

CHAPTER 3: GUIDE TO ARTHURIAN LEGEND

THE TRAINING OF A KNIGHT

The Knights of the Table Round were universally regarded as the finest collection of knights in the world, and were composed of knights from all over the known world. However, before one could join the ranks of the Round Table, one first had to become a knight, no easy task in itself.

A PAGE'S LIFE FOR ME?

The first step toward knighthood was to become a page, also called a valet or varlet (this is one reason the word varlet is commonly used as a slander toward another knight—essentially you are referring to him as a boy who needs over 10 years of seasoning to become a true knight).

At age 7, a prospective knight was sent to live with a governor or patron, to be introduced to life at court. Their early education revolved around religion and obedience to superiors, as well as education in the history of England and all its kings and rulers.

Their duties involved waiting table and carving meat at meals, working in the kitchen and stables, and generally performing all manner of menial tasks.

During their free time, pages engaged in hunting, falconry, fishing, wrestling, archery, horsemanship and tilting (hitting a stationary object, such as a wooden target with a spear on horseback). These activities, while certainly fun and engaging to an active young man, were also preparatory to the tasks a knight would have to undertake in earnest later in life.

THE SQUIRE'S TALE

At fourteen, if a page is worthy, he is elevated to the rank of esquire. Here, military training begins in earnest, and almost all of a squire's exercises were performed in armor, in order that he could become accustomed to its weight and carry it with ease in battle.

Horsemanship, vaulting into the saddle, running, jumping ditches, climbing walls and fences, all in full battle dress are performed by squires on a regular basis. Older squires are assigned to assist knights during tournaments and battles, carrying extra spears, tending to horses, and the like.

During a squire's free time his education concentrated on refining the young man for his later role, and a great deal of this "sensitivity training" revolved around the opposite sex. When not on campaign, squires were housed in castles thronging with young girls of station undergoing a similar training and refinement, and squires were encouraged to choose a girl as an object of their affection, and to wear some small token she would give them, such as a scarf, during their jousting exercises against other squires. Often these court dalliances turned into wives, but this was seen as

a secondary benefit to the training of a young knight to fight on behalf of ladies and treat them with gentleness.

DUBBING

A young squire's entry into the knighthood was handled with utmost solemnity. The squire would fast and pray for days, take confession and mass, and clothe himself in a pure white cloth. Finally, a sword was blessed by the confessional priest and tied around the squire's neck. After this was done, the squire made his way to a nearby chapel.

Waiting for the squire in the chapel would be a full-fledged knight, and the squire would kneel before him, arms folded over his chest. The knight would then question the squire about his motives for becoming a knight, after which the knight would take the squire's oath of allegiance and name him a knight.

After this was done, the squire would remove the white cloth and sword, and onlookers would assist the squire in dressing as a knight: armor, spurs, gauntlets, and finally the sword he had worn around his neck would be belted to his waist. When this was done, the squire would kneel before the presiding knight once more, who would draw his own sword, and perform "the accolade", three strokes with the flat of the blade on alternating shoulders, with each stroke accompanying the words "In the name of God, of Saint Michael, and St. George, I make thee knight; be valiant, courteous, and loyal!"

When this was done, the presiding knight would then give the squire his helmet, lance, and shield. The squire was now a knight.

THE HISTORY OF ARTHURIAN BRITAIN

AGE OF ANTIQUITY

In the earliest times, Britain was not inhabited by man at all, but by several races of giants (one reason why giants abound in Britain even after the time of Arthur) ruled by Albion, a son of Poseidon, and built numerous stone circles in which to perform bizarre rites of sacrifice and worship.

After many millennia, Hercules came to the island during his exploration of the world, seeking passage to the mysterious west. When Albion opposed him, Hercules killed him in an epic battle. After Hercules' departure, the giants set to tremendous wars with one another over who would rule the island, and these wars were so long and so terrible that the giants' numbers dwindled and dwindled, and the forests reclaimed the island, and the land grew wild.

Over time, the northern part of the island became occupied by the fierce men later known as the Picts and the Scots, while the Western Isle was settled by the Irish, for these areas had few giants, but the central area in later times called

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Britain was still too heavily populated by the giant folk for man to inhabit.

THE COMING OF BRUTUS

Brutus was the son of Silvius, who was the son of Ascanius, who was the son of Aeneas. After killing his father accidentally while hunting, he was forced to flee Troy, and after seeking refuge in Greece, Brutus and his followers fled west with his wife Imogen. Seeking guidance at a temple of Diana, Brutus receives this message:

*Brutus! far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Seagirt it lies, where giants dwelt of old;
Now, void, it fits thy people: thither bend
Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreaded might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold*

-Bullfinch's Mythology, Mythical History of England

After a long journey west, the rag-tag band of refugees landed at what is now Devonshire on an isle they called Albion after the giant king who formerly ruled it. Moving inland, Brutus established a capital, called Trojanova (New Troy), on the site of present day London.

After a reign of 24 years, Brutus died, leaving England divided between his three sons, Lochrine, Albanect, and Camber.

According to legend these events took place approximately 1,000 years before the invasion of England by Julius Caesar.

THE CONQUEST OF BRITAIN

After conquering Gaul, Julius Caesar cast his eye across the English channel to Britain, and boldly embarked across the water, hoping to take the island and add it to his growing list of conquests. He moved his forces up the Thames, intending to take London, thereby decapitating the island nation and conquering it quickly and easily.

Caesar was not destined to conquer Britain during that campaign, however, and was met with stiff resistance by King Cassibellaunus. At one point he engaged Prince Nennius in single combat, and Caesar's sword became stuck in the British prince's shield. When Caesar was forced to withdraw, his sword remained behind, much to the delight of the Britons.

*The famed Cassibelan, who was once at point
(O giglot fortune!) to master Caesar's sword,
Made Lud's town with rejoicing fires bright,
And Britons strut with courage.*

-William Shakespeare, Cymbeline

However, on a second try, Caesar conquered Britain, and forced the island to pay tribute to the Roman Empire, and took young prince Cymbeline as ransom, to be raised in Rome. When Cymbeline returned and took the throne, he was a very sympathetic ruler to Rome.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROMANS

Although the invasion of Rome was resisted bitterly, the two peoples became very close over time. And when the Empire began to fall, and forces were called back from frontiers such as Britain in order to protect interior parts of the Empire from barbarian invasions, the Arthurian Age officially begins, with a newly independent, and newly defenseless, Britain at the mercy of invading Picts, Scots, and Saxons.

THE BIRTH OF MERLIN

Born of an incubus and a virtuous woman, Merlin seemed destined for a life of wickedness and deceit. However, his mother was able to avert most of his father's lineage through the help of a priest, who baptized the child immediately after his birth.

How Merlin began his career in the magical arts we do not know, however we are given a brief glimpse of his master and teacher, old Blaise by Malory:

Then Merlin took his leave of Arthur and of the two kings, for to go and see his master Blaise, that dwelt in Northumberland; and so he departed and came to his master, that was passing glad of his coming; and there he told how Arthur and the two kings had sped at the great battle, and how it was ended, and told the names of every king and knight of worship that was there. And so Blaise wrote the battle word by word, as Merlin told him, how it began, and by whom, and in likewise how it was ended, and who had the worse. All the battles that were done in Arthur's days Merlin did his master Blaise do write; also he did do write all the battles that every worthy knight did of Arthur's court.

VORTIGERN THE USURPER

At the time Merlin was entering into the height of his power, Vortigern killed the King, Moines, and had driven his brothers, Pendragon and Uther into exile. Vortigern was Moines' Seneschal, and had made a black bargain with the Saxons, allowing them to entrench themselves throughout Britain in return for a small piece of it which he could rule as a petty fiefdom.

Vortigern was constantly afraid the brothers, who were mighty knights of great renown, would return and reclaim their birthright, so he tried to build a mighty tower for his defense the like of which the world had never seen. Three times the tower collapsed to the ground of its own weight.

Vortigern consulted his court astrologer, who told him that only the blood of a child born without a mortal father poured

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into the foundation of the tower would make it stand. After much searching, Merlin, who seemed to fit the prophecy, was brought before Vortigern.

However, the young magician proclaimed this prophecy false, and countered with one of his own. The cause for the tower's threefold collapse was that it was built over the lairs of two dragons, constantly at war with one another. And Merlin offered to prove his prophecy, telling Vortigern where he should dig. When the workers dug where he specified, two mighty dragons, one red, and one white, flew into the air, continuing their battle above the ruined tower.

Vortigern and all his subjects fled, while Merlin merrily stayed, clapping and cheering the dragons on, eager to see the winner. As the red dragon fell, no one had remained to hear Merlin's next prophecy, that the dragons represented the brothers-in-exile Pendragon and Uther, but that one brother, the red dragon, would not survive long after his return.

While Vortigern and his men fled the dragons, they were greeted by Pendragon and Uther, who had landed from Brittany with a mighty army, and who quickly killed the usurper and his advisors, burning them in the tower Vortigern had hoped would provide him with sanctuary.

THE BROTHER KINGS, SAXON COUNTERATTACK

Pendragon, the eldest of the two brothers, took Merlin as his advisor, and Merlin first advised him to rule jointly with his brother, and for the two knights to swear an oath of mutual fidelity. However, the two brothers were not long to rule, as the Saxons immediately launched a full scale attack, seeking to snuff out the native Briton kings before they had a chance to grow in power or reputation.

During the battle, the Saxons were repelled, but Pendragon was killed, as Merlin had predicted. Uther, assuming full kingship alone, nonetheless assumed the surname Pendragon, forever remembering his oath to rule Britain jointly with Pendragon.

Merlin, during this time, performs one of his greatest miracles, bringing the most powerful stone circle across the waters from Ireland to England and forming Stonehenge. This massive giant's circle forms a magical hub for Britain, strengthening the magic of the land and allowing Merlin to perform magical feats never known before in the history of the world. As a final solemnity, Uther buries his brother in the center of the great stone circle.

Under Merlin's wise counsel, which included securing for him the sword Excalibur from the Ladies of the Lake, Uther unites the bickering British warlords under his banner, and eventually drives all the Saxon, Pict, and Scot invaders north of Hadrian's Wall, making the land free and united. It should have been the beginning of a golden age for Britain, but fate then did something that not even mighty Merlin could foresee.

At a mighty castle in Carlisle, Merlin unveils another of his great miracles, the Table Round, and advises Uther to invite all the kings and barons united under him to join

a great fellowship and permanently unite Britain under his rule. All the lords and their wives attend, and at this council, Uther falls in love with Igraine, wife of the second most powerful lord in attendance, Gorloise of Cornwall, and makes an advance toward her, offering to make her his queen. She spurns him, and when her husband learns of Uther's treachery, he immediately leaves, and begins to prepare for war. Worse still, seeing that Uther is not a man to be trusted, all the other warlords withdraw as well, and the golden age ends before a single council is held at the Round Table in the preparation for civil war.

KING Uther

It befell in the days of Uther Pendragon, when he was King of all England, and so reigned, that there was a mighty duke in Cornwall that held war against him long time.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur Book I Chapter I

The war between Uther and Cornwall provides the backdrop of Arthur's birth, and as Uther marches south to Cornwall, Gorloise puts himself in the second most powerful castle in Cornwall, Terrabil, and his wife in the most powerful, the legendary Tintagel.

During the battle, when Uther falls sick with love, his attendant knight, Ulfus, seeks out the wizard Merlin, who promises to aid Uther, changing him into the likeness of Cornwall so he may have one night with Igraine.

A PACT WITH MERLIN

Sir, said Merlin, I know all your heart; so ye will be sworn to me as ye be a true king anointed, to fulfill my desire, ye shall have your desire.

Soon came Merlin unto the king, and said, Sir, ye must purvey you for the nourishing of your child. As thou wilt, said the king, be it. Well, said Merlin, I know a lord of yours in this land, that is a passing true man and a faithful, and he shall have the nourishing of your child, and his name is Sir Ector...

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Merlin changes Uther's form to that of the Duke of Cornwall, and Uther travels the ten miles to Tintagel castle where for a night, he is with Igraine.

Cornwall, seeing what he thinks is Uther fleeing the siege of Terrabil, leaves his castle with a group of men and attacks Uther's troops in an attempt to break the siege. During this battle, while Uther lays with the unsuspecting Igraine, Cornwall is killed.

When it is learned that Cornwall has died during the night,

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Igraine realizes the man she slept with was not her husband, however she tells no one. Soon after, Uther offers to marry Igraine, and end the siege.

At a group wedding, Uther marries Igraine, and arranges the marriages of her daughters by Gorloise like so many trophy pieces to reward nobles who have been loyal to him in the past. King Lot of Lothian marries Morgawse, King Nentres of Garlot marries Elaine, and Morgan le Fay, who is not yet of age, is sent to a nunnery.

Lot and Morgawse are the parents of Sir Gawain, who will become one of the greatest of Arthur's knights.

In this way, Uther ends the war with Gorloise and brings peace anew to Britain, however, his reign will find no peace between rebellion, sickness, and new barbarian invasions.

THE DEATH OF Uther

Then within two years King Uther fell sick of a great malady.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur Book I Chapter IV

When Uther falls sick in Arthur's second year, the barbarians attack again, moving swiftly from the north. Merlin advises Uther that he must take the field, even though he is too sick to ride, so Uther is carried out to St. Albans, where his army has a final confrontation with the barbarian host. Sir Ulfius and Sir Brastias are especially heroic and pivotal figures in the battle, which sees the defeat of the barbarians.

After the battle, Uther becomes even more sick, unable to speak, but Merlin calls all the barons loyal to Uther before him, and, after declaring Arthur heir to the throne of Britain, Uther dies, and is mourned by all his subjects.

BETWEEN Uther AND ARTHUR

*For many a petty king ere Arthur came
Ruled in this isle and, ever waging war
Each upon the other, wasted all the land;
And still from time to time the heathen host
Swarm'd over-seas and harried what was left.
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness, Wherein
the beast was ever more and more,
But man was less and less...*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

After the death of Uther, a new dark age descends upon Britain, with each petty warlord styling himself a king, numerous barbarian incursions, and the rise of monsters and wild beasts with no fear of mankind. Merlin, having seen what is to come, begins to prepare for the ascent of Arthur, having seen that vast lands and fortunes were given to Sir Ector prior to Uther's death, having assigned Ulfius and

Brastias to the court of Ector to ensure the boy's safety, and lastly, preparing the sword Excalibur a new resting place, where it would remain until the boy was ready to become the king.

THE SWORD IN THE STONE

And when matins and the first mass was done, there was seen in the churchyard, against the high altar, a great stone four square, like unto a marble stone; and in midst thereof was like an anvil of steel a foot on high, and therein stuck a fair sword naked by the point, and letters there were written in gold about the sword that said thus: Whoso pulleth out this sword of this stone and anvil, is rightwise king born of all England.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Around this stone, by the decree of the Archbishop of Canterbury, forms a great tournament and joust, held at New Year's, at which ten knights will win the right to attempt the sword. The Archbishop hopes that this will cause some common ground to be forged between the quarreling warlords.

So upon New Year's Day, when the service was done, the barons unto the field, some to joust and some to tourney, and so it happened that Sir Ector, that had great livelihood about London, rode unto the jousts, and with him rode Sir Kay his son, and young Arthur that was his nourished brother; and Sir Kay was made knight at All Hallowmass afore. So as they rode to the joustsward, Sir Kay lost his sword, for he had left it at his father's lodging, and so he prayed young Arthur for to ride for his sword. I will well, said Arthur, and rode fast after the sword, and when he came home, the lady and all were out to see the jousting. Then was Arthur wroth, and said to himself, I will ride to the churchyard, and take the sword with me that sticketh in the stone, for my brother Sir Kay shall not be without a sword this day.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

After Arthur draws the sword, he is told to reinsert it into the stone, and an ever-increasing line of petty barons and warlords attempt to draw it from the stone, to no avail. Finally, Merlin invites the most powerful Barons to witness Arthur draw the sword flanked by Sir Ulfius and Sir Brastias, the two greatest living knights who served under Uther. Unable to finally deny that the sword has chosen a low-born boy, the robber barons go to war with the fledgling king and his small group of knights.

The Archbishop of Canterbury holds a small coronation on the eve of war, at which Arthur names Sir Kay Seneschal, Sir Baudwin Constable, Sir Ulfius Chamberlain, and Sir Brastias Warden of the Northlands.

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GUINEVERE; THE ROUND TABLE

It is well your bounty and noblesse should not be without a wife. Now is there any that ye love more than another? Yea, said King Arthur, I love Guinevere the king's daughter, Leodegrance of the land of Cameliard, the which holdeth in his house the Table Round that ye told he had of my father Uther.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur, Book III, Chapter I

After uniting his realm, Arthur's Dukes begin requesting he take a wife, so the realm might have an heir. Arthur still loves Guinevere, and asks Leodegrance for her hand. Leodegrance is pleased, but concerned he will be unable to provide a dowry for such a richly endowed King. Leodegrance then decides he will give Arthur the Round Table willed to him upon Uther's death, and his 100 greatest knights. Since the table will hold 150 knights, a cry goes out through the kingdom for the noblest knights of the realm, and men come from near and far, drawn by a table where all are equal.

As a special present to his nephew, Gawaine, Arthur knights him moments before he is wed to Guinevere.

Merlin declares that thirteen seats, called sieges, are for the most holy knights, as these seats represent the apostles and Christ. The thirteenth, the siege perilous, represents Judas, and will kill any who sits in it save one.

THE PASSING OF MERLIN

And so, soon after, the lady and Merlin departed, and by the way Merlin showed her many wonders, and came into Cornwall. And always Merlin lay about the lady to have her maidenhood, and she was ever passing weary of him, and fain would have been delivered of him, for she was afeard of him because he was a devil's son, and she could not beskift him by no mean. And so on a time it happed that Merlin showed to her in a rock whereas was a great wonder, and wrought by enchantment, that went under a great stone. So by her subtle working she made Merlin to go under that stone to let her wit of the marvels there; but she wrought so there for him that he came never out for all the craft he could do. And so she departed and left Merlin.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Merlin becomes enamored of a Lady of the Lake, Nimue. He dotes on her, travels the world with her, and teaches her all his secrets and magic arts. Then, in Cornwall, she traps Merlin under a magic rock, and leaves him to die. Before he leaves for his last journey with Nimue, Merlin imparts a great number of prophecies on Arthur to guide him through the coming days alone.

THE GRAIL QUEST

The Holy Grail was the cup Christ used at the last supper to drink his wine. As Christ lay dying on the Cross, Joseph of Arimathea, the man also responsible wrapping Christ in the Shroud of Turin, used the cup to catch some of his blood.

Following Christ's death, Joseph journeyed to Britain, founding Glastonbury Tor, the first Christian monastery in Britain. However, he did not come to Britain as a proselytizer, he came to hide the greatest treasure in the world, the San Greal, the Holy Grail.

Journeying north, Joseph builds a castle, and hides both the grail and the most terrible weapon, the Lance of Longinus, which pierced the side of Christ, a weapon that must never be used. Joseph's descendants, the so-called "Fisher Kings" carry out this task faithfully for generations.

However, a rash knight named Balin, after a series of misadventures, uses the Lance to strike the Fisher King, giving him a wound that will not heal, striking all the people in the Fisher King's kingdom dead, and turning it and the surrounding kingdoms into the Wasteland. Because of this transgression, the Grail, the only way of returning life to the Wasteland also disappears.

Arthur's best knights search endlessly for the Grail, whose disappearance plunges Arthur's entire realm into an ever-increasing cycle of discord and despair.

LANCELOT AND GUINEVERE: BETRAYAL

*"O Lancelot get thee hence to thine own land,
For if thou tarry we shall meet again,
And if we meet again some evil chance
Will make the smouldering scandal break and blaze
Before the people and our lord the King."
And Lancelot ever promised, but remain'd,
And still they met and met.*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Foretold by Merlin, this betrayal of God, country, and King, serves as the final blow that topples Arthur's already tilting reign. When the betrayal is revealed, Arthur sends Agravaine leading a dozen knights to arrest Lancelot, who conducts a daring escape, killing Agravaine and most of the knights sent to arrest him.

Pursued by the king and his men, Lancelot flees to France, accompanied by several knights of the Round Table, where Arthur lays siege to his castle, a dark, bloody affair that sees the death of Sir Gawaine, along with countless other knights of the Round Table on both sides.

Guinevere, in shame, retreats to the abbey of Amesbury, where she becomes a nun, there to live out the rest of her days.

This moment of weakness, with all the realm in disarray, provides Mordred with his chance to strike for the crown.

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DARK ALLIANCES

*"Tell thou the King and all his liars that I
Have founded my Round Table in the North,
And whatsoever his own knights have sworn
My knights have sworn to counter it- and say
My tower is full of harlots, like his court,
But mine are worthier, seeing they profess
To be none other than themselves- and say
My knights are all adulterers like his own,
But mine are truer, seeing they profess
To be none other: and say his hour is come,
The heathen are upon him, his long lance
Broken, and his Excalibur a straw."*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Mordred sets up his own Round Table in the north of Arthur's realm, allying with Morgan le Fey to create the "Black Table", his own twisted vision of Arthur's court. He takes with him many of the Round Table's younger knights, disillusioned by the fall of Lancelot and Guinevere. Worse, he makes a deal with the barbarian hordes driven back behind Hadrian's wall to divide Britain after Arthur's death.

THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

*"I found Him in the shining of the stars,
I mark'd Him in the flowering of His fields,
But in His ways with men I find Him not.
I waged His wars, but now I pass and die.
...
For I, being simple, thought to work His will,
And have but stricken with the sword in vain,
And all whereon I lean'd in wife and friend
Is traitor to my peace, and all my realm
Reels back into the beast, and is no more.
My God, thou hast forgotten me in my death!
Nay- God my Christ- I pass but shall not die."*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Arthur's final battle with Mordred. Although sick of heart, and feeling abandoned by all he loved: Guinevere, Lancelot, and God, Arthur fights bravely in the end, slaying Mordred and preventing England from falling into his hands. Arthur and his knights also break the back of the barbarian horde one last time, giving England a final respite from the looting and burning of the heathen horde.

As he lies dying, Arthur casts Excalibur into the sea, and is borne away on a barge to the isle of Avalon. The last Quest Knights take the Grail to Jerusalem.

After Arthur's death, Constantine, a lord of Cornwall takes up the throne of England.

ERAS OF THE ARTHURIAN AGE

For practical purposes, most Arthurian campaigns will take place in one of three "eras". Each of these eras has distinct qualities, and campaigns set in different eras will have different encounters, and a different tone. In the campaigns section that follows, each campaign model will note the era in which it is set.

Note that it is also possible to run a campaign that moves from one era to the next, possibly even stretching through all three for a truly long campaign. However, knights come and go in Malory's telling of the Arthurian legend, so the best way to experience the depth and richness of the story, while maintaining a high level of detail (a suitably large number of quests and campaigns within each era), it is recommended that campaigns take place within one era, with new, younger knights coming to the fore.

For instance, Ulfius, a knight who had also served under King Uther, and Pellinore, are two of the most powerful knights of Arthur's early campaigns during his rise to power. However, Ulfius fades from the tales (presumably dying of old age), and Pellinore is killed by Gawain. These knights are replaced at the height of Arthur's reign by more familiar knights such as Lancelot, Tristram, and Gawain.

RISE OF ARTHUR

Upon achieving the sword Excalibur from the stone, Arthur, a mere boy, is immediately set upon by rebellious lords. These petty rulers have either cooperated with the Saxon horde, or managed to ruthlessly carve out petty baronies in spite of them. Either way, they are not lightly going to bow down to a boy proclaimed king by a wizard. Britain divides into two camps mere days after Arthur is crowned. No sooner does the Archbishop of Canterbury set the crown on the young King's head than an attack is launched by five petty lords, led by King Lot of Lothian. When this battle is won, even more lords flock to the rebel cause, and a full-scale civil war erupts, with eleven rebel lords, led by King Lot. So great are the forces against him, that Arthur seeks help from France, in the form of the brother Kings, Ban and Bors, themselves under siege by King Claudas. They agree to help Arthur put down his insurrection, if he will aid them in return (more detail on these events, and many others, may be found in the Campaigns section). Campaigning in the Rise of Arthur era will be tense and action-packed. Adventures will involve reclaiming wild areas of Britain taken over by giants, putting down rebellious lords, and expelling murderous, bloodthirsty barbarian hordes from England.

However, some of the trappings of Arthurian legend are not yet present, however, which may disappoint some players. There is no Round Table, which was left to King Leodegrance (who does not take place in the rebellion, nor does he help Arthur, having his own problems to deal with which are addressed in the Campaigns section). There is no

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Guinevere (she's also with Leodegrance, being his daughter). Even Camelot is not seen in this era, where Arthur is an almost "vagabond King", holding court at Carlion (when fighting the eleven Lords), Carlisle (when fighting the northern barbarians), and occasionally in London, Arthur is constantly on the move, putting out brushfire after brushfire that threatens to engulf his realm.

ONE BRIEF SHINING MOMENT

Arthur's realm officially begins, in many ways, with his marriage to Guinevere, which coincides with the introduction of many of the standard trappings of Arthurian legend. The Round Table comes with Guinevere as dowry, and the marriage takes place in Camelot as the first official function held in the grand capital of Arthur's realm. This era also sees older, less familiar knights, such as Ulfius, Brastias, and Pellinore replaced by figures central to many Arthurian legends, such as Lancelot, Gawaine, Percival, and Galahad. One of the chief conflicts of this time occurs when the Roman Emperor Augustus seeks tribute from the fledgling realm he has only recently abandoned. This launches Arthur into a full-scale war with Gaul and Rome that ends this era with Arthur crowned High Emperor by the Pope.

DREAM'S END

Like an apple, rotten at the core, but still appearing healthy and wholesome on the outside, the end of Arthur's realm happens gradually, and few in Camelot see it coming. The appearance of the Grail during this period offers a brief respite, and a chance at redemption, but the younger knights of the Round Table are arrogant, hot-headed, violent, and much more likely to follow the lead of young Mordred than their king. The affair with Lancelot and Guinevere is ongoing through this period, and is discovered by many of Arthur's knights before he himself finally becomes aware of it.

The end is bloody and messy, with Lancelot slaying a dozen knights sent to arrest him, including Gawain's younger brother Agravaine, leading him to swear a blood oath to kill Lancelot. Lancelot flees first to Joyous Garde, a castle given to him by Arthur, and then to Benwick, where he is named King, along with numerous Round Table knights who side with him over Arthur.

When Arthur launches his campaign to lay siege to Lancelot, Mordred stays behind, and gains the support of Morgan le Fey, Arthur's half-sister and longtime enemy, and also the barbarians, and sets up his own court, with his own Black Table, to which many of Arthur's younger knights flock. This leads to the final confrontation at Salisbury Plain, where both Arthur and Mordred are killed.

GAZETTEER OF ARTHURIAN BRITAIN

AMESBURY

The nunnery to which Guinevere retired after Arthur's death.

CAIRNPAPPLE HILL (MAJOR HENGE)

This site consists of a small stone circle at the top of a hill. There is an opening at the center of this small henge leading down into the hill, which has been slowly excavated over the years by the druids and turned into a massive network of cairn graves for the local adherents of the Old Faith. No one knows how many graves this hill contains except the druids who guard and maintain the site.

CAMELOT

*For barefoot on the keystone, which was lined
And rippled like an ever-fleeting wave,
The Lady of the Lake stood: all her dress
Wept from her sides as water flowing away;
But like the cross her great and goodly arms
Stretched under the cornice and upheld:
And drops of water fell from either hand;
And down from one a sword was hung, from one
A censer, either word with wind and storm;
And o'er her breast floated the sacred fish;
And in the space to left of her, and right,
Were Arthur's wars in weird devices done,
New things and old co-twisted, as if Time
Were nothing, so inveterately, that men
Were giddy gazing there; and over all
High on the top were those three Queens, the friends
Of Arthur, who should help him at his need.*

*Then those with Gareth for so long a space
Stared at the figures, that at last it seemed
The dragon- boughts and elvish emblemings
Began to move, seethe, twine and curl: they called
To Gareth, 'Lord, the gateway is alive'.*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Arthur's final capitol, first established after his marriage to Guinevere at the beginning of the "One Brief Shining Moment" era. In fact, one of the first official functions performed here is the marriage of Arthur and Guinevere, at St. David's Cathedral, which is not far from Arthur's palatial castle. The location of this final capitol serves to cement Arthur's power in many ways, giving him easy access to druidic, ley line, and priestly power sources.

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CANTERBURY

Site of a magnificent cathedral, this city is old even in Arthur's time, having been founded by the Romans (who called the city Durovernum). The Archbishop of Canterbury is one of Arthur's closest, and most important advisors. Note that the inclusion of an Archbishop of Canterbury is an anachronism, as there was no Archbishopric at Canterbury in historical Arthurian England.

CARLION (OR CAERLEON)

An important city, and Arthur's first capitol, this will be the home base of Arthur's reign during the War of Ascension. There is a cathedral here, headed by the Archbishop Saint Dubricius who will serve Arthur as an advisor during his wars with the rebellious lords. There is also a Roman amphitheater in this city that is used as an early incarnation of the Round Table. Arthur holds war councils here with his knights and senior advisors.

CARLISLE

Another of Arthur's early capitols, though not as important as Carlion. Carlisle is primarily used as a staging ground for Arthur's Twelve Battles against the Saxons, the final stage of his wars to cement his control over Britain.

DEVIL'S ARROWS (MINOR HENCE)

Rather than a circular arrangement, these standing stones consist of five massive stones in a straight line. The name comes from a legend that Satan attempted to fire the stones at a nearby settlement, but missed. Others hold this account to be a tale of a giant attack, with the stones later being erected and invested with power by powerful druids after slaying the giants.

DOVER

Dover is a major port, even in Arthur's day, and is a key gateway to the continent. During his war with Rome, Arthur embarks his troops here. He also departs here when chasing Lancelot to France, and returns to this port city when coming home to face Mordred in his last battle.

DURHAM

Durham is framed by the River Wear on three sides, like a frame for the absolutely magnificent cathedral, one of the most impressive major cathedrals in the world.

DRUID'S CIRCLE (MAJOR HENCE)

This henge consists of two stone circles, ten stones in the inner ring, and fifteen stones in the outer ring. Worshippers of the Old Faith are cremated at the center of this site upon their death, a practice virulently opposed by the local priests

of the One God. In the recent past, the two sides have even come to blows over the practice, but for now, the druids are able to hold their own, due to the immense power they have at their disposal near the stones. The priests have therefore taken to attempting to convert the locals, convincing them that this practice of the Old Faith is barbarous, with limited success.

CORS FAWR (MAJOR HENCE)

This site is one of the oldest stone circles on the isle. Adherents to the Old Faith have been buried here for generations, and this site is literally covered with cairns, barrows, and burial mounds, all of which are tended by the large, powerful group of druids who maintain this bastion of the Old Faith.

HIGH BRIDESTONES (MAJOR HENCE)

This complex stone circle actually has a companion henge a short distance known as the low bridestones. A small bog separates the two complexes, and a rather large group of druids tend to both sites. This group is rather secretive, and encourages outsiders (those not of the Old Faith) to stay away. Given the somewhat desolate nature of the surroundings, this isn't hard for them to accomplish.

LONDON

Even in Arthurian times, London was a thriving metropolis, a center of wealth and influence. Founded by the Romans as Londinius, the Thames River, which the city straddles, makes it an important entryway of trade goods to and from the island. Despite the wealth and strategic importance of the city, Arthur never makes it his capitol, preferring instead power centers that increase the might of his magically inclined advisors, of which the Boy King has many.

MERRY MAIDENS (MINOR HENCE)

According to legend this minor stone circle was originally a group of nineteen nymphs dancing to the music of satyrs who were turned to stone. In keeping with the legend, two nearby standing stones are known as the pipers.

NINE STONES CLOSE (MAJOR HENCE)

A circle of nine massive stones, this site is also known as the "grey ladies" by the local folk. The druids who tend to the site dislike this name, preferring to refer to the site by its "proper" title. The legends that revolve around this site are many, including that the druids who tend to the stones can make them dance, some say at noon, others at midnight, and that the stones can be used as a gate to the land of the Fey. The druids who tend the site will say nothing about these rumors.

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RING OF BROCDAR (MAJOR HENCE)

Also known as the giant's ring, because legend has it the site was originally built by giants, this massive ring of sixty stones is maintained and protected by one of the largest sects of druids in the world. These powerful priests of the Old Faith carry tremendous authority in the Orkney Isles, and are ardent supporters of the King of the isles.

SEA HENCE (MAJOR HENCE)

A wooden circle of posts, this henge rests on a beach, and is completely submerged at high tide. Due to the magical power invested in the site, the wood remains pristine and unaffected despite the action of the waves. There is a wooden altar at the center of the ring for sacrifices to the sea gods of the Old Faith. Sacrifices are left on the altar and carried away by the tides.

STONEHENCE (MAJOR HENCE)

The greatest, most powerful henge in the world, and thereby the greatest source of druidic power, Stonehenge was erected by Merlin at the behest of Uther, to form a suitable burial ground for Uther's brother-king Pendragon. In addition to raising this magnificent monument to his brother, Uther took his name, thereby fulfilling Merlin's prophecy that the brothers would rule together.

