At the very bottom of this page, you have the option to switch to the ecclesiastical offices, which in a city consist of two priestly offices and the position of the canon. A narrow cross to the right of the bar indicates the officeholder is of Protestant faith, while a broader cross signifies Catholic faith. For instance, if you want to bribe the architect, click on his office. A window will appear where you can enter the amount and let the gold flow. If you give the architect a sufficiently high sum, it will positively impact your reputation with them, and the black bar below the builder will widen after the bribe. Keep in mind: If you share the faith of the “victim“ of your bribe, the benefit you gain will be greater than if the individual is of a different faith.
This mechanism of selecting an office is used in many parts of the game and is summarized here once more.

1. Select a city, county, principality, bandit camp, or customs fort
2. Choose the secular or ecclesiastical level
3. Select an office

4.2 Game Options



If you click on any area of the banner other than the gold display, the marketplace or options window will open. Here you have the following options:

4.2.1 Saving the Game

Click on the shield with the letter “S“. You can save up to five game states, each with a comment.

4.2.2 Loading a Game

A previously saved game can be resumed by clicking on the shield with the letter “L“.

4.2.3 Graphics

Here you can select the color resolution between 256 and 32,768 colors, adjust the window size for animations, and set the text scrolling speed. The color resolution is set to 32,768 colors by default. On modern hardware, there is no reason to change this setting. This version of the game only supports the “Cinema“ option for video sequences. If “Blackbox“ is selected instead, only the audio of the sequences will play against a black screen.

4.2.4 Music

In this window, you have three volume controls for digital sound, music, and speech. You can also toggle the voice output on or off and verify your settings with a “sound check“.

Note: Due to reengineering the sound code for “Mittelland AD“ for DOSBox, the “Music“ volume slider has no effect.

4.2.5 Options

You can toggle the recording of history (historical events), adventures (sub-plots), fate (random events), gameplay tips, and warnings on or off. If you play with gameplay aids enabled, you will, for example, be notified of mistakes in your trade or warned if your in-game life is nearing its end but you have no children to continue playing. When "Confirm Turn" is enabled, you will be asked after a right-click in the office whether you really want to end your turn. By enabling "Announce Players", the name of the next player will be displayed at the start of their turn. If you disable "Witnesses & Pleas", court proceedings will play out faster. After installing "Mittelland AD", all options are enabled by default.

4.2.6 New Player

"Mittelland AD" allows you to add additional players even during an ongoing game, provided that not all six possible starting locations have been assigned and there is at least one city not yet occupied by another player. For example, if two players have already progressed to the year 1617 and a third player wants to join, they will start the game with the average wealth of the other two. However, they will need to earn an office and a title on their own.

4.2.7 End Game

At some point, perhaps around four in the morning, you may feel so tired that you decide to end the current game. The city gate on the marketplace serves as your exit from the 17th century. By the way, you can continue the last completed game directly after restarting "Mittelland AD" using the "Continue Last Game" option.

Never forget to SAVE your game progress before ending a session! "Mittelland AD" does not create save files automatically.

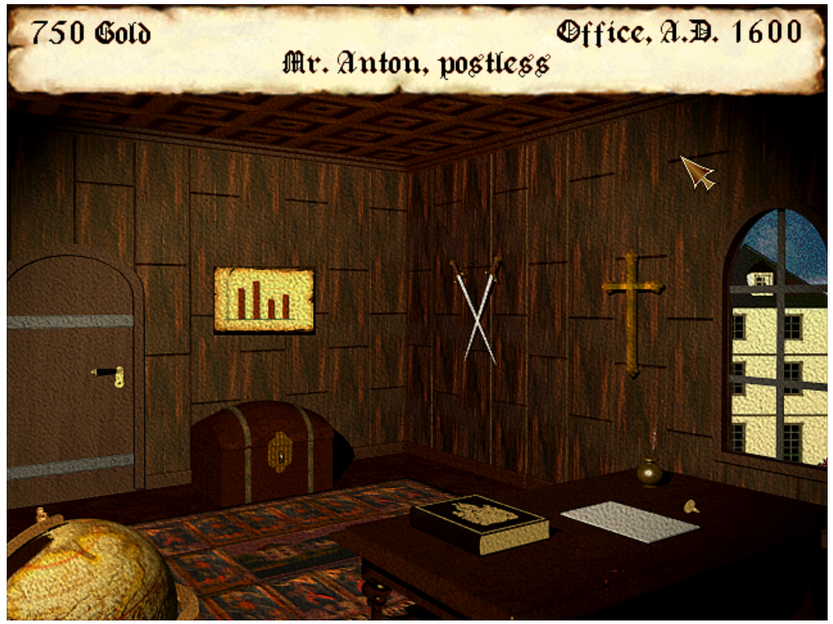
5. In the Office

"Mittelland AD" is a turn- and year-based game. This means that if you play with multiple players, which significantly enhances the enjoyment of the game, all players take their turns one after the other: Initially (except in the first year), you will arrive at a screen where you are informed of the results of your previous year's trade – for example, how much fish you caught or how your harvest turned out. Afterwards, you find yourself in the office, from where you make all your critical decisions.

When you finish your turn (your game year), the consequences of your decisions are presented to you. Once all players have completed their turns, the more than 100 NPCs take action, and you are updated on the progress of events in Mittelland.

To achieve fame and prestige in the thorny world of the 17th century, you have numerous options available to you in the *office*.

5.1 Trade



5.1.1 The Trade Map

Clicking on the globe in the office brings you to a map of Mittelland. From here, you manage your trading activities. Near the cities players have already opened a branch, small flags flutter in the wind. By their color, you can easily identify where your branches are located. This also keeps you informed about your competitors sitting in front of the screen.



Each city has two clickable areas. If you select the *city name*, a window will provide information about that city. Clicking on the *city graphic* will take you to your branch there, provided you own one.

CITY INFORMATION: Is the city suffering from a disaster? Which goods are particularly well-produced at this location? Which goods are in high demand and therefore fetch higher prices? Is the city currently under siege? Finally, what is the cost of opening a branch at this location?
(Only one player can obtain these rights in each city.) All these questions are answered in the city information.

CITY GRAPHIC: Clicking on the graphic of a city where you do not have a branch will open a window asking if you wish to open a branch, provided one is still available. However, be cautious – at the beginning of the game, the cost of a second branch will likely be beyond your means. After a few years, when you have increased your wealth, you must weigh the following: If you establish another branch at your desired location, your budget in the coming years may be quite constrained. On the other hand, if you decide to continue investing your gold solely in the trade of a single branch, you may generate larger profits, but another player could claim an available branch before you. Whatever the case, once your flag flies in a location, a mouse click on the city graphic will take you directly to your branch.

5.1.2 In the Branch

You are now in one of your branches. From here, you can take all necessary actions to increase your wealth through skillful trade. In the top third of the screen, you see your inventory, the center displays your order book, and the lower section contains various control icons.

5.1.2.1 Your Inventory

Each city can produce six different goods. The goods that can be produced at a specific location depend on the *geographical location* of the city. Above each good is a two-digit number indicating how much gold can be earned by selling one unit of that good at the local market. *The price of the good* is surrounded by a more or less complete golden ring. This ring provides information about *your personal skills* in producing that particular good. The closer the ring closes at the top, the more experienced and successful you are in production. The number below the good indicates how many *units of the good* are stored in your warehouse – at the start of the game, you have no goods in stock.

Initially, four of the six goods are grayed out, meaning you cannot yet produce these goods. As the game progresses, you will be awarded various certificates that allow you to trade in more valuable goods. If you place a production order in the first game year (see below), the goods you produce will appear in your warehouse the following year.

To sell goods locally, there are three options:

SELLING GOODS LOCALLY:

1) You can sell goods one by one by clicking the left mouse button on the quantity below the corresponding graphic when a minus sign appears on the cursor. For more details, refer to the chapter on controls.
2) You can sell an entire batch of goods by clicking on the graphic of the good.
3) You can sell all goods in stock by clicking the icon to the left of the goods icons, which depicts an empty warehouse.



5.1.2.2 The Order Book

The order book is *the heart of your trade*. Here, you specify which tasks your subordinates should complete throughout the year. In each branch, you can issue *two orders per year*. For example, you could place a production order: Harvest grain with 10 workers on 2 fields! Or, if you have grain in stock and wish to sell it in another city for a better price: Sell 270 grain on 3 carts in Bergstedt!
(...assuming your branch is not Bergstedt)

The order book allows you to set *four different types of orders*, which are described below. A *forecast of the expected costs and storage utilization percentage* gives you an overview of whether you can afford your plans.

The costs will only be deducted at the end of your turn.

At the end of each order line, the order status determines whether a task can or should be executed:

1) A CHECKED CIRCLE:
Confirms an order! The order is possible and will be executed. You have selected it.
2) A CIRCLE:
The order is possible, but you have not confirmed it, so it will not be executed.
3) A BROKEN CIRCLE:
The order cannot be executed. A broken circle cannot be clicked or activated. This might happen, for example, if you attempt to transport 4 carts' worth of goods but only 3 carts are available in your branch. You can transform impossible orders into feasible ones by reducing the number of transporters or goods or by switching them to available ones.

The order status you set will persist over the years, as long as the order remains executable. This allows you to easily "pause" specific orders for a year if necessary by deactivating the checked circle.

IMPORTANT NOTE:
The order book uses abbreviations for locations and transport types (e.g., Steam C. for steam carts). These can be fully referenced in the section "Appendix III – Abbreviation Index".

5.1.2.3 The production Order

With a production order, you *"hire"* some workers and production tools to produce a specific *good*. The optimal ratio between workers and production tools depends on the type of good. For example, if your first branch is in Falkenhorst, a suitable production order might be:

Brew beer with **6** workers at **3** kettles. **(Status)**

The bold components of the order can be adjusted. The "6" and "3" values are self-explanatory. By clicking "beer", you can cycle through the goods that can be produced in this city. In Falkenhorst, clicking "beer" would change the order to:

Catch fish with **6** workers in **3** boats. **(Status)**

Since the optimal worker-to-boat ratio for fishing is 3:1, you should increase the number of workers by 3 or decrease the number of boats by 1 if you want to catch fish. The optimal worker-to-tool ratios for each good are detailed in "Appendix II – Ideal Production Ratios".

By clicking on the first term of an order, you can cycle through the order types. When an upward arrow appears in the cursor, a left-click on "Catch" changes the order to a sell order – but only if goods are available in your warehouse. If you do not want to sell goods but instead transfer them to another branch, click again to change the order type to "bring goods"...

5.1.2.4 The sell Order

A sell order involves sending a specified quantity of goods using a set number of transporters to another city, where the goods are sold. The transporters return to your warehouse afterwards and are available again in the following year.

Sell 200 fish using **2 carts** in **Fürstenbrück**. **(Status)**

"200" is self-explanatory. By clicking on "fish", you select the type of good to be sold in "Fürstenbrück", the target city for this order. For all transport orders, note that a specific type of transporter (e.g., "carts") has a fixed capacity. Carts, for instance, can transport 100 units of a good, while ships can carry ten times that amount. Refer to the capacity specifications for transporters. The number of transporters required is automatically determined based on the quantity of goods to be transported.

TRANSPORTER TYPE	CAPACITY
Cart	100
Ship	1,000
Balloon	50
Steam Cart	80
Submarine	700
Flying Machine	30

5.1.2.5 The bring Order

A bring order can only be issued to a destination where you own another branch. Both the transporters and the goods are sent to the target location; the transporters do not return, and the transferred goods are not automatically sold at the destination.

