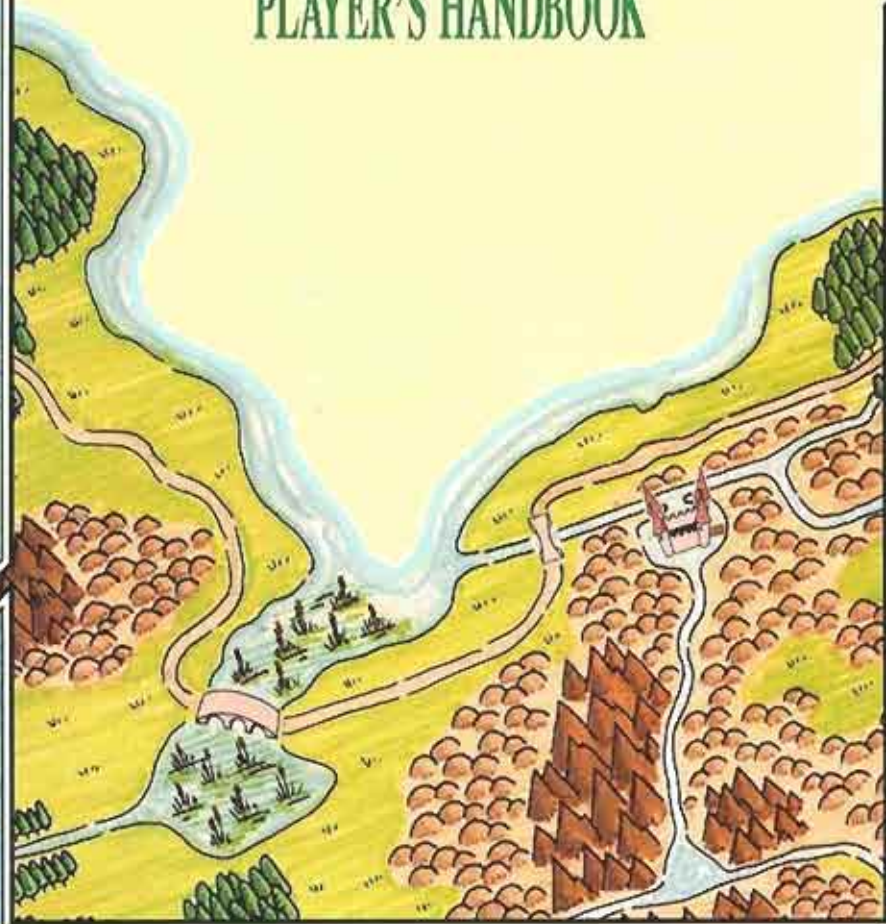


# KNIGHTS<sup>TM</sup> OF LEGEND

PLAYER'S HANDBOOK



## THE MAKING OF KNIGHTS OF LEGEND

The vision that was to become *Knights of Legend* began in George's Restaurant in Pella, Iowa, in 1981. There, four dedicated gamers—Todd Porter, Arvin VanZante, David Barnes and Jeff Groteboer—spent long, late night hours discussing their favorite roleplaying games. The pen-and-paper games they enjoyed the most featured elaborate, realistic combat systems, but were frustratingly slow to play. Computer roleplaying games moved more quickly, but lacked the rich environments and involving characters of paper games. What these four gamers wanted was a game that combined the quick play of a computer with the detailed combat and worlds of paper. Programmer Todd Porter decided to make this vision a reality.

Moving back to his home town of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, Porter began with the game's graphics and data routines, which would let a player see and feel his fantastic realm. In 1984, Porter became a computer research associate at Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. By 1987, he had a prototype version of the game, and began to seek a publisher. He called an old associate from his days at Penguin Software, Dave Albert, who was then at Origin Systems. Albert mentioned that Richard Garriott—Lord British of *Ultima*—was in Austin, Texas *that day*, and arranged a meeting between the two. Porter drove the 30 miles to Austin and demonstrated the game to Garriott. They talked through the night, and within a week, Porter had signed with Origin.

Now that *Knights of Legend* was certain to become a reality, Porter called upon his old gaming friends from Pella for design input. With their long-distance help, Porter designed and refined the combat, town and conversation systems. Working with the authors and staff at Origin, Porter developed the game's icon-based user interface and lush graphics. In June of 1989, the game that began as discussion over burgers in Pella eight years before, was demonstrated to an appreciative audience at the Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Four months later, the eight-year-old dream of those four Pella gamers was realized, when *Knights of Legend* was released to the public.

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## GETTING STARTED



The book on the screen when you boot up *Knights of Legend*™ is a gateway to Ashtalarea, a medieval realm of glory and peril, a fantastic land in which you will someday take your place among the heroes of song and story. Your adventure begins when you open this book by hitting any key ...

On the Table of Contents are a number of options. By selecting an option, you will turn to the appropriate page in the book.

The *Credits*, *Forward*, and *Dedication* are messages from the author. When you have finished reading them, hit the spacebar to turn back to the Contents page.

*Install New Region* allows you to expand your adventure to realms beyond Ashtalarea. Once you've explored Ashtalarea, separate *Knights of Legend* modules will take you to the nearby lands of Salyann, Bamidor, Tsadith and Astrikan. *Character Options* allow you to review your list of adventurers and their current locations, as well as create new characters or delete old ones. By choosing the various edit options on the *Character Options* page, you can change your character's picture and shield, making each character unique. We'll come back to this option, since you'll need to create a character before you can play *Knights of Legend*.

*Play the Game* begins your adventure in earnest. When you select this page, you'll be asked to pick one of the heroes from your character list. This adventurer will become the unofficial leader of your party; once you begin play, he can recruit other characters you've created to join with his expedition.

The first time you play *Knights of Legend*, you'll see a bold warrior approaching on a dark and stormy night. *Run the Intro* allows you to watch this sequence again. Pressing the space bar any time during the introductory sequence will transfer you back to the main book.

## CREATING A CHARACTER

Select *Character Options* on the Table of Contents. The page will turn, revealing another menu of options. Select "Create Character." The page will turn again to a page entitled "New Character."

### NAME

The first step in creating a character is to come up with a name. To do this, use the keyboard to type any name of up to sixteen letters and spaces. Only the first four letters of the name will be shown with the character figure on game displays.

To enter a name, hit RETURN. To undo a name you have entered and return to Character Options, hit ESCAPE.

### RACE

Next, you must choose your character's race—Human, Elven, Dwarven or Kelden. Humans are ordinary people; Elves are fair-skinned friends of nature known for their bowcraft; Dwarves are short, sturdy folk interested in hacking trolls and hoarding gold. The Kelden are newcomers to Ashtalarea, a strange and mysterious race, little known by other peoples. Most Kelden stand over seven feet tall, and fly about the kingdom on huge, leathery wings. More information on Kelden and the other races of Ashtalarea can be found in the "Races of Ashtalarea" section of this book.

Select your character's race, then hit RETURN or the mouse button to enter your selection. To undo your selection so you can select a different race, hit ESCAPE.

### SEX

Once you have chosen your character's race, you must choose its sex. Select male or female and hit the RETURN key or mouse button. If you change your mind, hitting ESCAPE will undo your selection. Note that only male Dwarves and Kelden are available. For reasons unknown to Ashtalareans, the women of these two races don't adventure.

### CLASS

Having chosen your character's race and sex, you must now select his or her class. This decision is perhaps the most important and—for a new player—the most difficult. It will determine the character's statistics (or stats), base skill levels and starting equipment. For now, select any class which sounds interesting, and hit RETURN or the mouse button. Later, you can read about all the character classes in the "Advanced Gamers" section.

When you hit RETURN or the mouse button to record your character's class, his statistics will be generated randomly, based on the class you've chosen. Select the "Reroll Stats" option to roll the character's stats over again. You can reroll as many times as you like. Select "Accept Stats" when you are satisfied with the character's statistics.

### FIGURE

To complete your character, choose a figure which will represent him during the game. Use the RIGHT and LEFT ARROW keys to scan through the available figures. When you have found the one that best represents your character, hit RETURN to record your selection. Once you have done so, your character will be saved to disk, and the page will automatically turn back to Character Options.

## CREATING ADDITIONAL CHARACTERS

*Knights of Legend* allows you to adventure with as many as six characters at a time. Of course, you must create all of the characters in your party. To do this, just repeat the character-creation process for each adventurer. As you finish each character, it will be saved to disk and recorded on your character list.

## OTHER CHARACTER OPTIONS

Once you've created your characters and returned to the Table of Contents, select "Character Options" to investigate some other features of this menu.

### CHARACTER LIST

Select "List Characters." The page will turn to reveal a complete roster of all the characters on your Character Disk. The characters are listed by name, in order of creation, on the left-hand page.

On the right-hand page, each character's current location is listed. The first ten letters are an abbreviation of the inn's name, followed by a three letter prefix of the town in which the hostel is located. For example, all new characters appear at the Trollsbane Inn in Brettle, so their current position is listed as "Trollsbane, BRT."

A single Character Disk can hold up to 16 characters at a time, but there is no limit to the number of Character Disks you can create. You can transfer characters between disks. To do this, boot up the game and create a party of adventurers from the list on your first Character Disk. Remove that disk and insert your second Character Disk. Save the party back to the inn (see page 21). This will transfer them to the new Character Disk.

When you have finished examining your character list, hit any key to return to Character Options.

### DELETE A CHARACTER

If you would like to *erase* a character from your Character Disk, select "Delete Character." The page will turn to the character list. Select the character you want to remove from your roster and hit RETURN or the mouse button.