TEMPLE WOOD (MAJOR HENCE)

This circle of thirteen stones is surrounded by a dense forest, hence the name. Like many other sites, worshippers of the Old Faith are cremated at the center of this stone circle. Children who die of natural causes are buried in the center. The priests of the One God are attempting to convince the populace of the folly and godlessness of these practices.

TINTAGEL

A castle formerly belonging to Gorloise, and the place where Arthur is conceived. This castle is massive, and nigh impenetrable, which necessitated Merlin's magic to penetrate. Oddly, Arthur neglects this massive castle, and so do his enemies, allowing it to fall into disrepair. A giant takes up residence here, and terrorizes the countryside.

TRUSHEL STONE (MAJOR HENCE)

This site consists of a single standing stone, a massive obelisk over twenty feet tall. The obelisk marks the grave of the giant who once ruled these islands. This giant was killed by the druids who have watched over the people who live there ever since.

WOODHENCE (MAJOR HENCE)

Unusual for henges, this is not a stone circle, but rather a wood circle, with wooden posts staked into the ground. The site consists of six rows of wooden posts sunk into the ground. At the center of the complex is the body of a three-year-old child, who according to the druids who tend the site died of natural causes as the site was being finished, and was buried there at the request of her mother, an adherent to the Old Faith. Charges by local adherents of the One God that the child was sacrificed are hotly contested and the source of much tension between the two groups.

YORK

A large city, York has a major ley line passing right through the city. As a result of this, more mages make their home here than any other place in Arthurian Britain, and a fledgling mage may be able to find a teacher here. Both Merlin and his mentor Blaise have been seen here, much to the dismay of the locals, who consider the sight of such bewitched folk bad luck. Perhaps in an attempt to stave off the "devil's children" who seem to gravitate to the city, York also is home to almost two-dozen churches and monasteries. Like many of the isle's large important cities, York was founded by the Romans.

BRIEF GAZETTEER OF THE KNOWN WORLD

AMAZONIA

Famed warrior women, located somewhere in Africa. During Arthur's war with Rome, these women served Roman Emperor Lucius. Their Queen is named Radigund.

ANJOU

A French province conquered by the British usurper King Vortigern and given to the Saxon Hengist to rule for him. When Arthur achieved the crown he gave this land to Sir Kay.

ATLANTIS

Although this land sank beneath the waves long before Arthur's time, it is rumored that Merlin came from this strange, distant land.

AVALON

Island of unknown location where Arthur is taken after his death. It is also known as the Isle of Apples. It is quite possible that this island does not exist in the physical realm at all and is in fact part of the Otherworld. Some tales suggest that Avalon is simply another name for Paradise, the Garden of Eden, which still exists but is denied mankind after Adam and Eve. Tennyson refers to the "island valley of Avilion", implying that the land the island is made of is quite

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large. Despite the fact that she is Arthur's enemy while alive, Morgan le Fey is said to rule this island with nine Celtic priestess-queens able to turn into animals, heal the incurable, and see the future. Some authors have even associated this land with America. Each game master should decide how he wants to handle Avalon, in keeping with the tone and mysticism of his campaign.

BAGHDAD

A Caliph named Baruch rules this center of Islamic learning and culture in Arthur's day. This Caliph is served by the finest Saracen knights, and will be a serious threat to any Arthurian Crusaders who venture to the Holy Land (as Galahad did). Note that Islamic culture and religion, as well as the Caliphate of Baghdad are anachronisms that would not exist during the time of the "real" Arthur.

BENWICK

French kingdom ruled by Ban and Bors, the brother kings. These kings fight a long and bitter struggle against their uncle Claudas. They aid Arthur in his War of Ascension, after which Arthur sends the majority of his forces to aid the brothers. With Arthur's aid, this rebellion is put down for a time, however as soon as Arthur's troops leave, Claudas strikes again, managing to kill Ban and his wife, who set their son adrift in a basket, where he is raised by a Lady of the Lake who takes pity on him. This boy is Lancelot. Bors' son, who is also named Bors, joins the Round Table, and is one of the Grail Knights (along with Lancelot, Galahad, Percival, and Gawain). When Arthur battles with Rome, Claudas sides with Roman Emperor Lucius, but manages to survive the defeat of the Roman forces with his kingdom intact. Finally, Claudas imprisons Guinevere, attempting to hold her for ransom. Arthur invades and conquers Benwick, killing Claudas. Benwick is then given to Lancelot to rule. After Lancelot's affair with Guinevere is discovered he retreats here, along with several of the Round Table knights, whom he makes high officers in the realm of Benwick. Arthur lays siege to Lancelot, but their battle is cut short when Mordred sizes Guinevere and prepares to marry her, naming himself King.

BRITTANY

Area on the French coastline traditionally inhabited by Britons. During Arthur's day, this land was ruled by King Hoel, who was distantly related to Arthur and was a staunch ally in his many campaigns, especially the war with Rome. During the time when Vortigern the Usurper had ruled England, the young escaped princes, Uther and Pendragon were raised here in exile by Budicius, Hoel's father

BULGARIA

Netor and Madan ruled this Eastern European kingdom in Arthur's time. (Game masters running historical campaigns should note that this kingdom did not exist during Arthur's day and is thus an anachronism).

CONSTANTINOPLE

Capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, also called the Byzantine Empire. Leo I ruled this Empire in Arthur's day, and he was distantly related to Lot of Lothian. His empress was a lover of Percival, and gave him a magical stone that rendered him invisible to giants.

DENMARK

Saxon kingdom ruled by King Aescil. Mordred allies with this king, who sends barbarian troops to fight alongside Mordred in his attempt to seize the crown.

ETHIOPIA

This African Kingdom is ruled by Prester John, a holy man of tremendous power. Although too distant to be involved in Arthur's wars, he considers Arthur an ally and is a source of aid to knights adventuring in Africa.

FAIRYLAND

Oberon and Titania, King and Queen of the Fey Folk rule this kingdom in the Otherworld. During his youth, Arthur adventures here, along with Kay, on behalf of Oberon's daughter Gloriana. Sprites, pixies, dryads, elves, goblins, and giants (with a nobility of 80 or higher) are all able to travel to Fairyland, and all these creatures except giants are born there. Sprites, pixies, and dryads are all loyal subjects of King Oberon, as are the elves, but Fairyland is in a constant state of war against the goblin and giant forces, who seek to conquer Fairyland as a base from which to attack the material world.

GAUL

Pharamond rules this land, which is conquered by Roman Emperor Lucius as part of his war with Arthur.

GREENLAND

Amangons rules this island, which is eventually conquered by Arthur.

GROCLAND

An island chain ruled by giants that led north to a great mountain range that surrounded the top of the world. This mountain range surrounded a strange kingdom composed of four inland seas. Arthur conquered the islands, but after an expedition of four thousand men failed to return from the lands beyond the mountains, he abandoned any hope of exploring those lands.

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HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

This vast kingdom is ruled by Emperor Lucius. After abandoning Britain to the Saxons, he now requires tribute from Arthur, whose refusal leads the two empires to engage in a bloody clash that engulfs all of Arthurian Europe in a sort medieval World War. After Arthur's victory, the Pope crowns him Emperor of all Europe.

HUNGARY

King Ditus rules this kingdom, north of Bulgaria on the border of Russia until he aids Lucius when Rome attacks Britain. During the Roman campaign Ditus is killed, and is replaced by his son Sagremor (who was already a Knight of Round Table). Gawain married Sagremor's sister. The presence of Hungary in Arthurian legend is an anachronism.

ICELAND

Malvasius and his queen, the daughter of the King of Russia rule this island kingdom. After Arthur's Roman campaign, he decides to add this kingdom to his Empire. However, rather than fight him, the king agrees to serve Arthur, and provides him his son, Escol, to serve Arthur as a Knight of the Round Table to prove his loyalty.

IRELAND

This island is ruled by King Anguish, whose daughter, Isolde, is the object of Tristan's affection. Arthur eventually adds Ireland to his empire.

NORWAY

King Odbrict rules this land and is an ally of Arthur. He dies in Arthur's final battles against Mordred.

RUSSIA

Baraton rules this distant land of ice and snow in Arthur's time.

SPAIN

Alaric II, a barbarian of the Visigoth tribe rules this realm. An enemy of the Romans, and the Saxons, and under assault by the Saracens, he is too busy to interfere in Arthur's affairs. However, Christian knights will find few friends here.

WHO'S WHO IN ARTHURIAN ENGLAND

ACCOLON, SIR

The Consort of Morgan le Fay. Accolon is a young, honorable knight, though a touch on the roguish side. He genuinely cares for Morgan, and is too naïve to see her wickedness. Once he realizes she intends to kill Arthur and

place him on the throne, he wants nothing to do with the enchantress.

Sir Accolon: British Middle Class (Knight 15) CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 15d12+45; hp 153; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Misc); Spd Walk 20'; AC 25, touch 11, flatfooted 24, Base Atk +15/+10/+5; Atk +22 melee (1d8+6 19-20/x2, +3 masterwork longsword), +22 melee (1d10+7 20/x3, +3 masterwork heavy lance); Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (1d8+6 19-20/x2, +3 masterwork longsword), +22/+17/+12 melee (1d10+7 20/x3, +3 masterwork heavy lance); SA: Armor Tolerance +7, Aura of Knighthood, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Fealty, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +4, Power Charge 2/day, Stuck in the middle with you, Take the Reins, Unhorse; Vision: Normal; Nobility: 47; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV: Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +6, Handle Animal +13, Intimidate +11, Ride +15, Bluff +2, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +2, Gather Information +2; Animal Affinity, Cleave, Heritage of Nobility, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance, Longsword).

Possessions: Barding (Chain Shirt/+1/Masterwork), Longsword (+3/Noble/Masterwork), Full Plate (+2/Masterwork), Lance (Heavy/+3/Noble/Masterwork), Shield (Heavy/Steel/+2/Masterwork), Warhorse (Heavy/Courser/Mixed-breed).

Role: Accolon is the muscle-bound henchman. He will support Morgan in her scheming, never realizing the evil she does.

ARTHUR, KING

Arthur reigned for approximately 42 years; being crowned King at 14, High King of all England, Wales, and Cornwall at 18, and High Emperor of all Europe after his campaign against the Romans. Defeated in battle only once, by his bastard son Mordred, the only real loss suffered by the Boy King was when the two people he loved best in the world, Lancelot and Guinevere, betrayed him, which sent his Empire crashing down into ruin, and Britain "reeling back into the beast".

*So great bards of him will sing
Hereafter, and dark sayings from of old
Ranging and ringing thro' the minds of men,
And echo'd by old folk beside their fires
For comfort when their wage-work is done*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

King Arthur: British Lesser Nobility 25th Level (Knight 5/Noble 20) CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 5d12+20d8+75; HP 235; Init +2; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 32, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 30 (+13 Full Plate, +7 Shield, +2 Dexterity);

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Base Atk +19/+14/+9/+4; Atk +28 melee (1d8+8/19-20 damage Excalibur); Full Atk +28/+23/+18/+13 melee (1d8+8/19-20 Excalibur) or +32 melee (3d10+10 Ron with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to rule a united Britain) Destiny (to be betrayed by the two he loves best in the world); SQ Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +6, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 3/day, Divine Right, Aura of Majesty, Papal Intercession, Divine Intercession, Land and the Lord are One, Spell Resistance 25 (from Priwen), DR 15/noble weapon (scabbard of Excalibur); Nobility 85; AL: Noblesse Oblige, Code of Chivalry; SV Fort +21, Ref +17, Will +23; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Ride +30, Handle Animal +30, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +32, Intimidate +34, Jump +10, Diplomacy +33, Bluff +28, Sense Motive +27, Knowledge (history) +26; Heritage of Nobility, Predestined, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Leadership, Faith, Weapon Focus (longsword), Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Negotiator. Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (lance)

Possessions: Knight's Mantle Full Plate +5 (8 DR bypassed by ignoble weapon), Priwen, Excalibur, Ron, Scabbard of Excalibur, Heavy Warhorse (Noble, Pure Breed)

Role: Arthur is ambitious, noble, and honest, almost to a fault. He is determined to be a better king than his father, and confident in his divine right to rule. When a problem presents itself, Arthur tends to trust his instincts, seizing a solution rather than debating, acting rather than thinking. While these qualities serve him well, especially on the battlefield, they are also his only true weaknesses as a leader.

Arthur is the noble's noble. He will serve as a patron and giver of quests, rewarding those who serve him well, crushing those who do not.

BALIN LE SAVAGE THE KNIGHT OF TWO SWORDS

Balan's brother; smote the Dolorous Stroke, creating the Wasteland and necessitating the Grail Quest; banished from Arthur's court for killing the Lady of the Lake who repaired Excalibur for Arthur after a disastrous battle with King Pellinore.

Balin le Savage: British Lesser Nobility (Barbarian 4/Fighter 8/Knight 5); CR 17; medium humanoid; HD 9d12+8d10+51; hp 153; Init +2 (Dex +2); Spd 40 ft (30 ft in armor); AC 26, Touch 17, Flat-Footed 24 (+4 breastplate, +5 ring, +2 Dex); Base Atk: +17/+12/+7; Atk: +29/+29/+24/+19 melee one weapon (1d10+13/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword) or +25/+25/+20/+15 +25/+25/+20/+15 (1d10+10/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword) or +27 + +27 mounted (2d10+10/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Armor Tolerance +2, Aura of Knighthood, Bred to the saddle, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Fast movement, Fealty, Illiteracy, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +2,

Rage 2/day, Trap sense +1, Uncanny dodge; Nobility 20; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +17, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 24 (18), Dex 19 (15), Con 16, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +0 (+2 when handling horses) (0), Intimidate +13 (12), Ride +16 (12), Survival +3 (4); Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Great Cleave, Greater Two-Weapon Fighting, Greater Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Improved Critical, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword).

Possessions: belt of giant strength +6, gloves of dexterity +4, ring of protection +5, 2 +3 speed bastard sword, +4 breastplate, heavy warhorse (steed/strong).

Role: Balin is a basically good and honorable man with a tragically dangerous temper. Ultimately this temper will damage the very realm of Britain and necessitate the Grail Quest.

Balin le Savage (raging): HD 9d12+8d10+85; hp 187; Init +2 (Dex +2); AC 24, Touch 15, Flat-Footed 22 (+4 breastplate, +5 ring, +2 Dex, -2 rage penalty); Base Atk: +17/+12/+7; Atk: +31/+31/+26/+21 melee one weapon (1d10+15/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword) or +27/+27/+22/+17 + +27/+27/+22/+17 (1d10+12/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword) or +29 + +29 mounted (2d10+12/17-20 +3 speed bastard sword); SV Fort +17, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 28 (12), Dex 19 (15), Con 20, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 10.

BLAISE

Blaise was Merlin's teacher and mentor. Rumored to reside in the city of York, in a veritable maze of books and scrolls.

Blaise: British Middle Class (Expert 10 / Hedge Mage 10); CR 19; medium humanoid; HD 20d6; hp 94; Init +0; Spd 30 ft. AC 10, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 10; Base Atk +11/+6/+1; Full Atk +14/+9/+4 melee (1d6+2 +3 quarterstaff); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; SQ Dream reader, Lesser prophecy, Prophecy, Stuck in the middle with you, Summon familiar, Superstition; Fate: ; Destiny: ; Nobility 61; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +16; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 15 Languages: Arabic, British, French, German, Irish, Latin, Scottish, Spanish

Skills and Feats: Concentration +17 (17), Diplomacy +26 (17), Gather Information +24 (17), Intimidate +2 (+12 against illiterates) (0), Knowledge (Arcana) +22 (17), Knowledge (Architecture and engineering) +15 (7), Knowledge (Geography) +25 (15), Knowledge (History) +31 (23), Knowledge (Local) +31 (23), Knowledge (Nature) +20 (15), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +28 (20), Knowledge (religion) +21 (16), Perform (Oratory) +7 (2), Prophecy +29 (12), Speak Language 7, Spellcraft +24 (17); Second Sight, Skill Focus (Knowledge (Architecture and engineering)), Knowledge (Geography), Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Local), Knowledge (Nobility and

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royalty), Prophecy), Spell Focus (Divination)

Possessions: +3 quarterstaff, handy haversack

Spells: Caster level 10, Hedge Mage spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/4/6);

Spell DC 12 (13 for Divination spells) + caster level; Spell points: 45

Spells Known (9/5/4/3/3/1)

0 level: Arcane Mark, Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Ghost

Sound, Mending, Message, Prestidigitation, Read Magic

1st level: Comprehend Languages, Detect Secret Doors, Identify, Sleep,

Unseen Servant

2nd level: Continual Flame, Detect Thoughts, Mana Armor, See Invisibility

3rd level: Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Tongues

4th level: Detect Scrying, Locate Creature, Scrying

5th level: Prying Eyes

Role: Blaise is the greatest sage in the world, and chronicler of the Arthurian age.

BRASTIAS, SIR

Brastias is one of the last of the old guard, the knights who stood by King Uther to the end. Brastias was present when Uther proclaimed Arthur his heir, and searched all of Britain for the boy after his lord's death. During these travels he was a constant foe of the rising tide of chaos and barbarism engulfing Britain, and became a folk hero to many beleaguered peasants. When Arthur appears at the New Year's Day joust and draws Excalibur from the stone, Brastias is one of the first knights to swear fealty to him, and his sword is instrumental in helping Arthur secure his reign. In return for his valiant service, Brastias is named Warden of the Northlands, and given rule over the critical city of York, which he rules wisely and well until his death of natural causes.

Brastias, Sir: British Lesser Nobility 15th Level (Knight 12/Quest Knight 3); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 15d12+45; HP; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC, Touch, Flat-Footed (+2 Dexterity); Base Atk +15/+10/+5; Atk; Full Atk; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +4, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +6, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Unhorse, Take the Reins, Divine Grace, Perseverance; Nobility 80; SV Fort +11, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Ride +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (religion) +5, Diplomacy +3; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Blind-fight, Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (Longsword), Improved Critical (Heavy Lance).

Possessions: +4 Full Plate, +4 Lg. Steel Shield, +2 Noble Longsword, +1 Noble Heavy Lance, Heavy Warhorse (Noble, Blazing Fast, Strong)

Role: Brastias is the noble vassal. He has no desire other

than to serve his King, maintaining Britain as a free and prosperous realm on his behalf.

DAGONET (SIR FOOL)

Jester of Camelot; made an honorary knight of the Round Table at Gawaine's request

Being fool, and seeing too much wit

Makes the world rotten, why belike I skip

To know myself the wisest knight of all.

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Dagonet, Sir Fool: British Commoner (Fool 20/Knight 2/Minstrel 3); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 23d6 + 2d12 + 25; hp 122; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 60 ft; AC 42, Touch 29, Flat-Footed 42 (+5 amulet of natural armor, bracers of armor +8, +5 ring of protection, +9 banter, +5 Dex); Base Atk: +17/+12/+7; Atk: +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+2/x3 +2 lance) or +26/+21/+16 melee (1d6+4/15-20 +4 keen rapier); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Aura of Knighthood, Banter, Barrel Roll +5, Code of Chivalry, Fool's Luck +6, Improved Feint, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Inspire Competence, Jig 4/day, Lore +5, Minstrel's Music 3/day, Mounted Combat +1, Rapier Wit, Razor Wit, Soothe the Savage Beast, Tongue Lashing, Uncanny Dodge, Verbal Barrage, Verbal Firestorm, Wit; Nobility 55; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +17, Ref +24, Will +17; Str 10, Dex 20 (14), Con 12, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 28 (18)

Skills and Feats: Balance +38 (11), Bluff +25 (10), Climb +20 (0), Craft +4 (0), Diplomacy +17 (0), Escape Artist +15 (10), Gather Information +27 (10), Handle Animal +15 (4), Intimidate +17 (0), Jump +24 (0), Knowledge (Local) +28 (26), Listen +8 (5), Perform (Act) +26 (11), Perform (Comedy) +44 (26), Perform (Oratory) +27 (11), Perform (String instruments) +41 (26), Perform (Sing) +44 (26), Ride +9 (4), Sense Motive +12 (10), Sleight of Hand +18 (10), Spot +8 (5), Survival +6 (5), Tumble +44 (11), Use Rope +6 (0); Acrobatic, Alertness, Deft Hands, Dodge, Epic Reputation, Mobility, Mounted Combat, Ranged Inspiration, Skill Focus (Perform (Comedy, Sing)), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (Rapier)

Possessions: +5 amulet of natural armor, boots of swiftness, bracers of armor +8, cloak of epic charisma +10, +2 lance, masterwork full plate, plate barding, +4 keen rapier, +5 ring of protection, heavy warhorse (courser/worker)

Role: Like many jesters in literature, Dagonet makes his living taking humorous stabs at his opponents. Gawain loves his sense of humor, while Tristram, whose faults are frequently the subject of Dagonet's jokes, has nearly killed the fool on several occasions.

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DUBRIC, HIGH SAINT

Leader of the Church of England during Arthur's reign

Dubric, High Saint: British Middle Class (Priest 20 / Saint 10); CR 30; medium humanoid; HD 20d8 + 10d6; hp 125; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23 (+8 bracers of armor, +5 ring of protection); Base Atk +18/+13/+8; Atk +21 (1d6+3 +3 noble quarterstaff); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 (1d6+3 +3 noble quarterstaff); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft.; SQ Absolution (Minor, Moderate, Major, Severe), Aura of Piety, Aura of Sanctity, Beatification, Clean Slate, Crusade +6, Declare Infidel, Divine Intervention, Excommunication, Fealty, Litany 5/day, Papal Intercession, Proselytize, Sacraments, Stuck in the middle with you, Turn the other cheek; Fate: ; Destiny: ; Nobility 91; AL: Turn the other cheek, oath of celibacy, oath of poverty; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +18; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 20, Cha 17

Languages: British, Latin

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16 (0), Concentration +10 (10), Decipher Script +11 (9), Diplomacy +56 (32), Gather Information +34 (16), Heal +25 (20), Intimidate +7 (0), Knowledge (History) +9 (7), Knowledge (Local) +8 (6), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +9 (7), Knowledge (Religion) +35 (33), Perform (Oratory) +20 (4), Perform (Sing) +21 (5), Prophecy +29 (20), Sense Motive +28 (10), Speak Language (Latin), Spellcraft +15; Brew Potion, Empower Spell, Epic Reputation, Leadership, Maximize Spell, Negotiator, Ordination, Second Sight, Spell Focus (Conjuration, Divination)

Possessions: +8 bracers of armor, +3 noble quarterstaff, +5 ring of protection
Spells: Caster level 30 Priest, spell points to cast (0/0/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9),
Spell save DC 15 (16 for Conjuration and Divination spells) + caster level;
Spell Points 197

Role: Dubric is a perfect example of the devout priest, who cares little for his own wealth or power, tending to the needs of his flock.

ECTOR, SIR

A noble man, honorable to a fault, even a bit on the stodgy side, Sir Ector is the man chosen by Merlin to care for the upbringing of Arthur both in terms of his training as a knight, but also his training in the institutions of the nobility. Although he does not know who Arthur is, Sir Ector has taken the boy's rearing and upbringing with the same care and attention to detail with which he handles all assignments given to him. The lavish gifts in money and land that have come along with the boy from King Uther have made Ector a powerful noble in his own right, and he is determined to use this newfound power to aid the King and combat the inroads of rebels, barbarians, and bandits with his own life if necessary.

Sir Ector: British Lesser Nobility (Knight 2/Noble 8); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 2d12+8d8+20; HP 70; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 24 (+10 Full Plate +2, +4 Lg. Steel Shield +2); Base Atk +8/+3; Atk +11 melee (1d8+3/19-20 Lord's Longsword +2), +9 ranged (1d6+1/x3 Short bow +1); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+3/19-20 Lord's Longsword +2), +9/+4 ranged (1d6+1/x3 Short bow +1); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +1, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +1, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +2, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 1/day, Divine Right (Aura of Majesty); Nobility 70; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +10; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Ride +9, Handle Animal +11, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Diplomacy +13, Sense Motive +13, Knowledge (history) +4; Mounted Combat, Leadership, Faith, Pious

Possessions: +2 Full Plate, +2 Large Steel Shield, Lord's Longsword +2 (+2 to Quest modifier), Lance +1, Short Bow +1 (normally only carried while hunting or on campaign), 40 arrows, Heavy Warhorse (Courser, Strong), 5,000 gp.

Role: For PCs in the Childhood of Arthur campaign, Sir Ector provides the main patron of the campaign, and will frequently send them on missions either to protect his land or defend the boy king. Once Arthur becomes King, Ector is one of his most loyal and steadfast supporters, and also serves as an advisor when called upon to serve.

EDWARD AND HUE, SIRs

The "knights perilous," these robber barons always fight together, raiding, slaying, and doing anything they can to advance themselves at the expense of others. Their only loyalty in the world is to one another.

Sir Edward: British Middle class (Robber Baron 10); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 10d8 + 10; hp 55; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 24, Touch 11, Flat-Footed 23 (+2 full plate, +1 heavy shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk +7/+2; Atk: +13/+8 melee (1d8+5/19-20 +3 longsword); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Fealty, Improved Feint, Mounted Combat +2, Sneak attack +3d6, Stuck in the middle with you; Nobility 33; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15 (13), Diplomacy +3 (0), Handle Animal +14 (13), Intimidate +13 (13), Jump +15 (13), Listen +15 (13), Ride +14 (13); Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Great Cleave, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Ride-by Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 heavy shield, heavy warhorse (charger/maverick), +3 longsword.

Sir Hue: British Middle class (Robber Baron 10); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 10d8 + 10; hp 55; Init +7 (+4 improved initiative, +3 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 21, Touch 15, Flat-Footed 18 (+2 breastplate, +1 natural armor, +2 ring of protection, +3 Dex); Base Atk: +7/+2; Atk:

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+11/+6 ranged (1d8+2/x3 +2 composite longbow) or +9/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+2/x3 +2 composite longbow) or +12/+7 melee (1d8+1/19-20 +1 longsword); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Fealty, Improved Feint, Mounted Combat +2, Sneak attack +3d6, Stuck in the middle with you; Nobility 26; SV Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +14 (13), Diplomacy +3 (0), Disguise +13 (13), Forgery +15 (13), Gather Information +14 (13), Hide +16 (13), Move Silently +16 (13), Ride +16 (13); Far Shot, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow, longsword)

Possessions: amulet of natural armor +1, +2 breastplate, +2 composite longbow, heavy warhorse (charger/nimble), +1 longsword, +2 ring of protection.

Role: These “knights” are cads, villains, scoundrels, and knaves. They have not a redeeming quality between them.

GAHERIS

Younger brother of Gawain serves as his squire, and will one day sit at the Round Table himself.

Gaheris: British Lesser Nobility (Knight 5); CR 5; medium humanoid; HD 5d12 + 15; hp 42; Init +5 (Dex +1, Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 21, Touch 11, Flat-Footed 20 (+1 half-plate, heavy steel shield, Dex +1); Base Atk: +5; Atk: +9 melee (1d8+3/19-20 +1 longsword) or +11 mounted (2d8+3/19-20 +1 longsword) or +10 mounted (3d8+3/x3 +1 lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Armor Tolerance +2, Aura of Knighthood, Bred to the saddle, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Fealty, Knight’s Warhorse, Mounted Combat +2; Nobility 46; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Loyalty (Gawain and his brothers), Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +11 (+13 with horses) (8), Intimidate +2 (0), Ride +15 (8); Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Possessions: +1 half-plate, heavy steel shield, heavy warhorse (racer/coltish), +1 lance, +1 longsword.

Role: Gaheris, along with his brothers, serve as a clan, with a loyalty to themselves second only to Arthur. If one brother is in trouble, the others will quickly follow.

GALAHAD, SIR

The only knight worthy to sit in Siege Perilous, Galahad is the illegitimate son of Lancelot and Elaine. Ultimately he will complete the Grail Quest, healing King Pellam and the land itself. After Arthur’s death, he embarks on a series of adventures in the Holy Land of Jerusalem. After meeting Joseph of Arimathea and returning the Grail to him, Galahad perishes.

Sir Galahad: British Lesser nobility (Knight 10/Quest Knight 10/White Knight 10); CR 30; medium humanoid; HD 20d12 + 10d10 + 100; hp 285; Init +9 (+4 improved initiative, +5 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 40, Touch 20, Flat-Footed 35 (+13 knight’s mantle full plate, +5 moderate fortification heavy steel shield, +2 natural armor, +5 mantle of knighthood, +5 Dex); Base Atk: +25/+20/+15/+10; Atk: +38/+33/+28/+23 melee (1d8+12/19-20 +5 noble longsword or 1d10+12/x3 +5 noble heavy lance) or +41 mounted (2d8+12/19-20 +5 noble longsword or 3d10/x3 +5 noble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Armor Tolerance +5, Aura of Grace, Aura of Knighthood, Bred to the saddle, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, Emissary of Grace, Fealty, Fortitude of Knighthood, Hermit Spells, Knight’s Warhorse, Lay on Hands (30 hp/day), Mantle of Knighthood, Mounted Combat +3, Perseverance, Quest Knight (Attacks, Initiative, Damage), Shield of Grace 2/day, Sword of Grace 2/day, Unhorse, Vision of Grace 1/day, Vision Quest; Nobility 100; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); Fate: To retrieve the Holy Grail; Destiny: To die in the holy land; SV Fort +27 (20), Ref +17 (11), Will +18 (15); Str 24 (16), Dex 20 (14), Con 24 (16), Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 22 (16).

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +32 (15), Handle Animal +20 (10), Heal +14 (12), Intimidate +26 (15), Knowledge Nature +2 (0), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +10 (9), Knowledge (Religion) +11 (10), Prophecy +22 (10), Ride +21 (15), Sense Motive +17 (13), Survival +12 (10); Animal Affinity, Armor Skin, Brew Potion, Dire Charge, Faith, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Mounted Combat, Negotiator, Piety, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance, longsword).

Possessions: bracers of epic health +8, cloak of charisma +6, +3 moderate fortification heavy steel shield, +5 knight’s mantle full plate, gloves of dexterity +6, +5 noble heavy lance, +5 noble longsword, heavy warhorse (noble steed/lightning quick and blazing fast) with +3 chain barding.

Role: Galahad is the greatest knight to ever live, the successful Grail Quester, he accomplished what his father could not.

GAWAIN, SIR

Gawain is the son of King Lot of Lothian and Morgawse. Despite his acceptance into Arthur’s court, and indeed his place as a Grail knight and one of Arthur’s most important and well-rewarded subjects, his early life in the court of a man considered Arthur’s enemy was a constant sticking point for the knight.

Gawain always felt he had to prove himself, prove his loyalty, his worth, and this led to numerous clashes with other Knights of the Round Table. Pellinore was a blood enemy of the young knight, and despite the fact that both served Arthur, Gawaine eventually killed the knight who slew his father. Lancelot and Percival were also rivals of the knight, often competing against one another in the same tournament, or even championing opposite sides in minor skirmishes. Gawain always is portrayed as having a chip on

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his shoulder, even when he accepts the Grail quest, we are told that Percival, Lancelot, Galahad, and Bors accepted the quest, and then finally “Gawain, louder than all the others”.

Then Sir Gawaine was all abashed, and with Galatine his good sword he smote through shield and thick hauberk made of thick mails, and all to-rushed and break the precious stones, and made him a large wound, that men might see both liver and lung.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Sir Gawain: British Lesser Nobility 25th Level (Knight 15/Quest Knight 10); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 25d12+75; HP 275; Init +2; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 32, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 30 (+13 armor, +7 Shield, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +25/+20/+15/+10; Atk +35 melee (1d8+10/19-20) longsword; Full Atk +35/+30/+25/+20 melee (1d8+10/19-20 longsword) or +41 melee (3d10+12 lance with spirited charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Code of chivalry, mounted combat +4, aura of knighthood, armor tolerance +7, knight's warhorse, dispense justice, unhorse, take the reins, power charge 2/day, divine grace, perseverance, quest knight (attacks, initiative, damage), divine health, fortitude of knighthood, mantle of knighthood, vision quest; Nobility 92; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Loyalty (to his brothers), Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +25, Ref +16, Will +17; Str 18 (20+varies by time of day as *Gawain's Morningstar* spell), Dex 14, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Ride +18, Intimidate +19, Handle Animal +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +14; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Blind-fight, Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Diehard, Great Cleave, Improved Shield Bash, Squire (Gaheris is Gawaine's squire), Faith, Piety.

Possessions: Galatine (see Artifacts for complete information on this weapon), knight's mantle full plate +5, heavy steel shield +5, gauntlets of ogre power, noble knight's lance +5, cloak of resistance +5, heavy warhorse (noble steed).

Role: Gawaine is one of the greatest knights in the world, but always carried himself like an outsider. He was determined to be remembered as *the* greatest knight ever to have lived, which will cast him in the role of rival to any knight he sees as equal to himself.