Bring 1643 grain using **2 ships** to **Greifenheim**. **(Status)**

5.1.2.6 The get Goods Order

The get goods order is a special type of task. If you own a customs fort or a bandit camp where goods are stored (e.g., after a raid), you must first use transporters to retrieve the loot and bring it to one of your branches before it can be sold.

Get goods using **6 balloons** from **Meucheltann**. **(Status)**

This order sends “6 balloons“ to “Meucheltann“, your bandit camp, to get the goods.

5.1.2.7 Ships – Where no River flows...

With carts and balloons, you can transport goods between any two locations. However, keep in mind that ships require sufficient water depth to navigate! Some locations, such as Moortal, Finsterwalde, Falkenhorst, and Waldstein, are inaccessible by ship. Additionally, none of the four bandit camps are connected by navigable waterways.

5.1.2.8 Escorting Transporters

All the sell and bring orders listed above can also be escorted. In this case, two crossed swords will appear next to the first words of the order, for example, “Get goods X...“, where the X indicates that an escort is included. If you are attacked by marauding bands during transport, *your loyal mercs* will be there to defend your goods.

However, escorts come at a cost: the overall expense of your transport will increase significantly.

5.1.2.9 Your Residence

The first of the six icons at the bottom of your branch screen takes you to your residence – initially displayed as an almost blank parchment, as you do not own a residence at the start of the game. You have the option to purchase a residence, have one built, sell an existing residence, or put it up for auction. Occasionally, storms or other disasters may necessitate renovations; and one day, when you have sufficient wealth, you can expand your residence with parks, outbuildings, or vast lands.

The significance of a respectable home is clear: *Patricians who value pomp and status symbols will be impressed by your estate*, and the more splendid and well-maintained your property is, the more favor you will gain from the notable figures of the land.

5.1.2.10 The Size of your Warehouse

The second control icon at the bottom of the screen displays a number, which is *15* at the start of the game. This indicates that you have 15 square meters of storage space available. Clicking this icon takes you to the warehouse menu. *The size of your warehouse determines how many goods you can store in it*, with each square meter accommodating between 15 and 20 units of goods, depending on the type. If you lack sufficient storage space to hold both your current stock and newly produced goods, you will be forced to donate some items to those in need.

There are two categories of storage: wooden storage and stone storage. The former is cheaper to build but quickly burns down in the event of a fire, leading to greater losses in storage space and potentially the goods stored within.

Each year, you will receive offers to expand your warehouse, and you can select options as you see fit. You may sell your storage space at any time, without limitations.

5.1.2.11 Your Transporters

The three control icons on the lower-right corner of the branch screen lead to your transporters. *Carts, ships, and balloons each have distinct advantages and disadvantages.* Carts are inexpensive and can reach any destination, but they are easily targeted by attackers. Ships may seem expensive at the start of the game, but they allow you to transport large quantities of goods between locations later on. Their limitation is that they can only access cities along rivers or coastal areas. Finally, balloons are quite costly, have limited cargo capacity, and occasionally drift off course. Their significant advantage, however, is that they cannot be attacked.

In the respective menus, you can issue construction orders, sell transporters, or have them repaired. If an auction is announced, you may also put your transporters up for bidding.

5.1.2.12 Directors: Part one

Is all of this too complicated? Or are you simply not interested in managing your branch yourself? Or perhaps you have already opened your third branch!? Then it’s time to hire a *Director*!

Click the control icon *Signet Ring* to open a window where you can assign a director to manage your branch.

Depending on their skills, the director will demand an annual share of the annual budget you allocate for your branch. This means you set aside a certain amount of gold annually for the branch, which the director will manage. The director will take a percentage of this budget as their salary and use the remainder to run your branch. You no longer need to worry about trading operations, leaving you free to focus entirely on politics or darker pursuits.



ADVANTAGES OF DIRECTORS:
Directors save you a lot of time, especially when you own multiple branches.
Directors maximize experience in producing goods. For example, if you are highly skilled in grain production and your director is a master weaver, your branch will excel in both grain and cloth production.
Directors miss nothing: Are your carts in good condition? Have your ships accumulated barnacles? Did you seize the opportunity to buy inexpensive stone storage? Was it really wise to sell your wool in Lauenburg for the fifth consecutive year, possibly saturating the market?

DISADVANTAGES OF DIRECTORS:
Directors cost money, that's simply the way it is.
Directors may sometimes act unpredictably, making decisions to adapt optimally to changing market demands. While not necessarily a drawback, this can be confusing.
Directors enrich themselves from your wealth if they believe they deserve it.

Despite their drawbacks, we wholeheartedly recommend hiring *Directors* in branches with significant trade volume. You'll enjoy watching everything run smoothly!

5.2 A good Accountant... – The Chancery

Finally, back to the office! What the globe is for trade, the desk is for other critical areas in "Mittelland AD". Move your mouse over the desk in the office and left-click to access the chancery. Your friendly accountant and advisor will look at you skeptically...

5.2.1 The Career calls – In Office and Honors

Move the mouse to the writing in front of the accountant at the center of their impressive desk and left-click. This will open a window where you can apply for vacant offices. If you are not yet a citizen of a city, you cannot apply for any office; this may change in later years.

In the game, some of Mittelland's dignitaries occasionally pass away, while others are dismissed by their superiors. Their positions are then

filled by promoting lower-ranking officeholders in the hierarchy of the principality. For example, a mayor may become a counselor, the judge becomes mayor, and a councilor takes the vacant judge's seat. When a new councilor election is announced in your home city, your moment has come.

At the end of a turn, you may receive the joyful news: a councilor will be newly elected in your home city next year! In the application menu, you can now apply for the vacant office. Typically, you won't be the only applicant. To find out who your competitors are, click the crystal at the beginning of the respective line. If you decide to submit your application, change the "No" at the end of the line to "Yes". Your application is now submitted.

The question remains whether you will be elected to the desired office. Certain offices grant the holder the authority to appoint others. Check the bribery window or another source to determine whether you are in the favor of those who appoint you. If you're unsure, you can always secure their favor through a bribe! After reading the following pages, you might also discover other ways to influence potential appointers to your advantage.

As your mission demands and your strategies dictate, sooner or later, it may become essential for you to climb the ranks of the principality's hierarchy. Ensure the favor of those who appoint positions and outmaneuver your competitors for office and prestige!

Tabular information on who appoints whom can be found in "Appendix I – Who Appoints Whom?".

5.2.2 Privileges

Move the mouse slightly to the right on your accountant's desk in the chancery. The golden lettering "Privileges" will appear. Left-click to access your personal privileges menu.

Privileges are special active or passive boons granted to you through your political office, your noble title, your economic prowess and certain circumstantial states like whether you are married or your spies have gathered evidence against someone. For example, let's say you are the treasurer in a city. Lucky you – now you can lower the wage levels in your city, ensuring that you pay your workers less. Or perhaps you are not the treasurer but the canon, and one of your competitors is courting a beautiful councilor's daughter in your city... Did you know that, as the canon, you have the privilege of forbidding marriages in your city?

Review your privileges carefully whenever you take on a new office, as you'll often discover new ways to help your allies or hinder your opponents.

5.2.3 The Law Books of Mittelland

Clicking on the stack of books to the right of the accountant allows you to review the laws of the principality. Currently, there are approximately 30 written laws in Mittelland that you can potentially violate. Keep

an eye on the legal texts and your own actions, as it's easy to find yourself guilty of an offense. While this might not seem catastrophic, your journey to the top will attract many envious rivals, and you may unexpectedly find yourself summoned to court, accused of the most heinous crimes...

NOTE: Your offenses can only be successfully used against you in court if the accusations are based on evidence obtained by spies.

5.2.4 At the Lender

Click on the left stack of books in the chancery to access the lender. Here, you will find loan offers with rather steep interest rates. It's not uncommon for your fellow citizens to demand annual rates exceeding 30% – outrageous interest! Still, in certain situations, taking such a loan might be wise. For example, it could provide you with the liquidity needed to persuade the builder that you are the perfect candidate for the newly vacant councilor position.

5.2.5 The Credit Book

Move the mouse to the left side of the bookshelf in the chancery and left-click to access your credit book. This provides an overview of any loans you've taken. Ideally, this section will indicate that you owe nothing to anyone. However, if you've borrowed from the lender, your debts, including the loan amount, interest rate, and repayment term, will be displayed here. If you wish, you can repay your loans from this menu.

If you choose not to repay, the consequences will eventually catch up with you: Once the loan term ends, the creditors' enforcers will come after you. Should you fail to settle your debts, you will be dragged before the fearsome jury court, which you can escape only by paying a significant sum to appease the court.

5.2.6 Directors: Part two

If you click on the bookshelf to the right of your accountant in the chancery, you will enter the menu where you can set the budgets for your directors.

If you have assigned a director to one of your branches, you can now determine the amount of gold they are allocated annually. Keep the following in mind: Your director's salary is calculated as a percentage of the budget you provide. *Sales taxes and church tithes* are still deducted from the remaining funds.

The "rule of thumb" for paying your directors is to allocate no more than two thirds of your total gold. If you trust your directors – having observed their consistent spending patterns over several years – you may safely allocate up to three quarters of your gold. However, you should reserve the rest to cover taxes and tithes, ensuring you don't end up summoned to the jury court.

5.3 Gold is Running low... – Payments

Move your mouse to the chest in the office and left-click. This will take you to the payments screen, where you can adjust the wages for your subordinates.

If you underpay your directors, they may exceed the budget you have allocated to them. If your workers are paid below average, their motivation will likely suffer, and they may not be inclined to break any production records. On the other hand, paying your workers generously increases their motivation, leading to higher production output with the resources you provide.

The same principle applies to the pay for your mercs and thugs. If some of these individuals serve under your command, their willingness to fight directly depends on how well you pay them. In short, the better you compensate your mercs or thugs, the more effectively they will fight.

5.4 The Church

5.4.1 Outside the Church

Click on the cross in the upper right corner of the office to access the church. Clicking on the meadow to the left of the church allows you to leave the church entirely, provided you are willing to pay the price for doing so. The meadow to the right of the church offers you the opportunity to convert to the opposite faith.

If you wish to enter the holy state of matrimony, click on the bell tower. You will meet the "matchmaker" – what happens next will unfold before you.



If none of these options appeal to you, only one remains: clicking on the church portal...

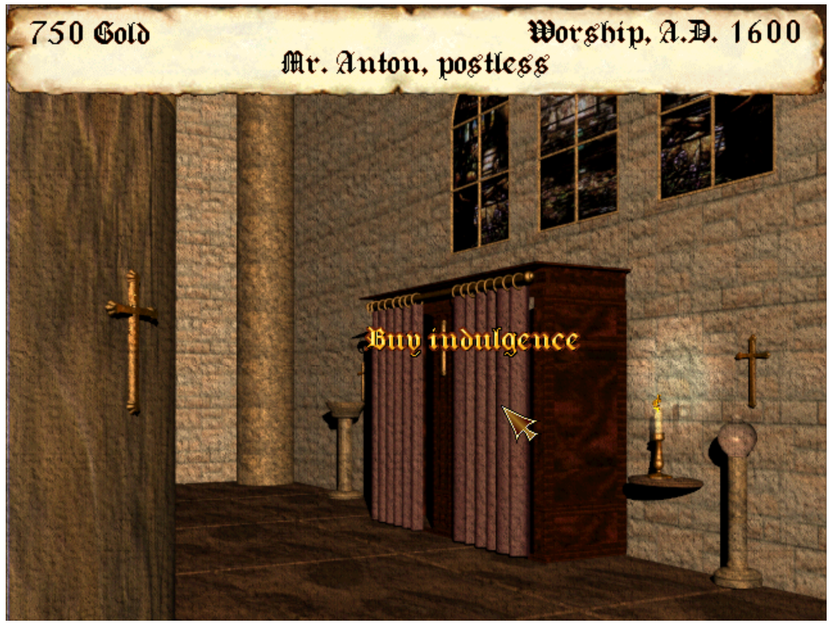
5.4.2 Inside the Church

Once inside the church, you have the following options:

1) QUICKLY HEAD TO THE CONFESSIONAL AND PURCHASE AN INDULGENCE...