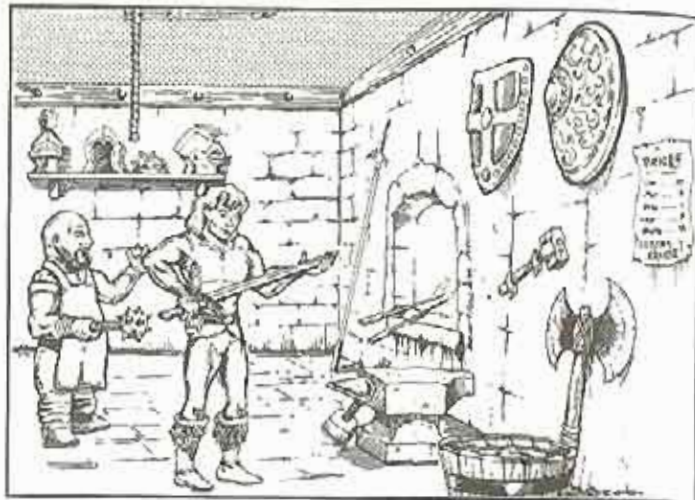
A window will appear, asking if you are sure you wish to delete the selected character. Double-check to make sure you have chosen the character you wanted, since a deleted character cannot be recovered. If you have selected the wrong character, or decided not to delete any character at all, select "No," which will take you back to the Character Options without deleting the character. Selecting "Yes" will delete the selected character and take you back to the Character Options page.

## EDITING YOUR PICTURE OR SHIELD

Each character has a certain degree of individuality by virtue of the unique figure used to represent him in combat, on the main game screen and on the equipment screen. Still, you may want to personalize your characters even further. This can be done by modifying the combat figure or your character's great shield (if he or she has one).

The utilities for these options can be accessed by choosing *Character Options* from the first page of the main menu. See the reference card for information about using these utilities.

## POKING AROUND TOWN



Now that you've created a character—or better yet, a whole party of adventurers — you're ready to play *Knights of Legend*. Since all new characters set out from the Trollsbane Inn in the town of Brettle, that's where we'll begin. Select "Play the Game" on the Table of Contents to start.

### AT THE TROLLSBANE INN

The book will open to your character list. As mentioned above, you should now select the character that will "lead" your party. Once you have done so, the page will turn, revealing a final message from the author, and then be replaced by the game screen.

The members of your party are displayed across the top of the play screen. At the moment, only the leader of your party — the character you chose after selecting "Play the Game" — can be seen. Other characters will appear alongside him once he has asked them to join his party.

In the center of the screen are three windows. The small one on the upper right reads, "Trollsbane Inn, Elmu Trollhewer," telling you what establishment you are in, and who runs the place. Elmu's picture appears on the left side of

the screen, and the large text window tells you about the inn. Nailed to the wood background, at the bottom of the screen, is the Icon Plaque. In *Knights of Legend*, the small, square pictures — called "icons" — which appear on this plaque take the place of verbal commands. Most of the actions you will take during play will be chosen from the icons displayed on this plaque.

At the moment, the SPACEBAR icon is displayed. Once you have read the text in the large window, hit the spacebar to bring up the next passage of text.



SPACEBAR

*The SPACEBAR icon appears when the computer has displayed text and is waiting for you to read it before continuing. When you have finished the text on-screen, hit the spacebar to let the computer know you're ready to go on.*

In the next message, Elmu greets you and asks what he can do for you. You reply by selecting one of the icons which has appeared on the Icon Plaque.



DOOR

*The DOOR icon is used to enter or leave various locations. If you are in a shop when the DOOR icon appears, selecting it will take you out of the shop and into town. If you are approaching a town or village, selecting the DOOR icon causes you to enter that town. When you leave a town, selecting the DOOR icon takes you into the wilderness.*

Select DOOR to leave the Trollsbane Inn. Elmu and the text window will disappear, to be replaced by a town map and coat of arms. For now, select DOOR, to re-enter the Trollsbane Inn. Hit the spacebar when its icon appears.

## THE CHARACTER PROFILE

Next is the **MIRROR** icon. Select it to check your hero's current status.



MIRROR

*The MIRROR icon allows you to view your hero's Character Profile. This displays all the pertinent information about him. It also allows you to view and manipulate the character's equipment.*

On his Profile, you can easily check a character's statistics, height and weight, weapon skills, gold crowns, adventure points, movement rate, magic order and present rank. Gold crowns are the Coin of the Realm; this money can be used to buy weapons and other equipment, as well as magical and martial training. Stats, skills, adventure points, movement and rank are all discussed in detail later in this book.

The bar graphs at the bottom of the screen indicate the character's current state of health. "DAMAGE" indicates the wounds he has taken from combat or exposure to the environment. "NUTRITION" tells you how well he's been eating lately. At the moment, the graphs are blue, but if your adventurer is hurt or doesn't eat well, the bars will begin to turn red. These bars show the amount of injury sustained and lack of nutrition. For information on what effect this will have on your character's abilities, see page 25.

Three new icons will appear with the Character Profile — **U-TURN**, **ARMOR UP**, and **VIEW PARTY**. Select the **VIEW PARTY** icon first. This shows what your entire party looks like. When you first start the game, you may see just a single figure wearing no armor and carrying no weapons. As you add items to this character's inventory — and as you add members to your party — this screen will grow progressively more impressive!



VIEW PARTY

*The VIEW PARTY icon allows you to see your entire party at a glance.*

Now, select the **ARMOR UP** icon.



ARMOR UP

*The ARMOR UP icon has two functions. On the Character Profile Screen, it lets you review — and view — your adventurer's armor, weapons and other equipment. If it appears when you are examining a specific item, such as a helmet or necklace, it allows you to put that item on.*

The Character Profile has now been replaced by the Equipment Screen, where your character stands in his under garments. Most characters will also be holding a weapon, the only piece of equipment they come with. To get their armor and additional weapons, they'll need to trade at the various shops around town.

On the right side of the Equipment Screen is a column of locations, where adventurers can wear or carry items. To check what your character has in a given spot, simply select that location. A small window will appear on the picture, giving brief information about the item. Since you have only one item at the moment, a weapon, select the "Weapon" option. In the window, you'll see three pieces of information about the weapon: on the middle line is its name, at the lower left is the damage it does, and at the lower right are two numbers. The first number is the character's skill with the weapon; the second is the weapon's encumbrance value (a number which indicates how tiresome it is to lug around).

A new icon—**EXAMINE**—will have appeared alongside **U-TURN**. Select **EXAMINE** now.



EXAMINE

*The EXAMINE icon lets you take a closer look at whatever seems relevant. If you are on the Equipment screen, it gives you detailed information on the item currently selected. If you are talking to a merchant or craftsman, it lets you examine his wares.*

The Equipment Screen has now been replaced by the Item Screen, which describes the item selected in some detail. For a weapon, the Item Screen tells its type (abbreviated "TYP"). This can be one-handed, two-handed, or both. You will also see how each item is being carried (position, abbreviated "POS"), the damage it does (DMG), its encumbrance value ("ENC"), its value in gold crowns ("GC"), and its condition ("CND"). Armor may also have a fitting cost ("FC") and a protection (PRT) rating. The first is the number of crowns the character must pay to have the armor custom-fitted; the second is the amount of protection that is provided by the armor.

The new icons which have appeared are SHEATH, DROP, and PACK. Select the first one, SHEATH.



SHEATH

*The SHEATH icon lets you take a weapon in hand or from your pack and stow it in a sheath on your belt. Some weapons (bows, for example), are too large to be carried on a character's belt. The SHEATH option will not be available when using these weapons. Such weapons can only be carried in the hand or backpack.*

When the Equipment Screen reappears, the weapon window will be empty, and the weapon that you sheathed is now by your character's feet. That location indicates that the

weapon is slung in his belt. To put the weapon back in his weapon hand, select the "Belt" position, and click on the EXAMINE icon.

The item screen will look almost as before, except that the weapon's position will be listed as "Belt," and a new icon will have appeared. This new icon, READY, is in the same spot that SHEATH occupied a moment before.



READY

*By selecting the READY icon, you take the selected weapon in hand, holding it at the ready for combat. Since you can't fish a weapon out of your pack in the middle of a fight, be sure to have a weapon READY or at least in a SHEATH at all times. If you think you might want to switch between weapons in combat—it's often a good idea to carry a sword and a bow, for example—you'll need to SHEATH one and READY the other when on the Equipment Screen.*

Before you select the READY icon, take a look at the DROP and PACK icons. If you select DROP here, your adventurer will drop his weapon for good. If you select PACK, the weapon will be stowed in one of the six pockets of his backpack. You can check the contents of your pack by selecting the various pockets listed on the Equipment Screen. Of course, you can EXAMINE items in your pack just as you examined items in your hand or on your belt.



PACK



DROP

*The PACK icon stows the item currently in hand in the character's backpack. The DROP icon drops the item for good unless you're in combat.*



Go ahead and select the **READY** icon, so your character will have a weapon in hand when a fight comes along. This will also take you back to the Equipment screen, where you should select the **U-TURN** icon.



U-TURN

*The U-TURN icon does one of two things, depending upon where you are in the game. In most circumstances, it takes you back to the screen "before" the one you're currently on. For example, hitting U-TURN on the Item Screen takes you back to the Equipment Screen. By hitting U-TURN when you're outside a town or shop, you are deciding not to enter, going back to the Wilderness or Town Map screen instead.*

*In combat, however, U-TURN undoes your most recent decision. If you had selected the WEAPON ATTACK icon, you could "take it back" by hitting U-TURN. Having done so, you would be free to choose a different combat option from the available icons.*

Once you are back at the Character Profile, hit U-TURN again to take you back to the regular game screen. Since U-TURN is already selected, you can do this simply by hitting RETURN.

## **CHATTING WITH THE TOWNSFOLK**

The next icon on the screen is **LISTEN**. Select it to hear any interesting rumors Elmu may have. You'll need to hit **SPACEBAR** to hear his reply.



