

K I N G A R T H U R  
**Pendragon**<sup>®</sup>





# KING ARTHUR Pendragon®



5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION



*Let us win glory for our king,  
who will reward us with honors and lands;  
and the devil take the hindermost!*

BY GREG STAFFORD



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The arms of King Arthur's Knights are based on the 15<sup>th</sup>-Century French manuscript known as *La forme qu'on tenoit des tournoys* from the collection of Harvard University, attributed to Jacques d'Armagnac, Duc de Menours.

## ABOUT THE COVER

### ARTHUR AND THE TROIT BOAR

King Arthur had a young cousin named Culhwch who sought to marry the beautiful maid Olwen. Yet to achieve that love, the young chief had to fulfill a series of tasks so seemingly impossible that only a man as great as Arthur could accomplish them, and then only when accompanied by his amazing band of heroes.

The greatest of these tasks was to get a comb, scissors, and razor — symbols of manhood and initiation — from between the ears of the gigantic Troit Boar, known to the Welsh as *Twrch Twyth*. This monstrous creature was accompanied by its seven piglets, each of which alone was nearly invincible. Arthur and his men pursued this army of swine through Ireland, Wales, and Cornwall, slaying them one by one until at last only the greatest remained. Sword to tusk, they fought for nine days before Arthur's valiant huntsmen and warriors were able to seize the treasures. That fight is what we see on the cover of this 5<sup>th</sup> edition of *Pendragon*.

The original story is a savage and wild tale of the Welsh Arthur, a supernatural chief of superhuman men in a fairy-tale world of wonder and terror. The game herein is set in a world based on later sources, where Arthur and his court are the sophisticated Knights of the Round Table, a court of knights both chivalrous and brutal. Yet it also includes the legends of the more primitive Welsh stories, the more refined French epics, the gentlemanly English poems, and the Grail legends. It is the world of the greatest king in the world, where you participate in the realm of King Arthur Pendragon.



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# Introduction

Welcome to *Pendragon*.

*Pendragon* is the game of King Arthur. It brings the extraordinary world of Arthurian chivalry, magic, and romance to life, with you playing one of the knights of the realm. You start off small, but through action, intelligence, and luck, you have a chance to join the Round Table. As time passes, your knight may establish a famous family and participate in the wondrous events of the most famous king of fiction.

This is a game of medieval fantasy, played using feudal standards and offering a chance to experience vicariously that long-lost world, in both its brutal reality and its fantastic idealism. Every player character is a knight, thus having both the privileges of elite society and also the risky, often deadly responsibilities. These dichotomies — brutal reality versus idealism, elite privilege versus deadly burden — are the basis for the game.

*Pendragon* is a game for knights. It is not about magicians, thieves, or scholars, nor about “might-have-beens” or “could-haves” (though these options will appear in later supplements). In this core game, designed for playing the heavily armed and armored chevaliers of Arthurian literature, knighthood is complex enough!

But the “reality” of this game is not a specific period of knighthood. The game crowds the entire Middle Ages into its framework, moving your character’s family through the equivalent of centuries of time. It begins in the Dark Ages and ends in the War of the Roses, just before the Renaissance, allowing you to sample the developments of armor, weapons, castles, and customs in a process of accelerating change.

This setting is not “fair” to people outside Britain, and does not strive for game balance for everyone. The untamed Celts, Saxons, and Picts who defy Arthur’s rule must rely upon their own barbaric cultures, devoid of the anachronistic gifts that feudalism, chivalry, and romance deliver to the player characters. Their warriors might be addressed as knights, and their chieftains might be called kings, but these enemies of the *Pendragon* are deluded, destined only to be conquered by him.

Between the kingdoms of men lie the mythical domains of Faerie — great dark woods and bright shining fields unexplored by human foot or thought. Entire kingdoms of immortals lie both beyond and within Arthur’s realm. Their cities and castles appear and vanish like mist. Their magical residents, such as the Green Knight, often visit the world of men. In turn, bold human questers sometimes enter the Faerie realm to seek the greatest adventures.

## PLAYING *PENDRAGON*

Most of us, as children, engaged in some sort of make-believe. “Cops and Robbers” is common, or some variant of “guns.” (Or the ever-present “knights,” if swords and shields were in fashion that year.) Playing *Pendragon* is like that style of childhood play, but instead of running around the backyard with sticks, the players use their collective imaginations. And instead of the incessant “Got you!” and “No you didn’t!” arguments, you use dice to settle disputes and arbitrations. Game play consists mostly of talk about and on behalf of your character, who is your “pretend guy” in the imaginary world. If it seems strange at first, give it a try. It is something you have done in the past. And it’s entertaining fun. If it seems embarrassing, relax — Fun is its own reward and needs no justification.

Playing *Pendragon* is simple. Players start by creating an imaginary character, a knight who will do — or at least attempt to do — whatever the player wishes in the world of King Arthur. Normally, several player characters adventure together to help each other obtain common aims.

Each character has its own *character sheet*, a piece of paper that categorizes all of his (we use the masculine pronoun because most player characters will tend to be male) game-relevant information. This sheet lists statistics to show his physical characteristics, his prowess at various knightly things, and his behavior. These statistics change as time goes on, for as the knight uses his abilities, he gains experience and has a chance to improve. After many game years of play, though, he begins to age so that certain attributes deteriorate.



### Introduction to King Arthur

Listen and hear the life of a great lord who, while he lived, had no equal in cottage or castle. This event took place in the time of Arthur, that King, courtly and royal, and is about one of his great adventures. Wherever he went, of all kings, Arthur bears the flower; of all knights, he bears the honor. The whole country was chivalrous in those days. All knights were valiant, and cowards were forever disgraced.

—from *The Wedding of Sir Gawaine and Dame Ragnell*

The “Gamemaster” plays the rest of the world. A Gamemaster sets up problems, events, or stories, and manages the playing of everything and everyone else in the world, whether rival knight, enemy warrior, romantically inclined damsel, or ferocious black lion. He is the guide and master storyteller who presents problems and determines when the game system is used. He is not an opponent, per se, but the referee and designer of the game, who prepares challenges, oversees non-player characters, and moves the overall plot along through the miracles and marvels of King Arthur’s world.

Most game play is verbal. The players simply tell the Gamemaster what their characters are doing, and the Gamemaster tells them what the results are. If there is a chance of failure, then dice are used to determine success or failure. Most actions are determined with a single die roll, and *Pendragon* uses a single simple system to determine all results, whether

recognizing a stranger’s coat of arms, flirting with a maiden, or fighting desperately against a sword-wielding opponent.

The object of the game is to acquire Glory. Everything a character does that is knightly helps to acquire Glory, and when he attains 1,000 Glory points he has the chance to develop in ways denied to normal folk. He gets Glory through combat, chivalrous behavior, religious behavior, familial obligation, possessions and riches, and social position.

Warning: This game is potentially deadly to your player knights. Their job is one of combat, and the game is designed to be dangerous, not easy on them. Characters need to be careful! In any case, every character is going to die, either through violence (quite common) or through old age. This mortality makes the game more poignant and the characters more affected with the concerns of real people.

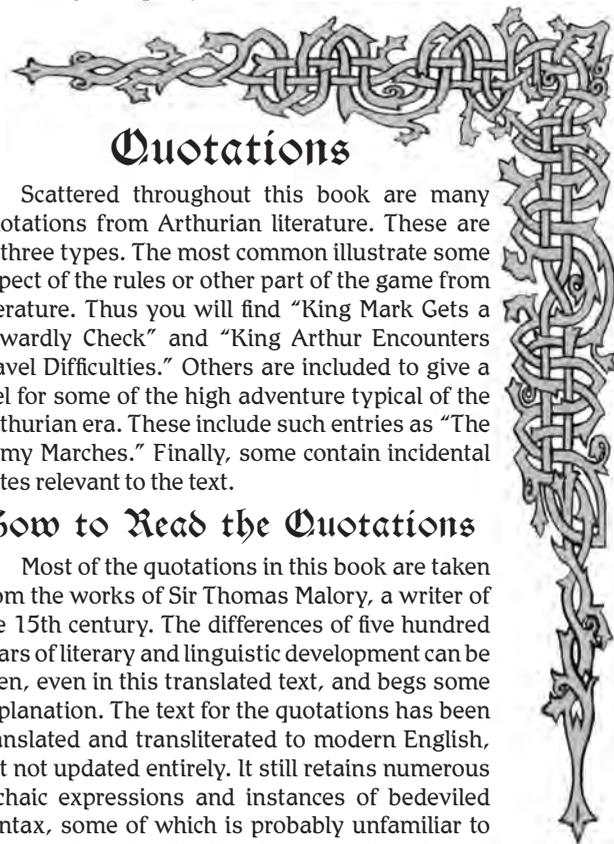
But there is a solution to this mortality — a family. One of the concerns of the game is to raise a family. Thus, when your character retires from play, either through death or old age, then all his possessions go to his heir, the next character you will play. The coat of arms, horse, manor, and family name live on!

Hence, reputation is critical in the game. Everyone is a knight, but the *kinds* of knight one portrays can vary greatly from one’s fellows. A character’s actual behavior is always up to the player, but certain behaviors earn more Glory than others. Everyone is judged on the thirteen paired traits (see Chapter 4), which denote the most important types of knightly behavior. Everyone also has certain passions, such as loyalty to their feudal lord, love of their family, and obedience to the laws of hospitality. Most people have other passions as well, be they love for a paramour or wife, hatred of enemies, or loyalty to a certain group or brotherhood. These things are important, for when fired by a passion, a knight can obtain nearly superhuman prowess!

The *Pendragon* game moves quickly through time. The objective is to go through almost ninety game years, covering the entirety of King Arthur’s life. Your first character might well be on hand to learn of the conception of the great king, fight through the anarchy before his reign, and witness him drawing the sword from the stone. Later, he, or his family, will participate in the great and deadly battles of Arthur’s reign. Most likely, though, it will be his progeny who share in the period of High Adventure, when questing and love rule the court, and it might be his grandchildren who witness the decline of the Round Table, the great Grail Quest, and the final destruction of all that is wondrous in the final battles.

The history of *Pendragon* is not static. Customs change, armor improves, new weapons and better horses become available. The pace of these changes is set so that fifteen years of game time approximate a hundred years of real-world medieval history, bringing the campaign not just through the Arthurian story, but also through the entirety of the Middle Ages.

*Pendragon* offers a chance to be a part, vicariously, of the greatest epic of Western literature in a way that can thrill, challenge, affront, and entertain. Its unique features bring the important aspects of medieval feudalism and Arthurian chivalry to imagined reality in a series of enjoyable sessions that you will never forget.



## Quotations

Scattered throughout this book are many quotations from Arthurian literature. These are of three types. The most common illustrate some aspect of the rules or other part of the game from literature. Thus you will find “King Mark Gets a Cowardly Check” and “King Arthur Encounters Travel Difficulties.” Others are included to give a feel for some of the high adventure typical of the Arthurian era. These include such entries as “The Army Marches.” Finally, some contain incidental notes relevant to the text.

### How to Read the Quotations

Most of the quotations in this book are taken from the works of Sir Thomas Malory, a writer of the 15th century. The differences of five hundred years of literary and linguistic development can be seen, even in this translated text, and begs some explanation. The text for the quotations has been translated and transliterated to modern English, but not updated entirely. It still retains numerous archaic expressions and instances of bedeviled syntax, some of which is probably unfamiliar to the casual reader. Clarifications have been inserted into the text in brackets to make understanding easier.

- Run-on sentences are the rule, rather than the exception.
- Pronoun usage often differs widely from that used today, so that it is sometimes hard to understand to whom “he” and “him” refer. I can only urge patience.
- The major changes made to the published texts are to spell the names consistently, using the forms I prefer. Thus we use “Lancelot du Lac” rather than “Launcelot du Lake,” and “Isoud” instead of “Isoult.”
- See the bibliography following the appendices at the end of the book for further notes. Specific attribution is not given in the sections quoted, except for those from Malory.



## WHICH ARTHUR IS THIS?

Many versions of King Arthur exist. Stories have been told and retold about him for 1400 years, changing a little or a lot to suit the audience. The *Pendragon* game uses parts from all literary versions. However, in this introductory book some versions are emphasized over the others. Supplements to *Pendragon* reveal other aspects of the legends.

### ENGLISH

Personal heroism, chivalrous honor, and a refreshing simplicity mark the English tales. In them, King Arthur is a vigorous, wise, and benevolent monarch, and Sir Gawaine is by far the favorite English knight. Among the best-known stories of this classification include *Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight* and *Sir Gawaine and Dame Ragnell*. Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*, the first modern English interpretation of French and English sources, serves as the basis for this game.

### FRENCH

Most medieval Arthurian legends are in French, the tongue of aristocrats in the era they were written. These stories range from brilliant to insipid, but are characterized by a colorful, romantic, and artistic treatment. In these, King Arthur is often portrayed as inefficient and uninspiring, and Sir Lancelot is by far the most highly favored knight.

Chretien de Troyes is often considered the father of Arthurian Literature, but the anonymous, sprawling *Vulgate Tristram* and *Prose Tristram* were among the most-copied manuscripts of their day. These latter two are the "French books" which Malory used in his version, and have inevitably influenced the game.

### CHRONICLES

Characterized by relatively sober reporting, chronicles reported purportedly historical events. The best known of these is also one of the first, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*. Modern fiction that follows this tradition portrays a Dark Age Arthur, devoid of medieval flourishes. Mary Stewart's series on Merlin is perhaps the best known of these modern novels.

Facts (or at least what are widely considered facts) drawn from this type of history are used to supply background political detail for *Pendragon*.

### MODERN TALES

King Arthur is wise beyond his era, foreshadowing democratic and other common institutions; he is vaguely aware of being a tool of some greater Fate, and courageously but vainly struggles against a certain doom.

In this, T. H. White's *Once and Future King* is closest to the spirit of the basic *Pendragon* game; Howard Pyle's Arthurian compilation exhibits a similarly sanitized American idealism. Hal Foster's *Prince Valiant* comic strip provides a background similar to the chronicles, and to *Pendragon*. The idealism and enlightenment of King Arthur in *Pendragon* comes from such stories.

### WELSH

Primitive and wild, the Welsh tales go hand-in-hand with the supernatural and fantastic. Arthur is a vigorous

warrior, more a chieftain than king or emperor. The best known Welsh Arthurian story is "Culhwch and Olwen," found in *The Mabinogion*.

The wonder and fantasy of this Arthurian tradition is at the root of the advanced character generation system, and the magic system in this book.

### RADICAL

Some stories, mostly modern, provide novel interpretations of people and events in the Arthurian legends. They tend to psychologize the heroes. Favorite characters in these apocryphal tales are often the antagonists from the medieval stories. These include a confused, yet not *evil*, Sir Mordred in Stewart's *That Wicked Day*; a justifiably short-tempered Sir Kay in Phyllis Ann Carr's *The Idylls of the Queen*; and Marion Zimmer Bradley's amoral Morgan le Fay in *The Mists of Avalon*.

The complexity of the corpus of legend leaves room for these kinds of open-minded and creative interpretations. We encourage Gamemasters to use whichever interpretations they fancy most, even to make up their own for their campaigns. Interpreting the story is, for us as well as for established authors, a creative experience.

## WHEN IS THIS?

This book, the core rules for the *Pendragon* game, is set to begin your campaign in the year 485 A.D. This period occurs toward the end of Uther Pendragon's reign, shortly before he fathers Arthur. The information given here is narrowly set in that period, with armor and weapon choices, clothing styles, castle and horse types, and a general price list inspired by what we know of Dark Age Europe. Subsequent game supplements will advance the chronology so that fifteen game years emulate one hundred years of technological and cultural advancement through European history.

King Arthur's reign lasts for 55 years — from the time he draws the sword from the stone (510 A.D.) until he is rowed to Avalon (565 A.D.). If you are starting to play in an ongoing campaign, be sure to check with your Game-master on the precise date.

### A PENDRAGON CHRONOLOGY

This chronology lists the crucial phases and events in King Arthur's long reign. It can only hint at the richness of detail and variety to be found in the various Arthurian sources. Subsequent *Pendragon* supplements will present these events in detail.

- 485–495: **Period of King Uther.** The strong-arm king rules Logres.
- 495: Battle of St. Albans — Uther Pendragon dies without a known heir.
- 495–510: **Period of Anarchy.** Kingless, the Isle of Britain falls into ruin amidst lawlessness, rivalries, war and invasion.
- 510: Arthur draws the sword from the stone and is declared High King.
- 510–525: **Period of Unification.** King Arthur fights many fierce wars to unify Britain.
- 514: King Arthur marries Guenever and institutes the Brotherhood of the Round Table.
- 515: The Dolorous Stroke begins the Enchantment of Britain.
- 525: Sir Lancelot arrives at court.

- 525–540: **Period of Consolidation.** Romance and knight errantry are popular. Hints of what is to come, both good and ill, begin to appear, but are ignored or unrecognized.
- 531: The sinister Sir Mordred arrives at court early this year. Lancelot is made a member of the Round Table. Finally, during the Irish Tournament that crowns the year, an unknown knight, “Sir Tramtrist” (Tristram), defeats all participating Round Table knights, and begins a legendary love affair with Queen Isoud of Cornwall.
- 540–555: **Period of Apogee.** A period of magical quest and adventure as the Enchantment of Britain is at its peak.
- 549: Miraculous healings by the Grail begin.
- 553: The Lonazep Tournament is held, the last and greatest. Dark forces appear and tragedy looms.
- 554: The Quest for the Holy Grail begins.
- 555–: **Period of Decline.** Intrigue, murder, and rebellion disrupt the realm.
- 563: Lancelot and Guenever are caught in adultery, shattering the unity of the Round Table and Britain.
- 565: At the disastrous Battle of Camlann, Mordred wounds Arthur, who is removed to the Isle of Avalon. The world’s magic fades and banal history intervenes.

## ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book begins with the Introduction you are currently reading, which provides a brief overview of the contents and explains the most basic things you need to know about the game.

Essential background information comes next. Chapter One gives the what and why of the game. The first section, “The Pendragon Realm,” covers information about the lands and people of Britain, primarily drawn from literature; next, “The Feudal World” gives various facts about medieval times (again, generally taken from historical and literary tracts) that you, as a player, will need to understand — remember, medieval customs were very different from those of our modern life.



### What Does “Pendragon” Mean?

*Pendragon* is a title that roughly corresponds to “High King.” Arthur’s uncle, Aurelius Ambrosius, first held it when he regained his patrimony from the usurper Vortigern, a hated tyrant who invited the Saxons to Britain. After Aurelius died, his brother Uther came to hold the title. Uther fathers Arthur, who will hold it next, and after whom none will hold it again. Thus, the title becomes, in effect, a family name.

The word comes from the ancient British (Cymric) tongue: *ben*, or chief, and *dragon*, or warlord. Warlords and dragons have been associated ever since the coming of the Romans, who carried draconic banners as legionary standards. Aurelius Ambrosius is called by Nennius “the last Roman,” and bore a famous draconic banner before his army. The modern descendants of Arthur’s people, the Welsh, still revere the symbol in their national arms: a red dragon.



Chapter Two addresses the rules of character generation. With it, you will create your first character, a soon-to-be knight, who will set out to establish a dynasty and to find fame and glory in the Arthurian world. Part of the chapter addresses the option of playing women in the game, and also provides background to help you better understand women’s roles in Arthurian society; there is also a section about the possibility of playing a female knight.

Chapter Three, “Family and Fatherland,” allows players to learn some background to flesh out their characters’ paternal family in post-Roman Britain; it also includes rules for generating starting Glory for their first characters to inherit. The section entitled “Your Family” rounds off the information needed for you to create a fully realized background for your character. An even larger view of the player’s realm comes next: The “Your Home” section gives a great deal of very detailed information about the County of Salisbury, whence all beginning characters hail. It is a sample of the sort of knowledge that characters have about their homelands. You don’t have to memorize this material, but it is a useful reference if you need it.

Chapter Four explains some of the unique facets of the game that quantify behavior, reward it, and draw both bonuses and restrictions from it. In addition, it explains the various skills and combat skills your character will use regularly in the game.

Chapter Five explains most of the other core game mechanics; it tells you when and how to roll the dice and the consequences of success and failure when you do so. It explains how your character will gain Glory and experience, even how your character will change as he ages, and addresses the rules for movement around the land and across the battlefield.

Chapter Six, “Combat,” explains the many details of how to fight in the game, which is of course a key element in the life of any respectable Arthurian knight. It also includes rules for running skirmishes, larger-scale fights including up to a couple hundred warriors.

Chapter Seven, “Ambition and Faith,” defines and explains some of the things your character may attempt throughout the campaign — to become a Chivalrous knight, to become a nobleman, or to join the Round Table, for instance. This portion of the book discusses the various social and cultural values that inform and define the game. It explains how your knight must behave to get ahead, and what prompts his beliefs and his motivations. Further, it explains some of the background and history of the Christian and pagan religions of the game. It also includes a small section about magic, the dark and mysterious realm that good knights all avoid.

The final chapter explains how knights in *Pendragon* view riches and affluence. It also contains a price list for the beginning era of the game so that your character can spend his hard-earned treasure.

Appendix One, “In the Future,” contains rules and information about things that have not yet come to pass, but that will become important after King Arthur takes the throne. Here you will find rules for chivalry and romance.





This section highlights some of the material that will be expanded upon in the *Great Pendragon Campaign* sourcebook.

Appendix Two, “Characters and Creatures,” gives sample characters, beasts, and monsters that frequent or dwell in the knights’ world. Gamemasters might wish to let players look through this chapter briefly to get an idea of what other beings in the world are like (in terms of game mechanics and statistics). It will show you why you ought to run from giants and dragons, but might wish to fight a panther or a hippogriff.

Appendix Three, “Scenarios,” is divided into two sections. The first is an Introductory Scenario for new Gamemasters to help them start a new campaign. Later, there are several “solo scenarios” designed for single players (with or perhaps even without a Gamemaster), for any of the reasons contained in that chapter.

Appendix Four gives rules for running battles of a larger scale than the skirmish rules found in Chapter Six. With the information in this appendix, you can quickly and easily run battles with armies of as many as 10,000 warriors or more!

Finally, Appendix Five provides an overview of the role and structure of tournaments, and rules, for player and Gamemaster alike, for running them.

After the appendices are a list of books for suggested reading on knighthood, the Arthurian legend, and similar pertinent topics (both fiction and non-), as well as some design notes and observations from the game’s creator.

## DIE-ROLLING CONVENTIONS

*Pendragon* uses two types of dice to play: 20-sided and 6-sided polyhedrons. To use them, the appropriate die is rolled on a table or other smooth surface. When the die comes to rest, the number that can be read on the top provides the result. For a 20-sided die, this number is between 1 and 20. For the 6-sided die, it is between 1 and 6.

**d20:** The abbreviation for the rolling of a 20-sided die. If the rules say, “Roll a d20,” they mean that the player rolls the die, and the number which is left face-up is the result.

**d6:** The abbreviation for the rolling of a 6-sided die. However, usually more than one of these are used at the same time. The abbreviation for multiples of the d6 is made by putting a number before the “d6,” in the form “xd6.” Thus, if the rules say “Roll 5d6,” the player rolls five 6-sided dice and adds their results together.

**d3:** This notation indicates that the player should roll a 6-sided die, with results of ‘1’ or ‘2’ meaning 1, ‘3’ or ‘4’ meaning 2, and ‘5’ or ‘6’ meaning 3.

**+N:** This notation indicates that the player rolls all the dice normally appropriate to the prevailing situation, then adds an amount (equal to *N*) to the die result. For example, a typical starting character begins with 6d6+150 Glory, meaning he rolls 6d6 and adds the sum to 150 to get his total starting Glory.

**XdX/2:** This notation indicates that the player rolls all the dice (as represented by XdX) normally appropriate to the prevailing situation, then divides the result by 2. For example, 3d6/2 means “roll 3d6, then divide the sum by 2.”

**XdXx2:** This notation indicates that the player rolls the appropriate number of dice (as represented by XdX) two times and adds all the results. For example, 4d6x2 means “roll 4d6 twice, adding together the results of the two rolls.” This notation is also sometimes referred to as “doubles” or “doubled,” as in “double damage.”

## ROLLS AND CHECKS

During the game, your character will be tested in certain ways, such as in personal combat. Rather than merely saying “I win” or “I succeed,” the Gamemaster sometimes requires you to make a d20 roll against an appropriate statistic. For example, in combat, you would roll versus a combat skill. The random result is compared with the value of the dictating statistic (i.e., the appropriate skill, trait, or passion value) to determine whether you succeed or fail.

If you describe your character’s actions in a very convincing or creative fashion, you may not need to roll — in such a case, your ideas or tactics were well-conceived enough in the Gamemaster’s eyes to ensure automatic success.

Your character may also receive a “check” (short for “experience check”). See the section entitled “Obtaining Experience” in Chapter 5 for more on checks and what they mean.

The Gamemaster always decides if a roll is necessary or an experience check is warranted.

## ROUNDING OFF FRACTIONS

When performing calculations in *Pendragon*, round 0.5 and higher fractions upward and lesser fractions downward. For example, a character with a Damage value of 4.43 would have an effective value of 4, while a character with a Damage value of 4.5 would have a 5.

## CHARACTER STATISTICS AND VALUES

The numbers on your character sheet are used to rate your character’s various statistics. Your character has five sets of statistics listed on the sheet: attributes, traits, passions, skills, and combat skills. Spaces are also given for squire and horse statistics.

Statistics have numerical values ranging from 5 to 21 for most characters in the game. What is a good value to have? In general, values around 10 are ordinary and mediocre. Values over 15 are considered superior, while values over 20 are heroic. Those lower than 5 are inferior. This is the range for humans; some monsters or magical characters have values of 30 or more in certain statistics. A normal character’s Chaste trait might have a value of 10. A Round Table knight’s Sword skill might have a value of 25. An aged knight’s Strength might have dwindled to 5.

## MIND YOUR C’S AND K’S

The C-sound used in foreign words in this game in almost every instance is pronounced as a hard C, a K-sound. This is especially important for these words:

*Cymric* is pronounced “Kim-rik.” *Celtic* is pronounced “Kel-tik.”

Remember that the Celtics (*Sel-tiks*) are a basketball team, a *selt* is a stone knife without a handle, and a Celt (*Kelt*) is a member of an ancient culture.

## MEASUREMENTS

Distances are measured in imperial measures of *inches*, *feet*, and *miles*. Metric conversions are given here:

- 1 inch = 2.5 cm
- 1 foot = 12 inches = 30 cm
- 1 hand = 4 inches = 10 cm
- 1 rod = 16.5 feet = 5 meters
- 1 mile = 0.66 km
- 1 league = 3 miles = 5 km

Weights:

- 1 ounce = 30 g
- 1 pound = 16 oz. = 0.48 kg
- 1 stone = 14 pounds = 6.5 kg
- 1 ton = 2000 pounds = 0.9 metric tons

## COMMON TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Many words used in this game are, inevitably, from archaic forms of English and thus no longer in current usage. Others remain in use, but have been transformed over time to have a new meaning. Also, many game terms have specific meanings not carried by their common usage. Effort has been made to use these terms consistently, as given here.

**£:** *Librum* (plural *libra*): A Roman monetary unit, later called a “pound,” equal to 240 d. or 20s.

**APP:** Appearance. One of the attributes.

**Attribute:** A statistic measuring innate physical aptitude or ability (note that this does not include mental factors): The five attributes are SIZ, DEX, STR, CON, and APP.

**Character:** An individual person or being encountered during the game. Player characters have their actions determined by players, while Gamemaster characters are controlled by the Gamemaster.

**Combat Skill:** A skill used in war or tournament.

**CON:** Constitution. One of the attributes.

**d.:** *Denarius* (plural *denarii*). The Roman equivalent of a pence, or penny. 240 d. = 1 £.

**d6, d20:** Dice used in the game, 6- and 20-sided respectively.

**Dame:** Title for a woman that is equivalent to “lord,” used when the woman is the head of her own household.

**DEX:** Dexterity. One of the attributes.

**Glory:** A measure of a character’s success, notoriety, and power. Does not measure reputation directly. Value is measured in Glory points, which are received for most significant events or actions during play.

**Knight:** A warrior who has undergone the ceremony of knighthood and sworn allegiance to a lord. A nobleman of the lowest rank.

**Lady:** The wife of a nobleman of any rank.

**Liege Lord:** The lord to whom a knight owes primary loyalty. Through marriage and inheritance a knight may have many lords, but he must choose one to be pre-eminent, who is called the liege lord.

**Lord:** A knight, and a nobleman, holding other knights as vassals. A banneret knight is the lowest lord. The High King is the highest lord.

**Manor:** A land holding which is capable of providing enough income to support a knight.

**Noble:** A person of the highest social class, including all lords and knights, and some squires.

**Passion:** A statistic. A powerful specific emotion that can inspire or prematurely age a knight. Also measures reputation.

**Penny:** See “d.” (Denarius).

**Roll:** A random roll of a die to determine events during the game impartially.

**s.:** Shilling. A monetary unit equal to 12 d., or 1/20 £.

**SIZ:** Size. One of the attributes.

**Skill:** A statistic. A measure of ability and knowledge in a specific ordinary activity such as singing or swimming. Combat skills are significantly different from ordinary skills and are placed together in a separate section.

**Squire:** The servant of a knight. Squires may be nobles if they are the sons of nobles, or commoners if they are the sons of commoners or of squires.

**Statistic:** The various areas in which a character is rated: attributes, traits, passions, skills, and combat skills. All statistics have numerical values for use with a d20 roll.

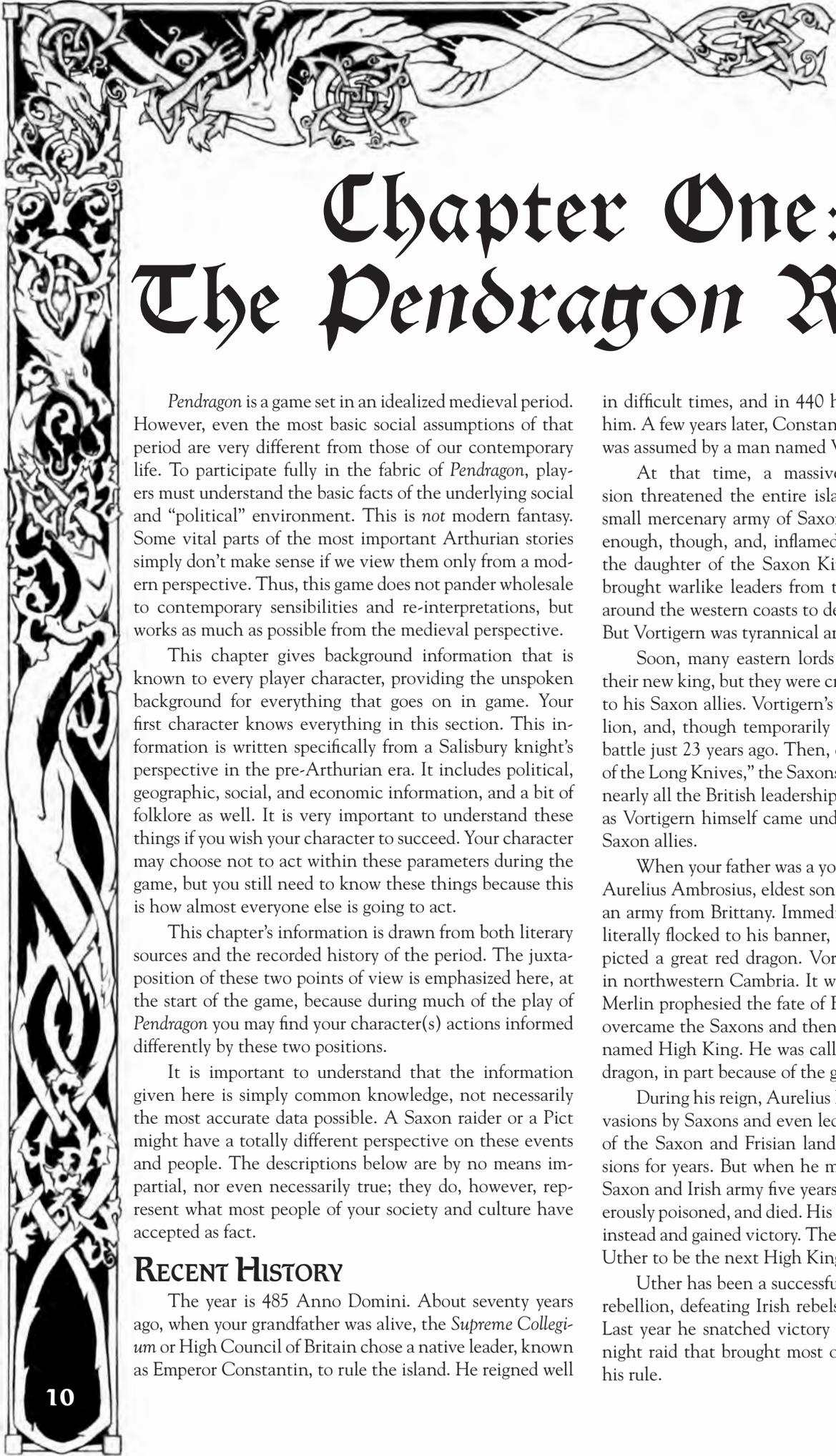
**STR:** Strength. One of the attributes.

**Trait:** A statistic. A psychological factor indicating preferences for certain actions over others, such as courage rather than cowardice. Also measures reputation in conjunction with passions.

**Value:** The numerical value of a statistic.

**Weapon Skill:** A type of combat skill involving a particular weapon.





# Chapter One: The Pendragon Realm

*Pendragon* is a game set in an idealized medieval period. However, even the most basic social assumptions of that period are very different from those of our contemporary life. To participate fully in the fabric of *Pendragon*, players must understand the basic facts of the underlying social and “political” environment. This is *not* modern fantasy. Some vital parts of the most important Arthurian stories simply don’t make sense if we view them only from a modern perspective. Thus, this game does not pander wholesale to contemporary sensibilities and re-interpretations, but works as much as possible from the medieval perspective.

This chapter gives background information that is known to every player character, providing the unspoken background for everything that goes on in game. Your first character knows everything in this section. This information is written specifically from a Salisbury knight’s perspective in the pre-Arthurian era. It includes political, geographic, social, and economic information, and a bit of folklore as well. It is very important to understand these things if you wish your character to succeed. Your character may choose not to act within these parameters during the game, but you still need to know these things because this is how almost everyone else is going to act.

This chapter’s information is drawn from both literary sources and the recorded history of the period. The juxtaposition of these two points of view is emphasized here, at the start of the game, because during much of the play of *Pendragon* you may find your character(s) actions informed differently by these two positions.

It is important to understand that the information given here is simply common knowledge, not necessarily the most accurate data possible. A Saxon raider or a Pict might have a totally different perspective on these events and people. The descriptions below are by no means impartial, nor even necessarily true; they do, however, represent what most people of your society and culture have accepted as fact.

## RECENT HISTORY

The year is 485 Anno Domini. About seventy years ago, when your grandfather was alive, the *Supreme Collegium* or High Council of Britain chose a native leader, known as Emperor Constantin, to rule the island. He reigned well

in difficult times, and in 440 his son Constans succeeded him. A few years later, Constans was killed, and the throne was assumed by a man named Vortigern.

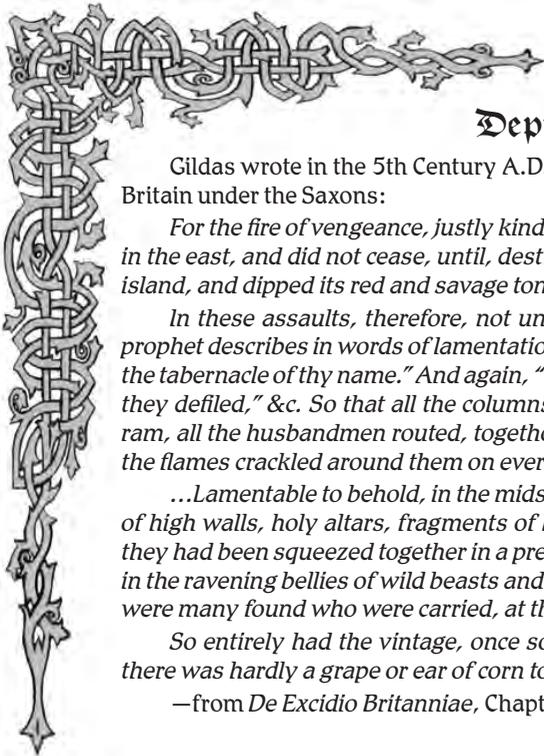
At that time, a massive Pictish and Irish invasion threatened the entire island until Vortigern hired a small mercenary army of Saxon warriors. Victory was not enough, though, and, inflamed by lust, Vortigern married the daughter of the Saxon King Hengest. Vortigern also brought warlike leaders from the north and settled them around the western coasts to defend against Irish invaders. But Vortigern was tyrannical and not well loved.

Soon, many eastern lords of Britain rebelled against their new king, but they were crushed and their lands given to his Saxon allies. Vortigern’s own son led another rebellion, and, though temporarily successful, he was killed in battle just 23 years ago. Then, during the infamous “Night of the Long Knives,” the Saxons betrayed Vortigern, slaying nearly all the British leadership. The island suffered greatly as Vortigern himself came under the rule of his erstwhile Saxon allies.

When your father was a young knight, in the year 466, Aurelius Ambrosius, eldest son of Constantin, landed with an army from Brittany. Immediately, the people of Britain literally flocked to his banner, a magical standard that depicted a great red dragon. Vortigern fled and took refuge in northwestern Cambria. It was there that the child sage Merlin prophesied the fate of Britain. Aurelius Ambrosius overcame the Saxons and then Vortigern himself, and was named High King. He was called the “high king,” or Pendragon, in part because of the great battle banner he bore.

During his reign, Aurelius Pendragon defeated new invasions by Saxons and even led a fleet to ravage the coasts of the Saxon and Frisian lands, suppressing further invasions for years. But when he marched against a combined Saxon and Irish army five years ago, in 480, he was treacherously poisoned, and died. His brother, Uther, led the army instead and gained victory. The grateful nobles then named Uther to be the next High King, the new Pendragon.

Uther has been a successful king thus far, quashing all rebellion, defeating Irish rebels and Saxon invaders alike. Last year he snatched victory from defeat with a surprise night raid that brought most of the northern kings under his rule.



## Depredations of the Saxons

Gildas wrote in the 5th Century A.D., thus during King Arthur's time. Here is a part of his commentary about Britain under the Saxons:

*For the fire of vengeance, justly kindled by former crimes, spread from sea to sea, fed by the hands of our foes in the east, and did not cease, until, destroying the neighbouring towns and lands, it reached the other side of the island, and dipped its red and savage tongue in the western ocean....*

*In these assaults, therefore, not unlike that of the Assyrian upon Judea, was fulfilled in our case what the prophet describes in words of lamentation: "They have burned with fire the sanctuary; they have polluted on earth the tabernacle of thy name." And again, "O God, the gentiles have come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled," &c. So that all the columns were levelled with the ground by the frequent strokes of the battering-ram, all the husbandmen routed, together with their bishops, priests, and people, whilst the sword gleamed, and the flames crackled around them on every side.*

*...Lamentable to behold, in the midst of the streets lay the tops of lofty towers, tumbled to the ground, stones of high walls, holy altars, fragments of human bodies, covered with livid clots of coagulated blood, looking as if they had been squeezed together in a press; and with no chance of being buried, save in the ruins of the houses, or in the ravening bellies of wild beasts and birds; with reverence be it spoken for their blessed souls, if, indeed, there were many found who were carried, at that time, into the high heaven by the holy angels....*

*So entirely had the vintage, once so fine, degenerated and become bitter, that, in the words of the prophet, there was hardly a grape or ear of corn to be seen where the husbandman had turned his back.*

—from *De Excidio Britanniae*, Chapter 24



Now, in 485, news has come that more Saxons are gathering in far Saxony to come to the aid of their kinsmen in Britain. The preparations for yet more war are building, and the noble British knights prepare once again to defend the realm under their courageous Pendragon.

Your character's ancestors, your grandfather and father, participated in these events. If you roll through the "Salisbury Family History" section (in Chapter 3), you will learn more of these events.

## FAMOUS PEOPLE

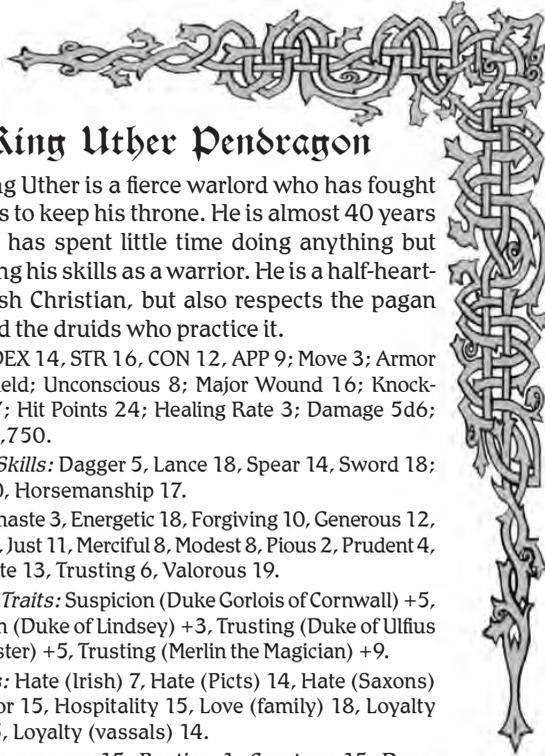
These extraordinary individuals are known throughout Britain and beyond. Your character has not personally met any of these people yet. Players are advised to review these characters briefly to get an idea of the highest level of success and power that can be reached by characters in the game.

### UTHER PENDRAGON

Uther is the High King of Logres. He is known to be ambitious and a great fighter and leader, stern in his judgments. He came to the throne when his brother, Aurelius Ambrosius, died. He has no wife, but several paramours, and an illegitimate son Madoc, now a young man recently knighted. He desires to rule all of Britain, not just Logres, and has waged wars against invading Saxons and other British kingdoms.

### MERLIN

The great magician and Archdruid of Britain, Merlin is reputedly the son of a nun and a daemon. He was baptized at birth, before the daemon could seize his soul, yet retained the supernatural powers he obtained from his father. He is the most skilled and revered of all magicians and, though respectful of Christians and Christianity, practices pagan magic without shame.



### King Uther Pendragon

King Uther is a fierce warlord who has fought for years to keep his throne. He is almost 40 years old and has spent little time doing anything but practicing his skills as a warrior. He is a half-hearted British Christian, but also respects the pagan faith and the druids who practice it.

SIZ 12, DEX 14, STR 16, CON 12, APP 9; Move 3; Armor 12 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 16; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 24; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6; Glory 27,750.

**Combat Skills:** Dagger 5, Lance 18, Spear 14, Sword 18; Battle 20, Horsemanship 17.

**Traits:** Chaste 3, Energetic 18, Forgiving 10, Generous 12, Honest 7, Just 11, Merciful 8, Modest 8, Pious 2, Prudent 4, Temperate 13, Trusting 6, Valorous 19.

**Directed Traits:** Suspicion (Duke Gorlois of Cornwall) +5, Suspicion (Duke of Lindsey) +3, Trusting (Duke of Ulfius of Silchester) +5, Trusting (Merlin the Magician) +9.

**Passions:** Hate (Irish) 7, Hate (Picts) 14, Hate (Saxons) 18, Honor 15, Hospitality 15, Love (family) 18, Loyalty (lord) 15, Loyalty (vassals) 14.

**Skills:** Awareness 15, Boating 1, Courtesy 15, Dancing 5, Faerie Lore 1, Falconry 3, First Aid 18, Flirting 3, Folklore 2, Gaming 3, Heraldry 12, Hunting 9, Intrigue 21, Orate 10, Play [harp] 3, Read [Latin] 2, Recognize 9, Religion [British Christianity] 2, Romance 2, Singing 2, Stewardship 9, Swimming 2, Tourney 2.

**Distinctive Features:** Red hair, powerful physique.

**Horse:** Charger (6d6).

**Equipment:** Noble clothing (£9), personal gear, travel gear, war gear.



As a magician, he is greatly feared and mistrusted by all right-thinking people. He has great powers of Glamour, and is thus able to temporarily create things, change shape, conceal himself, and move very quickly around the land. He has helped King Uther several times, as well as some



## Merlin the Magician

Merlin the Magician is a middle-aged man with great magical powers who serves as an advisor to King Uther. He is steeped in the druidic lore of Britain, wise and mysterious, and rightly feared and respected by everyone with good sense. Merlin's lord is Britain, not the king, though he helps Uther in many ways.

Merlin is capable of performing any magic known in Britain, whether British Christian or Druidic, Roman Christian, or Gnostic; he even knows something of Egyptian magic.

SIZ 12, DEX 17, STR 28\*, CON 19\*, APP 12; Move 7; Armor 2; Unconscious 12; Major Wound 19; Knockdown 12; Hit Points 47\*; Healing Rate 5; Damage 7d6; Glory 14,452.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 5, Spear 6; Battle 15, Horsemanship 1; Magical Disarm 26†.

*Traits:* Chaste 24, Energetic 19, Forgiving 10, Generous 18, Honest 19, Just 10, Merciful 8, Modest 12, Pious 19, Prudent 14, Temperate 15, Trusting 10, Valorous 15.

*Passions:* Honor 10, Hospitality 15, Love (Britain) 24, Love (family) 10, Loyalty (Uther) 10.

*Skills:* Awareness 21, Boating 5, Chirurgery 20, Compose 10, Courtesy 21, Dancing 2, Faerie Lore 21, Falconry 3, First Aid 24, Flirting 3, Folklore 21, Gaming 3, Heraldry 10, Hunting 21, Industry 10, Intrigue 3, Orate 3, Play [harp] 19, Recognize 13, Religion [Roman or British Christianity] 6, Religion [Paganism] 22, Romance 2, Singing 10, Stewardship 2, Swimming 2, Tourney 2.

*Distinctive Features:* Long grey hair and beard.

*Horse:* No need, for magic is much faster...

*Equipment:* Magician's robes, magician's staff.

*Special:* Merlin is the only person alive who can use every magical Talent (see "Magic" in Chapter 7).

\*These scores are beyond human standards due to bonuses accrued from Merlin's magic: STR and Hit Points +16 each, and CON +8.

† Merlin must have his staff in hand to use this ability, and he must be within 20 yards of the target (even in melee). Otherwise, it is treated as a standard opposed combat roll. If Merlin wins, the opponent's weapon is torn from his grasp and sent hurtling to any location within range, at Merlin's whim.



other kings such as Lot. He claims to have the best interests of Britain in mind, but no one can truly trust a magician. He periodically disappears into his private hideaway to recover from his magical exertions.

## OTHER NOTABLES

### KING LOT

Lot is the greatest king of the north and a rival to King Uther. He rules over a powerful confederation of kings who resist the rule of the Pendragon, and everyone knows that Lot himself covets the esteemed title of High King.

### ULFIUS, DUKE OF SILCHESTER

This neighboring lord of Salisbury is a renowned warrior and a loyal follower of King Uther. He is one of the most influential lords in Logres.

## NIMUE

Lady Nimue is the Lady of the Lake, a powerful enchantress and head of a sisterhood of powerful pagan priestesses. Her home is beneath a magical lake which comes and goes at her call, and which may appear in almost any land.

## THE FISHER KING

King Pellam, better known by his title of Fisher King, is known by reputation but never seen. He is the Keeper of the Holy Grail. His realm is hidden from mortal eyes, known only through legend. Thus, the secret Castle of the Holy Grail remains undiscovered.

## KING ÆLLE

Ælle is the *bretwalda*, reigning king among the many Saxon tribes that have settled in Britain. His personal land is Sussex. He has boasted that he will take over all of Britain, and has fought many battles against King Uther. Migrants coming from the continent are continually reinforcing him, although other Saxon immigrants instead ally with his rival Saxon kings.

## ARCHBISHOP DUBRICUS

Dubricus is the Archbishop of Britain. He oversees the religious affairs of the island from his holy see in Carlion, a Roman city in southern Cambria. He is a Roman Christian who uses his diplomatic skills to try to convince the many abbots of the British Church, which has no single leader, to submit to his (and Rome's) rule. Thus far, he has been unsuccessful.

## BRITAIN AND EUROPE

In this short section, the basic geographical and political organization of your character's world is revealed. Note that the information here represents commonly accepted estimates, not the work of trained geographers, demographers, or other technical specialists, who will not exist for perhaps a thousand years.

As you will see, your character knows little about the world outside his own homeland of Logres, less of Europe, and nothing about lands and peoples outside of Europe.

## POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF BRITAIN

Britain is divided into five areas: Logres, Cambria, Cumbria, Pictland, and Cornwall. Logres is by far the most important. Furthermore, several Saxon kingdoms inhabit the eastern coastal regions.

## LOGRES

Logres is the lowland region of Britain previously ruled by the Romans, who established many great cities. Your character's county, Salisbury, is located here. Logres is the largest and most powerful kingdom of Britain and the home of British civilization and culture. It includes about one half of the island's population. It is divided into several regions that are loosely based on the pre-Roman tribal areas. However, those tribal regions have been subdivided into administrative counties, each ruled by a count (though a couple of them have dukes instead). These Roman-imposed regions are stronger and more practical than the older divisions.

# Regions of Britain



**KEY**

Region Name  
Kingdom Name

Influence Only  
Kingdom's Center of Power  
Wilderness





Logres contains several significant cities, of which London is the largest and most important.

A map of Arthurian Britain appears on the endpapers, representing your character's knowledge of the world. The roads shown are all of Roman manufacture, but are now royal roads. They are considered to be the property of the local king. However, local lords have a responsibility to maintain these major thoroughfares. Anyone who commits violence upon the roads commits treason and incurs penalty as if having violated the sanctity of the king's own feast hall. Other Roman roads also exist in Logres, but they are not royal roads.

## THE CHURCH

Two rival types of Christianity are practiced in Britain at this time.

- *British Christianity* is native to the island, established by immigrants four centuries ago. It has bishops and abbots, but no single figure rules over all of them. Their local kings or noblemen appoint these important leaders, who in turn are loyal to their regional lords.

- The *Roman Church* is part of a hierarchy that takes its orders from Rome, so the pope determines its bishops. The Roman Christian Church in Logres has one supreme churchman, the Archbishop of Carlion, a Cymric, Dubricus by name; there are also a dozen or so abbots of great houses.

Churchmen are not considered noble unless they are also landlords, which is not uncommon. Many noble families have made land grants to churches or abbeys, which in turn supply knights in the usual feudal manner.

For more on Christianity, see Chapter 7.

## PAGANISM

Much of Britain is still pagan. Many farmers across Logres still make offerings to the field and weather gods, and many kingdoms outside of Logres even have kings and nobles who sacrifice to the old gods. The local kings are advised by councilors who are professed druids, a class of bardic priests and wise men who are in touch with the ancient powers of the land. The druid leaders are appointed to their positions by the local kings. A druidic network exists, but it does not have a ruling hierarchy. Instead, druids acknowledge each other's ranks through their exercise of knowledge and power.

Merlin the Enchanter, the Archdruid, is the acknowledged leader of the pagan religion, for no one is wiser or more powerful than he. Indeed, his power dwarfs that of all other druids, who are more advisors than magicians.

Another magical organization exists whose members are not druids, but who are yet priestesses and advisors. These generally lead local covens and perform farming and fertility rites. Like the druids, they are not a single organization but acknowledge each other through recognition of power and prestige. The leader of this group is Nimue, and her organization of the Ladies of the Lake is highly respected, if only from arms' length.

For more on Paganism, see Chapter 7.

## FOREIGN BRITAIN

All the rest of Britain outside of Logres is foreign land. These lands are divided among five larger regions, each of which has several kingdoms within it. Many lands are inhabited by Cymric peoples, others by Irish, Saxons, or Picts.

### CAMBRIA

Cambria is the western region of Britain. It is sometimes called Wales or, in the French fashion, Gales. Cambria, however, extends eastward beyond modern Wales to include a much larger region.

Two strong kings contend for power in Cambria. In the south, King Lak rules over Estregales. His subjects are generally descendants of ancient Irish raiders who settled here. He receives fealty from the lords of Escavalon, Gloucester, and Cardigan.

The lands of Gomeret and Isles (Anglesey and the Holy Isle), including Cheshire, are ruled by King Pellinore, an ambitious and difficult king. He is a fair and just man, but his passion for the hunt sometimes overcomes his obligations to his kingdom. Still, his people love him, and he has protected the land well from Irish raiders.

The interior of Cambria is all rugged mountains and forests. Many tribesfolk live there, outside the rule of any king or civilized ways.

### CUMBRIA

The people of Cumbria are often called the "northern British." Cumbria includes all the lands north of the Humber River and south of the Pictish mountains. Much of this region is of moor-covered mountains or dense, unexplored forest.

King Lot, the King of Lothian, is the preeminent king of the north. He comes from the northern islands of the Orkneys, but rules over Lothian. He also has alliances with many Pictish tribes. Though Lot is dominant, the rulers of most of the other British kingdoms have not submitted to him.

The Kingdom of Malahaut is the strongest single kingdom, and King Uther recently saved its king, Sir Barant de Apres, from the Saxons. Barant has as many titles as King Uther does: the Centurion King, King of the Brigantes, heir of King Coel the Old, and especially King of One Hundred Knights. He rules from the city of Eburacum (York).

### THE SAXON COAST

Several regions of eastern Britain have been settled by Germanic peoples from the northern mainland of Europe. Collectively, they are called Saxons, though technically not all are from Saxony. Saxons currently hold Sussex, while the Jutes hold Kent. Angles hold the lands of Nohaut and Diera. These regions each have their own kings.

Although they are all hostile to the Cymry, the "Saxons" are also rivals, and a rough peace is maintained through a high king called a *Bretwalda*, who is currently King Ælle of Sussex.

### PICTLAND

Pictland includes everything north of Cumbria. Most of it is mountain, unexplored and unknown to anyone except the wild, tattooed natives. Its rugged western coast-

line, called the Long Isles, is occupied by Irish from the powerful kingdom of Dal Riada.

The wild tribesmen of this region regularly raid and pillage Britain, returning home with plunder.

## CORNWALL AND BRITTANY

Cornwall and Brittany are “the west.” Cornwall includes the entire southwestern peninsula of the British Isle (an area much larger than the Cornwall of modern times). It is famous for its rich tin mines and its close political connections with Brittany, whose settlers have been populating and dominating the northern half of the peninsula for a generation.

Cornwall is divided between two rulers. Neither has ever submitted to Uther. The northwestern half of it is ruled over by Duke Gorlois; his wife, Ygraine, is the most renowned beauty in Britain. The southeastern half is ruled by King Idres, who also rules most of northern Brittany.

Brittany was once a Roman province, but it was severely depopulated by barbarians and disease, and has recently been settled by emigrants from Britain. Its coastal lands are rich and thriving, although the interior is a wild and enchanted forest. Most of the north is ruled by old King Idres of Totnes, the Cornish king. King Conan of Vannetais, in the south, is the other major ruler, ambitious and troubled by a fierce hatred for the King of France.

## BEYOND BRITAIN

### IRELAND

Ireland is a barbarous island populated by many clans of notorious wildness, all divided into five great kingdoms. It has a High King, but he rules more in name than in fact. The savage tribesmen of the region regularly raid across the Irish Sea to pillage Britain.

### EUROPE

Little is known of continental Europe in this time. The major regions are Rome (Italy), France, Ganis, Gaul, and the far-distant Byzantine Empire. The great Roman Empire of the Caesars has fallen, replaced by warring barbarian kingdoms ruled by grandsons of the ancient German war gods.

France is a large country in the north occupied by the Franks. Its king is Clovis, who does little more than oversee the many Frankish lords who continually bicker among themselves. The capital city of Paris is a squalid, fortified city.

Ganis is a powerful land in the southern coast of Biscay. Sailors of Ganis and Brittany contend for the Atlantic trade routes between Britain and the Mediterranean, along with the many Saxon pirates who ply the region.

Gaul is the southern region, more civilized and Roman than the northern French. (Most of its inhabitants can still read and write!)

Italy is dominated by the Goths, Germanic tribesfolk who try unsuccessfully to ape the Roman ways. In Rome is the pope, the leader of the Roman Christian church.

The Byzantine Empire is a powerful one, but is so far away that it is beyond concern. Every other land in Europe

is a feudal or barbarian kingdom. The farther north the kingdom lies, the more barbaric it is, making the Picts and the Scandinavians the most barbaric.

## THE HIGH ORDER OF KNIGHTHOOD

As a knight, your character knows all this information intimately. Other important information about knighthood is found in Chapter 7.

## THE ORIGINS OF KNIGHTHOOD

In the beginning, all men were equal in a perfect world of harmony and peace. But Adam and Eve condemned humanity to live in the world of trouble and death. Envy and covetousness came into being, and when men became violent, then might triumphed over right. Cruel people became leaders and forced themselves upon the weak and hapless.

At last, knighthood was instituted to restrain the unjust and to defend the weak. The most strong, courageous, and loyal man in every thousand (the *ex mille electus*) was chosen to be a knight (*L. miles*). He was given weapons, armor, a noble horse, and a squire to serve him. He was placed over the common people to protect them from tyranny and wild beasts. Commoners, in turn, were to till the earth and support the knight.

Since virtue is inherited, it has been the duty of each knight to train his son to follow in his noble steps, and so the institution has continued. The great Biblical heroes were knights: Judas Maccabeus and King David, for instance. Certain ancient pagans were knights as well, Alexander and Julius Caesar being among their number.

## BECOMING A KNIGHT

A formalized sequence for learning the skills of knighthood is an established part of the feudal tradition. Except under very special conditions, every aspirant to knighthood must follow these steps.

### PAGE

Pages are young boys or girls between the ages of ten and fifteen who are learning the ways of courtly life by observing their elders and doing those tasks assigned to them. After serving as pages, most girls become maids-in-waiting and wives. Boys become squires.

### SQUIRE

Boys may become squires at age fifteen. Squires are servants of their knights, studying the ways of knighthood as they serve. Those who are confident in themselves, who show promise, and who have the right connections may become knights. Most will remain squires.

### KNIGHT

Most aspirants must wait until age 21 to be knighted, after serving six years as squires. Men knighted younger are exceptional, but not unknown. (Lancelot was knighted at eighteen.) Sometimes a young heir must be hastily knighted and ennobled upon reaching his majority at age eighteen or, even rarer, at fifteen.



## RANKS OF KNIGHTHOOD

All knights share certain duties and traits. However, not all knights are equal in rank, and there exist several grades of knighthood. The difference between these is determined primarily by the source of income for the knight. (Note that the descriptive term to describe a knight may either precede or follow the word “knight.” Thus, it is equally correct to say *knight bachelor* or *bachelor knight*. This is a vestigial remnant of the French influence on Germanic English.)

The grade or rank that your character attains affects the course of the game in many ways. The rules for the effects of varying incomes are given in the Chapter 8. The rules that indicate how increased prestige affects the game, as derived by increasingly powerful and respected grades of knights, are found in Chapter 7, “Ambition and Faith,” and under “Glory” (in Chapter 5).

### KNIGHT MERCENARY

Knights without a lord are the lowest class of knights. They are called *mercenary* because they must seek to sustain themselves through work for money. Since knights are fighting men, they generally make their living by seeking mercenary soldier employment, and differ from ordinary mercenary cavalry (sergeants) only in that they have taken the oath of knighthood before a lord.

### KNIGHT BACHELOR

Knights bachelor derive their income directly from their lord, either through direct maintenance or by cash payments. (The word bachelor derives from *bas chevalier*, or “low knight.” It has come to be associated with unmarried men because bachelor knights were generally not rich enough to support a wife.)

Knights bachelor are also called “household knights” because they live in their lord’s household, not on their own land. They are his bodyguard and standing army, and travel wherever their lord takes them. Their loyalty is crucial to the lord’s success, perhaps even to his survival, so they are usually treated well and receive great honor.

A knight bachelor may bear a *pennocelle* (a small pennant) upon his lance to distinguish his rank from mercenary knights and commoners, who wear no decoration.

### KNIGHT VASSAL

Knights who own their own land are knight vassals. They have their own manor and lands, and are thus substantial landlords capable of equipping themselves for war. Knights vassal generally live at their own home, but are obliged to serve for forty days per year at war, plus a customary extension of twenty more if the lord demands it. They must also serve three months of castle garrison duty, and appear at court to offer advice whenever the lord demands it. A knight vassal may bear a pennant on his lance.



HOTZ

## KNIGHT LORD

Knights are sometimes lords over other knights, and are thus called knight lords. Knight lords are the upper-rank noblemen, the lords of the land. In this book, a “lord” means any knight who has taken on other knights as followers. The lowest grade of lord is a banneret knight. The highest is the High King.

## THE COAT OF ARMS

Each knight has his own unique coat of arms. This is a design carried on his shield and surcoat, but also used to mark anything of the owner’s as a personal possession. Only the knight, his wife, and his hired herald (who must wear a special type of coat called a tabard) can wear a knight’s personal arms.

The knight’s eldest son wears his father’s arms, but with a special mark called a *difference* which is taken off only after he inherits the title and other rights of his deceased father. Other sons generally make some modification to their father’s coat, so families all have similar coats of arms. Look at the examples in this book to see how the de Galis family all have three red diagonal stripes, or the Orkney clan all have a yellow double-headed eagle on a purple background.

The art and science of understanding coats of arms is called heraldry, and it can become extremely detailed and complex. These complexities are discussed in great detail in any number of books you can find at your local library, and are touched upon only briefly in *Pendragon*.

## FEUDALISM

The rules and laws of feudalism govern the world of *Pendragon*. The following sections deal with facts and beliefs that were prevalent in the Middle Ages, but which are unknown to most people today.

However, note that the rules and laws of *Pendragon* are generally based on the considerably more well-known laws of Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries, not those of 6th-century Britain. Still, they are historical facts — the reality of a brutal and violent world. Players must be at least vaguely familiar with these factors in order to understand their characters fully.

Feudalism begins with the belief that everything belongs to the king, as highest lord of the land. All rights derive from the king, who has distributed some of his rights and responsibilities among his lords; they, in turn, distribute some of these rights and responsibilities to their knights. All obligations are personal, dependent upon the relationship between a lord and his followers. The followers swear fealty to the lord, and afterwards are known as vassals of that lord.

The lord ensures the loyalty of his favored followers by giving them land, the single most valuable and permanent commodity in the realm. To receive gold is a slightly dubious honor, since even a peasant can be bribed with gold. However, a transfer of land is sacred. Two types of land transfer are common:

- A *gift* is given for the duration of the recipient’s life but upon death reverts to the lord.
- A *grant* is given for the life of the recipient and his heirs.

A vassal does not really *own* the land he is given, but he does own all the granted benefits collected from that land. The vassal receives his grant in return for loyalty and services. As long as the knight’s obligations are satisfied, the benefits are legally his and cannot be justly taken away. Typically, a knight’s obligations are to serve loyally in his lord’s military campaigns and to advise his lord on important matters. In return, the lord owes his vassal protection, sustenance, and livelihood. Thus, there is a non-equal but reciprocal agreement between lord and vassal.

Obligations may be changed only if both parties agree. Usually they are only changed when one person has done something significant for the other. If the vassal rescued the king on the battlefield, he might receive his former gift as a permanent grant. If the knight violates his loyalty, he can lose the land he has of the lord. Typical reasons for land to revert to the lord include treason, failure to support the lord, or the lack of an heir when the grant holder dies. Daughters may inherit their father’s grants only if there are no male heirs.

Ranks of feudal vassalage begin with those closest to the king, both in friendship and in wealth. In *Pendragon* these are the British kings, lords, and office holders. In turn, these men appoint their own vassals. Knights (and squires, as knights-in-training) are the lowest class of noble vassals. They may hold land from the king, a count, a lower lord, or even from another knight; in some rare cases, a knight may become a vassal without a gift or grant of land.

Church officials and monasteries also rely upon land grants to knightly vassals in return for loyal service. Monasteries often became powerful landowners with their own knights to protect them.

## OATHS

An oath is a promise made under the witness of God, the most sacred form of promise, and cannot be broken except with the gravest consequences: To Christians, it implies the threat of eternal damnation in Hell.

Perhaps just as important, though, are the more immediate social consequences. All normal people shun oath-breakers. A man’s sworn word is one of the few possessions that he has after all material goods are taken away. It measures his soul and personality. A breaker of oaths has a shriveled and tiny soul, is not to be trusted, and forfeits the rights that he had as a member of society. Since all of society is based upon oaths and keeping one’s word, anyone who fails in this duty fails to uphold society and, therefore, cannot be part of it.

Oaths can be taken literally or figuratively. However, most common people look to the oath’s spirit to be fulfilled, while intellectuals sometimes allow only the letter to be fulfilled. Such misunderstandings are the cause of much friction between classes. In game terms, oaths are handled using the Honor passion (see “Passions” in Chapter 4).





## HOMAGE AND FEALTY

Every knight but the king is someone's vassal. Everyone who has a lord has undertaken a ritual (later called a *ceremony of commendation*) composed of *homage* and *fealty*, pledging two free men to an unbreakable, permanent bond of loyalty.

The first part of the ceremony, homage, is ancient, having originated among the Franks and Saxons. Homage is an act of submission. It is the personal oath of an underling to his lord. The vassal kneels and raises his clasped hands to his lord, who encloses them in his own. The vassal gives a brief oath promising aid and counsel. *Aid* means military assistance, while *counsel* means support of the lord in his business and the granting of advice. Then the lord gives a similar promise of leadership, and of support expressed as a *beneficium*, or gift. The *beneficium* is usually a land grant, or *fief*. After swearing, the vassal rises, and the men kiss once to seal the oath. This finishes the act of homage.

Fealty is an oath of faithfulness. It is a solemn oath, often sworn upon saints' relics. Fealty's most common clause includes a promise never to attack the lord. Unlike homage, which can be sworn only once, a fealty oath is sometimes re-sworn to remind someone of his place, or whenever otherwise felt by the lord to be necessary.

After both of these oaths have been sworn, the vassal is the "man of another man." He is also sometimes called "a man of hands and mouth."

Multiple loyalties are possible when a man swears fealty to two (or more) different lords. The issue is confused at court, but currently the most popular solution offered to the problem of multiple lords is the practice of having a *liege lord*. That is, among all of one's lords, one is selected to be liege, and he has priority in the vassal's loyalty in case of conflict.

Your character has only one lord to begin, which creates no problem. However, if he acquires lands elsewhere, the character will eventually have to choose one as liege.

## SOCIAL CLASSES

Society consists of three strictly separate social classes — nobles, clergy, and commoners. Everyone participates in this system. People are born into a specific class and enter the same occupation as their parents. People do not usually expect to change their status.

This seems shocking to us today, when individual freedom is the highest ideal. Members of our modern, democratic society have difficulty understanding the class system which dominated medieval society, but an understanding of it is necessary to capture the feel and meaning of the literature and events of the Middle Ages.

Strict social classes are not inherently wrong or bad. Many people find comfort in avoiding responsibilities and knowing that their daily routine will be predictable and unchanging. It is not being in a caste which is bad, but rather being in an exploited and abused caste. Thus, although many miserable serfs would like to have their condition improved, they know they will always be serfs, with all the advantages and disadvantages of being a man or woman of the soil.

The ruling class of nobles jealously holds its prerogatives. So insistent are noblemen on maintaining class differences that a knight is likely to lose his status for engaging in non-knightly behavior, such as physical labor or money lending. The inarguable belief in "might makes right" allows noblemen to maintain their prerogative at everyone else's expense.

It is important, however, to remember that these are social classes, not strictly hard castes. For instance, any knight may attain the status of lord by being richly rewarded by his own lord. Furthermore, even a lowly commoner may attain knighthood through prowess of arms displayed on the battlefield. Finally, the clergy fill their ranks from people of all classes.

Admittedly, every age has people who do not fit into their class. Such people are exceptional and, like exceptional people in any time, will find a way through or around the system to their advantage. In the Middle Ages, exceptional commoners usually join the Church, or become personal employees of a nobleman. Exceptional members of the ruling class may become saints, like St. Francis, or heroes, like King Arthur.

## THE NOBLE CLASS

The nobility is the upper class. Nobles are the leaders and warriors of society. They do not work for their own maintenance, but acquire the food and goods of their life from others.

However, within this class not all persons are equal. Two distinct divisions exist, commonly called the higher and lower nobility. The lower nobility are the knights. The higher nobility are called lords. Lords include all knights who have their own vassals, and includes all hereditary landholders. Lords are also knights, of course, but are usually referred to by their higher rank.

This division is common among most feudal cultures. In English, the terms for higher and lower nobility are *lords* (higher) and *gentry* (lower); in French, they are *barons* and *chevaliers*; in German, *Herren* and *Ritter*; and in Spanish, *grandes* and *hidalgos*.

Further, within the category of lord are several ranks of noblemen. Among the British, these are ranged from lowest to highest as follows: banneret, baron, earl, duke, king.

The knights' primary responsibility is to serve as the military force for their lord. They have many privileges and freedoms which are not available to the lower classes, gained in exchange for the pledge to die, if necessary, for their lord.

Knights fill the most advantaged class, and thus have the greatest freedom and most privileges of anyone else in the game. *Pendragon* concerns itself primarily with this class of men.

## THE CLERICAL CLASS

The clergy includes all members of the Christian Church, a powerful institution which owns considerable lands and has many rights of its own. Churchmen are exempt from most ordinary laws and claim loyalty to God, a

higher authority than the king — a claim which is a source of great conflict between clergy and royalty.

The clergy, supposed to be chaste, can hardly be expected to reproduce itself, so it draws members from both the nobility and the commoners. It is not unusual for younger sons of the nobility to join the clergy rather than be landless knights, seeking whatever opportunity the Church can give them. For bright and ambitious commoners, the Church provides the best opportunity for advancement.

Churchmen may be secular clergy or monastics. Secular clergy includes bishops and the village priests who administer the sacraments to commoners, and who oversee the spiritual development of their parishioners. Monastics are men or women who have taken the religious path of isolation and joined special communities that practice devotion apart from the ways of ordinary mankind.

## THE COMMON CLASS

Everyone who is not of the nobility or clergy is a commoner. Commoners are the basis for society, and make up 95% of the population. They are the ordinary people who provide the food and goods that allow noblemen and clergy to pursue their specialized functions. Commoners are mostly farmers, whether poor serfs without any freedom or rich landholders who maintain the right to change lords at will. However, the artisans who populate cities and make their wares are also commoners, as are the merchants who act as middlemen and brokers for trade across Britain.

Members of the nobility can become commoners. A squire's sons are considered commoners, though of good status within the broad spectrum of commoners.

Commoners can sometimes enter the ranks of knighthood, as well. Anyone who can acquire weapons and employment in the ranks of mercenaries might rise from soldier or sergeant to squire or knight through recognition by his leader. Commoners who perform outstandingly, even off the battlefield, can be raised to the status of squires or even knights by their grateful lords. Sometimes lords desperate for money sell knighthood to rich men. More often, though, lords' daughters marry wealthy commoners, who thus share their wealth with the lord in return for the chance for their own children to become noble.

## CUSTOMS AND LAWS

Every player must remember that these rules of society are the keystones of his character's society and of the world. They are what make people into people, and set them apart from beasts.

### THE UNIVERSAL LAWS

Certain customary laws — *hospitality*, *family*, *loyalty*, and *honor* — are universal among all the peoples of Britain. Your character knows these unwritten laws well. From childhood on, they have been a part of life for every knight.

These laws are respected even between enemies. For instance, when an enemy Pictish king accepts the hospitality of King Arthur, he is confident that he can eat and relax

in the Pendragon's halls without fear of murder, even if he is dead drunk. Only the Saxons and other dastards perfidiously break this rule, and then only occasionally. Similarly, if the enemy Pict king was conquered by Arthur and swore loyalty, then Arthur can be confident that his new vassal will obey him. Finally, if someone marries into a family, even that of his enemy, he becomes a kinsman and can therefore be trusted.

This is not to say that your character must *always* abide by the four laws, or that he must assume that others will. You control your own character, and tricky issues such as consistency of behavior or your character's reputation are handled by the game rules, not just left to the Gamemaster to enforce or ignore.

Players must understand that these laws precede and underlie the bold new concepts of chivalry that King Arthur will promote. Even the most barbaric or vicious groups in Britain accept these ancient traditions as necessary and essential for survival in an unforgiving world. In game terms, these laws are the four basic passions held by all characters. See Chapter 4 for further information.

### HOSPITALITY

This unspoken law, of the four mentioned above, deserves a little more attention here. Among the divergent cultures of Britain, there is one matter upon which all agree — the rules of hospitality. The host may never act against his visitor, but must treat him as an honored guest. The visitor, in turn, must be civil and not insult his host.

A person's house is considered to be sacrosanct, protected by whatever powers watch over mankind. This is true whether one lives in a hovel or a mighty castle. This sanctity does not mean the powers intervene to protect a



### Hospitality Broken

The following famous events in the Grail Castle, precipitated by the unlucky Sir Balin, illustrate the workings of fate as regards the unwritten law of hospitality.

Sir Carlon, a vile knight, and Sir Balin, brother to King Pellam, were both guests in Pellam's castle. Sir Carlon insulted and struck Sir Balin, breaking the law of hospitality. However, Sir Balin then committed another crime (and a greater) by killing Sir Carlon in anger, despite the guest-right both shared under Pellam's roof.

Thus King Pellam, the host, was caught in a dilemma: He could (i) honor the laws of hospitality and maintain peace, or (iii) seek to protect his family honor and punish his brother's heinous crime. He chose the latter, and in the fight against Sir Balin, Pellam suffered the Dolorous Stroke.

For these wrongs, the hapless Sir Balin was condemned to a useless and tragic death, and King Pellam suffered terribly until finally healed by the celebration of the Mass of the Holy Grail many years later.





house if it is attacked. It does mean, though, that the offender is never trusted in anyone's house again if he breaks the rules, and that an ill fate will dog the offender's footsteps from then on.

A person need not invite anyone into the safety of his hearth, but if he does, then *both* people must obey certain rules of respect and safety. Once inside, peace must reign between them, even if they later discover that they are deadly enemies. They can go outside and fight, or one of them can leave and then return with hostile intentions, if he is permitted back in. But while inside, both parties must be peaceful, and the visitor must even aid the owner of the hearth to defend it if they are attacked.

Any breach in this unwritten contract is viewed and corrected by the powers that oversee the laws of hospitality. Such powers ensure that justice is eventually delivered. Hence, common superstition assures your character that, if a person abuses this rule, something terrible will occur to him at the most inconvenient time, whether delivered by God, Llew, or Wotan, all of whom protect the hearth.

## FAMILY

The world is a dangerous place, and it is easy to mistrust in others, even if they are not strangers who speak a different tongue and worship alien gods. Foreigners are, *a priori*, hostile and threatening. The loyalty and affection of a person for his family is considered to be inherent to nature. It is unthinkable that someone would turn against his family. A kinslayer is inhuman, almost demonic.

One's own kin should always be trusted. Even if a kinsman acts despicably to others, he is still to be trusted. Only one's family can be counted upon in an emergency — any emergency. Given this understanding, an individual is not helpless against the world, but can always count on his kin for aid.

Sometimes a knight has to choose between loyalty to his kin and loyalty to his lord. There may be no way to resolve such problems without offending someone important. Such dilemmas fuel some of the greatest stories, and thus offer the best chances for roleplay.

Some of the commonly used family terms are as follows:

**Clan:** All people who claim descent from a common ancestor.

**Family:** The nuclear family, consisting of a husband and wife, and their dependants.

**Lineage:** All people who can actually trace their ancestry to a common ancestor. This is the "extended family."

**Kindred:** All people who are relatives of an individual, including those who are outside his lineage (e.g., his wife's family).

## LOYALTY

Loyalty is acknowledged as the basis for all of society beyond the family. All members of society, excepting the mad, hold loyalty to someone. For warriors and soldiers (like your character), loyalty is particularly important because it is the foundation of military organization and the basis of survival in battle.

Logic and self-interest both provide a basis for loyalty. No one would consider it fair or just to perform hostile acts

against the person who supports them with food, protection, and comfort. Moreover, loyalty to a leader extends a person's influence outside of his own family, giving him a place in the larger world.

Loyalty is assured by ritualized pledges and oaths that establish the relationship between two people. As noted earlier in this chapter, feudal loyalty is an agreement between two parties: a leader and a follower.

Those who break an oath of loyalty are outcasts from society and will never again be trusted by right-thinking people. As with the laws of hospitality and kinship, the supernatural powers that watch over man may intervene to bring oathbreakers to a terrible end.

## HONOR

Honor is the last and least of the four universal laws of society. It is required of knights, but not of everyone else. Having honor is one of the things that sets a knight apart from all others. Churchmen do not need honor, for they are supposed to put the interests of God and the Church before their own. Commoners do not need honor, for they have enough difficulty simply staying alive. Women do not need honor because they are "merely women," although women who *do* have honor are esteemed above others.

Knights, however, must have honor because they have agreed to take the oath of knighthood. Without honor, no oath is worth taking, for without it the sworn word will soon be broken. It is conceivable that a knight could cheat and connive yet maintain his own sense of honor, as long as the oath of knighthood was never violated.

Honor includes your character's personal code of integrity, pride, and dignity, which is important enough to be backed up by force of arms. Beyond these words, however, definition gets more difficult. Difficulty stems from using the critical adjective "personal." Every knight has agreed that it includes some things, such as killing a woman, for example. (The "Dishonorable Acts" table in Chapter 4 lists the things that everyone agrees are dishonorable actions for a knight.)

However, the concept of a *personal* definition of honor is important. It means two things: First, some aspects of honor are determined by the individual, not by common social consent. Secondly, "personal" is used to separate honor from the other sworn or innate social obligations, including the other unwritten laws of society or any others, which are determined socially.

## CUSTOMS OF THE FAMILY

Feudalism and vassalage, already discussed, are the most important customs in the world of *Pendragon*. The laws of property and marriage, though, are still vital.

## PATRIARCHY

The laws of patriarchy are based on Roman models and are reinforced by the beliefs of both the Judeo-Christian and the Germanic warrior traditions. These three systems uniformly hold men and male things as inherently more important than women and female things. Property belongs to the father, or *patriarch*. Thus the system is called patriarchal, in which everything of importance revolves around the family's leader.

Women in this system are degraded by the Church and diminished by the legal system. They are promised as pledges of friendship between men who would be allies. Their only power comes from overseeing the household and the family lands.

## MARRIAGE AND INHERITANCE

Marriage is a sacred and legal institution that is supposed to secure certain inheritance rights for all members involved. It is sanctioned and blessed by the Church, and is recognized by all government authorities. Divorce is not allowed.

Note that there are absolutely no emotional requirements for marriage. It is an entirely political act, with little care evident for individual feelings. Thus it is not surprising that both men and women seek love, emotional expression, and satisfaction in extramarital affairs. These affairs eventually acquire unofficial sanction in the Courts of Love, wherein the art of *fine amor* is developed and exercised.

## RULES OF MARRIAGE

In marriage, a woman leaves her blood relations and takes up residence with her husband, thereby joining herself and her children to his family. A critical function of marriage is to produce an heir (a son being vastly preferable) who will obtain control of the properties of both father and mother, as ordained by law.

Marriage is a legal institution, and children born to a legally married couple are *legitimate*, or “within the law,” and can inherit things without problem or question. Children born outside of wedlock are illegitimate, commonly called bastards (see Illegitimacy, below). Marriage also serves to increase property holdings, and is thus usually arranged for political ends; on rare occasions, however, it serves emotional needs as well.

In general, marriage and love are entirely separate matters for most medieval couples. Many marriages are arranged, and some couples see each other for the first time on their wedding day. The occasional happy marriage inspires bards to write poetry, spiteful overlords to become jealous and cruel, and other lovers to take heart. Most, however, are not so loving.

Marital fidelity was a constant issue in the Middle Ages. The desire for the lord to maintain his bloodline demanded complete fidelity from his wife, and fearful punishments could be invoked upon her for having a lover. Churchmen, themselves servants of a jealous Father God, thundered constantly about chastity from their pulpits. Undoubtedly, most women followed the social norm and remained faithful to their loveless marriage, just to keep things simple and safe.

Such fidelity was not expected, however, or at least not as expected, from married men. The now-infamous “double standard” was in its heyday. Women could be murdered for having a lover, but men were, in some circles at least, admired for their capacity to engender children upon numerous women.

## ILLEGITIMACY

Many children are born out of wedlock. Noblemen seem especially subject to propagating this vice. Their partners are sometimes called lovers, concubines, courtesans, or

paramours, and are frequently of a social class significantly lower than that of the nobleman.

Children of such issue are illegitimate, or, basely said, “bastards.” The issue is not one of knowing one’s father or not. Often the children know quite well who their father is, but because they were born outside of marriage they have fewer rights than legitimate children. Most importantly, illegitimate children have no rights to inherit any property from their father.

Illegitimate children can be legally adopted and therefore allowed to inherit, but only if no legitimate children are living. Even then, other kinsmen close to the deceased father can challenge their rights.

Noblemen, at least the truly honorable ones, often provide for their concubines after they are dismissed. Sometimes such women are married off to one of the noble’s retainers as a reward for his loyalty. The women might even receive valuable properties to be passed on to the bastard afterwards. Noble fathers often keep half an eye on their illegitimate sons, too, and might even use their own influence to help their unacknowledged children advance in station beyond their mother’s class. This influence may be quite overt. In many cases, illegitimate sons help their legitimate brothers as loyal, reliable retainers.

## DIVORCE

Divorce is the dissolution of the sacred bond of matrimony. It is a legal matter, but more importantly a religious one. However, the parts are so bound together that no one in the Middle Ages ever gets a legal divorce without Church approval. (That doesn’t occur until Henry VIII.)

Divorce is allowed only in cases of *adultery* and *consanguinity*. Adultery means the woman had or has a lover; the term is never applicable to men. Occasional annulments are granted on grounds of consanguinity — i.e., the person whom you married is more closely related to you than you originally believed. In general, marriages between any persons more closely related than third cousins are prohibited. Proving consanguinity is an expensive and laborious option, usually available only to kings or others who can afford the immense cost of pontifical procedure.

## INHERITANCE

Strict laws govern inheritance. These laws may be bent, but they cannot be broken without considerable intervention. Parties who defend the laws are usually the next of kin, who stand to inherit the property, and the lord, who has much to say in its governing.

The British cultures of *Pendragon* follow the custom of *primogeniture*: The eldest son of the father is held to be the heir. As a rule, the eldest son gets everything. If the father is rich, then the younger sons might get something, although if they are knighted and merely receive sets of armor, they should be grateful. If a lord is very rich, he is more likely to give small parts of his wife’s property to his younger sons, but keep his patrimony intact. The Merovingian French divide their estates among all their sons, but the result of that practice is seen in the impoverished and anarchic state of that kingdom. The lesson is not lost on the British.



The eldest son also inherits his father's coat of arms. Thus his arms are exactly the same as his father's, but with a small mark called a *difference* to set them apart for as long as both father and son live. The *difference* is established by tradition as a horizontal stripe with downward tabs. Although a tradition of other differences for younger sons is present, younger siblings can also choose their own coats of arms. Again by tradition, though, these are similar to the father's.

If there are no sons, the eldest daughter often inherits the land, or the widow might keep it. There is a good chance, however, that some other male of close kinship receives it instead. Likely candidates are the brother to the dead lord, or his bastard son, or even the father if he still lives. In all cases, the lord of the lands has some say about who gets disputed property. If a woman, whether daughter, widow, or mother, retains property rights, a lord always has final say as to whom she marries.

Wills may specify the inheritance preference of a deceased property holder. Your character sheet has a place for Heir to be written in. Use it. The Game-master need not accept any unrecorded will.

Second only to war, litigation is a lord's favorite activity, although few of us desire to play out constant legal wrangling in our games. If legal disputes do arise, they should be settled through trial by combat, or be referred to the judgment of the next highest common lord — or perhaps even the Pendragon himself.

## CUSTOMS OF KNIGHTHOOD

### YOU ARE THE LAW

Knights are sheriff, judge, and jury for all matters of Low Justice on their own domains (see below for the three types of temporal justice). If a character has land, then it is his responsibility to maintain justice within it. Likewise, on their lord's land, knights must act on their lord's behalf, either delivering justice then and there or else taking the wrongdoer to the lord's court.

Knights who break the law are subject to justice in the courts of whoever was offended. If the law-breaking takes place in a knight's own domain, then his own lord makes judgment. The only exception to this is when a knight breaks a rule of his lord, in which case the other knights of the court stand to deliver a judgment.

Appeal to a higher court can be made, but the higher lord's court can always decide whether or not to hear the petition.

Knights accused of wrongdoing at any time may claim trial by combat instead of normal court justice.

### TRIAL BY COMBAT

In any case of justice, any knight may choose trial by combat. In this trial, everyone knows that God will favor the right party, that right will aid might.



A lord can, and a woman must, choose a knight to fight in his or her stead. The fight may be for love of fighting (the first combatant to be knocked down or wounded loses the fight — see Chapter 6); for conquest (the knight who yields loses); or to the death. The ruling of battle, made by God, cannot be reversed or appealed.

## JUSTICE

Four types of justice exist, as follows.

*Low Justice* is the purview of any noble of a land, including knights, who can judge any case less critical than murder, rape, or other capital crime. Knights can deliver justice to commoners, up to and including imprisonment and the cutting off of hands, ears, and other body parts. They cannot judge capital crimes or deliver a sentence of death, or judge other nobles or members of the clergy.

*High Justice* is reserved for higher nobles, usually only kings. They make rulings on capital crimes, which are anything that may be rewarded with the death penalty. This includes treason, rape, murder, and theft of the lord's goods.

*Arthur's Justice*, or the King's Justice, is a humanitarian system of rules inaugurated by King Arthur to pacify his lands and keep the peasants happy and whole. The ideals of the Round Table are extended not just to the noble class, but to all of humanity. Thus, a peasant may not be murdered for cursing at a knight who has trampled his crops

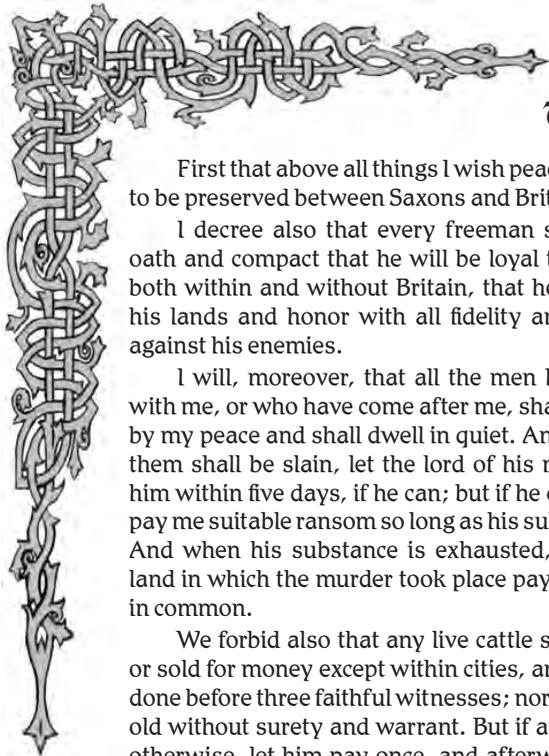
and carried off his daughter if the place is protected by the Laws of Arthur. Thus, as Arthur's bold fellowship conquers the island, the reign of peace grows, and fair (if not exactly equal) justice is available to all.

*Church Justice*, or Canon Law, is applicable only to members of the clergy, and it is determined only by higher-ranking members of the clergy. Further, it applies also (though not exclusively) to matters of the Church and its properties. Thus monks, friars, nuns, and priests alike are generally tried under this justice, and bishops and abbots claim the right to try anyone who harms their properties under this rule.

## NOBLE PRISONERS

Knights are often captured and held in various states of arrest. Sometimes they are maintained according to their station, sitting at their captor's table and making no attempt to escape since they have given their word of surrender. Often, though, they languish shamefully in dark dungeons, dirty and unfed.

Surprisingly, even enemies of the worst kind do not kill their enemies. Hated murderers languish away in prison rather than being hung or killed. Player-character knights may occasionally spend years in prison this way, for reasons the Gamemaster must understand.



## The Laws of Arthur

First that above all things I wish peace and security to be preserved between Saxons and Britons.

I decree also that every freeman shall affirm by oath and compact that he will be loyal to King Arthur both within and without Britain, that he will preserve his lands and honor with all fidelity and defend him against his enemies.

I will, moreover, that all the men I have brought with me, or who have come after me, shall be protected by my peace and shall dwell in quiet. And if any one of them shall be slain, let the lord of his murderer seize him within five days, if he can; but if he cannot, let him pay me suitable ransom so long as his substance avails. And when his substance is exhausted, let the whole land in which the murder took place pay what remains in common.

We forbid also that any live cattle shall be bought or sold for money except within cities, and this shall be done before three faithful witnesses; nor even anything old without surety and warrant. But if anyone shall do otherwise, let him pay once, and afterwards a second time for a fine.

If a Briton shall charge a Saxon with perjury or murder or theft or homicide or "ran," as the Saxons call open rapine which cannot be denied, the Saxon may defend himself, as he shall prefer, either by the ordeal of hot iron or by wager of battle. But if the Saxon be infirm, let him find another who will take his place. If one of them shall be vanquished, he shall pay a fine to the king. If a Saxon shall charge a Briton and be unwilling to prove

his accusation either by ordeal or by wager of battle, I will, nevertheless, that the Briton shall acquit himself by a valid oath.

Every man who wishes to be considered a freeman shall be in pledge so that his surety shall hold him and hand him over to justice if he shall offend in any way. And if any such shall escape, let his sureties see to it that they pay forthwith what is charged against him, and let them clear themselves of any complicity in his escape. Let recourse be had to the hundred and shire courts as our predecessors decreed. And those who ought of right to come and are unwilling to appear, shall be summoned once; and if for the second time they refuse to come, one ox shall be taken from them, and they shall be summoned a third time. And if they do not come the third time, a second ox shall be taken from them. But if they do not come the fourth summons, the man who is unwilling to come shall forfeit from his goods the amount of the charge against him, and in addition to this a fine to the king.

I prohibit the sale of any man by another outside the country on pain of a fine to be paid in full to me.

I also forbid that anyone shall be slain or hanged for any fault, or his eyes be put out or him be castrated. And this command shall not be violated under pain of a fine in full to me.

—Modified from *The Laws of William the Conqueror* (which are actually much more brutal than these we have adopted for our Good King Arthur).



The answer lies in the fact that most knights and lords do not have the right of life and death over their prisoners. This is determined by the division of Justice into High and Low, as mentioned above. Most lords have the rights only to Low Justice, which allows them to enforce most laws *except* those of capital crimes. Any crime that warrants death of the culprit is a matter of High Justice, enforceable only by a king. To execute a criminal would be unusual and illegal, drawing the lord's attention and wrath significantly enough that the knight might lose his station for disobedience to his rightful office.

Remember, most knights are law-abiding in their own realm and sworn to uphold their king's justice. Thus, instead of killing his foe, a knight will simply throw the offender into jail, a thing which is well within the rights of his office.

### PUNISHMENTS

Knights can be punished for disobeying their lord's laws or the customs of the land. Usually the punishment is a fine. A more severe penalty is *banishment*: The knight must depart all of his lord's holdings for the term of the banishment, which is typically a year and a day for the first such offense. The banished knight is considered an enemy of the lord during this time, even unto being killed without his kin justly claiming revenge. During his absence, the lord controls all the lands and obtains all income and benefits therefrom.

More serious offenses can be punished by *outlawry*, which is permanent banishment, and is usually accompa-

nied by the knight's family's forfeiture of all lands and titles to the lord.

Finally, *degradation* is the ultimate punishment, for the knight is stripped of his title and his right to his rank. This ceremony is a public humiliation, and the effect is permanent, so that another lord cannot re-bestow knighthood.

## CUSTOMS OF THE CHURCH

The Church is the spiritual institution of the land. It blesses the people and land, oversees crises (both spiritual and temporal), and guards the realm from wicked magic. The Church itself is feudal, having its own hierarchy of bishops and abbots, priests and monks, and lay clergy.

The ultimate clerical authority for the Roman Church is the pope, in distant Rome. The British Church has no single head. Further details are contained in Chapter 7.

### LANDHOLDING

The Church holds lands, both as abbeys and as bishoprics. The leaders of these institutions act in every way as vassals of whoever gave them the land. Even the Roman Church has not yet obtained independence from the King of Britain — though its priests are working on it.

### ECCLESIASTICAL LAW

The Church has the right to try all of its members who have broken laws. They also have the right to try any laymen who have violated Church laws, such as robbing the clergy, plundering abbeys, and so on. However, we largely ignore this latter fact in *Pendragon*.





# Chapter Two: Character Generation

A player character is the imaginary persona used for play in *Pendragon* game sessions. In this chapter you create your first character, an experienced squire from Salisbury who is ready to be knighted as a landed vassal knight.

Characters used by the Gamemaster are called “Gamemaster characters” or, alternately, “non-player characters” (or NPCs). In the world of *Pendragon*, the Gamemaster controls everyone, from High King Arthur Pendragon to the half-wit goose boy, aside from your player characters.

## THE CHARACTER SHEET

Players use the two-page (and ideally two-sided) character sheets provided at the end of this book to record all information pertinent to the play of their imaginary *Pendragon* personae. This information includes such things as the characters’ physical qualities, appearance, family data, personality, equipment, and personal history. Each character requires a separate character sheet. After a player character is completed, the character sheet is the only piece of paper necessary for play.

The character sheet should be filled out using a pencil. The information contained on it will change during play.

If your character dies during the game, give his character sheet to the Gamemaster. He or she will keep these together in a “cemetery” for later reference (and as a handy tool to use as instant Gamemaster characters, simply changing their names and origins as needed).

## CREATING A CHARACTER

You can create your first *Pendragon* character even as you learn the basic game mechanics from the character sheet. When you are finished, and once you have read the first two chapters of this book, your character is on the verge of knighthood. Your Gamemaster can explain the basic rules to you in your first play session (though you will want to read the rules yourself to fully enjoy the game experience.)

There are two kinds of characters you might start with: a *designed character* or a *preconstructed character*. You should create a designed character, if at all possible. The first half of this chapter is your guide in doing so.

Preconstructed characters are found later in this chapter and have all their numeric values given in full already.

The procedure for designing your own character creates knights that fit into the mainstream of British *Pendragon* society. With this method, you create your character the way you wish him to be, choosing all of his qualities and attributes from the ground up. This ensures that you will not have to play a character you dislike, or with whom you feel no connection.

All the characters generated through this procedure come from Salisbury, an important land loyal to King Uther and, later, to Arthur. They speak the same native language, live by the same culture, and have been raised in one of the dominant religions of the region (most likely Christianity, or perhaps Paganism). They are experienced squires, just on the verge of becoming knights.

Many Gamemaster characters you meet during play are not from this mainstream. They may be of a different gender, nationality, social class, or religion, and might even belong to some esoteric organization such as the Templars. (Your character can later join these, too, if he wishes.)

Follow these six steps to create your first character.

1. Determine Personal Data
2. Allocate Personality Traits and Passions
3. Allocate Prime and Derived Statistics
4. Determine Starting Skills and Combat Skills
5. Determine Previous Experience (if any)
6. Determine Other Data

## PERSONAL DATA

This information includes such items as the character’s name, homeland, culture, character age, date of birth, and so forth.

### NAME

Write in your character’s name. Here are some sample male names, taken from obscure characters in *Le Morte D’Arthur*, that you can use if you wish:

Adtherp, Alein, Aliduke, Annecians, Archade, Arnold, Arrouse, Bandelaine, Bellangere, Bellias, Berel, Bersules, Bliant, Breunis, Briant, Caulas, Chestelaine, Clegis, Cleremond, Dalan, Dinaunt, Driant, Ebel, Edward, Elias, Eliot, Emerause, Flannedrius, Florence, Floridas, Galar-doun, Garnish, Gerin, Gauter, Gherard, Gilbert, Gilmere, Goneris, Gracian, Gumret, Guy, Gwinas, Harsouse, Harvis, Hebes, Hemison, Herawd, Heringdale, Herlews, Herm-



el, Hermind, Hervis, Hewgon, Idres, Jordans, Lardans, Leomie, Manasan, Maurel, Melion, Miles, Morganor, Morians, Moris, Nanowne, Nerovens, Pedivere, Pellandres, Pellogres, Perin, Phelot, Pillounes, Plaine, Plenorias, Sauseise, Selises, Selivant, Semond.

Examine the name list or select a name that sounds right to you. If you have trouble pronouncing it, write it down the way you think it sounds. It is important that you be comfortable with the name.

Furthermore, just about any good English or French name is usable. Just avoid silly names. A campaign takes on appropriate tone when the characters have appropriate names. It is impossible to stop some people from using ridiculous names like Exxon, Lancealittle, or Karim al'Wheat in a campaign, but it is possible to forestall most of this foolishness by using only names found in popular or historical literature.

Characters should have one name only. Last names or family names are not used. Instead, the name is modified by the addition of a title.

Sounds can be arranged and re-arranged to make new names. Feel free to make a name that you can live with — again, without ridiculing the campaign (i.e., no Xerox or Groucho).

Don't choose names that you already know from the King Arthur stories since those are most likely the most famous characters in the story. It gets confusing during play to have to keep saying that you are not *that* Tristram or *that* Lancelot...

## HOMELAND, CULTURE, RELIGION

All initial characters are from the Homeland of Salisbury, were raised in a Cymric culture, and are either Christian or pagan.

## FATHER'S NAME

Choose another name from the above list (or make another one up) to be your character's father's name.

## TITLES

Characters often have descriptive titles or epithets as well as a given name. Often, these titles describe a physical distinction (e.g. "the Strong"); a place of origin (such as "de Ganis" or "of the Orkneys"), so you might be "of Salisbury"; or a family link, such as "son of Gauter." Titles such as "the Bold" are also possible, and may be self-given or earned in play.

Many names in Malory are given in French, so a French title rings with authenticity even though the character is a Briton. However, you should decide whether the sobriquet sounds better in English or French. Some are descriptive, such as *le blanc* ("the white"); *le noir* ("the black"); or *le petit* ("the little"). Some are more descriptive of actions: *le Desirious* ("the Desirer" [i.e., of battle]); *le Chevalier au Leon* ("the knight of the lion"); *of the Seven Adventures*; *of the Golden Ring*; *of the Hat*; and so on.

However, note that it is often best to wait until your character earns a title for his actions.

## FATHER'S CLASS

All characters created using this simple character generation are sons of a vassal knight.

## SON NUMBER

You are the eldest son of your family: Write a "1" here. Eldest sons have a terrific advantage in *Pendragon*. Primogeniture is the law of the land, meaning that the eldest son inherits everything (or almost everything) from his father. The younger sons are generally left out of the inheritance, and must make their own way as poor knights in whatever service they can find.

## LIEGE LORD

By default, your character's only lord is Sir Roderick, Earl of Salisbury. Listing a lord's title (as opposed to his proper name) in this space is sufficient. If a knight has multiple lords, one will be selected as liege, and should be duly noted here.

## CURRENT CLASS

Your first character is a squire on the verge of knighthood. He will soon become a vassal knight during the course of play, but write in "squire" for now.

## CURRENT HOME

Your home is the manor that is your inheritance, as the eldest son of your father. A manor often provides a knight's title, as discussed above (i.e., *de [name of the manor]*). Roll 1d20 to get the name of a Salisbury manor from the table below.

| d20 Result | Manor               |
|------------|---------------------|
| 1          | Baverstock          |
| 2          | Berwick St. James   |
| 3          | Broughton           |
| 4          | Burcombe            |
| 5          | Cholderton          |
| 6          | Dinton              |
| 7          | Durnford            |
| 8          | Idmiston            |
| 9          | Laverstock          |
| 10         | Newton              |
| 11         | Newton Tony         |
| 12         | Pitton              |
| 13         | Shrewton            |
| 14         | Stapleford          |
| 15         | Steeple Langford    |
| 16         | Tisbury             |
| 17         | Winterbourne Gunnet |
| 18         | Winterbourne Stoke  |
| 19         | Woodford            |
| 20         | Wylye               |

Only one person may inherit each manor, so, if necessary, a player should roll again until the result indicates a manor not already taken. Knightly manors are described more fully in Chapter 3.

## AGE AND YEAR BORN

This entry should remain blank until character generation is completed. At the end of character generation, your character is 21 to 26 years old (see "Previous Experience"). Once character generation is complete, go back to this entry and ask your Gamemaster the starting year for his or her campaign. Subtract your age from the current game year to find the year your character was born, and record the answer here.

As a default, a new campaign begins in 485 A.D., and characters starting at age 21 were born in 465.

## TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Every story of King Arthur and his knights, whether taken from the romances, legends, or Hollywood movies, is full of characters with remarkable personality and passion. This game emphasizes those points.

*Traits* and *passions* are game mechanics for quantifying your character's inner self, recording both repute and propensity. They help you run your character in a consistent manner and according to his actual play activity.

A value of 16 or more in a particular trait or passion indicates tremendous interest and activity in that quality, perhaps bordering on the fanatical. The behavior is very obvious to everyone, and is thus significant in roleplaying terms as well as in game terms.

New characters start play with only one value of 16, in one trait of your choice.

### TRAITS

The personality traits used in *Pendragon* consist of thirteen opposed pairs of virtues and vices. Note, though, that what is a virtue in one culture is sometimes a vice in another. Thus, Christian and pagan cultures, for instance, view the contrast between Modesty and Pride in a very different light.

All initial characters begin with a moral base derived from either British or Roman Christianity or from Paganism.

To determine your character's starting traits, follow these three steps:

1. *Note Your Religious Background*: Initial traits are modified by the religious background. On your character sheet, underline those traits which your character's religion deems the most important, as follows:

**Roman Christian Virtues:** Chaste, Forgiving, Merciful, Modest, Temperate.

**British Christian Virtues:** Chaste, Energetic, Generous, Modest, Temperate.

**Pagan Virtues:** Generous, Energetic, Honest, Lustful, Proud.

2. *Assign Values to the Traits*: The Valorous trait always begins at a value of 15, reflecting your character's martial training. The Religious traits listed above begin at a value of 13. All of the remaining traits begin at 10.

Next, note that every "virtue" has its opposing "vice," located on the opposite side of the slash. For example, Forgiving is balanced by Vengeful, and Prudent by Reckless. The total on the two sides of the slash must equal 20. Complete your trait statistics by subtracting the values you have already assigned from 20, and filling in the resulting number opposite the chosen trait. Thus, if your character has a score of 13 in Forgiving, he also has a 7 in Vengeful; if he has a 10 in Prudent, he also has a 10 in Reckless.

As your character develops, these initial values will change, and various rewards may become available. For more information, see "Traits" in Chapter 4.

3. *Assign Your "Famous Trait"*: You may assign a value of 16 to any one trait, including those on the right side of each binary, such as Worldly or Reckless, if you desire. Assigning

this value of 16 is optional. If you do assign a 16, put it in a trait that denotes the behavior for which you wish your character to be renowned. Be sure to adjust the corresponding trait (the opposite side of the binary pair) to a value of 4.

**Important:** For your first character, be sure to choose a "famous trait" you can live with. Since this value shows how your character has acted in his youth, be sure the trait is in line with your intended actions and attitudes for the character.

Further, note that having a trait over 15 decidedly affects the player's actual control over a character! Your character's actions may be determined by the trait and contrary to your wishes as a player. For example, a character with an Honest trait of 16 tells the truth in almost all situations, even those where deception might be advisable! The game system assures this.

See Chapter 4 for more information on traits.

### DIRECTED TRAITS

Leave these blank for now. They are discovered during game play.

### PASSIONS

Passions are strong emotional and psychological propensities within any individual. These include Love, Hate, Loyalty, Envy, and Honor, among others. Beginning characters all begin with five passions: *Loyalty* (to their lord), *Love* (of family), *Hospitality*, *Honor*, and *Hate* (of Saxons).

- Loyalty is the prime virtue and passion of the medieval world — without it the feudal system could not exist. Most knights believe in the axiom "King before God." Showing obedience to one's immediate overlord is always correct behavior, and disobedience to a lord is shocking to all true knights.

- Love of family is a natural emotion common to humankind in any age or culture. To most people, family equates to society in microcosm, which in turn represents their world. Further, the travel restrictions of the Arthurian era emphasize family closeness.

- Everyone learns Hospitality at his or her mother's knee, and it is so ingrained that it is almost subconscious.

- Honor is the knight's special passion. All knights must retain a value of 4 or higher in Honor, or they risk losing their knighthood. (See Honor in Chapter 4 for more information.)

- Hatred of the Saxons is an inherited passion of all Salisbury residents.

The Gamemaster might allow other passions for a character by at the start, and characters acquire passions as the result of game play.

Enter the values below onto your character sheet. (They are already entered onto the beginning character sheet.)

| Passion        | Starting Value |
|----------------|----------------|
| Loyalty (lord) | 15             |
| Love (family)  | 15             |
| Hospitality    | 15             |
| Honor          | 15             |
| Hate (Saxons)  | Roll 3d6*      |

\* If the optional "Salisbury Family History" is used (see Chapter 3), this number is instead determined therein.



Once these values are assigned, a player *may* (but need not) raise one or more of her character's passions by distributing up to 3 points among them.

See Chapter 4 for more information on passions.

## ATTRIBUTES

The physical qualities of any *Pendragon* character are quantified by five basic attributes, from which various other statistics are then derived. These five primary attributes are Size, Dexterity, Strength, Constitution, and Appearance. In each case, the larger the value of an attribute, the more advantageous it is for your character.

Size (SIZ) reflects the bulk and relative height of your character. The smallest that an adult Cymric male can be is SIZ 8 (roughly 80 pounds), and the largest SIZ 18 (around 215 pounds). (See Table B-1 in Appendix 2 for a full breakdown of the SIZ rating.) Bigger characters are superior in combat because they can deal out and take more damage and because SIZ is also used to calculate Knockdown, as explained below and, more fully, in Chapter 6.

Dexterity (DEX) reflects your character's quickness, agility, manual coordination, and sense of balance.

Strength (STR) reflects your character's ability to lift and carry weight. STR influences combat and movement rate.

Constitution (CON) reflects the health of your character. A CON value less than 5 indicates a sickly character, while a value greater than 15 indicates robust health. In combat, the "Major Wound" statistic (equal to CON) indicates a wound that knocks the character unconscious immediately.

Appearance (APP) reflects the physical attractiveness of a character. APP over 15 indicates a handsome or beautiful person, while APP below 5 indicates one who is extremely repulsive. Do not neglect this stat! It is tempting to reduce this in favor of combat-oriented statistics, but handsome knights have a distinct advantage in some situations. See "Distinctive Features," below, to help define the exact appearance of your character.

## ALLOCATE ATTRIBUTES

Distribute a total of 60 points among the five attributes, keeping in mind the restrictions below.

Note that every Cymric character's CON automatically increases by +3 during the next step ("Cultural Modifiers"), regardless of allocation, and that the maximum for

## No Intelligence Rating?

Note that no attributes are given for intelligence or any form of wisdom, astuteness, or wit. This is because it is a knight's duty to act, not to think...

All kidding aside, though, since a player controls every character, it is that player's intelligence that dictates the character's goals and actions, not an arbitrary number on a character sheet. Thus, in a sense, the player *is* the character's "intelligence score"!

such a character's CON is 21, so if you allocate more than 18 to CON, the extra points are wasted.

*Restrictions:* In standard character generation, all knights come from the Cymric culture, and are thus limited to the following values.

TABLE 2-1: CYMRIC ATTRIBUTES

| Attribute | Min. Score | Max. Score |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| SIZ       | 8          | 18         |
| DEX       | 5          | 18         |
| STR       | 5          | 18         |
| CON       | 5          | 21         |
| APP       | 5          | 18         |

Your first character should be designed so that STR and SIZ have a combined total of at least 21. This gives him a respectable Damage statistic of 4d6 (see "Derived Statistics"). His CON also ought to be at least 11 (i.e., 8, plus the Cymric cultural modifier of +3). Characters with less than these values are essentially handicapped in combat.

You have plenty of points to work with. For example, assigning values of SIZ 11, STR 10, and CON 8 (recommended *minimums*) yields 31 more points to be allocated to DEX and APP (for example, DEX 13 and APP 18).

*Effects of Low Attributes:* As shown on the Cymric Attributes table, no stat for your starting character can have an initial value of less than 5, and SIZ must be at least 8. However, be careful about assigning these minimums to attributes. Statistics are often reduced during the game, and when any attribute is at 3 the character is considered bedridden, unable to leave his room. Worse, any attribute reduced to 0 indicates death. Thus, even a low APP can be hazardous due to aging (see "Winter Phase" in Chapter 5) and wounds (see "Injury and Healing" in Chapter 6).

## CULTURAL MODIFIERS

Your character's original culture modifies his attributes. This modification is applied after the base attributes have been allotted. Your first character is Cymric, and thus gains a +3 bonus to CON.

## DERIVED STATISTICS

Some of a character's statistics are derived from those already determined above.

**Damage:** A character's Damage value reflects his potential to do harm to his foe. The value acquired from the equation below indicates the number of six-sided dice that the player rolls when his character successfully hits something or someone with a sword or other heavy weapon.

$Damage = (SIZ + STR)/6$  [the result is the number of d6 rolled for damage]

**Healing Rate:** The Healing Rate of a character indicates the number of hit points which can be regained during a week of game time by the character, as long as that character is quietly resting. See the "Injury and Health" section of Chapter 6.

$Healing Rate = (CON + STR)/10$

**Movement Rate:** This value indicates the number of yards per melee round that your character can walk while in armor. The Movement Rate number also affects daily

overland rates and forced march. See Chapter 5 for more information on movement.

$$\text{Movement Rate} = (\text{STR} + \text{DEX})/10$$

**Total Hit Points:** Total Hit Points are used in combat to determine how much damage a character may sustain before going unconscious or being killed.

$$\text{Total Hit Points} = \text{CON} + \text{SIZ}$$

**Unconscious:** This value is a threshold below which a character falls unconscious. Every time any character's current hit points fall below this value, that character drops to the ground, senseless and out of play. In many cases, this might save his life.

$$\text{Unconscious} = \text{Total Hit Points}/4$$

## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

A character's APP measures his or her relative appearance, determining whether a character is handsome, beautiful, or ugly. Higher APP attributes indicate a more attractive character, while numbers below 5 indicate unattractiveness and possibly physical deformity.

Distinctive Features allow for objective differences between characters with the same numerical value. A Distinctive Feature is not always a negative quality, even for a character with low APP, though you may wish to make it so. The following suggestions include ideas for both positive and negative features.

The number of features your character receives is determined by his APP, cross-indexed on the table below.

| APP Value | No. of Features |
|-----------|-----------------|
| 5–6       | 3               |
| 7–9       | 2               |
| 10–12     | 1               |
| 13–16     | 2               |
| 17+       | 3               |

Once the number of Distinctive Features is derived, players are free to choose the specific details that best fit their character (the table below offers some ideas and suggestions). However, the player might wish to simply roll on the Distinctive Feature Detail table.

| d6 Result | Feature Detail  |
|-----------|---|
| 1         | Hair (very long, curly, red, crew cut, blond, excessively hairy, huge beard, prematurely gray, glossy, balding, a particular cut, etc.)   |
| 2         | Body (slouched, barrel-chested, hunchback, fine-haired, tall, thin, broad-shouldered, high-shouldered, very muscular, burly, squat, smooth skin, etc.)  |
| 3         | Facial Expression (bright-eyed, proud, sneering, haughty, nice smile, hidden by beard, straight teeth, dour, cheerful, squint, piercing glance, etc.)   |
| 4         | Speech (lisp, stutter, charming accent, basso, sharp, nasal, shrill, squeaky, musical, loud, soft, strong, thick accent, etc.)  |
| 5         | Facial Feature (patrician nose, scarred, darkly tanned, black eyes, bushy eyebrows, deep-set eyes, high cheekbones, red and weather-beaten skin, braided beard, big ears, long mustache, small nose, facial blemishes, birthmark, etc.) |
| 6         | Limbs (short legs, bulging biceps, one arm longer than the other, rough hands, long nails, hairy arms and hands, bow-legged, flabby, big feet, long fingers, etc.)  |

## SKILLS

Skills in *Pendragon* define those activities which characters commonly perform during game play. The numerical value of both standard skills and combat skills reflects the chance of successfully completing any action related to that skill during the game; higher numbers mean better chances of success. As a result of different personal experience, though, not all characters have equal ability in these skills. Nonetheless, characters who have matured within the same culture show certain similarities in their abilities.

The values for each character's skills are derived from three sources: his culture, his social class, and the individual choices of the player. Once these determinations are complete, your character has the skills of a 21-year-old (or slightly older) squire who is ready to be knighted.

## BEGINNING VALUES

A character's beginning skill and combat skill values are shaped by his environment, especially his culture and his father's social class. In standard character generation, all characters are of the Cymric culture and are the sons of an established knight.

The character sheet has all of the skills entered, so you need merely introduce the numerical values for each ability. (Use a pencil!) The beginning skill values for Cymric sons of knights are as follows:

Awareness 5, Boating 1, Compose 1, Courtesy 3, Dancing 2, Faerie Lore 1, Falconry 3, First Aid 10, Flirting 3, Folklore 2, Gaming 3, Heraldry 3, Hunting 2, Intrigue 3, Orate 3, Play [harp] 3, Read [Latin] 0, Recognize 3, Religion [choose one] 2, Romance 2, Singing 2, Stewardship 2, Swimming 2, Tourney 2.

The beginning combat skills for Cymric sons of knights are as follows:

Battle 10, Horsemanship 10, Sword 10, Lance 10, Spear 6, Dagger 5

## INDIVIDUAL SKILL CHOICES

During his youth, each squire discovers those things that interest him most, and he spends as much time as possible in doing those things. The following process lets the player pick the things that interested his character most as a youth.

There are a few limitations, as follows:

- No skill or combat skill may ever be raised above 15 by this process.
- No stat may ever be raised above your character's standard racial limits. A character's SIZ may not be increased after he reaches age 21.
- No trait may be raised above 19 and no passion may be raised above 20.
- No Non-Knightly skill may be augmented (see Chapter 4). Hence, for example, no player knight can have the Surgery skill before starting play.
- Individual skills can be augmented by any of the several steps shown below. For instance, Hunting normally starts at 2, but at Step 3 it can be raised to 7, and then at Step 4 can receive 8 more points, to raise it to 15.





The process for personalizing a starting character's skills is as follows:

1. Choose any one Knightly skill at which you excel. Make it 15. The Sword skill is a popular and useful choice.
2. Choose any 3 non-combat skills other than First Aid. Make each of them 10.
3. Heighten any four unique statistics chosen from among the following: attribute scores, traits, passions, or skills. Heightening a skill (or combat skill) increases it by up to 5 points, while heightening an attribute, trait, or passion increases it by 1 point. Thus, for example, a character could increase (i) his SIZ, STR, and DEX by 1 point each and his Axe skill by up to 5 points; or (ii) his Energetic trait and his Love (family) passion by 1 point each and his Horsemanship and Hunting skills by up to 5 each. Any combination of four increases is allowed, within the restrictions given above.
4. Add 10 more points (again keeping in mind the limitations given above) divided among any number of combat or non-combat skills of your choice.
5. All other skills start at the value listed above under Beginning Values.

## PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

Thus far, your character is 21 years old and has already gained the reputation, connections, and minimum skills needed for knighthood. You may wish to add some years to your character's age before play, allowing him to gain some further pre-play experience.

Each additional year of age provides a character with any *two* of the following benefits; you may not choose the same benefit twice for the same year. (*Note:* These benefits are similar to, but not the same as those gained in the Winter Phase of the game — see Chapter 5.)

- Distribute 1d6 points among the character's skills. No non-weapon skills with a starting value of 0 may be augmented, and no skill may be raised above 15.
- Add 1 point to any trait (to a maximum of 19) or passion (maximum 20).
- Add 1 point to STR, DEX, CON, or APP. No stat can be raised to a value greater than the maximum possible for a character of that culture.

**Note:** You may not age your character more than 5 additional years. Remember to note on your character sheet that your character is one year older each time you take the Previous Experience option!

## OTHER INFORMATION

You do not have to write down everything that affects or happens to your character, but you *should*. You lose much of the long-term impact of playing this game if you don't. *Pendragon* is a long-term game, with knights staking their lives for glory. Their game-lives are worth the minor effort of a simple word or two or even a one-line synopsis for each of their adventures.

## GLORY

This space is provided to display your character's accumulated Glory. Characters gain Glory through family ties:

Every son receives Glory equal to 1/10th of his father's Glory (whether the father still lives or not), determined when the character begins play.

Assuming you do not plan to use the "Salisbury Family History" (see Chapter 3), determine this amount now for your starting character, as shown below.

*Base Starting Glory: 6d6+150*

If you use the "Salisbury Family History," then your starting Glory is instead determined by that history.

When your character is knighted, he will gain 1,000 Glory points. (If your Gamemaster practices the custom of the Leap — see "The Knighting Ceremony" elsewhere in this chapter — then your character might have jumped successfully onto his horse after being knighted, and his Glory would then be increased by 10 more.)

**Glory This Game:** The "Glory This Game" notation on your character sheet, just beneath the actual Glory banner, is provided to keep track of new Glory gained during game play, but which has not yet been applied to your Glory score because the Winter Phase has not yet arrived in game time. See Chapter 5 for more information on gaining Glory.

## COAT OF ARMS

A coat of arms is the design worn by a knight on the outer surface of his shield. This design serves to identify the knight (and often his lineage) when he wears full armor and is not otherwise recognizable. The skill that allows the identification of a coat of arms is called Heraldry. A group of people, called heralds, spends all their lives mastering this skill.

A knight is entitled to bear his own unique coat of arms. If your character does not have a ready-made coat of arms and you cannot make one up on the spot, he may apply for provisional arms and ride for a year with a blank shield. Additionally, a squire may reserve his design ahead of time by checking with the Royal Herald (i.e., the Gamemaster).

Draw the coat of arms you want or trace a design from the nearby pages of *charges* (pictorial elements) and *ordinaries* (geometrical background designs). You can combine charges and ordinaries within the same coat of arms. The background part of a coat of arms upon which a charge is set is called a *field*.

Normally a coat of arms includes a chromatic color and a metallic color. Colors available are red, green, blue, purple, and black. Metals include silver (white) and gold (yellow). "Furs" are also possible. For the sake of readability, do not use a metal charge with a metal field. For example, if you chose a Lorraine cross as your charge and Barry as your field, the Barry stripes could be silver and blue, with a black cross, but not black and blue with a silver cross, or silver and gold, with a blue cross.

Label each section with the desired color, or, if you wish, fill it in with colored pencils. Be sure you do not use the same color scheme and arms as recorded for someone else who is listed in this book. Each coat of arms must be unique, or it is not fulfilling its purpose of identifying an individual. The Royal Herald will inform you if you have inadvertently chosen a design already taken by someone else.

Feel free to invent, alter, and otherwise be creative in your heraldic devices. Remember that the Gamemaster has the final say about your design. Simplicity is the key of heraldic design. The symbol should be easily recognizable from a distance or it has not achieved its purpose.

## JOUST SCORE

This space is provided to record the results of every joust resolved during game play. You start with a 0 in each category. Add 1 point to the Wins column every time that your character wins a joust, and add 1 point to the Losses column every time he loses a joust.

These tallies are mainly for the amusement of the players, and do not directly affect the game unless the Gamemaster wishes them to.

## HORSE

In this space you keep track of your most important horses. Your character starts with four horses, and luck may give you another. Eventually you may accumulate an entire stable.

You begin play with the following horses:

- #1. One charger (your warhorse).
- #2 and #3. Two rouncys (a rouncy is a small horse for riding; also carries some equipment), one for the knight and one for the squire.
- #4. One sumpter (a pack horse for carrying equipment and provisions).

List each horse's type and selected statistics under the appropriate number. Characters usually ride a rouncy, in order to keep their warhorse fresh to use in a fight.

See Appendix 2 for standard statistics for each type of horse.

