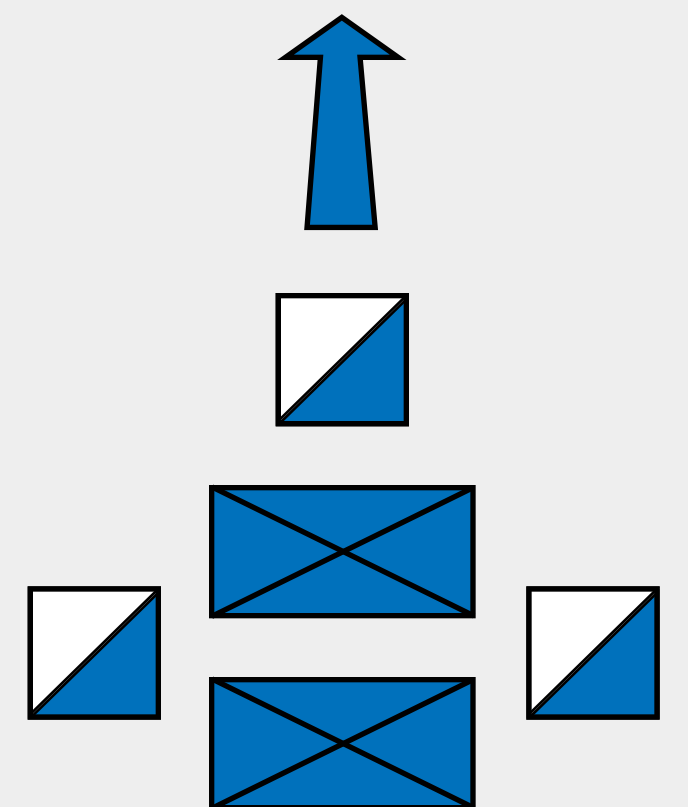
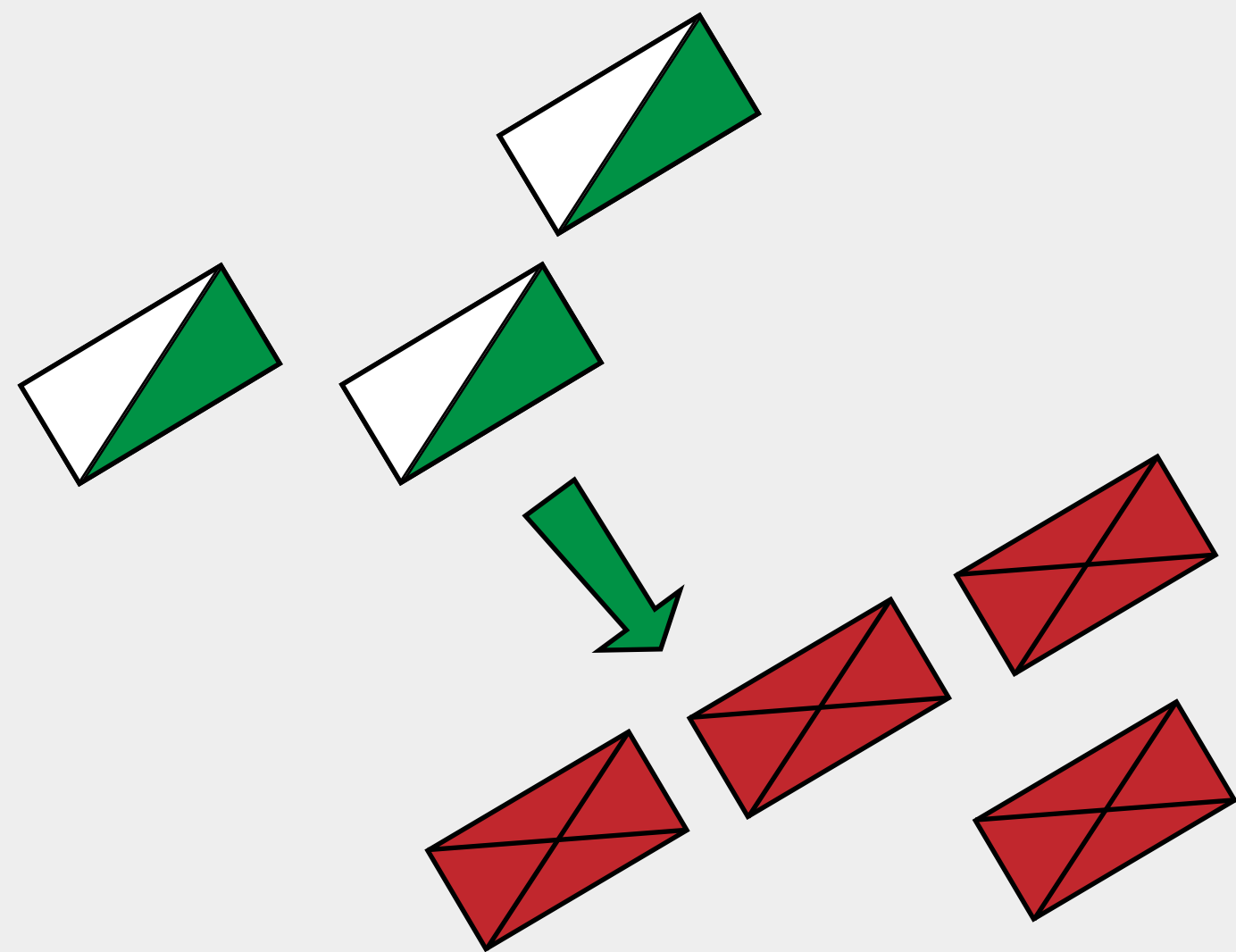


Maps of the Minas Tirith Campaign

Troop Movements and Tactical Decisions in *The Lord of the Rings*

By M. C. Brennan



Introduction

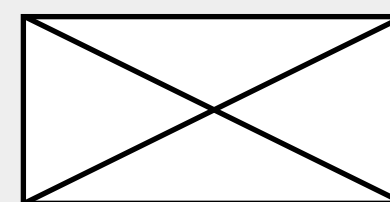
Granular descriptions of tactics, personnel, and other such trivia are at cross-purposes with the literary intent of *The Lord of the Rings*. A good demonstration of this might be to imagine what “casualty statistics” look like, and then read the *Song of the Mounds of Mundburg*, which is (among other things) Tolkien’s version of that concept.

This is my excuse for fudging some details (the location of the crossroads), guessing at others (the numbers of soldiers), and omitting some entirely (the Morgul horsemen).

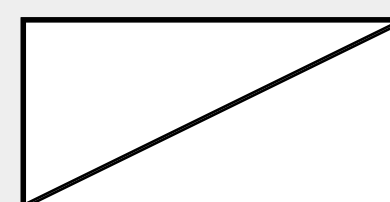
Also, there are no scale bars. Minas Tirith is about 20 miles away from Osgiliath, if you really must know.

Also, I didn’t make most of the maps.

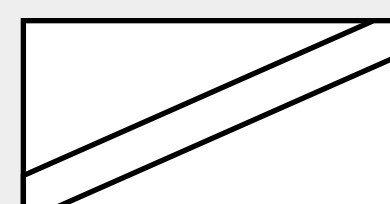
Unit Types



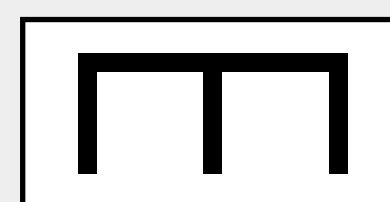
Infantry



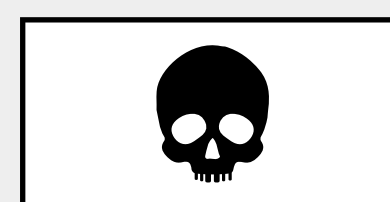
Cavalry



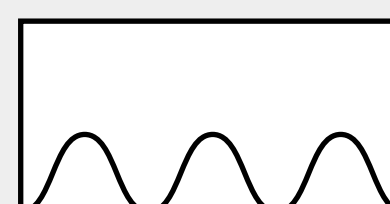
Elephantry



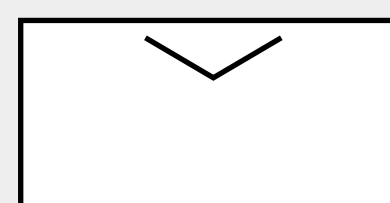
Engineers



Ghosts



Naval

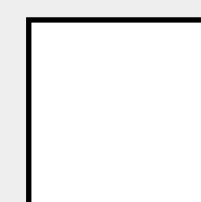


Flying

Unit Details

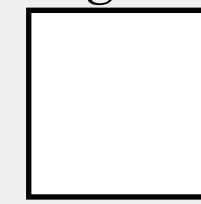


larger unit

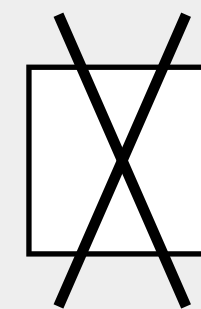


smaller unit

Uglúk



named commander



casualty

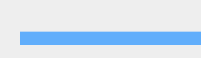
Map Details



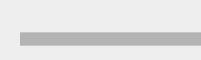
mountains



forests



rivers



roads



fortifications

Bree

Free place

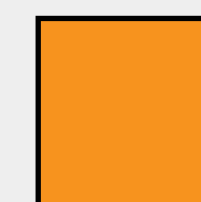
Udûn

Evil place

Allegiance



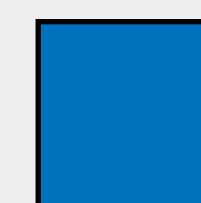
Mordor



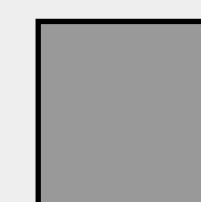
Mordor vassals
(Harad, Rhûn, Khand,
Umbar, ...)



Rohan



Gondor

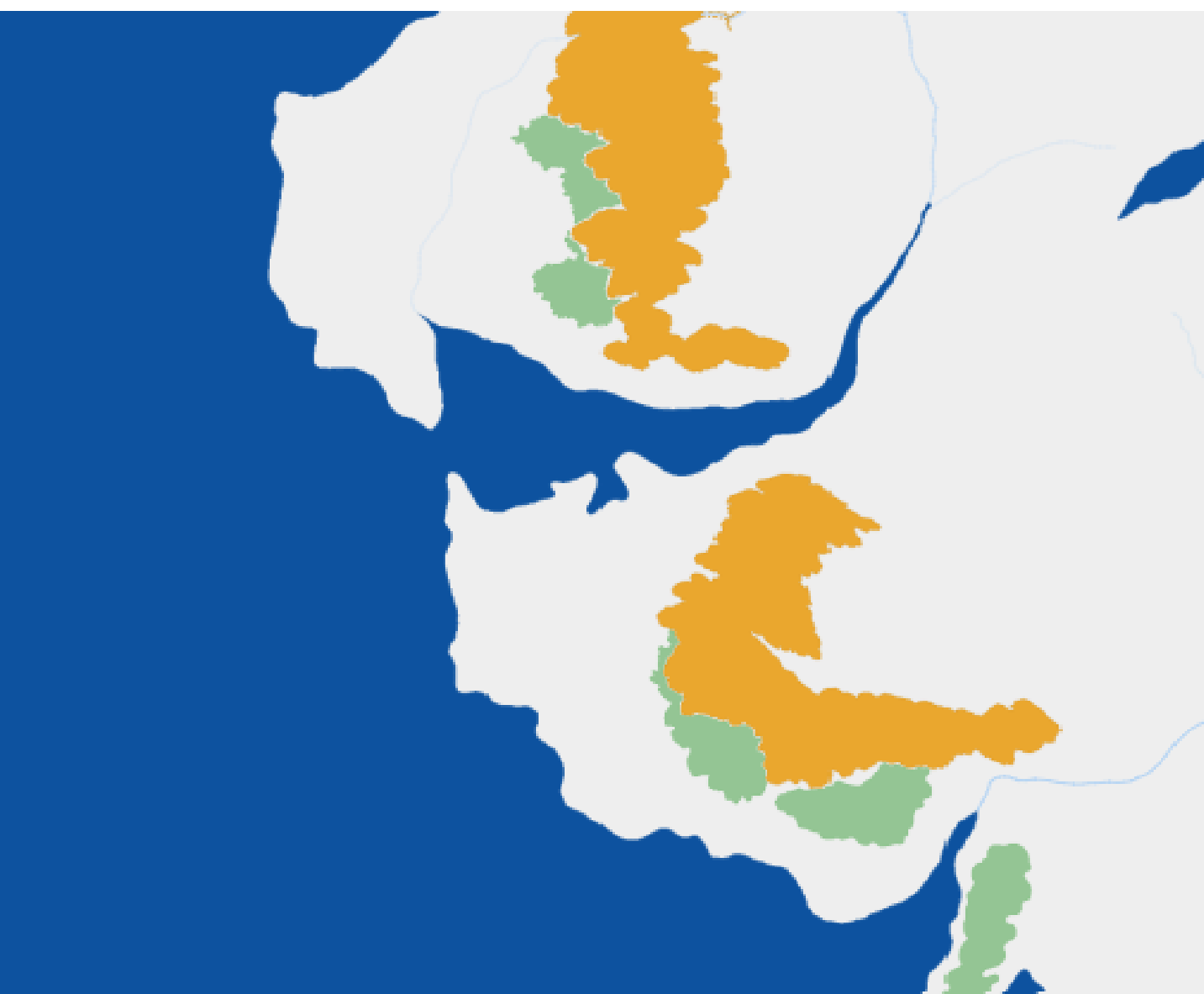


Dúnedain



Oathbreakers

Sauron's Grand Strategy

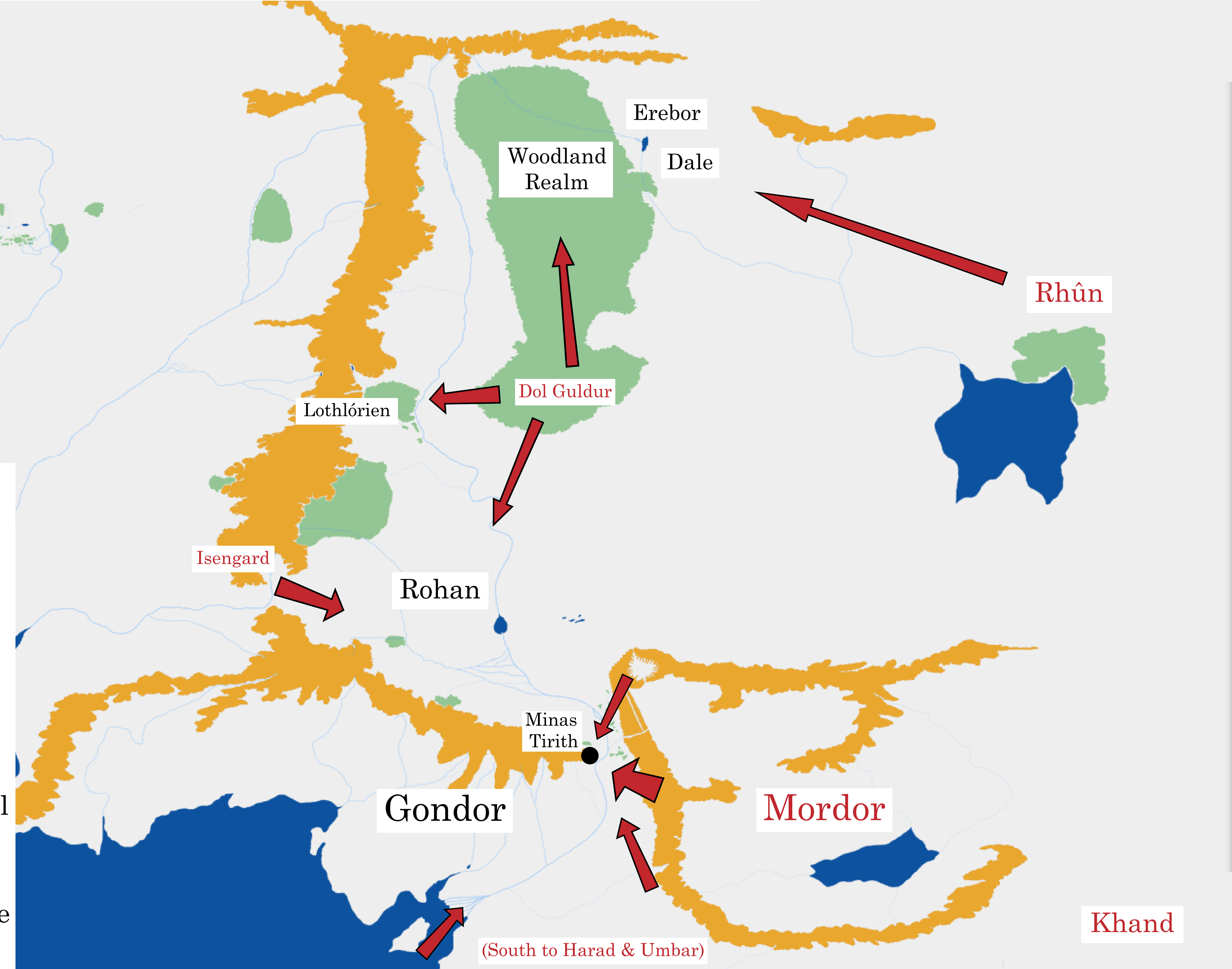


3019 years after losing the Ring, Sauron's empire is again the most powerful state in Middle-earth.