If you have a long list of misdeeds, purchasing an indulgence will cost a significant amount of gold. However, the investment can be worthwhile,

as it absolves you of all violations against the laws of Mittelland, making it much harder for anyone to successfully sue you in court.



2) DONATE TO THE POOR...
Making a donation to the poor increases your reputation with the secular offices of the principality.

3) LIGHT CANDLES...
If you decide to light candles, your reputation with the ecclesiastical offices of Mittelland may improve.

4) PRAY...
Clicking on one of the two crosses inside the church allows you to pray.

5.5 Customs Forts and Bandit Camps

5.5.1 The Overview Map

Click on the crossed swords in the office to open the map of Mittelland. This map displays the three customs forts and the four bandit camps. Customs forts guarantee secure trade in the region; each of the three counties has its own customs fort. In Mooringen, this is Waldenfels; Seefels belongs to the county of Auenthal, and Bergenhöh is monitored by the customs fort Hohenfels.

Clicking on the name of a customs fort provides information about its current owner and some details about the fort itself. If you click on the graphic of the customs fort, you can express your interest in purchasing it. This notifies the owner that you are willing to buy their fort. If you possess enough wealth, you may later receive a purchase offer. Owning a customs fort brings toll revenue and the ability to take action against bandit camps.
The same rules apply to bandit camps regarding information and acquisition. Owning a bandit camp allows you to raid peaceful traders or even attack other bandit camps. There have even been reports of bandit leaders daring to assault customs forts.

5.5.2 Inside Customs Forts and Bandit Camps

If you eventually acquire ownership of a customs fort or a bandit camp, clicking on the fort or camp graphic takes you inside. Much like branches, the upper section displays your four types of mercs or thugs, the order book is located below them, and the control icons are arranged

at the bottom of the screen.

5.5.2.1 Mercenaries and Bandits

Customs forts house mercs, musketeers, gunners, and officers. Mercenaries fight with rapiers, musketeers (as the name suggests) use muskets, gunners operate cannons to fire projectiles or grapeshot, and officers, like regular mercs, fight with rapiers but are significantly stronger in combat.

Bandit camps, on the other hand, house thugs, riflemen, and gunners, who are comparable to the corresponding types of mercs. However, officers have no place in bandit camps. Instead, you'll find the enigmatic bombers. These individuals sneak up on their targets, place a bomb at their feet, and quickly retreat. It's a risky endeavor, as many bombers have met their demise due to their own explosives! Still, when successful, bombers can inflict significant damage on their targets.

Hovering over the upper body of any of the four types of mercs or thugs and clicking will display an information window showing their current level of training.



The four numbers below the figures indicate how many individuals of each type are present in the customs fort or bandit camp. Clicking on these numbers with the minus symbol in the cursor (as described in the "Controls" chapter) dismisses these individuals. However, be cautious: hiring new mercs or thugs is a more complicated process, so think carefully before dismissing anyone!

Of course, your subordinates expect annual pay. On average, this is around 100 gold coins per person, though ordinary mercs earn less than officers. The wages are due at the end of each year, regardless of whether you've assigned them any tasks. Be warned: Many owners of bandit camps or customs fortes have been driven to ruin by the exorbitant wage demands.

5.5.2.2 The Order Book

Above the control icons is the order book, where you can assign tasks to your mercs or thugs for the year. Setting up various orders works similarly to the process in a branch's order book. Depending on whether you are in a customs fort or a bandit camp, different types of orders are available.

The *order status* in this book is interpreted the same way as in a branch's order book, and you can *cycle through the order types* by clicking on the first term in each order line.

5.5.2.3 Customs Fortresses and Bandit Camps: The raid Order

With the raid order, you can send forces from a customs fort or bandit camp to assault another customs fort or bandit camp, provided you do not own the target location. The goal of such a raid can either be to reduce the *security* (in the case of customs fortes) or the *concealment* (in the case of bandit camps) by destroying the location with your gunners, or to seize control of the target.

For instance, if you want to raid the bandit camp Dunkelforst from your customs fort, you might issue the following order:

Raid Dunkelforst w. **08+03+06+12** mercs. **(Status)**

The bold components of the order can be modified. Clicking "Raid" cycles to the next type of order (see below), while clicking "Dunkelforst" cycles to the next bandit camp or customs fort that does not belong to you. The four two-digit numbers allow you to configure the forces for the task. In this example, 8 mercs, 3 musketeers, 6 gunners, and 12 officers are assigned to the expedition.

This setup might be sensible if your officers are particularly well-trained, giving you confidence in the mission's success. Alternatively, you might have a different strategy: your musketeers might be highly skilled, and you want to retain them at the fort to defend against an enemy attack while the rest of your forces are away.

NOTE: A customs fort or bandit camp is a vulnerable target for your enemies when significant portions of its forces are away.

5.5.2.4 Customs Fortresses and Bandit Camps: The send Order

The send order allows you to *send troops from your stronghold to any customs fort or bandit camp*. If you send troops from a customs fort to a bandit camp, the four types of mercs will be converted into the four types of thugs. Similarly, a conversion occurs if you send troops from a bandit camp to a customs fort.

This order can be used to balance troop strength between your own strongholds or to transfer troops to another player in exchange for payment. For instance, suppose Baron Hugo, the owner of the customs fort Hohenfels, offers you 12,000 gold coins to send troops from your bandit camp Säbeltal to his fort. You could issue the following order:

Send Hohenfels 04+02+07+03 thugs. (Status)

This sends 4 thugs, 2 bombers, 7 gunners, and 3 riflemen to Hohenfels. Upon arrival, they will be converted (due to the transfer) into 4 mercs, 3 musketeers, 7 gunners, and 2 officers.

5.5.2.5 Bandit Camps only: The plunder Order

The plunder order allows you to use a bandit camp to raid trade transports within a specific county. The thugs will set out and lie in wait for the transports. However, since thugs are not always aware of the secret paths these transports might take, the order does not guarantee success.

Plunder Bergenhöh w. **03+05+02+04 thugs. (Status)**

The target location (county) “Bergenhöh“ indicates that the thugs will attempt to raid trade transports heading to cities within the county of Bergenhöh. Potential victims could include transports destined for Greifenheim, Bergstedt, or Falkenhorst.

5.5.2.6 Customs Fortresses only: The monitor Order

The monitor order is the counterpart to the plunder order. When mercs monitor a county, they may intervene if thugs attempt to raid a trade transport in that area. If the mercs are nearby when a raid occurs, they will join the fight. Such assistance can be financially rewarding, as grateful merchants often show their appreciation for helpful mercs with generous payments.

Monitor Bergenhöh w. **04+05+03+03 mercs. (Status)**

However, it is not unheard of for mercs to form alliances with the thugs they encounter, splitting the spoils amongst themselves...

5.5.2.7 The Control Icons

At the bottom of the screen are four control icons (five in the case of customs fortes) that allow you to expand your stronghold, recruit new troops, or conduct training drills. For customs fortes, you can also set the toll rates.

5.5.2.8 Status Overview

The first control icon at the bottom of the screen takes you to a status overview of your customs fort or bandit camp. Here, you can see whether and how many goods are stored on-site, waiting for retrieval through a loot retrieval order from one of your branches. You will also be informed about the *security level* (for customs fortes) or the *camo level* (for bandit camps) of your stronghold. Highly secure customs fortes may deter attackers altogether, preventing any assault. Well-camouflaged bandit camps, on the other hand, may remain entirely undetected by attackers.

In this menu, you can also construct new casemates or straw mats facilities to increase the capacity of your stronghold.

5.5.2.9 Recruitment

Clicking on the second control icon takes you to a tavern or harbor den. Here, you can provide your recruiters with a sum of money that you deem appropriate. At the end of the year, you will be informed of the success of your recruitment efforts and how many new troops you managed to enlist.

5.5.2.10 Conducting Drills

The cannon icon (in customs fortes) or the bomb icon (in bandit camps) takes you to a menu where you can arrange for a drill to be conducted. Such drills are costly, but they significantly improve the training and combat readiness of your troops, equipping them with the skills they need to excel in their martial professions.

5.5.2.11 Setting Toll Rates

This option is available only in customs fortes. Here, you can set the toll rates that transports must pay, based on the value of their goods, when passing through your territory. Which transports pay tolls at which customs fort depends on the destination of the transport.

The following table provides an overview of these relationships:

TRANSPORT DESTINATION	TOLL PAID TO FORTRESS
Fürstenbrück	No Toll Required
Finsterwalde	Waldenfels
Moortal	Waldenfels
Lichterheide	Waldenfels
Greifenheim	Hohenfels
Bergstedt	Hohenfels
Falkenhorst	Hohenfels
Waldstein	Seefels
Lauenburg	Seefels
Kronsbach	Seefels

Be cautious: setting the toll rate too high may discourage merchants from trading in cities within your jurisdiction, prompting them to sell their goods in cities belonging to other counties.

5.5.2.12 Hiding the Order Book

Clicking on the signet ring in your customs fort or bandit camp hides the order book. Clicking it again brings the order book back into view. This feature can be helpful if, for any reason, you prefer that other players in front of the screen see as little as possible about your plans.

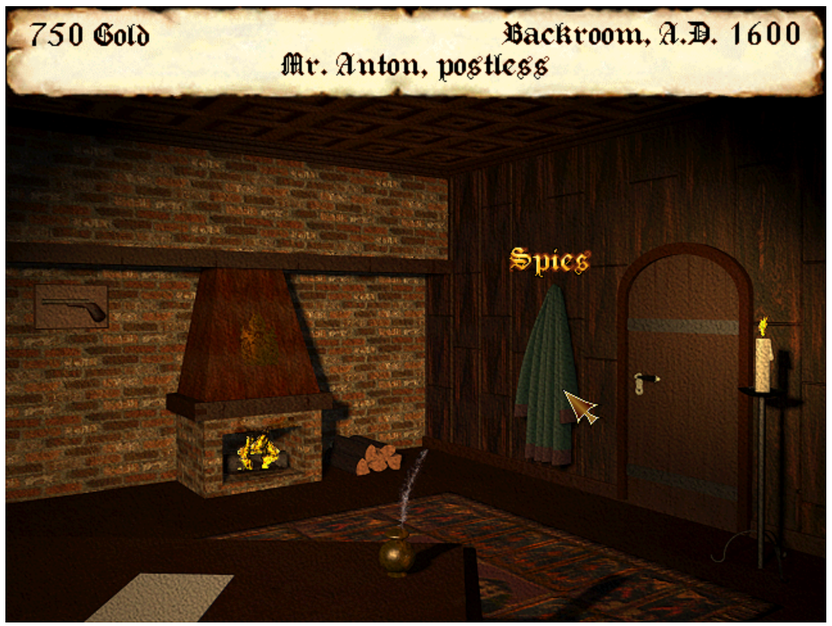
5.6 Strictly confidential – The Backroom

Click on the door in the left section of the office screen to enter the backroom of your office. Here, you can indulge in your darker ambitions to your heart's content. "Mittelland AD" is a game that revolves, among other things, around climbing the office hierarchy within the principality. The back room offers a variety of ways to bolster your political aspirations.