## SQUIRE

After being knighted, characters are assigned a squire by their lord. For more information, see the "Squire" section later in this chapter.

## EQUIPMENT CARRIED

New characters start with standardized possessions. Write the items and values listed here in the spaces provided on the character sheet.

- Chainmail and shield
- 2 spears, sword, dagger
- Fine clothing (worth 1 £.)
- Personal gear, travel gear, war gear (see "Starting Equipment" in Chapter 8)
- 4 horses (as noted above)

This list assumes that your knight begins with typical economic resources; if you and your Gamemaster decide, for whatever reason, that you are more or less wealthy than the typical vassal knight, then see Chapter 8.

No player knight should start play in the Impoverished or Superlative categories of wealth.

## ADDITIONAL BELONGINGS

Each beginning character may roll once on Table 2-2 to find one additional valuable, colorful possession. Make up the where and why of this, if necessary. A number of the

entries are simply money, which can be used to purchase additional equipment (see Chapter 8) if the player wishes.

## TABLE 2-2: ADDITIONAL BELONGINGS

| d20 Result | Possession   |
|------------|--|
| 01         | Money (3d20 d.)  |
| 02-03      | Money (3d20+100 d.)  |
| 04-06      | Money (£1)   |
| 07         | Money (£1d6)   |
| 08         | Heirloom — sacred Christian relic (Roll 1d6: 1 finger, 2 tears, 3-4 hair, 5 bone fragment, 6 blood); if you are pagan, re-roll |
| 09         | Heirloom — ancient bronze sword, worth £2 (+1 modifier to Sword skill when used; breaks in combat as if it was not a sword)    |
| 10         | Heirloom — blessed lance, worth 25 d. (+1 modifier to Lance skill until it breaks)   |
| 11         | Heirloom — decorated saddle, worth £1  |
| 12         | Heirloom — engraved ring, roll 1d6 for value: 1-4 silver, worth 120 d.; 5-6 gold, worth £2                                     |
| 13         | Heirloom — arm band, roll 1d6 for value: 1-5 silver, worth £1; 6 gold, worth £8  |
| 14         | Heirloom — valuable cloak, worth £1 (roll 1d6 for origin: 1-2 Byzantium, 3 Germany, 4-5 Spain, 6 Rome)                         |
| 15         | A magic healing potion, priceless (cures 1d6 damage, once)   |
| 16-17      | An extra rouncy  |
| 18         | A second charger   |
| 19         | A courser (a fast horse; see Appendix 2)   |
| 20         | Roll twice more, re-rolling further results of 20  |

**Heirlooms:** For heirlooms, you can make up a story of how such an object came into your family's possession. Note that it might be from your mother's side of the family, a gift from a grateful lord, a war trophy, and so on.

## SELECTED EVENTS

Use this box on the back of your character sheet to record the dates upon which these seven critical events of a character's life occur:

**Born:** Your character's birth date.

**Squired:** Birth date plus 15 years, and to whom squired, if part of the campaign.

**Knighted:** The year in which your character is knighted, and by whom. *Starting characters are about to be knighted.*

**Titled:** The year in which your character receives a lord's title (if ever).

**Landed:** The year in which a household knight becomes a vassal knight. Your character, being the eldest son of a deceased vassal knight, will be landed at the same time he is knighted.

**Member of the Round Table:** The year in which your knight is accepted at the Round Table — a rare honor!

**Died:** The year in which your character died. Useful if you created a family for your character.

## FAMILY

Record your family information in the spaces provided on the back of your character sheet.

**Year Wed:** The year in which your character marries, if ever.

**Spouse Name:** The name of your character's wife. No knights start the game married. However, marriage is





an important part of the *Pendragon* story, and most player knights should wish to be married. See Chapters 6 and 7 for more information about marriage and your character.

**Will:** Write here the name or relationship of the person whom your character has designated as heir to his property. (Writing “Family” here is usually sufficient.) Note that only *granted* property is transferred — gifts from one’s lord return to him upon the recipient’s death. If nothing is written here, then everything goes to the lord.

**Children Born:** The date of birth and name of any children your character may have. Mortality rates in children are fairly high, so one or more of your children might well not survive to age of majority.

## FAMILY CHARACTERISTIC

A Family Characteristic is some unusual feature gained by everyone in your father’s family. Roll on the table below (this is decided randomly, even though other components of your character were yours to choose), then turn the character sheet over and add the value to the appropriate skill. This bonus can violate the rules previously established for limitations; thus it might raise a skill above 15, or perhaps even above 20.

The Family Characteristic is transferred through the male line, and is given to all male children of this bloodline. Thus your brothers and sons also have this characteristic. (Your sisters and daughters have their own women’s gifts from their mothers’ side of the family, as shown later in this chapter.)

**TABLE 2—3: FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS**

| d20 Result | Characteristic                                  |
|------------|---|
| 1–2        | Good with horses (+5 Horsemanship)              |
| 3          | Excellent voice (+10 Singing)                   |
| 4–7        | Keen senses (+5 Awareness)                      |
| 8          | Nature-craft (+5 Hunting)                       |
| 9          | Light-footed (+10 Dancing)                      |
| 10         | Natural healer (+5 First Aid)                   |
| 11         | Naturally lovable (+10 Flirting)                |
| 12         | Never forgets a face (+10 Recognize)            |
| 13         | Remarkably deductive (+5 Intrigue)              |
| 14         | Like an otter (+10 Swimming)                    |
| 15         | Natural speaker (+10 Orate)                     |
| 16         | Natural musician (+15 Play (choose instrument)) |
| 17         | Good with words (+15 Compose)                   |
| 18         | Love for arms (+10 Heraldry)                    |
| 19         | Good with birds (+15 Falconry)                  |
| 20         | Clever (+10 Gaming)                             |

## HOLDINGS

Your character begins as the eldest son of a deceased landholding knight. List the name of his future holding here — it is the same as his Current Home. If he acquires more land as the game progresses, list each manor or larger holding by name. List the number of manors in any larger holding.

## EQUIPMENT AT HOME

Knights often accumulate *denarii*, *libra*, extra weapons, addition mounts, sumptuous goods, and so forth. If your character does not carry these things everywhere he goes, list them here.

## ARMY

One of the most important factors in the game is how many knights you can potentially call to your aid in a crisis.

**Family Knights:** Your relatives who are knights, whether uncles, brothers, or other relations. These are noted as being either old (over age 55), middle-aged (35–55), or young (20–35 or so). Only the numbers of each type are needed now, not their individual names or other information.

Determine your family knights by rolling as follows, and then enter the numbers on the character sheet back.

Old Knights: 1d6–5

Middle-Aged Knights: 1d6–2

Young Knights: 1d6+1

Add all three numbers together, plus 1 more young knight (your character), to find the total number of family knights.

**Vassals:** Starting characters are never lords holding other knights as vassals; leave this space blank for now. If your character acquires vassals during the campaign, list them here; these knights are obliged to come to battle if summoned, and are probably close associates of yours as well.

**Other Lineage Men:** Other men of your family, not themselves knights, can still be useful in a fight. They are never well armed, and are generally unskilled at fighting, but at least they won’t run away immediately upon being attacked. As family members, they have much to gain in any family victory.

Total Number = 3d6+5

**Levy:** The levy calls forth every able-bodied man of your holding(s). Though the total population of your starting manor is around 420 people, this includes only 100 or fewer able-bodied men other than knights and squires. Not all of these peasants can be called upon to fight.

For ease’s sake, this is the number of levies anticipated per manor. If your character gains more manors, roll again for each new manor and write the combined total down here. A knight with many manors can call upon a large levy!

Your Gamemaster decides how effective the men of your levy are in combat, but in general they are poor soldiers. (Appendix 2 gives sample game stats for an adult male peasant.)

Total Number = 5d20

## ANNUAL GLORY REWARDS

Each Winter Phase, your knight receives Glory for exceptional traits and passions, for being suitably chivalrous and/or religious, and for holding land. This area helps you keep track of that annual Glory reward.

See Chapter 5 for more on Glory and the Winter Phase.

## HISTORY

Use this area to record various events of import in your character’s life. Begin each entry with the date. (The year designation is usually enough, as opposed to day and month, since most characters engage in only one adventure per year.) At the end of each line is a column for listing any new Glory gained in the adventure for each event, plus a column to list the total Glory earned by your character at that point in the game.

After experiencing several adventures with a number of characters, you will begin to sense the history and movement that pervades the Arthurian saga, and your characters will grow into the story.

## CONCLUSION

If you have followed instructions so far in this chapter, you now have a character ready to play. The character is a squire, 21 or more years old, possessing the connections, skills, and reputation necessary to become a knight immediately once play begins.

The actual events leading to knighthood, and especially the ceremony, are best played out during the game.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF KNIGHTHOOD

Knighthood is an extraordinary and rare honor, too important to be conferred automatically on characters. Instead, the ceremony should be part of the game, in which each player speaks the part of his or her character in taking the oath of knighthood. If this is a player's first knight, the oath may be the first words they speak "in character." (The oath appears in a text box nearby.)

Beginning knights receive a full 1,000 Glory points as soon as they are knighted; they are thereafter entitled to use the honorific "Sir" before their name, and also qualify for a heraldic coat of arms.

Note that new characters are assumed to have contacts at court who sponsor them properly, and it is further assumed that their lord needs another knight.

## NEW CAMPAIGNS

If you, as the Gamemaster, are just beginning a campaign, you should familiarize yourself with the scenarios in Appendix 3 and conduct the "Introductory Scenario" once all of the characters are completed. At the appropriate point, perform the knighthood ceremony for all the characters in the campaign, who will then have the same lord and homeland, and thus an important bond between them.

## ONGOING CAMPAIGNS

If your new character is entering an ongoing campaign in which the other characters are already knights, then as soon as you've finished your character, the Gamemaster should announce a court session and conduct the ceremony of knighthood, with the other player knights as witnesses.

If the other player knights are in the middle of an adventure elsewhere and cannot come to court, the Gamemaster should interrupt the action long enough to conduct the knighthood ceremony, with non-player characters as witnesses.

## INTRODUCING YOUR KNIGHT

Once the characters have been knighted but before the first adventure begins, everyone usually introduces their character. Here are two such descriptions, using two sample knights that appear throughout this book in examples of play. They are young Sir Ambrut (a new player character) and his lord, Sir Yvane (an experienced player character).



# The Knighting Ceremony

Initiation into knighthood is a solemn occasion that occurs only once for each knight. Several squires are often knighted at the same time; the order in which they are called forth depends upon the importance of their fathers. The Gamemaster determines precedence.

The ceremony is always done with full panoply. This means the lord sits upon his high seat or throne, banners are displayed, courtiers are present in their best clothes, and heralds make announcements.

For first characters, the NOBLE is the Earl of Salisbury.

HERALD: [NAME OF CANDIDATE], come forth and kneel before the throne.

*(Servant places sword, armor, shield, and spurs nearby.)*

HERALD *(reads)*: Be it known to all men that I, [NAME OF NOBLE] am minded to raise [NAME OF CANDIDATE] by virtue of his honor, loyalty, valor, and skill at arms, to the high rank of knighthood.

HERALD: [NAME OF CANDIDATE], do you swear and acknowledge [NOBLE] to be your true and lawful liege?

CANDIDATE: I do so swear.

HERALD: Do you also swear fealty to Uther Pendragon, to defend and obey him until he depart the throne, or death shall take you?

CANDIDATE: I so swear.

*(NOBLE rises, goes to CANDIDATE.)*

NOBLE: Let this be the last blow you receive without just recourse.

*(NOBLE delivers the coulee, striking CANDIDATE across the face or on the shoulder, sometimes hard enough to knock him down. CANDIDATE then kneels before his liege, placing his hands palm-to-palm and upraised. NOBLE places his hands over the knight's.)*

HERALD *(to CANDIDATE)*: Repeat after me: "I, [NAME OF CANDIDATE], do solemnly swear and pledge my sword to [NOBLE], my liege, to defend and obey him until he depart his demesnes or death shall take me, and to uphold the honor of knighthood."

CANDIDATE: *(Repeats the above.)*

NOBLE: And I, for my part, do swear to defend and honor [NAME OF CANDIDATE] as befits a true knight.

*(NOBLE then receives the sword and taps CANDIDATE lightly on both shoulders with the sword.)* I dub thee Sir [NAME OF CANDIDATE]. Receive now your spurs *(receives spurs)*, your right to suitable arms *(receives shield)*, and take this, my sword *(girds on sword)*, to your side to serve and defend me well. Arise, Sir Knight.

## Ceremonial Flourishes

In addition to the standard knighthood ceremony, there are sometimes additional ceremonies that may be added by regional custom or by the desires of the lord.

### Beforehand: Vigil

Religious lords may use a more elaborate ceremony. Typically, the knight spends the night preceding his ceremony in a vigil of prayer and contemplation. The sword, armor, coat of arms, and spurs he is to wear as a knight are placed upon the altar to receive a blessing from God or the knight's favorite saint. A priest or bishop bestows blessings, and the knight makes further oaths to support the church.

In this ritual, the candidate may be dressed in special clothing that symbolizes his future as a knight. In such cases, his white over-tunic symbolizes purity; his black tunic, hose, and shoes denote death; his red cloak indicates blood (both that which may be shed and that which runs in a nobleman's veins); and his white belt denotes the chastity of a good Christian man.

The Gamemaster might have the player make rolls on Energetic (to see if the squire stays awake) and Pious (to see if he prays adequately.)

### Afterwards: The Leap

Many lands follow an informal ritual held immediately after the knighting ceremony is concluded. The new knight, armed and armored, dashes outside and leaps into the saddle. If he makes it into the saddle, the knight is praised and honored, but if he misses, everyone laughs. No other meaning is attached to the rite.

In *Pendragon* some lords follow this custom. To see if your character is successful, roll d20. If the number rolled is equal to or less than your character's DEX, he is successful and earns an additional 10 points of Glory.

## Short Ceremony

Knighting may also occur without the pomp and ceremony given above. This ceremony, for instance, might be used on a battlefield to promote someone instantly.

NOBLE: Kneel before me, [NAME OF CANDIDATE]. *(CANDIDATE kneels.)* Do you acknowledge me as your true and rightful liege?

CANDIDATE: I so swear.

NOBLE: Do you pledge fealty to me, and swear your sword to me, to be forever at my service?

CANDIDATE: I so swear.

HERALD: Repeat after me: "I, [NAME OF CANDIDATE], do solemnly swear and pledge my sword to [NOBLE], my liege, to defend and obey him until he depart his demesnes or death shall take me, and to uphold the honor of knighthood."

CANDIDATE: *(Repeats the above.)*

NOBLE *(taking sword from CANDIDATE)*: Then I dub thee Sir [NAME OF CANDIDATE], and return this, my sword, to you to be wielded in my name. Arise, Sir Knight.





# THE COURTIER

This young man plans to pursue renown at court through Courtesy and Intrigue. Though average on the field of combat, he shines in court situations. He is also famously Just.

Select this character if you are interested in Glory derived from roleplaying as well as combat. He can act as a spokesman for the rest of the party (and perhaps even his lord), and is sure to do very well with the ladies (note his Appearance).

## KING ARTHUR Pendragon

KNIGHT'S CHARACTER SHEET

PLAYER:

**PERSONAL DATA**

Name: *The Courser*  
 Age: Son Number  
 Homeland:  
 Culture: Religion: *British Christian*  
 Lord:  
 Current Class:  
 Current Home:

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Chivalry Bonus (+) (Total=0+)  
 Religious Bonus (underlined traits all 10+)

|           |    |    |           |  |
|-----------|----|----|-----------|--|
| Chaste    | 15 | 7  | Lustful   |  |
| Energetic | 15 | 7  | Lazy      |  |
| Frivolous | 15 | 10 | Vengeful  |  |
| Generous  | 15 | 7  | Selfish   |  |
| Honest    | 15 | 7  | Deceitful |  |
| Just      | 15 | 7  | Arbitrary |  |
| Merciful  | 15 | 7  | Cruel     |  |
| Modest    | 15 | 7  | Proud     |  |
| Pious     | 15 | 10 | Whoreish  |  |
| Prudent   | 15 | 10 | Reckless  |  |
| Temperate | 15 | 7  | Indulgent |  |
| Timid     | 15 | 10 | Staunch   |  |
| Valiant   | 15 | 5  | Cowardly  |  |

Directed Trait:  
 Directed Trait:

**PASSIONS**

Loyalty (Lord) (15): 17  
 Love (Family) (15): 15  
 Hospitality (15): 15  
 Honor (15): 15  
*None (None)*

**EQUIPMENT CARRIED**

Armor Type (Points):  
 Clothing (Linen Value):  
 Personal Gear (On horse #):  
 Travel Gear (On horse #):  
 War Gear (On horse #):

**STATISTICS**

SIZE: 10 (Knockdown)  
 DEX: 10  
 STR: 10  
 CON (+3): 11 (Major Wound)  
 APP: 10  
 Damage (STR + SIZ/6): 2  
 Healing Rate (STR + CON/10): 2  
 Movement Rate (STR + DEX/10): 2  
 Total Hit Points (SIZ + CON): 25  
 Unconscious (HP/4): 6

**SKILLS**

Awareness (5): 5  
 Boating (1): 1  
 Carpentry (0): 1  
 Courtesy (3): 15  
 Dancing (2): 5  
 Fencing (1): 1  
 Falconry (3): 5  
 First Aid (10): 10  
 Fighting (2): 5  
 Gambling (3): 5  
 Heraldry (3): 10  
 Hunting (2): 2  
 Intrigue (3): 10  
 Jousting (3): 5  
 Leadership (10): 10  
 Lore (Latin) (10): 1  
 Music (3): 5  
 Navigation (British Constitution) (2): 2  
 Romance (2): 2  
 Singing (2): 2  
 Stewardship (2): 2  
 Swimming (2): 2  
 Tournaments (5): 5

**COMBAT SKILLS**

Battle (10): 10  
 Horsemanship (10): 10  
 Weapon Skills:  
 Sword (10): 10  
 Lance (10): 10  
 Spear (5): 5  
 Dagger (5): 5

**JOUST SCORE**

Winn: Loss:

**HORSES**

Best Warhorse (#1):  
 Type:  
 Damage: None  
 Armor: HP  
 Size: CON: DEX:  
 Breed:  
 Other Horses:  
 Riding (#2): None  
 Squire's (#3): None  
 (#4): None  
 (#5): None

**SQUIRE**

Name:  
 Age:  
 First Aid (6):  
 Battle (1):  
 Horsemanship (6):

# MASTER OF THE HUNT

This young man wishes to pursue all the great beasts of Britain. He has studied all the skills important to the hunt; he is also famously Energetic. Note that he has a courser as his primary steed instead of the usual charger, so his horse is faster but slightly less damaging than usual.

Select this character if you wish to gain Glory from hunting as well as in lethal combat. The Master of the Hunt is somewhat less biased towards roleplaying than the Courtier, and represents a good compromise.

# THE FIGHTER

This fierce young warrior is big, strong, and homely. He already bears the scars of many fights though only 21 years old. He is famously Reckless by nature, he has the Constitution to survive most injuries with little permanent effect.

Choose this character if your primary interest lies in combat. He is not designed to do very well in any other situations, however.

## KING ARTHUR Pendragon

KNIGHT'S CHARACTER SHEET

PLAYER:

**PERSONAL DATA**

Name: *Master of the Hunt*  
 Age: Son Number  
 Homeland:  
 Culture: Religion: *British*  
 Lord:  
 Current Class:  
 Current Home:

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Chivalry Bonus (+) (Total=0+)  
 Religious Bonus (underlined traits all 10+)

|           |    |    |           |  |
|-----------|----|----|-----------|--|
| Chaste    | 15 | 15 | Lustful   |  |
| Energetic | 15 | 2  | Lazy      |  |
| Frivolous | 15 | 10 | Vengeful  |  |
| Generous  | 15 | 7  | Selfish   |  |
| Honest    | 15 | 7  | Deceitful |  |
| Just      | 15 | 10 | Arbitrary |  |
| Merciful  | 15 | 10 | Cruel     |  |
| Modest    | 15 | 15 | Proud     |  |
| Pious     | 15 | 10 | Whoreish  |  |
| Prudent   | 15 | 10 | Reckless  |  |
| Temperate | 15 | 10 | Indulgent |  |
| Timid     | 15 | 10 | Staunch   |  |
| Valiant   | 15 | 5  | Cowardly  |  |

Directed Trait:  
 Directed Trait:

**PASSIONS**

Loyalty (Lord) (15): 15  
 Love (Family) (15): 15  
 Hospitality (15): 15  
 Honor (15): 15  
*None (None)*

**EQUIPMENT CARRIED**

Armor Type (Points):  
 Clothing (Linen Value):  
 Personal Gear (On horse #):  
 Travel Gear (On horse #):  
 War Gear (On horse #):  
*1 Bear Skin*

**STATISTICS**

SIZE: 10 (Knockdown)  
 DEX: 15  
 STR: 15  
 CON (+3): 18 (Major Wound)  
 APP: 10  
 Damage (STR + SIZ/6): 3  
 Healing Rate (STR + CON/10): 3  
 Movement Rate (STR + DEX/10): 3  
 Total Hit Points (SIZ + CON): 28  
 Unconscious (HP/4): 7

**SKILLS**

Awareness (5): 10  
 Boating (1): 1  
 Carpentry (0): 1  
 Courtesy (3): 5  
 Dancing (2): 2  
 Fencing (1): 1  
 Falconry (3): 5  
 First Aid (10): 15  
 Fighting (2): 5  
 Gambling (3): 5  
 Heraldry (3): 10  
 Hunting (2): 10  
 Intrigue (3): 5  
 Leadership (10): 5  
 Lore (Latin) (10): 1  
 Music (3): 5  
 Navigation (British Constitution) (2): 2  
 Romance (2): 2  
 Singing (2): 2  
 Stewardship (2): 2  
 Swimming (2): 2  
 Tournaments (5): 2  
 Unconscious (HP/4): 7

**COMBAT SKILLS**

Battle (10): 10  
 Horsemanship (10): 15  
 Weapon Skills:  
 Sword (10): 10  
 Lance (10): 10  
 Spear (5): 5  
 Dagger (5): 5

**JOUST SCORE**

Winn: Loss:

**HORSES**

Best Warhorse (#1):  
 Type:  
 Damage: None  
 Armor: HP  
 Size: CON: DEX:  
 Breed:  
 Other Horses:  
 Riding (#2): None  
 Squire's (#3): None  
 (#4): None  
 (#5): None

**SQUIRE**

Name:  
 Age:  
 First Aid (6):  
 Battle (1):  
 Horsemanship (6):

## KING ARTHUR Pendragon

KNIGHT'S CHARACTER SHEET

PLAYER:

**PERSONAL DATA**

Name: *The Fighter*  
 Age: Son Number  
 Homeland:  
 Culture: Religion: *British Christian*  
 Lord:  
 Current Class:  
 Current Home:

**PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Chivalry Bonus (+) (Total=0+)  
 Religious Bonus (underlined traits all 10+)

|           |    |    |           |  |
|-----------|----|----|-----------|--|
| Chaste    | 15 | 7  | Lustful   |  |
| Energetic | 15 | 7  | Lazy      |  |
| Frivolous | 15 | 10 | Vengeful  |  |
| Generous  | 15 | 7  | Selfish   |  |
| Honest    | 15 | 7  | Deceitful |  |
| Just      | 15 | 10 | Arbitrary |  |
| Merciful  | 15 | 7  | Cruel     |  |
| Modest    | 15 | 7  | Proud     |  |
| Pious     | 15 | 10 | Whoreish  |  |
| Prudent   | 15 | 10 | Reckless  |  |
| Temperate | 15 | 7  | Indulgent |  |
| Timid     | 15 | 10 | Staunch   |  |
| Valiant   | 15 | 5  | Cowardly  |  |

Directed Trait:  
 Directed Trait:

**PASSIONS**

Loyalty (Lord) (15): 15  
 Love (Family) (15): 15  
 Hospitality (15): 15  
 Honor (15): 15  
*None (None)*

**EQUIPMENT CARRIED**

Armor Type (Points):  
 Clothing (Linen Value):  
 Personal Gear (On horse #):  
 Travel Gear (On horse #):  
 War Gear (On horse #):

**STATISTICS**

SIZE: 15 (Knockdown)  
 DEX: 11  
 STR: 11  
 CON (+3): 16 (Major Wound)  
 APP: 8  
 Damage (STR + SIZ/6): 5  
 Healing Rate (STR + CON/10): 3  
 Movement Rate (STR + DEX/10): 3  
 Total Hit Points (SIZ + CON): 22  
 Unconscious (HP/4): 5

**SKILLS**

Awareness (5): 10  
 Boating (1): 1  
 Carpentry (0): 1  
 Courtesy (3): 5  
 Dancing (2): 2  
 Fencing (1): 1  
 Falconry (3): 5  
 First Aid (10): 10  
 Fighting (2): 5  
 Gambling (3): 5  
 Heraldry (3): 10  
 Hunting (2): 10  
 Intrigue (3): 5  
 Leadership (10): 5  
 Lore (Latin) (10): 1  
 Music (3): 5  
 Navigation (British Constitution) (2): 2  
 Romance (2): 2  
 Singing (2): 2  
 Stewardship (2): 2  
 Swimming (2): 2  
 Tournaments (5): 2

**COMBAT SKILLS**

Battle (10): 10  
 Horsemanship (10): 15  
 Weapon Skills:  
 Sword (10): 15  
 Lance (10): 15  
 Spear (5): 5  
 Dagger (5): 5

**JOUST SCORE**

Winn: Loss:

**HORSES**

Best Warhorse (#1):  
 Type:  
 Damage: None  
 Armor: HP  
 Size: CON: DEX:  
 Breed:  
 Other Horses:  
 Riding (#2): None  
 Squire's (#3): None  
 (#4): None  
 (#5): None

**SQUIRE**

Name:  
 Age:  
 First Aid (6):  
 Battle (1):  
 Horsemanship (6):

# SQUIRES

Most Pendragon campaigns dispense with player character squires; they are simply non-player characters who are



always around but rarely if ever important. However, your knight needs the services of a squire at times.

A squire's success at performing his duty is most easily determined by having him attempt a Squire roll (see below). Otherwise, the following facts are important to know about non-player character squires:

**Name:** If you know your squire's name, you have the kernel of a character. (Usually your squire is a younger son of one of your lord's other vassals, or perhaps the son of one of his allies' vassals.)

**Age:** Usually 15 at start, but as high as 20. When a squire reaches 21, he is usually knighted, whereupon you take a new squire of 15 years into service.

**Squire Roll:** Age is used in a simple mechanic called the Squire roll, made any time the squire must be assumed to have performed his duties, with appropriate forethought, while under stress. For instance, if a knight needs a new lance in a tournament's grand melee, roll the squire's age on d20. If the roll is successful, the knight gets the lance at once (assume that the squire wisely had an extra lance at hand already); if not, he must wait until the next melee round and try again. The Squire roll can be used in other instances, such as for the squire to see if his knight's armor is polished properly when the king visits to inspect the castle.

Sometimes a simple Squire roll does not seem appropriate, or the squire requires more definition. Thus, skills are given here for a typical Cymric squire: First Aid 6; Battle 1, Horsemanship 6; and any one other skill 5. These are the skills most often needed by a combatant knight's squire, yet most likely to be significantly different from the squire's age.

**Horse:** The knight's second rouncy. When the squire's knight becomes unhorsed or otherwise loses his mount, he can take the squire's mount as replacement.

## PLAYER CHARACTER SQUIRES

Sometimes it is amusing, educational, or otherwise useful and meaningful to have players play squires. All player characters begin as squires; however, most are knighted immediately. However, those who for whatever reason do not qualify for knighthood should remain as squires, at least for a time.

Squires are apprenticed to knights, acting as servants while receiving on-the-job training. They are gentlemen-in-waiting, usually planning to become knights someday. Squires must prove their worth to their master knights in order to qualify for knighthood. When openings become available, squires are presented to their future lords for acceptance.

It is not uncommon for men to be advanced in age, yet still be squires, especially if they are not of knightly or noble blood themselves. There is no dishonor in serving as squire for life: Gouvernail served Sir Tristram until that knight's death. It is a great honor to be a squire, even one of a famous knight's many squires.

A knight may have several squires at a time. The senior squire, called the "squire of the body," is in command of the other squires, and has both the responsibilities and benefits of his post. He is usually the only squire to go with the knight into battle.

For roleplay's sake, a knight and his squire should be played by different players if both are player characters. When one person plays both, the pair works in unnatural unison, creating an unfair advantage over players with non-player character squires and crowding relatively unimportant characters into knightly scenarios. Worse, a domineering player may have his own characters argue with each other during play, resulting in a complete waste of time.

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a squire, a person must be accepted as such by a knight. He must pledge to obey the knight as his lord, and grant full loyalty to him. He agrees to place his care and protection into the hands of the knight.

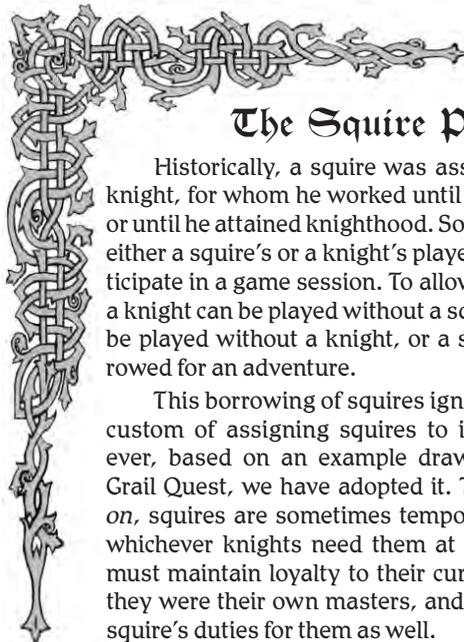
An individual knight may also have further requirements, such as a preference for attitudes, religion, culture, or specific skills. Those are strictly personal requirements that vary according to the individual, and may certainly be imposed upon the squire.

## DUTIES

A squire, simply, does whatever his knight tells him to do. Typical chores that all squires must perform include tending horses, sharpening weapons, polishing armor, helping don armor, carrying messages, preparing and handing over fresh weapons, providing the knight with a horse, taking charge of prisoners on a battlefield, riding errands, standing guard, waiting on the knight at a banquet, rescuing and carrying off a wounded knight from the battlefield, and fighting when so ordered.

## BENEFITS

Squires receive goods, training, board, and protection from their knights. Goods include their clothing, horses, armor, weapons, and everything required or sustenance. Training is gained through play experience, and as outlined in the experience rules. Squires receive board from the knight, as available and appropriate. Unless the knight is in a lady's quarters, the squire can expect lodgings comparable to the knight's.



## The Squire Pool

Historically, a squire was assigned to a single knight, for whom he worked until death, dismissal, or until he attained knighthood. Sometimes, though, either a squire's or a knight's player is unable to participate in a game session. To allow play to proceed, a knight can be played without a squire, a squire can be played without a knight, or a squire can be borrowed for an adventure.

This borrowing of squires ignores the historical custom of assigning squires to individuals. However, based on an example drawn from Malory's *Grail Quest*, we have adopted it. Thus, in *Pendragon*, squires are sometimes temporarily attached to whichever knights need them at the time. Squires must maintain loyalty to their current knights as if they were their own masters, and perform all other squire's duties for them as well.





The knight must work and fight to protect his squire, and may not squander his squire's life needlessly. This is a subjective judgment made by the knight, and a matter of trust for the squire. Many squires chafe at being held back, preferring the chance to fight the enemy and thus gain experience. Others appreciate the protection.

Squires, as the lowest class of nobles- and gentlemen-in-training, may be ransomed if captured for 6 £.

## WOMEN IN *PENDRAGON*

Women have roles in the Arthurian world that no man can perform. Still, *Pendragon* is based on Arthurian literature: To be faithful to the sources, the role of female characters is limited to those roles found in literature and history. The core game does not go out of its way to be politically correct or modern — those concessions appear in later supplements. Thus, this chapter concerns itself with the traditional roles of women in feudal society, with perhaps a nod toward some other possibilities.

A character sheet for traditional female characters is provided.

### WOMEN'S ROLES

Women in *Pendragon* are normally classified as one of three types, based on the typical roles found in Malory and similar sources. These are as follows: *ordinary*, *important*, and *extraordinary women*.

*Ordinary*: These women fulfill all non-epic functions without complications. Their anonymous existence is implied or accepted through the feudal world. They remain faceless and nameless. Such women have no individual character sheets; they are all non-player characters. These generally include the un-played wives of player knights.

*Important*: These women have some individuality. They usually have names, or are at least known as the daughters of their fathers. Interestingly, many of these important women are called Elaine, or some alternate spelling of that name. Important women are often widows, mothers of vengeful men, heiresses, or healers of note. They are commonly accused of or found to be using minor magic. They are often among the major Gamemaster characters who will interact directly with the player knights on a regular basis. They generally do not have complete character sheets.

Some important women from Malory include Amide (a.k.a. Elaine), Percivale's sister, who is instrumental in the completion of the Grail Quest; Beauvivate, the provocateur of Sir La Cote Mal Taile; La Beale Isoud, Queen of Cornwall and lover of Sir Tristram; Brangwine, handmaid and confidante of La Beale Isoud; Elaine of Carbonek, who bears Galahad by Sir Lancelot; Elaine of Astolat, who dies of a broken heart for Sir Lancelot; the various wicked enchantresses (often queens as well) who plot great calamities for the Round Table sympathizers; and Dame Lynette, who, with her saucy tongue, guides Sir Beaumains on his first quest.

*Extraordinary*: These women are major characters, with rights and powers and personality to match any man's. Their actions have a major impact upon the main story line. All player-character women are of this category. In

game terms, any woman can be made extraordinary simply by filling out a character sheet for her and playing her at appropriate times during the game.

Extraordinary women in Malory include Queen Guenever, the beautiful wife of King Arthur and head of the Courts of Love; Queen Margawse, widow of King Lot, a dabbler in witchcraft and the mother of Sir Gawaine and his brothers; Queen Morgan le Fay, the mistress of Faerie, an enchantress supreme who has a passion for Sir Lancelot, hates Guenever, and plots trouble for her brother, King Arthur; Lady Viviane of the Lake, who gives Arthur his sword, Excalibur, and is killed by Sir Balin; and Lady Nimue of the Lake, guardian of the High King's court against wicked enchantment, once Merlin is gone.

### COURTLY ACTIVITIES AND SKILLS

Even extraordinary women tend to have minor roles when compared with the adventuring knights. After all, much of this game is concerned primarily with the masculine pursuits of combat, war, and knighthood. However, *Pendragon* still offers a chance to play interesting and influential females. Sometimes a player is almost required to play a woman character. If a typical (i.e., male knight) player character dies when his son is young, then a formerly ordinary woman is likely to be upgraded to watch over the affairs of the heir until he is ready for knighthood. Sometimes a daughter is the only issue of a player knight's marriage, making her a highly desirable heiress.

The skills of Chirurgery and Stewardship are particularly apt for women. Chirurgery is likely to save the lives of fighting player characters, and is not commonly practiced by men. Stewardship affects the income from one's landholdings. Courtly skills such as Dancing are also appropriate for women characters.

### WIFE, MOTHER, WIDOW

The standard roles for women (outside of religious life, explained in the next major section) are those of wife, mother, or widow. There are some particular points of interest to women player characters in these roles, as shown below:

*Wife*: Wives are a natural part of life in the game, and provide great roleplaying opportunities. The game changes significantly, gaining a great deal of richness, when a person other than the Gamemaster operates such a character in interaction with player knights.

*Mother*: The home must always be tended; such business may be resolved in a few die rolls, but it is very important for unmarried wandering knights to have someone at home managing the household.

*Widow*: The wife of a knight is likely to outlive her suitors and husbands, accumulating some of their Glory and further collecting her own along the way. Thus, a widow is highly desirable as a wife. Widows also often have young children whose interests require attention until they come of age. Such rights are given to the official ward of the heir, so women seek to gain that right over their own sons. Finally, widows by law keep a third of their husband's holdings as their own source of income, the "widow's gift." This can amount to quite a sum.

## HEIRESS

Women, usually daughters of men with no male heirs, may come into property in their own right. Yet, however rich, they are without power under the law of the land, held in a state of perpetual childhood. An heiress is placed under the care of her father's liege lord, and he has the right to choose her husband. This effectively makes her a pawn in her lord's hands.

The liege lord generally takes control of all the property of an heiress, taking its income for himself for the duration of her spinsterhood, merely providing for her welfare out of her coffers. Since the income is usually much more than the expense of keeping a rich maiden, lords like to have heiresses in their care, and are often in no hurry to have them wed.

Because the hand of a rich heiress is the greatest prize that can be awarded to a loyal retainer for his service, many knights maintain their bachelorhood in the hopes of receiving just such a reward. Perhaps the best historic example of this patience is found in Sir William Marshall, a landless knight who served faithfully as head of the household knights for Prince Henry of England (the "Young King"), then for his father King Henry II, then King Richard the Lion-hearted, and finally King John Lackland before finally obtaining the hand of the Countess of Pembroke at the ripe old age of forty-three.

The law of the land requires that, if an heiress is widowed, her liege lord may have her take a second husband of the lord's choosing. However, law also holds that a woman cannot be forced to marry a third time. If she finds love after being widowed a second time, she must obtain her lord's permission to marry, as before, but she has no obligation to marry. Further, she can now, unencumbered, exercise all other rights of possession. Knights may swear fealty to her, she determines how to spend the fief's money, and so on. Such an heiress is quite independent and powerful.

## LOVERS

Because women are effectively blocked from great personal achievement, they often find their outlet for power and respect by manipulating and controlling men. Some men do not mind this. In fact, some actually prefer it to thinking for themselves. The custom of *fine amor* (see Appendix 1) provides limitless opportunity for adventurous, if perhaps reckless women to pursue their personal interests.

Romance is one way of controlling men. Although the consequences of an affair may be personally disastrous, love is one of the areas where women have great freedom, albeit in secrecy. A woman may be courted by several suitors, all of whom she is refusing, all of whom are working hard to please her. If she is cruel and clever, she may test the dedication of her paramours by sending them against her personal enemies, or otherwise engaging them in troublesome tasks for her.

## RELIGIOUS WOMEN

Religious women can hold great power, even in a man's world. Their claim of loyalty to a higher power gives them authority denied to people with only mundane pursuits.

Their proximity to spiritual power often makes them feared as well as respected.

Historically, religious communities serve many functions relevant to women. They provide a number of benefits for their members:

- a place for women to follow a religious vocation
- a place where orphaned girls can be raised until they are of marriageable age
- refuge for widows who are trying to avoid another marriage or who are completing a period of mourning for their husbands
- refuge for women deposed from their rightful lands until their lord returns, or until their lands are otherwise returned
- education and training for women
- sanctuary and care for travelers, outcasts, the sick, and the wounded

Note, however, that such communities also provide lords of the land with a socially acceptable means of removing troublesome women from positions of power without having to resort to violence. In this way, even the most benevolent institution can be abused.

## MONASTIC LIFE

Nunneries, sometimes called convents, are places for religious Christian women. These are often part of a "double monastery," in which the women's section is considered less important than the men's. Sometimes, however, a nunnery is completely independent, with the abbess responsible only to the local bishop. The abbess of such a nunnery is a landholder with all the usual rights and obligations, holding the land in trust for the Church in general or her abbey in particular. It is therefore possible that a knight's lord is actually an abbess.

The best known of the women's religious houses in *Pendragon* is at Amesbury, on the Salisbury Plain not far from Stonehenge. This double monastery was established by Aurelius Ambrosius, the first Pendragon, and has received generous royal support ever since. It is the place where Morgan le Fay learns to read; where Queen Ygraine retires after her son is taken away and her husband Uther dies; and to which Queen Guenever retreats after the disastrous events at the end of Arthur's reign.

Nunneries are under the protection and control of one of the larger monastic (i.e., Cistercian or Benedictine) orders. They owe allegiance to their father organization, and to the Roman Church beyond. They are organized along formal lines, with several possible roles for membership. Guests hold no special position, but are expected to obey the rules of the house.

Once a woman formally enters a convent, the following ranks are recognized:

- Third-Order Vows: These bind a woman to the rules of the order while residing there, but she can be absolved at any time if she wishes to depart. This is very convenient for women seeking temporary refuge until a husband, lover, or son returns from crusade or war. Widows often take these vows if they prefer to shun the hustle of their lord's court while awaiting another marriage.



- Novice: Anytime after age sixteen, a girl can enter the convent. She remains a novice for at least a year.
- Postulant: Novices who have proved themselves capable are promoted to postulant, and serve at this rank for at least two years.
- Nun: Final vows commit a woman to the religious life of the nunnery. It is not impossible for her to leave (especially if a good marriage awaits), but it is extremely difficult, often requiring papal dispensation and appropriately hefty bribes.
- Abbess: The abbess is the temporal and spiritual head of the monastery, responsible for the maintenance of its lands, membership, and rights. She is a powerful landholder, and always a respected figure.

## GENTLEWOMAN BONUS

Just as a Chivalry bonus exists to denote a male character's living a superior way of life for the fighting nobleman, so does a comparable way exist for female characters.

The six virtues of the gentlewoman are the following: Chaste, Energetic, Honest, Modest, Prudent, and Temperate. Mark them on the Woman's Character Sheet.

If a woman has these virtues with a total of 80 points among them, she receives the Gentlewoman's bonus: The woman gets a total of 100 Glory for herself each year. Further, all the rolls for her household made during Step 4 of the Winter Phase are treated as if her economic level were one level higher. That is, an Impoverished household is treated as Poor, a Poor as Ordinary, an Ordinary as Rich, and a Rich as Superlative. Superlative households, however, get nothing more.

## GENERATING FEMALE CHARACTERS

To create women characters, use the rules found earlier in this chapter as for men, but with some significant notes and changes.

### NAMES

Ade, Alis, Arnive, Astrigis, Bene, Blancheflor, Carsenefide, Calire, Cunneware, Diane, Elidis, Enide, Elizabeth, Escarmonde, Feimurgan, Felelolie, Felinete, Feunete, Florie, Gloris, Heliap, Iblis, Idain, Imane, Jeschute, Laufamour, Liaze, Lore, Loorette, Laudine, Malvis, Maugalie, Melior, Morchades, Obie, Obilot, Oruale, Repanse, Sangive, Tantee, Tryamour, Violette

### DAUGHTER NUMBER

All daughters are supplied with a dowry, if possible. As with an eldest son, an eldest daughter has the best position to obtain wealth and status, especially if she is the heiress, for all her family's property and money goes with her into her marriage, making her a highly desirable match. Other daughters may have a cash dowry, or maybe a piece of property, if the father is exceptionally rich.

## ATTRIBUTES

As with men, distribute a total of 60 points among the five attributes, keeping in mind the restrictions and bonuses for Cymric characters. Note that women tend to be smaller and weaker than men.

## TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Assign these, as with men, keeping in mind the associated virtues based on religion.

## SKILLS

These differ considerably from those for men, primarily because women have practical skills for tending the home, such as Industry, for sewing and embroidery; Stewardship, allowing her to oversee a family manor; and Read [Latin], to keep accounts and read holy texts.

Awareness 2, Chirurgery 10, Compose 1, Courtesy 5, Dancing 2, Faerie Lore 3, Falconry 2, Fashion 2, First Aid 10, Flirting 5, Folklore 2, Gaming 3, Heraldry 1, Industry 5, Intrigue 2, Orate 2, Play [harp] 3, Read [Latin] 1, Recognize 2, Religion [choose one] 2, Romance 2, Singing 3, Stewardship 5, Swimming 1, Tourney 1.

## COMBAT SKILLS

Note that a starting female character has a rudimentary Battle skill in case she someday needs to help lead the defense of a castle or a manor. And, of course, virtually everyone has rudimentary skill with a dagger.

Battle 1, Horsemanship 3, Dagger 5.

## WOMEN'S GIFTS

Roll once on the table below for each new female character. The resulting gift is an inherited characteristic, not a learned one, passed on through the female line: All women have the same talents as their mothers. Sons never inherit these gifts (and they cannot pass gifts on to their female children), nor can women *teach* these arts to each other.

| d20 Result | Gift  |
|------------|---|
| 01-05      | Pretty (+10 APP)                                |
| 06-10      | Natural healer (+5 First Aid and +5 Chirurgery) |
| 11-15      | Good with animals (+5 Falconry and +5 Ride)     |
| 16-17      | Beautiful voice (+5 Orate and +5 Sing)          |
| 18         | Nimble fingers (+10 Industry)                   |
| 19-20      | Caretaker (+10 Stewardship)                     |

## ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Women may add up to 5 years' experience before the start of play, in precisely the same manner as men. Note that women tend to be married at a much younger age than men, so a woman who is older than 21 and not yet betrothed might be regarded as a spinster or, even worse, a shrew!

## GLORY

Women's starting Glory is the same as for men: 6d6+150.

## COAT OF ARMS

Heiresses, as long as they are unmarried, bear their family arms on a lozenge rather than a shield. Note that the Woman's Character sheet has a shield on its back. This is because her arms is impaled with her husband's upon marriage, and should be drawn there.

## SERVANT

Instead of a squire, a lady normally has a lady-in-waiting. In conjunction with the Gamemaster, give this servant a name, age, and skills as appropriate.

## EQUIPMENT

Women's minimal equipment includes personal sewing instruments, a decent wardrobe appropriate to her station, some simple jewelry, toilet articles, and a chest to keep it all in.

## NON-TRADITIONAL WOMAN

Your campaign may have room in it for female knights, for while highly unusual, such women are not entirely unprecedented. In medieval France, two words were used to designate women in chivalry: *chevalière* and *chevaleresse*. The first was the term used to designate the wife of a knight. The second was used in special cases "when some male fiefs were conceded by special privilege [sic] to women" (Menestrier, a 17th-C. writer on chivalry). Menestrier does not state that the *chevaleresse* was a fighting women per se, but it certainly presents the option to allow for such a character in game.

## HISTORICAL FIGURES

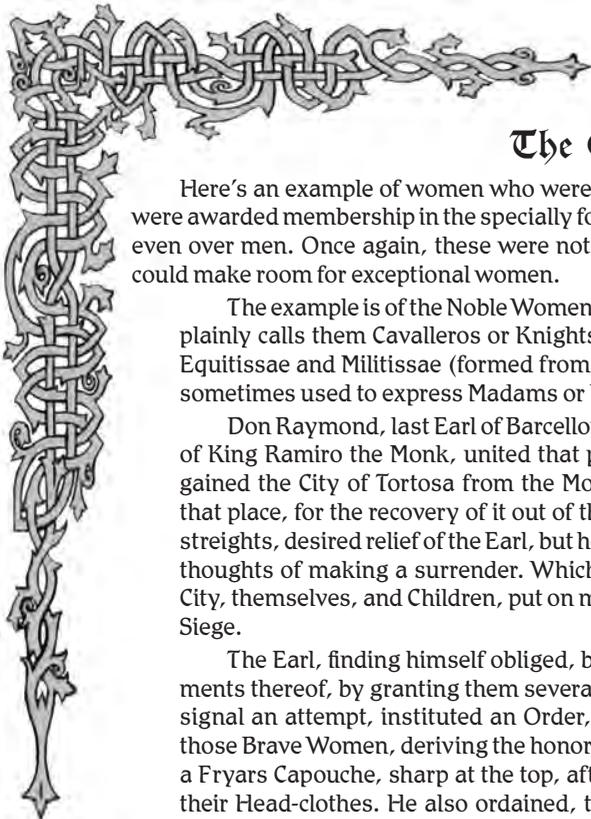
In all the literature of King Arthur, no women knights or fighters appear. Keep in mind, however, the fact that the troubadours, minstrels, and balladeers of that period were generally successful because they represented the status quo, and fighting women simply were not contained within the image of society they were expected to convey. Yet consider that some significant *historical* examples of "fighting

women" are known to have been roughly contemporary with early Arthurian literature.

**Sigelgaita:** A Lombard princess and wife of Robert Guiscard, the Norman adventurer who founded the Kingdom of Sicily. She dressed in armor and bore weapons like a man during her husband's many campaigns. She drew praise from her male European contemporaries, although Anna Comnena, historian and daughter of the Byzantine Emperor Constantine, was much less gracious, calling Sigelgaita "a monster, hateful to her kind."

**Eleanor of Aquitaine:** Early in her life, Eleanor was the Queen of France. She accompanied her husband on crusade, dressing herself and her ladies in armor and riding with the army instead of accompanying the baggage. Unlike Sigelgaita's case, this behavior appears to have outraged her contemporaries. No record exists of Eleanor and her fellow women having ever engaged in combat.

**Duchess Constance of Brittany:** When her husband was captured and their land was attacked, the Duchess donned armor to rally the men of the city of Hennebon. She urged the local women to cut short their skirts to make it easier for them to carry rocks and pitch to the ramparts to help in the defense. During a pause in the fighting, she led a body of men out of a secret gate on a surprise attack that destroyed half the enemy camp, defeating the siege. Later, she bore a sword during a desperate sea battle, and continued to lead her people's resistance against the French heroically.



## The Order of the Satchel

Here's an example of women who were granted honor equal to — indeed, exceeding — that of knights. They were awarded membership in the specially formed Order of the Satchel, and in public ceremonies given precedence even over men. Once again, these were not full-time professional warriors, but it indicates that the Middle Ages could make room for exceptional women.

The example is of the Noble Women of Tortosa in Aragon, and recorded by Josef Micheli Marquez, who plainly calls them Cavalleros or Knights, or may I not rather say Cavalleras, seeing I observe the words *Equitissae* and *Militissae* (formed from the Latin *Equites* and *Milites*) heretofore applied to Women, and sometimes used to express Madams or Ladies, though now these Titles are not known.

Don Raymond, last Earl of Barcellona (who by intermarriage with Petronilla, only Daughter and Heir of King Ramiro the Monk, united that principality to the Kingdom of Aragon) having in the year 1149, gained the City of Tortosa from the Moors, they on the 31 of December following, laid a new Siege to that place, for the recovery of it out of the Earls hands. The Inhabitants being at length reduced to great streights, desired relief of the Earl, but he, being not in a condition to give them any, they entertained some thoughts of making a surrender. Which the Women hearing of, to prevent the disaster threatening their City, themselves, and Children, put on mens Clothes, and by a resolute sally, forced the Moors to raise the Siege.

The Earl, finding himself obliged, by the gallantry of the action, thought fit to make his acknowledgements thereof, by granting them several Privileges and Immunities, and to perpetuate the memory of so signal an attempt, instituted an Order, somewhat like a Military Order, into which were admitted only those Brave Women, deriving the honor to their Descendants, and assigned them for a Dadge, a thing like a Fryars Capouche, sharp at the top, after the form of a Torch, and of a crimson colour, to be worn upon their Head-clothes. He also ordained, that at all publick meetings, the women should have precedence of the Men. That they should be exempted from all Taxes, and that all the Apparel and Jewels, though of never so great value, left by their dead Husbands, should be their own.

These Women (saith our Author) having thus acquired this Honor by their personal Valour, carried themselves after the Military Knights of those days.

— excerpt from Ashmole, in *The Institution, Laws, and Ceremony of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*



Constance's husband escaped his prison and returned to her, but died shortly afterwards. She continued the struggle to protect the family rights of her young son. Constance finally went mad and was confined to a castle for another thirty years. Undoubtedly, some of her contemporaries thought this was a natural result of her unladylike activities.

**Joan of Arc:** This heroine comes near the end of the feudal era, far too late to influence the Arthurian literature. Nonetheless, she offers a wonderful historical precedent of the female warrior archetype. A peasant girl inspired by angelic voices, she worked her way through ordeals and tests to find the heir to the French throne, inspire him and his army, and then lead them to drive the English out of France. Her efforts were incredibly successful, to the delight of the French king and the despair of the English.

However, the French noble class was appalled at Joan's behavior. She was of common origin and dressed like a man, bore arms, and led an army into battle. She was wounded twice in combat. She was eventually captured by the Burgundians. They sold her to the English, who trumped up outrageous charges of heresy and witchcraft, and then burned her at the stake. A few years later a papal inquiry cleared her of the charges, and in 1920 she was canonized as a French saint.

## LITERARY FIGURES

Despite the relative rarity of female warriors in literature, the precedents are certainly numerous enough to support the inclusion of such characters in a fantasy roleplaying game.

### The Nine Female Worthies

A century after the appearance of the famous (male) Nine Worthies in literature, a famous balladeer named Eustache Deschamps created the Nine Female Worthies. He chose nine women noted for their military virtues, often at the expense of his own contemporary feminine virtues. In doing this he sacrificed the neat symmetry present in the Nine Worthies. His reasons for doing so are still the cause of much debate; although his original list was occasionally altered, the martial nature of its members was unchanged.

All of these women are noted not only for their fighting skills, but also for leadership. Thus Deschamps, and the male writers who followed him, equated worthiness with masculine virtues at the expense of the feminine. Even Christine de Pisan, a spokesperson for women in the Middle Ages, included them (though without calling them the Nine Worthies) in her *Citie des Dames*. She stressed their virtues and defended their vices as foreign custom and political necessity. Her book does not view the virtues as necessarily manly, and stresses the potential of women in her own age to transcend such categories in a manner that would not become acceptable until our own modern time.

**Queen Semiramis of Assyria:** Famous for her military conquests and infamous for her sexual victories, including the seduction of her own son.

**Queen Teuta of Illyria:** Noted for her struggle against the Romans and for her chastity.

**Queen Thamyris of Scythia:** Famous because she slew King Cyrus of Persia, the most powerful ruler of his time.



**Deipyle:** A heroine from Greek legend, wife of the savage hero Tydeus. She helped the hero Theseus destroy the city where her husband died.

**Hippolyta:** Queen of the Amazons, perhaps the most famous of her tribe. She resisted Herakles in his efforts to obtain her girdle, and later wed Theseus after he was able to best her in combat.

**Penthesilea:** An Amazon who fought with the Trojans against the Greeks until she was slain by Achilles, who mourned her death greatly.

**Menalippe and Antiope:** Both Amazons noted for their fighting prowess.

**Marpesia or Lampedo:** Amazon co-rulers; only one or the other normally appears in the list because they worked in conjunction. One would stay home to rule while the other went to war.

### The Three Amazons of Britain

Female fighters are not unknown in medieval Britain, as shown by this triad:

*The first of them, Llewei daughter of Seitwed,  
and Rorei daughter of Usber,  
and Mederi Badellfawr ("Big Knee").*

—Triad lix., *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*

### Britomart

After the Middle Ages, Edmund Spenser, court poet for Queen Elizabeth, began a huge allegorical poem called *The Faërie Queen*. It was never finished, but one of its main characters is Britomart, the virginal fighter who personified the virtue of Chastity.

## WOMEN KNIGHTS IN PLAY

Perhaps the lack of women knights in Arthurian literature is not so surprising when we consider that the European society of that time had only begun to seriously consider women to be anything more than baby machines, a great leap in consciousness that Western society is even now only widely starting to accept. Twentieth-century thinking allows for extrapolation where the Middle Ages did not.

Keep in mind this important fact: The Arthurian legend has survived for 1,400 years because it has been able to adapt to the needs of its audience. Therefore, if you wish, there is certainly room in the Enchanted Realm for women knights.

A woman may choose to take up the profession of arms for several reasons. For instance, a military emergency might make great and unusual demands for soldiers; a kinsman may need rescue, without any other family member or champion available; or she may be motivated by a fierce independence that outweighs any desire to follow custom.

### ACCEPTABILITY

Each Gamemaster determines the prevailing attitude of Britain toward women during his or her campaign. In some, female knights may be common and acceptable, raising no

eyebrows at all. Or they might be strange and unaccepted. Most likely, reactions will vary from person to person, and can be summarized in one of the following ways:

**Scorn:** Women belong in the kitchen and nursery, and any deviance from this is met with scorn, contempt, and hostility. This reflects the actual, historic attitude.

**Reluctance:** Women knights might exist, if they can prove themselves and do not get too uppity about it. (Some have noted that this is similar to the attitude prevalent in liberal businesses today...)

**Acceptance:** Women knights are accepted as the equals of men in every way.

### DISGUISE

Perhaps the best way for a female warrior to begin is to operate *disguised* as a knight. Such a woman will have many problems retaining her secret when not in armor (and perhaps even then). Gamemasters should decide whether they wish to press this point or not — the roleplaying that results could be fun, or it could be oppressive.

Once a woman masquerading as a man has revealed her true gender, another problem presents itself: Finding a lord willing to knight her. If she has acquired 1,000 or more Glory points, her status ought to carry considerable weight. Nonetheless, a reluctant lord might never accept the situation, in which case she must find another lord. Alternately, a lord may set some difficult quest to be obtained before he grants his permission. Success would undoubtedly make him, however grudgingly, accept the reality of her prowess.

## CHARACTER GENERATION

Generate a female knight exactly the same way you would a male knight. In the real world, women are statistically smaller and weaker than men by about 15%, but female knights should be allowed to use the same attributes for men to generate female characters. *Pendragon* does not seek to limit characters arbitrarily, but rather tries to provide only basic standards. (Obviously, though, in the game's culture, women warriors are not standard.)

The final consideration for the Gamemaster is how to entitle a female knight. "Sir" is traditional, but "Sir Ellen" or "Sir Alice" may sound strange enough to make some people grind their teeth. On the other hand, "Lady Ellen" and "Dame Ellen" both mean other things entirely, and could be misleading in context.

In the end, "Sir," which is the proper title of a knight, is the most appropriate title.

### CHIVALRY BONUS

If women knights are allowed in the game, then they should also be allowed to become Chivalrous knights (see "Magical Virtues" in Chapter 4), assuming they qualify. However, if the Gamemaster rules that they are eligible to be Chivalrous knights, they cannot receive the Gentlewoman bonus.





# Chapter Three: Family and Fatherland

It is always fun to know what your character's family did in the past, and this knowledge also helps to set the stage for your first character's life. It is suggested that the Gamemaster lead the players through this part of the game during character generation.

This section provides four major benefits:

1. Some background history to help you understand past events of the region and the nation.
2. Knowledge of your family's participation in the events surrounding the rise of the Pendragons.
3. Likely acquisition of at least one family passion or directed trait handed down from father to son. (These may be gained from some of the more dramatic and sanguinary historical events and battles.)
4. Glory inherited from your ancestors, based on a knowledge of their actual achievements in life. This replaces the standard starting Glory (i.e., 6d6+150) indicated in Chapter 2.

## **SALISBURY FAMILY HISTORY**

The tables and information in the following section are based on the presumption that you are entering the game as a knight at age 21, in the year 485 A.D. Your father died one or more years ago, and, as play begins, you are made a vassal knight, taking over from your father as head of the family.

If you chose to take the Previous Experience option during character generation (see Chapter 2), assume that your additional experience was gained during extra years spent as a squire, so that the current year is still 485; you are thus a little older than the text assumes, but this presents no problem.

Your family history is determined year by year, as indicated by the series of tables throughout this chapter. The first year, 439 A.D., includes a detailed explanation (in italicized text) of the method to be used for both your grandfather's and father's histories.

To use this history, read the opening entry for each year to get its basic information, and then go to that year's Event Table. Roll d20 to determine your ancestor's part, if any, in the year's events. For example, in 443 your grandfather might have fought in the great battle against the Picts. On the other hand, he might have died of natural causes

(or in a hunting accident, or by drowning, etc.) without having achieved anything notable that year.

You may be told to check for a passion or trait at the end of a year's entries; do this before you go on to the next year. If the ancestor is dead, the son gains the same passion after hearing his father's last words.

Use a pencil and paper (perhaps your character sheet) to keep track of these details as you go. You can write down each year's event, if any, but be sure to track any Glory and any passions or directed traits gained by your ancestor.

When your grandfather dies, determine 1/10th of his final Glory and add 1,000 points: This is your father's starting Glory (the extra 1,000 is for being knighted). Note any traits and passions (including the numerical value you rolled for them) gained by your grandfather; assign one or more of these (player's choice) to your father, using the same numerical value your grandfather had. For example, if your grandfather had Hate (Saxons) 15 and you wish your father to have that passion, then his starting Hate (Saxons) value must also be 15.

Follow the same procedure for your father once he reaches the age of knighthood. If he becomes a knight while your grandfather still lives, you should continue to track both of their histories. However, for this calculation, your grandfather's Glory does not affect your father's Glory after the latter reaches knighthood. (You might still wish to know your grandfather's total Glory when he died, though, for your own interest.)

When your father finally dies, the sequence is over. Take 1/10th of his final Glory as your own starting Glory. (You gain another 1,000 Glory points when knighted, as noted elsewhere.) You also may pick any passions or traits from your father, as you wish; write down the same value that he had for that statistic.

## **YOUR GRANDFATHER'S HISTORY**

Grandpa was born in 410 A.D., the last year that Britain was part of the Roman Empire. Irish raiders from the west, Picts from the north, and Saxons from the east were ruthlessly harrying the island. The nobles sent a letter to their emperor to ask for imperial help, preferably in the form of legions to fight off the invaders. However, Emperor Honorius had no armies to spare, and instead he sent only a return letter with the now-famous line, "look to your own

defenses.” From that moment forward, no Briton considered his land to be a part of the Roman Empire.

The high council of Briton nobles, called the Supreme Collegium, debated and at last chose a leader, struggling to raise an army of their own. The man they chose, named Constantin, a Briton of wealth and renown, then chose one man in a thousand to be a military leader — an *equites* as they say in Latin, or in our tongue, a knight.

Among those first native knights was your great-grandfather. His first son, your grandfather, grew up in a dangerous land studying the ways of weapons and of warfare. Your grandfather was knighted in 431 by Count Reginald of Salisbury and proudly took his place in the army of King Constantin.

For the first several years, your grandfather witnessed vicious religious debates as Saint Germanus worked unsuccessfully to stamp out the British Christian Church. Barbarian raids, against which he fought, continued along the borders of Britain, and on the European Continent great hordes of Germanic tribes swept over the failing Roman Empire.

Choose a name for your great-grandfather and his son, your grandfather, from among the names in the Character Generation chapter, or from appropriate literary sources. Also choose your family’s traditional religious faith — Roman Christian, British Christian, or pagan.

## STARTING GLORY

Your great-grandfather died some time shortly before your grandfather was knighted. At the time of his death, his Glory was as follows: 1,000 for being knighted, plus 1d20x100 for the work of his life.

Next, calculate your grandfather’s Glory as of the year 439 A.D.: He begins with 1/10th of this father’s Glory, plus 2d20 for his own actions as a knight thus far.

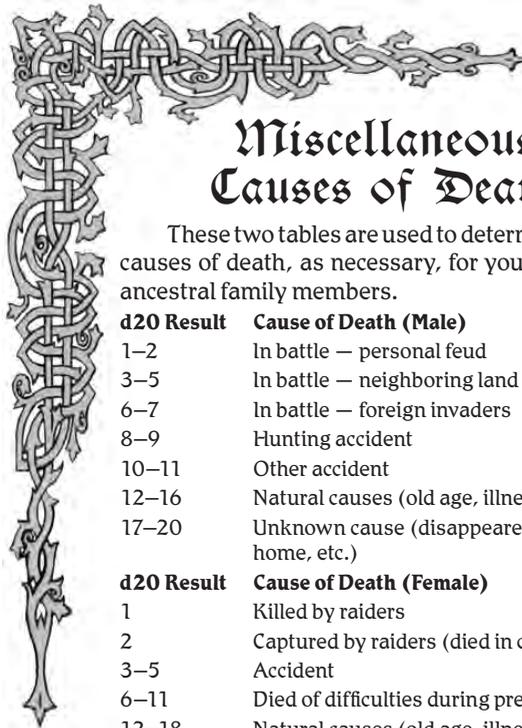
## YEAR 439 (SAMPLE YEAR)

This is a typical year for its era: The Saxons raid heavily but are driven off by the noble knights of Briton. Of special note is the fact that an heir is born into your family some time during this year — your father, eldest son of your grandfather.

*Throughout this chapter, italicized notes like this are included to explain the nearby text, if necessary. A sentence or two, like those above, always introduce events for the year. For each event, roll a d20 and refer to the subsequent table for the event that occurs that year.*

### Events Table: 439

| d20 Result | Event  |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar). <i>(This means your grandfather died outside of battle. The Cause of Death (Male) table, in the noted sidebar, determines the exact cause. Once your grandfather dies, whether here or in a later event, simply calculate his Glory and proceed to year 460, where your father’s personal history begins.)</i> |
| 2–6        | Nothing significant occurred.  |
| 7–20       | Fought at the Battle of Carlion. Roll below. <i>(Whenever an entry indicates that an ancestor fought in a battle, a separate table concerning that event follows. Roll a d20 on this table to find your ancestor’s fate in that battle.)</i>   |



## Miscellaneous Causes of Death

These two tables are used to determine random causes of death, as necessary, for your character’s ancestral family members.

| d20 Result | Cause of Death (Male)                              |
|------------|--|
| 1–2        | In battle — personal feud                          |
| 3–5        | In battle — neighboring land                       |
| 6–7        | In battle — foreign invaders                       |
| 8–9        | Hunting accident                                   |
| 10–11      | Other accident                                     |
| 12–16      | Natural causes (old age, illness, etc.)            |
| 17–20      | Unknown cause (disappeared, never came home, etc.) |

| d20 Result | Cause of Death (Female)                            |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Killed by raiders                                  |
| 2          | Captured by raiders (died in captivity)            |
| 3–5        | Accident   |
| 6–11       | Died of difficulties during pregnancy              |
| 12–18      | Natural causes (old age, illness, etc.)            |
| 19–20      | Unknown cause (disappeared, never came home, etc.) |



*The numbers in parentheses beside the table’s header, below, show the amount of Glory your ancestor gains simply by taking part in the event. The first number, in this case 15, is based on the size of the battle; the second, generally expressed as a die roll, shows the number of battle rounds over which the battle took place; and the third is a variable dependent upon victory conditions. (For more information about these values, see Appendix 4.)*

*Multiply these values together and record the result under your ancestor’s running Glory total. Thus, by taking part in this battle, your grandfather gains from 15 to 90 points of Glory.*

### Battle of Carlion (15 x 1d6 x 1)

| d20 Result | Consequence  |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory); end personal history for this ancestor, but roll for passion. <i>(Whenever an entry indicates that your ancestor should check for a passion or trait, a separate table concerning that event follows, like the one below. Make another d20 roll and consult that table to see if your family gains the passion or directed trait listed as a result of this experience.)</i> |
| 2          | Died in battle. End personal history, but roll for passion.  |
| 3–20       | Survived. Continue history; roll for passion.  |

### Passion Table: 439

| d20 Result | Consequence   |
|------------|---|
| 1–15       | No passion gained.  |
| 16–20      | Gain passion: Hate (Irish) 3d6 [ <i>“Damned Irish! They don’t fight like real men.”</i> ] <i>(The result of the 3d6 roll determines the value of your ancestor’s passion. The quotation in brackets is more or less what people remember your ancestor saying about this particular battle, if he survived it, or as his last words, if he died there.)</i> |

Note that your ancestors may later receive duplicate passions. Do not add these values, but use the higher of the two. For example, if your father gains Hate (Irish) 13 from his father and then later gains Hate (Irish) 9 from another event in his own life, he uses the higher value (13).





This ends the explanatory year. The remaining years follow the same pattern.

## YEAR 440

During this year, King Constantin is murdered by one of his own guards.

Events Table: 440

### d20 Result Event

- 1 Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45).
- 2–9 Served garrison duty; killed by Pictish raiders. Gain 20 Glory. End history.
- 10–18 Served garrison duty; survived Pictish raiding. Gain 10 Glory.
- 19 Present at Constantin's murder, but unable to protect his king. Roll for passion.
- 20 Died trying to protect Constantin. Gain 1,000 Glory. End of history. Roll for passion, with a +8 modifier.

### Passion Table: 440

#### d20 Result Consequence

- 1–10 No passion gained.
- 11–20 Gain passion: Mistrust (Silchester knights) 1d6+6 ["I always said those damned Silchester men can't be trusted!"]

## YEARS 441–442

At the urging of Duke Vortigern of the Gewessi, the High Council chooses Constans, the young son of Constantin, as king. Constans is a young, bookish type, however, so he relies on his uncle, Duke Vortigern, for advice.

### Events Table: 441–42

#### d20 Result Event

- 1 Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45).
- 2–6 Served garrison duty; killed by raiders. Gain 20 Glory. End history.
- 7–20 Served garrison duty; survived raiding. Gain 20 Glory.

## YEAR 443

Young King Constans is murdered by his Pictish bodyguards. After much debate, Duke Vortigern is selected to be the next King of the Britons. The younger brothers of King Constans are taken away to Brittany in secret.

Also this year, a prelate from the pope, the saintly Germanus, comes to Britain to condemn and combat British Christianity. Your grandfather either resists or supports this, depending upon the family's choice of religion.

### Events Table: 443

#### d20 Result Event

- 1 Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45).
- 2–10 Served garrison duty; killed by raiders. Gain 20 Glory. End history.
- 11–18 Served garrison duty; survived raiding. Gain 20 Glory.
- 19 Present at Constans' murder, but unable to protect his king. Roll for passion.
- 20 Died trying to protect Constans. Gain 1,000 Glory. End of history. Roll for passion, with a +5 modifier.

**Passion Table: 443****d20 Result Consequence**

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1–10  | No passion gained.  |
| 11–20 | Gain passion: Hate (Picts) 1d6+6 [“You have to be a fool to trust a Pict!”] |

**YEARS 444–445**

The Picts stage a massive invasion, with their armies occupying much of the north and bands of raiders penetrating all the way into Logres. Rather than risk a great loss, King Vortigern orders his armies to dig in and garrison their homes and holdings.

**Events Table: 444–45****d20 Result Event**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45).         |
| 2     | Served garrison duty; killed by raiders. Gain 10 Glory. End history. |
| 3–16  | Served garrison duty and survived; defended well. Gain 10 Glory.     |
| 17–20 | Served garrison duty and survived; saw little or no combat.          |

**YEAR 446**

King Vortigern realizes that he needs assistance against the furious Picts and, in good Roman fashion, hires new barbarians to fight the old barbarians. The Saxon kings Hengest and Horsa come from the Continent with their bands of warriors to join Vortigern’s army. Thus reinforced, the Briton army marches north against the Picts. Battle is met near the city of Lincoln, and it is a great victory for the British.

**Events Table: 446****d20 Result Event**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–5  | Served garrison duty and survived; saw little or no combat.  |
| 6–20 | Fought at the Battle of Lincoln. Roll below.                 |

**BATTLE OF LINCOLN (30 x 1d6 x 2)****d20 Result Consequence**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory); end personal history, but roll on Passion Table 443. |
| 2–3  | Died in battle. End personal history, but roll on Passion Table 443.                           |
| 4–20 | Survived. Continue history; roll for passion.  |

**YEARS 447–449**

During this time, King Vortigern spares his own army, using the Saxons to drive the Picts out of the north. More Saxons come to Britain, including many families, and Hengest’s daughter Rowena becomes a favorite at Vortigern’s court.

News from the Continent is persistent in saying that new foes, the Huns, are defeating the German tribes right and left. These savages are thought to be half demon, half horse.

**Events Table: 447–49****d20 Result Event**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–20 | Nothing significant occurred.                                |

**YEAR 450**

Vortigern, impressed with the battle prowess of the Saxons and even more so with the talents of Rowena, the daughter of the Saxon chief Hengest, marries her this year in a lavish celebration.

**Events Table: 450****d20 Result Event**

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45).                           |
| 2–5   | Nothing significant occurred.  |
| 6–18  | Attended the wedding of Vortigern and Rowena. Gain 5 Glory.                            |
| 19–20 | Attended the wedding of Vortigern and Rowena. Noticed she was pregnant. Gain 10 Glory. |

**YEARS 451–453**

News comes from the continent that the Huns, led by their king, Attila, reached the walls of Rome itself but were unable to storm or besiege it. Some say the Huns were stopped because they lacked siege engines, others that they failed because of the pope’s piety.

The lands of Britain are relatively quiet. Yet many Britons complain to Vortigern that he is falling away from their noble ways and selling the country to the Saxons. If your grandfather still lives at this point, decide whether he was one of those who complained or not.

**Events Table: 451–53****d20 Result Event**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–20 | Nothing significant occurred.                                |

**YEAR 454**

After failing to smash or bluff Rome into submission, the Hun army turns to Gaul for pillage and plunder, scouring the land of its wealth, slaughtering as it goes. The commander in Gaul, Aetius, sends for help from all who will send it, and Vortigern sends a small contingent. The allied army meets the Huns at Chalons, where the Huns are defeated and driven from Europe.

If your grandfather complained to Vortigern in Years 451–453, roll on Events Table 454B for this year. If not, roll on 454A.

**Events Table: 454A****d20 Result Event**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–20 | Served garrison duty and survived; saw little or no combat.  |

**Events Table: 454B****d20 Result Event**

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–20 | Sent to help Aetius in Battle of Chalons. Roll below.        |

**BATTLE OF CHALONS (45 x 1d6 x 2)****d20 Result Consequence**

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 1–2  | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory); end personal history.   |
| 3–5  | Died in battle. End personal history.   |
| 6–20 | Survived. The survivors, all of whom were knights dissatisfied with Vortigern’s policies, return to Britain with great glory; Vortigern welcomes them with honeyed words, but a bitter heart. |

**YEARS 455–456**

News arrives that Rome, the center of the civilized world, has been sacked! The tribe of Germans called the Vandals has done the impossible and brought Rome low. The Western Empire is finished.



**Events Table: 455–56****d20 Result Event**

- 1 Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45).
- 2–20 Nothing significant occurred.

**YEAR 457**

The eastern Britons rebel, protesting the policies of King Vortigern. The king summons his army, including the Saxons, and marches against them. A great battle ensues at Kent, in which the rebels are crushed. Vortigern gives the great lands of the Kantii tribe to his loyal Saxons. Many Britons pack up and depart the land, moving to Brittany to escape the rule of Vortigern.

**Events Table: 457****d20 Result Event**

- 1 Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45).
- 2–5 Served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.
- 6–20 Fought under Vortigern at the Battle of Kent. Roll below.

**BATTLE OF KENT (30 x 1d6 x 2)****d20 Result Consequence**

- 1 Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory); end personal history.
- 2–3 Died in battle. End personal history.
- 4–20 Survived. Continue history.

**YEARS 458–459**

Many dissident Britons depart from the island, moving with their families and possessions to Brittany. Your grandfather, loyal to the Count of Salisbury, remains.

**Events Table: 458–59****d20 Result Event**

- 1 Died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45).
- 2–20 Served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.

**YEAR 460**

This year begins your father’s personal history as a knight. He starts with 1,000 Glory (for being knighted), plus 1/10th of the total current Glory of his father (whether his father still lives or not). From this point forward, any further Glory won by your grandfather (if he still lives) does not accrue to your father.

**Events Table: 460****d20 Result Event**

- 1 Grandfather died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45); father served garrison duty, but saw little or no combat.
- 2–20 Father and grandfather served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.

**YEAR 462**

The rule of King Vortigern has proved unwise and very oppressive, often favoring his Saxon mercenaries (and in-laws) over his lawful subjects. Many nobles have talked of rebellion, and when Vortigern’s eldest son (by his first marriage) agrees to lead the nobles, general rebellion breaks loose. The Count of Salisbury is among the rebels to fight in the Battle of Cambridge.

**Events Table: 462****d20 Result Event**

- 1 Grandfather died (see “Miscellaneous Causes of Death” sidebar, page 45); father served garrison duty, but saw little or no combat.

- 2–5 Father and grandfather served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.

- 6–20 Grandfather fought against Vortigern at the Battle of Cambridge. Roll below.

**BATTLE OF CAMBRIDGE (30 x 1d6 x 1)****d20 Result Consequence**

- 1 Grandfather died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory); end personal history.
- 2–3 Grandfather died in battle. End personal history.
- 4–20 Grandfather survived. Add 10 Glory.

**YEAR 463**

Ostensibly to bring peace to all sides, Vortigern and Hengest call a council of all combatants to meet at Stonehenge for a feast of peace. Seeking reconciliation, almost all British knights attend. The Saxons prove their worth through great treachery, though, and the majority of the nobles of Britain are slain in the “Night of Long Knives.” In the subsequent confusion, a large part of their armies are dispersed or slain. The Earl of Salisbury is among the dead.

**Events Table: 463\*****d20 Result Event**

- 1–20 “Night of Long Knives” treachery: Grandfather murdered. Your family gains Hate (Saxons) passion 3d6+6.

\* All further entries on the tables in this section refer to your character’s father.

**YEAR 464**

In this year, your father marries to procure an heir (rather than for love). He is fortunate in that his own father was favored by the Earl of Salisbury, and that there are many heiresses now, in the wake of the Night of Long Knives, needing protection.

He marries a widow with a manor of her own, who, thanks to her former husband, also has a modicum of Glory before she remarries (which thus accrues to your father).

**d20 Result Bride’s Glory**

- 1–4 25
- 5–7 50
- 8–17 100
- 18–19 200
- 20 350

**YEAR 465**

*In this year your character is born, assuming the default starting age of 21.*

Vortigern, with his Saxons, marches back and forth across Britain, extracting tribute and plunder. Many more Britons flee the land. Your father, a young knight, remains in his lands, tends to his manor, and waits with his lord.

Vortigern escapes from the Saxons and takes refuge in Gomeret, attempting to build a fortress. The youthful Merlin makes his appearance and begins his career here.

**YEARS 466–467**

Aurelius Ambrosius, son of the former King Constantine and brother of Constans, lands in Hampshire with an army from Brittany. He carries a great banner with a red dragon upon it. All across the land, discontented nobles muster their armies and join him. Vortigern seeks to escape, but his Saxon allies go back home to Kent, and many other allies desert him.

After besieging a portion of Vortigern's army at Carlion, Aurelius Ambrosius marches through the entire island, accepting the submission of those loyal to Vortigern.

**Events Table: 466–67**

**d20 Result Event**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–5  | Served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.               |
| 6–20 | Fought at the Siege of Carlion. Roll below.                  |

**SIEGE OF CARLION (15 x 1d6 x 1)**

**d20 Result Consequence**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1    | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). |
| 2–3  | Died in battle.                           |
| 4–20 | Survived.                                 |

## YEAR 468

Aurelius Ambrosius and his army pursue Vortigern and besiege him in his new castle on Mount Snowdon. A battle ensues, at which Vortigern is killed and his army scattered.

Aurelius Ambrosius summons the High Council, and they elect him High King. He takes the title of Pendragon ("high dragon" or "head dragon"), derived from his great battle banner.

**Events Table: 468**

**d20 Result Event**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–5  | Served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.               |
| 6–20 | Fought at the Battle of Snowdon. Roll below.                 |

**SIEGE OF CARLION (15 x 1d3 x 2)**

**d20 Result Consequence**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1    | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). |
| 2–20 | Survived.                                 |

## YEARS 469–472

Many Saxons come over from the Continent and settle in Kent under their king, Hengest. High King Aurelius Ambrosius maintains an unsteady peace with the Saxons, Irish, and Picts, despite their raiding. His younger brother, Uther, makes a name for himself as a great warrior in countering these raids and leading picked warriors on raids into enemy territory.

**Events Table: 469–72**

**d20 Result Event**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–5   | Gained 25 Glory in the fighting.                             |
| 6–10  | Gained 50 Glory in the fighting.                             |
| 11–15 | Gained 100 Glory in the fighting.                            |
| 16–20 | Gained 200 Glory in the fighting.                            |

## YEAR 473

The Saxons, confident of victory, march into the Thames Valley. King Aurelius Ambrosius raises an army to resist, but loses the battle in a major Saxon victory.

**Events Table: 473**

**d20 Result Event**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–10  | Served garrison duty; saw little or no combat.               |
| 11–20 | Fought at the Battle of Windsor. Roll below.                 |

**BATTLE OF WINDSOR (30 x 1d6 x 0.5)**

**d20 Result Consequence**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1     | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory).         |
| 2–10  | Died in battle. Gain Hate (Saxons) passion 2d6+6. |
| 11–20 | Survived. Gain Hate (Saxons) passion 2d6+6.       |

## YEARS 474–476

The Saxons of Kent roam and pillage the land. Only fortified places are safe, and the peasants suffer terribly.

**Events Table: 474–76**

**d20 Result Event**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–4  | Died on garrison duty; fought well. Gain 25 Glory.           |
| 5–20 | Served garrison duty and survived. Gain 25 Glory.            |

## YEAR 477

Another Saxon king, Ælle, lands in southern Britain with a large army and takes over the area. Many of the peasants flee, but others are captured and enslaved. Ælle renames the land South Saxony, or Sussex.

Aurelius Ambrosius marches with his army to oppose the foe, who is reinforced at the last moment by the Saxons from Kent. Ambrosius is lucky to escape with his army. The Saxons remain.

## YEARS 478–79

For years, Aurelius Ambrosius has been building a fleet of ships in the ports of his western lands. In this year, he musters his army and sets sail, sweeping around the southern coast, where he destroys the fleets of the Saxons in Britain. Then he sails to the Continent, destroying all the hostile shipping as he goes.

The British army lands in Frisia, doing great damage to the Saxons there, and winning a battle against the barbarians. The Saxons in Britain begin vicious raiding in retaliation.

**Events Table: 478–79**

**d20 Result Event**

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1    | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45).                               |
| 2–6  | Served garrison duty. Fought in Saxon raids on Salisbury (roll below).                     |
| 7–20 | Sailed with High King's fleet. Gain 25 Glory. Fought at the Battle of Frisia (roll below). |

**SAXON RAIDS ON SALISBURY (20 x 1d6 x 1)**

**d20 Result Consequence**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1    | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). |
| 2–5  | Died in battle.                           |
| 6–20 | Survived.                                 |

**BATTLE OF FRISIA (15 x 1d6 x 1)**

**d20 Result Consequence**

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 1    | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). |
| 2–5  | Died in battle.                           |
| 6–20 | Survived.                                 |

## YEAR 480

An army of Saxons sails up the Port River into Salisbury. While planning for the battle, Aurelius Ambrosius is poisoned by a false doctor. Despite his illness, Ambrosius marches with Uther against the enemy, whom they meet at Menevia. Ambrosius confronts the foe while Uther takes his army around to the Saxons' rear and cuts them off from their ships, attacking them with great vigor.

It is a great victory for the British, but Ambrosius is killed in the fighting.



Events Table: 480

| d20 Result | Event  |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2          | Served garrison duty.  |
| 3–20       | Fought at the Battle of Salisbury (at Menevia). Roll below.  |

#### BATTLE OF SALISBURY (45 x 1d6 x 2)

| d20 Result | Consequence                               |
|------------|---|
| 1          | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). |
| 2–5        | Died in battle.                           |
| 6–20       | Survived.                                 |

If your father survives this year, he attends the funeral of High King Aurelius Ambrosius, who is interred with great ceremony and sorrow in the Giants' Dance (Stonehenge). Afterward, the High Council meets and unanimously elects Uther to be the new Pendragon; your father is present at the coronation. Your father gains 50 Glory for each event (i.e., 100 total).

### YEARS 481–483

The Saxons are relatively quiet during this time, with small bands raiding here and there but no armies marching. It is reported that many of their women and children have now settled in their lands.

Events Table: 481–83

| d20 Result | Event  |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2–4        | Served garrison duty; saw some fighting. Gain 25 Glory.      |
| 5–20       | Served garrison duty and survived; saw little or no combat.  |

### YEAR 484

Another wave of Saxons arrives by boat and settles in the land of Diera. Aided by the Saxons in Britain and some rebellious northern Britons, they attack in the land of Malahaut. Their army defeats the northern defenders, then lays siege to the city of Eburacum. King Uther raises his army and hastens northward to join battle.

However, King Uther, anxious to relieve the sorry inhabitants of Eburacum, is drawn into a trap and fights a desperate battle, from which he barely escapes with great loss.

Events Table: 484

| d20 Result | Event  |
|------------|--|
| 1          | Died (see "Miscellaneous Causes of Death" sidebar, page 45). |
| 2          | Served garrison duty.  |
| 3–20       | Fought at the Battle of Eburacum. Roll below.                |

#### BATTLE OF EBURACUM (30 x 1d6 x 0.5)

| d20 Result | Consequence   |
|------------|---|
| 1          | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory). Gain Hate (Saxons) passion 1d6+6.   |
| 2–15       | Died in battle or of wounds received there. Gain Hate (Saxons) passion 1d6+6. |
| 16–20      | Escaped and survived. Gain Hate (Saxons) passion 1d6+6.                       |

King Uther refuses to give up. With the battered remnants of his army, he sneaks north under cover of darkness, and falls upon the celebrating Saxons who are drunk on both victory and ale. The Saxons are slaughtered and Uther claims a great victory.

If your father has survived thus far (no small feat!), he fights again this year, but perishes at the Battle of Mt. Damen.

#### BATTLE OF MT. DAMEN (30 x 1d6 x 2 x 1.5)

| d20 Result | Consequence                                 |
|------------|---|
| 1          | Died gloriously in battle (+1,000 Glory).   |
| 2–20       | Died in battle or of wounds received there. |

### YEAR 485

King Uther suffers heavy losses and raises many troops to make up for it. He orders all squires who are ready to muster at Windsor Castle to be knighted.

This is the current year, the start of your *Pendragon* campaign: You are about to be knighted!

## FAMILY

A knight's family is his most precious and reliable resource. The family discussed here consists of your closest relatives — those who can be relied upon to help each other out in any circumstances, against any odds. These are the ones who, if they heard you were in mortal danger, would get up from whatever they were doing to come help immediately. You, of course, would do the same for them.

Several reasons exist to have some further knowledge of your family than you have already gained from the character generation. Even if you have no desire to maintain your own dynasty, your roleplaying will be enhanced if you know about your family's past.

As well, a family provides many kinds of protection from enemies. The ultimate expression of this protection is that, in *Pendragon*, your family members are willing to enter mortal combat for your sake, regardless of their own concerns. In game play, one of the most useful functions of the abstracted family is to give player knights a small back-up "army" of their own. (You have already calculated the basic numbers for your private army during Character Generation.) In this chapter you will learn a little more.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The extensive Salisbury Family History in the previous section helps you figure out what your character's grandfather and father did. Naturally, both did much more than simple tables can indicate, but the tables nonetheless provide the salient facts to incorporate the family into Arthurian history. Your character gains not only a background with some sense of story, but also a portion of his grandfather's and father's Glory, and one or more inherited traits or passions derived from your ancestors' experiences over the last couple of generations.

## THE ROLE OF FAMILY

*Pendragon* is designed to include long-term events that may take longer than a single character's lifetime to come to an end. Game time advances regularly. Some stories take the whole of King Arthur's reign to complete — enough time for grandchildren of the original character to become knights.

To participate fully in a long-term campaign, every knight should raise a family that can bring a player through the entire saga. The best kind of *Pendragon* history is established when the campaign begins late in Uther's reign and continues

through to the end of Arthur's. Guidelines for this are contained in the forthcoming *Great Pendragon Campaign* book.

## BEYOND THE FIRST CHARACTER

The emotional tenor of the game is substantively changed by your character's having a family lineage. With a family, a knight has someone other than himself to live for and to die for. The motivation of a character changes when he has someone to love and for whom he is more than willing to fight.

The Gamemaster should urge development of characters' families to provide this kind of critical motivation. Your character's sons can be given the same family characteristic, traits, passions, equipment, and starting attributes that your previous character had. Thus, in some ways, a character with a strong family never really dies.

Additionally, families allow players to interact in a natural way. When two unrelated character knights marry into the same family, perhaps wedding two sisters, they become connected in a clearly observable way. (This particular device also provides an excuse for the various knights to mingle so trustingly on adventures.) An established family provides a source of rank, power, traditions, knowledge, and even possessions. Thus, the magic sword which your first knight character cherished need not disappear from the game at his death. Instead, along with his coat of arms, title, and other possessions, it goes to his eldest son — your next character.

Further, family histories provide a wonderful source for interaction with old characters in the saga (whether player or Gamemaster characters). When a new character enters the game, the old ones might say, "Why, I was with your father at Badon!" or "Ha! I remember when your father botched the Adventure of the Knight of the Parrot." And your new character, of course, knows the details of the Adventure of the Knight of the Parrot.

Thus, death need not diminish the campaign, which — like the new character — inherits the best elements of the accumulated story as well as the goods and the glory of the deceased.

## CONNECTIONS

Relatives may provide opportunities: If someone in a family is well placed, then his relatives benefit as well. However, in this game, the player knight is indisputably the leader of the family. He is an unusual, adventurous, and successful individual from the moment he first becomes a squire. It is to your character that others turn for leadership.

You won't find a rich uncle in *Pendragon* — your character is that rich uncle for the other non-played family members. More important are the connections that your family provides between the successive player character knights. Your experience of the game takes on new depth and elegance if most of your own player characters come from a single family.

## WHEN A CHARACTER DIES

When a favorite character dies, you should be prepared for a moment of emotion. It may be one of elation at some heroic deed, or it may be dejection over bad dice rolls. Amongst everything else, a touch of sadness is likely. The

other players must decide what to do with the body. Your character's suddenly lordless squire might voice his dead lord's concerns and former desires. (See what you wrote on the character sheet back as his living will and testament.)

Bookkeeping follows. Check whether he died among people who know where to return the body or at least to bring news of the character's death. Add up the deceased character's final Glory. If he has a son, calculate the 10% of that value that is going to be passed on. Make a list of all equipment to be passed on. Make a list of fiefs. List the traits, directed traits, and passions of 16 or more for later reference. Take a deep breath and reflect for a moment on his part in the story thus far; you might pause to write the one-line epitaph that appears on the headstone of his grave.

Store the character sheet in the "graveyard" (or "cemetery"). Players often want to keep treasured characters in their own graveyard. If they do not care to do so, they should give the sheet to the Gamemaster to keep.

## YOUR LIVING FAMILY

Players usually want to know a little bit more about the rest of their family. These tables provide the naked facts for individualized information.

You have already determined the number of knights in your family and their relative ages during Character Generation. (The information is on the back of your character sheet.) Given here are tables to construct the rest of your family based on the number of knights.

### OLD KNIGHTS

Old knights are age 55 or more. Whatever their actual relationship to your character, such cherished individuals are likely to be addressed by the honorific "grandfather" during family discussions. They are counted among the elders of the community, for they have survived both years of warfare and the ravages of age and sickness.

#### d20 Result Relationship

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1–15  | Your grandfather's younger brother      |
| 16–20 | Your grandfather's illegitimate brother |

### MIDDLE-AGED KNIGHTS

Middle-aged knights are between 36 and 54 years old. (Characters at this age have begun using the Aging table in Chapter 5.) They are usually addressed as "uncle" by younger family knights, whatever their familial status.

#### d20 Result Relationship

|       |                                    |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1–12  | Your father's younger brother      |
| 13–16 | Your mother's brother              |
| 17–19 | Your father's illegitimate brother |
| 20    | Your mother's illegitimate brother |

### YOUNG KNIGHTS

Younger knights are between 20 and 35 years of age. They do not use the Aging table yet.

#### d20 Result Relationship

|       |                                    |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1–8   | Your younger brother*              |
| 9–14  | Your first cousin (paternal)*      |
| 15    | Your sister's husband              |
| 16–17 | Your first cousin (maternal)       |
| 18    | An illegitimate brother (older)    |
| 19–20 | An illegitimate brother (younger)* |



\* If you took the Previous Experience option during character creation and are thus older than the standard starting age, you might have younger brothers or paternal cousins who are already knights. However, if your character is only 21 and has just been knighted, then roll again until you get a result without an asterisk — none of your younger brothers or younger male cousins would be knighted before you.

## OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

When constructing your character's family, proceed from the oldest relevant generation to the youngest. (The oldest "relevant" generation is that of your character's father and mother.) These calculations determine, in every case, legitimate kin only. Illegitimate children, determined on the tables above, do not enter into these calculations, but are added separately onto the family tree at the end of the process.

Note also that these rules cover only adults. Children under the age of fifteen are ignored for this purpose.

### SIBLINGS

To determine the number of siblings for your character's mother and father and for your character himself, do the following.

**Father:** Roll 1d6 to find the total number of your father's siblings. Next, roll 1d6 for each sibling: An even number represents a male sibling, and an odd number is a female. These are your paternal uncles and aunts who lived to the age of majority. Now, match the number of your uncles with the number of your father's brothers whom you know to be family knights.

**Mother:** Next, to determine your mother's siblings, follow the same process as used for your father's siblings.

*Note:* If the total number of your father's and mother's brothers is less than the number of middle-aged family knights, add enough brothers to reach the correct number. Roll on the Old Knights table for each of these additional siblings.

**Your Character:** Again, to determine the number of your character's own siblings, follow the same process as for your father's siblings.

### LIVING OR DEAD?

The status of the rest of the family (grown women and unknighthed men) is determined by rolling on the following table.

*Note:* All of your family knights, as determined during character generation, are necessarily still alive (or they wouldn't be included as family knights any longer!); when they roll on this table, subtract 6 from the result. Your mother may still be alive, but she might have remarried after your father's death; roll for her, but subtract 3 from the result. Your father is dead, as is your grandfather; both were married, so you need not roll on this table for them.

| d20 Result | Relationship         |
|------------|----------------------|
| 1-7        | Alive and married    |
| 8-14       | Alive and unmarried  |
| 15-17      | Dead (was married)   |
| 18-20      | Dead (never married) |

For those relatives who are deceased, use the tables in the "Miscellaneous Cause of Death" sidebar (page 45) to find out how they died.

## YOUR FUTURE FAMILY

The selection of a wife is one of the most important points in a knight's life. Your Gamemaster may introduce your character to several female non-player characters of appropriate status for marriage in the course of the campaign. (They may well be related to other player characters.) This is the best way to find a wife. However, the "Winter Phase" section in Chapter 5 includes a family creation segment, with a random marriage table that can be used to generate wives immediately. Of course, you take your chances this way.

Many game possibilities open up for you and the Gamemaster once your character is married. It should be stressed that a legitimate wife is necessary.

### YOUR HEIR

Once you have a wife, the Winter Phase system gives you a chance every year of having children. Usually a few years of game time must pass before you produce a male heir. There is no rule for reduction of fertility due to old age or wounds in *Pendragon*, so your character (and, presumably, his wife) may become quite old and still produce a son.

Once he is born, your heir must survive until he reaches age 21, whereupon he qualifies to become a new player character knight. He can then carry on your aged or deceased character's dynastic goals, interests, and even rivalries, while letting you participate in the latest phase of the campaign with a strong, vital young knight as your primary character.

Your new character does not enter into a history constructed from rolling through the Salisbury Family History in this chapter, as did your first character, but rather a history actually constructed by you the player (and his father, your former character). You, the player, still get to make most of the decisions in his makeup, a few of which are dependent on Gamemaster approval.

### UNDERAGE HEIRS

Your main character might die before any son reaches 21 years of age. Your Gamemaster can help you through this situation. First, generate a ward for the child. This should be a close relative of your first character, likely one of the other family knights generated during character generation. This character then becomes the de facto head of the family, whom you play until the young heir reaches majority.

By the time your first character's heir reaches age of majority, you might have grown used to the ward as your active character, or you might choose to have two characters from the same family to play. The Gamemaster and the circumstances of the ongoing campaign should determine whether the youth may be knighted upon reaching majority. (Depending on the story, your heir might have lost his lands, his family connections, or even worse.)

**Premature Heir Loss:** Sometimes, due to the luck of the dice, a character fails to generate an heir. The frustra-



tion of this fact illustrates one of the unwritten sorrows of the Arthurian legend. May consolation be found comparing the plight to that of King Arthur himself? Perhaps.

Frustration is not the desired end of this process, however. If you fail to conceive a child or if your children continue to die as the years pass, talk to the Gamemaster about the situation. Perhaps one of the young family knights is a cousin who can be discovered as a player character.

## SONS AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Once a son survives to age of majority, you have an eldest son, a squire who is ready to be knighted and played. Create the character using normal character generation methods, with some modifications.

Check the list of fiefs gained by your heir upon his reaching knighthood. Of course, if the father still lives, then he holds these until he dies, when they are passed to his son. In some cases when the father holds many fiefs, however, he can give one to his son while he yet lives.

**Personal Data:** This information is derived from the father's. The Year Born has been recorded on the back of the father's character sheet. Calculate the age with careful reference to the campaign date.

**Traits and Passions:** Players choose whether they wish their characters' heirs to keep the same traits, directed traits, and passions as the father. The heir must start the game with these qualities at the same numerical value as the father, although the Gamemaster must approve of any inherited traits, directed traits, or passions above 20.

**Equipment:** The heir inherits everything his deceased father owned, as long as it was brought home. If the father lives, then the new knight gets whatever equipment the father deigns to part with.

**Attributes:** Attributes are calculated as usual, with the standard 60 point distribution. If the player wishes, these stats may be identical to the father's.

**Skills:** Skills and combat skills are calculated in the usual manner for starting characters.

**Coat of Arms:** The eldest son's coat of arms is the same as that of the father, with the special heraldic mark (the *difference*, shown below) for the son if the father still lives.



**Glory:** Initial Glory for the heir is equal to 1/10th of the father's Glory, determined when the knight is made or when the father dies (whichever comes first). Like all characters, the heir gets 1,000 points for being knighted, and perhaps more if other inheritances (such as landholdings) are involved.

**Family Characteristic:** The heir receives the same Family Characteristic as his father (as do all of the heir's male siblings).

## YOUR HOME

Starting characters are, by default, natives of Salisbury, a county in Logres, the most important kingdom in Britain.



Consider the information in this section to be what your character would learn just by growing up at the court of Salisbury. Remember that no accurate maps are available — the type of map we use in the 21st century is a relatively late invention.

Note that your character does *not* know this quantity and quality of information about other regions, and also remember that if you have a character from another region, he won't know this much about Salisbury, either. This ability to separate personal knowledge from character knowledge is one of the marks of good roleplaying.

This section, like the rest of this book, assumes that your campaign begins during the latter portion of Uther Pendragon's reign. During Arthur's reign, things will be very different.

## THE COUNTY OF SALISBURY

Salisbury is one of the most interesting places in Arthurian legend. It is one of the most densely populated areas. Many of the great events are going to occur here — the Battle of Badon, which will establish Arthur as king of Logres, for example; and the final Battle of Camlann, which concludes the campaign.

Many interesting places are here, as well, such as Stonehenge, most famous of the ancient monuments; and Amesbury Abbey, to which Arthur's mother will retire early in the campaign and to which Queen Guenever will retire near its end. Many interesting landmarks are nearby, especially the dozens of prehistoric mounds, stone circles, and the unusual White Horse. Camelot, the future capital city, is also nearby.

Salisbury is thus a good place to start.

Salisbury County, proper, consists of all the holdings of the Earl of Salisbury. This fief consists primarily of the city of Sarum and the large land area on Salisbury Plain around it. The fief is composed of good farmland, and provides other good forms of income for the count — fisheries, taxes on merchants, and tolls from the bridges.

Two maps are provided for the County of Salisbury: a two-page map showing major features, and a smaller map showing travel times, in terms of one or more days of travel.

The county includes one large city, Sarum, which is described in detail below, three smaller walled cities (Wilton, Warminster, and Tilshead), and dozens of much smaller towns and villages that are not shown on the maps, but which are generally clustered in the river valleys around the cities. It has five castles. The one in Sarum is very strong, and is also behind the city walls; the other four (Devizes, du Plain, Ebble, and Vagon) are common motte-and-bailey castles. Note that Amesbury Abbey is not part of the county, but is held by the Church.

Several towns and cities are cited in this description as "local markets." This means that the local farmers bring their excess grain and livestock there to sell, and also go there to buy goods or produce that they do not make or grow. Sarum, however, is the central market and is the only place at which some types of goods are available for pur-

chase. These include good cloth, clean salt, and anything from outside of the county.

The roads shown on the maps are nearly all hard-packed dirt roads, the best travel routes available. Thus, there is no real road from Tilshead to Warminster, even though they are but 10 miles apart. Rather, rutted tracks and hunters' trails connect these. The good roads are more heavily traveled, and the only ones used by travelers passing through the territory. The poor roads are less used, mainly by locals traveling within the region.

The Old Tracks have been known since the Bronze Age, and traverse high ground. Though they are usually dry, they are difficult for horses, which are reduced to traveling a mere 5 miles per day; hence, mainly peasants on foot use them.

The King's Road runs through the territory from Levocamagus to Sarum, and then onward towards Dorchester. This used to be a Roman road, and is both wide and paved, though overgrown at the edges and with many tufts of grass cracked through its surface.

## THE CITY OF SARUM

Sarum is your home base, sitting upon a steep, wind-swept mound amidst the rolling Salisbury Plain. Educated, Latin-speaking persons call this city *Sorbiodunum*. Its old Cymric name is *Caer Caradduc*.

Sarum was first settled centuries ago during the time before iron was used, in the days when people still worshipped the sun at Stonehenge. A series of concentric rings surround the city: a massive ditch on the outside, then a huge rampart, then another large ditch and another rampart.

A great curtain wall perches on the inner rampart and overlooks the inner ditch. The wall is 12 feet thick and 40 feet high. Battlements give its top a serrated shape, made by merlons (the upright stone) and crenellations (the breaks or indentations between the merlons).

Two gates, to the east and west, pierce the walls. They are defended by towered gateworks, each with its huge iron-reinforced portcullis, murder holes, and drawbridges. As with all cities, these are closed at night and normally admit no one.

In the center of the city is a great *motte*, or artificial mound, upon which sits the large castle of the earl. Four ditch-and-rampart spokes radiate from the castle almost to the outer wall, and divide the city into quarters. The northwestern quarter is given over to the magnificent cathedral and church buildings, a part of the fief of the Bishop of Salisbury. It is occupied by churchmen and the bishop's retinue. The cathedral is dedicated to Saint Mary, the Mother of God.

The city occupies the rest, and it serves as the outer bailey for the castle. It is large and relatively rich. It serves as the trading center for the entire county and the earl receives rich revenues from its taxes, part of which go to the High King. A royal mint is here stamps out silver pennies that show King Uther's image on one side and the name of mint and minter on the other. The earl receives no income from this source.

## SALISBURY CASTLE

Salisbury Castle, also called Sarum, is a modern (i.e., in the Arthurian era) stone castle. It sits upon a great motte in the center of the city, and is the main seat for your lord, the Earl of Salisbury.

Curtain walls 8 feet thick and 20 feet tall surround the inner bailey, which is roughly circular and about 300 feet in diameter. Within this bailey are the earl's domestic buildings, including the bakery by the east gates. The castle well is in the center of this bailey.

Sarum Castle has four towers. Two regular gates and one postern gate pierce the wall. The gates have defensive towers and drawbridges that cross the ditch surrounding the motte. The east tower protects the postern gate, which goes through it. The south tower is large and stands attached only to the wall, while the northern tower is attached to the keep.

The keep, or donjon, is the center of domestic and administrative activities. Four other rectangular, two-story buildings, all surmounted by battlements, surround a central courtyard that is paved with crushed chalk to cast more light within its enclosure.

The keep can be entered only by ascending a staircase and crossing over a wooden drawbridge on the second floor. The ground floor is used mainly to store food and supplies.

The private chambers of the earl, his family, and county officers occupy the eastern and northern buildings.

The north tower, situated along the wall, is connected to the keep.

The western building holds the great, high-ceilinged hall where the earl meets his petitioners and otherwise holds court. Here most of the household knights sleep at night.

The south building contains the kitchen and chapel, and above it more private chambers for county and castle officers, and for guests.

### THE GREAT HALL

When your character stays with his lord, Earl Roderick, he does not have private chamber. Instead, like most people in the castle, he sleeps at night in the same place where he works in the daytime. (Thus, cooks sleep in the kitchen, bakers in the pantry, and grooms in the stable.) As a knight, your character sleeps in the Great Hall. This is also the permanent home of the earl's household knights. They each have a large chest here to store personal possessions.

By day, the great hall is the lord's courtroom. The floor is cleared of furniture except for the lord's high chair, which remains upon the raised dais at the far end of the room. In the evening, trestle tables and benches are brought out for the evening meal. At night, the tables and benches serve as beds, or people sleep on the floor.

### SURROUNDING COUNTIES

Several other regions of Logres surround Salisbury. These are detailed in the descriptions below, and include Silchester to the east; Hampshire, southeast; Dorset, far south, across dense and inhospitable forests; an independent kingdom of Somerset, westward; Clarence, north and northwest; and Marlborough, a barony to the north.

## PEOPLE

These are the most important people in your character's home, the County of Salisbury. Few except Earl Roderick and Bishop Roger are well known outside Salisbury.

Since your character is personally acquainted with these people, their Glory numbers and, for the ladies, Appearance attributes and holdings, are given here.

### THE EARL AND FAMILY

These are important people, for to them you owe both loyalty and fealty. Your entire future lies in obeying Sir Roderick, for he is the lord who will knight you, and your entire job is to protect him and his lands, and to obey him.

**Earl Roderick (Glory 8,840):** The Earl of Salisbury, Roderick is a warrior famed for his prowess, having fought under King Uther against the Saxons to the east. He is noted for his deadly feud with Sir Blains, the Steward of Levcomagus, for whom he holds a deep grudge (Mistrust +6) because they were both suitors of Lady Ellen many years ago.

The Earl's arms are blue and gold (yellow) horizontal stripes.

**Countess Ellen (Glory 1,470; APP 14):** The Countess Ellen is a daughter of the Count of Silchester. Her dowry was comprised of several manors that lie on the road between Levcomagus and Mildenhall, for which she was much sought after by many wealthy and influential people, including Sir Blains, Steward of Levcomagus.

**Young Robert (Glory 0):** The infant son and heir of the Earl of Salisbury was born last year. He is the pride of the household and is always surrounded by fawning handmaids.

**Lady Jenna (APP 14):** The daughter of Earl Robert and Lady Ellen, Jenna is still a girl, not yet marriageable, but her promised dowry is significant. Many suitors are already putting their cases before the earl. *Promised Holdings:* 5 demesne manors; 5 enfeoffed manors; the town of Upavon (annual income £12).

### THE KNIGHTS

These are the local men whom you know and admire. They are the key figures and most distinctive individuals among the seventy or so other knights of the county.

**Sir Elad (Glory 4,189):** The Marshall of the county, Elad is the castellan of Vagon as well.

**Sir Hywel (Glory 2,457):** The banneret of West Lavington, he holds many manors which he inherited from his father; he has only a young daughter. Since his wife died at her birth and he refuses to remarry, his daughter will inherit great wealth.

**Sir Amig of Tilshead (Glory 3,234):** An older man, scarred and with a noticeable limp, Sir Amig is a veteran of many battles. He was just granted castellanship over Tilshead, built to defend the county against the witches and monsters of the nearby forests.

**Sir Jaradan (Glory 1,190):** A skilled and ambitious young knight, he is the best swordsman at court (Sword skill 22).





## ELIGIBLE LADIES

Many women live in the county, but these are the ones who are available and have the largest holdings — or other reasons to be worthy of marriage to you.

**Lady Adwen (Glory 740; APP 18):** The beautiful young (but marriageable) daughter of Sir Bles, who was killed in battle. Her holding would make her husband a banneret and a rich knight. *Holdings:* 2 demesne manors, 4 enfeoffed manors.

**Lady Elaine (Glory 258; APP 18):** Elaine is a beautiful woman whose first husband was killed by her base-born lover a few years ago, and who was subsequently hanged for killing a knight. She is rich, but considered an unfaithful hussy by every other woman in the county. *Holdings:* 4 demesne manors.

**Lady Gwiona (Glory 856; APP 16):** Gwiona is the second handmaiden of Countess Ellen. She is the heiress of two manors. Her last four suitors all were killed in war shortly after proposing to her, but the priest says she is not really unlucky. *Holdings:* 2 demesne manors.

**Lady Indeg (Glory 2,140; APP 12):** A 40-year-old woman, the richest heiress of the county, holding 3 manors in her own right. She has been widowed twice, so she can choose her own husband this time. However, she is lonely and might like a dashing young knight to keep her company. *Holdings:* 2 demesne manors, plus £2/year extra income. *Widow's Holdings (Gifts):* 3 manors.

## THE RELIGIOUS

These are a few of the important or interesting religious figures of Salisbury.

**Bishop Roger:** The Bishop of Salisbury is both wealthy and worldly, in a religious sort of way. His wealth comes from the holdings of the church, including the church holdings of Amesbury and those around Sarum and Warminster, and the other numerous sources of church income. He is well educated, widely read, and influential; he loves to travel to London for business. He tends towards practicality when conflict between the count and the church arises.

**Father Tewi:** The priest of Salisbury Castle, Tewi is personal confessor to the earl and his wife, as well as the general religious overseer of the castle and its people. He is not particularly wealthy, but is well maintained by the earl. He loves his drink, and is rumored to have a wandering eye (and hand, depending on who tells the tale) when it comes to several of the serving maids.

**Father Brugyn:** The priest of the manor you will gain upon being knighted, Brugyn is neither terribly smart nor terribly holy. He attends to the spiritual welfare of his flock with a businesslike efficiency unstained by either scandal or avarice.

## IN AND AROUND SALISBURY

In the following section is the information your character knows about specific locations in his homeland. *ITALICS* indicate places within the fief lands of the County of Salisbury. Lower case indicates places outside the fief of Salisbury.

See the map of the County of Salisbury and the associated Travel Times map, which shows the same area in terms of how many days' ride places are from one another. Travel times are based upon 15 miles per day, always following the roads.

## AMBROSIUS' DIKE

Aurelius Ambrosius, the first Pendragon and brother of Uther, built these massive earthworks as a part of a defense system against the Saxons to the east. Too large to be manned as walls, these were used to observe the moving army, hinder its approach, and hide an ambushing defensive army. They now mark the northern boundary of the county.

## AMESBURY ABBEY

Aurelius Ambrosius established this monastery, which is still supported by royal funds. It is a double-abbey, having facilities for both men and women. Although this is within the county, it is actually a fief of the Church and contributes no income to the earl.

## AVON RIVER

This river is one of several of the same name in Britain. It is the main drainage of the Salisbury Plain, and continues to flow southward through the Camelot Forest and Dorset to the British Sea. It is navigable by coastal ships that sail all the way up to Wilton.

## BADON HILL

This is an ancient hill fort. Its great destiny lies in the future, after the Saxons have overrun a large part of Britain.

## BATH

The main city of Somerset, it is called in Latin *Aqua Sulis*, or the Baths of Sulis, because of the magical healing properties of its springs. It is three days' ride from Sarum, in the land of Somerset.

## BOKERLY DIKE

This is a north-facing bank and ditch built in Roman times to separate tribes that have, since then, become extinct. It now marks the boundary between the counties of Salisbury and Dorset.

## BOURNE RIVER

A tributary to the Avon River. Many villages and farms dot the valley.

## CALNE

This is a fortified city that serves as the local market, and is part of the fief of Clarence. It is about two days' ride from Sarum.

## CAMELOT

Camelot is a small city about two days' ride from Sarum, the center of the county of Hampshire. It was an important Roman city, but deteriorated badly before and during the Saxon occupation. It is destined to become the capital first of the invading Saxons, and then of King Arthur, when it will house the Round Table.

## CAMELOT FOREST

This is a dense forest that forms the southern border of Salisbury County. It is inhabited by both normal and fabulous beasts.

## CAMPACORENTIN FOREST

This dense forest lies several days' ride north of Sarum. It stretches for many miles, primarily east and west, and encloses many holdings, some of which are still independent from the High King's rule.

Like all forests, it houses many strange creatures, but is especially noted for a pair of huge night-black lions that periodically terrorize nearby peasants. A persistent rumor about the forest tells of a rich princess imprisoned in a tower surrounded by a garden of giant, thorny roses.

## CIRENCESTER

This was once an important Roman city, and is now the primary seat of the Duke of Clarence. It is about four days' ride from Sarum.

## CLARENCE

The Duke of Clarence feuds continually with the Duke of Gloucester.

## COLINGBOURNE WOOD

This woodland is a favorite hunting place for knights and commoners both. It probably has no exotic animals or faeries.

## DEVIZES

This is a market town with a motte-and-bailey castle. It is about 1 to 2 days' ride from Sarum.

## DU PLAIN CASTLE

One day's ride from Sarum, this town marks the eastern boundary of the county.

## EBBLE CASTLE

This is an old motte-and-bailey castle made mostly of wood, but still serviceable in defense. It is the most southern settlement of the county.

## EBBLE RIVER

A tributary of the Avon River, this river valley is not densely inhabited. Menaces often come out of the surrounding Camelot Forest.

Of late, the river has been plagued by a school of repulsive water leapers (see Appendix 2) that prey upon small boats.

## FIGSBURY

This is one of numerous hill forts on the Salisbury Plain. It has been abandoned since ancient times. Sometimes on Midsummer's Eve, it is said, the sounds of groaning men and clanking chains can be heard coming from the ground beneath it.

## GLASTONBURY

Glastonbury is one of the most sacred places in Britain, for it was here that the first Christian church was built.

Before that it was sacred to Don, the earth mother, and was a magical entrance to the Otherworld. An abbey is there now.

Glastonbury is about four days' ride from Sarum, within the County of Somerset.

## GLOUCESTER

Gloucester, called *Glevum* in Latin, is the most important seaport of the western coast, located near the mouth of the Severn River. It is ruled by the Duke of Gloucester, a rival of the Duke of Clarence. It is about five days' uninterrupted ride from Sarum.

## GROVELY CASTLE

Not really a castle, this is an ancient hill fort of great earthworks, now mostly overgrown with thorns and wild flowers.

## HANTONNE

This is a part of the County of Hampshire, and is the nearest seaport to Sarum. It is two days' ride from Sarum.

## JAGENT

This city is the center of a county ruled by a militant lord who defends his ancient rights fiercely.

## KENNET RIVER

A large, eastward-flowing river which is a tributary which joins the Thames far to the east.

## LEVCOMAGUS

This city is part of the fief of the Duke of Silchester. Its steward and his brothers hold a fierce grudge against all men of Salisbury because Earl Roderick obtained the hand of Lady Ellen in marriage.

## LONDON

London is the largest and most important city in Britain. It has no lord but the High King, and is ruled by a council of its most important merchants. It is about eight days' ride from Sarum.

## MARLBOROUGH

This is a fine castle. It is built atop a large ancient mound, believed by many to be the burial mound of an ancient wizard. It is about two days' leisurely ride from Sarum.

## MILDENHALL

This unwalled city is the local market for the farms along the Kennet River, and is held by the castellan from Marlborough.

## MODRON'S FOREST

This dense forest which lies to the west of the county is named after an ancient goddess of the Britons. It is rumored to be inhabited by many wicked faeries and beasts.

## NADDE RIVER

This is a heavily populated river valley. The river is a tributary of the Avon River.

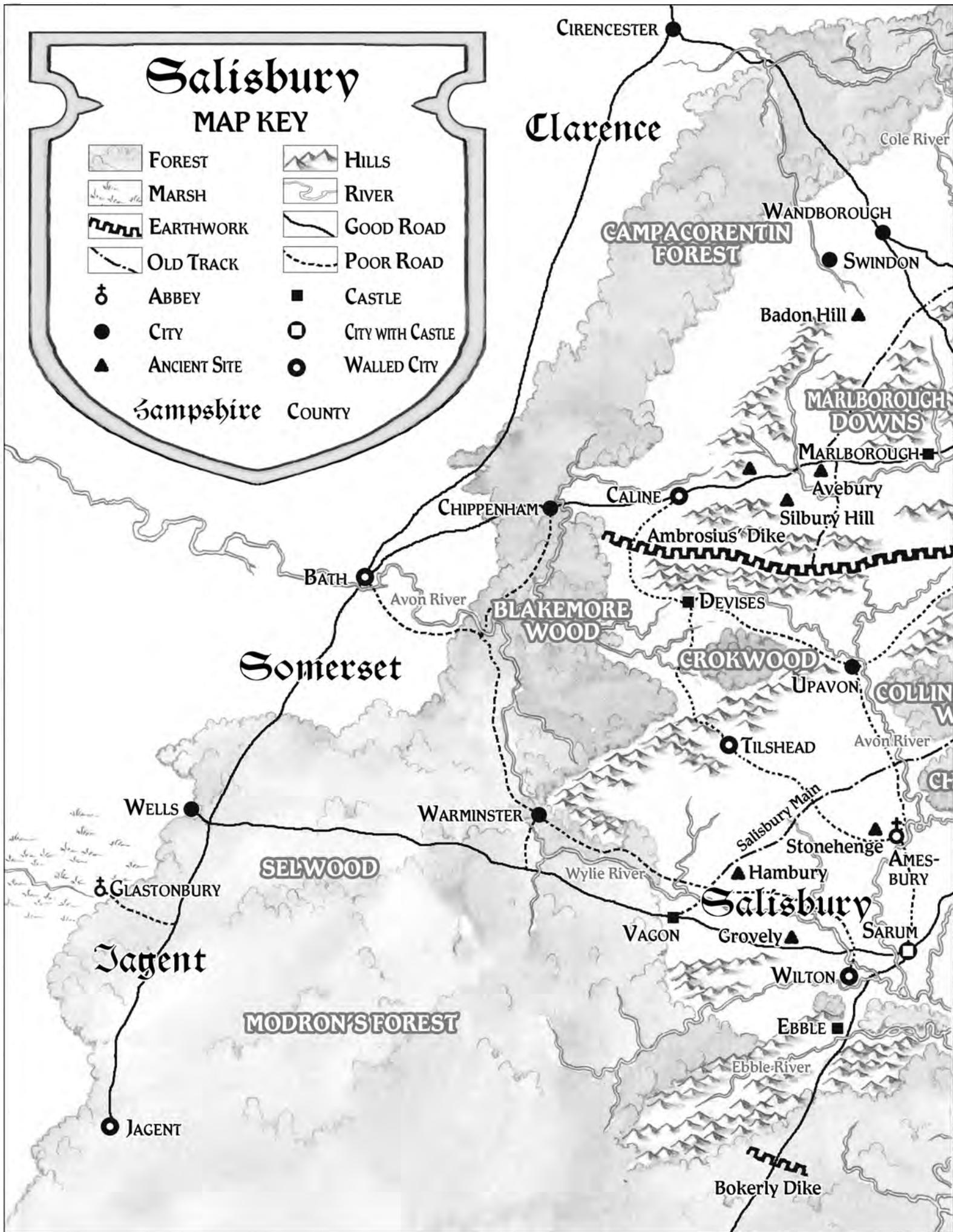


# Salisbury

## MAP KEY

|   |              |   |                  |
|---|--------------|---|------------------|
|  | FOREST       |  | HILLS            |
|  | MARSH        |  | RIVER            |
|  | EARTHWORK    |  | GOOD ROAD        |
|  | OLD TRACK    |  | POOR ROAD        |
|  | ABBAY        |  | CASTLE           |
|  | CITY         |  | CITY WITH CASTLE |
|  | ANCIENT SITE |  | WALLED CITY      |

Wampshire COUNTY





MILES



Silchester

Hampshire





## OCK RIVER

This is the main river that flows through White Horse Vale. Its farmers visit Uffingham for their local market. It is a tributary of the Thames River.

## SALISBURY PLAIN

The Salisbury Plain is a gently undulating plain whose rivers are populated by many villages of farmers. It has also held many ancient bronze- and early iron-age settlements, mostly long abandoned but occasionally resettled, as at Sarum. Only the largest of these are shown on the map, and many are unrecognized as such by the natives.

## SARUM

The main county seat, this is a fortified city and castle built within one of the many ancient earthworks of Salisbury Plain.

## SAVERNAK FOREST

This border forest is within either or both of the lands of the Earl of Salisbury and the Baron of Marlborough, and has been the cause of considerable dispute between those lords. No faeries have been reported here, though Countess Ellen claims privately to have once seen a unicorn there.

## SILCHESTER CITY

This is one of the Roman cities of the past, now much diminished in size and importance, but still great nonetheless. It is about two days' ride from Sarum. It is part of the holdings of the Duke of Silchester.

## SILCHESTER DUCHY

Silchester is the dukedom that commands most of the lands east of Salisbury.

## SOMERSET

This is an independent kingdom and includes all the lands to the north west of Salisbury.

## STONEHENGE

This monumental structure was built by giants in ancient times and dedicated to the sun, stars, and ancestors. It consists of five concentric rings and horseshoes of standing stones and a few outlying stones, all surrounded by a mounded ditch.

