

Weekly Wonders

Archetypes of War
Volume VI

Siege
Warfare

Alex Riggs, Joshua Zaback



*Necromancers
of the Northwest*

PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Credits

Designers

Alex Riggs, Joshua Zaback

Editor

Rosa Gibbons



Necromancers of the Northwest, LLC
8123 236th St SW, Unit 102
Edmonds, WA, 98026
www.necromancers-online.com

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Introduction

The *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* is full of combat and bloodshed. They are, in many ways, the bulk of what the game is, and what it is about. But there is a difference between simply fighting, even fighting for one's life, and fighting in a war. Wars are chaotic and bloody things, and a battlefield is not a single, neat, orderly conflict, but in fact hundreds, perhaps thousands of small life-and-death struggles, each of which impacts the others around it. It is an order of magnitude larger than the standard battles of an adventurer, and while many adventurers can certainly contribute in a true battle between opposing armies, that's not the same as being specifically trained and equipped for it. Each installment of *Weekly Wonders: Archetypes of War* presents six new archetypes for military characters, focused on a particular theme.

For this book, we focus on archetypes relating to siege warfare. While some battles are fought on featureless plains, in most cases, at least one side, and possibly both, have dug themselves in and set up fortifications to protect themselves from assault. Overcoming these obstacles is crucial to victory, whether it be through brute force, cunning and guile, or more esoteric means. The archetypes in this book specialize in overcoming these types of obstacles, from demolitions experts that blow them apart, to those who rely on brute strength to knock down opposing walls, and even those that summon the spirits of the land to betray and turn upon those that attempt to defend it.

New Archetypes

The following archetypes are presented in alphabetical order.

Sapper (Alchemist)

Many alchemists are experts at creating explosives, but there are some who excel at demolition more than others. Sappers are alchemists that can create explosives specifically designed to destroy objects, and rig up mines that explode when creatures come within proximity.

Siege Engineer (Ex): A sapper is an expert at demolitions and operating siege equipment. He gains a bonus on Knowledge (engineering) checks and Profession (siege engineer) checks equal to 1/2 his alchemist level (rounded down, minimum 1), and is treated as trained in both of those skills. Additionally, he gains a competence bonus equal to 1/4 his alchemist level on attack rolls made with siege engines.

This ability replaces the brew potion class feature.

Explosive Mine (Ex): A sapper can create special bombs that can be laid as deadly traps, rather than thrown. Preparing an explosive mine takes 10 minutes. As part of creating the explosive mine, it can be concealed with a Sleight of Hand check, opposed by the Perception checks of creatures attempting to locate it. Once put in place, an explosive mine becomes a dangerous trap, which is triggered whenever a creature enters the square the explosive mine was placed in. Once triggered, an explosive mine explodes, dealing 1d6 points of fire damage to each creature and unattended object

in the space. A successful Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the sapper's alchemist level + the sapper's Intelligence modifier) halves this damage. At 3rd level, and every two levels thereafter, this damage increases by an additional 1d6.

Once placed, an explosive mine remains active for 24 hours. A character that perceives an explosive mine can attempt to disarm it with a successful Disable Device check (DC = 10 + the sapper's alchemist level + the sapper's Intelligence modifier), as though it were a standard trap. A sapper can create a number of explosive mines per day equal to his Intelligence modifier.

This ability replaces the mutagen class feature.

Demolitions Expert (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, a sapper is an expert at destroying objects. His bombs and explosive mines deal 1 additional point of damage per damage dice to any unattended object or structure they damage. At 5th level, and every three levels thereafter, this damage bonus increases by an additional 1.

This ability replaces the poison resistance class feature.

Controlled Demolition (Ex): Beginning at 2nd level, whenever a sapper deals sufficient damage to a section of wall or other component of a structure to destroy it, he can make a DC 25 Knowledge (engineering) check. If he succeeds, he is able to place the explosion expertly in order to ensure that the loss of that particular section of wall does not cause the structure to collapse.

This ability replaces the poison use class feature.

Destructive (Ex): At 6th level, a sapper is particularly effective at destroying objects. Whenever he deals energy damage to an object (such as acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage), that damage is not halved before applying hardness.

This ability replaces the swift poisoning class feature.