5.6.1 Spying

Do you want to uncover whether someone is breaking the laws of Mittelland? You should hire spies to monitor the person in question. This is done by clicking on the cloak in the back room. After selecting the individual you wish to observe, you will be informed of the cost and can decide whether to proceed or spare your target.

If you decide to hire spies, an informant symbol will appear next to the favor bar of the monitored officeholder. Wait a few years. If the person commits any crimes during that time, the previously unfilled informant icon will turn solid black, signifying that you now have evidence against them.



What can you do with this evidence? If the monitored person is a superior who is hostile toward you, you might risk being removed from office by them. Use the appropriate privilege to take them to trial! If they are convicted, they may be dismissed by their superiors, allowing you to remove an adversary.

In addition to initiating a trial, there are two other measures you can take when you hold evidence against someone.

5.6.2 Slandering someone

If you have evidence against someone, you can use it to slander them before another individual. To do this, click on the fireplace in the back room, select your target, and then choose the person to whom you want

to slander your target.

EXAMPLE: Suppose you want to slander the judge of a city before the mayor to have them dismissed, allowing you, as a councilor, to ascend to the newly vacant judge's seat. To succeed, you will need 1) sufficient evidence against the judge, and 2) a strong reputation with the mayor, ensuring they believe you.

Slandering is often an effective way to eliminate opponents who stand in your way.

5.6.3 Blackmailing someone

If you have gathered significant evidence against someone, you may be able to blackmail them. This allows you temporary access to the privileges of the person you are blackmailing. To attempt a blackmail, compose your letter of extortion at the desk in the back room.

EXAMPLE 1: Suppose you are a priest in a city where you wish to build a residence, but the construction costs are quite high. By successfully blackmailing the builder, you can access their privilege to lower construction costs, significantly reducing the expense of your new residence.

EXAMPLE 2: You are a counselor in the county of Bergenhöh, where the position of judicial advisor has become vacant and will be filled next year. Unfortunately, you are not highly favored by the chancellor of Bergenhöh, who appoints the judicial advisor, so you expect they will choose another candidate. However, with ample evidence of the chancellor's misdeeds, you successfully blackmail them, enabling you to direct their decision to appoint you to the position.

While blackmailing can be advantageous, it also has drawbacks. After a few years, your target will no longer tolerate the blackmail. When this happens, you will lose 1) access to their privileges, and 2) their goodwill, as they are unlikely to forget your actions anytime soon!

5.6.4 Sabotaging someone

If all other subtle methods fail or seem too complicated, you can resort to sabotage. Click on the pistol in the back room to hire saboteurs. Their mission: to destroy one of your opponent's branches.

Hiring saboteurs is not cheap, but if they succeed, you will have plenty of reasons to celebrate as your rival's operations are reduced to rubble.

5.7 For Fans of Statistics – The Game Score

If you are playing "Mittelland AD" with multiple players, the current game score might interest you from time to time. Click on the board above the chest in the office to access the game score screen. Here, you can view the progress of all human players participating in the game, as well as some selected computer-controlled players.

Clicking on one of the blue crystals provides additional details about the respective player.

6. Fate smiles upon you... – Events

6.1 At the End of a Turn

If you believe you have completed all critical actions during your turn, right-click in the office. If you have enabled the corresponding warning in the banner options, you will be asked whether you truly wish to end your turn; otherwise, your turn ends with your click...

If you've diligently grown your wealth, it might happen that a city's mayor awards you a new title. Your first title "Citizen", is always granted in the year 1601, as this marks your first year living in a city, earning you citizenship rights. From that point on, you are eligible to apply for offices.

Next, you will see a screen presenting the financial impacts of your game decisions. How much gold did your workers demand? What did your transports cost you? If you sold goods during your turn, you will also be charged this year's taxes and church tithe. Do you employ spies, mercs, or even thugs? This screen will also display those expenses.

6.2 The Whims of Chance

After the cost overview, fate may present surprises that either fill you with joy or plunge you into despair. Numerous events can influence your next moves or force you to adjust your strategy. There might be poor harvests, transport workers might steal goods, or your beautiful country estate could be hit with a property tax. On the other hand, your workers might sympathize with your dire economic situation and lend you a helping hand. Or you might win a significant amount of gold in a dice game.

6.3 Making your own Luck...

Whatever the case, you might decide to give fate a nudge. Perhaps you hired saboteurs, happily arranged for other merchants to be ambushed, or initiated a trial against the unfortunate mayor of your city. Here, you will face the consequences of your actions. Depending on whether you chose mischief or charity, the game will switch to a special sequence where events unfold accordingly.

6.4 Adventures

"Mittelland AD" features numerous small adventures, known as sub-plots. These are mini-games within the game that span several years, often giving you the opportunity to enhance your wealth and reputation. For instance, if you own a customs fort, you may be asked to help suppress a peasant uprising. Perhaps ancient artifacts are discovered in the foundations of your residence, and you can initiate an archaeological dig. Or someone might hire you to orchestrate the removal of a specific individual from their office. As mentioned, a variety of adventures await your mastery.

6.5 Before the Jury...

Sometimes, amid all these events, you may lose track of your financial situation. In such cases, creditors may seize some of the goods stored

in your branch or place a foreclosure mark on one of your carts. If you test your creditors' patience too much, you may soon find yourself standing before the jury court. Take advantage of the option to bribe, as the debtor's prison looms...

7. Events in Mittelland

7.1 The Course of Events and Offices...

After all players have finished their turns, the computer-controlled players spring into action: Some meet their demise, others may be dismissed from their offices due to incompetence, and still others advance to fill the newly vacated positions. If one of the offices to be filled is of interest to you and you applied for it in your chancery, the appointment process will now take place.

All your competitors, along with you, will appear on a special screen before the appointing authorities for that office. The voting takes place, and all you can do is hope for the best. Occasionally, you might also find yourself in the position of selecting an applicant, which can be particularly amusing when you decide the fate of another player in front of the screen.

The background of the appointment screen indicates the type of office being filled:
A TOWN HALL PORTAL: The appointment of a secular office at the city level.
A CASTLE: A secular office in a county is vacant.
A DUKE'S HALL: The appointment of one of the highest secular offices is next.
A CHURCH PORTAL: A church office in a city is being filled.
A CATHEDRAL: A church office at the county level is appointed.
THE INTERIOR OF A CATHEDRAL: The positions of archbishop, archdeacon, or inquisitor are vacant.

7.2 What else happened

As with you, computer-controlled players are free to do as they please. It might happen that one of them takes fencing lessons, hosts a feast, or, if they possess the privilege, amends the laws of Mittelland. Tax levels are changed, cities are besieged, competitions are held, and ministerial seats are swapped. Each player pursues their own goals, particularly your opponents. They will try to place obstacles in your path.
Your trade transports may also be ambushed by devious thugs, you might be dragged into court, or someone may insult you. In the case of an insult, you can either let the matter go, damaging your reputation, or demand satisfaction. If you choose the latter, you'll arrange to meet your adversary for a duel, where you can hopefully use your superior fencing skills to settle the score.
Finally, if you wish, you can be informed about the real historical events of the respective year.

8. Help, an Ambush – The Battle

8.1 The Escort

Since your financial situation at the start of a game in "Mittelland AD" does not permit the acquisition of a bandit camp or a customs fort, your first ambush will likely be experienced from the victim's perspective. Some ill-tempered bandit leader has selected your trade transport for some entertainment and to claim your goods for themselves...

In this case, the game switches to a tactical battle – a game within the game. In a short introductory sequence, you will see your transport on its way to the city you have chosen as the destination. If you have an escort, you will see your troops in far greater numbers, which is much more reassuring than merely looking into the startled faces of your transport workers.

Eventually, the thugs will sneak up on you, and a battle may ensue. You will first be given the option to attempt to dissuade the attacker with a small payment. If you decline for moral or other reasons, or if you offer too little gold, the battle begins. The rule of thumb for a promising protection money may be 20-30% of your value of goods, but depending on other factors such as your favor with the attacker, this can be too much or too little.
Often, mercs are nearby, assigned by the local lord to patrol the county. You and your opponent can attempt to gain the support of these troops. The mercs will make their decision and, if they choose to participate in the skirmish, align with either the defender or the attacker. At this point, the actual battle begins.

8.2 The Unit

All troops are organized into individual units. A unit consists of between one and five men, such as two transport workers or four riflemen. All members of a unit act simultaneously according to their tactics (see 8.4), regardless of their current position on the battlefield.

8.3 The General or Bandit Leader

Both the attacker and defender are given a special character. For the attacker, this figure appears in the lower-left corner of the screen and represents either a general (for mercs) or a bandit leader (for thugs). For the defender, this figure appears in the upper-right corner.

The general or bandit leader plays a critical role. As long as they remain alive, you can press your hotkey to open the tactics menu and issue specific orders to your units. If your general dies, control of your troops is taken over by the computer. It is therefore advisable not to send the general into the front lines. (The initial tactic for the general is thus set to "Wait".) On the other hand, the general is highly skilled in combat and can eliminate many opponents. You should carefully decide which tactics to assign to your general or bandit leader.

8.4 Unit Tactics

Press your hotkey (the key you selected at the start of the game) to display a flag in your color in one of the upper corners. This informs the game that you want to change the tactics of your units. A banner will appear once the previous action is completed. Move the mouse over one of your men, and a golden frame will appear around the feet of all soldiers in that unit. For example, if you select one officer from a unit of three, the banner will display “3 Officers (67%)“ on the left and “Attack Enemy“ on the right.

The first entry (“3 Officers (67%)“) indicates the unit’s status. The higher the percentage, the stronger the unit is in attack and defense. The second entry (“Attack Enemy“) shows the current tactic of the unit. Left-clicking cycles to the next available tactic for that unit. Once you are satisfied with the tactic, move the mouse to select another unit and adjust their tactics as needed. Selecting a unit doesn’t require you to click on a member of the unit. Just move the mouse over one and left click for a tactics change.

8.5 Available Tactics

ATTACK ENEMIES: The unit will approach the nearest enemies and attack them.
WAIT: The unit remains stationary and does not move. It will defend itself but will not initiate attacks. This can be useful for holding a unit back to reclaim goods without retreating from the front lines.
TAKE PRISONERS: If your men are operating from a customs fort or bandit camp, they can attempt to capture enemies. The unit will try to encircle opponents and take them prisoner. Captured enemies are marked with a flag in your color and can later be persuaded to join your side.
LOOT GOODS: As an attacker, you can claim goods from a trade transport. The unit will move to the nearest unclaimed goods and plant your flag to claim ownership.
RECAPTURE GOODS: As a defender, you can attempt to reclaim goods that have already been seized. Reclaimed goods will display your flag.
FIRE AT ENEMIES: Gunners fire their cannons at areas with a high concentration of enemies. Be cautious, as friendly fire can harm your own troops.
FIRE AT THE BREACH: During an assault on a customs fort or bandit camp, gunners can bombard the target to weaken its defenses, damaging security or concealment structures, and destroying storage facilities.
STORM ENTRANCE: Assign this tactic to capture a customs fort, bandit camp, or ship. The objective is to occupy three specific entrance tiles with three of your men. Your troops will only attack enemies obstructing their path to these tiles.
DEFEND ENTRANCE: The opposite tactic. Defenders will group around the entrance and attack any enemies that come too close.
RETREAT: The unit will create distance from the enemy without leaving the battlefield entirely.
ESCAPE: If a unit is near defeat and you wish to save them, order them to flee. They will leave the battlefield via the shortest route.