One generation ago, a great treachery occurred here when Vortigern the Traitor betrayed the nobles of Britain to the Saxons.

Recently it was refurbished by Merlin the Enchanter, who re-established some of the old magic by stealing some great magical stones from Ireland. Now it is also the burial site for the first Pendragon, Aurelius Ambrosius, brother of Uther.

## SWINDON

A city to the north of Salisbury, held by the Duke of Clarence. It is important because of the quarries that lie nearby. It is about three days' ride from Sarum.

## TEST RIVER

A river that flows southward to the British Sea, the boundary between Salisbury and Hampshire.

## TILSHEAD

A fortified city serving as the market for the local farmers. It is a one-day ride from Sarum.

## UPAVON

This is a large, unwalled town that serves as the local market for farmers of the Upper Avon River. It is about one day's ride from Sarum. This town has been promised as the dowry of Early Roderick's daughter.

## VAGON

Vagon Castle sits about one day's ride from Sarum. It is a reinforced motte-and-bailey.

## WANDBOROUGH

An unwalled city which is held by the Duke of Clarence. It is three days' ride from Sarum.

## WARMINSTER

This is a fortified city, which serves as the local market for the farms of the upper Wylve River. It is surrounded by the Modron Forest, and defends the country from incursions from Somerset. It is two days' ride from Sarum.

The cathedral of the Bishop of Silchester is located here.

## WILTON

This fortified city is the local market for the many farms of the Nadde River and the lower Wylve River. More importantly, boats sail upriver this far, and unload their goods from the coast before reloading with local goods bound for the sea.

## WYLVE RIVER

This river is a tributary of the Avon River. Its farms are divided between Warminster and Wilton.

## YARNBURY

This is one of many ancient earthworks. It encloses almost 30 acres within its bank and ditch. Every Beltaine, the local peasants bring all their cattle here and drive them between two big, smoky fires in a pagan ritual.

## THE PROGRESS OF SALISBURY

A "progress" is the route that a noble takes to check on his properties and to move his rather large household to where the food is. The Earl spends most of his year at Sarum, the natural collection point for excess goods. His progress can go in any direction or order, and the progress given here is only a typical example:

- at Sarum for late autumn, all winter and early spring (16 weeks total).
- to Vagon for 3 weeks
- to Warminster 4 weeks
- to various hunting lodges in Modron Forest for 2 weeks
- to Devizes Castle for 3 weeks.

### Start of Summer:

- to Tilshead for 4 weeks
- to Amesbury for 2–3 days as guest of the abbot
- to Sarum for 1 week

- to Ebble Castle for 2 weeks, hunting and searching for robbers
- to Sarum for 1 week
- to du Plain Castle for 2 weeks, raiding against Silchester

- travel along the Bourne River valley, hunting in Collingbourne Woods, 2 weeks total
- to Mildenhall for 1–2 days as guest

**Start of Autumn:**

- to Mildenhall for 1 week, perhaps including a hunt in Savernake Forest
- to Upavon for 1 day as guest
- to Devizes Castle again, 2 weeks
- Modron Forest hunting, 2 weeks
- Warminster, 3 weeks
- Vagon, 2 weeks
- to Sarum again, preparing for winter

## THE EARL’S ARMY

Given here is the usual distribution of the 50 knights and 100 footsoldiers of the earl’s personal armed force. Note several interesting features:

- The earl’s entourage always has at least 12 knights, including the earl himself.
- A patrol of knights roams randomly from area to area within the earl’s holdings, on patrol.
- Almost any place is only minimally garrisoned if the resident knights depart, as they would certainly do if real trouble or opportunity occurred in the county.
- Hard-riding knights can reach Sarum from any place within the county (Uffingham excepted) within 2 days: 1 day for messengers to go out, and another for the knights to ride in, assuming they are at home. Thus, within 2 days, presumably, most of the county’s knights can be mustered at Sarum. This is actually quite optimistic, but certainly within 4 days from sending out word, almost all the knights can reach Sarum.

**TABLE 3–1: THE SALISBURY ARMY**

| Place      | Min. Garrison* | Standard                |
|------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Devizes    | 5              | 4 knights + 5 footmen   |
| Du Plain   | 5              | 4 knights + 20 footmen  |
| Ebble      | 5              | 8 knights + 20 footmen  |
| Sarum      | 34             | 16 knights + 55 footmen |
| Tilshead   | 14             | 2 knights + 15 footmen  |
| Vagon      | 19             | 2 knights + 10 footmen  |
| Warminster | 11             | 2 knights + 15 footmen  |
| Wilton     | 24             | 2 knights + 25 footmen  |
| Patrol     | 0              | 10 knights              |

\* Minimum garrison of footmen needed for normal defensive capability.

## THE SALISBURY MANORS

Twenty manors are immediately available holdings for starting player knights (see “Personal Data” in Chapter 2), as shown on the Manors of Salisbury map. This map reveals a portion of the main Salisbury map, which does not show any population centers of manor size, in greater detail.

The Manors of Salisbury map also includes several places that are also mentioned in Appendix 3.

## YOUR MANOR

A manor is the basis of your character’s wealth. A starting vassal knight holds a manor that garners him £6 of annual income. Explained here is a typical knight’s holding. An illustration showing a typical manor is presented nearby.

### THE HALL

This is a fine house for the knight and his family. Its unique characteristic is its great hall, where the knight holds court for his holdings. Sometimes a manor is called, metonymically, a “hall,” naturally implying everything that lies around it.

The knight’s squire and a couple of the manor’s chief servants (such as a bailiff) probably live in the hall too. Other servants (the pig boy, gardener, stable hands, and so on) live in the buildings where they work. This hall and its building are, basically, the nicest farm in the area.

### DEMESNE

These are lands owned by the knight. The lands are planted mostly with wheat for people and oats for horses. Peasants from the holding send men and plows to work the land for a traditionally assigned allotment of time each week. The peasants also pay a portion of their own harvest to the master of the lands, generally of barley.

### THE TOWN

This town is the local market where common local craftsmen (blacksmith, carpenter, cooper, etc.) can be found, and where itinerant peddlers meet once a week to hold market. It has a couple of nice houses for the richer farmers, but most buildings are peasant shacks, storage sheds, barley granaries, and cattle byres.

The town’s population is around 120 people, including those people who live in the Hall.

**The Church:** A small, poor church lies generally at the center of the town. It is the largest building around, and made of stone. The priest, most likely nearly as illiterate as the farmers, is in charge of the local congregation.

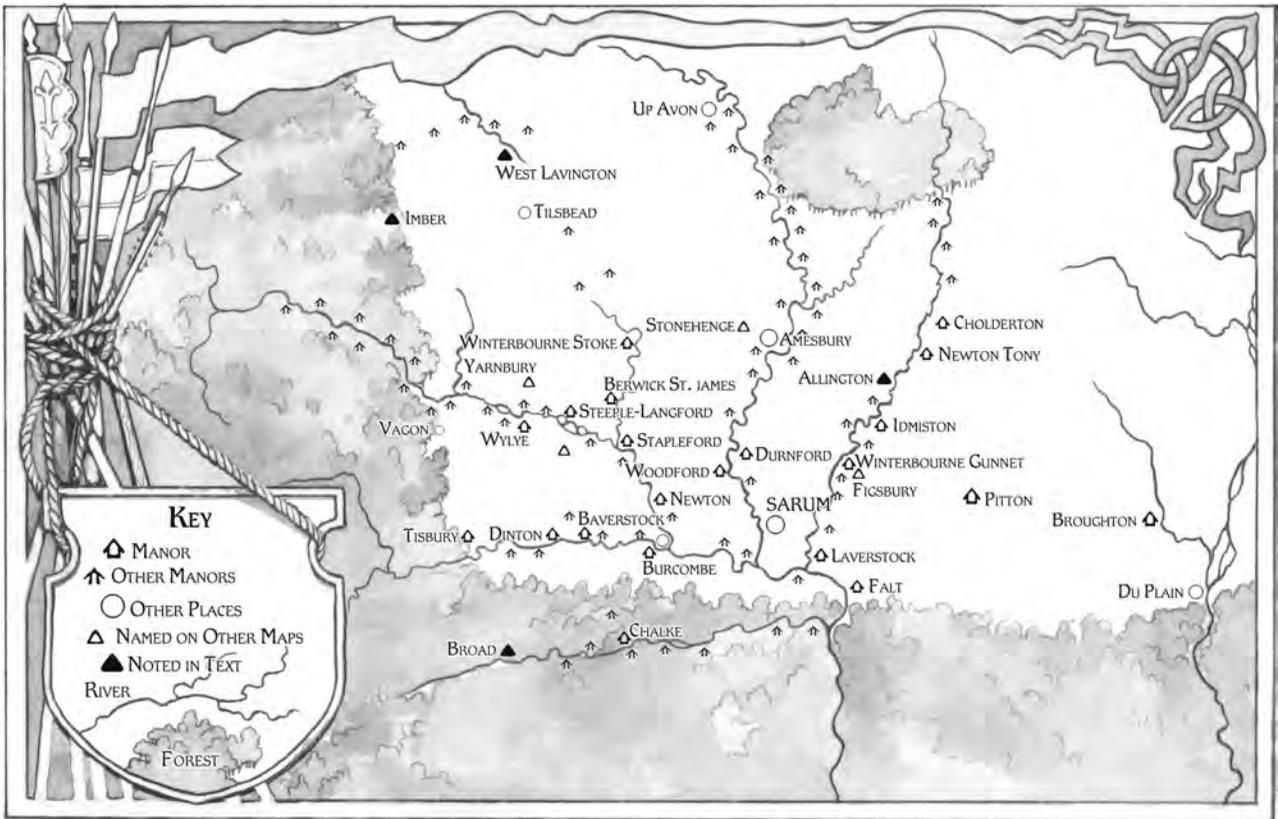
The church is often called the “baptistery” because baptisms, marriages, and funerals are performed and recorded there.

**Mill:** Several mills work to grind the grain for the daily bread of the peasants. The manor lord owns the biggest mill, and all the townsmen must grind their grain there (those who come from other villages may use the lesser mills). The lord collects a percentage of all proceeds from his own mill, and also collects a smaller tax on the other local mills.

### VILLAGES

Three villages, each about a mile away, are part of the manor. They each have about 100 residents who are all farmers. They all come to the town for church, festivals, and to work their share for the lord. The village might have





a dilapidated church, but most buildings are huts, sheds, byres and granaries.

## PLOW LANDS

Plow lands are usually crowded into the quarter-mile or so around a village or town. Much more distance than that and the workday is too short for the oxen to be herded out daily from the village. Most fields grow barley used in making the bread and ale of daily life. Oats are a secondary crop, while wheat is a luxury crop.

*Note:* The knight also owns strips of land scattered among the other plowed lands. Most landholders have their land in strips scattered among the many fields, which increases community cooperation and cohesion.

**Fallow Lands:** Half the fields are plowed each year. The other half is left fallow, and used to graze livestock.

## WILD LAND

Between the plowed lands of each village lie lands that are not cultivated, but which instead supply wood, occasional wild fruit, and grazing for animals. Hunting here is not allowed to the peasants, but unless it is a royal forest, the knight can hunt on his own lands.

## ANIMALS

**Horses:** The knight himself needs at least four working horses at all times (a charger, a rouncy for himself and one for his squire, and a sumpter). Wealthier knights also keep rouncys for their wives, any additional squires, and perhaps a favored servant. Most knights do not have the resources to breed or raise chargers, and his stable is usually restricted to keeping and breeding rouncys, sumpters, and cobs, and sometimes a good courser or palfrey.

The horse herd for the entire manor has about ten horses (1 stallion, 4 mares, 2 yearlings, 2 colts, and 1 gelding being trained). Most knights' stables also include a few ponies, used as mounts for pages and other servants when traveling.

**Cattle:** Cattle provide meat, leather, and work animals (plow oxen are castrated bulls). The manor has a herd of around 20 cattle (1 bull, 1 yearling bull, 6 oxen, 5 milk cows, 2 unseasoned oxen, 5 calves).

**Sheep:** Sheep provide both food and wool. A herd of about 21 serves the manor (1 ram, 14 sheep, 6 lambs).

**Pigs:** Pigs provide the most usable meat per pound of any domestic animal. The herd is around 31 animals (1 boar, 6 sows, 24 piglets) and is loosed into the wild land each year to fatten on wild acorns. They are rounded up in the fall.

## CASTLES

Castles abound in Arthurian legend, the natural abode of lords. Your character will spend most of his time, when not adventuring, in one castle or another.

Literature occasionally describes the castles, but more often than not it doesn't. The medieval storytellers simply left out all of the most obvious facts because their listeners or readers would already know about them. Modern players and Gamemasters are not so prepared, so this brief overview is offered.

Castles are the ultimate expression of power in *Pen-dragon*. They are both homes and tools of war. They offer refuge from danger and serve as a base for cavalry raids and major expeditions. Extraordinarily expensive to build and maintain, castles are essential for controlling areas of the

land. They also gain the owner great prestige. Without a castle, your lord would be just another knight.

The basic game provides four “standard” types of castle as a starting point.

### **MOTTE-AND-BAILEY**

The most common type of castle is a simple wood and earth structure called a “motte-and-bailey,” a style that has been known and used for many decades. Some people claim that these edifices should be called “forts” rather than castles. They are relatively easy and inexpensive to build.

The motte is the hill, often artificially constructed, atop which sits the stronghold — a great log or, sometimes, stone (or perhaps half-timber, half-stone) tower. The bailey is a large courtyard enclosed by log walls, which contain the buildings for the followers of the lord. Among these are a stable, a smithy, servants’ quarters, cattle pens, and so on. A log stockade and ditch surrounds the bailey, which can be crossed only by means of a drawbridge.

### **SMALL CASTLE**

Small castles are made of stone. The castle’s heart is a central keep that is the lord’s stronghold. The keep is three stories high, with a basement, and can be entered only through a door on the second story. A courtyard, still called the bailey, surrounds the keep. A tall, thick stone wall surrounds the bailey, and encloses many wooden buildings.

The outer ditch can be crossed only by the drawbridge.

### **COMMON CASTLE**

The common castle is like a small castle but with towers on the outer walls. Two square towers stand at two or more of the corners of the walls, while a third overlooks the drawbridge, creating a “gate tower.”

### **LARGE CASTLE**

A large castle is much like the common castle, but with taller walls, towers at every corner, a large gatehouse, and a larger keep. The buildings in the bailey are probably built of wood, or perhaps stone.

### **FORTIFIED CITIES**

Fortified cities are occasionally seen in Britain. Some have ancient Roman walls, while others are more recently constructed and strengthened by towers.

## **TRAVEL IN BRITAIN**

Your character will spend much time traveling through Arthurian Britain, a risky, time-consuming business. Difficulties of which modern people are largely unaware create problems for everyone moving from place to place in this era.

### **MAPS**

Maps in the Dark Ages are nearly nonexistent, and those that do exist are not at all similar to the maps of our day. First of all, most people are illiterate and thus unable to read symbols. If anything, a “map” might be a list of stops along the way, probably indicated by a coat of arms of the castle or other holding. Some symbol might indicate whether the stop is a manor, castle, monastery, city, or other landmark.

The usual manner of getting around in strange places is to have a general idea of direction and to ask for more specifics every time someone is met along the way. Since most such meetings are with locals, those asked tend to have a pretty good idea of their locality (which in the case of peasants is only the 5-mile radius around their homes, or for knights the extent of their native domain).

People have only vague, often incorrect information about areas outside their homelands. Directions are not usually given in miles, but rather in vague travel times, like “a long time” or “a little while,” or perhaps at best “until high sun” or “nearly till sundown” or the like. Landmarks are better travel aids, and may be specific, like “the ford,” but can be confusing too — “the big tree” or “where the rocks fell down” or “the ruins.” Information about dangerous areas is particularly sketchy, and often plain wrong. Vast areas of forest in Britain are unknown to anyone.

Even moderately settled areas may be lost to the knowledge of nearby folk should a group of enemies cut off the roads and trails to the settlement. A modest quest for a group of young knights might be to travel into an area with which their lord has lost connection, and return with an accurate description of landmarks and so forth. It is not uncommon to get lost and have to backtrack to the last secure place.

### **TRAVEL TIMES**

Traveling is not just a matter of simply going from one place to another. In addition to the problem of not knowing your route are the problems of traveling safely and finding safe accommodations. This increases travel time.

Travel is usually safe within the demesne of a lord, unless of course the local lord lives by robbing travelers weaker than himself — which is regrettably quite common outside of Logres. As well, groups of bandits often hide near roads and tracks through forests and wild lands to waylay the unwary. Journeymen must always be on the lookout, perhaps even sending out scouts, a process that slows them down considerably.

Finally, stopping to eat and rest is common. In particular, persons not used to travel, especially women or children, require more frequent stops.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

Knights normally stay at some castle, manor, or other settlement along the way. Hospitality is an honored tradition, and standard custom is to help any traveler according to his or her status. See “Hospitality” in Chapters 1 and 4 for more information on the laws of hospitality.

Most people travel very little, and are likely to be starved for information and gossip about the outside world. Thus strangers who are known not to be enemies are welcome, and if they are entertaining, then they are the more welcome. No payment is expected from the visitors.

Of course, not everyone is allowed entry. The normal procedure is for a party to ride to the gate and knock, blow a horn, ring a bell, or simply shout until someone comes to listen to them. This person is usually called the porter, because his job is to tend the *porte*, or door. Porter is a rather



prestigious job at any location, despite normally being a commoner's position, since he determines who enters immediately or enters later.

The porter is fully authorized to ask who the visitors are and what they want. He may decide to allow entry right away, especially if the visitor is known to him, but more likely will go to his lord and relay the information before making a decision. The travelers wait patiently outside, perhaps in the rain or in the dark.

If it is an enemy who has inadvertently come to the door, the porter simply stalls for a while, perhaps exchanging bitter or insulting words with the travelers, while knights and soldiers arm and prepare to rush out and capture the foe.

Once guests enter a castle or manor, they are shown to the long hall or bedroom where the lord welcomes them, interviews them, and instructs servants to show the guests to their accommodations. Occasionally they are shown to a place to wash up before seeing the lord.

Accommodations for visiting knights are normally in the great hall, where the household knights and ladies also sleep, unsegregated (but also without much privacy). Honored guests may be given a chamber or tower room to themselves, but most likely will have to share it with the rest of their party. These rooms are normally the residences of someone else, who will have been forced to give it up for the guests. Only a great palace has enough space to give individual guests their own private quarters.

A worthy visitor will have pages or women assigned to help him disarm, disrobe, and wash. Washing may be from a public basin or — luxury of luxuries! — a hot bath.

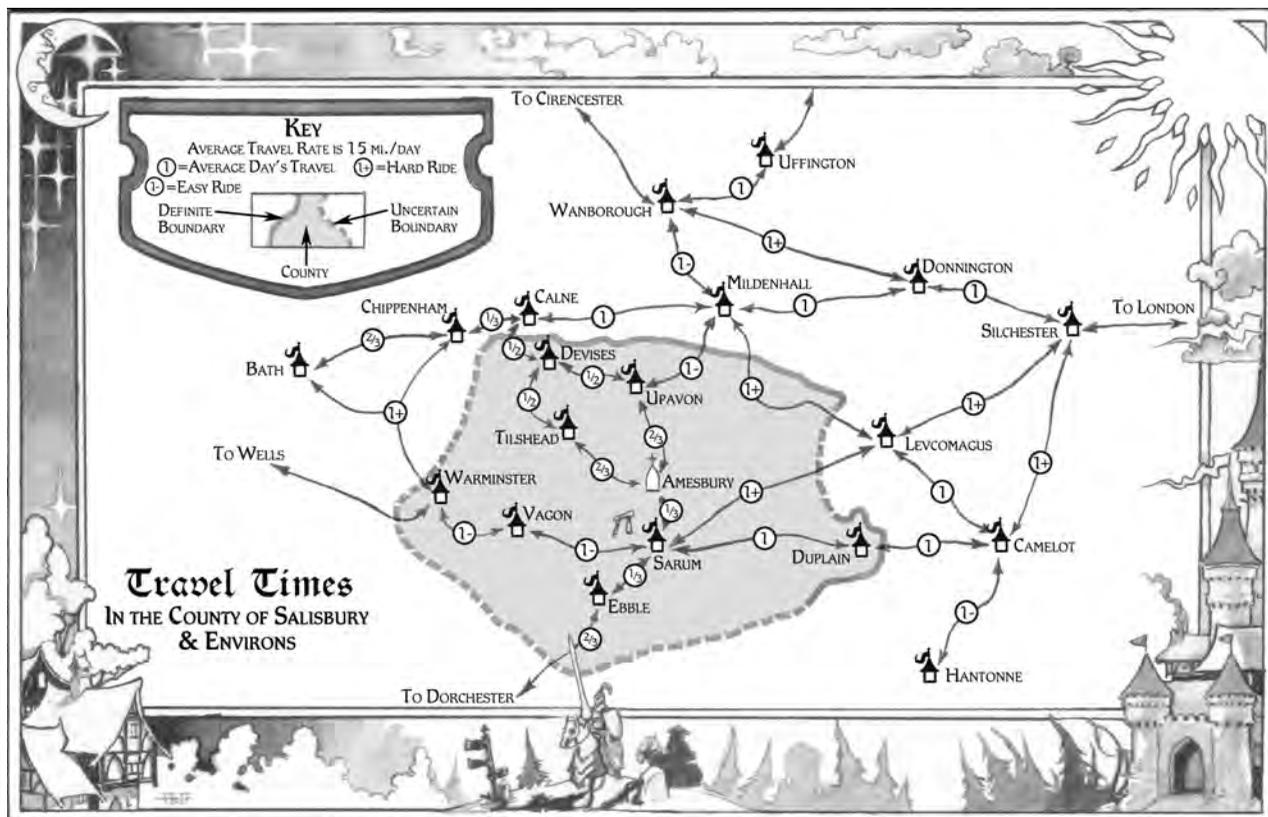
Women servants commonly help men bathe without any necessary sexual implication (but plenty of opportunity...), though the reverse is most certainly not true.

Monasteries have similar customs. Separate rooms are often available for those of different social ranks, thus keeping the nobility away from the commoners. Particularly high-ranking individuals may actually be offered the quarters of the abbot himself.

Where no noble accommodations exist, knights may seek to stay at peasant dwellings. The traveler goes from building to building asking for hospitality until someone tentatively agrees. The commoner complains that he is poor with nothing to spare, and the traveler offers to compensate somehow. They dicker over the price until agreement is reached. Nothing is guaranteed except what is agreed upon by both parties. Remember that commoners are usually reluctant to allow powerful strangers into their houses, and may recommend someone in town who is more affluent and less suspicious. Out of these individuals' hospitality will — within the campaign, but not in Uther's time — grow public inns.

Inns are not yet known at the start of the *Pendragon* campaign. They arise later, in cities but only rarely elsewhere, and will be frequented mostly by pilgrims and merchants. They are generally of very poor quality, unlikely to have private accommodations, a menu to choose from, or food other than common peasant fare. The inn is likely to house everyone in a single large common room with a single fireplace, with space closest to the fire charging a premium rate.

If no accommodations can be found, knights do what soldiers have always done — camp out on the cold, hard ground.





# Chapter Four: Stats and Skills

King Arthur's epic is one of personality and action on a grand scale. Everyone whose name is remembered through legend is known for both deeds and feelings. In roleplaying games, as in legend (and generally in life), no truly great individual is a two-dimensional cutout whose biography consists solely of high scores and lists of accomplishments.

Personality in *Pendragon* is depicted through traits and passions; a character's ability to perform actions, on the other hand, is controlled by skills (including combat skills). Together, these tools provide guidelines for playing characters who may be quite different from the player.

## TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Traits and passions allow us to quantify character behavior. Thus, they make the player's roleplaying task easier by providing guidelines for how the character has acted in the past, and thus how he is likely to continue to act. Numerical values are assigned to each trait and each passion, and rolls are made using these values to determine behavior. Of the two measures of character behavior, personality traits are more often used than passions.

Keeping track of character reputation is important. Characters with similar Glory totals may have very different reputations, some good, some bad, some simply colorful.

### ACCURACY

Personality traits and passions define the way your character feels and acts. During play, various emotions are revealed and traits and passions may thus receive experience checks, just like skills (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5). Passions may also be reduced at the Gamemaster's option.

Over time, characters' traits and passions come to reflect the story of their lives. The system allows characters to record the changes in their attitudes and behavior accurately and consistently.

### ENTERTAINMENT VALUE

The interplay of character personalities provides a great deal of the fun in *Pendragon* roleplaying. With traits and passions, each character's personality is very different. A character may be pure of heart like Galahad, a courteous womanizer like Gawaine, or a blasé knight with a streak of cruelty, like Agravaine. Each character has a well-defined and colorful basis for roleplaying and for action within the game.

Traits and passions are also entertaining because they can lead to amusing results. As well, some successful trait or passion rolls result in the character becoming inspired, with temporary benefits to die rolls. Fumbled passion rolls might even result in madness.

### GLORY

Any dramatic pattern of behavior gains Glory. As a result, characters with interesting personalities gain more Glory than those without. However, behavior in accordance with society's ideals still gains more Glory than actions arising from one's idiosyncrasies or peculiarities. Thus, Gawaine gains much more Glory for his chivalrous nature than Agravaine gains from his streak of cruelty.

### CONSISTENCY

In cases of distinctive behavior, your character may have to struggle to maintain his behavior, especially in the face of conflicting desires. The chaste knight will be able to maintain his chastity, the drunkard will remain a drunkard and the courageous will be courageous even sometimes against his better judgment.

And even after a long hiatus from play, you will be able to remember how a given character acts just by glancing at his traits and passions.

### AUTHENTICITY

*Pendragon* deals with what is indisputably the greatest of all medieval stories — the tragic tale of King Arthur and the Round Table. The game takes place in a world of knights and their ladies, in an age of feudalism and chivalry, wherein democracy is seditious and unequal authoritarianism the norm.

Players control the actions of characters that may thus be quite understandably unlike themselves, yet they must be expected to act appropriately to their station. Acts such as incidental murder, stealing horses, participating in ambushes, or unmerciful behavior are not necessarily villainous, for death, slaughter, and misery are normal parts of a knight's life.

How, then, can you know what is appropriate and correct? Traits and passions are the primary indicators that you will use to determine "correctness" in the Arthurian setting. If your character gains the "proper" traits and passions, then he is doing just exactly those things that constitute correct behavior in Arthurian society.



If you wish to run a character who defies Arthurian traditions, you can and may, but your character will probably lose out in various passion values for acting outside the norms of society. The Gamemaster must decide whether a loss is warranted and how much the loss should be, based on the specific circumstances.

## USING TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Traits and passions are important to game play, being the primary component of a character's reputation, along with Glory, which is the general indicator of success in the game. Traits and passions measure such things as honor or trustworthiness, while Glory measures raw prestige and power. The two systems are inextricably linked, though, for traits and passions may gain you Glory.

### FAMOUS TRAITS OR PASSIONS

The threshold value for gaining Glory from a trait or passion is 16. If your knight has a Valorous trait of 15, he is brave, but not particularly noteworthy for courage. Nor is a priest with a Piety of 6 *particularly* impious, nor is a Love passion of 11 at all worthy of notice. But a knight whose Valorous statistic reaches 16 is considered heroic beyond many other men and one with a Piety of 18 is nearly a saint, while a Love passion of 20 denotes one as being famous throughout the realm for his passion.

### ROLLING FOR TRAITS AND PASSIONS

During play, character behavior is often challenged by the Gamemaster. Temptations are paraded forth, moral crises heaped up, and critical judgments and actions thrown forward.

Since traits and passions define character personality, they must be consulted whenever the Gamemaster feels them necessary. In crises, it is assumed, individuals act according to their character, not spontaneous and ambiguous choices. Custom and training triumph over instinct. Players may not want their characters to do something dictated by a die roll, but free choice is not always possible.

### FAMOUS TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Only famous traits and passions (i.e., those with a value of 16 or higher) are noteworthy, and such traits or passions must be tested with a die roll whenever character behavior is challenged in a crisis. Basically, if you get Glory for a trait or passion, you should expect rolls based on that value to be made quite often.

This does not mean that trait rolls must be used whenever the character makes any decision in the game. And even characters with famous characteristics are allowed free choice of behavior except when the plot demands otherwise. The Gamemaster should request trait rolls only when a trait is tested in an important situation. In general, trait rolls simulate situations in which a crisis forces the character to act unconsciously.

### ORDINARY TRAITS AND PASSIONS

Traits and passions between 5 and 15 do not have to be rolled against if the player wishes to use his free will to

determine an action, although rolling is obviously the most impartial way to determine actions.

Characters who consistently act a certain way will eventually have the appropriate traits or passions valued at 16 or higher, due to the rules below, at which time they will either have to make the required rolls or retire the character.

**Modifiers:** Trait or passion values may be modified based on the situation, in order to keep the game realistic. Players are responsible for reminding the Gamemaster when a situation might call for a trait or passion modifier. The Gamemaster determines whether such modifiers are valid, and how much of a modifier should be applied.

### PENALTIES AND REDUCTIONS

Values for traits and passions generally rise and fall repeatedly during the game. Experience checks for traits and passions are assigned by the Gamemaster in a slightly different fashion from checks for skills (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5). Players who are reluctant to roll should not be forced to; however, if they consistently have their characters act against their established personalities, the Gamemaster must have them check the trait or passion they *actually* exhibited, in order to simulate the possibility of a change in the character's psychology and reputation.

For example, the player of a knight with a Generous value of 13 wants to loot and pillage his foes at every turn and constantly talks about the amount of money (or lack thereof) his character has. This attitude and behavior is not in keeping with the Generous trait, so the Gamemaster is perfectly within his rights to tell the character to check his Selfish trait the next time he expresses the desire to loot an enemy.

Passions are particularly vulnerable to reduction. When a character acts against a passion, no check is assigned — instead, the Gamemaster simply instructs the player to reduce the value of the passion by 1 point immediately. Also, any failed passion roll causes the character to lose 1 point.

Acting consistently according to character will prevent compulsory checks and reductions from being imposed.

The traits and passions system is not to be used to turn the player knights into puppets. Most of the time characters just do whatever the player wishes them to do, collecting checks along the way. However, if your character has a reputation, it's only fair that he maintains it or loses it.

### EVIL OR UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR

It is not at all in the spirit of the game for player characters to become evil knights. However, players are encouraged to take minor character flaws such as cruelty or laziness for their characters; such traits can be very amusing in moderation, and also provide the Gamemaster with more opportunities to create interesting situations.

With one or two undesirable traits or inferior passion values, characters can have weaknesses other than those revealed only in mortal combat, giving the Gamemaster the possibility of creating non-lethal challenges for characters. Given the dangers involved in combat, this is a useful opportunity.

# TRAITS

Traits are dualistic personality factors presented in opposed pairs. A trait and its opposite both exist in every individual. They define a person's feelings and tendencies.

*Pendragon* has thirteen pairs of personality traits which are important. Characters can certainly display other traits, but those listed on the character sheet are the ones critical to the Arthurian literature of the game.

The total value of each trait pair must always equal 20 when the game begins, and in most cases this will never change: When one trait increases, the opposite decreases by the same amount. Normally, no trait may ever be higher than 19 or lower than 1, except through experience or by the use of increased Glory (see "Traits Over 19").

## TRAITS OVER 19

Some extraordinary characters may have a trait valued of 20, 25, or perhaps even more! Scores above 19 are always the result of increases made during the Winter Phase (or perhaps by Gamemaster fiat). Such characters always have a value of 0 for the opposite trait, and are known through all the land for their unrelenting, utterly fanatical behavior.

Unopposed rolls against these traits are handled as with any other unopposed roll having a value of 20 or higher — the score is treated as 20, and any amount in excess of 20 is treated as a modifier to the roll itself.

As usual, trait values should be listed in pencil on the character sheet as whole numbers, each to one side of the slash (/) mark.

## USING TRAITS

When the opportunity arises to have your character behave one way or another, traits can be used as casual guidelines, or rolls against the appropriate trait may be imposed by the Gamemaster.

Most of the time, you simply state what you want your character to do and he does it, possibly receiving an experience check in the process (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5). Sometimes, though, behavior takes precedent over conscious intent. Most of us have experienced doing something without thinking, and a trait roll duplicates that kind of situation.

Modifiers may be used to underscore the demands and pressures of a situation.

**TABLE 4-1: STANDARD TRAIT ROLL RESULTS**

| Roll Result      | Effect  |
|------------------|---|
| Critical Success | An experience check is normally gained, and the character acts strongly in accordance with the trait.   |
| Success          | The character acts in accordance with the trait. The player may decide precisely what action ensues within that limitation. An experience check should be gained only if the action is somehow significant to the story or the character.   |
| Failure          | Roll again, this time against the opposed trait. Success on this second roll means the character acts in accordance with that second trait. Failure indicates the player may choose freely how the character will act. No checks are given. |
| Fumble           | The opposite trait is checked, and the character immediately acts in accordance with the checked trait.   |

## INTERPRETING TRAIT ROLLS

Each result of a trait roll has special implications, and high or low trait values may influence interpretation. Use of traits is not the same as striking with a weapon or using a skill. The traits quantify a character's likelihood to act in one of two generally opposed ways. Therefore it is not enough to know merely that a character does not feel particularly merciful — the player must know whether the character actually acts cruelly. The binary traits of *Pendragon* define the chances of either.

**Critical Success:** A critical success in a trait roll indicates that the character must act in the manner described by the trait. The action need not be outrageous or extreme, but ought to be apparent enough to be noticed enough by others, and to make the character feel that he has revealed strong emotions or perhaps even compromised his beliefs or his integrity in some way.

For example, Sir Bors de Blanc, a religious knight renowned for his purity — he has a Chaste trait of 19 — encounters a beautiful young maiden in a forest clearing while traveling alone. The Gamemaster asks Sir Bors' player to make a roll against his Lustful trait of 1, given the unusual situation; as luck would have it, the player rolls a 1 and gets a critical success. Certainly Sir Bors does not rape the girl, though — the player declares that, in keeping with his character's almost angelic virtue of chastity, he gently touches the maiden's fair cheek, causing her to blush. This alone is enough for the knight to feel embarrassed and ashamed for perverting his ideals.

At the Gamemaster's option, minor inspiration may be gained from a critical success with a trait, gaining the character a +5 modifier to one skill selected by the player, lasting for the duration of the situation that provoked the roll. Such inspiration should be gained only in rare instances, for it is usually the domain of passions, not traits. Still, when a truly dramatic trait roll occurs, inspiration can make the process far more exciting. The possibility of inspiration also makes trait rolls more entertaining in general.

Thus, to continue the example above, Sir Bors might be allowed a +5 modifier to any Courtesy rolls made for the rest of the encounter in the forest glade, since the girl and anyone else witnessing his moment of shame would see it as evidence of his great virtue and thus be inclined to receive his courtesies well.

**Success:** Success in a trait roll indicates that the knight felt, and was moved by, the feelings expressed by that trait. Thus, if he made a Merciful roll, he feels that he should grant mercy in this instance. However, the player may choose to have the character act in the opposite manner: The penalty for disobeying the roll result is a check in the opposite trait.

**Failure:** Failure at a single die roll is not enough to force a character to act entirely opposite to his usual patterns of behavior; the player must also roll against the opposite trait to see if chance and statistics force his character to break pattern. Thus, only a successful roll within the range of a trait forces the player's hand.





For example, Sir Ambrut has accompanied a distressed damsel to her inheritance, which has been seized by a wicked uncle. The uncle refuses to return the land and gladly agrees to duel his niece's champion for it. The fight is fierce, but at long last Ambrut's enemy collapses and begs mercy. The ruthless damsel, however, urges Ambrut to kill her hated uncle.

The Gamemaster asks Ambrut's character to make a roll against his Merciful trait, and he fails the roll. Now his player must attempt a Cruel roll, and that result is also a failure. The choice, then, is up to Ambrut's player. Given the fact that Ambrut hopes to marry this harsh but beautiful woman, the player chooses death for the unhappy uncle. The damsel gets her revenge, the dastardly uncle meets his demise, and a marriage is planned, but no experience checks are given to either of Ambrut's traits since both rolls failed (even though a very significant event took place).

### PREPARING FOR TRAIT ROLLS

Players will often sense impending trait rolls and should take action as needed to keep the game moving along without arguments. They can have their characters avoid conflicts or gain modifiers against forthcoming ones, but only if they pave the way before the Gamemaster initiates the challenge process.

For example, while lost in the woods some months after his marriage, Sir Ambrut finds a brightly lit tower amid the trees. He asks for refuge and is granted it by the beautiful female host. The player is suspicious, and states that over dinner Ambrut tries to recognize his hostess. His Recognize roll is successful, and Ambrut abruptly realizes he is supping with Morgan le Fay, wicked sister of King Arthur.

Fearful for Ambrut's life and virility, the player announces that he wishes to avoid all carnal relations with the woman, and requests a modifier to his Chaste trait. The Gamemaster grumbles, but Ambrut was forewarned by his own devices, and thus deserves a modifier. The Gamemaster rules that Ambrut's Chaste trait is modified by his new Love (wife) passion, effectively raising Chaste to above 20 and making it possible for him to overcome Morgan's impending advances.

Had Ambrut not recognized his hostess, he might not have tried to avoid the affair at all.

### CASUAL USE OF TRAITS

A player often does not know, though he may have some idea, what his character would do under specific non-crucial circumstances. This might be because the player has never thought or does not care about such trivial things, or because the character has mid-range personality traits.

In such circumstances, the player may choose to use the most appropriate trait(s) as a guideline, or he might decide to roll against them to let the dice dictate his decision. A modifier may be applied to such die rolls if the situation warrants one.

Characters never receive experience checks for actions imposed on themselves this way. Sometimes the Gamemaster might reward characters with a check for doing something, but it is still always the Gamemaster's decision to give out checks.

For example, Sir Ambrut is among seventeen knights riding to hunt the fabulous White Hart. A mysterious huntress comes from the woods and speaks privately with each man while they camp. When it is Ambrut's turn, she quietly asks him, "Are you seeking the White Hart?" — a simple question, but coming from such a mysterious character it seems fraught with danger.

Neither player nor Gamemaster can say for sure whether Ambrut's reply would be truthful or not. The player simply rolls a d20 against his Honest trait and gets an 18, which is over the value (a failure). Therefore Ambrut replies, "No, not exactly..."

### CONFLICTING TRAITS

In some cases, a character may be torn between two warring traits (that is, not an opposed trait pair like Pious/Worldly, but entirely different virtues, such as Pious and Trusting).

By making an opposed roll between two unrelated traits, you may play your character's emotions off against each other, emulating the deep introspection of someone tortured by internal doubts. You or your Gamemaster may also set opposed tests of conflicting emotions, requiring you to make several separate unopposed trait rolls, with varying results depending on which of them was successful and which failed.

Whichever traits are successful (if unopposed) or win (if opposed) receive experience checks if approved by the Gamemaster.

*Example of Conflicting Emotions:* Sir Ambrut, again wandering through the forest, is attacked by a ferocious knight with a black shield. By dint of much effort, Ambrut defeats his foe, who now lies helpless on the ground before him crying for mercy. Just as Ambrut is about to spare him, a maiden rushes from the woods and cries, "Good Sir Knight, I call on you to slay this villain. He has murdered his wife, my sister, and all of my other sisters as well. As you revere God, do not spare him!"

Ambrut is torn between conflicting emotions. Justice demands that he kill this villainous knight, but Mercy calls on him to spare his defeated foe. Neither trait has an unusual value in Ambrut's case (both are 10s). Thus, Ambrut gets an opposed resolution roll matching his Justice versus his Merciful. His Justice roll is a 4 and his Merciful a 7, so his mercy wins and Ambrut spares the caitiff. He didn't have the stomach to cold-bloodedly slaughter a helpless man.

Ambrut receives a check on Merciful.

### TRAIT DISPUTES

Personality disputes between individuals, particularly between player knights and non-player characters, may be determined by opposed resolution rolls of traits. The challenger matches his personality against his rival's.

Because personality traits have opposites, results are more complex when someone fails during opposed trait resolution than is the case with other opposed skill rolls. Whenever a character receives a failed trait roll during a personality dispute, his player must then attempt to roll the opposite trait. If that roll succeeds, then the character acts accordingly, even though this means that behavior is not as intended.

The challenged party in a trait dispute has free reign to do as he pleases when he fails both trait rolls, having managed to control their inclinations.

*Example of Trait Dispute:* Sir Douglas the Red states, in a fit of pique, that Sir Ambrut is too slothful to amount to much. Ambrut challenges Douglas to an endurance contest of wearing arms and armor day and night until one of them falls asleep. Players of both characters attempt Energetic rolls, and both succeed. However, Ambrut's roll of 9 is higher than Douglas' roll of 2. When Douglas falls asleep after two days and two nights, Ambrut is declared winner. Thus, Ambrut wins and gets the experience check (and promptly takes a nap).

*Example of Personality Dispute:* Sir Yvane (Modest 8/12 Proud) and some of his men are visiting some newly conquered lands. They are eating dinner with a petty Saxon lord, Sir Aethelfrith, who somehow survived the Battle of Badon.

With a loud voice, Sir Aethelfrith engages the visitors with boasts of his courageous martial exploits. After a pause for breath, the Saxon asks Sir Yvane what he has done to compare with such bravery. Sir Yvane hates such boastful boors (we often dislike those qualities in others that we fight against in ourselves), so he tries to be Modest in response to his host's Pride.

A personality dispute occurs, and an opposed resolution is performed. Because the Saxon is so overbearing, the player requests and receives a +5 modifier to Modest, boosting his usual Modest value to 13. Sir Aethelfrith gets a successful roll of 6 for his Proud trait, while Yvane gets a result of 18, a failure. The Saxon chuckles over Yvane's hesitation.

Sir Yvane, red-faced and provoked, now tries to outbluster his opponent. (Having failed against his initial trait, he must now check against its opposite.) Yvane's player rolls against his Proud trait, this time with no modifier. The player rolls a 9, a successful result greater than the Saxon's initial roll of 6. Yvane speaks harshly of his recent victory in battle over a Saxon army, and wins the personality dispute.

Yvane now gets an experience check in Proud for such behavior — although he wanted to remain modest, his natural personality won out over both his initial desire and the influence of the situation.

Per the usual rules for opposed resolution, if Yvane had initially gotten a successful Modest roll that was less than the Saxon's Proud roll (i.e., a "partial success"), he would not have had a chance to make a Proud roll. His humility simply would not have been enough to put down the boastful Saxon, and a hush might have fallen over Yvane's side of the dinner table.

## QUALIFYING FOR A MORAL TEST

Arthurian adventure is full of magical and moral tests. A magical shield may be fated to be wielded only by a chaste knight, or an enchanted sword may be withdrawn only by a courageous knight, and so on.

Some of these tests use absolute trait values. For example, only those characters with an Honest trait of 15 or

more may pass uninvited through the doorway into the Palace of the Lake, where lives the fay Nimue.

In other cases, a character must pass a less rigorous test and make an unopposed roll against a particular trait. Success gains the reward, while failure indicates that the consequences of failing the test ensue. Thus, anyone who answers a "justice riddle" correctly (i.e., succeeds in a Just roll) can enter into the great feast hall of King Bagdemagus on St. John's Day, while failure to answer the riddle means a cold meal outside.

## TRAITS AND EXPERIENCE CHECKS

One of the key tasks of the Gamemaster is to decide when an action performed by a player deserves an experience check (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5). The action need not have been preplanned as a test or challenge, nor need it be the result of a trait or passion roll.

For instance, if a player decides that his knight will slay a peasant who has insulted him, the Gamemaster is more than justified in giving that knight an experience check for both his Proud and Cruel traits, even though no resolution rolls took place.

## MAGICAL VIRTUES

Idealism and faith can help make a man a hero. By ascribing to and behaving in accordance with certain values — that is, by maintaining a minimum value in a number of prescribed traits — a character gains certain rewards and benefits beyond those of lesser knights. Some of these gifts are of a magical nature.

## RELIGIOUS VIRTUE

Virtue is the sum of the traits that a culture finds admirable, necessary, and important. Virtues are not fixed, but vary according to the beliefs of the people. In general, whatever behavior (i.e., trait) is the opposite of a virtue is perceived as a vice.

The relative virtues and vices of the faiths common to player characters in *Pendragon* (remember, all starting characters are either Christian or pagan) are as follows.

*Roman Christianity:* Chaste, Forgiving, Merciful, Modest, Temperate.

*British Christianity:* Chaste, Energetic, Generous, Modest, Temperate.

*Paganism:* Generous, Energetic, Honest, Lustful, Proud.

## RELIGIOUS KNIGHTS

Knights who follow a strict religious way of life get an advantage in game. Most people in Logres believe that Christianity is the One True Faith, but Religious knights of the Christian faith go one step further and work hard to promote their religion through their exemplary lifestyle.

Bonuses are awarded to characters who maintain a minimum value of 16 in all of the traits pertinent to their religion, as listed above. Such knights are referred to (un-surprisingly!) as Religious knights, and are usually treated as embodiments of the virtues of their faith. Christian





knights must strive to exercise their virtues during their daily lives; they attend Mass as much as possible, and must attend Easter mass.

Religious Knights receive benefits as follows.

| Religion          | Benefits                       |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Roman Christian   | Total Hit Points +6            |
| British Christian | Total Hit Points +3, Damage +2 |
| Pagan bonus       | Healing Rate +2                |

In addition, all Religious Knights gain 100 Glory annually, during the Winter Phase.

If a Religious knight ever fails to maintain his required trait values, even by a single point, he immediately loses these benefits.

## DIRECTED TRAITS

A character may have strong feelings about someone or something in particular that modify one or more of their traits. In game, these tendencies are referred to as *directed traits*. Directed traits thus represent strong feelings or beliefs, but not strong enough to drive your character mad, as a passion might (see “Passions”).

In situations where the directed trait might reasonably alter your character’s actions or perceptions, he applies its numeric value as a modifier on appropriate trait rolls.

Some directed traits that might come up in play are as follows:

- Weakness for blondes (adds to Lustful rolls where blondes are involved)
- Mistrust Sir So-and-so (adds to Suspicious rolls where Sir So-and-so is involved)
- Mistrust London residents (adds to Suspicious rolls where London residents are involved)
- Forgiving of crying women (adds to Forgiving rolls where crying women are involved)
- Unjust towards Malahauts (adds to Arbitrary rolls where Malahauts are involved)
- Loves mead (adds to Indulgent rolls where mead is involved)
- Fears boars (adds to Cowardly rolls where boars are involved)

Any number of other directed traits are possible; as you can see, some can be quite specific and some seemingly inane — but remember that truth is always stranger than fiction.

Specific directed traits are entered in the blanks beneath the “Personality Traits” heading of your character sheet. Write in the specific trait which is modified, its object, and the value of the modifier.

*Example of a Directed Trait:* His father having once been betrayed by a Roman, Sir Yvane has inherited a directed trait of Mistrust (Romans) +3. While on an investigative mission for his lord, he and his companions are invited on a hunt by a Roman lord. The Gamemaster asks everyone to make a Suspicious roll. Yvane, however, must add his Mistrust (Romans) value of +3 as a modifier to his normal Suspicious roll.

## ACQUIRING A DIRECTED TRAIT

Directed traits can be inherited from one’s parents (see “Your Family” in Chapter 3), taken voluntarily by a player, or assigned by the Gamemaster.

Voluntary directed traits usually have a value of +2d6, or whatever value both player and Gamemaster agree upon. Gamemasters can assign a directed trait to a character who consistently displays specific prides or prejudices: The value of a Gamemaster-imposed directed trait is usually not more than +5.

## TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

This section provides details and explanations for the thirteen sets of paired traits, in many cases including examples of famous literary characters who exemplify one trait or the other.

### CHASTE/LUSTFUL

To be chaste is to be monogamous, or otherwise faithful to one’s sexual mores. It does not always require virginity, so a man being faithful to his wife is exhibiting the Chaste trait. A chaste person is modest and decorous in terms of sexual or flirtatious behavior. (Note that a relatively chaste character can still make Flirting checks, but probably does so in a rather demure or “innocent” manner.) A fanatically or famously chaste person is celibate and most likely virginal.

Lustful describes sexual desire, and also implies sexual activity, often without personal commitment between the persons involved. The pagan virtue of Lustful recognizes the value of this sensual art to appreciate the immanence of the Goddess. Excessive promiscuity may be called lechery, wantonness, or bawdiness.

**Famous Characters:** Sir Bors de Ganis is respected for his chastity.

### ENERGETIC/LAZY

A vigorous person is Energetic. This trait includes the natural inclination to get up early, work hard, and apply oneself fully to the tasks at hand. Energetic persons might be called vigorous, robust, or industrious.

Laziness includes all slothful activity, such as loafing and general sedentary behavior. At the furthest end of the spectrum lies complete indolence.

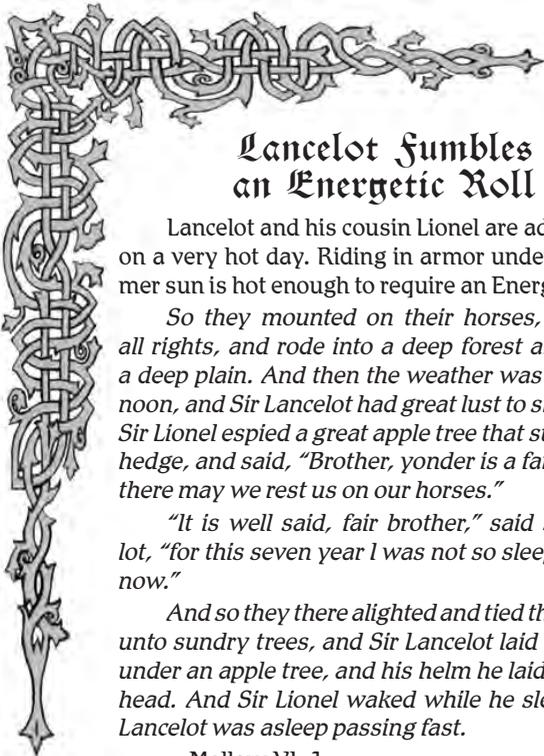
**Famous Characters:** Sir Lamorak de Gales is often admired for his energetic nature.

### FORGIVING/VENGEFUL

To be forgiving means is to be willing to take insult without injury. A forgiving character is unlikely to seek revenge for injuries intended or done to him. Extremely forgiving people are called “meek” (in the Biblical sense).

Vengeful indicates a character’s propensity to seek revenge — perhaps only in petty ways, but possibly sweeping and grandiose — for wrongs done or imagined. This trait also includes spitefulness.

**Famous Characters:** Sir Gawaine is often noted for his vengeful streak.



## Lancelot Fumbles an Energetic Roll

Lancelot and his cousin Lionel are adventuring on a very hot day. Riding in armor under the summer sun is hot enough to require an Energetic roll.

*So they mounted on their horses, armed at all rights, and rode into a deep forest and so into a deep plain. And then the weather was hot about noon, and Sir Lancelot had great lust to sleep. Then Sir Lionel espied a great apple tree that stood by an hedge, and said, "Brother, yonder is a fair shadow, there may we rest us on our horses."*

*"It is well said, fair brother," said Sir Lancelot, "for this seven year I was not so sleepy as I am now."*

*And so they there alighted and tied their horses unto sundry trees, and Sir Lancelot laid him down under an apple tree, and his helm he laid under his head. And Sir Lionel waked while he slept. So Sir Lancelot was asleep passing fast.*

—Mallory VI, 1

Lionel receives a check for Energetic; Lancelot receives one for Lazy.



## GENEROUS/SELFISH

Generous determines the impulse, learning, or desire to share with others. It includes the largesse of the Saxon and Cymric chieftains, and also the famed Christian virtue of Charity. Extremely generous persons are called unselfish, magnanimous, and big-hearted.

Selfish is the desire to possess, keep, and further accumulate things for oneself. Greed is usually a component of selfishness. This possessiveness usually regards material property and wealth, with the character being known as a miser or hoarder, but it might apply to Glory, so that the character always wishes to keep the most glorious tasks and duties for himself. Very selfish persons are labeled both stingy and self-serving.

*Note:* In some cases, jealousy is included under the Selfish trait. Thus when someone acts jealous, he may get a check for Selfish.

**Famous Characters:** King Arthur and Queen Guenever are revered for their generosity.

## HONEST/DECEITFUL

To be honest is to deal truthfully with others, both in matters of import or triviality, no matter what the consequences. Persons of extreme honesty are said to have integrity and to be trustworthy, scrupulous, and reliable.

A deceitful person is generally likely to distort truths, or to fabricate untruths, for his own ends (or perhaps on behalf of others) — or in some cases, simply for the sake



of doing so. Chronically deceitful people are called liars, frauds, and false-hearted.

## MODEST/PROUD

To be modest is to be quiet and reserved about one's gifts and accomplishments, not seeking excessive attention in the recitation of one's own deeds. A modest character is glad simply to perform deeds, rather than bask in the repeated glory of hearing about them. Very modest people are called humble and reserved, or perhaps even shy.

The Proud trait indicates the degree to which one gets pleasure from hearing and/or boasting of his deeds. Both Germanic and Pagan ways value Pride in a character. Excessive pride implies arrogance, and likely a boastful nature.

**Famous Characters:** Sir Turquine, the feared Saxon knight, is notorious for his great pride.

## JUST/ARBITRARY

A just character is capable of telling what is right and wrong (within the mores of his upbringing and his personal beliefs), and is desirous of passing due judgment based on that information. A very just person is called fair and impartial.

Arbitrary means that the character has no concern for what is right or wrong, and uses other information and bases for his decision making. Very arbitrary people are labeled unjust, unfair, wrongful, and probably biased and partial.

**Famous Characters:** King Arthur is perhaps most famous for his extraordinary sense of justice.

*...such custom was used in those days, that neither for favor, neither for love nor affinity, there should be none other but righteous judgment, as well upon a king as upon a knight, and as well upon a queen as upon another poor lady.*

—Mallory, XVIII

## MERCIFUL/CRUEL

Mercy indicates a tendency to extend sympathy, pity, and aid to others. This includes sparing an enemy, giving money to the poor, helping the weak, and any other act that is not expected of one's rank and station. A very merciful person is called compassionate.

Cruel indicates a disregard for the feelings and needs of others, or lack of sympathy. High values in Cruel indicate that the character actually enjoys the discomforts and troubles of others.

## PIOUS/WORLDLY

A pious character often dwells on spiritual matters, and is aware of them and their implications in the material world. (This is not the same as worship, which is an action rather than a belief.) A pious person is a spiritual person. An extremely pious person is devout or zealous, perhaps even saintly.

Worldly indicates a disregard or disbelief in the spiritual side of life. Extreme values might indicate blasphemy and sacrilege. Alternatively, it might just indicate profligacy, taking great pleasure in temporal things such as fine clothes, comfortable furnishings, good music and poetry, and the best company.

Do not confuse Worldly with Indulgent; the two often go hand-in-hand, but they are not the same.

**Famous Characters:** Sir Galahad is the most pious knight in King Arthur's realm.

## PRUDENT/RECKLESS

The prudent character gives thought to what he does before he acts. Such a character is called cautious, and excessively prudent people are called shrewd, circumspect, or discerning — or “slow to act.”

The reckless character acts before he thinks things through, without concern for anything but the immediate consequences. Almost any time someone gets a check for acting according to a passion, they will have acted rashly. An extremely reckless character is called careless, or a hot-head.

**Famous Characters:** Sagramore le Desirious is decidedly rash, while Sir Dinadan is noted for being prudent.

## TEMPERATE/INDULGENT

Temperance means that a character takes only what he needs of food, drink, and other temporal needs. He is frugal and abstains from excess. Extreme temperance indicates asceticism, perhaps even self-mortification.

An indulgent character is a gourmand: He takes pleasure in food and drink, both in quality and quantity. Extremes of this indicate gluttony and drunkenness.

## TRUSTING/SUSPICIOUS

One who is trusting tends to believe information without any inclination to suspect its falsity. An excessively trusting person is gullible and credulous, perhaps even a dupe.

Suspicious indicates that a person is unlikely to believe what he hears unless proof is offered. An extremely suspicious person is called a skeptic or a doubter. A naturally suspicious person might still be extremely pious, however.

*Note:* In some cases, jealousy is included under the Suspicious trait. Thus when someone acts jealous, he may get a check for Suspicious.

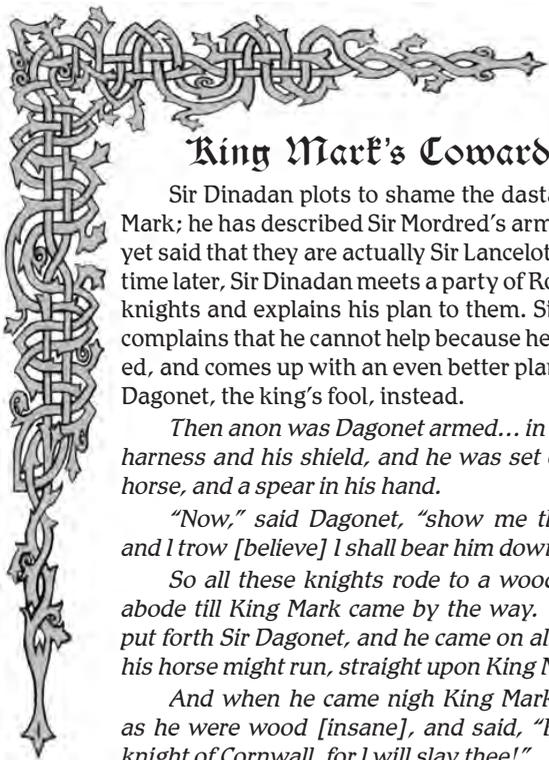
**Famous Characters:** Sir Mordred is noted for his suspicious and skeptical behavior.

## VALOROUS/COWARDLY

To be valorous means to be brave and courageous, willing to place oneself in danger for the sake of victory, friends, or the simple love of battle. Normal knights are valorous, and thus might be referred to as doughty, stalwart, or valiant. Extremely heroic individuals are often called fearless or intrepid. Valor may be exhibited not only in combat, but whenever risks to one's health or wellbeing are involved.

Cowardly means to be fearful of pain and of harm to one's self. Someone who is extremely faint-hearted is labeled as a poltroon, dastard, craven, caitiff, or recreant.

**Famous Characters:** Sir Lancelot and Sir Lamorak are well known as the most valorous knights in Britain.



## King Mark's Cowardice

Sir Dinadan plots to shame the dastardly King Mark; he has described Sir Mordred's arms to Mark, yet said that they are actually Sir Lancelot's. A short time later, Sir Dinadan meets a party of Round Table knights and explains his plan to them. Sir Mordred complains that he cannot help because he is wounded, and comes up with an even better plan using Sir Dagonet, the king's fool, instead.

*Then anon was Dagonet armed... in Mordred's harness and his shield, and he was set on a great horse, and a spear in his hand.*

*"Now," said Dagonet, "show me the knight, and I trow [believe] I shall bear him down."*

*So all these knights rode to a woodside, and abode till King Mark came by the way. Then they put forth Sir Dagonet, and he came on all the while his horse might run, straight upon King Mark.*

*And when he came nigh King Mark, he cried as he were wood [insane], and said, "Keep thee, knight of Cornwall, for I will slay thee!"*

*Anon, as King Mark beheld his shield, he said to himself, "Yonder is Sir Lancelot; alas, now I am destroyed"[:] and therewithal he made his horse to run as fast as it might through thick and thin. And ever Sir Dagonet followed after King Mark, crying and rating him as a wood man [madman], through a great forest.*

—Mallory X, 12



## PASSIONS

The Arthurian tales are full of intense emotion, much of it uncontrolled. Beautiful women drive men to incredible and outrageous acts to prove their love. Family feuds turn otherwise sane men into wild avengers. An idealistic young king determines to bring everyone his extraordinary justice against all odds.

Passions are strong personal emotions, including religion, love, hate, amor, loyalty, envy, and anything else that the Gamemaster admits into the game. These passions provide a method of measuring a character's inner self. They help the character follow the morals of his age, and let him benefit from being a notable example of proper (or improper) behavior.

Passionate characters may perform with superhuman effort and a greater likelihood of success. However, passionate characters are volatile and moody — their feelings may change instantly due to success or failure on a passion roll. Based on the success or failure of a passion roll, they are likely to be found in any one of several states of mind which are not found among dispassionate folk: *inspiration*, *introspection*, *melancholy*, *shock*, and even *madness* (all have effects in game terms, as described below).

## USING PASSIONS

Invoking a passion is a good way for the Gamemaster to add excitement to a scenario. However, passion rolls are

a risky business for players. The results vary, but are likely to be dramatic.

The Gamemaster may call for a passion roll, possibly with a modifier for the particular situation. This roll is handled as any other unopposed resolution (see Chapter 5), but uses the results found on Table 4–2: Standard Passion Results.

At other times the player may request a roll, with the Gamemaster's approval. Remember that the Gamemaster has final word on the appropriateness of attempting to use a passion for inspiration. Players are warned that passion rolls can be extremely risky as well as rewarding, for they may subject a knight to several unusual states of mind, including introspection, melancholy, and madness.

### TABLE 4–2: STANDARD PASSION ROLL RESULTS

| Roll Result      | Effect*   |
|------------------|---|
| Critical success | Character is <i>inspired</i> (see below) and acts strongly in accordance with the passion. Gain 1 point in the passion, plus an experience check (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5). |
| Success          | Character is <i>inspired</i> (see below) and acts in accordance with the passion. Gain an experience check in the passion.  |
| Failure          | Character is <i>disheartened</i> (see below) and immediately loses 1 point in the relevant passion unless the Gamemaster rules otherwise.   |
| Fumble           | Character is <i>maddened</i> (see below) and immediately loses 1 point in the passion.  |

### INSPIRED

To be *inspired* is to have achieved the highest state of passion. Inspiration can turn an ordinary character into an extraordinary one; it is the source for the greatness that many Round Table knights often exhibit.

An inspired character gains tremendous ability for a time. The player may choose any one skill or combat skill: His character's value in that skill is modified as shown on the chart below, based upon whether he was inspired by a success or a critical success in his passion roll.

| Inspired By...   | Benefit*  |
|------------------|---|
| Success          | Gain +10 modifier   |
| Critical success | Doubled or gains +20 modifier (whichever results in a higher value) |

\* Remember to use the rules for skill values above 20.

This inspiration lasts for the length of the task at hand, but never for more than one full day.

**Shock:** If a knight should somehow fail to perform a deed for which he was *inspired*, he suffers *shock*. In game terms, the character must immediately make a roll on Table 5–2: Aging.

*Note:* The Gamemaster may impose shock on characters (with or without their first being inspired) in other appropriate situations as well. Likely circumstances for imposing such a state might be after the knight has just abandoned a lord or a lover to grave danger or a dire fate.

### DISHEARTENED

A *disheartened* knight suffers a –5 modifier on all further rolls made during the situation that brought on his state. Once the situation passes, he then becomes *melancholic*.





**Melancholic:** Melancholy is a mental disorder that, when it manifests, causes the victim to be overwhelmed by grief. He or she may fall to the ground weeping aloud, lamenting losses and ill luck, and crying out from deep emotional pain. Alternately, a melancholic character might fall into a deep and morose depression.

If a melancholic knight is disturbed by another man, he falls into an maniacal rage, hoping to overcome his misery through violence; he always attacks the disturbing individual unless it is a woman. The only way a man can hope to calm a melancholic knight is by using “reverse psychology”: The would-be healer must first succeed at an opposed roll using a trait of his choice. If he fails the roll, he fails to penetrate the victim’s melancholy using that trait. He may try again using a different trait.

Once the healer succeeds at a trait roll, he provokes an opposed roll from the victim on the *opposite* trait. (He is assumed to have addressed the melancholic victim in such a way that he provokes a response.) If the melancholic character’s roll wins the resolution, he attacks, but if he loses he calms down and, a short time later, goes to sleep. On a tie, the characters do what their players wish them to do.

In game terms, a bout of melancholia usually lasts for one full day.

*Example of Curing Melancholia:* Sir Ambrut happens upon his liege lord, Sir Yvane, who disappeared after the recent revels when he was publicly scorned by his lady love. Now, Yvane sits upon a wall looking filthy and tired. His elbows are on his knees, his head hung low; he sighs deeply and, every so often, sobs. Leaves are piled up against his foot and thigh, and several stick to his shoulder and even his face.

Sir Ambrut recognizes the signs of melancholy and does not barge in, for he knows that to do so typically causes a berserk frenzy in the man so rudely shocked out of his trance.

Ambrut knows that Sir Yvane is famously merciful, and Ambrut himself is not especially cruel. (Ideally, he wants to provoke an opposed roll against Yvane that he knows his liege is likely to win.) Therefore, Ambrut waxes philosophical for a few moments on matters of cruelty and mercy, talking aloud near Yvane, who makes no move. Finally, he makes a cutting comment about how cruel the lady is who would do such a thing to his friend and lord. Ambrut now makes a Cruel roll, and is successful, rolling a 5.

Yvane looks up in anger, provoked to action. “You insult my lady!” he snarls. But his player makes a Merciful roll opposed to Ambrut’s Cruel result of 5, and wins the roll. Yvane’s natural capacity for mercy wins out and he spares Ambrut, apologizes, and mutters something about going to take care of business...

If Ambrut had won the opposed roll, Yvane would have attacked him in a rage (a good time for Ambrut to fight defensively or try to grapple!).

*Note:* The Gamemaster may impose melancholia on characters (with or without their first being disheartened) in other appropriate situations as well.

## MADDENED

A character may be driven mad by his passions. This madness may occur at once, or once the relevant action is over (at the Gamemaster’s discretion). Once madness sets in, the player must immediately give his character sheet to the Gamemaster, who describes what ensues based only on what the other player characters know and can perceive.

Normally, mad characters run away immediately. For the duration of their madness, they attempt to avoid the scene of their disastrous experience at all cost. A madman is out of play until the Gamemaster wishes to reintroduce him into the campaign — which may be years later, or perhaps never. Storytelling considerations should be dominant in determining how long a maddened character is gone.

If recovered, the madman will have undergone unusual, unknown circumstances that can result in changes to some attributes and/or skills, at the Gamemaster’s option. Players should simply accept these changes, which may not always be negative.

The character’s player remains unaware of precisely what has transpired while the character was in the Gamemaster’s hands. However, once returned, a character may seek out knowledge of his actions while maddened, and by that means eventually determine where he went and what happened to him during his period of madness.



## The Madness of Sir Lancelot

Queen Guenever discovers her lover, Sir Lancelot, in bed with another woman, and does not know that he was bewitched to do so. She wakes him:

*And then he knew well that he lay not by the queen; and therewith he leapt out of his bed as he had been a wood [mad] man, in his shirt, and the queen met him in the floor; and thus she said:*

*“False traitor knight that thou art, look thou never abide in my court, and avoid my chamber, and not so hardy, thou false traitor knight that thou art, that ever thou come in my sight!”*

*“Alas,” said Sir Lancelot; and therewith he took such an hearty sorrow at her words that he fell down to the floor in a swoon. And therewithal Queen Guenever departed.*

*And when Sir Lancelot awoke of his swoon, he leapt out at a bay window into a garden, and there with thorns he was all to-cratched [torn] in his visage and his body; and so he ran forth he wist [knew] not whither, and was wild wood [mad] as ever was man; and so he ran two year, and never might man might have grace to know him.*

—Mallory XI, 8

## GAINING A PASSION

Passions may be gained during play. Plenty of opportunities are given in a typical campaign to gain enemies, lovers, and loyalties.

A player and Gamemaster should agree upon passions: When something significant occurs to the character, one or the other may suggest that a passion has likely been generated. They discuss the matter, and then, if a concord is reached, determine the character's starting passion value — an entirely subjective amount agreed upon by both player and Gamemaster.

Suggested guidelines for starting passions are given in “Initial Passions.”

## LOWERING A PASSION

Once gained, a passion can only be lowered or replaced (see the “Amor” passion).

Reducing a passion willingly is normally something performed during the Winter Phase (see Chapter 5). It is assumed that the character spends time loudly declaiming his former passion in public, and acting in every way contrary to the passion; for instance, when Sir Gareth learned that his brothers had murdered Sir Lamorak, he disassociated himself from them by loudly proclaiming his unhappiness and his dissatisfaction with his family. A passion can eventually — one Winter Phase at a time — be eliminated (i.e., reduced to a value of 0) in this way.

As well, a character is almost certain, at some time, to receive a failed passion roll in time of a crisis. This failure may cause an immediate loss of 1 point in the associated passion. Always ask the Gamemaster before you subtract the point, however (some circumstances may not warrant the reduction).

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Passions help to define a character's goals, desires, and intentions. Characters who share similar passions have much in common. Passions such as Loyalty (lord) provide common ground between relative strangers and makes introductions easier.

Of all that passions do, most notable is that they serve to inspire their possessors, as discussed in “Using Passions.” Famous passions also generate Glory; each winter, a character normally receives Glory for any passions with a value of 16.

## FRIVOLOUS ROLLS

In some cases, players may request a passion roll in inappropriate or borderline circumstances, hoping to gain the substantial benefit of being inspired. If a player insists on rolling his passion and is inspired, but then fails to win his goal (defeat an enemy, win a lady's heart, capture the stag, etc.), then the character receives a shock caused by grief and frustration.

This shock mechanic helps to keep players from abusing the power of passions.

## MANDATORY ROLLS

Great passions can place your character at the mercy of the Gamemaster and the scenario. As noted in “Famous Traits and Passions” earlier in this chapter, values of 16 or higher in passions often require mandatory rolls whenever the Gamemaster chooses.

## INITIAL PASSIONS

Four specific passions are common to all starting characters, so they already appear on the character sheet, while blanks are provided for further passions. These passions are obligatory because every Cymric character (the default character background) has them. They are the unwritten laws of your culture.

If the Gamemaster wishes, subsequent characters may roll for passions normally, as given below.

### LOYALTY (LORD)

Loyalty is the prime virtue of the medieval world — without it, the feudal system could not exist. Most knights believe in “King before God,” no matter what the priests tell them. Showing obedience is correct behavior, and disobedience to a lord is shocking to all true knights.

All knights must be knighted by someone, and the “Loyalty (Lord)” space on your character sheet is used for his loyalty to that initial lord. The starting Loyalty (lord) value is 15 for vassal knights (and thus the default for player characters).

If the Gamemaster permits the play of a household knight with an assured household but no land, like Sir Ambrut, then roll 2d6+6 for his Loyalty (lord) passion. If a player runs a homeless knight, his Loyalty to whoever knighted him is only 2d6.

### LOVE (FAMILY)

Love of family is a natural emotion common to humankind in any age. The travel restrictions of the medieval era were severe, which reinforced family closeness. Serfs almost never traveled more than a day's walk from their birthplace. Noblewomen were fortunate to travel across the country once a year. Thus, turning to one's kin for help was the universal answer to any problem.

In character generation, new characters, who are by default eldest sons and thus destined to be the heads of their immediate families, start with a powerful love for their family: A character's starting Love (family) value is equal to 15 for eldest sons. This default value is similar for all daughters of a household.

However, less fortunate younger sons, often sent from the hearth, were more likely to find fault with their kin, and so expressed less loyalty to them. The second son gets a Love (family) value equal to 2d6+5; the third son, 2d6+4; the 4th, 2d6+3; 5th, 2d6+2; 6th, 2d6+1; and 7th and any others 2d6.

Other modifiers to the starting value may apply.

### HOSPITALITY

This passion measures how much your character respects the time-honored institution of hospitality. In cases of great



## Berluse Gains a Hospitality Check

Sir Dinadan, Sir Lamorak, and a disguised King Mark, traveling together, seek lodging at the castle of one Sir Tor. They are admitted, and one of the host's knights, Sir Berluse, makes a successful Recognize roll.

*And then they came into a fair court well repaired, and the had passing good cheer, till the lieutenant of this castle, that hight Sir Berluse, espied King Mark of Cornwall. Then said Berluse,*

*"Sir knight, I know you better than you ween, for ye are King Mark that slew my father afore mine own eyen [eyes]; and me had ye slain had I not escaped into a wood; but wit ye well, for the love of my lord of this castle I will neither hunt you ne harm you, nor none of your fellowship. But wit ye well, when ye are past this lodging I shall hurt you and I may, for ye slew my father traitorly. But first for the love of my lord, Sir Tor, and for the love of Sir Lamorak, the honourable knight that here is lodged, ye shall have none ill lodging; for it is a pity that ever ye should be in the company of good knights; for ye are the villainous knight or king that is now known alive, for ye are a destroyer of good knights, and all that ye do is but treason."*

—Mallory X, 9



passion (16 or higher), a proponent of this practice might feel bound to correct others' inhospitable behavior, and perhaps even to seek out and destroy those who break the rules of hospitality. On the other hand, anyone with a disregard for hospitality (less than 5) is likely to steal without compunction.

Whenever a character's behavior warrants it, the Hospitality statistic should be altered. If a character goes lurking and spying around in someone's castle, especially if he actually robs it of goods, he should lose at least 1 Hospitality point immediately for breaking the rules of hospitality.

Similarly, if a character rises to defend the hospitality of someone else, he should get a check (see "Obtaining Experience" in Chapter 5) — especially if he defends the hospitality of someone for whom he really doesn't much care, or if he holds his own anger or hatred in check for the sake of another's hospitality. (No check is given to someone defending his own home.)

All characters from the Cymric culture start with a Hospitality value of 15.

## HONOR

Honor is the passion that sets knights apart from ordinary people. It is a combination of personal dignity, integrity, and pride. Personal honor is not always a slippery issue. The Dishonorable Acts table, below, lists a number of things upon which everyone can agree as being dishonorable actions for a knight. Performing these deeds clearly and invariably diminishes honor — this is the code of knighthood to which knights have agreed.

TABLE 4–3: DISHONORABLE ACTS

| Act   | Honor Lost |
|---|------------|
| Attacking an unarmed knight                     | –1         |
| Cowardice                                       | –1         |
| Desertion from battle or military service       | –1         |
| Plundering a holy place of your religion        | –1         |
| Killing an unarmed holy person of your religion | –2         |
| Killing, kidnapping, or raping a noblewoman     | –2         |
| Lending money at a profit                       | –2         |
| Performing physical labor                       | –2         |
| Breaking an oath                                | –3         |
| Flagrant cowardice                              | –3         |
| Treachery against a member of your family       | –5         |
| Treason (against your lord)                     | –5         |
| Killing a kinsman                               | –6         |
| Learning to cast magical spells                 | –8         |

However, beyond the acts listed on Table 4–3, disagreement may arise as to what is or is not honorable, often because the honor of an action is *personal* rather than *social*.

The term "personal honor" is used carefully to separate such honor from other sworn or understood social obligations, including issues or behaviors covered by other passions. Thus, it is not possible for a knight to have his personal honor abused if someone insults his family — one's Love (family) passion covers that. Likewise, someone insulting one's lover should involve the Amor passion, not Honor.

But Honor can still cover many other things. In fact, it can include almost anything that a character chooses to include. Someone with an extremely high honor may be offended by anything that anyone says that he does not like. Rationality may have little if any bearing.

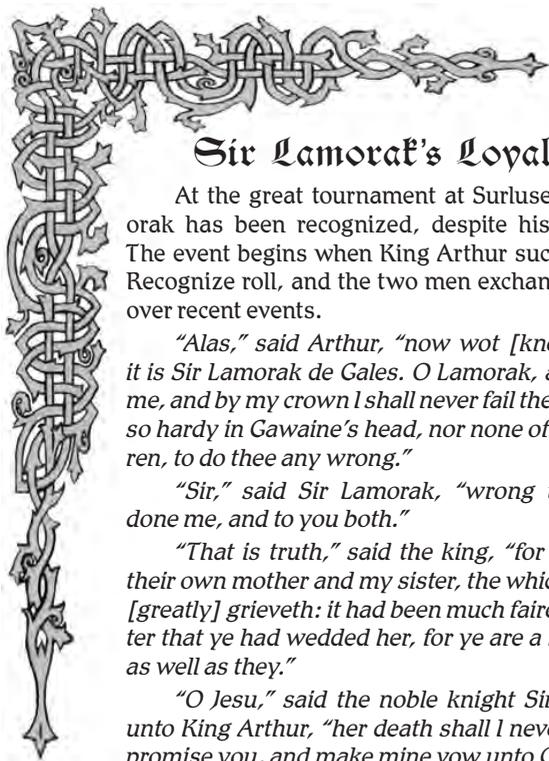
Honor is tied to traits more deeply than other passions usually are. The "integrity" component of Honor, for instance, is closely linked to the trait of Honest, while "pride" is obviously linked with the Proud trait. Thus, a knight might be required to make a Proud trait roll by the Game-master and, upon losing, the player might then invoke the Honor passion (rather than the Modest trait) to help him through the event.

A dishonorable character suffers considerably in Arthurian society. He loses the trust of those about him, and in committing dishonorable acts probably incurs various punishments — monetary fines, banishment, forfeiture, blood feud, etc. These social troubles are further reflected by rules concerning this passion.

Whenever a character's Honor is reduced to 4 or lower, he has proved himself unfit to bear the title of knight and serve a lord. His lord must either outlaw him or degrade him (i.e., strip him of knighthood). To fail to do so places the lord's own status in jeopardy because he would be failing to uphold his own governance. Honor may eventually be regained at this grim point in a character's career.

If a character's Honor ever reaches 0, the player must remove that character from active play. Recovery from such a low state is simply not possible. If the player wishes to see him in the campaign, he must turn the character sheet over to the Gamemaster, who can play him as a Gamemaster character if he wishes.

A character's starting Honor value is 15.



## Sir Lamorak's Loyalty

At the great tournament at Surluse, Sir Lamorak has been recognized, despite his disguise. The event begins when King Arthur succeeds at a Recognize roll, and the two men exchange regrets over recent events.

*"Alas," said Arthur, "now wot [know] I well it is Sir Lamorak de Gales. O Lamorak, abide with me, and by my crown I shall never fail thee; and not so hardy in Gawaine's head, nor none of his brethren, to do thee any wrong."*

*"Sir," said Sir Lamorak, "wrong they have done me, and to you both."*

*"That is truth," said the king, "for they slew their own mother and my sister, the which me sore [greatly] grieveth: it had been much fairer and better that ye had wedded her, for ye are a king's son as well as they."*

*"O Jesu," said the noble knight Sir Lamorak unto King Arthur, "her death shall I never forget. I promise you, and make mine vow unto God, I shall revenge her death as soon as I see time convenient. And if it were not at the reverence of your highness I should not have been revenged upon Sir Gawaine and his brethren."*

*"Truly," said Arthur, "I will make you an accord."*

*"Sir," said Lamorak, "as at this time I may not abide with you, for I must to the jousts where is Sir Lancelot, and the Haut Prince Sir Galahaut."*

—Mallory X, 46

Because Sir Lamorak refuses the king's offer to make peace between himself and Gawaine, the awful feud between the houses of Orkney and de Gales continues.



## HATE (SAXONS)

By default, hatred of the Saxons is an inherited passion of all starting characters. The depredations of these foreigners have reached everyone in Britain. Characters begin with a Hate (Saxons) value of 3d6.

## OTHER COMMON PASSIONS

The most common passions of player characters are described in this section. Expect to encounter these in your game. Other passions are certainly possible.

### FEAR (CREATURE OR EVENT)

Fear is a negative emotion that can possibly be inherited as a family curse, but is normally gained only through a character's personal experience. Fear is an irrational and absolute, mindless state of panic. Only extraordinary adventures can instill such terror in knight characters (lesser characters may be more vulnerable). Such fear usually stems from supernatural places or creatures.

Of course, a Fear passion is often wisdom in disguise, as many supernatural creatures and natural phenomena are immensely powerful and can cause only harm to humans. Some

sample fears might apply to for hags, sailing, sea monsters, crazed holy men, standing stones that move, or Picts in the wild.

*Note:* Fears, unlike other passions, never give benefits; they are an exception to the normal passion rules. No Glory is gained from a success or a critical success on a Fear roll, and no inspiration is possible. A Fear passion serves only to place the character out of the player's control (or at least to drastically limit his actions) during specific situations.

**Special:** The Gamemaster may create an opportunity to overcome a Fear passion. Such a chance should probably come only once in any character's career, and if the character succeeds in overcoming his Fear, he may gain Glory for it — about ten times the value of the character's former Fear value is appropriate.

## HATE (NATION, GROUP, OR PERSON)

Hatred motivates many people in *Pendragon*, especially poltroons who are driven to dastardly deeds. For instance, King Mark assuredly hates Tristram, and Morgan le Fay hates Guenever. Even some of the protagonists develop hatreds, usually because of their Love (family) or other loyalties. The best instance is Gawaine's unrelenting Hate (Lancelot), brought about by Lancelot's slaying of Gareth, Gawaine's beloved brother.

Hatred may be for an individual, a people, a kingdom, a religion, for magicians or monks, a station or class, or whatever the Gamemaster agrees to.

Starting Hate values are up to the Gamemaster, but should have a value of at least 10. The exact Hate value should be based on the event that provoked the passion.

## LOYALTY (LORD)

Loyalty is the basis for all society. A knight's initial lord is the one who knights him and thus for whom he harbors a special passion, as detailed above. As the game progresses, though, a knight may later acquire other lands, though, and therefore other lords as well. The typical Loyalty (lord) value for a new lord (other than the one who knighted you) is 3d6.

The following modifiers are common to these loyalties:

| Circumstance           | Modifier                   |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Manor(s) granted       | +1d3 per manor             |
| Rich estate(s) granted | +1 per £1 of annual income |

## LOYALTY (PENDRAGON)

Likely, only a few characters will ever become direct vassals of the High King. The typical Loyalty (Pendragon) value is 2d6+6.

| Circumstance  | Modifier  |
|---|---|
| Your father was killed fighting against a Pendragon | -1d6  |
| You are socially conservative                       | -1d6  |
| You already have the Hate (Pendragon) passion       | Subtract value of the Hate (Pendragon) passion        |
| Your liege lord has the Hate (Pendragon) passion    | Subtract value of the lord's Hate (Pendragon) passion |

## LOYALTY (VASSALS)

Feudalism calls for mutual loyalty between vassals and lord. Most knights never gain other knights as vassals and thus have no need for this passion. However, any knight



who does gain the vassalage of other knights should also gain this trait, which might be used, for instance, to determine whether the lord will ransom his vassals. Other game uses will inevitably come up.

The typical starting Loyalty (Vassals) value is 2d6+6.

### LOYALTY (GROUP)

Knights may join or even form fellowships. (The name of the fellowship replaces the word “group” in the name of the passion.) The typical Loyalty (group) value for a new group is 3d6.

| Circumstance                                     | Modifier                |
|--|-------------------------|
| Members are all kinsmen or from the same kingdom | +6                      |
| Members are all of same general culture          | +1d6                    |
| Members knew each other previously               | Varies (as appropriate) |

### LOVE (PERSON, GROUP, OR GOD)

Love is an emotional bonding or attraction felt by one individual for another individual, group, or deity. A character may have many loves, but it is best if only one counts for Glory points each year (normally the highest).

**Love (Deity):** This passion is required of all Christian clergy. The cynical nature of many clergymen proves that this passion does not have to be high to join the church,

but it is a requirement nonetheless. Religiously oriented knights may also have this passion.

A critical success in this passion gives the character a modifier or a check to *all* appropriate religious traits, not to any one skill. The character is thereafter incapacitated by an ecstatic vision for a period of time determined by the Gamemaster (at least 1 hour), and cannot act at all during that time.

The typical Love (deity) value is equal to that character’s starting Pious trait value.

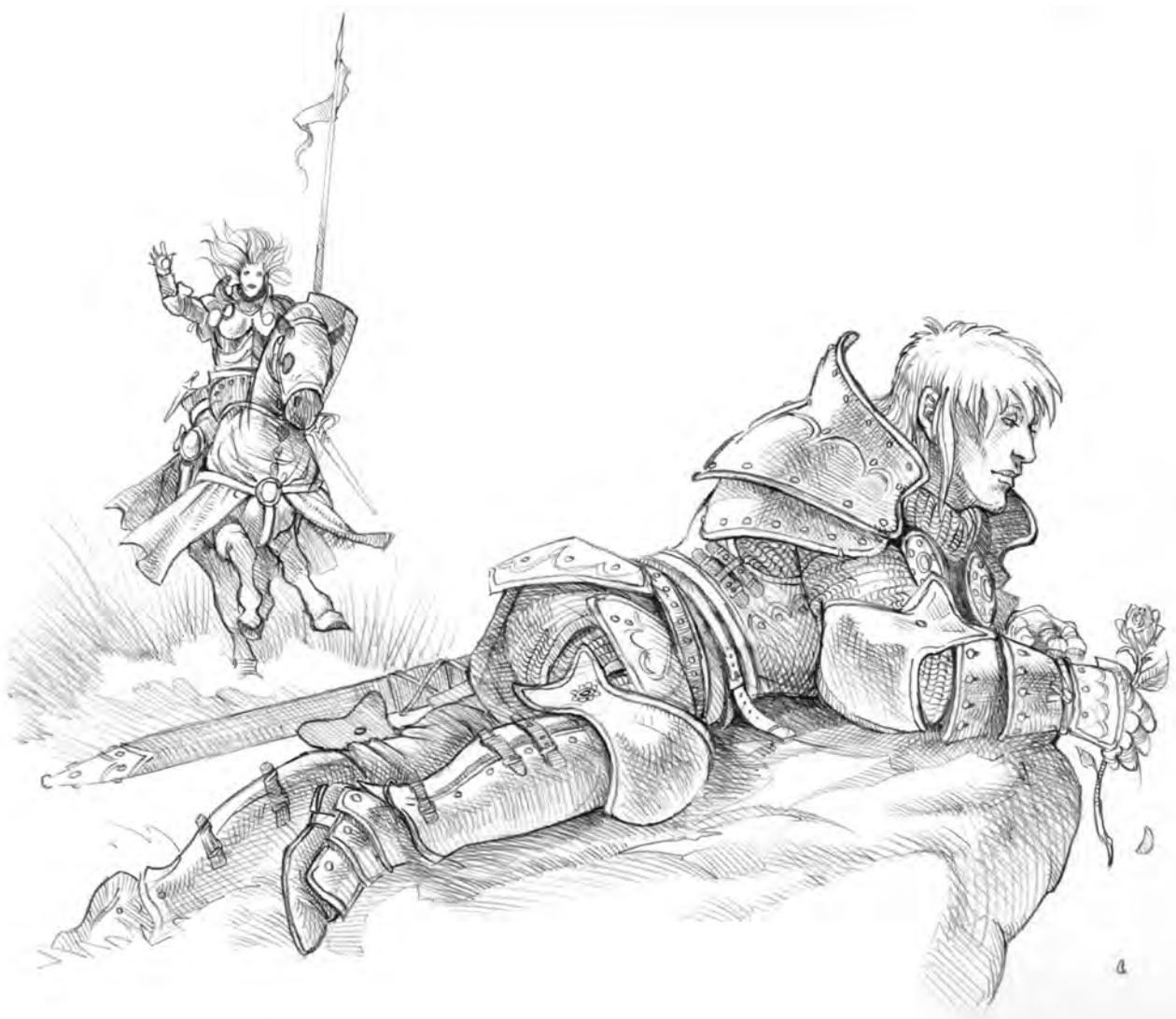
**Love (Spouse):** Deep feeling and attraction for one’s husband or wife was apparently quite uncommon in the feudal world of arranged marriages, but not entirely absent. Two significant exceptions in the romances are the loves of Duke Gorlois for his wife Ygraine and of Arthur for his wife, Guenever.

The typical Loyalty (spouse) value is 3d6.

Optionally, the modifiers listed for the Amor passion (see Appendix 1) may be used for Love (spouse).

## THE DEXTERITY ROLL

Game play presents countless hazards and difficulties that challenge your player knight’s agility, reactions, or movement-related abilities such as climbing, sneaking, and



balancing. All these situations use a DEX roll, usually unopposed, to determine success.

The Gamemaster may find other occasions to use the DEX roll as well.

**Critical Successes and Fumbles:** As with most attribute rolls, success and failure are usually the only possible results of a DEX roll — neither a critical success nor a fumble gives any special result.

However, several special uses of the DEX roll, such as brawling and sneaking, are an exception to this pattern. Furthermore, the Gamemaster may allow critical success or failure in a particular situation: If storytelling is enhanced, by all means let a critical DEX success gain some extra benefit, or a fumble extract a special penalty.

**Modifiers:** Many situations in which the DEX roll is used require negative modifiers. A few usages gain positive modifiers. Each particular use of the DEX roll below lists specific suggestions for modifiers in addition to the general points given here. Modifiers from sources such as Passions apply to DEX rolls, as they do to all rolls. In borderline situations, the Gamemaster decides whether a modifier to DEX is appropriate.

For actions involving agility or movement, such as climbing or dodging, DEX is reduced by encumbrance, as shown on the chart below.

| Encumbrance | DEX Modifier |
|-------------|--------------|
| Light load  | -5           |
| Heavy load  | -10          |

In addition, armor penalizes DEX rolls, as shown in Table 6-1: Armor.

Cumulative modifiers may be applied to DEX rolls. For example, an climber attempting to clamber up a slope in leather armor while carrying a wounded knight on his back might suffer a -15 penalty or even worse to DEX. Realistically, certain feats are virtually (if not *actually*) impossible, and a negative modifier should support this.

## BALANCE

The balance roll is one of the most common types of DEX roll. Whenever an unmounted character receives a Knockdown result in combat (see Chapter 6), he must make a DEX roll to remain upright. Balance might also be tested when a character wishes to cross a narrow bridge, stay afoot on the heaving deck of a ship, or stay upright when the earth shakes from magic.

Encumbrance is *not* used to modify a DEX roll for balance unless the Gamemaster decides that it should, based on the circumstances. However, difficult footing may impose a negative modifier as usual.

If the balance roll is successful, the character remains upright; if not, he falls down. A critical success on a balance roll gains no special advantage unless the situation presents an obvious extra benefit. A fumble does no further harm than a failure, though, either.

Once knocked down, a character needs no roll to get up again, even if in heavy armor. However, in combat he must fight from a disadvantage while clambering back to his feet: He suffers a -5 modifier to his weapon skills, while any opponents gain a +5 modifier. See the "Combat" chap-

ter for more information on the complicated issues of combat modifiers and actions during a melee round.

**Footing:** Most balance rolls should receive a negative modifier when attempted upon rough, narrow, or unstable surfaces, as appropriate. For example, a character attempting to balance as he walks across on a narrow wooden beam over a chasm should receive a penalty. Usually, this negative modifier should be no more than -10.

## CLIMB

A character may attempt to clamber up a surface using a DEX roll. If it is a relatively easy climb, such as up a sand dune, the DEX roll might be made without modification, if required at all. Otherwise, a modifier is applied, as shown below.

| Slope                                       | DEX Modifier* |
|---|---------------|
| Tough climb (e.g. rough vertical wall)      | -5            |
| Difficult climb (e.g. smooth vertical wall) | -10           |

\* Ropes or convenient vines may add to the chance of success. A rope gives a +5 modifier, while a proper ladder gives a +10 modifier. Siege ladders, which may have suffered hasty construction or damage from usage or defenders, grant a modifier of +5 to +10 (1d6+4).

Encumbered characters (such as those wearing armor) while climbing also suffer the usual modifiers to DEX.

Normally, one DEX roll is made per 30 feet of height or fraction thereof. Therefore, a 65-foot tower would require three successful DEX rolls to climb.

**Slipperiness:** Most climb rolls should receive a negative modifier for slippery surfaces, as appropriate. For example, a character attempting to climb a wet, moss-covered wall should receive a penalty. Usually, this negative modifier should be no more than -10.

## JUMP

A character may jump horizontally to cross a wide chasm or hole, or vertically up or down. Both types of jump require a DEX roll. Encumbered characters who are jumping suffer the usual modifiers to DEX. As well, a jump may have a modifier for difficulty assigned to it, based on the distance in yards. (This is intended to make certain jumps impossible, as they should be.)

For simplicity's sake, a jump's distance imposes a -3 modifier per yard of distance beyond the first. For this purpose, treat each fraction of a yard as a full yard. Assume that a horizontal leap also has a vertical component equal to half its length, but this imposes no further penalty.

Thus, for example, a 1-yard-high wall imposes no modifier to DEX for jumping (most relatively fit people can jump that high without much trouble), while a 7-foot-high wall imposes a -6 penalty to DEX (round to 3 yards, with a -3 penalty for each yard beyond the first).

A 9-foot-wide ditch imposes a -6 penalty to DEX for characters trying to jump across, making the jump difficult, yet possible for an agile character. A moat 22 feet across imposes a -21 modifier (round to 8 yards, with a -3 penalty for each yard beyond the first) — it is simply too wide ever to jump, even for naked, screaming Picts.

Keep in mind that realism should always assert itself in these situations: No human can cleanly hurdle a 10-foot





wall, for example, even with a critical success, but a fit person can capably jump up and haul himself to the top.

## SNEAK

Stealth and detection are complicated subjects, and the Gamemaster should be ready to adjust or augment the basic rules given here as needed.

If a character wishes to sneak up on someone, he makes a DEX roll. Any character who might reasonably have a chance to observe the character makes an opposed Awareness roll. (See “Opposed Rolls” in Chapter 5.) If both sneaker and observer fail their rolls, the Gamemaster should decide what happens based on the circumstances.

Unlike most DEX rolls, a critical success on a sneak roll has a distinct effect: It always succeeds unless the opponent also achieves a critical, in which case a tie results, meaning that the sneaker moves forward, but the victim is alerted that something suspicious is going on. Conversely, a fumble while sneaking ensures detection.

Standard rules for encumbrance do not apply while sneaking: Instead, a character suffers only a –5 modifier for metal armor or a heavy load, and no penalty for sneaking in leather armor or with a light load.

Circumstances may provide modifiers to the DEX roll. For example, abundant cover or ambient noise might grant a +5 modifier (or even +10 if the benefit is substantial, such as a loud waterfall nearby or a sudden fire lighting the sky, accompanied by faint shouting from a different direction). Similarly, if the potential observer is engaged in an activity rather than devoting his attention to watching and listening for intruders, he should suffer a –5 or greater penalty on his Awareness roll.

## THROW

To have your character throw a rope to a drowning person or hurl a stunned enemy over the parapet, use a DEX roll. Success indicates that the objective was achieved. The Gamemaster rules on the modifier, if any, that should be applied to the task. Throwing a heavy object at a tiny target far away might suffer a –10 modifier, while a throw from the top of a wall at a huge target below might gain a +10 modifier.

Encumbrance or footing does not normally hinder a throw unless the Gamemaster feels the circumstances warrant a negative modifier.

**Thrown Weapons:** If damage is intended to a target, the Javelin skill might be used if it seems appropriate. However, if a character wishes to heave a boulder from a cliff or hurl a stool at a nearby foe, for instance, he should make a DEX roll as if it were a ranged combat skill; a successful attack roll deals damage as if with a brawling attack. (See both “Ranged Attacks” and “Brawling” in Chapter 6.)

A critical success indicates that double damage is dealt, as with any attack, while a fumble might hit a nearby ally, object, or surface instead of the intended target.

The maximum range for any object that may be hurled as a weapon should be decided by the Gamemaster, but should rarely exceed 20 yards.

# SKILLS

Character advancement in *Pendragon* is measured in part by the increase of your character’s skills. Skills express the social and physical activities popular in the Arthurian mythos. No knight is expected to master all or most of the possible skills.

## IMPROVING SKILLS

Your character sheet lists every skill and combat skill common to the Cymric culture. Non-standard weapon skills like Great Axe are not printed, and all such skills are assumed to start with a value of 0.

The blanks on the character sheet permit you to write in ordinary skills of your own devising, or special skills from later *Pendragon* supplements. The blanks under combat skills permit you to write in the non-standard weapon skills of your choice.

Starting values may be altered during Character Generation, and skills can be increased in many ways as the game progresses. Within the setting of the game, a character may raise a skill value by training with a teacher, by diligent practice on his own, by first-hand experience in the field, by means of a major increase in self-confidence and reputation, or by magic.

All of these improvements, save those introduced by magic, occur during the Winter Phase (see Chapter 5). The Gamemaster handles any magical skill increases that might occur during his scenarios, based on the rules for magic that will appear in future game supplements.

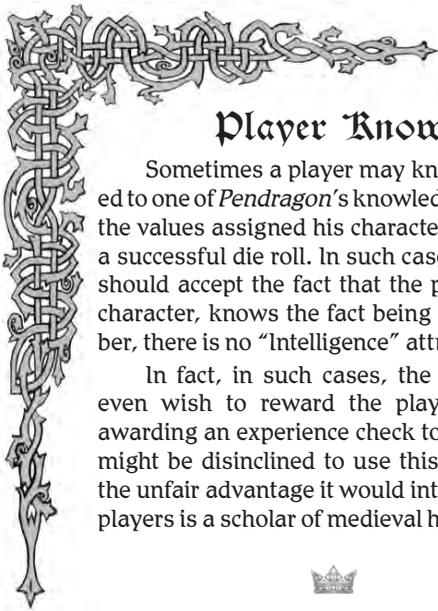
Part of the fun in the game is seeing your character increase in skill. Most players focus on a half-dozen or fewer skills that they increase through the methods listed above, over several decades of game time. Using training and practice, these skills are gradually raised to a value of 20. Thereafter, experience checks (see “Obtaining Experience” in Chapter 5) and Glory can raise each skill into the realm of truly heroic mastery.

## SKILL CATEGORIES

Skills are divided into two broad categories: *ordinary skills* (normally referred to as simply “skills”), which include a wide range of different practical proficiencies and areas of knowledge, and *combat skills*, the crucial military skills that are the traditional area of expertise for knights. The two categories are listed in two separate areas on the knight’s character sheet, and are described in separate sections below.

**Knightly:** Certain skills are noted as being *Knightly* in nature. These are accepted as being compatible with the duties of knighthood. Characters who are not knights may also use these skills; for instance, a common huntsman should have a decent Awareness skill.

**Knowledge:** Some skills are noted as being *Knowledge* skills. These include knowledge normally associated with social classes, such as Courtesy (noble customs), Folklore (peasant customs), and Religion (clerical customs); or with specialized practices, such as Romance or Tourney. These are bodies of information that require special knowledge to execute properly.



## Player Knowledge

Sometimes a player may know something related to one of *Pendragon's* knowledge skills, but, due to the values assigned his character, is unable to make a successful die roll. In such cases, the Gamemaster should accept the fact that the player, and thus the character, knows the fact being requested: Remember, there is no "Intelligence" attribute in this game.

In fact, in such cases, the Gamemaster might even wish to reward the player's knowledge by awarding an experience check to the character. (You might be disinclined to use this option, because of the unfair advantage it would introduce, if one of the players is a scholar of medieval history...)



Each knowledge skill includes the what, when, where, why, and how of these activities or areas of expertise. Success in a knowledge skill does not always indicate that the knight *did* something, but that he knew, intuited, or recognized something important or useful.

**Non-Knightly:** *Non-Knightly* skills are those often used in the game, but not by knights. The best example is Industry (used in artistry and artisanship), which is normal for women, tradesmen, and peasants, but will surely cost a knight his title if he engages in it. Characters destined for knighthood begin with — and generally maintain — a value of 0 in these skills.

## SUCCESS OR FAILURE

Success or failure with skills is resolved using the normal resolution rolls (see Chapter 5). Some skills are used only in opposed resolution, while others are normally used in opposition against other characters, in contests or challenges. Modifiers may be applied to any of these resolutions.

The results of a critical success or fumble with an ordinary skill, when significant, are given in the individual skill descriptions below. Otherwise, the Gamemaster describes the results based on the situation.

The "Combat Skills" section gives the results of criticals and fumbles for combat skills.

## HONOR

The Honor passion reflects your character's code of behavior and his reputation as a knight. Fumbled or failed skill rolls do not affect your character's Honor value: Honor cannot be lost simply because of a bad skill roll.

Certain situations might occur, however, in which a Gamemaster feels justified in subtracting Honor because a skill was used unwisely or unjustly. For example, causing harm or humiliation to another character through failure in a skill might incur the loss of 1 point of Honor (or, in particularly severe cases, more) — especially if another character with a higher value in that skill was available to attempt the task, yet the character who failed insisted on taking responsibility for the task anyway. The Gamemaster is always the final arbiter in such difficult situations.

## SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

### AWARENESS [KNIGHTLY]

Use this skill when a knight is listening for a sound, trying to spot a hidden Pict or discern some other hidden danger, or otherwise draw some sensory information from his surroundings.

This skill measures the character's attentiveness to his immediate surroundings, using both his five physical senses and the mysterious "sixth sense." A critical success might reveal extra information (such as the precise location of the bandits hiding in the trees, as opposed to the simple realization that there *are* bandits there), while a fumbled Awareness roll reveals incorrect information.

A success that reveals an ambush or other such crucial information may be worth Glory, at the Gamemaster's option.

### BOATING [KNIGHTLY]

This skill allows a character to handle watercraft, whether a rowboat, a skiff, a coracle, or a Saxon longship. Success indicates that the boat did what it was supposed to do. In calm waters, Boating is unmodified, but during storms or floods, modifiers may be assigned.

A success with the Boating skill can gain the character Glory if lives were saved thereby.

### CHIRURGERY [NON-KNIGHTLY]

This ancient practice of healing includes much useful knowledge, such as herbal medicine and bone setting. It also includes superstition, prayer, and generous heaps of misinformation. Thus, its use is fraught with uncertainty. Chirurgery (pronounced approximately "KY-rir-jur-ee") does little to heal the patient directly, but is a process that seeks only to keep the patient alive so that the natural healing processes of the body may take effect.

Chirurgery is a most important skill for women, though many priests and monks also know it. However, it is *not* the duty of a knight to learn this skill, and most knights would feel highly uncomfortable performing a skill associated with women.

Badly wounded, ill, or debilitated characters often require application of the Chirurgery skill. If your character needs Chirurgery, for whatever reason, the Gamemaster tells you to check the box on the character sheet entitled "Chirurgery Needed."

Glory should always be gained for successful use of the Chirurgery skill. The amount gained can be increased in proportion to the Glory or rank of the character being treated if the Gamemaster feels this is appropriate. More Glory should be gained if a life was saved thereby.

See "Injury and Health" in Chapter 6 for more information on the complicated processes of chirurgery and healing.

### COMPOSE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill grants the user a chance to create original musical works for voice or for one or more medieval instruments. The quality of the piece composed is relative to the number rolled for the success. The composer's ability





to perform his work is limited by his Play (instrument) and Singing skills, as appropriate.

A critical success indicates that the piece created has great beauty, quality of rhyme and emotion, originality, and perhaps spontaneity. A piece of this quality might bring a listener to tears, or even more.

A fumble indicates an embarrassingly bad piece.

The Gamemaster may award Glory to a successful composer, particularly if the song is dedicated to a lady.

### COURTESY [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Courtesy is a knowledge skill defining a knight's knowledge of courtly manners, from etiquette to matters of precedence and table manners; from modes of speech, including protocol, vocabulary, style, and forms of address, to all types of decorum appropriate to a lord's court, such as around superiors, around women, and around disfavored people.

The default starting Courtesy value of 3 indicates that the character understands simple matters of precedence and knows the basic forms of address at court. Courtesy does not include dance, heraldry, or forms of the tournament. These areas of expertise are so complicated that they are treated as separate skills.

A successful Courtesy roll means that the knight performed correctly in the formal manner appropriate to the relative situation, making a suitable impression upon his audience. Courtesy is inappropriate for use with commoners.

A critical success indicates great elegance and style in the performance. A fumble indicates that a silly or even offensive act occurred, with consequent humiliation. Haughty or cruel lords may become insulted and angry at characters who fumble their Courtesy roll in court, possibly with dramatic consequences.

Glory may be gained by any significant use of Courtesy in court or any formal situation, particularly with a critical success.

**Special:** With the Gamemaster's approval, characters having high Glory may receive a positive modifier to Courtesy, with a maximum modifier equal to Glory/1,000.

### DANCING [KNIGHTLY]

This skill measures the character's ability to move gracefully to music, as well as his knowledge of the many styles of formal dancing done at court. This elegant style of dancing depends primarily on experience and knowledge of forms rather than on agility.

A success indicates accurate adherence to the accepted form of the dance being performed, while a critical success indicates superb grace, verve, and perhaps spontaneity.

A fumble means that the character went the wrong way, probably bumping into other dancers. The Gamemaster may even rule that the fumbler tripped and fell over his own feet. A fumbled Dance roll is invariably a humiliating experience.

Glory can be gained from successful Dance rolls if the dancer(s) are the center of attention.

**Special:** With the Gamemaster's approval, characters having high Glory may receive a positive modifier to Dance, with a maximum modifier equal to Glory/1,000.

### FAERIE LORE [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Faerie Lore quantifies how much a knight knows about the mysterious ways of Faerie and the invisible world of the Other Side. It may be used to identify a particular type of faerie that was sighted, to recognize a faerie encounter as such, or to aid communication with the inhabitants of the Faerie Realm.

Every character in *Pendragon* is superstitious to some extent and this is expressed by the starting skill value of 2. This minimum means that all characters know common legends. For example, person in King Arthur's Britain knows that a lone faerie probably intends harm, while a band of faeries may not. Everyone knows that whenever something uncanny occurs it is due to some elf or faerie, and anything strange that is not immediately recognizable as the influence of faeries is quite possibly made by them as well.

Although characters must be roleplayed as superstitious, the Gamemaster decides to what extent the magic of Britain is real within his campaign. This fact is then up to the players to discover through play. Some Gamemasters like to have magic as a common thread running throughout the game, while others prefer that actual magic appear only in the most unusual and terrifying circumstances.

A Faerie Lore success reveals magical information, which the Gamemaster should present in an entertaining way. However, this information may be sheer superstition, or incorrect in detail. A failure or fumble gives erroneous information. A critical success always reveals some important fact, as secretly communicated to the player of that character by the Gamemaster — for example, "Sir Ambrut realizes that the three witches are actually the mad daughters of the king."

Characters may gain Glory for a success with Faerie Lore if it reveals information crucial to a scenario. Usually, however, little Glory is to be gained from knowledge of Faerie — Glory is gained from interactions with that world, not mere talk of it.

### FALCONRY [KNIGHTLY]

Falcons and hawks can be trained to hunt birds and other small prey. Such sport is the pleasure of nobles, who sometimes spend considerable money to maintain a first-class mews (the building reserved for the maintenance of hunting birds).

The Falconry skill is used whenever knights and ladies take birds into the fields to hunt. The skill value indicates how apt the character is at the sport, such as knowing just when to let the bird go, how to call it back, and how to handle it both safely and decorously.

Critical success means the bird caught its prey and returned with it to the hawk's feet, and that both falconer and bird acted gracefully and stylishly. Success simply indicates that the bird got its prey. Failure shows it missed its catch. A fumble means the hawk flew away and was lost, or was somehow fatally injured in its hunt.

Individual birds may be trained by their masters, and a particularly well-trained bird can actually improve a knight's Falconry skill with a positive modifier.



Tradition insists that certain birds be used only by certain ranks or classes of folk, as follows.

- Eagle: emperors
- Jerfalcon (or gyrfalcon): kings, princes
- Peregrine falcon: earls
- Merlin: ladies
- Goshawk: knights
- Sparrowhawk: clergy

Glory is gained for every success in Falconry. Most successes gain ordinary Glory (10 points), but a spectacular critical success before King Arthur and the assembled court might gain as much as 100 points.

## FASHION [NON-KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a lady's sense of fashion, of knowing what is in style and what is not. It dictates her mastery of what to wear, how to wear it, and how to be creative in setting new fashions. Generally, the queen sets fashion (or rather, her ladies-in-waiting do), though outside sources may also have some influence — "Spanish dresses this year," and whatnot. Fashion expertise is yet another way for a young woman to get into a noble household.

In general, for each £1 value of her attire, a character gains a +1 modifier on any APP roll she might make. However, any time she arrives at a social event or some other public venue, a character may attempt a Fashion roll, the results of which can modify the APP modifier.

| Fashion Roll     | APP Modifier | Effect               |
|------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Critical success | x2           | Sets new fashion     |
| Success          | x1.5         | Suitably fashionable |

|         |      |                           |
|---------|------|---------------------------|
| Failure | x1   | Behind the times          |
| Fumble  | x0.5 | Dreadfully out of fashion |

*Note:* Remember that clothes wear out a little every year (see "Winter Phase" in Chapter 5), but jewelry does not.

## FIRST AID [KNIGHTLY]

First Aid provides immediate medical assistance to wounds. It is actually more reliable than the medieval treatments to be used later in treatment (see the Chirurgery skill). Like Chirurgery, the use of this skill is an important and complicated subject (see "Injury and Health" in Chapter 6 for more information).

Characters cannot apply First Aid to themselves.

Glory should usually be gained for successful use of the First Aid skill, the amount gained being proportionate to the Glory and rank of the character being treated. If a life is saved, more Glory should be gained.

## FLIRTING [KNIGHTLY]

Flirting is a courtly skill that can be mastered to convey sensuality and sexuality. It includes use of specific words, tones of voice, expressions, movements, gestures, and attitudes. The primary purpose is to gain the attention of a member of the opposite sex.

Success simply indicates that a flirtatious message was conveyed, to which the recipient may choose to respond or not. The higher the number rolled, the more potent the message conveyed. However, a critical success indicates that the listener was moved somehow, and further was unable to hide his or her feelings.



Failure indicates that the message was not adequately conveyed during the conversation. A fumble shows that the speaker misspoke something terribly, and caused embarrassment, and perhaps even offense.

Although seduction certainly requires flirtation during its initial stages, flirtation does not necessarily mean seduction. It is not uncommon to flirt for amusement's sake, although this practice may be misinterpreted and incite passions among the unlettered and ignorant.

It is more exciting to flirt with a handsome or beautiful character than an ugly one. The Gamemaster may wish to impose a modifier on the Flirting skill of any character with unusually high or low APP.

Success with the Flirting skill gains Glory only if a subject of the opposite sex becomes infatuated with the character.

Note that Flirting is deliberately set apart from the far less vulgar Romance skill.

**Special:** With the Gamemaster's approval, characters having high Glory may receive a positive modifier to Flirting, with a maximum modifier equal to Glory/1,000.

### FOLKLORE [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Folklore is a knowledge of peasant beliefs and ways of life. It stems from familiarity with the land that has been gained over thousands of years of experience. Folklore includes information on many subjects, from such ordinary things as the lore of pigs or local landmarks, all the way to the household herbal cures passed from old women to their female descendants. It includes thousands of tiny facts useful to daily living, such as when to plant, how to tell if the coming winter will be hard, and how to cheat the tax collector, as well as a certain amount of nonsense, such as how to rid oneself of warts, charms to kill rats, and songs to make the plants grow.

Folklore is used in play when a knight observes peasants to determine what they are doing, or when trying to evaluate how they feel. It may also be used to gain a benefit in communicating with peasants. In this case, a successful Folklore roll indicates that the knight has communicated his friendliness and knowledge of "folksy" ways, presumably making the peasant more agreeable and less afraid.

A failed Folklore roll reveals the knight to be a typical upper-class oppressor, while a fumble indicates a major social gaffe that offends, and possibly gravely insults, the peasant.

Glory is not normally gained through Folklore. What Glory is there in dealing with commoners and peasant matters?

### GAMING [KNIGHTLY]

The Gaming skill allows the user to perform certain types of medieval play effectively and with aplomb, whether in competition or for entertainment. This skill does not include ability in physical sports such as wrestling and jousting, and has nothing to do with them.

All types of common gaming, including simpler forms of gambling, are included. Common games include Roman *Tabula* (backgammon), Saxon *Hnaeftafl* ("swords-and-shields"), Cymric *Gwyddbwyll* ("wooden wisdom"), and the continental *Les Dames* (checkers).

Two characters playing a game together make opposed Gaming rolls. If a monetary stake is involved, the difference between the two numbers rolled can be used by the Gamemaster to determine the amount of money won (i.e., a difference of 3 might indicate that the winner took away 3d. from the loser).

Glory may be gained from success with the Gaming skill only if the situation is unusually chivalrous; ordinary gaming or gambling never gains Glory.

### HERALDRY [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

A knight is known by his coat of arms. When in armor, everyone looks the same, except for the coat of arms blazoned on the shield and the banner. Surcoats also carry this identification.

Members of families commonly display similar arms, such as the two-headed eagle of the Orkney clan. Sons often design their arms to resemble those of their fathers. Quite by accident, some coats of arms are similar to one another, making perfect identification difficult. Examples of large groups with similar coats of arms include the aforementioned Orkney clan, the de Ganis clan, Cornish knights, and the royal families of any kingdom. Other less coherent groups include arms that have horses, ships, or simply fields with red on top.

Successful use of this skill indicates that your character knows the members of the group or family for that coat of arms, or the several most likely holders of those arms. A critical success indicates that the precise person is recognized, as well as the general group.

A failed Heraldry roll means the character simply does not know whose coat of arms he is viewing. A fumble means that he identifies the coat of arms wrongly.

The Gamemaster may require a Heraldry roll to see if the characters properly identify the coat of arms of someone they already know. Success means the Gamemaster states the individual's identity (or at least the identity of the individual whose shield he bears...).

A success with Heraldry gains Glory — normally 10 points — if vital or significant information is gained thereby.

**Special:** For every 1,000 points of Glory a knight has, other characters gain a +1 modifier to *their* Heraldry skill for the purpose of identifying the glorious one. Thus, if anyone tries to recognize the arms of Sir Ambrut (who has accumulated 1,605 Glory thus far), their Heraldry skill is effectively raised by 2 points.

### HUNTING [KNIGHTLY]

The Hunting skill includes the entire variety of tasks performed during the noble sport of the chase, excluding weapon skills.

Hunting includes knowing what is meant by the different blasts on the horn, for instance, and knowing whether an animal is a "beast of chase, venery, or vermin." It includes care of hounds, as well as an understanding of their methods of hunting and the meanings of their various cries and barks; tracking the spoor and identifying beasts from it; knowing the best way to kill each beast quickly; and the skill of cut-

# Finding Prey

In a typical hunt, your dogs might catch wind of almost anything unless you began the hunt from a certain creature's spoor. Generally, hunters are glad to kill almost anything for food or, if they find a predator, to slay it to protect the nearby herds.

Use the tables in this sidebar to discover what creature you pursue in a standard hunt; usually the hunters will know fairly soon what creature they pursue, and can choose to let it go. However, if disturbed and/or frightened, a monster may choose to attack and not give the would-be hunters a choice.

**Table 4-4: Sunting — Normal Prey**

| d20 Roll | Creature   |
|----------|--|
| 1        | Bear (Avoidance 7)                               |
| 2        | Fox (Avoidance 13)                               |
| 3-4      | Boar (Avoidance 10)                              |
| 5        | Bull (Avoidance 5)                               |
| 6-10     | Red Deer (Avoidance 15)                          |
| 11-17    | Fallow Deer (Avoidance 18)                       |
| 18-19    | Wolf (Avoidance 10)                              |
| 20       | Special Creature. Roll again on the table below. |



**Table 4-5: Sunting — Special Creature**

| d20 Roll | Creature                       |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1-2      | Giant, small (Avoidance 5)     |
| 3        | Griffin (Avoidance 30)         |
| 4        | Hippogriff (Avoidance 30)      |
| 5-7      | Lion (Avoidance 10)            |
| 8        | Manticore (Avoidance 10)       |
| 9-11     | Panther (Avoidance 15)         |
| 12       | Lesser Unicorn (Avoidance 25)  |
| 13-14    | Greater Unicorn (Avoidance 15) |
| 15       | Wyrms (Avoidance 7)            |
| 16       | Wyvern (Avoidance 30)          |
| 17-19    | Yale (Avoidance 12)            |
| 20       | Special Event! (see below)     |

## Special Event

Not every hunt need be ordinary. Surprises happen all the time. This intrusion into the expected story is the kind of surprise that *should* happen from time to time in the game!

A special event of this nature is some small adventure or unique, short-term scenario that might sidetrack the player knights for a little while. Alternately, it could be a link, such as a mysterious Gamemaster character who gives the PCs a map or a bit of information regarding an ongoing bit of the story that will occur later on, perhaps even years later in game time.

As an example of a special event, see the "Questing Beast" scenario in Appendix 3.





ting it up properly afterwards so everyone, from hounds and dog boys to the sponsor, gets their correct share.

Generally, a Hunting roll made to pursue a beast through the wilderness is opposed by that creature's Avoidance roll (see "Natural Beasts" in Appendix 2 for a detailed explanation), modified by terrain as noted below.

In addition to dictating one's ability to hunt game, the Hunting skill is also used to test general woodland and wilderness knowledge. A successful Hunting roll (indicating an innate sense of direction, as well as the need to check the route with passersby, seek trails and roads, follow landmarks, and so on) is needed to make progress while traveling in wild or uncharted areas. A successful check in this circumstance results in travel at a Leisurely pace, while a critical success allows travel at a Normal pace (see Movement in Chapter 5).

A failed Hunting roll made to find one's way in the wilderness means the character is confused and must stop the trip to get his bearings, delaying the journey for an hour or more, depending on Gamemaster preference. A fumble means the character goes the wrong direction and becomes thoroughly lost. (See the "Lost in the Woods" scenario in Appendix 3.)

Finally, a Hunting roll can be used to forage and hunt for small game. Assume that a successful roll means the character has found enough food and potable water to keep himself fed for one day. A critical success sustains a character for 1d3 days, or else 1d6 characters for one day (since food spoils). A fumble might mean the character is poisoned by tainted food or water, at the Gamemaster's discretion.

Regardless of the purpose of a particular Hunting roll, local terrain can make a difference on a character's Hunting skill, as shown on the following chart.

| <b>Terrain</b>   | <b>Modifier</b> |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Barren waste     | -5              |
| Forest/wildlands | +0              |
| Hills            | -3              |
| Marsh/swamp      | -6              |
| Mountains        | -4              |
| Open fields      | +4              |

Successful hunts usually are worth modest Glory, but this is normally based on what animals or beasts are caught.

Glory may be gained directly using the Hunting skill if scenario goals are met or lives are saved.

*Note:* See the "Introductory Scenario" in Appendix 3 for a sample hunt.

**Special:** Characters who hunt without dogs suffer at least a -5 modifier to all Hunting rolls.

Characters hunting in their home county (or otherwise in the lands immediately surrounding the place where they grew up) gains a +5 bonus on all Hunting rolls.

## INDUSTRY [NON-KNIGHTLY]

Knights never engage in Industry, and are in danger of losing their high rank if they do. Industry is the woman's work of creating things with her hands, or the common peasant's tasks of farming, labor, and craft.

In *Pendragon*, this skill is most often expressed in the arts of spinning, weaving, and sewing, tasks for noblewomen who create fashionable clothing for both men and women; large tapestries to hang upon walls; ornate church vestments; and perhaps even simple table linens and the like. Industry can also be applied to churchmen who make fine books, or to witches or druids who create fetishes and charms.

The quality of work produced by one's Industry is based on the number rolled for success. A critical success creates a work of great quality or even artistry.

Ordinary Glory (usually no more than 10 points) can be gained by non-knights from the use of this skill, if a particularly beautiful item is made and presented to someone in public.

## INTRIGUE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill allows one to know what is going on at court. Everyone has access to gossip, but hard work and clever conversations help to pry out the real facts. The Intrigue skill is needed to know who to ask, when to ask them, what to say to them to learn of a secret, and how to sift truth from lies. Intrigue is not used to poison people in secret, to foment rebellion, or to assassinate rivals. Such dark practices must be roleplayed, not left to random die rolls.

Personal contacts cultured through long, often secret relationships can be established and maintained using this skill. Thus even a young Sir Mordred, with his remarkable Intrigue skill, already has contacts among most of the noble families of Britain.

Many modifiers may be applied to an Intrigue roll. For instance, trying to find out secrets in a castle whose entire staff has been briefed on a plan, and who agree with its intent, likely imposes a negative modifier. A resident who is sympathetic because both he and the characters are from the same homeland, on the other hand, might give a positive modifier. A normal castle or court situation, with nothing unusual going on, gives no modifiers.