LISTEN

*Selecting the LISTEN icon allows you to ask a townsman if he has heard any important news, bits of gossip or interesting stories lately. Be sure to pay close attention to his response as any word he emphasizes may be something he wishes to talk about. Of course, he'll wait until you bring up the topic!*

To your question, Elmu replies, "All the Elves live in the Plains of Lintle. I hunted wild Bronk there in my youth."

Of course, not everything people tell you will be accurate, important, or even true. Even so, you should make a point of remembering what townsfolk say, as an obscure fact or rumor may prove useful later in your adventures.

Once you've read a character's reply, you can question him again by hitting the **LISTEN** icon. It's often a good idea to keep asking until he runs out of things to say—he'll let you know when he's told you everything he has heard.

The next icon on the plaque is **MOUTH**. You may select it now.



MOUTH

*The MOUTH icon has two functions. When you're dealing with a townsman, it allows you to ask him about any subject you like. To do so, select MOUTH and then use your keyboard to type your question in the large window. When you've finished typing in a question, hit RETURN.*

*On the Equipment Screen, the MOUTH will appear whenever you EXAMINE a pocket holding food. By selecting the MOUTH, you will eat the food.*

When you talked to Elmu, he put special emphasis on the word "Bronk" -- you know this because the word was capitalized. When a townsman capitalizes a word, he or she may have more to say on that subject. To ask him for more information, use the keyboard to type in, "What are Bronk?" and hit RETURN.

Elmu's reply appears in the large window. "Never

heard of a Bronk?" he may say. "It's a small beast with six legs and a pair of rather ugly heads!" Now you'll know a Bronk if you see one.

## RECRUITING COMPANIONS

Next is the **REST** icon. At an inn, **REST** lets you save the game by checking your adventurers in for the night. At an Abbey, **REST** tells the Friar you wish to lay down and be healed. Skip over this one for now, and select the final icon on the plaque, **COMPANION**.



COMPANION

*By selecting the **COMPANION** icon while visiting an inn, you call up a list of all the adventurers currently staying at that inn. To add a companion to your party, select his name from the list and hit **RETURN** or select the **YES** icon. ( see page 17).*

In the large window will appear a list including all the characters staying at the inn you are currently visiting. Since you have just begun play, all your characters — except the party leader, whom you selected earlier — will appear here. Select one of your characters and hit **RETURN** or select the **YES** icon. This character's figure will appear at the top of the screen, next to your party leader, and you will be returned to the series of icons normally available at the Trollsbane Inn.

Repeat these steps — hitting **COMPANION**, selecting a character from the list, and hitting return — until you have assembled your party of adventurers. You can set out with up to six adventurers at a time.

Now that you have more than one adventurer in your party, notice that one of them has a white border around his picture, while the rest are bordered in blue. When your party enters a shop and speaks to the proprietor, the character bordered in white is the one doing the talking. It is usually

best to let your most charismatic hero speak for the group. To change your speaker, just select a different figure.

## WALKING IN BRETTE

Having done everything you can at the Trollsbane Inn — except saving by selecting **REST** in an inn, which you won't need to do until you've played a bit — it's now time to explore the town of Brettle. You may select the **DOOR** icon to exit the inn.

The windows in the center of the screen have now been replaced by a new set. To the left, you see a small window showing the current date and the Brettle town crest. The large window shows an exterior map of Brettle. The building in the center of the map is the Trollsbane Inn, which your party has just departed. Your party is represented on the town map by the knight's helm which is constantly scanning from left to right.

You can move around Brettle using the arrow keys or, with the appropriate hardware, a mouse. For more information on moving, please check the *Knights of Legend* reference card.

Begin your tour of Brettle by strolling south along the main street in front of the Trollsbane. When the road dead-ends into an intersection, turn to the west. A few steps west of the intersection, you'll come to a small house. The path leading up to the house tells you that you can enter. Step right up to the front door to get a good look at the building.

When you reach the door, the town map will be replaced by a picture of the building you're facing. Two familiar icons will appear as well — **DOOR** and **U-TURN**.

From the picture, you can see this is a stable. Since you're not ready for a trek into the wilderness yet, you have no need of a steed. Select the **U-TURN** icon to leave the stables and return to the town map.

## AT THE ARMORER'S

Continue west along the road until it jogs to the north

and hits a three-way intersection. From this intersection, you'll want to head for the house which has appeared to the west. Step right up to the door, as you did at the stables.

The picture which replaces the town map shows a small armory. Your adventures will certainly involve combat, so it's a good idea to buy yourself some sturdy armor. Hit the **DOOR** icon to enter the shop. A picture of the owners of the armory, the Ludeman brothers, will appear beside a message describing the shop. Hit the spacebar to call up additional information.

Pretty soon, the Ludemans will ask you which of your adventurers needs help. You'll notice that none of your characters is currently selected as the speaker. Select a member of your party to talk with the brothers.

Before you begin your negotiations with the Ludemans, you'll want to double-check how much gold you have. Hit the **MIRROR** icon to call up your Character Profile. The amount of gold in your purse is listed near the center of the screen. Armor will be a new adventurer's biggest investment, but you'll want to save at least a couple hundred crowns for weapons, provisions, and other equipment. When you've finished with the Character Profile, select **U-TURN** to return to the main screen.

To look over the Ludeman's stock of armor, select the **EXAMINE** icon. A list of available armor will appear in the large window. Since the list is too long to fit in this window, selecting the arrows on the right side of the window allows you to scroll up or down. You can also scroll through the list using your computer's arrow keys.

You'll want to buy armor for three portions of your body—the head, the torso (including arms), and the legs. On the armor list, pieces are arranged in sets (head, torso, legs), in order from the lightest type of armor to the heaviest. Select a piece of armor that looks interesting and hit **RETURN**.

Information about the piece of armor will appear in the window. For now, all you need to concern yourself with is cost ("GC") and the protection it offers ("PRT"). When you start out, you'll want to get the heaviest protection you can afford. If a piece seems right for you, hit the **YES** icon; if you want something different, select **NO**.



YES



NO

*The YES and NO icons will appear when a simple response is required. Select the icon which represents your answer to whatever question has been posed.*

If you answer **NO**, you will be returned to the armor list. Select another piece of armor and hit **RETURN**. Not surprisingly, you will be asked once again if you are interested in that piece of armor.

If you answer **YES** to a piece of armor, you will be asked if you would like the article fitted. Large characters will *have* to fit their armor; small characters can buy armor that is too big for them, at the cost of carrying around unnecessary weight. Armor will be placed in the character's pack, and can be put on after the character leaves the shop (if it is not too small to wear).

Repeat the process to complete your suit of armor, with a helm, torso protection, and leggings. Since you buy each piece separately, you can mix and match armor types. If your adventurer normally uses a one-handed weapon, you may want to get him a shield as well. You'll find three sizes of shield at the bottom of the Ludemans' list of wares.

Once you've purchased all your armor, you'll want to see it on. Hit the **MIRROR** icon to call up your Character Profile, then **ARMOR UP** to take you to the Equipment Screen. Your hero will automatically suit up for battle. Only those pieces of armor which were fitted will appear on your character's body. Non-fitted pieces of armor will be in the character's pack.

Now, select the "Head" location at the upper right corner of the screen; then hit the **EXAMINE** icon. When the window describing your helmet appears, so will three icons. Two of these, **DROP** and **PACK**, you've seen before, but one is new. This is the **GIVE** icon.



GIVE

*The GIVE icon lets you hand the selected item to another character in your party. After selecting GIVE, you must specify which party member is to receive the item.*

Go ahead and select the GIVE icon. You'll be asked who you want to give your helm to. Pick any other member of the party and select his figure. The Item Screen will then be replaced by the Equipment Screen of the adventurer to whom you gave the helmet. When you GIVE an item to another character, it goes in his pack. Look through his pockets to find the helmet.

Once you've found the helmet, select EXAMINE, so that you can GIVE it back to the character who purchased it. Since the helmet will go into his pack, you'll have to find which pocket it's in, select EXAMINE, then use the ARMOR UP icon to put it on his head.

When the Equipment Screen reappears, the adventurer should be wearing his helmet once again. Select the U-TURN icon to go back to the Character Profile, and again to return to the main game screen.

There are two more new icons on the screen at the Ludemans' shop—SELL and ANVIL. Though you don't need either of them at the moment, we'll discuss them while we're here.



SELL

*The SELL icon lets you sell an item to a merchant. To sell an item, select SELL, then choose the item you wish to trade from the list of your possessions that appears in the large text window. When you are shown the current condition and value of the item, you will be asked whether or not you want to sell it. Reply by selecting YES or NO.*

To try out the SELL icon, select one of your adventurers. Since you can only sell items that are in your pack, as opposed to worn or carried in hand, you'll need to be sure you have something you *can* sell before you begin. Use the MIRROR to call up the adventurer's Character Profile, then ARMOR UP to go to the Equipment Screen. Check his pockets to see if anything is in his pouch and available for sale. If nothing is there—as is likely this early in the game—use the EXAMINE and then PACK to put at least a couple of items in his pack. U-TURN back to the main screen when you've finished.

With this adventurer still selected as speaker, hit SELL. A list of the items in his pack will appear. Select any one of them. Text will appear in the window describing the item and its value. You'll be asked whether you want to sell the item. Since you probably just bought it, answer NO.

If you had answered YES, the item in question would be removed from your pack, and its sale price added to your cash on hand. Since you answered NO, however, the item stays in your pack, and your gold stays the same.

Before you forget, go back to the Equipment Screen and put your weapons and armor back on. That way, you won't get caught in a combat with all your gear in your pack!

When you've finished suiting up, U-TURN back to the main screen, where the next icon is the ANVIL.