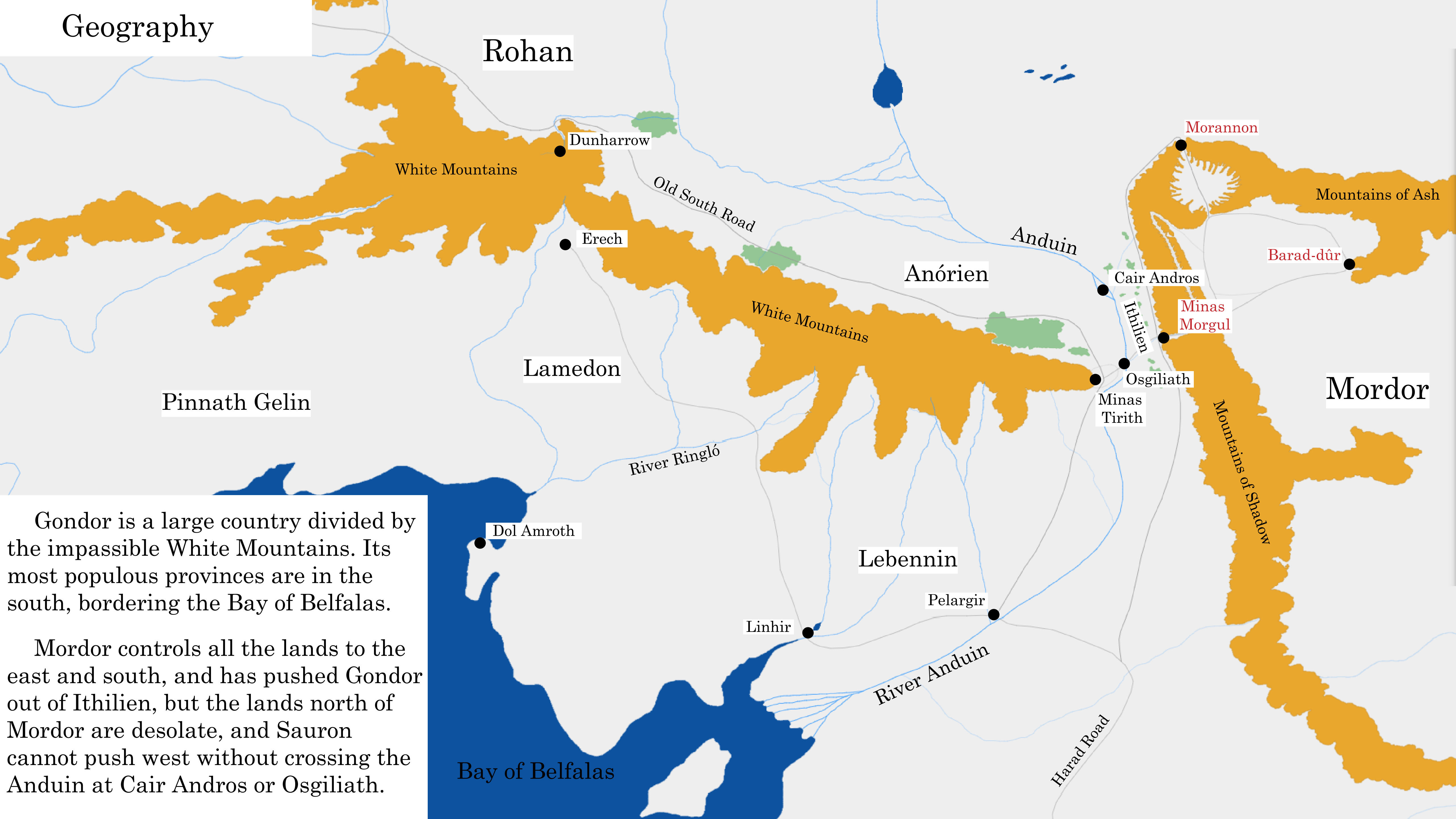
Despite this, he is hemmed in by Gondor's fortress-city of Minas Tirith, and expects a coalition of nations to assemble against his westward expansion.

His solution is a continent-wide series of coordinated attacks by several armies, intended to prevent the Free Peoples from reinforcing each other.

With Minas Tirith isolated, it will be destroyed by a single huge blow.



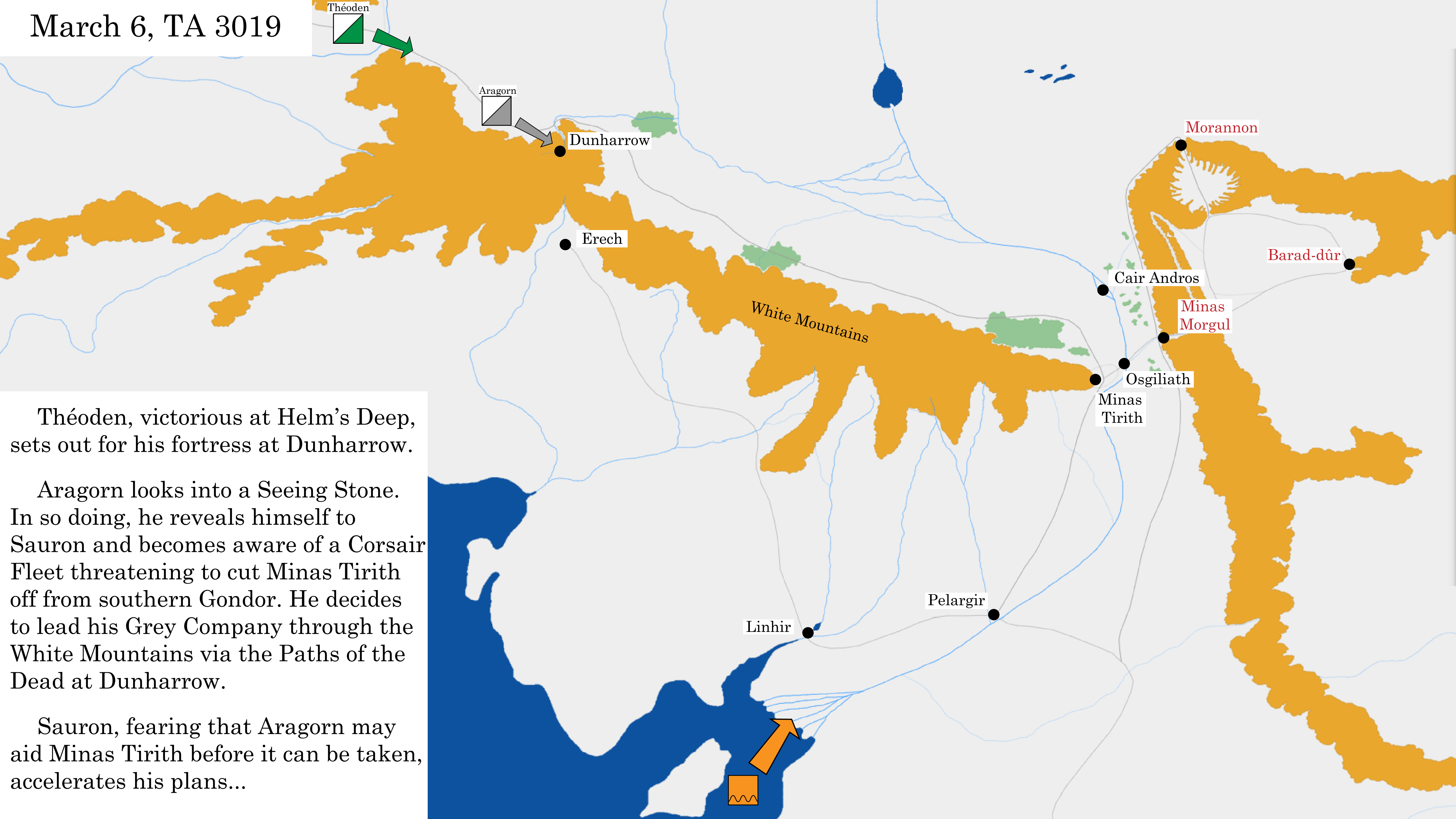
Geography



Gondor is a large country divided by the impassible White Mountains. Its most populous provinces are in the south, bordering the Bay of Belfalas.

Mordor controls all the lands to the east and south, and has pushed Gondor out of Ithilien, but the lands north of Mordor are desolate, and Sauron cannot push west without crossing the Anduin at Cair Andros or Osgiliath.

March 6, TA 3019

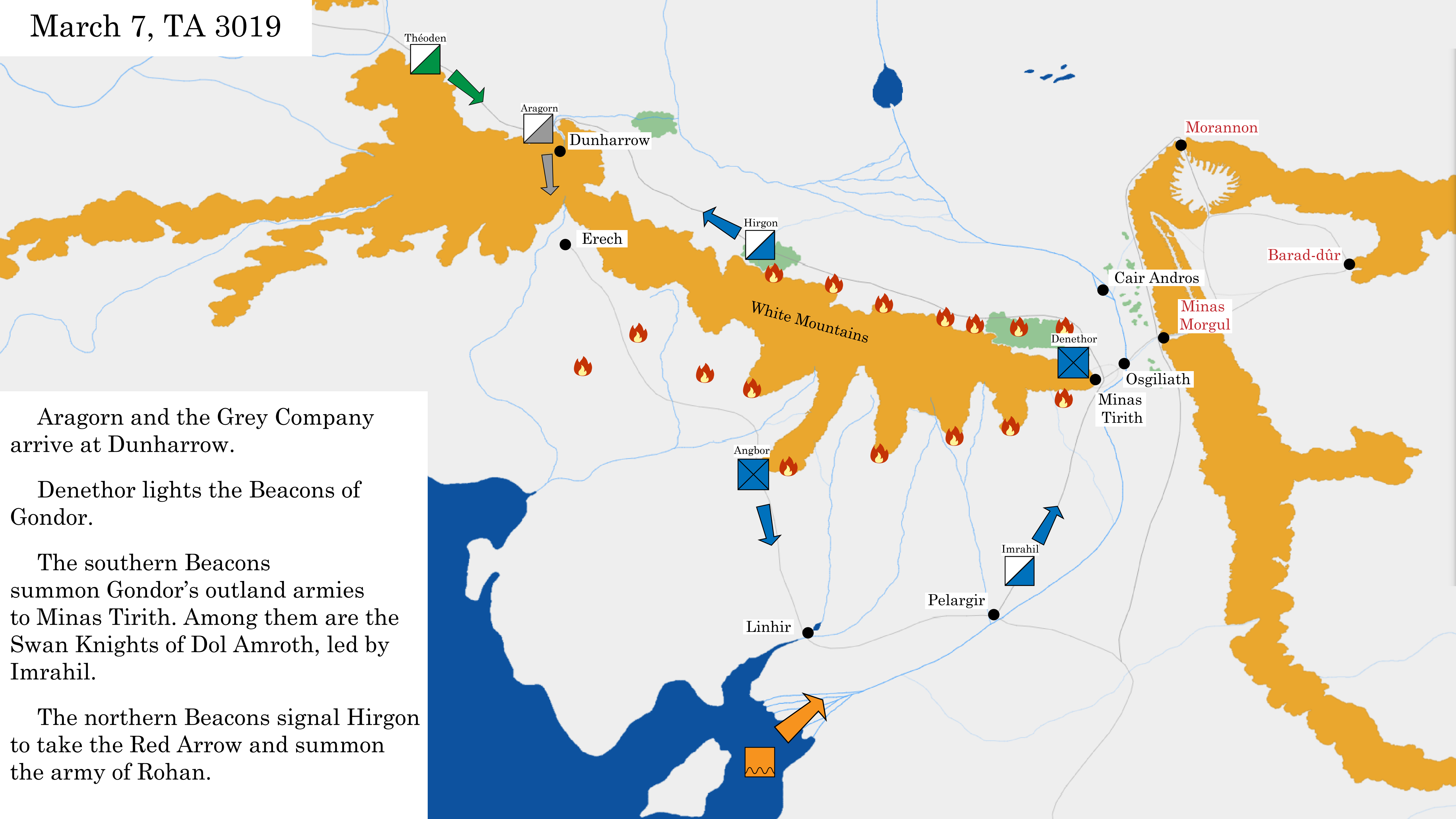


Théoden, victorious at Helm's Deep, sets out for his fortress at Dunharrow.

Aragorn looks into a Seeing Stone. In so doing, he reveals himself to Sauron and becomes aware of a Corsair Fleet threatening to cut Minas Tirith off from southern Gondor. He decides to lead his Grey Company through the White Mountains via the Paths of the Dead at Dunharrow.

Sauron, fearing that Aragorn may aid Minas Tirith before it can be taken, accelerates his plans...

March 7, TA 3019



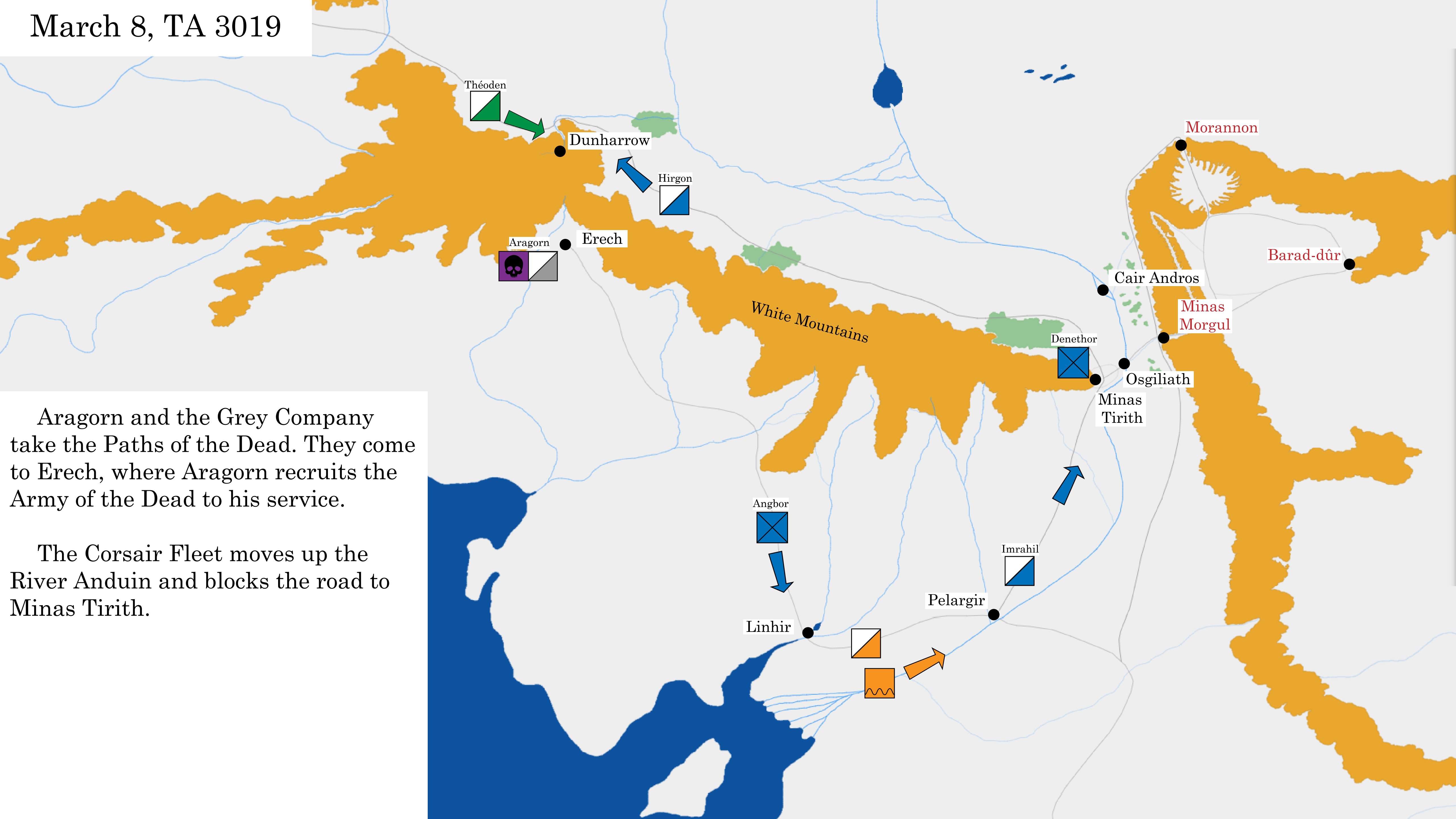
Aragorn and the Grey Company arrive at Dunharrow.