8.6 The End of a long Battle

Eventually, the battle comes to an end. You may win, lose, or end in a draw. You will receive a summary of gains and losses, including the number of prisoners taken, goods seized, and casualties. You will also discover whether any sailors will never return to the sea or how many bombers misjudged the length of their fuses.

A Final Warning: If you orchestrate raids with thugs, they will always demand a share of the loot as a reward. Carefully consider whom or what you attack to ensure it is worth the cost. Many leaders of highwaymen have been reduced to beggars due to excessive raids...

9. Special Events

9.1 ...And for the Third – The Auction

At irregular intervals, an auction is held in one of Mittelland's cities. This event is announced a few years in advance, giving you the opportunity to auction off your residence or some balloons. Simply release the desired items for auction through the corresponding menus. If you have a valuable item, it will often fetch a higher price at auction than through a regular sale.

At the start of an auction, you can admire the *catalog of items up for bidding*, which may include your own. The catalog provides details about the item's condition, quantity (for transporters), minimum bid, and current owner. This allows you to flag interesting items without needing to closely monitor the entire auction.

If you browse the catalog and find nothing of interest, you can *opt out of the auction*, and it will proceed without you. However, you cannot leave if you are auctioning an item yourself.
The auctioneer will describe the first item and open bidding with the minimum bid. Pressing your *hotkey* allows you to place a bid. The auctioneer occasionally comments on the bidders' behavior before finally declaring "...and for the third!". The item is then sold, and the next lot is presented.

Acquiring an item at auction can be quite lucrative. Many a bargain has changed hands for a pittance. However, the auctioneer can sometimes coax bids far beyond an item's actual value, so proceed with caution.

9.2 To the Pillory with him... – In Court

Crime doesn't pay. Or does it? This is a question you'll have to answer for yourself. At some point during a game of "Mittelland AD", even the most good-natured players will find themselves facing the court – particularly when sued by an opponent over a trivial matter.

First, the prosecution will read a list of charges, after which the accused can respond. Both sides then have the opportunity to hire witnesses. While this costs a significant amount of gold, it enhances your credibility. After the witnesses testify, closing arguments are made. Finally, you can offer the judges a bribe before the verdict is rendered.

It's crucial to determine whether the accusations against you (or the ones you've made) are truthful or fabricated. In addition to your witnesses and reputation with the judges, this will heavily influence the trial's outcome. If in doubt, invest a modest sum, as penalties can be severe.

Possible penalties include:
- *A few hours in the pillory*, which negatively affects your health and reduces life expectancy.
- *A fine*, which isn't too painful financially.
- *A multi-year fine*, which can significantly strain your resources.
- *One year in debtor's prison*, requiring you to skip a turn.
- *Loss of a title*, which can mean losing a small yet crucial advantage in prestige.
- *Removal from office*, which could jeopardize your entire strategy.

9.3 On my Honor... – Duels

There is one primary reason to issue an insult and demand a duel: If your reputation with someone is extremely low, perhaps because they slandered you, and you depend on their favor – for instance, to appoint you to a higher office – it may be wise to insult them.

A duel resolves disagreements, meaning that after the confrontation, your standing with your opponent will return to a neutral level, and any prior problems or disputes will be forgotten.

However, duels come with a drawback. If you engage in combat, your health will suffer depending on your fencing skills. In the worst-case scenario, you may no longer be able to fulfill your official duties...

10. Appendix I – Who appoints whom?

SECULAR OFFICES

RELIGIOUS OFFICES

In the principality Mittelland

OFFICE	APPOINTED BY	OFFICE	APPOINTED BY
Regent	Draw of lots	Archbishop	3 Bishops of the counties
Chancellor	Regent	Inquisitor, Archdeacon	Archbishop
Finance & Justice Minister, Marshal	Chancellor		
3 Counsels	Finance & Justice Minister, Marshal		

In the three counties

OFFICE	APPOINTED BY	OFFICE	APPOINTED BY
Ward	Draw of lots	Bishop	Archbishop
Minister	Ward	Ab.	Sacristan, Cellarmaster, Bishop
Finance & Justice Advisor, Captain	Minister	Deacon	Bishop
3 Counselors	Finance & Justice Advisor, Captain	Sacristan, Cellarmaster	Ab.

In the ten cities

OFFICE	APPOINTED BY	OFFICE	APPOINTED BY
Mayor	3 Councilors	Canon	Bishop of the associated county
Steward, Judge, Architect	Mayor		
3 Councilors	Steward, Judge, Architect	2 Priests	Canon

11. Appendix II – Ideal Production Ratios

Trade Certificate	Good	Workers/Production Means
I	Corn	5 : 1
	Fish	3 : 1
	Beer	2 : 1
	Wool	1 : 2
	Wood	7 : 1
II	Pigs	1 : 1
	Ore	5 : 1
	Wine	1 : 1
	Fur	1 : 2
	Glass	3 : 1
III	Salt	6 : 1
	Cloth	2 : 1
	Silver	8 : 1
	Pepper	9 : 1
	Weapons	4 : 1

12. Appendix III – Abbreviation Index

Places		Means of Transport		Miscellaneous	
ABBREVIATION	**MEANING**	**ABBREVIATION**	**MEANING**	**ABBREVIATION**	**MEANING**
Fürstenbr.	Fürstenbrück	Steamc.	Steam Cart	Fur.	Furnace(s)
Finsterw.	Finsterwalde	Submar.	Submarine	Ab.	Abbott
Lichterh.	Lichterheide	Fly.M.	Flying Machine	Clth	Cloth
Greifenh.	Greifenheim			w.	with
Falkenh.	Falkenhorst			w.o.	without
Lauenb.	Lauenburg			fr.	from
				Repress.	Repressive
				exp.	expensive
				Conv.	Convert
				reven.	revenue
				Cond.	Condition

Important Notes about the Game – Introduction

Germany in the year 1600 – a dark century looms, casting its shadow over a land fragmented into countless free cities, small dioceses, counties, and principalities, ravaging it with destruction and death. The old unity of the holy roman empire of the german nation lies shattered; the imperial crown has lost its luster, and the Christian church is divided into two hostile factions. Hatred and fratricidal conflict dominate the course of this turbulent century, as the armies of warlords roam the lands, pillaging and killing. The Thirty Years' War will sweep across Germany's fields, leaving behind chaos on an unimaginable scale.
The rulers of this new era – the counts, princes, and kings of the many regions and nation-states – stand proudly above the impoverished and destitute peoples.
In 1588, England defeated the mighty Spanish Armada, followed by Spain's third bankruptcy in 1596. The German banking houses of the Fuggers and Welsers, which had extended vast loans to the Spanish king, were nearly ruined. The Fuggers alone lost three million ducats overnight...

Amidst the turmoil of this period, fate brings you to the small fictional principality of Mittelland, somewhere in Germany. Lacking the freedom to reside in a city and thus escape the bonds of your feudal lord, you wander the land penniless until, one day, you hear news:

Your uncle has passed away! Thanks to this twist of fate, you inherit an office in one of the principality's small cities. In addition, your uncle bequeathed you a pouch containing 750 gold coins and a cart. Determined to exchange your wretched existence for a life of glory and prestige as a grand merchant, complete with numerous privileges and a prominent office, you set off for the city.
As you enter the office of your newfound inheritance, your eyes fall on a large book lying on the old oak desk. You leaf through its pages and realize it must be an order book. Neatly recorded within are numerous tasks your uncle assigned to his workers during his final years. The last entries, from the year 1599, detail instructions for producing various goods. Weighing your pouch of gold and making a few notes, you decide to hire some workers of your own this year...

Immerse yourself in the era of the Thirty Years' War, witness the end of the Middle Ages, and embark on the dawn of the Enlightenment! Navigate the intricate world of trade, intrigue, and politics! Amass your wealth and secure the favor of those who can guide your ascent from poverty to the aristocracy, unlock doors to significant offices, or shield your shadowy dealings! Prove yourself a match for the Fuggers!

The Map of Mittelland



Mittelland

A brief Geography

The Principality of Mittelland is divided into the counties of Mooringen, Auenthal, and Bergenhöh. The capital of Mittelland is the city of Fürstenbrück, located at the center of the land on the shores of the Great Lake.

The county of Mooringen stretches across the western part of Mittelland. The seat of the Counts of Mooringen is the city of Finsterwalde, situated in dark forests. To the northeast, amidst the marshlands, lies Moortal, while the harbor city of Lichterheide is located to the south. The customs fort of Waldenfels, positioned at the intersection of major trade routes, ensures both security in the region and substantial customs revenues for the county and the principality.

Expansive forests and vast fields characterize the county of Auenthal in the southeastern part of Mittelland. The largest city is Waldstein, an ancient seat of the counts and the bishops. To the south lies Lauenburg, a burgeoning harbor city. On the southeastern shore of the Great Lake is the small town of Kronsbach, which is connected by many trade routes to the nearby Fürstenbrück. Perched on a hill overlooking the Great Lake is the customs fort of Seefels, whose owners oversee numerous trade routes and control maritime traffic.

Finally, in the far northeast lie the cities of Greifenheim, Bergstedt, and Falkenhorst. Greifenheim, the capital of Bergenhöh County, serves as the seat of the counts and bishops. Its strategic position atop high mountains has often made it the center of various disputes. The fort of Hohenfels acts as a base for the region's mercs. Its owners are renowned as exceptional military leaders.

No one knows their exact locations, or at least no one would admit it: the bandit camps hidden in gorges or dark forests, home to sinister individuals. Currently, four of these camps are known by name: Meucheltann, Dunkelforst, Säbeltal, and Henkerswald.

Trade

Respect Silver if you wish to earn Gold!

Excerpt from the economic records of Nobleman Humbert von Horkenhaine, advisor to the County of Mooringen on matters of economy:

“Esteemed and interested reader, I present to you some reflections born of my inclination toward economic affairs, enriched by extensive discussions with learned French scholars dedicated to studying connections within this field. To cover the costs inherently tied to the production of goods, a merchant must ensure that the revenue from selling these goods exceeds the costs incurred. If this is not achieved, he is a poor merchant, unlikely to avoid his creditors for long.“

Thus, one must answer this question: Why does a barrel of fine fish sell for only five gold coins in one city but ten in another, particularly one nestled in the mountains? Two conditions influence this disparity.

Firstly: If a city is located in the mountains, it likely lacks ponds or access to the open sea. Fishing here is arduous, perhaps limited to a small river where few fish are caught each year. Still, the fishermen must eat. To sustain themselves on their modest catches, they must sell their fish at a high price. Those ten gold coins might barely suffice to feed their hungry families.

On the other hand, if a city lies by the sea, fish are plentiful. The fishermen can afford to sell their catch for a mere five gold coins, as the abundance ensures they still earn enough silver to support their families. The discerning reader will recognize that geography determines the conditions under which goods are produced. When production is abundant, the price of goods in that location will be low. Thus, I name the first rule of pricing: abundance.

Secondly: What does someone with little money buy for their daily meal? They will eat plain bread made from grain and perhaps indulge in a mug of beer. Their clothes will never be made of fine fabrics, and their windows will lack ornate glass, instead covered by simple wooden boards. And the wealthy? They will adorn their tables with the finest meats and exquisite wines, dress in beautifully embroidered fabrics, and wear rings of silver and gold. What sets these two apart? Wealth – nothing more. It seems to me that as wealth increases, simple goods lose popularity while luxurious ones grow in demand. Therefore, the second origin of pricing is popularity, which directly depends on wealth.