Success with Intrigue indicates that you learn something true and probably useful; a critical success indicates you learn a special and important fact known only to you and the direct participants (perhaps a fact overheard at a critical juncture, or seen by accident, or discovered in a lost note). Failure indicates nothing new was learned, while a fumble means that a close contact lies, or is thought to have lied, to you. The Gamemaster can exploit this uncertainty at his leisure.

A successful Intrigue roll accrues Glory if facts critical to the characters' success in a scenario are gained.

## ORATE [KNIGHTLY]

The art of speaking fluently, with poetic grace and charismatic delivery, is useful in any situation that requires a character to speak, but especially in public.

A successful Orate roll indicates that the speech was effective and well-delivered. A critical success indicates the listeners were genuinely moved by the speech, as the Gamemaster decides. Failure shows that the speech was boring; a fumble indicates that the speaker made a fool of himself.

Ordinary Glory (10 points) is gained from a typical successful oration, while a speech that swayed a crowd at a crucial juncture, or one that impressed an angry king, might gain more.

**Special:** With the Gamemaster's approval, characters having high Glory may receive a positive modifier to Orate, with a maximum modifier equal to Glory/1,000.

### PLAY (INSTRUMENT) [KNIGHTLY]

Everyone appreciates a good tune to wile away the after-dinner hours. Moreover, some women prefer men who have some degree of ability in this form of entertainment.

This skill is specific for each individual type of instrument; characters with this skill should choose an instrument from the Musical Instruments sidebar. The name of the instrument is inserted into the parentheses on the character sheet.

Most characters, even those well-versed in music, are familiar with only one instrument; if a character wishes to play more than one instrument, he must record and develop each instrument as a separate Play (instrument) skill, with each represented as a separate entry on the character sheet. For example, a character might have Play (harp) 10 and, entirely separate, Play (lute) 3.

Success indicates a good tune was played, while failure indicates the song was out of tune, off-beat, or in the wrong chord. A critical success indicates a rousing tune that evoked an emotional response from the audience, while a fumble means the character played so badly that everyone laughed at him.

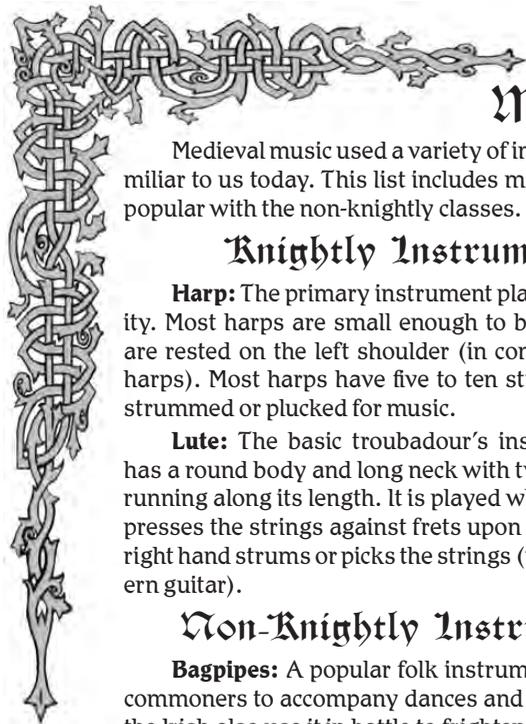
Glory for Playing (instrument) rolls can only come from playing instruments appropriate to a courtly audience. No Glory is gained, for example, by a Saxon warrior blowing his horn in a Cymric court, or for someone entertaining peasants on a bagpipe.

### READ (SYMBOLS) [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Several esoteric forms of writing exist in Britain, each generally known only to initiates of ancient lore. They are generally used not for messages or books, but for documenting magical powers; they often serve as foci for spells and rituals. Latin is the closest equivalent to modern writing, and even that tongue is rarely encountered except within the church. Otherwise, characters might encounter symbols written on sticks, on stone menhirs, or inscribed over mysterious cave mouths.

This skill is specific for each individual type of symbol; characters with this skill should choose a written "language" from the Written Symbols sidebar. The name of the language is inserted into the parentheses on the character sheet.

Most characters, even scholars, are familiar with only one form of written symbols; if a character wishes to know more than one kind of symbol, he must record and develop each type as a separate Read (symbol) skill, with each represented as a separate entry on the character sheet. For example, a character might have Read (Latin) 5 and, entirely separate, Read (Ogham) 2.



## Musical Instruments

Medieval music used a variety of instruments unfamiliar to us today. This list includes many instruments popular with the non-knightly classes.

### Knighly Instruments

**Harp:** The primary instrument played by the nobility. Most harps are small enough to be hand-held and are rested on the left shoulder (in contrast to modern harps). Most harps have five to ten strings. Harps are strummed or plucked for music.

**Lute:** The basic troubadour's instrument. A lute has a round body and long neck with two to ten strings running along its length. It is played while the left hand presses the strings against frets upon the neck and the right hand strums or picks the strings (much like a modern guitar).

### Non-Knighly Instruments

**Bagpipes:** A popular folk instrument used among commoners to accompany dances and other festivities, the Irish also use it in battle to frighten their foes and to signal their friends. All other noblemen scorn its use.

**Double Pipes:** Another ordinary instrument not encouraged among noblemen because the puffing distorts his face and makes him look silly. Two pipes, each with up to five holes, are bound side by side, to be played at the same time by blowing into a single mouthpiece at

one end. Sometimes one pipe is much longer than the other. Sometimes called "pan pipes."

**Drums:** A military instrument. Drums are used to signal forces on the battlefield, occasionally to send signals over a distance, or among peasantry to accompany dances. No one in their right mind considers its use for courtly music.

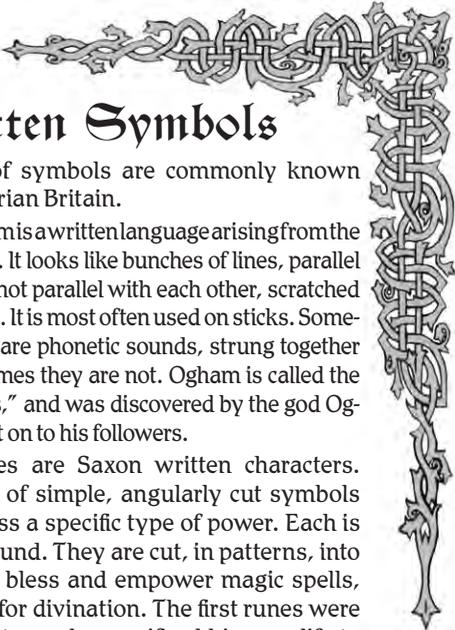
**Flute:** An ordinary instrument used by entertainers, but, like double pipes, not encouraged for use by nobles. It is held horizontally and wind blows across the sound hole. Up to nine finger holes make a wide variety of notes possible.

**Horn:** Only Saxons consider this instrument to be capable of music. Others may use it to entertain by coloring tales of the hunt or war (more likely used with an Orate roll). They are made of animal horns, and sometimes have holes to modulate the sound.

**Recorder:** Another ordinary instrument used by entertainers and occasionally by noblewomen. It is played by blowing into one end, and covering or uncovering holes along its length.

**Trumpet:** Sometimes called the "Prince's Instrument." This is a metal horn up to 3 feet long, often bent into an S-curve. It is not ideal for "real music" and is used only for battlefield signaling and courtly fanfares. Only royal houses may have trumpeters, hence its nickname.





## Written Symbols

Four types of symbols are commonly known and read in Arthurian Britain.

**Ogham:** Ogham is a written language arising from the old Cymri and Irish. It looks like bunches of lines, parallel within a group but not parallel with each other, scratched along a straight line. It is most often used on sticks. Sometimes the symbols are phonetic sounds, strung together like words. Sometimes they are not. Ogham is called the "Language of Trees," and was discovered by the god Ogmios, who passed it on to his followers.

**Runes:** Runes are Saxon written characters. They are a series of simple, angularly cut symbols which each possess a specific type of power. Each is also a phonetic sound. They are cut, in patterns, into rocks or sticks to bless and empower magic spells, or to then be cast for divination. The first runes were discovered by Wotan, who sacrificed his own life to obtain the wisdom for himself and his followers.

**Glyphs:** These are Pictish signs, most often carved into rocks that serve as border markers and altars to local spirits. They tell the name of the local people responsible for the upkeep of the altar, and of the power which can be invoked there. The first glyphs were placed at certain sites by the Earth Mother to help her people, and the Picts can still work magic at those sites.

**Latin:** Latin is the language of old Rome. To be literate means being able to read and write Latin. Few people are well versed in the skill of Read (Latin) other than churchmen, classical scholars, and some merchants.



A successful Read (symbols) roll indicates that the symbols were read and understood. A critical success means that only a short time was needed to read the symbols at hand. A failure indicates that the symbols remain incomprehensible, while a fumble means that a (potentially calamitous) misinterpretation occurs.

Some pieces of script may have negative modifiers for reading, depending on their age, their relative complexity, and the subject of the writings. Ciphers and secret words are also possible within each type of written symbols, making the task of reading difficult or even impossible to the uninitiated.

The Gamemaster should determine how much time reading a document requires, based on its size and other factors. Given society's belief in the power of symbols for spells and ritual, the Gamemaster's interpretation of magic might include Read (symbols) as a component in working such magics.

Glory could be gained for a use of Read (symbols) if important information for a scenario or hidden secrets were revealed thereby.

### RECOGNIZE [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Not everyone is adept at putting names to faces — or, in *Pendragon*, faces to coats of arms. When people mingle at court, there may be hundreds of nobles and knights, along with thousands of servants and commoners. In such a crowd, you might

see someone or perhaps even be introduced, yet forget him almost immediately as one among many. Likewise, after viewing several hundred young knights at a tourney, you might find that all but the best tend to blur into one indistinct figure.

Recognize lets you put together clues — a face with a jousting style or some distinctive feature, for example — that help you identify a person. However, you must have reason to recall facts about that person at all. Thus, if you've never seen or heard of someone before, even a critical success would not help; it is impossible to use this skill to learn something about a complete stranger. On the other hand, the Gamemaster may have you make a Recognize roll when you don't think of it yourself, and might also assign a positive modifier to your skill if the personage is actually an unrecognized acquaintance.

A successful Recognize roll indicates that you remember a character and recall everything you know about him. A critical success means that you recognize a person even if he is in disguise. A failed roll indicates that you don't remember this person. A fumble indicates that you think you recognize him, but the Gamemaster can give you false (or true information if that might be misleading...); a character who fumbles a Recognize roll is thus always unsure about his identification.

A successful Recognize roll might gain Glory if recognition was crucial to a scenario.

### RELIGION [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

This skill quantifies what a character knows concerning the beliefs, rites, sacred calendar, and practices of a religion. It also indicates a person's ability to follow ceremony and to do what is appropriate to his station within a sacred context.

This skill is specific for each individual religion; characters with this skill should choose a religion appropriate to his culture. The name of the religion is inserted into the parentheses on the character sheet.

Most characters, even priests, are familiar with only one form of religion; if a character wishes to know more than one religion, he must record and develop each type as a separate Religion skill, with each represented as a separate entry on the character sheet. For example, a character might have Religion (Roman Christianity) 10 and, entirely separate, Religion (Wotan) 2.

Note that a high Religion skill does not necessarily indicate the strength of one's belief — this is measured by the Piety trait. Neither does it indicate the fervency of one's faith, which is measured by passions. This skill simply allows one to know the forms, ceremonies, and ideologies of a religion, as would be acquired by attending normal worship. Non-believers may have this skill for any religion.

The most common religion for player knights of Logres is Christianity, whether of the Roman or British variety; many knights still adhere to Paganism, however. Less common religions, to be introduced in later supplements, are the Wotanism of the Saxons and, truly exotic, Islam and Judaism.

Success or failure with the Religion skill should not normally affect magical events. Piety and passions are better sources of miracles and magic in the game than expertise in the forms and dogma of a religion.

Successful use of the Religion skill does not usually gain Glory unless a successful prayer or ritual was crucial to the scenario.

### ROMANCE [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

A Romance roll might be required to know how to approach a woman for the first time; how to properly avert one's eyes; to properly kiss a hand, wrist, elbow, or other part of the body; and, most especially, what is the best type of present to give a lover. For a woman, this skill includes knowing when to refuse an audience, when to accept a tryst, how to say no, how to be "constructively cruel," how to tell whether entertainment is new or customary, and how a man lies.

The Romance skill also concerns the practice of *fine amor*. (See Appendix 1.)

Romance is an elegant and courtly skill, and success should gain ordinary Glory in most instances.

### SINGING [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

Vocal music pleases all listeners, whether sung in church, in court, or for a lover in a warm summer glade. Professional bards and minstrels wander from court to court with a repertoire of ballads and lays. Noblemen create love poems and romances, and find honor in the title of troubadour. Poorer troubadours perform their own songs, while the richer hire singers, called jongleurs, to perform for them. Women sing both to entertain the household on lonely winter nights and to please lovers. On some fine spring days, Arthur's court may be very much like the musical Camelot, or like unto a very pleasant dream.

A critical success at Singing indicates a powerful and emotional performance, while a simple success indicates a pleasant experience. A failure indicates an unpleasant song or worse, while a fumble indicates something awful and scandalous, causing social embarrassment.

Successful Singing always gains Glory, usually an ordinary award (10 points). More Glory might be gained if some scenario goal was achieved thereby (a savage guardian soothed, for example). Successful singing in a respected lord's court gains additional Glory.

### STEWARDSHIP [NON-KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

This ability to plan, administer, and oversee the keeping of a farm or similar holding is not normally required for knights. It is an important women's skill, used to maintain and improve the income generated from her husband's (or her family's, or, more rarely, her own) lands. On a knight's holding, the bailiff usually knows this skill.

Glory is not found by being a farmer or administrator, although Glory may be derived from Stewardship if a success contributes to a battle victory or saves a knight or greater noble from poverty or humiliation.

### SWIMMING [KNIGHTLY]

Swimming is used to move successfully through water. The roll is normally unmodified, but in stormy or flooded conditions there may also be negative modifiers involved.

A successful Swimming roll indicates that the character remained above water and traveled his base Movement Rate in the desired direction. A critical success indicates

that he did so at double speed. A failure indicates that he did not make significant progress this round. A fumble means he must attempt a CON roll: If he fails, the character begins drowning, taking 1d6 damage each melee round after the CON roll fails.

A Swimming roll also can be used to remove armor while underwater. A successful roll removes 2 points of armor. However, during this time, the character suffers drowning damage (as above) with no CON roll possible.

Glory is gained only if someone is saved by a Swimming roll.

**Special:** Swimming does not use the standard encumbrance rules for armor worn. Instead, a character's Swimming skill is reduced by 1 point per point of armor worn; thus, a character with a Swimming value of 10 would have a modified skill of 6 while wearing leather armor (4 armor points).

Normal encumbrance — a light or heavy load — imposes the usual penalties (that is, -5 and -10 respectively) in addition to any penalties from armor. However, a character's gear, other than armor, can be dropped freely.

### TOURNEY [KNIGHTLY, KNOWLEDGE]

This skill is used to understand the correct procedures, customs, and behavior at that spectacle of chivalrous entertainment known as the tournament.

A Tourney roll is required to find out if a knight has registered with the correct person at the right time, or whether he has embarrassed himself by arriving at the last minute. A roll could be used to see if the knight understands what certain trumpet blasts at a tourney mean; a failure might indicate that he did not have his squire place his helmet and surcoat out for the helm show, or that he missed an important feast or speech. Alternately, a failed roll might mean that the knight did not know whom to address; what do upon winning a joust; or how to properly ask for, receive, or handle a lady's favor.

A fumble, as with most knightly skills, is almost invariably humiliating.

Glory can be gained with most successful uses of the Tourney skill. Usually this should be an ordinary award (10 points). A crucial use of the skill that gains an advantage in combat or foils a villain's plans should gain additional Glory.

## WEAPON SKILLS

Some of the following skills are knightly, while the rest are Non-Knightly. Note that those skills listed here as being Knightly assume that, as with all other considerations in this game, the character is a Cymric knight; warriors and knights from other cultures might have slightly different ideas about what weapons are "knightly" or not.

### AXE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates the use of a battle axe, a one-handed weapon that may be single- or double-edged. A battle axe easily shatters or splits open shields: It deals an additional 1d6 damage against any combatant using a shield. A fumble indicates that the axe broke.

This skill and the weapon for which it is named are favored by many Saxons.



## BATTLE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill has two general applications. The first dictates a leader's ability to command his troops in battle; this application is used for both battles and skirmishes.

The second applies to tactical decisions when individuals are separated from their larger unit; this use of the Battle skill is used only in battles.

For more information on uses of the Battle skill, see Chapter 6 and Appendix 4.

## BOW [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character's skill with the bow, a missile weapon usually of wood or horn, normally used by peasants for hunting and by foot soldiers in war. Knights normally do not use bows in combat, although they often use them for hunting.

A bow deals 3d6 points of damage regardless of the user's Damage statistic. It is a two-handed weapon, so no shield can be used while shooting a bow. The bow's maximum range is 150 yards. Modifiers must be applied for mid-range or long-range shots, small or covered targets, and so on.

A fumble indicates that the weapon has a broken string or, worse, is cracked.

## CROSSBOW [NON-KNIGHTLY]

This is a mechanical missile weapon invented, some say, by the devil. The Pope has outlawed its use against Christians, but the damnable commoners seem not to have heard. Knights generally scorn the use of crossbows in combat, although some may welcome their use in hunting (only!).

As with any missile weapon, negative modifiers must be used for longer ranges.

Different strengths of crossbows do different damage, and take different times to reload and shoot. A light crossbow fires at the same rate as a bow (one shot per round), for instance, but a heavy crossbow requires 3 full rounds of cocking before it can be fired.

| Crossbow Type* | Damage† | Rate of Fire         | Maximum Range |
|----------------|---------|----------------------|---------------|
| Light          | 1d6+10  | 1 per round          | 150 yards     |
| Medium         | 1d6+13  | 1 per 2 melee rounds | 200 yards     |
| Heavy          | 1d6+16  | 1 per 4 melee rounds | 250 yards     |

\* A light crossbow may be fired from one hand, though it requires two hands to load. Other crossbows are two-handed weapons for purposes of both firing and loading.

† A crossbow of the given type deals this amount of damage regardless of the user's Damage statistic.

## DAGGER [KNIGHTLY]

This skill includes the use of all one-handed knives, daggers, and even short swords — in fact, it covers anything from the ancient Roman *gladius* to a common table knife. The tool is usually steel, but particular daggers might be of bronze, iron, or even possibly of stone or some other material.

The weapons covered by the use of this skill are generally ineffective against heavily armored knights, but a simple knife or dagger is carried by virtually everyone in Cymric society, including women and priests. A knight usually has a dagger sheathed on his sword belt, ready for use in close quarters.

Due to its small size, a dagger does 1d6 less damage than the user's normal Damage statistic when it strikes, to a minimum of 1d6 damage (so even a shriveled, weak old woman still does 1d6 damage). Thus, a character who normally does 4d6 points of damage on a hit deals only 3d6 with a dagger.

A fumble indicates the weapon has broken.

**Special:** If an enemy wielding a 2-foot-long dirk attacks a character with a tiny table knife, for instance, the Gamemaster might wish to adjust the relative damage done slightly to reflect the difference between the two similar but not identical weapons.

## GRAPPLE [KNIGHTLY]

Characters in Arthurian literature often throw down their weapons and grapple an opponent in dramatic fashion. This skill simulates such tactics.

The art of pugilism, in the modern sense, is unknown in Arthur's Britain, but common brawling includes punching, wrestling, bashing, slamming, gouging, biting, kicking, and so on. (This is handled under the "Brawling" section in Chapter 6.) Quarrelsome knights in their cups may often wrestle to prove their manhood, but this is considered brawling, not a use of the Grapple skill.

Grapple is normally used in armed combat, either when every other weapon is broken or when stalemate has set in between two knights with excellent weapon skills, so that neither can easily hurt the other. Grappling is a risky but viable option in such instances.

Armor has no effect on the Grapple skill, nor does sitting a horse affect it unless the Gamemaster rules otherwise. (It is assumed that both characters suffer the same hampering conditions, which effectively negate each other.)

See also "Grappling" in Chapter 6.

## GREAT AXE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character's use of the great axe; a two-handed and double-headed version of the battle axe, this weapon cannot be used with a shield. However, due to its great mass, it does an extra 1d6 points of damage against all foes, and an *additional* 1d6 against any combatant using a shield. A fumble indicates the weapon broke.

Many Saxons fighting against armored knights favor this weapon.

## GREAT SPEAR [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character's use of the great spear (sometimes called a "pike"), a heavy two-handed spear used to strike and stab. A great spear grants a +5 modifier when used by foot soldiers against horsemen (thus negating the footmen's normal disadvantage). The great spear is long enough that it also negates the +5 lance modifier versus non-lance weapons.

A fumble indicates that the spear has broken. A great spear may not be thrown.

**Boar Spear:** This skill is also used by a hunter wielding a boar spear, a large, broad-bladed spear with a metal crossbar located a short distance below its head. A boar that takes damage equal at least to its DEX score (i.e., typi-

cally 15) from a boar spear may not thereafter attack the foe wielding the boar spear. See “Boar” in Appendix 2.

## HORSEMANSHIP [KNIGHTLY]

Horsemanship is the ability to perform actions and maneuvers while mounted on a moving horse. Such activities include fighting, jumping obstacles, and galloping.

In most situations, a success indicates that the horse did what it was expected to do, while failure indicates it did not. A critical success allows the mount to go a little faster, jump a little farther, or otherwise perform beyond its usual capabilities or apply greater than normal effort. A fumble indicates that the horse trips, the rider falls off, the saddle girths break, or the like — regardless, the ride has ended.

Horsemanship is also used by a mounted combatant whenever he suffers a Knockdown result from damage taken. See “Knockdown” in Chapter 6.

Glory can be gained for a success in Horsemanship as with many non-combat skills. Usually, the Glory is gained not for the successful roll but for the results. Winning a race or carrying a vital message swiftly to its intended recipient might gain 10 Glory, for example.

A heroic use of Horsemanship, such as rescuing a child from a burning barn by riding in and out, might gain 100 Glory.

## JAVELIN [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character’s use of the javelin, a short, light spear that can be thrown at a nearby opponent or game animal. A javelin’s maximum range is 30 yards.

Due to its lightness and the fact that it is hurled, a javelin deals 2d6 less damage than the user’s normal Damage statistic, to a minimum of 1d6 damage. Thus, a character who normally does 4d6 points of damage on a hit deals only 2d6 with a javelin.

A fumble indicates that the weapon has broken.

## LANCE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character’s use of the lance, a stout, lengthy spear used in a mounted charge. It is held in the right hand and crossed over the horse’s neck, allowing the knight to crouch behind his shield and impact his target directly. The lance thus protrudes out to the left; if it were held any other way, the impact would dislocate the lancer’s shoulder.

Fighting with a lance but without a mounted charge is the same as using a spear: Use the character’s Spear skill, not Lance.

For more information on lances and jousting, see “Mounted Combat” in Chapter 6.

**Special:** The Lance skill is also used in jousting; there is no separate “Jousting Lance” skill. A jousting lance is a piece of sporting equipment, not a lethal weapon; it is designed not to destroy the loser of a joust, but merely to knock him from his horse.

## MACE [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character’s use of the mace, a heavy one-handed bludgeoning weapon often augmented with flanged edges or spikes. A mace deals an additional 1d6 points of damage against foes in chainmail armor.

A fumble indicates that the mace has broken.

## SPEAR [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character’s use of the spear, essentially a short pole or long stick with a pointed head (usually of metal) on one end. The spear is used one-handed, unlike the great spear. It can not be thrown like a javelin, which is much smaller.

A fumble indicates that the spear has broken.

**Special:** The spear can also be used from horseback as a lance; like a lance, when used in a mounted charge, it calls for the Lance skill rather than the Spear skill.

## SWORD [KNIGHTLY]

This skill dictates a character’s use of the sword, the quintessential knightly weapon. The standard sword, whether referred to as a longsword, a broadsword, a *spaetha* (by the Romans), a *seax* (by the Saxons), a *clddyf mawr* (by the Cymri), or by any other name, is a one-handed weapon normally used with a shield. Swords may be of varying lengths, thicknesses, and shapes, but they are always of the best possible iron.

The sword has two distinct advantages over all other weapons: (i) Swords do not break when their wielder fumbles, but are instead dropped and can be recovered, and (ii) if a tie occurs in any opposed resolution against a different weapon, a sword always breaks a non-sword.





# Chapter five: Game Mechanics

This chapter deals with the fundamental mechanics of the game (or at least those not already dealt with in the previous chapters). It is important that the Gamemaster be solidly conversant in these rules, but players need not memorize them. Gamemasters can use the Introductory Scenario (in Appendix 3) to introduce the players to the rules of the game while playing.

## **DIE-ROLL RESOLUTION**

*Pendragon* is a game in which determining a character's successes and failures is important. In fact, several kinds of success or failure may result from your rolling of the dice.

Most things that your character attempts are automatically successful. You simply tell the Gamemaster what your character is doing, such as, "My knight walks up the aisle towards the throne," or, "I ride out of the castle to my manor." These things simply occur more or less as you describe them.

However, sometimes your knight attempts things that require skill, discipline, or talent and which therefore might not succeed. During such critical times, the Gamemaster asks players to make die rolls for their characters to see whether they are successful in what they are trying to do. Generally, rolls are also required whenever a character attempts a maneuver or skill in a situation of stress or otherwise acts without deliberate forethought.

## **UNOPPOSED RESOLUTION**

"Unopposed" rolls are made directly against the character's pertinent statistic value. To determine success or failure, roll 1d20 and compare the result with the character's statistic value. If the die roll is equal to or less than the number indicated, then the character succeeded at what he was trying to do.

Modifiers to the value may apply, raising or lowering the number on the character sheet temporarily. The value may be lowered to 0, in which case failure is certain, or above 19, in which case success is certain. In either case, though, the die should still be rolled to see whether a fumble or critical success occurs. (See the sections below for more information on modifiers, fumbles, and critical successes.)

*Example of Unopposed Resolution:* The Gamemaster calls for Sir Ambrut, traveling through the forest, to make an Awareness roll on 1d20. (The Gamemaster knows there are bandits in the trees above Sir Ambrut, but he does not tell this to Ambrut's player, not wishing to give away the scenario.) The player rolls a 7, which is higher than Ambrut's Awareness value of 5, so the check fails. An instant later, without warning (since Ambrut failed to hear him), a robber swings down on a vine and attacks.

## **OPPOSED RESOLUTION**

"Opposed" rolls are made both against the character's own statistic *and* versus the opponent's rolled number. Simple success may not be enough to defeat the opponent. To win, the player must succeed with his own roll, yet also roll a number higher than that of the opponent's player (usually the Gamemaster).

As with unopposed rolls, modifiers may adjust values up or down: Values over 20 increase the rolled number, but the maximum success roll is always 20.

*In opposed rolls, a failure is always treated as if the player had rolled 0, regardless of the actual number rolled on the die.*

An opposed resolution may thus result in a winner and a loser, a tie, or two losers. A winner must roll equal to or under his own statistic value, and also achieve a success that is higher than his opponent. Both opponents may be losers if both fail their roll against their own statistic.

**Tie:** A tie in *Pendragon* means that the situation is temporarily unresolved, although time passes while the combatants contend with one another. Continue with the resolution during the next round, as normal.

Ties may have specific results in certain special instances; for example, in personal combat, a tie means that other kinds of weapons are broken by a character using a sword.

**Partial Success:** A loser in an opposed resolution may achieve a "partial success" — i.e., a roll that succeeds relative to his own statistic, but which loses relative to the opponent's roll. Some minor benefit is usually gained from a partial success. In combat, a character achieving a partial success may parry with a shield (see Chapter 6 for more on combat resolution), if using one.



*Example of Opposed Resolution:* After the initial (unopposed) surprise attack, Sir Ambrut draws his sword, now aware of the bandit. The robber has a Sword skill of 12 and Ambrut 15. In the first melee round, the robber rolls a 13 and fails, but Ambrut rolls a 1, a success; further, Sir Ambrut's result is higher than the robber's roll, since a failure in opposed rolls is always considered a 0. Ambrut is the winner of this resolution. He inflicts damage on the robber.

In the next round, Ambrut rolls a 12, the robber an 11. Both succeed against their own skill value this time, but Ambrut still wins the contest, since his roll is higher. The robber, although he is the loser in the round, still succeeded, so he achieves a partial success — if he bore a shield (which he doesn't, unfortunately for him), he could apply its damage reduction value to his armor's when calculating the damage from Ambrut's attack. (See "Armor and Shields" in Chapter 6.)

## MODIFIERS

Modifiers to all statistics may be applied by the Game-master whenever they are useful or "realistic." The Game-master should be consistent in applying these to both Gamemaster and player characters.

Modifiers are always added to or subtracted from the character's statistic values, not to the roll itself. However, values modified to 21 or higher increase the die roll. (See "Values Greater Than 20.")

### Modifier Situation

- +/- 5 Standard modifier (used for most situations)
- +/- 10 Strong modifier (for dramatic situations)
- +/- 15 Extreme modifier (for spectacular situations)

In certain unique or epic situations, modifiers of +/-20 or even more might be awarded or assigned. Such modifiers essentially guarantee success or failure, but the die should be rolled in any case to see if a critical success or fumble occurs.

**Total Modifier:** The *total modifier* represents the sum of all advantages or of all difficulties in a given situation. Thus, a particularly intelligent and well-trained hawk might add a +5 modifier to a character's Falconry skill. A wounded knight armed with only a dagger (his sword being broken and his shield rent asunder) who is asked to surrender by a troop of fresh enemy knights might suffer a -10 modifier to his Valorous trait (-5 for being wounded and poorly armed, and -5 for the advantage of numbers).

**Reflexive Modifiers:** In many cases of opposed resolution, modifiers are *reflexive*. This means that both participants are affected, but in opposite directions. For example, in the case of the mounted lance-wielder attacking a dagger-armed man on foot, the mounted man receives a +5 modifier to his Lance skill for being mounted, while the man on foot suffers a -5 modifier to his Dagger skill for the disadvantage of such a tiny weapon against a lance in this situation.

Note that the disparity produced by these reflexive modifiers is *not* the same as a +10 total modifier for the lance-wielder.

In some cases, there may be *total* modifiers, applied reflexively, on either side of an opposed roll. Thus, in extreme circumstances, one character might receive a +15 total modifier to a skill from various beneficial sources, while his opposition receives a -10 modifier to his skill from other





disadvantageous conditions; still, this isn't quite the same as a +25 total modifier for the first character.

## TYPES OF MODIFIERS

Modifiers can be assigned to any statistic. The following are the standard types.

**Skill Modifiers:** These are used to adjust a character's skill in a particular situation. Modifiers make skills harder to use or, less commonly, easier. They should be used whenever the situation calls for it.

*Example of Skill Modifier:* Continuing his journey through the forest, Sir Ambrut actively tries to spot any more ambushes using his Awareness skill of 5. This time the player states that Ambrut is carefully scanning each tree near the trail for robbers before passing underneath. The Gamemaster permits Ambrut a +5 modifier to his normal Awareness value, temporarily making his skill value a 10, because a treetop ambush is indeed the favored tactic of the local bandits.

A few moments later, Ambrut rolls a 10, a critical success. He spots two robbers lurking in a tree about 200 yards ahead and quietly leaves the trail, bypassing them before they see him. The Gamemaster decides that Ambrut receives a check for his Awareness skill.

Note that if the bandits had been hiding on the ground instead of up in a tree, Ambrut would not have received a modifier for his tactic.

**Trait and Passion Modifiers:** As with skills, these are used to modify traits or passions when the current situation is likely to influence a character's normal behavior. For example, a character whose family had betrayed him to an enemy might receive a -10 modifier to his Love (family) passion.

Trait and passion modifiers may also be used when a player feels that his character would act differently from what would be determined by a simple die roll. The objective of this type of modifier is to make both player and Gamemaster comfortable with the trait or passion roll in question. The Gamemaster must permit realistic modifiers whenever the players ask for them: Characters should not be forced to behave randomly at the whim of a die roll if the player is trying to roleplay.

*Example of Trait Modifier:* Sir Moris of the Tower, a notoriously lazy knight, is asked to perform a difficult task by a beautiful damsel of his lord's court. Although Moris is normally unlikely to undertake such a task, his desire for the charming young woman might make a difference. The player asks for a modifier before he makes his character's Energetic roll. The Gamemaster agrees and gives Sir Moris a +5 modifier for this special situation.

**Statistic Modifiers:** Sometimes a statistic roll may be modified. The most common use of this is the negative modifier that armor gives to DEX rolls in some situations. (See "The Dexterity Roll" in Chapter 4 and also "Armor and Shields" in Chapter 6 for more information on DEX rolls and armor worn.)

**Combat Modifiers:** These modifiers are based on weapon types, the relative position of combatants, and

so on. The standard combat modifier is +/-5, as described above. Combat modifiers are discussed at greater length in Chapter 6.

## CRITICAL SUCCESS

Whenever a character attempts a resolution roll of any type, he has a chance for a critical success. A critical success is achieved whenever a character rolls a number exactly equal to his *modified* statistic value.

When this occurs, the character has achieved the ultimate success: Regardless of the number rolled on the die, a critical success is considered a successful roll of 20. Since a roll of 20 beats any lesser roll in opposed resolution, a critical success guarantees either a win or a tie. This is true even if a character with a statistic of 1 rolls a 1.

In some situations, no special benefit arises from a critical success, with no difference between a critical and a normal success: In particular, a critical success with an attribute (Dexterity, Strength, etc.) often gives no special result. In most cases, though, unusually favorable results derive from a critical success, depending upon whether the roll was for a skill (including combat skills) or for a trait or passion.

**Skills:** A critical success on a skill roll has two potential benefits. First, the results are extraordinarily successful; the Gamemaster may relate specific game effects beyond those normally associated with a success using that skill, at his or her discretion.

In combat, specifically, a critical success with a weapon skill indicates that the character inflicts double damage. (His player rolls the normal number of dice twice and adds the two results.)

Second, the skill may, with Gamemaster approval, gain an experience check (see "Experience" in this chapter), indicating a chance to increase that skill during the Winter Phase.

*Examples of Critical Success:* Sir Ambrut is wooing Lady Dana, and he gets a critical success on his Flirting roll. She is immediately smitten with him and gains a Love (Sir Ambrut) passion, with its value set at the Gamemaster's discretion.

**Traits or Passions:** A critical success on a trait or passion roll works in a similar way to skills, giving increased benefits and an experience check. A critical trait or passion roll usually also indicates extreme, perhaps even fanatical behavior in accordance with the trait or passion in question.

*Examples of Critical Success:* Later on, Sir Ambrut decides that he wants to seduce Lady Dana, but she critically succeeds on her Chaste roll. She slaps his face and immediately tells her father of the insult to her honor, and her Love (Sir Ambrut) passion is reduced by *at least* 1 point (if not eradicated altogether).

## FUMBLE (CRITICAL FAILURE)

A fumble occurs whenever a character receives a roll of 20 — unless his modified statistic value is 20 or more, in which case he has no chance to fumble. (In such cases, a critical success is achieved on a die roll of 20.)

A fumble is a disastrous stroke of bad luck resulting in such things as dropping or breaking your weapon during combat, or coughing or cursing in the midst of a romantic ballad. Gamemasters relate the specifics of a fumbled roll, based on the guidelines suggested for the particular skill attempted (see Chapter 4) and the Gamemaster's discretion.

Note that, in most cases, pure attribute rolls (i.e., those against Dexterity, Strength, etc.) are simply a succeed-or-fail matter, and neither fumbles nor critical successes should have any special effect for them.

Fumbles can occur frequently in *Pendragon*. This provides many opportunities for storytelling to the Gamemaster. In many cases, a fumble lets the Gamemaster balance a situation that has gotten out of hand; feed the players false information; or simply inject some humor and excitement into the story. However, frequent fumbles open the way for unwise Gamemasters to inflict excessive and possibly incesant grief on their players.

Most situations not covered by the rules should present a possible fumble result. However, Gamemasters who insist that every fumble means a major disaster tend to spoil the game for everyone.

*Examples of Critical Failure ("Fumble"):* Young Sir Ambrut is out hunting deer and fumbles his Hunting skill. He loses the tracks he has been following and, without realizing it, begins to follow the spoor of a lion that recently crossed the deer's trail.

## VALUES GREATER THAN 20

If a character has a statistic value greater than 20, even if it is only temporarily modified to greater than 20, then every die roll he makes versus that value is increased. The increase is equal to the amount of the value over 20. Thus, a knight with a Dexterity of 25 would gain a +5 bonus to the roll every time he makes a DEX check, as long as he suffers no penalties from other sources.

Note that the die roll can never be reduced, only increased, in *Pendragon*. A penalty to a statistic is applied to the statistic's value, not to the roll itself.

Treat any result of 21 or higher on the roll as a 20, which is effectively a critical success. Thus, a value greater than 20 in a statistic increases the chance of a critical success and eliminates the chance of a fumble.

*Example of Values Greater than 20:* Sir Yvane fights from horseback against a footsoldier. Yvane's Sword skill is normally 19, but the combat modifier for attacking unmounted foes gives him an increase of +5, so Yvane's Sword skill value is temporarily increased to 24. In effect, then, his skill value is set at 20, and he receives a +4 bonus on his Sword rolls.

If Yvane and the footsoldier both rolled 13 on their dice, Yvane would win because his increased roll equals 17. Further, if Yvane rolls anything from 16 to 20, he gets a critical success (and not a fumble).

## VALUES OF ZERO

Due to negative modifiers, a statistic value may be temporarily reduced to 0. Negative values are never used

in *Pendragon*, even if a modifier would reduce the value to a negative number. Instead, the value is considered to be 0.

In such circumstances, the character who wishes to roll against the modified value receives an automatic failure. Players should still roll to see if they fumble (on a roll of 20), as normal.

## TIME SCALE

Time in *Pendragon* passes at clearly defined rates, as explained below.

### CAMPAIGN TIME

Generally, one scenario occurs per game year. (A scenario is defined as a linked series of adventures, feasts, combats, battles, quests, tournaments, or other knightly activities selected by the Gamemaster for the player knights to participate in.) Usually a scenario lasts no more than one or two seasons of game time.

There are a number of reasons why the one-scenario-per-year rule is useful.

1. Much of a knight's time is not his own. Training, duties to one's lord, and the needs of one's family take precedence over the pursuit of personal fame. Travel times are very slow as well. The period of good weather and free time available in a typical year in Arthurian Britain only suffices for a single scenario, and some years may pass without any scenarios occurring at all.

2. Part of the fun of the game is the dynastic segment; further, death is more likely in *Pendragon* than in other fantasy roleplaying games with more magical healing. Children are a solution to both these points. If player knights are to have children who grow to adulthood during a campaign, game years must pass quickly.

3. Glory is the goal of the game. Since Glory accrues only after time has passed and one's exploits become part of heroic legend, time needs to pass briskly. Glory, coming as it does from public recognition, garners benefits only during the Winter Phase of the game, not at the immediate conclusion of glorious events.

4. *Pendragon* characters improve quickly and age slowly as the years pass. As each year passes, it is possible to augment characters significantly due to Glory, experience, and training. This character improvement is based on yearly updating, and aging doesn't necessarily spoil characters. In fact, the Aging Table is designed so that player knights can live (and play significant roles) to about seventy years of age or even older.

### NARRATIVE TIME

Narrative time is the quick passage of time that moves the game along. For instance, most travel time is narrative in nature. Other examples, such as those below, are easy to imagine.

- "It is twenty days until you are fully healed again."
- "It takes you twelve days to get there."
- "The giant will reach you in one minute, so get prepared fast."



- “You search the woods for a week and nothing happens.”
- “It takes five minutes for you to reach the trees.”
- “The storm lasts for two days.”
- “You wait two weeks for the enemy fleet to show up.”
- “Nothing important happens this whole summer.”
- “You have to wait here for an hour. Will you do anything in that time?”

In each case, the Gamemaster controls time by stating how it passes, in terms of months, weeks, days, hours, and/or minutes.

## REAL TIME

Real time occurs in scenarios when players speak in character, or otherwise vicariously describe the “here and now” of the game action from their character’s perspective. As a player, you might say, “My knight is walking to stand beside the courtier who is speaking”; or “Your highness, might I inquire as to the identity of the lady I just saw in that window?”; or “I will speak to this herald, seeking to gain access to the Duke.”

## BATTLE ROUNDS

When a knight is in a large-scale battle during a scenario, time passes in battle rounds, each approximately 30 minutes in duration. A typical battle lasts from 2 to 12 battle rounds. Battle rounds are also commonly used in pursuit scenarios.

Because of the confused state of affairs in battles (the “fog of war” and so forth), only one combat skill use is performed during a battle round, though many other mass events may occur.

See also the “Battle” skill in Chapter 4; “Skirmish Rules” in Chapter 6; and the rules for large-scale battles in Appendix 4.

## MELEE ROUNDS

Skirmishes and single combat are lesser events than battles, and time in these situations is measured in melee rounds rather than battle rounds. The melee round is a brief period of time, the exact duration of which is abstract. It is not necessarily measured in seconds nor in tens of seconds, but in terms of activities performed (though it is most often somewhere between a few seconds and perhaps a minute in length).

As a basic rule, one action can be performed by each participant per melee round.

This important time scale is treated in more detail in the “Movement” and “Skills” sections of this chapter, and in the movement rules for combat (in Chapter 6).

## EXPERIENCE

One of the most exciting things to occur in roleplaying games is the growth and development of characters as game time progresses. In *Pendragon*, these changes are brought about by Glory, by training, by experience in the field, and through the effects of aging.

Experience is handled using “experience checks.” The results of experience, as well as Glory and training, are noted during the Winter Phase.

## OBTAINING EXPERIENCE

Every skill, trait, or passion that can change as a result of learning is marked on the character sheet by having a box (☐) near it. This box is checked (✓) when the character gains significant experience during an adventure with a skill, trait, or passion. Statistics do not change immediately as a result of this experience, though annual training may increase them.

## SKILLS

There are times during play when the Gamemaster tells the player to check one of his character’s skills (under “Skills” or “Combat Skills” on the sheet). This means that the character has successfully used that skill in a time of crisis and may, at a future time, learn from the experience.

A box may be checked only when the Gamemaster says the player may do so. The mark reminds the player to check the skill later, during the Winter Phase, to see if any learning occurred.

Experience checks for skills are intended to be very difficult to gain, and are not automatic whenever a success is achieved. Gamemasters must explain this point to the players. The ability to award or deny an experience check is one of the key powers of the Gamemaster.

Note that a squire’s skills may increase in the same manner as a player knight’s skills.

A check for a skill is possible only if at least one of the following two statements pertains:

1. A critical success is achieved. If a character does his best possible, learning is likely.
2. A success in a significant situation is achieved. Even a dozen successful attacks on a gang of poorly armed peasant levies would not be justification for a check to a weapon skill, since no real risk or challenge was incurred by the attacker, and nothing important was achieved by their defeat.

*Example of Skill Checks:* Sir Ambrut, in love with a lady, announces that he wants to write a love poem to her. Ambrut’s player actually writes the poem and reads it to the group. The poem is reasonably good and the player showed great effort, bringing some real creativity to the game, so the Gamemaster decides that Ambrut has succeeded with his Compose skill, and states that it may be checked. Note that no roll was necessary here, only success and the Gamemaster’s approval.

## TRAITS AND PASSIONS

As with skills, there are times during play when the Gamemaster tells a player to check one of his character’s traits or passions. This means that the character has displayed significant behavior in accordance with that trait. This action or behavior does not necessarily have to be observed by other characters or players.

If the rules for traits or passions request a roll, this means that your character might learn something, if he

acts or feels the right way. But his actions are not yet clear, or significant enough. A successful roll means he might get the check, too.

*Example of Trait/Passion Checks:* Fickle Sir Ambrut's new lady-love asks if he has ever loved any woman as deeply as he loves her. Ambrut answers, "Never has my love been so deep," choosing not to tell the woman of his recent obsession with her predecessor. The Gamemaster feels that Ambrut is being dishonest, given the depth of feeling he claimed in the poem he wrote a few weeks earlier, and states that Ambrut gets a Deceitful check.

## RESULTS OF EXPERIENCE CHECKS

When a character has a check next to a skill, trait, or passion, the player must make an experience roll during the Winter Phase. If the roll is successful, the checked value increases by 1 point. Experience rolls may bring skills over 20, with luck.

See "Winter Phase" for more information.

## MOVEMENT

Movement during the game is one of the most complicated subjects that the Gamemaster has to handle. In *Pendragon*, movement and actions are highly abstracted for the purposes of quick resolution and simplicity. The Gamemaster must be ready to adjudicate specific situations using the following rules as guidelines.

Different rates of movement are calculated according to different time scales. Of significance are *melee movement* and *scenario movement*.

## MELEE MOVEMENT

The melee round is used for game situations that must be handled second by second. Duration is defined as the time needed perform one action, possibly including the time needed to conceive of that course of action. See "Actions in Melee" (in Chapter 6) for more information.

Characters fighting one another are considered to be engaged in combat and may not move or do anything else other than fight without suffering a penalty assigned by the Gamemaster.

During melee movement (i.e., when not already engaged in combat), all characters travel 1 yard at a time, synchronously, until each has moved a total number of yards equal to his or her Movement Rate. Table-top miniature figures may be used to help determine exact movement distances, but they are not essential. In many cases, it is not necessary to determine exactly how many yards a character has moved, but only that he entered a door or approached another character close enough to engage in combat.

Remember that a character may normally perform only one action in a round.

## MOVEMENT RATE

This statistic represents the number of yards an encumbered character or creature (an armored warrior, for example, or a horse carrying a rider) can move per melee round. It also affects forced-march rates (see "Scenario Movement").

For humans, Movement Rate = (STR + DEX)/10.

For animals, Movement Rate varies. Generally, for four-legged creatures, it is equal to (STR + DEX)/5, but some creatures may have adjustments to this base.

Movement on foot uses the character's Movement Rate. If the character is mounted, he uses the mount's Movement Rate instead. Normally, the character may move a number of yards equal to his Movement Rate as his sole action for one round. (See "Actions in Melee" in Chapter 6.)

## RAPID MOVEMENT

Characters may wish to run or sprint during melee movement. In crowded combat situations, though, this option may be inappropriate. The Gamemaster always determines whether movement beyond the base rate is permitted.

**Running:** Running (sometimes referred to as *cantering* for mounts) doubles the base Movement Rate. There is no express penalty for running or for pressing a mount to a canter, but Gamemasters should be wary of players who wish to run through a crowd of combatants or a battle. Further, if it is sustained for a long period of time, running or cantering tires and weakens the runner (see "Sprinting" for suggested effects).

**Sprinting:** Sprinting (or *galloping* for horses) triples the base Movement Rate; however, if this pace is sustained for more than a few melee rounds, the Gamemaster may require a DEX roll or CON roll every subsequent round. Failure indicates that the character slows down, while a fumble indicates exhaustion and collapse. Modifiers may be applied if the sprint is continued.

## SPECIAL SITUATIONS

The rules below attempt to deal with some of the questions that can arise when characters interact during movement. Gamemasters are advised always to keep the game simple.

**Initiative:** If it is important to decide who moves or acts first, the character with the highest Movement Rate goes first. If two characters have the same Movement Rate, the person with the highest DEX has the option to decide whether he takes the initiative or lets another character move first. Otherwise, the matter is decided by the Gamemaster based on the situation of each character.

**Moving and Taking Other Actions:** If a character or creature moves only a portion of its Movement Rate in a round, then the Gamemaster decides if other actions are also allowed. Normally the "one action per round" rule should be enforced, but note that a lance attack, for example, is always made in combination with mounted movement.

See "Actions in Melee" (Chapter 6) for more information.

**Movement and Evasion:** If a character moves within 1 yard of an enemy with the intention of moving on past, or if a character in combat wishes to disengage from an opponent, evasion must be attempted as part of movement.

Friendly characters or creatures may move past each other freely without becoming entangled, unless their





paths converge. A surprised enemy, or one engaged in combat with other opponents, or with his back turned, may be moved past freely with Gamemaster approval.

See “Evasion” in Chapter 6.

**Encumbrance:** A character or creature may be “encumbered.” Knights and horses are usually treated as being encumbered during the game as their normal state of affairs, so no special rules apply. However, characters and horses used to bearing heavy loads who then find themselves *unencumbered* gain an increase of +2 to their base Movement Rate.

Thus, a knight with a base Movement Rate of 3 can travel 5 yards per melee round when unencumbered; similarly, a sumpter bearing only an empty pack has a Movement Rate of 7 (5 + 2).

The state of being “encumbered” is defined as bearing a heavy load. Clothing, or even some kinds of armor and a sword and shield, for instance, aren’t enough to constitute a heavy load for a character, but metal armor, weapons, and combat gear all together most certainly qualify as a heavy load.

Similarly, an armored knight and heavy saddle are clearly a heavy load for a horse to carry, while a small girl riding bareback is not much of a burden for most steeds.

As always, the Gamemaster is in charge of judging specific cases. In borderline situations, simply add 1 point, rather than 2, to the Movement Rate of the character or creature in question. If a character is bearing an *extremely*

heavy load, perhaps carrying another armored knight on his back, the Gamemaster might wish to reduce the Movement Rate by 1 or 2 points.

Note that a +1 or +2 bonus is already figured into Movement Rates for characters and creatures that do not normally bear heavy burdens (i.e., giants, bandits, hawks, bears, wyrms, peasants, and so forth — see Appendix 2).

*Note:* Encumbrance affects skills as well as movement: Whenever a knight fights without any leather or metal armor, he gets a +5 modifier to his weapon skill.

**Chases:** There are times when two characters are involved in a chase on foot or on horse, or when a creature is chased by several characters (or vice versa!), and so forth. If the participants’ Movement Rates are different, the character or creature with the higher rate simply catches the lower. If the rates are the same but one is more encumbered than the other, the Gamemaster should make a ruling based on common sense.

For example, two characters racing on identical horses might find that the horse carrying the lighter load (possibly the rider with the lower SIZ) gradually outdistances the other.

Alternatively, if necessary, opposed rolls on appropriate statistics can resolve these situations. For instance, when one knight chases another, opposed Horsemanship, Energetic, or DEX rolls might be appropriate (as the Gamemaster sees fit), with the winner catching or escaping the other.

As always, modifiers can be applied if necessary.

## SCENARIO MOVEMENT

Scenario movement can cover vast distances in a few words. The Travel Rates table below offers detailed guidelines for scenario movement. The Gamemaster can use the table to determine travel times for specific situations. In general, overland movement afoot is about half as fast, or perhaps slightly faster than that, when compared to mounted travel.

The distances for normal travel, as shown on the table, do not vary for individuals but are based on average travel times. On the other hand, forced marching puts character or horse movement ability to the test, and movement is affected by individual Movement Rates.

Given below on the Travel Rates table are standard rates for different types of roads and paths, using one of the four following general paces.

**Cautious:** “Cautious” movement is used when travelers are taking great care to avoid ambushes, to look for tracks or other signs, to find their way when lost, or the like.

**Leisurely:** Certain persons or groups may travel only at the “Leisurely” pace or slower: most ladies, siege trains, merchants, monks on donkeys, and badly injured characters needing Chirurgery, for example. In other cases, the Gamemaster must decide which pace is appropriate.

**Normal:** People on horse and afoot move at the same general pace for a day’s travel. However, parties on foot cannot move at the “Hurried” pace: “Normal” is the best they can do, unless they wish to try a “forced march” (see below). Most often, player knights move at the “Normal” pace.

**Hurried:** If something important is occurring or if there is otherwise great need, mounted characters may move at the “Hurried” pace without penalty.

### Travel Rates (mi./day)

| Road Type            | —Pace Maintained— |           |        |         |
|----------------------|-------------------|-----------|--------|---------|
|                      | Cautious          | Leisurely | Normal | Hurried |
| Road, Royal or Trade | 10                | 15        | 20     | 30      |
| Road, Local          | 5                 | 10        | 15     | 25      |
| Path                 | 2                 | 5         | 8      | 12      |
| Track                | 1                 | 2         | 3      | 4       |

**Royal Road:** A road protected by the laws of the High King. Crimes committed against anyone on the Royal Road are treated as an offense against the king: high treason. Otherwise this is like a trade road.

**Trade Road:** A raised dirt or stone road, repaired occasionally.

**Local Road:** An undrained, ill-repaired dirt road.

**Path:** This is a well-marked path through woods or fields.

**Track:** A barely discernible series of marks.

## UNKNOWN ROUTES

Often, player characters enter unfamiliar areas of Britain. A successful Hunting roll is needed to make progress while traveling in such areas (see the Hunting skill in Chapter 4).

## FORCED MARCH

A “forced march” is a deliberate effort to go farther and faster than normal. Making a forced march requires a

## King Arthur Encounters Travel Difficulties

The king has been marching with his men, but experiences some of the difficulties of medieval travel:

*But many days passed before the king found food or fire, only deep valleys, one after the other, hills and dales, mountains and morasses and many rank quagmires, groves of birches, swamps and springs, without decent shelter, no barns or sheds. The rocks and narrow paths were harrowing even in the telling. So terribly damp was the way that they became worn and fatigued, for even the best men can tire, as you may well know. All their food was gone that once they had in great plenty, nor could they find shelter, which might have given them relief.*

—from *Golagros and Gawaine*



CON roll for each day of the journey. If the roll is successful, add three times the character’s or mount’s Movement Rate as a bonus in miles to the appropriate distance given in the Travel Rates table, with further adjustments if the Gamemaster deems them necessary. A critical success on this CON roll has no additional effect beyond that of the standard forced march.

A failed CON roll indicates exhaustion: The character or mount stops after moving half the attempted distance and must rest for several hours, perhaps for the rest of the day (the Gamemaster must determine the exact time spent resting).

Worse, a fumbled CON roll in a forced march indicates that a serious injury was taken during the day’s travel. Distance traveled and rest needed are the same as for failure, but if a horse fumbles the roll, it is lamed. A character fumbling the roll takes 2d6 damage from heat stroke, a sprained limb, or some other travel mishap. (See “Injury and Health” in Chapter 6.)

**Example of Forced March:** Sir Ambrut must ride hard to rescue his brother. He decides to make a forced march on his best riding horse, an exceptional charger called “Flame.” He also takes another horse, an unusually hardy rouncy, as a backup. The trip is entirely along a trade road well known to Ambrut, so he should make good time.

Ambrut and his squire (leading his master’s special rouncy and mounted on his own rouncy) leave at dawn. Ambrut’s brother is imprisoned in a castle about 50 miles away, so a single day’s forced march should do it.

Flame has a Movement Rate of 9 and a CON of 13. Ambrut’s player succeeds on the CON roll for Flame, so the trip is successful. The bonus for forced marching gained by this particular horse is  $9 \times 3 = 27$  miles. The Travel Rates table gives a standard day’s movement on a trade road, at a Hurried pace, as 30 miles. Since  $30 + 27 = 57$ , Ambrut covers the 50 miles easily and arrives at the castle a short while before sunset.



The squire's horse also sustains the pace but, having a Movement Rate of only 6, gains only  $6 \times 3 = 18$  miles of movement for the day, and is thus gradually left behind as the day progresses. The squire does not arrive until very early the next day, even riding all night: The forced march rule puts an absolute limit on what can be achieved in a day.

## GLORY

The object of *Pendragon* is for your character to accumulate Glory. Knights receive Glory for doing the things that knights do, whether those are behaviors according to the ancient warrior virtues, or the late medieval ideals of chivalry and *fine amor*.

Glory is the chief mode of reward in the game, always given to a player character by the Gamemaster. Players are free to ask for Glory at any time during the game, but the Gamemaster has the final say regarding who wins Glory, how often they gain it, and how much they receive. Keep in mind the fact that this chapter contains guidelines for the Gamemaster, not exact rules that must be slavishly followed.

The concept of Glory is fairly intuitive in play, but it is important to read the information below, especially if you intend to be the Gamemaster.

Of course, real people don't have Glory numbers, but repute and personality. A character's Glory value thus measures a character's fame, success, confidence, importance, influence, and status; Glory is expressed in minstrels' songs, court gossip, peasant chatter, the prayers of holy men, enemies' curses, traders' tales, and nobles' praises. People are thus aware of each others' Glory because they all participate in the same society; while characters do not really know their exact number, everyone is extremely conscious of their status relative to others.

Thus, the Glory number is a quantification of your character's personal social position in comparison to that of others. That is, Glory is not about the *quality* of a character's reputation, but about the quantity. (Its quality is handled by the traits and passions system.) A glorious knight might walk about proudly, revered beyond other knights, yet be despised for his cowardly or treacherous deeds. King Mark of Cornwall is an excellent example of such a character.

It is important for players to understand the fact that, since Glory measures not reputation but status, successful evil knights may attain the same Glory as some chivalrous knights. Evil knights lose reputation, not Glory, for their vile deeds.

See also the Honor passion in Chapter 4.

### GAINING GLORY

Characters can get Glory by many different means, so players may choose entirely different paths to Glory for their characters. This promotes roleplaying and ensures that not all characters are the same, and that they do not need to compete for the same rewards.

Any dramatic event taking place in the game offers a potential Glory award. However, routine or mundane events rarely provide much opportunity for Glory. At times, simple

participation in a significant event is enough, but successful action is generally required to gain Glory.

Almost any action that an ambitious knight performs can gain Glory. Examples of events that normally provide Glory include defeating an enemy in personal combat, getting married, being made a lord, successfully exhibiting a skill at court, spending a great deal of money, and finding the solution to an eerie magical riddle.

Glory can even be gained from events or circumstances that occur in the background, outside of game sessions, without the character's direct attention or interaction. Ownership of land and castles, for example, grants the character Glory every year. Notoriety and reputation also gain yearly Glory.

In addition, because society is concerned with personal behavior as well as combat and daring, Glory can also be earned from evidence of high passion and from faithful service to chivalrous, romantic, or religious ideals.

Specific ways to get Glory are discussed below. *Glory, once gained, cannot be lost.*

### WHO CAN GAIN GLORY?

Any person, whether peasant or king, may gain Glory. Further, any two characters gain the same amount of Glory for the same action. However, knights and higher-ranking members of the noble class are very jealous of their prerogatives: They alone do the deeds of knights. Squires, sergeants, and other characters below the status of knight may frequently be denied the opportunity to gain Glory. This must be the case in order to keep the game authentic to its sources.

Most courtly situations in which Glory can be gained are thus off-limits to characters of less than knightly status. For example, feasts and tournaments are held for knights and their ladies only. Squires are expected to serve humbly, not to dance with the ladies or show off their other skills before the court.

On adventures, all sergeants or squires must be under the orders of a knight, whether a player knight or a Gamemaster knight. As the premier warriors, knights are expected to do most of the fighting, while their squires render assistance by fetching new lances and horses, providing first aid, and possibly fighting off foot soldiers and other rabble. Squires and sergeants are expected to fight when the combat is unchivalrous or when the knights ask for help, and not at any other time.

In many cases, only the knights fight, so they get all the Glory from such events. During combat, any sergeant or squire who rudely shoulders aside knights in order to grab Glory may be declared outlaw or simply killed immediately. In non-combat situations, a presumptuous or insolent sergeant or squire is simply removed from the room, or placed in a dungeon if he resists. Gamemasters must enforce these points consistently to maintain the authenticity of the game.

### GLORY AND QUALITY

Once a character begins to accumulate Glory, it is inevitable that the player will want to know where his character stands relative to other famous knights of the realm. The chart below answers this question in general terms,

and defines the range of Glory for all player and Gamemaster characters.

| Glory       | Quality of Knight                                 |
|-------------|---|
| 1–999       | Non-knight (serf, merchant, squire, damsel, etc.) |
| 1,000–1,999 | Average knight                                    |
| 2,000–3,999 | “Notable” knight                                  |
| 4,000–7,999 | “Famous” knight                                   |
| 8,000+      | “Extraordinary” knight                            |

Tremendous heroes such as Sir Lancelot are far superior in Glory to almost all other knights in Britain, with good reason. It is unlikely that player characters will attain Glory similar to that of King Arthur or Sir Lancelot: There can be only one High King and one perfect knight in Britain.

Players should set realistic goals, and not expect the Gamemaster to let their characters become famous after just a few adventures. Only characters who have been through scores of adventures can hope to attain the status of Extraordinary knight. Even a very active and very successful knight errant collects only about 100 to 200 Glory per adventure, and perhaps another 100 at the end of the year for maintaining his ideals and pursuing his passions.

## GLORY AWARDS

*Pendragon* is a social game; Glory represents the respect of one’s peers, not something palpable like gold. Thus, to a great extent, Glory is dependent on the reaction of the Gamemaster and the other players to your roleplaying. This section offers guidelines, but not absolute rules, for earning Glory.

If you impress everyone with your character’s actions, chances are that he receives some Glory. If your actions during the game are banal or uninspired, or if you rely on a powerful fellow character to gain attention and success, you should expect to receive less than the usual Glory for your actions.

Many successes in the game are not worth Glory, and those that are usually gain a character only *ordinary* Glory (see below). The high points in a character’s career, though, such as the ceremony of knighthood, are extraordinary events. Those occasions from which more than 1,000 points can be gained are invariably unique and deadly (the Battle of Badon Hill, for instance).

Gamemasters may be tempted to award excessive Glory during moments of excitement and drama. Do your best to keep to the guidelines printed here: Once a bad precedent is set, every player begins to expect similarly high amounts of Glory in subsequent games. “Glory inflation” can ruin a campaign very quickly.

First, determine the appropriate category for the event: *mundane*, *minimal*, *ordinary*, *heroic*, or *extraordinary*. In some situations, important events take place but no Glory is gained; this occurs when the action, though successful, is dishonorable.

### TABLE 5–1: BASIC GLORY AWARDS

| Accomplishment     | Glory Won |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Mundane            | 0         |
| Minimal            | 1         |
| Ordinary (Default) | 10        |
| Heroic             | 100       |
| Extraordinary      | 1,000     |

*Mundane*: Some actions are beneath notice in the game, and do not accrue Glory. For instance, a knight does not gain Glory simply for drawing his sword from his scabbard, no matter how impressive the flourish.

Occasionally an act deserves 0 Glory, but certain oblique effects of the action might result in great Glory. For example, when Sir Balin decapitates the Lady of the Lake in King Arthur’s Court, he receives no Glory for the killing, for he commits a dishonorable act of treason by so offending the king’s hospitality.

However, he might well win Glory for achieving such a dramatic and violent success with his Sword skill (killing his foe instantly), for a critical success roll on his Love (family) roll, and for another critical success on his Hate (Lady of the Lake) roll.

*Minimal*: The minimum Glory that a character can gain from a significant event is 1 point. Killing a snake might be worth 1 Glory point if circumstances are appropriate. In most cases, though, if an event is worth Glory at all, the character should gain more than 1 point.

If the Gamemaster is dividing Glory among a group, and each individual would receive less than 1 point by a strict division of the Glory, then each individual gains 1 point.

*Ordinary*: The common amount of Glory that should be awarded for a significant action or event is 10 points. Most normal actions during the game that are worth praise should receive 10 Glory. These might include victory over a bandit, a successful speech, or an act of courage.

As a default, the Gamemaster should hand out 10 Glory whenever he or she is unsure of how much to award, or whenever an argument over Glory seems likely. Gamemasters may reward excellent roleplayers with 10 Glory (per action) as a reward for their fine play-acting and believable choices.

*Heroic*: Most heroic acts or important events should earn 100 points of Glory. By this definition, a heroic event is an order of magnitude more significant than an ordinary event. Keep in mind that even 100 points is a substantial amount for a single action or event. Still, some heroic events and actions are worth as much as 250 to 500 points.

The following events or actions are considered “heroic” (note the suggested Glory awards in parentheses beside each):

- Behaving in accordance with all the religious virtues for one year (100)
- Being the Grand Champion in a medium or large tournament (250)
- Being the champion of a small tournament (100)
- Fighting successfully through 8 rounds of a large battle (400)
- Fighting successfully through 8 rounds of a medium-size battle (250)

*Extraordinary*: For an action or event that signifies a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, 100 Glory is clearly not enough. Such extraordinary actions or events gain 1,000 points, an order of magnitude over that gained from heroic actions. Adventures yielding opportunities for extraordinary Glory are extremely rare; only something incredible, an awesomely heroic and successful action, or a unique





magical or sacred ritual qualifies as extraordinary. Perhaps one adventure in twenty, at best, might offer this opportunity. Such adventures must involve great risk or demand great roleplaying from characters.

For example, defeating an extraordinary monster like a huge fire-breathing wyrm (one with statistics tougher than those shown in Appendix 2) might gain 1,000 points, should the Gamemaster feel it appropriate. But such creatures are rare indeed, and should easily kill most knights foolish enough to go against them single-handed.

Adventures involving tasks crucial to the realm, such as rescuing Queen Guenever, might yield extraordinary Glory if completed successfully. However, only extraordinary knights (those already having 8,000 or more Glory) known personally to King Arthur would ever be considered for participation in such important events — these sorts of adventures are the domain of the peers of the Round Table. Until they attain great fame, player knights must accustom themselves to tasks of lesser significance.

The fact that it usually takes a group of knights to achieve such great things (unless the knight is of Lancelot's stature) means that few will gain a full 1,000 Glory for successfully completing any adventure of this sort.

A few extraordinary non-adventuring acts might gain extraordinary Glory, and each of these, with one exception, can occur only once in a knight's life:

- being knighted
- being made a king
- being married (this being the one exception to events that might garner Glory more than once in a knight's life)
- dying heroically in battle
- joining the Round Table
- participating in the High Mass of the Holy Grail

## BONUS GLORY

Sometimes the nature or circumstance of a deed warrants a bonus to the Glory earned. Gamemasters and players both should be alert for unusual situations, desperate successes, exciting solutions, and dramatic incidents that might warrant a bonus.

Some reasons to award extra Glory might include the following:

- Success against bad odds (worse than 3:1): Add 100 per knight.
- Extraordinary witness to the event: Add 25 for a greater noble (earl or duke), 50 for a king or Round Table knight; 100 for your own lord; 150 for the High King (or Queen).
- Helped a famous hero (for instance, a Round Table knight): Add 100 Glory.
- Extraordinary flourish and show: Add 10.
- Made the Gamemaster laugh uproariously: Add 10.

## GROUP GLORY AWARDS

Glory is often attained by a lone individual, but this is not always the case. Sometimes player characters cooperate to achieve some task or goal. The Gamemaster divides his



## Comparing Glory



Sir Tristram, traveling incognito, is staying at a friendly lord's castle. He and his host have a discussion regarding which knights are among the best (i.e., the most glorious) of the realm. Tristram defends his opinions vigorously except where one knight is concerned.

*Now turn we unto Sir Tristram, that asked the knight his host if he saw late any knights adventur-ous.*

*"Sir," he said, "the last night here lodged with me Ector de Maris and a damosel with him, and that damosel told me that he was one of the best knights of the world."*

*"That is not so," said Sir Tristram, "for I know four better knights of his own blood, and the first is Sir Lancelot du Lak, call him the best knight, and Sir Bors de Ganis, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Blamore de Ganis, and Sir Gaheris."*

*"Nay," said his host, "Sir Gawaine is a better knight than he."*

*"That is not so," said Tristram, "for I have met with them both, and I felt Sir Gaheris for the better knight, and Sir Lamorak, I call him as good as any of them except Sir Lancelot."*

*"Why name ye not Sir Tristram?" said his host, "for I account him as good as any of them."*

*"I know not Sir Tristram," said Tristram.*

—Malory IX, 43

**Note on Traits:** If he were a *Pendragon* player character, Sir Tristram would receive a Modest check for his self-effacing modesty, for, especially while he is hiding his identity, he might account "Sir Tristram" highly.



Glory award among several characters whenever it is clear that more than one individual was responsible for a success. For example, if five characters cooperate to defeat a group of bandits, each of the five receives some of the credit.

The Gamemaster always determines the division of Glory. Usually Glory is divided equally among all the participants, perhaps with an extra portion awarded to any particularly deserving individual for heroic behavior. However, the Gamemaster may choose to award most of the Glory to one of the participants, rather than giving anything extra, with the rest receiving very small awards. The wise Gamemaster always confers with the players about such matters, but the decision, once made, is final.

If a player wishes, he may assign his character's portion of the Glory to someone else. There are precedents for such behavior in Arthurian literature. Sir Lancelot, for example, occasionally gives credit for his deeds to other knights. The Gamemaster may choose to award a Generous and/or Humble check to the character for such an action. (See "Obtaining Experience" earlier in this chapter for more information on trait checks.)



## NON-STANDARD GLORY

The following section lists the primary kinds of actions or behaviors from which Glory may be gained. Specific Glory awards are given in each of these categories; again, these should be used as a guideline, not an ironclad set of rules.

However, the Gamemaster should be wary of adding other things to the lists, especially if the items added do not clearly fit into one of the following categories, for not everything a character does should be worth Glory.

### INDIVIDUAL COMBAT

Knights are warriors first and foremost, and their fame is increased most significantly by combat, whether against bandits, monsters, soldiers, or other worthy knights. The basic rationale is simple: the more fearsome or important the foe a knight overcomes, the greater the Glory.

If the loser had an unusual advantage in the combat, such as a large damage value, or a magic shield, or inspiration from a passion, then more Glory for the winner is appropriate, since the risk was greater. Creatures follow the same rationale as human opponents: A creature with an unusual power or statistic yields the victor extra Glory. Likewise, if the enemy defeated has its own Glory, or is significant in some way beyond its simple combat ability, then the victor's Glory should be increased. Thus, an old but famous knight would be worth somewhat more Glory to defeat than a bandit with the same skills and equipment.

Many sample enemies — both humans and creatures of all kinds — and the Glory gained for defeating them are offered in Appendix 2. The Gamemaster must determine the amount of extra Glory if the creature has different statistics or capabilities from the standard. As well, situations of extreme danger or significance, or those combats taking place in a famous noble's court or tournament field, may result in more than the usual Glory for the winner, as determined by the Gamemaster.

Mortal combat with another knight is the supreme challenge, and great Glory may thereby accrue. However, combat between knights in *Pendragon* is often initiated “for love” (i.e., of fighting). Such combat is normally performed with one or more customary restrictions that reduce the chance of maiming or fatal injury. Combat is resolved by some minor event, such as Knockdown, rather than by the surrender or death of the loser.

Consider “defeat” to mean that the enemy surrendered or was captured, incapacitated, or killed. If the enemy's plans were quashed but he escaped, no Glory is gained for the defeat (but see “Successful Tasks”).

Note that if several knights cooperate to defeat an enemy, the Glory is divided equally among them. If a combat is fought without intent to kill (such as a duel held only until one knight knocks the other down, or to first blood), then the Glory should be reduced to 1/10th of the normal value.

*Example of Combat Glory:* Young Sir Ambrut jousts with a knight he meets at a river ford. Ambrut is a new knight on his first year's adventuring, with only 1,100 Glory to his name. Ambrut loses the joust, so the other knight gains the usual 50 Glory for defeating an average knight



(see the Glory Ratings table earlier in this chapter). However, because the joust was “for love,” the knight receives only 1/10th of 50, or 5 Glory.

## MARRIAGE

Marriage grants both participants Glory. Each partner acquires Glory equal to that currently possessed by the new spouse, up to a maximum of 1,000. Thereafter, each continues to collect Glory individually, not mutually.

If one’s spouse dies and the character later remarries, he or she collects the new Glory for the new spouse normally.

## NON-COMBAT ACTIONS

The Gamemaster should award Glory for any chivalrous or dramatic actions of note during the game, such as an act of great generosity or courage, or a remarkable performance with a harp or lute during a feast. Usually the reward entails a successful die roll, but not always.

**Skill, Traits, and Passions:** If the Gamemaster feels it is appropriate, a character who succeeds in a statistic, skill, trait, or passion roll during courtly or public circumstances may gain Glory equal to the adjusted number rolled (i.e., from 1 to 20). Remember that any critical success is considered to be a roll of 20. See Chapter 8 for information on die rolls and successes.

A non-combat action of great significance to an adventure may gain Glory equal to double the value rolled or even more, at the Gamemaster’s option. In the court of King Arthur, a success might gain five times the number rolled in Glory. However, five is the maximum multiplier, and should rarely be used except in extremely dramatic or complicated situations. (Moreover, simply awarding 100 points for a heroic action is much simpler and faster.)

Glory may be gained from chivalrous actions even without a roll. For example, a player may state that his character performs a remarkably generous act. As long as this is consistent with the character’s normal behavior and reputation, no roll is needed. Of course, in such cases the Gamemaster has no starting number of points to award. Usually he should award 10 points of Glory, the normal amount, or — if the action was heroic — 100 points.

In addition, any trait or passion having a value of 16 or higher results in a Glory reward equal to that value during each Winter Phase.

**Honors and Titles:** In addition, Glory is gained for receiving honors significant to a knight and his society. Being knighted, joining the Round Table, and celebrating the High Mass of the Holy Grail are all examples of this type of honor, but these are dealt with elsewhere.

This one-time Glory is received at the end of the year.

| Honor or Rank Attained   | Glory* |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Banneret knight          | 100    |
| Companion of Arthur      | 100    |
| Duke                     | 750    |
| Earl                     | 350    |
| King                     | 1,000  |
| Officer to a duke        | 75     |
| Officer to a king        | 100    |
| Officer to an earl       | 35     |
| Officer to the Pendragon | 250    |
| Vassal knight            | 50     |

If a character regains a title after having lost it for some reason, no Glory is gained.

See Chapter 7 for more information on various noble titles and their ramifications.

**Conspicuous Consumption:** Generally, each expenditure of £1 or more (whether on purchases for oneself or on gifts for others) also accrues Glory for the buyer. For each *libra* up to £100, the buyer gains 1 Glory per *librum* spent; for every £10 thereafter, he gains another 1 point. Thus, a gift of £120 would result in 102 Glory for the gift-giver.

**Sponsoring a Tournament:** This Glory is per tournament, received at the end of the year in which the tournament takes place.

| Size of Tourney | Glory* |
|-----------------|--------|
| Neighborhood    | 50     |
| Local           | 100    |
| Regional        | 200    |
| Regal           | 300    |

See Appendix 5 for more information on tournaments.

*Example of Non-Combat Glory:* Sir Ambrut goes on a hazardous magical adventure late in his first year, in which someone must suffer being bitten by a panther before the group can pass through the gate that the sinister beast guards. Every knight on the adventure attempts to make a Valorous roll, but either the players are unlucky or their characters are daunted by the panther’s cruel appearance, and only Sir Ambrut succeeds. He steps forward, presenting his naked arm to the slavering jaws, and receives 10 Glory for his heroic and selfless action. (If the action were crucial to the story or if Sir Ambrut would suffer long-term ill effects from the bite, he might be awarded 100 points for his heroism.)

## PARTICIPATION IN NOTABLE EVENTS

Great events such as tournaments, battles, and religious or feudal ceremonies are at the heart of the game. Simply participating in such exciting events can net Glory of a magnitude based on the importance of the event. Note that qualification to receive such honors may require many successful actions.

**Battles:** Glory awards for participation in battle depend on how well the character and the army fought. Glory is gained on a per-round basis, and is derived from the size of the battle, with adjustments for various factors. See the “Chivalric Duties” chapter for more information on battles and the Glory awards thereof.

**Tournaments:** Glory in tournaments is normally gained through individual combat, as described above; however, a small amount is gained simply for participating, and a larger sum can also be earned by winning either of the two main events, the joust or the melee.

| Size of Tourney | Glory* |
|-----------------|--------|
| Neighborhood    | 50     |
| Local           | 100    |
| Regional        | 200    |
| Regal           | 300    |

\* This amount is for the champion in the joust and in the melee; other participants in the tourney gain one-tenth of this amount.

See Appendix 5 for more information on tournaments.

**Successful Quests or Tasks:** Members of any quest group or adventuring party gain Glory when the task is successfully completed. (Note: A scenario or adventure may require several tasks to be completed as part of the process.) Task Glory should be awarded whenever a task is important to a scenario, as long as it offers some challenge. The scenario need not involve any rolls or checks, and no enemies need be defeated or killed.

The Glory awarded for successful completion of a task may supplement incidental Glory gained for defeating enemies, participation in important events, etc. If a knight is specifically ordered by his lord to slay a famous ogre, he gains both defeating enemy Glory and task Glory.

Assuming cooperation and similar contributions, each participant receives an equal share of the Glory. The Gamemaster should reduce or eliminate the share of any character who held the others back or remained largely uninvolved.

| <b>Significance of Task</b>  | <b>Glory*</b> |
|--|---------------|
| Trivial (e.g. save a maid from a wolf)   | 1             |
| Ordinary (e.g. carry a message through unknown territory)  | 10            |
| Heroic (e.g. free prisoners from a tribe of giants; carry a message safely through a very dangerous place) | 100           |
| Laudable (e.g. lead a tiny army to repel an invading horde of Irish raiders)                               | 250           |
| Extraordinary (e.g. rescue Queen Guenever from kidnapping)   | 1,000         |

*Example of Participation Glory:* Sir Ambrut and his lord Sir Yvane enter a chapel where a priest garbed all in white magically heals Ambrut of a terrible wound inflicted by a panther's bite. Both knights gain 10 Glory simply for being involved in a miraculous event.

## PASSIVE GLORY

Glory can be gained without any action taking place. Instead, the Glory award is simply calculated and collected during the Winter Phase of the game.

**Traits and Passions:** In addition to gaining Glory from successful trait and passion rolls, a character gains a Glory reward during each Winter Phase from any trait or passion having a value of 16 or higher during that year's adventures.

**Quality of Maintenance:** This Glory is received annually. The amount of Glory equals the amount of extra money spent on the knight's maintenance (see Chapter 8).

**Landholdings:** This Glory is received annually by the knight enfeoffed.

**Castle Holdings:** This Glory is received annually by the knight enfeoffed.

**Ideals:** Meeting the Religious requirements for a knight (see "Magical Virtues" in Chapter 4) earns 100 Glory during each Winter Phase, in addition to any points gained from the required traits.

*Example of Passive Glory:* Sir Eoric the Golden is famed for his strong-headed lack of caution. In game terms, this translates into a Reckless value of 16. He gains 16 Glory for his notorious rashness every year during the Winter Phase as long as he retains at least a 16 in that trait.

## REWARDS OF GLORY

A character having 1,000 or more Glory has attained considerable renown, and gains special benefits and advantages thereby. The obvious benefit is enhanced status, which can aid the character in many ways. In addition, though, high Glory can directly affect the mechanics of game play.

### SKILL MODIFIER

Glory indicates status and importance, not just notoriety. In formal situations where characters interact, such as the courts of nobles, great status may enhance the character's capabilities to influence or impress others. Normally the character must have a respectable reputation to do so, though: Evil knights with no honor, even if very powerful and influential, won't usually be invited to court.

Only non-combat skills such as Flirting, Singing, or Oratory can be enhanced by Glory in this way. The rationale is that characters of great Glory are much more likely to receive attention and praise, and less likely to be judged harshly if their performance is mediocre.

If the Gamemaster approves, a character may gain a modifier of up to +1 per 1,000 points of Glory to the skill being used. Thus, a character with 8,200 Glory could gain a maximum modifier of +8 to a courtly skill in this way. A player can always request such a bonus to courtly skills, but the Gamemaster is always the arbiter of how much or how little of a bonus the character actually gains.

*Example of Skill Modifier:* Sir Yvane (Glory 4,500) wishes to impress a lady with his charm and wit. Yvane uses his Flirting skill, and his player requests a modifier to take into account his character's impressive Glory. The Gamemaster concurs, but knows that this particular lady is not particularly influenced by Yvane's Glory — she is far more concerned with his wealth and his appearance — so Sir Yvane gains only a +1 modifier to Flirting in this situation even though his Glory could permit a modifier of up to +5.

### BONUS POINTS

Characters with 1,000 or more Glory derive measurable benefits from their status: For each 1,000 Glory points, a character may add 1 bonus point to any one trait, passion, statistic, or skill during the Winter Phase of the game. Bonus points might allow characters to bend or break certain game rules, and can confer heroic statistics on characters with already high abilities. This bending of the rules occurs in two ways.

First, statistics can be increased using bonus points, even when already at the cultural maximum, and even after the age of 35. Thus, you might see Extraordinary knights with statistic values of 25 or even greater.

Second, bonus points allow any statistic (attribute scores, traits, passions, or skills) to increase freely, without the character having to allocate training points or make a successful experience check roll (again, see "Winter Phase").

Once bonus points are added, they are not distinguished from ordinary points. They cannot be taken away directly, although their results can be lost. For example, a statistic to which a bonus point was once added could still decrease due to aging.





## STATUS

The following rules give the standard ways in which increased status and prestige from Glory translate into game terms. Both players and Gamemaster should be alert for other ways to bring Glory into the story. Glory should be a source of pride, and can be an excellent basis for roleplaying.

**Increased Recognition:** Glorious individuals are well known in the lands of Britain. Each 1,000 Glory adds 1 point to a knight's chance of being identified using Recognize or Heraldry skills (see "Skills" in Chapter 4).

**Character Precedence:** When characters are in a social situation among chivalrous folk, the character with the highest Glory takes precedence over others of equal title. Titles of rank still maintain their precedence, of course, so a king or other lord is unlikely to defer to an ordinary knight, no matter what the knight's Glory.

In situations where feats of arms may be called for, it is the privilege of the greatest to make the first attempt. In social situations, "precedence" means that the person of lower rank goes first. For example, when entering a feast, the lower-ranked individuals go first and the highest-ranked person is last.

*Example of Precedence:* Four knights are preparing to enter a mysterious ruined castle. The laws of courtesy and chivalry accord the knight of highest Glory the right to enter first. If there is only one enemy to defeat inside the castle, he thus gets the chance to fight first, and gain all the Glory thereby.

## TRACKING GLORY

A character's Glory may increase a great number of times during his career. The player should keep careful track of each major award. Part of the fun in the game is looking back with pride on the adventures, tournaments, and battles your character was involved in.

Glory should be recorded on the character sheet, written in under the heading "Glory This Game," as soon as it is gained. At the end of the session or adventure, a year or more of game time will usually have passed. On the back of the character sheet is a large space labeled "History," in which you should record all significant events in the adventure that gained Glory, with the year clearly noted in the space provided.

*Example of Recording Glory:* In game year 532, his second year in play, Sir Ambrut participates in an adventure in which he and his comrades successfully vanquish a powerful group of faerie knights in a castle. The Gamemaster's title for the adventure is "The Dark Tower." During the same year, while traveling, Sir Ambrut also slays a lion in an incident unconnected with the main story.

At the end of the year, during which Ambrut earned 45 miscellaneous points, the Gamemaster announces that all participants gain 100 Glory for their clever and successful solution to the adventure, which he feels was *heroic* in overall significance and drama. The Gamemaster also awards Ambrut 250 Glory for single-handedly defeating the lion (a remarkable feat).

Sir Ambrut's player adds two entries on the back of the character sheet:

| Year | Important Event           | New    | Total |
|------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| 532  | The Dark Tower            | 45+100 | 1355  |
| 532  | Slew a lion single-handed | 250    | 1605  |

In later years, Sir Ambrut may look back with pleasure at this record of his success and courage. When someone asks, "What deeds of fame have you performed?" Ambrut's player can check the back of the character sheet and answer accurately.

## THE WINTER PHASE

Winter is the time for rest, recuperation, and character growth. During this time, knights engage in training, amorous pursuits, and gossip. In game terms, the players perform character updating.

Although most military activity stops for the winter, people still are active as they gather for feasts and holy days. These meetings are of major importance; a lord often calls his vassals to feast at his castle, or travels through the snow to visit each of them at their own holdings.

Thus, most of the wintertime is spent in socially oriented scenarios, if any at all. Gamemasters might wish to run more typical scenarios during the winter; however, if so, they will have to rule as to whether the normal opportunities for training are available during that same year, or lost due to the characters being in action instead.

The Winter Phase is formalized into these steps, which should be handled in the order listed.

1. Perform Solo Scenario (if applicable)
2. Roll for Experience (if applicable)
3. Check for Aging (if applicable)
4. Check Economic Circumstances
5. Make Stable Rolls
6. Make Family Rolls
7. Undergo Training and Practice
8. Compute Glory
9. Add Bonuses from Glory (if applicable)

### STEP 1: SOLO SCENARIOS

Your character may benefit from one or more "solo scenarios" (see Appendix 3). This is particularly important if you were absent for a play session and your knight thus missed the last game year of play. Later in the campaign, Romance may be done in secret, so romantic knights will wish to utilize this step. Check with the Gamemaster.

### STEP 2: EXPERIENCE ROLLS

Characters spend some of the winter reflecting back over the year that has gone by. This process is simulated using an "experience roll." Throughout game play during the game's summer season, potential improvements are recorded as an increase in the checked skill, passion, or trait value (see "Obtaining Experience").

The experience roll process is the same whether you seek to increase a skill, a passion, or a trait. Attributes (STR, DEX, etc.) cannot be increased this way. Roll d20 once for

# The Courtly Year

Gamemasters may wish to use the following structure to help shape their campaign. This format gives plenty of opportunity to use courtly as well as combat skills.

## Easter Feast (Spring Court)

As the flowers bloom and the crops peep forth, knights report to their lords' courts to see how their friends and enemies have fared over the winter, and also to see what business they will have for the upcoming season.

## Pentecost

Every Pentecost after he ascends the throne, King Arthur will hold a great feast at Camelot, where he expects all the Round Table knights to report their deeds of the past year. Many people flock to court to witness this. This is a natural time for characters to visit and make contacts with the great lords and knights of the High King's court.

## Summer Adventure Season

Summer sees the characters off to perform their knightly duties. Player knights may have normal duties

for their lord, but they are also likely to go adventuring. They may visit the courts of other lords, perhaps even in foreign lands.

## Harvest

Knights retire to their lord's castle or, if vassal knights, to their own manors to oversee the harvest. (This is the time to calculate manor income, as explained below.) They then retire for the cold season with their families.

## Running the Winter Phase

In addition to the usual activities of the Winter Phase, knights visit their lord's castles at midwinter, and perhaps those of other friends and allies, for Christmas feasts and other seasonal festivities. Other visitors are likely to be about as well. Bachelor knights receive their annual stipend.

This is an opportunity to hobnob with one's lord, his family, and his court.



each experience check you have on your character sheet. If the number rolled is *greater* than the current value, then the character learned from experience and adds 1 point to that value. If the value is already at 20 or greater, a roll of 20 still boosts it by 1 point. Thus, a character with a checked Proud trait of 24 who received a 20 on the experience check roll would increase his Proud statistic to 25.

The process is repeated for every check on your sheet. Each skill gets only one check per year, but any number of skills may be checked. The number of successes achieved during play is not relevant: only one check can appear in any box. The player determines the order in which he rolls for checks.

If your primary squire has any checks, you may roll for each of his skills normally as well.

## STEP 3: AGING

Increase your character's age by one year. In game terms, all aging is done during the Winter Phase, regardless of your character's actual birth date. Your squire(s) also age at this point, and a player knight's squire is always replaced with a new 15-year-old squire upon reaching age 21.

Aging eventually takes even the most gifted character out of play, usually around age 50 or later. When any attribute, even APP, reaches a value of 3 or less, the character is considered bedridden and may no longer participate in active play. A bedridden character no longer receives Glory unless circumstances are truly unusual, but continues to age. He may still give orders (which will probably be ignored), write a will, tell tales of his adventures, or take other actions that the Gamemaster permits. When any attribute reaches 0, the character dies.

**Aging Procedure:** Every character of 35 years of age or more must roll on Table 5-2: Aging each winter. The ultimate result of aging may be a random reduction in one or more of the character's statistics. For example, in a given year, a character might lose 1 point of STR and 1 point of CON, or 2 points of SIZ. In many years of aging, no statistics are lost at all; at worst, no more than 4 points can be lost in a single year's aging.

Roll 2d6 and consult the table to find the number of statistics affected by aging this year. The result from Table 5-2 is the number of rolls you must then make on Table 5-3. For example, if the first roll is a 4, you must roll twice on Table 5-3.

**TABLE 5-2: AGING**

| 2d6 Result | No. of Stats Affected |
|------------|-----------------------|
| 2          | 4                     |
| 3          | 3                     |
| 4          | 2                     |
| 5          | 1                     |
| 6-8        | 0                     |
| 9          | 1                     |
| 10         | 2                     |
| 11         | 3                     |
| 12         | 4                     |

Rolling on the Statistics Lost table determines which statistic values, if any, are reduced by 1 point. For example, if Table 5-2 tells you to roll three times on the following table, and all three results are 2s, then your character loses 3 points of DEX. Note that a roll of 6 on the Statistics Lost table indicates that no statistic is lost from that particular die roll.

A character may die as a result of rolling on this table if the result brings any statistic to 0.



**TABLE 5—3: STATISTICS LOST**

| 1d6 Result | Stat Reduced |
|------------|--------------|
| 1          | SIZ          |
| 2          | DEX          |
| 3          | STR          |
| 4          | CON          |
| 5          | APP          |
| 6          | No loss      |

*Note:* This important table is also used when a character receives a Major or Mortal Wound, suffers shock from a failed passion result, or perhaps suffers from some magical effect.

When characters lose statistics from Tables 5–2 and 5–3, whether as a result of aging or from some other source, various natural forces such as disease or inimical magic are often blamed. Thus, for example, characters who suffer a loss of SIZ or STR may be said to have been “withered by the Evil Eye” or afflicted with “elf stroke”; loss of APP is commonly ascribed to the “pox.” A loss of DEX is commonly referred to as “the palsy,” while a loss of CON is likely attributed to “consumption.”

## STEP 4: ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Every character must determine his situation as regards food, money, clothing, possessions, and holdings in consultation with the Gamemaster. An overall grade of maintenance must be established for your character. See “Standards of Living” in Chapter 8 to help make the appropriate determination.

Ask the Gamemaster if anything important has happened to your character’s lands and economic needs, keeping notes as needed. Raids, unscheduled visits by a lord, or even faerie curses might reduce a knight’s economic circumstances, forcing a reduction in his grade of maintenance, while a very good harvest might let a knight increase his grade of maintenance.

Gifts given by the lord to the knight, if any, should also be determined now, and any plunder or other valuable items gained during the last year should be evaluated for worth. (At this stage, buying and selling may be required to convert goods into cash.) Gifts and plunder may be substantial enough that a vassal knight can maintain or even increase his grade of maintenance, even though his lord has not directly provided for it.

Now, based on the results of the above considerations, the player knight is assigned to one of the standard grades of maintenance. If nothing remarkable has occurred in terms of your character’s personal wealth, for good or ill, then your character uses the same grade of maintenance, if any, that he had last year.

### EFFECTS OF MAINTENANCE

Based on his grade of maintenance, as determined above, a knight incurs various modifiers to rolls in subsequent steps of the Winter Phase. Keep track of these modifiers on a piece of scrap paper.

**Impoverished:** This is a disastrous economic state in which to find oneself, little better than the lot of a common peasant. No knight should suffer such a state if any alternative is available and consistent with the dictates of loyalty and honor.

An Impoverished Knight suffers a –15 modifier on all rolls made during Step 5 and Step 6 of the Winter Phase, treating rolls of 0 or less as 1s. Further, his armor suffers a permanent 1-point loss of reduction value (applicable every winter) due to severe rust and neglect of proper repair and care. Finally, he must make a CON roll or lose 1 point of CON, as if through aging, due to the hardships of having insufficient shelter.

However, even with all this to suffer, the knight loses no Glory, nor do his traits and passions change. The state of a knight’s reputation is independent of such petty issues as money.

**Poor:** This grade of maintenance is unfortunate but not disastrous. Many vassal knights (most player characters) may suffer this state for a year or two during their careers. Household knights have little control over their state of maintenance, and may be kept at this level if they are greatly disfavored by their lord or if their lord has himself become poor.

The knight suffers a –3 modifier on all rolls made during Step 5 and on rolls on the Child Survival table during Step 6, treating rolls of 0 or less as 1s; for each consecutive year that knight has been Impoverished or Poor, he suffers an additional –3 modifier to these rolls, so that a knight who has been poor for 4 years suffers a –12 penalty. He also suffers a –5 modifier to his roll on the Childbirth table in Step 6.

**Ordinary:** Household knights are almost always maintained at this level. In general, vassal knights (most player characters) are capable only of maintaining themselves at this grade, unless they have gained wealth from plunder or ransoms.

No special effects or modifiers apply. All tables are rolled on normally.

**Rich:** Lord knights are usually expected to maintain themselves at this grade. They normally have the resources to do so unless disaster or war strikes their lands. In rare instances, household knights whose lords are exceptionally wealthy may be kept at this grade.

During Step 6, the knight receives a +1 modifier when rolling on the Child Survival table and a +3 modifier on the Childbirth table.

**Superlative:** Only the richest knights and greatest lords can maintain themselves at this grade. During Step 5, the knight receives a +2 modifier when rolling on the Horse Survival table and a +3 modifier on the Childbirth table. During Step 6, he receives a +3 modifier when rolling on the Child Survival table and a +5 modifier on the Childbirth table.

### CLOTHING VALUE

For all grades of maintenance, reduce the character’s best suit of clothing to half its previous value. This reflects the fact that even the most expensive formal clothes go quickly out of style, in addition to suffering normal wear and tear. New clothes can be purchased if the knight has the means (again, see “Standards of Living” in Chapter 8).

## STEP 5: STABLE ROLLS

Every horse owned by the knight must be checked to see if it survived the winter. Horses may die, given bad luck or poor conditions of care.

Roll d20 for each horse owned, applying appropriate modifiers.

| d20 Result* | Horse's Fate            |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1–2         | Horse dies or is ruined |
| 3 or more   | Horse remains healthy   |

\* All horses suffer a –1 modifier for each year of the horse's age beyond 7 years.

Vassal knights may get new animals from their lord at some point during the following year's scenario, as needed, to maintain the minimum stable of one charger, two rouncys, and one sumpter. Any additional or unusual horses (superior chargers, destriers, unique horses) that perish need not be replaced.

## STEP 6: FAMILY ROLLS

Your character's family already exists, but children are desirable, especially for a vassal knight. The ideal way to gain children is through marriage. Once a marriage is achieved, legitimate children are possible. The wife's Glory and dowry are also desirable — see below.

If your character is unmarried and wishes to remain so this winter, you may skip the marriage and childbirth portions of this step. (If you wish to roll on the childbirth table but not the marriage table, you may do that as well.)

### MARRIAGE

When a player wishes his character to marry, the Gamemaster rules whether this honor is possible for the character at this point in the campaign. A marriage may require some roleplaying to find the wife; alternately, the Random Marriage table can be used. No characters start the game already married.

Most knights' marriages are one of two types — marriage below one's class or marriage within one's class. To marry *above* your class, such as into a count's or a duke's holding, requires game play, not random die rolls.

Any knight may choose to have "kept women" (i.e., those which are not wives), but they each require a fee of 10£ per year. If payment can't be made, then the knight was unable to maintain the woman's interest or health and she has departed. Wives do not require extra payment of this kind; their costs are figured into the knight's stipend or holding (see "Standards of Living" in Chapter 8).

**Below Your Class:** Use this course of action whenever your character wants to have a wife, no matter what or who. She is probably a handmaid to your lord's wife, a serving woman, an assistant seamstress to some rich merchant woman, or the younger sister of another knight. Household knights usually marry this way.

The Gamemaster should almost always permit this form of marriage, unless the character has been absent from home for years or is impoverished and shamed, or unless the marriage would not fit in well with the scenarios he intends to run.

The procedure is simple. Get permission from the character's lord by making a Loyalty (lord) roll. If this roll is successful, the lord grants you the boon to wed. If your knight has not already chosen an available woman, the lord

selects an appropriate match. You are thus married to an ordinary woman who has a dowry of 1d6 and 10 Glory.

If the Loyalty roll fails, your lord refuses you permission to wed, although you may ask again next winter. A fumble might indicate that the lord was offended somehow, or that something humorous happened, but a fumble should never indicate marriage to an unsuitable woman unless the Gamemaster and the player agree to it.

**Within Your Class:** For a vassal knight or higher noble, it may take time to find a likely candidate for marriage. The Gamemaster should personalize potential wives who hold great dowries and have great Glory.

To find an ordinary wife within your character's class, make a Courtesy roll. If successful, you may either roll on the Random Marriage table below, or wait a year. If you choose to wait until the next Winter Phase, write "met candidate for marriage, still waiting" (or something to that effect) in your character's history. You can wait for as many years as you want, if there is no pressure from your lord.

For each year you make a successful Courtesy roll but choose to wait for marriage, add a +1 modifier to the d20 die roll on the Random Marriage table when you finally do roll. (If you fail your Courtesy roll during any year, you do not gain the +1 for that year.)

When you decide to roll for a marriage, you get only one chance. If you get what seems to be a poor match financially, assume that the marriage provides some significant political benefit for your lord instead (which may or may not impact your character directly).

**TABLE 5–4: RANDOM MARRIAGE**

| d20 Result | Dowry*             | Glory |
|------------|--------------------|-------|
| 1–4        | No holding, £1d3+6 | 10    |
| 5–7        | 1 manor, £1d6      | 25    |
| 8–17       | 1 manor, £1d6+3    | 50    |
| 18–19      | 2 manors, £1d6+6   | 100   |
| 20 or more | 2 manors, £2d6+6   | 250   |

\* The number of *libra* (£) is likely to be composed at least half of valuable items like rugs, hangings, furs, furniture, and the like.

### CHILDREN

Characters normally make a d20 roll on the Childbirth table once per year whether they are married or not, whether rolling for a wife, concubine, lover, camp follower, or simply a some woman they have encountered during play within the previous year.

If the Gamemaster permits it, up to one annual childbirth roll may be attempted *per* wife, lover, or concubine, if sufficient opportunity was fulfilled during play to possibly allow conception.

**TABLE 5–5: CHILDBIRTH**

| d20 Result | Childbirth                                 |
|------------|--|
| 1–10       | No children                                |
| 11         | Mother and child die at childbirth         |
| 12         | Child born,* but mother dies in childbirth |
| 13         | Twins born*                                |
| 14 or more | Child born*                                |

\* Roll 1d6 for each child born, where an odd number = female, and even = male.



After checking for new children, roll a d20 for each child the character has (if any) under 15 years of age — including the newborn — and consult the Child Survival table. Children who survive to age 15 are assumed to live to adulthood.

### TABLE 5–6: CHILD SURVIVAL

| d20 Result | Consequence             |
|------------|-------------------------|
| 1–2        | Child dies              |
| 3–10       | Child is ill, but lives |
| 11 or more | Child lives             |

### FAMILY EVENTS

This section determines whether any important or unusual events occur in your extended family. Note that the fathers and grandfathers of player knights created in this book are already dead, and all inherited Glory and items already gained thereby.

Each character rolls once per winter on the Family Events table.

### TABLE 5–7: FAMILY EVENTS

| d20 Result | Consequence*                         |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1–2        | Death in family                      |
| 3–7        | Marriage in family                   |
| 8–12       | Birth in family                      |
| 13–15      | Family member is missing or lost     |
| 16–18      | No event                             |
| 19–20      | Rumor of scandal (roll on Table 5–8) |

### TABLE 5–8: SCANDALOUS RUMORS

| d20 Result | Consequence   |
|------------|---|
| 1          | Insulted a lord   |
| 2–3        | Cheated at a tournament   |
| 4          | Impoverished, badly in debt                                       |
| 5–7        | Adulterer   |
| 8          | Kidnapper   |
| 9–10       | Horse-thief   |
| 11–16      | Illicit love affair   |
| 17         | Murderer  |
| 18         | Heretic   |
| 19         | Necromancer   |
| 20         | Roll again (re-roll 20s), but this time the rumor is proved true! |

Next, roll on the table below to find the person most directly affected by the result of the event discovered. If the result is ridiculous, like someone remarrying while their spouse is still alive or your grandmother being a horse-thief (or anyone who is already dead taking any action!), then re-roll.

| d20 Result | Family Member |
|------------|---------------|
| 1–3        | Father        |
| 4–6        | Mother        |
| 7–10       | Brother       |
| 11–14      | Sister        |
| 15         | Uncle         |
| 16         | Aunt          |
| 17         | Grandfather   |
| 18         | Grandmother   |
| 19–20      | Cousin        |

## STEP 7: TRAINING AND PRACTICE

This step includes any weapon training or practice done over the winter, and allows deliberate changes to attributes, traits, and passions.

If the Gamemaster permits it, your knight's squire can also increase one or more of his three primary skills (listed on the character sheet) at this time, using the same choices as your knight.

During this step, you may choose to do any one of the following three things:

1. *Gain 1d6+1 Points in Skills (To Max 15)*: Roll 1d6+1 for the number of points available to you to improve your skills. Any combination of one or more skills or combat skills may be improved, but you may not improve a Non-Knightly skill in this way, and no skill may be raised to higher than 15.

2. *Gain 1 Point in a Skill (To Max 20)*: You may increase any one skill by 1 point, to a maximum value of 20. Skills can go beyond 20 only by means of experience or Glory. (See Step 2 and Step 9.)

3. *Improve an Attribute, Trait, or Passion*: You may raise or lower any one attribute, trait, or passion value by 1 point. (Keep in mind that altering a trait this always also alters the value of the opposite trait as well.) Several restrictions apply: No trait can be increased to over 19, and passions cannot be increased over 20. No attribute can be raised higher than its maximum cultural value (see "Character Generation"). A character's SIZ may not be increased after he reaches age 21; further, a character cannot increase any other attribute (STR, DEX, CON, or APP) after he reaches age 35.

## STEP 8: COMPUTE GLORY

During the winter, all Glory gained during the previous year's play is computed. The total is then added to the current number in the main "Glory" box on the character sheet. The sequence is one of the high points of the game for many players, as they see their character's fame and prestige increase through Glory.

Check with the Gamemaster to be sure you record all the various Glory awards correctly. (See "Glory" elsewhere in this chapter.)

**Glory from Play:** This is the primary source of Glory. If you participated in a scenario last game year, the Glory gained by your character should already be written in the "Glory this Game" box on the character sheet, and ideally recorded in detail on the back of the sheet with a date attached. For example, if you killed a bear while hunting, you might have recorded an award of 10 Glory.

Transfer the Glory from "Glory this Game" into the main "Glory" box, adding the two totals together for your current total Glory.

**Glory from Solo Scenarios:** Your character may have gone through a solo scenario at the beginning of this Winter Phase. With Gamemaster approval, Glory may have been gained thereby. For example, the solo scenario entitled "Your Own Land" (see Appendix 3) might have gained you special Glory equal to your Just trait.

**Glory from Unique Honors:** If any special honor or ambition was achieved last year, such as marriage to an heiress, this honor should have been recorded on the back of the character sheet. Review your character's achievements for the previous year.

**Annual Glory:** Many sources of Glory accrue annually. For example, holding a motte-and-bailey castle gains you 8 Glory per year. Annual Glory accrues now.

## STEP 9: GLORY BONUSES

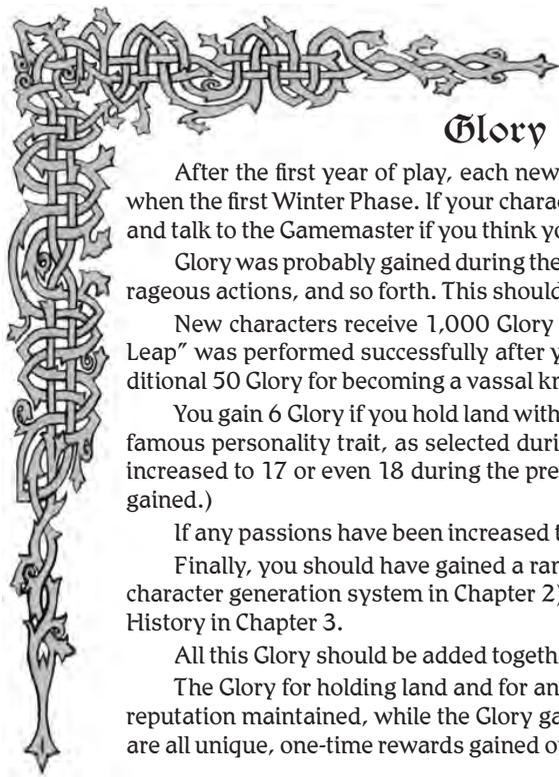
The final step of the Winter Phase is to add any bonus points gained from high Glory to the character's attributes. A bonus point is gained whenever your total Glory exceeds 1,000 points, and for every additional 1,000 points thereafter. (For example, a knight's Glory might increase from 1,800 to 3,010 in an extraordinary year, yielding 2 bonus points for that year.)

Bonus points must be spent now, as soon as they become available. Each point may be applied directly to an attribute, trait, passion, skill, or combat skill, increasing

that statistic by 1 point. Only two restrictions apply to this increase: No character may increase his attributes beyond their racial maximums, and no character past age 21 can increase his SIZ stat.

If you increase an attribute score, recalculate any derived statistics related to that attribute.

If a trait or passion has just been increased to 16 or higher by means of a bonus point, you do not gain Glory from that trait or passion until next year's Winter Phase. The same is true for Glory gained if a character now qualifies for a Religious bonus (see "Magical Virtues" in Chapter 4), but the bonus itself (the +3 armor reduction bonus from Armor of Honor, for example) is gained immediately and may be used during the coming year's scenarios.



### Glory for Beginning Characters

After the first year of play, each new player knight gains a great deal of Glory, all of which comes into effect when the first Winter Phase. If your character just started play in the previous session, check this sidebar carefully and talk to the Gamemaster if you think you missed any of the listed Glory in Step 8.

Glory was probably gained during the previous year for participation a scenario, for defeating enemies, for courageous actions, and so forth. This should have been noted in the "Glory This Game" box on your character sheet.

New characters receive 1,000 Glory for the sacred ceremony of knighthood, as enacted during play. If "The Leap" was performed successfully after your ceremony, you should have gained 10 more Glory from that. An additional 50 Glory for becoming a vassal knight is also due for new player knights.

You gain 6 Glory if you hold land with an income of £6 (one manor) for a year, and 16 Glory for exhibiting your famous personality trait, as selected during character generation. (Note that the value of this trait may now have increased to 17 or even 18 during the previous steps of the Winter Phase, in which case 17 or 18 Glory points are gained.)

If any passions have been increased to 16+, they also accrue Glory equal to their value.

Finally, you should have gained a random amount of Glory from your character's father (if you used the basic character generation system in Chapter 2), or else a set amount as a result of rolling through the Salisbury Family History in Chapter 3.

All this Glory should be added together now, and the total written in the main "Glory" box.

The Glory for holding land and for any famous trait or passion is gained every year that the land is held or the reputation maintained, while the Glory gained for knighthood, the Leap, vassal knight status, and inherited Glory are all unique, one-time rewards gained only after the first year of play.





# Chapter Six: Combat

History, romance, and legend all agree that fighting is a knight's primary work. Combat is perhaps the most important part of *Pendragon*. Yet even combat can involve roleplaying in this game. The usual enemies are other knights, who are honorable opponents and fellow nobles; enemies, such as invading Saxons or Picts, or enemies of his lord; beasts of the hunt, such as boars, lions or bears; or monsters, such as an ogre, giant, or hippogriff.

## COMBAT AND ROLEPLAYING

The best combats are those with purpose, particularly in battle or adventure. Knights fight for reasons that go far beyond the crude concerns of unscrupulous mercenaries and plundering Saxons. Knights might even refuse combat on rare occasions, should loyalty dictate it.

In combat situations where love, honor, or another powerful passion is invoked, knights may be inspired to greatness and fight with superhuman strength and skill. See "Passions" (in Chapter 4) for rules concerning inspiration.

Pomp and circumstance are also a part of knightly combat, although blood may be drawn without ritual or preamble when characters are angry or impassioned. Miniature figures painted using heraldic coats of arms can add to the pageantry of the game during combat.

Much Glory can be gained from combat. Moreover, this possibility of winning Glory may also ensure that combat is directed more toward roleplaying than toward basic concerns like experience and treasure. For example, the monsters and magical beings a knight may encounter are worth only moderate Glory by themselves (unless they are exceedingly rare and fearsome, like the dreaded basilisk). More important is the purpose behind their appearance in the scenario: the secret they hide, or the sorceress they guard, or the magical riddle that they reveal to you if they are vanquished and spared. If such mysteries are handled well by players, the Gamemaster should award additional Glory.

Imagine, as your character, meeting a young knight whose father is the hated enemy of your father. Do you challenge the knight or leave him be, knowing that his only crime is his bloodline? If you do fight, do you plan on a combat to the death or a fight "for love of fighting"? Once combat is joined and assuming that you are victorious, do you accept the lad's surrender chivalrously, or mock him before slaying him?

The best games of *Pendragon* include these emotional and intellectual decisions in much of the combat that occurs. This is why the combat rules below are relatively simple and flexible in comparison to those of many other fantasy roleplaying games. Gamemasters are free to add more detail to suit their personal preference.

## THE MELEE ROUND

The basic time measure for single or small-group combat is the melee round. This is a short, elastic unit of time — basically, the time required to conceive and perform one action in melee. Melee rounds continue in succession until everyone is done fighting, either through incapacitation, death, surrender, or flight.

In these rules, the limit of one "action" per round means one *category* of action, not necessarily one unique physical movement, per round. A knight's entire round of combat is not merely a single blow, but an exchange of attacks and parries, or perhaps a cautious waiting for an opening.

The limit of one action per melee round is therefore a loose one, with several notable exceptions. Usually, an opposed roll required of a knight as a reaction to the efforts or actions of another is not considered his action for that round, but a "free action." For example, a character whose Knockdown statistic is exceeded must make a balance roll that round, but this balance roll does not constitute the knight's action for this round.

The general point of the one-action limit is to keep the game moving swiftly. The players and the Gamemaster must cooperate in this, or the game soon becomes bogged down in pointless minutiae.

## MELEE ROUND PROCEDURE

Each time personal combat is joined, the following procedure should be followed during each melee round:

1. Determination Phase
2. Resolution Phase
3. Winner's Phase
4. Loser's Phase
5. Movement Phase

### DETERMINATION PHASE

*Fighting does not actually occur during this phase, but is declared now.*

In this initial phase, all combatants state what they intend to do this round, including the weapon they wield. Targets and opponents are named. The Gamemaster decides whether the players or their Gamemaster-character (or creature) opponents make their statements of intent first.

Characters may choose to fight or do something else this round, as listed below under “Actions Permitted in Melee.” If combat tactics are to be used (see “Optional Combat Tactics”), the choice of each knight’s tactic, if any, must be stated out loud, or written down secretly if necessary.

Enemies within 1 yard of each other are automatically considered “engaged,” and need not move to fight. Otherwise, movement must take place (during the Movement Phase) before combat can be resolved in subsequent rounds.

## RESOLUTION PHASE

*Any non-movement action declared in the previous phase is now resolved.*

If the character did not intend to move this round, then his action now takes place. If a skill or combat skill roll is required for the action, it is made now.

Generally, characters can either fight (during this phase) or move (during the Movement Phase), but not both. Lance charges are an exception to this rule: Knights *must* both move and fight during the charge, and that resolution takes place now.

If combat occurs, both combatants roll their respective modified weapon skills, using opposed resolution (see “Die-Roll Resolution” in Chapter 5). The results leave a winner and a loser, a tie, or two losers. In addition, critical successes and fumbles have special meaning in combat.

If one character succeeds and the other fails, proceed to the Winner’s Phase.

If both fighters fail their weapon rolls, then both missed that round. The fight is inconclusive this round, and no damage is dealt on either side. They can try again (or try something else) next round. Proceed to the Movement Phase.

If both fighters roll the same number and both are successful, then a tie occurs. This is essentially the same as if both had failed, but if one combatant’s weapon is a sword and the other’s is not, the sword breaks the other weapon. Proceed to the Movement Phase.

A fumble means one of two things: Either that the fumbling fighter dropped his weapon (if it was a sword), or that his weapon broke (if it was any other type of weapon). Either way, the character must re-arm himself before he can attack again, or else he must resort to some other type of action.

A critical success on a weapon roll means that the player who rolled the critical deals double damage for his weapon during the Winner’s Phase — unless both fighters rolled criticals, in which case their attacks are resolved as a tie.

**Special:** A “natural” roll of 1 on the d20, before any modifiers, is important if a character is using a flail or warflail. (See “Kinghtly Equipment” in Appendix 1.)

## WINNER’S PHASE

*The winner rolls his damage against the loser.*

If the winner achieved a notable success (a critical, for example, or a success against a noteworthy foe or that

moves the story forward significantly), he may also, with Gamemaster approval, receive an experience check for the weapon used.

A critical success deals double damage.

## LOSER’S PHASE

*The loser checks for special results and takes damage.*

First, the loser should check immediately, based on the damage his opponent rolled in the previous phase, for Knockdown results. (See Knockdown.)

Next, if the loser is using a shield and made a successful weapon roll, then he adds his shield’s armor reduction value to his armor’s reduction value for this round. He now takes damage, subtracting any protection gained from his armor and shield (if applicable). See “Armor” elsewhere in this chapter for more on armor and damage.

Any damage beyond that absorbed by the character’s reduction points is recorded under Wounds on the character sheet, and this number is then subtracted from the character’s current hit points. This is the actual damage (as opposed to the “Knockdown damage”) taken this round.

Compare the actual damage with the character’s Major Wounds statistic to determine whether he suffers any grievous effects from his enemy’s blow. (See “Wounds” elsewhere in this chapter for more on damage and wounds.)

Also, compare the character’s current hit points with his Unconscious statistic to see if the character has taken too much punishment and thus collapsed. (See the “Injury and Health” section elsewhere in this chapter for more information.)

A character who falls unconscious during combat, whether due to a Major Wound or the accumulation of many small wounds, may still attempt a DEX roll if on horseback or balancing on a wall. Success indicates a gentle fall that does little or no damage, at the Gamemaster’s discretion. (The DEX roll here signifies a trained involuntary reaction resulting from years of training in mounted combat, and has nothing to do with the knight’s being aware of his surroundings.)

## MOVEMENT PHASE

*Characters who declared movement this round now move up to a number of yards equal to their Movement Rate.*

Participants in the combat who intended to move this round take their first yard of movement all at once; likewise, their second yard of movement occurs simultaneously; then their third; and so on until all combatants have taken their full allotment of movement. Riders can move up to their mount’s Movement Rate this way (a horse gives a great advantage in melee movement).

A character is not required to move his full Movement Rate. However, once a combatant chooses to stop moving along with the other combatants, he cannot move any further during this phase.

When a character moves to within 1 yard of an enemy, evasion may be necessary for movement to continue. (See “Evasion” elsewhere in this chapter.)

Note that movement is generally used only to determine whether a character has closed with an enemy so that they might engage in combat. (Once two combatants



are within 1 yard's distance, combat is possible.) In other circumstances, breaking movement down into round-by-round bits may be altogether unnecessary.

Miniature figures may be helpful to concretize distances for the players' benefit, but such tools are certainly not essential as long as issues like facing are left out of the game.

Characters may wish to move at an increased speed. For simplicity's sake, running or sprinting (or cantering or galloping for horses) is normally disallowed in close combat. In some cases, the Gamemaster may require a DEX roll for characters to increase their speed to a run or a sprint. If increased movement rates occur during melee, characters moving at different rates (for example, if one character is walking while another sprints) still move simultaneously, yard by yard.

The Gamemaster must determine whether interception or other important events occur between characters moving at different rates, always deferring to common sense as the final arbiter.

Other kinds of movement-type actions taking place during this phase might require skill rolls as determined by the Gamemaster. For example, a character wishing to have his horse leap an obstacle might be required to make a Horsemanship roll.

*Example of Movement:* Sir Ambrut is riding a charger (Movement Rate 8) in melee. He states during the Determination Phase that he intends to make a lance charge against an enemy knight (Movement Rate 3) who is on foot 8 yards away.

Both characters move 1 yard each, Ambrut moving straight toward his enemy, the unhorsed knight moving backwards from an almost certain death. They each repeat this movement in two more steps of 1 yard each, after which the unhorsed knight can move no further — he has exhausted his movement for this round.

Ambrut then moves his remaining 5 yards straight toward the enemy knight, but he does not come within the 1 yard distance needed to attack (the enemy knight remains 3 yards away), so no combat takes place this round.

## BASIC RULES

These rules include the way damage is determined, the difference between damage that knocks someone down and that which causes actual injury, the actions a knight might make in a round, and so forth.

## DAMAGE STATISTIC

The Damage statistic on your character sheet tells you how much harm your character does when he wins an opposed weapon roll in combat.

*Damage = (SIZ + STR)/6 [the result is the number of d6 rolled for damage]*

Certain weapons, such as daggers or great swords, do slightly more or less damage than the wielder's Damage statistic (see "Combat Skills" in Chapter 4 for more information on specific weapons).

All characters use the same rating to determine damage. Creatures using natural weapons use a slightly different formula that varies depending on size, magic, and other factors.



## KNOCKDOWN

Whenever a character takes a blow, whether from a weapon in combat or some other source (such as riding into a tree limb), the base damage — i.e., the damage dealt before the victim's armor, if any, reduces it — is compared to his SIZ value.

If the damage received is equal to or greater than the SIZ value but less than twice that value, then the character has received a blow that sends him reeling for balance. He must now make a DEX roll, if on foot, or a Horsemanship roll if mounted. If the roll is successful, then the character recovers handily and can continue fighting as normal.

If the DEX or Horsemanship roll fails, the knight falls down. If he was mounted, he takes 1d6 damage from the fall; if he was on a wall or some other high place and fumbles the DEX roll, he plummets over the edge, taking falling damage as appropriate.

Whenever a character receives damage equal to twice the value of his SIZ attribute or more, he is knocked down automatically, without the chance to recover his balance using a DEX or Horsemanship roll.

When knocked down, an armored knight may struggle back to his feet during the Movement Phase *next round* (i.e., not the one yet to come *this round*). If the character is attacked before getting up, then he and his opponent(s) receive -5/+5 reflexive modifiers to their weapon rolls. Unless knocked down again, he regains his footing at the beginning of the next Movement Phase, and may take a move normally at that time.

Gamemaster characters and even monsters must make DEX rolls, just as knights do, when their Knockdown statistic is equaled or exceeded.

## ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Armor and shields protect characters from combat damage (but not from most other kinds of damage, such as that incurred by falling).

When an armored character is hit by any weapon or by a monster's natural attacks, the *armor reduction* value of his armor is subtracted from the total damage dealt. The modified result is the amount applied to the character's Wounds value for this round; all other damage is assumed to be absorbed by the armor.

See "Injury and Health" for more information on wounds.

Animals and monsters have armor reduction based on the toughness of their hides, the thickness of subcutaneous muscle and fat, their magical nature, and other factors. This "armor" factor gives no penalty to their DEX, nor can it be removed and made into true armor.

*Example of Armor Reduction:* Sir Ambrut is hit for 17 points while wearing reinforced chainmail (12 points of reduction); he succeeds at a Horsemanship roll to avoid being knocked off his horse. Now, after subtracting the reduction value of his armor, he takes only 5 points of actual damage in Wounds this round.

**Special:** Magical armor exists, but it should be very difficult to get and may also have certain limitations or even disadvantages that should be enforced by the Gamemaster.

**TABLE 6-1: ARMOR**

| Armor Type             | Reduction | DEX Modifier | Heavy Load? |
|------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| Clothing               | 0         | 0            | N           |
| Heavy clothing         | 1         | 0            | N           |
| Padded armor*          | 2         | 0            | N           |
| Leather armor          | 4         | -5           | N           |
| Hard leather           | 6         | -5           | Y           |
| Chainmail              | 10        | -10          | Y           |
| Reinforced chainmail** | 12        | -10          | Y           |

\* Simply heavy padding worn by knights under their metal armor; a knight would be encountered in this type of "armor" only when he is about to don or has just doffed his heavier armor. Certain levies or poor soldiers might intentionally wear quilted or piece-meal armor that functions as "padded armor," however.

\*\* Reinforced chainmail is extremely rare and costly at the start of the game, usually available only as a gift from wealthy lords.

**Heavy Load?:** See Encumbrance in the "Special Situations" section of "Movement" (in Chapter 5) for more on this topic. A "Y" indicates that a character is encumbered when wearing this armor, while "N" indicates that a character wearing this armor along with a minimal load of equipment (perhaps personal gear and a sword and shield) is unencumbered. Of course, a heavier load of gear worn with this armor would push the character into the "encumbered" zone.