GUINEVERE

Guinevere is not what many expect her to be. The daughter of a widower, growing up in a kingdom besieged, she has an iron will beneath the beautiful velvet exterior of the pampered noblewoman. Since the attacks on her father's kingdom, she is always armed, and although she has agreed to an armed escort, refuses to halt her beloved daily ride into the countryside (Player Characters should be favored escorts on these excursions). Although Arthur falls head over heels in love with her at first sight, she begins their relationship

extremely underwhelmed with the unassuming Boy King.

In many ways, Guinevere's story is the whole of the Arthurian myths in one tale. Her marriage to Arthur signals the beginning of Camelot's golden age, just as her affair with Lancelot signals the end of Arthur and his realm. She is a truly tragic figure.

Guinevere: British royalty 3rd level (Noble 3); CR 3; medium humanoid; HD 3d8; HP 17; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 11 (+1 Ring of Protection, +1 Dexterity); Base Atk +2; Atk +0 melee (1d4-2 dagger); Full Atk +0 melee (1d4-2 dagger); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (To marry Arthur and be Queen of all Britain), Destiny (To betray her husband with Lancelot); SQ Dispense justice, aura of nobility, noblesse oblige, divine grace, quest +1; Nobility 62; AL Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 6, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 17.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Intimidate +11, Ride +7, Sense Motive +7, Handle Animal +9; Inheritance, Faith.

Possessions: Ring of Protection +1.

Role: Guinevere is the object of desire. For Arthur she is a beloved wife, for Lancelot she is the forbidden fruit, for Mordred she is the prize. Throughout Arthurian cannon she is kidnapped (with alarming regularity) by monsters, bandits, and enemies or Arthur. Obtaining her is a constant struggle.

KAY, SIR

Sir Kay thought he knew how his life was going to turn out. He fully expected to follow in his father's footsteps, ruling a tiny barony and living out his days as a feudal lord. However when Arthur drew Excalibur from the stone, Kay's life took an unexpected turn. Rather than be the quiet lord of a prosperous, but unimportant manor, Kay was now at the center of the fight to unify and protect Britain, serving the greatest king who ever lived as Seneschal and advisor. Despite the unexpected nature of these duties, Kay performed them brilliantly, and is one of the most underestimated of Arthur's great knights. Those who face him in battle soon come away with a different impression, if they live.

But always Queen Guinevere praised Sir Kay for his deeds, and said, What lady that ye love, and she love you not again she were greatly to blame; and among ladies, said the queen, I shall bear your noble fame, for ye spake a great word, and fulfilled it worshipfully.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Sir Kay, Seneschal of Britain: British Lesser Nobility 20th Level (Knight 10/Noble 10); CR 20; medium humanoid; HD 10d12+10d8+80; HP 195; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 28, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 28 (+13 Full Plate, +5 Shield); Base Atk +17/+12/+7/+2; Atk +25 melee (1d8+8/19-20 noble longsword +5); Full Atk +25/+20/+10/+5 (1d8+8/19-20

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noble longsword +5) or +28 melee (3d10+8 heavy lance with spirited charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +3, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +5, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Unhorse, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +3, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 2/day, Divine Right (aura of majesty); Nobility 80; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 16 (20)

Skills and Feats: Ride +22, Handle Animal +18, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +25, Intimidate +28, Sense Motive +14, Diplomacy +15, Bluff +13; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Spirited Charge, Trample, Faith, Piety, Devotion (Round Table), Power Attack, Cleave

Possessions: Knight's Mantle Full Plate +5, Heavy Steel Shield +3, Noble Longsword +5, Noble Heavy Lance +3, Cloak of Charisma +4, Horseshoes of a Zephyr, Heavy Warhorse (Noble Steed)

Role: Sir Kay is the administrator. He rules in Arthur's absence, advises the King, and sees to it that the mundane aspects of running a kingdom, and later an empire, run smoothly. In battle he will be found at Arthur's side.

LANCELOT, SIR

Lancelot is son of Bans, King of France. When the evil Claudas took his father's kingdom, Lancelot's mother placed Lancelot in a basket and pushed him out into a lake moments before being taken and killed by the rebel forces. Rather than sinking, the basket was picked up by Vivien, a Lady of the Lake, who raised Lancelot. As a man, Lancelot was called Lancelot of the Lake, or Lancelot du Lac in France, to commemorate his amazing childhood. The greatest knight in the world, Lancelot's only two defeats were the failure to achieve the Grail, and the failure to control his disastrous passion for Guinevere.

...for in all tournaments and jousts and deeds of arms, both for life and death, he passed all other knights, and at no time he was never overcome but if it were by treason or enchantment...

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Lancelot, Sir: French Royalty 30th Level (Knight 15 / Noble 3 / Blue Knight 2 / Quest Knight 10); CR 30; medium humanoid; HD 25d12 + 2d10 + 3d8 + 127; hp 194; Init +5; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 38, Touch 18, Flat-Footed 33 (+13 full plate, +7 large steel shield, +5 Dex, +3 Mantle of Knighthood); Base Atk +24/+19/+14/+9; Atk +33 melee (1d8+9/19-20 +2 noble knight's lord's +3 longsword); Full Atk +33/+28/+23/+18 melee (1d8+9/19-20 +2 noble knight's lord's +3 longsword) or +37 mounted (2d8+9/19-20 +2 noble knight's lord's +3 longsword) or +36/+31/+26/+21 melee (1d10+9/x3 +5 noble knight's heavy lance) or +40 mounted (3d10+9/x3 +5 noble knight's heavy lance); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft; Fate: ; Destiny: ; SA ; SQ Armor

Tolerance +7, Aura of Knighthood +3, Aura of Nobility +3, Breathe Water, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, Fortitude of Knighthood, Knight's Warhorse, Mantle of Knighthood, Mounted Combat +4, Noblesse Oblige, Perseverance, Power Charge 2/day, Quest +1, Quest Knight (Attacks, Damage, Initiative), Take The Reins, Unhorse, Vision Quest, Voice of Command; Nobility 78; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur), Oath of Celibacy (this is lost in the declining years of Arthur's reign); SV Fort +28, Ref +19, Will +19; Str 18, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 18

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +20 (11), Handle Animal +18 (+22 for horses) (9), Heal +3 (3), Intimidate +23 (11), Knowledge (Nature) +6 (5), Knowledge (Nobility and Royalty) +11 (10), Ride +42 (+46 for horses) (33), Survival +12 (12), Swim +9 (5); Animal Affinity, Cleave, Endurance, Epic Weapon Focus (Lance), Epic Weapon Focus (Longsword), Faith, Leadership, Legendary Rider, Mounted Combat, Piety, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (Lance), Weapon Focus (Longsword)

Possessions: +5 knight's mantle full plate (DR 7 bypassed by ignoble weapons), +5 noble knight's heavy lance, +2 noble knight's lord's +3 longsword, +5 large steel shield, heavy warhorse (noble / blazing fast, pure breed)

Role: Lancelot is the tragic hero. Widely regarded as the best knight in the history of the world, his one moment of weakness is destined to ruin the two people he loves most in the world.

LEODEGRANCE, KING OF CAMELIARD

Leodegrance was one of Arthur's earliest supporters, and his eventual father-in-law. An aging lord of the "old school", Leodegrance is one noble whose honor is above repute even during the trying times between the reigns of Uther and Arthur. Despite his age, he is still a dangerous opponent, especially when mounted.

Leodegrance, King of Cameliard: British royalty 12th level (Knight 6/Noble 6); CR 12; medium humanoid; HD 6d12+6d8; HP 70; Init -2; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 22, Touch 8, Flat-Footed 22 (+10 full plate, +4 shield, -2 Dexterity); Base Atk +10/+5; Atk +11 melee (1d8+1 longsword); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+1 longsword) or +16 melee (3d10+3 lance with spirited charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted combat +2, code of chivalry, aura of knighthood, armor tolerance +3, knight's warhorse, dispense justice, aura of nobility, nobles oblige, divine grace, quest +2, aura of courage, divine wrath 1/day; Nobility 70; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur- after the marriage of Guinevere to the King); SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 7, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 20 (abilities modified for old age).

Skills and Feats: Ride +13, Intimidate +20, Diplomacy +11, Bluff +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +8, Handle

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Animal +11; Mounted Combat, Ride-by attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (lance), Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Great Cleave

Possessions: Full Plate +2, Heavy Steel Shield +2, Longsword +1, Noble Heavy Lance +1, Heavy Warhorse (Courser, Tough as Nails)

Role: Leodegrance is the benefactor, for in many ways he allows Arthur to unify his realm. He is the first of the great lords to support Arthur, and by allowing Arthur to marry his daughter, leaves little doubt that he believes Arthur *is* the son of Uther, and not simply a pretender with a knack for winning military victories. By giving Arthur the Round Table, he also allows the golden age of Arthur's reign to bear fruit.

KING LOT OF LOTHIAN

The last of the major lords to swear fealty to King Uther, Lot is a ruthless, wily noble with designs on seeing himself wear the crown for the entire isle. After the death of Uther, Lot becomes obsessed with finding and killing his heir. When that heir takes the throne, Lot leads the rebellion against the "Boy King". Although ruthless and ambitious to a fault, Lot is, by and large, an honorable opponent, and the fact that he has lowered himself to dealing with scum like Salazar shows just how obsessed he has become with ending Uther's line.

King Lot of Lothian: Scottish Royal Knight 5/Noble 10; CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 5d12+10d8+30; HP 113; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 25, Touch 9, Flat-Footed 25 (+12 Full Plate +4, +4 Shield +2, -1 Dexterity); Base Atk +12/+7/+2; Atk +15 melee (1d8+3/19-20 Noble Longsword); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d8+3/19-20 Noble Longsword) or +17 charge (3d10+4/x3 Noble Lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Knight's Warhorse, Armor Tolerance +2, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +3, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 2/day, Divine Right, Aura of Majesty; Nobility 56; AL Code of Chivalry; SV Fort +13, Ref +7, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +14, Intimidate +26, Bluff +24, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +15, Ride +12, Sense Motive +10; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Leadership, Weapon Focus (Lance), Persuasive, Improved Shield Bash, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint.

Possessions: +4 Full Plate, +2 Large Steel Shield, +2 Noble Lance, +3 Noble Longsword, Heavy Warhorse *Stormfront* (Steed, Pure Breed) 50,000 gp (not normally carried, may be used to purchase mercenaries or weapons as needed).

Role: Lot is the archenemy. He is Arthur's lead opponent in his attempt to unify Britain, and the realm is only united when King Pellinore kills him.

MARK, KING OF CORNWALL

King Mark is a foe of Arthur, but has a great hatred for Tristram, because of the latter's affair with his wife Isould. He eventually kills Tristram, causing Isould to die as well.

King Mark: British Royalty (Noble 4/Robber Baron 6/Black Knight 10); CR 20; medium humanoid; HD 10d8 + 10d12; hp; Init +5 (+4 improved initiative, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 29, Touch 11, Flat-Footed 28 (+13 +5 full plate, +5 black shield, +1 Dex); Base Atk: +17/+12/+7/+2; Atk: +25/+20+15/+10 melee (1d8+7/17-20 +2 wounding ignoble vorpal longsword) or +31 mounted charging (2d8+9/17-20 +2 wounding ignoble vorpal longsword) or +33 mounted/charging (3d10+10/x3 +5 ignoble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Aura of Courage, Aura of Nobility, Black Heart +7d6 2/day, Black Shield, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Improved Feint, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +4, Noblesse Oblige, Quest +1, Sneak Attack +2d6, Voice of Command; Nobility 18; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +14; Str 20 (14), Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10 (2), Diplomacy +19 (7), Disguise +9 (6), Handle Animal +22 (+23 with horses) (16), Hide +7 (-1 in full armor) (6), Intimidate +46 (23), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +6 (5), Ride +30 (23), Sense Motive +11 (7); Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Negotiator, Persuasive, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Possessions: +2 full plate barding, +6 belt of giant strength, black shield, circlet of persuasion, +5 full plate, +5 ignoble heavy lance, +2 wounding ignoble vorpal longsword, heavy warhorse (noble steed/strong)

Role: Mark is the noble who cares only for his own power and advancement. He is an opponent of Arthur, but does not openly oppose him, instead using guile and trickery. Any knight of Arthur's court can expect to be ambushed by Mark's bandits while traveling through his realm.

MERLIN

Merlin is the greatest sorcerer to walk the Earth in the history of the world. More rumors are known about his early life than fact. It is rumored he was sired by the Devil himself, though some say it was a mere incubus that spawned him, and that at an early age, when his talent for magic appeared, he was sent to the sage Blaise for apprenticeship. However, it is also rumored that he was born in the lost continent of Atlantis and learned his arts there, using them to escape that fabled city's watery destruction. Perhaps both these tales are true, or perhaps they are both false. Merlin does not talk about his past in any event.

What can be documented of Merlin is his first appearance to Uther and his brother Pendragon, who were then princes in exile, hiding in Brittany. Vortigern the Usurper had killed their father. Merlin advised the brothers to return, and his

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magic helped the brothers overthrow Vortigern and remove the barbarian hordes from Britain. When Uther's lust for Igraine threatened to undo all he had accomplished, Merlin saw to it the heir Arthur was placed in his care, and saw to the boy's education and protection until he was ready to complete his father's work.

Merlin the Magician: British Middle Class (Hedge Mage 20/Druid 10); CR 30; medium humanoid; HD 20d6+10d8; HP 125; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, Touch 23, Flat-Footed 23 (+8 Bracers of armor, +5 Ring of protection); Base Atk +15/+10/+5; Atk; Full Atk; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to advise and serve the Kings of Britain) Destiny (to be seduced and killed by Nimue); SQ Superstition, Dream Reader, Lesser Prophecy, Prophecy, Greater Prophecy, Ultimate Prophecy, Animal Companion, Nature Sense, Wild Empathy, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure, Wild Shape 4/day (Large), Venom Immunity; Nobility 80; AL Oath of Loyalty (King Arthur); SV Fort +12, Ref +11, Will +29; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 22, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Prophecy +31, Bluff +21, Concentration +24, Diplomacy +36, Disguise +12, Intimidate +16 (+36 when dealing with illiterate), Handle Animal +16, Heal +19, Listen +16, Ride +10, Spellcraft +24, Survival +16; Dark Heritage, Second Sight, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Scribe Scroll, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Staff, Craft Wand, Craft Rod

Possessions: Bracers of armor +8, Ring of protection +5, Staff of Passage (40 charges). Merlin tends to travel light. However, he is the creator of some of the most powerful items in the history of the world (the Round Table, Stonehenge, to name only two), and has an encyclopedic knowledge of the future. It is reasonable to assume anything he needs he is likely to have, and it is certain that anything he needs, he will be able to get, or make, in a relatively short period of time.

Spells: Caster level 20 Hedge Mage spell points to cast (0/0/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9) Spell save DC 16+spell level; Caster level 10 Druid spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/4/6/16*) Spell save DC 16+spell level; Spell Points 246

Spells Known (9/5/5/4/4/4/3/3/3/3)

0 Level: Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Poison, Detect Magic, Flare, Light, Prestidigitation, Read Magic, Touch of Fatigue

1st Level: Color Spray, Comprehend Languages, Disguise Self, Identify, Sleep

2nd Level: Alter Self, Bull's Strength, Protection from Arrows, Summon Swarm, See Invisibility

3rd Level: Clairvoyance, Dispel Magic, Haste, Heroism

4th Level: Bestow Curse, Crushing Despair, Phantasmal Killer, Polymorph

5th Level: Baleful Polymorph, Break Enchantment, Hold Monster, Teleport

6th Level: Flesh to Stone, Geas/Quest, Stone to Flesh

7th Level: Hold Person, Mass, Teleport, Greater, Invisibility, Greater

8th Level: Moment of Prescience, Trap the Soul, Power Word Stun

9th Level: Imprisonment, Wish, Power Word Kill

Role: Merlin is the man of mystery. Although he is Arthur's most important advisor, he does not act like a vassal. He does not come when he is called, and offers advice when it is not asked for. Many of Arthur's servants resent the fact that, above all else, Merlin acts like the King's equal. However, he is always loyal, and when things are at their worst, he can be found by Arthur's side.

MORDRED

Mordred is the bastard son of Arthur by his half sister Morgause. A knight of the Round Table as a young man, Mordred was constantly scheming and conspiring to achieve the throne from his father. When Arthur goes to war with France and Lancelot over his affair with Guinevere, Mordred sets up a rebel kingdom in Lothian with Morgan le Fay, and amasses a huge army of Saxons and young, impressionable knights of Camelot. This draws Arthur back to England, and the two meet in battle on the field of Salisbury Plain, near Camelot, where both were killed, ending the Arthurian Age.

*Sir Mordred; he that like a subtle beast
Lay couchant with his eyes upon the throne,
Ready to spring, waiting a chance.*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Mordred, Sir: British Royalty 25th Level (Knight 5/Robber Baron 6/Fighter 4/Black Knight 10); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 6d8+4d10+15d12+25; HP 205; Init +9; Spd 30 ft. (20ft. in armor); AC 30, Touch 15, Flat-Footed 25 (+10 Armor, +5 Shield, +5 Dexterity); Base Atk +21/+16/+11/+6; Atk +27 melee (1d8+5/19-20) Ignoble Longsword or +29 ranged (1-10+3/19-20 heavy crossbow); Full Atk +27/+22/+17/+12 melee (1d8+5/19-20 Ignoble Longsword) or +34 melee (3d10+5 Ignoble Heavy Lance with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to kill Arthur) Destiny (to be killed by Arthur); SQ Mounted Combat +6, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Sneak Attack +2d6, Black Knight, Black Heart +5d6 2/day, Black Shield; Nobility 15; AL: Code of Chivalry (later renounced), Oath of Loyalty (Morgan le Fey); SV Fort +19, Ref +17, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 23, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +17, Climb +5, Disguise +14, Forgery +12, Gather Information +10, Handle Animal +20, Hide +14, Intimidate +37, Jump +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13, Move Silently +15, Ride +28, Sleight of Hand +13, Swim +5; Blind-fight, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Deceitful, Improved Disarm, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Improved Trip, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Quick Draw, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (longsword)

Possessions: Black Shield, Breastplate +5, Ignoble Longsword +5, Ignoble Heavy Lance +5, Ignoble Dagger of

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Wounding +5, Heavy Crossbow +3, Heavy Warhorse (Noble Steed)

Role: Mordred is the schemer. He uses guile, false promises, blackmail, and ultimately murder all in an attempt to seat himself on the throne. He is in many ways the polar opposite of Arthur, and his use of Morgan as his advisor in a black parody of Merlin only completes the picture.

MORGAN LE FAY

Morgan is destined to be the second most powerful sorcerer in all of Britain, one day rivaling the mighty Merlin himself. She is also consumed with an unquenchable hatred for her half-brother Arthur, whom she blames on an unconscious level for the death of her father, Gorloise, and the arranged marriages of her and her sisters like so many chess pieces to cement Uther's crumbling reign. She is a beautiful woman, fully capable of using her beauty to gain whatever she wants, from her husband Uriens, to her many lovers. Her one true love, however, is Accolon, whom she hopes to put on the throne as king. However, it is ultimately Mordred whom she will serve as a dark counterpart to Merlin, and aid Arthur's downfall.

Now, sir, said Accolon, I will tell you; this sword hath been in my keeping the most part of this twelvemonth; and Morgan le Fay, King Uriens' wife, sent it me yesterday by a dwarf, to this intent, that I should slay King Arthur, her brother. For ye shall understand King Arthur is the man in the world that she most hateth, because he is most of worship and of prowess of any of her blood; also she loveth me out of measure as paramour, and I her again; and if she might bring about to slay Arthur by her crafts, she would slay her husband King Uriens lightly, and then had she me devised to be king in this land, and so to reign, and she to be my queen...

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

Morgan le Fey: British Royalty 25th level (Hedge Mage 10/Druid 5/Enchantress 10); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD10d6+5d8+10d4+25; HP 116; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24, Touch 24, Flat-Footed 22 (+8 Bracers, +4 Ring, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +14/+9/+4; Atk by spell; Full Atk by spell; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (To aid in the downfall of Arthur), Destiny (To be spurned by the only man to win her heart- Accolon); SQ Summon familiar, superstition, dream reader, lesser prophecy, prophecy, animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape 1/day, enchantress; Nobility 20; AL Oath of Loyalty (Mordred); SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +20; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 23 (29).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +26 (+36 vs. men), Concentration +24, Diplomacy +31 (+41 vs. men), Disguise +21 (+31 vs. men), Gather Information +26 (+36 vs. men), Intimidate +26 (+36 vs. illiterate), Prophecy +15, Spellcraft +22,

Listen +10, Spot +10, Ride +10, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (local) +14; Dark Heritage, Second Sight, Spell focus (enchantment), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Innate Spell (Hold Person), Innate Spell (Confusion), Innate Spell (Charm Monster), Power Surge, Heighten Spell, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Still Spell

Possessions: Bracers of Armor +8, Cloak of Charisma +6, Wand of Charm Person (heightened 3rd level) 50 charges, Wand of Web 50 charges, Ring of Protection +4, Mana Stone +18, Ring of Fire Command, 10,250 gp

Spells: Caster level 10 Hedge Mage spell points to cast (0/0/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9) Spell save DC 20+spell level (21 for enchantment); Caster level 5 Druid spell points to cast (0/1/2/5/18*) Spell save DC 13+spell level; Spell Points 175 (193 with mana stone)

Spells Known (9/5/5/4/4/4/3/3/3/3)

0 Level: Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Poison, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Message, Read Magic, Touch of Fatigue

1st Level: Cause Fear, Charm Person, Hypnotism, Shield, Ray of Enfeeblement

2nd Level: Eagle's Splendor, Mirror Image, Invisibility, Protection from Arrows, Bull's Strength

3rd Level: Hold Person, Phantom Steed, Heroes' Bane, Deep Slumber

4th Level: Bestow Curse, Ice Storm, Charm Monster, Mana Vampire (moderate)

5th Level: Teleport, Dominate Person, Witch's Curse, Overland Flight

6th Level: Bull's Strength (mass), Suggestion (mass), Legend Lore

7th Level: Hold Person (mass), Limited Wish, Power Word Blind

8th Level: Charm Monster (mass), Protection from Spells, Power Word Stun

9th Level: Wish, Power Word Kill, Hold Monster (mass).

Role: Morgan is the ultimate manipulator, using wit, guile, and sexuality to manipulate those around her. She hates Arthur, blaming him for Uther's sins, and will do anything to see him fall.

MORGAWSE, QUEEN

Morgawse, like all the women in her family, possesses the gift of magic, along with "the sight". Having seen that she will indirectly result in Arthur's death, she supports her husband, feeling that he will kill the boy and become King. What she does not know is that her bastard son of an encounter with Arthur, Mordred, is the one who will accomplish this deed for her, but only after she has been killed by one of her own sons (Gaheris).

Queen Morgawse of Lothian: British Royal (Hedge Mage 5/Enchantress 3); CR 8; medium humanoid; HD 5d6+3d4+8; HP 36; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, Touch 14, Flat-Footed 14 (+2 Ring of Protection, +2 Bracers of Armor); Base Atk +3; Atk +1 melee (1d3-2 unarmed strike) or spell; Full Atk

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+1 melee (1d3-2 unarmed strike) or spell; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to indirectly cause the death of King Arthur) Destiny (to be killed by one of her own sons); SQ Superstition, Lesser Prophecy, Enchantress; Nobility 41; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +8; Str 6, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15 (+18 when dealing with men), Diplomacy +15 (+18 when dealing with men), Gather Information +15 (+18 when dealing with men), Prophecy +11, Sense Motive +6, Intimidate +7 (+12 when dealing with illiterate), Decipher Script +5; Second Sight, Innate Spell-Charm Person, Leadership, Innate Spell-Hold Person

Possessions: Ring of Protection +2, Wand of Web (20 charges), Bracers of Armor +2

Spells Known (8/5/3/3/2/1; save DC 14 plus spell level): 31 Spell Points

0 Level (0 Spell Points): Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Poison, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Message, Read magic

1st Level (1 Spell Point): Cause Fear, Charm Person, Color Spray, Disguise Self, Hypnotism

2nd Level (2 Spell Points): Eagle's Splendor, Invisibility, Web

3rd Level (3 Spell Points): Clairvoyance, Hold Person, Suggestion

4th Level (5 Spell Points): Confusion, Charm Monster

5th Level (14* Spell Points): Dominate Person

Role: Morgawse, like Morgan, seeks revenge on Arthur for the wrongs done to her mother by Uther.

NIMUE, LADY

Enchantress, Lady of the Lake; traps Merlin under the Earth, killing him; later advisor to Arthur; wife of King Pelleas

Lady Nimue: British Middle class (Druid 5/Hedge Mage 15/Enchantress 10/Lady of the Lake 5); CR 35; medium humanoid; HD 10d4 + 15d6 + 10d8 + 35; hp 157; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 35, Touch 20, Flat-Footed 35 (+15 bracers of epic armor, +10 ring of protection); Base Atk: +18/+13; Atk: +22/+22/+17 melee (1d6+4 +5 defending speed quarterstaff); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Animal companion, Breathe Water, Dream Reader, Enchantress, Fealty, Greater Prophecy, Lesser Prophecy, Nature sense, Prophecy, Resist nature's lure, Stuck in the middle with you, Summon familiar, Superstition, Tap Water, Trackless step, Walk on Water, Wild empathy +9, Wild shape 1/day, Woodland stride; Nobility 63; AL: Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +14, Ref +11, Will +23; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 31 (19).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +22 (+32 when dealing with men) (8), Concentration +39 (38), Decipher Script +14 (10), Diplomacy +43 (+53 when dealing with men) (23), Gather Information +33 (+43 when dealing with men) (17), Heal +16 (13), Intimidate +26 (+41 when dealing with illiterates) (10), Knowledge (Arcana) +28 (24), Knowledge (Geography) +6 (2), Knowledge (History) +7 (3), Knowledge (Local) +14 (10), Knowledge (Nature) +21

(13), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +7 (3), Knowledge (Religion) +6 (2), Listen +7 (4), Perform (sing) +24 (+34 when dealing with men) (10), Prophecy +46 (24), Sense Motive +35 (30), Sleight of Hand +2 (0), Spellcraft +44 (38), Spot +7 (4), Survival +18 (+20 in above ground, natural environments) (13), Swim +7 (8); Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Dark Heritage, Epic Reputation, Extended Life Span (x2), Forge Ring, Innate Spell (charm monster, hold person, suggestion), Natural Spell, Scribe Scroll, Second Sight, Silent Spell, Still Spell, Spell Focus (Enchantment).

Possessions: +15 bracers of epic armor, +12 cloak of epic charisma, mana stone +20, +5 defending speed quarterstaff, +10 ring of epic protection

Spells: Druid – 10th level caster, spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/4/6/16*), spell save DC 13 (14 for enchantment spells) + spell level; Hedge Mage – 25th level caster, spell points to cast (0/0/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9), spell save DC 21 (22 for enchantment spells) + spell level; spell points 99 (119 with mana stone).

Hedge Mage spells known

0th level – arcane mark, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mage hand,

mending, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic

1st level – alarm, color spray, comprehend languages, expeditious retreat, grease

2nd level – darkvision, detect thoughts, invisibility, mana armor, touch of idiocy

3rd level – deep slumber, fly, secret page, suggestion

4th level – charm monster, lesser geas, scrying, stone skin

5th level – dominate person, hold person, symbol of sleep, witch's curse

6th level – geas/quest, legend lore, symbol of persuasion

7th level – greater scrying, vision, greater witch's curse

8th level – moment of prescience, protection from spells, temporal stasis

9th level – imprisonment, wish, witch's doom

Role: Nimue takes the role of Arthur's advisor during the later part of his reign. Sometime vindictive and cruel, she has a dark side that surpasses that even of her master Merlin.

PALAMIDES, SIR

Son of King Pellinore; took up the hunt for the Questing Beast after his father's death

Sir Palamides: British Royalty (Knight 10/Quest Knight 5); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 15d12; hp; Init +0; Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 23, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23 (+3 knight's mantle full plate, +2 heavy steel shield); Base Atk: +15/+10/+5; Atk: +20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+8/19-20 +3 knight's noble longsword) or +19 melee (1d10+4/x3 +2 noble heavy lance) or +23 mounted (2d8+8/19-20 +3 knight's noble longsword) or +21 (3d10/x3 +2 noble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Armor Tolerance +5, Aura of Knighthood, Code of Chivalry, DR 7/ignoble, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +3, Noblesse Oblige,

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Perseverance, Quest Knight (Attacks), Unhorse, Voice of Command; Nobility

79; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +15, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +13 (5), Handle Animal +18 (10), Heal +3 (0), Intimidate +17 (9), Knowledge (Nature) +3 (0), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +11 (10), Listen +3 (0), Ride +14 (10), Spot +3 (0), Survival +13 (10); Alertness, Animal Empathy, Faith, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Piety, Ride-by Attack, Self-sufficient, Spirited Charge, Track, Trample.

Possessions: plate barding, +3 knight's mantle full plate, +2 noble heavy lance, +3 knight's noble longsword, +2 heavy steel shield, heavy warhorse (courser).

Role: Palamides, like his father, seeks the Questing Beast. He is, like his father, the quintessential Quixotic knight, wrapped up in his own personal quest for the merest glimpse of perfection.

PELLAM, KING (THE GRAIL KING)

Father of Garlon; descended from Joseph of Arimathea; guardian of the Grail and the Lance of Longinus

Pellam, King: British Royalty (Noble 15); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 15d8; hp 87; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 17, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 17 (+2 knight's mantle chain mail); Base Atk: +11/+6/+1; Full Atk: +16/+11/+6 melee (1d8+5/19-20 +4 noble longsword); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach: 5 ft; SA Divine Wrath +20 melee (1d8+15/19-20 +4 noble longsword); SQ Aura of Courage, Aura of Majesty (all saving throws, attack rolls), Aura of Nobility, Divine Intercession, Dispense Justice, Divine Right (Aura of Majesty), Divine Wrath 2/day, Divine Grace, DR 8/ignoble, Noblesse Oblige, Papal Intercession, Voice of command, Quest +5; Nobility 100; AL: Noblesse Oblige; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +14; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 18

Skills and Feats: Bluff +16 (5), Diplomacy +32 (15), Handle Animal +21 (12), Intimidate +25 (10), Knowledge (History) +20 (18), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +14 (12), Profession (fisherman) +16 (12), Ride +14 (12), Sense Motive +21 (18), Sleight of Hand +2 (0); Faith, Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive, Piety, Predestined, Skill Focus (Profession (fisherman))

Possessions: Holy Grail, Lance of Longinus, +2 knight's mantle chain mail, +4 noble longsword

Role: Pellam is the Grail King, sworn to protect the holiest of relics. His death strangely coincides with Arthur's, after which Galahad embarks to the Holy Land with the Grail.

PELLINORE, KING

A king of Wales; pursues the Questing Beast; also the Knight of the Pavilion, challenging all who pass; during a fight with Arthur breaks Excalibur, which is repaired by a Lady of the Lake. Father of Percival, Lamerake, and Tor. Killed King

Lot, Sir Gawaine's father, during his rebellion against Arthur. Gawaine eventually revenges this death and kills Pellinore.

He will not be lightly matched of one knight living, and therefore it is my counsel, let him pass, for he shall do you good service in short time, and his sons after his days.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

King Pellinore: British Royalty (Knight 10 / Quest Knight 10); CR 20; medium humanoid; HD 20d12 + 28; hp 148; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 35, Touch 16, Flat-Footed 33 (+13 knight's mantle full plate, +6 shield, +4 mantle of knighthood, +2 Dex); Base Atk: +20/+15/+10/+5; Atk: +28/+23/+18/+13 melee (1d8+8/19-20 +5 noble longsword or 1d10/x3 +5 noble heavy lance) or +31 mounted (2d8+8/19-20 +5 noble longsword or 3d10/x3 +5 noble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ Armor Tolerance +5, Aura of Knighthood, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, DR 8/ignoble, Fortitude of Knighthood, Knight's Warhorse, Mantle of Knighthood, Mounted Combat +3, Noblesse Oblige, Perseverance, Quest Knight (Attacks, Initiative, Damage), Unhorse, Vision Quest, Voice of Command; Nobility 84; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +16, Ref +9, Will +13; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +17 (10), Gather Information +6 (0), Heal +4 (0), Intimidate +7 (0), Knowledge (Nature) +2 (0), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +10 (10), Listen +4 (0), Ride +12 (10), Search +7 (0), Spot +4 (0), Survival +17 (+22 when tracking) (13); Alertness, Endurance, Faith, Investigator, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Piety, Ride-by Attack, Self-sufficient, Spirited Charge, Track, Trample.

Possessions: +5 knight's mantle full plate, lens of detection, +5 noble heavy lance, +5 noble longsword, +4 heavy steel shield.

Role: Pellinore is a classic knight of the Quixotic tradition. He constantly seeks the impossible, the ephemeral, whether it is the greatest King in the world, the most beautiful woman in the world, or the Questing Beast, his goal is always just over the horizon.