Expanded Blast (Ex): Beginning at 14th level, whenever a sapper creates an explosive mine, he can choose to give it an expanded blast, causing it to deal damage to creatures in adjacent squares, as well, if triggered.

This ability replaces the persistent mutagen class feature.

Juggernaut (Barbarian)

Unstoppable forces on the battlefield, juggernauts stand out like some sort of horrific siege engine of flesh and blood, a towering titan that cannot be stopped by lesser men. They plough through enemy forces and battlements alike, carving a bloody swath of destruction wherever they go.

Force of Momentum (Ex): A juggernaut never provokes attacks of opportunity for performing bull rush, drag, or overrun combat maneuvers. Additionally, she gains a +4 bonus to CMD against attempts to bull rush, drag, or overrun her.

This ability replaces the fast movement class feature.

Unstoppable (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a juggernaut remains conscious and can continue fighting even if her hit point total is below 0. She is still staggered and loses 1 hit point each round, and she still dies when her hit point total reaches a negative amount equal to her Constitution score.

This ability replaces the uncanny dodge class feature.

Mental Juggernaut (Ex): At 3rd level, even a juggernaut's mind is difficult to stop. While raging, she gains a +1 bonus on saving throws made to resist compulsion effects. At 6th level, and every three levels thereafter, this bonus increases by +1.

This ability replaces the trap sense class feature.

Kick in the Door (Ex): At 4th level, a juggernaut is better able to burst through barriers. She gains a +4 bonus on Strength checks made to break down doors, gates, and similar structures (but not walls or other obstacles). Additionally, she can attempt to do so as a move action, rather than a standard action, and, if she successfully breaks down a door that has a creature adjacent to it on the other side, she may immediately make a bull rush, overrun, or trip combat maneuver against that creature as a free action. This never provokes attacks of opportunity, and the juggernaut gains a +4 bonus on the combat maneuver check.

This ability replaces the rage power gained at 4th level.

Shrug It Off (Ex): At 5th level, a juggernaut can shrug off things that would weaken lesser warriors. Whenever she succeeds on a Fortitude save to suffer partial damage or lessen an effect, she suffers no damage, and ignores all effects of the ability, instead.

This ability replaces the improved uncanny dodge class feature.

Through the Wall (Ex): At 8th level, a juggernaut has no need of doors, and can simply smash her way through walls. The bonus granted by her kick in the door class feature applies to Strength checks made to break all objects, and she can attempt to break through walls and doors as a swift action, rather than a move action. Finally, whenever she fails to break through a door or wall by less than 5, the structure is weakened by the attempt, permanently reducing the DC of all future Strength checks to break that door or wall by 1. This penalty stacks with itself.

This ability replaces the rage power gained at 8th level.

Behemoth Trainer (Hunter)

Horses are an important part of war, and bards may sing songs about the so-called dogs of war, but there is no substitute for the massive animals that some armies are able to muster as engines of destruction. From bears and elephants to more exotic creatures, behemoth trainers raise and train animals of immense size and power to fight on their behalf.

Siege Engineer (Ex): A behemoth trainer is an expert at demolitions and operating siege equipment. She gains a bonus on Knowledge (engineering) checks and Profession

(siege engineer) checks equal to 1/2 her hunter level (rounded down, minimum 1), and is treated as trained in both of those skills. Additionally, she gains a competence bonus equal to 1/4 her hunter level on attack rolls made with siege engines.

This ability replaces the wild empathy class feature.

Enduring Companion: At 2nd level, the behemoth trainer chooses either Toughness or Diehard as a bonus feat for her animal companion. The animal companion does not need to meet the prerequisites for the chosen feat.

This ability replaces the precise companion class feature.

Siege Rider (Ex): At 2nd level, a behemoth trainer adds 1/2 her level on Ride checks made to ride her animal companion.

This ability replaces the track class feature.

Juggernaut Companion: At 3rd level, the behemoth trainer's animal companion begins to develop into a hulking war machine. The animal companion gains DR 2/—. At 9th level, and again at 15th level, this damage reduction increases by 1 (to a maximum of DR 4/—at 15th level).

This ability replaces the hunter tactics class feature, as well as the bonus teamwork feats gained at 3rd, 9th, and 15th levels.