ANVIL

*The ANVIL icon appears at both armorers' and weaponsmakers' shops. It has a different function at each.*

*By selecting the ANVIL icon when dealing with an armorer, you'll ask him to fit a suit of armor to your physique. Important note: armor to be fitted must be worn by the character before he asks to have it fitted. At a weaponsmith's, the ANVIL icon won't do you any good unless you've found an ingot during your adventures. If you have, select the ANVIL at a weaponsmaker's to ask him to forge a custom item for you.*

Select the ANVIL icon. The Ludemans should tell you that each piece of your armor has already been fitted, since you fitted them all when you bought them. If you've missed one, however, the Ludemans will let you know, and offer to fit the piece for you for a small fee. If you want the armor fitted, answer **YES**; otherwise, say **NO**.

Later on, you may be able to scavenge armor from your foes, or decide to trade armor among your party members. Anyone can wear armor that is too big for them, even without its being fitted to them. Fitting oversized armor will reduce its weight, though, so that you won't have to carry the extra load. Armor that is too small for a fighter, however, cannot be fitted to him by even the most skilled armorer.

At this point, you've done everything there is to do at Ludeman Armorers. Before you leave, buy armor for all your characters. When you've finished, explore Brettle—visit the various shops, chat with the people, buy equipment. You've already learned all the icons you'll need to interact with the townsfolk.

Once you've walked around town for a bit, you'll be ready to strike out into the wilderness around Brettle. The next chapter will guide you through your first journey outside of town.

## INTO THE WILDERNESS



Now that you've walked around the fair town of Brettle, chatted with a few of its residents, bought your armor and perhaps an extra weapon or two, it's time to set out for adventure. Since adventure isn't likely to be found in town, you'll want to head out into the wilderness. Before you do, however, you'll want to save your fully-equipped party.

### **A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP**

In Brettle, there are two places characters can stay—the Trollsbane Inn, where you began play, and the Broken Keg Inn, near the town gate. A room at the Trollsbane, with the accompanying game-save, costs 60 gold crowns per character. The Broken Keg, on the other hand, will let you stay for free, but many of the Keg's customers are known to have sticky fingers. If you can afford it, stay at the Trollsbane; if you can't, take your chances at the Broken Keg.

Staying at an inn does more than just rest your characters—it also saves the party to disk. To save your

game, step up to the inn and enter. When the innkeeper asks what he can do for you, select the **REST** icon. He'll ask if you want to put the whole party up. Answer **YES**. Then he'll ask each character if he has the price of lodgings. Answer **YES** again. If he hasn't got the gold, the innkeeper will tell you; if he has, he'll be saved to the Character Disk.



REST/SAVE/HEAL

*Selecting the **REST** icon saves the game to disk. You can only save the game when you are at the inn.*

Once you've saved the whole party, you'll be asked if you want to quit. If you say **YES**, you'll be returned to the table of contents page in the *Knights of Legend* book. If you reply, **NO**, a list of all the characters currently saved and staying at this inn will appear. Select one adventurer from the list to be the leader. By talking to the innkeeper and selecting the **COMPANION** icon as you did when you first started play, you can reassemble your party.

Now that you've saved your party and reassembled it, you're ready to venture out into the wilderness. Head for the town gate, in the west wall near the north edge of town. Go out the gate and walk due west. In a moment, you'll reach the edge of the wilds.

## SETTING OUT

When you reach the edge of the town map, just a few steps beyond the town gate, the town map will be replaced by a picture of the woods outside Brettle. Select the **DOOR** icon to leave town and "enter" the woods. (In case you forgot anything, hitting the **U-TURN** icon at this point will put you back on the town map, where you can re-enter Brettle.)

In the large window, a picture of Brettle from the outside will replace the woodland scene. To the left of the picture is the same Date Window you saw in town, a small

picture showing the current weather conditions, and a small window telling the time of day and the type of terrain the party is moving through. The icons across the bottom of the screen are the **DOOR**, **U-TURN**, **ROAD** and **SIGNPOST**.

**DOOR** and **U-TURN** you've seen before. If you select **DOOR** at this point, you will enter Brettle. By choosing **U-TURN**, you are deciding not to enter Brettle, going instead to the wilderness map. **ROAD** and **SIGNPOST** are used to move along the highways that link some of Ashtalarea's towns and hamlets.

For now, however, go ahead and select the **U-TURN** icon. When you do, the picture of Brettle will be replaced by the Wilderness Map, the largest-scale map in *Knights of Legend*. Your party is represented on this map by the small, flashing dot which is currently standing on the road just outside Brettle.

## TRAVELLING IN THE WILDERNESS

By now, the **U-TURN** icon has disappeared. Selecting **DOOR** would take you back into Brettle. Since the **ROAD** and **SIGNPOST** icons are new, let's take a look at how they're used to move your party along the road.



ROAD



SIGNPOST

*When your party is on or near a road in the wilderness, the **ROAD** and **SIGNPOST** icons will appear. To move your party along the road, select **ROAD** repeatedly. To change the direction of your travel along the road, select the **SIGNPOST**.*

When covering long distances in the wilderness of Ashtalarea, you'll move faster and more safely by using the highways that connect many of the towns and hamlets. The **ROAD** and **SIGNPOST** icons will appear whenever you're close enough to a road to follow it. Select the **ROAD** icon to

move your party along the road.

To change directions on the road, select the **SIGN-POST** icon. When you hit the **SIGNPOST**, you'll hear a beep, indicating that your party is now headed the opposite way. To begin moving in the new direction, select **ROAD** once again.

Of course, you don't *have* to follow the roads to move through the countryside. You can also go overland, through the forests and plains. When you leave the roads, you control your party's movement just as you did in town.

## THE ELEMENTS

There's more to travelling between towns than just walking through the countryside. Along the way, you'll have to contend with challenges such as greedy bandits, hostile weatlier, hungry monsters, difficult terrain, scarce food, and dark, dangerous nights. Only a fool travels alone, or without careful planning.

## AMBUSH!

The most obvious and lethal hazards of the open wilderness are the vicious monsters and desperate men who haunt Ashtalarea's lonelier areas. If you've run into a band of these, the Wilderness Map will disappear. In the window that replaces it you will see a brief text message telling you of an impending encounter — you may be walking or riding into an ambush, but you may be approaching a wandering healer. The message will provide clues about the encounter to come.

If you are on foot, the encounter will begin automatically. If everyone in your party is on horseback, you can try to avoid the encounter, if you want. Depending upon your quickness (or the quickness of your steed) you may be able to escape, if that's what you want. Otherwise, you will find yourself engaged in combat.

A moment later, the Combat Screen will appear. To find out how your company can defend itself against attackers, go to the next chapter of this book, "Coming to Blows."

## THE LAND AROUND YOU

Ashtalarea is a beautiful and varied land, with snow-capped mountains, roaring rivers, deep forests, broken hills, and broad plains. Each type of terrain offers its own challenges to the traveller. For example, rocky, orange hill country is the most difficult ground to cross, with its frequent and unpredictable gullies and small cliffs. The floors of the deeper forests, on the other hand, are fairly clear, offering few obstacles other than the many hungry monsters that make their lairs there, away from the sun. The plains are the easiest terrain to cross, while the mountains, lakes and seas are impassible. Most rivers can be forded at almost any point, and make routes that are almost as useful as the Duke's highways.

Not surprisingly, the density and make-up of Ashtalarea's monster population varies from one area to the next. The larger members of the giant family, such as the Stone Ogre and the Cliff Troll, are most common in the hills, especially near the mountains, while magical creatures like Zombies and Djinn are most frequently encountered in the forests. With a little experience, you'll soon come to know what type of opposition to expect in each part of the realm.

## NEITHER RAIN NOR SNOW . . .

There is one benefit to travelling in inclement weather — most monsters don't like snow any better than the average adventurer does! Bad weather will drive roaming creatures back to their lairs, making encounters less common. On the other hand, the monsters you do encounter in rain or snow are likely to be that much tougher and more desperate!

## LIVING OFF THE LAND

After you've been walking around in the wilderness for a little while, call up one of your adventurers' Character Profiles. You'll notice that the bar under "Nutrition" has begun to change gradually to red. As you travel the wilds, you must live on field rations — usually dried meat and hard-tack biscuits—supplemented by what you can find.

You don't have to stock up on field rations before you set out — your heroes are clever enough to provision themselves for their adventure automatically. Just assume that a decent supply of field rations were figured into your bill the last time you checked into an inn. Yet while field rations will keep you alive, they are hardly an adequate substitute for a hot, well-balanced meal. While you travel, your characters will look for fresh foods to add to their diet, such as small game, fruits and wild vegetables, perhaps even the occasional stag or boar.

Yet some months are a bit leaner than others in the wild. During the harsh winter months, the land is especially barren. You'll have little to eat aside from your dry biscuits, so your Nutrition will dwindle rapidly. The most plentiful months come in the late spring and early fall, when animals are active and many types of fruits, nuts, and vegetables come into season. During these months, you'll barely notice the difference between living off the land and eating a "civilized" diet. Other months fall between these extremes, with varying amounts of wild food to be found.

Now, you won't die of starvation while you're out in the wilderness — your field rations will prevent that. But as your Nutrition gradually dwindles, you'll notice your Strength fade. Your attacks will be weaker, and you'll tire faster.

You can replenish your Nutrition level by eating good, hearty food, which you buy in the pubs in most towns and hamlets. We'll talk about this when we get back to town.

## COMING TO BLOWS



After you've been walking through the wilderness for a while, you're bound to run into a pack of hostile monsters. As an aspiring knight, you'll need to know how to defend yourself against them. We'll cover that in this chapter.

## MEETING YOUR FOE

When you encounter a band of foes, a tone will sound, and then the Wilderness Map will be replaced by a large window identifying your enemies. You'll also be shown a picture of them, to give you a better idea of what you're up against. A moment later, this large window will disappear, replaced by the Combat Screen.

The Combat Screen is divided into three areas. The Icon Plaque, along the bottom edge of the screen, holds the new series of icons you'll be using in combat. The rest of the screen is taken up by two large windows. The one to the left can be called the Combatant Window—this is where pictures and information regarding the fighters on both sides will appear. The larger window to the right is the Combat Map, showing the position of each fighter.