PERCIVAL, SIR (ALSO CALLED PEREDUR)

Percival was raised in isolation. His mother wanted him to know nothing of knighthood. However, the lure of adventure was too strong and eventually the boy ran away from home to join Arthur's court. Upon his arrival there he encountered a red knight stealing from court, and pursued him and killed him, even though he knew nothing of knighthood or combat. This brought the boy to the attention of an older knight, who trained and knighted him. Percival is in some sources the successful Grail Knight, although in Malory he is one of

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three, along with Galahad and Bors who will jointly retrieve the holy artifact.

Sir Percival: British Lesser Nobility (Knight 10/Crusader 5/Quest Knight 10); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 15d10 + 10d12 + 79; hp 226; Init +7 (+4 improved initiative, +3 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 42, Touch 17, Flat-Footed 39 (+13 +5 knight's mantle full plate, +7 +5 heavy steel shield, +5 amulet of natural armor, +4 mantle of knighthood, +3 Dex); Base Atk: +24/+19/+14/+9; Atk: +35/+30/+25/+20 melee (1d8+15/19-20 +5 knight's noble longsword) or +39 mounted/charging (3d10+15/x3 +5 knight's noble heavy lance or 2d8+15/19-20 +5 knight's noble longsword); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA smite infidel (+2 to-hit, +5 damage); SQ Armor Tolerance +5, Aura of Knighthood, Aura of Piety, Bred to the saddle, Code of Chivalry, Crusade +1, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, Divine Spells, DR 9/ignoble, Fealty, Fortitude of Knighthood, Knight's Warhorse, Lay on Hands 10 hp/day, Mantle of Knighthood, Mounted Combat +4, Perseverance, Quest Knight (Attacks, Initiative, Damage), Smite Infidel 2/day, Unhorse, Vision Quest; Nobility 97; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur), Code of the Crusader; SV Fort +25, Ref +19, Will +22; Str 22 (16), Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Diplomacy +12 (10), Handle Animal +12 (+16 with horses) (10), Heal +7 (5), Intimidate +4 (0), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +10 (10), Knowledge (Religion) +5 (5), Ride +20 (11), Survival +7 (5); Cleave, Epic Prowess, Epic Toughness, Faith, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Piety, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Zealot

Possessions: +5 amulet of natural armor, +6 belt of giant strength, +6 cloak of epic resistance, +5 knight's noble heavy lance, +5 knight's noble longsword, +5 knight's mantle full plate, +5 heavy steel shield, heavy warhorse (steed)

Spells: Priest caster level 3, spell points to cast (1/1/4/15*), Spell save

DC 12 + spell level; spell points 15

Role: Percival is a Grail Knight, one of the purest, mightiest, and most loyal of Arthur's servants.

TOR, SIR

Illegitimate son of King Pellinore; raised by Aries the cowherd; a great knight of Arthur's court; later made an Earl by Arthur

Sir Tor: British Middle class (Knight 10/Noble 5); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 5d8 + 10d12; hp 87; Init +5 (+4 improved initiative, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft; AC 29, Touch 13, Flat-Footed 26 (+3 knight's mantle full plate, +3 heavy steel shield, +3 Dex); Base Atk: +13/+8/+3; Atk: +18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+8/19-20 +2 knight's lord's +1 noble longsword or 1d8/x3 +2 lance) or +21 mounted/charging (2d8+8/19-20 +2 knight's lord's +1 noble longsword or 3d8/x3 +2 lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA divine wrath; SQ Armor Tolerance +5, Aura of Courage, Aura of Knighthood, Aura of

Nobility, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Wrath 1/day, Fealty, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +3, Noblesse Oblige, Quest +1, Stuck in the middle with you, Unhorse; Nobility 68; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur), Noblesse Oblige; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +13; Str 16, Dex 16 (12), Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 20 (16).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15 (5), Craft (Leatherworking) +5 (5), Diplomacy +25 (10), Handle Animal +18 (+21 with horses) (10), Intimidate +15 (0), Jump +8 (5), Profession (Cowherd) +6 (5), Ride +17 (9), Sense Motive +8 (5), Sleight of Hand +5 (0), Swim +8 (5), Tumble +3 (0); Heritage of Nobility, Improved Initiative, Inheritance, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Standard Bearer, Trample.

Possessions: chain barding, cloak of charisma +4, +3 knight's mantle full plate, +4 gloves of dexterity, +2 lance, +2 knight's lord's +1 noble longsword, +3 heavy steel shield, heavy warhorse (steed/tough as nails).

Role: Sir Tor is an example of the theme, extremely common in Arthurian legend, of an abandoned or unknown son raised beneath his birth. After his heritage is discovered, he serves Arthur loyally.

TRISTRAM, SIR (ALSO CALLED TRISTAN)

One of the twelve greatest knights of the age, Tristram was in love with a married woman, Isould. Her husband, the evil King Mark, eventually he was caught with Isould by Mark, who killed Tristram by driving a lance through him from behind. Isould died of a broken heart, and the two ill-fated lovers were buried side by side.

Sir Tristram: British Royalty (Knight 15/Quest Knight 10); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 25d12 + 33; hp 255; Init +12 (+8 superior initiative, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 38, Touch 18, Flat-Footed 36 (+13 +5 knight's mantle full plate, +7 +5 heavy steel shield, +4 mantle of knighthood, +4 Dex); Base Atk: +23/+18/+13/+8; Atk: +36/+31/+26/+21 (1d8+16/17-20 +5 knight's noble longsword) or +40 mounted/charging (2d8+16/17-20 +5 knight's noble longsword or 3d10+16/19-20/x3 +5 knight's noble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA power charge (+8 damage while charging), unhorse (DC 19 or be unhorsed); SQ Armor Tolerance +7, Aura of Knighthood, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, DR 8/ignoble, Fast Healing 3, Fortitude of Knighthood, Knight's Warhorse, Mantle of Knighthood, Mounted Combat +4, Noblesse Oblige, Perseverance, Power Charge 2/day, Quest Knight (attacks, initiative, damage), Take the Reins, Unhorse, Vision Quest, Voice of command; Nobility 83; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +23, Ref +17, Will +18; Str 24 (16), Dex 19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 22 (16)

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10 (0), Diplomacy +26 (10), Gather Information +10 (0), Handle Animal +25 (+29 with

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horses) (15), Heal +10 (10), Intimidate +29 (13), Knowledge (Nature) +4 (0), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +11 (10), Perform (string instruments) +24 (+27 with masterwork harp) (10), Ride +34 (24), Survival +10 (10); Epic Reputation, Improved Critical (lance, longsword), Improved Initiative, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Superior Initiative, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance, longsword)

Possessions: masterwork harp, +8 belt of epic strength, +6 cloak of charisma, +5 knight's mantle full plate, +5 knight's noble heavy lance, +5 knight's noble longsword, +5 manual of quickness of action (used), ring of rapid healing, +5 heavy steel shield

Role: Like Lancelot, Tristram is a noble knight whose one weakness is a woman he cannot have. And like Lancelot it eventually leads to his death.

ULFIUS, SIR

One of the greatest knights to ever live; served Uther Pendragon, and afterwards Arthur; was possibly the greatest knight of Arthur's early reign, before the emergence of Pellinore, Lancelot, and Gawaine.

Sir Ulfius: British Lesser nobility (Knight 20/Quest Knight 5); CR 25; medium humanoid; HD 25d12 + 125; hp 287; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft (20 ft in armor); AC 35, Touch 15, Flat-Footed 30 (+13 +5 knight's mantle full plate, +7 +5 heavy steel shield, +5 Dex); Base Atk: +23/+18/+13/+8; Atk: +37/+32/+27/+22 melee (1d8+14/17-20 +5 knight's noble longsword) or +43 mounted/charge (2d8+14/17-20 +5 knight's noble longsword) or +40 (3d10+14/x3 +5 knight's noble heavy lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA power charge (+12 damage), terrifying charge (DC 21 (mounted foes) or 26 (foes on foot) or be flat-footed), unhorse (DC 21 or be unhorsed); SQ Armor Tolerance +10, Aura of Knighthood, Bred to the saddle, Code of Chivalry, Dispense Justice, Divine Grace, Divine Health, DR 7/ignoble, Fealty, Knight's Warhorse, Mounted Combat +6, Perseverance, Power Charge 3/day, Quest Knight (Attacks), Take the Reins, Terrifying Charge, Unhorse; Nobility 73; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +21, Ref +12, Will +11; Str 22 (16), Dex 20 (14), Con 20 (14), Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Climb +13 (7), Diplomacy +22 (15), Handle Animal +20 (+26 with horses) (15), Intimidate +20 (15), Jump +13 (7), Knowledge (Nobility and royalty) +10 (10), Ride +30 (15), Tumble +7 (0); Cleave, Epic Weapon Focus (longsword), Faith, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Mounted Combat, Piety, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (lance, longsword) Possessions: +6 amulet of health, +5 knight's mantle full plate, +6 belt of giant strength, +6 gloves of dexterity, +5 heavy steel shield, +5 knight's noble heavy lance, +5 knight's noble longsword

Role: Ulfius, along with Brastias, are the last of the "old guard", and serve Arthur admirably during his early reign, cementing his tie to Uther in the minds of the people.

KING URIENS OF GORE

Uriens is an ambitious, headstrong man who is not overly bright. A powerful noble who could have stood in the way of Uther uniting Britain, Uriens felt slighted that his "gift" of a royal bride, Morgan le Fey, was delayed, as she was too young to marry at the time of Gorloise's death. Upon Arthur's coronation, Lot, Morgawse, and his new bride Morgan convince Uriens that Arthur is a bastard being put forward by Merlin, who will be the real power behind the throne.

King Uriens of Gore: British Royalty 15th Level (Knight 8/Noble 7); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD 8d12+7d8+30; HP 119; Init +1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 24, Touch 11, Flat-Footed 23 (+9 half plate, +4 shield, +1 Dexterity); Base Atk +13/+8/+3; Atk +19 melee (1d8+5/19-20 +2 Noble Longsword); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+5/19-20 +2 Noble Longsword) or +19 melee (3d10+6 +1 Noble Heavy Lance with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted combat +3, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +4, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +2, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 1/day; Nobility 70; AL Code of Chivalry; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +8; Str 17, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +7, Ride +16, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Bluff +7, Sense Motive +4; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Leadership, Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (Longsword), Combat Reflexes, Endurance, Diehard

Possessions: +2 Knight's Mantle Half Plate (3 DR bypassed by ignoble weapon), +2 Lg. Steel Shield, +2 Noble Longsword, +1 Noble Heavy Lance, Heavy Warhorse (Steed, Strong, Maverick)

Role: Uriens, like Accolon (along with an astonishing array of men) serve Morgan as her unwitting muscle. Although he does not believe Arthur has any legitimate claim to the throne, Uriens respects, and even comes to like the boy King. However, he is frequently caught up in Morgan's schemes to bring Arthur down, often without even realizing the role he plays.

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ADVENTURE LOCATIONS

TOWNS

Towns are centers of trade. A place where excess food could be sold or traded for other goods was the basis of the economies of Arthurian Britain, and the medieval world in general. Towns are almost always found near some access to trade, either a river or a major road of some sort.

Most towns in Arthurian Britain are a hodgepodge of different architectural styles, revealing their mixed lineage. Celtic towns, which were conquered by the Roman Empire, who adopted their technologies of roads, and the Roman villa, returned to the locals after the Roman withdrawal, and then conquered by the Saxons. As villages grow, or as they are destroyed and rebuilt, they will be built in the style of the current conquerors. However, the old Roman roads and stone fortifications still form the backbone of the infrastructure, so this can frequently be seen in villages and towns.

Towns can be used in the campaign to provide characters with a place to buy and sell their goods, rest between adventures, and also as a place to get involved in politics.

SAMPLE TOWN: CARLION (CAERLEON)

Carlion (or as the old folks call it, Caerleon) is a small, yet critically important town built on the ruins of a Roman settlement. A source of food, wool, stone, and lumber, the town's position on the river Usk make it a hub of trade to nearby areas. The castle, built originally by the Romans, and expanded by later rulers from the nearby stone quarries serves as Arthur's headquarters during his War of Ascension, when he is battling King Lot and the Eleven Lords.

The town is important for other reasons as well, not the least of which are the other two prominent landmarks in the town: Caerleon Church and the Amphitheater.

Caerleon Church, despite its humble trappings, is the home of none other than Saint Dubricius, one of the holiest, most highly respected leaders in the church of the One God. He, along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, serve as two of Arthur's closest advisors, exceeded in their wisdom only by Merlin himself. However, as a beatified living saint, Dubricius is an especially powerful ally, and serves as Arthur's senior advisor while Merlin is away engaging in diplomacy and intrigue.

The Amphitheater, constructed during the Roman occupation, was the original reason Arthur chose Caerleon for his Pentecost celebration, as it makes an excellent venue to host jousts, races, and tournaments. However, when open war is declared, the Amphitheater serves another function: it becomes the place where Arthur and his knights discuss war strategy, and is the precursor to the Round Table itself.

Although the key locations of Caerleon are detailed on the map, most of the town is not shown on the map provided. Areas off the map include manorial farmland, rock quarries, and rough hilly terrain occupied by shepherds and their flocks. There are also many ruins of the original Roman settlement in the outlying areas of the map. Farmers and villagers have used these as a source of free stone for almost a century, and so most items of value have been discovered. However, there are persistent rumors of underground burial chambers, ancient libraries, haunted ruins, and other wonders dismissed by older, more sober minds.

Should the outlying areas be attacked, the villagers will retreat to the town proper, and its Roman walls, for protection. In truly dire circumstances, should the walls of the town center be penetrated, they would retreat to Caerleon Castle.

MAP KEY

1. GRUNDY'S FARM

"Big" Sal Grundy, who rose from humble beginnings to become quite wealthy, owns this large plot of land. No one is quite sure what Sal did to become wealthy, and he doesn't talk much, so rumors about him abound. He can often be seen at the Black Stallion drinking alone, watching the crowds of soldiers, entertainers, and locals alike with a detached, bemused interest.

2. GUILDHOUSE:

The buildings on either side of this short street belong to some of the most wealthy and influential citizens of Caerleon: the Guildmasters. These individuals spend most of their time working their trades, and occasionally meet to regulate the terms of apprenticeship and other matters. Recently, however, the role of the guildsmen as community leaders has become more important, as the King himself has called on them to manage the explosive growth to the small town brought about by the arrival of the King's men. Certain guild leaders see this as an opportunity to line their pockets, while others try to genuinely support the fledgling King, proud he chose their village as his capitol.

3. MERCHANT'S ROW

Merchant life in Caerleon is rather more unorganized than one might expect. This area of shops, while it serves the villagers and manorial lords seeking supplies, also serves the class of itinerant wandering merchants of the day, who pack the open air market simply called "The Common" each afternoon to haggle, buy, and sell. These adventurers, often solitary, but occasionally grouped together in small bands, will buy goods they know (or hope) they can sell at a discount in distant towns.

Popular goods for trade are woolen blankets and cloaks (the cloaks are especially prized because they are water

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repellent), horn tools and utensils (made from sheep and goat horn), and occasionally more exotic goods such as weapons or artifacts from the Roman ruins. Trade is normally conducted in barter, but a growing number of merchants prefer silver coins (a practice begun by the Roman occupiers that has continued since their departure) as they are more portable and their value is easy to discern without excessive haggling.

With the influx of soldiers, knights, and dignitaries to the town, this area has also become an unofficial entertainment district. The small Inn of the Black Stallion at the base of Lodge Hill is packed to overflowing every evening, and this influx of patronage has drawn entertainers in droves to the small village. A group of entertainers sporting tumblers, jugglers, a monkey, and even a trained bear has secured the rights to a performance on the hill behind the inn, and crowds are delighted nightly by their performances.

In addition to the daily markets held for whatever customers or merchants happen to pass through town, this area also hosts a large commerce fair once a year, at which many residents of the surrounding manors come to trade for items they will need to get them through the winter.

4. ROMAN FORT

Especially after Arthur arrives and turns Caerleon into his ad hoc capitol, crime becomes a serious problem for the little village. Since the King is busy prosecuting his war with the rebellious nobles, and since the manorial lords tend to their own justice, there was no one with the authority and power to respond to those who would threaten the King's Peace in the town proper. So, with the King's permission, a group of merchants and guild leaders got together and established the first town Sheriff, a yeoman by the name of Carter, and gave him as his office and gaol, this old Roman garrison.

Although all of the crimes in town have been minor (so far), Sheriff Carter has secured labor from the guildmasters to repair the gaol, and has set up stocks for the public display of the drunkards and other minor offenders as an example to the other villagers. Crimes usually consist of petty thievery and fights among soldiers impatient for their first taste of glory, or vying for the attention of an especially promising tavern wench. New in his position, Sheriff Carter is well aware of how tenuous his position in the social order is, and will certainly not prosecute any knights in Arthur's service. He will report such activities to the King's men, and help them deal with it. However he will not act on his own in such matters.

5. MALLET HOUSE

This tool shop sees extensive business from the river merchants, who ferry the hammers, nails, and other implements made here to distant towns. Carl Samson recently inherited this shop when his father passed away, and this young craftsman, newly married, has the harrowed look only a man recently thrust into ownership of a business, expecting a child, and attempting to learn the art of politics on the town council can have. Carl's hairline, which has

been retreating faster with each passing day, is the subject of much local humor, not to mention the odd betting pool.

6. THE HEDGEROW

This dark, narrow, little street is the domain of thieves, cutthroats, and prostitutes, and is avoided by all honest folk, especially after the sun goes down. It was the activities on this street, more than any other cause that prompted the appointment of Sheriff Carter, who does his best to contain the activities of the seedy elements that cater to the darker desires of the soldiers and other newcomers to Caerleon.

7. THE MILL

This building is the economic hub of the entire town during harvest time. Like many of the town's important buildings the Romans originally constructed it.

8. AULD IRONWORKS

Solomon Aaronson runs the local smithy and has gone from shoeing the occasional horse to repairing the plate mail of Knights of the Realm virtually overnight. This has made Solomon extremely wealthy, but greatly overworked. He has taken on three new apprentices to help with menial duties while he attends to the intricate work required by the military forces stationed in town.

9. COOPER'S KEEP

Angus Cooper is the second wealthiest man in town (next to Stanley Morgan), and has an ostentatious manner, making sure everyone knows how wealthy he is. His combination house and place of residence rises to a majestic three stories. The head of the town council, Cooper's arrogance and success in equal measure have made him many enemies. However, his three daughters are all very fetching, and considered prime marriage candidates for ambitious young townsmen who want a piece of the arrogant man's little empire.

10. FREE SCHOOL

An unusual site in any town, this school only survives because of its connection to the church. Saint Dubricius has personally sponsored this school, encourages parents to allow their children to attend, and even provides laborers to assist families, allowing their children to attend more often. Because of his tireless work to support the school, most families allow their children to attend year round, except for the harvest, and the most inclement weather. The guildsmen do not like the influence this gives the church over the minds of the young, but are hesitant to oppose the charismatic and beloved Dubricius.

11. MORGAN'S HOUSE

Home of the oldest, most prestigious family in town, Stanley Morgan has gone out of his way to support Arthur's fledgling reign, including vast donations to the war coffers. Morgan disdains politics, and refused to head the town council, allowing that honor to fall to Angus Cooper. However, it is

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rumored that when Arthur moves on, Morgan will take his place in Castle Caerleon itself.

12. STONE HOUSE

Along with a sheriff, Caerleon's town council decided their new status as Arthur's capitol also required something else the small village had never needed before: a militia. Gruff old Warden Henslowe was given this assignment, and has begun drilling all able-bodied men from the surrounding villages every ten days. Unfortunately, all this rag tag group has to practice with at the moment is some old sticks, as the local metal smiths are too busy creating and maintaining equipment for Arthur's knights. Henslowe is seeking someone willing to travel to Oxford to buy pikes and halberds, but so far no one has presented themselves.

AMPHITHEATER

This ancient structure, built by the Roman occupiers for their entertainments and town meetings, had fallen into disrepair until Arthur decided to celebrate his coronation here. The influx of money and craftsmen to carry out the work was the first in a series of upturns for the small community. Upon the declaration of civil war against the young King, Caerleon found itself thrust into the spotlight like never before. Now this ancient amphitheater hosts war council meetings between Arthur and his knights, and serves as a practice facility for those same knights to practice their jousting. During other times, the newly formed town militia also drills here.

CAERLEON CASTLE

Arthur's official headquarters, this castle, while in fairly good repair, has been transformed overnight into a formidable defensive structure through the magic of Merlin himself. This created quite a stir in the community, and drew the criticism of many of the locals. However, Dubricius has refused to condemn even this blatant act of sorcery out of the need to protect the village and support Arthur's claim to the throne, a claim that should bring stability and order back to a land too long subjected to the petty whims of bandits and barbarians.

CAERLEON CHURCH

A modest house of worship, this church is still the subject of pilgrimages by the faithful, not because of its wondrous architecture, but because of the miraculous character of the man who leads the local congregation. Saint Dubricius is known as a pillar of piety, worker of miracles, and converter of infidels. A model of restraint, he refuses to condemn those who continue to practice the Old Faith, even working with them on joint initiatives.

CITIES

Cities are more rare, and show more of their Roman heritage than towns. The Romans founded most existing cities, including London, during their occupation of the isle. One thing Romans understood was commerce, and these major

settlements, the first real cities on the island, were founded with that in mind, and supported by the best roads the world will see for a thousand years. This only increases the strategic value of these locations.

SAMPLE CITY: YORK

York was originally built by the Romans during their conquest of Britain. As they moved northward, they established a garrison here called Eboracum. This site was of great strategic importance because it controlled a key north-south route, and was thus a focal point of older Celtic roadways. This site was also adjacent to two rivers which were both suitable for trading and which even provided access to the North Sea. As the Romans continued to occupy this site, they built their roads on top of the older roads, making York more important as a trading hub. These factors attracted a civilian population to York, and when the city was Christianized, a bishopric was established here. Lastly, a major ley line runs right beneath the city, making it a source of great power for magicians, and a natural place for them to build their homes and conduct their studies. All of these factors have combined to make York one of the most powerful and influential cities in Britain.

After the Roman occupiers departed from Britain, York's strategic importance led to it being quickly conquered and occupied by the Saxons, who called the city Eoforwic. During his Twelve Battles to rid England of Saxon rule, Arthur lays siege to York and recaptures it.

MAP KEY

1. CATHEDRAL PRECINCT

This area is the home of York-minster, dedicated to St. Peter, the largest cathedral in all of England. The Archbishop who rules here is an ardent foe of the "devil's children" who seem drawn to the city for reasons the churchmen do not understand. Sermons denouncing the practice of witchcraft are given here weekly, and sentiment against the "children of the night" seems to be building to a fever pitch.

2. BOOTHAM BAR

This gate guards the major entrance into the city from the north, and can be dated back to Roman times.

3. MONK BAR

This gate is extremely elaborate and well-fortified, having had a portcullis recently installed.

4. LAYERTHORPE GATE

Not nearly as well-defended as the true bars (a term for the principal gates into a medieval city), this postern gate is a simple pair of iron-bound wooden doors.

5. FISHERGATE BAR

This gate is named for its access to the river, and for the fishermen who live in the nearby neighborhoods.

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6. CASTLE

This motte-and-bailey castle is the home to the Lord who rules and protects the city on Arthur's behalf, the Warden of the Northlands, Lord Brastias. Having served Uther and his son Arthur with distinction, Lord Brastias is now in his 70's, and is rumored to be in ill-health. Only his influence has prevented a popular uprising against the witches of the city, but mages and those who practice the Old Faith throughout York are preparing for the day the venerable lord passes away, because they fear that day they will have to fight for their lives.

7. CLIFFORD'S TOWER

This tower was the original defensive fortification of the city, and predates the current castle. It is named after a man who was hanged here, and is rumored to be haunted.

8. FRANCISCAN FRIARY

This Friary was personally associated with Francis of Assisi, and its proximity to the castle leads many visiting dignitaries, including the King himself to take residence here.

9. FOSS BRIDGE

This stone bridge is lined with many shops and stalls, including a chapel dedicated to St. Anne, and the city's main market for saltwater fish. A representative of the King is stationed here to collect all appropriate taxes and fees from the fish trade. The Foss has been dammed, and the bulge in the river (at the extreme right of the map) is a lake created by this dam, which is an official royal fishery. Only those with the proper licenses (and according fees paid) are allowed to fish here under penalty of death.

10. MERCHANT ADVENTURER'S HALL

This powerful guild that specializes in foreign trade (and indeed holds a monopoly over such trade and travel) has paid handsomely for a Royal Charter making it independent of all local rules and regulations. Only the King himself may place any limits or restrictions on this guild, which he chooses not to do as long as they support him financially.

11. CARMELITE FRIARY

These monks have a charter to run boats across the King's fishery, and have built a small dock to allow boats crossing the lake to bring supplies to their monastery.

12. THE SHAMBLES

This area is the city's butcher market. Those new to the city can quickly find this area because of the charnel smell, blood soaked streets, immense population of bugs, or the sounds of animals being slaughtered when it is open. When it is closed, the area still reeks.

13. MARKETPLACE

This area not only hosts a variety of shops, but also an open-air market every Thursday. This area is commonly referred

to as the "Thursday market" for just that reason. Vendors can begin selling their wares at 5 a.m., or 7 a.m. in the winter months. A town warden is always present at the Thursday market to assess fees for the vendors, called "stallage", which is a major source of revenue for the city.

14. STONEGATE

This neighborhood is one of the most important in the city, and the road leading through this area is an important route for official processions in the city. Many of the buildings in this neighborhood are owned by the Church, and many of the shops here sell religious books. There are also many goldsmiths in this part of the city, who are important allies of the Church, who in turn are some of the biggest purchasers of gold for their elaborate cathedrals.

15. COMMON HALL

This hall is the home to the powerful Guilds of the city. In addition to guild meetings, this hall is able to support large gatherings, and the Great Hall is where the city's Mayor is elected every year. When the Lord of York is powerful and well respected, as Lord Brastias is, he will be asked to approve the guild's choice of Mayor. There is no popular vote.

16. ST. LEONARD'S HOSPITAL

This facility, run by the Abbey of St. Mary (with considerable help from the other religious institutions of the city), is dedicated to caring for the poor. Alms are collected here, and local farmers are required by law to contribute corn to help the hospital carry on its work.

17. ABBEY OF ST. MARY

Home to a powerful and influential order of Benedictine monks, this large, self-contained, and self-governing abbey is a source of tension and bitterness among the rulers of York. There is a separate temple for the use of the monks, so they may worship privately in the center of the enclosed abbey yard.

18. DOMINICAN FRIARY

This monastery is dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene.

19. OUSE BRIDGE

This bridge was originally built by the Romans. The building at the northwest side of the bridge houses the Mayor and his administrative staff, including the city treasury and gaol. There are numerous shops on the bridge, a chapel, and even one private residence. No area on the bridge may be owned, and are all rented from the city.

20. HOLY TRINITY PRIORY

This Benedictine monastery owes its allegiance to Bors, the King of Benwick, who established this monastery during his campaign to aid Arthur during his War of Ascension. Although the locals view it with suspicion for this reason, Bors is a staunch ally of Arthur.

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21. OLD BAILLE

Although called “old,” this small, imposing castle is actually much newer than the Lord’s castle, and has only recently been completed. It is controlled by the Archbishop of York, and its stated purpose is to act as a prison for priests and monks who violate the Archbishop’s orders or commit other infractions. Many believe it will also act as an Inquisitional Court to root out the city’s witches, serving as a place of execution as well when the time is right and the Archbishop feels free to act.

22. MICKLEGATE BAR

This gate guards the main entrance to the city from the south, and is the most important and well-defended gate in the entire city. There are only three keys to this gate, in the hands of the Sergeant of the Guard, the Mayor, and Lord Brastias. This gate will be locked at night, but may also be locked during external attack, or internal strife.

THE INK WELL AND OLD WORLD PARCHMENTS

These book shops are the two most important secret gathering places of the city’s mages, who use these places as guild halls to teach their craft to apprentices and to buy supplies. Many meetings have been held here of late to discuss what to do about the Archbishop’s growing desire to see all who practice magic killed or driven out of the city. Like the Archbishop, the mages here have decided to wait until the time is right before they take any rash action.

HENGES

Henges are centers of worship for the Old Faith. The Old Faith includes all those who worship pagan deities, including the island’s original giant inhabitants, the later Celtic peoples, and the most recent invader to the island, the Saxons.

Henges serve as connections for the ley lines that mysteriously transport mana throughout the world, not just in Britain, but on the continent as well. Although the giants descended from Albion can take credit for building the earliest of these, it is unknown where the mana itself comes from, and if the giants actually sought to tap this power from creating these worship centers.

It is known that in relatively recent times, steps have been taken to place henges at locations to benefit one group or another. When Uther asked Merlin to create a grand burial site for his brother, Pendragon, the mightiest mage in the world cast the most powerful spell ever seen in order to move the grand Stonehenge from Ireland to its current location. He did this to enhance the power of the King he served, and redistributed mana throughout the island of Britain in so doing. Had others done this in the past? It is impossible to say. There have been accounts of henges being destroyed during internecine warfare among giants, doubtless humans, even the druids who care for and venerate these sites, would take the same course of action if they felt sufficiently threatened.

SAMPLE HENCE: SEAHENCE

One of the most bizarre and hotly contested of the henges is Seahenge. While this henge is currently under the nominal care of an enclave of druids, the giants also bear an ancient claim to this site, considering it their most holy altar to Poseidon. For the time being, these two groups have entered into an uneasy “time share” arrangement, with the druids vacating the site during the holiest days for the descendants of Albion. The giants have no use for the site at other times, since sacrifice to appease their god is more important than constant veneration (a human weakness).

One of the remarkable traits of this site is the use of trees, somehow inverted into the ground, for the pillars and altar of the henge itself. These trees are not only permanent, they are somehow alive, and their roots grow more tangled and gnarled over time.

MAP KEY

1. CEREMONIAL CHAMBER

This chamber is made of wood, straw and mud, and is quite fragile. Every time the giants use the site they destroy it, so the druids have constructed it of impermanent materials with an eye to ease of reconstruction. This chamber is totally bare, except for the altar itself, where the faithful, when they die, are placed on the altar to be carried out to sea by the high tide.

The giants, when they use the altar, place goats killed for sacrifice, or more commonly vanquished foes.

2. CENTRAL ALTAR:

This is where corpses and sacrifices are laid, to be carried out by the tide.

3. BRAZIER

Pots filled with peat are placed here, and lit during the druids’ ceremonies. The branches of the inverted trees grasp onto these, and prevent them from being carried out to sea. The druids and loved ones of the deceased will watch the ceremony for a time from the stone benches surrounding the site, but then will retreat as the waters rise, watching from a distance, until the waters rise high enough to extinguish the lights in these braziers.

4. WITNESS BENCHES:

This is where witnesses to the ceremony, typically high ranking druids and the family of the deceased, watch during the first part of ceremony. When the tide rises over the benches, all witnesses will file out, down the processional path.

5. THE PROCESSIONAL

This is where those who witness the ceremony, but who do not participate, wait for the druids and loved ones of the deceased, bearing torches. When the rising waters cause the participants to leave the site, they will meet with these observers, and the druids will lead all away from the site.

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RUINED CASTLES

Ruined fortifications abound in Arthurian England. Old Roman Garrisons, Castles built in the time of Uther, and more recent Saxon defensive sites may all serve as this most Arthurian dungeon setting (the most commonly encountered type of dungeon in the setting). During Arthur's early reign, nature herself has reclaimed many of these sites, as the rate of forest and plant growth is simply astounding. In a few months, lands can look as if they have never been inhabited, and the erstwhile explorer might find, to his surprise, a castle in the midst of thick overgrowth and seemingly ancient forest.

Often, these castles will be taken as a lair by a monster, such as a giant or dragon. As Arthur's men move to reclaim the Britain of their fathers, lost to Saxon hordes and rampaging nature, they must defeat these foes in order to return the castle to local authorities. This is necessary if the Boy King is to extend his control over the whole of his dominion and protect it from future invasion.

SAMPLE RUINED CASTLE: TINTAGEL

Regarded by many as the mightiest castle ever devised, Tintagel has never fallen to siege. Only Uther's treachery, combined with Merlin's magic, allowed this castle to be breached, and even then only the untimely death of the castle's lord, Gorloise, which caused those inside to surrender, allowed the castle, and the prized Igraine, to be taken.

The only approach to the fortress is by a narrow, winding path that makes transport of siege engines difficult. As would-be attackers move up this road, they are subject to bombardment by the so-called Lower Ward, a fine castle in its own right.

If the attackers choose to ignore this outer defense, assaulting the Breastworks in an attempt to gain access to the Inner Ward, the master of the Lower Ward will dispatch footmen to engage the attackers from behind, trapping them against the Breastworks between soldiers from the Lower Ward and yeomen on the walls of the Inner Ward. The number of attacking forces that have met bloody ends this way has led the tactic of bypassing the Lower Ward to be labeled a fool's gambit.

Even after achieving the Inner Ward (no small feat) an attacking force has yet to take the castle itself. Another wall must be bypassed to reach the inner courtyard, and the attackers must then lay siege to the Central Bailey. If the East and West Bastions are ignored, men from these garrisons will again attack from behind, attempting to encircle the siege party, trapping them against the wall.