Run Them Down (Ex): At 5th level, a behemoth trainer's animal companion becomes specially trained to run foes down. It no longer provokes attacks of opportunity for performing overrun combat maneuvers. Additionally, whenever it successfully performs an overrun maneuver, whether the target chooses to allow the animal companion to pass through its square or the combat maneuver check is successful, the behemoth trainer's animal companion inflicts 2d6 points of damage to the creature whose space it passes through.

This ability replaces the woodland stride class feature.

Behemoth Companion (Ex): At 6th level, a behemoth trainer's animal companion grows in size. Its size category increases by one step from what it would otherwise be. The animal companion's Strength and Constitution scores increase by 4, and its Dexterity score is reduced by 2. Its natural armor bonus to AC increases by +1. It also gains the appropriate size bonus to AC based on its new size, as well as the appropriate size bonuses on attack rolls, Fly skill checks, and Stealth skill checks, and the appropriate size penalties to CMB and CMD. Further, its space and reach change to reflect its new size, as do the damage dice of all of its attacks.

If the behemoth trainer's animal companion normally increases in size at a level after 6th, apply the ability score adjustments listed for that size increase as normal, but its size increases to the next-highest size category, rather than the one listed (for example, a behemoth trainer with an allosaurus animal companion would have it grow to Huge size at 7th level, rather than Large. Its natural attacks will deal damage appropriate for its new size, but the increase in size will still apply +8 Str, -2 Dex, +4 Con, and +2 natural armor, just as the allosaurus normally gains when growing to Large size).

At 12th level, the behemoth trainer's animal companion increases in size again, growing one further size category beyond its normal size. This further increases its Strength score by +4 and its Constitution score by +2, and reduces its Dexterity score by -2, and increases its natural armor to AC by a further +1. As with the previous size increase, its size bonuses, space and reach, and the damage dice of its natural attacks changes to reflect its new size.

This ability replaces the teamwork feats gained at 6th and 12th levels.

Shadow of Giants (Ex): Beginning at 8th level, a behemoth trainer is able to use the bulk of her animal companion to better protect her. As long as she is riding her animal companion or adjacent to it, she gains a +1 circumstance bonus to AC. At 15th level, this bonus increases to +2.

This ability replaces the swift tracker class feature.

Siege Animal (Ex): Beginning at 17th level, a behemoth trainer's animal companion gains a +4 bonus on Strength checks made to break walls, doors, or similar objects. Additionally, whenever it successfully breaks a wall in this way, it causes it to collapse on anyone standing adjacent to it on the other side, inflicting 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage per 5 feet tall the wall is, and forcing the creature to succeed on a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the behemoth trainer's hunter level + the animal companion's Strength modifier) or be knocked prone.

This ability replaces the one with the wild class feature.

Awesome Blow: At 18th level, the behemoth trainer's animal companion gains Awesome Blow as a bonus feat, even if it doesn't meet the prerequisites.

This ability replaces the teamwork feat gained at 18th level.

Land Channeler (Medium)

Having the terrain in one's favor is a valuable asset in any battle, which is among the reasons why land channelers are prized by any army that can find them. These mediums commune with local spirits in the terrain, coaxing them to aid their allies and hinder their enemies.

Awaken Guardian Spirits (Su): At 3rd level, a land channeler can call upon nature spirits tied to the land in order to turn them against creatures in an area. This functions similarly to the spell *lesser curse terrain*^{OA}, except that the effect only lasts until the next time the land channeler rests, and the land channeler can designate a number of creatures equal to his Charisma modifier whenever he uses this ability, and each of those creatures have a 75% chance of ignoring any hazards created by this effect (however, because of the fickle nature of spirits, there is still a 25% chance that designated creatures will be affected, anyway). The land channeler can use this ability three times per day.

At 8th level, this ability functions as the spell *curse terrain*, instead, although the spell's area remains a 300-foot radius emanating from the touched point. At 13th level, it functions

as *greater curse terrain*, with the same range restrictions. At 18th level, it functions as *supreme curse terrain*, with the same range restrictions.

This ability replaces the haunt channeler class feature.

Wood Channeler (Sp): Beginning at 5th level, a land channeler can call upon wood spirits to bend and shape wood to his whims. He can cast *warp wood* and *wood shape* as spell-like abilities. He can use these abilities in any combination a total number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier.

This ability replaces the location channel class feature.