This table assumes complete suits of clothing or armor. Metal armors include a helmet and gauntlets of the appropriate type, plus padding.

**DEX Modifiers:** As explained under "The Dexterity Roll" (Chapter 4), armor imposes a negative modifier to DEX rolls in many situations, such as climbing or jumping. The Gamemaster is free to adjust these modifiers to suit the logic of unusual situations, such as a fight in a muddy field during a rainstorm.

## SHIELDS

The shield normally used in *Pendragon* is the Arthurian "heater" (closely related to the Norman "kite shield"), a roughly medium-sized shield, flat at the top and rounding to a point at the bottom.

The shield may be used in conjunction with any one-handed weapon, but not with two-handed weapons. A shield grants 6 additional points of armor reduction to the loser of an opposed combat resolution with a partial success (see "Die-Roll Resolution" in Chapter 5).

If a knight has lost his weapon but still has a shield, he may use the defense option (even if that option is not normally allowed in the game), using his DEX in place of a weapon roll. If the Gamemaster allows combined actions (see sidebar on next page), the knight may also use this defense while re-arming, with a -5/+5 reflexive modifier applied to the knight's DEX and to the opponent's weapon skill, respectively, for the round. (These modifiers stack with those from the defense option, as usual.)

Finally, a knight who has no other weapon available may use his shield to slam his opponent. For this purpose, treat the slam as a brawling attack using the wielder's STR value for his weapon roll. (See "Brawling" in Special Combat Rules.) A shield used in this manner may be sundered, rendered useless, if the knight's STR roll ties an opponent's Sword roll.



# ACTIONS IN MELEE

Most actions normally undertaken in melee are included here. Other actions are certainly possible, and the Gamemaster should be open-minded about allowing players to try new things, as long as the rules they establish mutually are fair and consistent.

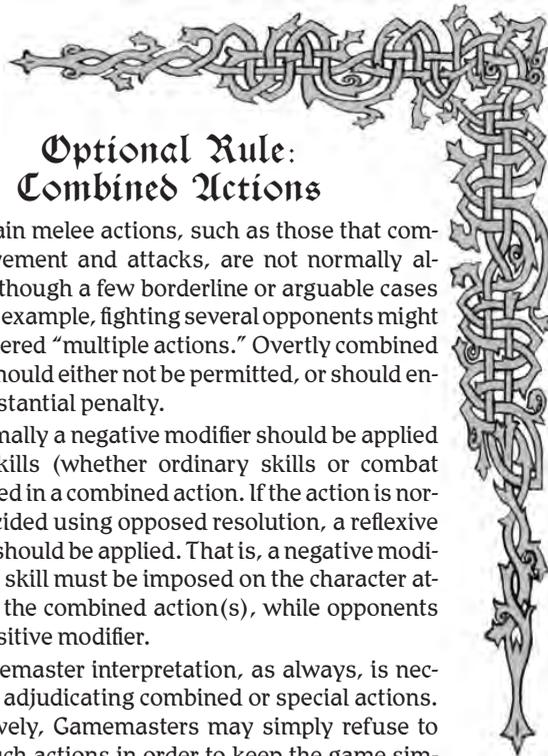
The following actions are typical in melee combat, listed as taking place either “standard actions (i.e., those taking place during the Resolution Phase) or “moving actions” (taking place during the Movement Phase).

## STANDARD ACTIONS

- Exchange blows with an opponent using simple opposed resolution (see “Die-Roll Resolution” in Chapter 5).
- Attack a surprised or helpless enemy, or one ignoring your attack, with an unopposed weapon roll.
- Try to dodge an attack rather than fighting your opponent normally. See “Special Combat Rules.”
- Move your mount’s full Movement Rate and make a lance charge during mounted movement. Rapid movement (at a canter or gallop) may be permitted by the Gamemaster during the charge.
- Make a Squire roll (see “Squires” in Chapter 2) to have your squire summon help or give you a new weapon. If more than one squire is available, multiple rolls may be made as one action.
- Give commands to followers.
- Engage in a brief conversation with a comrade.
- Re-arm yourself with a new weapon or a shield carried on or about your person or mount, or brought to you by your squire.
- Make a ranged attack with a bow or light crossbow, making an appropriate unopposed weapon roll with a modifier for range and target if necessary, and then reload.
- Make a ranged attack with a hurled weapon, making an appropriate unopposed weapon roll (with a modifier for range and target if necessary).
- Scrutinize your surroundings using Awareness or Hunting.
- Attempt an optional maneuver, if allowed in your game, such as a berserk attack. (See “Optional Combat Tactics.”)

## MOVING ACTIONS

- Move up to your full Movement Rate (on foot) or your horse’s Movement Rate (while mounted). If the Gamemaster permits it, based on circumstances, this movement may be at a double-speed run (or canter for horses) or even a triple-speed sprint (gallop).
- Mount or dismount a horse.
- Arm yourself for combat (i.e., draw a weapon and gird a shield).
- Perform a maneuver on horseback (turn around, leap a fence, etc.). A Horsemanship roll may be required in difficult or trying circumstances.
- Get up from the ground after a fall if not engaged in combat, even while wearing heavy armor.



## Optional Rule: Combined Actions

Certain melee actions, such as those that combine movement and attacks, are not normally allowed, although a few borderline or arguable cases exist. For example, fighting several opponents might be considered “multiple actions.” Overtly combined actions should either not be permitted, or should entail a substantial penalty.

Normally a negative modifier should be applied to any skills (whether ordinary skills or combat skills) used in a combined action. If the action is normally decided using opposed resolution, a reflexive modifier should be applied. That is, a negative modifier to the skill must be imposed on the character attempting the combined action(s), while opponents gain a positive modifier.

Gamemaster interpretation, as always, is necessary in adjudicating combined or special actions. Alternatively, Gamemasters may simply refuse to permit such actions in order to keep the game simple.

If the Gamemaster allows combined actions, they always take place during the Resolution Phase of the melee round. A character who moves during this phase as part of a combined action may never, under any circumstances, move again during the Movement Phase.

A list of combined actions (many others are possible) is provided below for those characters who wish to perform them while suffering a negative or reflexive modifier.

- Move up to half of your Movement Rate (rounding up) and still fight. A reflexive  $-5/+5$  modifier should be applied to the moving and stationary combatants, respectively. If both moved, both suffer a  $-5$  modifier.
- Mount or dismount a horse while giving battle commands to followers or making a Squire roll. A DEX roll is required, with failure indicating that you did not mount successfully; a fumble indicates a fall for 1d6 damage.
- Scrutinize your surroundings with an Awareness roll while dodging, *assuming the dodging option is available* (see “Optional Combat Tactics”): You suffer a  $-5$  modifier to both DEX and Awareness (in addition to the usual modifiers for dodging).
- Arm or re-arm while fighting, with a  $-5/+5$  reflexive modifier applied to your and your opponent’s weapon skill, respectively, for the round. This option may also be used with a shield’s defense option (see “Armor and Shields”).
- Climb or jump over an obstacle while fighting an opponent who has the height advantage. Apply a  $-10/+10$  reflexive modifier to your and your opponent’s weapon skill, respectively, for the round ( $-5$  for combining movement and combat, plus another  $-5$  for the height difference).



- Start to get up from the ground while fighting, suffering a reflexive modifier of -5/+5 that round to character and opponent weapon skills. Characters in metal armor require one full round to regain their feet while engaged by an enemy, effectively standing up at the beginning of the *second* Movement Phase after declaring their intention to stand up. Characters in lighter armor or less may stand as a free action during the round in which they were knocked down, even in melee.

- Reload a medium crossbow. (This effectively allows one attack every other melee round with a heavy crossbow.)

- Start to reload a heavy crossbow. In total, this requires 3 full Movement Phases to accomplish, allowing one attack every 4 melee rounds with a heavy crossbow.

## COMBAT MODIFIERS

Certain conditions and situations may affect the skill of fighters for better or worse, no matter how skilled or clumsy. Modifiers to weapon skills are, as all modifiers in *Pendragon*, applied to the weapon skill value, not the die roll.

### COVER

A character who is partially protected by a substantial protective covering (other than armor or a shield) imposes a -5 modifier to attacker's weapon rolls. For instance, a knight standing behind the crenellation on a battlement is much harder to hit than one standing in the open, and an archer partly concealed behind a tree is a difficult target.

Cover modifiers usually apply against ranged attacks, but a character in melee might, at the Gamemaster's discretion, gain a cover modifier.

### FATIGUE

In general, combat in *Pendragon* is over fast enough that fatigue does not have a chance to overcome adrenaline and valor. However, in Arthurian literature, knights sometimes become too exhausted and wounded to continue their fight, so they agree to rest for an hour or so before continuing.

The Major Wound and Unconsciousness rules ensure that characters will collapse if they fight on after serious injury, rather than continuing until all hit points are lost. However, these rules do not address simple fatigue.

If a character fights for a number of consecutive melee rounds greater than his CON value, then fatigue should set in; normally, this modifier should not exceed a -5 penalty.

The Gamemaster should determine whether a modifier for fatigue is necessary and appropriate under other circumstances. For example, if a knight must fight three or more consecutive combats without rest, or must fight after a whole day's forced march, then fatigue might be appropriate.

### HIGHER GROUND

Any time a character fights with the advantage of height, such as a horseman versus a foot soldier or a knight on a rampart attacking a man scaling the wall, a +5/-5 reflexive modifier applies in favor of the character with the height advantage. Of course, when opponents are separated by more than a yard (in this case, of height), they are too far apart to engage in melee.

Note that this modifier applies when one character has fallen to the ground and the other remains standing, or when a character fights while backing up a steep castle stairwell while fighting foes moving up toward him.

### IMMOBILIZED

Characters who are grappled, partially entangled, stuck in quicksand, or otherwise unable to move properly suffer a -10/+10 reflexive modifier in combat or to skills involving movement.

### SURPRISE

A surprised foe includes one attacked from behind or without due warning. The attacker's weapon roll is always unopposed by the surprised victim, and also gains a +5 modifier.

It is very dishonorable to attack an enemy from surprise.

### UNBURDENED

Knights (or other character accustomed to heavy armor, at the Gamemaster's discretion) not wearing armor and otherwise only lightly encumbered gain a +5 modifier to all weapon rolls in combat. Characters such as peasants, bandits, or Picts, who are not trained to wear armor, do not gain this modifier.

Gamemasters should also give knights a +5 modifier to Awareness rolls when they are unarmored, to simulate the increased sensitivity gained when the heavy, confining helmet is removed. Again, characters who do not normally wear heavy armor do not gain this modifier.

### VISIBILITY

In darkness, fog, smoke, or similar conditions, a character suffer a -10 modifier to all weapon skills. A character may make an Awareness roll each round during combat (this is an exception to the "one action per round" rule) to reduce this to a -5 penalty.

## TABLE 6-2: COMBAT MODIFIERS SUMMARY

| Condition or Situation | Modifier(s) |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Cover                  | -5          |
| Fatigue                | -5          |
| Higher Ground          | +5/-5       |
| Immobilized            | +10/-10     |
| Surprise*              | +5          |
| Unburdened             | +5          |
| Visibility             | -10 or -5   |

\* Surprise allows the attacker to make an unopposed weapon roll.

## SPECIAL COMBAT RULES

Any number of unusual situations and inquiries may arise during combat. Answers to some of these questions and concerns, for players and Gamemasters alike, can be found in this section.

### DODGING

A character may spend the melee round simply dodging attacks rather than fighting normally. Treat a dodge as an unopposed DEX roll, with the attacking character making an unopposed weapon skill roll at the same time.





A successful dodge means the character avoided the blow entirely, taking no damage and avoiding any knock-down effects. A critical success while dodging has no additional effect.

A failed or fumbled dodge, however, means that the character fell to the ground as a result of his awkward movement, and was hit by the enemy as usual if the latter was successful in his unopposed weapon roll. Damage is inflicted normally, although knockdown need not be tested since the character has already fallen.

As always in combat, a fallen character must take the next round getting to his feet, fighting at a disadvantage (-5/+5 reflexive modifiers).

Modifiers for encumbrance and footing apply normally to dodging.

**Multiple Attackers:** A character fighting multiple foes may try dodging, but must divide his DEX value among his foes, as he would normally divide his weapon skill value. See “Multiple Opponents.”

## BRAWLING

Brawling is a most unchivalrous manner of fighting. Occasionally, however, a player knight will want to hit another character with his fist, a chair, or whatever is handy. There is no special skill defined for such attacks, nor are knights trained in such banal forms of combat: This uncouth kind of violence is more appropriate to commoners than members of the nobility.

To make a brawling attack, each character involved makes an opposed roll using either STR, DEX, or his Grapple skill, whichever is highest, as his “brawling” value. A critical success deals double damage, as with any attack, while a fumble indicates that the brawler fell down clumsily.

Damage for brawling is equal to the character’s normal Damage statistic minus 2d6, to a minimum of 1d6 damage. For example, a character with a 5d6 Damage statistic would deal 3d6 damage while brawling, and a character with 2d6 Damage instead deals 1d6 damage in a brawl.

Modifiers for drunkenness, bad footing, encumbrance, and so forth all apply to rolls for brawling. The Gamemaster must decide whether other modifiers are appropriate, depending on what the character is attempting; for example, hitting an enemy from behind should gain a +5 modifier for surprise, just as with a normal weapon skill.

Brawling damage from common objects used as weapons (chairs, candlesticks, rocks, beef bones, etc.) must be determined by the Gamemaster, but should never be more than the character’s damage with a dagger (normal Damage statistic minus 1d6). Note that if a character pulls out his dagger, the situation is no longer a casual brawl but deadly serious combat.

Glory should rarely, if ever, be gained from brawling, and only if no alternative form of combat was possible.

**Special:** Should the Gamemaster wish it, engaging in a serious brawl might lose a knight 1 point of Honor, particularly if the results are disgraceful (such as a character killed or maimed in front of the court, for example). If the fight was unavoidable, this rule should likely not apply.

See “Passions” in Chapter 4 for more information on Honor.

## RANGED WEAPONS

Knights disdain to use missile weapons in combat, except for the short-ranged javelin once common in Rome: Only cowards fight from a distance, and personal honor requires men to confront each other body to body. Hunting is different; missile weapons may be used by knights in this pursuit, especially where food gathering is more important than sportsmanship.

Three ranged weapon skills are defined in *Pendragon*: Bow, Crossbow, and Javelin. As well, a DEX roll can be used to hurl a stone or heave a boulder at an enemy, but there is no “throw” skill per se. (See “The Dexterity Roll” in Chapter 4).

All ranged attacks are made as unopposed rolls. If the target has a shield, he does not get an opposed roll, but the shield acts as “cover,” imposing a -5 modifier to the attacker’s skill.

All ranged attacks may suffer penalties at longer ranges, as decided by the Gamemaster.

There is no penalty to Honor for using missile weapons, but the Glory gained from defeating an opponent or creature using ranged attacks is always 1/10th of normal, regardless of whether melee combat was also part of the victory or not.

## GRAPPLING

Grappling in combat uses opposed Grapple rolls (see the Grapple skill in Chapter 4), although the *defending* character may use his weapon skill rather than Grapple if he has a weapon in hand. The character initiating the grapple must drop both weapon and shield to tackle his enemy. This is extremely dangerous against an armed and experienced knight with a good Damage statistic, but the reward for success may be a quick finish to a fight.

A winning Grapple roll indicates that the grappling knight has seized his opponent in a furious hold, whether the opponent was using a weapon skill or an opposed Grapple roll. (A partial success does the loser no good in this instance.) The held knight automatically loses his weapon, though he may retain his shield.

If the attacker loses the roll, he does not achieve a hold; further, if the winning opponent used a weapon rather than an opposed Grapple roll, he also hits the would-be grappler normally for damage.

A tie indicates a stalemate, even if the defender is using a weapon; no damage is dealt on either side, no hold is established, and the combatants go on to the next round. (This is an exception to the rule that a sword breaks any other weapon on a tied roll.)

**When Grappled:** Once he is held, a character is capable of performing only one of the following two actions in any subsequent round:

1. *Break Free or Reverse the Grapple:* The held knight may make a Grapple roll to try to break the attacker’s grasp and thus escape (note that this may not be attempted if the victim’s modified Grapple value is 0). If a grappled knight wins the opposed Grapple roll and has no weapons or shield in hand, he can choose to reverse the hold on his

opponent rather than breaking free. (Continue with the grapple normally.)

2. *Re-Arm a Dagger*: He may try to re-arm himself with a dagger (the only weapon that can be used while grappling) by winning an opposed STR or Grapple roll; each opponent uses whichever value is higher. This option is available even if the Gamemaster does not normally allow combined actions (see “Optional Rule: Combine Actions”); however, remember that fighting while re-arming incurs the usual +5/-5 reflexive modifiers to the respective combatants. (If both knights attempt to re-arm, these modifiers do not apply, since they effectively negate one another.)

**When Grappling:** Once a knight has held an opponent, he has *three* options in any of the following rounds:

1. *Pin the Opponent*: He may attempt to pin the enemy with a second opposed Grapple roll. If he wins this second opposed roll, the opponent is pinned and immobilized (imposing +10/-10 reflexive modifiers if the pinned victim still wishes to fight). Assume that a pinned character is flat on his back, with the winner sitting on his chest; or that the winner has both the victim’s arms twisted behind his back; or something similar.

In several cases in Arthurian literature, a winning grappler unlaces the pinned character’s helmet and pulls it off, creating a situation of great vulnerability for the victim, who usually surrenders at that point. (In one famous instance, a knight is immobilized by Sir Turquine, who then tucks the hapless victim under his mighty arm and rides off!)

2. *Attack by Dagger or Brawling*: He may make an opposed Grapple roll to deal brawling damage to his opponent. (See “Brawling.”) Alternately, he may try to re-arm himself with a dagger, as noted above.

3. *Throw the Opponent Down*: He may make an opposed Grapple roll to throw his foe down. If he wins, he must release the grapple to throw his opponent, but the foe takes 1d6 damage from the fall and is sprawled on the ground. (If thrown from horseback, he also takes the normal 1d6 for the height of the fall, for a total of 2d6. Further falls are certainly possible, say from the parapet of a castle....)

A thrown knight who remains conscious may regain his feet normally, suffering all the usual penalties while doing so. (See “Knockdown.”) Note that, in some cases, a fall may signify the end of a fight, such as in some fights “for love” between competing knights.

A fumbled Grapple roll indicates that the fumbler falls down (off his horse if mounted), taking falling damage if appropriate.

## MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

Up to three enemies may attack a single character on foot; only two may attack a single foe if all are mounted.

When a knight is opposed by multiple opponents, he can divide his weapon value among them as he wishes. (The values assigned to each enemy do not need to be equal.) Once your weapon value has been divided, make a separate weapon roll against each opponent, using the assigned portion of your weapon skill as your effective skill for that opponent.

Note that, when facing multiple opponents, it is generally best to assign 1 point to the lesser foe(s) and concentrate the remainder of your skill on the superior foe; this way, you still have a 1 in 20 chance of a critical success against each foe, but your skill against the most dangerous enemy is only slightly reduced.

Regardless of the number of successes you roll against your foes, you may deal damage to only one of them.

No character can make multiple attacks that deal damage, although some unusual creatures, such as the lion, are permitted to do so.

*Example of Fighting Multiple Opponents:* Sir Ambrut is assaulted by a pair of young Saxon warriors (each with an Axe skill of 11), and decides to fight them both. Ambrut’s Sword skill is 18, and, out of that 18, he decides to assign the first enemy a value of 10, and the other an 8.

Against the first warrior, Ambrut gets a 13, failing his Sword roll (remember, his effective skill is a 10 against this foe); the Gamemaster rolls a 7 for the Saxon, who thus strikes Ambrut and does damage. Against the second warrior, Ambrut rolls another 7 (!), a success even considering his effective skill of 8; the enemy warrior rolls a 5, so Ambrut beats him. The second Saxon still gets a partial success, though, allowing him to ply his shield against Ambrut’s blow.

Had Ambrut won both rolls, he could still have dealt damage only against one of the two foes (player’s choice).

## NONLETHAL COMBAT

During a tournament or in a joust or otherwise “friendly” fight, a knight might use blunted (or *rebated*) weapons, or else voluntarily hold back the full force of his blows. (The latter is often preferred to rebating a good weapon.) In either case, rebated weapons and held blows alike, the knight strikes with force, seeking merely to knock his foe to the ground, but without the damage a normal attack would confer.

Weapon skill rolls and the chance for a knockdown are calculated normally. However, rebated weapons and pulled blows deal no actual damage at all except on a critical success: In this case, the attack does normal damage, but not the double damage of a real weapon on a critical. This damage is treated as normal in every way — it may penetrate armor and wound the opponent, possibly fatally if the knight is truly puissant.

## LOST WEAPONS

Weapons broken in combat cannot normally be fixed. New ones must be obtained at normal cost, or captured from an enemy. All weapons except swords and great swords break in combat when the combatant fumbles. Swords and great swords are dropped instead; they can be recovered in the next melee round, even if the fighter is on horseback, for the weapon is normally tied to the knight’s wrist or belt by a cord.

Remember that a sword always breaks a non-sword if both get the same roll in combat.

## BATTLING CREATURES

In general, combat against creatures follows the normal rules. For example, a creature who achieves a critical suc-





cess does double damage. However, creatures do not suffer broken weapons upon fumbles or ties, a significant benefit. On the other hand, they may not use shields, so they gain no benefit from partial successes.

Many creatures in *Pendragon* have special abilities in combat to reflect their unique and magical characteristics. For example, the lion is permitted two attacks in a single round, and is given an armor reduction value of 10 to reflect its legendary prowess. Boars fight for 1 round after death (even if they are at negative hit points). A griffin is so fearsome that opponents are required to make a Valorous roll, with a  $-5$  modifier, just to engage it in combat!

These rules and special abilities are specific to the listed creatures, and cannot be gained by player characters. However, most creatures should not use the Optional Combat Tactics listed elsewhere in this chapter, even if those options are available to the characters, with one exception: Assuming those rules are used, creatures may dodge as needed.

Further rules for creatures and monsters are found in Appendix 2.

## OPTIONAL COMBAT TACTICS

Tactics allow more direct player and Gamemaster involvement in the fortunes of combat. These tactics are optional, not mandatory, and may be allowed or disallowed on a case-by-case basis: The Gamemaster is in charge of whether to allow special combat tactics in any specific situation.

If players have a problem deciding which tactic to use, or if two player knights fight one another, any tactics used should be written down secretly during the Determination Phase of the round, in order to avoid having player knowledge color a knight's actions. Once declared, a tactic cannot be changed for that round; the character must fight using whatever tactic was selected.

### BERSERK

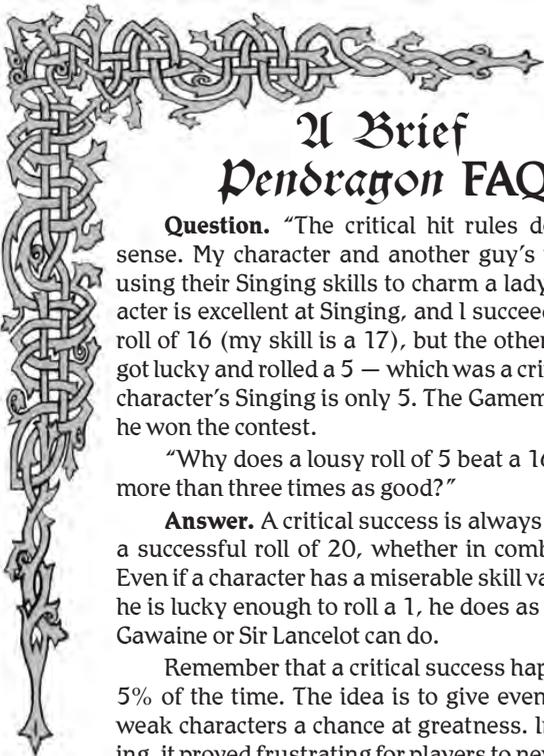
With this option, a combatant may make an all-out, guileless attack, common among the Saxons and other northerners and known as a "berserk attack." The fierce Arthurian knight Sir Turquine was feared for his use of the berserk attack.

In a berserker attack, the berserker allows his enemy to attack first, unopposed. If the attack hits, the opponent deals damage normally. If the berserker remains conscious and on his feet, he then makes an unopposed attack with a  $+10$  modifier to his own weapon skill. Carnage is almost sure to ensue.

In a fight between two characters using the berserk option, the character with the highest Movement Rate attacks second. If their Movement Rates are the same, then the one with the highest DEX goes second. Otherwise, flip a coin.

### DEFENSE

Contrary to the berserk style of fighting, knights may choose to fight defensively. This is especially useful when a knight is beset by multiple enemies and needs to divide his defense, but it can also be used against a single foe.



## A Brief Pendragon FAQ

**Question.** “The critical hit rules don’t make sense. My character and another guy’s were both using their Singing skills to charm a lady. My character is excellent at Singing, and I succeeded with a roll of 16 (my skill is a 17), but the other character got lucky and rolled a 5 — which was a crit, since his character’s Singing is only 5. The Gamemaster said he won the contest.

“Why does a lousy roll of 5 beat a 16, which is more than three times as good?”

**Answer.** A critical success is always treated as a successful roll of 20, whether in combat or not. Even if a character has a miserable skill value of 1, if he is lucky enough to roll a 1, he does as well as Sir Gawaine or Sir Lancelot can do.

Remember that a critical success happens only 5% of the time. The idea is to give even relatively weak characters a chance at greatness. In playtesting, it proved frustrating for players to never be able to do as well as more powerful characters — hence the rule.

**Q.** “My character was attacked by three bandits and the Gamemaster gave two of them +10 modifiers, even though I wasn’t surprised or knocked down. How is that fair!?”

**A.** The rules leave modifiers up to the Gamemaster to assign in specific situations. The bandits do seem to have gotten a good deal in this case, but your Gamemaster apparently felt that they had your character in a bind.

If you don’t like the interpretations you’re getting, set a good example instead of complaining — offer to be the Gamemaster yourself, so you can show people how *you* think modifiers should be handled.

**Q.** “The rules for healing make it impossible to have a combat — when my character gets hit, he always takes weeks and weeks to heal and misses the rest of the scenario. How can you design a game where the characters are knights and then make fighting no fun?”

**A.** The combat and healing rules are brutally realistic in terms of the lingering effects of injury... but the game has to be faithful to the literature, or why bother calling it *Pendragon*? Next time, ask your Gamemaster if you can stay with the rest of the party even though you need Chirurgery. Your character may get worse, or even die, due to the aggravation rules, but at least you’ll be involved in the scenario, and you can still fight if you have to.

Regarding healing times, I’ll bet your character has a low CON and a low STR, so that his healing rate is poor. I’ll also bet he has inferior armor. Spend a couple of years training up your character’s CON instead of his skills, and buy, beg, borrow, or steal some better armor!



A character who fights defensively gains a +10 modifier to his weapon skill for the round, but he does not deal damage if he wins the combat roll (even on a critical). Partial successes, failures, fumbles, and ties have normal results in the opposed resolution.

If two characters both opt to fight defensively, both gain the +10 modifier and no damage is dealt. Such combats might last for hours of game time.

No Honor is lost for this option, nor is Glory reduced for victory: Fighting defensively is a perfectly honorable (and often a wise) option.

**Special:** If a character using the defense tactic fights a character using the berserk tactic, both still gain the +10 modifier from their respective tactics, but combat is otherwise resolved normally: If the defending character wins, he deals no damage.

## EVASION

Moving out of a melee engagement requires the evasion tactic if two characters are fighting afoot or if both are mounted. This is similar to dodging while moving, but less likely to succeed since an opposed roll is required.

The evading character must make an opposed DEX roll (if the combatants are on foot) or Horsemanship roll (if they are mounted) opposed to the opponent’s modified weapon skill roll. Since both moving and dodging is a combined action, this tactic imposes +5/-5 reflexive modifiers to the attacker and the dodging character, respectively.

If the evading character wins the opposed roll, he dodges the enemy’s attack and may still move normally this turn. If the attacking character wins the roll, he deals damage normally and the evading character cannot move this round.

If the characters tie, both are considered to have lost the roll for the round: In this case, the evading character fails to move but is not hit.

If the evading character fumbles, he falls down; if he was on horseback, he takes 1d6 damage from the fall.

If multiple opponents are involved, this tactic cannot be used at all unless the Gamemaster approves. If evasion is allowed against multiple foes, the evading character must divide his skill.

Encumbered characters suffer the usual encumbrance modifiers while trying to evade an enemy.

**Special:** If the evasion option is not used, a character cannot disengage from melee combat unless he is mounted and his opponent is afoot. Otherwise, combat goes on until both opponents agree to stop fighting willingly.

## MOUNTED COMBAT

Horses are essential to characters in *Pendragon*, for they give many advantages in combat. Several options and rules regarding mounted combat are found in this section.

## LANCE CHARGE

A lance charge is the only attack that must be made while moving. The horse must move at least 6 yards in a roughly straight line to build up enough speed for lance charge damage, although the Gamemaster should not insist that each yard’s movement be charted before combat takes place.



## Jousting

Competition using jousting lances is handled just as if the combatants were fighting a nonlethal combat (see above) while making normal lance charges. Thus, a normal success has a chance of unhorsing the opponent with a knockdown result (using the horse's Damage statistic, not the knight's, as with a normal lance), but deals no real damage; on a critical success, however, the jousting lance deals real damage (i.e., the horse's normal Damage, but not doubled).

Jousting lances break just as do normal lances — that is, any time that an odd number is rolled for damage.

A fumbled Lance roll while jousting indicates that the jouster did something terribly wrong, such as striking his foe's horse or falling without being struck, as well as uselessly shivering his lance.



If a lance charge is made against anything other than a character wielding a great spear or another character making a lance charge, the charging knight gets a +5 modifier to his Lance skill. Further, because the horse's weight and momentum is behind the attack, the damage from a lance charge uses the horse's Damage statistic rather than the rider's, as shown below.

| Mount Type | Damage |
|------------|--------|
| Charger    | 6d6    |
| Courseer   | 5d6    |
| Rouncy     | 4d6    |

The lance charge can thus be particularly devastating against opponents using ordinary melee weapons.

A lance breaks more easily than some weapons: If the total damage dealt by the lance is an odd number, then the lance breaks. Also, a fumble indicates that the lance broke *before* doing any damage.

Fighting with a lance while mounted but not charging is the same as using a spear: Use the character's Spear skill, not Lance; also, remember that the wielder does not get the usual +5 modifier for charging, and he inflicts his own Damage value, not his mount's.

## TWO-HANDED WEAPONS

Two-handed weapons may not be used from horseback. (See "Weapon Skills" in Chapter 4.)

## HEIGHT ADVANTAGE

As noted in "Combat Modifiers," a mounted character fighting an enemy who is afoot gains a +5 modifier to his weapon skill unless the footman is armed with a great spear or halberd. This modifier stacks with that gained from a lance charge (for a total of +10), if applicable.

## VARIANT STEEDS

Gamemasters may wish to increase or decrease some of the statistics for horses to vary them, and give a slightly superior horse as a reward for good roleplaying. For example, a

typical horse moves much faster than any man, armored or not, in melee; however, an exceptionally fast horse (Movement Rate 10, for instance) can gallop 30 yards in a round, though this must normally be in a straight line.

Regardless of the quality of a steed, the Gamemaster should require Horsemanship rolls if any turns or tricky maneuvers are executed, although the best horses might grant bonuses of +5 or even +10 to a character's Horsemanship.

## HORSE ARMOR

The charger, a typical knight's warhorse, may wear a *caparison*, a fancy full-length cloth covering that both decorates and protects. It is generally colorful and bears the arms or a badge of the owner. The basic caparison worn by most warhorses is worth 1 point of armor. (This stacks with the horse's usual armor value, so a charger with a caparison has an armor value of  $5 + 1 = 6$ .)

Characters may insist on equipping lesser horses with a caparison (though to do so is gauche if not ridiculous); Gamemasters should be sure to apply negative modifiers to an overburdened mount's DEX and Movement Rate.

## INJURY AND HEALTH

The *raison d'être* of the knight is to fight, and much of the action in the game revolves around personal or military combat — which often results in injury, whether minor or mortal. Knights expect to take injury, and they wear their many scars proudly.

In Arthurian literature, knights often suffer great wounds, and thereafter go through long periods of healing and rest to recover. Such events are realistic as well as authentic to the stories. The following rules attempt to formalize this process, while leaving the Gamemaster enough flexibility to deal with all possible situations.

Keeping track of injuries and healing is a complicated process. Both the Gamemaster and players are responsible for recording information accurately and honestly. You may wish to simplify portions of these rules while learning the game, but they should be used in full once familiarity is gained. The reward will be a more authentic and dramatic experience.

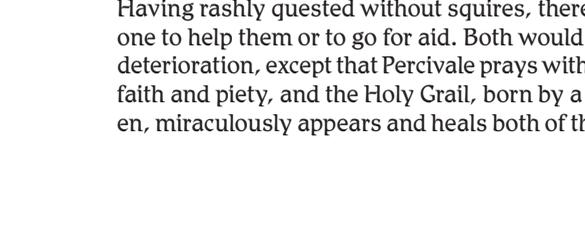
Violence in *Pendragon* should be realistic and terrifying, never casual or routine, and the best way to achieve this is to make injuries a serious matter.

## HIT POINTS

Health in *Pendragon* is measured primarily through the Total Hit Points statistic (calculated using  $SIZ + CON$ ). This number represents the character's capacity to absorb injury. Death is imminent if a character has 0 or negative hit points. In essence, though, a character with only half his hit points is half-dead.

## LOSING HIT POINTS

As damage is taken during the game, hit points are lost. The player records this loss, in pencil, using the workspace on the character sheet labeled "Current Hit Points."



## A Fight to the Death

Young Sir Percivale, traveling through a forest, meets a knight he does not recognize. They decide to fight a “friendly” duel and soon find that they are well matched. Too stubborn to halt the combat, both fight until they are unable to continue, each taking many light wounds. In the heat of battle, neither notices the other’s serious condition until too late.

*...Thus they fought near half a day, and never rested but right little, and there was none of them both that had less wounds than fifteen, and they bled so much that it was marvel they stood on their feet. But this knight that fought with Sir Percivale was a proved knight and a wise fighting knight, and Sir Percivale was young and strong, not knowing in fighting as the other was.*

*Then Sir Percivale spoke first, and said, “Sir knight, hold thy hand a while still, for we have foughten for a simple matter, and quarrel overlong, and therefore I require thee tell me thy name, for I was never or this time matched.”*

*“So God me help,” said that knight, “and never or this time was there never knight that wounded me so sore as thou hast done, and yet have I foughten in many battles; and now shalt thou wit that I am a knight of the Table Round, and my name is Sir Ector de Maris, brother unto the good knight, Sir Lancelot du Lac.”*

*“Alas,” said Sir Percivale, “and my name is Sir Percivale de Gales that hath made my quest to seek Sir Lancelot, and now I am siker [certain] that I shall never finish my quest, for ye have slain me with your hands.”*

*“It is not so,” said Sir Ector, “for I am slain by your hands, and may not live. Therefore I require you,” said Sir Ector unto Sir Percivale, “ride ye hereby to a priory and bring me a priest that I may receive my Saviour, for I may not live. And when ye come to the court of King Arthur tell not my brother, Sir Lancelot, how that ye slew me, for then he would be your mortal enemy, but ye may say that I was slain in my quest as I sought him.”*

*“Alas,” said Sir Percivale, “ye say that thing that never will be, for I am so faint for bleeding that I may unnethe [scarcely] stand, how should I then take my horse?”*

—Mallory XI, 13

In game terms, the two knights fight until their hit points go below the Unconscious threshold. This example serves to illustrate a loose interpretation of the Unconscious rules: Although scarcely able to stand, and certainly not capable of further fighting, Sir Percivale is able to speak to his opponent and to make a successful prayer.

Incidentally, the two knights have broken their Round Table vows to never fight against each other. Having rashly quested without squires, there is no one to help them or to go for aid. Both would die of deterioration, except that Percivale prays with great faith and piety, and the Holy Grail, born by a maiden, miraculously appears and heals both of them.

Characters may lose hit points from many different sources. Some forms of damage cause *wounds*, while some act directly on *hit points*. Fatigue alone never causes hit point loss.

Once injured, characters may lose further hit points through illness, infection, excess activity, blood loss, or worse. These factors are summarized under the “Deterioration and Aggravation” rules below. Deterioration may be prevented by the unsophisticated medicine of the times, known as Chirurgery. Aggravation is caused by excessive activity while a character is already injured or ill, and may be averted only by avoiding such activity.

### REGAINING HIT POINTS

A character’s recovery from injury is a natural bodily process, which is quantified as that character’s Healing Rate, calculated as  $(STR + CON) \div 10$ . Characters normally recover a number of hit points equal to their Healing Rate every week (on Sunday at noon, in fact), although the Gamemaster may adjust this schedule if necessary.

The First Aid skill lets the injured character regain hit points immediately, and ensures that bleeding is stopped, infection prevented, and so forth. A critical success with the Chirurgery skill augments a patient’s Healing Rate. (See “First Aid” and “Chirurgery” later in this section.)

Magical healing may cure hit points or otherwise magically improve a character’s health, at the Gamemaster’s option. As always, the details of healing magic are secrets known only to the Gamemaster (and to a few unique Gamemaster characters).

In all cases, any hit points that would be regained over the value of the Total Hit Points statistic are lost.

### UNCONSCIOUS

As a character loses hit points, he reaches a point at which he becomes unconscious. This important threshold is represented by the Unconscious statistic, equal to  $Total\ Hit\ Points \div 4$ .

Characters with current hit points below the Unconscious value are out of action. At the moment a character goes below this threshold, he slumps slowly to the ground, possibly staggering a few yards first or sliding gently off his horse before collapsing. (A DEX roll is allowed for a mounted character who becomes unconscious, with success indicating that any falling damage is averted; otherwise, he takes another 1d6 points from the fall.)

The Gamemaster may wish to let unconscious characters have brief periods of lucidity. With Gamemaster approval, they may be allowed to speak quietly. For example, they might be capable of slowly dictating a will, praying for divine guidance, or describing an assailant in a weak whisper. (See the “A Fight to the Death” sidebar.)

Since they have been gravely injured, unconscious characters are considered *unhealthy* (see “States of Health”) and must check the “Chirurgery Needed” box on their character sheet immediately. They require chirurgery until the Gamemaster says otherwise.

*Example of Injury and Unconsciousness:* In a tremendous fight, Sir Ambrut is victorious over two Saxon assail-



ants. Ambrut takes no Major Wound in the fight due to his heroic CON of 21. However, he takes many minor injuries, including a fall from his horse, for a total of 26 points of damage, leaving him with 8 current hit points.

Since 8 is below Ambrut's Unconscious value of 9, the sorely wounded knight staggers into a wood near the battlefield and falls unconscious. His player checks Ambrut's "Chirurgery Needed" box at once.

### ZERO OR NEGATIVE HIT POINTS

As a character suffers consecutive minor injuries or deterioration, current hit points may become a negative number. The player must continue to keep track of the number.

A character at 0 or negative hit points for any reason is on the verge of death. The First Aid skill or magic may restore and preserve his life long enough for healing to be possible, but unless he is healed to positive hit points before midnight of that same day, the character dies sometime during the night.

Even if he survives, he will need Chirurgery.

*Example of Negative Hit Points:* After the fight mentioned above, Sir Ambrut lies unconscious on the field, with 8 hit points remaining. In his delirium, he cries out. An enemy footsoldier wanders past and, seeing another victim, brutally stabs the helpless Ambrut with his spear for 9 more points of damage: Ambrut writhes briefly and goes limp. His current hit points are now -1. He will die later that evening if not given successful First Aid by midnight.

Luckily, his squire, who had been separated from his knight, eventually manages to get help (Ambrut's player makes a successful Squire roll), and Ambrut receives First Aid for 2 points from the physician his squire has brought. Now back to 1 hit point, he survives the night, though he has many new scars.

### FIRST AID

The First Aid skill can return lost hit points to wounded characters, and ensures that bleeding is stopped, infection prevented, and so forth. As emergency battlefield treatment, it is useful only immediately or shortly after any kind of wound is received (see "Wound Categories"). It cannot be applied to wounds more than a day old, and its benefits can only be received once per wound.

Each use of First Aid for a light wound takes several minutes (3d6 melee rounds, if such a calculation is required). More serious wounds should take longer to dress, but this is up to the Gamemaster to decide. If a failed attempt is made, it is too late for further tries. Any subsequent medical attention must come from Chirurgery.

The hit points returned by First Aid are independent of the patient's Healing Rate, but only a few points are regained. A successful First Aid roll reduces the chance of a wound's becoming infected, and also returns 1d3 hit points to the injured character. A critical success heals 1d3+3 hit points.

A fumbled First Aid roll causes a further 1d3 hit points of damage to the recipient. Worse, the patient's condition has been worsened, and the wound is now infected, bleed-

ing further, or otherwise exacerbated. The character is now *unhealthy*: check the “Chirurgery Needed” box.

Characters that gain successful First Aid for all their wounds usually do not require Chirurgery, unless they have suffered a Major or Mortal wound (see “Wound Categories”).

Note that many small wounds can be taken care of using First Aid and the knight returned to full hit points, but a severe wound leaves him still damaged.

## WOUNDS

When a character is wounded, the magnitude of damage is crucial. For game purposes, three classifications of wounds are recognized — *light*, *major*, and *mortal* wounds — based on the amount of hit point damage by each successful attack relative to the character’s Total Hit Points. Thus, characters with high SIZ and CON values suffer less severely from injuries.

Remember that, even at full hit points, a knight is likely to have ugly bruises, cuts, scrapes, and pulled muscles capable of disabling the normal 20th century male!

### LIGHT WOUNDS

Any hit dealing less damage than the character’s Major Wound threshold (which equals his CON) indicates bruising, laceration, or other minor injuries that are painful, but which do not in themselves cause any additional serious effects.

A light wound may later fester and worsen if not dealt with properly (see “First Aid,” above, and “Recovery” below), but it has no immediate effect on combat or any other abilities. Aggravation may occur if a character fights or takes other violent activity after receiving several light wounds, at Gamemaster option.

Cumulative light wounds may bring the character below his Unconscious threshold. Once the character is unconscious, Chirurgery is invariably needed, and deterioration may set in. Bodily weakness from unhealthy resting conditions or fumbled First Aid rolls may also result in the character becoming ill, again at the Gamemaster’s option.

### MAJOR WOUNDS

Damage from a single injury that is equal to or greater than CON (the Major Wound threshold) represents serious bodily harm that the character simply cannot shrug off. Practical examples of such wounds might be a severe concussion, crushed or broken bones, heavy bleeding, or damaged internal organs.

There are several negative consequences to Major Wounds in game terms.

1. The “Chirurgery Needed” box is checked immediately. The character requires the attention of an expert in order to avoid infection and other dangers resulting from his injury, described as deterioration in these rules.

2. The character falls unconscious unless he makes a successful d20 roll against his current hit points (for example, a character with 10 hit points left would need to roll a 10 or less to stay conscious).

3. The player must roll on Table 5–3: Statistics Lost to discover the permanent effect, if any, of the wound. All derived

statistics, such as Movement Rate or Unconscious, must be refigured immediately if a loss to an attribute occurs from this roll. If the Total Hit Points statistic drops, current hit points are not affected unless the character is at full hit points currently (in which case they drop to the new maximum).

4. Should the character avoid unconsciousness, he may wish to continue fighting or performing some similarly active task. However, the injured character must first make a successful Valorous roll to do so, possibly with a modifier. Failure indicates the knight cannot summon up the courage and desire to continue fighting. He hesitates, and will not enter combat unless forced into it. A fumbled Valorous roll means the knight actually flees in fear or surrenders. A critical success may gain some benefit, at the Gamemaster’s discretion.

5. If further actions are taken once a Major Wound is suffered, both aggravation and deterioration may set in.

### MORTAL WOUNDS

Damage from a single blow that is equal to or greater than the Total Hit Points statistic is usually mortal, hence the term. The character has received a truly horrible life-threatening injury — his skull is cracked, an artery severed, internal organs punctured, or even a limb amputated, if the Gamemaster so rules. Regardless of the description of the wound, the character is incapacitated and totally helpless. However, he may still survive if certain criteria are met. Follow the steps below.

1. First Aid must be successfully applied within 1 hour or the character dies, and even then recovery is doubtful. First Aid must restore enough hit points to give the character at least 1 current point. (Thus, if the character is more than 5 points negative, the wound is always fatal since First Aid never restores more than 6 hit points.) Chirurgery is of no use until the character is out of immediate danger (i.e., has positive hit points). The only alternative is magic healing, which is controlled by the Gamemaster.

2. If the character is brought back to 1 or more hit points he lives, but immediately suffers *three* rolls on Table 5–3: Statistics Lost to determine permanent effects. Derived statistics must be recalculated immediately if losses to attributes occur (current hit points are not reduced any further, though).

3. If the character lives beyond the first hour (having been brought to positive hit points), the “Chirurgery Needed” box is checked. He lies unconscious, and his future is still in grave doubt.

## RECORDING INJURIES

The workspace labeled “Current Hit Points” is used to record all important information on a character’s physical state. The section also includes a space labeled “Wounds” to record the magnitude of new, untreated injuries. At the bottom is the crucial “Chirurgery Needed” box, which may be checked to indicate whether the character is *healthy* or *unhealthy* overall (see “States of Health”).

### PROCEDURE

When a character takes damage, use the following steps to record the damage and wounds properly.





**Step 1.** Record the actual points of damage (e.g. 4 points, 15 points, etc.) that the character has just taken on the lines labeled “Wounds” in the “Current Hit Points” box.

Occasionally, an insidious injury will be received that affects hit points without inflicting a visible wound. This is the case, for example, with disease, or if First Aid is fumbled, or if deterioration sets in after a previous injury. In these cases, go directly to Step 3, without recording a wound number or checking the injury magnitude.

**Step 2.** Check to see if the magnitude of the injury qualifies for a Major or Mortal Wound. See “Wound Categories.”

**Step 3.** Subtract the magnitude of the injury from your current hit points. Erase the current hit points number in the small inner box in the upper left-hand corner, and put down the new total. Thus, if your character has 26 Total Hit Points and takes 4 points of damage, his current total drops to 22; if he then takes 15 points from a deadly blow, he now has only 7 current points.

Depending on wounds, the character’s surroundings, his activity level, and other factors, the number recorded in this space may change many times during a play session.

**Step 4.** Check to see if current hit points have gone below the Unconscious threshold. If so, the character sways briefly and passes out. A DEX roll is allowed if the character is on horseback or balancing, in order to keep from taking additional damage from a fall.

## STATES OF HEALTH

A character in *Pendragon* is either healthy or unhealthy. For the sake of simplicity, there is no middle ground. A character may have a reasonable number of hit points and still be unhealthy, or he may have only a few hit points above Unconscious and still be healthy. The only deciding factor is whether or not the “Chirurgery Needed” box at the bottom of the “Current Hit Points” section is checked.

**Healthy:** Healthy individuals do not require Chirurgery: If the “Chirurgery Needed” box is not checked, then he is fine, despite any number of minor wounds, and may function normally — knights are trained to live with minor injuries.

Healthy characters whose hit points are at half or less might also suffer from aggravation (see “Deterioration and Aggravation”).

**Unhealthy:** If the “Chirurgery Needed” box is checked, the character is unhealthy and needs a physician’s care. Any physical exertion is liable to worsen his condition.

Normally the check is gained by any one of the following means:

1. Losing enough hit points to below the Unconscious level.
2. Taking a Major Wound.
3. Taking a Mortal Wound (assuming he survived).
4. The caregiver fumbled First Aid roll.
5. Contracting an illness due to unhealthy living conditions or other sources. This might include poisoned characters. See “Other Damage.”

Unhealthy characters are incapable of taking care of themselves properly, and natural deterioration may set in unless someone else actively tends to their needs: See “Chirurgery” below.

Once a character is unhealthy and the “Chirurgery Needed” box is checked, it remains checked until the Gamemaster approves its removal, normally after several weeks of rest. At the very minimum, the character must be conscious before the check is erased.

## RECOVERY

Recovery from illness or injury is unpredictable. Many situations can delay or even retard recovery, and weak characters might require months of convalescence before full recovery takes place. It is possible for unhealthy characters to die during convalescence, should they be badly cared for.

Keep in mind the fact that, in the literature, even Sir Lancelot is often out of action due to injury.

Once a character is injured, recovery is determined for every week of game time. If injured characters insist on activity instead of resting, aggravation damage must be applied on a per-action basis; Chirurgery, natural healing, and deterioration are always determined on a weekly basis.

## NATURAL HEALING

Natural healing occurs at noon every Sunday (within game time): At that point in time, the character regains a number of hit points equal to his Healing Rate. Even if a character is injured on Saturday, he normally heals on the following day. Gamemasters should determine partial healing rates when necessary.

In all cases, natural healing occurs weekly, regardless of what form a character’s injuries or illnesses have taken, or whether he is resting or active during the week.

## DETERIORATION AND AGGRAVATION

Injuries or illnesses may grow worse over time rather than better. If a character undertakes activity enough to interfere with healing, or if he is not tended properly, then he may take further hit point damage. This may be due to blood loss, dehydration, infection, further illness, and more. The damage from deterioration and aggravation indicates the effects of all these factors.

Due to damage caused by deterioration and aggravation, the final result of a week’s cycle of rest and activity (see “Natural Healing”) may be rendered nil, or even a loss of hit points. Chirurgery can stave off deterioration, but only adequate bed rest can save an overly active character from aggravating his illness or injuries.

## DETERIORATION

Deterioration affects only unhealthy characters who do not receive a successful Chirurgery roll during the week. Deterioration causes the loss of 1d6 hit points per week (no wound is recorded, and First Aid cannot help). As with natural healing, this damage occurs on Sunday at noon. The net result of the two hit point adjustments may be a gain in hit points, a loss, or nil.

## CHIRURGERY

Chirurgery is applied to unhealthy patients only. Chirurgery’s purpose is to halt deterioration: A successful roll means that deterioration does not occur for that week.

Only one Chirurgery roll per patient may be attempted per week. Normally the roll is attempted at the beginning of the week, and the result noted by the Gamemaster for future reference. If a failure is the result, the character suffers deterioration, but this effect is not apparent until the following Sunday.

On a critical success, the patient's health improves rapidly for that week: He gains double his normal Healing Rate that week, in addition to avoiding deterioration. On a fumble, the patient immediately loses 1d3 hit points (but no wound number is recorded, and First Aid cannot help), and he also suffers deterioration at the end of the week.

Normally, two or three consecutive successful Chirurgery rolls will allow a patient to improve from "unhealthy" to "healthy," at the Gamemaster's discretion. With more severe wounds, a longer period may be necessary.

Note that if more than one surgeon try to use their arts on a single patient in a week, all automatically fail.

**Modifiers to Chirurgery:** If the patient is kept in unclean or unhealthy conditions (disease, severe filth, freezing cold, etc.), a -5 modifier to the Chirurgery skill is applied. Other modifiers must be determined by the Gamemaster.

## AGGRAVATION

Gamemasters inevitably face situations where knights who should be resting insist on activity — perhaps "to travel just for a few hours" or for "just one good fight." In other cases during a scenario, an injured character may be forced to leave his sickbed for several days, then rest, then ride many miles, then rest again. The rules for aggravation take care of this.

For simplicity's sake, cumulative rest between actions is not tracked for the purpose of aggravation, only damage from specific activities. These rules are intended to permit freedom of action for players, as opposed to simply forbidding injured characters to be involved in the game.

Players who wish to risk their character by taking actions while wounded or unhealthy are free to do so, with realistic consequences. Sometimes in *Pendragon*, action may be more important than life — perhaps a character wishes to avenge a brother, or deliver a vital message, even if it means riding or fighting while injured.

Aggravation means making a condition worse by undertaking excessive activity while ill or injured. Each incident of aggravation causes 1 or more points of damage directly to current hit points; no wound is recorded. Aggravation damage occurs immediately after the activity is completed unless the Gamemaster decides otherwise. The extra damage may cause a character to become unconscious immediately after his rash action.

**Resolving Aggravation:** Current health, the extent of one's injuries, and the duration and intensity of an activity are all important in determining aggravation, as shown below.

Aggravation is possible for even healthy characters at half hit points or less when they undertake strenuous activity. It may occur for unhealthy characters when even moderate activity is undertaken. Note that characters below the

Unconscious threshold cannot receive aggravation damage because they can, at best, perform only light activities. Normally they are comatose.

A brief and trivial incident, such as a single 5-minute dance during a feast, should rarely cause aggravation except to a severely wounded character (i.e., one with a Major Wound who happens to still be conscious). The Gamemaster should judge each separate incident based on the suggested damages given in the table below, the relevant storytelling concerns, and common sense.

| Activity   | —Suggested Aggravation Damage— |           |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------|
|  | Healthy*                       | Unhealthy |
| None (resting, eating, or sleeping)                        | 0                              | 0         |
| Light (walking slowly, eating heavily, talking or writing) | 0                              | 1         |
| Moderate (walking, riding, dancing, romancing, arguing)    | 0                              | 2         |
| Strenuous (fighting, running, climbing, traveling)         | 1                              | 3         |

\* A healthy character should take damage from aggravation only if he is currently at half hit points or less, and only at the Gamemaster's option.

The normal loss due to aggravation, as given on the chart above, can be exacerbated by sustained activities at the Gamemaster's option. For instance, an unhealthy character who engages in light activity for over an hour might take more than the suggested damage (say, 2 points instead of 1).

Aggravation effects stack with those from deterioration, but aggravation cannot be halted or cured by Chirurgery, First Aid, or any other die roll.

*Example of Aggravation and Deterioration:* Sir Ambrut, with Total Hit Points of 34, enters a rowdy tournament held on a Saturday to celebrate the victorious battle fought earlier that year by Baron Yvane's men. As the day progresses, Ambrut fights many times and takes several light wounds; he gets successful First Aid for most, but as a result of his last fight he now has 14 hit points, less than half his total.

After he fights once more (luckily, taking no further damage from his younger opponent), the Gamemaster rules that Ambrut has nonetheless performed strenuous activity while injured. He tells the player to record 1 point of aggravation damage (to which First Aid may not be applied), for a new current total of 13 hit points.

At the end of the feast, still conscious, Ambrut staggers to his tent to rest. He is healthy, so deterioration does not occur, nor is Chirurgery needed. He rests Sunday morning. At noon, he gains his Healing Rate of 3 hit points as natural healing for the week, bringing his current total up to 16 — which is still below half, so he still cannot fight again without risking further aggravation of his wounds.

Ambrut decides to rest the requisite number of weeks to return to full hit points, avoiding any further strenuous activity during the first week (after which his hit points increase to 19, above half) in order to ensure quick recovery. Being healthy, he is able to engage freely in moderate activity, such as dancing and romance, throughout his convalescence.

## OTHER DAMAGE

Knights sometimes languish in foul dungeons or become feverish due to foul poisons or wasting illnesses. Other





sources of damage beyond combat are included here, although such sordid forms of damage as disease should rarely kill a brave knight. Magic can also inflict damage, but this is unusual — the effects of magic are normally more subtle.

All damage is recorded in the same way: that is, by subtracting it from current hit points. Wounds and recovery for unusual forms of damage may be handled differently, however, at the Gamemaster's option. Suffocation and disease, for instance, do not normally cause Major or Mortal Wounds, but neither can they be dealt with using First Aid unless the Gamemaster wishes it.

## DISEASE

Suffering a disease should be a rare event for characters in *Pendragon*. Usually disease results only from incarceration in a deep dungeon, rather than from a casual trip to a large city or similar action. The Gamemaster must determine the amount of damage inflicted and decide whether a disease causes wounds that First Aid can help. Normally no wound is inflicted, only a general loss of hit points.

However, a diseased character is unhealthy, regardless of hit points. Check the "Needs Chirurgery" box and proceed normally.

## POISON

Every poison has a Potency rating, which measures its toxicity. When poison is ingested or otherwise introduced into the body of its victim, the victim makes a CON roll in an opposed resolution against a Potency roll (i.e., 1d20 + Potency) made by the Gamemaster. Check the CON roll result against following chart.

| CON Roll         | Poison Effect   |
|------------------|---|
| Critical success | No effect   |
| Success          | Victim is unhealthy   |
| Partial success  | Victim is unhealthy, and takes damage equal to Potency minus CON. |
| Failure          | Victim is unhealthy, and takes damage equal to Potency.           |
| Fumble           | Victim is unhealthy, and takes damage equal to 2 x Potency.       |

## FALLING

Falling from a distance of less than 3 feet results in no damage. For each 6 feet or fraction thereof beyond the first 3 feet, add 1d6 damage. For instance, falling from a horse (about a 5-foot drop) normally causes 1d6 damage. A fall of 12 feet, say from a house's roof, causes 2d6. A fall of 50 feet, such as from a cliff or a castle wall, causes 8d6 damage.

Armor does *not* absorb falling damage, though magical effects that emulate armor reduction might do so if the Gamemaster wishes.

Wounds are calculated normally for falling damage.

**Dropped Objects:** Dropped objects deal damage dependent upon their size and the height from which they are dropped. Size is determined in pounds, with each 10 lbs. translating to 1 point of damage. Height adds to this damage at the rate of 1 point of damage per 3 feet dropped. Thus, a 35-pound rock dropped from 23 feet up causes 4 (rounded from 3.5) + 8 = 12 points of damage.

Armor (and possibly a shield) protects against damage from dropped objects just as from weapons, and wounds are calculated as usual.

## FIRE AND HEAT

Normally, fire does 1d6 points of damage per melee round, plus a cumulative 1d6 more for each consecutive round of constant contact. Thus, during the second consecutive round of contact, a character takes 2d6 points of damage; in the third round, 3d6; in the fourth, 4d6; and so on.

A flame or scalding source of heat must be held against an immobilized character to deal damage in this way; otherwise, such as in the case of a torch used as a weapon in combat, the contact is not sufficient to cause cumulative damage, instead dealing just 1d6 points with each hit.

Further, this damage assumes an open fire between the size of a fresh torch and a bonfire. Larger fires, or sources of heat such as red-hot irons or kettles of boiling lead, can be substantially hotter, doing 2d6 cumulative damage per round or even more. The Gamemaster must determine heat damage beyond the basic 1d6.

Larger or more intense sources of heat may also do damage at a short distance. However, no natural fire causes damage to characters over 12 feet distant.

Fires may also cause suffocation due to smoke inhalation (see "Suffocation").

Armor of any kind (but not clothing) reduces fire damage by 1d6; that is, a character wearing armor takes no damage from a normal fire in the first round, then takes 1d6 in the second round of consecutive contact, 2d6 in the third round, and so on.

Each wound from fire or heat damage should be based on the total damage inflicted by a singular source or application of heat, not necessarily on the damage per round. Thus, continuous contact results in one wound, while repeated, distinct instances of contact (such as being struck repeatedly with a burning torch) result in a number of individual wounds.

For example, a character has a hot iron held against his flesh for two rounds. He takes 1d6 points of damage (with a result of 4 points) in the first round and 2d6 points (result 7 points) in the second round. He records a single wound of 4 + 7 = 11 points, not two separate wounds of 4 and 7 points respectively.

First Aid is useful for dealing with most fire and heat damage.

## SUFFOCATION

Damage from inhaling water, smoke, or poisonous vapors may be averted by attempting a CON roll. This simulates holding one's breath.

The CON roll must be made each round while the character is exposed to possible harm from inhalation. If he is successful, he takes no damage. Once the CON roll is failed, the character takes 1d6 damage per melee round thereafter while he remains within the harmful substance or area. He may take more than 1d6 damage if the inhaled substance is itself toxic.

If the CON roll to avoid suffocation is sustained for many consecutive rounds, a negative modifier to CON should be imposed. As a precedent, a character might suffer a cumulative -1 modifier for each round beyond the first, so that, for instance, holding one's breath for a seventh consecutive round imposes a -7 modifier.

No actual wound is inflicted by suffocation. Hit point recovery from some forms of suffocation (such as from a near drowning) may be much more rapid than from physical wounds, at the Gamemaster's option.

## SKIRMISH RULES

Knights fight many battles, both in single combat and in situations where large numbers of knights, soldiers, and warriors clash. In such a situation, individual prowess is still important, but it is often submerged beneath the movement, emotions, and actions of the masses.

Two types of mass combat are used in *Pendragon*: "battles" and "skirmishes," the latter being most common. The skirmish is smaller, generally involving a single unit against a single unit (at most, 200 combatants). In both skirmishes and battles, special rules are used to resolve what happens, but the procedure for a skirmish is much shorter and simpler, so — being likely to see use more often in your campaign — it is explained here.

### BATTLE SKILL

The Battle skill measures an individual's knowledge and use of individual tactics in skirmishes and battles. A high Battle skill value means that the character knows how to stick with his unit, how to examine a battlefield to recognize what is dangerous or advantageous, and how to take advantage of what he sees.

In general, the Battle skill has two applications. The first allows leaders to command their group of combatants, and is used in both large battles and skirmishes. The second dictates tactical decisions that take place when individuals are separated from their larger unit; this use of the skill applies only in large battles.

See Appendix 4 for more on large-scale battles.

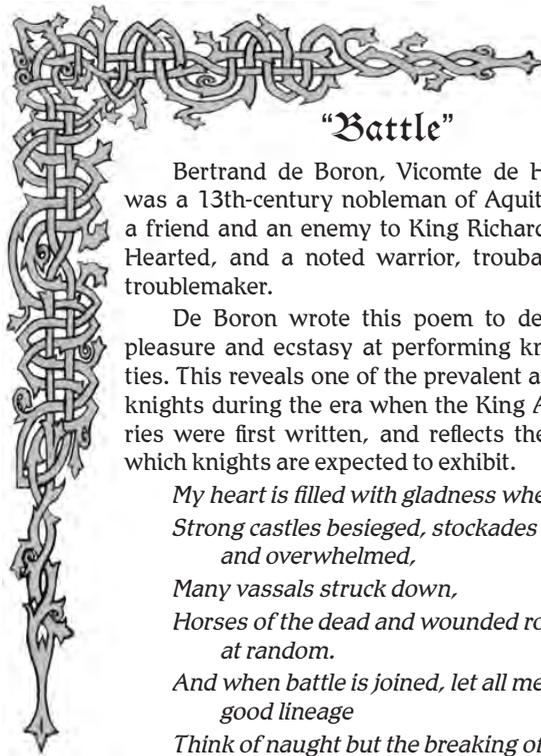
## THE SKIRMISH

A skirmish is a special form of melee combat that opens with a mass attack by one or both sides. One side or the other may gain an initial advantage, and combat then dissolves into individual whorls of melee. Most mass combat during scenarios is of this type.

In a skirmish, only the primary commander of each force makes a Battle roll. If the unit's commander is not a player knight, the Gamemaster determines the commander's skill and makes an unopposed roll on Table 6-3: Tactics Modifier. The modifier from this table is then applied to the combat skills of everyone who attacks in the first melee round.

**TABLE 6-3: TACTICS MODIFIER**

| Battle Roll Result | Modifier |
|--------------------|----------|
| Critical success   | +5       |
| Success            | +0       |
| Failure            | -5       |
| Fumble             | -10      |



### "Battle"

Bertrand de Boron, Vicomte de Hauteforte, was a 13th-century nobleman of Aquitaine, both a friend and an enemy to King Richard the Lion-Hearted, and a noted warrior, troubadour, and troublemaker.

De Boron wrote this poem to describe his pleasure and ecstasy at performing knightly duties. This reveals one of the prevalent attitudes of knights during the era when the King Arthur stories were first written, and reflects the behavior which knights are expected to exhibit.

*My heart is filled with gladness when I see  
Strong castles besieged, stockades broken  
and overwhelmed,*

*Many vassals struck down,  
Horses of the dead and wounded roving  
at random.*

*And when battle is joined, let all men of  
good lineage*

*Think of naught but the breaking of  
heads and arms,*

*For it is better to die than be vanquished  
and live...*

*I tell you I have no such joy as when I hear  
the shout*

*"On! On!" from both sides and the neighing  
of riderless steeds,*

*And groans of "Help me! Help me!"*

*And when I see both great and small*

*Fall in ditches and on the grass*

*And see the dead transfixed by spear shafts!  
Lords, mortgage your domains, castles,  
cities,*

*But never give up war!*

—Bertrand de Boron



After the commander's Battle roll, combat is joined and resolved for each player character, using normal melee combat rules. Each player knight should face an enemy knight unless the enemy unit is composed entirely of inferior troops. After the first round, the tactics modifier is not used — only normal combat modifiers apply.

In a skirmish, most of the combatants on each side are non-player characters (nobody runs a game with 30 or 40 player knights). The skirmish does not end until the situation regarding the non-player characters is resolved. It may be that the player knights are victorious, only to look up and see that the rest of their unit has been routed. Or they may be defeated by their opponents, only to be rescued by their NPC (non-player character) companions.

To determine what the rest of the unit has done, use Table 6-4: Followers' Fate. Usually, this roll is delayed for anywhere from 1 to 5 battle rounds, while the Gamemaster deals with individual combats. Eventually a player knight is sure to look around and ask what is happening with the



rest of the unit, or the Gamemaster might simply feel it is time to make the roll.

Every character who leads men (other than a knight's own squires), including the overall commander, should make a Followers' Fate roll. In most cases, the overall commander has all non-player characters under his command, but player characters such as banneret knights are considered subordinate leaders, so they are directly responsible for their own men.

A Followers' Fate roll uses each individual leader's Battle skill, modified by the initial result on the Table 6-3 above. The result of this roll is checked on the table below: In each case, "subordinates" refers to the number of men, other than squires, led by the leader in question.

#### TABLE 6-4: FOLLOWERS' FATE

| Result           | Effect  |
|------------------|---|
| Critical success | A great victory! One enemy of appropriate rank is captured per 5 subordinates. No losses. |
| Success          | 10% losses (2% killed, 8% wounded). Survivors are victorious.                             |
| Failure          | 50% losses (10% killed, 25% wounded, 15% captured). Survivors retreat from the field.     |
| Fumble           | 75% losses (50% killed, 25% captured). Survivors routed.                                  |

*Note:* Being a sub-leader is the only way that a player can make a Battle roll in a skirmish if his character is not the overall commander of the unit.

Losses from groups that contain different classes of troops require a ruling from the Gamemaster as to who was captured, wounded, or killed. Wealthy knights with several squires are far less likely to be killed than sergeants or impoverished knights with no squires, but they are prime targets for capture.

Each Followers' Fate roll determines what happened to that sub-section of the unit. The Gamemaster must make sure that each NPC in the skirmish is clearly assigned a leader for the purposes of Fate rolls, with no confusing overlaps.

#### SAMPLE SKIRMISH

The famous warlord Earl Crassus (Battle skill 18), with a band of 19 other knights and 30 sergeants, is riding northward. Crassus personally leads 10 non-player character knights, and the 30 sergeants are also under his direct command. Sir Yvane, his vassal, leads a subordinate troop of eight household knights (three other player knights including Sir Ambrut, plus five NPC knights). The unit totals 50 men, including the earl.

The group sights a party of 75 Saxon warriors who must, of course, be raiding. Crassus decides to smash the invaders, and the knights prepare to make a charge with lances.



Crassus, handled by the Gamemaster, is responsible for the fate of his 10 NPC knights and 30 sergeants, while Yvane, a player character, is responsible for the five non-player knights under his command. (The three other player knights are responsible for their own fate.)

Crassus, as the commander of the unit, rolls to determine the first round modifier for the skirmish.

Earl Crassus begins the skirmish by making his Battle roll as commander, and receives a lucky result of 18, indicating a critical success. Since Crassus is a Gamemaster character, no Glory is recorded for the success. Consulting Table 6–3, the Gamemaster announces that all members of the unit have +5 modifiers to their initial Lance attack in melee. The unit charges with a cheer, and the Saxons are caught in the flank.

The success or failure of individual player characters in the skirmish, though, is determined by normal melee combat. On the first melee round of combat, Sir Ambrut's unmodified Lance skill of 10 is modified by Crassus' successful Battle roll to a value of 15. Ambrut rolls a 14 on the first round and hits a Saxon. Yvane skewers a Saxon with a critical Lance success on the first round. The other player characters also do well in the first round, defeating several more Saxons. Glory is gained for each defeated enemy by the victors, as normal.

In subsequent rounds, the +5 modifier from Crassus' Battle roll no longer applies, and combat is resolved normally.

Later in the fight, after resolving 3 rounds of melee combat, the Gamemaster decides to see what has happened to the NPCs. He starts by rolling for the fate of Crassus' knights and sergeants. Yvane, as a subordinate leader,

now gains a +5 modifier for his Followers' Fate roll, as does Crassus himself, due to this critically successful Battle roll.

Crassus achieves success in his Followers' Fate roll, so the results from Table 6–4 are applied to all the men directly under his command, with these results — the men are victorious, and take 10% losses. Of the 40 men in his charge,  $2\% = 0.8$  (round to 1) = one NPC killed. The Gamemaster rules that it is one of the youngest non-player knights, who was reckless during the charge and attacked three Saxons at once. Also,  $8\% = 3.4$  (round to 3) = three NPCs are wounded. The Gamemaster rules that all three are sergeants.

Now Yvane rolls for his five NPC knights. He also receives a +5 modifier from the commander's initial Battle roll, but manages to fail his own Battle roll at this point. Thus, we find, his surviving men were forced to retreat. Results are as follows.

$10\%$  killed out of 5 =  $0.5 = 1$  household knight killed.

$25\%$  wounded out of 5 =  $1.25 = 1$  household knight wounded.

$15\%$  captured out of 5 =  $0.75 = 1$  knight captured.

The Gamemaster rules that the skirmish ends with Crassus' troop of sergeants driving off the surviving Saxons. The player knights were all victorious in personal melee, so no special results obtain there. Sir Yvane's NPC followers were driven back, but since his player knight followers did so well, the Gamemaster rules that no loss or humiliation occurred as a result of Yvane's failed Battle roll.

Since Crassus' force won the fight, the Gamemaster can arrange a short scenario in which the knight of Yvane's who was captured can be rescued, and no ransom need be paid.





# Chapter Seven: Ambition and Faith

Your character gains experience and glory during the game, and you may aspire to some of the higher ambitions of knighthood. These include rank and wealth as well as virtue and other ideals of behavior.

Knights may attempt to fulfill several roles at once in their never-ending quest for glory and renown. Some roles are, of course, incompatible. Players are encouraged to focus on those ambitions that are most interesting to them and to ignore the others; despite what some storybooks suggest, not all knights are cut from the same mold.

If you have already created a starting character using this book, the character is already about to achieve one of the great ambitions of the gentry — becoming a landowner, a vassal knight. Being a vassal knight makes your character one of an elite group that makes up less than two percent of Britain's population.

As the campaign progresses, your character may attain considerable rank.

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN KNIGHTS

Knighthood is the unifying factor among members of the noble class in the Middle Ages. It sets a man apart from the common folk and defines the aristocracy of society. All knights, despite any personal differences between them, have more in common with each other than they have with the peasant class. The richest knights hobnob with the poorest and acknowledge each other as brothers of the military class.

Differences between knights do exist, though. Primarily this is measured by Glory, and of course traits and passions, but behavior, rank, and wealth also have a strong effect. Who would say that a humble household knight is equal in importance to Sir Gawaine, the preeminent baron of the land with hundreds of knights at his beck and call? As brothers in arms, knights may stand together on the battlefield, or cross lances in a tournament, but if they both reached a doorway together, there is little argument to be made about who is more glorious and thus has the right to choose whether he goes first or second.

Other differences between *Pendragon* knights are measured by several factors. First, the quality of a knight is determined to some extent by the amount of money spent in his yearly maintenance (see "Standards of Living" in Chapter 8). As well, a knight may earn titles and thus gain honor and glory as befits his new rank.



## Class Distinction, Arthurian-Style

Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides find the corpse of a nobleman, the king of the Red City, floating down a stream. In his hand is a letter explaining the conditions of his murder. Rather than trusting his kinsmen the dead king had trusted two commoners who he raised to be knights. They feloniously murdered him. The dead man's letter admits the error of his democratic point of view with these bitter words:

*Give a churl rule and thereby he will not be sufficed; for whatsomever he be that is ruled by a villain [peasant] born, and the lord of the soil to be a gentleman born, that same villain shall destroy all the gentlemen about him: therefore all estates and lords, beware whom ye take about you. And if ye be a knight of King Arthur's court remember this tale, for this is the end and conclusion.*

—Malory X, 61



## ROLEPLAYING NOBLES

Gamemasters should be careful of making a player character a powerful lord in the campaign. An earl in *Pendragon* is one of about 100 such noblemen in all of Britain — a tremendously significant person! A duke is one out of ten or so earls. Even the seemingly many kings in the whole of the Arthurian world number only about 25.

Such lords have a right (conventional, spiritual, and legal) to take command and, in general, to act superior in whatever manner they feel appropriate. Even a very humble individual of this class may greatly overbear the roles of less influential landholding knights.

Upper class lords are most playable if a majority of the regular players wish to run comparable lands and, hence, characters. A minor baron may not overwhelm a party. Though he may be very glorious, a certain equalizing attitude may set in if the other knights recognize that the baron's Glory is largely accrued from sitting on fat lands.

Since a character with even a minor barony is “set for life,” he has in effect “won” the game of *Pendragon*. A baron is no longer compelled to follow the life of an adventuring knight errant. When a player character receives such a grant, he should retire for a while to learn about the land, pay off the relief, create an heir, and so on. As a lord, he can now grant knighthood to his own squires and other loyal men; for all intents and purposes, he enters the ranks of “semi-retired player knights.”

The oldest son of a baron, trained for a noble’s life, is too precious to allow him to go off adventuring (an occupation with a much higher mortality rate than that of landlord). Barons and their heirs thus stay home, collect easy land Glory, and generate more heirs.

However, second and third sons of such characters have an ideally Arthurian ambience about them. The younger sons of minor lords are normally sent from home to fare for themselves. They get a hefty bonus of Glory to start, and may be accorded great respect if they identify themselves through their heraldry (or are otherwise recognized).

Sometimes one player in a campaign wants to play a lord while the others do not. At the Gamemaster’s discretion, special solo opportunities may be given for noble characters.

## PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A noble lord gains many privileges. His precedence and prestige are enhanced, he gains Glory for holding land and castles, and he controls a contingent of personal knights. He may appoint new knights, arrange marriages for widows who hold his lands, and has the duty and privilege of attending his lord’s court.

Such a character also has many responsibilities, however. He must protect the people who tend his land, and he must uphold Low Justice (and High Justice too, if allowed or directed to do so by his lord). He must maintain his castles, bridges, and towns, and keep a specified number of knights (and sometimes men-at-arms) for his lord’s army. He must feed his lord and his lord’s retinue whenever they arrive during their progress, and must sponsor tournaments and feasts.

Finally, a lord must maintain a lifestyle appropriate to his station (see “Grades of Maintenance”), and provide appropriate compensation to his household knights and servants as well. This cost reflects the required tournaments, feasts, gifts, and ceremonies which a lord is expected to sponsor. A lord who fails to expend the proper amount on himself and his estates is failing in his duty and loses the yearly Glory benefits of his title. Great lords are expected — nay, required! — to look the part.

For a player character lord to be effective, the player must acquire a wider view of the realm than a player of a simple adventuring knight. The recommended path to gain this overview is to require that each lord’s player must become a part-time Gamemaster for short-duration events. Thus, the lord must, at some time, sponsor an event and his player must run the required game session. The precise nature of the event depends upon the size of the holding, and, especially

for wealthier lords, sponsoring such an event may be required by the Gamemaster more than once during a year.

The purpose of this part-time gamemastering requirement is twofold. Firstly, it gives your Gamemaster a break. He must mastermind the campaign and oversee adventures for a year or more of real time to sustain a *Pendragon* campaign, and he deserves a chance to play characters occasionally without also having the Gamemaster’s responsibilities. This experience keeps him in touch with the player characters’ outlook and needs.

Second, part-time gamemastering helps train new Gamemasters by illustrating just how fun and manageable the responsibility really is when using the straightforward mechanics of the *Pendragon* game.

The events described below are only suggested minimal requirements for part-time Gamemaster. Players should treat the responsibility of gamemastering seriously: In the best case, players of nobles should volunteer to run several additional events, perhaps even adventures, within their landholding.

## LORD’S HOMAGE

Each vassal lord, before taking his office, must swear homage to his own lord. Gamemasters may wish to have characters take such an oath, as they did when becoming a knight. Here is an appropriate oath, derived from the oath taken by Count Baldwin IX of Flanders and Hainault, sworn to King Philip Augustus of France:

*I [NAME AND TITLE], make known to all men present and to come that I have agreed and sworn to my liege lord [NAME AND TITLE], to give him aid, openly and in good faith, all the days of my life, against all mortal men; and moreover I will never withhold or withdraw such aid from him as long as he shall be ready to do right to me in his court and to let me be judged by those who ought to be my judges in his court.*

## NOBLE RANKS

Player characters may progress beyond the office of banneret; such advancement is extraordinary, but they might be assigned to a high office or even become a ruling lord. Such a position of power is not within everyone’s goals and ambitions, and even less likely to fall within someone’s actual accomplishments.

However, all characters are likely to encounter people of these ranks during play, so this is a good opportunity to define them. The nobles form a social class that does not work the land directly or make a living by production. Instead, nobles are supported by goods and food collected from the lower social classes. Virtually all knights are nobly born, as are many squires; still, several higher social classes of nobles also exist. These are the lords and are the leaders of their world.

There are several methods whereby a man may be ennobled. The first is to work directly for the sovereign, for all nobility stems from the king. The second is to inherit it from his forefathers; third is to live “an honorable life” and be rewarded for it; fourth, to earn it by profession of arms; and fifth, to receive it from the lord by letters of patent.





## Who Are Noblemen?

*And so, my lord, it is needful both in this regard and others that you should know who they are who you should hold for gentlemen, who for nobles, and who for non-nobles.*

*The Gentleman is he who from old springs from gentlemen and gentlewomen, and such men and their posterity by marriage are gentle.*

*And with regard to nobility, which is the beginning of gentility, it is acquired firstly by those who hold great office under the prince, and by this means they are ennobled and their posterity after them. And the heirs of such, who come after, may, by maintaining the free condition and leading the honorable life of the nobleman, call themselves gentlemen.*

*Thirdly, when the servant of the prince of any other has led an honorable existence, and the prince has made him a knight, he thus ennobles him and his posterity.*

*Fourthly, to follow the profession of arms in the rank of man-at-arms and to serve the prince valorously and long at war, this ennobles a man.*

*And fifthly, when a prince wishes to ennoble a man, he may do so and may give him letters to make him noble, for his good or his virtuous living, or for his riches. And although it is true that to be ennobled by letters patent is the least well authorized manner of ennoblement, yet it is apparent enough that ancient nobility comes from ancient riches. And he is the happier, and is to be the more esteemed, who commences his nobility in virtue, than he who brings his to an end in vice.*

—Oliver de la Marche (1425–1502), Castellan of the Burgundian court



## VASSAL KNIGHT

Knights may obtain special honors from their lord(s). Simple gifts are common, usually as horses, better armor and weapons, and so on. The most prestigious honor is to receive a fief — a manor to be held by the vassal — which raises a bachelor knight to the status of vassal knight.

First-time player knights normally receive this great honor upon being knighted, immediately after starting the game. The Gamemaster may wish to have player knights created subsequently in his campaign begin as household knights, not vassal knights, in which case gaining a fiefdom becomes an ambition of great importance.

The land received by a vassal knight may be either a gift or a grant (see “Feudalism” in Chapter 1). Player knights hold their land as a grant unless the Gamemaster chooses to have it otherwise.

A vassal knight holds at least one manor and its land. This gives him enough income to provide his own food and equipment, and supports him as an Ordinary knight in terms of economic quality. He usually lives on his land, which has a nice (but not extravagant) hall, when he is not

servicing his share of castle garrison duty, serving summer active duty time, or visiting court to offer his advice.

## REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

To be a vassal knight, a character must inherit land, gain land (as a grant or a gift) from a lord, or conquer new lands.

The duties of a vassal knight are the same as those of any knight — to serve and protect his lord. As a knight given a special honor by his lord, though, it is expected that a vassal knight perform his duties with consummate skill and energy.

## BENEFITS

- **Eligibility.** A vassal knight usually receives a wife (if he does not already have one) soon after gaining his holdings, completely at the will of his lord. The woman may be the heiress of other lands, or simply be provided to maintain stewardship.

- **Glory.** A vassal knight receives 50 Glory upon receiving his title (once only). He receives annual Glory for his land equal to the income generated by the fief, usually 6 points, but perhaps more. If he maintains himself at higher than Ordinary quality (i.e., Rich or Superlative) during any given year, he receives annual Glory based on the grade maintained that year.

- **Income.** A vassal knight's manor provides enough annual revenue for him to maintain an appropriate (usually Ordinary) life style.

- **Influence.** His land gives him rank and prestige, and raises him in the hierarchy of knighthood over all landless knights.

- **Safety.** A vassal knight has a higher price for ransom than bachelor knights, and is thus more likely to be spared in a fight. (See Chapter 8 for more information on ransoms.)

- **Security.** A vassal knight's economic future is secure beyond his life. A knight with a land grant receives the knowledge that his heirs, should he have any, can inherit his property and status after he dies.

## BANNERET KNIGHT

The lowest rank of lord knight, and that rank most accessible to the player knights, is that of banneret. A knight banneret holds several manors and estates. He must have at least three vassal knights of his own holding land from him, but typically has seven or eight. He also has a hall much nicer than that of a vassal knight, but usually not a fortified estate or castle.

## REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

Like a vassal knight, a banneret must inherit land, gain land (as a grant or a gift) from a lord, or conquer new lands.

Because he has enfeoffed other knights, the banneret's responsibility as a leader (both in peaces and war) is greater than that of a vassal knight. When summoned to battle, the banneret must bring his knights as well.

## BENEFITS

A knight banneret has all the benefits of a vassal knight, with the following additions or addendums:

- **Army.** A banneret knight has a private army pledged to obey him, composed of perhaps a handful of household knights and sergeants, plus 3 or more vassal knights and their own followers.

- **Eligibility.** The Gamemaster must ensure that a banneret's wife is more individualized and wealthier than the wives of mere vassal knights.

- **Glory.** A banneret receives 100 Glory during the Winter Phase of the year in which he is first entitled. This Glory is added during the Winter Phase that concludes that year. The banneret gets annual Glory thereafter equal to the total income of his estate (in *libra*) for as long as he holds it. This is at least 30 points, often much more.

- **Income.** A banneret knight receives an income to maintain his appropriate lifestyle as a Rich knight, as long as famine or raids do not interfere; when he travels, he can go with a full retinue, and he usually has disposable income.

- **Influence.** A lord knight has increased rank and prestige, and is raised in the hierarchy of knighthood over all landless and vassal knights. He is always seated higher at table, enters the room later, and is served before lesser knights.

## BARON

This title is used for anyone who holds land directly from his king. Baron means “a royal landholding vassal,” and theoretically all recipients of small holdings directly from their king are barons, even if only bannerets. Thus, in *Pendragon*, there are barons of Arthur and barons of other kings as well. However, most of those small fief holders get a gift from the High King that is held through one of his intermediary barons.

The term “baron” usually means the Great Barons who hold rich and widespread estates, and who command large armies of knights. All earls and dukes are technically barons as well, but if a baron holds another more prestigious title he will use it.

On average, a baron has about 25 vassal knights, and holds 30 to 40 manors from either the High King or one of the many other kings in the land. When traveling, a baron has a retinue typically of 25 people or more, including his wife, another knight, three or more squires, two maids-in-waiting, four pages, a cook, a groom, a herald, and other menials.

### REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

Barons must spend at least £26 per year to support themselves and their retainers adequately — any less than this, and the baron is not showing the proper appurtenance of his estate. The baron himself lives as a Rich knight at least.

A baron must provide military aid and counsel, in matters both personal and social, to his lord. He must provide for the wellbeing of his vassals and household knights, and must also maintain the health and prosperity of his holding. He is also (at least putatively) responsible for making sure his vassals meet their own responsibilities as landlords.

**Player Responsibilities:** The player of a baron must take on the role of Gamemaster for a hunt (or a similar excursion) when asked by his Gamemaster, and he must also run a Neighborhood Tournament at least once annually.

He must also make certain command decisions when required by the campaign in addition to playing the character in role as needed.

### BENEFITS

A baron has all the benefits of a knight banneret, with the following additions and addendums:

- **Army.** A baron has at least 15 knights under his command, plus their own followers.

- **Glory.** Barons receive yearly Glory equal to their landholding, up to 100 points annually. (Thus, they usually receive 100 Glory per year.)

- **High Office.** A baron may wear a crown with eight large pearls as a sign of office. Barons and their sons are addressed as “Lord,” and their wives and daughters as “Lady.”

- **Influence.** A baron is raised in the hierarchy of knighthood over all lesser knights.

## EARL/COUNT

“Earl,” like “Count,” is a title that implies rule over a large region called a county or an earldom. Saxons use the term *ealdorman*, later shortened to *earl*. Frenchmen use the term *count*, which is roughly equivalent. To illustrate the degree to which these terms are interchangeable, in England the wife of an earl has always been called a countess.

Commonly, an earl holds most of the land in his county and lesser lands in other counties. Earldoms are sometimes named after the chief seat or after the county itself. An earl has received his lands and title when he has had the “Sword of the County” belted onto him during the proper investiture ceremony.

On average, an earl controls 75 knights and has about 100 manors. An earl's retinue while traveling typically numbers approximately 50 people, including the countess, eight additional knights, twelve or more squires, five maids-in-waiting, at least eight pages, two messengers, a herald, two grooms, a cook and two assistant cooks, a clerk, a priest, a dog boy, a hawk keeper, and perhaps five miscellaneous varlets.

### REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

Earls must support themselves, their families, and their retainers in the proper style and manner, costing at least £84 annually. The earl himself must live as a Superlative knight.

Otherwise, aside from the increased breadth of responsibility, an earl's duties are much like those of a baron.

**Player Responsibilities:** As the player of a baron, but he must gamemaster a hunt and a feast (or other such diversions) and also a Local Tournament at least once annually.

### BENEFITS

An earl has all the benefits of a baron, with the following additions or addendums:

- **Army.** An earl has at least 50 knights under his command, plus their own followers.

- **Castles.** A county always has at least one medium castle and typically 1 to 3 small castles.





- **High Office.** As a sign of office, an earl may wear a crown with eight strawberry leaves alternating with eight small pearls on spikes. He is always supplied with the honorific “Right Honorable” and is styled “My Lord”; his wife is “Countess,” referred to as “My Lady.” An earl’s eldest son bears his father’s second title (usually Lord or Baron) and younger sons are “Honorable,” while all daughters are “Lady.”

- **Income.** In addition to other revenues, earls always receive the “third penny” from the county courts. This is a great source of income for them.

## DUKE

The title of “Duke” denotes the highest rank possible other than those given to royalty. Dukes are invariably rich and powerful. They hold the equivalent of several counties and have lesser holdings throughout several kingdoms. Dukes almost always hold lands of the Pendragon, who usually grants these titles for military purposes. (Thus we can understand how there are both a King and a Duke of Cornwall.)

A Duke usually commands 100 to 200 knights from across his domains, and holds 150 or more manors and other sources of income. Ducal retinues are typically 80 to 100 people, including 15 to 20 knights plus other servants.

### REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

Dukes must support themselves, their families, and their retainers in the proper style and manner, costing at least £164 per annum. The duke himself must live as a Superlative knight. Otherwise, aside from the increased military responsibility, a duke’s duties are much like those of an earl.

**Player Responsibilities:** As the player of a baron, but the duke’s player must take on the role of Gamemaster for a hunt, a feast, a session of court, and a Regional Tournament at least once annually.

### BENEFITS

A duke has all the benefits of an earl, with the following additions or addendums:

- **Army.** A duke has at least 100 knights under his command, plus their own followers. In addition, dukes are often given leadership over large portions of their king’s armies during times of war.

- **Castles.** Ducal holdings usually have at least one large castle as a primary residence, 1 to 3 medium castles, and 2 to 6 small castles. Due to the military nature of the office, many more castles and watchtowers are likely under the duke’s command.

- **High Office.** A duke is addressed with the honorific “Your Grace” and is styled “Most Noble”; his wife is “Duchess,” also referred to as “Your Grace.” The eldest son of a duke takes his father’s second title (likely Earl), and the other sons are addressed as “Lord,” and the daughters as “Lady.”

## KING

Kingship is the highest rank of nobility. A king normally owes no vassalage, but feels responsibility to whatever personal ideals he swears by. Thus he might owe ultimate allegiance to his people, to ancient Roman law, to the di-

vine right of kings, or to some act of history which made him king. All the powerful kings of England eventually submit and pay homage to Arthur Pendragon, who thereby becomes the High King of all Britain.

Many kings in the various literary sources do not seem to meet these requirements for kingship. In *Pendragon*, these rulers are classified as *pennaths* (see below), even though their contemporaries might call them “king.” (The title does not define usage, but class and status.)

To qualify as king, a landholder must be politically independent or owe allegiance only to the Pendragon, and be liege to 100 or more knights. If a player assumes the role of a king, he controls a kingdom.

Royal retinues are typically 100 or more people, including 15 to 25 knights as escort, and appropriate servants and auxiliaries.

### REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

A king must support himself and his family, and must provide for the wellbeing of his vassals and maintain the health and prosperity of his kingdom. The king himself must live as a Superlative knight.

A king has no lord, and thus owes duty to no one, or else owes fealty to Arthur Pendragon.

**Player Responsibilities:** As the player of a baron, but the king’s player must take on the role of Gamemaster for a hunt, a feast, and a session of court when asked, and must hold a Regional or Regal Tournament at least once annually.

### BENEFITS

A king has all the benefits of a duke, with the following additions or addendums:

- **Army.** A king effectively commands all the forces of all of his vassals.

- **Castles.** Royal domains have at least one large castle, 2 to 5 medium castles, and 3 to 8 small castles.

- **High Office.** A king is addressed with the honorific “Your Highness” and is styled “His Majesty”; his wife is “Queen,” and is also referred to as “Your Highness.” The eldest son is the Royal Prince, and the other sons and daughters are princes and princesses.

## PENNATH

“Pennath” is a title given to independent landholders whose status is similar to but less than that of a king. Pennaths may be called “King” by their subjects and contemporaries because of their independence from vassalage. Their wealth and prestige are comparatively minor, though, warranting this category.

Pennaths’ holdings are usually located within a single small region, often isolated from easy outside contact. They might also lie completely within the borders of a larger kingdom whose king is not recognized as the pennath’s lord. (This is the case for the numerous kings of Gomeret and Norgales who appear in Arthurian stories.)

The size and strength of a pennath’s holding may vary widely, but should be judged in comparison with standards set above, including annual personal maintenance costs.

## REQUIREMENTS AND DUTIES

Like the king, a pennath knows no lord. He must see to the well being of his holding.

**Player Responsibilities:** The duties of a pennath's player vary according to the size of the character's holding, but should be judged by the standards set above.

## BENEFITS

Pennaths receive yearly Glory appropriate to the size of their holding(s), up to 100 per year. They may wear a crown decorated in whatever their tradition dictates — be imaginative: perhaps crenellations, oak leaves made of gold, laurel wreaths from ancient Roman times, or a crown made with spearheads.

Other benefits are comparable with the equivalent status of lord listed above.

## OFFICERS

Some estates are so large that they require the attention of more than one knight and his wife. These estates have officers, as listed below. Smaller estates have fewer officers of course, who may each perform several of these tasks at once.

When a person is appointed to be an officer, the job is usually treated as neither a gift nor a grant, but a temporary office held at the pleasure of the liege lord, who may remove the holder for any or no reason whatsoever.

The attention required to the duties involved in these positions generally does not allow much time to go adventuring, except on the lord's most important business. Thus it is possible for a player character to retire into one of these positions when he stops active play.

Given below are listings of common tasks, plus the name of the man who holds that job for King Arthur. Note that the definitions given here are feudal, and many of these titles have changed in meaning, sometimes drastically, since the Middle Ages — if they are still in common usage, that is.

### CASTELLAN

A castellan is an officer in charge of a castle for his lord; he is responsible for both its maintenance and defense. Unlike most other offices, this office is often filled as the result of a grant or a gift.

### CHANCELLOR

The chancellor is in many ways the second most powerful man in the kingdom, the holder of the Royal Seal that must mark all official documents. Generally, only kings have a chancellor.

Sir Constantine, son of Cador, comes to hold this post for Arthur.

### BUTLER

A butler is responsible for his lord's food, especially the procurement and storage of goods. He is in charge of many workers, carters, servants, etc.

Sir Lucan the Butler fulfills these tasks for Arthur.

### SENESCHAL OR STEWARD

This is the man in charge of feeding the court, especially the part of the process between the storage cellars

and the plate. He commands all the cooks, servers, and so on.

Sir Kay, son of Ector, holds this position for King Arthur.

### CHAMBERLAIN

This officer is the keeper of the King's Chamber, including all things in it. Since the king's chambers are the most protected part of a castle, the most valuable things are often kept there as well, such as the treasure. Thus, the chamberlain is both chief body servant to the king, commanding other servants such as tailors and laundresses, and also his treasurer.

### CONSTABLE

This person is responsible for the order and comfort of the court, performing tasks such as arranging lodgings for the king and commanding messengers, watchmen, musicians, sergeants, huntsmen, horn blowers, and so on.

Sir Baudwin of Britain is Arthur's constable.

### MARSHAL

The Marshal is the commander of his lord's forces during war, and is also responsible for the protection of the household.

Sir Brastias, Warden of the Northern Marches, commands the forces for Arthur at first, and later Sir Griflet takes the post.

### JUSTICIAR

The individual responsible for making sure that justice is delivered in the High King's courts, this officer is also overseer of his lord's sheriffs. He may also sit in as judge for cases presented before the High King himself.

King Arthur himself oversees this post during his reign.

### SHERIFF

A shire is a county-sized division of land, and the reeve is the person in charge of making sure that the king's justice is properly delivered in the courts held there. He (or his appointed representative) circulates through the shire and is one of the two judges of the shire court (the other is the local Earl).

## OTHER TITLES

The following titles are used by other cultures also existing in Britain during Arthur's time.

### BRETWALDA

This title is a Saxon term equivalent to High King. The title is gained by the most powerful warrior and king among the British Saxon houses.

### DUX BELLORUM

This is a Roman title meaning "Leader of Battles," and is applied to a warlord who commands an army drawn from all across Britain, yet who is independent from command of the local kings and praetors. Arthur holds this title in his time.

### EMPEROR

King Arthur is sometimes called Emperor, especially after he conquers Rome and is crowned there by the Pope. However, most of the time he prefers to be called High King or Pendragon (or the most simple, humble "Sir").



## PENDRAGON

The Pendragon is the “Chief Dragon,” or High Warlord, of the Cymric warriors, he who is qualified to command the red dragon banner of the land. Arthur holds this title almost as a family name, for it was formerly borne by his father and his uncle.

## PRAETOR

This is a Roman term used for lords who derive their power from the city they rule.

## PRINCE

The son of a king, the eldest prince is also the royal heir. The title of prince is never transferred to the children of a prince unless the father is the royal prince and has ascended to kingship.

## PRINCESS

The daughters of kings, princesses never pass their titles to their children unless they marry kings.

## QUEEN

A queen may be the wife of a king, or the heiress of a kingdom in her own right.

## VAVASOUR

This label comes from “vassal of a vassal.” A vavasour thus holds land from a ranking nobleman other than a king. The title is often found in stories, typically of a kind old retired knight who hosts visiting strangers, living out his pension in a land gift. Vavasour is not a title per se, and such men may also be a castellan or banneret.

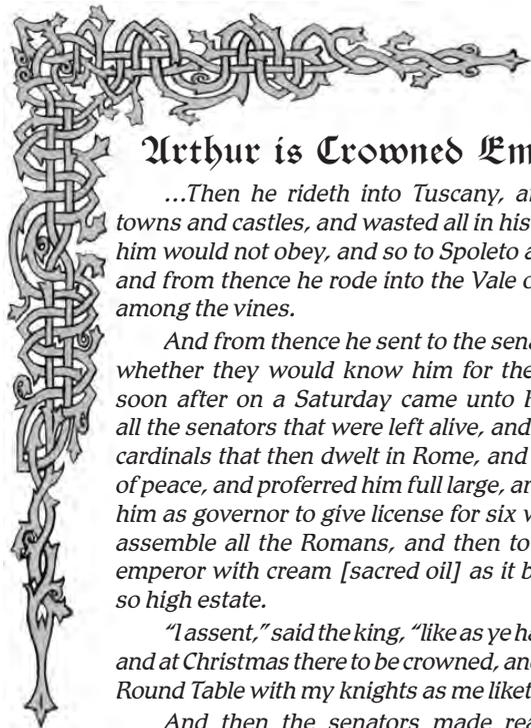
## RELIGION

Religion plays a large part in the lives of every Arthurian knight. As warriors, knights live close to the grim reality of death at all times, and spiritual life provides some comfort and guidance for them.

Religious conflict is a possible theme in *Pendragon*, based on a Gamemaster’s wishes for the campaign, but is not generally touched upon in the basic game. Religious conflict was not a very important part of most Arthurian literature. Constant argument and bigotry is almost sure to destroy a game, and players and Gamemasters alike are advised to use religious conflict in a campaign only with great care.

In general, players have a wide variety of attitudes about Christianity, ranging from ignorance and indifference through curiosity and willing acceptance to fanaticism or even overt hostility. For the latter people, Paganism is provided as an option starting religion for player knights.





## Arthur is Crowned Emperor

...Then he rideth into Tuscany, and winneth towns and castles, and wasted all in his way that to him would not obey, and so to Spoleto and Viterbo, and from thence he rode into the Vale of Vicecount among the vines.

And from thence he sent to the senators, to wit whether they would know him for their lord. But soon after on a Saturday came unto King Arthur all the senators that were left alive, and the noblest cardinals that then dwelt in Rome, and prayed him of peace, and proffered him full large, and besought him as governor to give license for six weeks for to assemble all the Romans, and then to crown him emperor with cream [sacred oil] as it belongeth to so high estate.

"I assent," said the king, "like as ye have devised, and at Christmas there to be crowned, and to hold my Round Table with my knights as me liketh."

And then the senators made ready for his enthronization. And at the day appointed, as the romance telleth, he came into Rome, and was crowned emperor by the Pope's hand, with all the royalty that could be made, and sojourned there a time, and established all his lands from Rome into France, and gave lands the realms unto his servants and knights, to every each after his desert, in such wise that none complained, rich ne poor...

—Malory V, 12

Shortly afterwards Emperor Arthur sails back to Britain, where both the commons and Queen Guenever joyfully meet him at the shore in Sandwich.



## PIETY AND RELIGION

Religious attitudes, both Christian and pagan, can be summed up within four categories for *Pendragon*, and are determined roughly by the value of a character's Pious trait, as noted in parentheses beside each category.

**Fanaticism (16+):** For this character, religion is placed before any observance or behavior arising from a trait having a lower value, and before any social event or endeavor that interferes with dedication to the religious life. Sir Galahad is the best literary example of this type of knight.

**Interest (11–15):** Most people in this range have been brought up on the precepts and ideologies of their religion and accept them without thinking much about it. They regularly attend religious services and functions, residing at the core of mainstream belief.

**Indifference (6–10):** Most knights of Arthur's era show great indifference toward their religion, just as most people do today and probably always have. They are subject to its invisible cultural influence, but don't really care one way or the other. They might attend Mass regularly, or as needed, but probably think it's a waste of time. Sir Gawaine is regularly accused of being this type of knight.

**Hostility (0–5):** Some knights actively hate the church and plunder its holdings and servants with glee. Reasons can vary widely, and a few examples of these types appear in literature, and more in history. Sir Thomas Malory is himself a good example of a knight of this type.

## CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is likely the foremost religion of the Arthurian world. Religion in the Middle Ages, though, was very different from religion today. To capture the feelings and attitudes of medieval literature, it is important for players to understand the accepted attitudes held about religion by their characters, who are members of the ruling class.

Christianity is the dominant religion in Britain and in Europe during the Pendragon era. Your character knows that several different forms of the religion exist in Europe. Two types compete for followers just in Britain.

Even the most ignorant worshiper knows the information contained under Core Beliefs, below. More informed individuals — i.e., those with a Religion skill of 6 or higher, with higher scores indicating progressively more thorough knowledge — know parts of the History, as well, which is drawn from many British sources and is intended largely as player information. Thus it includes many facts that outsiders question (such as whether Jesus was ever in Britain).

## CORE BELIEFS

Two types of Christianity are practiced in Arthurian Britain. One is ancient, having been established in the first century A.D. by Joseph of Arimathea. It is called *British Christianity*. The second is derived from distant Rome, and is called *Roman Christianity*. Both types of Christianity share the most important beliefs and have more in common with each other than do the many forms of Paganism practiced in the lands outside of Logres.

Christianity believes in a single God who created the world and everything in it. The first people were called Adam and Eve. Because humans were made with free will, many descendants of Adam and Eve fell away from the worship of God and the world was corrupted.

God then manifested Himself [it is common to capitalize personal pronouns referring to God] as the Son of the Father to offer salvation to the world. During the reign of Emperor Augustus was born this Son of God, named Jesus Christ, in the kingdom of Judea. Barely escaping death as an infant, Jesus was raised in obscurity as the son of a carpenter and his wife, the Virgin Mary, in a small town in Judea. Christ spent a short time as a wandering teacher, attended by his selected followers called the apostles. He allowed Himself to be tortured and nailed to a cross, dying for the sake of all humankind. The day he died is called Good Friday.

He was buried in the tomb of his uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, but after three days He rose miraculously from the dead. He visited his closest disciples and instructed them in his new religion. Fifty days after the first Easter, the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles and gave them the gift of tongues, after which time they went around the world teach-





ing about the miracle of Christ's death and resurrection. The converted people formed the start of the Christian religion.

This sacrifice by God allowed humans to obtain eternal salvation and, after death, to join God in Heaven. Worshipers can find personal salvation through imitating the life of Jesus Christ and following His teachings.

Regular worship takes place every Sunday within buildings called churches. The holiest day of the liturgical year is Easter, the day that He rose from the dead and proved he was the Son of God. Another important day is Pentecost, commemorating the time fifty days after Easter when the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. Christmas is another holy time, marking the birth of Christ in the city of Jerusalem. Many other holy days exist as well, but those listed above are the most important.

Although most people are illiterate, literacy (in Latin) is common among the clergy and Christian writings are available, painstakingly copied by the hands of countless monks. Records of the religion are collected in a book called the Bible.

Saints are important in Christianity. These are exceptionally holy persons who are rewarded after death for a lifetime of dedication to God. They have the power to intercede between God and his worshipers. Many saints are important in Arthurian Britain, including the apostles, but one of the foremost is Saint Mary, the Mother of God.

Mass is the name of the formal worship service, celebrated every Sunday by Christians everywhere, and even more often by exceptionally pious people. The holy rituals are called sacraments, including the following: baptism, which is given upon entering the religion; penance, which forgives the penitent's sins; communion, the basic act of interaction with God, and around which the Mass is centered; confirmation, which initiates members of the church as Soldiers of Christ; matrimony, which blesses marriage; Holy Orders, by which a man is made a priest; and Extreme Unction, given at death to ease a person's journey to Heaven.

## HISTORY

Jesus Christ first visited Britain during the "missing years" of his youth and adolescence, years not chronicled in the Bible. He went with his uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a rich tin merchant with contacts in the Cornwall region. Jesus studied with and taught the ancient druids, thereby identifying their ancient wisdom with the future *Logos* (i.e., the Word of God, as incarnate in Jesus Christ) of the world. He then returned home to teach, suffer, die, and resurrect Himself to fulfill many ancient prophecies of the Old Testament.

Joseph of Arimathea, who had lent his tomb for Christ's temporary burial, was arrested, tried, and sealed into a tower in Jerusalem for his beliefs. He was freed many years later, having been kept alive by the presence of the Holy Grail. With a band of followers, he left his homeland and migrated westward to Britain in 55 A.D., where he settled and taught the Christian religion. Many people, including druids, remembered their sacred visitor and converted to the new faith, establishing the early British Church.

Joseph established a chapel at Glastonbury and planted a miraculous thorn bush there, which bloomed every Christmas. He brought many precious relics, including Longinus' Spear, which had pierced the side of Jesus while he was on the cross; and especially the Holy Grail, a drinking vessel used at the Last Supper for the first Communion, and which later caught Christ's precious blood at the crucifixion. Afterward, Joseph's family kept these sacred objects in their care when they moved from Glastonbury to other regions.

The disciples of Jesus were blessed with the gift of tongues at the Pentecost, and they then went forth from the Holy Land to teach the Good News of their religion to others. Their teachings were learned and interpreted in many regions, with variations to suit the understanding and capacity of the people in each region. Thus, many different forms of Christianity were established across the world.

The Roman conquest of Britain began in 43 A.D.; King Caratacus, a British king, organized widespread resistance to it, but Roman military might and treachery eventually overcame him and he was captured. He was taken to Rome with his family as part of the military triumph, and, as usual, taken before the Roman Senate to give his last words before being beheaded. So lucid was Caratacus' oratory, though, and so moved was the Roman senate by his nobility that they changed their usual verdict and let him live.

In Rome, Caratacus and his family met the apostle Peter and were converted to Christianity. Though Caratacus was not allowed to leave the imperial city, eventually his father, called Bran the Blessed, and others of Caratacus' descendants returned to Britain to spread the faith in the West.

Many converts joined the religion in Britain. Eventually King Lucius sent to Rome for teachers of the new religion to come to teach his people. The papal envoys Fagan and Dyfan found the thriving British Christian community when they arrived in 166 A.D. and discovered the ancient chapel at Glastonbury, where they established a monastery.

Most of the Roman Empire was still pagan and under tremendous internal and external pressure, which caused the Empire to deteriorate. The Christians and other minorities became scapegoats. Mass murders and tortures followed, often in the Coliseum to entertain the commoners of Rome with spectacles of death. In Britain, Saint Alban was the first martyr, murdered in 210 A.D. in the city now bearing his name and his grave. Aaron and Julius were legionaries who refused to participate in pagan sacrifices, and they too were martyred in 304 A.D.

However, when the Diocletian persecutions brought wholesale slaughter, the Christians of Britain were largely spared, thanks mainly to the protection offered by Princess Helen, a daughter of the powerful King Coel of the west midlands. This Queen Helen was tremendously influential in her time. She wed a Roman emperor who came to Britain, and was mother to another from Britain. In her old age, she was the first westerner to make pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There she discovered the True Cross and founded a world famous order to help pilgrims and the poor.

Constantine, a British prince, was the son of Saint Helen and the Emperor Constantius Chlorus, who was

## The Holy Grail

The Holy Grail is the most precious and sacred object in Britain. It played a central role in the most important events of the death of Jesus Christ.

Shortly before His death, Jesus taught his disciples the ritual of Holy Communion, a rite wherein the worshippers participate in the Last Supper of Jesus. In that rite, He used a vessel to hold the wine of the ceremony. That vessel was the Grail. Shortly afterward, He was crucified and died, and shed his blood for the redemption of humanity. Joseph of Arimathea used the vessel to catch the dripping blood of Jesus as He died upon the cross. Thus it became the vessel wherein the grace and power of Christ's sacrifice was first held, and through which salvation was materialized.

As such, the Grail has many miraculous powers, first manifested when its keeper, Joseph of Arimathea, was imprisoned. Though kept entirely without food, the Grail fed and sustained him for years. No wonder that he kept it with him when he, with friends, family, and followers, fled to Britain.

The Holy Grail is noted for four particular powers: healing, providing sustenance, moving about at need, and changing its external form. Its awesome healing power, at different times in Arthurian tales, saves Lancelot, Gawaine, and Bors when they are debilitated. Once it travels to rescue Percivale and Ector de Maris from deadly wounds. It alone can heal Lancelot's madness. At the Grail Castle, it feeds all present with their favorite dishes daily, just as it does when it appears at Camelot before the assembled Round Table. Sometimes it looks like a goblet, at other times a plate, and yet others as a gleaming jewel. All these things are reflections of its inner majesty and mystery.

The Holy Grail is kept at Castle Carbonek, tended by the Grail Kings and their pious court. From there they teach the secrets of Grail Christianity, which seeks the mystical understanding found in the balance of masculine power of the transcendent God and his Son and the immanent Goddess and her Daughter. It teaches the union of the lance and the cup. In fact, all of the successive Grail Kings have been affected by a particular curse: Each in turn was wounded by the sacred lance and healed by the sacred cup. The transformative mysteries of the Holy Grail were thus practiced and passed down through the centuries.

Early in King Arthur's reign, Sir Balin, called the Knight of Two Swords, strikes the Dolorous Wound. This is the lance wound that cripples the Grail King so that his kingdom is laid waste and the entire spiritual realm suffers. Thus King Pellam, who is also called the Fisher King, is to become the latest victim to await the resolution of his suffering, which will come during the Quest for the Holy Grail.

The Grail will be sought despite Arthur's wide-ranging, peaceful, plentiful rule. Arthur's kingdom is the height of satisfaction in the material world, yet man requires more than just physical comforts to be satisfied. As a result, when offered even a glimpse of the Grail, of the Mystery, the Round Table knights seek satisfaction from the Other World (the spiritual realm) as well.

A great part of the literary tension of the Grail legend stems from the conflict between the material and spiritual — between the actual and the ideal. Thus, when the Round Table has achieved its objective in the material world and brought about peace and plenty, its knights are challenged again from different heights.

The Holy Grail is a fundamental and inseparable part of the Arthurian legend. Still, in a *Pendragon* campaign, each Gamemaster must make of it what he or she will. It may be the greatest device for spiritual contact in the world, or merely an illusion. Like the questing knights, each of us must decide for himself.



HOTZ



murdered by enemies. The young Constantine was declared emperor by the western Roman army at Eburacum (York) in 306 and soon sailed to the continent, where he met his enemies in many desperate battles. He slowly reconquered his father's empire.

Emperor Constantine did not worship Christ at first, but was a dedicated follower of Sol Invictus, a henotheistic cult that attempted to incorporate the many pagan religions under the rule of the Unconquerable Sun. But before a desperate battle at Milvian Bridge, Constantine saw a great burning cross in the sky and vowed to accept Christ if he won the fight. He won and became Emperor of Rome.

In 313, Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, which proclaimed official government tolerance of Christianity. As his reign continued, he relied more and more heavily upon the administrative organization of the Christian church for support. In 326, to establish another headquarters for the Empire and prove his greatness, he founded the city of Constantinople. Finally, in 337, upon his deathbed, Emperor Constantine the Great converted to Christianity and was baptized.

As church leaders filled imperial positions, Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. The church absorbed imperial bureaucratic methods, undertook responsibility for state functions, and underwent dramatic changes.

The Roman Church, heir to imperial bureaucracy, began to exert itself as the center of Christianity. The ancient doctrine of "One God, One Church" was expanded to be "One God, One Church, One Bishop," with the Roman Bishop declared to be pre-eminent, invested as Pope. Centralization grew, as did tighter control of all churches. Church fathers standardized the New Testament Bible, sacraments, and holy days. As the church wielded more temporal power, dogma and orthodoxy increased and the Roman Church became increasingly intolerant of non-Roman Christians, whose doctrines and practices were declared heretical.

Around the time at which the *Pendragon* campaign starts, the British church, like most others, has resisted incorporation into Roman orthodoxy. It has its own traditions, as ancient as Rome's, that have not been corrupted by the selective editors of the Gospels. It also has its own ideals, like its extensive missionary work. For instance, Saint Ninnian was active converting the southern Picts around 390 when he founded Whitethorn Abbey.

Local philosophy and theology took shape around 400 when a British monk called Pelagius, or "the Islander," preached his unusual doctrines of Free Will in Rome. His theological opponent was Saint Augustine of Hippo, a church father responsible for much Roman Catholic dogma. In 418, Pelagius was declared a heretic and banished, going to the Middle East. Most of his followers returned home to Britain where the "Pelagian heresy" remained deeply rooted.

Pope Celestine I sent Saint Germanus of Auxerre to Britain to combat this heresy. He first came in 429, then again in 443, aided each time by Aurelius Ambrosius, the first *Pendragon*. Yet Germanus' efforts to destroy Pelagianism in the British Church were in vain.

In 432, a British student of Germanus, named Succat but later known as Saint Patrick, was sent to Ireland to convert the heathens to the Roman fold. Patrick's work was only partly successful, for although the folk became Christian they did not become Roman. (In fact, Ireland maintains its own Celtic Christianity until 1171, when the Pope will sell the island to King Henry II in return for uncollected church back taxes.)

Despite the condemnation from Rome of Pelagius and its efforts to change the beliefs of the populace, the dominant belief expressed in Britain is still "Semi-Pelagianism." Thus, a strong Roman presence of churches and abbeys exists, powerful in their hierarchy, but many worshippers practice various forms of British Christianity. No doubt the presence of the Holy Grail has influenced the land.

The hierarchy of Rome is still present in Saint Dubricus, the highest archbishop of Britain, who will continue his rule into the time of King Arthur. His seat is at the Roman city of Carlion.

## DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The British Church has a flavor of its own, due in part to its early adaptation of local druidic beliefs. Evidence of this is found in the unusual tonsure adopted by the monks. In the Roman method, the top of the head is shaved (in the famous "Friar Tuck" style). But with the Celtic method, the front of the head, from ear to ear, is shaved, leaving only a forelock.

Another major difference involves the question of authority. The British church feels that abbots, who oversee monasteries, are more important than bishops, who exist primarily to appoint new priests. Also, for the British Church, the local kings appoint both the abbots and bishops. The Romans accept only the authority of Rome to appoint their bishops, who have authority over the local abbots.

In the British Church, a monastery is always associated with a tribe or clan, and the abbacy is inherited by descendants of that family. The leader is called a *coarb*, and he acts in every way as both a temporal and ecclesiastical leader for the holding. The *coarb* might be an abbot or bishop; however, his loyalty is not to a church hierarchy, but to the local clan or tribe that originally granted the land.

Most importantly, there is a dispute between the British and Roman Churches as to the date for Easter. The rationales behind this dispute are far too esoteric to go into here, but since Easter is the most important holy day for both churches, this dispute is prominent in the friction.

Finally, Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism dispute many points of the new dogma of Rome. Key points held by the Pelagians are that every person has a free will, and every person, pagan or Christian, is responsible for his own conduct; that mankind was not cursed by Original Sin and, hence, is inherently good; that every man has a right to be wrong; and that baptism is not necessary for salvation. Also, there is a stress on clerical poverty and social justice. All these things are denied by Roman dogma.

Yet although Christianity has not cemented itself into a single unitary church, and despite these differences, it unifies all of Britain and indeed western humanity against

most other religions. It is, in fact, one of the two factors that unify all European peoples (the other being the feudal system). A person can travel from Ireland in the west to Italy in the east, and from Germany in the north to Spain in the south, and in every place he stops he will find the same belief in the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, even though the ceremonies, holy days, and certain aspects of morality may differ.

## THE GOOD AND BAD CHURCHES

The actual influence of the Christian Church on the rest of society in the Middle Ages varied widely during the two eras compressed into *Pendragon*. In the sixth century, it was busy solidifying its position as the One Church, and clarifying its beliefs into dogma. By the 13th century, the same dogma was strangling the Church and the rest of Europe nearly to death as the Pope tried to rule politics as well as religion.

Naturally, this growth of temporal power offended many people whose traditions and privileges were being eroded, most notably the noblemen and knights. Conflict, especially as the Church entered the temporal realm, was inevitable. It is appropriate to note here, for instance, that all the saint's lives in which King Arthur appears portray the king with considerable hostility and unkindness.

Despite this, religious attitudes in Arthurian literature vary widely, and none of the good knights return this type of hostility overtly. The least religious knights merely ignore their spiritual obligations, although in reality, historically, many knights plundered the rich abbeys, especially during foreign wars. Most of the knights in literature attend Mass more or less regularly, but seem to show their spiritual interest the most when they swear either oaths or profanities. The most religious knights are fanatics, though they pursue an officially unacceptable form of Christianity in the Holy Grail.

Rather than judging the past, *Pendragon* presents the following two versions of the Church. Each Gamemaster must decide the role of religion (or perhaps use some combination thereof) in his or her campaign.

### THE "GOOD" CHURCH

- The Church has done immeasurable good for humanity.
- The Church is the primary organization within which commoners can raise themselves from their humble origins to a position where they can use their talents.
- The Church is the only institution that fosters education, both for itself and for others. It has preserved the best knowledge of the ancients.
- The Church provides protection and peace in a violent, brutal age. Churchmen continually plead for mercy on behalf of their fellows and others, despite the violence and hostility of the knights and lords.
- The Church provides for the poor, sick, and homeless.
- The clergy are selfless servants of the Lord, working hard to meet the demands of their faith and provide for the welfare of the people.
- The Church alone can provide true solace for the suffering by offering Salvation for the Eternal Soul.

### THE "BAD" CHURCH

- The Church has done limitless harm to humanity. In the name of God, it has perpetuated itself so that it might control every aspect of humanity's existence, all for the benefit of its corrupt leaders.

- It is a materialistic and greedy organization, interested only in enriching itself and its clergy at the expense of all else. It is foremost among the hypocritical organizations known, selling and buying spirituality like bread.

- The clergy are deceitful, grasping men without belief in their own preaching, interested only in enriching themselves and in extending the influence of the Church for their personal benefit. They sell spirituality and pardons rather than following the correct spiritual order.

## WAR AND THE CHURCH

Medieval theology wrestled with doctrines that seemed to prohibit war — after all, the fifth commandment says, rather unambiguously, "Thou shalt not kill." Philosophers examined the problems of passivity in the face of cruel overlords, foreign oppressors, and heathen invaders, and came up with three interesting doctrines: The Peace and Truce of God; the Just War; and the Crusades.

### THE PEACE AND TRUCE OF GOD

This doctrine, also called *Treus Dei*, calls for all men to lay down their arms at specific times. Its origins are so early that they are unknown.

At some point, the church claimed that knights owed protection to churches and clerics, especially, but also to merchants and peasants, including their property, whether that was mills, vines, cattle, or trade goods. The concept clearly pits the church against the morality of its times, and marks an outstanding example of the church's positive influence during the horrors of the Dark Ages.

Fighting was forbidden on all great festival days, and also from dusk on Friday until dawn Monday, and on all feasts of the Church. It expressly forbade harming church members or property, and also protected peasants and merchants, and their livelihoods.

The Truce declared in southern France in 1027 extended its protection from sunset Wednesday to dawn Monday, including a strict vigil to be held each Sunday. It also suggested that all knights in war undergo a 40-day penance after battle to cleanse themselves of the taint of death. During this time, prayer and fasting were to replace martial pursuits. In 1054, these rules became sacrosanct with their passage at the Council of Narbonne.

However, enforcement of the Truce was impossible. Noblemen were expected to be self-policing, which apparently was asking a lot of them. Few occasions are recorded when hostilities suspended for a holy day, and of those recorded occasions, several were actually ruses to make the other side relax its defenses.

The church also tried to control tournaments. More easily contained because they were sporting events with less at stake than in a war, tournament festivities began on Friday with peaceful formalities continuing over the week-



end, and combat commencing early Monday. Several times the church tried to forbid tournaments (as did many kings), but always failed.

The ideal world of *Pendragon* undoubtedly provides opportunities for well-meaning knights to follow the Truce themselves, and possibly to enforce it upon others. Such an act is one of piety, and deserves an experience check for the character maintaining it.

## THE JUST WAR

The concept of the Just War was established in the late 4th century by the saints Ambrose and Augustine, both great founts of Catholic dogma, and elaborated by Saint Thomas Aquinas and others. Saint Augustine attempted to clarify the position for those who were uncertain about killing: He says that, in war, what really matters is the intention in the combatant's hearts. If they love their enemies as they slaughter them, anything is excusable.

A Just War is a war whose morality is approved by the church. Strict criteria must be fulfilled. If all the conditions are met the war is acceptable.

1. Is the cause just? Is there clear injury to be redressed? The wrongful action must be perfectly clear or else the resultant war risks being judged unjust. A *supposed* harm is not enough. (Some medieval kings paid their philosophers and theologians handsomely to discover the "justice" in their causes.)