This is a description of Tintagel at its height, when Gorloise ruled it with an iron gauntlet. After Uther's treachery, the castle falls into disuse for many years, despite its mighty reputation as a flawless citadel. After King Mark comes to power over Cornwall, ten years before Arthur's ascendancy, even he does not use this castle. The reason for

this will determine what adventures the PCs must undertake to reclaim the castle.

The likeliest scenario would be that the castle is inhabited by a mighty clan of giants. In such a case, although many of the walls and defenses will be in poor repair, rooting out the castle's inhabitants will be almost as bad as laying siege to it at its height. A giant is a mobile catapult, and so the giants will be able to use all of the tactics outlined above in order to rain death down on anyone attempting to retake the castle.

Or the castle could be haunted by ghosts and banshees, echoes of the betrayal of Gorloise.

Regardless of the current inhabitants, King Mark would heap immense honors on anyone who reclaimed this castle and returned it to him. Those who take the castle with the intent of keeping it for themselves will have to bolster its defenses and hire men to defend it quickly, for Mark will certainly attempt to reclaim the castle before it can be repaired, seeing this as a direct challenge to his rule over the area.

Since Arthur and Mark are mortal enemies, Arthur would certainly sponsor such an expedition if he thought it could succeed.

MAP KEY

LOWER WARD

This courtyard is grimy, unkempt, and the home to a group of ogres, currently being lorded over by a single Hill Giant.

UPPER WARD

This is the Giant's home, from which he ventures out to terrorize the countryside and hunt.

INNER WARD

A pair of young stone giants reside here, serving as a watch for the lord of the castle. However, these giants have a severe dislike for the ogres and giant in the lower ward, and will wait to raise the alarm until they see the outcome of any fight that breaks out there.

LOST CAVES

These caves are currently being used by a small band of smugglers and thieves as a base from which to raid the surrounding countryside. They have a near perfect location, since the local forces are too afraid of the giants to investigate these caves.

CHAPEL

This area has been completely defiled, and is the home to a small band of ragged goblins. However, a careful search (DC 20) of the area will reveal a major relic.

CENTRAL BAILEY

A family of stone giants, with a leader of Albion's line, have made their home here, and conduct grisly sacrifices by throwing anyone they capture over the cliffs into the ocean home of their god Poseidon.

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GRANARY

This area is used as a makeshift prison for future sacrifices and local women captured for “entertainment” purposes.

Garden: This area has been trampled and ruined.

ARMORY

Another group of goblins make their home here. These goblins have taken advantage of the weapons and armor here (too small and of no use to the giants) to make themselves an extremely well armed and dangerous group of goblins.

COTTAGES

This area has been totally ruined and razed.

TOP LOOK

This area has had an altar erected on it, and sacrifices are hurled from this height to a watery death.

THE QUEST

The basic unit of adventure in Legends of Excalibur is the *quest*. A quest is a short-term goal that the characters are either asked to solve by a higher authority (typically a noble with the quest class ability), or the quest could present itself to the characters, and they could decide to resolve the situation themselves. For example, the characters could come across a fork in the road while traveling to deliver a message for their lord. In the center of the road sits a maiden on the back of a donkey, with a distressed look on her face. If the characters ask what’s wrong, she will inform them that her father has just been killed by a giant, who has taken up residence in their castle home, with the intent of raiding the countryside for food and female companionship. The characters have just been offered a quest, one that they are under no obligation, save their honor as gentlemen, to undertake.

ELEMENTS OF THE QUEST

A quest has three main components: set-up, complication, and resolution. The set-up is the event that gets the players interested and involved in the adventure. The set-up should contain the seed of a dilemma for the characters to solve, and the promise of a reward.

SET-UP (DILEMMA)

The dilemma is the central action that must be resolved. In a single quest the dilemma is normally fairly straightforward, as in our previous example. There is a giant terrorizing the townsfolk, and it’s up to the characters to kill him and put an end to his reign of terror. A dilemma does not always involve combat, but Arthurian legend tends to be action-packed, with

Fair damosel, said Sir Launcelot, know ye in this country any adventures? Sir knight, said that damosel, here are adventures near hand, an thou durst prove them. Why should I not prove adventures? said Sir Launcelot for that cause come I hither.

- Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d’Arthur

frequent clashes against evil men and monsters. However, sometimes a diplomatic touch will be needed.

SET-UP (REWARD)

The reward can be promised as subtly or as obviously as the GM wishes. Continuing our previous example, there are several implied rewards that might present themselves to the players’ imaginations in the above quest. Is this maiden the heir to the lands attacked by the giant, now that her father has passed away? If so, a character might, through freeing her and her people from this menace, win her heart, and himself a keep and rulership over a small town, thus beginning his advancement into the nobility. All that is necessary in the set-up is the *promise* of a reward. In the previous example, the players’ imaginations will do most of the promising.

COMPLICATION

The complication is everything unforeseen that happens in between the set-up and the resolution. In other words, it’s the series of dilemmas the characters must overcome before they can resolve the dilemma posed at the start of the adventure. These mini-dilemmas work in much the same way as the set-up that got the characters involved in the first place. As the characters move into the lands now controlled by the giant, they encounter a small farm that has been put to the torch by the giant. The barn has been set ablaze, and from inside the characters hear a cry for help. A new dilemma, one not laid out before the characters in the initial set-up, has just presented itself. If the characters save the farmer, he will tell them that his new bride was taken by the giant to satisfy his lust, and that if the characters hurry, they might still catch him. So having resolved one complication (the burning barn), the players have now been offered the set-up to yet another complication, moving the adventure forward. If the characters follow the farmer’s advice and hurry up the road toward the keep, they will find not a giant, but a group of ogres that have been bullied into serving the giant, carrying the farmer’s wife up the road. A new complication has just emerged, this time with the promise of a reward, the rescue of the woman from the lascivious clutches of the giant.

There is no limit to the number of complications that can be inserted in between the set-up and the resolution. If enough complications arise during the course of a quest, it may eventually be considered more than one quest, if not a whole campaign, a subject covered below.

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RESOLUTION

The resolution is the climactic encounter of the quest. Here is where the characters get to solve the dilemma first posed to them at the beginning of the adventure. Each complication along the way has served to heighten the expectations for this encounter, which will have raised the tension of the resolution up several notches. The characters now have first-hand knowledge of how vile and wicked the giant and his followers are, making this final encounter even more satisfying for the players to resolve.

REWARDS

At the end of the adventure, having resolved the final encounter, the characters now receive a reward of some sort. This could be the items found in the giant's impromptu lair after his death, a chance to win the heart of the new liege lady of the hamlet, or perhaps, she will bequeath upon one of the characters the sword of her father, a weapon of power forged in the time of Uther.

The reward, like the quest itself, should be tailored to the characters taking part in the adventure for maximum effect. If the party undertaking the quest consists of a yeoman, a hermit, and a rogue, then a reward of a magic lance, however powerful, is likely not going to make the players feel like they were justly compensated, since none of them could really use the item to its full effect.

Occasionally, a reward could, in fact, be a set-up to a new quest for the characters. The lady might know the location of an ancient barrow mound where a saint was buried, offering the priest character a chance to gain a holy relic to aid in his adventures, and offering the rogue the chance to test his skill against the most devious of traps designed to thwart grave robbers. In addition, the farmer could arrive and give the yeoman a masterwork strength bow that his grandfather had used in the old wars against the Saxons. Now each character has gotten a reward, or at least the promise of a reward, tailored to her individual abilities and personalities. So even though the total power of what was gained is much lower, each player will feel more satisfied with the outcome of the adventure.

SAMPLE QUEST: THE INVISIBLE KNIGHT

Length: Short-Medium

Era: Any

Set Up: Following a battle, King Arthur, who was slightly wounded, is laying in a tent alone. When the PCs ride by, Arthur calls them over, and tells them he saw a sorrowful knight ride through, and he wishes the PCs to bring him back so that Arthur may hear why he is sad.

Complication: The PCs follow the knight and find him in a nearby wood with his lady. When the PCs tell the knight he must come with them, he will only do so if they will swear on their honor to protect him, for someone is out to kill him. The only other way the knight will accompany the PCs is by force. No sooner do the PCs agree to protect him,

or they subdue him, but his pursuer, Garlon, an especially infamous Red Knight, appears out of nowhere and slays the knight they just agreed to protect (or have just rendered unconscious)!

Resolution: The PCs' duty is clear: they must avenge the knight they were protecting. If they return to Arthur and ask for instruction, he will certainly ask them to go, and his order will aid the PCs (they will gain Arthur's quest bonus for the remainder of their hunt and combat with Garlon).

Adjustments: Garlon is actually on his way to a feast with his father, a noble of some renown. If the GM wishes to increase the difficulty and length of the quest, he can have Garlon elude the PCs until he is at the feast. Then the PCs must ascertain who their prey is out of armor, and deal with a host of protective relatives at the same time! Depending on the PCs abilities and the GMs desire, this could be solved through force (with the PCs apprehending the villain and fighting their way free to Arthur's court), or by the PCs appealing to the honor of Garlon's father (who is actually an honorable man who has no idea what a villain his son is).

SUPPORTING CAST:

Sir Garlon, the Red Knight: British Lesser Nobility Knight 1/Robber Baron 6/Red Knight 3; CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 1d12+9d8+20; HP 72; Init +7 (+3 Dexterity, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 24, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 22 (+12 Armor, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +7/+2; Atk +10 melee (1d8+2/19-20 longsword +2); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d8+2/19-20 longsword +2); FS 5 ft by 5 ft Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +3, Sneak Attack +3d6; Nobility 22; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 15.

Skills and Feats: Ride +13, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +9, Bluff +11, Hide +16, Move Silently +16, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4; Mounted Combat, Improved Feint, Weapon Focus (longsword), Improved Initiative, Ride-by attack

Possessions: +3 Chain Mail, +2 Shield, Ignoble Longsword +2, 4 Cure Light Wounds Potions, Ring of Invisibility, Light Warhorse (Charger, Coltish), Heavy Lance, 400 gp.

Caster level 3 Hedge Mage spell points to cast (1/2/12*)
Spell save DC 12+spell level; Spell Points 3

Spells Known (4/2/1)

0 Level (1 Spell Point): Flare, Message, Read Magic, Touch of Fatigue

1st Level (2 Spell Points): Charm Person, Disguise Self

2nd Level (12* Spell Points): Invisibility

Background: Garlon has grown up with every advantage a young man could want. A kind family, wealth, and positions of importance. However, rather than accept his responsibilities and act for the good of his family, Garlon has become a lout, and a knave, and even, some say, a bandit. His father has refused to turn him out, hoping the young man may yet grow out of his impulsive ways.

Role: Garlon is the knavish knight, playing the role of the knight, but acting with no regard for the Code of Chivalry.

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SAMPLE QUEST: THE MACHINATIONS OF MORGAN

Length: Medium-Long

Era: One Brief Shining Moment or Dream's End

Set-up: In recognition for good service, the PCs are invited to accompany the King's party on a great hunt, along with King Uriens of Gore, the husband of Morgan le Fey. During the hunt, the party spies the White Stag (see the new monsters section for more information), and Arthur, who has chased the beast before, will not rest until it is caught. Soon the King, Uriens, and the PCs are well away from the rest of the hunting party, and lost in deep woods at night. Suddenly, the party finds itself on the shores of a beach, and a grand ship draws to the shore. Twelve beautiful maidens offer the group rest and food.

Regardless of what the PCs would rather do (certainly they will be at least a little suspicious), Arthur, accustomed to strange and wondrous events, will board the ship to eat and drink. Surely the PCs, regardless of their suspicions, will not let him face danger alone. The best way to handle this scenario, guiding the PCs toward the quest with a minimum of railroading is to use Arthur. Should the PCs question him, he has faced situations like this before, with good results, and doesn't see the situation as strange or foreboding.

Complication: Despite the GM's best efforts to make sure the PCs feel like they aren't being herded into a trap, that's exactly what's happening. The food is poisoned with a powerful sleeping drug (save DC 30), with an onset time of thirty minutes. This drug has been incorporated into the food with the Witch's Brew spell. A Nondetection spell has also been placed on the food to aid the chances of the plan's success. The beautiful maidens will entertain the party during the poison's onset time, and will use all their wit and wiles to encourage the characters to eat and drink and relax.

Should all else fail (particularly once Arthur and Uriens have succumbed to the poison), the maidens have twelve knights on the ship to beat the characters into unconsciousness. However, escape is not impossible, and could even make the quest events that follow more interesting if some of the PCs are captured while others remain free. However, the GM should remember that nobility transgressions might apply for characters that retreat, especially without Arthur and Uriens.

Resolution: Depending on the events in the ship, this quest will follow two courses. If the PCs were captured, they will be locked in a dungeon with dozens of starving knights, many of whom are on the verge of death. Their jailer tells them that they can be provided with equipment and given the opportunity to fight for their lives. If they accept they will be given plain, normal armor and weapons, and herded into an arena, where they will face another knight similarly equipped. If Arthur or Uriens has been captured, they will be the opponents of choice (and the PCs will only recognize them if they engage in conversation during their duel or with a Spot check DC 20), as Morgan desires to rid herself of both her hated half-brother and her husband.

If the PCs escaped, then they will have to track down Arthur and Uriens, who are at a nearby castle, and free them, fighting their way through the knights guarding them. When they arrive they will find Arthur and Uriens locked in combat. Once the two men recognize each other, they will immediately stop fighting and attempt to escape.

SUPPORTING CAST:

King Arthur: Arthur is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

King Uriens: Uriens is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

Morgan le Fey: Morgan is unchanged from her Who's Who entry. Note, however, that Morgan will not actually appear in this quest. She is working quietly behind the scenes, and has no intention of confronting her half-brother directly.

THE CAMPAIGN

FROM QUEST TO CAMPAIGN

A campaign is a series of quests, one leading to the next. As discussed in the complication portion of the discussion on quests, there is no limit to the number of quests that could make up a campaign. Like the complications found within individual quests, the campaign serves to heighten expectation and anticipation of the next evening's adventure, serving as a lure to keep the players engaged for a long period of time.

ELEMENTS OF THE CAMPAIGN

A campaign shares many of the elements of an individual quest, and is composed of set-up, adventures, recurring themes, supporting cast, and resolution phases.

CAMPAIGN SET-UP (DILEMMA)

A campaign set-up is similar to the set-up used for an individual adventure. A dilemma is introduced, and a reward is promised or implied for resolving the dilemma. However, the dilemma needs to be much broader in scope, since it will be the focus of many adventures. For example, looking at the quest to slay the giant discussed earlier, as a set-up for a whole series of quests, taking months or even years of gaming to resolve, this seems a poor choice. However, if all of Britain were besieged by a family of giants intent on restoring the rule of the isle to the descendants of Albion, a set-up worthy of weeks of play has been discovered.

CAMPAIGN SET-UP (REWARD)

As with the dilemma introduced by a campaign set-up, the reward promised should be much broader in scope. Often such rewards will not be a simple offering of a magic

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item or experience, but something much more integral to the characters, and indeed to the campaign environment itself. In the case of an invading army of giants, the most tangible reward for resolving the dilemma is to live free from servitude to such vile and honorless creatures. The consequences for failure would be an almost complete reimagining of the campaign setting, with the Round Table and tales of the deceptions of Mordred and Morgan le Fey replaced by a Britain whose destiny lies in the hands of inhuman monsters.

ADVENTURES

Adventures, along with recurring themes, take the place of the complication phase seen in the individual quest. Each adventure is a quest of its own, and at the resolution of each adventure, the characters should, if successful in their tasks, move closer to the resolution for the campaign. If you picture an individual quest as a train heading toward a destination, then a campaign could be viewed as a roller coaster. You are still heading in a (more or less) straight line toward a destination. However, your trip is longer, and filled with the peaks of victories, and the valleys of defeats of the individual quests. When you are at the peaks, you can sometimes glimpse your destination, which not only increases the anticipation of your arrival, but also makes it a little easier to plot your course.

INTERLUDES

As exhilarating as a good roller coaster can be, there are limitations to the linear style of story telling, and occasionally the campaign is better served with a side trek or mission that does not lead the characters closer to their ultimate goal. This helps keep the campaign fresh and the players guessing. These adventures could be red herrings, where the players are led to believe solving the conflict of the quest will move them closer to the resolution, or they could be a way to break the tension of a series of harrowing quests, in the form of a tournament, or perhaps even more simply a celebration. These interludes give the players a chance to explore their characters without the pressure of feeling like they must succeed to keep the campaign moving along.

For example, after several tense adventures, including a disastrous encounter with an Albion's Bloodline giant, the invading giants might need to regroup, with one of their most important leaders slain. In this vacuum, the giants take to squabbling amongst themselves about who will take the fallen leader's place, and there is a lull in the campaign. During this lull, the lady in distress that started the entire campaign could invite the characters back to her tiny kingdom for a feast. This would give the players a chance to see how their characters' efforts have improved the campaign world. They could reunite with the farmer and his wife, and find that the woman they saved has a new baby, named after one of the player characters. Those PCs with an eye toward marrying the liege lady they saved would be given another opportunity to reacquaint themselves.

RECURRING THEMES

Campaigns can be more fun than a series of unconnected adventures because, as stated earlier, the players' anticipation towards the resolution of their adventures is allowed to build every week. This "wait for it" style of storytelling is a basic cinematic technique, used by dramatists as skilled as William Shakespeare. In *Henry V*, as an example, two priests are seen discussing King Henry, how the faults of his youth have blossomed into a marvelous and glorious reign. The audience, perhaps subconsciously, is left wondering, "Who is this rogue turned king? Will he live up to the high expectations raised by these priests, or will he dash them?" and when Henry does enter, all eyes are on him. While every adventure in a campaign is a form of this recurring theme, making certain adventures very similar reinforces the story to an even greater degree.

For example, the invasion of Britain by the giants could have been spurred on by an elite group of descendants of Albion who are priests in a cult of Poseidon, the Greek god who was Albion's father, and a well-known mythological patron of giant-kin. Early in the campaign, the characters could tangle with these very dangerous giant spellcasters. In doing so, however, they would hear about the leader of the invasion, a leader that the giants whom the PCs face would rather die than disappoint. A leader whose very name is whispered in awe and reverence among the lesser ogres who serve as the foot soldiers to the invaders. As the PCs work toward their goal, they will hear about this leader again and again, and will subconsciously wonder to themselves, like the play audience described above, if he will live up to the hype. Recurring themes also serve as a kind of built-in backstory for the campaign. Some of the players may have been asking themselves, as the campaign progressed, why the giants have invaded now, what new source of leadership and cohesion have they found to unite their squabbling factions and turn against their true enemy: mankind. The encounters with the priests of Poseidon will answer these natural questions, in a way that eliminates the need for a lengthy and boring exposition on the game master's part. This is known as "show don't tell" storytelling, and it is one of the most elegant and effective means of getting your point across.

SUPPORTING CAST

Every quest will have a cast of characters for the player characters to interact with, even if that cast is as small as a single knight guarding a bridge who will not let the PCs cross until they defeat him in single combat. When running individual quests, unless a member of the supporting cast is expected to meet the PCs in combat, it is not really necessary to know much about him or her. For example, the farmer and his wife discussed earlier do not need to be fully realized characters to serve their function in the story. In a campaign however, it is important that the supporting cast, both friend and foe, be given extra attention, often including a history and a statblock.

The reason for this is that any NPC who will be a recurring

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feature of the campaign, even one the characters will interact with as an ally needs a framework of consistency, both in terms of abilities and personality. The players have less to cope with than the GM, and will usually have a more clear memory of individual events. If the NPC was a fearsome warrior who helped bail the PCs out when they were in over their heads last month, the players will notice if he seems cowardly the next time they meet him. Having a set of statistics, along with a personality profile of the characters becomes more important the more time the player characters will get to spend with that character. Preparing these ahead of time will also allow the game master to put some thought into making the NPC a little different, a little more distinctive and interesting.

For example, it might turn out that the tiny realm where the campaign began is important to the overall plans of the invading giants, because of the many ancient barrow mounds containing tombs in the hills surrounding the liege lady's keep. One of these mounds contains an artifact that will allow the giants to tap into the ancient henges that form a network of energy across Britain. The island's giant inhabitants originally constructed the first of these henges, and this device, given to the giants by Poseidon himself, will allow their priests to tap the limitless energy coursing through the land concentrated in these structures. Thus, as the PCs battle against this invasion, they will find themselves needing to return to the tiny kingdom again and again, and the liege lady the characters met in the first adventure will become a regular NPC in the campaign. Because of this, the game master will want to detail her abilities and personality. Is she a high enough level noble to give the characters quest bonuses on adventures taken at her behest? Is she secretly a powerful enchantress who will be able to teach the party's hedge mage new spells, or construct powerful weapons to reward the party with? Does she have a dry sense of humor? All of these things will make her more and more interesting as the characters spend more time in her realm, working with her, and of course, attempting to win her heart.

RESOLUTION

Eventually, all the adventures, the interludes, the recurring events, the encounters with the supporting cast, will lead the PCs to one final encounter: the campaign's resolution. Sometimes this event will mean the end of the stories revolving around the current set of player characters. More often, however, it is a momentous event that moves the campaign in a new direction. While changing the lives of the characters that participated in the campaign forever, they will have more adventures ahead of them, more quests and campaigns to undertake, before their stories finally end.

For example, after finding the barrow that the giants have been seeking and uncovering the artifact the priests of Poseidon hoped to use as a weapon to rid Britain of its human "infestation" and reclaim their rightful place as rulers of the isle, the PCs will be confronted by the leader of the giant insurgency. Retreating to the castle they themselves raided in the campaign's first quest, the PCs hold off the

giant and his followers as long as they can, before he finally breaches the walls, and is killed in a deadly showdown with the player characters.

The story could end here, with the characters retiring, taking positions at court, or even marrying the liege lady of the tiny hamlet. However, if the game master and players wish to continue the stories of these characters, a mysterious stranger could be seen in the moments before the giants breach the castle walls, watching the battle. As the characters are recuperating, they will see the mysterious stranger again, who reveals himself to be none other than Merlin the magician! He will tell the characters that the artifact they recovered, now awakened, has caused the ley lines connecting the mysterious stone circles littered around the island to go crazy, and the magical energy building within the land will soon enshroud the island in a storm that will never end, but will instead grow more and more savage, until the isle is lost beneath the waves.

There was another such object, long ago, and it too caused an island to sink beneath the waves: the isle of Atlantis. The characters must sail west, and take the artifact to the precise spot where Atlantis met her watery end, and let the item fall to the bottom of the sea. Only when it is near its mate will the storms wracking the island abate. There is only one mariner who knows where the island's final resting place is, a Saxon explorer who has sailed far to the west, finding new lands and bringing back wondrous treasures. The characters must find him, and convince him to aid them. If they return to London, Merlin will be waiting for them with arrangements for a ship and crew. Even as the characters set out on this new journey, storm clouds gather in the east...

THE ARTHURIAN CAMPAIGN

The advice presented above, for all its usefulness, is general advice that would apply equally if one were running a campaign set in any fantasy world or historical setting. With the groundwork for individual quests and campaigns behind us, let us now look at the techniques unique to the Arthurian setting that the game master should consider when designing his adventures. In this section we will focus on the use of existing Arthurian canon, of which there is an almost limitless (and indeed ever growing) supply, coupled with the avoidance of that same canon.

THE USE OF ARTHURIAN CANON

Arthurian legend is absolutely packed with adventure nuggets. On every page of the typical tale is the seed for a quest that could occupy one or more nights of adventuring for your gaming group. These quests come in a great variety as well, from rescuing maidens, to fighting for one king or another in a great dynastic struggle, to participating in a grand joust, to undertaking a spy mission, the amount of adventure material in a copy of *Le Morte d'Arthur* or *Idylls of the King* is truly astounding. Taking these adventure seeds, using the supporting casts described in the tales, removing the central characters from them and replacing these with your player characters, you could run adventures

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and campaigns forever. Many of the quests and campaigns presented later in this section are drawn directly from Arthurian legend. However, there are some considerations that must be considered before taking this tack, namely, the handling of “name” NPCs and the integrity of events as presented in the canon.

IMPORTANT NPCs

For the game master running a campaign within even a loose framework of Arthurian legend, some NPCs are essential. For example, if Lancelot is killed, what effect would that have on Arthurian “history” as we know it? If he does not live to have his affair with Guinevere, then Mordred might never get his chance to rally his forces and attack Arthur, which means Arthur’s reign could go on for far longer. Very quickly the campaign has gone off the tracks of the stories and legends as we know them and into uncharted territory. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but most game masters would prefer to stay within at least a loose framework of the stories, since that is part of the appeal of playing with a given setting.

Therefore the issue of important NPCs is of critical importance, especially in cases where the player knows a little bit more about “future” events than he should. There are two ways of handling this: story protection, and story flow. Each solution offers challenges and advantages to the Excalibur game master.

STORY PROTECTION

One way to handle critical NPCs is to grant them a special “story immunity” to a premature death or removal from the campaign. Fate is a wonderful mechanic for doing this without the necessity of invoking GM fiat, and simply ruling the character unkillable.

For example, Morgawse in Arthurian legend is the mother of Mordred by her half brother Arthur. The game master is currently running the “War of Ascension” campaign (detailed below), and at a critical point in the war, the players decide, on their own initiative, to attempt a daring raid on the castle of King Lot of Lothian, the leader of the rebellion against Arthur. Cut off the head, and the body dies, they reason. Little do they know that Lot is not currently at home. However, several other NPCs, including the aforementioned Morgawse, but also her oldest son, Gawain, are in residence at the castle when the player characters attack.

Knowing Morgawse to be Lot’s key advisor, with her second sight abilities, the characters decide, having penetrated the castle through their skill and bravado, and finding Lot is not there for them to kill, to at least rob the rebel King of his most important advisor. As they move in for the kill, Gawain, a boy of 14 but already strong and brave and in training to become a knight, leaps into the room with a sword to defend his mother. The GM has himself quite a situation to unravel here, but has three main options on how to handle this unforeseen turn of events.

First, he could simply invoke GM fiat, and insure that Morgawse and Gawaine survive the encounter by having

endless waves of soldiers come to the queen’s rescue, having a raging fire overtake the castle and separate the characters from their prey, or even using the time honored technique of the “mysterious death” where it seems the characters have killed Morgawse, only to encounter her again at a later time.

This certainly makes life easier for the GM, who now does not have to rewrite the rest of Arthurian legend around these two critical characters for the rest of the campaign, but it is unlikely to be very satisfying to the players involved. Characters are the driving force of any campaign, and their ability to do the unexpected, to change the world and times in which they live, is the main thing that makes a good campaign far more enjoyable than the best computer game. You can’t do something *completely* off the boards in even the best computer game, you can only take those actions the designers of the game anticipated you would take, and programmed into the game. A role-playing game should be different. However, especially if mysterious death is used, such a solution can be dramatically feasible, but the game master must always take care that the players never see behind the curtain, never feel like they are props in a story they cannot change.

Secondly, the game master could decree that Morgawse is in fact *fated* to be Mordred’s mother, and allow her to spend fate points, helping to insure she survives the encounter. Gawaine could similarly be considered fated to perform actions described for him later in the tales. This option grants critical NPCs some extra protection, without removing the characters entirely from the mix. They can kill her; it will just be more difficult.

STORY FLOW

Lastly, the game master could decide to allow the story to “flow around” Morgawse and Gawain if they are killed, allowing logical characters to take their place for critical events, keeping the general backdrop of Arthurian legend intact, while the specific details of events mutate in keeping with campaign events. For example, in the Boorman movie *Excalibur*, Morgan le Fey, not Morgawse, is the mother of Mordred by her half brother Arthur. After Morgawse’s death, the game master could easily have Morgan take the place of her sister in mothering Mordred, and the campaign could proceed without a hitch. Likewise, if Gawain is killed, the game master could have his younger brother Agravaine take his place, battling the Green Knight, being a foil and rival for Lancelot, and so forth. This option is especially desirable if the players know as much or more about Arthurian canon as the game master, since from that point on they are in uncharted waters, and will not know if they successfully prevented Mordred’s birth, or if he will somehow still come into being. With this option, the game master is in much the same boat as the game master of a time travel game. He knows the future, and has to decide if he will allow it to be changed by the appearance of the player characters. If the PCs in a time travel game decide to kill Hitler before 1938, for example, the GM has much the same choices to make as he does here.

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AVOIDING ARTHURIAN CANON

For many GMs and their players, changing Arthurian events will alter the feel and tone of the campaign, disrupting the very things that made them want to play Legends of Excalibur to begin with. Oftentimes, rather than attempt to deal with the situations presented above, where the game master has to choose between allowing players their freedom or keeping events intact, the game master will decide to avoid the existing stories altogether, while still using Arthurian Britain as the setting for his campaign. Examples of this style of quest and campaign can be found in this book, right alongside the aforementioned quests and campaigns drawn from Arthurian lore. One example of this style of campaign (an extreme one at that) is the campaign used in the examples of the previous section. Although giants are absolutely rampant in Arthurian legend, there has never been a tale of a cult of giants who worship Poseidon invading Britain, and the heroes of Arthurian legend have never set sail to find the lost continent of Atlantis. However, by placing the campaign in the right time frame, there's no reason why there couldn't be.

Another, more traditional example can be found in the campaign section below, in the form of the "Childhood of Arthur" campaign. This campaign draws heavily on established canon, but places the characters squarely into one of its most notable gaps: the time between the birth of Arthur and his ascension to the throne by drawing Excalibur from the stone. Here the game master still has to deal with some important NPCs, such as "Wart", King Lot, Morgawse, and Sir Kay. However, there are no events to interfere with the characters' interactions with these personages, and unless the campaign is intended to last longer than twelve years of game time (we are told that Uther dies when Arthur is two, and do not hear from the boy again until he is a squire, probably around the age of 14) the GM really doesn't need to concern himself with the flow of the story. The characters attempt to guard and train the boy Wart, and protect him from the machinations of Lot and Morgawse, while in the service of Sir Ector.

In the first example, the GM has crafted a completely new story, requiring very few of the established characters or events of Arthurian legend. In the second, he has drawn heavily from the characters of the stories, but has room to craft a wide range of new events never before covered (at least not in any detail) by Arthurian legend.

Most campaigns will (and should) include a mixture of both of these styles to achieve the maximum fun and playability, while keeping the tone of the tales that have thrilled us for over a thousand years. An example of this can be found in the Guinevere subplot of the "Cameliard" campaign described below. We are told in Malory and Tennyson that Arthur was asked to come to Cameliard to aid King Leodegrance, and that in the process he both rescues the beleaguered ruler and meets Guinevere, his future

I know a Lord of yours in this land, that is a passing true man and a faithful, and he shall have the nourishing of your child, and his name is Sir Ector.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur Book I Chapter III

wife. Tennyson further tells us that Leodegrance has some hesitation before giving his permission for Arthur to marry his daughter, since the King's descent from Uther is still in some question. The Cameliard campaign brings all of this into the campaign description. However, it fills in the gaps, showing how Arthur actually wins Guinevere's heart, with the help of the PCs!

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: THE CHILDHOOD OF ARTHUR

SET UP

Era: Rise of Arthur

When Arthur is born, Merlin takes the boy to be raised by Sir Ector, a minor knight known for loyalty and piety. Uther heaps wealth and gifts on the knight, and bestows some talented, loyal knights on the boy for his protection, but otherwise obeys his pact with Merlin and has no contact with the young Arthur.

The player characters are assigned to the court of Sir Ector, and told to guard the man's son. They are given very little information beyond that, except for being asked to swear a solemn oath to King Uther that they will not leave the boy's side, will give their life for his, and will not leave Sir Ector's side under any circumstances, even to come the aid of the King himself.

The PCs for this adventure should be moderately experienced when the campaign begins, but the style of play could accommodate a wide range of power levels (2nd-8th level).

ADVENTURES

Sir Ector, as a knight known for solemnity, piety, and valor, has many pages and squires training in his court. It's a veritable boarding school of young boys and girls training for knighthood. The PCs, as Arthur's protectors, are often assigned to see to his mundane training, seeing him through horsemanship, falconry, hunting, tilting and so forth. For further information see "A page's life for me?" in the Training of a Knight section of the Player's guide for more information.

Arthur is small for his age, and since his parentage is unknown, and it is assumed he is the orphan son of a knight killed in the wars, the boys quickly set him as a mark for teasing, giving him the nickname "Wart".

There will also be visits from Merlin. He will check on the boy's progress, talk to the PCs about how he's doing, and

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then begin a miraculous form of training to show the boy to view the world from different perspectives: he will change Wart into the shapes of different kinds of animals, and Wart will actually have adventures in these different forms. As his chosen bodyguards, Merlin will “allow” the PCs to guard the king on these adventures.

Soon after Wart’s arrival, King Uther will become deathly ill, and his kingdom will begin to decline. Barbarian attacks and banditry will become increasingly common as the campaign progresses. A rich estate like Sir Ector’s will be a target, and the PCs will be called upon to deal with everything from monster incursions to barbarian raiding parties to horse thievery.