Stone Channeler (Sp): Beginning at 7th level, a land channeler can call upon stone spirits to alter the shape of stone on his behalf. He can cast *soften earth and stone* and *stone shape* as spell-like abilities. He can use these abilities in any combination a total number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier.

This ability replaces the connection channel class feature.

Landspeaker (Sp): At 13th level, a land channeler can commune with local spirits of nature for information. He can cast *speak with plants*, *stone tell*, and *commune with nature* as spell-like abilities at will.

This ability replaces the ask the spirits class feature.

Spiritquake (Sp): At 14th level, a land channeler can arouse the anger of the land, creating an earthquake, as the spell *earthquake*, except that the saving throw DC is equal to 10 + 1/2 his medium level + his Charisma modifier, rather than the normal DC. The land channeler can use this ability three times per day, but must wait at least one minute between each use.

This ability replaces the astral journey class feature.

War Mage (Wizard)

While other wizards study magic for its own sake, as a theoretical and esoteric thing, war mages study tactics and combat first, with magic coming only as a means to an end. These specialized wizards can create and destroy battlements with ease, directing the flow of battle from afar.

Siege Engineer (Ex): A war mage is an expert at demolitions and operating siege equipment. He gains a bonus on Knowledge (engineering) checks and Profession (siege engineer) checks equal to 1/2 his wizard level (rounded down, minimum 1), and is treated as trained in both of those skills. Additionally, he gains a competence bonus equal to 1/4 his wizard level on attack rolls made with siege engines.

This ability replaces the scribe scroll class feature.

Destructive Bond (Su): At 1st level, a war mage must select a bonded item for his arcane bond class feature. Whenever he uses his bonded item to cast a spell, if that spell deals damage to an object, that damage is not halved before applying hardness, and if the spell causes an object to make a saving

throw to resist its effects, that object suffers a -2 penalty on that saving throw.

This ability modifies the arcane bond class feature.

Student of War: A war mage does not select a school of magic to specialize in. Instead, he focuses on practically applying magic of all schools on the battlefield, and gains the following special abilities.

Arcane Blast (Su): As a standard action, a war mage can unleash a blast of flame, filling a 5-foot square within 30 feet with explosive fire. Each creature in the affected space must succeed on a Reflex save or suffer an amount of fire damage equal to $1d8 + 1/2$ the war mage's wizard level. The war mage can use this ability a number of times per day equal to $3 +$ his Intelligence modifier.

Create Fortifications (Su): As a standard action, a war mage can create trenches and walls. Each time he uses this ability, he must choose to create either a trench or a low wall. The resulting terrain feature fills a number of contiguous 5-foot squares equal to the war mage's Intelligence modifier, which can be shaped as the war mage desires. Creatures in the altered squares can move to an adjacent square as a free action if desired, to avoid being raised or lowered by the change in terrain, and this movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The fortifications created by this ability last for one minute, after which the terrain reverts harmlessly to its original state. The war mage can use this ability three times per day. For more information on trenches and low walls, see the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*. At 20th level, fortifications created in this way are permanent, and the war mage can also use this ability to remove existing trenches and low walls in the same fashion.

Breach (Sp): At 8th level, a war mage can easily penetrate enemy defenses. This functions similarly to the spell *passwall*, except that the effect lasts for only one minute each time it is used. Each day, the war mage can create a total amount of depth of *passwall* effects equal to 5 feet per wizard level (so, an 8th-level war mage could create one *passwall* to travel through a wall 40 feet thick, or he could use the ability to pass through two walls that were 20 feet thick each, etc.).

This ability replaces the arcane school class feature.

Path of War Archetype

No selection of war-themed archetypes would be complete if they ignored the martial classes from Dreamscarred Press's *Path of War*. These classes, mechanically inspired by *The Book of Nine Swords*, a 3.5 Dungeons and Dragons sourcebook, use maneuvers and stances to unleash devastating effects on the battlefield, with a dynamic and exciting feel to combat. There are six main classes associated with this content from Dreamscarred Press, and with the exception of the first installment, each of the seven volumes of *Archetypes of War* features a special bonus archetype for one of these six classes. For more information on *Path of War*, and the specific class that this archetype modifies, please visit www.dreamscarred.com.