From these considerations arise two of the three fundamental rules for merchants, by adhering to which they can achieve great profit:

1. The price of a good in a city rises with its popularity. The wealthier a city, the more popular expensive and luxurious goods become. The poorer a city, the more desirable simple and affordable goods are.

2. The price of a good in a city decreases with its abundance. The more efficiently a good can be produced in a city, the lower its price will be.

Esteemed merchants, the challenge is clear! If I fish by the sea, my catch is abundant, but the low price it fetches is disheartening. This leads to our third rule:

3. If the price of a good, due to the first two rules, is too low to yield satisfactory profits, it is worthwhile to sell the goods in another city where their popularity is high, and their abundance is low. Therefore, purchase carts or ships and dedicate them to the noble pursuit of amassing gold.

About Ratios

To produce a good, a certain number of workers must be hired or employed, along with various machines, fields, or other means of production. I would now like to explain how to achieve an optimal ratio.

Corn:  The vast fields around Moortal and Kronsbach are the of Mittelland. Corn is an inexpensive foodstuff. It is important not to assign too many workers to a single field, as they will get in each other's way and idle, assuming others will handle the work. For two fields, I would hire no more than twelve workers. However, I must caution against excessive thrift; fewer than eight workers per field will quickly exhaust themselves, and yields will be low.

Fish:  Caught in the bountiful sea, it is the cities of Lauenburg and Lichterheide from where large shipments are sent to all other cities in Mittelland. Fish is undeniably a cheap foodstuff. Many stories recount the disasters that occurred on boats with more than five fishermen working at once. They either lost their catch due to overcrowding or accidentally pushed one another into the waves, meeting a watery grave. Conversely, sending a boat out with only one fisherman is equally perilous, as they cannot manage both steering and netting alone.

Beer:  The most renowned breweries in the land are located in Falkenhorst and Greifenheim, benefiting from centuries-old brewing traditions. Beer, like grain and fish, is considered an inexpensive foodstuff. The optimal brewing method, as noted by an old brewmaster, involved five kettles staffed by 10 to 20 workers depending on demand or large orders for notable celebrations. It seems this brewmaster, with his experience, found an effective ratio.

Wool:  Grazing on the lush meadows near Fürstenbrück, the sheep produce wool of such quality that it rivals even that of Britannia's islands. Bergstedt in Bergenhöh County, on the other hand, is renowned for its robust, durable wool. Though generally affordable, wool traders have occasionally fetched handsome prices. The best results are achieved when one worker shears two to four sheep.

Wood:  In the deep forests around Finsterwalde and Greifenheim, mighty oaks and beeches grow, their trunks yielding only to the strongest woodcutters in the principality. Wood is a common good, crafted into stools or tables depending on its origin and grain, but also used for the finest carvings. To maximize timber yields, no fewer than four workers should clear a leased patch of forest. However, using more than six loggers risks serious harm to the forest, leading to diminished yields.

Meat: The grass on the pastures of Kronsbach and Lichterheide allows cattle to produce such high-quality meat that nobles frequently order these delicacies for their lavish feasts. Fine meat is celebrated as a delicacy across the land and commands high prices. To ensure quality meat, each cow should be tended to and fattened by no fewer than one worker throughout the year.



Ore: The mines of Falkenhorst and Bergstedt boast a long tradition. The purity of the iron ore extracted there is the highest in the land, and the abundant output has enriched many mine owners. Particularly near coastal cities, ore fetches high prices. Assigning three to seven workers per mine should ensure good yields.



Wine: The gentle southern slopes near Moortal and the warm winds of the Lauenburg region produce Mittelland's finest vintages. A delight for affluent connoisseurs, a well-maintained vineyard can generate handsome profits. Assign one worker per wine barrel to ensure the grapes receive the care they need to meet the highest standards.



Fur: The forests around Finsterwalde and Greifenheim are home to animals with the silkiest and softest furs in all of Mittelland. Many prominent figures are willing to exchange heavy pouches of gold for these luxurious symbols of wealth – true luxury goods. If you own a tannery, know that each ten tanning vats should be staffed by no fewer than four to six tanners.



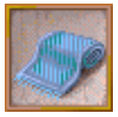
Glass: Finely cut, intricately engraved, and vividly colored – these qualities define the works of the glassworks in Fürstenbrück and Greifenheim. Fortunate indeed is the glassmaker who can assign two to four workers to each glass furnace and pay them competitive wages. With glass becoming a fashionable means of showcasing wealth, finely crafted glasswork yields considerable profits.



Salt: Bergstedt and Waldstein are renowned for their abundant salt deposits. Deep underground, six miners per mine extract this precious resource, indispensable for seasoning dishes throughout the land. In regions lacking natural salt deposits, selling salt can be particularly lucrative.



Cloth: Fine woven fabrics from Moortal and Finsterwalde can rival even the finest works from Antwerp. High-ranking individuals love adorning themselves with these silken textiles, often spending vast sums on their attire. If you enter this trade, remember: For quality's sake, limit each loom to two workers – any more would idle and waste your gold.



Silver: Known for centuries, the silver deposits around Falkenhorst and Kronsbach are the largest in Mittelland. Highly desired by nobles and citizens alike, silver adorns people and properties for all occasions. Considered a luxury good, silver will always find buyers, especially in wealthy cities – even during times of war. A silver mine should employ at least five but no more than ten workers for optimal output.



Pepper: Pepper ships arriving from distant lands to the ports of Lauenburg and Lichterheide represent one of the most profitable ventures for a merchant. Outfitting each expedition with around ten buyers, a wealthy merchant investing here can, after just a few years of trade, enjoy a life of leisure typically reserved for the nobility.



Weapons: A sensitive topic, as the forging of weapons is often restricted to select individuals within the land. When permitted, however, this craft can yield significant profits. Assign four workers per smithy to ensure profitable yearly returns. Weapons are in high demand in wealthy cities and locations besieged during war.



And with that, I conclude my treatise, hoping to have been of service to the merchants among you.

- Humbert von Horkenhaine

An honorable Career

The Rise of Citizen Heinrich

You begin the game with an office in one of the less prominent towns of Mittelland. Alongside this, you have a warehouse and 750 gold pieces at your disposal. However, this sum should not lead you into hasty investments; even the Fuggers did not build their trading empire in ten or fifteen years. It is up to your business acumen to make the most of it.

The briefly illustrated career of Citizen Heinrich can serve as an inspiration, though Heinrich faced many hardships on his way up – challenges you might also encounter. In a letter of application for the office of Treasurer of Falkenhorst, Heinrich recounts his journey and experiences.

"To the esteemed Mayor of Falkenhorst:
Dearest Ernbrecht,
Until the year of our Lord 1587, I was an unfree peasant, toiling day in and day out on my small patch of land and bound to various feudal duties for my lord. One day, I decided that this could not continue, and I resolved to flee under the cover of night and take refuge within the protective walls of a town. As you know, I ended up in the lovely little town of Falkenhorst, where, shortly after my arrival, I used my meager savings to acquire a small warehouse. After just one year, during which I hired six workers and tasked them with brewing beer at two kettles, I had accumulated a small fortune of 1,200 gold pieces. To this day, I am grateful to you, dear Ernbrecht, for being one of my supporters and elevating me to the status of a citizen after I had lived within the town walls for a year.
By 1592, I had amassed a fortune of over 7,000 gold pieces, and when the then-Councilwoman Magdalena passed away, I applied for the vacant office. I always felt that Master Builder Harald was not particularly well-disposed toward me, but during my Sunday church visits – where I often demonstrated my integrity with generous donations – and the subsequent gatherings at the inn "The Duke's Head," Judge Guthard and I grew closer. Guthard eventually convinced the then-Treasurer Anna to vote for me as well. Thus, I was entrusted with the position of Councilman at that time – despite the opposition of the Master Builder. And: No one could say I did not handle my duties responsibly.
Just last year, I donated a fountain to Falkenhorst, and my wedding to a prominent councilman's daughter from Greifenheim is all but finalized. Recall that I rescued her from the clutches of some ruffians who attacked her in broad daylight. I have always adhered to the laws of our principality and have never done anything dishonorable. On the

contrary, the splendid festivities at my house are well-known. The food was always plentiful, and the guests delighted in the view of my garden, where they strolled as night fell. And what can I do if, six months ago, you observed Nobleman Robert with his mistress in the northern pavilion of my park? I have often told Robert that I do not tolerate such behavior in my home.

To be brief: I was confident you would appoint me to the now-vacant office of Treasurer, but now, as Robert has, out of jealousy, tarnished my reputation among some officials of Falkenhorst, I felt it necessary to inform you once more of his machinations and my integrity.

With devoted admiration, your Heinrich“

And so Heinrich attempts to persuade the mayor to elect him as Treasurer over his competitors. What is not apparent from these lines is that the letter was accompanied by a pouch containing over 800 gold pieces. Heinrich’s calculation must have been that this would provide Mayor Ernbrecht with some ”persuasive tools”for himself and the town council. One last remark is worth noting: Heinrich was indeed an upstanding citizen up to this point, but had one of his competitors put him under surveillance, Heinrich’s crime of bribery might have become his downfall in court...

Means and Methods

A Correspondence between Landgrave Ullrich and Inquisitor Baleran

Over the years, you will trade various goods, pay taxes, and send your transports to the markets in the most remote corners of the principality. You will set the wages of your workers, give generous donations to the people, and perhaps acquire an indulgence or two. You will rise through the ranks, gaining ever more extensive privileges that open entirely new possibilities for fulfilling your mission.

But what can you do when advancement becomes impossible, when an unloved officeholder refuses to vacate their seat, and when you are held in low regard by those who ought to pave your way upward?

For such situations, you have a comprehensive set of tools at your disposal to rid yourself of unwanted individuals. Here is an excerpt from a correspondence between Landgrave Ullrich and Inquisitor Valeran, offering insight into how to resolve the aforementioned problems.

Greifenheim, February 1627

"To His Grace Duke Valeran, Inquisitor of Mittelland. My most humble congratulations on your new position as Inquisitor of Mittelland. Surely you remember the young canon in Falkenhorst – you visited my church a few times back when you were still Bishop of Auenthal. At that time, I had the honor of organizing two of your magnificent concerts. Now, it has been five years since I was entrusted with the office of Abbot of Bergenhöh. You know that in three years, the office of Bishop of our beautiful county will become vacant, as Bishop Albrecht has decided to retire. I wonder if it would be too presumptuous for me to apply. Unfortunately, there are two obstacles to my plan. First, there are two individuals who could be considered my competitors: Legal Advisor Carolina and Deacon Ludowig. Second, I follow a rather liberal interpretation of faith, if you understand my meaning. The Bishop's office is appointed by Archbishop Gottfried, who is known for his rigorous opposition to Rome's enemies...

That is my situation. I hope you can assist me.

Landgrave Ullrich, Abbot of Bergenhöh"

Fürstenbrück, May 1627

"To Landgrave Ullrich, Abbot of Bergenhöh.

Dearest Ullrich! Your problems amuse me. How naïve can you be!? But to be honest, I have long thought that the red robe of Archbishop Gottfried would suit me far better than the old fat man. Therefore, I will help you. Regarding your first problem: Legal Advisor Carolina is unlikely to stand in your way. Gottfried does not look kindly on secular officials, so I doubt Carolina has much chance. Deacon Ludowig is indeed a problem. As a deacon, he has the privilege of preferential consideration in the bishop election. But what if there were no Deacon Ludowig to apply when the time came? Consider that.