Denethor lights the Beacons of Gondor.

The southern Beacons summon Gondor's outland armies to Minas Tirith. Among them are the Swan Knights of Dol Amroth, led by Imrahil.

The northern Beacons signal Hirgon to take the Red Arrow and summon the army of Rohan.

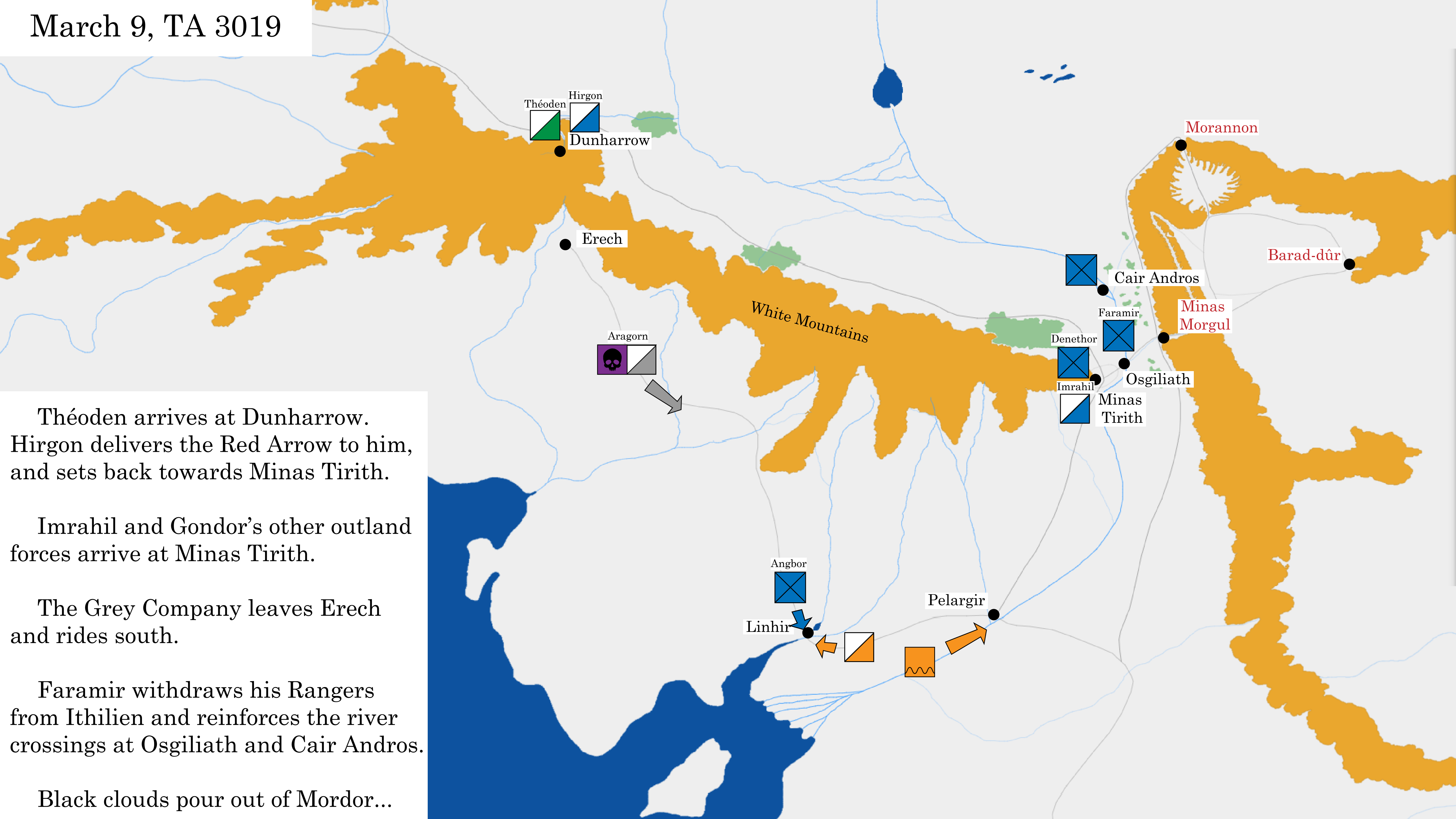
March 8, TA 3019



Aragorn and the Grey Company take the Paths of the Dead. They come to Erech, where Aragorn recruits the Army of the Dead to his service.

The Corsair Fleet moves up the River Anduin and blocks the road to Minas Tirith.

March 9, TA 3019



Théoden arrives at Dunharrow. Hirgon delivers the Red Arrow to him, and sets back towards Minas Tirith.

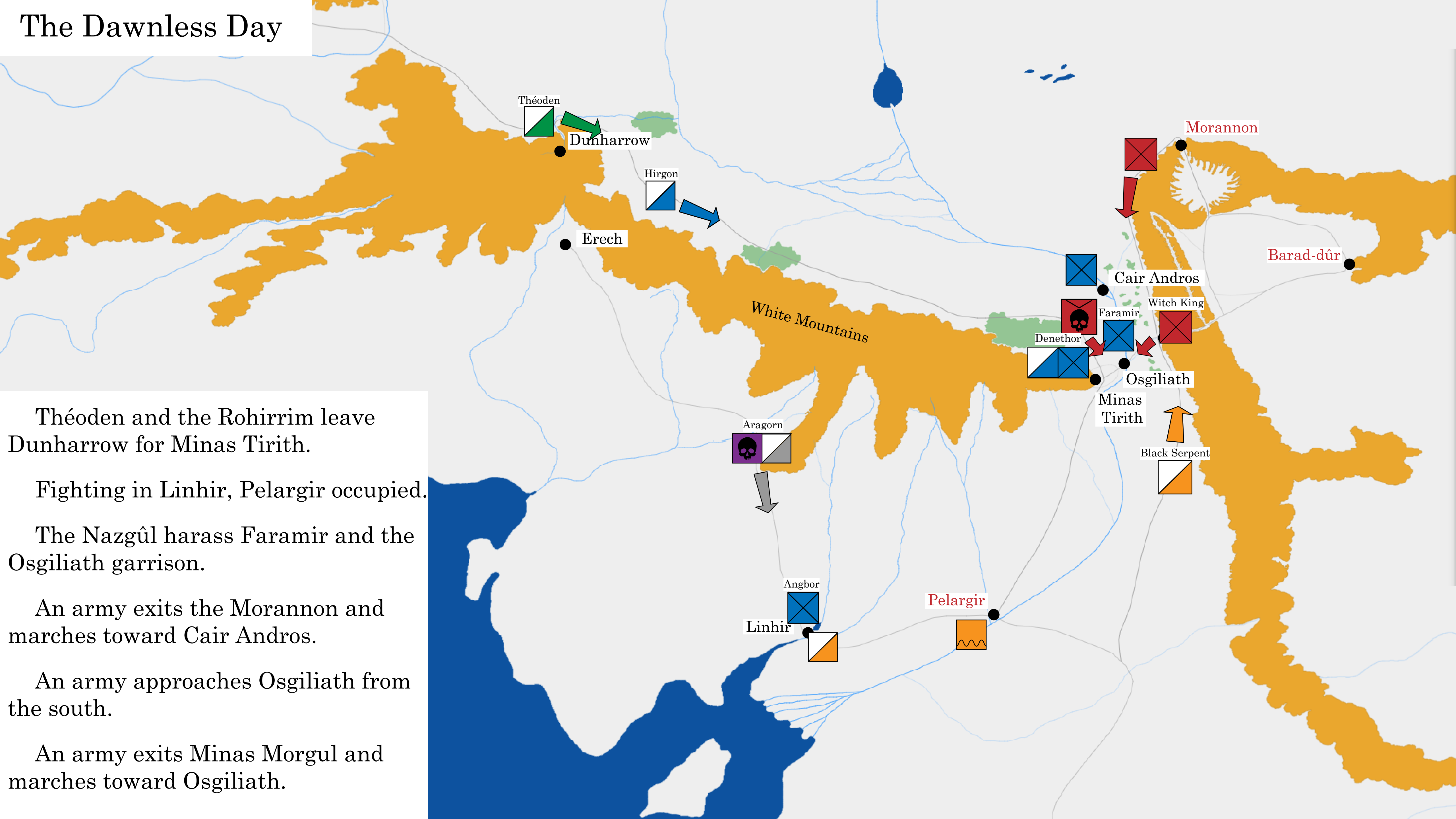
Imrahil and Gondor's other outland forces arrive at Minas Tirith.

The Grey Company leaves Erech and rides south.

Faramir withdraws his Rangers from Ithilien and reinforces the river crossings at Osgiliath and Cair Andros.

Black clouds pour out of Mordor...

The Dawnless Day



Théoden and the Rohirrim leave Dunharrow for Minas Tirith.

Fighting in Linhir, Pelargir occupied.

The Nazgûl harass Faramir and the Osgiliath garrison.

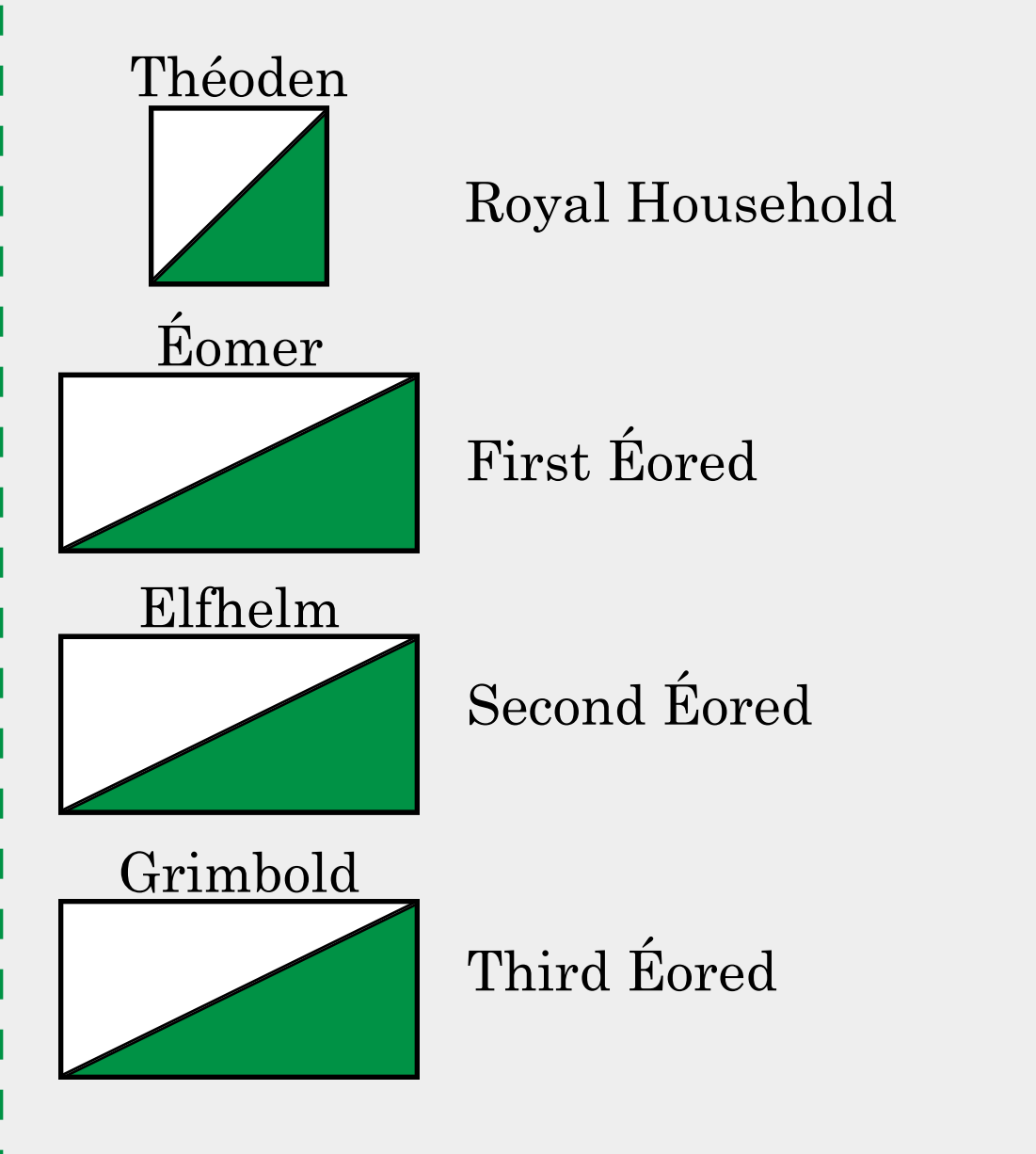
An army exits the Morannon and marches toward Cair Andros.

An army approaches Osgiliath from the south.

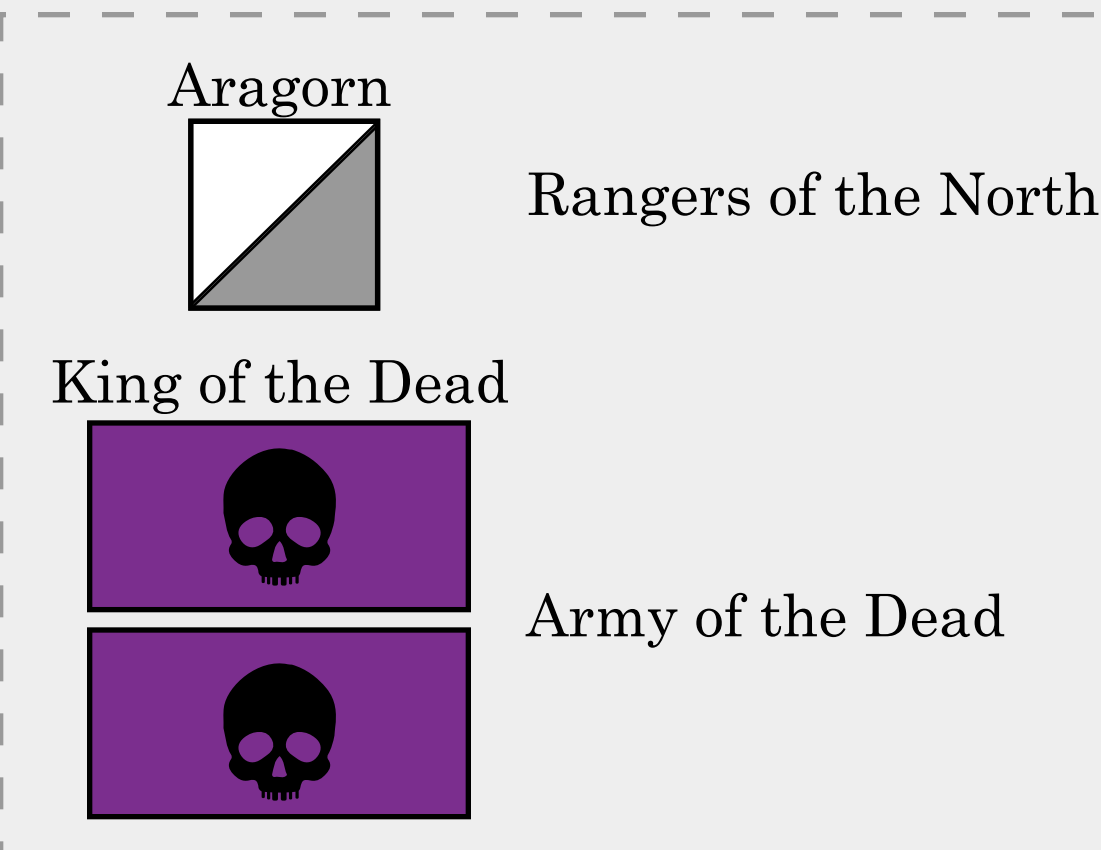
An army exits Minas Morgul and marches toward Osgiliath.