Your band of adventurers will be lined up in two rows at the center of the Combat Map. You'll recognize them by the orange tunics that they wear. The numbers over their



heads correspond to the position of their figures at the top of the screen on the Wilderness and Town Screens.

Your foes are represented by the larger, white figures scattered around your party. They may show up on any side of you, or on more than one side! Often, you won't be able to see all your enemies at first—some may be too far away to appear on the map just yet. Rest assured that they'll close in for the encounter.

## LEAPING INTO THE FRAY

Before every round of a combat, you must decide what each of your heroes will do that round. As each character appears in the Combatant Window, you will give him his orders for the round.

Take a look at the Combatant Window now. You'll see the name and figure of one of your characters in the upper half of the window, and a generic figure next to a blue bar in the lower half. As a character is wounded, the generic figure shown will "bleed." As he exerts himself, and his reserve of energy dwindles, his remaining energy will be indicated by the height of the blue bar. We'll look at both of these functions later in the combat, as the combatants become injured and fatigued.

One by one, the members of your party will appear in the Combatant Window, waiting for your orders. The first character is ready now, so let's look at his options, presented as icons on the Icon Plaque.

The first icon on the plaque is **YES**. Once you've given the character his orders for the round, you'll enter them by selecting **YES**. Of course, you don't want to hit it yet—wait until you've given the first adventurer his orders!

## CLOSING FOR BATTLE

If you have a bow or crossbow readied, or know a few long-range spells, you may want to keep your distance from your foes. Otherwise, you'll have to close with them before you can attack them. To move on the Combat Map, select the **MOVE** icon.



*By selecting the **MOVE** option on the Combat Screen, you call up icons which will let your character walk, run, or—in the case of Kelderheit or a member of another race who has a magic item—even fly across the field. Once you have chosen **MOVE** and selected a direction, the **WALK**, **RUN**, and **SPRINT** icons appear. **WALK** and **RUN** both move your fighter one space on the Combat Map, while **SPRINT** covers two spaces in the chosen direction. Kelderheit have three additional move options—**FLY**, **FLY FASTER**, and **ZOOM**. **FLY** lets a Kelden move one space through the air; **FLY FASTER**, two spaces; **ZOOM**, three. Return a flying creature to earth by selecting the **LAND** icon.*

When you select **MOVE**, a flashing circle—the cursor—will appear on the Combat Map next to your adventurer, and you will be asked to "Select a Direction." Move the cursor to indicate the direction you wish to move, either by using the arrow keys or by clicking the mouse pointer next to the character in the direction you wish to travel. For instance, if you want him to move north, place the cursor in the space immediately above your character. Select **YES** to enter the direction, or **U-TURN** if you've decided not to move after all.

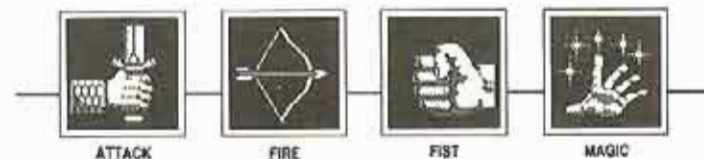
Once you've entered the direction, you'll be asked to "Select a Movement." Select **WALK** to move one space on the map at a leisurely pace, **RUN** to move one space quickly, or **SPRINT** to move two spaces quickly. Of these options, **WALK** uses the least energy, **SPRINT** the most. **WALK** allows you some defense against attacks aimed at you, whether missile or melee, but **RUN** and **SPRINT** leave no time for active defense. A character who runs or sprints will move early in the combat round, before most other fighters have had a

chance to act, while one walking will move late in the round. If the adventurer is a Kelderheit, he can also opt to fly by choosing one of the three flight icons that appear. By choosing the appropriate icon, he may fly one, two, or three spaces. Flight allows no active defense at any speed, and requires considerable energy — Kelden should be careful to wear light armor and pace themselves if they plan to do a lot of flying.

Once you've selected a movement, the character will reappear in the Combatant Window. In the lower section of the window, the movement option he's chosen — **WALK** or **FLY FASTER**, for example—will appear, along with the direction he'll be moving. If you are happy with the option you've chosen for him, hit the **YES** icon. Otherwise, you can begin again by choosing any other icon.

## ATTACKING

Four icons allow you to attack your opponents—**ATTACK**, **FIRE**, **FIST** and **MAGIC**.



*The **ATTACK** icon lets you attack a foe with a ready melee weapon. The foe must be adjacent to you to be struck. **FIRE** lets you loose an arrow at an opponent with a ready missile weapon. You may **FIRE** at any target who is not adjacent to you—that is, anyone who is more than one space away from you. By selecting the **FIST** icon, you are preparing to make an unarmed attack against an adjacent foe. If your character knows a spell, the **MAGIC** icon will appear. Selecting this icon will allow you to direct a spell against the target of your choice.*

*Once you've chosen an attack icon, you'll be presented with a series of choices in which you'll decide on the target and type of your attack, and perhaps the defense you'll assume while delivering it. These options, and the icons that represent them, are covered on the next page.*

Your ready weapon will determine which attack icons are available. If you have a melee weapon, such as a sword or a mace, the **ATTACK** icon will appear. A readied bow will give you the **FIRE** option. If neither of these icons appears, then the character has no weapon readied; he'll probably want to **READY** a weapon, as described below. The **FIST** icon is always available, whether you have a weapon readied or not.

Select the **MAGIC** icon and you will be asked to select a target — friend or foe. Then, a list of your spells will appear. Choose the one you want. Finally, you'll be asked to specify a positive or negative spell effect. For more about magic and spellcasting, see page 71.

Since you don't have any magic at this point, and you're unlikely to be adjacent to your foes yet, the **ATTACK** and **FIST** options aren't going to be very useful. You'll want to choose another option instead.

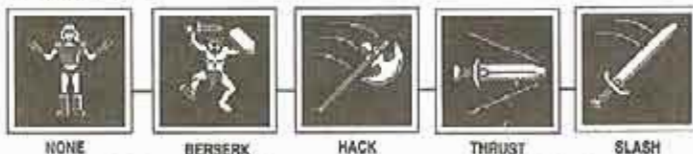
If a fighter has the **FIRE** option, it's best to get off a few arrows before the enemy can close. Select **FIRE**. A message in the Combatant Window will ask you to "Select Target," and a flashing circle will appear in the corner of the Combat Map. To select a target, move the flashing circle onto the foe you wish to hit, using the arrow keys or by clicking the mouse pointer on the desired target. Be sure that your Bowman has a clear shot — trees and other characters can block an arrow's flight.

Once you've selected your target, your character will be replaced in the Combatant Window by the opponent you've chosen to fire at. The figure and bar below now show *his* wounds and fatigue, not yours. If you decide to fire at a different target, simply select another foe. Once you're sure at whom you intend to fire, hit the **YES** icon. If you decide not to fire, select the **U-TURN** to go back to the combat icons.

If you selected **YES** to enter the target, your own character will reappear in the Combatant Window. Now, the **FIRE** icon will appear in the lower section of the window, along with the wound display and the fatigue bar. This indicates that your character has chosen to **FIRE** at the target indicated by the flashing circle on the map. If you are happy with these orders, select **YES** once more to enter them. If you would like the character to do something else after all, simply start over by choosing a different icon.

If you hit **YES** to enter these orders, the next character in your party will appear in the Combatant Window, ready for action.

Once you've moved adjacent to a foe, you'll be able to use the **ATTACK** and **FIST** options. The first two steps in these options are the same as for **FIRE**: Select the attack icon (**ATTACK** or **FIST**), then choose your target by moving the flashing cursor. Once you've chosen your target, though, you'll have to specify the type of attack and defense you intend to use.



When attacking with a weapon—by selecting **ATTACK**—there are five types of attacks possible: **NONE** means no attack at all—the fighter is devoting all his effort to defense.

**BERSERK** is the most damaging type of attack, but it is slow, very tiring, and assumes the **STAND** defense.

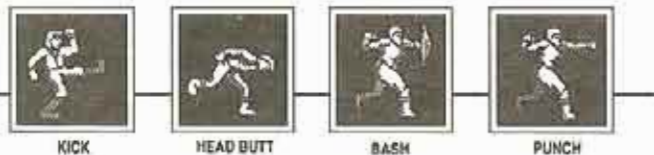
**HACK** is a full, overhead swing—powerful and it lets you use any defense.

**THRUST** is a stab, aimed from the attacker's midsection straight at the foe. It is the fastest but weakest type of strike.

**SLASH** is a side-armed swing, a bit faster and harder to defend against than a **HACK**, but not as powerful.

Note, not all weapons are suited for all attack types.

When attacking in unarmed combat—by selecting the **FIST**—you may choose from four different attack types, or select the **NONE** icon.

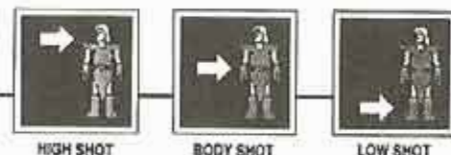


A **KICK** is a powerful blow with the feet. A **BASH** is another powerful attack, but with the fists.

A **HEAD BUTT** can be quite painful—if it hits.

*The **PUNCH** is the weakest of the unarmed attacks, but it is the most likely to hit.*

When you pick a melee weapon attack you'll be asked to "Select a Location." This will determine if you are aiming—generally—at the head, the body, or the legs.



An attacker must aim at one of three areas of his opponent's body:

A **HIGH SHOT** is directed at the head, arms and upper chest. It is most likely to hit the arms and cannot hit the legs.

A **BODY SHOT** is aimed at the torso, and is most likely to hit the chest. It may, however, strike any part of the body.

A **LOW SHOT** is aimed at the legs and lower torso. It cannot hit the head and is most likely to hit the legs.