For your second problem, I would first suggest gaining Archbishop Gottfried's favor – let us say – with a bag full of gold coins. However, if I understand you correctly, you are of Protestant faith, whereas the Archbishop is loyal to the Holy See. The bribe required would need to be astronomical to have any effect. No, no, this solution is unfeasible. First, have him monitored; I will come up with something.

Duke Valeran, Inquisitor of Mittelland"

Greifenheim, November 1627

"To His Grace Duke Valeran, Inquisitor of Mittelland.

Your Grace, I have never done such a thing before. My God, that tavern "The Fat Abbot"was such a smoky den of iniquity. What blasphemy! That Countess Beatrice tolerates such names in Bergenhöh speaks volumes about her morals regarding divine matters. In any case, a few shady figures were willing to spy on the Archbishop over the coming years. They demand 1870 gold coins per year – a fortune!

Your reassurance that Legal Advisor Carolina is not a serious competitor greatly calms me. But what do you mean when you suggest there might be no Deacon Ludowig at the time of the election? Do you mean I should... get rid of him? Surely, you cannot be serious.

Please let me know what means are available to resolve this issue in a less bloodthirsty manner.

Landgrave Ullrich, Abbot of Bergenhöh"

Fürstenbrück, March 1628

"To Landgrave Ullrich, Abbot of Bergenhöh.
My dearest Ullrich!
You still have much to learn! Do you really believe you can rise to such high political office without ever dirtying your hands? Certainly, I never thought of murder. My plan is as follows: Provoke Deacon Ludowig, have him watched, send saboteurs his way – perhaps you can provoke him into filing a lawsuit against you. Of course, you should first visit the church and purchase an indulgence, so you appear innocent in court. Ludowig will likely invest a fortune in witnesses, and this financial loss will not sit well with Bishop Albrecht. If you succeed in discrediting Ludowig before the Bishop, he may begin to reconsider his choice of deacon. With luck, Ludowig will be dismissed!
As for Archbishop Gottfried, I have thought long and hard about this problem and concluded that the only way to make him appoint you as bishop is to have enough evidence against him to blackmail him! Only under pressure will he be willing to support your candidacy.
Think about my suggestions, but do not take too much time. You must act!

Duke Valeran, Inquisitor of Mittelland"

Greifenheim, January 1631

"To His Grace Duke Valeran,
Inquisitor of Mittelland.
Your Grace, what a joyful day! At last, I have achieved my goal – I am Bishop!
In the summer of 1629, my saboteurs succeeded in devastating Deacon Ludowig's properties. I immediately purchased an indulgence at the church in Greifenheim. And as you predicted, Ludowig sued me.
Anticipating this, I had secured the favor of the judges and legal advisor in Bergenhöh through minor bribes the previous year. Despite Ludowig investing over 5000 gold coins in witnesses and offering another 3000 to the high court as a donation, I was acquitted because I was innocent. Ha, and Ludowig even had to bear the 1700 gold coin cost of the trial. When I then successfully discredited him before Bishop Albrecht for his baseless lawsuit, Albrecht dismissed him from his position. The way was clear for me.
Meanwhile, my informants had gathered substantial evidence of Archbishop Gottfried's various law violations. Imagine – he had taken a mistress, bribed officials extensively, and maintained a bandit camp in Henkerswald! With this damning material, I was able to blackmail him into supporting my candidacy.
If you, your Grace, had not provided these invaluable tips, I would likely still be Abbot today.
In infinite gratitude,

Landgrave Ullrich, Bishop of Bergenhöh"

This was not the last correspondence between Ullrich and Valeran. As Valeran had already informed Ullrich in 1627, he himself sought to become Archbishop. And what could have been more convenient for him than the friendship of a Bishop – after all, the Archbishop's office is elected by the Bishops of the three counties...

As you can see, political entanglements are diverse and highly complex. To achieve one's goals, it is often necessary to stray from the path of virtue and brood over dark schemes in the backrooms of one's office. However, caution is advised – what if you were in the same position as Ludowig and Gottfried during such a time...

The Law Books

Or: The Judiciary of Mittelland

Judiciary in Mittelland is based on the Three Great Law Books, first written down in 1433 by order of Prince Arland IV. in Fürstenbrück. Sooner or later, you too will come into contact with the letters of the law, whether because your task requires it, or because you, as a judge, must decide the fate of a person accused of a crime. Therefore, here follows an excerpt from the chronicles of that time, describing the history of the law books.

The Chronicle of Mittelland, recorded by Silvana, scribe of His Glory, the Regent over the Beautiful Lands, Protector of Christendom, and Keeper of the Insignia of the Holy Umbriks, Arland IV. of Mittelland.
Anno Domini 1433

...in the years preceding, there were doubts in several cases before the high courts of the land about the legality and divine will of various judgments. To ensure and preserve the protection of the law, for the benefit of my people, I hereby decree that it be written and binding for all, whether peasant, freeman, or noble:
Rules and laws passed down through tradition shall be recorded, upon which anyone in my land may base their defense in court, regardless of their lowly status. Any form of arbitrariness shall be prohibited through the Three Great Law Books.

For all matters of monetary nature, it is decreed:
It shall be permitted to take credit from lenders. Anyone attempting to subdue others with money shall be punished. It is disgraceful to pay your workers starvation wages. Henceforth, everyone shall pay one-seventh of their earnings as tax.

It is further decreed for matters of legal nature:
Anyone who spies on or harms others, regardless of the method, shall be brought before a proper court.

Fishing in the princely ponds is strictly prohibited.

Anyone who, without the approval of the Emperor or the Prince, attempts to besiege cities, may be exiled and deemed an outlaw within the borders of Mittelland.
Those who fall to banditry shall be severely punished.
Matters of faith shall be dealt with as follows:
The Prince serves the Holy Roman Church, and so shall his people. The practice of indulgences is to be favored, as it purifies our souls and is for the greater glory of God the Lord.

Concubinage is reprehensible, for it is written: ”Honor your wife.”The people shall be allowed to celebrate feasts and rejoice in wine and song. A tenth of everyone’s income shall be designated as the church tax. Thus it shall be written and shall apply from now on. I further decree...

These laws, first written down, have been expanded and modified over the decades by succeeding rulers. Today, the legal code is divided into three law books, each containing ten laws. As the enforcement of laws became increasingly complicated, the rulers of the land decided to delegate the legislative power to high-ranking state officials. Today, the privileges to amend the laws are distributed as follows: The Minister of Finance can amend laws regarding financial matters, the Minister of Justice has the same right concerning criminal laws; the Archbishop, in turn, issues or abolishes church laws.

To enforce the laws, there exist various offices in Mittelland at the three levels of cities, counties, and the principality, whose holders can act as judges. Normally, judgments are made based on the available evidence by city judges, but if the accused holds an office in the county or even in the principality, the legal advisor or the Minister of Justice will act as the judge. Associate judges, who also participate in the decision-making, are usually judges from neighboring cities of the trial location or, in more serious cases, the legal advisors of the counties.
Every good merchant, and you surely count yourself among them, should have the Three Law Books of Mittelland in their bookshelf. On one hand, to know how you should conduct yourself, and on the other, to be able to judge the behavior of others and bring any discovered violations to court.
Loans, seizures, the role of the jury court, and the debt prison, your titles and possessions, your conduct toward other officeholders, and your benevolence toward the people all grant you a certain reputation and creditworthiness. Wealthy patricians are willing to advance you money – of course, at correspondingly high interest rates.
You may take such loans, but if your debt reaches a certain level, it may also happen that you are forced into such agreements to cover your running costs.
If your debt surpasses a certain threshold, your creditors may be forced to seize some of your goods, transport means, and storage space. In particularly severe cases, entire establishments may fall victim to seizure. Such alarming events have always been followed by lawsuits before one of the jury courts. However, there have been cases where heavily indebted traders, without any trial, were thrown into prison by their enraged creditors and still languish there to this day...

Jury courts are appointed from ordinary citizens of a city and are independent from the regular permanent courts.

Two cases, judged by a jury court, are here described as examples:
Citizen Andreas, a small grain merchant from Kronsbach, is accused. This is not the first time Citizen Andreas has appeared before the jury, but today – as before – the trial is preceded by the seizure of only three carts and the collection of an unpaid loan of 230 gold coins. After Andreas implores with a tale of his family’s plight, the jurors, aside from a bored, condescending smile, show no sympathy and acquit him.

Baron Hugo, who had previously caused court scandals, steps before the court. His self-assured grin comes from a bribery scheme before the trial, in which Baron Hugo invested 3000 gold coins to win the favor of the witnesses. But some of the jurors became concerned when the extent of the debt was laid out: After all, it had become necessary to seize 14 carts, 3 ships, and two complete establishments. The verdict, though with a narrow majority, was: “Guilty!“

Hugo was immediately sent to the debt prison, where he was given a year to reflect and adjust his financial dealings, making them less speculative in the future. Water and bread, which were nothing compared to his accustomed game meat and wine, were certainly unpleasant for him, but he rubbed his hands in satisfaction: Presciently, he had hired managers in his other establishments, who continued his risky speculations in his absence...

The Family

How to found a Dynasty?

Even in the 17th century, no one lived forever. On the contrary: Life expectancy was significantly lower than in the 20th century, due to poor hygiene, plagues, and wars, which all played their part. Especially in the countryside, but also in many urban craft professions, where heavy physical labor from dawn to dusk was the norm, anyone who had passed the age of fifty was considered an old man or woman. Today, we know the birth and death dates of kings, wealthy citizens, and great philosophers of that time, but these often mislead us about the typical lifespan in that era, as these people were extremely privileged in terms of medical care, hygiene, and the harshness of their working conditions compared to their contemporaries.

Your inner clock also ticks in “Mittelland AD“. Suppose you begin the game in the year 1600 at the age of twenty, then you can easily gauge how much time you have left before the Grim Reaper visits you. A year passes, and over time, you will notice that the painful sensation in your fingers that was not there last winter is now present, walking becomes harder, and your eyesight begins to fade. Additionally, various other illnesses may strike you down and shorten your already limited lifespan further. Even a duel will not pass without consequences. How fortunate you will feel when a quack or medic visits and gives your life some drops of paraffin to extend your time.

Nevertheless, eventually, the last hour of everyone will strike. For this reason, you should think early on about courting a fair woman or a noble man, so that many children are blessed upon you.

To assist, here is an excerpt from the diary of a matchmaker, undoubtedly a disreputable trade. However, the advice of an old matchmaker may be useful to you.

Jolanda’s Diary, August 1614

To find a partner for life, go to a matchmaker, as I have been one all my life. She will make you an offer and show you a picture of your future spouse. Who a person like me recommends depends primarily on how high your fortune, position, and reputation among the people are. If you decide to woo this person, it helps to give them lavish gifts in the following years. To win their affection, you must not be stingy. Furthermore, you should take note of where the wedding will take place. Unfortunately, the cathedral canons still have this outdated privilege of forbidding weddings without giving any reason if they disapprove of the couple...

Once you are married, you can count yourself lucky, as your reputation among your bride’s or groom’s friends will rise. For this reason, it is never a bad idea to throw a beautiful celebration before you close the

door to your bridal chamber, heh heh...