Dispositions on March 10, TA 3019

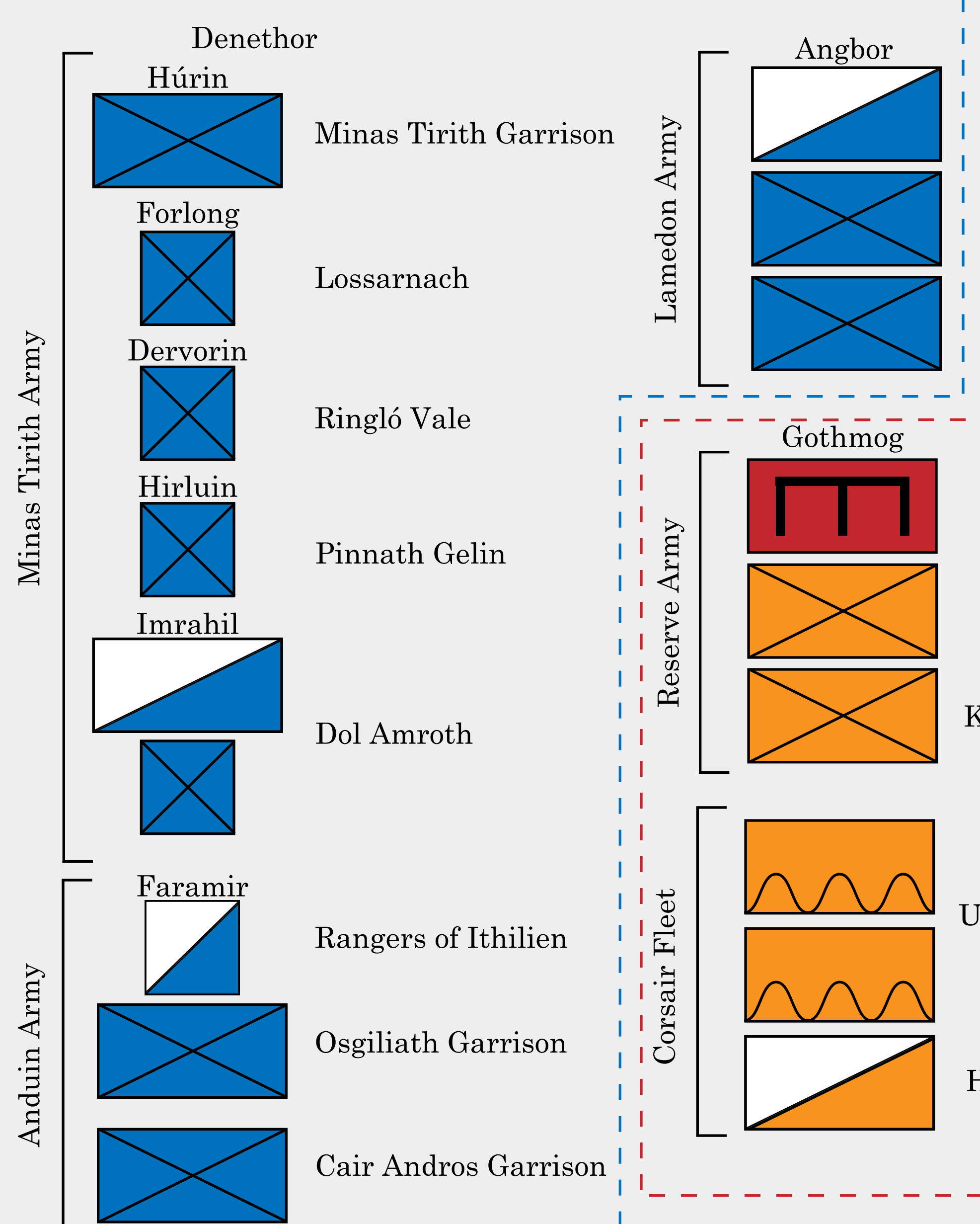
Rohan



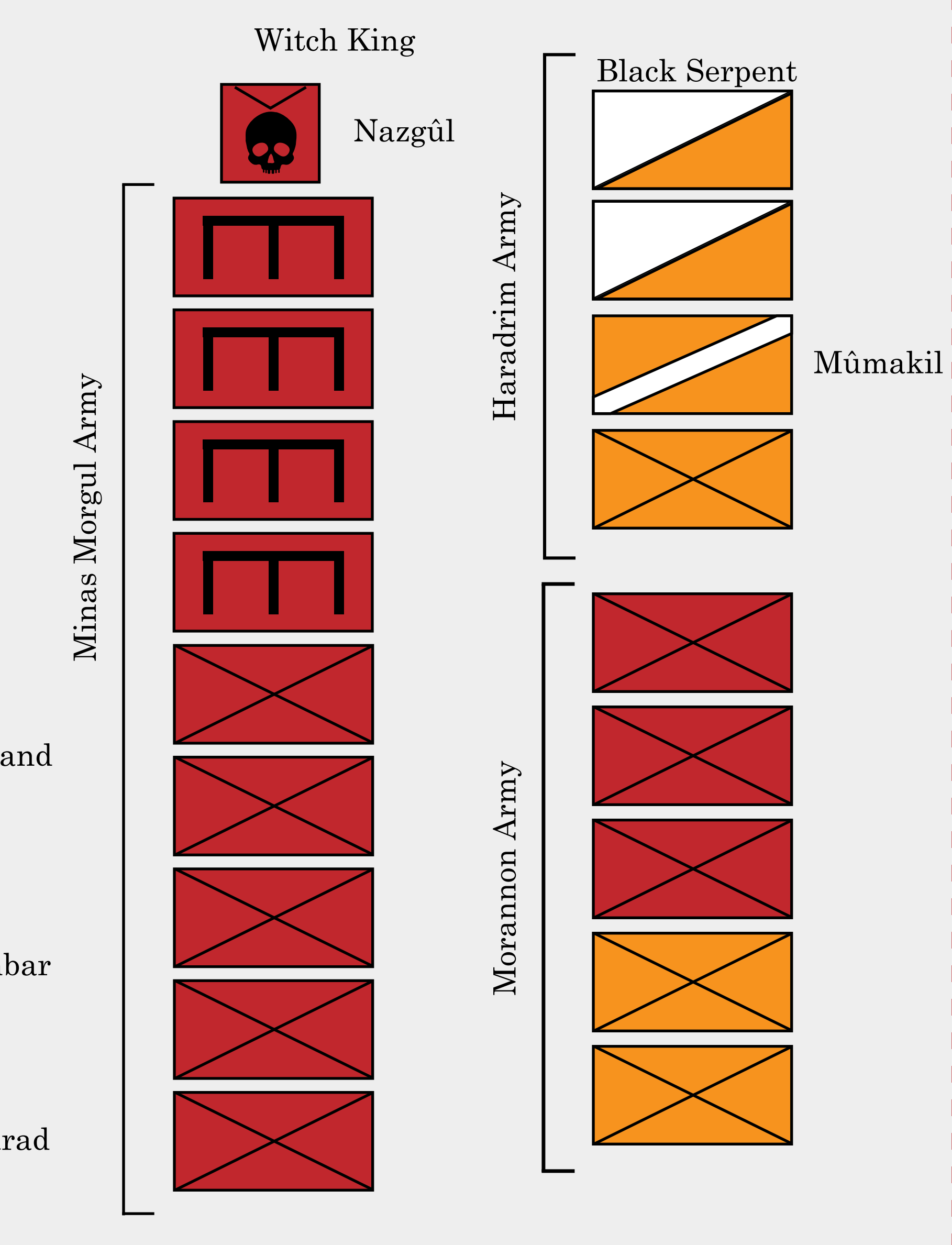
The Grey Company



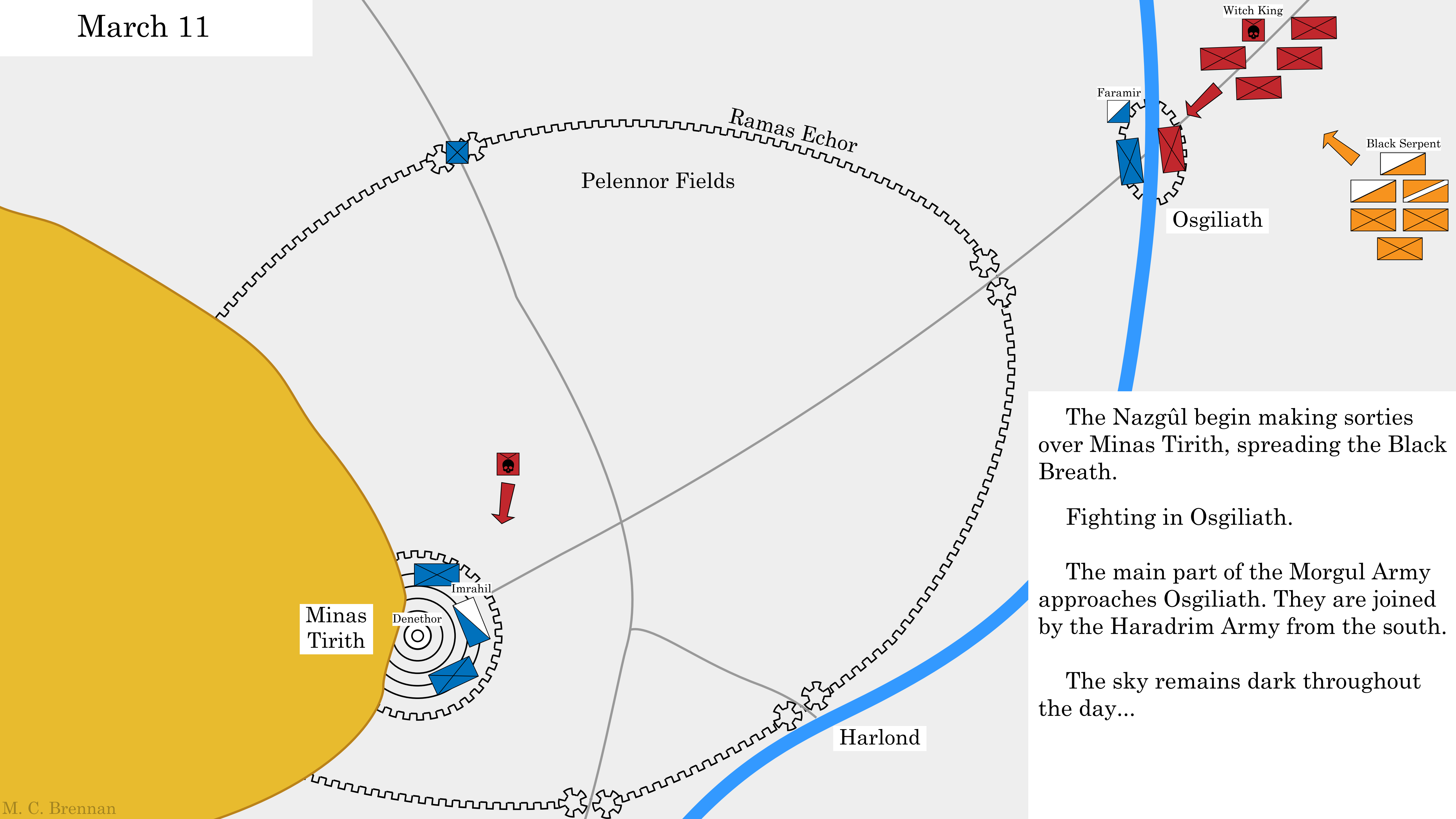
Gondor



Mordor



March 11



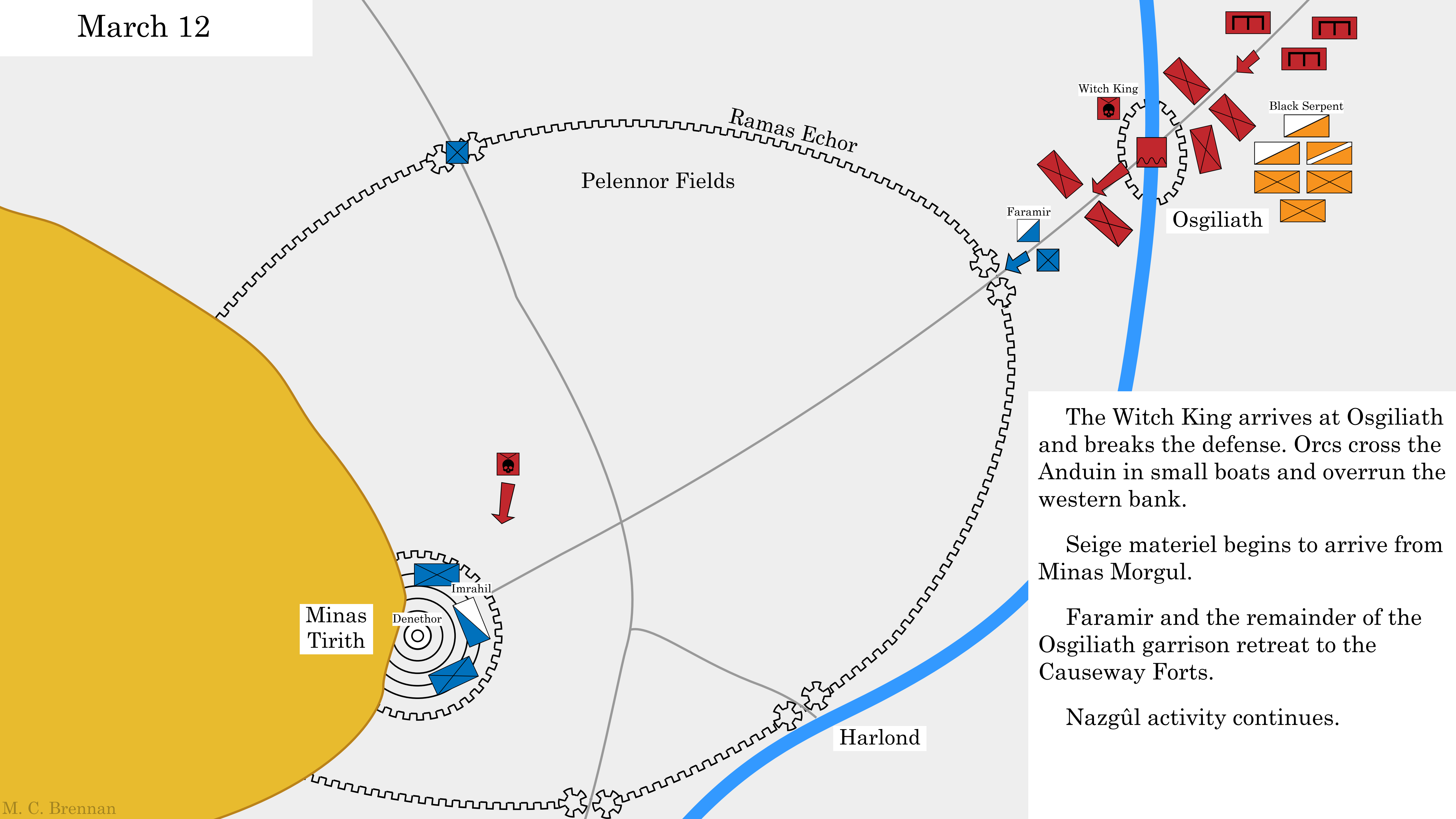
The Nazgûl begin making sorties over Minas Tirith, spreading the Black Breath.

Fighting in Osgiliath.

The main part of the Morgul Army approaches Osgiliath. They are joined by the Haradrim Army from the south.

The sky remains dark throughout the day...