If the foe is already wounded, exploit his weakness by aiming at the section of the body that is already hurt. This way, you're more likely to disable an arm or leg, or knock him out. If he is not yet injured, you'll want to aim at his least-armored area. You can check his weapon and his armor in each location by doubling back to the "select target" phase of your character's attack. (You can also check the status of your party members in this way.)

To check an opponent's condition, hit the **U-TURN** icon twice. You'll undo your attack and target selection in the process, but they can be easily re-entered in a moment. When your target's picture appears in the Combatant Window, hit the spacebar. His picture will be replaced by a listing of his ready weapon, armor, and — if he has one — shield. If his armor is weaker in any one area, remember it. Then hit the spacebar once again, to bring back his picture and wound-status.

Re-select your target and attack, then select where you want to place your attack — a **HIGH SHOT**, **BODY SHOT**, or **LOW SHOT**.

Once you've chosen a location to aim at — or immediately after you selected your fighter's attack, if he's attacking unarmed — you'll be asked to "Select a Defense Type."



PANIC



STAND



BACK UP



DODGE

Counting **NONE**, there are seven types of defense: By choosing **NONE**, you decide to waste no time or effort on defense, devoting all your attention to your attack.

**PANIC DEFEND** is the most effective defense, but it allows no attack whatsoever. If you've already selected an attack, it will be erased when you choose this defense.

By ordering a character to **STAND**, you give him a minimal defense — not too fatiguing or time-consuming, but more effective than no defense at all.

**BACK UP** and **DODGE** are more effective than **STAND**, but less so than most other defenses. They let a fighter evade his opponent's blow by shifting his body back or to one side.

**DUCK** and **JUMP** are effective defenses — especially if you know in advance that your opponent will be taking a **HIGH SHOT** or **LOW SHOT**.



DUCK



JUMP

When you select a defense, your character will reappear in the Combatant Window and the basic combat icons will show up on the plaque once again. Your character's complete attack — type, direction, location, and defense — will be depicted in the lower half of the Combatant Window. If you are satisfied with the attack, select the **YES** icon; if you want to make a change, or choose a different option altogether, select the appropriate icon and begin again.

## LOADING A CROSSBOW



LOAD

Before a crossbow can be fired, you must prepare it by selecting **LOAD**. On the next round, the **LOAD** icon will be replaced by **FIRE**, indicating that the bow may now be used to attack a foe. Once it has been fired, a crossbow must be loaded again before it can be fired a second time.

Unlike a more conventional bow, such as a longbow or selfbow, a crossbow must be laboriously cranked to a cocked position and loaded with a new bolt before it can be fired. If your character has a crossbow ready, the **LOAD** icon will appear in place of **FIRE**. Select **LOAD** to get his crossbow ready to **FIRE** on the combat round.

## A SWORD IN THE HAND . . .

Before you go into combat, make sure that every character has at least one weapon in his hand or his belt. To do this, you'll have to go to the Character Profile and the Equipment Screen when you're not in the middle of a fight. If you find that most or all of your party left their weapons in their backpacks, then flee the battle. Instructions on retreating are given below.

Assuming that your adventurers all have at least one weapon ready or tucked in their belts, one of the following icons will appear on the screen: **READY**, **SHEATH**, or **SWITCH**. Both **READY** and **SHEATH** you've seen before; **SWITCH** is new.



SWITCH

When a character takes the **SWITCH** option, he swaps his readied weapon for the one in his belt. The new

*weapon is then ready to attack, and the old is safely sheathed, should he need it again.*

If the **READY** icon is the one that appears, select it on the first round of combat—a weapon in your belt won't do you any good. A weapon in your hand won't hamper you in any way, however, since you can do anything in combat just as well with a weapon readied. For this same reason, you should simply ignore the **SHEATH** icon, if it appears. The best defense is a good offense, and your offense is *much* better with a weapon than without.

On the other hand, **SWITCH** can be very useful. Most adventurers will want to carry two weapons into any fight—a bow or crossbow in hand, and a melee weapon in their belt. This lets them get off a few arrows while their enemies are still several steps away, then **DROP** their bows and **READY** a sword or axe when they close.

### **PICKING UP/ PUTTING DOWN**

Two more icons which you won't need very often in combat are **PICK UP** and **DROP**. Though **PICK UP** is new, you first saw **DROP** on the Item Screen, when you were looking through your adventurers' pockets.



PICK UP

*The pick up icon lets you snatch an object from the battlefield. All objects—weapons or other items—are represented on the Combat Map by a sword lying on the ground. You must move directly onto an object in order to pick it up.*

*When it comes time in the combat round for the character to carry out his **PICK UP** action, you will be asked something like, "You have found a battle axe. Do you want to pick it up?" If you do, hit the "Y" key to answer yes; otherwise, hit "N" for no.*

The only time you'll need to **DROP** an item is if you already have one weapon in hand and another in your belt but need to **PICK UP** a third object lying on the ground. In such a case, go ahead and drop the weapon in your hands so that you'll be free to **PICK UP** the other item. If you need to pick something up when you're only carrying one weapon, **SHEATH** the weapon rather than drop it to free your hands.

If an enemy's attack hits you especially hard, you may drop your weapon inadvertently. If this happens, select **PICK UP** as soon as possible, so you'll be ready to return the favor! In combat you can pick up a dropped weapon. This is the only time you can recover items in this way.

### **CATCHING YOUR BREATH**

Every action a fighter takes in combat requires a certain amount of exertion. As his energy dwindles the blue bar in the lower right-hand corner of the Combatant Window will gradually turn red. If the bar turns entirely red, your adventurer has exhausted himself, and will pass out from severe fatigue.

Yet it is possible to regain energy during a combat, by selecting the **REST** icon. When you do so, the blue bar will rise as your character catches his breath. The amount of fatigue recovered will vary, depending on how tired he already is, and how many wounds he's suffered. A hero who's badly cut up may not notice much improvement at all, and he may pass out with his next step.

### **PLAY BY PLAY**

After you've given each member of your company his orders for the round, the action begins.

Three icons will appear across the Icon Plaque — **YES**, **U-TURN**, and **PANIC**. If you select **PANIC**, your company will flee the encounter; this is discussed in detail below under "The End of the Line."

To review and revise the orders you've given your company, select **U-TURN**. This option will allow you to change the orders you've given one or more characters. As each character appears in the Combatant Window, his orders

appear in the lower section of the window. If you want the orders to stand, just hit the **YES** icon; to change them, select the appropriate icon for the new orders. When you have reviewed the actions of every fighter, the **YES**, **U-TURN** and **PANIC** icons will appear again.

Hitting the **YES** icon at this point will enter the orders issued to all of your adventurers and begin combat. A parchment will appear over the Icon Plaque, describing the first character's action and its consequences. When you've read this message, hit the spacebar again to call up a message describing the next character's action.

Note that the actions of your party members and their opponents do not occur in neatly-alternating turns. Instead, each combatant's action is carried out in the order in which it would naturally occur, based on his Quickness, encumbrance, injuries, and the action he's chosen. Thus, slower members of the party do not slow down their more speedy comrades.

After all actions on both sides have been carried out, the scroll covering the icons will disappear. One of your characters will appear in the Combatant Window. This is the first member of your party awaiting his orders for the next round of combat.

## **AS THE BATTLE WEARS ON**

During combat, be sure to keep an eye on the current fatigue level of your adventurers, as well as the wounds they have taken. In an extended battle, exertion can be as deadly as injury. In fact, if a hero is very tired—his fatigue bar is almost entirely red, that is—but not seriously hurt, he may want to move away and **REST** for a round or two. An unwounded adventurer who's passed out from exhaustion is every bit as useless to his comrades as one who's been hacked to pieces.

You'll also need to keep mental tabs on roughly how many wounds each character has taken. Only rarely is a single blow fatal; warriors fall far more often to blood loss suffered due to numerous small injuries. Thus, a character who's been hurt a little bit in several areas can be in as much trouble as one who's been severely injured in one place.

Check the current status of your foes whenever you

can as well. If you've got an archer in the party, select the **FIRE** icon and then set the cursor on each of the foes before deciding which one to fire at. This will let you see how badly wounded and fatigued each of them is before you choose the archer's target. When choosing targets, concentrate on the ones that are already injured or fatigued—they're much more vulnerable.

And though you don't have to buy your arrows, you don't have an infinite supply either. Each bowman comes into every battle with 20 arrows; when they're used up, he'll have to switch to some other kind of attack. If the battle involves several foes, you'll want to use your archers quite carefully.

And finally, if things are looking bad for the party, don't be afraid to run away. It may cost you a few weapons but those can be replaced. If the whole party drops, monsters will loot everyone's bodies, taking weapons and armor, and perhaps cleaning you out to the last gold crown!

## **THE END OF THE LINE**

A battle can have any of three different outcomes. If all goes well, your party of adventurers will emerge victorious, and will gain gold, booty, and Adventure Points as their reward. If things start to go badly for them, the band may decide that survival is more important than their reputations, and flee the battlefield. Or they may fight on to the bitter end, when their last man is overcome by his monstrous foes.

## **TO THE VICTOR GO THE SPOILS**

Once the last enemy falls, a message will appear over the icon plaque, reading something like, "You have defeated the goblins!" It will be accompanied by a picture showing two fighters standing over their vanquished foe.

Hit the spacebar to receive the next message, telling you how many Adventure Points each hero is awarded for his part in the battle, as well as how many gold crowns he gets as his share of the monsters' treasure. Hitting the spacebar one more time will reveal the items found strewn about the bat-

tlefield. Chance encounters will usually only yield weapons and armor, but the climactic battle of a major quest will often leave some valuable item as well.

To carry your booty home, you'll need to divide it among the members of the company. To do this, select one of the objects listed under "Items Found." When you do, a complete roster of your party will appear. Select the character to whom you wish to give the item; it will be placed in one of the pockets of his pack. If the party found more than one item, the list will return, minus the item you just assigned to a character. Repeat the process until everything you want has been given to one companion or another.