2. Has every reasonable attempt at reparation been made before resorting to bloodshed? War is the last resort. All other peaceable means must have been sought before a war can be considered just.

3. Will the war be declared by a legitimate authority? A legitimate authority usually means a king, or at least a ranking nobleman considered to have the right to declare war (e.g. a bishop, prince, duke, etc.).

4. Will the war be waged solely by honorable and moral means? This clause only insists that the usual honorable means be followed. Thus, the *treus dei* was expected to be honored, the 40-day penance observed, etc. (Note that hanging a garrison that did not surrender was still acceptable behavior. No requirement ever demanded doing more than what was dictated or authorized by the common morality of the times.)

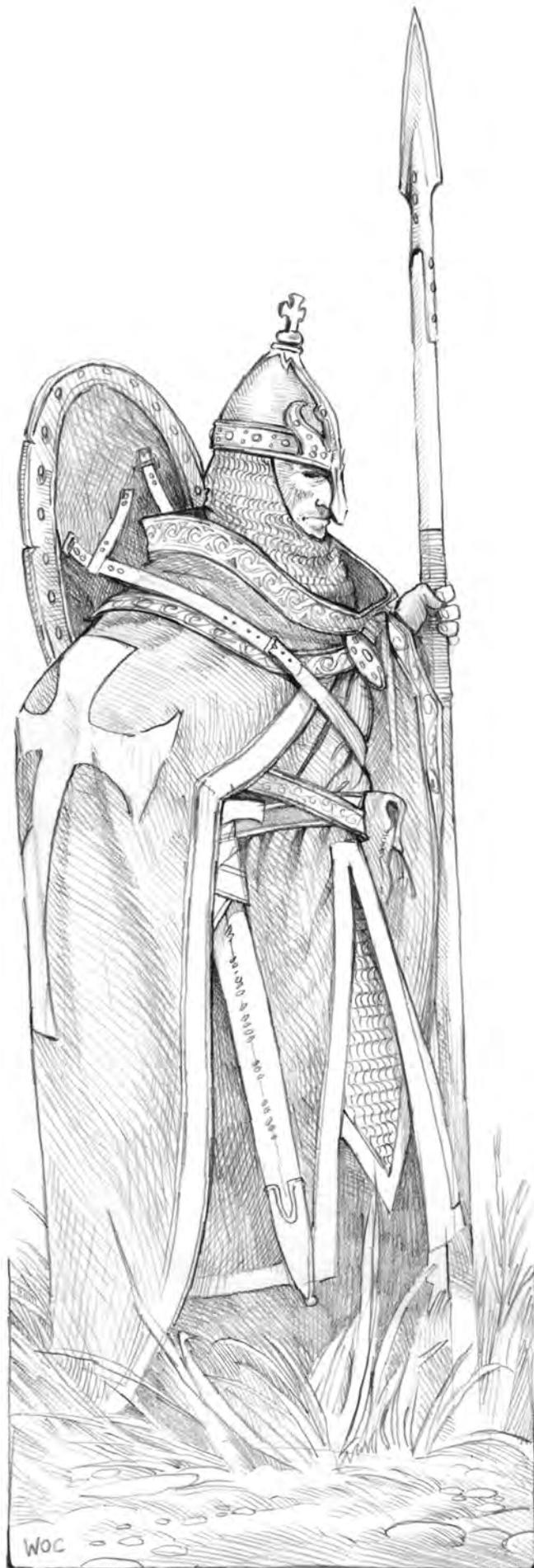
5. Is the damage incurred by the war likely to be less than that caused by the original wrong? After all, if the war will do nothing but increase the expenses to the combatant, there is no reason to pursue it.

6. Is success likely (or even possible)? Failure is a measure of God's judgment. If the odds are impossible, God has apparently prejudged the event.

## CRUSADES

The First Crusade was called in 1095 by Pope Urban II, centuries after King Arthur. It offered an opportunity for the Christian knight to fulfill his martial obligation for the highest cause: the service of God.

The Pope was in favor of the crusade since it caused the warring Christian princes to cease hostilities against each other and work harmoniously to liberate the Holy



Land. Kings often supported a crusade because it cleared their lands of troublesome warring vassals. Knights were in favor because becoming a crusader absolved them of previous commitments and guaranteed them a place in heaven if they died fighting. Common folk were happy because it rid them of cruel and combative overlords.

A war for God warrants special rules of combat. Because it is a religious cause, different conditions apply. Most important is that a religious cause allows no compromise with the enemy. Furthermore, dishonorable means are excusable against unbelievers. (A holy war exempts men from ordinary morality.) Many crusaders wholeheartedly embraced this murderous code, as is shown in the slaughter of innocent citizens when Jerusalem was liberated.

Not all crusaders were so harsh, though. Richard the Lion-Hearted dealt with his rival, Saladin, as an equal, and achieved some of the greatest successes of Christendom in the Middle East. Other knights did as much with lesser achievements.

No crusades took place during the historic era of King Arthur's 6th century, and crusading plays a very small part in Arthurian literature. Yet crusading was such an important part of later medieval life that it must be addressed for the game. Crusading gave the common knight a chance to live up to the highest ideals of both his military and religious beliefs. It offered adventure, plunder, opportunity, and fame.

The influence of the Crusades is obvious in only one source dealing with Arthurian legends. The French "Perlesvaus" (or "Perceval le Gallois"), also called the "History of the High Holy Grail," is a non-canonical Arthurian story exemplifying the crusading lifestyle and attitude. In it, Sir Perlesvaus struggles mightily to rescue his family from enemies and to save the Fisher King from the evil clutches of the King of Castle Mortal. Perlesvaus shows no sympathy or compassion for his foes, deadly intent upon installing the New Law to replace the corrupt Old Law. His adventures seem to be mostly in the British Isles.

In keeping with the emphasis of Arthurian legends, then, crusading is not emphasized in the basic *Pendragon* game. Rather, spiritual emphasis is on Grail-questing. Internecine religious strife is best avoided, especially crusading in foreign lands.

On the other hand, most adventures in the campaign take place away from court so the player knights can have opportunities to achieve fame and glory to make them the equals of the great knights of the stories. Crusading, based on the Gamemaster's personal preference, might provide a setting for several years' worth of adventures.

## THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Evil, and all it connotes, should be addressed in any game that involves the sanctity of the Holy Grail; many stories of the Quest for the Holy Grail include encounters with the Christian devil in varied forms. Evil simply *is*, and few would argue to the contrary. A Church of Satan is too ludicrous, perhaps, but Gamemaster-character sorcerers can still sell their individual souls to the Devil.

To exclude defining "evil" gives tacit permission for unlimited licentious behavior from player knights. One of *Pendragon's* goals is to illustrate the splendor, pageantry, and glamour of the legendary Arthurian realm and its heroes, and to explore the many possible solutions to typical Arthurian problems. Evil player characters, then, ruin play, and we recommend that no evil player characters be generated.

A significant portion of the game, in fact, is an exploration of good and evil. Christian knights have a difficult set of values to uphold, some of which are seemingly in direct conflict with their profession. Pagans always have the choice of falling back on the dark side of their religion, and justifying their actions that way.

Is Paganism evil? No. Even the Wotanic religion, with its exaltation of bestial fury, is not evil (though, certainly in the minds of most player knights, it is undoubtedly mad, and probably unnatural and wicked). Enemies can be good or bad, whether Christian, pagan, or otherwise, but few "bad" men (i.e., those with notable character flaws) are truly *evil*.

However, truly evil characters probably do exist. For instance, the Knight of the Dragon whom Percival fights is best understood if portrayed according to his repute — as a knight-sorcerer who has sold his soul to the devil. Likewise, Duke Klingsor (from the German *Parzifal*) and the King of Castle Mortal, Klingsor's counterpart in "Perlesvaus," cannot escape the damnation penned for them.

In the end, Gamemasters must to decide for themselves how much deliberate evil is contained in Mordred, Turquine, Agravaire, and other villains. Most likely they can be portrayed as bad and wrongheaded, but not truly evil.

## EVIL VIRTUES

In the simplest but perhaps the most interesting interpretation, true *evil* in the Christian sense — like everything else about a character — can be defined as a set of personality traits much like those of any religion: Its "virtues," though, are those vices excoriated by all honorable knights.

Evil (Anti-Christian) Virtues: Vengeful, Selfish, Deceitful, Cruel, Suspicious.

## EVIL KNIGHTS

As with knights who excel in all of the virtues of their Religious values (see "Magical Virtues" in Chapter 4), knights who pursue evil can gain magical benefits from having high evil trait scores. Since evil characters are to be run only by the Gamemaster, the benefits are for him to create as needed. Some suggested special effects are fire-breathing helms or shields, flaming or poisonous lances, and monstrous steeds.

Add up the scores for the evil virtues. If the total is 80 or more, then that character is quantifiably *evil* and subject to diabolic recall by his master. A non-player character gains some benefit as noted above. A player character meeting these requirements should be removed from the game at once (either drawn down to hell by his diabolic mentor or turned into a Gamemaster villain).





## CHRISTIAN PLACES OF INTEREST

### ST. ALBAN'S GRAVE

*Logres, St. Alban's City*

The first martyr of the island died about 300 years ago (around 210 A.D.) and was buried here. The gravesite is one of the most popular pilgrimage sites of Britain. A stream reputedly having healing properties runs nearby.

### AMESBURY

*Logres, on the Salisbury Plain*

A large monastery and a nunnery were founded here by grants from Aurelius Ambrosius, the first Pendragon, uncle to King Arthur. It is the site of one of the three Perpetual Choirs of Britain, where monks chant the Divine Office nonstop, day and night. At the end of Arthur's life, Queen Guenever retires here.

### CARLION-ON-USK

*Escavalon*

This Roman-built city is now the seat of the Roman archbishop. It has two famous churches, named after the martyrs Aaron and Julius. The Church of St. Aaron is served by the monastery headed by the archbishop, a famous center of learning whose astrologers advise the king. The Church of St. Julius is the site of a Perpetual Choir where monks sing the Divine Office day and night.

### CANTERBURY

*Kent*

This city is destined to become the most famous English religious city at the coming of St. Augustine, long after the time of King Arthur. Afterward, it becomes a famous pilgrimage site.

During the time of the *Pendragon* game, Canterbury is not even the site of a bishopric. Whenever you read "Canterbury" in a Malorian reference, take it to mean "Carlion."

### CARBONEK

*Hidden location*

Also called the Castle of Marvels, this place is the home of the Holy Grail, where reside the Grail King, his knights, and his maidens, all serving the Grail and awaiting the Savior who will return and heal their maimed king. The castle is protected by powerful magic, and sometimes, it is said, moves about the land.

### GLASTONBURY TOR

*Logres, Somerset*

A site on a hill in the midst of the Marshes of Avalon, this place houses the first Christian site of worship in Britain, a reed hut raised by — depending on who tells the tale — either Joseph of Arimathea or Jesus Christ himself. The mysterious Christmas Thorn grows here, blossoming every Christmas.

The monastery now standing here was started by St. Patrick, who dwelt here before he went to Ireland and organized the local hermits into an abbey. It is sometimes called the Black Abbey after the Black Monks (Benedictines) who live there.

### MENYW

*Menevia, Estregales*

Here stands is the first Roman monastery in Britain, founded by Dewi (see "Living Saints") after his return from the Holy Land. Later in the campaign, after St. Dewi is named Archbishop, Menyw is also the seat for that office.

### ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

*London*

The largest and most famous church in Britain, St. Paul's is named after the apostle who traveled westward with the Good News of the gospel. (Many believe that he visited Britain.)

### ST. STEPHEN'S CATHEDRAL

*Camelot*

Nonexistent at the start of the campaign, this is the cathedral in Camelot. Its highest skylight is a stained glass window of a nightmare of King Arthur's, depicting serpents crawling out of a foul wyrm. The meaning of this dream is unknown.

## CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS

Several Christian religious organizations exist in Arthurian times, including four well-known monastic orders.

### BENEDICTINES (BLACK MONKS)

Called the Black Monks due to the color of their habits (robes), the Benedictines were founded in the 6th century by Saint Benedict at Monte Cassino, in Italy. The order established vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and stresses communal life and its spiritual benefits.

### CISTERCIANS (WHITE MONKS)

Saint Bernard founded this order to return monasticism to its original Benedictine roots. The order stresses solitude; its monasteries are often in isolated regions. The order opposes feudal revenues, and thus rarely holds them.

Cistercians are sometimes called Bernardines, but usually known as White Monks. Their appearance in *Pendragon* is technically an anachronism since the order was founded in 1098, but they are too firmly established in the legends of the Quest for the Holy Grail to be excluded from the game.

### FRANCISCANS (GRAY FRIARS)

These friars — the three branches of their order called the Friars Minor, the Conventuals, and the Capuchins — appear in *Pendragon* as the latest wave of mendicants through the British Isles, seeking to reclaim the poverty of their founder. They own nothing and travel the land preaching the Good News of Christ to whoever listens, and epitomizing the virtues of chastity, poverty, and obedience.

### ALBANITES (BROWN MONKS)

The Order of Saint Albans is a monastic order of the British Church, with many abbeys throughout the land. The Albanites wear a brown-colored robe, and the distinctive tonsure as well.

## CHURCH RANKS AND TITLES

**Abbess:** This woman is in charge of a house of holy women called a nunnery. Nunneries are usually associated with a nearby monastery whose abbot receives loyalty from the abbess.

**Abbot:** An abbot is the head of a monastery. He may or may not be a priest. The abbot's loyalty is to his local nobleman, not to the local bishop.

**Archbishop:** Archbishops receive the loyalty of their bishops. Three of them oversee the spiritual wellbeing of Britain: Their seats are in London, Eburacum, and Carlion (later Menevia). The holder of the last-named is the highest-ranking of the three.

**Bishop:** Bishops are administrators and guides for a number of priests. Ten bishoprics are noted in *Pendragon*: Camelot, Carduel, Carohaise, Chichester, Exeter, Leicester, Lincoln, London, Norwich, and Rochester.

**Cardinal:** A cardinal is a bishop who has been elected to an important position in the church. He must live in Rome, and is charged with electing the new Pope whenever necessary; he may be appointed to oversee some important church business. In the latter case, he is invested with the powers as a Papal Legate.

**Cenobite:** This is a monk who lives in a community, as distinct from a hermit or anchorite, who lives alone.

**Friar:** The friar is a member of a religious order that combines aspects of monasticism with active ministry in the world. Friars constitute the "mendicant orders," emphasizing corporate and personal poverty. Of the principle orders, the Franciscan Friars Minor appear most regularly in *Pendragon*.

**Hermit:** Anyone who lives a secluded life devoted to prayer and contemplation can be called a hermit. Many standards exist. Some, like Percivale's aunt, shut themselves up in a box or a cave and never move out, and are called anchorites. Some are actually monks or priests. Many are lay folk. Knights often retire to become monks, and in some cases they seem to take the title of hermit and live in the wilds part-time, returning later to their castles.

**Monk:** A monk is a man who lives in a religious community under vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, engaging primarily in communal worship and self-perfection. Further tasks depend on the order and on the individual. Not all monks are actually priests in the time of King Arthur. Many different orders exist, but the best known are the White Monks (Cistercians) and Black Monks (Benedictines).

**Nun:** A woman who retires to a life of religion is called a nun. (Although some Celtic practices allowed women to assist with Mass, no woman is allowed to become a priest.) Nuns differ from Sisters in having taken a "solemn vow." Orders of nuns include Augustinian Canonesses, Benedictines, Poor Clares, Carmelites, and Ursulites.

**Pope:** The Archbishop of Rome, Heir of St. Peter, is also called the Pope. He is the highest authority of the Roman Christian (i.e., Catholic) religion. All archbishops owe him loyalty. During Arthur's reign, eleven men successively hold the office.

**Priest:** The basic holy person of the Christian faith is a priest, who oversees sacraments, services, and salvation.

**Sister:** A woman may join a religious order. Sisters differ from nuns in that they take only "simple vows." Among them are the Sisters of Charity, of Mercy, of the Sacred Heart, of Nazareth, and of St. Joseph, and the Little Sisters of the Poor.

## CANONIZATION

Saints are men or women whose lives exemplify the virtues taught by Jesus Christ. The term saint is derived from the Latin word *sanctus*, which means simply "sacred" or "holy." Many saints suffer a violent death for their faith and are called martyrs. Saints who die normal deaths are called confessors. The hard times of 6th-century Britain result in the canonization of many saints. Such an event is certainly outside most characters' expectations, but the process is instructive.

The office of sainthood is officially conferred posthumously to recognize the greatness and holiness of an individual's life. Only dead people may be canonized. However, evidence indicates that certain 6th-century British holy men were called saints while they lived.

Canonization requires that the candidate must have performed at least three miracles while alive, and three more must have occurred after death, preferably at the place of internment or by means of a relic, usually one associated with the dead person in life. When a churchman recognizes the miracles and assigns a feast day, the process is complete and a saint has been made.

Canonization may be formal or informal. If a local bishop or archbishop approves the canonization, it is informal. If the Pope confers sainthood, then the canonization is formal. Most British saints were informally canonized. Formal canonization confers no special status except the increased honor of papal observances.

## LIVING SAINTS

Many men (and some women) living in Arthur's time came to be reckoned as saints during their lifetimes. Here are some of the best known, including details of their interactions with King Arthur where applicable.

**Cadoc:** This kind old soul exemplifies the heart of Celtic Christianity in Arthurian Britain. He recognizes God in everything, as well as in man. He chooses to serve, not to judge. He recognizes human fallibility, and tolerates heretical Pelagianism. His center is the Llarcarfan monastery in Escavalon. He is well versed in the magical art of Glamour.

**Carannog:** This saint interacts with King Arthur when he sets adrift an altar, vowing to preach wherever it lands. King Arthur finds the altar and tries to use it as a table, but everything is thrown off it at each attempt. Carannog recovers the altar after vanquishing a dragon in Somerset, where he is given land at Carhampton by the king for his deed.

**Collen:** Collen is a monk of the British Church. He once slew a giantess who was threatening his neighborhood. While he was a hermit at Glastonbury, this saint received





a summons from Gwynn ap Nudd, the ruler of Annwn, a portion of the Other Side. He overcame the pagan powers there and secured the place as a Christian stronghold. He recently founded the monastery at Llangollen.

**Dewi:** Dewi (in English, David) is from Henfynew (in Sugales), of a very religious family. Years ago, he went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and returned with sacred relics, including the altar Christ used at the Last Supper and a piece of the True Cross. More importantly, he brought back a desire to establish the monastic tradition of the desert hermits into his homeland.

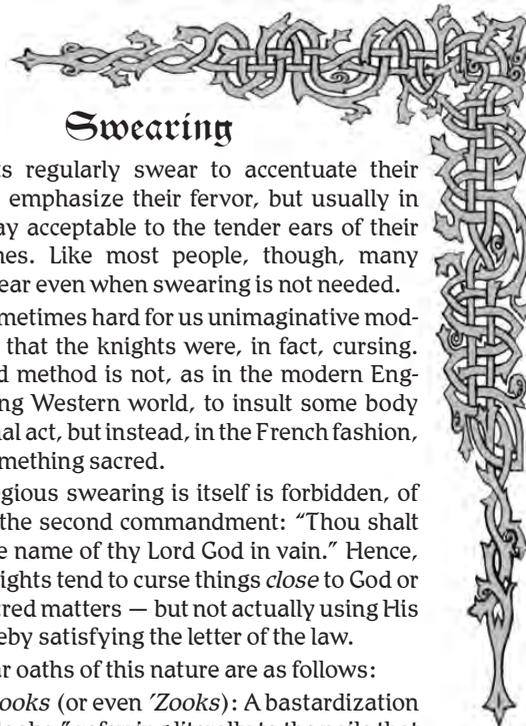
He instituted a system of rigorous monasticism based upon the Order of Saint Benedict, heedless of the fact that a regimen acceptable in a desert climate is extreme in damp and chilly Wales. He was called "Waterman" because he forbade all alcoholic beverages to his order. His order has attracted many followers and has spread from its corner of Wales to Ireland, Cumbria, Cornwall, and Brittany. He is a Roman Christian, and after Dubricus dies, will become the Archbishop of Britain.

**Dubricus:** Dubricus is the Archbishop of Britain at the time of the game's start, and for many years afterwards. He anointed King Uther, and will anoint Arthur as well. He lives in Carlion.

**Gildas:** This fire-and-brimstone preacher, also called Sapiens ("the Wise"), makes fiery speeches that condemn his Christians parishioners, claiming that the Saxon invasion occurred because of their sinful ways. Gildas was a student of Illtud (see below), and active primarily in Cambria during his youth and middle age. Because of a family feud, in which Arthur killed Gildas' treacherous and dishonest brother, Gildas is an enemy of King Arthur. Nonetheless, he is said to have negotiated the release of Guenever in one of the stories of her kidnapping. Gildas later went to Britain, settling on Rhun Island in the Bay of Morbihan.

**Illtud:** One of the most influential monks of the era, Illtud was teacher to the Saints Gildas, Samson, and Paul Aurelion, as well as various religious noblemen of his era. He was a knight from the Brecknock district (in the southern Cambrian Mountains) who entered the church after a hunting accident killed many of his friends. He established Llanilltud Fawr (now Llanwit Major in Glamorgan). Despite oppression by noblemen, his community thrives so that he is on one occasion able to bring shiploads of grain to Brittany during a famine.

**Samson:** This Roman saint was born in Cambria and, from an early age, dedicated to the Church. Saint Illtud trained him. Samson's theater of activity was at first the Isle of Caldey (Ynys Byr, Pembrokeshire), where he founded a monastery. He traveled to Ireland about this time, where he obtained a chariot later used for travel. He eventually left his community with a handful of followers, and traveled through Cornwall converting heathens and founding churches. He sailed to Brittany, where he founded several monasteries, the most important being at Dol. He visited the Channel Islands, the Scilly Isles, and France, whose king made him Bishop of Dol, which is now his primary theater of activity.



## Swearing

Knights regularly swear to accentuate their ardor or to emphasize their fervor, but usually in a subtle way acceptable to the tender ears of their courtly times. Like most people, though, many knights swear even when swearing is not needed.

It is sometimes hard for us unimaginative moderns to tell that the knights were, in fact, cursing. The favored method is not, as in the modern English-speaking Western world, to insult some body part or carnal act, but instead, in the French fashion, to insult something sacred.

Sacrilegious swearing is itself is forbidden, of course, by the second commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in vain." Hence, instead, knights tend to curse things *close* to God or to other sacred matters — but not actually using His name, thereby satisfying the letter of the law.

Popular oaths of this nature are as follows:

- **Gadzooks** (or even **Zooks**): A bastardization of "God's Hooks," referring literally to the nails that hung Christ upon the cross.

- **God's Teeth:** The favored oath of King John of England. Other oaths recorded are derived along the same lines: "God's Head," "God's Death," and "by the Holy Face of Lucca."

- **S'Blood:** A bastardization of "God's Blood" (or more popularly, "Bloody" in general), referring to the most precious part of the Body of Christ. This particular expression comes extremely close to profanity, and is usually discouraged. Another popular oath similar to this one — and similarly offensive — is "Zounds" (pronounced *zoonds*, from "God's Wounds").

Swearing by saints was also popular among knights, as if invoking the saint's name would keep his or her attention turned towards the speaker. There were a number of popular saints in King Arthur's time:

- St. Michael, the Archangel of Battle.
- St. George, the Dragonslayer.
- St. Theodore, called "the Recruit."
- St. Demetrius, "the Proconsul."
- St. Procopius, "the Officer."
- St. Mercury, a Scythian soldier and martyr.
- St. Maurice, head of the Theban Legion, which mutinied rather than participate in pagan sacrifices.

## VASSALS OF THE CHURCH

The Church in Britain holds many lands. A player knight may even be a vassal or household knight to an abbot or the nearest bishop. What does this mean, in terms of differences in character generation and game play? Very little.

The fact that a member of the church is lord of the land changes none of the normal obligations for a vassal knight. In fact, the bishop or abbot in this relationship generally acts in every way as if he is a count, for that is exactly the function he is fulfilling.

Even during the Middle Ages, the only real effect of vassalage to the church was the fact that certain crimes were more likely to be judged by an ecclesiastical court rather than a lord's or sheriff's court. In such cases, judgment is consistent — whatever most benefits the Church is upheld by its court. It is not unusual for the Church itself to end up with a piece of disputed land, for instance...

## PAGANISM

Paganism is the native religion of Britain. In Arthur's time, many of the kingdoms outside of Logres have never converted to Christianity. Even within Logres, many individuals have not abandoned their ancestral beliefs. These folk are called pagans, and their religion is Paganism.

Several pagan practices exist in the land, but we concentrate here on the Cymric one, which some knights in Salisbury may still follow if their players wish. Throughout the game, the potential conflict of these religions is ignored in favor of High Adventure rather than low prejudice.

Paganism is important to the game because the wilds of the forest and glen, of mountain and seaside, are inhabited by the Faerie, mystical beings who are descendants and worshippers of the ancient gods. Their powers and influence are loosed upon the land later in the campaign, during the Enchantment of Britain. As well, many of the human magicians of Britain are pagans.

## BELIEFS

"Paganism," like most beliefs or ideologies, is revealed when examined closely to be a number of differing ancient practices and attitudes, and not a homogeneous, monolithic religious system. For our purposes in the game, however, the myriad forms of Paganism can be treated as a relatively unified whole.

Paganism, then, is characterized by beliefs and attitudes that differentiate it from Christianity. The most obvious is the worship of many immortal and sometimes deific entities called gods, goddesses, and spirits. These entities inhabit the landscape, the sky, the sun, the moon, and other parts of the world, and also the Other Side (also called the Spirit Realm, the Faerie Realm, or any number of other such titles). They imbue the world with a life force and consciousness. By living in harmony with these natural forces, people live happier, healthier, safer lives. Paganism believes in an afterlife, on the Other Side, and druids also taught that souls reincarnate back onto our side as well.

Paganism is built upon oral tradition, shunning the written word. This grows out of a system of belief that reveres empirical experience over education. Pagans do not proselytize. Nor do they adhere to a strict hierarchy of leadership, or to a central authority. One important belief is an acknowledgment of human limitations, especially where it comes to knowing the "Truth." Truth, for pagans, has many forms, all of which deserve respect within their limited sphere.

Paganism is a religion of nature; ceremonies are usually held at outdoor sites such as megalithic circles or ancient oak groves. The seasonal celebrations in different parts of the land are similar, although they probably invoke deities

with different names. The patterns are the same, though details differ from place to place.

Paganism is eclectic and acknowledges many gods and goddesses, even many from outside of Britain. British Paganism includes native deities such as Don and Beli; Roman imports like Minerva Sulis and Dionysus; and Far Eastern mysticism, such as Mithras, Isis, and Cybele. Pagans in *Pendragon* may be content to think that their ancient ways will eventually absorb even the latest religion imported from Rome: Christianity.

## HISTORY

Long ago, only the races of Faerie — a strange, immortal race of beings descended from the Old Powers — lived on the land. They marked the places of natural power in the land, living in huge, elaborately constructed mounds. They read the wisdom of the universe in the stars. They learned the wisdom of the earth, and recorded their sacred knowledge into the landscape using great stones, which even now mark their ancient holy places.

The Faerie themselves were akin to the Old Powers (the ancient daemons and spirits of power), which they referred to, collectively, as "The Dragon." However, they were as much akin to the earth itself, and did not differentiate between the World and the Other Side, nor favor either light or darkness, nor separate the turning of the year into its parts.

Then people came to the land who were born on it but not of it. The first humans in Britain were the Picts, who called themselves children of Alba, the eldest Goddess, and named the land Albion after her. At first the Picts lived in harmony with the Faerie, but even they — being human, for all their savagery — could not bear the inhuman knowledge of the Dragon. Their greatest deity, whose name is never spoken, slew the Dragon using the power of words. The Picts' deity then named things to take power over them, and thus appointed beings to embody the powers of Nature.

Pictish magic requires a worshipper to make a personal pact with one of the Powers, and each thereafter helps the other. Those people are called "heathen magicians," because their magic is still practiced out on the wilderness heaths, where the Picts and other wild people still worship. (Pictish Heathenism is not detailed in this book, but will be explained in subsequent supplements to *Pendragon*.)

When the Dragon was slain, the stars moved, and the world was separated into this world and the Other Side. The Faerie people began to depart. Most went to the Other Side, where they still live. Sometimes they went away in horror. Sometimes they fled out of fear. Disgust drove others out. Sometimes they were driven out. Some have not yet left, and have made homes beneath their earthen mounds and stone circles, or in the wastes where humans do not go.

The Picts inherited the responsibility for many Faerie rites. Heathen magicians invoke the Faerie powers, but used the Pictish names for the parts of the Dragon. The first named is always Anna, "the Goddess," who is bountiful and cruel, both Source of Life and Keeper of Death. Anna is wife, mother, and daughter to Cernunos, the horned hunter,





who is the First God. The Picts maintain important rituals to these deities to keep the world alive. They practice the spiraling dance of the labyrinth to awaken the Sleeping God, Arktos the Seven-Starred Bear. They were the first to divide the year into four parts, each with its own sacred fire.

The heathen religion is — by “civilized” Christian standards, at least — amoral and impersonal. It has no true gods, only natural forces with names. It does not acknowledge good or evil, only the ceaseless cyclical movement of nature and the self-interested morality of personal and family survival. It submits to the forces of nature, and does not recognize a separate human morality. It integrates worshippers into the flow of the material world so that they may prosper with nature rather than fight against it.

The presiding magician in Paganism is a shaman, who has penetrated the invisible world individually, learned the secret names, and returned to use his powers for others. Ceremonies usually require an entire family to participate, helping the shaman with the magic. Typical magic is to cure a sickness, heal a wound, calm the wind, raise a fire, summon an animal for dinner, or bless the fertility of woman or beast.

The ancestors of the British came to this land under Brutus, a man of great lineage and prowess. They were Trojans, descendants of the great race so foully destroyed by the vile Greeks. (Historians and scholars place the date of the Trojan War at somewhere around 1200 B.C., so Brutus’ arrival must fall some time after that.) The land is named “Brutus-land” (eventually transformed to British-land, then Briton or, later yet, Britain) after him.

Brutus and his people brought civilization to the wild lands. They knew how to plow the land to plant grains, so they settled first in the well-watered valleys. They lived in large communities, not scattered clans, and built clusters of houses. They had horses, too, and chariots to bear their lords about.

Brutus also brought his own deities and priests, and new ways of interacting with the spirits of the land, which the Romans referred to gods. Each deity holds specific powers that he can grant to the priests. This form of worship is the Paganism of today. Pagan worship of the gods is done in public, for great numbers of people, to fulfill the needs of the gods.

Priesthood has always been with the Britons. Anyone can become a priest or priestess of the deity who chooses them — the mortal has no choice over the matter. Even royalty must obey when they are summoned by the gods. For example, Queen Boudicca herself presided over the sacrifices during her victory against the Romans in the year 60 A.D.

These priests used their deep wisdom to study the ancient wisdom of the Pict lands. They moved their worship into the sacred places, and they called upon their gods to help them triumph. The first gods they called upon were the Two Brothers, Bran and Beli; and then they called upon the Three Goddesses; then the Three War Gods, and the Three War Goddesses, and then on all their other deities, like the god of the plow, or the goddess of the horse, or the goddesses of the streams.

The gods of the priests proved that they were stronger than the heathen spirits. Yet the older powers were not destroyed or driven away. Instead, they were absorbed by the more newly arrived holy folk. The British integrated the heathen magic of the Picts with their own occult secrets and insights. From this fusion came the practice of druidism.

The druids’ secret was to experience the Other Side, to discover what it means, and to teach it to others who asked. They rediscovered the cosmic language of the heavens, and found unity between belief, worship, philosophy, and mysticism. The druids were so learned in philosophy, it is said, that even the famous Greek wise man Pythagoras acknowledged their wisdom.

Druid philosophy is concerned with maintaining a balance between the material world and the Other Side. It recognizes a duality in form, manifest in masculine/feminine, earth/sky, summer/winter, day/night, and light/darkness. It also recognizes the existence of several cycles, some regular and temporal, others free-willed and mythic. By interacting with these cycles, an individual can experience, and learn from, his or her god. All gods manifest an ambivalence that operates equally well within worlds of light and darkness, of life and death, of myth and materialism. The objective is to exercise the powers that are best for the communal good. The teachings of the druids outlined and guided people to the common good.

Paganism, unlike Heathenism, is not amoral. The pagan gods work for the specific purpose of helping the tribe, so they teach right and wrong. Paganism acknowledges good and evil, unlike the heathen faith. The welfare of the people is preeminent, and spiritual work is for the good of the people. Thus, if the tribe does something “bad,” it does so only because it might accomplish some good by that means.

Thus the druids, recognizing that some of the ancient practices from which they drew their religion were “wrong,” outlawed certain heathen rites and traditions. Especially odious were human sacrifice and headhunting, both of which were outlawed, as noted in the laws of Dunvallo Molmutine, the great Lawgiver of ancient times.

Under druidism, witchcraft was also recognized. Witches were people who maintained the heathen ways, but without continuing human sacrifice or headhunting. The witches were ordinary people who remembered the Old Ways, and practiced what they could remember or discover, variously helped or hindered by priests and/or druids alike.

Roman conquest stilled the druids. The empire feared any organization that rivaled its own, and the Romans preferred to exterminate what they feared. In 61 A.D., the sacred druid isle of Mon was invaded, its wells filled and its keepers slaughtered. The practice of Druidism was declared illegal, though public worship of native deities led by priest-kings was allowed. Druidic knowledge went underground or was lost. Only the bards continued their ancient tasks, offering half-forgotten doorways to ancient secrets. Common people, though, continued their ancient ways despite Roman conquest. The myths lived, and like the ancient western Roman god Chronos, slept, waiting.

When Roman power failed in 400 A.D., the gods came back. Old cults were revived. Northern warlords, who had never been conquered by Rome or Christianity, moved southward and became kings. The names of the old gods again rang out in groves and temples. Bards once again delved into the Old Ways. The spirits responded.

Individuals rose in knowledge and wisdom, relearning druid secrets from native Faerie ways. A leader among them was Blaise of Northumbria, a wise and ancient man of books and of nature, and he taught his secrets to talented young folk such as Merlin and Viviane. At last, from among the contemporary druids there emerged the true Archdruid, Merlin the Magician and Prophet, who mastered the arcane arts and who struggles against the world to shape its future.

## PAGAN PLACES OF INTEREST

### STONEHENGE

*Logres, on the Salisbury Plain*

This is the best known of hundreds of similar stone circles in Britain. It is also called the Giants' Dance, and was once the site of a famous Saxon treachery called the Night of Long Knives. Merlin the Magician rejuvenated the site with potent stones taken from distant Ireland.

The first two Pendragons, Aurelius Ambrosius and Uther, are both buried here.

### THE ISLE OF AVALON

*Logres, West Country near Cornwall*

From within the marshes rise a group of several hills called the Isle of Avalon, or Isle of Apples. This is the central site for the Ladies of the Lake, held apart and kept secret from the uninitiated and the unwanted by the Ladies' magic. Within its confines are a sacred well and a labyrinth that can bring the seeker to the Other Side.

### LYDNY

*Escavalon*

A rich late- and post-Roman temple to Nodens is here, kept well by private donations of people who have been cured by its healing baths.

### AQUA SULIS

*Bath, in southwest Logres*

Ancient healing springs rise from the earth in this place, sacred to the wise goddess Sulis. An ancient pagan priest-king named Bladud was cured of leprosy here and founded the nearby temple. Holy fires have remained burning ever since.

King Bladud preferred this place above all others to study his magic, which eventually allowed him to fly. He died in Trinovantium when his flying failed and he plummeted to the earth. Later the Romans associated the native deity with their own Minerva.

### POMITAIN

*In the Irish Sea*

Called the Isle of Mannanan (later the Isle of Mann) by its inhabitants, this island is sacred to the god of that name.

### WHITE HORSE

*Salisbury*

This gigantic figure is cut into the downs, exposing the white chalk beneath. It is the place where Epona, the Great Queen, lay when her son was crowned King by the Picts and Faeries.

### CERNE ABBAS GIANT

*Dorset*

This huge figure is cut into the sod to reveal the chalk beneath, much like the White Horse and other figures in the Downs. It is sometimes called "the vulgar man" because of its prominent phallus. Women seeking to have children sleep on the figure, invoking the powers of fertility to aid them.

### THE LONG MAN

*Sussex*

Another figure cut through the topsoil, this one shows the shape of a man holding two long staffs. The pagans did not explain its meaning or purpose when they fled from the Saxons, who regard it with superstitious awe and scrupulously avoid it.

### TOMNAHURICH

*Pictland*

Located between Loch Ness and the sea, near modern Inverness, this large wooded hill is the main place where the northern Faerie court once convened, and still holds much ancient power. It is also the place where ancient Pictish kings were crowned and buried.

### MAES HOWE, BRODGAR, AND STENNESS

*Orkneys*

A huge complex of ancient stone tombs, rings, and lines is concentrated here. Maes Howe is a very powerful ritual center. Brodgar is a large stone ring, called the Temple of the Sun. Stenness, a smaller ring, is called the Temple of the Moon. A third small ring, destroyed in modern times but extant in the era of *Pendragon*, was called the Temple of the Stars.

### CLAVA CAIRNS

*Pictland*

Located near the modern city of Inverness, this dramatic series of tombs, stone rings, and stone lines marks a major center of ritual. Old rites of human sacrifice were once practiced here.

## DEITIES

Pagan deities do not fall into those neat lists and categories so loved by scholars. Different parts of Britain prefer their own deities. Their mythologies, functions, and aspects were often alike, yet they were often called by different names even from one village or holding to the next. Moreover, when the old groves were searched for living spirits, the surviving gods were welcomed and mixed up further.

This list is reconstructed from many fragments, and portions are speculative. Given here are interpretations current in the era of the Pendragons.





## BELI LUGH

*A.k.a. Belenos, Lug, Llud, Nudd, Llyr*

The most ancient god of fire, sun, and heaven still rules over a Faerie world called the Land of Youth. Often called the Shining One, this god is he who intercedes among the gods and spirits in favor of the living. He rules the tribe of the Gods of Light and is the furious magical king who wields the thunderbolt. He is widely worshiped as a god of life and death.

## BRAN

*A.k.a. Pwyll, Urbgen*

This is the Lord of the Underworld, who keeps all riches, the ancestors of animals, and the power of Life when it is absent from the human world. He rules the Land of the Dead under the Western Sea. He is sometimes called Lord of Nourishment. He is widely worshiped as a god of life and death.

## MATH

*A.k.a. Esus*

Math the Ancient is “the Overlord,” keeper of the starry night which speaks its secrets to astronomers and herdsmen. He is the Source of Wisdom, and much druidic knowledge comes from him. His young assistant, Gwydion, the Druid of the Gods, usually accompanies him.

## DON

*A.k.a. Modron, Anna, Brigid, Arianrhod, Rhiannon, Epona, Gaia*

This First Goddess has many aspects and is most quickly recognized as Mother (Modron or Anna), Fire and Poetry (Brigid), Moon (Arianrhod), Horses (Epona), Sovereignty (Rhiannon), and Earth (Don or Gaia). She is wife to many, and mother to the rest.

## CERRIDWEN

*A.k.a. Morgaine*

The Dark Goddess owns the magical cauldron of inspiration, life, and rebirth. She rules beneath the earth and in its dark waters, and upon its shores she may meet a young hero to test him; if he succeeds, she may give him a magical horse.

## BLODEUWEDD

*A.k.a. Creudylad*

The Maiden, or Young Goddess of Springtime, is the carrier of new life to the world. She is the flower goddess, often called simply Wife or Bride, who carries the light of life within her. She is sometimes a treacherous temptress.

## LLEW

*A.k.a. Owain, Angeus, Pryderi, Gwythur, Mabon*

This is the God Who Comes Again, the resurrected warrior of light who arises from the darkness, rescues the flower goddess, and begins the season of Plenty. He is sometimes called the Sleeping Hero. Sometimes he is associated with a lion.

## GWYNN

*A.k.a. Gronw Pebyr, Meligraunce*

This is the Dark God who terrifies men, abducts the Goddess, enchants the Light God, and brings the cold

hardship of winter to the world. He is the Wild Hunter whose hounds can be heard in the wilderness.

## MANNANAN

*A.k.a. Manawyddin*

This god rules over the Irish Sea and the magical land underneath. Especially sacred to him is the Isle of Mann, where the tailless Manx cats dwell.

## RANKS AND TITLES

No single hierarchy exists for all pagan practitioners. The relations between members of different pagan traditions depend upon mutual recognition and respect of each other's ability and power. The druidic organization is the most standardized, so the others are compared to it.

### DRUIDIC RANKS

**Archdruid:** The highest and most powerful magician in the land is called the Archdruid (or sometimes Chief Druid). Unlike other druids, the Archdruid is not examined by a superior and then appointed to his post. Instead, he must have proved himself through knowledge and experience to greater, invisible powers. He must understand the deepest powers of the world and its magic. Druidic training prepares a person for this experience. Merlin the magician is Archdruid before Arthur and well into his reign. Later, Taliesin the Poet becomes Archdruid.

**Bard:** Bards used to be only the lowest rank of druid, but many bards exist who have no ambition to progress further. To be a bard, one must have mastered the oral traditions of storytelling, poetry, genealogies, and law-speaking. True bards can perform the magical poem called a *lampoon*, which is so powerful that it can disfigure a king's appearance, reputation, and health if he violates his social duties.

**Druid:** Not all magicians are druids. To become a druid, a man undergoes a time of training as a bard, then an ovate, in preparation for tests whose aim is to prove him to be an accomplished practitioner of magic capable of performing the rituals, spells, and other religious activities of a community. Only men may be druids, though women may receive druidic instruction. Women usually become enchantresses or a witches. (They do not need to be druids because they, as Bearers of Life, are already initiated into the greatest secrets.)

**Ovate:** A ovate is a druid-in-training who has already proven himself a master of bardic song and oral tradition, and who is now studying the esoteric arts of astronomy, astrology, divination, philosophy, and ritual. Ovates outrank bards.

### OTHER RELIGIOUS ROLES

**Priest, Priestess:** Anyone who has magical ability may become a priest or priestess with the proper training; such training is usually administered by an existing hierarchy with an established traditional relationship to a deity, often linked to a specific holy place. Thus they are almost always priests or priestesses of a specific deity.

Functions of the priesthood are largely ceremonial, especially concerning the seasonal festivities overseen by the priests and priestesses. Healing and magical protection are common powers and activities. These people can often



work magic, but lack the depth of understanding to qualify as druids and the breadth of experience to do anything outside of their deity's scope. Some, however, are more powerful than ovates.

The best known priestesshood is that of the Ladies of the Lake. Priestesses are often called "enchantresses."

**Witch:** The native, earth-oriented magical lore of Britain is widely practiced, and organized locally by men and women called witches or *wicca* ("wise ones"), or occasionally, for men, warlocks. They specialize in forms of folk magic, especially in healing wounds and curing illness. Many other spells may be known (or simply claimed) by a witch. They also lead communities in seasonal rituals.

Witches recognize no authority outside their covens, but respect anyone accomplished in magical crafts. Witches are sometimes called "enchanters" or "enchantresses."

## MAGIC

Everyone in the world of *Pendragon* knows that magic exists, and all wise and good folk fear it. To knights, magic is unknown in every way. Its effects are known through story and rumor, but only a wizard or a witch knows how it is done. The magic of Britain is extremely potent, partially because of its very mystery. Magic is also dangerous because it is hidden and subtle: Your character knows that it is more likely to drive him mad or age him a century in a day than it is to roast him with a bolt of lightning.

Fate and luck are important components of magic, not just spells. Further, the fundamental laws of society, such as loyalty and hospitality, are enforced by the decrees of fate, and thus enter into the realm of magic. People accept the world of magic as a normal part of the great unknowable reality, and the wise among them know to live by its rules, not to tamper with them.

Magic in this game is for purposes of roleplaying, not for cartoon violence. *Pendragon* magic imitates the traditional magical effects found in Arthurian literature rather than comic-book explosions. Nonetheless, even without bursts of hellfire and bolts of eldritch energy, it is a factor of great mystery, uncertainty, and danger.

Men will not be able to explain how Merlin marched an army over 165 miles in a few days, even if they remember being part of the army. Similarly, all people know that some druids can change their form, that magical ladies live beneath enchanted lakes, and that an invisible world exists with its own populace of frightful beings. They have heard about, and perhaps seen, magical objects like the sword Excalibur and the Holy Grail. But most honorable men do not hope to understand these things, and in fact tend to distrust magic immensely.

Magicians, like magic itself, are not to be trusted. Everyone knows reasons for this, though the reasons vary depending on the point of view of the observer. Some mistrust them because they can alter reality, or because they talk to the dead, or because they can tell what the weather is going to be and change it if they don't like it. Other people



dislike magicians because they believe that all occult powers come from Satan. Most simply don't like anyone who is strange; magicians, by their very nature, have access to the unknowable, and what is not known cannot be trusted.

## TYPES OF MAGIC

Different types of magic are recognized: In general, these are druidic magic, Christian miracles, native Old Heathen magic, and Saxon battle magic.

The primary types are the druidic (pagan) and Christian magics. The main difference between Christian and pagan magic is that the latter is immediate and demonstrative, while Christian magic is subtle and assertive. Curses, blessing and healing are common to both types of magic. Spirits are acknowledged, and can be summoned, banished or exorcised by both types. Both, however, are still to be feared and avoided.

Pagan druidic magic stems from mastery of the power of *glamour*, which is the ability to create a temporary reality. Often this temporary magic has a permanent or long-lasting effect, however. A fountain that was once blessed may last for generations. A healing potion fixes wounds and they stay healed.

Knowledge and wisdom are two of the best-known applications of Christian magic. Magical healing is done by the laying on of hands and channeling the power of God rather than using physical components.

Old Heathen magic is the integral magic of the land that predates all humanity. It can be sensed in the rocks, in the earth and tides, and in the glimpses of the old gods' minds that can be caught on unholy, moon-bright nights. It is the power of the forest, of the moor, or of the ever-changing river that exists with or without mankind.

Saxon magic makes its users mad in battle. It is gained from the blessing of Wotan, the Saxon war god. Practitioners of this magic can cut mystical runes into bone, wood, or stone to carry their unearthly powers against foes.

Demonic magic, the most difficult and thus least common type, uses magic which is gained from making deals with the truly evil forces of Satan, the Christian prince of evil.

The distribution of these different types of magic depends upon the different nations of people. Not everyone knows about the differences between these forces. For instance, among 6th-century Christians, the belief in Satan was not universal. Some or all of these forces, in the eyes of certain groups or individuals, may be totally false. Part of the adventure is to figure out what scheme the Gamemaster has adopted for magic in his or her campaign.

## TALENTS

Given below are ten basic magical abilities called "Talents." Some of these may be available to users of magic from any nationality, at the Gamemaster's discretion. Though a variety of other effects certainly exist, only the most common found in the literature are given here.

Gamemasters may create whatever effect they need, even if it is not on this list.

**Blessing:** A blessing gives a positive effect or an advantage to someone, such as increasing their ability to resist a disease, or to do damage to a fell beast, or to have children. It may be measurable as a game statistic, such as "a +2 modifier to Sword rolls when fighting Faerie creatures"; or it may just be part of narrative effect to give comfort to knights.

**Curse:** A curse gives a negative effect or a disadvantage to something or someone. It is the opposite of a *blessing*. Any negative magical effect is called a curse.

**Enchantment:** This kind of magic makes it possible to make a person feel an emotion (or an excess thereof). This is generally easier and more potent if they already subscribe to that feeling to some degree (such as through a directed passion or trait), which is then provoked or augmented with a game statistic bonus. The emotion created may also be a feeling not listed as a statistic, such as causing grief or hilarity in the target(s). It is also possible to simply confuse beings, so they are slow-witted for a short time or forget their immediate purpose.

**Glamour:** Glamour is the creation of a temporary reality, and is the most common form of Arthurian magic. It can be used on the magician, or on someone or something else. It can be used to raise a wall of flames, for example, or to change the color of cattle, to turn leaves into food or mice into horses, or to make a king look like someone else. It might magically augment protection (granting armor reduction bonuses) or cause something to be unnaturally heavy. However, the effect is short-lived, generally about an hour or so at the most.

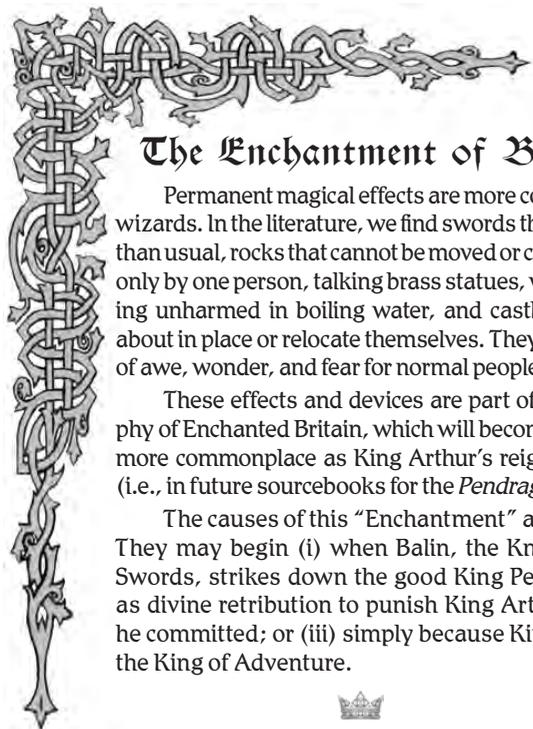
**Healing:** Magic, usually in the form of salves, bandages, or potions, can be used to hasten the healing process. The deadly nature of combat may tempt Gamemasters to use this often, *but such temptations should be ignored*. Magical healing is very rare in the literature, and overuse will reduce its wonder and cause players to have false hopes.

**Miracle:** A miracle is an extremely powerful supernatural effect that comes directly from God (or a god) to change the conditions of the world. It could be a miraculous healing, an enemy abruptly turning away, or the finding of an object beyond the limits of natural chance. In effect, due to its divine source, a miracle can cause any effect from any other type of magic to occur.

**Necromancy:** Speaking with the dead is possible and occurs several times in the literature, in order to obtain information from the deceased. This kind of magic is so dangerous that it almost always has a terrible effect upon the user and often on the spectators as well.

**Summoning:** Sometimes creatures other than the dead may be summoned, including devils or other unearthly beings, Faeries, or monsters. Such magic is dangerous, as the beings almost always resent the summoning. It provokes great terror among observers (perhaps instilling a Fear passion) and often taints everyone involved with curses afterwards.

**Travel:** It is possible to hasten movement through magic. Large tracts of territory can be covered in short period of time, generally without the beneficiaries even real-



## The Enchantment of Britain

Permanent magical effects are more common than wizards. In the literature, we find swords that are better than usual, rocks that cannot be moved or can be moved only by one person, talking brass statues, women floating unharmed in boiling water, and castles that spin about in place or relocate themselves. They are sources of awe, wonder, and fear for normal people.

These effects and devices are part of the geography of Enchanted Britain, which will become more and more commonplace as King Arthur's reign continues (i.e., in future sourcebooks for the *Pendragon* game).

The causes of this "Enchantment" are not clear: They may begin (i) when Balin, the Knight of Two Swords, strikes down the good King Pellam; or (ii) as divine retribution to punish King Arthur for sins he committed; or (iii) simply because King Arthur is the King of Adventure.



izing what they have done. Merlin is a great one for this type of spell.

**Weather Control:** Magicians can often draw clouds to make it rain, summon a snowfall out of season, or bring warmth to comfort freezing soldiers in the field.

## MAGIC IN THE GAME

The following guidelines are very general since magic is not the point of a *Pendragon* game; nonetheless, these rules will be expanded upon in forthcoming supplements. For now, when magic is used, the Gamemaster should describe the effects in non-specific times, like saying, "Fire breaks out in a circle around the knight," or make simple statements such as, "You have been blessed." There is no need to describe precisely how magic works — or even to state that it is being used! Let the characters speculate on it. Since many Faerie creatures have magical effects as natural traits, what a knight considers "magic" is perfectly mundane to them.

To make magic work, the Gamemaster simply says that it works. There is no way for knights to defend against it. This is extremely powerful, and Gamemasters are urged to use magic sparingly, not corrupting the genre by tainting it with magic at every turn. Magic ought to be used as a special effect, not a major plot device. Establish a mood with magic: Let Faerie palaces glow from a warm internal light, serve exotic and intoxicating wines from Cathay, mark trails through the forest with glowing stones.

Magic is also sometimes an essential plot device for Gamemasters. A magical event or curse can form the basis for an adventure. Magic can be used to save villains or player knights. But *never* should the plot rely upon a magician to do something or not do something magical — this is an example of the Gamemaster working against his or her own devices, which occurs only at the players' expense.

It is common in the literature that casters of magic must pay for their powers by sleeping afterwards. Thus, if a magician has been active for a time, he is likely to be absent for a longer time afterwards while recuperating.

## MAGICIANS

Some accomplished individuals pursue magic for its own sake, others for personal gain. They may profess to be pagan or Christian, but the powers used are invariably pagan.

**Enchanter/Enchantress:** This is a generic term that indicates someone who uses magical powers. Priests, druids, and witches are all referred to in this way, especially if they use the power of Glamour. Recently, the term enchanter has come to refer specifically to the British druidic organization, which is separate from its Irish counterpart.

**Sorcerer:** A sorcerer is a general term for a magician who gains his magical power via knowledge gained from books, not from the sacred knowledge of a deity passed down through generations of practitioners. The type of book can vary widely, perhaps being a tome of ceremonial holy magic, an exposition of mystical philosophy, an alchemical dissertation, or a vile book of black magic.

**Necromancer:** Necromancers gain their magical power from dealing with the dead. They usually summon spirits and question them to gain lore normally hidden from mortals. These spirits are usually hostile and may volunteer additional bad news or advice that the necromancers (or their employers) would rather not know.

## LIVING MAGICIANS

Here are listed some of the best-known magicians and enchanters living during the reign of Uther Pendragon.

**Blaise:** This ancient teacher is a recluse living hidden in the wilderness. He has taught many students, though Merlin is undoubtedly the most famous.

**Brisen:** This young woman at Castle Carbonek will become "one of the greatest enchantresses... in the world living." She works for the dynasty of the Grail Kings, hidden away someplace in Listeneisse. She does not indulge in the ways of the world, except to aid her lord to fulfill the prophecies of the Grail.

**Camille:** The Saxon enchantress lives in the Castle La Roche and aids the Saxons in their wars against the Britons.

**Merlin:** Merlin is the greatest practitioner of magic alive, and also the Archdruid of Britain. Though aging, he is still vigorous and works for the good of the land. He helped Aurelius Ambrosius, is helping Uther, and will help the Pendragon line in the future as well.

**Nineve:** The current High Priestess of the Ladies of the Lake, Nineve lives at Avalon, training the sisterhood of priestesses and enchantresses there. She travels about the country relatively often, though, and visits courts as needed.





# Chapter Eight: Matters of Wealth

Wealth is one of the many measures of a knight. Each player, though, must choose how much he wants to become involved in economics. Note that it is possible to ignore economics completely in your campaign: A vassal knight simply receives enough income from his land to maintain the standard lifestyle appropriate to his station.

Extravagance, however, requires more attention to detail. This chapter examines the basic economic aspects of your character's world. Part of the enjoyment of the game, for some, comes from spending money freely and lavishly. Your character starts the game well off, and in time he may become incredibly rich. And there are many things to spend money on in the sumptuous world of *Pendragon*.

## UNDERSTANDING WEALTH

Value is important because wealth is measured as a standard of living and property, not necessarily cash on hand. Thus, household knights do not get money every Christmas. Instead, the lord spends enough each year to keep each knight up to accepted standards of maintenance. Hence, the knight gets his clothes patched by the castle ladies for free, gets his food at the common meal, and has his armor repaired by the lord's blacksmith. None of this business is recorded or roleplayed: It is just the normal cost of daily living.

Basic coins in use — when coins are used at all — are the silver penny (or *denarius*) and the larger silver shilling, as well as the gold *librum*. If you wish to get into halfpence, sixpence, sovereigns, crowns, and so on, you certainly may, but for simplicity's sake, *Pendragon* values are figured in libra, shillings, and pence only.

### Coinage Value

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <i>Librum</i> , plural <i>libra</i> (£)        | 20s. = 240 d.     |
| Shilling, plural shillings (s.)                | 12 d. = £ 1/20    |
| <i>Denarius</i> , plural <i>denarii</i> * (d.) | 1/12 d. = £ 1/240 |

\* Also called penny (plural, pence).

## STANDARDS OF LIVING

The daily measure of wealth is that which can be seen and partaken of. Rich people eat better, wear fancier clothes, and have more luxurious homes. Knights, as members of the noble class, wear very nice clothing and eat well, whether at their lord's board or in their own manor. A normal vassal knight — i.e., the typical player knight — has an ordinary knightly standard of living (spending from £6 to £8 per year), as shown below in "Grades of Maintenance."

It is interesting and useful to compare knights' standards with those of a typical peasant family of two adults and three children: The common peasant exists in a self-sufficient world where money is unknown, and the family makes, grows, or barter for everything it needs. However, in monetary value, annual expense and income for the whole peasant family equals about £1 per year.

## GRADES OF MAINTENANCE

The economic situation (or "grade") of a knight is quantified by the annual income allotted to him during each Winter Phase. Five grades of knight exist for this purpose: *Impoverished*, *Poor*, *Ordinary*, *Rich*, and *Superlative*.

### IMPOVERISHED

A knight with an income of less than £3 per year is Impoverished. His is a miserable lot. He appears ragged, most likely lean and sickly, and his armor pitted and rusty. He has no squire and often lacks a horse of any kind. As a result, an Impoverished knight counts only as a sergeant in battle (see "Ransom and Blood Price"), even though he may be far more skilled or valorous. Legally, impoverishment means trouble.

An Impoverished household knight is not required to remain loyal to his lord since, under the feudal oath, his lord promised him sustenance. He may leave or may be sent away on a quest by the hapless lord.

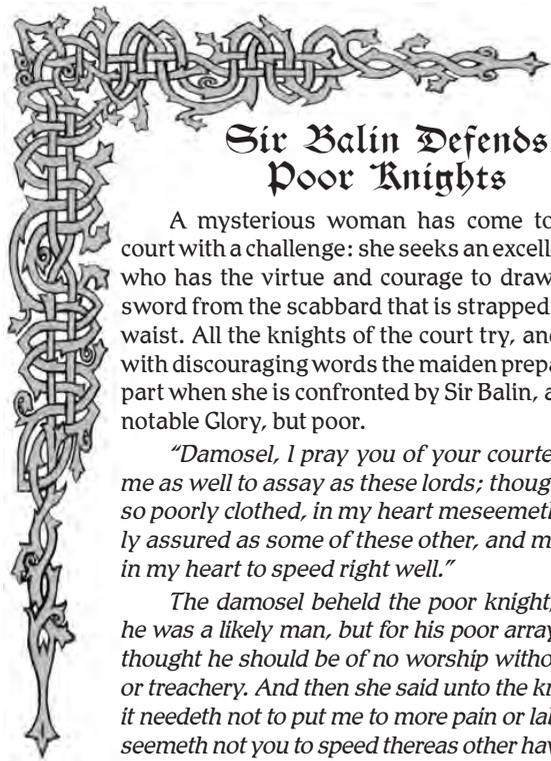
On the other hand, if a vassal knight neglects his land to the point of impoverishment, the lord has the right to cancel their agreement and take the land back: The vassal has clearly failed to maintain the land and uphold his end of the feudal bargain.

**Glory:** No Glory is gained during the Winter Phase for suffering the life of an Impoverished knight.

### POOR

Poor knights are, for whatever reason, unable to maintain themselves in the manner in which they ought. A knight who receives between £3 and £5 per year is considered Poor. (A nearby sidebar expounds upon this state of relative poverty.) In general, a Poor knight has no squire; rides a mangy, sway-backed horse; is hungry, lean, and ragged; and wears armor in a sad state of disrepair.

**Glory:** No effect. There is no shame, but no special fame, in being a poor knight.



## Sir Balin Defends Poor Knights

A mysterious woman has come to Arthur's court with a challenge: she seeks an excellent knight who has the virtue and courage to draw forth the sword from the scabbard that is strapped about her waist. All the knights of the court try, and fail, and with discouraging words the maiden prepares to depart when she is confronted by Sir Balin, a knight of notable Glory, but poor.

*"Damosel, I pray you of your courtesy, suffer me as well to assay as these lords; though that I be so poorly clothed, in my heart meseemeth I am fully assured as some of these other, and meseemeth in my heart to speed right well."*

*The damosel beheld the poor knight, and saw he was a likely man, but for his poor arrayment she thought he should be of no worship without villainy or treachery. And then she said unto the knight, "Sir, it needeth not to put me to more pain or labour, for it seemeth not you to speed thereas other have failed."*

*"Ah! Fair damosel," said Balin, "worthiness, and good tatches [qualities], and good deeds, are not only in arrayment, but manhood and worship is hid within man's person, and many a worshipful knight is not known unto all people, and therefore worship and hardiness is not in arrayment."*

*"By God," said the damosel, "ye say sooth [truth]; therefore ye shall assay to do what ye may."*

*Then Balin took the sword by the girdle and sheath, and drew it out easily; and when he looked on the sword it pleased him much. Then had the king and all the barons great marvel that Balin had done that adventure; many knight had great despite at Balin.*

—Malory, II, 2

Thus did Sir Balin prove that clothes do not make the man, and thenceforth he was known as the Knight of Two Swords, and so began his great adventure.



### ORDINARY

Ordinary knights are those most often discussed in *Pendragon*; generally, whenever the word "knight" is used, unmodified by another adjective, it refers to a character of this economic standing. Ordinary knights comprise the majority of chivalry. Player knights always begin the game as Ordinary knights in terms of economic quality.

An Ordinary knight receives £6 to £8 per year in money and food, which keeps himself, his family, a single squire, and his horses in a healthy and robust manner of living, and his equipment in good repair. This may be provided by his lord, or by a normal manor.

**Glory:** No effect.

### RICH

Rich knights receive between £9 and £12 per year to spend on their maintenance, an amount significantly above normal standards. Their families live well off the fat of the land.

Rich knights usually wear clothing of rich fabrics and furs in the latest style, have ornate silver-decorated tack for their glossy-coated horses, and regularly enjoy rich feasts. They typically have two squires in attendance, both being well-mounted and attentive to their knight's needs.

**Glory:** Knights who live above their expected means (i.e., more than £8 per year) gain Glory equal to the annual number of maintenance *libra* spent; thus, a knight who has £11 per year also gains 11 Glory per year.

If a lord supplies this maintenance, rather than the knights' getting the money themselves, the lord also gains a like amount of Glory.

### SUPERLATIVE

Superlative knights are the most extravagant and impressive of all, requiring £13 per year or more for upkeep. Their armor shines brightly, and their clothing is sumptuous, with intricate stitching, extensive use of gold thread, jewels, imported feathers, and furs from fantastic beasts. Three squires, each proud in matching livery, typically attend the knight's needs.

Superlative knights also benefit from superior health and the aid of well-equipped, loyal squires in battle.

**Glory:** As noted under Rich knights, above, knights who live above their expected means gain additional annual Glory based on their income.

### THE MARKET

Most towns have a weekly market (usually little more than a meeting of itinerant peddlers, really) that operates during the warmer seasons if not throughout the year. Every city, though, has a permanent market. This economic nucleus, in fact, defines the term "city" in the Dark Ages — a place where you can buy whatever you need at any time.

Most cities in *Pendragon* have about 1,000 to 2,000 inhabitants. Three of the largest cities are in the 4,000 to 5,000 range: York, Lincoln, and Norwich. When shopping in any town or city of this size or smaller, player characters should always use the "Town Price" column when buying goods from the Standard Price Lists (found at the end of this chapter).

At the start of the game, only one British city is truly large, with about 10,000 residents; that is London, which has much larger markets than other cities in the land, with more exotic items for sale. The great continental cities of Paris, Rome, and Constantinople are of similar size. When shopping in these cities, player characters should always use the "City Price" column when buying goods from the Standard Price Lists.

Whatever the size of the city, the rules for buying and selling are always the same.

### BUYING

Items can be purchased at a market for Standard Price List costs (at the end of this chapter). Either shortage or abundance may temporarily raise prices, while an overabundance likely lowers them.

### SELLING

Knights can sell goods at the market as well. This is done by going to a merchant and negotiating with him for





the price. Selling goods at market nets the buyer half the price shown on the price list. This half-price is a law of marketing and, incidentally, one of those damnable things that commoners delight in because it pesters the gentry so much.

## TRADE

Knights will find it most advantageous to trade goods with their own lord (or, in some cases, with another amenable lord). In such trades, the lord usually grants the full price as shown on the Standard Price List. It is always better to try to trade with your lord than to sell treasure or other goods at a market.

Note that trading armor to lords other than your own is not generally possible. Instead, the knight is sent to the blacksmith, who grants a value in trade of only half the listed value. (These commoners must have a conspiracy!)

## STARTING EQUIPMENT

It is assumed that starting player characters are the sons of knights and have been equipped appropriately by their lord and by inheritance. Standard equipment is thus handled in separate “pre-constructed” bundles or packages of gear (as described below), and players are not to pick through enormous lists of goods and items to pay for everything individually. Instead, they simply start with all of the equipment listed in this section.

Note that squires’ equipment is generally included in these packages. Poor knights may not have a squire, while Rich knights may have two or three very well-equipped squires.

Regardless of the knight’s maintenance, certain essential minor equipment is assumed to be present in this list (but is not stated), including saddles, tack, spurs, weapon belts, and so forth. These items are simply of better quality or in greater quantity for wealthier knights.

### POOR KNIGHT

- Chainmail and shield
- Spear, sword, dagger
- Threadbare clothing (worth 10s.)
- Personal gear (see below)
- 2 horses (rouncys)

### ORDINARY KNIGHT

- Chainmail and shield
- 2 spears, sword, dagger
- Fine clothing (worth 1 £.)
- Personal gear, travel gear, war gear (see below)
- 4 horses (charger, 2 rouncys, sumpter)

### RICH KNIGHT

- Chainmail and 2 shields (one painted, one not)
- 2 spears, sword, dagger, 8 jousting lances, any one other weapon†
- Rich clothing (worth £2)
- Personal gear, travel gear, war gear (see below)
- 6 horses (charger, courser, 3 rouncys, sumpter)

† This may be another sword if the player wishes. Note, though, that the knight’s war gear (explained below) normally includes a spare sword and a lance already.

**Gear:** The simplest way to classify a knight’s three types of “gear” is as shown below. For each type, note the number of the steed that carries it (the character does not normally carry these items himself).

*Personal Gear:* A small bundle, very portable, that includes underclothes (which double as nightclothes), hairbrush, towel, blankets, and maybe a razor; money, documents, your best set of clothing, your favorite secondary weapon (if any), and perhaps a few other knick-knacks. (Note any extra or unusual items in the small space provided to the right.) This is generally carried on the knight’s rouncy.

*Travel Gear:* This includes a tent (with cord and stakes), a blanket, cooking and eating materials, horse-tending equipment, horse blankets, cold weather and rain cloaks, a few rags, and so on. Such gear can be carried on a horse that is also being ridden, and amounts to about a quarter of a horse-load per person (so a half-load for both knight and squire), without much food or water. If your character has something special in his travel gear, such as a mirror or a wig, write this in the small space provided.

*War Gear:* This includes things for extended military campaigning, such as a few pairs of warm socks, a spare cloak, curry brushes, a length of rope, whetstones, some paint and a brush to touch up shield devices, a lance and a spare sword, several bits of armor for makeshift repairs, a keg of rough sand (for your squire to polish your mail), a couple bottles of wine, and anything else that might not be easily replaceable while on campaign. This is about a horse-load per person (so two full loads for both knight and squire), but this includes the travel gear for each person as well.

A knight’s war gear is kept in a trunk in the lord’s hall when not being used. When a knight goes on campaign with (or on behalf of) his lord, the lord usually lends him an extra horse to carry this gear. If adventuring on his own recognizance, a knight must find, borrow, buy, or otherwise obtain an extra sumpter if he wishes to both carry this gear and allow his squire to ride.

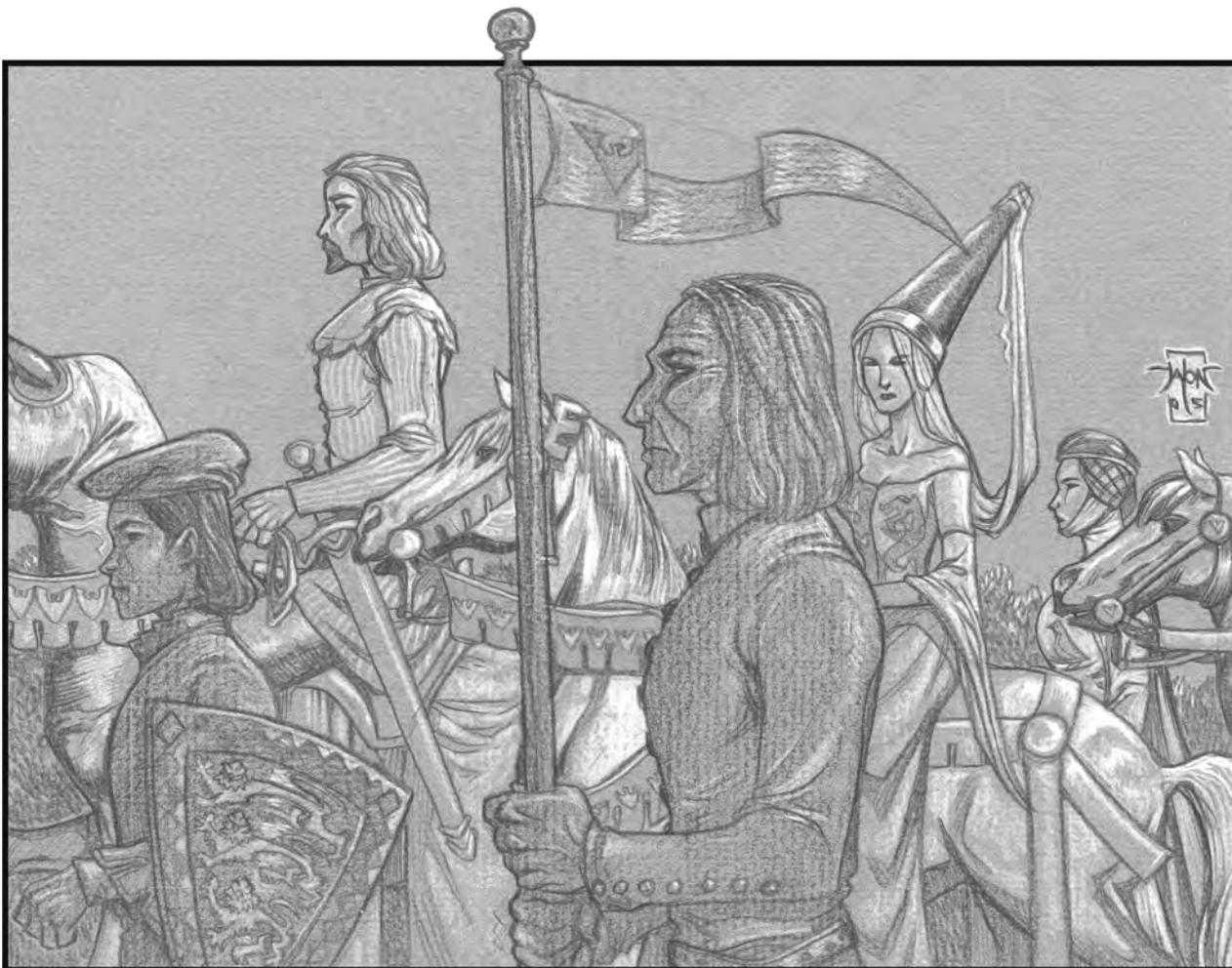
## PREROGATIVES OF WEALTH

The wealthy have many privileges that are natural and right. Here are the most important ones common to every noble.

### THE LORD’S PROGRESS

Most lords have a main residence, but also travel about their lands with their households in an official “progress.” This is because it is easier for them to go where the food is rather than move the food. Thus, the lord goes from place to place within his own demesne, stopping in to visit vassals, moving with his family and household.

This process has the added advantages of letting the lord check to see how each site is doing economically and politically, testing the loyalties of vassals and servants, and conducting whatever business is necessary or beyond the capability or responsibility of the resident overseer. If a vas-



sal is reluctant or untrustworthy, a lord may choose to stay a long time, eating up the wealth and thereby restricting future activity.

Usually when a lord arrives, the chief resident gives up his own quarters — which are of course the best — to his lord. The chief then takes the second best, while the resident of the second best bumps the third best, and so on, until someone ends up staying with the household knights for the duration of the stay. Only in special cases of extreme luxury do vassals have special rooms for visiting lords.

See “The Progress of Salisbury” in Chapter 3 for a sample progress.

## HERALDS

Announcements are often made at court. Ordinarily a knight banneret simply has his sergeant-at-arms bawl out proclamations, but higher-ranking nobles employ professional heralds specifically for that duty. Heralds have several duties.

In court, heralds announce visitors by name and by their distinctive titles as they enter. On judgment days, they proclaim all the cases to be discussed, state the judgments rendered, and also record all the pertinent facts for later reference. (While this can add flavor to the game, Game-masters should be wary of boring the players with too much idle verbiage.)

Heralds generally read and write well. They read public proclamations from scrolls, and they record the attendance of every nobleman and knight at a feast or tournament. Scrolls are made of parchment (usually scraped lambskin)

and, in royal circles, are calligraphic, illuminated, and decorated with gold or silver leaf and pasted-on jewels.

Fanfares blown on long trumpets announce the entrance and exit of important personages. The definition of important is left up to the nobleman. (Here is an excellent opportunity to offend or insult someone, whether intentionally or not.) Fanfares are also used to announce major decrees and to punctuate ceremonial functions such as sworn homages and the naming of officers, champions, and others.

## RETINUES

Wealthy nobles are always accompanied by a retinue, whose size depends only upon the relative wealth of the noble. Even the traveling entourage of a single fully accoutered knight is quite something.

To start, many horses are present. Every Ordinary knight has his warhorse for combat. Yet no one would ride such a magnificent steed while traveling: The creature would be too tired when a fight came up; also, due to the complex military saddle born by the warhorse, it is most comfortable to ride a simple rouncy or palfrey, and then switch to the charger for battle.

In most cases, a knight doesn't ride around the countryside fully armed and armored, due to the discomfort caused by weight and heat, so a pack horse is needed as well. Note that a warhorse cannot be used as a pack horse and vice versa — the equipment and saddles are so different that either steed would soon have serious saddle sores if used for the other purpose. More importantly, a warhorse is a noble beast, and it is plain wrong to burden it with baggage.



An Ordinary knight's full field entourage, then, when traveling with his lord, would normally include a total of three people (including the knight himself) and six steeds:

- The knight, his squire, and a page
- 2 riding horses (rouncys), for knight and squire
- 1 pony for the page
- 1 warhorse (the knight's charger)
- 2 sumpters (the knight's own, plus 1 provided by the lord), for gear

Now, add the knight's wife, and the entourage grows greatly. She herself has two maidservants and her own page, all of whom would ride. At least another pack horse is needed for their supplies, plus a groom for the horses (the squire performs this duty for the knight). Thus, their combined party would total at least 8 people and 12 mounts (horses and ponies).

There may also be sergeants, foot soldiers, messengers, children and their nurse, cooks, heralds, and musicians, many of whom may have assistants of their own.

For further illustration, let us assemble the retinue of a banneret knight and his family, traveling to a tournament with their whole entourage:

- The knight banneret with his 2 squires and 2 pages. Nine steeds required (2 warhorses, 3 riding horses, 1 spare riding horse, 2 ponies, 1 sumpter).
- 3 household knights, with 1 squire each. Twelve steeds required (3 chargers, 6 riding horses, 3 sumpters).
- 4 servants (herald, messenger, cook and assistant cook). Six steeds required (4 riding horses, 2 pack horses).
- The knight banneret's wife, with 3 maidservants and 4 pages. Nine steeds required (4 palfreys, 1 spare palfrey, 4 ponies).
- Wife's 4 servants (2 butlers, 2 grooms). Six steeds required (4 riding horses, 2 packhorses).
- 2 children, with 1 nurse. Three steeds required (1 palfrey, 2 ponies).

Total: 30 people, with 45 horses and ponies.

Note that there are only 4 knights here. Thus using the same ratio of knights to travelers, the various entourages that arrive at a tournament for 100 knights add about 750 people, in total, to the local population. This might create an encampment equal to the entire population of the sponsoring castle and nearby town put together.

Imagine the multitudes at a major tournament five times that size...

## GETTING MONEY

Noblemen are notoriously short of money. Being important is expensive!

In addition to his own expenses, a noble's virtue is reflected by his largesse, and if he wants to be famous within his social circle, he should reward favorable behavior with an open hand. King Arthur leads everyone in the largesse that he bestows upon those who deserve it (and even upon those who don't necessarily).

Historically, noblemen had many methods of deriving income from their holdings and vassals. The most important are the agricultural and material goods which a knight or lord regularly collects to maintain himself, his family, and his household. Every feudal lord had other methods as well; most are so unique that we ignore them, but below are a number of the common ones.

## LAND

Land is the time-honored basis for measuring one's economic success; the more land a character gains, the stronger his economic position. Land provides the basics of life, the people to husband it, and the raw materials to be turned into profit. Thus the manor is the basic source of economic measure for knights. Other sources may be granted or gifted to individuals at the Gamemaster's whim.

Noblemen ought to maintain effective stewards of their properties to encourage efficiency and profit. Wives are traditionally good at this, though the younger brother of someone important may suffice.

The value of good stewardship is illustrated in the amusing tale told of William, Lord of Hemricourt, a knight who loved to joust but who lost again and again, almost paupering himself each year with ransoms and remounts. Yet he never went broke. One day while returning from another disastrous tourney, Sir William watched his sheep being driven away to pay his ransom. Yet another, larger flock remained behind in his fields.

Sir William asked his friend whose sheep remained grazing on the other side of the hill. "Why, your wife's, Sir," said the friend. Thus William learned that his wife's stewardship had kept him solvent for years. Both chagrined and delighted, the good knight headed home to show his appreciation to his wife.

## RANSOM AND BLOOD PRICE

Ransoming captives from battle is the single most lucrative (and probably the most dangerous) way to get money. Everyone captured alive in battle is worth money to his captor. Prisoners are, by the rules of war, owned by their captors. By further rules of war, it is gentlemanly to return the captive alive, but for a ransom. It is very generous, although foolhardy, to release enemy captives for free.

Landed knights and other lords who have been captured may need to pawn possessions and even lands to raise the money, but will do so if needed. Otherwise, they need to borrow the money from a friend or ally, and then somehow repay whoever lent them the money.

A nobleman may volunteer to ransom his landed vassals if he wants. Opportunities to exhibit his largesse are limitless. Such behavior is extraordinary, though, and warrants an experience check for his Generous trait.

Ransoms may also be gained during tournaments, and from combat in general, if appropriate. The primary restriction is that the combat must be serious, not "for love."

The minimum values of ransoms are established by custom and law and are not usually open to bargaining or debate, except in the case of very important or famous people.

| Rank                      | Ransom |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Sergeant                  | £4     |
| Squire                    | £6     |
| Knight, bachelor          | £12    |
| Knight, landed (vassal)   | £18    |
| Knight, banneret          | £150   |
| Baron                     | £550   |
| Earl or praetor           | £1100  |
| Duke or pennath           | £1600  |
| King or independent ruler | £2150  |

The ransoms given here are based on roughly three years' average income, the minimum acceptable amount. Particularly proud knights may offer to pay more for their release, but most are generally satisfied to offer or accept the ransoms below.

**Ransoming Vassals:** Vassals are obliged to ransom their lord, but what about knights with no vassals, particularly poor ones, and what of knights without a lord, or household knights?

Poor knights without a lord or a vassal, alas, have no hope. They might be captured while questing, while serving as a mercenary, or perhaps while engaged in a bit of knightly procurement. They can beg for help from their family, but most families of poor knights are too poor to afford ransom. A friend may lend aid, or the poor knight can pledge himself to some task for his captor. But in general his fate is glum — he will rot away in a dungeon.

Household knights can expect to be ransomed by their lord. They are the chosen few who reside close to the lord, and who have presumably exhibited valor and loyalty to prove their worth. The feudal bond supposedly guarantees that a lord provides for the safety and wellbeing of his vassals.

The lord must make a Loyalty (vassals) roll. Success means that the lord is motivated by his vow and does everything he can to fulfill it. A failed roll probably indicates that he does so, or perhaps that he pays the ransom grudgingly but the captured knight loses favor with the lord.

Failure to fulfill the basic obligation of ransom means that the lord automatically loses 1 point of Loyalty (vassals) per knight abandoned, plus he loses 1 point of Honor per knight. If the lord fails the passion roll but still ransoms the knight, then the captured knight is released from his oath of vassalage (if he survives and returns home).

Whenever any vassal, landed or not, is ransomed by his lord, the knight receives an experience check for Loyalty (lord) to reflect his gratitude.

**Blood Price:** When a noble is murdered, according to all known customs, his kinsmen pursue the murderer to death. One acceptable alternative exists, though, and that is for the murderer to pay to the kinsmen a "blood price" (or *weregeld* in the Saxon tongue). If this price is accepted, the feud is over, passions are ended, and peace reigns once more (supposedly...). A character's blood price, by social rank, is equal to the ransom value shown above.

There is no compunction to accept *weregeld* if the kin do not wish to. The Orkney clan, for instance, never accept blood price, but simply hunt down their enemies instead.

## FOUR UNIVERSAL AIDS

Four universal customs of European feudalism reward landlords with special income. These four taxes give the knight the right to collect income from his holding whether the vassals like it or not. These are called *aids*.

Each of these four methods may be imposed only once by a lord, with exceptions noted below. When the aid is imposed by a lord knight, each of the lord's vassals pays an amount equal to the average yearly income of his primary holding.

1. *Knighting of the Eldest Son:* Creating a new knight is expensive (£8 minimum). This money is raised to outfit a man with the equipment listed for an Ordinary knight. However, the tax may not be enough to outfit the candidate. A father has choices to make here: He can squeeze his people (and incur their hate), pay from his own treasury, or outfit his son as a Poor knight. If outfitted too cheaply, though, the young man might not be accepted for the office and thus not receive the honors of knighthood.

On the other hand, the collection may make much more than the necessary £8. All or part may be used to upgrade the new knight's outfit. Or the father can just keep the extra money (though he most certainly gets a Selfish experience check for doing so). If used on the new knight, the extra money is normally used in part on a lavish feast, or perhaps even a tournament, to mark the event.

All Glory gained for the expenditure of money at a knighting goes to the new knight as well as the father. Thus, if a nobleman spends more than £8 on his son, then his son gets a bit of additional Glory for the year.

Sometimes a ranking nobleman knights many other candidates along with his own son. This is a rare opportunity for qualified but Impoverished squires to become household knights at the nobleman's expense. Each of the new knights gets his 1,000 Glory, as usual, and all extra Glory for expenses over £8 is accrued by both the knights and their new lord, at the usual rate of 1 point of Glory per *librum* (for sums under £100 total).

2. *Wedding of the Eldest Daughter:* The family of the bride usually pays for the wedding. A nobleman whose daughter is wed receives Glory, though, for the money spent on the event. To cover the expense, this aid is collected. Part of it may be spent on the festivities, and part included in the dowry every wife is expected to provide.

3. *To Ransom the Lord:* A lord's ransom is the duty of his vassals. This tax provides the money needed. In all cases, the vassals provide at least their usual year's income via this tax, although sometimes they must squeeze their peasants to raise so much. The rest of the necessary sum is collected from the citizens of the towns of the holding, unless the vassals volunteer to pay more, earning Loyalty (lord) and Generous checks if the additional amount they grant is considerable.

If a lord is ever captured a second time, the vassals are not obliged to pay this aid again. (The lord may still take money from them to pay another ransom as an Impost or as Voluntary Tallage; see below.)



4. *To Support a Crusade:* Fighting the infidel is a venture financed by all the vassals so that they can share in the Glory and the expense. Crusading is almost never mentioned in Arthurian literature, though, and in *Pendragon* it is a matter to be explored only in future supplements.

Fighting a nearby kingdom or cultural enemy does not qualify as a crusade, and this aid should not be used in campaigns restricted to the European arena.

### TALLAGE

Another method of taxation, called *tallage*, can be invoked any time a lord needs to raise extra money. The purpose might be anything — to raise an army, whether to invade an enemy or to defend the realm; to build ships; to finance a tournament; to build a town; or to outfit an expedition. The lord calls together those knights and lords who hold land rights from him and the leading citizens of his towns (those commoners who control the mercantile wealth) and, either in one group or separately, pleads his case to them. The vassals and citizenry discuss the situation, and return their verdicts to the lord.

Results of the request can vary widely. The court might agree to make the payments and, if inspired (perhaps by the threat of an oncoming army), might even volunteer more money or additional labor. They might pay part of the request simply because they like or respect their lord. They might pay half, but only if the lord makes some sort of concessions in return. They might not pay anything because they don't like him, or because they too are impecunious, or because they disagree with the intent. Many factors affect their decision.

### IMPOST

An impost is yet another kind of tax imposed upon the commoners. It can be used to describe a legitimate fine, perhaps imposed for violating the lord's law, or it may be entirely arbitrary (as was all too common historically).

Imposts are simply declared and then collected from the commoners with whatever force is necessary. The only cost is the undying hatred of the people who supply the lord's daily bread. The peasants generally conceal this hatred from their overlords, who after all have the right to imprison and sometimes kill them, but if worsened may manifest in peasants running away, turning to banditry, or even (though very rarely) rebelling outright.

### SERVICE AT COURT

Noblemen holding high offices get income for holding down an extra job or two, for such key offices are lucrative. These include the offices of seneschal, marshal, tax collector, sheriff, and so on. (See "Officers" in Chapter 7 for more on court offices.)

### TOURNAMENTS

Some tournaments can be expensive for losers, who forfeit horses and equipment and might even be captured for ransom. Some noblemen make a profession of conquering their opponents at tournaments just for the money.



## WARS AND RAIDS

War sometimes yields great profits. Successful raiding of other knights' lands can net many herds of cattle and sheep. Taking cities by storm yields even richer plunder, and surrendering towns must pay a fee for their liberation. Castles are a lord's treasure house and usually hold many riches. (And, of course, ransoming noble prisoners of war can make a knight rich.)

The immediate dangers of this method of acquiring wealth are self-evident. As well, defeat causes all the money raised for the war effort to have been wasted, and even more may now need to be raised for reparations to the victorious party for damages done to his lands.

## LOANS

Loans are possible, but to be avoided at all costs since it puts the fate of nobles in the hands of peasant-class merchants. (These city dwellers are the only people likely to have any money to lend.\*) They always charge interest on loans, sometimes as much as 50% a year. (Usury!)

Alternately, moneylenders may extract promises odious to lords. For instance, they might bargain for promises of freedoms from future taxes, or maybe even the right to marry the daughters of the lord (or to have their sons do so, or their daughters marry the lord's sons), thereby ensuring that their own children will become nobles.

\* **Note:** At the start of a *Pendragon* campaign, British towns are all poor, unlikely places to ask for income. During Arthur's reign, however, it becomes increasingly possible to get loans from wealthy commoners.

## SELLING TITLES

One abhorrent method of raising money is through the selling of titles. This method is generally limited to kings, who have many lands and titles to sell. (These are usually vacant through the lack of a heir and have thus reverted to the crown.)

At other times, an unscrupulous king might even invent new titles to sell. These usually go only to established nobles who have the means to purchase them and thus increase their rank. However, a king may also sell knightly titles to rich merchants.

## MARRIAGE

War leaves many widows, and lords without sons may have only marriageable daughters for heirs. A marriage can earn a wise knight a great deal of money through a generous dowry, as well as lands and titles.

## SPENDING MONEY

Conspicuous consumption is the rule among knights. No one saves money, except perhaps to put aside a few *libra* for imminent expenses. Traveling to the nearby city to buy new equipment, gifts for lovers, or other items is a pleasant event after the slaughter and trouble of an adventure or battle.

Note that prices for items change as campaign time passes, and the types of goods available also increases. The

lists provided in this chapter are specific to the early part of the game.

Knights may have the opportunity to make major investments using items found here. Most of the time this isn't necessary — it is sufficient merely to say "I'm spending £10 on my manor," for instance — but sometimes the details are important, or just fun, so this price list offers prices for some really large items, if desired.

## PRICES

All prices given here are the minimum for any town or city in Britain, and may be increased by up to 50% at any time, according to the Gamemaster's whim. The Gamemaster must also adjust the base prices as needed, based on common sense. For example, if a knight wished to buy gilded armor, the price might be triple the given amount or even more.

Some goods may not be available for any price, based on the law of supply and demand (the term is an anachronism, but the law still holds true!).

**Note:** Prices are non-negotiable. (It is beneath a knight to bicker with a merchant, anyway.)

## TOWNS AND CITIES

Every item listed herein has two prices: The "Town" price applies whenever a character purchases that item in a small city or a local market; the "City" price applies in any great city. (See "The Market" at the beginning of this chapter for more on towns and cities.) Only one great city exists in Britain at the start of the game: London.

Certain items simply cannot be had at local or town markets, as denoted by a dash (–).

# STANDARD PRICE LISTS

TABLE 8–1: FOOD AND DRINK

| Item                        | Town Price | City Price |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Meals</b>                |            |            |
| Common meal                 | 1/8 d.     | 1/4 d.     |
| Knight's meal               | 1 d.*      | 2 d.*      |
| <b>Potables</b>             |            |            |
| Ale/beer (jug)              | 1 d.       | 1 d.       |
| Mead (jug)                  | 4 d.       | 6 d.       |
| Local wine, poor (bottle)   | –          | 1/2 d.     |
| Local wine (bottle)         | 1 d.       | 1 d.       |
| Local wine, good (bottle)   | 2 d.       | 2 d.       |
| Foreign wine, good (bottle) | –          | 6 d.       |
| Exotic wine, good (bottle)  | –          | 20 d.      |
| <b>Feast**</b>              |            |            |
| Ordinary                    | 1 d.       | 1 d.       |
| Good                        | 2 d.       | 2 d.       |
| Fine                        | 4 d.       | 4 d.       |
| Grand                       | 8 d.       | 8 d.       |
| Regal                       | 16 d.      | 16 d.      |
| <b>Road Fare</b>            |            |            |
| Common fare (2 weeks)       | 4 d.       | 8 d.       |
| Hard rations (4 weeks)      | 2 d.       | 4 d.       |
| Knight's fare (1 week)      | 7 d.*      | 14 d.*     |

\* This includes the cost for a knight's squire as well.

\*\* Includes all edibles and potables, delivery, cooking, cleaning, and service. Prices are per person.



## A Grand Feast

Sir Galeron of Galloway has come to court to challenge Sir Gawaine for some lands that were granted to Sir Gawaine, who receives the visitor with great courtesy in an extraordinary pavilion, complete with stove and stable.

*Sir Gawaine escorted him out of the hall to a pavilion of linen decorated in purple with tapestries, cushions, and magnificent hangings. Inside was a chapel, a chamber, and a large hall. A charcoal stove had its own chimney to warm the knight. His horse was led to his stall and racks filled to the top with hay.*

*In the pavilion they set up boards and cloths for dining and ordered the coffers, napkins, and salt-cellars, torches, candlesticks, and standards between. They served the knight, his squire, and lady with the most tasty food in silver services, all carefully prepared. They offered him wines in glasses as well as cups, and meats cooked in a special glaze. In this way Sir Gawaine delighted his guests.*

—from *The Adventures at Tarn Wadling*



**TABLE 8-2: THE HORSE MARKET**

| Item                         | Town Price | City Price |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Charger                      | £20        | £20        |
| Courser                      | £10        | £8         |
| Donkey                       | 60 d.      | 50 d.      |
| Mule                         | 100 d.     | 80 d.      |
| Nag                          | 50 d.      | 40 d.      |
| Palfrey                      | £5         | £4         |
| Rouncy                       | £1         | 200 d.     |
| Sumpter                      | 100 d.     | 80 d.      |
| Work horse                   | 80 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Tack and Harness             |            |            |
| Basic tack                   | 16 d.      | 16 d.      |
| Fancy tack                   | 24 d.      | 24 d.      |
| Exquisite tack               | —          | 100 d.     |
| Royal tack                   | —          | £3         |
| Unique tack (engraved, etc.) | 100 d.     |            |
| Armor                        |            |            |
| Caparison                    | 24 d.      | 24 d.      |
| Caparison, fancy             | 80 d.      | 80 d.      |

All steeds are assumed to have been trained appropriately.

The standard, average-quality horse is some shade of brown; a black or white horse, or one of some other unusual quality, costs at least twice the base amount.

**TABLE 8-3: KNIGHTLY EQUIPAGE**

| Item                  | Town Price | City Price |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|
| Armor                 |            |            |
| Padded armor          | 7 d.       | 7 d.       |
| Leather armor         | 15 d.      | 15 d.      |
| Hard leather          | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Chainmail             | £2         | 180 d.     |
| Chainmail, reinforced | —          | £5         |
| Shields               |            |            |
| Common (unmarked)     | 3 d.       | 3 d.       |
| Knightly (painted)    | 5 d.       | 5 d.       |

|             |       |       |
|-------------|-------|-------|
| Weapons     |       |       |
| Axe         | 25 d. | 25 d. |
| Dagger      | 5 d.  | 5 d.  |
| Great Axe   | 50 d. | 50 d. |
| Great Spear | 2 d.  | 2 d.  |
| Javelin     | 1 d.  | 1 d.  |
| Mace        | 30 d. | 30 d. |
| Spear       | 1 d.  | 1 d.  |
| Sword       | 75 d. | 75 d. |

|             |        |        |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| Gear        |        |        |
| Travel gear | 60 d.* | 60 d.* |
| War gear    | £2*    | £2*    |

|                  |        |        |
|------------------|--------|--------|
| Hunting Weapons  |        |        |
| Boar spear†      | 2 d.   | 2 d.   |
| Bow              | 10 d.  | 10 d.  |
| 5 arrows         | 1 d.   | 1 d.   |
| Crossbow, light  | 140 d. | 100 d. |
| 6 light bolts    | 1 d.   | 1 d.   |
| Crossbow, medium | —      | 140 d. |
| 5 medium bolts   | —      | 1 d.   |
| Crossbow, heavy  | 140 d. | 100 d. |
| 3 heavy bolts    | —      | 1 d.   |

\* This includes the cost of one squire's gear as well.

† This is a large, broad-bladed spear with a metal crossbar located a short distance below its head. It is wielded using the Great Spear skill. A boar that takes damage equal at least to its DEX score (i.e., typically 15) from a boar spear may not thereafter attack the foe wielding the spear. (See "Boar" in Appendix 2.)

**TABLE 8-4: THE STOCK YARDS**

| Item            | Town Price | City Price |
|-----------------|------------|------------|
| Common Beasts   |            |            |
| Cow/yearling ox | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Ewe and lamb    | 25 d.      | 25 d.      |
| Milk cow        | 120 d.     | 120 d.     |
| Ox              | 180 d.     | 180 d.     |
| Ram             | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Sheep/goat      | 10 d.      | 10 d.      |
| Sheep, fat      | 15 d.      | 15 d.      |
| Sow             | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Noble Beasts    |            |            |
| Young hawk      | 15 d.      | 15 d.      |
| Trained hawk    | 80 d.      | 80 d.      |
| Common dog      | 5 d.       | 5 d.       |
| Exceptional dog | 25 d.      | 25 d.      |

**TABLE 8-5: CLOTHIERS AND JEWELERS**

| Item                        | Town Price | City Price |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|
| Clothing                    |            |            |
| Knight's (fashionable)      | 120 d.     | £1         |
| Knight's (old fashion)      | 120 d.     | 100 d.     |
| Noble's (fashionable)       | £4         | £4         |
| Noble's (old fashion)       | £2         | £2         |
| Raw Materials*              |            |            |
| Knightly                    | 35 d.      | 30 d.      |
| Noble                       | 80 d.      | 75 d.      |
| Common Accessories**        |            |            |
| Brooch or medallion, gold   | £5         | £5         |
| Brooch or medallion, silver | £1         | £1         |
| Earrings, common            | 10 d.      | 10 d.      |
| Earrings, gold              | 160 d.     | 160 d.     |
| Earrings, silver            | 25 d.      | 25 d.      |
| Ring, gold                  | £1         | £1         |
| Ring, silver                | 40 d.      | 40 d.      |
| Ring, signet                | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Diamond (unset)             | £1         | £1         |
| Diamond, unusual (unset)    | —          | ‡          |

\*This is enough material (cloths, threads, etc.) to make one knight's or lady's set of fashionable clothing in appropriate materials.

\*\* The standard item is of typical quality; very fancy or cunningly crafted items may cost up to twice the usual price or, if unique and beautiful, even more. In the city, one can find stunning works of royal quality that easily fetch up to thrice the standard value.

‡ Such a diamond ranges from £2 to £5 depending on its cut and quality.

**Note:** Finished silver and gold pieces that combine fine craftsmanship with valuable stones can be worth much more than the standard accessories listed above; those prices are given only as a baseline. Of course, only the wealthiest nobles of the land can afford such opulence, and these items can generally only be found in the city market.

For example, a fine silver ring set with an emerald might fetch £1, 5s., while an intricately crafted gold medalion with a diamond and six pearls might be worth as much as £35 or more!

**TABLE 8—6: COMMON SERVICES**

| Item                                  | Town Price | City Price |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Entertainment</b>                  |            |            |
| Composition, heroic lay               | 70 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Composition, love poem                | 40 d.      | 30 d.      |
| Composition, mocking poem             | 60 d.      | 50 d.      |
| Harpist (per festival or event)       | ‡          | ‡          |
| Jongleur (per night)                  | 20 d.      | 20 d.      |
| Lute player (per festival or event)   | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Singer (per festival or event)        | 5 d.       | 5 d.       |
| <b>Clerical/canonical</b>             |            |            |
| Copy a book (per page)                | 5 d.       | 5 d.       |
| Copy and illuminate a book (per page) | 25 d.      | 25 d.      |
| Have a Mass said                      | 5 d.       | 5 d.       |
| Indulgence, venial sin                | —          | 10 d.      |
| Indulgence, moral sin                 | —          | £1         |
| Read a letter                         | 1 d.       | 1 d.       |
| Write a letter                        | 3 d.       | 3 d.       |
| <b>Heraldic</b>                       |            |            |
| Genealogy                             | —          | ‡          |
| Messenger (per day of travel)         | —          | 5 d.       |
| Professional herald (per day)         | —          | 20 d.      |
| <b>Professional Women</b>             |            |            |
| Low-class                             | —          | 1 d.       |
| Common                                | —          | 5 d.       |
| Courtesan                             | —          | 25 d.      |
| French courtesan                      | —          | 140 d.     |
| <b>Port Authority*</b>                |            |            |
| Brittany (2d6)                        | —          | 130 d.     |
| Cambria (3d6)                         | —          | 90 d.      |
| Frisia (3d6)                          | —          | 160 d.     |
| Ganis (2d6+6)                         | —          | 240 d.     |
| Ireland (3d6)                         | —          | 180 d.     |
| Normandy (2d6)                        | —          | 90 d.      |

|  |   |          |
|--|---|----------|
| Rome (4d6+12)                                      | — | £6       |
| South or East Britain (2d6)                        | — | 45 d.    |
| Spain (3d6+6)                                      | — | £1, 10s. |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>                               |   |          |
| Chirurgeon (per day)                               | — | 20 d.    |
| Hire a fishing boat,<br>no questions asked         | — | 60 d.    |
| Hire a pirate ship (20 men),<br>no questions asked | — | £3       |
| Lawyer (per day)                                   | — | 12 d.    |

‡ From £1 to £7 depending on the skill of the performer. Normally, the best harpists can be found only in the city.

† From £1 to £5 depending on the enormity of the genealogy to be completed and its import.

\* Prices are given for passage booked from London to the given destination. The Gamemaster must adjust for other ports of departure. Each cost listed is for one knight, plus one squire and their possessions and mounts. The result of the dice value listed in parentheses indicates the number of days the traveler must wait before a suitable ship departs.

**TABLE 8—7: MISCELLANEOUS GOODS**

| Item                   | Town Price | City Price |
|------------------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Luxuries*</b>       |            |            |
| Book                   | —          | —          |
| Carpet                 | —          | 100 d.     |
| Carpet, thick          | —          | 200 d.     |
| Dish, gold             | £7         | £7         |
| Dish, silver           | £1         | £1         |
| Drinking glasses (6)   | 60 d.      | 60 d.      |
| Goblet, gold           | £12        | £12        |
| Hand mirror, glass     | —          | 40 d.      |
| Perfume                | 30 d.      | 20 d.      |
| Perfume, imported      | —          | 40 d.      |
| Spices                 | 50 d.      | 40 d.      |
| Spices, imported       | —          | ‡          |
| Tapestry, plain        | 120 d.     | 100 d.     |
| Tapestry, nice         | £1         | 180 d.     |
| Tapestry, fine         | £2         | £1, 10s.   |
| Tapestry, exquisite    | £5         | £3         |
| Tapestry, royal        | —          | £5         |
| <b>Carter's Market</b> |            |            |
| Cart (2-wheel)         | 7 d.       | 7 d.       |
| Wagon (4-wheel)        | 10 d.      | 10 d.      |
| <b>Tent Makers</b>     |            |            |
| Camp tent              | 2 d.       | 2 d.       |
| Pavilion               | £1         | £1         |
| Pavilion, nice         | £2         | £2         |
| Pavilion, fancy        | £5         | £4         |
| Pavilion, regal        | —          | £8         |

\* As with jewelry, some of these luxuries can be worth much more (or sometimes less) than the standard items listed above, based on any number of variables; these prices are given only as a guideline.

‡ From 100 d. to £3 depending on the rarity and the demand.



**TABLE 8—8: MAJOR INVESTMENTS**

| Item                                 | Universal Price |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Common Construction</b>           |                 |
| Barn                                 | 12 d.           |
| Chapel                               | £8              |
| Church                               | £50             |
| Knight's manor hall                  | £2              |
| Ox shed                              | 2 d.            |
| Peasant dwelling                     | 3 d.            |
| Stone bridge                         | £5              |
| <b>Castle Construction</b>           |                 |
| Ditch and rampart                    | £1              |
| Motte-and-bailey                     | £25             |
| Motte-and-bailey, reinforced         | £95             |
| Shell keep with bailey               | £45             |
| Stockade                             | £6              |
| Stone tower                          | £10             |
| Stone tower, with motte and palisade | £75             |
| <b>Mercenaries (per month)</b>       |                 |
| 50 bandits                           | £5              |
| 50 footmen                           | £10             |
| 10 armored footmen                   | £5              |
| 5 sergeants                          | £5              |
| 4 engineers (siege crew)             | £1              |

|                             |       |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| <b>Water Craft</b>          |       |
| Fishing boat                | 20 d. |
| Horse transport             | £15   |
| Pleasure barge              | £10+  |
| Rowboat/coracle             | 5 d.  |
| Trade ship, large           | £15   |
| Trade ship, small           | £5    |
| War ship                    | £20   |
| <b>Manorial Renovations</b> |       |
| Fireplace and chimney       | £1    |
| Fish pond                   | 10s.  |
| Flower garden               | 75 d. |
| Glass window (per)          | 80 d. |
| Small orchard               | £1    |
| Suite of bedroom furniture  | £1    |
| Tile floor                  | £1    |





# Appendix One: In the Future

The nature of the game is going to change as the campaign progresses. The rough and tumble world of feudal “might makes right” will undergo a radical change when King Arthur, the son of King Uther, takes over the throne of Britain. The essential nature of knighthood — that of the professional warrior — will remain, but tempered more strongly by virtue and responsibility.

Furthermore, many new activities will emerge, including the elaboration of tournaments and of chivalry, and the introduction of knightly romance. Many new objectives and ideals will come out after the establishment of the Round Table, where the best knights of the world gather to serve the great King Arthur, seeking to tame the world of Enchanted Britain.

Technology will progress so that your knight can have better armor, better steeds, better weapons, better castles, and so on.

Most of the changes that are to occur will appear in great detail in the next game supplement, called the *Great Pendragon Campaign*. A few of them are summed up in this appendix, though (or at least hinted at), so that you can get a head start on your game without feeling that you must halt the action before Arthur is crowned High King.

## CHIVALRY

After Arthur becomes King, many new standards of behavior gain credence and authority. A knight may strive to live and act in accordance with the new chivalrous ideal. Some famous knights may maintain two ideals at once (being both Religious and Chivalrous knights, for instance), though this is a great challenge not easily met.

Chrétien de Troyes wrote the first stories of high chivalry and adventure in Arthurian romance, the earliest known stories of Lancelot and the Holy Grail, and his definition of chivalry was imitated by less skillful writers and poets for centuries afterwards. To Chrétien, chivalry embodied the loftiest values of *chevalerie et clergie*. “*Chevalerie*” is embodied by true courage and a passion for justice. “*Clergie*” is defined as “*elegance et culture*” — that is, right conduct, sensibility, and the proper handling of personal relationships.

Chivalry is a method of behavior introduced by Arthur early in his reign and popularized by his Round Table knights, so it is in vogue during the middle part of the *Pendragon* campaign. It is one of the major civilizing influences

that makes Arthur’s reign so outstanding. To be chivalrous is to be civilized.

Note that much of the early and mid campaign consists of spreading the ideals of chivalry by beating down everyone who disagrees (chivalry does *not* preclude violence).

## CHIVALROUS KNIGHTS

Chivalry supports the protection of the weak by the strong. Before its acceptance, most knights live by the attitude that “might makes right.” Chivalry seeks to turn that attitude into one of *noblesse oblige*, the belief that nobility obligates one to behave honorably and benevolently. This definition of chivalry places its emphasis upon refining the knights’ duty.

Like Religious knights (see “Magical Virtues” in Chapter 4), those known as Chivalrous knights must meet certain requirements; those that do gain magical benefits for as long as they maintain those requirements.

## REQUIREMENTS

Chivalrous knights are recognized by their ideals, behavior, and reputation. Although six different traits are admired, chivalry does not hold a person to have a minimum value in all of the requisite traits, as does Religious virtue. Instead, chivalry strives for an average high quality from among them.

Add together your character’s Generous, Energetic, Modest, Just, Merciful, and Valorous trait values. If he has a total of 80 or more in these traits (which are marked on the knight’s character sheet with a “bullet” [•] for this purpose), he may become a Chivalrous knight. First, though, he must swear an oath to always do the following:

*“To protect the widow, the orphan, the poor; not to slay a vanquished and defenseless adversary; not to take part in a false judgment or treason, or to withdraw if it cannot be prevented; to never give evil counsel to a lady; to help, if possible, a fellow being in distress.”*

Once he swears this oath, your character gains the benefits of being a Chivalrous knight. If his total in the requisite traits should ever drop below 80 for any reason, he loses the Chivalrous benefits until such a time as his requisite scores once again total 80 or higher.

## BENEFITS

All Chivalrous knights receive a supernatural boon called the Armor of Honor, which provides him with 3 points of armor reduction (see “Armor and Shields” in



Chapter 6). The protection from the Armor of Honor is added to any protection already gained by actual armor or shields. Thus, a Chivalrous knight wearing chainmail (10 points of reduction) subtracts  $10 + 3 = 13$  points of damage from each attack that hits him.

Chivalrous knights also gain 100 Glory annually, during the Winter Phase.

## ROMANCE

Queen Guenever introduces the Court of Romance to Arthurian Britain. This event marks the start of the popular activity of *fine amor*, or “courtly love” — a principle decree of which is that it is the duty of women to flirt with well-spoken guests and to receive flattery from them. In short, courtly love allows a character to gain Glory for romantic affairs.

*Fine amor* is an invention of ladies and poets to recognize and reward “the fairer sex.” It is love for love’s sake — romantic and passionate love that must be contrasted to the emotionless, political attitude of arranged marriage. Some have argued that courtly romance gave social power to women who previously had none (or at least very little).

The experiment was utterly novel at the time, though we may feel it is trite now. How much of it was merely a parlor game, a petty conceit for the debutantes, a castle-bound girl’s Dark Age soap opera of dreamy emotional outlawry? It is hard for us today to tell these things. Was *fine amor* ever actually practiced? Yes, we know it was. We have records of some historic knights who did the ludicrous and dangerous things demanded by it. Although these may have been isolated cases, they were nonetheless talked about and admired by many contemporaries.

In time, Guenever’s Court of Romance is transformed into formalized social events known as the Courts of Love. She and selected court ladies preside, with everyone else as audience. Women may come to this court to inquire of the rules, to complain of their lover (who nonetheless remains anonymous, of course), and/or to receive the judgment of the court whether an action — “a theoretical activity, of course...” — is romantically “correct” or not. If the Court of Love condemns an affair, or any activity involved in the affair, it might even rule that the love must be ended!

Part of the allure of courtly love is its forbidden nature. It is directly opposed to the sacrament of matrimony, for “True Love” is liberating while matrimony is bondage. Thus the most intense of all romances involves a married woman cheating on her husband. The purity of their bliss sets both lovers free from the gross material concerns of the world and places them into that rarefied realm of emotional commitment. The fact that adultery is forbidden by both Church and State makes its consummation all the sweeter.

But courtly love is not just the work of a back-door man — simple lust is only a base reflection of True Love. Courtly romance is delicate and formalized, and its practitioners are required to go through the stages outlined below in “The Romantic Affair.”

Troubadours are an important part of the romantic scene. They write and sing passionate songs that praise a lady’s beauty, grace, generosity, and chastity. The poems

are often disguised, using the names of ancient lovers so as not to name the lady directly. Thus the poet pretends to be entertaining everyone, but in secret sends his love and messages to someone in the court.

There are a number of behaviors expected of men in courtly romance. Firstly, men must adore women in word, thought, and action, with an overwhelming preoccupation. When problems occur and only failure and frustration ensue, the dotting man must be nourished by his agony until love becomes the all-encompassing passion of his life.

In *fine amor*, men are subordinate to their lovers, vassal to his lady. This humble and submissive attitude of the lover was an idea entirely new to its time, when patriarchy was otherwise unshakable and no doubt insufferable in both social and clerical circles. The deliberate role reversal was a reaction against the bondage imposed by prevailing attitudes. It exalted Love, transforming it into something new.

## ROMANTIC KNIGHTS

A knight of Romance honors all women and must do everything in his nature and ability to protect women, to deliver them justice, to respect them, and to do their bidding. He must honor every lady as if she were his own lover. Of course, a lover must also be true to his love. Infidelity is the worst offense of all.

## REQUIREMENTS

To become a Romantic knight, a character must have a lover. The precise nature of the amorous affair is shaped by the individuals involved; it may be chaste or not, as long as it is monogamous and not unrequited.

The knight must also have a value of 10 or higher in five of the following skills: Compose, Dance, Falconry, Flirting, Gaming, Intrigue, Orate, Play [harp], Read [Latin], Singing, or Tourney. The lady, of course, decides which five skills — i.e., those that she finds most appealing in a potential mate.

At least once per year, the knight must prove his passion for his lady by doing her bidding, occasionally even under duress. This activity must be played out, or done solitaire during the Winter Phase using the “Lover’s Solo” (see Appendix 3).

Finally, the knight must entertain his lover with presents or entertainments worth at least 1 *librum* per year.

## BENEFITS

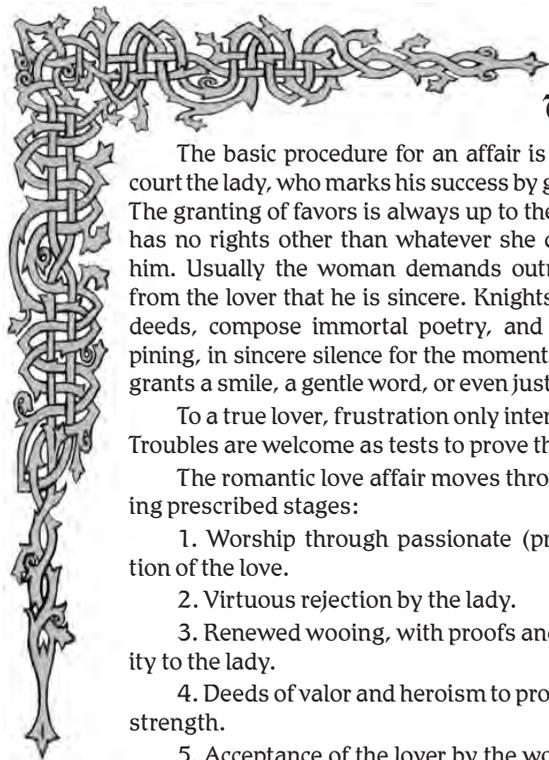
All Romantic knights gain Glory for maintaining their love affair, even during the time their love is secret. He gains 50 Glory the first year, and the magnitude of Glory gained increases by 50 each successful year thereafter (thus 100 is gained the 2nd year, 150 the third, and so on).

## PASSIONS

The art of love for love’s sake will be inaugurated by Queen Guenever. When this occurs, the following passions — Amor and Love (*amor*) — may be introduced to the game.

## AMOR (PERSON)

The Amor passion must remain chaste (as opposed to being consummated by sexual relations) — if it does



## The Romantic Affair

The basic procedure for an affair is for the man to court the lady, who marks his success by granting favors. The granting of favors is always up to the lady; the man has no rights other than whatever she deigns to grant him. Usually the woman demands outrageous proofs from the lover that he is sincere. Knights perform great deeds, compose immortal poetry, and wait patiently, pining, in sincere silence for the moment that their lover grants a smile, a gentle word, or even just a glance.

To a true lover, frustration only intensifies passion. Troubles are welcome as tests to prove their ardor.

The romantic love affair moves through the following prescribed stages:

1. Worship through passionate (private) declaration of the love.
2. Virtuous rejection by the lady.
3. Renewed wooing, with proofs and oaths of fidelity to the lady.
4. Deeds of valor and heroism to prove courage and strength.
5. Acceptance of the lover by the woman, followed by consummation of their secret affair.
6. Subterfuge and troubles, keeping their affair secret and alive.
7. A tragic ending when the affair is discovered, made more poignant by the depth of the tragedy.

### Chastity

Courtly love is often chaste and formalized. Some lovers consider the chaste affair to be the highest form of *amor*, gaining the benefits without the dangers. Such an affair takes place between Sir Galahad, the world's purest knight, and Lady Amide, Percivale's sister. On the other hand, everyone thought the romance of Lance-



not, then the passion automatically becomes one of Love (*amor*), as described below.

A character may have only one Amor passion at any given time, unless a knight has Amor (Guenever), in which case one other Amor passion may exist as well. (See the nearby sidebar for special rules about passions involving Guenever.) The name of the amor is kept secret; that is, the Gamemaster must be informed as to who the lady (or the knight) is, but the other players need not be told. The name of the amor should be written into the brackets only if and when a name is revealed.

The typical Amor value for a new love is 3d6. The following modifiers are common to this passion:

| <b>Circumstance</b>  | <b>Modifier (Max +10)</b> |
|--|---------------------------|
| Either has made a successful Flirting roll with the other                    | +1d3                      |
| Either has significant Glory   | +1 per 1000 Glory         |
| Either is an enemy of the other  | -1 per Hate (enemy)       |
| He has saved her from a dire fate  | +6                        |
| She brought him back from the brink of death (i.e., via Chirurgery or magic) | +6                        |
| The lady is an exquisite beauty  | +1 per point over 15 APP  |
| The lady is an heiress   | +1 per £ of annual income |

lot and Guenever to be the same, and its subsequent exposure brought about the greatest tragedy of all — the downfall of the Round Table.

Unmarried women must always be chaste. Virginity is the highest virtue for young women. Lack of it brings shame and guilt in abundance, often resulting in the woman being forced into a convent as atonement and punishment.

Married women are also expected to be chaste in their exercise of *fine amor*. To maintain their bloodline, nobles virtually imprison their wives in marriage, for only then can they be sure that their heir is in fact their own son. Laws state that a man may kill his wife and her lover if they are discovered in adultery. Such murder is frowned upon, but is often excused because it is a "crime of passion."

For this reason, many women work hard to maintain their chastity and use every device to make their lover work for each touch, glance, and kiss. Obstacles are not cause for sorrow, but opportunities for the knight to express his devotion and to prove that he is made powerful by their love, so that he can overcome anything for it. In this manner a woman may not even be attracted to the man for him to develop a passion and devotion. Sir Palomides, for instance, was never loved by La Beale Isoud, yet he often gained superhuman skill because he knew she was watching him.

So, despite the oppression of society, chastity was often a relative commodity in many affairs. Courtly manners sometimes allow a gentle knight to kiss the hand or cheek of a lady if he has performed some marvelous deed for her.

Of course, meetings even between chaste lovers are supposed to be secret, so who can tell what goes on after a discreet public kiss...?

Commonly, would-be Romantic knights travel about seeking the one who will be their Amor. In such a case, the knight may make a 3d6 roll for his starting passion every time he meets an eligible maiden or lady, but he may freely discard any rolls that are below 16 if he wishes. Any roll of 16 or greater immediately indicates that he is smitten, and cannot be discarded.

**Special:** A character having the Amor passion is prone to becoming *introspective* (see below).

### LOVE (AMOR)

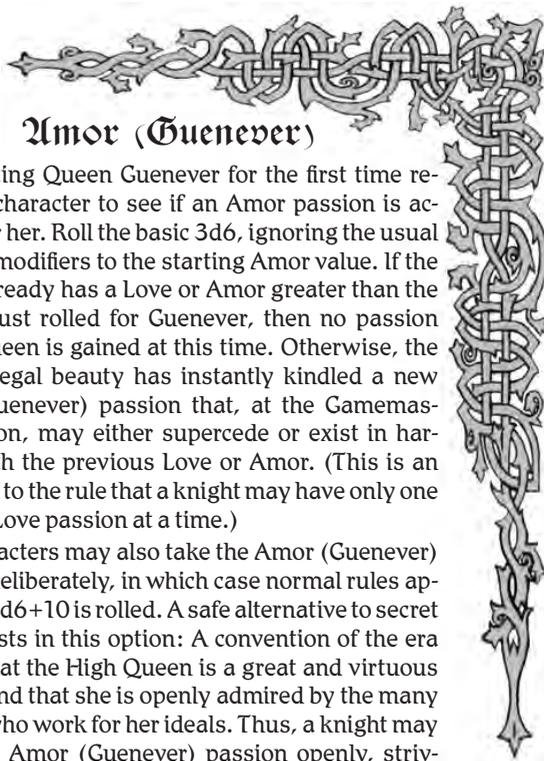
As noted above, any Amor passion that is consummated by sexual relations automatically becomes one of Love (*amor*). A character may have only one Amor or Love passion (not both) at any given time, unless a knight has Amor (Guenever), in which case he may have one other Amor or Love (*amor*) as well.

As long as the name of the lover is secret, the Gamemaster must be told who that person is, but other players need not be informed. If the name of the lover is revealed, write the name onto the character sheet.

The value of the Love (*amor*) passion is equal to the previous Amor passion value; no new number is rolled.

**Special:** A character having the Love (*amor*) passion is prone to becoming *introspective* (see below).





## Amor (Guenever)

Sighting Queen Guenever for the first time requires a character to see if an Amor passion is acquired for her. Roll the basic 3d6, ignoring the usual rules for modifiers to the starting Amor value. If the viewer already has a Love or Amor greater than the number just rolled for Guenever, then no passion for the queen is gained at this time. Otherwise, the queen's regal beauty has instantly kindled a new Amor (Guenever) passion that, at the Gamemaster's option, may either supercede or exist in harmony with the previous Love or Amor. (This is an exception to the rule that a knight may have only one Amor or Love passion at a time.)