March 12



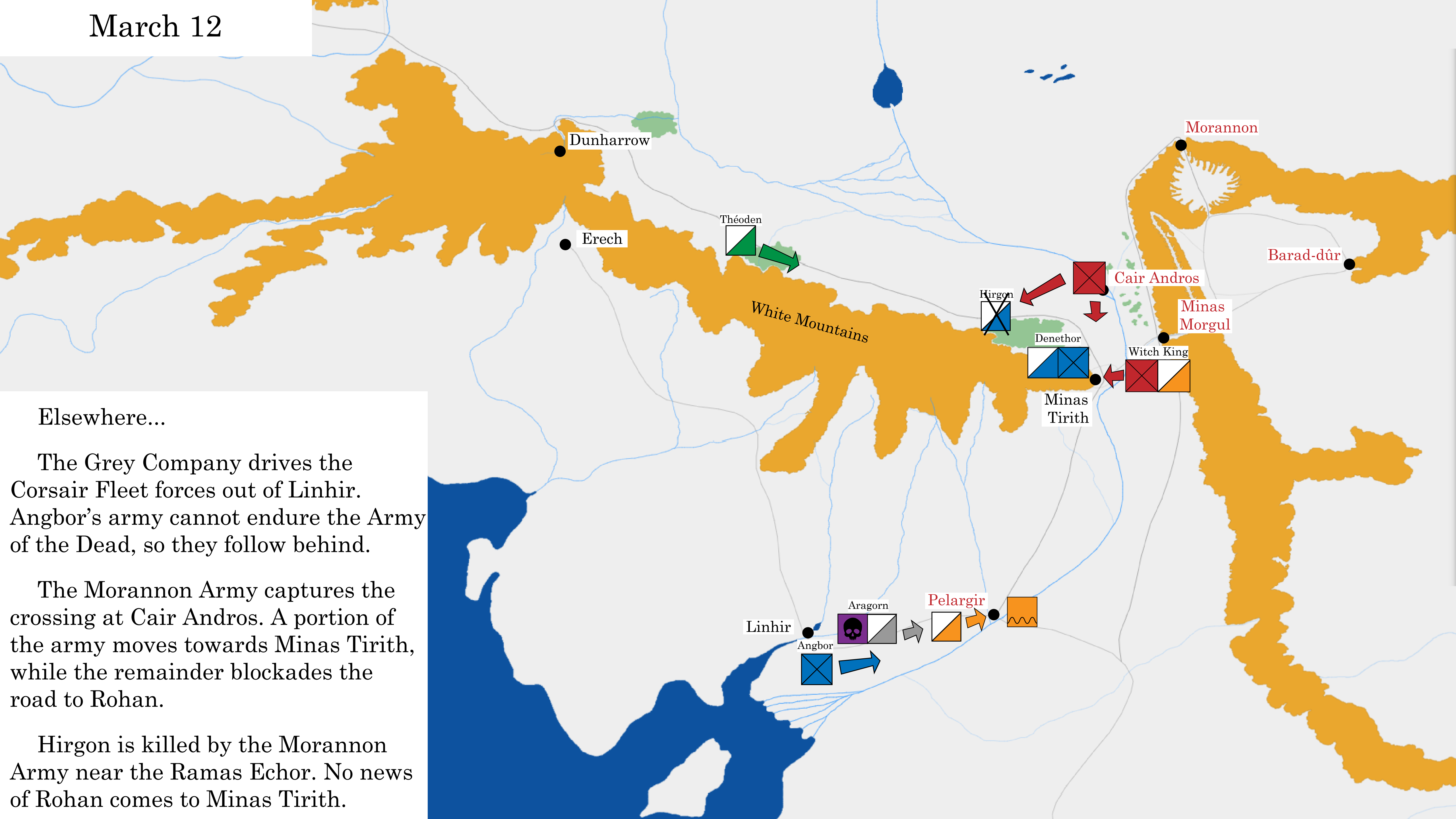
The Witch King arrives at Osgiliath and breaks the defense. Orcs cross the Anduin in small boats and overrun the western bank.

Seige materiel begins to arrive from Minas Morgul.

Faramir and the remainder of the Osgiliath garrison retreat to the Causeway Forts.

Nazgûl activity continues.

March 12



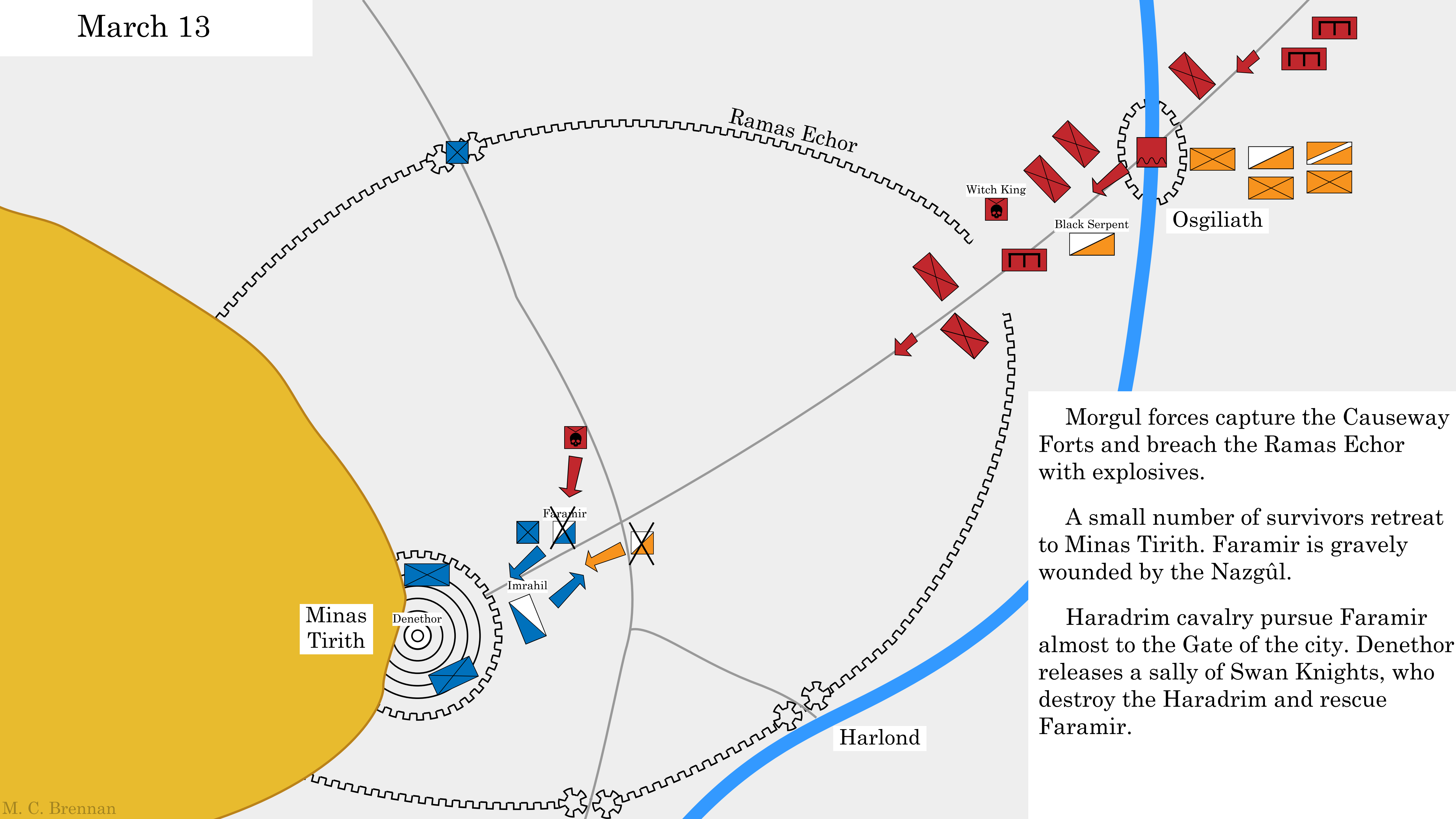
Elsewhere...

The Grey Company drives the Corsair Fleet forces out of Linhir. Angbor's army cannot endure the Army of the Dead, so they follow behind.

The Morannon Army captures the crossing at Cair Andros. A portion of the army moves towards Minas Tirith, while the remainder blockades the road to Rohan.

Hirgon is killed by the Morannon Army near the Ramas Echor. No news of Rohan comes to Minas Tirith.

March 13

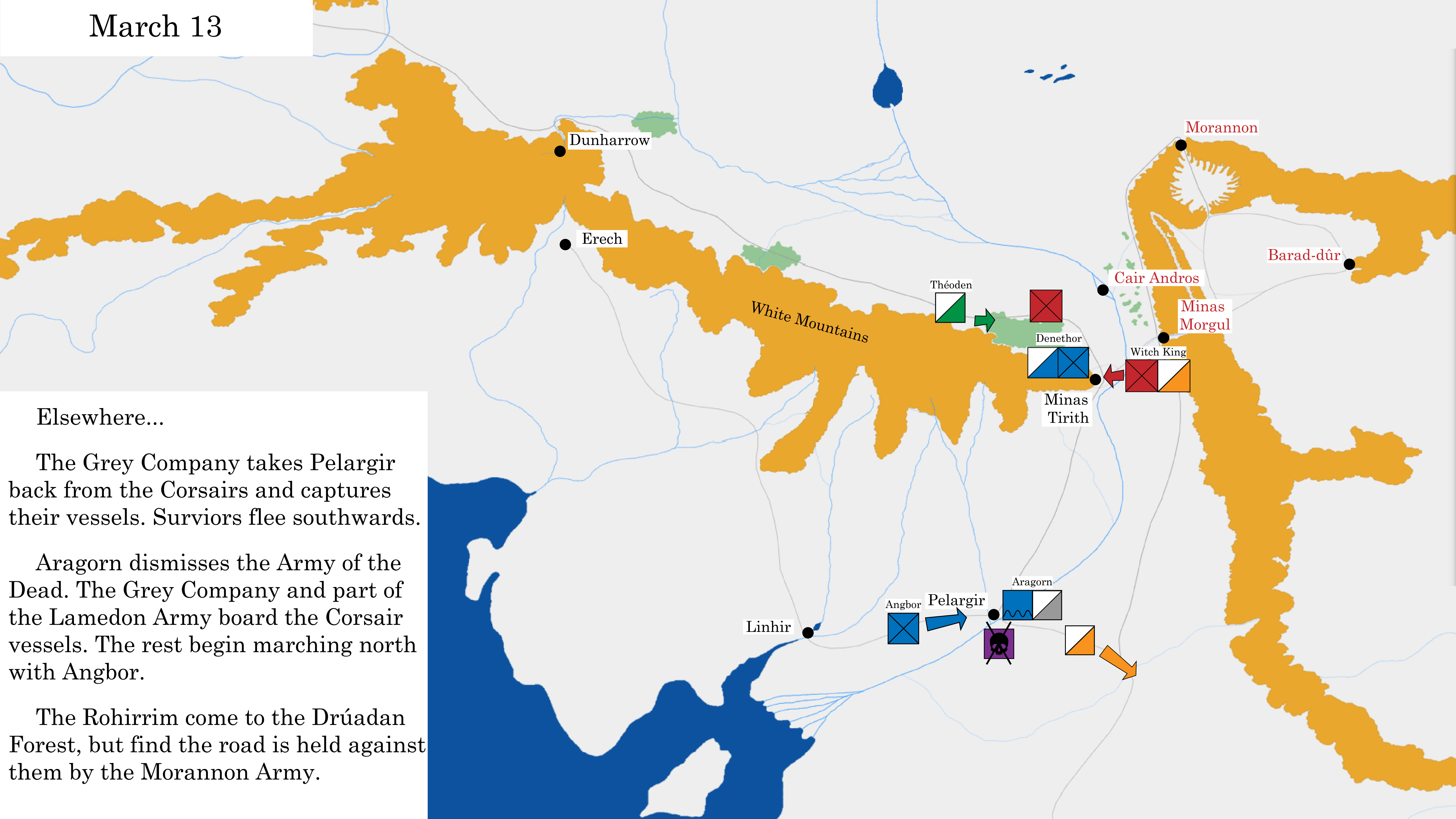


Morgul forces capture the Causeway Forts and breach the Ramas Echor with explosives.

A small number of survivors retreat to Minas Tirith. Faramir is gravely wounded by the Nazgûl.

Haradrim cavalry pursue Faramir almost to the Gate of the city. Denethor releases a sally of Swan Knights, who destroy the Haradrim and rescue Faramir.

March 13



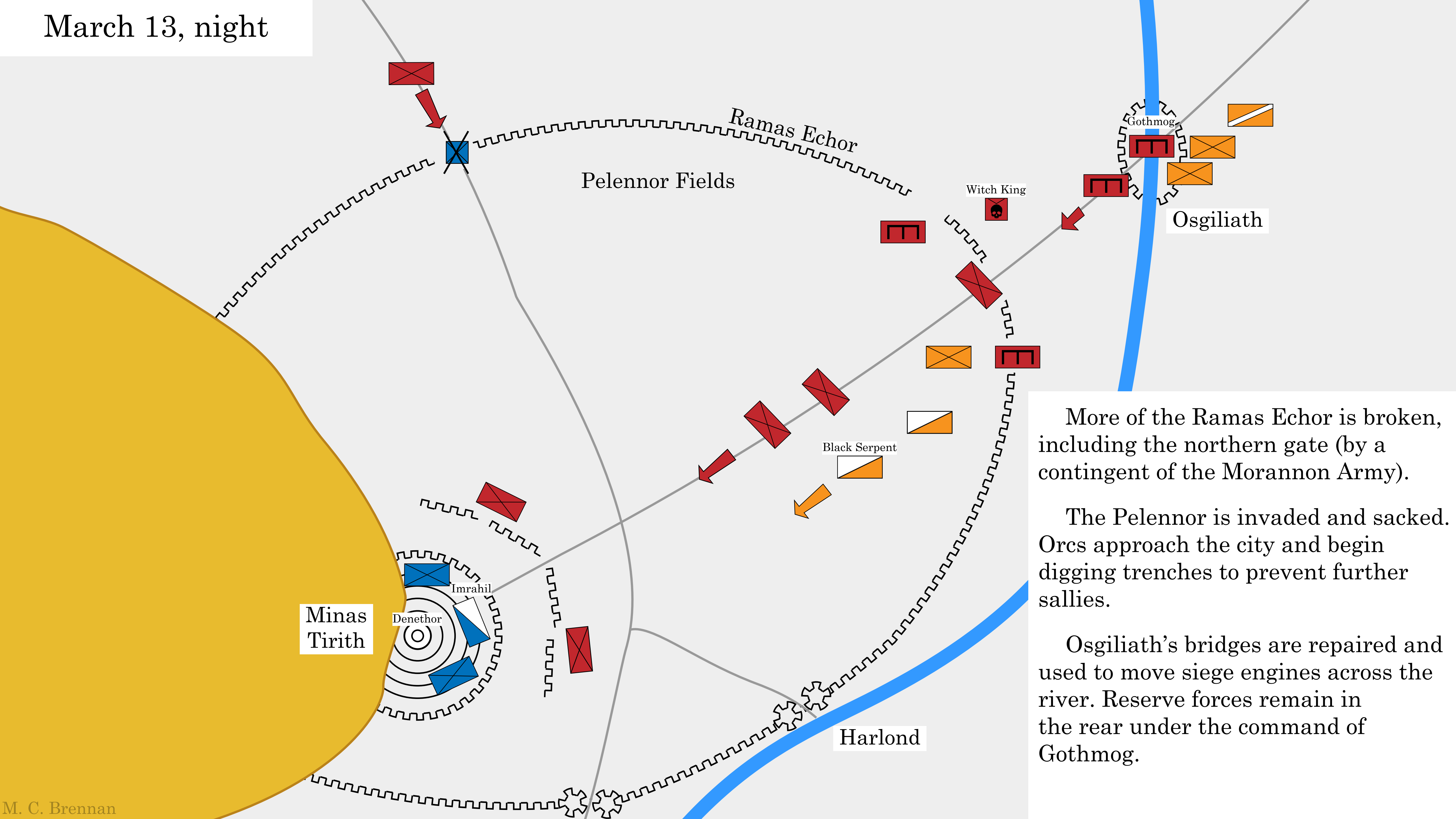
Elsewhere...

The Grey Company takes Pelargir back from the Corsairs and captures their vessels. Survivors flee southwards.

Aragorn dismisses the Army of the Dead. The Grey Company and part of the Lamedon Army board the Corsair vessels. The rest begin marching north with Angbor.

The Rohirrim come to the Drúadan Forest, but find the road is held against them by the Morannon Army.