When you have finished distributing the loot, hit the **U-TURN** to return to the Wilderness Map. If you would like to use any of the armor or weapons you picked up from your vanquished foes, go to the Character Profiles to put them on now. Otherwise, you can sell the loot the next time you enter a town.

## **RUN AWAY!**

If it becomes apparent that there is no hope for your band of stalwarts, it is important to recognize the better part of valor. To retreat from a combat, choose the **PANIC** icon. A large picture of your company's strategic withdrawal will be displayed with the caption, "You flee for your lives!" You will then be returned to the Wilderness Map.

Unfortunately, you lose more than just your dignity when you run from a fight. In his haste to escape near-certain death, any adventurer who has a weapon in hand may drop it on the battlefield, where the monsters will pick it up and carry it away. Fallen comrades suffer even greater losses. Before the foes leave, they loot the unconscious adventurers. Some foes — Skeletons and Salamanders, for example — have little interest in material goods, seldom taking more than a weapon or two. Others, like Bandits and Ores, may take everything, from weapons and armor to jewelry and gold.

## **THE BITTER END**

If every member of your party falls unconscious, the battle is over. A picture showing your adventurers nursing their injuries will appear, along with a message informing you of your defeat. You'll then find yourself back on the Wilderness Map.

Once you're back on the Wilderness Map, call up the Character Profiles and Equipment Screens for each of your adventurers. You'll notice that some of your gold and equipment is missing—maybe all of it! After they knocked you out, your foes looted your bodies, taking whatever they thought might be useful and leaving you for dead. Somehow, you'll have to stagger back to civilization to re-provision your party.

## BACK IN TOWN



After you've been out adventuring for a few days fighting monsters and picking up some gold and booty, as well as a few Adventure Points, it's time to head back to town. There, you'll be able to trade your gold and booty for new weapons and better armor, heal up at an abbey, check in for some rest and a game-save at an inn, hone your weapon skills with an expert trainer, and perhaps learn some magic or pick up a special mission or quest.

### TRADING

If you haven't done it already, look through the packs of all your characters, checking your loot for weapons, armor or other equipment that would be useful to any member of the party. For example, if you find that you picked up a long bow after your last battle, and your Kelden has the skill to use it but hasn't been able to afford one before, hand the bow over to him. If you've found a leather jerkin, and one of your fighters is wearing fur, let him try the jerkin on. If he can wear it, let him keep it; he can sell his fur armor back to the armorer to cover the price of fitting the jerkin.

Once you've given anything that can be used to the character who can use it, it's time to convert the rest of your

loot into gold. Most merchants will buy any sort of merchandise, so you don't have to go to an armorer to **SELL** armor you may have found, or a weaponsmaker to **SELL** an axe.

When you've finished selling your loot, you can start to buy better equipment — extra weapons and heavier armor, for a start. But you may want to wait to buy new gear, because there a few other things you might consider spending your gold on . . .

### HONING YOUR SKILLS

You can improve your weapon skills by training with veteran fighters around Ashtalarea. Naturally, not every trainer is familiar with every weapon; most know about four weapons well enough to train other fighters. Brettle's weapons master is Hvrad Myth, a specialist in the Long Spear, Long Bow, Longsword, and Battle Axe. He can be found in a small house within the Fortress of Brettle, on the east edge of town. To train with Hvrad, or any of Ashtalarea's masters, select the **TRAIN** icon.



TRAIN

*By selecting the **TRAIN** icon, your warrior asks a weapons master to train him in the use of a weapon.*

Training will cost you both gold and Adventure Points (a measure of your experience in combat). The standard fee for a training session is 200 gold crowns, but actual costs may vary. During this session, a fighter may increase his offensive or defensive skill with a weapon by one for every 100 Adventure Points he spends, up to a maximum of 500 Adventure Points. To learn any more requires another session, costing an additional 200 (or so) crowns.

Hvrad will tell you the cost of training and ask if you are interested. If you are, reply **YES**. He will then ask which weapon you wish to train in. Hit the spacebar to call up a list of the weapons Hvrad is qualified to teach. Select the weapon



you wish to practice, and then decide whether you want to work on your offense or defense.

Finally, Hvrad will ask how many skill points you wish to learn; use the number keys to enter any value between one and five. If you haven't amassed enough Adventure Points for the amount of improvement you've requested, you'll be told, "Sorry, not enough Adventure Points!" Hit the spacebar and request a smaller increase. If you haven't enough Adventure Points for even one skill point, hit the ESC key to get out of training.

After you've trained, choose the **MIRROR** icon to call up your Profile so you can check your new skill level.

### A LITTLE MAGIC

Many Ashtalarean towns have their own wizard-in-residence, providing the townsfolk with magical services at reasonable — or not so reasonable — rates. One of the services they offer is training in the art of magic. Many adventurers find it worthwhile to invest some of their gold and Adventure Points in the study of a spell or two.

To learn a magic spell, or to modify one you've already mastered, head for the tower of the mage, Astimiah Eckhart, in the northwestern corner of Brettle. When you get there, select the **MAGIC** icon to request instruction. The Advanced Gamers section covers learning, modifying, and casting spells in full detail.



MAGIC

*When the **MAGIC** icon appears in town, it lets an adventurer ask for magical training from a wizard. In combat, select the **MAGIC** icon to cast a spell you already know.*

### A GOOD, HOT MEAL

Another thing you'll want to do in town is sit down to a hearty, nutritious meal. Not only will this soothe your hungry belly, it will also restore your Nutrition bar, on the Character Profile, to its normal, healthy level. Food and drink are available at public houses — or pubs — in all towns and a few hamlets. In Brettle, head for the Lonely Page Pub, near the Trollsbane Inn.

At the pub, select the **EXAMINE** icon to look over the menu. Select whatever sounds good to you—you'll soon learn which foods are the most nutritious. Of course, food costs money, so be sure to bring a few crowns with you when you come to the pub.

You can also take food with you when you leave, to eat on the trail in the wilderness. When you order, your server will ask something to the effect of, "Will you be eating this here?" If you reply **YES**, you'll wolf it down right away; a message assessing the quality of the food will let you know how good the meal was. If you answer **NO**, your server will helpfully reply, "I'll put it in your pack." The next time you check your pockets, the morsel will be there, waiting to be eaten. Food purchased in this way is more nutritious than the field rations adventurers carry with them at all times.

To eat food from your pack, call up your Character Profile, then select **ARMOR UP** to show your Equipment Screen. Select the pocket holding the food; when the Item Screen appears, hit the **MOUTH** icon to eat it. When you've finished eating, you'll get a brief message telling you something about the quality of the food.

### NEW GEAR

Now that you've covered any training expenses, as well as eaten a satisfying meal or two, you can go ahead and spend your remaining gold on better equipment. The only other things you might want to save a few crowns for are healing, which may be purchased at the town abbey, and lodgings at the local inn.

You may want heavier armor, or perhaps an extra weapon or two. It's especially useful for each character to

carry both a melee weapon for close combat and a bow or crossbow for missile duels (assuming characters are trained in both!). Don't forget that if you need a few extra crowns to cover the cost of new armor, there's no reason not to sell your old gear. It certainly won't do you any good sitting in your pack! If you do buy new weapons or armor, be sure to go to the Equipment Screen and put it on before you go back out into the wilds.

## **HEALING**

In *Knights of Legend*, the only place to permanently recover Health lost to injuries or illness is in an abbey. These holy institutions, which may be found in every town, always keep a supply of healing elixirs on hand for the hapless adventurers that straggle in on a regular basis, cut and bruised from their battles.

All abbeys request a "donation" for their elixirs, though the amount varies according to how badly the patient is injured. There is also some variation from abbey to abbey; as you travel Ashtalarea, you'll come to know which abbeys offer the best rates. In Brettle, you'll want to visit St. Paul's Abbey, in the northeastern corner of town. The abbot of St. Paul's is Huxley, the well-known Dancing Friar.

To request a healing elixir, enter the abbey and select the **REST** icon. Friar Huxley will look you over, and inform you of the price of your healing. If you can afford the donation, reply **YES**; if you can't you'll have to come back after you've scraped up enough gold to cover it. If you can afford the abbey's elixir, however, your Health will be completely restored, as if you'd never been injured.

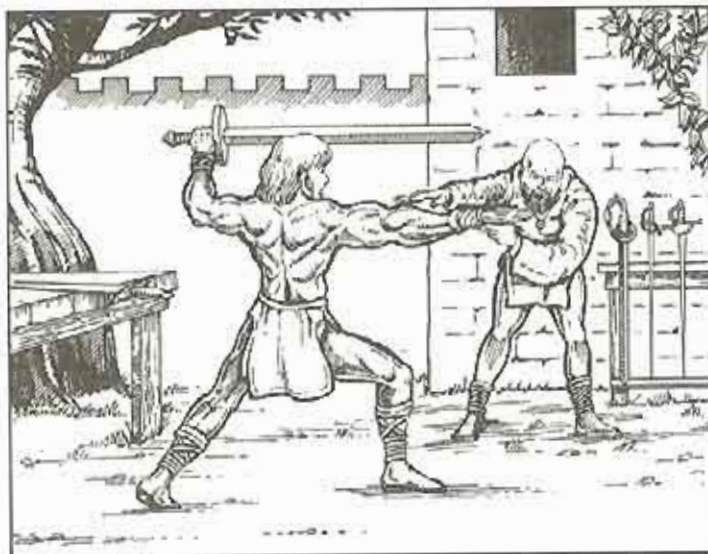
## **A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP, AGAIN**

Once you've finished all your other transactions — buying and selling, training, healing, eating — head for the local inn. A restful night in a real bed will be a welcome change from sleeping on the rocky ground under the stars. In the process, you'll save your characters back onto your Character Disk, recording their new skill levels, Adventure Points, and possessions for your next outing.