Characters may also take the Amor (Guenever) passion deliberately, in which case normal rules apply, and 3d6+10 is rolled. A safe alternative to secret Amor exists in this option: A convention of the era admits that the High Queen is a great and virtuous woman and that she is openly admired by the many knights who work for her ideals. Thus, a knight may make the Amor (Guenever) passion openly, striving to impress her enough to be invited to join her Queen's Knights. He does not expect to become her lover, just her sincere admirer. Someone stricken with a passion for an unsuitable Amor might even journey to see Guenever, and thus, with any luck, find an outlet this way.

In a relatively short time the effect of the queen's extraordinary charm and beauty becomes well-known, however: A character not wishing to put another existing Amor or Love passion at risk upon first seeing her need only to state that, when in her presence for the first time, he will think only of his love. This automatically obviates any need to make a roll for the Amor (Guenever) passion.



## INTROSPECTIVE

Knights and ladies in love periodically fall into a dreamlike daze while contemplating the qualities of their amor. They get a distant look in their eyes and ignore everything going on around them.

The Gamemaster may call for an Amor or Love (amor) passion roll once per game day from a given character with either of those passions. A critical success indicates that the character becomes *introspective*, but has none of the other effects typical of a passion roll. For 4d6 minutes, the character enters an almost hypnotic state; during this time, he or she cannot make any Awareness, Heraldry, Recognize, or other perception or knowledge-type skill rolls.

While lost in introspection, a knight gains a +10 modifier on any one weapon skill, but may only use the defense option if attacked.

*Note:* The Gamemaster may impose introspection on characters quite often — in fact anytime they are not actively doing something important. It isn't uncommon to see a passionate knight riding his horse blindly down the road in a rainstorm while viewing with his mind's eye the countless virtues of the pale hand of his lady fair.

## ISN'T ROMANCE SILLY?

Knights in love, frankly, act like fools. Sir Palomides, one of the finest fighters and most noble knights in the land, spends his spare time weeping, starving to death, and otherwise moping. Likewise, Sir Alisander le Orphelin is smitten with Alis la Beale Pilgrim:

*So when they were departed Sir Alisander beheld his lady, Alis on horseback as he stood in her pavilion. And then was he so enamoured upon her that he wist [knew] not whether he were on horseback or on foot.*

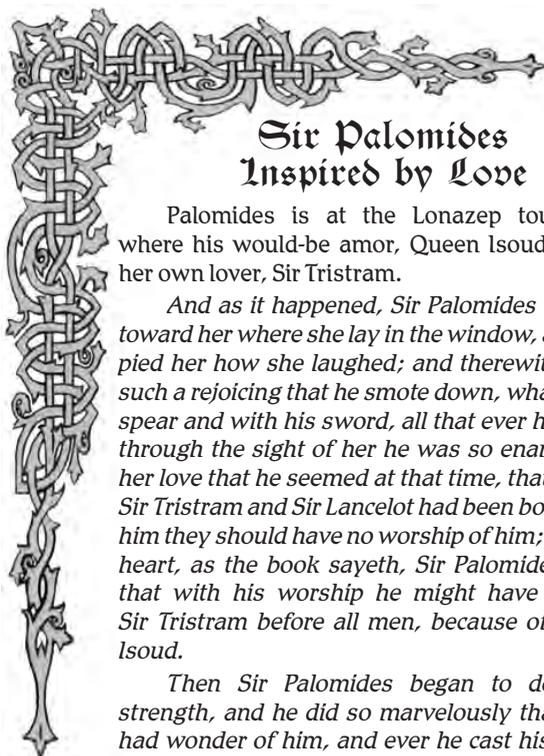
*Right so came the false knight Sir Mordred, and saw Sir Alisander was asotted upon [struck witless by] his lady; and therewithal he took his horse by the bridle and led him here and there, and had cast to have him led out of that place to have shamed him.*

—Mallory X, 39

Romantic knights, as we can see in the above examples, are often neither sensible nor rational. It is hard for most of us to imagine why anyone would even pretend to act this way. So what's going on here?

Modern readers should be aware of two facts of medieval emotional life: the expression of all strong emotions by everyone in the stories, and the new idea of love portrayed. Strong emotions are a mark of the impassioned practices of chivalry. King Arthur weeps when he hears news of tragic deaths, and one time falls onto the floor because he is laughing so heartily. The fury of Guenever's jealous outbursts drives Sir Lancelot mad, and their expressions of love are as fervent.

The idea of love as defined by *fine amor* was brand new in the 12th century when it was written into the Arthurian



## Sir Palomides Inspired by Love

Palomides is at the Lonazep tournament, where his would-be amor, Queen Isoud, watches her own lover, Sir Tristram.

*And as it happened, Sir Palomides looked up toward her where she lay in the window, and he espied her how she laughed; and therewith he took such a rejoicing that he smote down, what with his spear and with his sword, all that ever he met; for through the sight of her he was so enamoured in her love that he seemed at that time, that and both Sir Tristram and Sir Lancelot had been both against him they should have no worship of him; and in his heart, as the book sayeth, Sir Palomides wished that with his worship he might have ado with Sir Tristram before all men, because of La Beale Isoud.*

*Then Sir Palomides began to double his strength, and he did so marvelously that all men had wonder of him, and ever he cast his eye unto La Beale Isoud. And when he saw her make such cheer he fared like a lion, and there might no man withstand him.*

—Mallory X, 70



legends. Love existed before that, of course. All bodies of myth contain love stories of one kind or another. Previous to *fine amor*, though, for the most part, love was an emotion with extraordinary power, but whose results were as likely to bring about disaster as they were joy. The story of Helen of Troy is the ultimate ancient love story — great fun at first for Paris and Helen, perhaps, but an absolute social disaster since two great races were exterminated.

Thus the idea that love was a worthy, redeeming activity was new. In fact, love was now, suddenly, noble for the very reason that it respected women so much. For the first time in Western history, women gained some recognition as individuals worthy of something besides making bread, clothing, and children. Thus was born the “Woman on a Pedestal” attitude — trite and unworkable today, often disparaged and perhaps rightly so, but brand new and empowering then.

The people who supported the ideals of romantic love were mostly disgruntled members on the fringes of the ruling noble society: wives oppressed by church, husband, and daily work; and young unimportant knights who usually owned so little that it was easy for them to swear that their loves were more important than any earthly property. Opposed to them were society, the church, and husbands who feared cuckolding.

Malory, himself a poor knight oppressed by the Church, prefers romance and its rules to those of his society and its religion. In Malory’s works, Lancelot is guilty of heinous crimes — disloyalty to his liege, deceitful adultery, insincere oaths, and rebellion. Yet Malory holds him so guiltless that Lancelot catches a glimpse of the immaculate Holy Grail and, much later, even rises immediately to heaven upon his death. To Malory, Lancelot was guiltless to the end, always because he was a staunch upholder of a true and faithful love that sometimes caused him to do rash things. The unswerving loyalty of Lancelot’s love, patient and always according to the rules, generated a stability which gave Lancelot his reason to live.

Malory’s views on love are stated clearly in an essay where he compares love with a passing year. He was dismayed by the whims and vacillations of lovers in his own day.

*Right so fareth love nowadays, soon hot soon cold; this is no stability. But the old love was not so; men and women could love together seven years, and no lecherous lusts were between them, and then was love, truth, and faithfulness: and lo, in likewise was used love in King Arthur’s day.*

*Wherefore I liken love nowadays unto summer and winter; for like as the one is hot and the other cold, so fareth love nowadays; therefore all ye that be lovers call unto your remembrance the month of May, like as did Queen Guenever, for whom I make here a little mention, that while she lived she was a good lover, and therefore she had a good end.*

—Malory, XVIII, 25

Is that silly? Perhaps so to our modern sensibilities, yet like most ideologies in their purest forms, it holds a certain remarkable and enduring power.





In *Pendragon*, then, chivalrous love is a virtue, a noble passion that inspires and gives meaning to life. Simply do not try to run a chivalrous love affair in your game using today's emotional and sociopolitical standards and expectations.

## CUSTOMS

The following customs and practices will take hold as the game's timeline progresses.

### THE SHIELD OF PEACE

In addition to the regular knight's shield with its coat of arms, many knights will take up the custom (out of Camelot) of carrying a "shield of peace." This shield does not carry the heraldic coat of arms of the knight, but instead some other personal device by which he wishes to be recognized.

This custom becomes very popular at tournaments, where the shield is often a square shape, called a *targe*, with the chosen device painted on. According to the latest fashion, the shield of peace is to be used at tournaments with rebated weapons. Young Sir Lancelot, that trend-setter, is one of those most responsible for making this such a popular practice.

### BADGES

A coat of arms is individual to one's bloodline. However, sometimes another sign is needed to show relationships based not upon family, but on loyalty. This is done with badges. Badges are used by knights to designate members of their household. Thus everyone, commoners included, who live in the lord's household may wear his badge upon their clothing. A lord with multiple manors may have different badges for each household.

Badges may also be used by knights to show their membership in a group. The green sash that will be worn by Round Table knights, for instance, is such a badge. In time, the *planta genet*, or "broom plant," will be worn by soldiers of Anjou and give its name to a dynasty of English kings, the Plantagenets. Two of the last branches of the Plantagenet family will wear badges of red and white roses when they feud, and exterminate each other in the War of the Roses.

### COMBAT FOR LOVE OR CONQUEST

Knights may decide to undertake combat "for love" or "for conquest." If the former, both knights must agree to the terms, or else the combat is for conquest by default.

"For Love" means that the knights will fight *for the love of fighting*, and not for personal gain. Thus, when there is a friendly joust, the winner receives the Glory for winning, but nothing else. Fellows of the Round Table are always expected to joust and fight one another for love.

"For Conquest" is more serious. This combat is hostile, roughly equivalent to an act of war. This does not always mean that it ends in death, but it well might. Similarly, the loser in the struggle is not always held for ransom, but he may be. Alternatively, and more popularly, the winner seizes the loser's horse, weapons, and armor as his reward, and lets the man go.

Some vile knights will come to fight for conquest, but accept no ransoms, preferring to keep the prisoners in shameful imprisonment. Such villains include the Saxon Sir Carados of the Dolorous Tower, his brother Sir Turquine, and others.

## ADVENTURING

A primary activity of all the famous knights during Arthur's time and after is to adventure. Adventuring, in fact, is the activity that sets famous knights apart from those lesser knights who stay at home and acquire Glory passively (i.e., while out of play).

Adventuring is recognized as a legitimate knightly duty by the Arthurian court, one every bit as important as one's duty to stand garrison and serve an active 40 days in the field. Most knights do not take the job, though. For them, the everyday activities of guard duty, tournaments, and battles are enough to satisfy their sense of adventure.

Other knights (like the player knights, we hope), seek more and thus undertake dangerous and glorious quests. Most of the lords of Logres are in favor of this new "sport" of adventuring, and are happy to oblige those knights who wish to engage in it. The lull of peace following Arthur's rise leaves castles full of boisterous fighters with nothing to fight. Adventuring sends the knights to work off their energy elsewhere, perhaps far away from Logres. Undoubtedly, the lord hopes that the questing knights' vigor will arouse something from his other less enthusiastic knights, as well.

Adventures abound. Even stay-at-home knights have a few adventures as part of their routine, without having to go far to seek them out. Such adventures include going to tournaments, participating in battles, engaging in romance, visiting unusual sites, and encountering unusual beings.

**Questing:** If knighthood is the heart of *Pendragon*, questing is its soul. A quest includes adventures, but not all adventures are quests. A quest is a protracted series of adventures that must also include the following elements to qualify as such: going to an unknown place, encountering something mysterious or unusual, facing unusual dangers, and facing death. Quests must, by definition, occur in strange lands where High Adventure and opportunity wait to test the neat ideals of the heartland of civilization.

To go on a quest, a knight must request a leave from their normal duties to their lord. On a quest, as in any enterprise, a knight represents not only himself, but also his lord, so the lord will agree to send only individuals whom he will not have to bail out of trouble, or who will not bring shame or dishonor to him. A time limit is often imposed on absentee time for questing. The proverbial "year and a day" is a good starting time period. At the end of the leave period, the knight must return to court and report the results of his activities. In time, as a knight gains repute, the leave may be considerably longer, and sometimes even indefinite, particularly if it is assigned for a specific task.

Of course, questing is also a "metagaming conceit," the best excuse for player knights to wander the roads and trails of Britain.

## ORGANIZATIONS

Every roleplaying game must make some concessions to the needs of players and player characters alike. In practical terms, this means alternatives must be provided for them to exercise their personal preferences and prerogatives. Not every player will wish to have his character be a Chivalrous knight, aspire to the Round Table, or fall madly in love.

Here are some minor organizations that arise later in the campaign, all on the fringes of mainstream knighthood, which character might join. These examples are all public organizations. Other secret societies probably exist in fact as well as in rumor: These include the Fraternity of the Black Knight, the Order of the Destroying Serpent, and the Keepers of the Flame.

No Gamemaster is required to include any of these organizations in his campaign.

### THE QUEEN'S KNIGHTS

Some time after inaugurating the Court of Romance, Queen Guenever organizes this brotherhood to honor certain knights through membership in a specially picked body of men. These individuals serve the Queen both in and out of court.

Members of the Queen's Guard recognize the civilizing influences of the feminine principle, and devote themselves to protecting and honoring it.

**Primary Adherents:** Sir Lancelot, newcomer to Camelot; Sir Gawaine, nephew of King Arthur.

#### REQUIREMENTS

Queen's Knights must have a Love or an Amor passion. They must compete in and win at least one annual contest or tourney to belong. Contests might be held in Courtesy, Dance, Falconry, Gaming, Orate, Play [Instrument], Singing, or whatever knightly skill the Queen decides.

#### BENEFITS

The primary benefit is in being close to the High Queen, and thus able to get her attention, or that of the other primary adherents.

For each year spent serving as one of the Queen's Knights, a player knight collects 100 Glory.

### KNIGHTS OF THE GRAIL TEMPLE

The Templar knights are organized by the White Knight, a stranger who comes to Arthur's court in the early years. The Templars, as they become known, combine the rigors of chivalry and Christianity, following two sets of stern orders, both knightly and monastic.

Templars believe that the pursuit of the Holy Grail is the ultimate experience for mankind, practicable only by simultaneously following both knightly and Christian ideals. Templar knights must dedicate their lives to understanding the spiritual implications of the Holy Grail, and spend their spare time searching for its physical manifestation.

**Primary Adherents:** The White Knight, who founds the Temple (and whose other identity is secret); Galahad, grandson of the Fisher King (when he appears at court late in Arthur's reign).

#### REQUIREMENTS

Templar knights must be both Religious knights of the British Christian faith and Chivalrous knights. Initiates must give all their worldly possessions to the Temple, and may not own anything for their duration in the Temple's service. Templar knights may not have wives or "amors," or any overpowering attachments to their families (Gamemaster's discretion).

Templar knights serve all Christian people in accordance to their vows. They escort the poor upon pilgrimage, feed the hungry, act as impartial arbiters in disputes, preach to the ignorant, and fight the heathens.

#### BENEFITS

Templars gain the Love (Holy Grail) passion with a value of 3d6.

They get the usual annual Glory bonus for maintaining both Chivalrous and Religion bonuses (i.e., 100 for each). In addition, each year that they maintain a Love (Holy Grail) passion of 16 or more, they gain an additional 100 Glory.

### ORDER OF THE GOLDEN APPLE

Many orders have formed to provide mutual support among knights otherwise devoid of widespread political and personal support. Men unable to join the Round Table have formed lesser organizations like this. Thus, this order is a model for other possible orders, each of which should have its own specific requirements, but similar beliefs, duties, and benefits.

The Order of the Golden Apple was formed by the King of Malahaut to honor members of his own or neighboring lands who distinguished themselves. Members believe that they have an obligation to live chivalrously and to support each other against strangers.

**Primary Adherents:** King Barant of Malahaut.

#### REQUIREMENTS

Members must come from one of the Cumbrian or Northern kingdoms (Malahaut, Norgales, Nohaut, Lothian, Gorre, Strangore); or come from one of the northern Saxon lands (Sorestan, Deira).

Members must never fight against each other for conquest or for love, including on opposing sides of a tournament. Members must support and succor each other beyond normal expectations. They must not belong to any similar organization, especially the Round Table.

#### BENEFITS

The main benefit is that knights obtain the friendship and support of knights from outside of their own region. Members gain a Loyalty (Order of the Golden Apple) passion equal to 3d6.

### THE THRASHERS

Sir Mordred, the viper of Camelot, gathers this wicked brotherhood together to organize the malcontents of Arthur's late reign. (The Thrashers are taken wholesale from



T.H. White's story.) They distinguish themselves with the badge of a mailed fist gripping a whip.

The Thrashers believe that their knightly prerogatives have been eroded by Arthur and his chivalry. They believe that they must impose their rule (i.e., their power over others) as sternly as possible, and should be held blameless from any complaints of the lower classes. For them, might indeed makes right.

**Primary Adherents:** Sir Mordred, Prince of Orkney; Agravaine, of the Orkney Clan.

## REQUIREMENTS

Members must not be Chivalrous knights and cannot have a Loyalty (Arthur) or Loyalty (Pendragon) value greater than 9. They must have a Loyalty (Mordred) passion of at least 3.

## BENEFITS

The benefit of belonging to this organization is that members have the support of two powerful knights in case any one complains about their behavior. Mordred and Agravaine work hard to protect their friends in this club.

Members gain a of Hate (Lancelot) passion of 3d6.

## THE YOUNG KNIGHTS

The Young Knights are founded when Arthur is himself a young man. They are landless and leaderless, but volunteer for action with the new king. Their courage in battle and loyalty to the king, even over blood ties, earned them a permanent place at court.

## REQUIREMENTS

Members of the Young Knights choose their new members by popular acclaim. The volunteers must be known to be of good bearing and honesty, and must uphold the virtues of chivalry and other beliefs of the High King.

## BENEFITS

Members are close to the attention of the High King.

## KNIGHTLY EQUIPMENT

The following types of armor have yet to be discovered at the start of the campaign, but may be found later.

**TABLE 6-1B: ARMOR (AUGMENTED)**

| Armor Type*   | Reduction | DEX Modifier |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|
| Partial plate | 14        | -10          |
| Full plate    | 16        | -12          |
| Gothic plate  | 18        | -15          |

## WEAPON SKILLS

As with armor, weapons too improve with time, the two evolving hand in hand. Each of the following weapons derives its own weapon skill. (Thus, a character with Flail skill of 16 does not have skill in the warflail, just as a character with Spear skill is not proficient with the great spear.)

### FLAIL

This skill dictates a character's use of the flail, a wicked weapon having many spiked heads mounted on the ends of chains, which are in turn attached to a handle. The flail is

a one-handed weapon and can be used with a shield. This weapon is sometimes erroneously referred to as a "morning star" because of its spiked heads (but see the entry below for the real morning star).

A flail ignores all protection from an enemy's shield, wrapping around the obstacle to damage its target. It also does an extra 1d6 points of damage to any opponent wearing chainmail armor. However, the weapon is extremely clumsy, and on a natural roll of 1 (the raw number on d20, before any increases due to values over 20) it instead strikes its wielder, doing full damage.

With a normal fumble, the weapon breaks.

### GREAT SWORD

This skill dictates a character's use of the great sword, a two-handed sword that thus cannot be used with a shield. However, due to its great mass, the great sword does an extra 1d6 points of damage against all foes.

On a fumble, the great sword is dropped but not broken, and can be recovered. On a tied resolution roll, the great sword breaks the opponent's weapon unless it is a great sword as well.

### HALBERD

This skill dictates a character's use of the halberd, a heavy, two-handed weapon combining properties of both spear and axe. Due to its great mass, a halberd deals an extra 1d6 points of damage against all foes. Further, its length grants a +5 modifier when used by foot soldiers against horsemen (thus negating the footmen's normal disadvantage); however, it cannot be used from horseback or with a shield.

A fumble indicates that the halberd has broken.

### HAMMER

The Hammer skill affects a character's use of the military hammer, a blunt, beaked weapon particularly useful against plate armor. It is normally used one-handed with a shield. The military hammer deals an additional 1d6 points damage against opponents wearing partial plate, full plate, or gothic plate armor. (Note that the latter two armor types are not available until the last phases of the *Pendragon* campaign).

A fumble indicates that the hammer has broken.

### MORNING STAR

This skill dictates a character's use of the morning star, a long two-handed clubbing weapon ending in a wickedly spiked head. A morning star cannot be used with a shield, but, due to its mass and its deadly spikes, it deals an extra 1d6 points of damage against all targets; further, it deals an *additional* 1d6 against foes wearing chainmail armor.

A fumble means the morning star breaks.

### WARFLAIL

This skill dictates a character's use of the warflail, which is essentially a two-handed flail. A warflail does an extra 1d6 points of damage against all targets, and, like a standard flail, ignores any protection provided by an opponent's shield. The warflail also does an *additional* 1d6 damage to chainmail-armored foes.

However, because it is a clumsy weapon, the warflail is sometimes dangerous to its wielder: On a natural roll of



1 (before any increases due to values over 20), the weapon always strikes its wielder for normal damage.

On a fumble, the warflail breaks.

## DESTRIERS

A destrier is a large, war-trained horse. In this case, the term also indicates a breed, for only the “great horse” is big enough to be a destrier. They are, by definition, the only horses big and strong enough to bear an armored rider and their own armor as well (see “Horse Armor” below).

Destriers are not available in the early phases of the game; even later they remain rare and extremely valuable. Most player knights can hope to receive such priceless beasts only as rewards for valor or loyalty from a grateful lord. Alternatively, they may fight and defeat (possibly in a tourney) a destrier’s owner, who should usually be at least a famous or even extraordinary knight.

### DESTRIER

SIZ 42, DEX 10, STR 38, CON 10; Move 7; Armor 5; Unconscious 13; Major Wound 10; Knockdown 42; Hit Points 52; Healing Rate 5; Damage 8d6.

### HORSE ARMOR

Destriers are strong enough to wear heavy battle caparisons known as “trappers” without penalty to movement. Only a destrier can bear armor beyond the basic caparison.

Both light and heavy chain-mail bardings are also possible for destriers, but these are exceedingly rare, made only in the private smithy of a duke or king, and not for sale. Barding is available in the game only if and when the Gamemaster allows it.

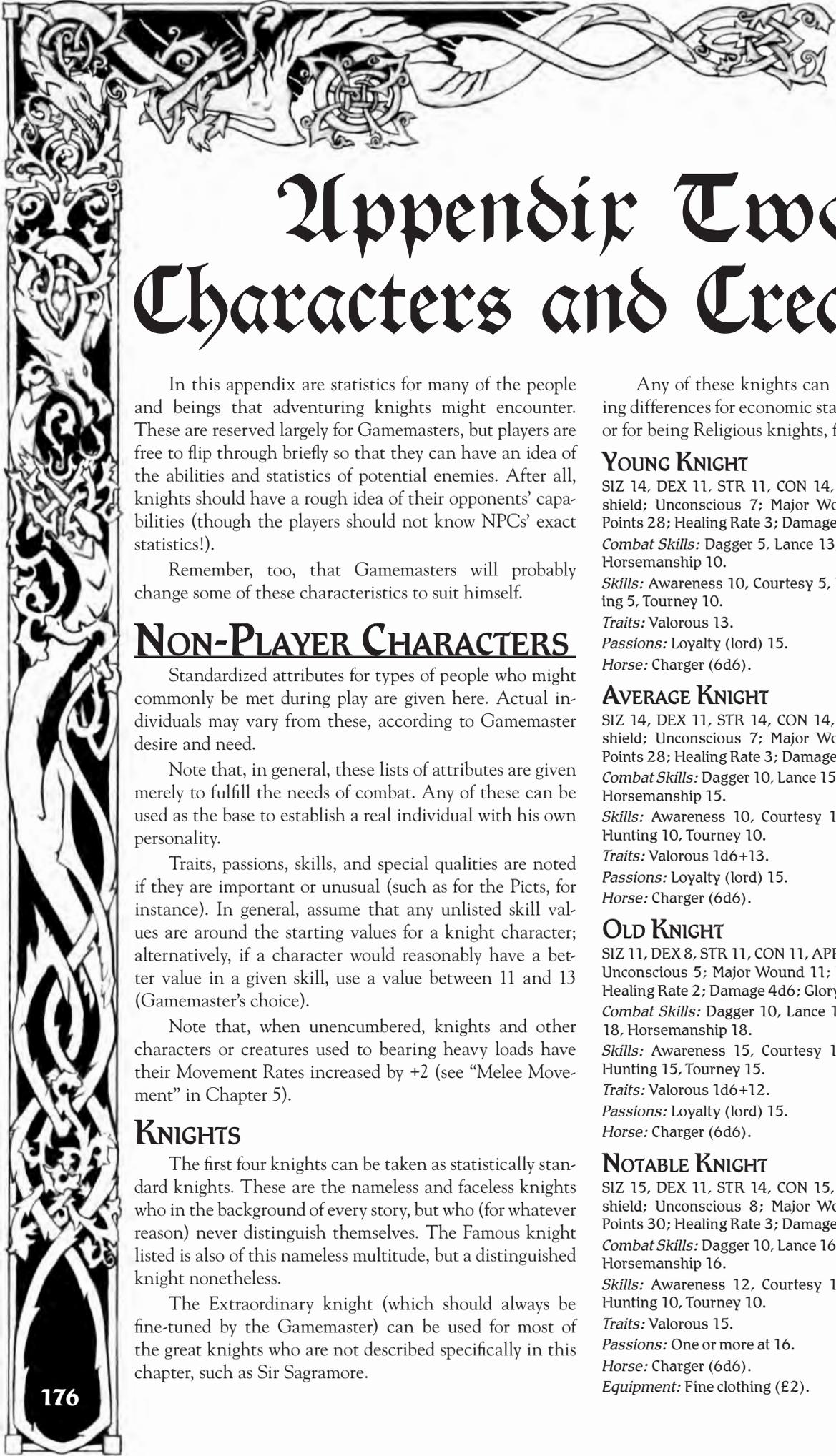
Caparisons, trappers, and barding all work exactly as human armor. Their reduction value stacks with the horse’s usual (natural) armor value, so a charger with a caparison has an armor value of  $5 + 1 = 6$ .

| Armor Type*   | Reduction | Move Modifier |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Caparison     | 1         | —             |
| Trapper       | 5         | —             |
| Light barding | 8         | -1            |
| Heavy barding | 10        | -2            |

### ATTACK-TRAINED HORSES

At some later stage in the campaign, the Gamemaster may allow player knights to use warhorses trained to actually fight (rather than just to bear a warrior in a fight). Destriers and chargers are normally the only animals ever trained in this way, and few steeds with such training are ever for sale.





# Appendix Two: Characters and Creatures

In this appendix are statistics for many of the people and beings that adventuring knights might encounter. These are reserved largely for Gamemasters, but players are free to flip through briefly so that they can have an idea of the abilities and statistics of potential enemies. After all, knights should have a rough idea of their opponents' capabilities (though the players should not know NPCs' exact statistics!).

Remember, too, that Gamemasters will probably change some of these characteristics to suit himself.

## **NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS**

Standardized attributes for types of people who might commonly be met during play are given here. Actual individuals may vary from these, according to Gamemaster desire and need.

Note that, in general, these lists of attributes are given merely to fulfill the needs of combat. Any of these can be used as the base to establish a real individual with his own personality.

Traits, passions, skills, and special qualities are noted if they are important or unusual (such as for the Picts, for instance). In general, assume that any unlisted skill values are around the starting values for a knight character; alternatively, if a character would reasonably have a better value in a given skill, use a value between 11 and 13 (Gamemaster's choice).

Note that, when unencumbered, knights and other characters or creatures used to bearing heavy loads have their Movement Rates increased by +2 (see "Melee Movement" in Chapter 5).

## **KNIGHTS**

The first four knights can be taken as statistically standard knights. These are the nameless and faceless knights who in the background of every story, but who (for whatever reason) never distinguish themselves. The Famous knight listed is also of this nameless multitude, but a distinguished knight nonetheless.

The Extraordinary knight (which should always be fine-tuned by the Gamemaster) can be used for most of the great knights who are not described specifically in this chapter, such as Sir Sagramore.

Any of these knights can be altered slightly by applying differences for economic standing (i.e., Poor, Rich, etc.), or for being Religious knights, for instance.

### **YOUNG KNIGHT**

SIZ 14, DEX 11, STR 11, CON 14, APP 11; Move 2; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 7; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 14; Hit Points 28; Healing Rate 3; Damage 4d6; Glory 1,200.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 5, Lance 13, Spear 6, Sword 15; Battle 10, Horsemanship 10.

*Skills:* Awareness 10, Courtesy 5, First Aid 10, Heraldry 5, Hunting 5, Tourney 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 13.

*Passions:* Loyalty (lord) 15.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

### **AVERAGE KNIGHT**

SIZ 14, DEX 11, STR 14, CON 14, APP 11; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 7; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 14; Hit Points 28; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6; Glory 1,800.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10, Lance 15, Spear 10, Sword 19; Battle 15, Horsemanship 15.

*Skills:* Awareness 10, Courtesy 10, First Aid 10, Heraldry 10, Hunting 10, Tourney 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 1d6+13.

*Passions:* Loyalty (lord) 15.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

### **OLD KNIGHT**

SIZ 11, DEX 8, STR 11, CON 11, APP 8; Move 2; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 5; Major Wound 11; Knockdown 11; Hit Points 22; Healing Rate 2; Damage 4d6; Glory 2,500.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10, Lance 18, Spear 10, Sword 20; Battle 18, Horsemanship 18.

*Skills:* Awareness 15, Courtesy 15, First Aid 15, Heraldry 15, Hunting 15, Tourney 15.

*Traits:* Valorous 1d6+12.

*Passions:* Loyalty (lord) 15.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

### **NOTABLE KNIGHT**

SIZ 15, DEX 11, STR 14, CON 15, APP 11; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 15; Hit Points 30; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6; Glory 3,000.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10, Lance 16, Spear 10, Sword 21; Battle 16, Horsemanship 16.

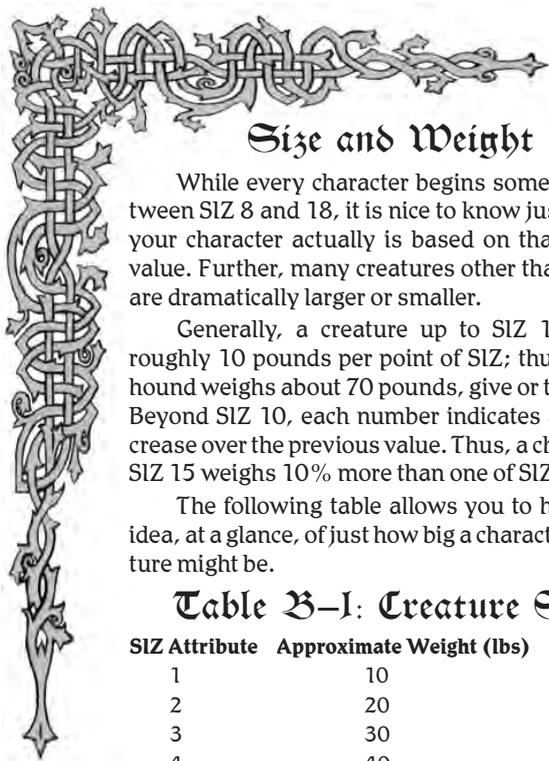
*Skills:* Awareness 12, Courtesy 10, First Aid 10, Heraldry 10, Hunting 10, Tourney 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 15.

*Passions:* One or more at 16.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

*Equipment:* Fine clothing (£2).



## Size and Weight

While every character begins somewhere between SIZ 8 and 18, it is nice to know just how big your character actually is based on that abstract value. Further, many creatures other than knights are dramatically larger or smaller.

Generally, a creature up to SIZ 10 weighs roughly 10 pounds per point of SIZ; thus, a SIZ 7 hound weighs about 70 pounds, give or take a few. Beyond SIZ 10, each number indicates a 10% increase over the previous value. Thus, a character of SIZ 15 weighs 10% more than one of SIZ 14.

The following table allows you to have some idea, at a glance, of just how big a character or creature might be.

**Table B-1: Creature Size**

| SIZ Attribute | Approximate Weight (lbs) |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1             | 10                       |
| 2             | 20                       |
| 3             | 30                       |
| 4             | 40                       |
| 5             | 50                       |
| 6             | 60                       |
| 7             | 70                       |
| 8             | 80                       |
| 9             | 90                       |
| 10            | 100                      |
| 11            | 111                      |
| 12            | 122                      |
| 13            | 134                      |
| 14            | 147                      |
| 15            | 162                      |
| 16            | 178                      |
| 17            | 196                      |
| 18            | 216                      |
| 19            | 238                      |
| 20            | 262                      |
| 21            | 288                      |
| 22            | 317                      |
| 23            | 349                      |
| 24            | 384                      |
| 25            | 422                      |
| 26            | 464                      |
| 27            | 510                      |
| 28            | 561                      |
| 29            | 617                      |
| 30            | 679                      |
| 31            | 747                      |
| 32            | 822                      |
| 33            | 904                      |
| 34            | 994                      |
| 35            | 1093                     |
| 40            | 1760                     |
| 45            | 2834                     |
| 50            | 4566                     |
| 55            | 7353                     |
| 60            | 11,842                   |
| 70            | 30,715                   |
| 80            | 79,667                   |
| 90            | 206,635                  |
| 100           | 535,960                  |

## FAMOUS KNIGHT

SIZ 16, DEX 13, STR 14, CON 15, APP 13; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 16; Hit Points 31; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6; Glory 6,000.

*Combat Skills:* Axe 15, Dagger 10, Lance 18, Spear 10, Sword 22; Battle 18, Horsemanship 18.

*Skills:* Awareness 13, Courtesy 13, First Aid 13, Heraldry 13, Hunting 13, Tourney 13.

*Traits:* Valorous 16.

*Passions:* One or more at 16.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

*Equipment:* Rich clothing (£4).

## EXTRAORDINARY KNIGHT

SIZ 17, DEX 16, STR 16, CON 16, APP 16; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 16; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 33; Healing Rate 3; Damage 6d6; Glory 9,000.

*Combat Skills:* Axe 18, Dagger 10, Lance 21, Mace 18, Spear 18, Sword 23; Battle 18, Horsemanship 20.

*Skills:* Awareness 16, Courtesy 16, First Aid 16, Heraldry 16, Hunting 16, Tourney 16, all other knightly skills at 5 or more.

*Traits:* Valorous 18, Prudent 16.

*Passions:* One or more at 16.

*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

*Equipment:* Noble clothing (£8).

## FIGHTING MEN

As with knights, these characters can be altered easily just by changing a few numbers and adding some more personality traits.

Note that a +1 or +2 bonus is already figured into Movement Rates for any non-knight character not wearing chainmail armor.

## ARCHER

SIZ 9, DEX 10, STR 10, CON 15, APP 10; Move 4; Armor 2; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 9; Hit Points 24; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bow 18 (3d6), Sword 8.

*Skills:* Awareness 12, Hunting 8.

*Traits:* Valorous 10.

## BANDIT

SIZ 12, DEX 10, STR 12, CON 12, APP 8; Move 4; Armor 4; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 12; Knockdown 12; Hit Points 24; Healing Rate 2; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bow 8 (3d6), Dagger 8, Great Spear 8.

*Skills:* Awareness 18, Hunting 16.

*Traits:* Cruel 13, Valorous 8, Suspicious 16.

*Passions:* Hate (knights) 12.

## FOOT SOLDIER

SIZ 10, DEX 10, STR 10, CON 13, APP 10; Move 3; Armor 6 + shield; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 13; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 23; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 6, Spear 10, Sword 10.

*Skills:* Awareness 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 12.

## PICT WARRIOR

SIZ 8, DEX 14, STR 11, CON 11, APP 7; Move 4; Armor 3; Unconscious 5; Major Wound 11; Knockdown 8; Hit Points 19; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Great Axe 15 (+1d6, +2d6 vs. shield), Great Spear 14, Javelin 18.

*Skills:* Awareness 18, First Aid 15, Hunting 18, Faerie Lore 15.

*Traits:* Valorous 16.





*Passions:* Honor 12; Love (Goddess) 12.

*Special:* Pict warriors suffer only a -5 modifier to combat skills (not -10) when fighting in darkness. They may make an Awareness roll each round during combat (this is an exception to the "one action per round" rule) to reduce this penalty to 0, since they normally move about at night.

\* Picts usually have magical tattoos on their bodies that protect as armor.

### ROYAL GUARDSMAN

SIZ 13, DEX 13, STR 13, CON 15, APP 10; Move 3; Armor 10; Unconscious 7; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 13; Hit Points 28; Healing Rate 3; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Crossbow 15 (Med. 1d6+13), Dagger 8, Great Spear 17, Sword 13.

*Skills:* Awareness 15.

*Traits:* Valorous 15.

*Passions:* Loyalty (lord) 16.

### SAXON BERSERKER

This fellow regularly uses the berserk combat option (see "Optional Combat Tactics" in Chapter 6).

SIZ 17, DEX 13, STR 17, CON 18, APP 6; Move 3; Armor 10; Unconscious 9; Major Wound 18; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 35; Healing Rate 4; Damage 6d6+1d6\*.

*Combat Skills:* Great Axe 19 (+1d6, +2d6 vs. shield), Javelin 20.

*Skills:* Awareness 5, Boating 3, Swimming 4.

*Traits:* Generous 16, Valorous 22, Proud 16, Worldly 16, Reckless 16, Indulgent 16.

*Passions:* Honor 6; Love (Wotan) 16.

\* Bonus from following Wotanic virtues.

### SAXON CHIEFTAIN

SIZ 17, DEX 10, STR 14, CON 14, APP 12; Move 2; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 31; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6+1d6\*.

*Combat Skills:* Axe 21, Javelin 17, Spear 20; Battle 15.

*Skills:* Awareness 15, Boating 18, Swimming 12.

*Traits:* Generous 16, Valorous 17, Proud 16, Worldly 16, Reckless 16, Indulgent 16.

*Passions:* Honor 15.

\* Bonus from following Wotanic virtues.

### SAXON WARRIOR

SIZ 16, DEX 8, STR 14, CON 14, APP 11; Move 3; Armor 6 + shield; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 16; Hit Points 30; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6.

*Combat Skills:* Axe 14, Javelin 13, Spear 13.

*Skills:* Awareness 15, Boating 12, Swimming 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 12.

*Passions:* Honor 10.

### SERGEANT

SIZ 13, DEX 10, STR 13, CON 15, APP 10; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 7; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 13; Hit Points 28; Healing Rate 3; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Lance 13, Sword 13.

*Skills:* Awareness 10.

*Traits:* Valorous 14.

*Horse:* Poor charger (5d6).

### SERGEANT, EXPERIENCED

SIZ 13, DEX 10, STR 13, CON 15, APP 10; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 7; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 13; Hit Points 28; Healing Rate 3; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Lance 18, Sword 19.  
*Skills:* Awareness 15.  
*Traits:* Valorous 16.  
*Horse:* Charger (6d6).

## ORDINARY FOLK

These folk are generally non-combatant, but stats are included here for the sake of completeness.

### CHRISTIAN MONK

SIZ 10, DEX 10, STR 10, CON 13, APP 10; Move 4; Armor 1; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 13; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 29\*; Healing Rate 3; Damage 3d6.  
*Skills:* Chirurgery 18, First Aid 18, Read [Latin] 6, Religion [Christian] 18, Stewardship 12.  
*Traits:* Chaste 16, Forgiving 16, Merciful 15, Modest 17, Pious 16, Temperate 17, Valorous 5.  
*Passions:* Love (God) 17.  
*Horse:* Charger (6d6).  
*Possessions:* Bible, simple silver crucifix, bandages, simple travel gear.  
\* Bonus of +6 hit points from following Christian virtues.

### FARMER

SIZ 8, DEX 9, STR 12, CON 10, APP 8; Move 4; Armor 1; Unconscious 5; Major Wound 10; Knockdown 8; Hit Points 18; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.  
*Skills:* Faerie Lore 5, First Aid 10, Folklore 12, Hunting 2, Industry 10, Stewardship 8.  
*Combat Skills:* Mace 8 (using club, -1d6).  
*Traits:* Valorous 5.

### MERCHANT, RICH

SIZ 11, DEX 10, STR 10, CON 14, APP 8; Move 4; Armor 2; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 11; Hit Points 25; Healing Rate 2; Damage 4d6.  
*Skills:* Awareness 15, First Aid 10, Folklore 16, Hunting 2, Orate 12, Stewardship 8.  
*Combat Skills:* Sword 8.  
*Traits:* Valorous 6.  
*Horse:* Rouncy.  
*Possessions:* Rich clothing (£2), 3d20 d.

### VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

SIZ 11, DEX 13, STR 17, CON 14, APP 7; Move 5; Armor 1; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 11; Hit Points 25; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6.  
*Skills:* Awareness 8, Faerie Lore 8, First Aid 10, Folklore 12, Industry 15.  
*Combat Skills:* Mace 13 (using hammer, no +1d6 vs. chainmail).  
*Traits:* Valorous 12.

## WOMEN

Women characters, of course, are not meant for combat, so they require attention to personality rather than hit points and attack skills. These stats are nonetheless provided as standards, from which interesting characters can be developed.

### COMMON MAIDSERVANT

SIZ 10, DEX 13, STR 9, CON 13, APP 12; Move 4; Armor 1; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 13; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 23; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.  
*Skills:* Awareness 10, Chirurgery 10, Courtesy 3, First Aid 10, Folklore 13, Industry 10.  
*Combat Skills:* Dagger 6 (-1d6).  
*Traits:* Chaste 10, Valorous 3.

### DAMOSEL

SIZ 10, DEX 11, STR 9, CON 14, APP 15; Move 4; Armor 2; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 24; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6; Glory 850.  
*Skills:* Awareness 10, Chirurgery 17, Courtesy 16, Dance 12, Fashion 14, First Aid 16, Industry 16, Stewardship 15.  
*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10 (-1d6); Battle 10.  
*Traits:* Chaste 17, Valorous 8.  
*Passions:* Honor 17, Hospitality 16.

### LADY

SIZ 10, DEX 13, STR 10, CON 15, APP 15; Move 4; Armor 2; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 25; Healing Rate 3; Damage 3d6; Glory 250.  
*Skills:* Awareness 10, Chirurgery 17, Courtesy 14, Dance 12, Fashion 13, First Aid 16, Industry 15, Stewardship 12.  
*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10 (-1d6); Battle 10.  
*Traits:* Chaste 13, Valorous 4.

### MAID-IN-WAITING

SIZ 10, DEX 14, STR 8, CON 13, APP 14; Move 4; Armor 1; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 13; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 23; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.  
*Skills:* Awareness 8, Chirurgery 9, Courtesy 8, Dance 9, Fashion 10, First Aid 12, Industry 13, Stewardship 7.  
*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10 (-1d6); Battle 3.  
*Traits:* Chaste 13, Valorous 4.

## CREATURES AND BEASTS

Listed from this point forward are many of the various creatures and monsters that populate the world of *Pen- dragon*. This information is designed for Gamemasters, but players may flip through to get some idea of the relative power of creatures they might well face — most knights have heard enough stories and legends of dragons, for instance, to know whether or not pursuing one is a wise course (regardless of what their valor and honor would have them do).

Note that creatures may have special abilities or qualities that are simply unavailable to human characters. For example, many creatures have “natural armor” due to thick hides or scales that protects just as armor but does not encumber.

**Movement Rate:** Generally, for quadrupeds, Movement Rate is calculated as  $(STR+DEX)/5$ , but some creatures may have inherent modifiers to this base. Creatures with other means of locomotion, such as wings, typically use some other formula to calculate their Movement Rates.

**Size and Leverage:** The Damage statistic for most creatures is calculated differently from that of humans, for beasts cannot always bring their full strength and mass to bear in combat the way that a knight can with a steel weapon. As a result, many monsters and beasts have a Damage statistic significantly less than what would be determined using the standard formula of  $Damage\ dice = (SIZ+STR)/6$ .

## THE STABLES

The training that a horse receives is generally more important than its breed or type, but size and strength are still important. A large pony might be trained for combat, for instance, but most are too small to be of significant value in such a situation. Custom determines what a mount is





trained for; this section assumes that ordinary custom has been followed.

## COMBAT TRAINING

Horses must be trained properly for combat if the rider is to concentrate fully on his task. All chargers, coursers, and rouncys are assumed to have been battle trained, as reflected in their price and usage. Because they have this training, no extra rolls must be made in a fight, as with riding horses.

Horses that are *not* combat trained are difficult to handle during the press and panic of a bloody fight. In combat, riders of insufficiently trained horses must attempt a Horsemanship roll to control their panicky steed; this roll occurs before any other actions every combat round (this is an exception to the “one action per round” rule), and its results are determined using the following chart.

| Horsemanship Roll | Effect   |
|-------------------|--|
| Critical success  | The rider need not make another Horsemanship roll to control the horse for the rest of this fight.                                     |
| Success           | The character may fight this round, as normal.   |
| Failure           | The character cannot fight this round, but can still try to evade attacks with another Horsemanship roll (see “Evasion” in Chapter 6). |
| Fumble            | The horse breaks control and bolts out of battle. It runs until another Horsemanship roll is made to rein it in.                       |

## HUNTING HORSES

Some horses, especially coursers, are trained for the hunt. When required to make a Horsemanship roll while hunting, or otherwise chasing something through the woods, add a +5 modifier to your skill while riding a trained hunting steed.

## RUINING HORSES

Horses are sturdy and immensely strong, yet in many ways quite fragile. A horse can be permanently ruined for combat work and hard labor if they are broken. A horse is considered “ruined” or “broken” if it takes a Major Wound or if it fumbles a CON roll during a forced march or other extended exertion.

A broken horse suffers has its STR and CON each reduced by 2 and its Movement Rate by 1. Such a beast is classified as a “nag,” capable of carrying goods but naught else.

**Nag:** Any type of horse that has been broken or grown too old to serve its function is a nag. Thus attributes can range widely, but all are uninspired and slow.

## MAGICAL HORSES

Magical horses are extraordinary, but there is substantial precedent for them in Arthurian literature. Magical horses usually have magical armor or Movement Rate values, but other game effects are possible.

To win a magical horse requires a heroic effort or deed, as determined by the Gamemaster. They may be gained only from adventures, never purchased. Possibly the trust of the steed must be established, if it is to accept its position in your stable. In other cases, mastery must be won, likely through a grueling series of Horsemanship rolls or other efforts.

## MOUNT STATISTICS

Note that steeds, like the many generic characters shown earlier in this appendix, can be individualized quite easily just by altering their statistics slightly, making a “poor charger” or a “swift courser,” for example.

### CARTHORSE

SIZ 15, DEX 10, STR 15, CON 10; Move 4; Armor 3; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 10; Knockdown 15; Hit Points 25; Healing Rate 3; Damage 2d6.

### CHARGER

This is a large, heavy, battle-trained steed, the standard knight’s warhorse. Most chargers are hybrids of native British ponies with the great horse or other large foreign breeds.

SIZ 34, DEX 17, STR 30, CON 12; Move 8; Armor 5; Unconscious 12; Major Wound 12; Knockdown 34; Hit Points 46; Healing Rate 4; Damage 6d6.

### COURSER

The courser is a large horse bred for speed, often used as a knight’s riding animal. Coursers are usually trained either for battle or for the hunt (and sometimes both).

SIZ 30, DEX 25, STR 24, CON 15; Move 9; Armor 5; Unconscious 11; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 30; Hit Points 45; Healing Rate 4; Damage 5d6.

### DONKEY

Donkeys came to Britain with the Roman invasion in 43 A.D.; since then, they have been used extensively both in the fields and as pack animals.

SIZ 15, DEX 15, STR 20, CON 15; Move 5; Armor 3; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 15; Hit Points 30; Healing Rate 4; Damage 4d6.

### MULE

A mule is the offspring of a male donkey (or jack) and a female horse (mare). They are known for their stubbornness, their great sense of balance, and their very hard, durable hooves, which rarely crack or split.

SIZ 25, DEX 8, STR 25, CON 18; Move 6; Armor 4; Unconscious 11; Major Wound 18; Knockdown 25; Hit Points 43; Healing Rate 4; Damage 6d6.

### PALFREY

The palfrey makes an excellent riding horse. Some are noted for their gentleness and easy handling, making them favored for women’s mounts. These gentle beasts are sometimes classified as amblers, trotters, or pacers.

Palfreys, by definition, are not normally battle-trained.

SIZ 26, DEX 10, STR 16, CON 8; Move 6; Armor 3; Unconscious 9; Major Wound 8; Knockdown 26; Hit Points 34; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.

### ROUNCY

The rouncy is the standard riding horse (though normally combat-trained as well, since they are a *knight’s* riding steed), relatively slow and small, yet comfortable and hardy.

SIZ 26, DEX 10, STR 18, CON 14; Move 6; Armor 4; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 14; Knockdown 26; Hit Points 40; Healing Rate 3; Damage 4d6.

## SUMPTER

Use these stats for either pack horse or pony.  
SIZ 22, DEX 12, STR 15, CON 16; Move 5; Armor 3; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 16; Knockdown 22; Hit Points 38; Healing Rate 3; Damage 3d6.

## NATURAL BEASTS

Characters might meet any number of ferocious creatures while hunting or on an adventure. The statistics for some of the most common, whether domesticated or wild, are given herein.

Note the following attributes unique to certain wild creatures. If any of these attributes is not listed for a particular creature, assume that its value is 0.

**Glory Won:** This is the amount of Glory gained by slaying the creature (if it has attributes as listed; as usual, increase the value if the creature's stats are significantly increased).

### AVOIDANCE

The Avoidance skill, available only to beasts and monsters, indicates how adept the animal is at hiding and escaping from predators.

During each segment of a hunt, the quarry makes an opposed Avoidance roll against a character's Hunting skill (or a predator's own Avoidance skill).

Once a hunter catches up to the prey, use the following formula to see how close the hunter (and his retinue) can get to the quarry for the first melee round of combat:

*1d6 + the quarry's Avoidance value – the pursuer's Hunting value*

**Surprise Attack:** Once hunter(s) have caught up to the quarry, the first character on the scene may make one free attack, as long as he can close to melee distance (1 yard) or has a missile weapon with adequate range; alternately, he can choose to stay near the creature until reinforcements arrive to attack it in normal melee.

If more than one character arrives on the same segment, any character with Glory significantly higher than the others should be allowed the first attack. Otherwise, whoever has the highest Movement Rate (or, if tied, DEX score) gets the first attack.

The surprise attack is an opposed roll pitting the hunter's weapon skill roll against the prey's Avoidance roll. Check the result on the table below.

**TABLE B-2: SURPRISE ATTACK VS. AVOIDANCE**

| Attack Result    | Effect   |
|------------------|--|
| Critical success | Hunter deals double damage. (Modify base damage by weapon type, if applicable.) In the first melee round, the quarry, if it is still conscious, seeks to attack the nearest hunter it perceives.   |
| Success          | Hunter deals normal damage. (Modify base damage by weapon type, if applicable.) In the first melee round, the quarry seeks to attack the nearest hunter unless it has taken a Major Wound or worse, in which case it tries to avoid again. |
| Partial success  | The quarry escapes. Go back to regular pursuit, with a +5 modifier on further Hunting rolls.   |

**Failure** The quarry escapes. Go back to regular pursuit, with a –5 modifier on further Hunting rolls.

**Fumble** The quarry escapes, and the hunter loses the trail. Go back to the first phase of the pursuit, with a –5 modifier on further Hunting rolls.

See the Introductory Scenario in Appendix 3 for a sample hunt, which explains the notion of “segments” and “pursuit” during a hunt.

**The Rush:** If the quarry lives after a surprise attack, as many as three characters with melee weapons (plus any number of ranged attackers) may attempt another attack, if possible, while the beast tries to either escape or close with its attackers. The prey still uses its Avoidance value to oppose attacks during the rush, rather than an opposed combat roll. If several people attack, the beast must divide its Avoidance value among them just as it would its combat skill in normal combat (see “Multiple Attackers” in Chapter 6).

**Normal Combat:** If the creature survives the rush and attacks, the hunt enters normal melee combat at this point. Otherwise, if the creature fled, the hunt resumes as a pursuit.

## DISCRETION AND VALOR

Whenever a character wishes to attack a fierce beast, he might be required make a successful Valorous roll upon first sighting the creature. (What constitutes “fierce” and thus requires a roll is left to each Gamemaster's discretion. In general, magical beasts always require a Valorous roll.) This modifier is a survival factor for young player knights — creatures too large or too powerful to kill should be avoided or placated, not attacked. Thus, a Prudent modifier is also given where appropriate; this functions just as the Valorous modifier, but with respect to Prudent rolls.

Failure on a Valorous roll indicates a character's reluctance to close with the beast for 1 round (another roll may be attempted each round), while a fumble indicates that the character flees in terror for 1d6 rounds at least before he returns to his senses. A character who succeeds on a Valorous roll but who doesn't wish to attack a particularly fierce creature (such as a dragon or giant whom he has no real chance of defeating) may then make a Prudent roll to avoid the combat, usually without dishonor.

Note that groups of knights confronting a single monster have a better chance of defeating it, so any Valorous and Prudent modifiers should be divided equally among them. Glory, likewise, is divided among the victors.

**Prudent Modifier:** This modifier applies to any Prudent roll a character might make in order to attack the creature in question; generally, only monsters (and not natural beasts) have Prudent modifiers.

**Valorous Modifier:** Many monsters and some natural beasts impose inherent modifiers to the Valorous roll. This modifier applies to any Valorous roll a character might make in order to attack the creature in question; if a creature has a modifier, then a character must *always* make a Valorous roll before attacking it.

Of course, other modifiers for the situation might also be applied; for example, if a helpless maiden is in imminent danger from a most terrifying beast, a positive modifier to the knight's Valorous roll might nonetheless be appropriate.



## Allegorical Beasts

The medieval world was one of myth and allegory, where anything might have hidden meanings. These interpretations, while apparently naïve and foolish today, were meaningful to the folk of that time.

As a result, some natural creatures in *Pendragon* can provoke a significant emotional response just by a character's observing their nature. Such events may occur often or rarely, depending on the Gamemaster's sense of humor and the manner of portrayal of these medieval truths.

Gamemasters can provide opportunities for a trait or passion check with these sightings. Simply ask for an Awareness roll first, report that this or that creature (and its behavior) attracts the character's attention; let those who succeed point out the strange animal if they wish.

If a player notices the correct trait being displayed, give the character a check. Everyone else, or everyone if no one notices, can then roll on the same trait, obtaining a check if they succeed and if they fail making a roll for the opposite trait. (Thus, they may get a check for the opposite effect, because they failed to recognize the virtue being illustrated.) If both rolls fail, no checks are gained.

No statistics are given for these allegorical creatures here because such numbers are meaningless in most cases. However, a couple of them have statistics elsewhere in this appendix or in later scenarios.

**Beaver:** This creature is hunted for its testicles, which make a very powerful medicine. When hunters close in upon it, the beaver castrates itself and flings the organs to the hunter, thereby escaping with its life. Observers of this event may receive a check to the Cowardly trait.

**Bee:** The bee is industrious and civil to all its fellows, a paragon of sociability. It works all day not for itself but for the good of the community, and has such a sense of justice that, when it commits felony against the community, it stings itself to death. When observed over time, a bee may impart a chance to make rolls on both Energetic and Just.

**Coot:** This bird is often found in company of eagles, with nests lower down the cliff face. Coots adopt any orphan or rejected eagle that is cast down from its home nest. The coots raise the eagle like their own to healthy adulthood. Observing this fact yields a Generous check.

**Dog:** No creature is more loyal than a dog, which follows its master everywhere, willingly laying down its life for him if necessary. Furthermore, dogs are unfailingly trusting, obeying commands without hesitation. Observing such behavior can warrant a Loyalty (lord) and/or a Trusting check.

**Eagle:** These imperial mothers of the sky test their offspring by holding the nestlings to stare at the

sun. If they flinch, the young are rejected as unworthy and ejected from the nest. The parent does this out of a sense of pure justice, which is always blind, and observers gain a Just check for the observation.

**Elephant:** Elephants never mate sexually. When they wish to conceive, a pair of them find a mandrake tree and feed each other its fruits. As a result, the female is impregnated. Viewing this and trying to understand, knights may gain a Chaste check.

**Hawk:** These sleek raptors often withhold food from their fledglings and are quick to kick them out of the nest to fend for themselves. They do this because it makes their young very tough. Still, anyone who observes this receives a Cruelty check.

**He-Goat:** The male goat is notoriously carnal, continuously seeking intercourse with its mates. When such behavior is noted allegorically, the observers may gain a Lustful check.

**Hoopoe:** The hoopoe bird can no longer fly when it grows old, yet its offspring care for it, feeding and cleaning it until it finally dies of old age. When this is observed, knights can attempt to make a Love (family) roll.

**Lynx:** The lynx is a type of spotted wolf whose urine hardens in seven days to form a precious stone called a *carbuncle*. Lynxes know this, so they bury their urine as deeply as possible to prevent humans from finding and using the stones as ornaments. Observers receive a Selfish check if they see this.

**Partridge:** The partridge is deceitful because it steals eggs from other birds and tries to raise them. However, fledglings of the other species are rarely convinced; when they hear the cries of their natural parents, they try to return to them. Observing this, knights gain a Deceitful check.

**Peacock:** The peacock is incredibly vain, considering itself the most beautiful of creatures. When it awakes, it squawks because it fears for a moment that its beauty has faded. It spreads its tail when observed, simply to show off. Observers of this bird may gain a Proud check.

**Pelican:** These water birds annually slay their young in righteous anger; then, three days later, they pierce their own breasts until blood flows out over the chicks, which then return to life. If player knights see this, they may receive a Piety check.

**Stork:** Storks are family-oriented birds. They are monogamous and always return to the same nests. The parents incubate the nest so intently that they lose feathers, and afterwards are cared for by their young for a length of time equal to their upbringing. Continued observation of this behavior, perhaps constantly over a year, or intermittently over many years, can allow characters a Love (family) check.



## BEAR

This smallish variety of brown bear is the only bruin native to Britain. It normally tries to avoid humans, but can be deadly if trapped or cornered. A popular entertainment is to pit a bull versus a captured bear in a pit or arena. When combating a mounted foe, a bear usually attacks the rider first.

Glory Won 10; SIZ 25, DEX 10, STR 25, CON 18; Move 8; Armor 6; Unconscious 11; Major Wound 18; Knockdown 25; Hit Points 43; Healing Rate 4; Damage 3d6 (maul)\*.

*Combat Skills:* Claws 13.

*Skills:* Avoidance 7.

*Ferocity:* A bear attacks normally for 1 full round after another creature would be incapacitated (i.e., even after its current hit points reach or drop below its Unconscious threshold, or after it receives a Major Wound, for example).

\* *Maul:* A bear may attack only one target per round, using its Claws value of 13. If the bear wins the melee round, however, it makes two separate 3d6 damage rolls instead of a single damage roll, simulating the bear's mauling attacks. Damage inflicted by these two damage totals is treated as two separate wounds.

## BOAR

The wild boar is a cunning and savage creature, widely respected for its deadliness when cornered. As a species, boars are quite pugnacious, and old solitary boars are particularly dangerous.

When combating a mounted foe, a boar always attacks the horse first since he cannot reach higher.

Glory Won 15; SIZ 20, DEX 15, STR 30, CON 25; Move 8; Armor 5; Unconscious 11; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 20; Hit Points 45; Healing Rate 6; Damage 6d6.

*Combat Skills:* Tusks 18.

*Skills:* Avoidance 10.

*Ferocity:* A boar attacks normally for 1 round after taking damage that would incapacitate most other creatures (i.e., even after its current hit points reach or drop below its Unconscious threshold, or after it receives a Major Wound, for example).

## BULL

The bull, wild or domestic, can be extremely fierce, especially when defending its herd or provoked to fight in an arena.

Glory Won 10; SIZ 30, DEX 10, STR 30, CON 20; Move 8; Armor 6; Unconscious 13; Major Wound 20; Knockdown 30; Hit Points 50; Healing Rate 5; Damage 6d6.

*Combat Skills:* Gore 10, Trample 18 (prone foes only).

*Skills:* Avoidance 5.

*Valorous Modifier:* +2.

*Charge:* A bull may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a Gore attack as part of a single action. If it does move before attacking, it gains a +5 modifier on its Gore roll, and, if the attack is successful, the bull deals +2d6 points of damage.

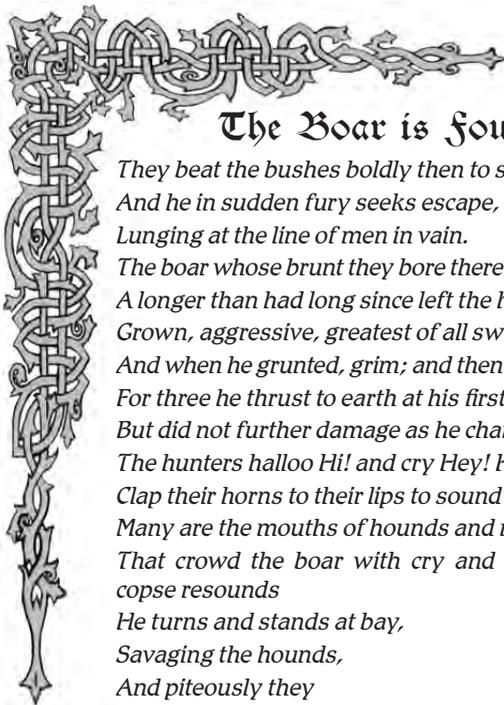
## DEER

A stag normally tries to elude foes, but when cornered or exhausted it fights to the death.

### DEER, FALLOW

The fallow deer is large, its reddish coat covered with white spots. Its large antlers are similar to those of the much larger American moose.

Glory Won 1; SIZ 17, DEX 20, STR 15, CON 15; Move 9; Armor 3; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 32; Healing Rate 3; Damage 3d6.



## The Boar is Found

*They beat the bushes boldly then to start him,*

*And he in sudden fury seeks escape,*

*Lunging at the line of men in vain.*

*The boar whose brunt they bore there was a beauty,*

*A longer than had long since left the herd,*

*Grown, aggressive, greatest of all swine,*

*And when he grunted, grim; and then men groaned,*

*For three he thrust to earth at his first thrust*

*But did not further damage as he charged.*

*The hunters halloo Hi! and cry Hey! Hey!*

*Clap their horns to their lips to sound recall.*

*Many are the mouths of hounds and men*

*That crowd the boar with cry and roar until the*  
*copse resounds*

*He turns and stands at bay,*

*Savaging the hounds,*

*And piteously they*

*Run howling at their wounds.*

—Gawaine and the Green Knight



*Combat Skills:* Gore 11, Hoof 10.

*Skills:* Avoidance 18.

*Valorous Modifier:* +10.

*Charge:* A fallow deer may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a Gore attack as part of a single action. If it does move before attacking, it gains a +3 modifier on its Gore roll, and, if the attack is successful, deals +1d6 points of damage.

## DEER, RED

The red deer is a large woodland deer similar to the American elk. A stag normally tries to elude foes, but when cornered or exhausted it fights to the death.

Glory Won 5; SIZ 20, DEX 25, STR 25, CON 20; Move 9; Armor 4; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 20; Knockdown 20; Hit Points 40; Healing Rate 5; Damage 5d6.

*Combat Skills:* Gore 15, Hoof 15.

*Skills:* Avoidance 15.

*Valorous Modifier:* +10.

*Charge:* A red deer may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a Gore attack as part of a single action. If it does move before attacking, it gains a +3 modifier on its Gore roll, and, if the attack is successful, deals +2d6 points of damage.

## DEER, ROE

This is a tiny deer, unworthy of being hunted by a knight. It is included only because the roe buck is important in several myths and fairytales, and thus might appear in adventures. It is so small that it needs no statistics — a single blow should kill one, and it has no attacks that might hurt a grown knight.

*Skills:* Avoidance 19.

## DOG

Virtually every household has some type of mutt that barks at strangers and feeds on scraps. Dog breeds are widely varied, and almost all of them are either “brachets” or “gaze hounds”: The first hunts by scent, the second by sight. A pack of hunting hounds usually includes some of each.



Dogs, kept in kennels, are almost as valued as horses; they are vital to a successful hunt, to such an extent that a -5 modifier (or greater) should be applied to Hunting rolls if dogs are not used.

### DOG, COMMON

Most kinds of dogs, including typical hunting dogs, are included in these statistics.

SIZ 4, DEX 25, STR 12, CON 12; Move 8; Armor 1; Unconscious 4; Major Wound 12; Knockdown 4; Hit Points 16; Healing Rate 2; Damage 2d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 8 (-1d6 vs. metal armor).

### DOG, EXCEPTIONAL

Large hounds and mastiffs, very rare and valuable, have better attributes than the typical dog; an example of such an extraordinary dog is the Irish wolfhound, a rare, very valuable domestic dog. It is more common in Ireland, and sometimes given as a prize in Britain.

SIZ 12, DEX 20, STR 13, CON 12; Move 7; Armor 2; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 12; Knockdown 12; Hit Points 24; Healing Rate 3; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 15 (-1d6 vs. metal armor).

### HAWK

All kinds of falcons, hawks, and other raptors can use the following statistics. The “mews” is a special building where falcons and hawks are kept.

SIZ 1, DEX 20, STR 5, CON 5; Move 20; Armor -; Unconscious 2; Major Wound 5; Knockdown 1; Hit Points 6; Healing Rate 2; Damage 1d6.

*Combat Skills:* Claws 12.

## WOLF

Wolves generally travel and hunt in packs. They rarely attack humans under normal circumstances, but are a menace to livestock.

Glory Won 5; SIZ 5, DEX 22, STR 12, CON 12; Move 8; Armor 2; Unconscious 4; Major Wound 12; Knockdown 5; Hit Points 17; Healing Rate 2; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 20 (-1d6 vs. metal armor).

*Skills:* Avoidance 10.

## MONSTERS AND FABULOUS BEASTS

Magical creatures dangerous to a knight are rare, and fortunately so. As a group, such creatures are commonly referred to as “monsters.” Many have special qualities and attributes such as unusual or extra attacks, which must be considered carefully during combat.

Monsters may flee or surrender if approached by strong contingents of armed knights. The duty of a knight is generally to rid the world of such “menaces,” so killing a monster is usually necessary to gain the Glory for its defeat. However, at the Gamemaster’s option, a tenth of normal Glory (or more, based on the circumstances) can be gained for a partial victory over a monster.

### DRAGON

The dragons of legendary Britain are each unique; most are quite cunning, if not erudite. Often, a particular





dragon has a specific weakness or can be slain by only one specific means.

Individual dragons are dealt with in later supplements, but no Arthurian book is complete without one, so below is detailed is a *small*, “common” dragon, provided as an example to keep player knights from thinking they can safely combat these magnificent, terrible creatures.

See also Wyrms and Wyvern.

Glory Won 1,000; SIZ 80, DEX 40, STR 80, CON 50; Move 16 (flying); Armor 15; Unconscious 33; Major Wound 50; Knockdown 80; Hit Points 130; Healing Rate 14; Damage 16d6.

*Combat Skills:* Claws 17\*, Bite 15†.

*Skills:* Avoidance 5.

*Prudent Modifier:* +10. *Valorous Modifier:* -15.

*Flying Attack:* A dragon cannot hover, although it may fly past an opponent, making a single claw or bite attack as it passes. In this way it may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a single attack as part of its action. A dragon attacking in this way imposes a -15 modifier to the attack roll of any foe it attacks that around.

\* *Claws:* A dragon on the ground may make two separate claw attacks per round, each using its Claws value of 17; these attacks may both be directed at one opponent, or at two different ones. A character attacked by both must defend separately against the two attacks, as if he were attacked by two different opponents (see “Multiple Opponents” in Chapter 6). Each claw deals damage as normal.

† *Bite:* A dragon’s bite attack is treated as a grapple attack (see “Grappling” in Chapter 6) in addition to dealing damage normally. A dragon that achieves a pin while grappling in this way has swallowed any creature with a SIZ equal to half the dragon’s own or less. The hapless foe is slain and devoured.

## FAERIE KNIGHT

A Faerie knight is not a human being, but an immortal who normally resides in the shadowy world of the Other Side.

The stats below represent a relatively powerful Faerie knight. Others might exist with greater or lesser skills and attributes.

Glory Won 200; SIZ 20, DEX 20, STR 20, CON 20, APP 20; Move 4; Armor 18 + shield; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 20; Knockdown 20; Hit Points 40; Healing Rate 4; Damage 7d6; Glory 6,000.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 10, Lance 21, Spear 21, Sword 23; Battle 15, Horsemanship 21.

*Traits:* Valorous 16+, others as decided by Gamemaster.

*Passions:* As decided by Gamemaster.

*Skills:* Awareness 15, Courtesy 15, First Aid 15, Heraldry 8, Hunting 15, Tourney 10.

*Horse:* Faerie charger (8d6, Move 10).

*Equipment:* Rich clothing (£4), various eerie magic items as decided by Gamemaster.

*Valorous Modifier:* -5.

## GIANT

This race ruled the world long ago, before the old gods drove them into waste places. They are bigger than men, but slow of wit and of body (they gain no bonus to Movement Rate for lack of armor). Their foul habits are more like those of bears than men, and many delight in eating the flesh of humans. They wear crude hides, and make nothing requiring any degree of skill or refinement.



In combat, they use only simple clubs (which might be mere branches, logs, or even whole uprooted trees) or their natural weapons (i.e., by grappling and brawling). Their thick skin is rough and hard.

Male giants' unnatural lusts extend to human women, most unchivalrously.

**Reach:** All giants may ignore the usual +5/-5 reflexive penalties for fighting against a knight making a lance charge, due to their great reach.

## GIANT, SMALL

This variety of giant is not much bigger than the largest Saxon warrior, but bigger than any normal man nonetheless.

Glory Won 100; SIZ 25, DEX 8, STR 20, CON 25, APP 5; Move 3; Armor 15; Unconscious 13; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 25; Hit Points 50; Healing Rate 5; Damage 8d6.

**Combat Skills:** Mace 13 (using club, no +1d6 vs. chainmail), Grapple 15.

**Skills:** Avoidance 5.

## GIANT, STANDARD

A true behemoth, this giant is almost invulnerable to the weapons of most knights.

Glory Won 250; SIZ 40, DEX 5, STR 50, CON 30, APP 3; Move 6; Armor 25; Unconscious 18; Major Wound 30; Knockdown 40; Hit Points 70; Healing Rate 8; Damage 15d6.

**Combat Skills:** Mace 15 (using club, no +1d6 vs. chainmail), Grapple 10. **Skills:** Avoidance 3.

**Prudent Modifier:** +5. **Valorous Modifier:** -5.

**Stomp:** This giant can make two separate brawling attacks per round in place of its other attacks, each using its Grapple value of 10; these attacks must be directed at two different opponents. Each stomp deals brawling damage as normal. A giant cannot stomp on a creature with a SIZ value greater than half the giant's own.

## GIANT, HUGE

A monster of fairytale proportions, this being is to be avoided by all right-thinking knights. Fortunately, it is relatively slow and thus easily avoided by riders.

Glory Won 500; SIZ 85, DEX 1, STR 65, CON 35, APP 3; Move 5\*; Armor 40; Unconscious 30; Major Wound 35; Knockdown 85; Hit Points 120; Healing Rate 10; Damage 25d6.

**Combat Skills:** Mace 7 (using club, no +1d6 vs. chainmail), Grapple 4. **Skills:** Avoidance 1.

**Prudent Modifier:** +15. **Valorous Modifier:** -15.

\* **Ponderous:** This type of giant suffers a -2 modifier to its Movement Rate (included in the stats above).

**Stomp:** This giant can make two separate brawling attacks per round in place of its other attacks, each using its Grapple value of 4; these attacks must be directed at two different opponents. Each stomp deals brawling damage as normal. A giant cannot stomp on a creature with a SIZ value greater than half the giant's own.

## GRIFFIN

This monster has the rear body of a gigantic lion along with the wings, head, and foreparts of a colossal eagle. It has a special taste for horsemeat, but also hates (and devours) humans.

Griffins come from the land of Hyperborea, north of Europe, and prefer to nest among bleak mountain peaks.

Glory Won 250; SIZ 40, DEX 20, STR 40, CON 25; Move 14 (flying); Armor 10; Unconscious 16; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 40; Hit Points 65; Healing Rate 7; Damage 8d6.

**Combat Skills:** Claws 17\*, Bite 10†.

**Skills:** Avoidance 30.

**Valorous Modifier:** -5.

**Flying Attack:** A griffin cannot hover, although it may fly past an opponent, making a single claw or bite attack as it passes. In this way it may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a single attack as part of its action. A griffin attacking in this way imposes a -15 modifier to the opposed attack roll of whatever foe it attacks that around.

\* **Claws:** A griffin on the ground may make two separate claw attacks per round, each using its Claws value of 17; these attacks may both be directed at one opponent, or at two different ones. A character attacked by both must defend separately against the two attacks, as if he were attacked by two different opponents (see "Multiple Opponents" in Chapter 6). Each claw deals damage as normal.

† **Snatch Attack:** A flying griffin's bite attack is treated as a grapple attack (see "Grappling" in Chapter 6) in addition to dealing damage normally. A griffin that gets a hold while grappling in this way has seized the foe in its mouth, whereupon it flies upward and drops the hapless foe a number of yards downward equal to the amount of movement it had remaining before its attack took place. A griffin cannot snatch a creature with a SIZ value greater than one-third of its own (i.e., SIZ 13 for a typical griffin).

## HIPPOGRIFF

This famed creature is part lion, part eagle, and part horse, the odd union of a griffin and a horse. The creature reputedly originates from Greece, but is found in many Arthurian legends.

Glory Won 200; SIZ 30, DEX 25, STR 15, CON 10; Move 16 (flying); Armor 10; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 30; Hit Points 40; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6.

**Combat Skills:** Hoof 12.

**Skills:** Avoidance 30.

**Flying Attack:** A hippogriff cannot hover, although it may fly past an opponent, making a single attack as it passes. In this way it may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a single attack as part of its action. A hippogriff attacking in this way imposes a -15 modifier to the opposed attack roll of whatever foe it attacks that around.

## LION

The majestic and terrible lion of Arthurian legend is found throughout Malory. For instance, Sir Percivale aids one on the Grail Quest, two of them live in the Tomb of Lions in Ganis, and four of them escort the magical White Stag through the forest.

This lion is much larger than the "natural" African lion, more akin in size to the saber-toothed tiger. In addition, it is both cunning and highly magical.

Glory Won 250; SIZ 40, DEX 25, STR 30, CON 20; Move 11; Armor 10; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 40; Hit Points 60; Healing Rate 5; Damage 7d6.

**Combat Skills:** Claws 21\*, Bite 20 (prone foe only, +2d6 damage).

**Skills:** Avoidance 10.

**Valorous Modifier:** -5.

\* **Claws:** A lion may make two separate claw attacks per round, each using its Claws value of 21; both attacks may be directed at one opponent, or at two different ones. A character attacked by both must defend separately against the two attacks, as if he were attacked by two different opponents (see "Multiple Opponents" in Chapter 6). Each claw deals damage as normal.

## MANTICORE

This man-eating beast has three rows of wicked teeth and the stinging tail of a scorpion. Its red eyes glow at



night and its voice resembles the sibilant notes of a flute. Although it originates in far-away India, one or two have been seen in the rugged mountains of Britain, coming out only to feed upon humans.

The mantichore is so powerful a leaper that virtually no walls can hold it. Contrary to some legends, it does not have wings.

Glory Won 300; SIZ 45, DEX 20, STR 45, CON 25; Move 11; Armor 10; Unconscious 18; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 45; Hit Points 70; Healing Rate 7; Damage 9d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 10, Tail Sting 20 (only 6d6 damage).

*Skills:* Avoidance 10.

*Prudent Modifier:* +10. *Valorous Modifier:* -10.

## PANTHER

The panther is said to be a native British cat “[of] truly variegated color, [...] most beautiful and excessively kind” (White’s *Bestiary*). It is a sworn foe of dragons, and reputedly has an incredible belch that makes it proof against those great monsters. (This last claim is left to the Gamemaster’s discretion; such an ability is not included in the stats below.)

The panther is smaller than a lion and prefers to lie in ambush to attack solitary foes in the deep woods. When surprised, perhaps on a hunt, it is considered to be wonderful sport.

Glory Won 75; SIZ 15, DEX 25, STR 25, CON 15; Move 9; Armor 5; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 15; Hit Points 30; Healing Rate 4; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Claws 10\*, Bite 15 (+1d6 damage).

*Skills:* Avoidance 15.

\* *Claws:* A panther may make two separate claw attacks per round, each using its Claws value of 10; both attacks may be directed at one opponent, or at two different ones. A character attacked by both must defend separately against the two attacks, as if he were attacked by two different opponents (see “Multiple Opponents” in Chapter 6). Each claw deals damage as normal.

## UNICORN

This creature is normally shy and retiring, and can easily hide from most hunters. However, any unicorn can be attracted using the “Virgin Ploy” (see sidebar). They are often sought after since their parts are valuable to magicians, their meat a rare delicacy to most palates, and their heads priceless trophies to any almost any lord who admires the hunt.

Although a unicorn may be captured, it can never be tamed; if imprisoned, a unicorn soon pines away, dying within days or even hours regardless of its captors’ methods.

*Magic:* A unicorn knows simple Glamour magic at the Gamemaster’s option, which can make small illusions to distract foes, cover its tracks, or frighten horses. A unicorn can heal all wounds with a touch of its horn, if it desires. It cannot use this healing ability during combat, but in quiet moments can heal itself.

## GREATER UNICORN

This noble creature typically uses Glamour to hide its tracks and disguise itself from dogs. A greater unicorn invariably fights to the death before allowing itself to be captured.

Glory Won 100; SIZ 25, DEX 40, STR 25, CON 25; Move 12; Armor 5; Unconscious 13; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 25; Hit Points 50; Healing Rate special\*; Damage 5d6.





*Combat Skills:* Horn 16.

*Skills:* Avoidance 15, Awareness 18.

*Charge:* A unicorn may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a Horn attack as part of a single action. If it does move before attacking, it deals +2d6 points of damage.

### LESSER UNICORN

This lovely creature would never harm any innocent creature. Nonetheless, its horn has miraculous properties, so it, like its greater cousin, is trapped and hunted.

Glory Won 25; SIZ 15, DEX 45, STR 15, CON 15; Move 10; Armor 3; Unconscious 8; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 15; Hit Points 30; Healing Rate special\*; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Horn 10.

*Skills:* Avoidance 25, Awareness 18.

*Valorous Modifier:* +5.

### WATER LEAPER

Rather like a large, legless frog with finny wings, this terrifying monster leaps from the water and glides along the surface to snatch boaters from their crafts. It then drags them under the water to be drowned and devoured. A water leaper is almost helpless if beached or trapped on deck, although its frantic thrashing remains dangerous to anyone struck.

A water leaper has no redeeming virtues, either physical or spiritual.



### The Virgin Ploy

Several types of wild beasts in British legends can be tamed by virginal maidens. Among the creatures detailed in this appendix, though, only the unicorn can be subdued this way.

A maiden must go alone to a place the creature is known to frequent and there entertain it: Her player must make either a Singing or a Play [instrument] roll; if this is successful, the creature is attracted and compelled. She then invites it to sit with her, and the beast lays its head on her lap. She must now make a Chaste roll; if she is successful, the creature falls asleep and remains that way for as long as the maiden continues to sing or play.

Some older tales suggest that a maiden who fails her Chaste roll may be "assaulted" by the amorous unicorn. It must be slain or the maiden suffers the worst possible fate.



Glory Won 100; SIZ 10, DEX 20, STR 15, CON 15; Move 7 (swimming or flying); Armor 5; Unconscious 6; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 10; Hit Points 25; Healing Rate 5; Damage 3d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 10\*.

† *Drowning Attack:* A water leaper can leap from the water and fly at an opponent, making a Bite roll as it goes. In this way it may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make an attack as part of its action. Further, the water leaper's bite is treated as a grapple attack (see "Grappling" in Chapter 6) in addition to dealing damage normally. If it gets a hold on a foe while flying, it immediately makes an opposed STR roll against its victim. If it wins and there is water within its remaining movement, it has overborne the foe and dragged him into the water.

*Death Throes:* A water leaper out of water thrashes about madly for a number of rounds equal to its CON score before expiring, flopping up to 1 yard per round toward the nearest body of water. During this time, it may make a Bite roll each round against any creature within 1 yard, dealing an extra +1d6 damage if it hits.

## WYRM

These giant serpents are undoubtedly of demonic origin. They can breathe fire and have very tough hides; unlike dragons, though, to which they are obviously related, they do not have wings. They also have the ability to regenerate damage and even to rejoin or regrow their severed parts.

Glory Won 400; SIZ 35, DEX 30, STR 35, CON 25; Move 10; Armor 15; Unconscious 15; Major Wound 25; Knockdown 35; Hit Points 60; Healing Rate special; Damage 7d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 15 and Tail Lash 10†, Fire Breath 10‡.

*Skills:* Avoidance 7.

*Prudent Modifier:* +10. *Valorous Modifier:* -10.

\* *Regeneration:* A wyrm heals 1d6 hit points each round, even from Major or Mortal Wounds. It can be killed only by being beheaded (i.e., a Mortal Wound) and then having fire applied to both sides of the stump.

† *Multiple Attack:* A wyrm may make both a Bite and a Tail Lash attack each round; each must be directed at a different foe, but deals damage as normal.

‡ *Fire Breath:* A wyrm's fire breath does normal fire damage at a cumulative rate of 1d6 (see "Fire and Heat" in Chapter 6) against a single target. This damage accrues for as long as the wyrm wins its combat roll against the same target each consecutive round.

## WYVERN

This dragon-like creature is two-legged and winged. It is usually much smaller than its draconic kin, but also tends to live and hunt in family groups of 2 to 6 individuals.

Glory Won 100; SIZ 20, DEX 60, STR 25, CON 20; Move 13 (flying); Armor 8; Unconscious 10; Major Wound 20; Knockdown 20; Hit Points 40; Healing Rate 5; Damage 5d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 12, Claws 15\*.

*Skills:* Avoidance 30.

*Flying Attack:* A wyvern cannot hover, although it may fly past an opponent, attacking with its claws as it passes. In this way it may travel up to its normal Movement Rate and still make a single attack as part of its action. A wyvern attacking in this way imposes a -13 modifier to the opposed attack roll of whatever foe it attacks that around.

\* *Claws:* A wyvern may attack with its claws only while flying. It attacks only one target per round, using its Claws value of 15. If it wins the melee round, however, it makes two separate 3d6 damage rolls instead of a single damage roll. Damage inflicted by these two damage totals is treated as two separate wounds.





## YALE

This hoofed animal is rare, but can be hunted in the deep woods. It is amazing in that its two horns are joined and can be moved independently of one another. Thus, this fabulous creature can fight two foes in one round.

Glory Won 50; SIZ 30, DEX 10, STR 15, CON 15; Move 8; Armor 8; Unconscious 12; Major Wound 15; Knockdown 30; Hit Points 45; Healing Rate 3; Damage 5d6.

*Combat Skills:* Gore 12\*.

*Skills:* Avoidance 12.

\* *Gore:* A yale may make two separate tusk attacks per round, each using its Gore value of 12; both attacks may be directed at one opponent, or each at two different ones. A character attacked by both must defend separately against the two attacks, as if he were attacked by two different opponents (see "Multiple Opponents" in Chapter 6). Each gore deals damage as normal.

## OTHER MONSTERS

Further *Pendragon* books will provide more monsters found in regions outside of Logres, including many creatures of Faerie.





# Appendix Three: Scenarios

In *Pendragon*, a “scenario” is any kind of game event that can be experienced by players. Scenarios are the stories of the campaign. They supply the interface between your imagination, your character, the setting, and the game. A scenario includes setting, Gamemaster characters, and a potential plot to challenge or beguile the player knights.

This section introduces the basic concepts, types, and terms used in the creation of *Pendragon* scenarios. A complete Introductory Scenario is provided. This scenario serves to introduce both Gamemaster and players to the game and rules. By its conclusion, newcomers will have a good idea of how to play the game.

Several samples are given — “Home Service,” “At the Crossroads,” and “Lost In the Woods” — along with instructions about when they should be used.

More adventures will be found in the *Great Pendragon Campaign* sourcebook and in subsequent publications, and especially at our online site at <http://www.white-wolf.com/arthaus/index.php>.

## INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO

*Pendragon* takes on its greatest depth of meaning and enjoyment when all of the rules are used. The game may seem intimidating and imposing at first, especially for beginning Gamemasters and players. Even Gamemasters with experience in other roleplaying game systems may find aspects of the game intimidating.

Here, however, we present a simple and fun way to start your *Pendragon* campaign. It contains suggestions for Gamemasters on running your extended campaign, additional background information, and an introductory adventure to get your game started in the right spirit. The adventure acquaints players with the game and their characters with their homeland.

It is important to time events so that the characters are knighted at the end of the first play session. Keep an eye on the clock and cut events short, if necessary, to perform this act.

## PREPARING AS A GAMEMASTER

To start off, be thinking of the following goals and objectives while you run this first scenario.

- teach Dark Age morals, and illustrate the primary passions

- introduce some Gamemaster characters
- introduce Logres, the primary *Pendragon* setting
- witness some of the marvels of pre-Arthurian Britain
- establish the player knights’ initial power base
- establish the player knights’ families and allies

## NECESSARY MATERIALS

As a Gamemaster, you will need the following: this book, copies of the blank character sheet (perhaps along with copies of the four default knights), some paper to write on (both blank and graph paper), pencils, d20s, and d6s.

In addition, you should have boundless energy and enthusiasm, a generous and helpful nature, a sense of fairness, a kind disposition, a modest and cooperative ego, and the courage to start.

## YOUR FIRST PLAYERS

Unless you come from an established gaming community, getting game players may be difficult. Even in places dense with gaming enthusiasts, like colleges, a gaming group is often made up of strangers who may meet for no reason other than to play games. The initial difficulty lies in getting enough like-minded people together for the first time.

The first place to find new gamers is among your friends. Presumably you have some common interests already, and if someone shares your interest in literature and medieval panorama, they might also share your interest in participation through roleplaying games.

Before you get the ball rolling, though, brush up on what you might say to prospective players to explain the nature of the game. I suggest that you explain the game with something along these lines:

*Pendragon* is a game where you make up imaginary characters who travel around and do medieval things in King Arthur’s realm. It is mostly about talking back and forth. You tell me what you want your knight to do, then either I tell you what happens as a result, or you roll dice to see if it works.

It is kind of like playing “Cops ‘n’ Robbers” as a kid, but instead of saying “I got you” and “No, you didn’t!” you roll dice. In a sense, I am the producer of an Arthurian movie and you are the actors, but you have the power to determine the script and most of the stage directions.



Once your players are willing to go along, you should get into some of the details of the game system and your overall plan. Simply mention that it will cover the Arthurian panorama and background, focusing on glory, jousts, battles, chivalry, families, heraldry, and so on.

Do not expect them to read the rules before the first game. Encourage them to do so if they wish, but many new players are so intimidated by a roleplaying game's rule book that they simply decide not to attempt to play. Sometimes, the best players have not read the rules of a game forward and backward (if at all!), and they therefore play their characters' roles more "truthfully"; they tend to trust the Game-master and other players to interpret the game rules in situations where precise measurements are needed. Other players are what some call "rules lawyers," and they insist upon scrutinizing every die roll for accuracy. Sometimes, these players even delight in arguing over rule judgments (not out of malice, but as a part of their enjoyment of playing a game). Your job as Gamemaster is to balance both types of players, along with everyone else in the game.

Prepare yourself by reviewing exactly what you need to do. This is a training session for you as well as the players, but you must be at least one lesson ahead of them.

The adventures suggested below may be compressed or expanded according to your needs and those of your players. You might rush through several scenarios in one evening's session, and then take several more to work out a single adventure. Play things off the cuff, and time events so that the game moves, for example, from heroic action to social roleplaying to contemplation and back again. Mix it up.

## YOUR FIRST TALK

Explain you are new at this, that you have a fair grasp of what to do, and that you hope everyone can work together. Let each player read through Chapter 1 and explain the basics of the game setting, particularly these important areas:

- Knighthood
- Glory
- Feudalism
- The Laws of Arthurian Society
- The Christian Church
- Magic

Next, decide which of the two character generation methods (see below) you will use. You might want to ask your players which they prefer.

Remember, you will have to keep talking to explain various things. Players will not wait for your instructions and will most likely bombard you with many questions. Don't worry about this — have fun!

## TO START

Give everyone a copy of the character sheet. Explain that this contains all the information needed to play the game. Then use either of the two character generation methods explained below.

As players create their characters, the Gamemaster should be ready to lead them through any confusing matters,

and to fill in setting details as necessary. Start to provide descriptive background of the people, places, and things used by characters. You might begin by talking about names — read the list of common names out several times, and explain why frivolous names tend to spoil the game experience.

Talk about the County of Salisbury. (See Chapter 3.) Remind everyone that their characters have all known each other, more or less, during most of their lives. Help everyone work something out about their character that is interesting. Note, though, that learning more about characters is an ongoing process, especially through the first few sessions.

Encourage the players to discuss their characters' previous history as squires. Tell them that later they will figure out their father's and grandfather's history.

Urge everyone to think about how their character looks, and about what motivates their character. It is likely that someone will choose a "wicked" knight. Let him, but warn him how his contemporaries feel about this, and note that his character may well be killed for his anti-social behavior.

*On a more serious note, be warned:* The game requires cooperation, and if one player is consistently and selfishly or maliciously spoiling the fun for everyone else, you should be prepared to kick him out of the game.

## FIRST CHARACTERS

Two methods of creating initial characters are detailed in this book.

### USING PRE-CONSTRUCTED CHARACTERS

The simplest method is to just copy the sample characters provided in Chapter 2. Pass around copies of the default characters, and simply have the players copy their favorite choice onto the blank character sheets, without trying to actually generate characters completely. Explain briefly the advantages and disadvantages of each type.

The advantage of using pre-generated characters is that it gets the game rolling quickly without getting bogged down in learning the game system all at once. It is best used if your players are impatient and have no experience with roleplaying games at all. It may disrupt play later, however, when you have to stop to explain what certain parts of the game or the character sheet are and how they are used.

You might want to explain that you will play a "sample game" using the pre-generated characters for a little while and that everyone will then roll up new character generated themselves.

Next, choose which manor each knight holds. (See Chapter 2.) This is going to be his personal property as soon as he is knighted, and it is where he has spent a great part of his young life.

Explain that everyone has a character who has completed his training with excellent results and, at age 21, is a respected and experienced squire who fully anticipates being knighted very soon.

### GENERATING YOUR OWN CHARACTERS

The alternative is to go through the character generation process step by step, as detailed in Chapter 2. (Of

course, be sure to go through the system ahead of time yourself; you must answer questions that come up during the process.) This procedure allows you to explain the facets of the games as you go. This is sure to make things easier later during play because you will already have explained what most of the common game terms mean.

You may also want to use the “Salisbury Family History” tables (from Chapter 3) to explain what has been going on in the past. This may help to get the mood and background of Britain.

## AFTERWARDS

Have everyone introduce their characters. To show them how to do it, introduce Sir Elad first, as follows.

## A DAY OF TRAINING

Now actual play begins. In this short sequence, you will teach the basic die roll resolution system and get each player started on the idea of roleplaying.

State that the squires are at Vagon Castle. Show where it is on the map. Introduce the first Gamemaster character now. He is Sir Elad, the castellan of Vagon Castle and marshal to the Earl of Salisbury. He is in charge of training the best of the squires to be knights and directing their activities.

You might say something like, “Sir Elad’s the guy who has been training you along with your own knight. He’s also the guy in charge of the earl’s small army.”

Sir Elad and the player characters go outside to the training grounds of the castle. It is springtime and the sun is shining. The usual day’s activity is martial practice and training, and today is no exception.

## FIRST ROLL RESOLUTION

Tell the players that their characters are going to practice their Lance skill. The first target is a small wooden plate attached to a post. Success at this attack is by a simple unopposed d20 roll versus the character’s Lance skill. Make sure everyone knows how to read the result: i.e., getting less than your character’s value for that skill = success, and rolling the value exactly = critical success.

Next the characters use the *quintain*, a vertical post with a rotating horizontal arm, one end of which has a shield and the other a rope and a stone. Lance practice consists of charging against the quintain, striking the shield, and ducking the swinging rock as it comes around from the force of the blow.

Success at this is determined by using Lance skill, again unopposed and unmodified. Failure means the character is thwacked by the rock — resulting in a bit of a bruise, maybe, but no more.

## FIRST ROLEPLAYING

Be sure to ask everyone two things while playing through this first bit of training. First, what they intend doing when something occurs. Second, how do their characters feel about and react to their own and others’ successes or failures.

For example, are they embarrassed if hit by the rock? Make sure they refer to their traits before they decide. Cruel characters might tease others, while modest characters might not mind. If anyone wants to roll a trait to see what they do, great. But no rolls are mandatory here.

## A HORSE RACE

Next is a horse race. Characters will have many opportunities in the future to try to outrace each other, and this is the procedure that will be used.

Explain how to make opposed Horsemanship rolls. Tell everyone to get their fastest horse. (It is probably their charger.) It is possible that someone will choose a rouncy for personal reasons. Note the relative speeds of each horse.

Get a piece of graph paper. For each mounted character, use a column as the steps to measure relative distance traveled in the race. Each round, a character moves as many squares along his column as his horse’s Movement Rate.

However, every successful Horsemanship roll allows a rider to move ahead one extra space. A critical success allows a movement of two extra spaces. Failure means that the rider moves only half the usual speed. (Remember, the grid squares of the sheet represent relative, not absolute distance.)

A fumble means the rider falls off and takes 1d6 damage (none of them are wearing armor right now), and must take an action to remount, in addition to traveling no distance this round.

The winner is the one who covers his whole column first. A tie is possible.

Once the race is concluded, everyone can rest. It’s noontime now. Encourage the players to voice how their characters feel. Speaking in character as Sir Elad, compliment those who did well, and gently tease or rebuke those who did poorly.

## YOUR FIRST ADVENTURE: A HUNT

Since Sir Elad is growing infirm, he does not usually ride on ordinary missions: Thus, he chooses a leader from among the player characters after discussing the task at hand. Speak in character, and begin your comments with “He says...”

Sir Elad says, “Men, we have need for your talents. Will you take on a small task for the good of the county?” Encourage the players to speak their answer aloud. If they are shy, tell them that Sir Elad smiles and says, “Say on, lad — don’t be afraid to speak your mind!”

Let the players ask questions, too. These may be from the players to the Gamemaster, or they may be from the characters to the Gamemaster characters. If, in the former case, the answer is something the characters are likely to know, then feel free to answer it fully. If it is not, then point that fact out. By the same token, if the players do not know something that their characters should reasonably know, it is the Gamemaster’s duty to inform them of it — particularly if that knowledge would change the way they’d approach a situation or a person.





When all questions are finished, Sir Elad speaks again. “The peasants have reported a man-eating bear in the west acres. I never heard of such a thing. It’s probably a rabid dog. Even if it is a chipmunk, though, you must go and take care of it because they claim it is too dangerous for them to come and work the lord’s fields.” (*He shakes his head ruefully.*)

## BEFORE YOU GO: A JOUST

Sir Elad says, “Before you leave, I want everyone to joust until only one person is left. That person will act as leader for this hunt.”

Explain that a joust is a nonlethal sport that uses blunt, easily broken lances. Opponents use their Lance skills in opposed resolution: the higher success wins. The two first players, designated at random, joust. Run the mechanics slowly, leaving the dice on the table after they have been rolled, and make sure everyone understands who won and why.

By the time a leader is determined, everyone ought to understand the basics of combat.

The marshal now congratulates the leader. “Go to Imber and ask for Old Garr, the priest. Any questions? Anyone?” Remind the players that their characters cannot ask anything of Sir Elad later once they’ve left his company. (They might still ask questions of local personnel.)

The marshal asks, “Now, do you want to leave this afternoon or tomorrow morning? It is a half-day ride to Imber.” Start them thinking in character.

Half of the job is for the Gamemaster to propose questions to the players that they answer for their characters. The other half is instigating talk and discussion, much of which may not be game-related. Just let the players do as they wish, describing the passive events as well as you can, and keep asking questions when something exciting is happening.

## A SHORT JOURNEY

Open the book to the map of Salisbury and trace the route of travel from Vagon to Imber. The land is a series of gently rolling hills. Being mounted, the player characters (PCs) will probably go along the Salisbury Main, an old track that runs along the tops of several of the rolling hills; from there, likely, they’ll head to the road, and then north to Tilshead.

Indicate the points of interest as they go. Be sure to note Hamburg, an old hill fort, visible off to the left. From the crossroad they can see distant Stonehenge. They might even pass close to one or more of their respective manors as they travel along.

Finally, they approach the dense forest west of Salisbury.

## THE VILLAGE OF IMBER

Imber is a village at the bottom of a valley of the downs. Ask each player to make a Stewardship roll. A success allows that player’s character to judge the quality of the village — large but poor. The fields around it are small, and judging by the hides stretched to dry, much of the income of the village is from hunting. Rather than a stream, it has a spring pond. The mill is ox-driven.

If they left in the castle in the afternoon, they reach the village in the evening. They can find Old Garr immediately, and he offers to let them sleep in his little house or in the barn, as they wish. He offers them a meal of barley porridge with onions, and with water to drink. He has no better.

If they stayed at the castle overnight, they arrive at the village in the late morning.

## OLD GARR

Once the PCs reach the town, use Old Garr as your mouthpiece (just as you did with Sir Elad earlier). He is the only priest for the couple hundred residents of Imber. Like many of this type, he is almost illiterate, having memorized several of the Latin verses he needs to know.

Garr is the younger son of an obscure knight, and lives (in sin with his mistress), as he has for many years, off the income he gets for his job as priest. He loves hunting even though he is no master of the hunt, and is a competent “field medic” (First Aid 14, Hunting 7); he goes along as a guide and healer if the players supply a horse. (Alas, the village has no horses at all, never mind a spare.) The priest is too old to fight.

Before the hunt begins, remind the players that their characters must remove their armor and wear appropriate hunting clothing (which provides 1 point of armor reduction). A body of peasants and hunting dogs arrive to help out.

## THE HUNT

This hunt includes only the relevant material for this scenario. It teaches the primary game rules for the hunt.

### STEP 1. PREPARATION

A hunt is normally divided into segments of about an hour in length. A single day allows up to 6 segments in winter, 8 in spring and autumn, and 10 in summer. Once these segments have elapsed, the hunt is over for the day.

If the PCs arrived the night before, they have all day to hunt, and thus can have up to 8 segments to hunt today, since it is early in the spring. If they arrived in the late morning, they have 4 segments to hunt during the remainder of this day.

During each hunting segment, the hunters engage in many activities, such as searching for tracks, finding the best way to ride through the brush, listening for sounds of the chase, and so on. Tracks and trails are fairly easily found, and pursued with the help of dogs and peasants. All of these things are represented by the Hunting skill.

As with the horse race earlier, you’ll use parallel columns of your graph paper to track the hunt’s progress — you’ll only need six rows in this case, though, so you might just as easily draw six parallel rows (with enough columns for each hunter in the party) on a piece of blank paper.

Put a “pursuit marker” for each participating hunter (i.e., each character who will make Hunting rolls) on one column. This marks the spot where they all begin. Each time someone fails a Hunting roll to overcome an obstacle,

he falls one row (or line) behind. This way you can keep track of when the laggards catch up with the quarry.

**Leaders and Followers:** Some PCs may not trust their Hunting skill (perhaps with good reason); these characters can choose to merely follow someone else with a better Hunting value. These followers do not make a Hunt roll, but then they cannot mislead the others, and will probably arrive on site for the kill.

## STEP 2. SEARCH

Finding game is not difficult in these wild forests — it is a matter of finding the *right* prey. Each character should make a Hunting roll before starting the first hunting segment to see if his dogs can find a trail. Old Garr, who knows the marks of the bear well, is able to point out a good spoor to start the trail: If he is present, everyone receives a +5 modifier to Hunting skill for this initial roll.

Old Garr follows the character selected as leader during the joust. He is cautious, and makes no Hunting rolls himself.

## STEP 3. CHASE!

Those characters (and any followers) who found the bear's tracks in the last step now spur their horses forward through the woods in pursuit. (Those who failed to find tracks may keep trying once per segment.)

Each hunter now on the trail makes another Hunting roll now. Of course, the bear hears the dogs and attempts to escape; he is a cunning old beast with stealth a little above the ordinary (Avoidance 10). Each hunter's roll is opposed to the bear's Avoidance roll for the segment, and the results are checked on the table below.

**Modifiers:** As noted under the Hunting skill, each character gains a +5 modifier due to the fact that he knows the lands of his home county quite well. Since they are hunting in a forest, the characters have no modifiers for terrain. (See the Hunting skill in Chapter 4.)

### TABLE C-1: THE BEAR HUNT

| Hunting Roll     | Effect   |
|------------------|--|
| Critical success | You find the prey at once, at the end of this segment. Move your pursuit marker to the last box and go immediately to Step 4.        |
| Win              | Move your pursuit marker ahead one box. If you reached the last box this segment, go immediately to Step 4.                          |
| Partial success  | You are still on the trail, but you make no progress this turn.  |
| Lose             | Move your pursuit marker back one box. Worse, some event or obstacle interferes with your hunt; roll on the "Obstacles" table below. |
| Fumble           | You lost the trail. Move your pursuit marker back to the first box and go back to Step 2.  |

From this point onward, each hunter must rely upon his own Hunting skill to keep on the track to the end, unless he is a follower. If no one makes a successful Hunting roll for the entire day, then the quarry is never located and the party must try again after another night in Imber.

**Obstacles:** Hunters who lost (but did not fumble) the opposed Hunting roll were delayed by some obstacle: They should roll on the following table. If you didn't fail a Hunting roll in Step 3, then continue with the hunt normally.

### d20 Roll Effect

- 1–2 Ooops! You roused the wrong animal. Roll on Table 4–4 (see the "Finding Prey" sidebar in Chapter 4), ignoring results of 1. On a result of 20, go to the "Questing Beast" scenario in this appendix and run it immediately. Since you seek a specific quarry, you ought to ignore everything else.
- 3–4 **Stream:** Make another Hunting roll with a –10 modifier; if you fail, you lose the trail and must return to Step 2.
- 5–6 **Fallen tree:** Make a Horsemanship roll or fall, taking 1d6 damage; if you fell, move your pursuit marker back one square and return to Step 3.
- 7–10 **Birds flushed underfoot:** Make a Horsemanship roll or suffer a –5 modifier on the next Awareness roll made during this hunt.
- 11–12 **Thick brush:** Make a Horsemanship roll; if you fail, move your pursuit marker back one square and return to Step 3.
- 13–14 **Men shouting somewhere:** Make an Awareness roll; if you fail, move your pursuit marker back one square and return to Step 3.
- 15–16 **Hidden ditch:** Make an Awareness roll or suffer a –5 modifier on the next Horsemanship roll made during this hunt.
- 17–18 **An animal growls nearby.** Make an Awareness roll or suffer a –5 modifier on the next Hunting roll made during this hunt.
- 19–20 **A horn blasts somewhere:** Make a Hunting roll or suffer a –5 modifier on the next Awareness roll made during this hunt.

## STEP 4. THE KILL

Once the prey has been found, see "Avoidance" in the Natural Beasts section of Appendix 2 to determine the distance between hunter and hunted; then run the "surprise attack" and "the rush," as noted there, and proceed to melee combat or return to the pursuit, as applicable.

If combat occurs, start with the standard bear statistics from Appendix 2; as was noted previously, though, this old bear is more cunning than the average specimen, and thus has an Avoidance value of 10, not 7. Similarly, you should raise its Claws attack value to 15 (rather than the usual 13). Leave all the other stats as noted. Remember that the bear has hide and fat effectively worth 6 points of armor reduction.

Unless the bear escapes, the other squires might not arrive in time to see the kill. Still, award each character 10 Glory for completing an ordinary but significant task. Glory for killing the bear is 10, divided among those who actually took part in its defeat. As well, divide another one-time bonus of 20 Glory among the characters who took part in killing the bear for completing their first unchaperoned hunt.

## STEP 5. THE HUNT CONTINUES

If the players failed to find and slay the bear on the first day, they must try again each subsequent day until it is dead. Once they kill the bear, move on to "Back to Imber."

## BACK TO IMBER

The bear is dead! They clean the bear, taking its hide (perhaps a rug...?) and its meat for consumption. (They might want to take its paws or claws and its head as trophies — that's fine too.) Again, as always, ask the players how they feel about the events that have transpired.

Then they head back toward Imber.





## BANDITS!

On the way back to the village, the young squires encounter a band of bandits (one bandit per squire), caught red-handed beating up a farmer and stealing his cows. The farmer is known to the squires and reminds them of it if necessary. (“You have seen me at our lord’s court many times! Help me!”)

If the players seem unsure, ask if they know their characters’ duty in this situation, and then state it for them if they do not: They should aid their lord’s peasant. Remember, too, that if Old Garr is along, he can be the Game-master’s mouthpiece in the game as necessary — but also remember that he himself doesn’t fight, being too old. Anyway, that’s the squires’ job!

This is their first test of potentially lethal man-to-man combat, but it’s a fairly certain win since the PCs are mounted while the bandits are on foot. The bandits stand and fight as long as half of them are still able. Then the survivors turn and flee into the nearby woods.

See the Bandit statistics under “Fighting Men” in Appendix 2.

Be slow and patient with everyone during this scene, and make sure they understand how combat works. Tell them that their characters know that taking these types of outlaws as prisoners is usual. Yet they don’t have to spare them: When a character has a chance to kill a helpless foe, ask the player to roll against his Merciful and/or Cruel traits, and go through the traits procedure. Those who do kill helpless or surrendered bandits should probably gain Cruel checks (see “Obtaining Experience” in Chapter 5).

After the fight, some squires may be hurt. Have the others use First Aid on them. If he accompanies them, remember that Old Garr has a First Aid skill of 14. Wise players might ask the old priest to try first aid unless someone has a better score, but they may also wish to have the chance to practice. (Don’t penalize them for the latter choice... not yet, anyway.)

Assign Glory for the bandit fight, as appropriate. Each bandit killed or captured is equal to 10 points, and everyone gets another 10 points just for being a part of this fight.

The PCs now continue onward to Imber.

## A VICTORIOUS RETURN

Assuming none of the PCs were slain or fatally wounded in the fight against the bandits, a small but exhilarating commotion occurs in the village when the characters return with their trophies. They spend the night, with the peasants celebrating happily. They eat roast bear. The peasants dress the hide of the beast properly and present the pelt to the squires.

Once the festivities are concluded, the characters rearm for the uneventful ride home.

## A VISIT TO COURT

After the celebration of their success, the squires should return to Vagon. Allow everyone to present their

own version of the tale to Sir Elad, who is no doubt pleased. (If they happened to get sidetracked by the “Questing Beast” encounter, he can tell them that they saw *Glatisant*, the Questing Beast, and that the man in pursuit was likely King Pellinore.) He suggests that they go to the earl to tell of their adventures.

This will be a courtly, non-combat, part of the scenario, and the squires have a chance to mingle in High Society for a while. Use this opportunity to show what a higher standard of living is like.

The squires, with the bear skin and possibly several bandits as prisoners, ride to Sarum with Sir Elad. If any bandits escaped, Sir Elad tells that the squires ought to report these bandits to their earl. If any bandit prisoners are present, they are brought along.

Upon entering the bailey of the castle, a young squire and several stable boys rush forward to take the horses. The player squires know to take their personal goods with them to the Great Hall, where their marshal, Sir Elad, immediately leads them.

## THE FIRST COURT SCENE

Gamemasters should be familiar with the rituals of court activities before attempting to run this section. First, describe the scene to your players. Within the Great Hall, court is in session and full of courtiers while dogs, cats and children bustle about. During this period, the Gamemaster should stress courtly etiquette and fashion. Courtesy rolls may be appropriate.

Note that the porter, the man in charge of letting people through the door, recognizes Elad immediately and treats him with great deference. After all, Elad is the Marshal, a very important man in this castle. Nonetheless, the Marshal and squires wait quietly in the back of the hall.

After only a short wait, the herald calls forth Sir Elad. The marshal indicates the squires should come forward with him, and then introduces them and their recent events. Let the players relate their events. The earl is delighted at their success.

If any bandits are alive, they are dragged forth and turned over to the earl. He is pleased, and thanks the player characters for their service. The earl addresses the squires directly, asking how many bandits were killed, and being pleased with that result too. The earl then dismisses the squires, asks Sir Elad to remain with him, and goes on to the next matter of business. The squires are left to their own devices at court.

The squires can now go about and mingle. The Game-master should bring forth the important people of the county whom they know and who will likely be a part of their future (see Chapter 3).

Let the characters meet people full of news, gossip, rumor, scandal, and tidbits of background information for upcoming adventures. Make things both interesting and informative. The PCs hear that Saxons are raiding in the east again, but that King Uther has sent knights to track them down.

In the campaign, at least in the beginning, the squires are going to spend a lot of time in this castle and city. Urge them to wander around a little bit. Use the map of the city to guide them.

Some possible activities and pursuits might include the following:

- Visit the City. Get to know the slick city ways of the merchants. See the large buildings, the biggest of which is the cathedral. The PCs might visit the market — the Gamemaster should hand out photocopies of the Standard Price Lists from Chapter 8.

- Visit the Castle. This is a large motte-and-bailey castle with a first-class stone tower atop the bailey.

- Meet Some Heiresses. One important “sideshow” for character at the castle is the opportunity to view — from a suitable distance — the heiresses whose husbands are to be chosen by the earl. However crude it might seem, these women are considered little more than great prizes for whoever greatly pleases the earl. (Until they are married, the earl collects the revenues from their lands.) Other available women, such as the younger daughters of knights, serve as ladies in waiting to the Countess and other noble ladies. They are the social equivalent of the player characters at this point.

The most eligible local heiresses are listed in Chapter 3.

In the evening, the squires join in the meal in the hall. They sit at the far end, away from the earl’s table, of course. They receive good fare, but not as good as that of the knights who sit closer to the earl.

## KNIGHTHOOD

That night, after dinner, Earl Roderick announces that he has decided to grant knighthood to those deserving it, so that they can better serve him. He ceremoniously asks the men of his court whom the available candidates are (of course, he actually knows this already — this is a matter of ceremony), and of course one of those asked first is the marshal, who sits at the high table near the earl.

And, of course, the marshal names the player character squires.

The earl agrees, and calls the characters forward to ask if they feel they are ready to become knights. They should agree. If not, they can continue play as squires for a bit longer. The earl announces that the ceremonies will begin the next day.

## THE CEREMONY

For most knights, the ceremony of knighthood is the most important event of their career. An extraordinary amount of Glory is gained, and a solemn oath spoken.

Refer to the boxed text entitled “The Knighting Ceremony” in Chapter 2. Explain the basic form of the ceremony. Explain that the characters, as the heirs to vassal knights, will simultaneously be invested with the rights to their inheritance.

The Earl of Salisbury is a Christian knight, so start with a vigil. Ask the players whether their characters are really trying to pray, or if they are just going through the

motions. Ask for Religion and Piety rolls. Energetic rolls might be used instead, to see whether the candidates stay awake as the night passes.

During the ceremony, you should probably insist that the players speak the oath of knighthood for their characters, and describe what is happening to them in some detail. Many knightings may occur later in the campaign, but this first one is always important and memorable. Try to do as well as possible by reading the script, spoken here by an anonymous herald, and by Earl Roderick, the lord.

Also, be sure to use the option of the ceremonial “Leap.” It is good for a little bit of Glory, and perhaps for a few laughs.

For the moment, the characters are the center of attention, radiant in the splendor of their new knighthood. Men offer them respect, women perhaps more. Allow everyone to make the best of it, with some opportunity for behavior checks in almost whatever trait they wish. Remember to give each new knight 1,000 Glory points, plus any accrued from his father.

Congratulations! Your campaign has begun.

If there is time, you might continue the session with the Winter Phase. Hand out copies of the Winter Phase section of the book and read through it, word by word if necessary, to help everyone learn how to do it.

Explain that the Winter Phase process just completed denotes the passage of a game year and the beginning of a new one. That is, their next game session will start a new year of exploits as newly knighted servants of the earl. Remind them, also, that many game years will pass during their characters’ careers.

## THE QUESTING BEAST

This scenario is best used as a Special Event that occurs while characters are hunting (see the Hunting skill in Chapter 4), although it can be used at any time when characters are traveling through the woods. In any case, it shouldn’t occur more than once in a given character’s career, or perhaps twice at most.

While hunting or traveling through the forest, have each character make an Awareness roll. A success indicates that that character hears the sound of ghostly hounds, like those of the Wild Hunt. Soon, all of the PCs can hear something strange and eerie, like a large beast being pursued by hounds, in the distance. It rapidly draws closer and grows louder, but nothing comes into sight.

As the eerie sounds approach, have each character make a Valorous roll. A failure indicates that the knight is hesitant to investigate, while a fumble means he rides in the opposite direction, and misses the rest of this adventure.

Abruptly, the noise stops, and next to a nearby stream or pool of water (perhaps a javelin throw away) a fabulous creature appears and stoops down to drink. As it does so, the howling and barking stops altogether. At this time, the characters can get a good look at the creature. Any knight who makes a successful Faerie Lore roll recognizes it as the famous Questing Beast. (See sidebar for stats.)





Ask if the characters wish to do anything other than watch the beast. If someone tries to sneak up to it, let him dismount and try the appropriate DEX rolls. Oppose his DEX with the beast's Avoidance of 35; a success means he gets close enough to touch it, whereupon the creature leaps up and dashes off into the woods.

If the squires try to approach the beast without sneaking, it hears them at once, jerks its head out of the water to look at them for a fraction of a second, and then leaps off into the woods.

Almost immediately after the creature leaves, for whatever reason, or after a few moments if they do not scare it off, have each character make another Awareness roll. Those who succeed hear something else is approaching, sounding like a mounted, armored man crashing through the brush. Soon, a mounted knight, without squire or retinue, rides toward the pool on a particularly fine hunting courser; if it is still present, the Questing Beast now turns and slips into the brush, once again accompanied by the sound of a pack of pursuing hounds, which seem to emanate from inside it!

Allow each character to make a Heraldry roll with a +5 modifier due to the mysterious knight's Glory. A successful roll indicates that the figure is a knight of the de Galis clan; a critical success discerns that the knight is none other than King Pellinore himself. (See sidebar.)

Pellinore sees the squires and asks them, "Have you seen Glatissant, a large, peculiar creature, pass by here?" If they admit they have, he asks how recently — and of course,

it was quite recent. He lets out a great whoop, thanks them quickly, and goes crashing off at once into the woods. If the PCs do not note it for themselves, Pellinore makes no offer of giving them his identity; if they ask directly, not having recognized him by his heraldry, he is proud and imperious, calling himself "a knight of excellence," but avoids giving away his identity.

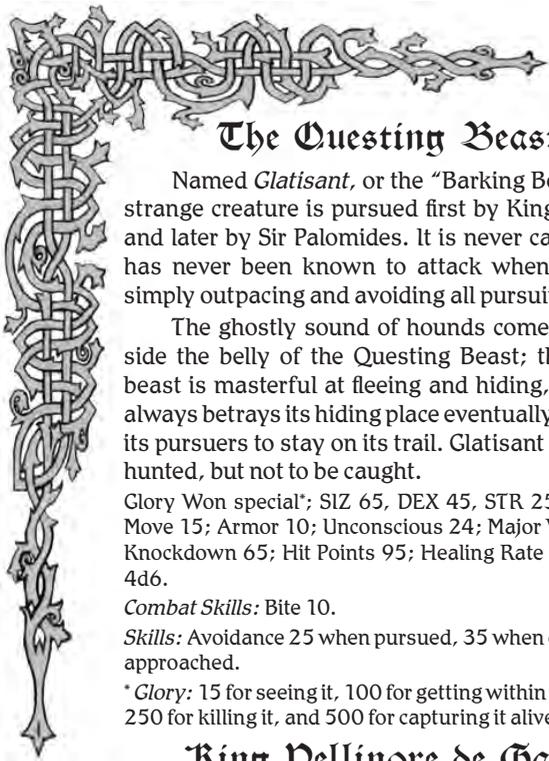
## FURTHER ADVENTURES

Continue the next year of game time (following the Introductory Scenario) with the characters traveling around their county, and also exploring the nearby lands. The exploration of Logres is a regular theme in this early stage of the campaign. Let characters get to know the noblemen who are important, and meet other Gamemaster characters of interest.

### THE SKIRMISH OF ALLINGTON

Sir Elad regularly rides patrol around the lands of Salisbury. The player knights must accompany him on patrol; this familiarizes the players with the setting and gives them a practical idea of the scale of the county. This brief scenario also gives everyone a chance to fight an actual combat.

When the patrol rides in the east, travel along the Bourne valley and point out the manors every mile or so along it. Note that these do not show up on the main maps, but such settlements are common along most of the rivers of Logres. Note which, if any, of the characters' manors are along the Bourne.



## The Questing Beast

Named *Glatissant*, or the “Barking Beast,” this strange creature is pursued first by King Pellinore and later by Sir Palomides. It is never caught, and has never been known to attack when pursued, simply outpacing and avoiding all pursuit.

The ghostly sound of hounds comes from inside the belly of the Questing Beast; though the beast is masterful at fleeing and hiding, the noise always betrays its hiding place eventually, allowing its pursuers to stay on its trail. *Glatissant* lives to be hunted, but not to be caught.

Glory Won special\*; SIZ 65, DEX 45, STR 25, CON 30; Move 15; Armor 10; Unconscious 24; Major Wound 30; Knockdown 65; Hit Points 95; Healing Rate 6; Damage 4d6.

*Combat Skills:* Bite 10.

*Skills:* Avoidance 25 when pursued, 35 when cornered or approached.

\* *Glory:* 15 for seeing it, 100 for getting within 1 yard of it, 250 for killing it, and 500 for capturing it alive.

## King Pellinore de Galis

Sir Pellinore is the king of Gomeret, a land in Gales (Wales). He is a young king of the “old ways” (a pagan in his early 30s), and has an unnatural obsession with hunting the great and mysterious Questing Beast. Pellinore is away from his kingdom for years at a time, and has allowed evil men to take control; as a result, most of his family has gone into hiding.

SIZ 17, DEX 16, STR 13, CON 17, APP 17; Move 3; Armor 10 + shield; Unconscious 9; Major Wound 17; Knockdown 17; Hit Points 34; Healing Rate 5\*; Damage 5d6; Glory 10,452.

*Combat Skills:* Dagger 5, Lance 15, Spear 16, Sword 16; Battle 14, Horsemanship 17.

*Traits:* Chaste 2, Energetic 18, Forgiving 13, Generous 17, Honest 17, Just 12, Merciful 12, Modest 3, Pious 12, Prudent 6, Temperate 10, Trusting 10, Valorous 17.

*Directed Traits:* Suspicion (Uther Pendragon) +4, Suspicion (other Cambrian kings) +9.

*Passions:* Hate (Irish) 10, Honor 17, Hospitality 15, Love (hunting) 17, Love (hunting *Glatissant*) 28, Love (family) 12, Loyalty (lord) 15.

*Skills:* Awareness 16, Boating 5, Courtesy 10, Dancing 2, Faerie Lore 11, Falconry 8, First Aid 17, Flirting 3, Folklore 5, Gaming 3, Heraldry 8, Hunting 24, Intrigue 5, Orate 7, Play [harp] 11, Recognize 4, Religion [Paganism] 11, Romance 2, Singing 5, Stewardship 2, Swimming 2, Tourney 2.

*Distinctive Features:* Tall, black eyes.

*Horse:* Noble courser (5d6, Move 10).

*Equipment:* Noble clothing (£3), personal gear, travel gear, sword, boar spear.

\* This stat includes a +2 bonus for being a Religious knight of the pagan faith.



While the PCs are on patrol along the Bourne, a young man mounted on a pony comes galloping to the Marshall and delivers a breathless message. Knights are raiding nearby! Without hearing more, Sir Elad orders his men to prepare for battle.

Get ready to introduce the players to knight-versus-knight combat. This is a much more dangerous prospect than fighting bears or poorly armed bandits. Combat is an important facet of play, though, so learn it and teach it carefully. Take it slow. Make sure people understand what is going on, and keep events simple the first time.

