

CHARM WARS

by Dan Lutts

Work

Like their ancient Roman counterparts, noblesse men don't work. Instead, their wealth is measured in land. Their families have a walled compound in Caldon and a farm in the country worked by commoners. One way for a family to increase its wealth is by purchasing existing farms from destitute farmers, which they combine into large farms. As more and more farms are bought, their former owners flock to Caldon, increasing the city's population and the importance of the grain dole to feed the citizens. Another way noblesse gain wealth is by purchasing shares in businesses and becoming silent partners, oftentimes because the debtor can't repay a business loan his matriarch had taken out from their patron.

Like their plebeian counterparts, commoners are the lifeblood of Caldon because they do all the work and run the businesses that keep the city humming. Rill's father, Marc, is a blacksmith, which is a crucial job because horses are important for transportation and weapons such as swords and daggers are needed by the legions and the sea service for war and by civilians for self defense. Jedd is a fletcher who makes arrows used in war, hunting, and personal protection. He also is a backwatcher. Rill's next door neighbor is a stonemason. Other jobs include running taverns and food houses, tanning, weaving, tailoring and dressmaking, shoemaking, baking, and winemaking.