March 13, night

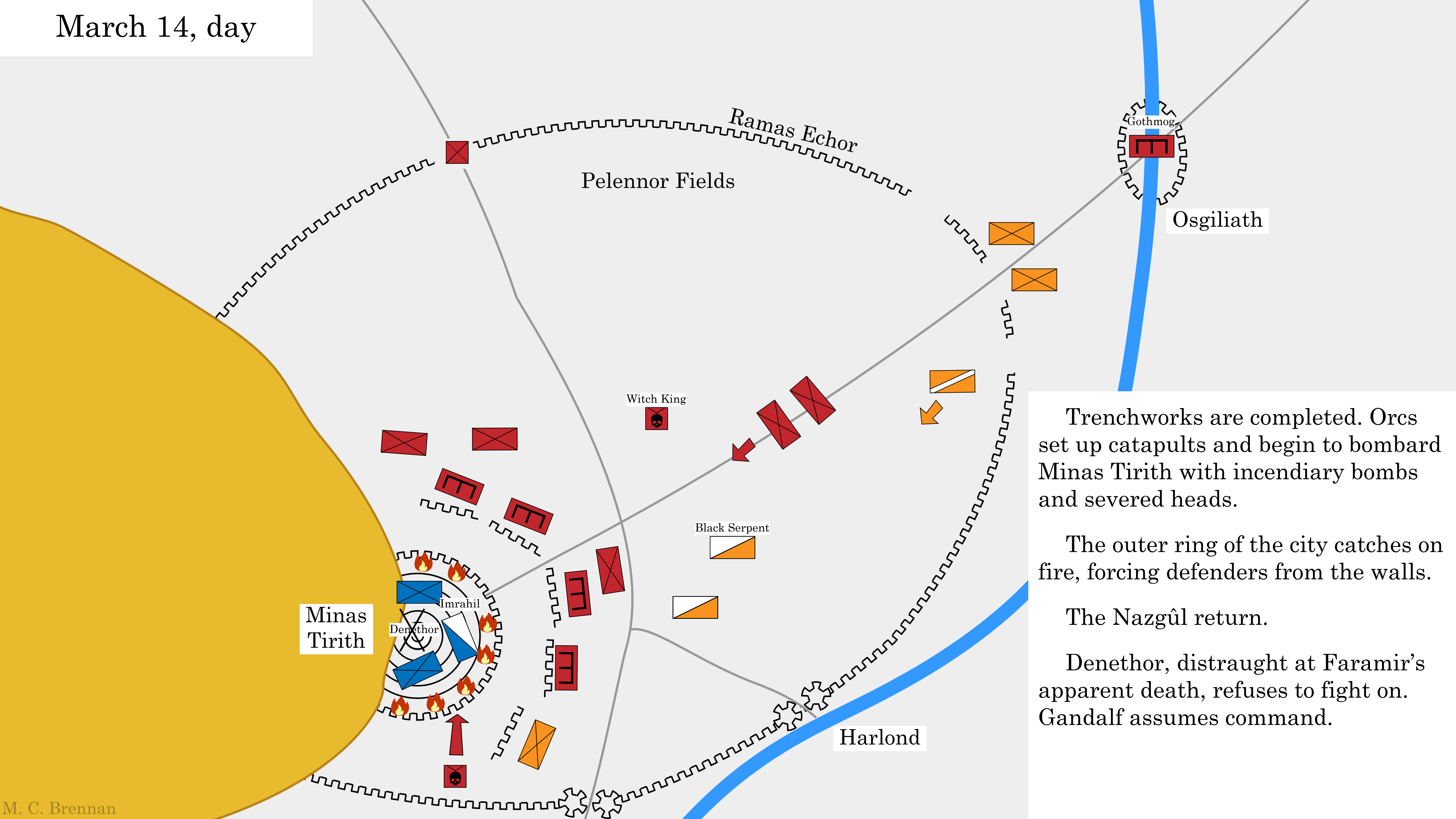


More of the Ramas Echor is broken, including the northern gate (by a contingent of the Morannon Army).

The Pelennor is invaded and sacked. Orcs approach the city and begin digging trenches to prevent further sallies.

Osgiliath's bridges are repaired and used to move siege engines across the river. Reserve forces remain in the rear under the command of Gothmog.

March 14, day



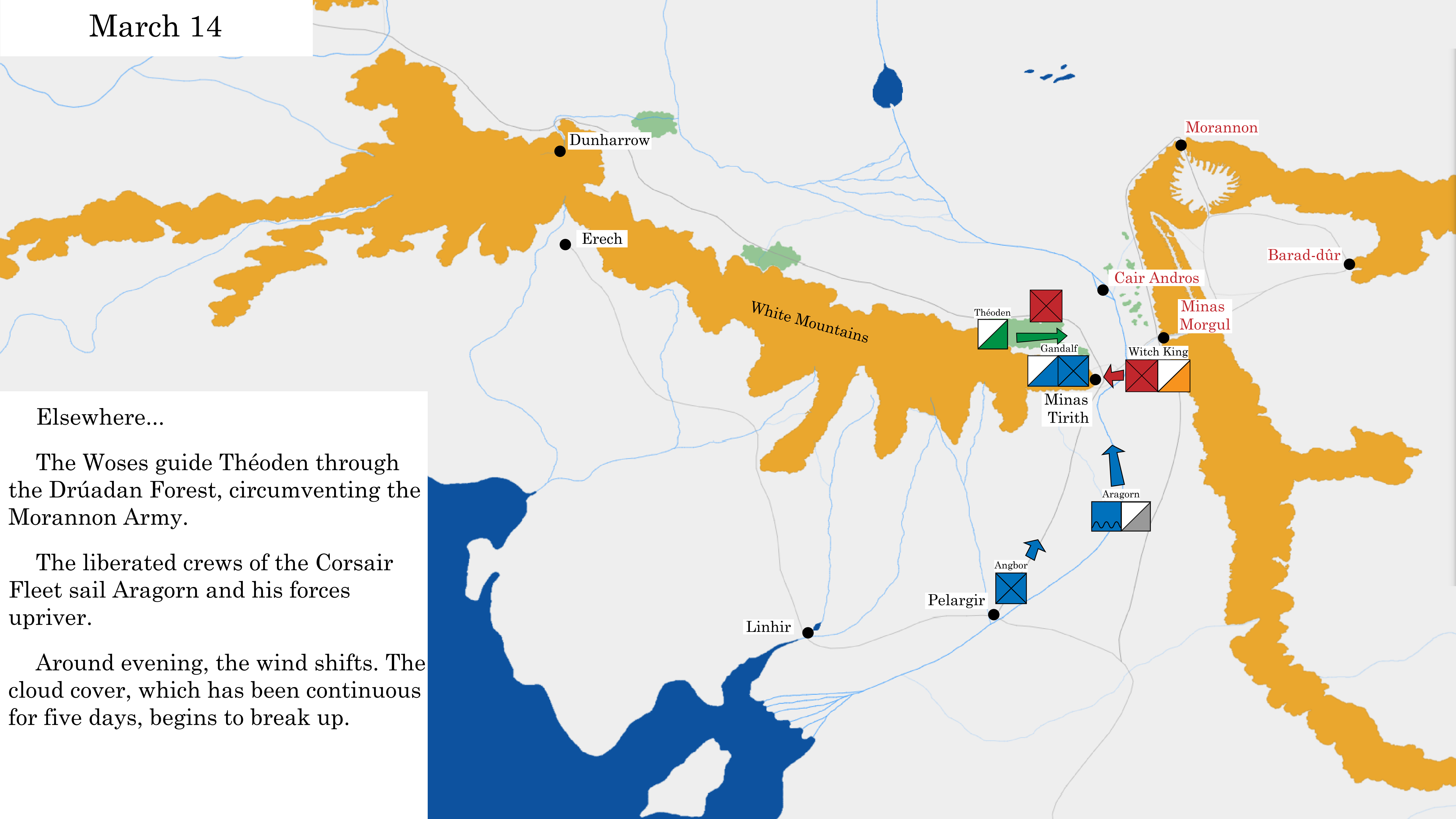
Trenchworks are completed. Orcs set up catapults and begin to bombard Minas Tirith with incendiary bombs and severed heads.

The outer ring of the city catches on fire, forcing defenders from the walls.

The Nazgûl return.

Denethor, distraught at Faramir's apparent death, refuses to fight on. Gandalf assumes command.

March 14



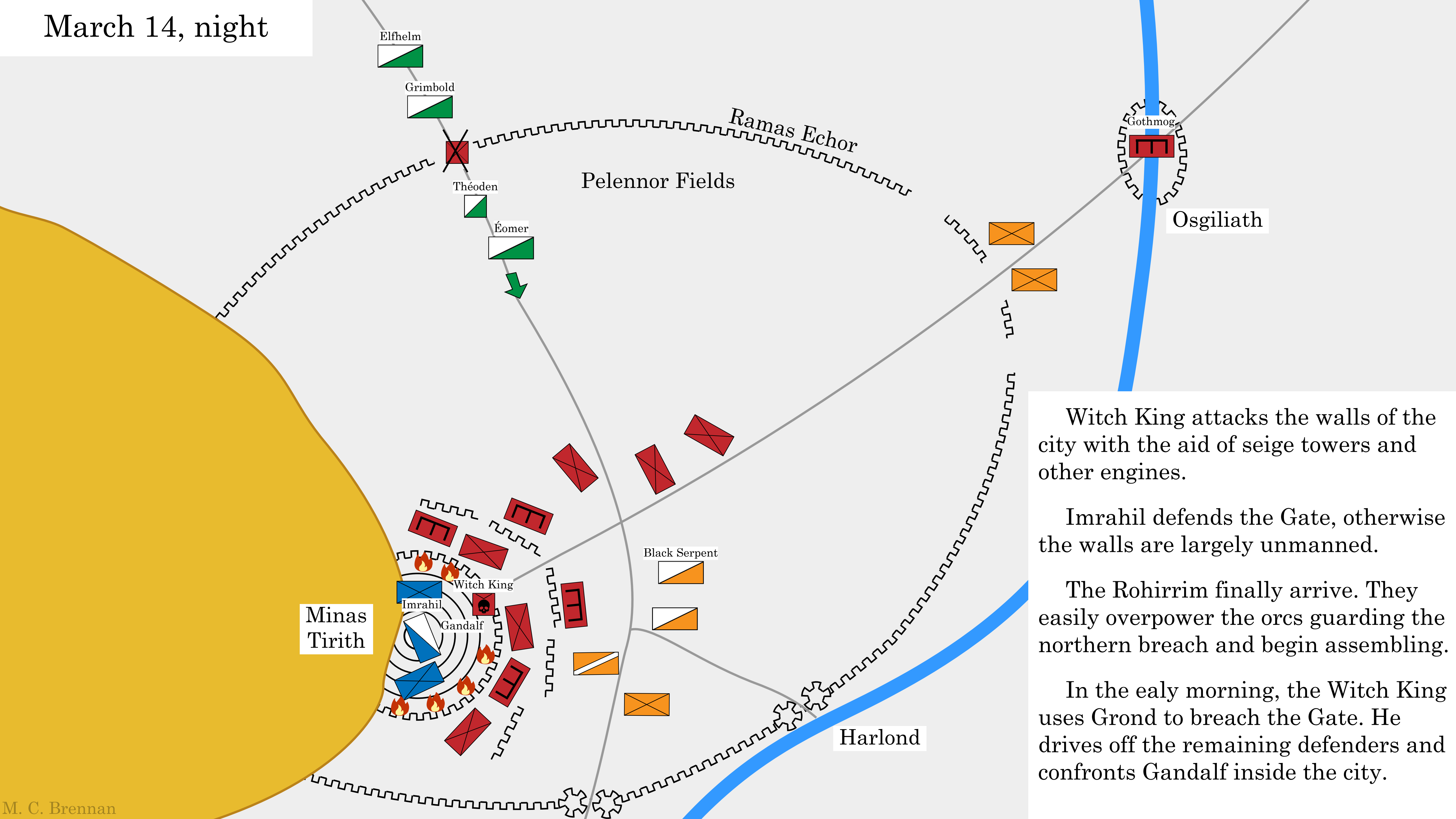
Elsewhere...

The Woses guide Théoden through the Drúadan Forest, circumventing the Morannon Army.

The liberated crews of the Corsair Fleet sail Aragorn and his forces upriver.

Around evening, the wind shifts. The cloud cover, which has been continuous for five days, begins to break up.

March 14, night



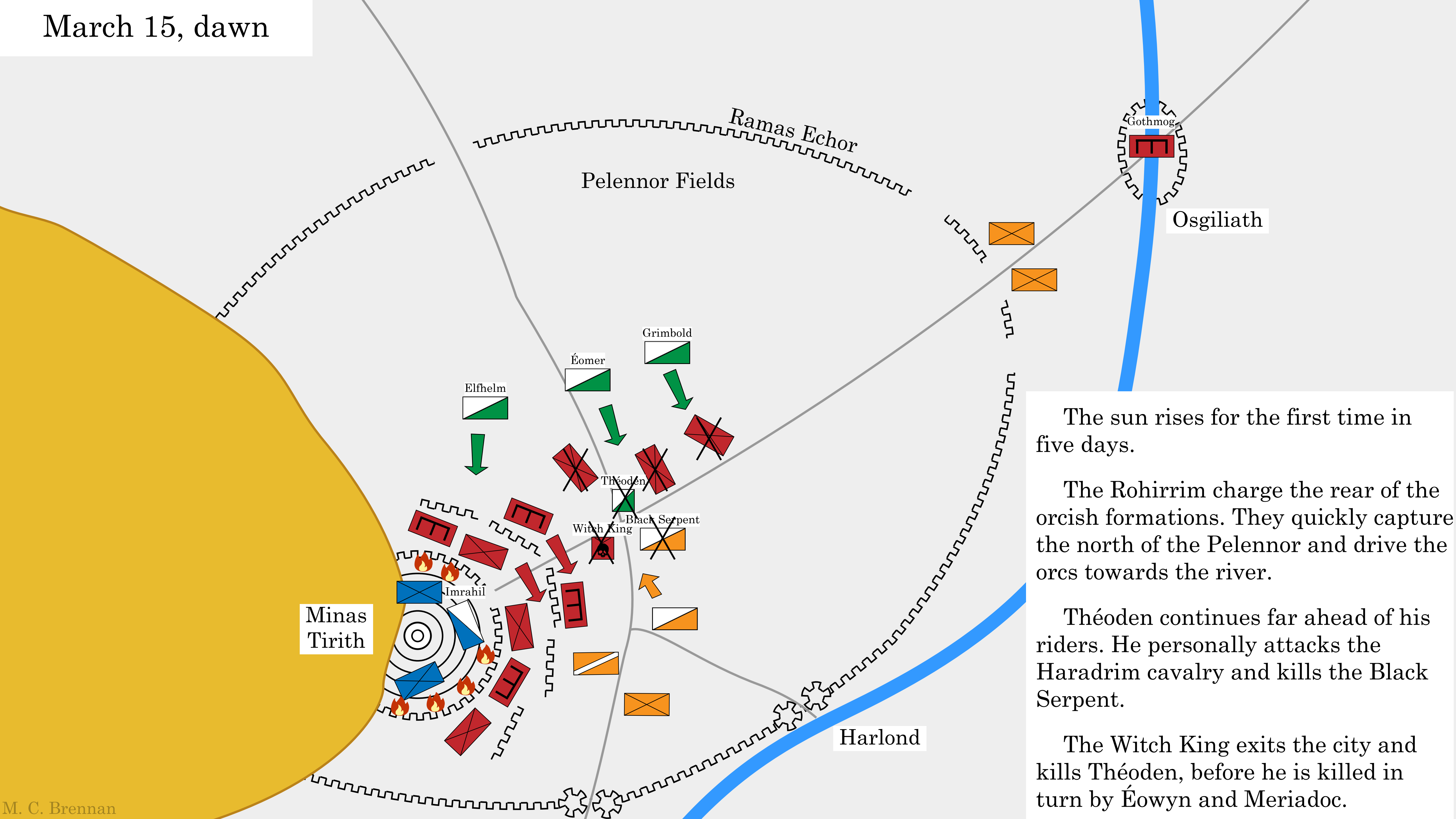
Witch King attacks the walls of the city with the aid of siege towers and other engines.

Imrahil defends the Gate, otherwise the walls are largely unmanned.

The Rohirrim finally arrive. They easily overpower the orcs guarding the northern breach and begin assembling.

In the early morning, the Witch King uses Grond to breach the Gate. He drives off the remaining defenders and confronts Gandalf inside the city.