As part of the training for the older squires and knights, Sir Ector will attend the New Year’s tournament every year in London, where knights will assay for the Sword in the Stone. This will give the PCs a chance to unwind and also find out a little about the increasingly troublesome events of the world.

RECURRING THEMES

Soon after Arthur is spirited away, Uther, on his death-bed, proclaims Arthur, his child with Igraine, to be his heir. This announcement is met with mixed emotions by his subjects: some believe the child in fact died during birth, and that the announcement is an attempt to forestall the inevitable civil war and barbarian incursions that will result upon the King’s death; others believe the child is Igraine’s by Gorloise, or the product of Merlin’s sorcery.

King Lot, and his bride Morgawse, however, know differently, and will stop at nothing to find the boy and kill him before he can seek to retake his father’s throne. Lot is the King of Lothian (present day Scotland), and, while he never consorted with the barbarians, was one of the last nobles to yield to Uther. Only the offering of Igraine’s daughter, Morgawse, in marriage caused the wily old Lot to join Uther’s cause, but now that the King’s health is failing, Lot sees his way clear to take the rule of England. Morgawse, a powerful sorceress, who possesses “the sight”, like all women in her family, has told Lot that Arthur will be King in time. Lot is determined not to let that happen.

As the campaign progresses, Lot’s spies and Morgawse’s seers will locate the boy in the tiny manor house of Sir Ector, at which point attempts to kill the child will become more and more frequent. At first these attempts will be very subtle and indirect. However, as the campaign draws to a close, the PCs will become aware that the attacks on the manor by bandits and barbarians are not isolated events. Captured bandits will tell of the vast monies they were paid to kill the insignificant boy. Either through their own investigations, or by confronting Sir Ector (or both), the PCs should learn in time who it is they are guarding and why it is so important that Lot’s attempts to kill him fail.

Tracing these attacks back to Lot should be the main recurring theme of this campaign, and while the PCs might be able to force a showdown to insure Arthur’s safety, if the GM plans to run campaigns in the Eleven Lords’ War

timeframe (see below), he should insure that Lot live beyond this campaign. Morgawse should be kept alive if at all possible, since she is the mother of Mordred (see the section on Important NPCs for more information and advice on how to handle situations like this).

SUPPORTING CAST

The following are the main supporting characters for this campaign, as they appear toward the middle of the campaign, where most of the action will take place. GMs who needs stats for the very beginning or very end of the campaign should adjust these stats up or down accordingly.

Wart (Age 10): British Lesser Nobility 0 level; CR ½; medium humanoid (child); HD 1d4; HP 4; Init +0; Spd 25 ft.; AC 13, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 13 (+2 leather, +1 Shield); Base Atk +0; Atk +0 melee (1d4 dagger) or +0 ranged (1d6 Short Bow); Full Atk +0 melee (1d4/19-20 dagger) or +0 ranged (1d6/x3 Short Bow); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to rule a united Britain) Destiny (to be betrayed by the two he loves best in the world); SQ none; Nobility 62 (not widely known); AL: Code of Chivalry; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Ride +2, Handle Animal +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4; Heritage of Nobility

Possessions: Leather Armor, Light Wooden Shield, Dagger, Spear (normally only carried during tilting or hunting), Short Bow (normally only carried during hunting), 20 arrows

Description: Wart is small for his age, but already extremely intelligent, handsome, and charismatic. He is a quiet boy, and tends to listen much more than he talks. This gives many of the older squires the opinion that he is either timid or stupid, but his words and actions indicate otherwise.

Kay (Age 14): British Lesser Nobility 0 level; CR ¾; medium humanoid (teenager); HD 1d6+1; HP 7; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 16, Touch 9, Flat-Footed 16 (+5 Chain Mail, +2 Large Steel Shield); Base Atk +0; Atk +1 melee (1d6+1/19-20 short sword) or -1 ranged (1d6/x3 short bow); Full Atk +1 melee (1d6+1/19-20 short sword) or -1 ranged (1d6/x3 short bow); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ none; Nobility 51; AL: Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (Sir Ector); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 8, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Ride +1, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +3, Intimidate +3; Mounted Combat

Possessions: Chain Mail, Large Steel Shield, Short Sword, Lance, Short Bow (normally carried only when hunting)

Description: Kay is a tall, gangly boy, and has a classic teenager’s combination of size and clumsiness. Especially in armor, which he is still learning to wear, he is a disaster waiting to happen, something that makes him the target of jokes, but only behind his back (he is a big lad for his age, and he is Sir Ector’s oldest son). The closest thing he has to a real friend is Wart, who seems to be the only one who doesn’t laugh at Kay behind his back while praising him to

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his face. While his clumsiness holds him back in the saddle, Kay is already an accomplished swordsman, something many of the older boys have found out to their dismay in practice.

As a headstrong young man, Kay is sometimes a little too eager to put his fledgling skills to use in defense of his family and friends. Any attempt on Arthur could cause Kay to take matters into his own hands, adding to the PCs' problems as they attempt their own intervention.

Sir Ector: Sir Ector is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

Salazar de Cazador: Spanish Criminal Rogue 4/Yeoman 4; CR 8; medium humanoid; HD 4d6+4d8+16; HP 48; Init +8 (+4 Dexterity, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, Touch 14, Flat-Footed 14 (+4 Leather Armor); Base Atk +7/+2; Atk +7 melee (1d4 dagger) or +16 ranged (1d8+2/x3 Longbow +2); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4 dagger) or +16/+11 ranged (1d8+2/x3 Longbow); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Sneak Attack +2d6, Trapfinding, Evasion, Trap Sense +1, Uncanny Dodge, +2 Archery; Nobility 4; SV Fort +7, Ref +12, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Climb +8, Disable Device +8, Escape Artist +11, Forgery +8, Hide +15, Move Silently +20 (includes Silent armor), Listen +12, Open Lock +11, Survival +10, Spot +3, Search +10; Stealthy, Weapon Focus (Longbow), Improved Initiative, Blind-Fight, Point Blank Shot, Tracking, Far Shot.

Possessions: +2 Silent Leather Armor, 8 Daggers, +2 Composite Longbow, 40 arrows, 4 Cure Light Wounds Potions, Riding Horse, 3,000 gp.

Description: A Spanish mercenary, Salazar is willing to do anything for money. Some of his Saxon allies put him in touch with King Lot, who wants a boy named Arthur found and killed. All Salazar needed to know was how much gold he would get for the deed. He doesn't know who the boy is, and he doesn't care.

King Lot of Lothian: King Lot is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

Queen Morgawse: Queen Morgawse is unchanged from her Who's Who entry.

Merlin: Merlin is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

RESOLUTION

This campaign will end once Arthur, Kay, and Ector travel to London at New Year's for Kay's first tournament as a full-fledged Knight in his 18th year. There will likely be a last, full-scale assault on the PCs by Lot along the way, but once Arthur and Kay reach London fate will take over, Arthur will draw the sword from the stone, and become King. However, Lot will now gather other lords with him reluctant to be ruled by a boy and begin an open rebellion. The young King

will now need the PCs even more, and their old enemy Lot will become even more powerful and aggressive.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: WAR OF ASCENSION

SET UP

Era: Rise of Arthur

The War of Ascension begins almost the moment Arthur's coronation as King is confirmed at New Year's in London. After drawing the sword Excalibur from the stone, great crowds of peasants gather, along with many great lords and knights, to see Arthur tested. Important persons present at this "test" are the Archbishop of Canterbury, King Lot of Lothian, King Uriens of Gore, Sir Ector, Sir Kay, Sir Ulfius, and Sir Brastias. While the commons watch, Arthur draws the sword again and again. Other characters of note, particularly King Lot and King Uriens also attempt to draw the sword, failing each time. This display only ends when the commoners begin a hue and cry for Arthur to be crowned, begging his forgiveness for the length of the delay. Sir Ulfius then knights Arthur, and the Archbishop crowns him king. Arthur retires to Carlion in Wales to begin the arduous task of rebuilding a kingdom laid waste by banditry, petty rule and barbarian invasions, as well as appointing officers and addressing the needs of his subjects.

A festival and tournament are called to celebrate the beginning of Arthur's reign at Pentecost (50 days after Easter). This festival will contain jousting, horse races (a traditional Pentecost entertainment), and, most importantly, the formal announcements of Arthur's important court officers, and the formal swearing of fealty by the important lords of Britain. At the festival however, it quickly becomes apparent that the lords are not there for fun and games, with Lot, Uriens, and many other petty lords arriving with close to three thousand men. After an initial defeat, Lot manages to draw even more rebellious lords to his cause, until eleven of the most powerful nobles in England, leading a force of nearly fifty-five thousand men against the "beardless boy king".

ADVENTURES

The War of Ascension campaign is, first and foremost, a war, and should offer the promise of glorious battles allowing characters to gain fame and fortune. The enemy outnumbers those loyal to Arthur by almost ten to one, so only the superior might and nobility of Arthur's troops will allow them to win the day. This campaign allows the characters the satisfaction of helping to build a kingdom, putting down the rebellious lords (whose banditry has caused many of Britain's current problems) and restoring stability and prosperity to the realm.

Diplomatic Relations: This long quest could be a mini-campaign unto itself if the GM wishes to flesh it out. Ban and Bors, two brother kings ruling the French nation of Benwick are besieged by the evil Claudas, much as Arthur is

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besieged by his rebellious nobles. Merlin advises that a truce be entered with the brothers, that if they aid Arthur in putting down his rebellion, then Arthur will aid them with all his might in their struggle against Claudas.

The PCs are asked to take on the role of diplomats. Due to enemy intelligence, their mission is known to the enemy, and they will have to win several fights (or use stealth and subterfuge) to reach their ship. Once the PCs cross the channel, they will have to win even tougher fights to reach Ban and Bors, as the rebellious lords, unable to prevent the PCs from leaving England have informed Claudas of the PCs' arrival and their intentions.

Once the PCs reach Ban and Bors, they will have to engage in a different sort of battle, one of diplomacy. As Arthur's representatives, the PCs must convince Ban and Bors not only of Arthur's sincerity and willingness to keep his bargain, but also of his ability to win his war, thus being able to support the brothers in turn.

After achieving the support of the brothers, the PCs will then have to make another dangerous trip through Claudas' men, and another through the forces of the rebel lords, to inform Arthur of their success to allow him to prepare for the arrival of his reinforcements.

RECURRING THEMES

As military missions (with a decidedly fantasy medieval bent) these adventures, or variations on them, could occur again and again. War has a rhythm and also a routine to it, even though danger and terror are sprinkled into the mix as well. Groups of characters especially suited to one of these quests could find themselves doing it again and again, essentially becoming the Arthurian equivalent of a special operations unit.

Hold the Line: The PCs are sent to reinforce the castle of a lord friendly to Arthur with a small force of men. The castle, and the support of the lord who rules it, are both critical strategically to Arthur's fledgling reign. An attack by an overwhelming force is expected shortly, so the PCs have to insure the keep is properly equipped and fortified, and then repulse the attack.

Escort Duty: The PCs are assigned to escort a crucial supply shipment to Arthur's forces. The shipment could be food, weapons, medicine or any other vitally needed materiel for Arthur's army. The attackers could be bandits, barbarians, or rebel forces. Award bonus experience for the percentage of goods successfully delivered to friendly forces (amount should be based on a percentage, since all of a small valuable shipment could still swing the course of the war).

Supply Raid: The reverse of a convoy escort, the PCs are ordered to intercept a shipment bound for the forces of the rebellious lords, and either return it to friendly forces for their use, or destroy it if that is not possible. Award bonus experience based on the percentage of goods successfully returned.

Homefront: Many smaller towns and villages are staying carefully neutral, having seen petty lords come and go often since Uther's death. Not having seen Arthur or the

circumstances of his drawing the sword, these villages think of him as just another robber baron till they see proof to the contrary. However, swaying the hearts and minds of the people is just as important as military defeat over the barons. The PCs are sent to an important village on a diplomatic mission to convince its headman to throw his support behind Arthur.

Intelligence Gathering: The PCs are sent on a dangerous mission to ascertain the position of enemy forces, and also to try and determine where they plan to strike next. A perfect adventure for a party of characters, as this mission could require stealth, charisma-based skills, and combat for the PCs to gain close access to the enemy forces, then return home with the information.

SUPPORTING CAST

King Arthur (Age 16): British Lesser Nobility 6th Level (Knight 4/Noble 2) CR 6; medium humanoid; HD 4d12+2d8+18; HP 74; Init +2; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 32, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 30 (+13 Full Plate, +7 Shield, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +5; Atk +13 melee (1d8+8/19-20 damage Excalibur); Full Atk +13 melee (1d8+8/19-20 Excalibur) or +15 melee (3d10+10 Lance +5 with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to rule a united Britain) Destiny (to be betrayed by the two he loves best in the world); SQ Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace; Nobility 80; AL: Code of Chivalry, Noblesse Oblige; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Ride +11, Handle Animal +11, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +13, Intimidate +13, Jump +10, Diplomacy +11, Bluff +8, Sense Motive +7; Heritage of Nobility, Predestined, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Leadership, Faith

Possessions: Knight's Mantle Full Plate +5 (4 DR bypassed by ignoble weapon), Lg. Steel Shield +5, Excalibur, Noble Heavy Lance +5, Scabbard of Excalibur, Heavy Warhorse (Noble, Pure Breed)

Description: Seen here halfway through his civil war, Arthur is already an exceptional warrior and leader, and is obsessed with uniting his kingdom. In battle he seems much more powerful than he really is, both because of his fate, and because of the impressive arsenal of weapons given to him by Merlin. There is little doubt that, despite his age, Arthur is in his element, defeating his foes, and using his considerable charm and statercraft to win over the neutral to his cause.

King Carados (alternately called the King of Carados): Saxon Royalty 10th Level (Barbarian 10); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 10d12+30; HP 100; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 22, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 20 (+6 Chain Shirt, +4 Shield, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +10/+5; Atk +14 melee (1d8+4 Battleaxe +2); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+4 Battleaxe +2); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Fast movement, Illiteracy,

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Rage 3/day, Improved Uncanny Dodge, Trap Sense +3, Damage Reduction 2/-; Nobility 15; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +18, Listen +4, Ride +15, Survival +10; Leadership, Alertness, Tracking, Blind-fight, Power Attack

Possessions: +2 Chain Shirt, +2 Lg. Steel Shield, +2 Ignoble Battle Axe, Light Warhorse

Description: Carados is a Saxon lord who rules a Saxon fiefdom in a partially conquered Britain. He sees the rise to power of a strong King as a direct threat to his position, and has allied himself with Lot's rebellion strictly out of personal interest. He cares little for concepts such as "honor", and prefers to fight on foot.

King of the Hundred Knights: British Royalty 10th Level (Priest 2/Knight 5/Crusader 3); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 2d8+5d12+3d10+20; HP 82; Init -1; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 19, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 19 (+7 Chain Mail, +3 Shield, -1 Dexterity); Base Atk +9/+4; Atk +12 (1d8+3 Heavy Mace); Full Atk +12/+7 (1d8+3 Heavy Mace) or +13 (3d10+4 Heavy Lance with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (lead a rebellion against Arthur) Destiny (to be slain in the final battle of that rebellion); SQ Aura of Piety, Turn the other cheek, Sacraments, Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Smite Infidel 1/day, Lay on Hands, Crusade +1; Nobility 60; AL Turn the other cheek, Code of Chivalry, Oath of the Crusader; SV Fort +12, Ref +1, Will +8; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Ride +8, Intimidate +4, Handle Animal +4; Ordination, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Faith, Zealot, Piety

Possessions: +2 Chain Mail, +1 Lg. Steel Shield, +2 Heavy Mace, +1 Heavy Lance, Heavy Warhorse (Courser, Blazing Fast)

Priest Spell Points to Cast (1/1/8*); Spell Points: 9

King Lot: King Lot is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

King Uriens: King Uriens is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

Sir Kay, Seneschal of Britain (Age 20): British Lesser Nobility 5th Level (Knight 4/Noble 1); CR 5; medium humanoid; HD 4d12+1d8+15; HP 51; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 23 (+10 Full Plate, +3 Shield); Base Atk +4; Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20 Longsword +1); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+4/19-20 Longsword +2) or +9 melee (1d10+5 Heavy Lance); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige; Nobility 60; AL Code of Chivalry, Oath of Fealty (King Arthur); SV Fort +7, Ref +1,

Will +4; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Ride +7, Handle Animal +9, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Intimidate +10, Sense Motive +5; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes

Possessions: +2 Full Plate, +1 Lg. Steel Shield, +1 Longsword, Heavy Lance, Heavy Warhorse (Charger, Tough as Nails)

Sir Brastias: Sir Brastias is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

RESOLUTION

Eventually, the war will come to a head, and a climactic battle will be fought. Lot is destined to die in this battle, and if the PCs have tangled with him sufficiently for him to qualify as an arch-nemesis in the campaign, they should get the opportunity to do the deed themselves. If one of the PCs kills Lot, his son, Gawain, too young to participate with his father in the war, will swear an oath of vengeance on the man responsible. This could put the PCs in the unenviable position of having an enemy ostensibly on the same side of their battles for Arthur (although Gawain will not challenge the character for no good reason, he will look for any good reason to come along).

When Lot is killed, the rebel army will break and flee. Although Arthur puts out an offer for the noblest of the rebels (particularly Uriens) to receive amnesty if they swear fealty to him, none of them take him up on the offer, and as the bulk of Arthur's army (particularly knights such as Brastias, Ulfius, and King Pellinore) leave to aid Ban and Bors, things are very much unresolved. One of the few who accepts this offer is Morgawse, who comes to court with her oldest son Gawaine. During this disastrous visit, Morgawse and Arthur have a dalliance, during which Mordred is conceived.

SAMPLE CAMPAIGN: CAMELIARD

SET UP

Era: Rise of Arthur

Already beset by a nature gone wild, like many other areas of Britain in the era between Arthur and Uther, Leodegrance has also been under attack from the Saxons. When Uriens returns from his unsuccessful campaign to unseat Arthur, he decides to add Leodegrance's lands to his own and attacks. Now in desperate straights, Leodegrance appeals to the new King for aid.

Although the majority of Arthur's forces have been sent to France to fulfill the promise made to Kings Ban and Bors. When the call for aid comes from Leodegrance of Cameliard, Arthur goes with a small group of newly dubbed knights to aid the lord, a powerful, influential Duke who served his father Uther, and a man who could greatly increase Arthur's standing among the rebellious lords of

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*And thus the land of Cameliard was waste,
Thick with wet woods, and many a beast therein,
And none or few to scare or chase the beast;
So that wild dog and wolf and boar and bear...
And ever and anon the wolf would steal the children and devour...
Then his brother king Urien assail'd him; last a heathen horde,
Reddening the Sun with smoke and earth with blood,
And on the spike that split the mother's heart,
Spitting the child, brake on him, till, amazed
He knew not whither to turn for aid...
But- for heard of Arthur newly crown'd...
Sent to him saying, "Arise and help us thou!
For here between the man and beast we die."*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

Britain.

Cameliard makes a perfect beginning to an Excalibur campaign. There will be many wilderness adventures to overcome against wild bears, boars, even lions (which have never existed historically in Britain, but appear in Arthurian legend). Also there are bandit lairs to raid and destroy, and barbarians to drive out. Finally, there is a military campaign to conduct against Uriens. Since most of his elite knights are away, this gives low-level PCs a perfect chance to shine, get to know their King, and catch his attention as followers of merit, worthy of dangerous, glory-bringing assignments in the future.

ADVENTURES

The Wolf Lord: One of the first tasks the characters will have to undertake is reclaiming Cameliard from the wilderness. Like many areas of Britain between Uther and Arthur, the land, with no king to tame it, has grown wild, turning against the men and women who live on it like an indigenous host attempting to repulse an invader. Old trails will have to be cleared of choking overgrowth, and wild boars, bears, wolves, and even lions pose a threat to the farmers and townsfolk of Cameliard.

However, as the PCs continue their fight against a wilderness gone berserk, they will come to realize that there is a malevolent force controlling the animals and directing their attacks. Eventually the PCs will have to find and confront the Wolf Lord in his lair if they are to tame the berserk animals of Cameliard.

Barbarian Raiders: After the animals are dealt with, the PCs will need to clear out the pockets of Saxons hiding in the wilds of Cameliard. These small groups are conducting a guerilla campaign, striking innocent townsfolk from stealth, and then retreating into the wilds when they meet heavy resistance. As the PCs tame the rampant overgrowth

and wild animals scourging the countryside, finding their leader, the Saxon Caladwold, will prove much easier.

Invading Army: Seeing the weakness of Leodegrance, Uriens, his neighboring lord, recently returned from an unsuccessful campaign against Arthur, decides to take Leodegrance's lands for his own. This will give the PCs the first chance to tangle with Uriens' young bride, Morgan le Fey, who is the secret source behind many of Leodegrance's problems and a dangerous advisor to Uriens.

RECURRING THEMES

Guinevere: From the moment Arthur sees Guinevere, he is head over heels in love with her. However,

she is not so quick to return the sentiment. Worse, her father, Leodegrance, while unwilling to join the rebellion against Arthur, shares some of the same concerns about his parentage that Lot and Uriens have expressed, and the same distrust of Merlin, and refuses to let Arthur see his daughter, much less court her, until the matter of Arthur's legitimacy is settled to his satisfaction.

Therefore, in the grand tradition of Cyrano, the PCs will be drafted into the role of go-between for the King to the woman he loves. He will have them ferry letters for her, in secret, while he meets with her father. These adventures should be played for comedic affect, with the heavily armored knights attempting to be subtle. Worse, the love poetry Arthur is having the PCs take to Guinevere is awful. If they read it, do they replace it with better poetry? If there is a bard in the party, this is an encounter where he could far outshine his knightly companions, winning a Queen for his King.

Once the King wins her love, there are secret meetings for the PCs to arrange as well, serving their King's heart while avoiding the wrath of a protective father, and a rash, *over* protective brother, Gotegrin. In fact, while Leodegrance will be easily swayed, given the critical aid Arthur is providing, and the majesty clearly evident in the young King, Gotegrin could be a real problem for the characters. If they are caught aiding Arthur, while he can do nothing to the aspiring King, he can and will challenge the PCs. Depending on their honor, nobility, and conduct, this challenge could be to the death.

Finally there is the matter of keeping Guinevere safe. A constant theme in all Arthurian legend is Guinevere's propensity to be kidnapped, and this campaign should prove no exception. Throughout the campaign, she will be kidnapped by the various factions the PCs are battling against, including the Wolf Lord, the barbarians, and Uriens himself. Lastly, when it becomes clear that Arthur intends to marry Guinevere, and that both she and her father are

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agreeable, the romance subplot culminates with Guinevere being kidnapped by her brother Gotegrin!

Evil Twin: Further complicating the Guinevere subplot, there is the matter of Gwenhwyfach, Guinevere's half sister. A Welsh fairy seduced Leodegrance while his wife was pregnant with Guinevere, and Gwenhwyfach was the result. She is capricious, seductive, with powerful magical abilities, and is identical to Guinevere physically. Not even her father or brother can tell them apart. She lusts for King Arthur, and will try to take Guinevere's place whenever possible, especially during the early stages of the relationship when Guinevere's interest for the young King is lukewarm. This will cause confusion, and generally serve to make Guinevere look bad in the PCs' eyes, since one minute she will be ready to surrender her honor to the King before marriage, while the next she will be cold and aloof. Solving this mystery will be a key to bringing the lovers together, as Gwenhwyfach's interference will cause nothing but strife between Arthur and Guinevere.

Family affair: Caladwold's younger brother has been captured by the Wolf Lord while on a scouting mission. Should the PCs rescue him (requiring the party to fight their way to the crumbling castle used as a lair by the creature and his followers), Caladwold will feel obligated to the characters, and his personal sense of honor will cause him to do almost anything they ask, including packing up and heading home.

Morgan le Fey: This will give the PCs their first chance to tangle with Morgan, and get a feel for what a subtle and dangerous opponent she is. Indeed, it may be some time before they realize she is their true enemy. The Wolf Lord was trained by Morgan, and she also provides magical support and lends her future sight to the barbarians plaguing Cameliard. To learn either of these events, the PCs will have to capture and interrogate opponents. If they just slay them in battle, the PCs might never learn of Morgan's involvement.

Morgan has also caught the eye of Gotegrin, and has been feeding him false information about Arthur, intensifying his dislike for the boy King. Worse, Gotegrin has been taking these "insights" back to his father, so Morgan is an indirect source of some of Leodegrance's concerns. Again only asking the right question of the right person, in this Gotegrin, will reveal Morgan's hand in events.

SUPPORTING CAST

Caladwold: Saxon lesser nobility 11th level (Barbarian 10/ Berserker 1); CR 11; medium humanoid; HD 11d12+44; HP 137; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, Touch 10, Flat-Footed 17 (+7 chain shirt); Base Atk +11/+6/+1; Atk +15 melee (1d12+4 greataxe); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d12+4 greataxe); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Fast movement, illiteracy, greater rage 4/day, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3, damage reduction 2/-; Nobility 35; AL Oath of Loyalty (Clan); SV Fort +12, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Handle Animal +7, Intimidate +16, Jump +7, Listen +13, Ride +9, Survival +13, Swim +6; Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Leadership

Possessions: Chain Shirt +3, Greataxe +2, Boots of Elvenkind, Cloak of Resistance +1, Dust of Tracelessness

Description: Caladwold is an ambitious young Saxon. Hearing of the fertile lands in Britain ripe for the taking, Caladwold carefully chose Cameliard to be the start of his new dominion, feeling Leodegrance too weak to withstand him. The truth turned out to be far different, and the small band of Saxons has been forced to retreat into the wildlands of the small kingdom, where they conduct a guerilla war, but mostly live the life of bandits. Many of Caladwold's followers are related to him in some way, including his cohort, Banak (Barbarian 7), who is his younger brother.

Caladwold has a deep sense of honor that will cause him to take extreme risks, charging headlong into any battle. The characters should recognize him, despite his frothing, bloodied, frenzied style of fighting as a worthy opponent. Family is very important to Caladwold, and all his relatives, and the characters could very well ransom him and his younger brother to their father, a quite important and wealthy Danish noble. However, this could have unfortunate side effects if the characters kill or mistreat Caladwold, as the Dane's many sons will come looking for their brother, and when they do, will begin seeking vengeance on those who killed him.

Guinevere: Guinevere is unchanged from her entry in the Who's Who section.

Gwenhwyfach: British royalty 8th level (Hedge Mage 5/Enchantress 3); CR 8; medium humanoid; HD 5d6+3d4; HP 27; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, Touch 13, Flat-Footed 12 (+1 bracers, +1 ring, +1 Dexterity); Base Atk +3; Atk by spell; Full Atk by spell; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Summon familiar, superstition, dream reader, lesser prophecy, enchantress; Nobility 15; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 6, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 18 (20).

And Guinevere

*Stood by the castle walls to watch him pass;
But since he neither wore on helm or shield
The golden symbol of his kinglihood,
But rode a simple knight among his knights,
And many in richer arms than he,
She saw him not, or mark'd not if she saw,
One among many, tho' his face was bare.
But Arthur, looking downward as he passed,
felt the light of her eyes into his life
Smite on the sudden, yet rode on...*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

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Skills and Feats: Bluff +16 (+19 vs. men), Diplomacy +16 (+19 vs. men), Disguise +16 (+19 vs. men), Gather Information +16 (+19 vs. men), Prophecy +10, Concentration +8, Sleight of Hand +7; Dark Heritage, Spell Focus (enchantment), Power Surge, Innate Spell, Innate Spell

Possessions: Bracers of armor +1, Cloak of Charisma +2, Ring of Protection +1, Mana Stone +5, 1,150 gp

Spells Known: Caster level 8 hedge mage spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/5/14*) Spell Points 35 (40 with Mana Stone) Spell Save DC 15+ spell level

0 Level: Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Magic, Flare, Message, Read Magic, Resistance, Touch of Fatigue

1st Level: Charm Person, Disguise Self, Expeditious Retreat, Hypnotism, Sleep

2nd Level: Hypnotic Pattern, Eagle's Splendor, Invisibility

3rd Level: Hold Person, Suggestion, Deep Slumber

4th Level: Charm Monster, Crushing Despair

5th Level: Waves of Fatigue

Description: The daughter of Leodegrance and a nymph, Gwenhwyfach is identical to Guinevere physically, and her polar opposite mentally. Flirtatious, manipulative, lustful, and spiteful, she hates and despises her sister, desiring everything she has. Gwenhwyfach will be particularly eager to marry Arthur, seeing power and fame and wealth, and will do anything to kill Guinevere and take her "rightful" place as Arthur's bride. If any of the characters discover the reason for Guinevere's "mood swings" toward Arthur, Gwenhwyfach will go to Gotegrin as Guinevere and tell them one of the PCs has made an unwanted advance toward her, or even implicate them in cooperating with the Saxon leader Caladwold (this will be especially convincing if the characters convinced him to leave peacefully). One of the characters may then end up facing Gotegrin in a trial by combat to the death.

King Arthur (Age 20): British Lesser Nobility 11th Level (Knight 5/Noble 6) CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 5d12+6d8+30; HP 106; Init +2; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 32, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 30 (+13 Full Plate, +7 Shield, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +9/+4; Atk +18 melee (1d8+8/19-20 damage Excalibur); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (1d8+8/19-20 Excalibur) or +19 melee (3d10+10 Lance +5 with Spirited Charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (to rule a united Britain) Destiny (to be betrayed by the two he loves best in the world); SQ Mounted Combat +2, Code of Chivalry, Aura of Knighthood, Armor Tolerance +2, Knight's Warhorse, Dispense Justice, Aura of Nobility, Noblesse Oblige, Divine Grace, Quest +2, Aura of Courage, Divine Wrath 1/day; Nobility 85; AL: Code of Chivalry, Noblesse Oblige; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +15; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 20.

Skills and Feats: Ride +16, Handle Animal +14, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +18, Intimidate +18, Jump +10, Diplomacy +15, Bluff +12, Sense Motive +11, Knowledge (history) +12; Heritage of Nobility, Predestined, Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Leadership, Faith, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Possessions: Knight's Mantle Full Plate +5 (8 DR bypassed by ignoble weapon), Lg. Steel Shield +5, Excalibur, Noble Heavy Lance +5, Scabbard of Excalibur, Heavy Warhorse (Noble, Pure Breed)

Description: Having solidified his hold over Britain to a large extent, the Arthur seen here has begun to make leaps and bounds as administrator, ruler, and king. He is much more comfortable delegating to others, and that will be his role in the Cameliard campaign, as a leader who assigns quests to the PCs. Many of these will be military in nature, such as rooting out the Wolf Lord and confronting Caladwold and his followers. However others will have the characters act as intermediaries with Guinevere, while Arthur runs interference, tying up Leodegrance in "war council". Any hint of hesitation or self-doubt is gone, and the Boy King is now simply a King, secure in his place as ruler of an ever more united Britain.

King Leodegrance: King Leodegrance is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

King Uriens: King Uriens is unchanged from his Who's Who entry.

Morgan le Fey (Age 22): British Royalty 15th level (Hedge Mage 5/Druid 5/Enchantress 5); CR 15; medium humanoid; HD5d6+5d8+5d4+15; HP 77; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, Touch 18, Flat-Footed 16 (+4 Bracers, +2 Ring, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +7; Atk by spell; Full Atk by spell; FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA Fate (To aid in the downfall of Arthur), Destiny (To be spurned by the only man to win her heart- Accolon); SQ Summon familiar, superstition, dream reader, lesser prophecy, animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape 1/day, enchantress; Nobility 30; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +14; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 20 (24).