So much for the wedding itself. In the following years, you will likely be blessed with children, who you can baptize in the church. As you grow older, you can make a will and designate an heir to inherit most of your possessions upon your death. If you have additional children, they will receive a legal share of the inheritance. When your day comes, you will be buried in the cemetery. Your relatives will surely have an epitaph carved on your gravestone that summarizes your life in a few words.
In any case, that time is not yet here. Therefore, it is wise to consider who you leave your wealth to, as it has often happened that disinherited relatives have opposed the primary heir and envied them their possessions for many years.
May you now, regardless of the possibility of playing “Mittelland AD“ over several generations, be granted a long, peaceful, and God-pleasing life!

Setbacks

A Letter from the Dungeon

To become a successful merchant, it takes not only great skill and excellent connections to influential officeholders. An often underestimated role is also played by fate, which may turn toward you either positively or negatively from time to time. But what is this fate, is it merely chance? There are priests who claim to gain God's favor by occasionally lighting a few candles in a church or cathedral for a bit of gold or using holy water...
Here is the farewell letter from Master Builder Thomas from the year 1623, which – along with a mountain of debt and a large group of furious creditors – was the only thing he left his mourning wife before he vanished forever behind the gloomy walls of the dungeon.

To Hanna, my beloved wife!
Although you never showed much interest in my business, you should know what led me to the dungeon and you to poverty.
Seven years ago, my fate slipped from the hands of Fortuna. Do you remember the great century flood of 1616 in Lauenburg? All my fields were flooded, the grain harvest destroyed, and many of my boats were driven aimlessly out to the open sea. Unfortunately, I had no insurance for such a catastrophe, so I was forced to take a loan of considerable gold from the lender – at 27 percent interest. I could have paid him back, had not Ernst von der Schniefenhöh – damn him – laid siege to the city of Lauenburg two years later. All my carts had to turn back, and I received the pitiful price of only four gold coins per bushel.
In those days, I saw no other way than to turn all my carts and my beautiful ship – surely you still remember the Ammelie – into gold. I also sold my second warehouse in Bergstedt. I invested the entire proceeds in purchasing more storage space, which yielded good profits in the years after the catastrophe. The first year went splendidly. Since I had just been elected as Master Builder and thus had a decent income, my gold grew, so I bought additional square meters of storage space at the favorable price.
Then, however, fortune abandoned me entirely. Just recall the great fire of 1620, when more than half of my warehouse turned to ash! After that, I made a decision I now regret. In order to drive up the prices for fish in Falkenhorst – where I usually sold my shipments – I decided to hire some shady characters to set fire to the warehouses of my competitors. Oh dear, how I wish I had never done that! Canon Helmuth, who had likely been watching my economic setbacks for some time, had my activities closely observed by spies. He brought me to court in Lauenburg. I will never forget his nasty grin, which must have been the result of bribing the witnesses. It can only be explained by the fact

that eight so-called witnesses made statements about crimes I never committed. And although I confessed to the sabotage – truly my only wrongdoing – all three judges found me guilty. The punishment was dreadful: I had to pay 780 gold coins each year for four years as a fine. When Mayor Adelheid then dismissed me from my post as Master Builder, I was ruined. When I was also required to pay a back tax of 630 gold coins and the due date for my loan came closer, my creditors became attentive.
When they – chiefly the dreadful Privy Councillor Heino (remember, at the last court concert, he gave a truly laughable performance as a troubadour) – finally arrived, they found nothing left to seize except my desk, and... but you know the rest!

All this writes to you, your Thomas

PS: I wish we could see each other again; perhaps in a few years, the terrible mistakes that were made against me will be recognized. I have little to reproach myself for. I love you, and if it's possible, please send me the delicious root cake, you know, the one I used to love so much...

Thomas' letter shows how quickly fate can ruin an existence. Thomas was a promising merchant until the day the storm flood destroyed his warehouse.
Less risk-taking merchants, however, would have ensured their security, taken out insurance, or reduced their business volume. Measures that Thomas, at least since the fire in his warehouse in Bergstedt, no longer had at his disposal...

Castles, Swords, wild Feasts

From the Life of Baldur Count of Decadence

If the previous chapter caused you, esteemed reader, any stomach pains, then let us now present a description from the life of Baldur, Count of Decadence, a true bon vivant as he is depicted in the books. His stories are those of a man who is devoted to all the pleasures of the time, who has neither fear of life nor the necessary respect for death. On the other hand, he is an example of what pleasures the wealthy and noble of that time indulged in, and if you own enough gold, those pleasures are also open to you... We now take a look into the hall where the Count usually hosts his feasts. The Count and his guests are in the middle of a lively conversation.

“Wine, cupbearer, more wine... He he... Have I ever told you the story of how I acquired my first customs castle?
No?!
One day, when I was staying at an inn on my way through Finsterwalde, there comes...
...but Greta, not now, you can see I am telling my guests a story.
So, this nobleman comes up to me. Ruprecht von der Hohleneiche was his name, well, whatever, and he asks me if I want to play a little game of 17 and 4 with him. You know, when we roll the rogue dice, I usually have bad luck... “
“Yes, you still owe me 4000 gold coins.“
“Quiet, you miser! This archdeacon always interrupts my stories... So, I bet 1000 gold coins and Ruprecht deals the cards. And what do you think I draw?...
A ten and... another one!
Of course, I was acting, just like those figures from that Englishman, what’s his name again? Shakespeare, exactly! I pondered deeply to make the man from Hohleneiche – har har – think, and then decided not to take any more cards. – Finally, the wine! – Ruprecht draws two more and looks very pleased. He decides not to take any more and we reveal: He has a Jack, a Queen, a King, and a Nine... I grin – and drop my trousers! Ha ha... and pocket his gold!
Over the course of the rest of the evening, I win about 8500 gold coins, wonderful, I tell you. And then, my head felt like it had been hit with a cannonball from all that Finsterwalder Dark, when he asks me to return the money. He wanted to sell me his customs castle Waldenfels for just 12,000 gold coins. I think for a moment, and soon we are in agreement... Well, that’s how it was back then...
My God, Priest Tankred, is there nothing to eat in your church!? It looks awful, the way you’re swallowing those pigeons!“
“Hmpff... Curses. Awbärr ef mumhdet gar gött- grmpf – gar göttlich. “

“Yes, yes... Oh, Countess Elisabeth, please have some more of the hare, I had it caught just for you. And you, Abbot Laurentius, is your cup still full?...
Noble ladies and gentlemen, another story: When I once had a disagreement with Baron Zelphyr – I thought his daughter was a very desirable maid, he thought I should rather make these compliments to my then-wife – God rest her soul – we decided to let God be our judge in a duel...
So we met on a foggy November morning, our adjutants exchanging pleasantries, while we ourselves were full of concentration.“
“Which weapon did you choose, Baldur?... “
“COUNT Baldur, if you please, Priest! Well, since the scoundrel insulted me, I chose the rapier as God’s instrument of judgment. Then we took our positions. And you won’t believe it, but suddenly a fog as dense as I have never seen before rolled in. We flailed wildly with our weapons, banged our heads against various trees, and actually gave each other a few blows. In the end, we were so exhausted that we fell into each other’s arms and decided to end our duel.“
“So what was the result of your duel? “
“Ilja, we made peace, so to speak, my reputation with Baron Zelphyr was restored to a perfectly normal level, but my health had suffered somewhat. My God, the scar on my cheek still hurts to this day... Greta! Greeeeta!... GRETA! My wound hurts, where are you when I need you?... come and COMFORT me finally...“

Hopefully, esteemed reader, you are not too outraged by the scene into which we have just been given a glimpse. Count Baldur of Decadence is often inclined to coarse expressions, yet it seems these attract his guests more than they repel them. Forgive his choice of words, it seems to me it could have been the language of that time...
Now, each of you may draw your own conclusions from the Count’s tales – but the role of Greta certainly deserves closer inspection:
In our time, it is quite common to take a mistress or even a lover, alongside one’s wife or husband, of course... Our Count Baldur is a rather harmless example in this regard, as his wife is already deceased. Be that as it may, an undeniable advantage of a mistress or lover is that you, esteemed reader, will undoubtedly rise in the esteem of your like-minded peers...

To dark Robbery

Or: What Happened to Landgrave Stephan's Goods in 1632

It had come to pass: Landgrave Stephan had opened his fourth warehouse in Waldstein the previous year and had then sent his carts and balloons in all directions. Everything else suggested that the Landgrave's warehouse would be overflowing the following year, and that a new noble title would be granted to him by the Regent of Mittelland.

Just at that moment, the treacherous Baron Hugo entered the peaceful life of the unsuspecting wholesale merchant Stephan. Baron Hugo, sensing an easy prey, noticed that Stephan had sent his shipments unguarded across Mittelland. The Baron, who ruled over the feared bandit camp Meucheltann under the command of Orlog, the Merciless, was determined to launch a raid on Stephan's transports with his dark companions. In Baron Hugo's hypocritical memoirs, it was later written:

"In the past, I had noticed how Landgrave Stephan became excessively agitated whenever it was necessary to give away a part of the goods that arrived at one of his warehouses due to a lack of storage space to the needy in the respective town.
Thanks to my infallible foresight, I realized that it would be a true celebration for beggars, day laborers, and other worthless people next year due to Stephan's clumsy storage sales.
So I have now decided to spare Stephan this trouble by relieving him of part of his goods.
I therefore went to Captain Orlog to arrange the necessary things. The bandit captain and his comrades had been of great use to me in the past, if you understand what I deeply care about.
Nothing is farther from me than violence! But unfortunately, I have always encountered persistent mercs in such endeavors, who prevented me from transporting my friends' goods. So this time, I was even forced to secure the support of Baroness Natascha, who then, for the exorbitant sum of 12,700 gold coins, made her "thugs" available to me. (Captain Orlog and his comrades really don't like that word...)
And so began the glorious battle against Stephan's cart drivers and their carts, where, as was to be expected, I proved myself to be the better strategist. With exceptionally clever tactics, I managed to defeat all twelve enemy mercs and cart drivers with no more than a ridiculous thirty-seven thugs and nearly made off with all the goods.
Unfortunately, I had to leave half of the goods to Baroness Natascha for her services, although she had only supported me with twelve thugs."

Here it is confirmed, aside from Hugo's deceitful treachery, that a robbery can indeed be quite rewarding. But always keep in mind who you are dealing with if you decide to run a bandit camp: the darkest of companions, the robbers! The ones who certainly don't let everything happen to them.
If you happen to have a similarly greedy merchant as our Baron Hugo nearby, then a caravan escort, to which you assign each of your transports, as well as a request for a military escort from a customs castle that monitors your trade routes, might prove to be worthwhile and provide the safety that ensures your goods reach your selected destinations unharmed.
Despite all these descriptions, you should always add escorts to your transports, especially if they are of great value to you, so that your cart drivers and their accompanying men can, if necessary, give a good strike with their clubs for you and against the robbers.

Encounter with marvelous Figures

On your way through the offices, as you try to increase your gold or earn respect through your misdeeds, various events will occur to you. You may participate in feasts, organize guild exhibitions, receive tax refunds, or make generous donations to your fellow players.

Alongside these random events, you can also take part in many smaller adventures. You may be offered a book to publish, attend seminars on various topics, a famous scientist might travel through the land giving lectures, you may join expeditions to distant lands, or have excavations carried out beneath the foundation of your residence. It could also happen that you are invited to participate in bets, competitions, or even in solving a murder case. Many other events await your adventurous spirit. You should participate in all these games within the game, which often span many years of play, provided your wallet allows it. Here, you often have the opportunity to learn special skills, win the favor of several people, outwit your competitors, or simply improve your purse in a comfortable way. Seize every opportunity that comes your way, no matter how absurd it may seem; a good adventurer is often also a better merchant...

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