March 15, dawn



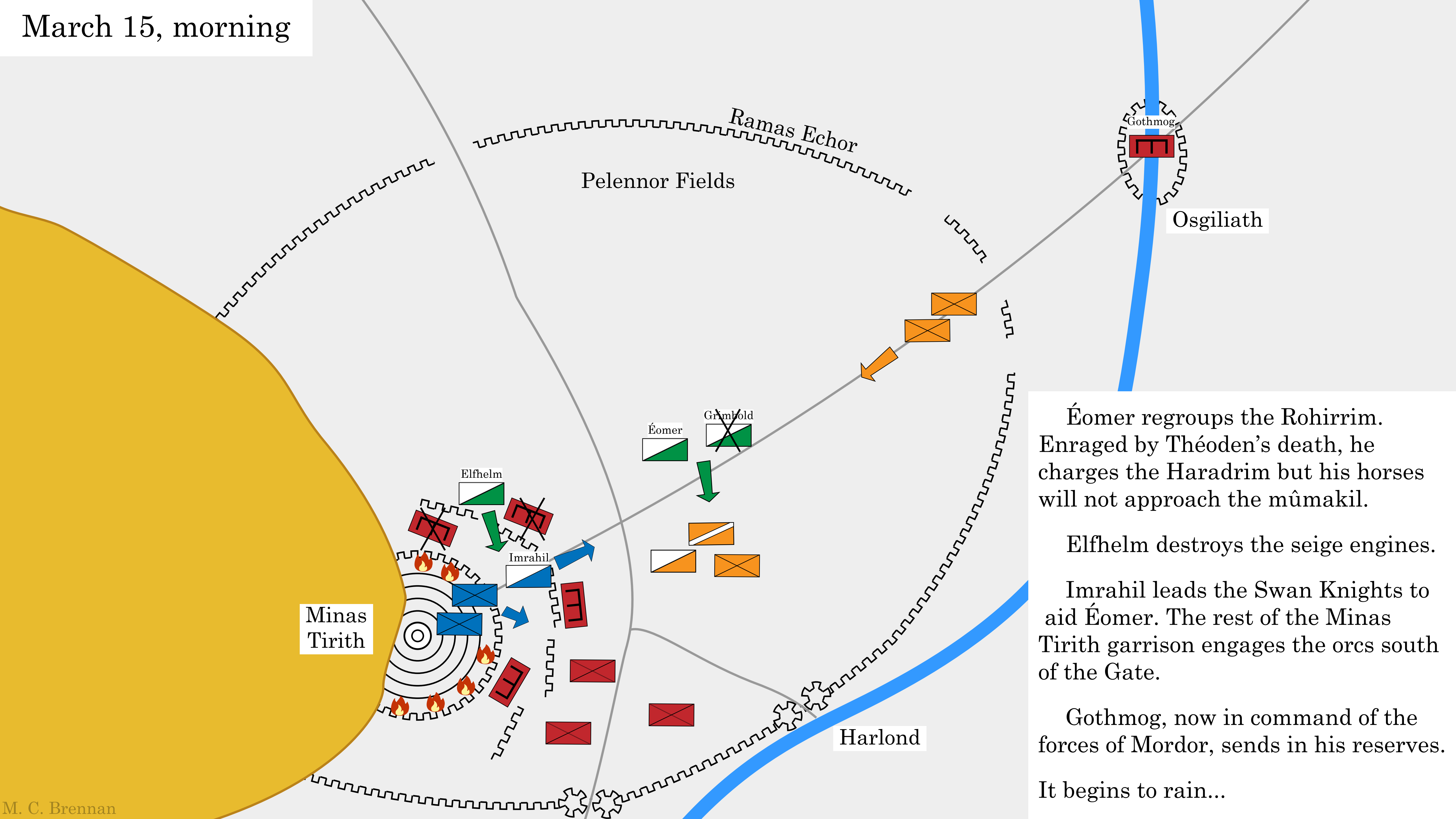
The sun rises for the first time in five days.

The Rohirrim charge the rear of the orcish formations. They quickly capture the north of the Pelennor and drive the orcs towards the river.

Théoden continues far ahead of his riders. He personally attacks the Haradrim cavalry and kills the Black Serpent.

The Witch King exits the city and kills Théoden, before he is killed in turn by Éowyn and Meriadoc.

March 15, morning



Éomer regroups the Rohirrim. Enraged by Théoden's death, he charges the Haradrim but his horses will not approach the mûmakil.

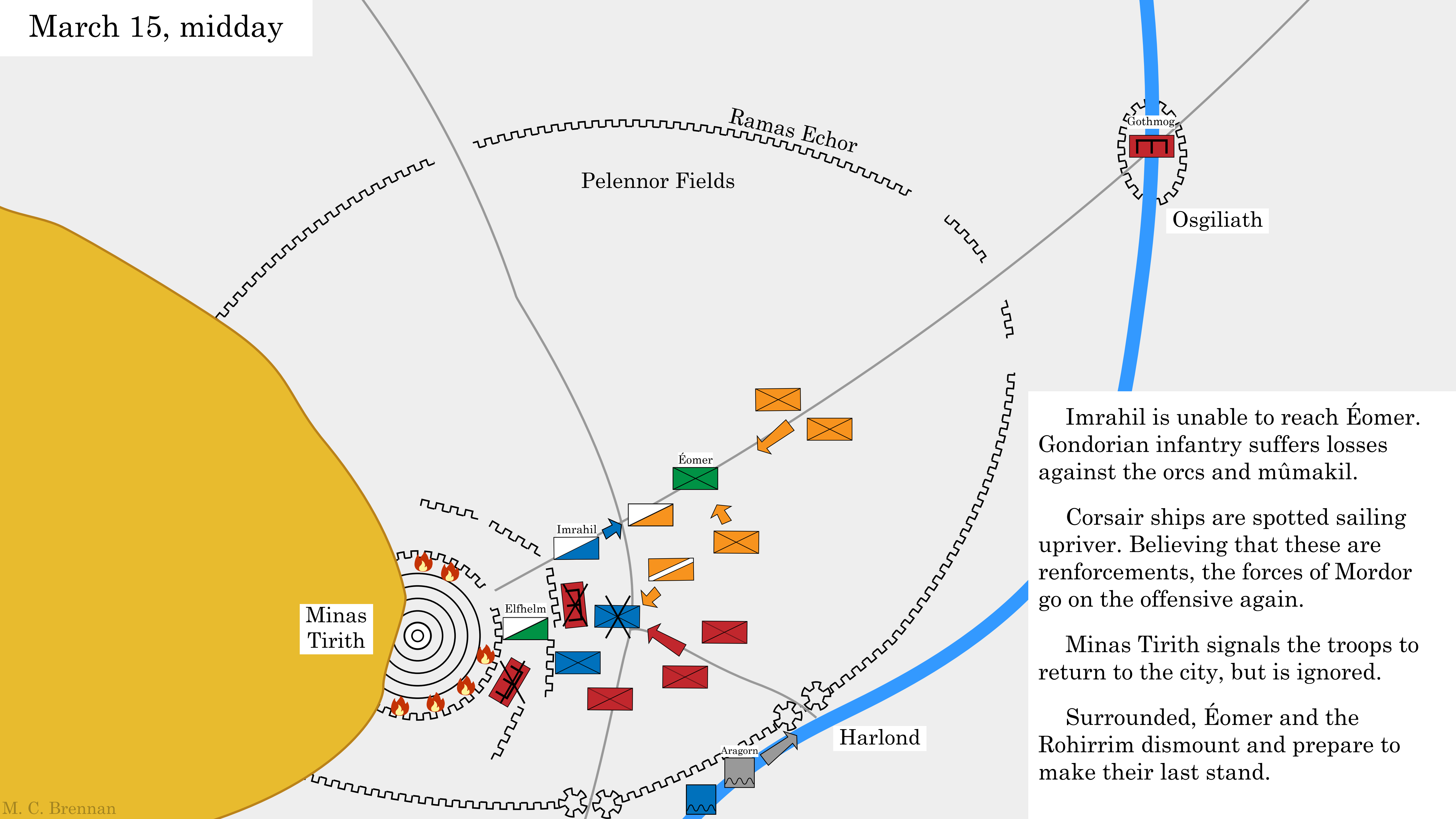
Elfhelm destroys the seige engines.

Imrahil leads the Swan Knights to aid Éomer. The rest of the Minas Tirith garrison engages the orcs south of the Gate.

Gothmog, now in command of the forces of Mordor, sends in his reserves.

It begins to rain...

March 15, midday



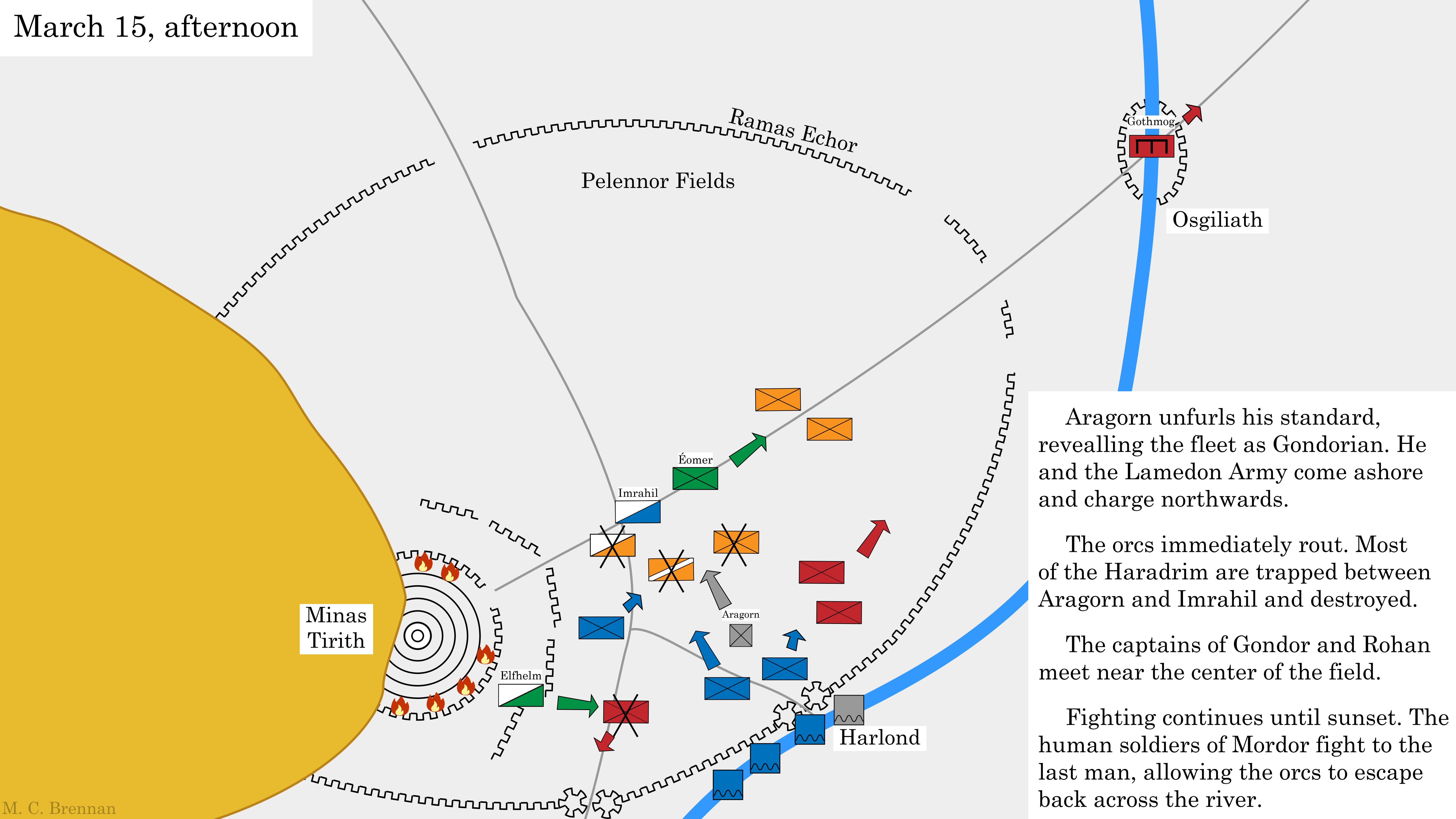
Imrahil is unable to reach Éomer. Gondorian infantry suffers losses against the orcs and mûmakil.

Corsair ships are spotted sailing upriver. Believing that these are reinforcements, the forces of Mordor go on the offensive again.

Minas Tirith signals the troops to return to the city, but is ignored.

Surrounded, Éomer and the Rohirrim dismount and prepare to make their last stand.

March 15, afternoon



Aragorn unfurls his standard, revealing the fleet as Gondorian. He and the Lamedon Army come ashore and charge northwards.

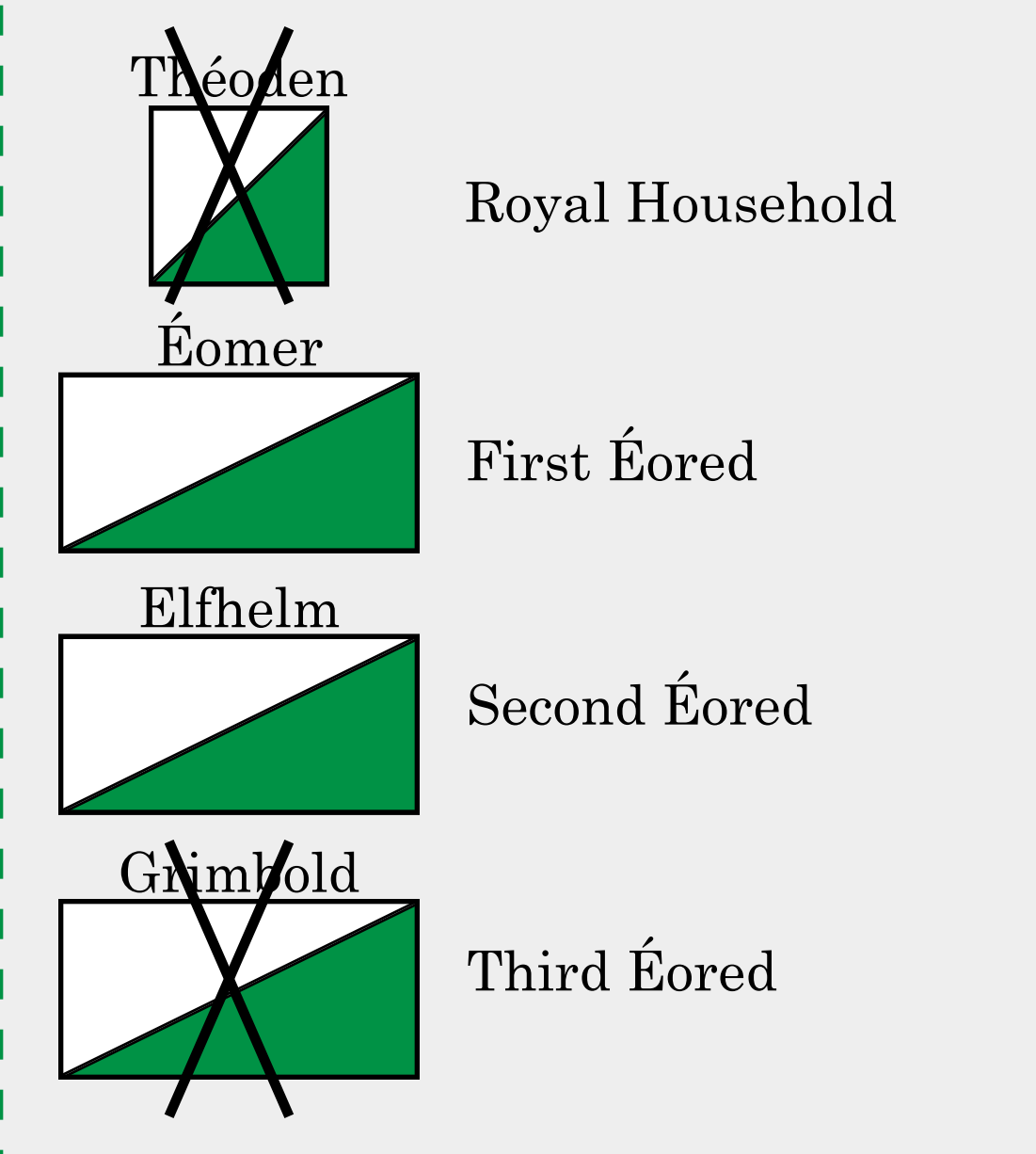
The orcs immediately rout. Most of the Haradrim are trapped between Aragorn and Imrahil and destroyed.

The captains of Gondor and Rohan meet near the center of the field.