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15 (+20 vs. men), Concentration +14, Diplomacy +20 (+25 vs. men), Disguise +15 (+20 vs. men), Gather Information +15 (+20 vs. men), Intimidate +15 (+20 vs. illiterate), Prophecy +10, Spellcraft +12, Listen +10, Spot +10, Ride +10, Knowledge (nature) +10; Dark Heritage, Second Sight, Spell focus (enchantment), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item

Possessions: Bracers of Armor +4, Cloak of Charisma +4, Wand of Charm Person (heightened 3rd level) 50 charges, Wand of Web 50 charges, Ring of Protection +2, Mana Stone +8, 1,250 gp

Spells: Caster level 10 Hedge Mage spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/4/6/16*) Spell save DC 18+spell level (19 for enchantment); Caster level 5 Druid spell points to cast (0/1/2/5/18*) Spell save DC 13+spell level; Spell Points 62 (70 with mana stone)

Spells Known (9/5/4/3/3/1)

0 Level: Dancing Lights, Daze, Detect Poison, Detect Magic, Ghost Sound, Light, Message, Read Magic, Touch of Fatigue

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1st Level: Cause Fear, Charm Person, Hypnotism, Shield, Ray of Enfeeblement

2nd Level: Eagle's Splendor, Mirror Image, Invisibility, Protection from Arrows

3rd Level: Hold Person, Phantom Steed, Heroes' Bane

4th Level: Bestow Curse, Ice Storm, Charm Monster

5th Level: Teleport

Sir Gotegrin: British Royalty 10th Level (Knight 10); CR 10; medium humanoid; HD 10d12+30; HP 100; Init; Spd 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); AC 24, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 22 (+10 full plate, +2 shield, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +10/+5; Atk +14 melee (1d8+3 longsword); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d8+3 longsword) or +19 melee (3d10+5 heavy lance with spirited charge); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Mounted combat +3, code of chivalry, aura of knighthood, armor tolerance +5, knight's warhorse, dispense justice, unhorse; Nobility 60; AL Code of Chivalry, Noblesse Oblige, Oath of Fealty (King Leodegrance); SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +4; Str 12 (14), Dex 14, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Ride +13, Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +9; Mounted Combat, Ride-by Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Animal Affinity, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Focus (lance), Power Attack

Possessions: Full Plate +2, Gauntlets of Ogre Power, Noble Longsword +1, Heavy Steel Shield, Heavy Lance, Heavy Warhorse (Charger)

Wolf Lord: wolf man Druid 7; CR 7; medium humanoid; HD 7d8+7; HP 49; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, Touch 12, Flat-Footed 15 (+5 hide armor, +2 Dexterity); Base Atk +5; Atk +5 melee (1d6 club); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6 club); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SA; SQ Animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, woodland stride, trackless step, resist nature's lure, wild shape 3/day; Nobility 20; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Handle animal +12, Survival +19, Knowledge (nature) +9, Concentration +6, Listen +13, Spot +10; Tracking, Self-Sufficient, Natural Spell

Possessions: Mana stone +10 (worn around neck), Hide armor +2, club (usually melees in animal form)

Spells: Caster Level 7 Druid spell points to cast (0/1/2/3/6/21*) Spell Points: 23 (33 with mana stone) Spell save DC 13+spell level

Description: An unusually intelligent, wily member of his race, this wolf-man has been receiving instruction from none other than Morgan le Fey as she attempts to help her husband conquer Cameliard. It was she who supplied him with the magic armor and the mana stone. With his power increasing daily, the wolf lord now commands a sizeable pack of wolves and dire wolves, and has taken up residence in an abandoned castle overrun with forest. In combat, the wolf lord will fight in wolf form, using his spells as necessary to summon aid or casting spells to heal and increase the power of his followers. He will attempt to go unnoticed in these efforts. If he is personally attacked, he will usually shift to bear form, still casting spells as necessary.

CONVERTING PUBLISHED ADVENTURES

One last topic that needs to be addressed is the subject of published adventures. Although the goal of the Campaign Guide is to provide the Excalibur game master with all the tools he needs to run a campaign, there is still a wealth of adventure material made by some very fine companies for the game master to take advantage of. However, the feel of Excalibur is quite different from most fantasy adventures, which are more based on the works of Tolkien than they are of Malory. With a few adjustments, however, any adventure can be modified to fit seamlessly in a Legends of Excalibur campaign, and below, you will find some tips and hints to pick the right adventure and modify it in the least amount of time. The main elements to consider when selecting a published adventure are the setting, the challenges, rewards, and the adventure's tone, each of which is discussed in greater depth below.

SETTING

The setting of adventure determines almost everything else about the adventure. An adventure set in an uncharted wilderness is not going to be one of political intrigue, nor is it going to pit you against an evil aquatic emperor bent on conquering the surface world. The main settings, discussed below, are the dungeon, wilderness, and city adventure.

Dungeons: Dungeons in the traditional sense are rare in Arthurian legend. However, castles are the location of numerous adventures in the tales. Therefore, the game master can take the dungeon, have it go up instead of down, and convert almost any dungeon into a castle adventure. Since most dungeons are drab and in poor repair, the castle will not be a living breathing castle, but Arthurian legend is full of rotting, crumbling castles swallowed by the forests that run rampant between the reigns of Uther and Arthur.

Wilderness: Arthurian legend is rife with wilderness adventures. It seems as though you can walk into any forest and find a giant, or a ruined castle, or an evil enchantress. Knights in the tales, in their desire for fame and glory, as well as a desire to "clean up Britain", often go plunging into the nearest desolate forest they can find (and they never seem to have to go far) just looking for trouble, and they always seem to find it.

City: Cities are popular settings for adventures, allowing characters to confront thieves' guilds, get caught up in politics, and all sorts of other skullduggery and mayhem. This setting includes both the glistening metropolis and the wretched hive of scum and villainy. City adventures are rare in Arthurian legend, primarily because of its focus on the knights taming the wilderness of Britain. However, there are many large cities in Arthurian Britain (discussed in the Gazetteer below), including London, already a thriving metropolis, Bath, with its medicinal springs, which has been a favorite recreation stop since the Romans built their bath facilities there during their occupation of the island, and

CHAPTER 4: ARTHURIAN ADVENTURING

Canterbury, with its magnificent cathedral devoted to the One God. Tournaments and jousts are often held near major cities, including one of the largest, at New Year's outside London. While attending these events, the characters could get sucked into any sort of city adventure. Further, this would be a good time to throw in the occasional dungeon, in the form of a sewer trek.

CHALLENGES

The challenges of an adventure are the obstacles that must be overcome for the characters to survive and succeed. Typically these obstacles take the form of monsters and NPCs each of which is discussed below.

Monsters: Many types of monsters appear in Arthurian legend, and these are detailed in the monsters section later in this book. Simply make sure that the monsters are appropriate for the setting, and change the inappropriate monsters as necessary. This can usually be done with little work and without changing the overall focus of the adventure. Two monsters that deserve special attention here are the goblinoid and undead. Both are favorites of adventure writers, especially low-level adventure writers, and neither occur with any frequency in Arthurian lore.

Goblinoids are reduced to only goblins. There are no orcs, no gnolls, no kobolds, and no bugbears. However, it is easy enough to replace these in adventures. Simply make them ruffians, robber barons, or bandits if they are sophisticated enough to pass as (awful) representations of humanity. Usually this will require nothing more than changing their descriptions when the characters encounter them, although the game master could also easily replace their statistics with those found in the NPC tables presented later.

Undead are reduced to spirits, such as banshee and ghosts, along with the occasional (and extremely rare) wight or ghoul. There are no skeletons or zombies, and definitely no vampires. While there are representations of these creatures in other forms of fiction written at the same time as Arthurian legend, they do not appear in the tales, and would be as out of place (especially the vampire) as a *kiiai*-shouting, *nunchaku*-wielding monk. Again, in the case of the skeleton or zombie, the change is easily made to a human opponent by a change in description, with the zombie-horde leading necromancer becoming the enchantress with her thralls of fallen knights.

The game master should further note that when undead are encountered (and again it should be rare), the fact that many of the spells and class abilities (such as *turn undead*) dealing with undead have been removed from the classes will make these encounters *much* more difficult. Therefore, it is recommended that these creatures be avoided, save for the occasional banshee, ghost, or barrow wight.

NPCs: NPCs are the most common form of opponent found in Arthurian lore, and are almost always appropriate. Changes will need to be made to class abilities, but for the most part, a simple alteration of the NPC's spell list will be all that is needed for the NPC to appear seamlessly in the campaign. Again, the NPC tables, along with the countless

detailed NPC statblocks found in the Campaign Guide will assist the game master in making these transitions as painless and quick as possible.

REWARDS

Sometimes questing is its own reward, but players usually like a little something tangible to go with their experiences. Money and magic items from opponents, otherwise known as the time honored tradition of "killing things and taking their stuff" is well and good, and certainly has its place in Arthurian adventuring. However, there are some rewards of a kind not found in the typical fantasy game worth including in your game as well.

Ransom: Not nearly as bad as its modern connotation, this was in fact considered one of the privileges enjoyed by combatants "of quality" (members of the Lesser Nobility and the Royalty) in medieval times. Killing an opponent was all well and good, but why do that when you could get his king or his relatives to pay you for his safe return? Exceptional combatants could expect their liege to pony up for their safe return, while others might have to wait for years while their family tried to raise the money to secure their freedom. For captured characters, this might remove them from the campaign for a time, although other party members could certainly raise funds themselves. For characters capturing defeated enemies, this is a way for them to earn some extra gold.

Assume a captured foe of the lesser nobility will fetch a price of 2 gp per level multiplied by the captured personage's nobility (or a substantial 200 gp per level should you be lucky enough to catch someone with 100 nobility). Captured members of royalty will fetch twice this amount, or 4 gp per level multiplied by the captured personage's nobility.

If a character is captured, a d100 roll under the character's nobility indicates that his liege has agreed to pay the ransom himself. If the player fails this nobility check, then he is on his own, and must rely on friends and family to raise the expected sum. Every month of captivity, the player may reroll his nobility check to see if his liege has changed his mind. It was not unheard of for a captive to wait over a year for ransom.

TONE

An adventure's tone is both the hardest element to pin down, but is also the most important element of making any published adventure fit into an Excalibur campaign. In many respects this element deals with the *why* of an adventure more than the setting or the objective or the challenges to overcome. In other words, taking on an adventure for revenge of a fallen comrade, or on behalf of a point of honor, will go much further to giving the adventure an Arthurian tone than changing where the adventure is set. This element, in addition to altering the setting and the encounters of an adventure, even slightly, will lead to almost any published adventure feeling like it belongs in the campaign.

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TABLE 4-1: JOUSTING CHECK

| Jousting Check | Description | Lances (hit / dismount) | Dismount Check |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Horses collide* | Disqualified | 20 |
| 2-5 | Hit horse | Disqualified | 10 |
| 6-10 | Clean Miss | None | None |
| 11-15 | Low hit | 1/6 | 10 |
| 16-20 | High hit | 1/6 | 15 |
| 21-25 | Helm hit; Helm removed | 10/15 | 15 |
| 26-30 | Helm hit; Helm not removed | 10/15 | 15 |
| 31-40 | Helm hit; Helm removed, head grazed | 20/25 | 20 |

JOUSTING

The usefulness of the lance charge as a military tactic has long been questioned. Certainly an attack of this sort was very impressive, and inflicted a great deal of “shock and awe” on an opponent, but the ability of shock warfare to contribute toward decisive victory, from the lance charges of the Middle Ages to the carpet bombings of World War II, is a subject of some debate by scholars and theorists of military strategy.

In the words of one such scholar: “The heavy cavalry charge of this sort was, for several centuries, regarded as the principal shock attack of a battle and, although its efficacy has with good reason been challenged by a number of modern historians, it clearly impressed many observers throughout its long history and was taken seriously by at least some military theorists until well into the seventeenth century.”¹

While the value of the lance charge in battle may thus be questioned, there can be no doubt of the appeal of the spectator sport derived from the lance charge: the tilt or the joust. This sport, filled with pageantry and spectacle, allowed knights to practice their skills, showcase themselves to potential brides or employers, and even, in many cases, to win substantial prizes. These tournaments, which feature prominently in Arthurian legend, are the subject of this section.

BASIC TERMINOLOGY

Historically, jousts may be divided into two broad categories: those fought “at large” and those fought with the aid of a “list”.

A joust fought at large was one in which the combatants simply ran at one another in an open field, with or without a blunted lance, for sport. This dangerous pastime is handled under the normal combat rules. If a jousting lance is used, then the damage will at least be nonlethal, but these matches were also held with standard lances on occasion, with a predictable number of accidental injuries and deaths resulting.

A joust fought with a list entailed the use of some barrier, of cloth (for impromptu matches) or of wood (for areas

specifically designed for jousting). This barrier served both as a guide to the horses (as head on collisions were a dangerous, even fatal consequence to knight and horse of jousting at large), but also to subtly alter the angle of attack, which caused the lance to break more frequently, and caused significantly less damage than jousting at large.

THE JOUSTING CHECK

All jousts, regardless of the conditions of victory (which will vary from joust to joust and which are covered below) will consist of a series of jousting checks. As the combatants pass, each will make a jousting check, and the results of both checks are applied. A jousting check is performed as follows: 1d20, plus your base attack bonus, plus all normal lance attack modifiers. In addition to this, the rider with the higher quality horse gains a +2 bonus, and the rider with the better Ride skill gains a +2 bonus.

CONDITIONS OF VICTORY

Jousts are scored in *lances*. Each jouster may score on each pass, and at the end of three passes, the jouster with the most lances wins.

Several results below call for a dismount check. This is a ride check, which must exceed the DC listed or the rider is dismounted. Being dismounted increases the lances scored by five.

Damage (lethal or nonlethal) is only done if the Jousting check is greater than the opponents AC. Scoring lances and dismounts are still possible even if the rider take no damage. If damage is inflicted by the attack, it is recorded, and may not be healed until after all three passes have been completed. If a jouster cannot continue because he has been rendered unconscious or killed, he is disqualified.

Horses Collide: This is the worst possible result of a jousting pass, and often results in serious injury to horse and rider. There have been reported incidents of head-on collisions resulting in the deaths of both horses and both riders. This is one reason why lists were first used. This jousting check inflicts 1d6 normal damage on both horses and both riders per 10' of movement of both mounts combined. So if one horse moved 40 feet and the other 60 in the course of the jousting pass, both horses and both riders

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would take 10d6 damage.

Hit Horse: This jousting check results in automatic defeat, and inflicts nonlethal damage on the horse.

Clean Miss: Rather embarrassing, but no other result.

Low Hit: The lance has struck your opponent on his thigh through his shield, inflicting nonlethal damage, and scoring one lance (or six if the hit dismounts your opponent).

High Hit: The lance has struck your opponent above his shield and as high as his neck, inflicting nonlethal damage, and scoring one lance (or six if the hit dismounts your opponent).

Helm Hit: A very desirable hit. In combat, lancers were taught to aim for the horse's shoulder or the knight's head. During jousts lancers wore helmets very loosely, or even only fixed in place with wax holding the chin strap, so their helmet would simply fly off on a head hit, and result in far less damage. This joust check inflicts nonlethal damage, and scores ten lances (or 15 if your opponent is dismounted).

Helm Hit (not removed): This means that the helmet did not come off as it was supposed to, resulting in more damage, but no more lances.

Helm Hit (Head Grazed): This is an automatic critical hit, and was greatly prized. Some tournaments even awarded extra points if teeth were knocked out by such a hit.

¹ The Martial Arts of Renaissance Europe, Dr. Sydney Anglo

CHAPTER 5: MAGIC ITEMS

ARMOR

Armor is both a knight's protection from the rigors of his duty and a symbol of his station. The combination of a mighty warhorse with heavy articulated armor is both a mighty military advance, and a way of restricting military power to the upper echelons of Arthurian society. The power of magic merely enhances this advantage even further.

ARMOR AND SHIELD SPECIAL ABILITY DESCRIPTIONS

These special abilities allow a knight's armor to protect him with the power of his honor, or the power of his service to his lord.

Knight's Mantle: A suit of armor with this ability grants the wearer damage reduction of 1 per 10 points of nobility. This damage reduction is bypassed by ignoble weapons (see below). A suit of armor may only have this ability once and may not have this ability in addition to the noble armor ability.

Strong abjuration; CL 13th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Noble Mantle*; Price +3 bonus

Noble Armor: A suit of armor with this ability grants the wearer damage reduction of 1 per 20 points of nobility. This damage reduction is bypassed by ignoble weapons (see below).

Medium abjuration; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Noble Armor*; Price +2 bonus

Vassal's Armor: A suit of armor with this ability gives the wearer an AC bonus equal to the quest modifier of any quest he undertakes (see the noble class for more information of quests and quest modifiers).

Strong abjuration; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Crusader's Zeal, Mass*; Price +2 bonus

SPECIFIC ARMOR

Rather than represent armors made from special or exotic materials, specific magical armors in Excalibur represent the iconic nature of the spectral knights.

Black Shield: This smooth black featureless shield can only be used by a 7th level Black Knight or higher. Any other character that attempts to use this shield is inflicted with one negative level. This negative level only remains while the shield is being held and disappears when the shield is discarded. When wielded by a Black Knight of 7th level or higher, the shield acts as a +3 shield that imposes a permanent -10 nobility modifier on the wielder, and halves all nobility gains. The wielder's Black Heart damage is increased by +2d6.

Blue Armor: This blue scale armor can only be used by a 7th level Blue Knight or higher. Any other character that

attempts to use this armor is inflicted with one negative level. This negative level only remains while the armor is being worn and disappears when the armor is removed. When worn by a Blue Knight of 7th level or higher the armor acts like +3 chain mail that imposes no armor check penalties to swim checks, allows the wearer to attack at no penalty underwater, and swim at his normal ground movement rate.

Green Armor: This dark green half plate armor can only be used by a 7th level Green Knight or higher. Any other character that attempts to use this armor is inflicted with one negative level. This negative level only remains while the armor is being worn and disappears when the armor is removed. When worn by a Green Knight of 7th level or higher the armor acts like +3 plate mail that imposes no armor check penalties to hide or move silently checks in natural environments.

Red Armor: This bright red half plate armor can only be used by a 7th level Red Knight or higher. Any other character that attempts to use this armor is inflicted with one negative level. This negative level only remains while the armor is being worn and disappears when the armor is removed. When worn by a Red Knight of 7th level or higher the armor acts like +3 plate mail that imposes no arcane spell failure chance to illusion or enchantment spells.

POTIONS

Potion of Energy: Downing this potion restores 1-10 spell points to the character drinking it. The character's spell points cannot be raised above their normal maximum. If the person drinking this potion does not have spell points, then the potion has no effect. This potion is made through the spell *strengthen energy*.

WEAPONS

Arthurian Britain is a wild and dangerous place, filled with man-eating animals, roving bands of bloodthirsty barbarians, and worse. Only a king, served by warriors as stainless as they are valorous could hope to tame such a land. And those warriors will need weapons to serve them as they do their king.

WEAPONS ABILITY DESCRIPTIONS

These weapons extend the purity (or lack thereof) of a knight into his weapon. They also enhance his ability to rule or serve those who do.

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Gleaming weapon: This weapon glows brightly from one side on command from its wielder. Everyone facing that side (typically your enemy) must make a reflex saving throw (DC 16) or be blinded for 1-4 rounds; opponents fighting with their eyes averted gain a +2 on this saving throw, but take a -2 to hit.

Strong evocation; CL 14th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Searing Light* and *Limited Wish* or *Miracle*; Price +4 bonus

Ignoble weapon: This weapon inflicts an extra +1d6 damage against an opponent with a higher nobility than you possess. Using this weapon in battle lowers the wielder's nobility by -10 points (the wielder only suffers this penalty once).

Medium evocation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Heroes' Bane*; Price +1 bonus

Knight's weapon: This weapon inflicts an extra +1 damage per 20 points of the wielder's nobility.

Medium evocation; CL 13th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Martyr's Cry*; Price +2 bonus

Lord's weapon (+1): This weapon increases a noble's Quest modifier by +1. In the hands of a character without the a Quest class modifier this ability does not function.

Faint evocation; CL 3rd; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Crusader's Zeal*; Price +1 bonus

Lord's weapon (+2): This weapon increases a noble's Quest modifier by +2. In the hands of a character without the a Quest class modifier this ability does not function.

Moderate evocation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Crusader's Zeal*; Price +2 bonus

Lord's weapon (+3): This weapon increases a noble's Quest modifier by +3. In the hands of a character without the a Quest class modifier this ability does not function.

Noble weapon: This weapon inflicts an extra +1d6 damage against an opponent with a lower nobility than you possess.

Medium evocation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Noble Weapon*; Price +1 bonus

Vassal's weapon: This weapon grants the wielder a damage bonus equal to the quest modifier of any quest he undertakes (see the noble class for more information on quests and quest modifiers).

Strong evocation; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Crusader's Zeal, Mass*; Price +2 bonus

SPECIFIC WEAPONS

Many unique items have been crafted by those seeking to aid knights in protecting Britain.

Accolade: This beautiful, cross-hilted longsword bears a silver blade and a ruby at each of the three points of its hilt.

It commonly functions as a +2 longsword, but in the hands of a noble with a nobility of 60 or higher, its true power is revealed, and the weapon functions as +3 Noble Lord's (+3) Longsword. However, as potent as these qualities are, even they are not the reason why this sword is sought after by kings and powerful nobles. Any knight dubbed with this sword gains a permanent +10 nobility bonus. Further, any nobility penalties that knight suffers from disobeying his lord

are doubled. Once per month, the wielder of Accolade may use the *quest* spell on any servant who has sworn allegiance to him. This quest spell is cast with a caster level of 11.

Medium evocation; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Crusader's Zeal, Mass, Quest*; Price 128,315 gp; Cost 64,315 gp+2,560 xp.

Albion's Bane: A plain battle-axe that has obviously seen much combat, this weapon has been the bane of the giants of Britain, especially the "noble" descendants of Albion who once ruled the island, for countless centuries. The details of its forging are lost to antiquity, but there are those who believe the weapon was forged in the first struggle to colonize the island, which would make it over a millennia old.

A +2 battle axe, giant bane, this weapon also grants its wielder a +4 bonus to all saving throws against a spell cast by a giant. Against a giant of Albion's Bloodline, the weapon inflicts an extra +2d8 damage, rather than the usual +2d6. This weapon's true powers cannot be revealed by any magic, but when it first comes within 100 yards of any giant, the weapon will drip blood, and anyone grasping the weapon at that time will instinctively know whose blood the weapon thirsts for. All giants know of this weapon, and will attack the wielder with utmost ferocity upon seeing it.

Moderate conjuration; CL 8th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster II, globe of invulnerability, lesser*; Price 32,310 gp; Cost 16,310 gp+ 640 xp.

Gloom Breaker: Gloom Breaker is a weapon forged during the dark days of the Roman occupation, when the followers of the Old Faith were staging a desperate rebellion. It is thought by some people that this staff was one of the first magical creations of Merlin himself, but no one has been able to get a straight answer from the old mage either yea nor nay. This has led some to assume that he did in fact create this weapon but feels its workmanship inferior to his later creations. A gnarled, weathered staff, Gloom Breaker is constructed of wood of an unknown type, which cannot be burned, broken or cut.

Gloom Breaker is a +2 quarterstaff that can be commanded to shed light in a 60' radius. Once per day, its wielder can command the staff to emit a *searing ray* cast at a minimum caster level of 10. Gloom Breaker can store up to 20 spell points of energy to power druid spells (and only druid spells). These spell points must be recharged either by the wielder replacing them, or by leaving the staff at the center of a henge for eight hours.

Moderate transmutation; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *searing ray, strengthen energy*; Price 72,600; Cost 36,600 gp+ 1,440 xp.

King's Commandment: The best word to describe this ancient longsword would be *regal*. A diamond crucifix fills out the entire inside of this weapon's cross-hilt, and the blade seems to catch and hold the light, and is etched three-quarters of its length with crowns. Unlike *Accolade* another highly sought blade among rulers, this weapon is not meant for those lords who delegate command to others, rather it is intended for the ruler who will enforce his commands with

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steel.

King's Commandment appears to be an ordinary +1 longsword. However, when grasped by a Noble of 10th level or higher, it will immediately reveal itself to be a +3 Flaming Noble Longsword. This weapon also increases its wielder's Charisma by +4, and adds +6 damage to the noble's divine wrath damage.

Strong evocation; CL 20th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *flame blade, noble weapon, crusader's zeal, mass*; Price: 128,315 gp; Cost: 64,315 gp+ 2,560 xp.

Knight's Heart: The weathered, battered longsword has no decoration, and looks as if it has seen dozens of campaigns. The hilt is an unremarkable cross-hilt, and the blade is covered with scratches and scars, including a small nick about three-quarters of the way between the hilt and the point. The only distinguishing characteristic of the weapon is a scuffed and worn leather wrap around the hilt, which bears the faint inscription "For Emma, my Heart". It is this inscription that has given the weapon its name.

Knight's Heart is a +1 noble longsword. Any nobility gains or losses for gentleness or mistreatment of women are doubled. Also, if the wielder is fighting to defend a Lady, the weapon grants him a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus to saving throws.

Faint evocation; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *noble weapon, minor penance, nobility shield*; Price: 18,315 gp; Cost: 9,315 gp+ 360 xp.

WONDROUS ITEMS

Unlike weapons, those who wield magic for their own purposes use these items. It is believed by many mages and priests that these items are never truly created; rather, the power within them is naturally brought out in them. This is particularly true in the case of relics.

SPECIFIC WONDEROUS ITEMS

These items aid mages and priests, and in some towns, the mere possession of one of these items is illegal.

Mana Stone (Medium Wondrous Item): This item provides an extra +1-10 spell points, of one power source (determined randomly when the item is discovered). These spell points must be replaced after being used. The number of spell points the item can hold are determined when it is made and cannot be changed (so if the item holds 5 spell points it cannot be recharged above that amount).

Moderate transmutation; caster level 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *strengthen energy*; Price 250 gp per spell point (250-2,500 gp).

Mana Stone, Greater (Major Wondrous Item): This item is identical to a lesser mana stone, except that it can hold 11-20 spell points, of one power source (determined randomly when the item is discovered). The number of spell points the item can hold are determined when it is made and cannot be changed (so if the item holds 5 spell points it cannot be recharged above that amount).

Strong transmutation; caster level 13th; Craft Wondrous Item, *strengthen energy, greater*; Price 500 gp per spell point (5,500-10,000 gp).

Relic, Minor (Medium Wondrous Item): Relics are either items intimately associated with a saint (such as the chains that bound a saint, or the burial cloth of a saint) or a small piece of the saint herself (such as a finger or toe). This item grants a priest +1 caster level on all priest spells, which could make high level spells much cheaper to cast.

Relic (Major Wondrous Item): This item is a significant piece of a saint's body, such as a hand or thighbone. This item grants a priest +1 caster level on all priest spells, +1 per hour spell point recovery, and can store up to 10 priest spell points (these must be recharged when used, or the item will recharge itself when left overnight at a Cathedral).

Tarot Deck (Minor Wondrous Item): This item requires at least 5 ranks in the Prophecy skill to use correctly. It allows prophecy checks to be made in half the usual time for the user, and grants a +4 bonus on Prophecy skill checks. Reading the deck itself only takes one hour; any additional time for a prophecy check is spent in contemplation of the cards.

Moderate Divination; caster level 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *clairvoyance*; Price 2,500 gp

ARTIFACTS

Arthurian legend is filled with items of great power. These items have been created through the years to aid one side or another in the struggle for power. Many of these items were crafted by Merlin himself to aid Uther, and later Arthur.

DOLOROUS SWORD

Major Artifact

The dolorous sword is a powerful weapon, and this power lures brave warriors to their deaths again and again. No one knows where the sword came from, and as its appearance changes with each new wielder, no one can say when it will reappear. However, the death and woe that follow in the blade's wake are inescapable.

The dolorous sword is a noble defending longsword +3. However, the weapon also curses the wielder, giving him a destiny to kill the person he loves best in the world. Each day the wielder uses the sword, even for a single stroke, he gains a destiny point. Any fate points the character spends go into this new destiny, not any other destinies the character may possess.

*Ye shall slay with the sword the best friend that ye have,
and the man that ye love most in the world, and the
sword shall be your destruction.*

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

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DRAGON HELM

Major Artifact

A helmet passed down for generations, and from Uther to Arthur. Gold, with a dragon crest, the helm projects the noble's auras out much further than normal, granting him success as a leader in battle.

The character that wears the dragon helm has the area of all noble auras increased by a factor of 10. For example, at 4th level all allies within 10 feet of the noble gain a bonus to saving throws vs. fear. With this helm, all allies within 100 feet would gain this bonus.

Finally, if a character spends fate points while leading others, he gains a +1 bonus on each die, cumulative with the Predestined feat.

EXCALIBUR

Major Artifact

The most powerful sword in the history of the world, Excalibur is a +5 Noble, Vorpal, Gleaming, Lord's (+3) Longsword. Also known as Cut Steel, Caladfwlch, and Caladbolg.

This weapon may only be wielded by a great hero and often disappears if found or wielded by one who is not worthy of it. Once the weapon disappears beneath any body of water it automatically appears in the court of the Lady of the Lake. Should the sword be broken, its pieces appear there, where it will magically mend itself within 24 hours. If a worthy hero is alive, the Ladies of the Lake will then return the mended blade to him.

The weapon is known under many different names. Excalibur, its English name, is frequently translated to mean "cut steel", however, Caladfwlch, the sword's Welsh name and Caladbolg, its Irish name, are both translated to mean "hard lightning".

At the age of 14 Arthur draws Excalibur from the stone and anvil in London, where it had rested since Uther's death. He wielded the blade his entire life, losing it only twice: once it was stolen from him, and once it was broken. Upon his death at the hands of Mordred, Arthur commands the sword be thrown back into the waters, returning it to the care of the Ladies of the Lake.

*I beheld Excalibur... the sword
That rose from out the bosom of the lake,
And Arthur row'd across and took it- rich
With jewels, elfin Urim, on the hilt,
Bewildering heart and eye- the blade so bright
That men are blinded by it- on one side,
Graven in the oldest tongue of all this world,
'Take me', but turn the blade and ye shall see,
And written in the speech you speak yourself,
'Cast me away!' And sad was Arthur's face
Taking it, but old Merlin counsell'd him,
'Take thou and strike! The time to cast away
Is yet far off.' So this great brand the King
Took, and by this will beat his foemen down.*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

GALATINE

Major Artifact

A mighty sword fashioned for Gawain by his mother Morgause. Terrified that she might lose her son in service to Arthur, as she lost her husband in war against him, she fashioned this sword from her own blood and tears and sorrow, to watch after her son after she was gone.

Galatine is a noble defending longsword +5. As long as the wielder carries it, he is under the permanent effects of *Gawain's Morning Star*. The sword also bears a special magic that grants the wielder a +2 to hit and damage when at half hit points or less, and +4 to hit and damage when at one-quarter hit points or less. Lastly, the blade will automatically cast *cure minor wounds* on the wielder if his hit points go below zero, stabilizing him.

HOLY GRAIL

Major Artifact

The Holy Grail, a wooden vessel which only appears to the most worthy and pious, is the subject of the greatest quest ever undertaken by Arthur's knights. The grail is needed to cure the Dolorous Stroke, a blow struck on the Grail King by the Lance of Longinus (see the entry for this artifact below). The Dolorous Stroke lays waste to three kingdoms in Northern Britain, a region where the land has been robbed of all energy. Nothing grows, and spellcasting is nearly impossible in this region, which is also inhabited by foul creatures of every description. Worse, the Wasteland is slowly growing, necessitating the pursuit of the Grail to restore the land.

Merely seeing the Grail will heal a creature of all wounds, including healing all poison and disease, even non-magical diseases or otherwise incurable diseases. Anything that could be healed by an application of the Miracle spell may be healed by the mere presence of the Grail. The only exception to this is the Dolorous Stroke, which requires the completion of a special ritual to heal (see below). The Grail can also be used to cast the Heroes Feast spell at will, if commanded by a worthy user.

Worthy users of the Grail: The grail can only be commanded by a person of the highest character. Although the Quest Knights chosen to find the Grail are the best the Round Table has to offer, most of them are not even worthy to see the Grail. In game terms, being worthy of the Grail requires a nobility of 95 or higher. Also, if the character has ever committed a severe transgression of any kind, he is unworthy of the Grail, even if he has been absolved of that transgression (thus Lancelot is unworthy of the Grail). The achiever of the Grail varies from story to story, meaning that it is quite possible for a PC to achieve the Grail, since the stories themselves do not agree on who accomplishes the task. The Grail is variously achieved by Percival (the original Grail story is from Chretien de Troyes' *Perceval*),

CHAPTER 5: MAGIC ITEMS

Gawain, Bors, Galahad, or (in *Le Morte d'Arthur*) Galahad, Percival, and Bors together. If an unworthy character comes within sight of the Grail, that character will fall into a deep sleep, at which time he will disappear, transported out of the Wasteland.

Healing the Dolorous Stroke: The Grail resides in the Grail Castle, at the heart of the Wasteland. There, Amfortas, the wounded Grail King, helplessly watches an endless procession of woe, every night through his castle, that anyone visiting the castle will be allowed to watch. A squire bears the Lance of Longinus, two squires bear 10-pronged candelabras, and finally a maiden bearing the Grail. If any worthy user watching this procession asks the Grail King (also called the Fisher King) the key questions, “What is the Grail?” and “Who does it serve?” then the Grail King will be healed, and the Wasteland will be restored.

*The cup, the cup itself, from which our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his own.
This, from the blessed land of Aromat—
After the day of darkness, when the dead
Went wandering o'er Moriah- the good saint
Arimathaeon Joseph, journeying brought
To Glastonbury, where the winter thorn
Blossoms at Christmas, mindful of our Lord.
And there awhile it bode; and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was healed at once,
By faith, of all his ills. But then the times
Grew to such evil that the holy cup
Was caught away to Heaven, and disappeared.*

-Alfred Lord Tennyson, Idylls of the King

LANCE OF LONGINUS

Major Artifact

This is the lance used by a Roman soldier to pierce the side of Christ while he was on the cross. Like the Holy Grail, the descendants of Joseph of Arimathea have guarded it since their arrival in Britain. The stewardship of these two items is the hereditary responsibility of all the Fisher Kings. The last of the Grail Kings, Pellam, is wounded by the lance, laying waste to three kingdoms, and creating the Wasteland.