Use Elad to lead the charge, using the “Skirmish Rules” from Chapter 6. If a player knight gets into trouble, let Elad rescue him — this time.

Throughout the skirmish, the enemy leader remains aloof, sitting atop his black charger on top of a nearby hill, simply watching. Sir Elad can identify him just before he turns his horse and rides off: He explains that it was a neighboring lord, the Steward of Levcomagus, who led this raid. He is an enemy of the earl’s family, and perhaps of the player characters now as well.

If there are prisoners, the knights take them back to the earl, who takes command of them. The earl listens to the account, showing anger but not expressing it verbally.

## THE ONGOING CAMPAIGN

You, the Gamemaster, have by this time begun your campaign in earnest. More information about the setting, its peoples, and the ongoing story will appear in the *Great Pendragon Campaign* sourcebook. The rest, though, is up to you and the players as you enter into the wonderful world of chivalric adventure.

Good luck!

## SOLO SCENARIOS

A solo scenario is a short scenario designed to be played by just one player and a Gamemaster. Such scenarios have several uses:

- **Additional Experience.** These provide relatively painless ways to try to get experience checks for some of a character’s traits, passions, or skills.
- **Previous Experience.** These scenarios can supplement the Previous Experience section of character generation, with Gamemaster approval. A player might want his or her character to be older than 21 years at the start of the game, and a solo scenario adds more interest and history to a new character than the standard character generation system can offer.
- **Compensatory Play.** Maybe someone missed a couple of games and the player wants to learn what his character did while he was away. Alternatively, a character might have chosen not to participate in an event or adventure, and is thus “out of the story.” Solo scenarios offer something for the player and character to do while the rest of the game continues.



• **Private Business.** Some things are done primarily in private — specifically, in *Pendragon's* context, the practice of romance.

Several solo experiences appear in this section: “Your Own Land,” for example, addresses a knight’s activities while taking care of his manor and other properties. “Vassal Service” is a similar sort of solo scenario dealing with a knight’s service to his lord. “Lost in the Woods” is perhaps the most oft-used scenario; Gamemasters can let a player use this solo whenever her character declines, for whatever reason, to participate in the ongoing scenario.

“At the Crossroads” allows for that famed activity of knights in the stories, who spend a surprising amount of time idling away the weeks by waiting by a crossroads, bridge, or ford — and jousting for sport with every knight who comes along. “The Lover’s Solo” can be used as a primer for the would-be romantic knight; however, this solo is reserved for use only after Arthur becomes king and weds Guenever.

## YOUR OWN LAND

Knights who own their own land also spend time on it, acting as both landlord and farmer. By spending most his time on his lands during a given year of game time, based on the result of this solo, a vassal knight might get several benefits, such as extra money; as well, he gets experience checks to his Folklore, Intrigue, and Stewardship skills, and a check for either the Just or the Arbitrary trait (player’s option).

### INCOME

Determine the kind of year your holding had, in general terms.

| <b>d6 Result</b> | <b>Type of Year</b>  |
|------------------|--|
| 1                | Terrible (blight, drought, etc.). See Step 3 in “Common Events.” |
| 2                | Bad. See Step 3 in “Common Events.”                              |
| 3–4              | Normal.  |
| 5                | Good. Gain an additional 1d20 shillings of income for the year.  |
| 6                | Excellent. See Step 3 in “Common Events.”                        |

### COMMON EVENTS

*Step 1.* Your lord visits. You gain a check in Intrigue.

*Step 2.* You deal regularly with the local commoners. You gain a check in Folklore.

*Step 3.* You review your estate. You gain a check in Stewardship.

If your holding has had a Terrible or a Bad year (see “Income” above), make a Stewardship roll; if you are married or have a steward, you may use your wife’s or steward’s value instead if it is higher than your own. If this roll is successful, you manage to maintain you holding’s health and status. If it failed, you spend the next year as a Poor knight unless you have at least £2 of other income.

If your holding has had a Excellent year, make a Stewardship roll; you may use your wife’s or steward’s value if it is higher than your own. If this roll is successful, you may maintain yourself as a Rich knight next year; if it failed,

you or your officers squander the excess, and you gain only normal revenue for the year.

*Step 4.* You sit in judgment. Roll 2d6 twice to find contestants in the argument. The first result determines the plaintiff, and the second is the defendant.

| <b>2d6 Result</b> | <b>Contestant</b>   |
|-------------------|---|
| 2                 | A rich farmer, who offers you £2 to settle for him        |
| 3                 | A rich farmer, who offers you £1 to settle for him        |
| 4                 | The local priest  |
| 5                 | A poor old widow  |
| 6                 | A peddler   |
| 7–8               | A farmer  |
| 9                 | A tradesman   |
| 10                | A poor farmer   |
| 11                | An attractive and flirtatious widow                       |
| 12                | A childhood friend, who offers you £1 “to help you think” |

Next, roll 1d20 to find out what the contestants are in dispute over.

| <b>d20 Result</b> | <b>Dispute</b>                |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1                 | Ownership of a cow            |
| 2                 | Ownership of a pig            |
| 3                 | Ownership of an ox            |
| 4                 | Use of the village’s plow     |
| 5                 | An unpaid debt                |
| 6–8               | An exchange of verbal insults |
| 9–12              | A brawl                       |
| 13                | A knifing                     |
| 14–15             | Petty theft                   |
| 16                | Theft of a valuable property  |
| 17                | Something about a wife...     |
| 18–19             | Something about a daughter... |
| 20                | A killing                     |

Once these things have been determined, you can either (i) Choose a party and decide in his or her favor, collecting any promised reward and automatically getting an Arbitrary check; or (ii) Attempt a Just roll and thus try to decide fairly, getting a Just check.

**Glory:** Ordinary manorial activities earn no Glory, although the mere act of holding land always gets 1 point of Glory per *librum* of income, gained during the Winter Phase. (A typical vassal knight’s manor earns £6 to £8 per year.)

## VASSAL SERVICE

Vassal service includes all the things vassals must do for their lord — standing guard at castles or manors, patrolling the borders, participating in hunts, giving advice, and otherwise performing a knight’s business.

Roll 1d20 on the chart below to find out which event, among all the things done, was of significant interest this year.

| <b>d20 Result</b> | <b>Service Required</b>            |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1–10              | Garrison duty                      |
| 11–14             | Border patrol                      |
| 15–16             | Armed escort (close destination)   |
| 17                | Armed escort (distant destination) |
| 18                | Enter tournament (local)           |
| 19                | Battle                             |
| 20                | Siege                              |

For each activity, the character gains a check in any one from among a number of skills and traits (player's choice). If paired traits are listed, the character gains the check in either one or the other, not both.

*Garrison Duty:* Gain a check for Awareness or Intrigue.

*Border Patrol:* Gain a check for Awareness or Horsemanship or for Merciful/Cruel, Prudent/Reckless, or Trusting/Suspicious.

*Armed Escort (Close):* Gain a check for Courtesy, Horsemanship, or Intrigue; or for Temperate/Indulgent.

*Armed Escort (Distant):* Gain a check for Awareness, Courtesy, Horsemanship, or Intrigue; or for Temperate/Indulgent or Trusting/Suspicious.

*Enter Tournament:* Gain a check for any one weapon skill; for Heraldry, Horsemanship, Recognize, or Tourney; or for Forgiving/Vengeful, Merciful/Cruel, Modest/Proud, Prudent/Reckless, or Temperate/Indulgent.

*Battle or Siege:* Gain a check for any one weapon skill; for Battle, First Aid, or Horsemanship, Recognize; or for Forgiving/Vengeful, Merciful/Cruel, Modest/Proud, Prudent/Reckless, or Temperate/Indulgent.

## LOST IN THE WOODS

Characters might find themselves leaving the company of the other characters and going off on their own, out of the larger game. If a lone player knight gets lost due to failed Hunting rolls (see the Hunting skill in Chapter 4), this scenario can be used as a compensatory solitaire.

Of course, this solo can also be used as a generic guide for wandering groups of characters who become lost. (Note that most of Arthurian Britain is wooded.)

*Step 1.* Each day, roll on the table below. If modifiers are applied, any number less than 1 equals 1, and any number greater than 20 equals 20.

**TABLE C-2: LOST IN THE WOODS**

| d20 Result | Effect   |
|------------|--|
| 1-5        | Wander aimlessly without encounters.   |
| 6          | Find a shrine. Make a Piety roll, a success granting a +2 modifier on your next roll on this table.  |
| 7-8        | Bandits. See below.  |
| 9-10       | Beast. Roll on Table 4-4 (in Chapter 4).   |
| 11-13      | Hostile Village. You suffer a -5 modifier on your next roll on this table.   |
| 14-16      | Friendly village. You gain a +5 modifier on your next roll on this table.  |
| 17         | Hermit found. You gain food and water for one day.   |
| 18-19      | Manor. See below.  |
| 20         | You have reached a familiar area or otherwise regained your bearings, and can resume making Hunting rolls as normal to continue on your way. |

*Bandits:* You are waylaid by 1d6 desperate bandits who attack with intent to capture and seek ransom. The bandits fight until half of them have been killed or incapacitated, at which point the rest flee; this counts as a defeat for purposes of Glory gained. They carry 1d6 pence each.

If you lose, you are captured and ransomed. You are stripped of all equipment and held prisoner until winter, when your liege pays this ransom. After collecting the ransom, the bandits take you to the nearest road and let you go.

*Manor:* In a solo game, the Gamemaster may wish to expand this into a meaningful encounter. In a typical adventure, a manor may be of little consequence and should not be elaborated upon. Roll on the following chart to find the basic tenor of the encounter.

| d6 Result | Manor  |
|-----------|--|
| 1-2       | Friendly. You are fed and offered a night's shelter. Gain a +5 modifier on your next roll on Table C-2: Lost in the Woods. |
| 3-4       | Neutral.*  |
| 5-6       | Hostile. You are most likely hurried off, possibly by arrow fire or harsh words.   |

\* Perhaps you must joust against the resident knight (Gamemaster's design), after which you may treat him as Friendly or Hostile (based on his traits and your success or failure).

## AT THE CROSSROADS

Arthurian stories are full of encounters with knights who reside at a road crossing, ford, or bridge seeking to joust with any and all peers. This undertaking is often self-imposed, a way to gain some Glory. Other times it might be a duty imposed by a lady.

This set of tables allows the Gamemaster to design foes for a knight who sets himself up in such a situation. Alternately, they can determine the stats for an NPC knight guarding a crossroads.

### STEP 1. TYPE OF ROAD

The types of roads determine the amount of traffic, and hence the number of opponents. If one (or both) of the roads is a Royal or Trade Road, then use the "Major" column on the table in Step 2. If both are paths, use the "Average" column. All others use the "Minor" column.

### STEP 2. ENCOUNTERS

If it matters, roll 1d20 to determine the number of traveling knights who pass by per month; otherwise, go to Step 3.

| d20 Result | Major | Average | Minor |
|------------|-------|---------|-------|
| 1          | 3     | 2       | 1     |
| 2          | 4     | 2       | 1     |
| 3          | 5     | 3       | 1     |
| 4          | 5     | 4       | 1     |
| 5          | 8     | 4       | 2     |
| 6          | 10    | 4       | 2     |
| 7          | 10    | 5       | 2     |
| 8          | 10    | 5       | 2     |
| 9          | 10    | 5       | 3     |
| 10         | 12    | 6       | 3     |
| 11         | 12    | 6       | 3     |
| 12         | 14    | 6       | 4     |
| 13         | 14    | 7       | 4     |
| 14         | 15    | 7       | 4     |
| 15         | 15    | 7       | 5     |
| 16         | 16    | 8       | 5     |
| 17         | 17    | 8       | 5     |
| 18         | 18    | 9       | 6     |
| 19         | 19    | 10      | 6     |
| 20         | 20    | 10      | 7     |

### STEP 3. OPPONENT QUALITY

Determine the quality of an opponent knight. For each traveling knight, roll 1d6 on the following chart, and then refer to the appropriate base statistics in Appendix 2. If this roll is used to determine the holder of the crossroads



rather than the travelers passing by a PC knight, treat a roll of 6 as a 5.

**d6 Result Quality of Opponent\***

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | Young knight                                     |
| 2 | Average knight                                   |
| 3 | Old knight                                       |
| 4 | Notable knight                                   |
| 5 | Famous knight                                    |
| 6 | Special Opponent. Roll again on the table below. |

\* See “Glory and Quality” in Chapter 5, where applicable, and find the appropriate stats in Appendix 2.

**d6 Result Special Opponent**

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
| 1   | Enemy knight (personal or family enmity). Roll again for quality, treating 6s as 5s. |
| 2–3 | 1d6+1 bandits  |
| 4   | 1d6 Saxon warriors   |
| 5   | 1d6+2 Pict raiders   |
| 6   | Extraordinary knight*  |

*Enemy Knight:* This knight is, or is about to become, a passionate foe of the PC. He fights to capture for ransom. If the player character has no permanent foes noted, he should quickly make up a name and a backstory, or ask the Gamemaster for one.

*Bandits:* These hard cases prefer to capture the knight for ransom. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (£1 each).

*Saxon Warriors:* These foes try to kill the knight. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (£1 each).

*Pict Raiders:* These foes try to kill the knight. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (£1 each).

*Extraordinary Knight:* See “Glory and Quality” in Chapter 5, and find the stats in Appendix 2. The Gamemaster should flesh this NPC out fully, giving him a name, history, allegiances, and so on. It might even be one of the famous knights of the Arthurian stories, such as Sir Kay, etc.

## STEP 4: FIGHT

Run each joust as normal. Each opponent is fought separately and successively. If the player character is wounded, captured, loses all his horses, or suffers some other misfortune, then the rest of his encounters are necessarily affected by that fact.

Each week spent healing subtracts 5 from the total number of knights not yet encountered for the month. For instance, a character on a trade road rolls a 12, thus expecting to fight 14 enemies that month. However, if the first one wounds him badly enough to require 2 weeks of healing, the player must subtract  $5 \times 2 = 10$  from the initial number of 14 opponents. After recovery, then, he can encounter only 3 more opponents for the month (given that he already fought 1 out of the remaining 4).

Victorious jousters who release their opponents only for ransom (see “Ransom and Blood Price” in Chapter 8) collect the money in 2d6 months. Characters may keep their defeated opponents’ warhorse, armor, and weapons if they wish, without incurring a Selfish check. However, returning the equipment at least half the time earns a Generous check.

## THE LOVER’S SOLO

This scenario can be used only once King Arthur is crowned and has married Guenever. See the *Amor and Love (amor)* passions in Appendix 1.

*Fine amor* is a long, often painful process for a knight, but one surely worth his efforts. Success is elusive, of course, and usually takes years to accomplish. However, perseverance is one of the greatest virtues of the Romantic knight, and the Glory gained from romantic affairs grows with time.

This solo is designed so that it can be done during the Winter Phase, and kept secret from the other players. It is used to determine success in a progressive love affair carried on with a non-player character.

The events of this solo should not be kept secret from the Gamemaster, of course, for the results should always be reported in case he can use it as part of his campaign. However, some players can be trusted to perform this solo on their own without a Gamemaster’s supervision.

*Note:* The Lover’s Solo can also be used to court a woman to become a wife.

### STEP 1: THE DECLARATION

The player must tell the Gamemaster, perhaps by secret note, that his character wishes to declare love, in private, to a lady. Determine the strength of the Amor passion (see Appendix 1) for both characters.

If the knight has one particular lady in mind, the player ought to write her name down someplace on his character sheet. She might be a well-known Gamemaster character, perhaps an heiress or maybe even a married lady — or queen...

### STEP 2: VIRTUOUS REJECTION

The knight’s paramour is always reluctant, at least at first. The length of time, in months, that she is willing to resist his advances (even if she is favorably impressed), is equal to the value of her “Reluctance Factor” (RF); this value may be reduced by future successes in the wooing; the knight “chips away” at her reluctance through flattery, gifts, and the performance of deeds.

The starting RF value is equal to  $20 + \frac{1}{4}$  of the lady’s Chaste value – the value of her Amor passion for the knight (if any).

### STEP 3: WOOING

Each winter, when the knight and his lover are together (or if they spent considerable time together during the rest of the year), the wooing may proceed.

A. *The Gift.* Each Winter Phase, the knight must give the lady a gift worth at least £1, and then make a successful Amor roll to get her attention. Failure indicates that he makes no progress this year. If he is successful, she gives him a tiny bit of her attention and imposes a task upon him.

B. *The Task.* Once the knight makes a successful Amor roll during the gift-giving, his lady assigns him a task. During the Wooing Step, only relatively simple tasks are requested. (Roll 2d6 on the table in the “Lovers’ Tasks” sidebar, with a +1 modifier for each task he has already performed for her.) The knight must attempt the assigned task at once. Only one task is assigned per winter.



## Lovers' Tasks

The following table gives an idea of the type of deeds performed to win the love of a romantic knight's amor. The knight must make a successful roll against the skill or trait in parentheses to complete the task to his lover's satisfaction.

| Task Roll | Sample Task (by Difficulty)   |
|-----------|---|
| 2         | Sit around sighing and looking moonstruck (Amor).   |
| 3         | Make her smile (Flirting).  |
| 4         | Get some fresh flowers from far away (Energetic or Horsemanship).   |
| 5         | Sing a pleasant song, preferably in the garden (Singing).   |
| 6         | Recite a traditional love poem (for her benefit) at court (Orate).  |
| 8-9       | Create an original love poem at court (Compose).  |
| 10-11     | Be seen pacing the ramparts, distracted, late at night (Amor and Energetic).                                  |
| 12-13     | Enter a tournament, fighting in every event. (The Gamemaster should run the tourney.)                         |
| 14-15     | Recite a personal love poem at court (Compose and Orate).   |
| 16-17     | Recite a love poem addressed to the lover, but disguised (Compose, Intrigue, and Orate).                      |
| 18        | Joust with all strangers for a month. (See the "At the Crossroads" solo scenario.)                            |
| 19        | Fight a boar (or some other such beast), without armor. (The Gamemaster should run the hunt and the combat.)  |
| 20+       | Carry her favor at a tournament and win the prize of Grand Champion. (The Gamemaster should run the tourney.) |

The Gamemaster is encouraged to add other tasks of a similar (or otherwise appropriate) nature.



If the knight fails a task, the lady takes his failure as evidence of his insincerity: Her RF increases by 1d3 points. On a critical failure, it increases by 1d6+1 points.

Every time the knight succeeds at a task, he may choose any one of the following benefits:

- Increased Friendliness. The lady's RF is reduced by 1 point. With a critical success, the RF is reduced by 3.
- Increased Glory. Each successful task nets increasing amounts of Glory, in multiples of 50. Thus, the first success gains 50 Glory, the second gets 100, the third 150, and so on, incidentally, until the tenth task is completed, for a total of 3,200 Glory. Further tasks are possible, but never win any further Glory for the knight in this way (though he may gain Glory for things he accomplishes during the tasks themselves, as normal).

At successive stages of success, the lady allows her lover more liberties: he might be allowed to address her affectionately, or to kiss the hem of her dress, her hand, her arm, his forehead; he might be allowed to receive a hug, to rest his head on her lap, and so on. When the last point of resistance is overcome, she may allow her lover a soulful, lip-to-lip kiss.

Finally, when only 1 to 3 RF points remain (whether due to time having passed or his success in various tasks, or some combination of both), go to Step 4.

## STEP 4. HARSH TASKMISTRESS

This next stage of deeds begins when the lady's RF is from 1 to 3, and continues to her submission (i.e., once RF equals 0). The lady now selects a more difficult task to be performed. This task's value is equal to 2d6+6, plus 1 for every task the knight has already attempted for her.

At this stage, if the knight fails a task, the lady's RF increases by 1d6 points. On a critical failure, it increases by 1d6+3 points.

Successes at this stage lead only toward more liberties (that is, only time can reduce her RF now!): The lady may allow her lover to lick her lips, to whisper softly into her ear, to kiss her ears and head [RF 3]; to touch her breasts, to "French kiss" her, to lick her neck [RF 2]; and then to fondle her naked breasts and, perhaps, even to kiss them [RF 1].

When RF equals 0, go to Step 5.

## STEP 5: CONSUMMATION

The lady, at long last, admits her deep and abiding love, then agrees to marry her suitor. Ah, sweet success! Bliss! Rapture! The love is joined on all planes. The affair, however, is still kept secret, if possible.

The passion scores of both knight and lady change from Amor to Love (amor). Compute all the Glory acquired in this quest. Was it not worth it? (Go to Step 6.)

Be sure to check whether the lady becomes pregnant over each winter once this stage is reached. (See "Winter Phase" in Chapter 5.) If she is already married, her child may be her lover's or her husband's. (Or could she have more than one lover? Oh, what tangled webs hormones, emotions, and genetics weave....)

## STEP 6: SUBTERFUGE AND TROUBLES

Now that the lovers are in accord, they must struggle to keep their burning desire a secret with each year that passes. This is not easy, since their natural desire is to be together — and she is, as often as not, a married woman.

A. *Determine Discovery Factor.* The "Discovery Factor" (DF) is equal to 1d6 + the husband's Suspicious trait (if the lady is married to someone other than her lover) + 1 for each year for which the affair has now endured.

B. *Avoid Discovery:* The lover with the highest Love (amor) value must make a Love (amor) roll opposed by a DF roll made by the Gamemaster. If the lovers are successful, they each get 50 Glory for the year and remain undiscovered. If they fail, go to Step 7.

## STEP 7: THE JIG'S UP

The lovers have been discovered, exposed, or otherwise caught. If they are both unmarried, there is bound to be pressure from the families to arrange a marriage. This is *certainly* the case if a pregnancy is involved and they are both of the same social class.

Her husband? Oh, him! If the woman is married, roll 1d20 and subtract the husband's Vengeful trait value; then, compare the result to the following table to find the husband's reaction (or you, the Gamemaster, should simply decide what the most appropriate reaction might be):





#### Current DF Cuckold's Suggested Behavior

- 1 Nothing much. He doesn't like women anyway...
- 2 Privately chastises the knight, and forgives wife.
- 3-5 Privately threatens the hated knight, and forgives wife.
- 6-10 Seeks to have the knight exiled without punishment, and beats wife.
- 11-18 Publicly shames the knight, and exiles his denounced wife.
- 19 Seeks to have the offending knight stripped of his rank.
- 20 Wants to fight to the death (or have a champion fight for him).

Where all of this leads is up to the players, the Game-master, and the flavor of the campaign. It is possible that the knight, his beloved, and her husband all neatly forget it now that it is over. Perhaps he harbors a grudge. Maybe she doesn't really want to end it, or maybe she does, once her piety or sense of justice is tweaked. There is literally no end to the possible intrigue.



### A Cuckold's Woes

The table below gives some idea of the kinds of the efforts that might be made by a cuckolded husband to uncover a suspected affair, and the kinds of outside influence that can be involved. These suggested occurrences are based on the current DF of the affair, and are supplied only to provide flavor for the game.

#### Current DF Sample Occurrences

- 1-3 The husband is blissfully unaware of his wife's illicit activities.
- 4-5 He discovers gifts from someone else.
- 6-7 He has seen his wife's longing glances too many times, but isn't quite sure who is their object.
- 8-11 He arranges for someone to follow the suspected knave!
- 12-13 The lovers make a few overeager slips in public.
- 14-15 A meddling busybody interferes, and carries tales to the husband.
- 16 Consistent malicious gossip plagues his ears.
- 17 Spiteful maids expose their knowledge to the cuckolded victim.
- 18+ He or his agents set a deliberate trap to catch the lovers.





# Appendix Four: Battle

Battles, in which large bodies of men meet to kill each other, are a constant part of a knight's life. *Pendragon* treats such long, large-scale engagements in an abstract manner. Although a battle is technically a lengthy series of individual combats, the rules abstract this to make it shorter and more playable. If the Gamemaster and players enjoy drawn out individual melees, they may certainly play them out — but most players tend to find them interminable and, after a time, boring.

In each “battle round,” your knight makes one combat roll that represents an entire half-hour of combat and chaos, of shouting and riding, of advance and withdrawal. Though this seems almost too simple and uneventful, a wide variety of other options enlivens the process and makes the event memorable and exciting.

## THE FEUDAL ARMY

Feudal battles and armies are not complex, following a traditional and predictable pattern. Similarly, army tactics rarely vary. In fact, military sophistication is at a historical low in the Dark Ages. The feudal lords have enough difficulty just getting the armies to the field without having to maneuver them too! Battlefields are sometimes chosen in advance, though accidental meetings also occur — usually because the ability to scout for the enemy is poor.

The *Pendragon* battle system assumes that the standard feudal battle tactics are always followed. Variations in military strategy may be introduced in later supplements (or by the enterprising Gamemaster), but they will be applied to this basic system.

When a feudal lord goes to war, he first summons his vassals. Their obligation is to come fully armed and equipped with provisions for a 40-day period (though service time is of indefinite length if the homeland is being invaded). For local defense, the lord probably calls up the local levy as well, a mob of untrained peasants armed with farming tools. Rich lords might also hire mercenaries, especially specialty troops such as archers, engineers, and spear-men, or simply affordable foot soldiers if the campaign is going to last more than 40 days.

## BATTALIONS

Medieval armies are organized into three sections. Each section is called a *bataille* (or battalion), and has a fixed place to march and to set up for battle. Each is labeled by the order in which it marched on the road.

- The “vanguard” marches first, commanded by the second-highest leader of the army. On the battlefield, the vanguard lines up on the right side of the battle line.

- The main battalion marches in the center, led by the high commander of the army, and assembles for combat in the center of the battle line.

- The rearward battalion is commanded by the third-highest noble, marches at the end of the line, and assembles on the left side of the field of combat.

Battalions are divided into organic portions called *followings* that are commanded by their noble leaders (thus, a starting player knight is in a following led by Earl Roderick). Each following may then be sub-divided into units; a noble might name his household officers or trusted veterans as unit commanders.

A *unit* is defined as any group of knights following a designated unit commander; it generally numbers from 6 to 20 knights and their squires. A knight banneret is always considered a unit commander for his own knights (see “Commanders”), and may also have other knights temporarily assigned to him for the battle.

## TYPES OF TROOPS

Several kinds of troops accompany a lord into battle.

*Knights*, well trained and well outfitted, form a core of professional mounted warriors. They are the heart of the army.

*Sergeants* are professional mounted troops, decently armed and trained, but generally lacking the skill, confidence, and first-rate horses of knights. (Don't confuse them with the modern sense of the word “sergeant.”) Other fighters, such as poor mercenary knights without a liege, ambitious men-at-arms, or unattached squires — with good equipment and a horse — also count as sergeants for this purpose. Many mercenary units are composed of sergeants.

*Hobilar*s are mounted but unarmored troops usually used as scouts and messengers, but never mustered for battle as a unit.

*Infantry* are foot soldiers used to garrison castles, to assault walls, and to build camps. They are often armed with shield and spear, but sometimes with great spears, long knives, bows, crossbows, or axes, depending on their nationality. They usually wear leather armor, often augmented by miscellaneous parts of real armor plundered from the dead (treat as leather or hardened leather); only kings can afford to outfit their foot soldiers with good armor.



Engineers are men who can build and work the mighty engines and constructions used in siege, such as trebuchets, mangonels, and belfreys. They are also responsible for building castles able to withstand engines. Engineers also oversee siege works and the digging of tunnels (in the latter capacity, they are sometimes referred to as “sappers”). Without engineers, it is hopeless to besiege a city or castle.

*Camp followers* are other people who commonly accompany armies; they are worthless as combat troops. These followers are a constant nuisance on the march and are always a great trouble to feed, yet few medieval leaders ever forbid them — or have the authority to send them away. Spectators, suppliers, well-wishers, and hangers-on congregate to trade with or cheat the soldiers. Knights bring girlfriends or wives and servants. Virtually every army in Britain has camp followers.

*Heralds*, because of their special status, play an important part in battle. Heralds are recognized as neutral messengers and may not be attacked by anyone. Prior to a battle, they carry messages back and forth between commanders to plan the battlefield’s location. Just before the armies engage, heralds from both sides withdraw to the same hilltop, steeple, or silo to watch and record the events of the battle. They help each other to identify combatants. The victorious side chooses the name of the battle. Afterward, heralds may carry further messages between the combatants, commonly to make a temporary truce for burying the dead and exchanging ransoms.

## COMMANDERS

There are three main levels of command, all of which are important to the player knights in any battle. During the battle, these leaders make Battle rolls that affect the individual combat of the knights.

The *army commander* is the individual who commands everyone. His Battle roll is important only one time, when the battle starts.

The *battalion commander* is one of three such officers in the army. Each battalion commander’s Battle roll is important only once, the first time his battalion enters combat. This usually occurs during the First Charge, and is modified by the army commander’s Battle roll result.

The unit commander is the person to whom a knight reports directly in the battle. He is the most important commander to a player knight because his decisions determine what the unit does each round. As well, it is to his banner that an individual knight rallies between rounds. A knight stays as close to his unit’s banner as possible, for there his companions and friends can aid him if necessary (and vice versa). The knights of this unit are those who have agreed to protect him, who know and recognize him, and who depend on him for aid.

Note that an army commander always has his own unit, generally composed of his own hand-picked bodyguards; and he is also the battalion commander for the main battalion. Likewise, a battalion commander has his own unit of bodyguards.

Remember that battlefield leaders are always determined by lordly ranks, in order of precedence as noted



## The Army Marches

King Arthur has mustered his army to march to war.

*With him were nobles and barons and rugged knights, the mightiest ever raised in Britain. Warriors fully armored, most skillful with their weapons, and the most resolute in the world. Dukes and worthy lords, strong and beloved, assembled at Arthur’s call, all soldiers of great renown, magnificent kings in their golden crowns.*

*So the king, mighty and rich, with his Round Table moved out in royal array. Never in the world, except in lies and fables, was there a finer gathering of the flower of knighthood in one place, powerful and determined men mounted on their steeds. Many a stern warrior took to the road, banners glittering in the sun, silver and black, others gold and vermillion, still more silver and blue, a brilliant column joyfully riding over the fair meadows and glades.*

—from *The Knightly Tale of Golagros and Gawane* (in prose, from the original alliterative verse)



previously in “Battalions.” It does not matter that the lord in question may be only 16 years old with a terrible Battle skill. Lordship is precisely about commanding the military, and nobles are jealous of their prerogatives.

Two exceptions may exist. First, if the king’s Marshall is present, he outranks the lords, since it is precisely his job to command the army. Secondly, although a lord always commands, he may choose to take the advice of a trusted companion or officer on the battlefield. Nonetheless, the noble must give the orders and the success or failure is credited to the lord, not to his advisor.

The rest of the rigid feudal hierarchy defines the command structure. A knight is always in the following of his liege lord, or of a unit commander assigned by that leader.

If a single individual commands the entire force and it is too small to be divided into battalions, then the battle is handled as a skirmish (see “Skirmish Rules” in Chapter 6).

## THE BATTLE SYSTEM

The remainder of this appendix outlines a step-by-step process for the Gamemaster and players to follow to run a *Pendragon* battle. Players do not need intimate knowledge of all of the rules, but portions of this section are written with individual knights in mind, so that players can keep track of their own characters.

### I. BEFORE THE BATTLE

Each of the following steps takes place only once, before the battle.

#### A. DETERMINE THE ENEMY

Most likely, the campaign determines what armies are fighting and under what circumstances (or the players might raise an army and attack some personal foe). Regard-

less, the Gamemaster determines the precise makeup of the opposing army.

## B. NOTE COMMANDERS

Each army has a single high commander. Each of the three battalions also has a battalion commander. These commanders may be either player knights or knights determined by the Gamemaster and the story line.

If any of the commanders are player knights, note their Battle skills. If commanders are determined randomly, the Battle skill of an army or battalion commander equals  $1d6+15$ . A unit commander, if chosen at random, has a Battle skill of  $2d6+8$ .

Gamemasters should probably go into a little more detail for the enemy battalion commander facing the player knights, and also for an enemy hero or champion (whom the player knights may encounter on the field). Normally these two would be Notable, Famous, or Extraordinary knights: Give each a name and a coat of arms, and work up any statistics pertinent to a personal encounter.

Determine the enemy commander's bodyguards as well, each of whom should be at least an Ordinary knight with decent combat skills.

## C. DETERMINE PCs' UNITS

Decide whether all player knights are in the same unit, and in what battalion. Everyone in a battle must be with some unit, which is always assigned to a battalion. For simplicity's sake, assign all players' units to the same battalion unless compelling game reasons require otherwise.

Find the unit leader(s) for the player knights' units (it might be one of them). You need know only his Battle skill.

## D. DETERMINE SCALE

The battle's size is a function of the number of total participants on both sides. Each fighter, whether knight, squire, footman, noble, kern, or peasant levy, counts as one participant.

| Battle Scale | Number of Participants |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Small        | 200 to 2,000           |
| Medium       | 2,001 to 5000          |
| Large        | 5,001 to 10,000        |
| Huge         | 10,001 or more         |

## E. DETERMINE DURATION

Each army commander secretly writes down the relative determination of his side to fight to the finish, as indicated by the maximum amount of time (in battle rounds) that his army is willing to fight per day. The number assigned by each commander should be a number between 0 and 12, with 8 being the average.

Roughly speaking, the number recorded by each commander represents his army's attitude, morale, and willingness to fight, within the following guidelines:

| Acceptable Duration | Attitude                                 |
|---------------------|--|
| 0–2 rounds          | Poor (e.g. fearful, outclassed)          |
| 3–5 rounds          | Uncertain (cautious, doubtful)           |
| 6–10 rounds         | Normal (determined, willing)             |
| 11–12 rounds        | Good (zealous, hateful of foe, reckless) |

Normally an army rises before sunrise, then arms and prepares at once, but delays inevitably occur and slow the process. Depending on his or her sense of drama and realism, the Gamemaster can subtract as much as  $1d6$  from each commander's chosen duration for the day, representing the time needed for the armies to prepare and possibly other variables such as weather.

Note that this modifier could result in a battle actually being aborted for the day, such as when a commander chooses 4 rounds and then the Gamemaster subtracts 4 or more due to the die roll. Such is war.

Also remember to subtract a number of rounds if a battle is set to begin late in the day. To be allowed to fight for the full 12 rounds, both sides must begin early, even in the long days of the British summer. Other factors to consider may depend on the story. For instance, maybe an army tried to escape but was caught, so the assembly occurs in the morning and battle begins at mid-day. Under such circumstances, even a fanatical or reckless commander could attempt to fight for only 5 or 6 rounds.

Gamemasters must keep careful track of the number of rounds actually fought. When the number runs out, the side with the lower number breaks off and withdraws from combat.

Gamemasters should keep the final number for the opposing side secret from the players; this allows for some uncertainty to keep them guessing about whether to withdraw due to wounds, to use inspiration in a given round, and so on. Note that a battle may end early if one side routs or retreats.

Note that the First Charge counts as one battle round.

## F. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Selection of the battlefield is critical; some sites offer great advantages to one army or the other. Many other manageable matters can affect the outcome of a battle as well. The specific site may have been predetermined by the events or considerations of the campaign, but in game terms, the leader of each force is still entitled to make a Battle roll to affect his army's effectiveness.

In battle, as in a skirmish, the primary commander of each force makes a Battle roll before any direct hostilities begin. If the player knights' commander is not a PC, the Gamemaster determines the commander's skill and makes an unopposed roll on Table 6–3: Tactics Modifier (repeated here from Chapter 6 for convenience).

A number of modifiers apply to each commander's Battle roll on Table 6–3, as follows:

| Commander's Army                 | Modifier |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| Outnumbers foe at least 2:1      | +5       |
| Outnumbers foe at least 5:1      | +10      |
| Is outnumbered by at least 2:1   | –5       |
| Is outnumbered by at least 5:1   | –10      |
| Is in commander's homeland       | +10      |
| Is in enemy commander's homeland | –10      |

### TABLE 6–3: TACTICS MODIFIER

| Battle Roll Result | Battalion Commander Modifier |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Critical success   | +5                           |
| Success            | +0                           |
| Failure            | –5                           |
| Fumble             | –10                          |



The modifier from Table 6-3 is now applied to the Battle rolls of each battalion leader (see “Battalion Commander Roll”) in that commander’s army.

## II. THE FIRST CHARGE

To participate in the First Charge, a warrior must have a horse and a lance, and he must be in a unit that is going to charge. The knight lines up at the *front* of the battle. If not in the First Charge, a knight begins at the *back* of the battle.

### A. BATTALION COMMANDER ROLL

The Lance skill of all knights in the First Charge is modified by their battalion commanders’ Battle rolls, as determined here. Modify each battalion commander’s Battle skill by his army commander’s tactics modifier, if any.

| <b>Battalion Commander’s Battle Roll</b> | <b>First Charge Modifier</b> |
|--|------------------------------|
| Critical success                         | +5                           |
| Success                                  | +0                           |
| Failure                                  | -5                           |
| Fumble                                   | -10                          |

Unit commanders have no effect on the First Charge (only). They, like every other knight, are merely following their respective battalion commanders’ orders.

### B. FIRST CHARGE

Each knight taking part in the First Charge fights an opposed resolution using his Lance skill, as modified by his battalion commander’s battle roll, against an enemy determined by the Gamemaster.

#### *i. Determine Enemy Skill*

Most likely, the ongoing story will have determined the types and numbers of foes, such as Saxons, Irishmen, or other British knights, that the players’ army faces. The specific foe can be determined using the Battle Enemy tables found at the end of this appendix. They vary widely depending on the type of foe.

For ease and speed of play, Gamemasters should determine these opponents beforehand.

The Gamemaster assigns a foe for each player knight (or rolls on the appropriate Battle Enemy table) to determine the results of individual combat. This foe is used in the First Charge; then, at the Gamemaster’s discretion, another foe may be assigned or checked anew for each subsequent round of melee.

Assume that all the opponents in a given enemy unit are of the same quality and value. Thus, if the player knights are fighting against knights, and the Gamemaster rolls a 3 on the “Knights” Battle Enemy table, the result is “poor knights”: Hence, all the player knights fight against a knight with a Sword skill of 11, Lance skill of 10, a damage bonus of 3d6, armor of 6 (with shield), mounted on a rouncy.

#### *ii. Charge!*

Use the standard Lance combat rules. If the charge is against enemy knights, they go lance against lance. If against footmen, the usual +5/-5 reflexive bonus applies unless the foot troops have footmen with great spears in the front ranks, therefore negating the mounted advantage of the knights.

The Gamemaster rolls each individual combat separately for each player knight.

Remember to have each player note whether his knight’s lance shattered! If so, he may not use it in later battle rounds.

#### *iii. Missile Troops*

Bowmen, crossbowmen, or javelin-armed troops must be treated differently from melee troops and horsemen. When knights use either a lance charge or a normal melee attack against missile troops, the enemy always shoots first, before the knights can close. However, to simulate the nervousness of the missile troops, their skill is opposed by the knight’s appropriate weapon skill (i.e., usually Lance skill for the First Charge), just as if the two were in melee.

If a missile weapon wins the contest, damage is rolled normally against the knight. However, if the damage result is any *odd* number then the knight’s horse is hit; on any *even* number, the knight is struck. If the knight gets a partial success, he may use his shield to protect either himself or his mount.

Horse damage can be disastrous to the knight. A wounded horse immediately tries to stop its charge: It continues only if the knight makes a successful Horsemanship roll. On a failure, the horse stops; on a fumble, the rider is thrown (and takes 1d6 damage, as usual). Any horse that takes a Major Wound or is rendered unconscious or killed as a result of the missile fire falls to the ground immediately; the knight must make a DEX roll to land safely, or else he takes 2d6 points of damage from the violent fall.

All knights without a horse begin the next round *alone* and *afoot* (see Section III: Melee).

## C. FOLLOWER RESULTS

As in skirmish combat, each unit leader should make a Battle roll to determine the fate of his followers. See “Skirmish Rules” in Chapter 6 for more information.

## D. END OF ROUND

The first battle round is over. Knights may have lances intact, which they can use; or they might need to draw swords or other weapons for the subsequent rounds. There can be only one First Charge per battle, although it is possible that a unit can later make a lance charge if conditions are right.

## III. MELEE

The remaining battle rounds are handled much like standard melee combat, so this type of round is likely to be repeated several times.

### A. PREPARATION

Start each melee round by checking each knight’s status. Each player needs to know if his or her knight is...

- alone, attached to a unit, or leading a unit
- mounted or afoot
- holding a prisoner

If a knight was unhorsed last round, he begins this round *alone* and *afoot* (see below).

**Note:** Holding a prisoner prevents a knight from engaging in combat, for if the knight becomes engaged the prisoner escapes automatically and no ransom can be collected. A knight with a prisoner must escort him to the rear of the battle, or call his squire (if available) to remove the prisoner for him. If either of those does not occur, then the prisoner escapes.

## B. MELEE EVENTS

Roll 3d6 and check the following table for each player unit. The resulting modifier is applied to the unit commander's Battle and Followers' Fate rolls for the round, and to all of the unit's weapon rolls for the round.

If *alone*, an individual is treated as if he were his own unit (he must make his own Melee Events roll) and the result is applied to the character's subsequent rolls this round. See the Unit Battle Roll section below).

| 3d6 Result     | Modifier | Event/Situation                        |
|----------------|----------|--|
| 3              | -15      | Player battalion routs* (see IV.B.)    |
| 4              | -10      | Player unit retreats (see IV.A.)       |
| 5              | -10      | Surge of enemy knights                 |
| 6 (triple 2s)  | -5       | Player battalion retreats* (see IV.A.) |
| 6              | -5       | Player battalion outnumbered           |
| 7              | -5       | Player battalion surrounded            |
| 8              | -5       | Enemy pushes forward                   |
| 9-12           | +0       | Could go either way                    |
| 13             | +5       | Enemy is confused                      |
| 14             | +5       | Enemy battalion outnumbered            |
| 15             | +5       | Enemy pulls away                       |
| 15 (triple 5s) | +5       | Enemy battalion retreats* (see IV.A.)  |
| 16             | +10      | Surge of victory                       |
| 17             | +10      | Enemy unit retreats (see IV.A.)        |
| 18             | +15      | Enemy battalion routs* (see IV.B.)     |

\* Ignore these results if they are generated by a lone knight currently acting as a unit; roll again until you get a suitable result.

Note that the Gamemaster does not make separate Melee Event rolls for enemy units.

## C. UNIT BATTLE ROLL

This roll determines opportunities of the moment, or the lack of them, and whether the unit is involuntarily engaged by the enemy or *disengaged* this round (see below).

Only unit commanders and knights who are *alone* make Battle rolls in melee, modified by the most recent Melee Events result for that unit or knight. Knights who are alone always suffer a -10 modifier to their Battle skill for this purpose. Always roll first to see if lone knights are engaged by an enemy, as explained below.

Remember that battalion commanders and even army commanders may also command their own units directly.

### Mounted vs. Mounted, or Afoot vs. Afoot

| Battle Roll Result | Effect  |
|--------------------|---|
| Critical success   | Unit can engage, remain disengaged, withdraw to the rear, join a unit, or seek a special melee event. If mounted, it can make a lance charge. |
| Success            | Unit can engage, remain disengaged, or withdraw to the rear. If it engages, use the appropriate Battle Enemy table. Lance is used as spear.   |
| Failure            | Unit is engaged by enemy unit.  |
| Fumble             | Unit is engaged disadvantageously: Suffer -5 on weapon rolls.   |

### Afoot vs. Mounted\*

| Battle Roll Result | Effect  |
|--------------------|---|
| Critical success   | Unit can engage or withdraw.  |
| Success            | If the Melee Events result was 9 or more, the unit can engage or withdraw to the rear. Otherwise, treat as engaged by enemy unit. |
| Failure            | Unit is engaged by enemy unit.  |
| Fumble             | Unit is engaged disadvantageously: -5 on weapon rolls.  |

\* Remember that +5/-5 reflexive modifiers normally apply to combatants on foot fighting mounted foes.

## D. DISENGAGED UNITS

If a unit (or a lone knight acting as a unit) is disengaged, *each* member of that unit may perform one of the following actions (or check with the Gamemaster for multiple actions):

- engage the enemy (see III.D.i.)
- withdraw to the back of the battle (see III.D.ii.)
- get and/or give several treatments of first aid (see the First Aid skill)
  - check a fallen character for signs of life, give him first aid, get him on a horse, and ride him to the back of the battle
  - pillage a corpse or living person of goods and armor
  - take off or put on armor
  - retreat to the back of the battle
  - attempt to rally troops to himself (see below)

In addition, a lone, disengaged knight may perform one of the following actions:

- make a Squire roll to have his squire arrive at his side
- look for his unit if he is alone (see below)
- look for and find a riderless horse (see below)

**Rally Troops:** The unit commander makes a Battle roll, modified by an amount equal to his Glory/1,000 - 2d6. Check the result against the following table.

| Rally Result     | Effect  |
|------------------|---|
| Critical success | Rallies 2d6+6 knights to his side. If he was a lone knight, he is now a unit commander.   |
| Success          | Rallies 2d6+3 knights to his side <i>next round</i> . If he was a lone knight, he becomes a unit commander <i>the round after his troops rally to him</i> . |
| Failure          | No effect.  |
| Fumble           | If he is a unit commander, his unit rallies to someone else and deserts him. He starts the next melee round alone.  |

**Find Your Unit (Lone Knight):** A knight separated from his original unit may make an Awareness roll. On a success or a critical success, he sees his former unit and may rejoin it in time for the next melee round.

**Find a Mount (Lone Knight):** A dismounted knight may take the time to locate an unhurt and riderless horse somewhere on the battlefield, rolling 1d6 to find its type:

| 1d6 Result | Mount Located |
|------------|---------------|
| 1-4        | Charger       |
| 5          | Rouncy        |
| 6          | Palfrey       |

He then makes a Horsemanship roll to catch and mount the horse. On a success or a critical success, he mounts it in time for the next melee round.





## I. ENGAGE THE ENEMY

A disengaged unit (or a lone knight acting as a unit) that received a success on its Battle roll this round may attack a disengaged enemy unit as normal.

A unit that received a critical success on its Battle roll may engage enemy units in any one of the following ways: attack a disengaged enemy unit, assist an allied unit, or seek a special melee event.

**Attack Disengaged Enemy:** Units that are disengaged can attack an enemy unit determined by the Gamemaster or by using the appropriate Battle Enemy table. (See III.E.i.)

**Assist a Unit:** A disengaged unit (or lone knight) can choose to help another allied unit (including a lone allied knight). The assisting unit enters combat against whatever enemy unit is attacking the allied one (the Gamemaster will have determined the foe already), forcing it to divide its combat rolls as described in “Multiple Opponents” in Chapter 6.)

In addition, if the assisted unit is a lone knight, he does not suffer the  $-10$  modifier to his Battle roll this round for being alone (see III.C.).

**Seek Special Event:** Unit commanders or lone knights who got a critical success on their Battle roll this round (see III.C.) may roll 1d20 on the following table.

| 1d20 Result | Effect   |
|-------------|--|
| 1–5         | Disadvantageous assault: You suffer $-3$ modifier on weapon roll.                |
| 6–10        | Only normal targets available: Roll again on the appropriate Battle Enemy table. |
| 11–15       | Advantageous assault: You gain $+3$ modifier on weapon roll.                     |
| 16–18       | Enemy hero or noble: Roll at $+3$ on Battle Enemy table to determine bodyguards. |
| 19          | Enemy standard: Roll at $+5$ on Battle Enemy table to determine bodyguards.      |
| 20          | Enemy battalion commander. (See I.B.)  |

Next, as usual, roll on the appropriate Battle Enemy table, but with modifiers as noted above. Go to III.E.i.

*Note:* If the players manage to defeat an enemy hero, noble, standard bearer, or battalion commander, they have struck a major blow against the enemy. Their success modifies the next round’s Melee Events roll: Give a  $+5$  to the roll for a captured or slain hero or noble,  $+10$  for a captured standard, and  $+15$  for a captured or slain battalion commander.

### ii. Withdraw

Unit commanders may order their unit to the rear of the battle, out of harm’s way.

## E. ENGAGED UNITS

Engaged units and knights on foot who are engaged by mounted troops cannot attempt to flee, but must fight. Lone knights who are mounted or who are afoot but fighting others afoot may choose either to fight or to flee.

Any lone knight engaged by a powerful foe always has the option to surrender.

*i. Fight*

This is the standard combat round. In general, everything done previously was to reach this moment of knightly purpose.

**a. Find Enemy Skill:** Use the Battle Enemy table to find the knight's foe this round. (The foe is likely to change every round.)

**b. Melee:** Battle melee is handled just as a single melee combat round, applying only to player knights. Players must keep track of their results each round (i.e., critical, success, partial success, failure, or fumble). This will determine Glory at the end of the process. Remember that a player's combat skill may be modified by the most recent Melee Events result and/or by Special Event results.

Player knights may gain the opportunity to gain Glory in battle by capturing an enemy commander, a noble, or the battalion standard (see III.D.i). In these events, Game-masters should momentarily switch from the Battle System procedure to normal melee combat. The players can carry on their melee as long as they wish and are able. (Player knights may well die trying to attain such Glory.) The entire fight counts as one battle round. After it is over and the players either win or give up, switch back to Battle mode and complete the battle.

Glory for these special combats is determined a little differently from that in normal battle rounds, so players must record all the results of their combats, especially enemies killed or defeated in battle, so they can collect Glory for it later. The Glory for this kind of "special battle round" is equal to the minimum for 1 battle round, plus any Glory gained for slaying or incapacitating an enemy, figured as per normal combat.

*ii. Flight*

While engaged, lone knights may choose to flee rather than fight against bad odds. Although flight is dangerous, it may be the best thing when opposed by great odds.

Fleeing in battle is much like evading an opponent in melee: To flee, a knight or unit commander must attempt a DEX roll (if on foot and fighting other afoot) or a Horsemanship roll (if mounted) opposed to the enemy's weapon skill.

Mounted characters trying to flee from footmen get a +10 modifier on Horsemanship rolls for this purpose.

**Flight (DEX or Horsemanship) Roll**

| Result           | Effect   |
|------------------|--|
| Critical success | Escape: Knight is disengaged next round and gains +5 modifier on next Battle roll.   |
| Success          | Escape: Knight is disengaged next round.   |
| Partial success  | Escape: Knight is disengaged next round, but is hit during his flight. Take normal damage, with shield reduction.                                    |
| Failure          | Knight is still engaged. Take normal damage from foe, with no shield applied.  |
| Fumble           | Knight is still engaged. Take normal damage from foe, with no shield applied. He also drops his weapon (if a sword) or breaks it (any other weapon). |

*iii. Surrender*

Knights may surrender if in danger of being slain. It is customary for knights to accept surrender from other knights, and to then ransom them afterwards. Even enemy nobles generally accept surrender and may choose to ransom captured foes afterwards; others may just throw them into prison.

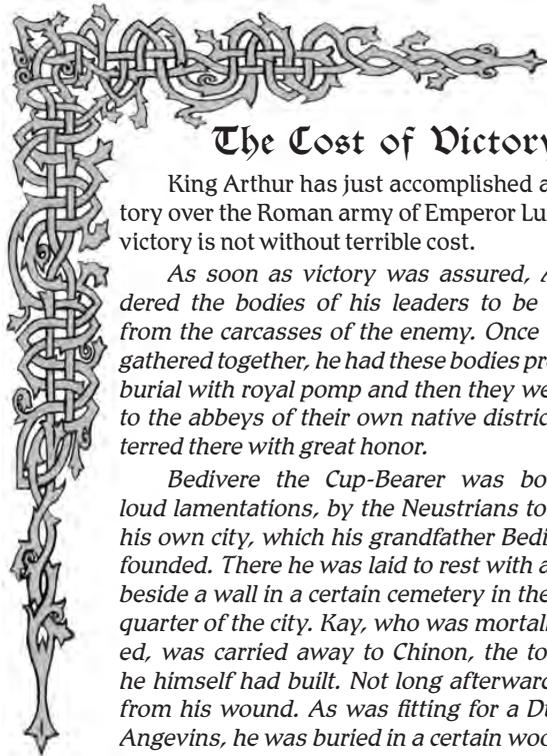
However, surrendering may be tantamount to suicide with enemies who are not knights, or to someone intent upon conquering the land (like the Saxons).

**F. FOLLOWERS' FATES**

After each complete battle round, as after each round in skirmish combat, each unit commander must roll on the Followers' Fates table to see what has happened to his unit. (For your convenience, this table has been copied, with minor alteration, from Chapter 6.)

**TABLE 6-4B: FOLLOWERS' FATE (AMENDED)**

| Result           | Effect   |
|------------------|--|
| Critical success | One enemy of appropriate rank is captured per 5 subordinates. No losses. |
| Success          | 10% losses (2% killed, 8% wounded).                                      |
| Failure          | 50% losses (10% killed, 25% wounded, 15% captured).                      |
| Fumble           | 75% losses (50% killed, 25% captured).                                   |



**The Cost of Victory**

King Arthur has just accomplished a great victory over the Roman army of Emperor Lucius. Even victory is not without terrible cost.

*As soon as victory was assured, Arthur ordered the bodies of his leaders to be separated from the carcasses of the enemy. Once they were gathered together, he had these bodies prepared for burial with royal pomp and then they were carried to the abbeys of their own native districts and interred there with great honor.*

*Bedivere the Cup-Bearer was borne, with loud lamentations, by the Neustrians to Bayeaux, his own city, which his grandfather Bedivere I had founded. There he was laid to rest with all honour, beside a wall in a certain cemetery in the southern quarter of the city. Kay, who was mortally wounded, was carried away to Chinon, the town which he himself had built. Not long afterwards he died from his wound. As was fitting for a Duke of the Angevins, he was buried in a certain wood belonging to a convent of hermits not far from that town. Holdin, the Duke of the Ruteni, was carried to Flanders and laid to rest in his own city of Therouanne.*

*At Arthur's command, the rest of the leaders and princes were borne to abbeys in the vicinity. He took pity on his enemies and told the local inhabitants to bury them. He ordered the body of Lucius to be carried to the Senate, with a message that no other tribute could be expected from Britain.*

—Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*



## IV. RETREAT, ROUT, AND PURSUIT

Some results of the Melee Events table (in III.C.) have special results, as detailed here.

### A. RETREAT

Retreat indicates an orderly withdrawal of forces from the battlefield. The armies still fight as they retreat, if necessary, possibly with a designated rear guard sacrificing itself (i.e., being ordered to the retreating army's rear...) for the benefit of the rest.

Note that battalions can be forced to retreat only on a roll of triple 5s or triple 2s on the Melee Events roll. Units are not required to retreat when their battalion does, but it is recommended. If they do not, then their subsequent Battle rolls suffer a -5 modifier because the unit is isolated.

Retreats are treated as part of normal battle. Units in retreat are likely to rally again and re-enter the battle, probably based on the actions of their commanders.

### B. ROUT

A rout is a panicked withdrawal from the field. Soldiers, even knights and nobles, abandon the field in reckless haste, often throwing away their encumbering equipment as they go.

Only battalions rout. Knights are not required to rout when their battalion does, but it is recommended. If they do not, then their subsequent Battle rolls suffer a -10 modifier because the unit is isolated.

Knights whose battalions rout have a choice of action depending on whether they are engaged or disengaged: Disengaged knights may escape, run away, or stand, while engaged knights may only run away or stand.

**Escape:** To escape, the knight makes a flight roll (see III.E.ii.), without modifier.

**Run Away:** The knight is one of the majority who are running from the field: He makes a flight roll (see III.E.ii.), with a -15 modifier.

**Stand:** The knight is determined to stand and rally a unit, or die in the attempt. Make a Battle roll using this special table:

| Result           | Effect   |
|------------------|--|
| Critical success | His heroic stand stymies the enemy. The battalion rallies! Gain 100 Glory, and the attention of the leaders.   |
| Success          | He rallies a unit of 2d6+1 men but is surrounded by the enemy; they must cut their way free. Enemy units from the Battle Enemy table have +1d6 men.  |
| Failure          | He is surrounded by the enemy, alone, and must fight his way free. In addition, he suffers a -5 modifier to weapon skills, a +5 modifier on the Battle Enemy table, and his enemy unit has +1d6 men. |
| Fumble           | He is deeply surrounded by the enemy. He suffers a -10 modifier to weapon skills, a +10 modifier on the Battle Enemy table, and his enemy unit has +2d6 men.   |

### C. PURSUIT

If the enemy has routed, a player knight may choose to be among those who have broken ranks to run them down. By its very nature, pursuit breaks the integrity of a unit,

rendering all pursuers alone, even if the leader of the unit orders the pursuit.

Only knights who are mounted may pursue a mounted foe. Men on foot may pursue dismounted foes.

Only two battle rounds of pursuit are possible during each single instance of a rout. Once a knight has pursued a routed enemy (even for 1 round), he may not rejoin the original battle this day, even if the battle continues among other battalions.

#### i. First Pursuit Round

The first round of pursuit is handled like a normal battle round of melee. This simulates chasing the enemy off the battlefield.

#### ii. Second Pursuit Round

Once the foe has fled, the pursuit is more like a hunt. In fact, this is so much the case that a Hunting roll is used (instead of a weapon roll) against the foe's opposed weapon roll for this round, and the results checked against the following special rout table.

No Battle roll is made this round.

| Hunting Roll     | Result  |
|------------------|---|
| Critical success | Pursuer found enemy camp: Gain 2d6+2 <i>libra</i> of booty and 2 more rounds' worth of pursuit Glory.   |
| Success          | Pursuer killed 1d6 more enemies and adds 1 round's worth of pursuit Glory. If he succeeds on a Prudent roll, he also captured an enemy.                         |
| Partial success  | Pursuer killed 1d3 more enemies and adds 1 round's worth of pursuit Glory.  |
| Failure          | Pursuer killed 1 more enemy and adds 1 round's worth of pursuit Glory. However, he was also hurt, and takes 3d6 damage (apply armor).                           |
| Fumble           | Pursuer was ambushed! If pursuing knights, take 6d6 damage from the surprise lance strike; if foot forces, take 3d6 twice. Get no pursuit Glory for this round. |

## V. AFTER THE BATTLE

### A. DETERMINE THE VICTOR

Determine whether the battle was a clear victory, indecisive, or a loss for the players' side. If the story has not determined the results, the Gamemaster rolls 1d20 on the Battle Results table for the results of the player's army.

Modifiers to the Battle Results roll are as follows:

| Situation Modifier                      |     |
|---|-----|
| A battalion on the players' side routed | -10 |
| A battalion on the players' side routed | -5  |
| Enemy battalion retreated               | +5  |
| Enemy battalion routed                  | +10 |

### TABLE D-1: BATTLE RESULTS

| d20 Result | Effect           | Fate Modifier |
|------------|------------------|---------------|
| 2 or less  | Decisive defeat  | +5            |
| 3-18       | Indecisive       | +0            |
| 19 or more | Decisive victory | -5            |

The total number of casualties for each army is determined by a final Battle roll made by the army commander, with the Fate Modifier from the chart above. Compare the result with Table 6-4 (see III.F.) to find the total numbers lost.

Burial of the dead is a tremendous task after battle. The losing side usually asks for a truce period to bury their dead, which is usually granted.

## B. TEND THE WOUNDED

Those who are too hurt to travel must be tended in a field hospital nearby. Others are taken by cart or wagon to cities and monasteries to be tended until healed.

Many characters, including player knights, may need extensive time to recover after a battle. The army may march on to campaign elsewhere, leaving them behind.

## C. DETERMINE PLUNDER

Only an army that wins a decisive victory obtains plunder, as determined by the Gamemaster.

## D. HANDLE RANSOMS

Although the actual collection of a ransom may take months, Gamemasters may wish to grant the ransom quickly, since in most cases a major battle is the end of the year's activities anyway.

## E. CALCULATE GLORY

### i. Battle Glory

The procedure here is to find the basic amount of battle Glory, and then multiply it by the several other factors shown here to find his *total* battle Glory.

| Size of Battle | Basic Glory per Round* |
|----------------|------------------------|
| Small          | 15                     |
| Medium         | 30                     |
| Large          | 45                     |
| Huge           | 60                     |

\* This value is gained for each battle round during which the character took part in the battle. Rounds spent at the back of the battle (i.e., without risk) do not count in this calculation.

| Combat Action (by Round) | Multiplier* |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| Critical success         | x2          |
| Success, partial success | x1          |
| Failure, fumble          | x0.5        |
| Disengaged               | x0.1        |

\* This multiplier is applied to the basic Glory for each battle round, as determined in the previous chart, based on the character's action in that round.

| Victory Modifier | Multiplier |
|------------------|------------|
| Decisive victory | x2         |
| Indecisive       | x1         |
| Decisive defeat  | x0.5       |

| Special Modifier                                 | Multiplier |
|--|------------|
| Character's unit was outnumbered more than 2:1   | x1.5       |
| Character's unit was outnumbered at 5:1 or more  | x2         |
| Character's unit outnumbered enemy more than 2:1 | x0.75      |
| Character's unit outnumbered them at 5:1 or more | x0.5       |

\* Apply a modifier from this chart only once; if more than one condition applies, choose the one that took place for the greatest duration during the battle.

### ii. Commander Glory

Army commanders receive Glory equal to the basic battle Glory x the total number of battle rounds x the victory modifier. He also gains individual Glory as normal.

Battalion commanders receive Glory equal to one third of that gained by the army commander.

Unit commanders do not receive extra Glory.

*Example of Commander Glory:* King Uther leads an army in a small battle (base 15 Glory per round) that lasts 8 rounds, but is clearly defeated. His resulting commander Glory =  $15 \times 8 \times 0.5 = 60$  Glory.

The Earl of Salisbury commanded the vanguard, so he gets an additional 20 Glory.

### iii. Individual Glory

If a character was involved in a melee Special Event (see III.D.i.), he gets Glory for the individual combats of that fight, calculated normally. This individual Glory is not affected by battle Glory multipliers; it includes only the normal combat Glory, which is added to the final result of the battle Glory.

## BATTLE ENEMY TABLES

These tables apply for the early years of the campaign; supplementary charts will appear in the *Great Pendragon Campaign* sourcebook. Although the tables are largely based on historical precedents, we've taken some liberties to make them more colorful and interesting, such as making some mounted troops available where history does not indicate they existed.

The quality given for a group is the average for its members. The leader is always one level of quality higher than the common group, so that a unit of Ordinary knights is led by a Rich knight, or a group of Saxon *ceorls* is led by a *thegn*, for example.

Where two values appear separated by a slash under the "Weapon Skill" column, the first value applies to the primary weapon and the second applies to the secondary weapon; if no secondary weapon is listed for a given chart, assume it is a dagger.

Damage listings already include modifiers for the type of weapon used, if applicable. For example, an Irish kern listed as using a javelin for 3d6 damage would have a Damage stat of 5d6 with a sword.



**TABLE D—2: BATTLE ENEMY — KNIGHTS**

This chart is used when fighting other British or continental knights. All knights are armed with sword (primary) and lance (secondary) and carry shields.

| d20 Roll | Quality   | Weapon Skill | Damage | Armor/Shield? | Horse (Damage) |
|----------|-----------|--------------|--------|---------------|----------------|
| 1        | Sergeant  | 11/10        | 3d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 2        | Ordinary† | 11/10        | 3d6    | 6/Y           | Charger (6d6)  |
| 3        | Poor†     | 11/10        | 3d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 4        | Poor†     | 12/11        | 3d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 5        | Poor†     | 13/12        | 3d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 6        | Ordinary† | 13/12        | 4d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 7        | Rich†     | 14/12        | 4d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 8        | Ordinary† | 14/12        | 4d6    | 6/Y           | Charger (6d6)  |
| 9        | Poor†     | 14/12        | 4d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 10       | Ordinary† | 14/12        | 5d6    | 6/Y           | Charger (6d6)  |
| 11       | Poor†     | 15/13        | 4d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 12       | Rich†     | 15/13        | 4d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 13       | Poor†     | 16/14        | 5d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 14       | Ordinary† | 16/14        | 5d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 15       | Sergeant  | 17/14        | 5d6    | 10/Y          | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 16       | Ordinary† | 17/15        | 5d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 17       | Rich†     | 18/16        | 6d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 18       | Ordinary† | 19/17        | 6d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 19       | Poor†     | 19/17        | 5d6    | 6/Y           | Rouncy (4d6)   |
| 20       | Ordinary† | 20/18        | 6d6    | 10/Y          | Charger (6d6)  |
| 21+      | Rich†     | 25/16        | 6d6    | 12/Y          | Charger (7d6)  |

**TABLE D—3: BATTLE ENEMY — FOOTMEN**

This chart is used for British or continental foot soldiers. Secondary weapon is always a dagger.

| d20 Roll | Quality             | Weapon Skill | Weapon        | Damage | Armor/Shield? |
|----------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| 1        | Peasant             | 5/1          | Shovel (−1d6) | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 2        | Peasant             | 10/1         | Hoe (−1d6)    | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 3        | Archer‡             | 10/1         | Bow           | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 4        | <b>Foot soldier</b> | 10/5         | Great spear   | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 5        | Archer‡             | 12/4         | Bow           | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 6        | Foot soldier        | 12/5         | Spear         | 4d6    | 1/Y           |
| 7        | Archer‡             | 13/6         | Bow           | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 8        | Foot soldier        | 13/7         | Spear         | 4d6    | 2/Y           |
| 9        | Archer‡             | 14/6         | Bow           | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 10       | <b>Foot soldier</b> | 14/6         | Great spear   | 5d6    | 2/N           |
| 11       | Archer‡             | 15/6         | Bow           | 3d6    | 2/N           |
| 12       | Foot soldier        | 15/8         | Spear         | 4d6    | 4/Y           |
| 13       | Archer‡             | 16/6         | Bow           | 3d6    | 4/N           |
| 14       | Foot soldier        | 16/8         | Sword         | 5d6    | 4/Y           |
| 15       | Archer‡             | 17/7         | Bow           | 3d6    | 4/N           |
| 16       | <b>Foot soldier</b> | 17/8         | Great spear   | 5d6    | 4/N           |
| 17       | Archer‡             | 18/7         | Bow           | 3d6    | 4/N           |
| 18       | <b>Foot soldier</b> | 19/10        | Great spear   | 6d6    | 6/N           |
| 19       | Archer‡             | 20/8         | Bow           | 3d6    | 4/N           |
| 20       | Foot soldier        | 20/13        | Sword         | 5d6    | 6/Y           |
| 21+      | <b>Elite guard</b>  | 21/15        | Great spear   | 5d6    | 11/N          |

## TABLE D-4: BATTLE ENEMY — SAXONS

The characteristic of a Saxon army is to have large numbers of foot troops. These are mustered in units of mixed troop types of varying quality, led by a *thegn* who is guarded by *heorthgeneats*, and including *ceorls*. The different types are divided into units on the chart below.

Secondary damage listings are for missile weapons, if applicable.

| d20 Roll | Quality               | Weapon Skill | Weapon         | Damage   | Armor/Shield? |
|----------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------|---------------|
| 1        | <b>Ceorl</b>          | 5/2          | Great spear    | 3d6      | 1/N           |
| 2        | <b>Ceorl</b>          | 10/4         | Great spear    | 4d6      | 1/N           |
| 3        | Ceorl‡                | 10/4         | Bow            | 3d6      | 1/N           |
| 4        | Ceorl                 | 11/5         | Spear          | 3d6      | 1/Y           |
| 5        | Ceorl‡                | 12/8         | Javelin        | 3d6      | 1/Y           |
| 6        | Ceorl                 | 12/5         | Spear          | 5d6      | 4/Y           |
| 7        | <b>Heorthgeneat†</b>  | 13/10        | Great spear    | 5d6      | 4/N           |
| 8        | Heorthgeneat‡‡        | 13/12        | Sword, bow     | 5d6, 3d6 | 6/Y           |
| 9        | Mounted heorthgeneat† | 14/12        | Sword, lance   | 5d6      | 6/Y           |
| 10       | Heorthgeneat†         | 14/12        | Sword, spear   | 6d6      | 6/Y           |
| 11       | Heorthgeneat†         | 15/12        | Sword          | 5d6      | 4/Y           |
| 12       | Heorthgeneat†         | 15/13        | Sword, spear   | 5d6      | 6/Y           |
| 13       | Heorthgeneat†         | 16/14        | Sword, spear   | 6d6      | 6/Y           |
| 14       | Heorthgeneat†         | 16/14        | Sword, spear   | 6d6      | 10/Y          |
| 15       | <b>Heorthgeneat†</b>  | 17/14        | Great spear    | 5d6      | 6/N           |
| 16       | Ceorl‡                | 16/15        | Sword, javelin | 4d6, 3d6 | 1/Y           |
| 17       | Mounted heorthgeneat† | 18/13        | Sword, lance   | 6d6      | 10/Y          |
| 18       | Mounted heorthgeneat† | 19/15        | Sword, lance   | 6d6      | 10/Y          |
| 19       | Berserker             | 30§          | Sword          | 6d6      | 10/Y          |
| 20       | Berserker             | 35§          | Sword          | 7d6      | 10/Y          |
| 21+      | <b>Small giants</b>   | 20           | Tree           | 8d6      | 15/N          |

*Ceorl*: An armed peasant or freeman.

*Heorthgeneat*: A professional warrior or bodyguard. Any unit listed as *heorthgeneats* has a *thegn* or a berserker among them as their leader.

*Thegn*: Saxon noble. They are leaders, and all their unit members are *heorthgeneats*.

**Berserker**: Madman. They are leaders, and all their unit members are *heorthgeneats*.

## TABLE D-5: BATTLE ENEMY — IRISH

An Irish army typically has many light troops augmented by a few units of highly skilled warriors, all led by nobles. Only rich chieftains among them are mounted.

| d20 Roll | Quality            | Weapon Skill | Weapon       | Damage | Armor/Shield? |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|---------------|
| 1        | Kern‡              | 5/1          | Javelin      | 2d6    | 1/N           |
| 2        | Kern‡              | 10/5         | Javelin      | 2d6    | 1/N           |
| 3        | Kern‡              | 11/6         | Javelin      | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 4        | Kern‡              | 12/7         | Javelin      | 2d6    | 1/N           |
| 5        | Kern‡              | 13/6         | Bow          | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 6        | Kern‡              | 14/7         | Bow          | 3d6    | 1/N           |
| 7        | Kern‡              | 15/7         | Bow          | 3d6    | 2/N           |
| 8        | Kern‡              | 16/8         | Bow          | 3d6    | 2/N           |
| 9        | <b>Kern</b>        | 16/8         | Great spear  | 5d6    | 2/N           |
| 10       | Kern               | 17/10        | Spear        | 5d6    | 2/Y           |
| 11       | Kern               | 18/12        | Spear        | 6d6    | 4/Y           |
| 12       | Bonnacht           | 14/13        | Sword, spear | 4d6    | 4/Y           |
| 13       | Bonnacht           | 15/13        | Sword, spear | 4d6    | 4/Y           |
| 14       | <b>Bonnacht</b>    | 15/13        | Great spear  | 5d6    | 6/N           |
| 15       | Bonnacht           | 16/14        | Sword, spear | 4d6    | 4/Y           |
| 16       | Bonnacht           | 17/15        | Sword, spear | 5d6    | 6/Y           |
| 17       | Bonnacht           | 18/15        | Sword, spear | 5d6    | 6/Y           |
| 18       | Bonnacht           | 19/16        | Sword, spear | 5d6    | 6/Y           |
| 19       | Bonnacht           | 19/16        | Sword, spear | 6d6    | 6/Y           |
| 20       | Bonnacht           | 20/18        | Sword, spear | 6d6    | 6/Y           |
| 21+      | Mounted chieftain† | 25/19        | Sword, lance | 6d6    | 6/Y           |

*Kern*: Light troops.

*Bonnacht*: Armored warrior or bodyguard.



## TABLE D-6: BATTLE ENEMY — PICTS

A Pictish army is commonly composed of hordes of poorly armed and armored warriors with high skill, augmented by a few bodies of superior warriors, all led by a band of noblemen with bodyguards. They never have horsemen.

| d20 Roll | Quality            | Weapon Skill | Weapon       | Damage   | Armor/Shield? |
|----------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|----------|---------------|
| 1        | Untried warrior‡   | 10/5         | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 2        | Warrior‡           | 11/6         | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 3        | Warrior‡           | 12/7         | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 4        | Warrior‡           | 14/8         | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 5        | Warrior‡           | 16/10        | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 6        | Warrior‡           | 18/14        | Javelin      | 2d6      | 0/N           |
| 7        | <b>Warrior</b>     | 13/11        | Great spear  | 3d6      | 0/N           |
| 8        | <b>Warrior</b>     | 13/11        | Great spear  | 4d6      | 2/N           |
| 9        | <b>Warrior</b>     | 14/12        | Great spear  | 4d6      | 3/N           |
| 10       | <b>Warrior</b>     | 14/12        | Great spear  | 5d6      | 3/N           |
| 11       | <b>Warrior</b>     | 15/13        | Great spear  | 4d6      | 3/N           |
| 12       | Warrior            | 15/13        | Spear, sword | 4d6      | 3/N           |
| 13       | Warrior            | 16/13        | Spear, sword | 4d6      | 3/N           |
| 14       | Warrior            | 16/14        | Spear, sword | 4d6      | 3/N           |
| 15       | Warrior            | 17/14        | Spear, sword | 5d6      | 3/N           |
| 16       | Warrior            | 17/15        | Spear, sword | 5d6      | 3/N           |
| 17       | Warrior            | 18/15        | Spear, sword | 5d6      | 3/N           |
| 18       | Warrior            | 19/16        | Spear, sword | 4d6      | 4/Y           |
| 19       | Warrior            | 19/17        | Spear, sword | 5d6      | 6/Y           |
| 20       | Warrior            | 20/18        | Spear, sword | 5d6      | 6/Y           |
| 21+      | Mounted chieftain† | 22/21        | Sword, lance | 5d6, 6d6 | 6/Y           |

### BATTLE TABLE NOTES

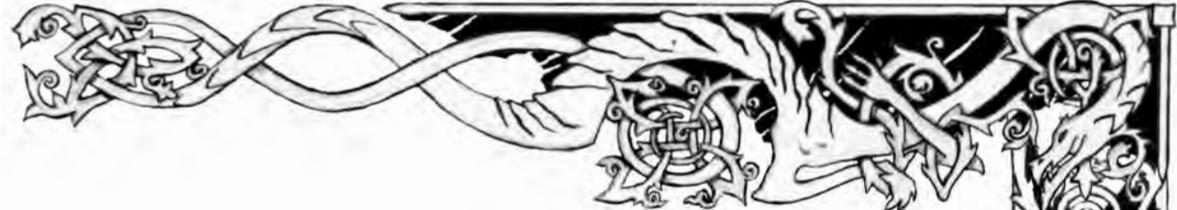
**Boldface** indicates footmen armed with great spears (negates +5/-5 modifier against mounted lance-wielders).

‡ These troops are missile-armed (see II.B.iii.).

§ These are berserkers; the bonus for the berserk tactic (see “Optional Combat Tactics” in Chapter 6) is already added.

† Any opponent from this unit is worthy of ransom. For knights, the quality determines the ransom value (see “Ransom and Blood Price” in Chapter 8).





# Appendix Five: Tournaments

A tournament, or tourney, is a friendly competition that provides opportunity for knights to exercise their martial skills in a nonlethal situation. It is also a market, a fair, and a general gathering for merry-making. It provides chances to win Glory, mix with other knights and ladies from around the country, and gain experience in both war and courtly skills.

A tournament is a formal affair that, over the years, develops a set of rules and procedures governing its events. As the *Pendragon* campaign progresses, tournaments undergo some changes as the courtly style becomes more elegant. The older styles are still practiced throughout the campaign, however, in the lands most distant from trend-setting Camelot.

In time, four types of tournament are recognized: Old, Full, Classic, and Elegant. Most tournaments are Full Tournaments, which is the standard form described here.

Another factor determines the type of tournament — whether or not blunted or padded weapons are used. Weapons so dulled are said to have been “rebated.” The rebated sword and lance with coronal are called “arms of courtesy.” (Regular weapons are called “arms of war.”)

Knights always need to check the style and weaponry of a tournament before they enter.

## TOURNAMENT GLORY

Knights attend tournaments for the primary purpose of gaining Glory. A knight gains Glory for every fight during the joust, the grand melee, or the challenge, but equal only to the value of 1/10th the normal Glory for each combat. This is because nonlethal weapons are usually used. He gains this Glory no matter what his status is once the tournament is concluded (i.e., whether he won the joust, was eliminated after two rounds, suffered a disabling wound, etc.).

Knights who win the elimination joust receive additional Glory. Furthermore, one knight is chosen as the Tournament Champion and receives Glory equal to 1/10th the number of knights at the tournament (as well as a prize of value and significance appropriate to the tourney’s size). Both the champion and the winner of the joust may be the same person.

Finally, the tournament host receives Glory for sponsoring the tournament.

## TOURNAMENT SIZES

The smallest size of tournament is a *neighborhood tourney*, in which only 100 knights or so participate. The melee champion and joust champion receive 50 Glory for this size tournament. The same amount is gained by the sponsor. Typical participants gain standard Glory (10 points).

Most tournaments are *local tournaments*, typically sponsored by an earl and pitting his knights against a neighbor’s knights. Volunteers are welcomed, and may join the side of their choice. Between 500 and 1,000 knights compete in these tournaments. Participants typically get 10 to 20 points of Glory. Sponsors and champions of these tournaments are awarded 100 Glory.

*Regional tournaments* are more unusual. Sometimes a rich earl gets extravagant and sponsors a regional tournament that draws knights from far and wide. Dukes might sponsor a tournament of this size. In Logres, they tend to occur only once every few years. Fully 2,000 knights typically compete. Sponsors and champions get 200 Glory points each. Participants typically get 20 to 30 Glory just for entering.

*Regal tournaments* have 3,000 or more knights competing. King Arthur’s annual Pentecostal Tournament is regal in size and nature. When a new king ascends to his throne, he typically sponsors a regal tournament. King Arthur sometimes sponsors them in distant corners of his realm. They are otherwise rare. Sponsors and champions of the melee and joust receive 300 Glory each, and participants typically receive 30 Glory.

## KNIGHTLY ROLES

The patron, or sponsor, is the most important individual at the tournament. He is usually the lord of the estate at which the tournament is held. His wife, the lady, bears half the responsibility (and gains the same Glory as her husband) for the tournament. He must supply a prize for the winner of the tournament, often something symbolic such as a hawk, but just as often something of value like a gold circlet or arm ring.

Heralds are important; they are official announcers for the events. The Marshals of the List are also important. They include two knights and two squires whose duty is to act as judges, arbiters, and overseers of the event.



Competing knights normally expect to participate in three events at a tournament: the joust, the melee and in challenges.

## THE JOUST

First comes the Joust, a single-elimination event designed to show off individual skill and luck, and resulting in a single winner. In simplest terms, it is the popular knightly sport of knocking each other off horses with sticks. Each knight who wins continues in the contest and meets another opponent. (For each victory, he can mark one win in the “Joust Score” box on his character sheet. If he loses he is eliminated from the contest and must mark a loss in his Joust score box.)

Each knight jousts as many rounds as necessary until either he is eliminated or he has eliminated all the other knights. If the latter occurs, he wins the joust.

In the event that one or both jousters break their lances but do not eliminate each other, new lances are made available. Up to three lances may be used. If all three break and no one has yet been eliminated, the matter is settled with swords on foot. The winner is the first man to knock the other to the ground.

Jousting is a martial art and, although not intended to hurt, can cause damage or even death. It uses the jousting's Lance skill, but with blunted, hollow weapons rather than pointed and barbed spears.

Glory is gained as through normal competitive combat, but at 1/10th normal. Thus, a character collects 1/10th the normal Glory for each round in which he succeeds on his combat rolls (usually 1–2 points per round). In addition, the winner gets a bonus amount whose value varies with the size of the tournament, as noted above.

## THE MELEE

The Grand Melee is a mock battle between the host's team and the visiting team. All participants must join either the host's or visitor's side. Combatants are expected to use rebated weapons or to withhold their blows.

There are a few other rules that must be followed as well:

- No striking foes from behind.
- No striking opponents who are unhelmed.
- No striking horses — injury to a man's steed warrants immediate dismissal from the tourney

Combatants remain in the fight until they voluntarily withdraw or are sent out by marshals, who act as judges to eliminate contestants. Simply being unhorsed does not eliminate a knight — sometimes his squire can bring a new steed; or he can capture one from a mounted foe; or he can receive one from a friend.

Marshals' rulings are final and no one may re-enter melee after being eliminated. The Marshals also separate combatants whose passions overcome their chivalry. Such bad behavior or other bloodshed usually results in the elimination of the offender.

Remember that not all action on the tournament field is continuous fighting. Squires ride about with new horses and lances for their knights, to administer first aid, and to

lead prisoners off the field. Knights of reserve knights wait patiently for their opportunity, sipping wine and critically observing the fight. Marshals ride about in heraldic garb shouting announcements and judgments. Leaders hold conferences to decide where reserves should be sent. A charge erupts here, a counter charge there. When a valiant fighter is unhorsed, a raging melee boils all around him as friends seek to rehorse him before he is discharged by the Marshals.

Eventually, one side is declared the winner, and the judges select the single most outstanding fighter and name him Champion of the Melee. He is the winner of the tournament, and wins the grand prize.

Glory is given to all participants as in a normal battle: 1/10th the rate for each round, plus the basic amount for entering. The winning team gets a bonus equal to the participation amount, which is dependent on the size of the tournament.

## CHALLENGES

The Challenges may come before or after the Melee, depending on the Grand Marshal's designs. Here, one contestant can challenge other contestants to various forms of combat for various reasons, including proving skill or strength, resolving stated disputes in a civilized manner, to increase one's standing in the eyes of his peers, or simply for love of the fight.

A knight may issue a challenge of whatever sort he wishes. He generally states who is invited to the contest, and what weapons may be used or what other conditions apply.

Some example challenges might be as follows: to any knight, a fight joust and sword, either horsed or afoot; to any Saxon, a fight with maces; to any knight, sword-fighting on foot; to any knight, a fight to the knockdown with two-handed weapons; to any Somerset knight, a joust to first blood; to any Round Table knight, a fight joust and sword, both horse and foot.

A knight may also challenge a single knight, by name, to a combat. This is an individual match, and although Glory is gained for it, there are often other motives in this sort of match. To refuse such a challenge without some reasonable excuse (such as wounds) is almost sure to earn a Cowardly check, and maybe worse rumors as well.

Any qualified individual may accept these open challenges. Glory is accumulated in the normal way. Fighting challenges likely net some Glory, but there is a danger of getting too wounded to participate in the big event: the Melee. Sometimes, in fact, challenges are fought after the Melee.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

Interspersed among these battles are lavish feasts, amorous adventures, courtly socializing, and other opportunities to engage in roleplaying.

## BEFORE THE TOURNAMENT

Upon arrival at the tournament site, a knight must present himself to the host, the same as at any other time

he enters a lord's domain. Then he must present himself to the Marshal of the List to sign up for the events. There, he must decide whether he will join the melee on the host's team or the visiting team. Once present, he may enter the rest of the social activities.

Before the competition begins, the participants are inspected to make sure that they qualify. Social activities are typically aimed at obtaining a lady's support for the event.

## INSPECTION

The "helm show" is an occasion when all tournament participants show up for inspection without their helmets. This gives the viewers a chance to review them and, if any are found guilty of reproach, name them. Similarly, at the same time, banners of the participants are hung from battlements and windows so that the viewers can check to see who is participating.

A knight may be refused entrance into a tournament if he is known to have been guilty or even accused of any of the following:

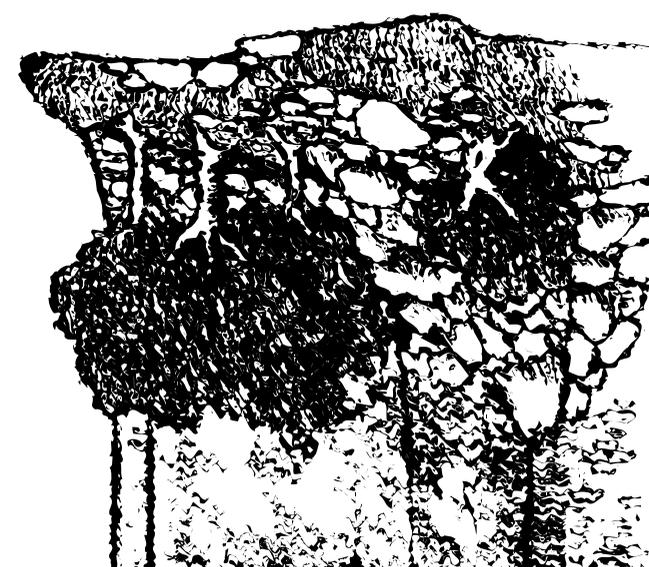
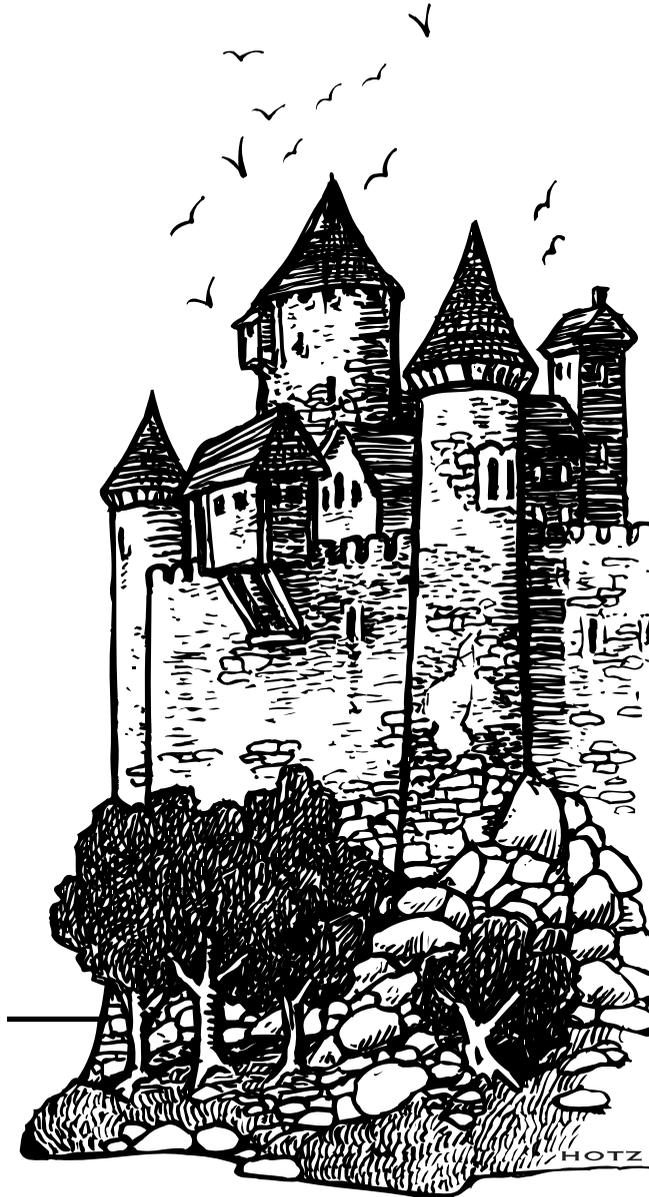
- Arson
- Breaking oaths or sealed pledges
- Cowardice on the field
- Discomfit in the duel on an issue of honor
- Excommunication
- Leading a free company
- Murder
- Robbery (or piracy)
- Slander or dishonor of women
- Usury
- Violation of churches

Historically, a participant in a tournament also had to prove his noble blood. Usually he had to prove that his male ancestors were all knights for the last three generations. This rule was often suspended for men who proved themselves to be of natural nobility and thus qualified. Since the average *Pendragon* game lasts only two to four generations, and since the knights in Uther's time were the first ever made, this rule is a bit silly for the campaign and is ignored.

## LADIES' FAVORS

A favor is a conspicuously worn token given by a lady to a lover or a knight in a tournament. Knights seek a lady's favor to inspire them and guide them safely through a tournament's perils. The usual token is a scarf or sleeve, though a glove, necklace, or ring might also be used.

The favor is usually either tied to the knight's arm or tied to the tip of a lance and thus driven through the enemy's shield.



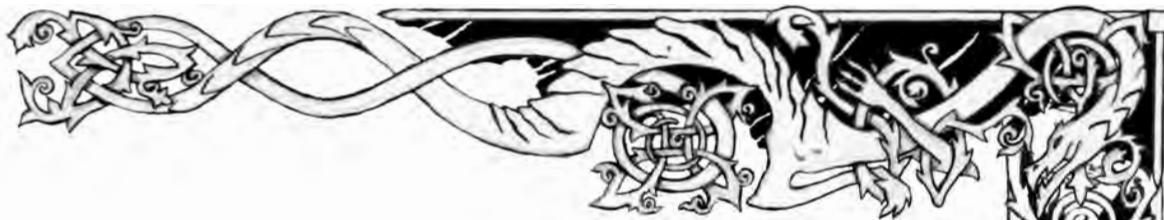


# Suggested Reading

The following books, listed as in an annotated bibliography, are recommended for players and Gamemasters wishing to obtain familiarity with the legend of King Arthur and with the history that surrounds it.

- Barber, Richard. *The Knight and Chivalry*. Harper & Row, 1970. An historical reference that traces the development of knighthood from its obscure beginnings to its decadent end, this book gives an excellent synopsis of the history and development of knighthood, and is highly recommended to Gamemasters wishing to maintain historicity.
- Bloch, Marc. *Feudal Society*. University of Chicago Press, 1964. Although over fifty years old, this text provides a definitive scholarly history of the development of the aspects of society critical to the *Pendragon* game. Concise, but not for the casual reader.
- Gies, Francis. *The Knight in History*. Robert Hale, 1984. Several life histories of famous knights from different periods of history illustrate the historical trends in chivalry detailed in this book.
- Hall, Louis B. *The Knightly Tales of Sir Gawain*. Nelson-Hall, 1976. Several not well known yet excellent tales of Sir Gawaine are here, taken from the Old English. It is the source of some of the quotes in this book, including "Golagros and Gawain."
- Karr, Phyllis Ann. *The King Arthur Companion*. Chaosium Inc., 1983. This definitive and highly readable catalog lists hundreds of characters, places, and things from Malory and the Vulgate. It delightfully reconstructs the lives of many lesser characters, turning them into complete personalities.
- Keen, Maurice. *Chivalry*. Yale University Press, 1984. Knighthood as an aspect of nobility is the main theme of this excellent book, which traces the development of this class through its history.
- Malory, Sir Thomas. *Le Morte D'Arthur*. Edited by Janet Cowen. Penguin Books, 1969 (two volumes). Sir Thomas Malory was a 15th-Century knight who compiled the most important version of the legend in the English language, published by Caxton, the first modern printer in Britain. Malory's book is the primary textual source for much of the *Pendragon* campaign. Many editions of this work are available, but this one has a good mix of modernization and archaic vocabulary.
- Silverstein, Theodore (translator). *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. University of Chicago Press, 1974. This is an excellent rendition of the most famous Arthurian poem in Old English, and an excellent example of the chivalrous ideals.
- Steinbeck, John. *The Acts of King Arthur and his Noble Knights*. Ballantine Books, 1977. American novelist Steinbeck pours forth his love for the subject, bringing the Arthurian characters alive for the modern reader. This work may be rather too psychoanalytical for some readers' taste; further, it is not complete, excluding the Grail Quest and final phases of the legend. One strength of this book is its wonderful portrayal of Sir Lancelot.
- White, T.H. *The Once and Future King*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1939. This modernist rendition of Malory's works is a great source for detailed information about the Middle Ages, as well as being perhaps the most readable modern version of the legend. If you read only one book from this bibliography, this is a good choice: It combines medieval lore with the traditional story in a delicious mix of literature. It also has terrific versions of King Arthur and Mordred (a real rotter).





# Designer's Notes

Tabletop gaming is always a bringing together of things: of players, of pleasure and anxiety, of fun and boredom. For me, making *Pendragon* was an exercise in this bringing together.

Primarily, I was bringing together two things: the feeling of Arthurian legend and lore, and the mechanics of the game. I wanted *Pendragon* to be such a device that the feeling was inseparable from the mechanics, so I endeavored to pour the utmost of my feelings and the perfection of my best mechanical logic into one form.

I feel that I succeeded, which is why I like the game so much. Here we find the volatile combination of passion and logic, of ideals and practicality, of individual and family, of planning and chance, of life and death — all played out by the combination of player and character. In the past, I have designed or co-designed seven published roleplaying games, (*RuneQuest*, *Adventurer's Handbook*, *King Arthur Pendragon*, *Prince Valiant*, *Ghostbusters*, *HeroQuest*), five published board games (*Dragon Pass*, *Nomad Gods*, *Elric*, *King Arthur's Knights*, *Merlin*), and one computer game (*King of Dragon Pass*), as well as innumerable supplements, adventures, and scenarios, and without a doubt *Pendragon* is my favorite. I consider it my masterpiece.

The short and simple answer as to why I feel this way is that *Pendragon* is a concise, elegant system that presents the desired effects in an entertaining, playable manner that delights both novices and scholars. I take pride in my work, and am very proud of this game.

The long answer is more complex.

It begins with my curiosity about the Middle Ages and my love for the King Arthur mythos. My curiosity began when I was about eight or so. I was looking through a big picture book that included photos of castles, and I clearly remember wondering why they had such tall walls and no roofs. Some time later I learned they were ruins, of course, inciting another passion of mine for exploring these lonely remnants.

I first learned about King Arthur in a copy of *Bullfinch's Mythology* when I was very young. I saw some Howard Pyle books shortly thereafter, and began reading every piece of medieval fiction I could get my hands on. I got my first copy of *Le Morte D'Arthur* when I was 14 and was astonished and delighted to learn there were stories about knights from before he was king, that Lancelot was not the only knight, and that there were many, many more books on the subject.

I began my first game company, Chaosium, in 1974, and a part of me always wanted to do a King Arthur game. My first was a board game, *King Arthur's Knights*, in 1978, but that was unsatisfactory. I was well published in roleplaying games when I finally decided to undertake presenting King Arthur.

I like *Pendragon*, too, because the work is all mine. In general, all of the other roleplaying games I have published have been works of committee. For *Pendragon*, though, I worked alone. I spent approximately 20 hours a week for a year designing and writing the core rules, and about the same time collecting and writing the background information. Ken St. Andre did give me a key to the resolution system to do away with the Resistance Table, but most of the rest was my own work. So, of course, I take pride in it.

I began with Basic Roleplaying as the basis, thinking we would publish another game in the genera/game system that had already spawned *RuneQuest*, *Elric*, and *Call of Cthulhu*, and that had or would include other less known games (*ElfQuest*, *Nephilim*, *Superworld*, *Worlds of Wonder*). But after a while I realized that I would have to expand that basic system because of the subject matter, and I wanted the game to be about more than playing a single hero and his goals. So, with its traits and passions, battles and families, the game graduated from the BRP system.

I decided early, too, that I would narrow the focus to be only about knights. I would not try to mimic the popular conception of fantasy that threw every possible player type into a big messy pool of options. I wanted to stick to the standards of literature, and did not cater to commoners, thieves, scribes, or even magicians. (Later, under pressure from Gamemasters who wanted a portrayal of Arthurian magic, I did publish a magic system for the game, and this naturally led to addressing the issue for player characters who wanted to be magicians. But I always felt this was a dilution of the essential game, and almost everyone who has commented says it is no fun to be a magic user in *Pendragon*. That is fine by me.)

By focusing on knights, I realized early on that Glory acquisition would be the key to the game. It was a reasonable coin with which to measure the value of a knight's life, both in the literary and the real worlds. So I made a list of things that knights do, and began fiddling with the relative values. With that "game coin" as the focus, I began working out how to collect it.



But if it was all about knights, then I needed to differentiate them. The system needed to quantify behavior, because I wanted it to be able to include patterns of conduct as different as William Marshall and Gille de Rais. Playtesting resolved the system for me.

This led to a proliferation of types. That is, everyone would have to be a fighting type, since that is the job of all knights. But chivalric behavior, romantic manners, and religious leanings were different. I eventually included character generation for people from every nation that produced original Arthurian stories and different religions as well (not in this 5th edition of the core rules, but to be published later in the *Great Pendragon Campaign* sourcebook).

Thus, I had the literary structure and idealistic frame for the game. But that alone is not enough. I love the setting of medieval reality and its brutal, gritty realism, the struggle between life and death. Though many games are tilted towards player-character ease, I feel that making it too easy dilutes the emotional impact of play. I wanted players to feel as worried about their characters as the characters themselves would. Since the perfection of Arthurian ideals is offset by this danger, I wanted to make a game that walked the fine line between lethal reality and the idealism of a visionary life dedicated to the highest ideals and values. This theme is the key to the Arthurian legends.

I didn't want to water down the knight's life of death and danger. I wanted players to know the danger, to have a reason for their knight to turn and run away once in a

while. The sweetness and lightness of so many previous fantasy games, which either were not lethal or had a hundred methods of resurrection and healing, is alien to the body of Arthurian lore. The original stories were entertainment for men who knew the realities of combat, and I felt that to water that down betrayed the literature.

Every *Pendragon* character is going to die, either from violence or old age.

But these people also lived in a world of ideals and hope that offered to lift them from the filth and dirt of their lives. Much of this came from spiritual ideals, an unreachable goal. Yet, these ideas of chivalry and *noblesse oblige* — and of romance and love — were real, and some people strove to obtain them. The legends of idealized knights striving for the unobtainable ideals would not have been so popular had they not moved those grizzled, ignorant old men, and so I felt they were critical to the game. I wanted it to mirror the concerns of that period. I did not want the simple, shallow reality of killing things without repercussions, without a concern for the larger world people live within.

So that essential tension in Arthurian literature — ideals versus reality — had to be the basis for the game.

But since literature and medieval life were the sources for the setting, the game required me to address many subjects that had never been dealt with before. As a result, *Pendragon* was the first roleplaying game that used the game system itself to address personal behavior, relationships, the passage of time and the generation of families, and Christianity.

Personal behavior was the key to all of this. In my years of gaming, I have always been irritated by characters who acted one way until a certain moment, when they would suddenly change. A key example would be those characters who were absolute lushes until the fairy queen put a flagon of wine before them, when they were suddenly teetotalers. I never denied the chance of a drunk doing this, but the incongruity of such reversals betrayed the essence of role-playing a consistent character.

So I invented the personality traits. I had played with this idea previously, but this time it was a playable system because of the opposed traits. The mechanic of directed traits came later when, during one campaign, a player developed a deep distrust only for Romans.

And then passions. Everyone in the literature is passionate. King Arthur weeps for the death of his friends, for the departure of the knights upon the Grail Quest; at other times he falls to the floor because he is laughing so hard. Guenever is enraged upon discovering Lancelot's inadvertent infidelity, and he goes stark raving mad under her scorn. Gaheis kills his mother because he thinks she is untrue to his father, Isoud dies of sorrow because she thinks Tristram is dead. I wanted the game to mirror these things, so I set it to give Glory for high passions — and at the same time, for players to risk losing control of their characters with this passion.

I had to grapple also with the passage of time. Arthur's story starts with his birth, or perhaps even before that, and it ends with his death. The literature has the youth of Gawaine and his son's early adventures. So I determined to make time move forward, and, in a desire to make the entire campaign playable, I insisted on the scheme of one significant adventure per game year. To ensure a desire and willingness to do this, I installed the Winter Phase, to allow characters to do that most amazing and wonderful thing of roleplaying games — to grow and change.

In my years of gaming, I had noticed the fact of “game inflation.” That is, even a stingy Gamemaster who gives only one magical sword and one magical horse and one magical shield will find that these never disappear. The characters always keep them and get stronger. And, of course, give one person a set of armor that is 2 points better than everyone else's, and soon everyone is clamoring — or worse, whining — for one.

I wanted them to build into their characters this natural inclination of increasing strength. It dovetailed perfectly with my desire to make the entire Arthurian saga coincide with the entire Middle Ages. Thus was born escalation, where the horses and the armor and the castles and all kinds of things all get better through the campaign, offering the players the chance to improve along with the story. And, of course, the villains improve as well.

And families. Families in Arthurian literature are incredibly important, and the creation of heirs critical to the genera. After all, it is that precise failure that brings the Round Table to ruin. And since I had already decided that time would pass, and thus people would (if they were lucky) slowly age, the introduction of families was natural. The function of Romance would take on meaning in the game as well, as knights sought wives, and we could play with the

concept of simply marrying for wealth and lands instead of love, if players wished.

Finally, Christianity was pretty much a taboo subject before *Pendragon*. People were leery of trying to portray the “living religion” of a large part of their customer base. But King Arthur would be impossible or false without it. The virtues worked in there perfectly. I decided, too, to introduce Paganism. After all, much Arthurian legend and most British folklore are based on pre-Christian religion and beliefs, so it was natural to use. The invading Saxons were a different flavor of Paganism. Thus, I added the alternate religions (not all of which are part of this 5th edition book, but will be published in the future).

Mostly, the game mechanics please me. I have devised a heads/tails system, the multiple dice *Ghostbusters* system (later used in a Star Wars game), and helped develop several games using the Basic Roleplaying d100 system. But this one, the *Pendragon* system, is my favorite.

The game covers combat, personal behavior, relationships, the passage of time, and the generation of families, all within one system. I spent countless hours working out the exact values for the people and creatures. I wanted to be sure that the monsters were compatible with the scale of the people. I tested it time and again to make sure that the Troit Boar, for instance, could not be killed by a normal human, that the Saxons would be formidable and scary fighters, and that the game's early armor did not stop all blows from normal fighting men, but that the later armor nearly did so. I have never been dissatisfied with the final stats.

Thus, to me, the combination of mechanics and the Arthurian setting came together.

I enjoyed the challenge of joining the imaginary places of legend into the fabric of British geography, combined with the historical 6th-Century facts. I used Phyllis Ann Karr's book, *The Arthurian Companion*, as a starting point. But I'd disagreed with a few placements based on my own reading. There were many decisions that were simply arbitrary, but most of them had reasons. I also searched out maps of 6th-Century Britain for the roads and settlements, and even used maps of that old coastline, which do not match those of today. It was a heady and satisfying effort.

Finally, the background took shape. King Arthur derives, ultimately, from British legend. I scoured my library of folklore and legend for all the places and things that might work with the medieval legend. I never used any ghost story or weird event that occurred beyond medieval history, but put in every place of faeries, every healing well I found, and the sites of ghosts, monsters, and faeries.

So it was that *Pendragon* became my most satisfying work. It brought together my professional game design career with my personal delight in the literature, my historical interests with the folklore interests, my pleasure at artistic creativity with its agony.

And it has brought us together, the players, Gamemasters, and designers. I invite you to enjoy it yourself, and hope the combination gives you pleasure as it has me.



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# KING ARTHUR Pendragon

## KNIGHT'S CHARACTER SHEET

PLAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL DATA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Son Number \_\_\_\_\_

Homeland \_\_\_\_\_

Culture \_\_\_\_\_ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Lord \_\_\_\_\_

Current Class \_\_\_\_\_

Current Home \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONALITY TRAITS

Chivalry Bonus [·] (total=80+) \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Bonus (underlined traits all 16+) \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |   |                  |                          |
|--|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaste _____    | / | _____ Lustful    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic _____ | / | _____ Lazy       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiving _____ | / | _____ Vengeful   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generous _____  | / | _____ Selfish    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honest _____    | / | _____ Deceitful  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just _____      | / | _____ Arbitrary  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merciful _____  | / | _____ Cruel      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modest _____    | / | _____ Proud      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pious _____     | / | _____ Worldly    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prudent _____   | / | _____ Reckless   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temperate _____ | / | _____ Indulgent  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trusting _____  | / | _____ Suspicious | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Valorous _____  | / | _____ Cowardly   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Directed Trait \_\_\_\_\_

Directed Trait \_\_\_\_\_

### PASSIONS

Loyalty (Lord) (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Love (Family) (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Hospitality (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Honor (15) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### EQUIPMENT CARRIED

Armor Type [\_\_\_\_ Points] \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing [\_\_\_\_ Libra Value] \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Gear [On horse # \_\_\_\_\_]

Travel Gear [On horse # \_\_\_\_\_]

War Gear [On horse # \_\_\_\_\_]

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### STATISTICS

SIZ \_\_\_\_\_ (Knockdown)

DEX \_\_\_\_\_

STR \_\_\_\_\_

CON (+3) \_\_\_\_\_ (Major Wound)

APP \_\_\_\_\_

Damage [(STR+SIZ)/6] \_\_\_\_\_ d6

Healing Rate [(STR+CON)/10] \_\_\_\_\_

Movement Rate [(STR+DEX)/10] \_\_\_\_\_

Total Hit Points (SIZ+CON) \_\_\_\_\_

Unconscious (HP/4) \_\_\_\_\_

### DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

Awareness (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Boating (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Compose (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Courtesy (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Dancing (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Faerie Lore (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Falconry (3) \_\_\_\_\_

First Aid (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Flirting (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Folklore (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Gaming (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Heraldry (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Hunting (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Intrigue (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Orate (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Play (\_\_\_\_\_) (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Read (\_\_\_\_\_) (0) \_\_\_\_\_

Recognize (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Religion (\_\_\_\_\_) (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Romance (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Singing (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Swimming (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Tourney (2) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

### SQUIRE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

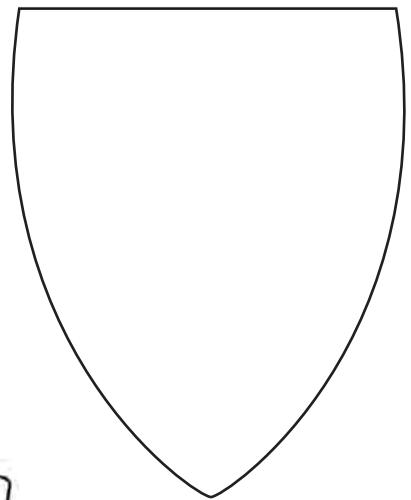
First Aid (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Battle (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Horsemanship (6) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



### Glory

This Game \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Hit Points



Wounds \_\_\_\_\_

Chirurgery Needed

### COMBAT SKILLS

Battle (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Horsemanship (10) \_\_\_\_\_

#### WEAPON SKILLS

Sword (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Lance (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Spear (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Dagger (5) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### JOUST SCORE

Wins \_\_\_\_\_ Losses \_\_\_\_\_

### HORSES

#### BEST WARHORSE (#1)

Type \_\_\_\_\_

Damage \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

Armor \_\_\_\_\_ HP \_\_\_\_\_

SIZ \_\_\_\_\_ CON \_\_\_\_\_ DEX \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_

#### OTHER HORSES

Riding (#2) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

Squire's (#3) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

(#4) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

(#5) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_



# KING ARTHUR Pendragon®

## WOMAN'S CHARACTER SHEET

PLAYER: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL DATA

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Daughter Number \_\_\_\_\_

Homeland \_\_\_\_\_

Culture \_\_\_\_\_ Religion \_\_\_\_\_

Lord \_\_\_\_\_

Current Class \_\_\_\_\_

Current Home \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONALITY TRAITS

Gentlewoman Bonus [·] (total=80+) \_\_\_\_\_

Religious Bonus (underlined traits all 16+) \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |   |                  |                          |
|--|---|------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chaste _____    | / | _____ Lustful    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic _____ | / | _____ Lazy       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forgiving _____ | / | _____ Vengeful   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generous _____  | / | _____ Selfish    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honest _____    | / | _____ Deceitful  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Just _____      | / | _____ Arbitrary  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merciful _____  | / | _____ Cruel      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Modest _____    | / | _____ Proud      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pious _____     | / | _____ Worldly    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prudent _____   | / | _____ Reckless   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temperate _____ | / | _____ Indulgent  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trusting _____  | / | _____ Suspicious | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Valorous _____  | / | _____ Cowardly   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Directed Trait \_\_\_\_\_

Directed Trait \_\_\_\_\_

### PASSIONS

Loyalty (Lord) (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Love (Family) (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Hospitality (15) \_\_\_\_\_

Honor (15) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### EQUIPMENT CARRIED

Clothing [\_\_\_\_ Libra Value] \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Gear [On horse # \_\_\_\_\_]

Travel Gear [On horse # \_\_\_\_\_]

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### STATISTICS

SIZ \_\_\_\_\_ (Knockdown)

DEX \_\_\_\_\_

STR \_\_\_\_\_

CON (+3) \_\_\_\_\_ (Major Wound)

APP \_\_\_\_\_

Damage [(STR+SIZ)/6] \_\_\_\_\_ d6

Healing Rate [(STR+CON)/10] \_\_\_\_\_

Movement Rate [(STR+DEX)/10] \_\_\_\_\_

Total Hit Points (SIZ+CON) \_\_\_\_\_

Unconscious (HP/4) \_\_\_\_\_

### DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

Awareness (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Chirurgery (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Compose (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Courtesy (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Dancing (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Faerie Lore (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Falconry (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Fashion (2) \_\_\_\_\_

First Aid (10) \_\_\_\_\_

Flirting (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Folklore (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Gaming (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Heraldry (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Industry (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Intrigue (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Orate (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Play (\_\_\_\_\_) (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Read (\_\_\_\_\_) (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Recognize (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Religion (\_\_\_\_\_) (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Romance (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Singing (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Stewardship (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Swimming (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Tourney (1) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SERVANT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

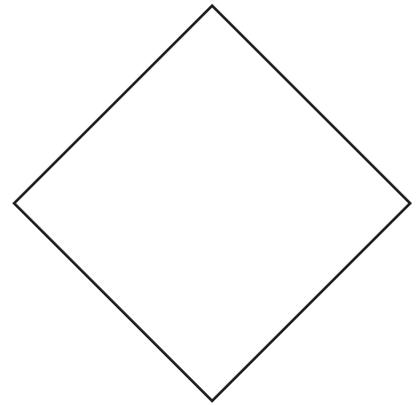
Age \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

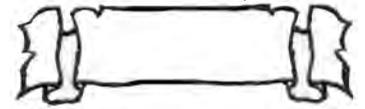
\_\_\_\_\_



### Glory

This Game \_\_\_\_\_ Total \_\_\_\_\_

### Current Sit Points



Wounds \_\_\_\_\_

Chirurgery Needed

### COMBAT SKILLS

Battle (1) \_\_\_\_\_

Horsemanship (3) \_\_\_\_\_

### WEAPON SKILLS

Dagger (5) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### WOMEN'S GIFT

### HORSES

#### BEST HORSE (#1)

Type \_\_\_\_\_

Damage \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

Armor \_\_\_\_\_ HP \_\_\_\_\_

SIZ \_\_\_\_\_ CON \_\_\_\_\_ DEX \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_

#### OTHER HORSES

Riding (#2) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

Servant's (#3) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

(#4) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_

(#5) \_\_\_\_\_ Move \_\_\_\_\_



King Arthur Pendragon



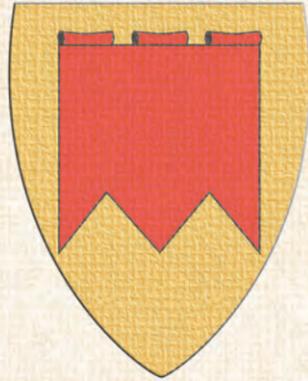
King Badgemagus of Gore



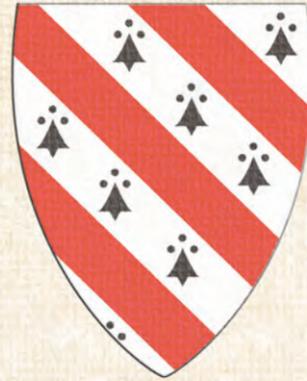
Sir Balin le Savage



Sir Bedivere



King Bors de Ganis



Sir Brastias



Sir Brus sans Pitie



Sir Dinadan



Sir Galahad



Sir Gareth Beaumains



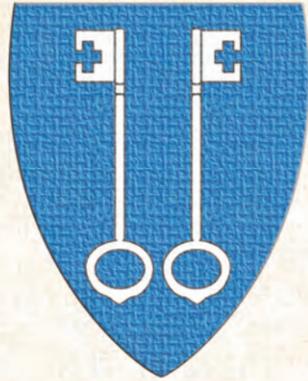
Sir Gawaine



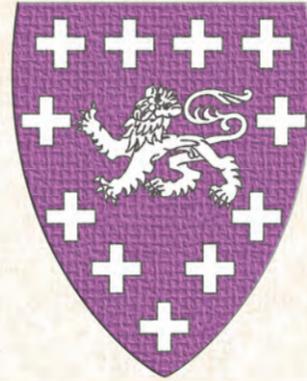
Sir Griflet le Fise de Dieu



Sir Kay the Seneschal



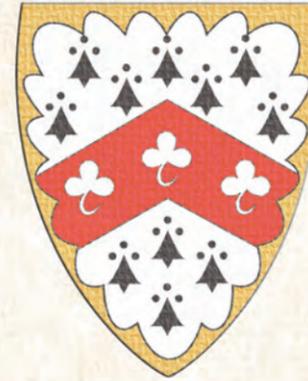
Sir Lamorak de Gales



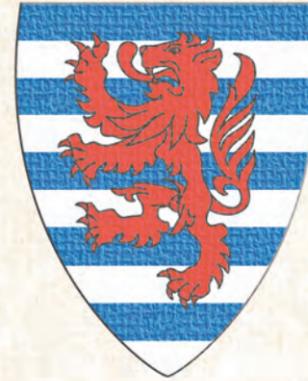
Sir Lancelot du Lac



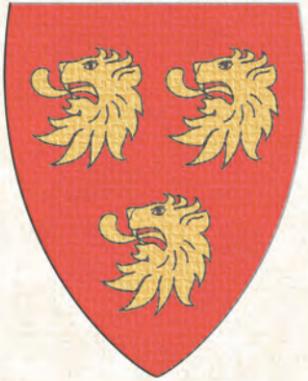
Sir Thomas Malory



Sir Marhaus



King Mark of Cornwall



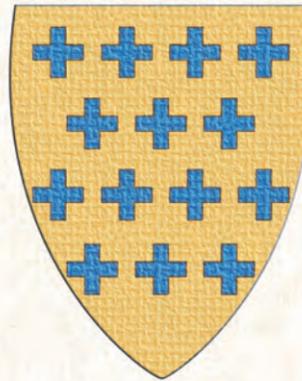
Sir Mordred



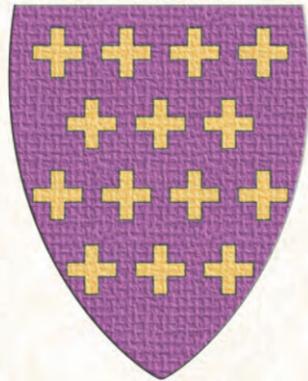
Sir Palomides



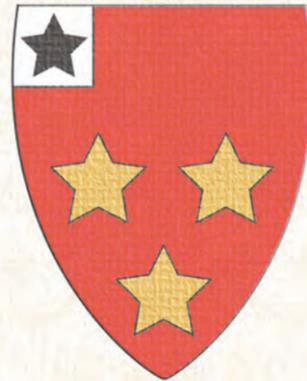
King Pellinore



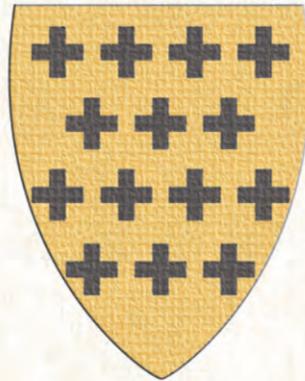
Sir Percivale



Sir Sagramore le Desirous



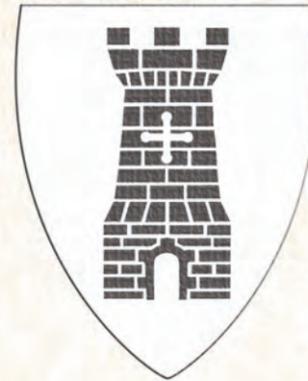
Sir Tor le Fise Aries



Sir Tristram de Lyonesse



Sir Turquine



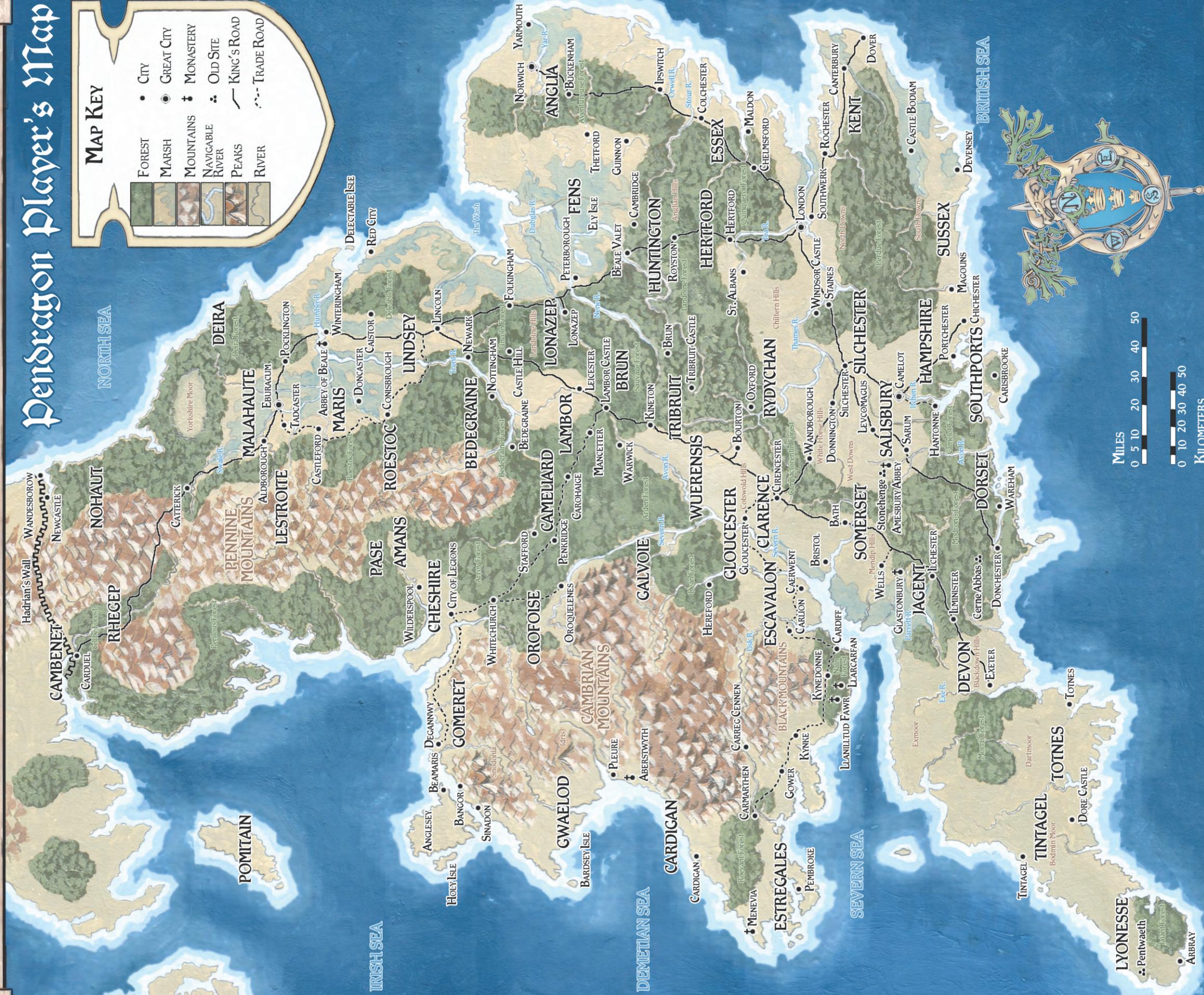
Sir Ywaine



# Pendragon Player's Map

**MAP KEY**

|  |                 |  |             |
|--|-----------------|--|-------------|
|  | FOREST          |  | CITY        |
|  | MARSH           |  | GREAT CITY  |
|  | MOUNTAINS       |  | MONASTERY   |
|  | NAVIGABLE RIVER |  | OLD SITE    |
|  | PEAKS           |  | KING'S ROAD |
|  | RIVER           |  | TRADE ROAD  |



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