Valiant Defender (Warder)

Standing like glorious watchtowers, resolute in the chaos of battle, valiant defenders serve as rallying points for their allies, impervious bulwarks that serve as a shield to their forces, as well as a symbol that they remain unconquered, still standing strong against whatever threats they may face.

Defensive Combatant (Ex): Whenever a valiant defender takes the total defense action, she regains a single readied maneuver of her choice that she has expended. Additionally, when she does so, until the beginning of her next turn, she can make any number of attacks of opportunity, and adds her Intelligence modifier as a bonus on attack rolls made as part of attacks of opportunity. Finally, whenever she takes a total defense action, until the beginning of her next turn, whenever a creature attacks one of her allies, that creature provokes an attack of opportunity from the valiant defender (the valiant defender does not count as her own ally for this purpose).

This ability replaces the defensive focus class feature.

Defensive Bulwark (Su): A valiant defender radiates an aura that dampens the blows made against her allies. Allies within 10 feet of the valiant defender gain DR $1/-$. This damage reduction increases to $2/-$ at 5th level, and then by an additional 1 every four levels thereafter (to a maximum of $5/-$ at 17th level).

At 6th level, her defensive bulwark extends to 20 feet. At 12th level, it extends to 30 feet.

This ability replaces the aegis class feature.

Military Training (Ex): At 4th level, a valiant defender becomes an expert of military tactics, able to use her wits and training to make up for gaps in her combat ability. She can use her Intelligence score instead of her Strength and Dexterity scores for the purposes of qualifying for feats. Additionally, she uses the higher of her Intelligence or Wisdom modifiers to calculate her Will saving throw bonus.

This ability replaces the tactical acumen class feature.

Unassailable (Ex): Beginning at 6th level, a valiant defender gains a +1 circumstance bonus to AC as long as she is wearing heavy armor and wielding a shield. At 12th level, this increases to +2.

This ability replaces the clad in steel class feature.

Press the Advantage (Ex): Beginning at 7th level, a valiant defender can focus on a single, effective tactic to hammer an opponent's weaknesses. When preparing maneuvers, the valiant defender can choose a single maneuver, and prepare that maneuver up to two times. Each instance of the prepared maneuver counts against the total number of maneuvers the valiant defender can have readied. This is an exception to the rule that each maneuver can be prepared only once. At 14th level, the valiant defender can prepare up to three instances of the chosen maneuver, instead.

This ability replaces the adaptive tactics class feature.

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And The Walls Come Tumbling Down!

There is battle, and then there is warfare. Many adventurers are familiar with wading into combat against monsters and small groups of enemies, but this is nothing next to the glory and chaos and carnage that is true war. More than simply a change in scale, the difference between war and other combat can be profound. In a war, the characters are part of something larger than themselves, contributing to the efforts of their armies, or perhaps leading those armies themselves. The priorities of a soldier are different from those of an adventurer, and often the challenges that they face are, as well. While many characters can translate their talents as adventurers to the battlefield, one who specifically focuses on warfare and battlefield tactics will have the edge on others when it comes to true war. Each installment of *Weekly Wonders: Archetypes of War* provides six new war-themed archetypes for a variety of classes.

For this book, we focus on siege warfare, and especially on tactics employed to break through sieges and defensive barriers. Whether it is breaking through walls and doors with brute strength, or using magic to make them twist and melt away, the characters in this book laugh at the obstacles laid to block their paths. This book contains the following archetypes:

- The sapper, an alchemist archetype specializing in using bombs for demolition purposes, including explosive mines and bombs that can collapse fortifications.
- The juggernaut, a barbarian archetype that is all but unstoppable in battle and can even crash through solid walls.
- The behemoth trainer, a hunter archetype whose animal companion grows to incredible size, and is perfect for smashing through buildings.
- The land channeler, a medium archetype that invokes the spirit of the land, turning it against his enemies as stone erodes, wood warps and twists, and the very terrain itself conspires on his behalf.
- The war mage, a wizard archetype that specializes in creating and destroying fortifications.
- A bonus archetype for the warder, from *Path of War* by Dreamscarred Press, the valiant defender serves as a rallying point for his allies, bolstering those nearby.

Whether you're about to embark on a campaign of military exploits (such as the official Paizo adventure path dealing with invading forces), or you just want to play a more military character, this book has lots of tantalizing options to offer.