The lance is a +5 ignoble wounding lance. However, both the constitution loss and the damage inflicted by this lance are permanent, and can only be healed by the Holy Grail. Use of the lance is a severe cowardice transgression, assessed each time an attack is made with the lance.

*And at the last he entered into a chamber that was
marvellously well dight and richly, and a bed arrayed
with cloth of gold, the richest that might be thought, and
one lying therein, and thereby stood a table of clean
gold with four pillars of silver that bare up the table,
and upon the table stood a marvellous spear strangely
wrought.*

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

MORGAN'S MANTLE

Major Artifact

Created by Morgan le Fey in an attempt to assassinate Arthur, this mantle appears as glorious velvet, gem studded cloak worth almost 100,000 gold. When worn, however, a Fortitude check must be made each round (DC 30) or the wearer bursts into flames, immediately dying.

*And then he said unto the damosel that came from his
sister, Damosel, this mantle that ye have brought me, I
will see it upon you. Sir, she said, It will not beseem me
to wear a king's garment. By my head, said Arthur, ye
shall wear it or it come on my back, or any man's that
here is. And so the king made it to be put upon her, and
forth withal she fell down dead, and never more spake
word after and burnt to coals.*

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

PRIWEN

Major Artifact

Arthur's shield, ever stainless, bearing a picture of the Virgin Mary.

Priwen is a +5 Heavy Steel Shield, that grants its wielder 25 spell resistance. The wielder of Priwen loses twice the standard amount of nobility for all transgressions.

RON

Major Artifact

Arthur's Lance, described by Geoffrey of Monmouth as “well devised for slaughter,” also called Rhongomyniad.

Ron is a +5 noble knight's heavy lance. Once per day its wielder can automatically inflict maximum damage on a charge attack.

ROUND TABLE

Major Artifact

Merlin creates the Round Table at Uther's request to aid him in unifying Britain. It is an enduring symbol of equality and justice. The table seats 150 knights, and its seats are called *sieges*. Twelve of the sieges may only be occupied by the most virtuous of knights. These sieges represent the apostles, and each chair of the twelve requires more nobility than the next. Only Segurant, Pellinore, and later Lancelot, could sit in the twelfth siege, on the right hand of the *Siege Perilous*. The twelve knights who occupy these sieges are referred to as the Grail Knights, as they are destined to search for this mysterious object. A thirteenth siege, named the *Siege Perilous* by Merlin represented Christ, and would kill any knight who sat in it. Only Galahad ever occupies the *Siege Perilous*.

During Uther's reign, only fifty knights occupied the table. These knights were known as the Knights of the Old Table, which implies that the table was ancient even then. Segurant, Ulfius, and Brastias are the only three knights of the Old

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Table mentioned in the tales.

Upon Uther's death, King Leodegrance inherited the table. King Leodegrance hosted a grand fellowship of knights, the Century Legion (see knightly orders for more information) heroes of the dark age between Uther and Arthur at this table.

When Arthur marries Leodegrance's daughter, Guinevere, Leodegrance gives him as a dowry not only the table, but the 100 knights of the Century Legion as well. Arthur fills the remaining fifty seats.

Only knights whose nobility is 55 or higher may sit at the Round Table. Each of the twelve sieges of the Grail Knights requires a nobility of 75 or higher, with the siege on the right hand of the *Siege Perilous* requiring a nobility of 90 or higher. Only someone with 100 nobility may sit in the *Siege Perilous* without being killed.

Sitting at the Round Table grants a *bless* spell with a duration of 1 day per 10 points of nobility. All diseases are also cured when a worthy character sits at the table. If a character shares stories of his adventures, he may learn from his mistakes, under the tutelage of his fellow knights, and the King and Queen. This has the effect of absolving the character of any one transgression he made during that adventure. If there is doubt as to whether the character has learned his lesson, Arthur or Guinevere will usually impose a quest or pilgrimage on the character, or require him to take a vow related to that transgression. For example, when Gawain related his tale of accidentally killing a maiden, Guinevere required him to take a vow championing women and their causes. Gawain upheld this vow for the remainder of his life.

A final note: Arthur never sat at the Round Table. Rather, his throne overlooked the table.

SCABBARD OF EXCALIBUR

Major Artifact

This item grants the wearer damage resistance 15/noble weapon, and acts as a ring of regeneration.

Then Sir Arthur looked on the sword, and liked it passing well.

Whether liketh you better, said Merlin, the sword or the scabbard?

Me liketh better the sword, said Arthur. Ye are more unwise, said Merlin, for the scabbard is worth ten of the swords,

for whiles ye have the scabbard upon you, ye shall never lose no

blood, be ye never so sore wounded; therefore keep well the

scabbard always with you.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur, Book I, Chapter XXV

WATER OF PARADISE

MINOR ARTIFACT

Potion, acts as a heal spell

And Priamus took from his page a vial full of the four waters that came out of Paradise, and with certain balm anointed their wounds, and washed them with that water; and within an hour after they were both as whole as ever they were.

-Sir Thomas Malory, Le Morte d'Arthur

CHAPTER 6: BESTIARY

MONSTERS FROM THE MM

To give the game master some guidance both in the formation of his own adventures, and translation of published adventures, a list of monsters appropriate for Legends of Excalibur games are included below. Where necessary, some notes on that monster are provided. Following this is a selection of completely new monsters drawn from the tales themselves.

MONSTER NOBILITY

In place of Alignment, Legends of Excalibur uses nobility to determine a character's birth, and then his worth as he progresses through life. Many monsters have nobility as well. However, in the case of monsters, nobility does not measure how honest or brave or trustworthy a creature is, these are human ideals. Rather, it represents how the creature lives up to ideals of its kind, and the purity, or potency, of the creature's blood. In the case of giants, for example, nobility determines how closely related the giant is to the lineage of Albion, the giant who first settled the island in the name of Poseidon. In the case of dragons, it represents a combination of caste and age.

Effects of Nobility: All monsters that possess a nobility score will derive some benefit from that score. These effects will vary widely, and are noted in the monster's description. Usually, however, benefits from nobility will take the form of an aura, much as they do for characters, such as the knight's aura of knighthood, and the priest's aura of piety.

Many weapons, spells, and class abilities are based on differences in nobility. For instance, a noble weapon does extra damage if the attacker's nobility is higher than that of his opponent. These items and effects all work in the usual fashion, despite the fact that a creature's nobility might represent something completely different than a character's. So even though a dragon might be despicable in every way, if it is a Sovereign Dragon, it may still be immune to an attacker's noble weapon.

ASSASSIN VINE

These carnivorous plants are rampant during the earliest days of Arthur's reign, and are indicative of the revolt of nature that occurs after the reign of Uther. With the help of Arthur's knights, and a steady campaign of burning, these creatures are consigned to desolate bogs after the War of Ascension.

ATHACH

Even the giants hunt these hideous creatures, as they are the hideous byproduct of giant-ogre mating. These creatures are either encountered alone, or accompanied by Ogres.

BASILISK

These creatures inhabit deep caves and desolate bogs, and are sometimes used as guardians by the Green Knights who prefer to lair in these inhospitable locations.

CHIMERA

These beasts prefer caves, or jagged mountaintops for their lairs. Early in Arthur's reign these creatures are a constant threat to livestock and man alike, but are driven to near-extinction by the Knights of the Round Table after the War of Ascension.

DEMON AND DEVIL (ALL)

These loathsome creatures are normally brought into the world by a hedge mage seeking to use them for his own purposes. Not easily tamed, they often escape into the world, wreaking havoc. Merlin was sired by one of these, an incubus, and has been known to use these creatures as servants.

DIRE ANIMAL (ALL)

These creatures are another product of the revolt of nature, and reflect the animals that have no fear of man, hunting them like any other prey. Arthur's knights have standing orders to hunt any creature that has taken to eating humans, and later in Arthur's reign, these creatures can only be found in the most remote unsettled areas. Note that in Arthurian legend, creatures appear that never (to our knowledge) existed historically in Britain. Most notably are the frequent references to lions. Bears, extinct in Britain today are also common opponents. Most common of all these natural terrors, however, are the wolves, which lead packs of lesser wolves in well-coordinated attacks on farms. Children are often spared in these attacks, and raised by female dire wolves as Wolf Men (see new monsters below).

During the Rise of Arthur era, all Dire Animals encountered will have a bonus of +2 Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. These creatures have had their fill of manflesh, and are strengthened by the lack of a king. They have no fear of man, seeing him as a foodsource and nothing more, and will attack on sight.

During the One Brief Shining Moment era, these creatures will be rarer, and gain no bonus to their ability scores.

During the Dream's End era, these monsters will begin to grow in numbers, but will not regain their ability bonuses until after Arthur's death.

DRAGON

Dragons are frighteningly common in Arthurian legend, second only to giants as central opponents of the Round Table. These creatures prefer the most inaccessible mountaintops, deepest caves, or dankest swamps for their

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lair. Arthurian dragons are identical to their monster manual counterparts, except as noted below.

Spell Casting: If a dragon has a caster level listed, it is capable of spell casting. All dragons cast hedge mage spells, and gain spell points modified by their Charisma.

Nobility: The major difference between Arthurian dragons and their monster manual counterparts is the *nobility* of dragons. Just as mankind has noble families and lineages, so do the dragons of the world. Unlike mankind, dragons do not earn nobility for good deeds, honesty, bravery or generosity. Two things determine a dragon's nobility, the purity of its bloodline, and its age. Male dragons constantly try to pass their genetics on, and will mate with any dragon in an attempt to perpetuate its bloodline. However, couplings between dragons of the same color are preferable, and the purity of the dragon's lineage determines its caste at birth. Pureblooded females are highly prized, and are often the subject of spectacular nighttime duels for primacy.

When creating a dragon, determine the caste it was born to on table 6-1.

Nobility Changes: Every age category a dragon ages adds +5 to its nobility, to a maximum of +55 for a Great Wyrmling.

Auras: Every time a dragon enters a new age category, it may select an aura from the list below, as long as it has not reached its maximum number of auras. The maximum auras a dragon can possess is equal to its Charisma modifier.

Razorclaw Aura: +1 per 10 nobility to claw damage

Razorfang Aura: +1 per 10 nobility to bite damage

Whipsaw Aura: +1 per 10 nobility to tail slap and tail sweep damage

Serrated Wing Aura: +1 per 10 nobility to wing damage

Ironscale Aura: +1 AC per 20 nobility

Mithralscale Aura: +1 damage resistance per 10 nobility (bypassed by noble weapons); Prerequisite: Ironscale Aura, Well Bred or higher caste

Mirrorscale Aura: +1 SR per 10 nobility; Prerequisite: Mithralscale Aura, Pure Blooded or higher caste

Adamantscale Aura (this aura replaces Mithralscale Aura): +1 damage resistance per 5 nobility (bypassed by noble weapons); Prerequisite: Mithralscale Aura, Pure Blooded or higher caste

Noxious Breath: +1 breath weapon damage per 5 nobility; Prerequisite: Pure Blooded or higher caste

Fireblood: +1 spell point per 10 nobility; Prerequisite: Well Bred or better, caster level 1

Firesight: Dragon gains 1 rank of Prophecy skill per 5 nobility; Prerequisite: Fireblood, Pure Blooded or higher caste

DRYAD

Forests near henges teem with these reclusive fey folk. Dryads have a nobility of 6-60 (6d10). Dryads have a druid casting level of 1 per 10 points of nobility, and will aid any druid with a nobility equal to or higher than theirs with healing spells when encountered. They will never participate in combat unless their symbiotic plant is threatened.

DWARF

Dwarves are common foils for knights in Arthurian legend, and are often seen pursuing relationships with human maidens. If the game master wishes to include non-human races in his game, characters may select dwarves as a PC race, gaining the qualities of the Dwarven race in place of selecting a lineage.

The abilities of dwarves are unchanged from the Player's Handbook. The base nobility of a dwarf character is 10 times the character's charisma modifier when created.

ELF

Elves are beautiful members of the fey race that reside in a place known as the Otherworld. Arthur has visited this strange plane with Merlin's assistance, and is on good terms with Oberon, the King of the fey. Occasionally, Oberon will send one of his followers to the mortal world on a mission of some import. If the game master wishes to include non-human races in his game, characters may select elves as a PC race, gaining the qualities of the Elven race in place of selecting a lineage.

Elves are much as they appear in the Player's Handbook, except their ability modifiers are -2 Str, +2 Cha, and their favored class is hedge mage. The base nobility of an elf character is 10 times the character's charisma modifier when created.

ETTIN

These loathsome creatures are descended from titans, and are thus bitter enemies of the giants, who are descended from Poseidon. Any time a giant encounters an Ettin, the inevitable result is one killing the other.

GARGOYLE

These creatures love to take residence in the many abandoned castles that dot the British countryside. They will use these abandoned structures as bases from which to hunt, and will defend them to the death from anyone foolish enough to seek shelter in their home.

GHOUL

These creatures are extremely rare, and are always encountered near old burial mounds in the hills around Britain, left over from bizarre rites and ceremonies conducted in the distant past. With the lack of undead turning and anti-undead spells, these creatures are even more dangerous than usual when encountered.

GIANTS (ALL)

Giants are easily the most common monster found in Arthurian legend. They are seen in the role of wandering monsters ravaging the countryside, robber bandits who have taken up residences in abandoned castles and extract tribute from all those who live nearby, and even soldiers serving with armies on both sides of a battle. Arthur's war with Rome is an excellent example of this, where the

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Roman army has entire *units* of giants on its side. Giants are normally villains in Arthurian legend, but there were giants who went so far as to swear fealty to Arthur, including one that guarded Camelot itself.

The existence of giants in Arthurian Britain predates mankind, and the first henges were constructed by the followers of Albion, legendary giant-king of Britain to honor Poseidon. Many giants trace their blood back to this venerable leader, and long for a day when the island was theirs alone, free from the meddlesome interference of mankind.

Legends of Excalibur reflects this change in giant society through the use of nobility. Giants of low blood tend to be bestial, concerned with nothing more than sating their monstrous appetites and lusts. At the other extreme are those that trace their lineage back to Albion, still practice the worship of Poseidon, and work to reclaim the island for themselves.

In Excalibur, a giant with a bloodline the group encounters will trace its ancestry back to one of six legendary giants: Nomera, Sadera, Polyphymos, Goliath, Manteran, and Albion. Each giantish bloodline has different ability modifiers and some always have levels in certain classes. These and other typical abilities are detailed below.

Giant nobility is determined by a straight roll of percentage dice. The higher the giant's nobility, the more directly he or she can trace their descent back to their legendary ancestor. Certain bloodlines are extremely strong, and so giants of rare bloodlines will receive a bonus to their nobility.

| Roll | Bloodline | Nobility | Ability Mod. |
|-------|------------|----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Sadera | -- | +2 Int. |
| 3-7 | Polyphymos | -- | +2 Wis. |
| 8-12 | Goliath | +5 | +2 Str.; +2 Con |
| 13-15 | Manteran | +10 | +2 Wis.; +4 Cha |
| 16-19 | Albion | +15 | +4 Wis.; +2 Int. |
| 20 | Poseidon | +20 | +4 Str.; +4 Con.; +2 Int.; +4 Cha. |

SADERA

Sadera was the craftiest of all the giants to serve Albion. These giants gain 1 additional skill point for each 10 points of nobility.

POLYPHYMOS

Polyphymos was a legendary hunter known for his keen sight and accuracy with ranged weapons. Giants with this bloodline gain a +1 bonus to all spot checks per 10 nobility, as well as a +1 bonus to hit with all ranged weapons per 20 nobility.

GOLIATH

Goliath was a legendary warrior, renowned for his ferocity, size and strength. Giants with this bloodline have 1 barbarian level per 10 nobility, in addition to the usual abilities of their type. If the giant meets the requirements for the berserker prestige class, he may take levels in that as well. These giants have a great desire to prove their strength and bravery, and disdain the use of any ranged weapon, unless no other option presents itself. Typically they will attempt to close with the most dangerous looking opponent.

MANTERAN

Manteran was Albion's mate and was noted for her ability to divine the future. Giants with this bloodline will have one hedge mage level per 10 nobility, in addition to the usual abilities of their type, as long as their Charisma is 11 or higher.

ALBION

Albion was noted for his devotion to the cult of Poseidon, and this was one of the main ways he united the many rival clans under his rule. He built many of the oldest henges, including Stonehenge (although it was Merlin who moved the edifice to Britain), and always sacrificed generously to his god. Giants with this bloodline will have one druid level per 10 nobility, in addition to the usual abilities of their type, as long as their wisdom is 11 or higher.

POSEIDON

The most rare of all bloodlines, these giants trace their lineage back to Poseidon, as Albion and Polyphymos did. These creatures are always great leaders among giants. These creatures possess one fighter level per 20 nobility, as well as one noble level per 20 nobility. These giants also possess +1 spell resistance per 10 nobility.

GIANT EAGLE/GIANT OWL

These intelligent creatures are often willing to aid the virtuous, and are well known for their hatred of the draconic and giant races. These creatures have a nobility of 55-100 (50+5d10), and will come to the aid of anyone with a nobility of 60 or higher, or anyone involved in a fight with giants or dragons, if they are in the area. It is possible, though extremely rare, for a druid, quest knight, or white knight to convince one of these creatures to be his mount. This can only occur if the character in question has a higher nobility than the eagle or owl in question.

These creatures gain a +1 damage reduction for each 10 points of nobility.

GOBLIN

The only goblinoid to appear in any number, these loathsome little killers are common early in Arthur's reign, especially in Lothian, where they aid King Lot in his battles. After Arthur consolidates his power, and Lot is succeeded by Gawain, the numbers of these creatures are dramatically reduced.

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GRIFFON

These creatures hunt horses, and are thus hunted by Arthur's knights later in his reign.

HAG (ALL)

These creatures all (unfortunately) can be found in the swamps and seas of Britain. If three hags join together, in addition to the covey abilities described in the Monster Manual, they can make Prophecy skill checks once per day, at a +15 modifier.

HELL HOUND

These creatures are often found in the service of demons or hags. Occasionally roving packs of these fiends are seen hunting through the countryside.

HIPPOCRIFF

These creatures are hunted by dragons and griffons, and are slowly becoming extinct. They can be domesticated when captured, and make powerful aerial mounts.

NIGHTMARE

These creatures are normally summoned by mages from the depths of the netherworld to serve as mounts. They can also be seen in the service of hags, or Black Knights serving particularly powerful mages.

NYMPH

Nymphs have 6-60 nobility (6d10) and possess one druid level for each 10 points of nobility. They will aid any druid encountered with an equal or higher nobility with healing spells.

OCRE

Another common monster, Ogres are often found in the company and service of giants, hags, and even human warlords. Their brute strength and lack of intelligence make them excellent hirelings for such beings.

PEGASUS

These creatures are extremely rare, and possess a nobility of 64-100 (60+4d10). They will aid anyone with a nobility of 60 or higher, and will even agree to serve as a mount for a druid, quest knight, or white knight with a nobility equal to or higher than theirs. Although these creatures appear frequently in Greek mythology, their appearance in Arthurian tales is credited to Merlin, who is said to have created these creatures. This could indicate that he summoned them, given that Greek mythology was assumed true in the context of Arthurian legend (the Goddess Diana is said to be the godmother of Nimue for example).

SHADOW

Shadows hate all that is good and noble. They gain a +1 bonus to hit for each 20 points of nobility possessed by their opponent.

SOVEREIGN ANIMAL (ALL)

These are the opposite of dire animals, and are ready to heed the call of the worthy to aid them in their fight against evil. A druid of equal or higher nobility may take sovereign animals as animal companions, and any character with the knight's warhorse class ability and an equal or higher nobility may take a sovereign horse as a mount.

Sovereign animals have 10-100 nobility (10d10). They gain a +1 damage bonus against dire animals for each 10 points of nobility.

Once per day with a successful attack a sovereign animal may inflict an extra 1d6 damage per 2 HD on a creature whose nobility is 10 or more points lower than its own.

SPRITE (ALL)

Rarely encountered, these creatures, part of the court of Oberon, are almost always on a mission for their King when encountered. This isn't to say they won't try to have fun while on their mission, often at the players' expense.

Like other Fey, these creatures possess 6-60 nobility, and one druid level per 10 nobility.

They consider themselves allies of Arthur's court, and will aid any servants of Arthur they encounter if they need assistance.

TROLL

These loathsome creatures are found deep in swamps, and are consumed by hatred of all that is good and noble. Each round of combat, a troll has a percentage chance to go berserk (as the barbarian rage ability) equal to the highest nobility of the creatures he is fighting. These creatures are often found in the service of hags, hedge mages, and black knights, especially when there is the prospect they will get to destroy something noble.

UNICORN

These creatures are the epitome of grace and purity, possessing nobility scores of 81-100 (80+1d20). They will aid anyone whose nobility is equal or greater than theirs (which will not be many), and may even consent to serve as a mount to someone with a nobility higher than theirs (which will be even rarer).

WILL O' WISP

These creatures live in the most fetid swamps, and will attempt to kill anyone they encounter, feeding on their pain and misery.

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WINTER WOLF

These creatures exist only in Saxon lands. However, they are often brought along with Saxon raiding parties, much to the dismay of British forces attempting to repel these invaders.

WYVERN

These creatures are unfortunately rather common, and will often be found in the service of true dragons. Black Knights have also been known to domesticate these ferocious creatures by besting them in combat, and then keeping them well-fed with still living prey.

NEW MONSTERS

Many unique and unusual monsters fill Arthurian tales. Many of these are already included in game books and have been noted above. However, some monsters exist which have never been detailed before, and these are noted below.

CATH PALUC

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 4d10+16 (38 hp)

Initiative: +3

Speed: 50 ft.

Armor Class: 17 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +5 natural), 12 touch, 14 flat-footed

Base Attack/Grapple: +4/+8

Attack: Bite +10 melee (1d8+7)

Full Attack: Bite +10 melee (1d8+7), 2 claws +8 melee (1d4+3)

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Pounce, improved grab, rake 1d4+3

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60', low-light vision, scent

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +2

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 17, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 6

Skills: Jump +15, Hide +7, Move Silently +11, Balance +7, Spot +6, Listen +7

Feats: Alertness, Multiattack

Environment: Temperate Swamp

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Nobility: None. Cath Palugs gain the same ability bonuses as Dire Animals during the different eras of play.

Advancement: 5-8 HD (Large)

Level Adjustment: --

These fierce swamp cats are built like leopards, only much larger, ranging from 6-9 feet long and weighing well over 500 pounds. Females are slightly larger than males, and are sometimes found accompanied by a single pup, which will not fight. However, the pup's presence grants the female a +2 morale bonus to hit and damage. Despite their size, Cath

Palug are extremely quiet and stealthy, as the creature's slick black coat almost seems to absorb light, and prefer to pounce from surprise.

COMBAT

Cath Palug stalk their prey, and will wait until an opportune moment to strike presents itself. Often, they will wait until their prey is injured or shows signs of weakness before they strike.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a cath palug hits with its bite attack, it may make a grapple check as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can rake with its back claws.

Rake (Ex): Attack bonus +10 melee 1d4+3 damage

Pounce (Ex): If a cath palug charges its foe, it can make a full attack, including two rake attacks.

Skills: Cath Palug have a +8 racial bonus to jump, hide, and move silently skill checks. They have a +4 racial bonus to balance skill checks.

GIANT, AFANC

Large Giant

Hit Dice: 12d8+60 (114 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft. in hide armor (40 ft. natural)

Armor Class: 25 (-1 size, +3 hide armor, +4 shield, +9 natural), 9 touch, 21 flat-footed

Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+19

Attack: Spear +15 melee 2d6+6 or Spear +9 ranged 2d6+6

Full Attack: Spear +15/+10 melee 2d6+6 or Spear +9/+4 ranged 2d6+6

Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Rock throwing

Special Qualities: Low-light vision, water breathing, water camouflage

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +4, Will +5

Abilities: Str 23, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Swim +8, Spot +5, Intimidate +8

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Weapon Focus (spear), Improved Critical (spear), Improved Sunder

Environment: River or Coastal

Organization: Solitary or Pair

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Nobility: 1-100 (modified by bloodline)

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +4

Afancs retain much more of their lineage as descendants of Poseidon than other Arthurian giants, retaining the ability to breathe water. They often dwell near some large body of water, such as a beach or lake large enough to hide them, so that they have a chance to surprise their prey. These creatures are so loathsome they cannot even tolerate their own kind,

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but occasionally a mated pair is encountered. These creatures are particularly hated by giants of Albion's Bloodline, who will hunt and kill them given the opportunity.

COMBAT

Afancs attempt to gain surprise by bursting from a watery area once their prey is close. These giants are fairly intelligent, using armor and shields, as well as spears, to hunt and fight. These creatures always maintain a supply of extra spears for throwing, preferring this ranged attack to rocks (although they are capable of using boulders as missiles). If a combat goes against these creatures, they will attempt to grapple a creature and drag them into the water, dining after they have drowned. Note that while these creatures can breathe water, and they are strong swimmers, they are not true amphibians, and have no special ability to fight or move underwater.

Water Camouflage (Ex): Afancs gain a +20 bonus to hide checks if partially submerged in water, as their skin will change color and tone to match any water touching the creature or its possessions.

AFANC'S SOCIETY

Afancs have little in the way of society, being solitary by nature. These loathsome creatures can barely even tolerate their own kind long enough to mate. Even other giants shun them.

AFANC'S CHARACTERS

Afancs have the following racial traits.

+8 Strength, -2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, -2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma

Large Size: -1 penalty to Armor Class, -1 penalty to attack rolls, -4 penalty on Hide checks, +4 bonus on grapple checks, lifting and carrying limits double those of Medium characters

Space/Reach: 10 feet/10 feet

An Afanc's base land speed is 40 ft.

Low-Light vision

Racial hit dice: An Afanc begins with 12 levels of giant, which provides 12d8 hit dice, a Base Attack Bonus of +10, and base saving throws of Fort +8, Ref +4, and Will +4.

Racial Skills: An Afanc's giant levels give it skill points equal to 15+ (2xInt.modifier). Swim, Spot, Intimidate, Climb, and Jump are its class skills.

Weapon and Armor Skills: The Afanc is automatically proficient with simple weapons, martial weapons, light and medium armor, and shields.

Automatic Languages: Giant. Bonus Languages: Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Orc.

Favored Class: Determined by Bloodline (see the entry on giants above).

Level adjustment +4.

QUESTING BEAST

Huge Aberration

Hit Dice: 20d8+120 (250 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 100 ft. (10 squares)

Armor Class: 33 (-2 Size, +25 Natural), 8 touch, 33 flat-footed

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+23

Attack: +23 melee (2d10+10+poison bite)

Full Attack: +23/+18/+13 melee (2d10+10+poison bite)

Space/Reach: 15 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: None

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60', Damage Reduction 20/cold iron, Frightful Presence (Will Save DC 20)

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +12

Abilities: Str 31, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Spot +11, Listen +13, Sense Motive +6

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Focus (bite), Power Attack, Cleave, Endurance, Diehard, Great Cleave

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary (Unique)

Challenge Rating: 20

Treasure: None (see below for details however)

Nobility: None

Advancement: None (Unique)

Level Adjustment: ---

The progeny of a woman and the Devil, the Questing Beast is a horrible abomination, with the head of a snake, the body of a leopard, the hindquarters of a lion, and the feet of a stag. From its stomach came a terrifying sound like the barking, or *questing* of 40 hounds, which is where the creature gets its name. However, the name questing beast also applies on a different level because this creature has become the vision quest of many great knights, most notably Pellinore and his son Palamides, but also Percival.

COMBAT

The questing beast is a ferocious opponent, with its long serpentine neck snaking out again and again to combat opponents with a vicious bite and terrible poison. However, the creature will try to run unless cornered, so catching it will prove the first problem for any would-be conqueror.

Darkvision (Ex): The questing beast has darkvision out to 60 feet.

Damage Reduction (Ex): Only weapons forged of cold iron inflict much damage on this creature, making it extremely difficult to injure.

Poison (Ex): The bite of the questing beast delivers a powerful neurotoxin (DC 25) that debilitates the muscles, and can easily kill a man under the weight of his own body, making it impossible for him to breathe. The initial damage of the questing beast's poison is 3d6 Strength, while the secondary damage is 3d6 Constitution.

Skills: Spot, Listen, and Sense Motive are considered class skills for the Questing Beast.

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WHITE HART

Large Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 6d10+24 (57)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 60 ft.

Armor Class: 15 (-1 size, +6 natural), 9 touch, 15 flat-footed

Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+10

Attack: +10 antlers 2-12+7

Full Attack: +12 antler charge 4-24+7

Space/Reach: 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Antler charge

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60', Low-light Vision, Damage Resistance vs. ranged 20/ignoble, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Nobility, Aura of Speed, Divine Grace, Object of Worship, Blood Bath

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +5

Abilities: Str 21, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 16

Skills: Balance +5, Jump +10, Spot +11, Listen +11

Feats: Alertness, Endurance, Improved Initiative

Environment: Temperate Forests

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Nobility: 81-100 (80+1d20)

Advancement: 7-8 HD

Level Adjustment: --

An important symbol of the Old Faith, the white hart finds itself at the heart of an intense battle over the hearts and minds of the people between the Old Faith, and the followers of the One God. As an object of worship, it is revered by the druids, and often hunted and killed by the followers of the One God. This has led these magnificent creatures to be slowly driven to extinction.

COMBAT

The white hart attacks with its antlers, and can inflict double damage with them on a charge attack. When threatened, the gentle creatures prefer to run rather than fight, but they will fight if cornered.

Aura of Speed (Ex): Once per day the white hart can trigger a burst of speed, adding 10' per 10 nobility to its movement for 1-6 rounds.

Divine Grace (Su): The white hart adds its Charisma modifier to all saving throws.

Object of Worship (Ex): Druids and green knights may take a white hart as one of their animal companions (or knight's warhorse in the case of the green knight) if their nobility is equal to or greater than the hart's. A white hart is considered a minor source of power for druids, granting them a +1 per hour bonus to spell point recovery.

Followers of the One God gain 10 nobility for successfully killing a white hart. In Arthurian legend, both Gawain and Percival successfully hunted and killed a white hart.

Blood Bath (Ex): There is a special ritual that black knights can perform involving a white hart. By killing the creature and bathing in its blood, a black knight loses 20 nobility.

Skills: Racial bonus of +4 to spot and listen skill checks

WOLF MAN (1ST LEVEL BARBARIAN)

Medium Humanoid (Wolf Man)

Hit Dice: 1d12+1 (8 hp)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)

Armor Class: 13 (+1 Fur Pelt, +2 Dexterity), 12 touch, 11 flat-footed

Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+2

Attack: Club +2 melee (1d6 +1)

Full Attack: Club +2 melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5ft./5ft.

Special Attacks: --

Special Qualities: Wild Empathy, Pack Tactics, Illiteracy, Rage 1/day

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Listen +6, Survival +10, Climb +2, Jump +2, Hide +6, Move Silently +6*

Feats: Tracking

Environment: Any Wilderness

Organization: Solitary, Small Pack (1, accompanied by 1-6 wolves), or Large Pack (2-4, accompanied by 2-16 wolves)

Challenge Rating: ½

Treasure: Standard

Nobility: 15

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +0

Wolf Men (and women) are products of the revolt of nature that occurs between the reigns of Uther and Arthur. With no king to command it, nature herself turns on the people of Britain, and wolves, boars, and bears lose all their fear of men, attacking with impunity. Sometimes wolves will even go so far as to adopt human children, rearing them as Wolf Men. Due to their intelligence and size, those who live long enough end up as pack leaders.

COMBAT

Wolf men are proficient in simple weapons and light armor, but have little sophistication in the fashioning of such weapons, usually using any large stick and pelt from a recent kill as opposed to taking the time to fashion something sophisticated. However, wolf men are intelligent, and might keep a weapon it can use that it came across (usually on the carcass of one of its victims).

Wild Empathy (Ex): Wolf men can use their charisma modifier, along with their HD or class level to modify a

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d20 roll to change the reactions of a wild animal, much as a human might use the diplomacy skill on another human.

Pack Tactics (Ex): Wolves instinctively work together when attacking prey, allowing them to take down much larger prey than their small size would indicate. With his superior intelligence, a wolf man can hone this instinct even further. When working with wolves or other wolf men, the character gains a +2 bonus to attack and skill checks by attacking cooperatively, raising distractions while his fellows set up ambushes, and so forth.

Skills: +4 racial bonus to Hide, Move Silently, and Survival *All skills listed above include their racial modifiers.

WOLF MAN SOCIETY

Wolf men have no unique society. Their behavior is based on that of wolves, with packs being the main social group, and the strongest males leading that pack. No attempt to civilize a wolf man has been successful, and they will slip away at their earliest opportunity to rejoin their pack.

WOLF MAN CHARACTERS

Wolf men characters have the following racial traits.

+2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence

Medium size

Base Speed 30 ft.

Racial Skills: +4 racial bonus to Hide, Move Silently, and Survival

Racial Feats: A wolf man gains feats according to its character class.

Special Qualities: Wild Empathy, Pack Tactics

Automatic Languages: None. Bonus Languages: Common

Favored Class: Barbarian

Level Adjustment: +0

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