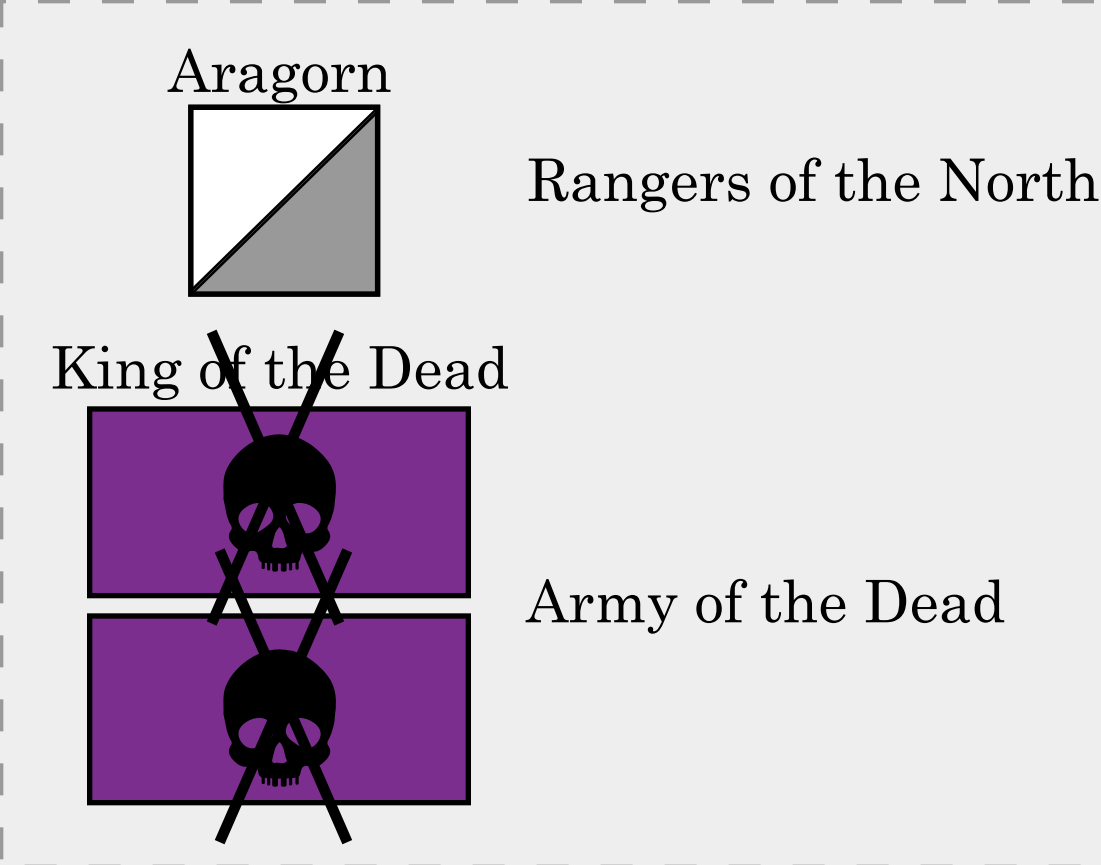
Fighting continues until sunset. The human soldiers of Mordor fight to the last man, allowing the orcs to escape back across the river.

Dispositions on March 15, TA 3019

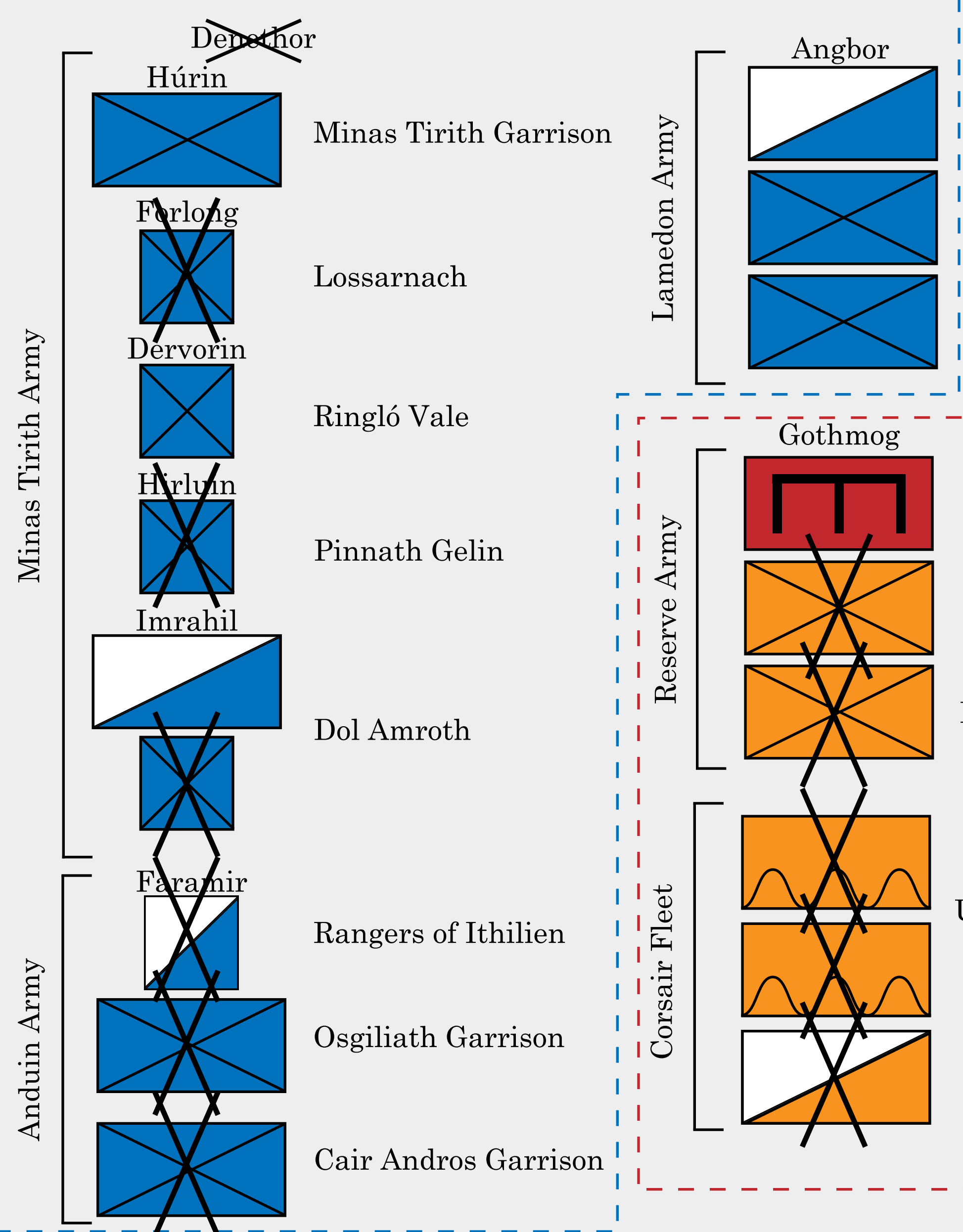
Rohan



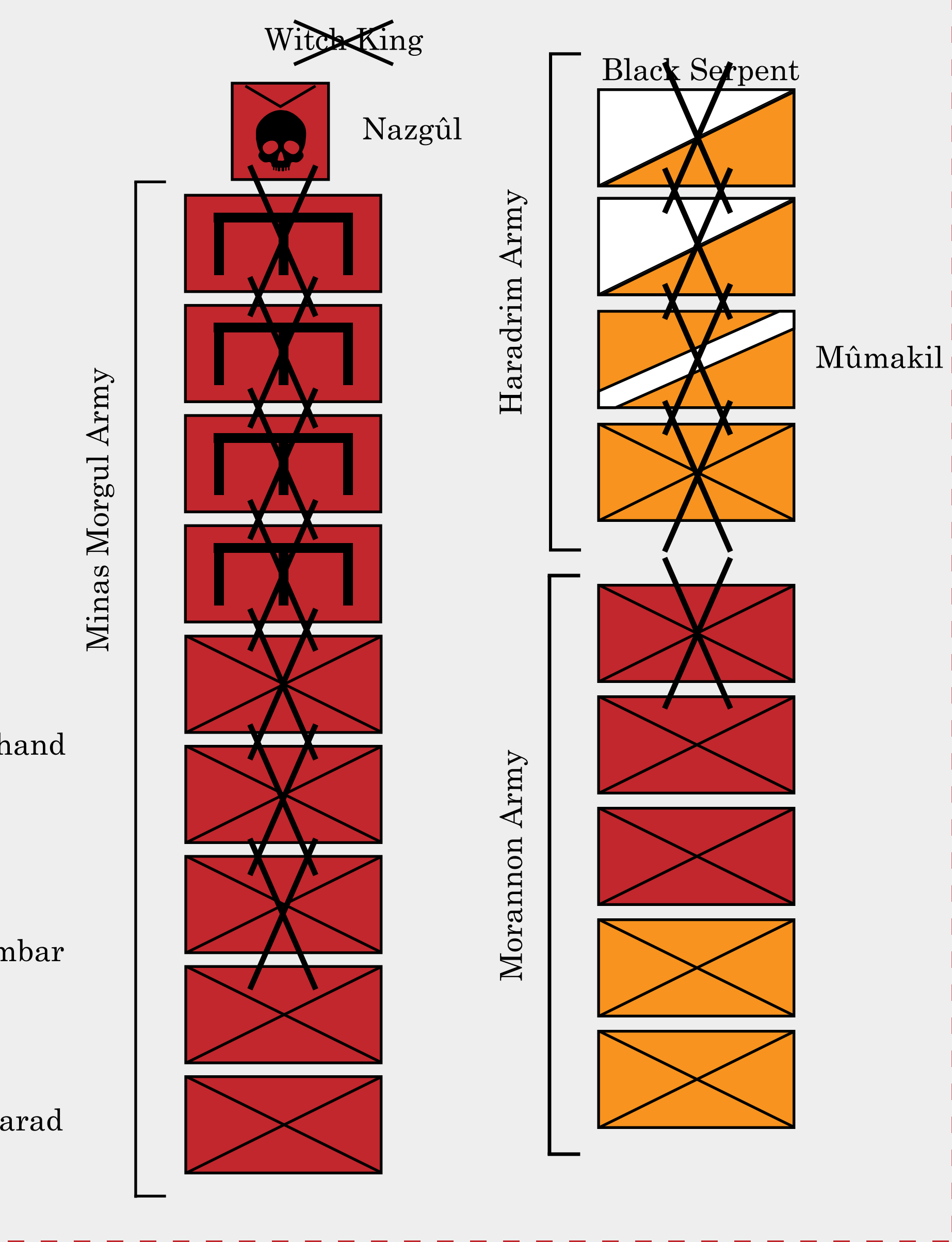
The Grey Company



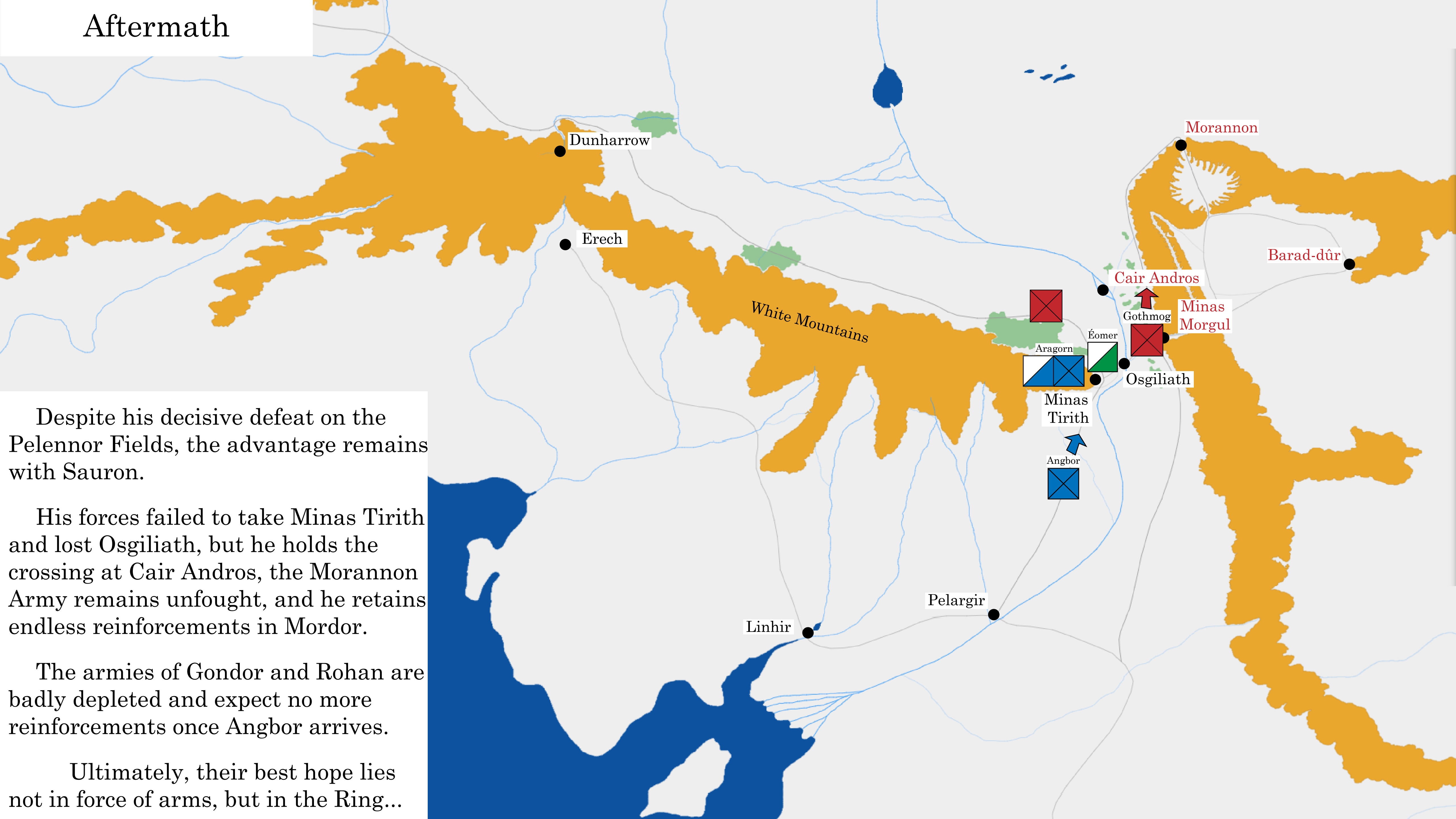
Gondor



Mordor



Aftermath



Despite his decisive defeat on the Pelennor Fields, the advantage remains with Sauron.

His forces failed to take Minas Tirith and lost Osgiliath, but he holds the crossing at Cair Andros, the Morannon Army remains unfought, and he retains endless reinforcements in Mordor.

The armies of Gondor and Rohan are badly depleted and expect no more reinforcements once Angbor arrives.

Ultimately, their best hope lies not in force of arms, but in the Ring...

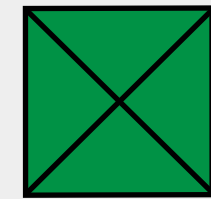
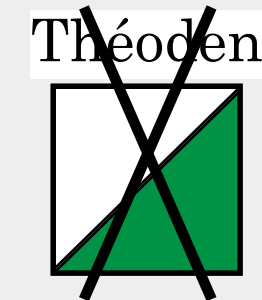
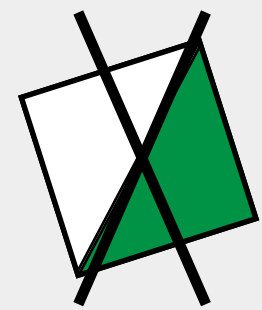
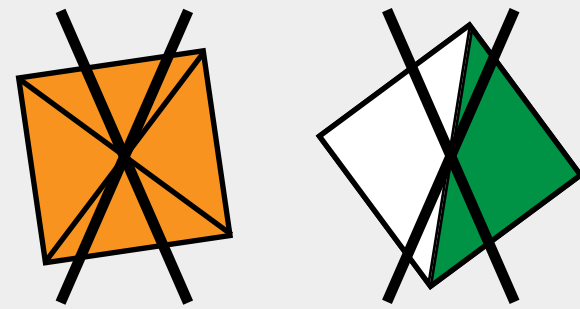
Credits

Dates from *The Lord of the Rings* (Appendix B: *The Tale of Years*), by J. R. R. Tolkien.

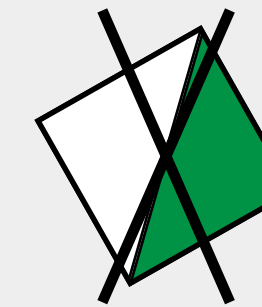
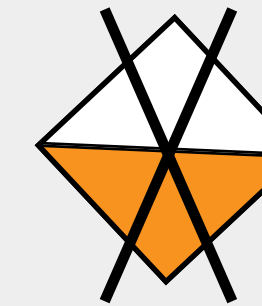
Large-scale maps from *Arda Maps* (arda-maps.org) by Curtis Mosters.

Inspired by *The Seige of Gondor* (acoup.blog/2019/05/10/) by Bret Devereaux.

I also looked at *Tolkien Gateway* (tolkiengateway.net/wiki/) a few times.



Witch King



Black Serpent