Here is the procedure to save once again: At the inn, select the **REST** icon. You'll be asked whether you want to check the whole party in. Reply **YES**. One by one, the members of the company will be charged for their lodging and checked into the inn. (If you'd replied **NO**, then only the character selected as the speaker would check into the inn.)

When the whole party has checked in, you'll be asked if you want to quit the game. If you reply **YES**, the game screen will be replaced by the *Knights of Legend* book; remove your disks from the drive and switch your computer off. If you reply **NO**, a list of the characters currently staying at that inn — including the whole party that you just checked in — will appear. From the list, choose a leader for your next adventure and begin play once again.

## ADVANCED GAMERS



Now that you have wandered around Ashtalarea a bit, you have a basic idea of *what* kinds of things can happen, but you are probably wondering *why*. This section explains how the *Knights of Legend* game operates. You can play without reading a single chapter from this section, but if you want to play well, it might be worth your while to scan through it.

### CHARACTERS

The most important decisions you will make when building your characters are their race, sex and class. The race and sex you choose narrow the list of available classes, while class determines the range of your character's stats. Use the tables that follow to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each class. The statistics are explained in detail in the section that follows. The last column on the right lists the gold crowns and weapons available to each class at the start of the game.

The numbers represent the average score achievable by each class in Strength, Quickness, Size, Health, Foresight,

Charisma, Intellect, Starting Weapon(s) and Gold. The first item listed under Starting Weapons is the weapon the character is given when he's first created. The number before the slash mark is the starting offensive skill with a weapon; the number after the slash, if any, is the character's defensive skill with that weapon.

### CHARACTER CLASSES

#### HUMAN MALE

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Krag Barbarian	80	60	74	73	66	60	60	GC: 1500 GS:10/5 HL:5/5
Drezin Ranger	73	66	68	66	66	66	66	GC: 1500 BR:10/7 LB:10
Krell Warrior	66	60	68	80	60	60	60	GC: 1500 BA:12/10
Hobean Squire	66	66	73	73	66	66	66	GC: 2000 BR:12/5 SB:5
Dark Guard	66	66	73	73	66	66	66	GC: 2000 MA:12/5 LC:5
Shellernoon Watchman	66	66	74	66	66	66	66	GC: 1500 BA:10/7 LB:7
Lintle Plainsman	53	73	66	63	53	66	73	GC: 1500 LB:12 LO:5
Olanthan Hunter	53	80	68	60	73	73	66	GC: 1500 SB:10 LS:7/5
Brettle Regular	66	66	68	66	66	66	66	GC: 3000 LS:10/5 BA:10/10
Dukes Highwayman	66	53	72	73	53	60	60	GC: 1500 WH:12/7 LO:5

Htron									GC: 3000
Pirate	66	66	68	73	60	73	73		SC:12/7 SB:7
Poitle									GC:3000
Rogue	53	80	68	60	66	60	66		LO:10/10 SB:5

### HUMAN FEMALE

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Ghor Tigress	60	73	66	60	60	73	66	GC: 1500 HL:12/10 LO:7/5
Tegal Amazon	66	60	68	66	60	66	60	GC: 1500 BR:10/10 SB:10
Olanthan Huntress	53	80	68	60	60	73	66	GC: 1500 LB:12 SS:7/7
Lintle Plains- woman	46	73	64	60	46	73	73	GC: 1500 LB:10 LO:12/7

### ELVEN MALE

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Brekland Elf	56	80	64	53	60	66	66	GC: 1500 LO:12/5
Klvar Elf	46	66	64	50	46	73	73	GC: 1500 LO:12/5
Melod Elf	60	73	61	53	53	73	73	GC: 1500 LO:12/5
Pyar Elf	66	66	65	53	66	66	66	GC: 1000 EB:15
Thism Elf	53	86	62	53	53	60	66	GC: 1500 LO:12/5
Usip Elf	50	66	58	53	46	60	73	GC: 200 EB:25

### ELVEN FEMALE

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Brekland Elf	50	86	61	60	53	66	66	GC: 1500 LB:12
Klvar Elf	46	73	61	56	46	73	73	GC: 1500 LB:12
Melod Elf	60	80	58	60	46	73	66	GC: 1500 LB:12
Pyar Elf	60	73	61	60	53	66	66	GC: 1000 EB:15
Thism Elf	46	93	60	60	46	60	66	GC: 1500 LB:12
Usip Elf	46	73	56	60	46	60	73	GC: 200 EB:25

### DWARVEN MALE (ONLY MALES ADVENTURE)

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Tunneller/ Digger	73	53	52	66	53	60	66	GC: 3000 SS:12/7
Spiderguard/ Ratguard	60	73	54	66	60	66	66	GC: 1500 BA:12/7
Troll Bane/ Orc Bane	66	66	56	73	73	73	66	GC: 1500 WH:12/7
Militia/ Militia	66	60	56	80	66	66	73	GC: 1500 BA:5/5 LC:10

## KELDEN MALE (ONLY MALES ADVENTURE)

Class	S	Q	S	H	F	C	I	Start
Cliff Guard	80	46	80	60	53	60	60	GC: 1250 GS:10/10
Rock Ranger	60	46	82	80	53	60	66	GC: 1250 LB:12
Far Seeker	73	53	86	73	60	60	73	GC: 1250 GS:5/5 LB:5

### ABBREVIATIONS:

GC:	Gold Crowns	LO:	Long Sword
BA:	Battle Axe	LS:	Long Spear
BR:	Broad Sword	MA:	Mace
EB:	Elf Bow	SB:	Self Bow
GS:	Great Sword	SC:	Scimitar
HL:	Halberd	SS:	Short Spear
LB:	Longbow	WH:	Warhammer
LC:	Light Crossbow		

### THE STATISTICS

In *Knights of Legend*, your characters' capabilities are represented by several statistics (or "stats"). These statistics define what kind of a person a character is and what he can do. By learning what the statistics mean, you end up with a much better grasp of what a particular character's advantages and limitations are, and how characters compare.

Each character is rated in 10 statistical categories. There are seven **primary** statistics and three **secondary** statistics. Primary statistics are determined independently of one another. Secondary statistics are derived from the primary stats. All statistics fall within a range of 0 to 100, where 0 is the absolute minimum a character could have and 100 is the effective maximum. A character can end up with a statistic above 100, but this happens very rarely.

### PRIMARY STATISTICS

The starting values for the seven primary statistics are determined by a character's class.

#### STRENGTH

This is a measure of the character's muscular development. A character with a low strength (50-80) is weak and out of shape. Characters blessed with a high strength (80+) are physically powerful, able to heft a laden pack with ease and toss around a twenty pound greatsword as though it were made of wood.

Strength is pivotal in combat, as it is used in calculating a character's offensive capabilities. Higher strength results in improved accuracy with melee weapons and greater damage on a successful hit.

The Strength stat is combined with Intellect to determine the character's Balance, and is combined with his Health to determine his Endurance. Through these secondary stats, strength has a direct impact on a character's courage, overall stamina and his ability to carry heavy loads without being seriously encumbered.

Strength can be improved by magic during combat.

#### QUICKNESS

This statistic measures the character's reflexes. Those with a high Quickness are fast and agile, while those with a low Quickness are less co-ordinated, making them slow and clumsy.

In the game, this stat is used to determine the order in which actions occur in melee. Characters with high Quickness scores usually act before other, slower characters. This allows them to extract themselves from close combat with ease and strike down opponents before they can get their attack. Note that armor will slow you down, so think carefully about how important Quickness is before you suit up.

Quickness can be raised through magic, but only during combat.

## SIZE

This stat measures a character's height and weight. A size 67 character is exactly six feet tall. Some races, like Dwarves, will be much smaller than humans; others, like the stately Kelden, tend to be much larger.

A character's size affects the armor he can use. Characters cannot wear armor that is too small for them. Armor that is too large can be used, if the character is willing to carry around unnecessary extra weight. In addition, armor weight is in proportion to the wearer's size, so armor for a large man will weigh more than that of a smaller man.

Size is a factor in resisting the impact of mighty blows that could knock down a small man. Height can even affect the possibility of striking a foe in certain hit locations. (It's tough to hit an opponent's head if you can't reach it!)

Size is combined with Health when determining the Body Points stat. A high Size score makes a character somewhat harder to kill. A seven foot adventurer in *Knights of Legend* is simply more durable than someone standing only five feet, regardless of training or experience.

Size cannot be altered by training or magic.

## HEALTH

This is a measure of the character's overall constitution. Characters with a low Health score will be prone to sickness and will be fairly easy to defeat in combat. High Health scores will stave off fatigue, sickness and injury better.

Health is combined with Strength when determining a character's Endurance. Health is averaged with Size to determine the character's Body Points. These secondary stats make Health one of the most important statistics for an adventurer. In combat, Health will have an effect on a character's stamina and his resistance to physical injury. The higher a character's Health, the more he is able to exert himself for prolonged periods of time and the harder he is to kill. Out of combat, Health is used to stave off disease, an important consideration in and of itself.

Health can be adjusted by magic during combat.

## FORESIGHT

This stat reflects your character's instincts. Foresight is a kind of "sixth sense" that allows some characters to guess what their opponent is going to do. This can be explained as the ability to read body language or the instinctive insight that comes with combat experience.

During combat, Foresight will occasionally allow you to see an opponent's move before deciding what your character will do that round. This means you can make a more effective choice of actions. For additional information on Foresight, see page 61.

Foresight can be raised by magic. Also, a character's ability to use and interpret what Foresight he has will improve as he gains in rank.

## CHARISMA

Charisma is the measure of a character's personal magnetism. A character with a very low Charisma is a drooling barbarian barely able to operate in civilized lands. High Charisma denotes a born leader or convincing salesman.

Not every encounter in the game can be solved with a sword. Some beings you meet may negotiate, trade information or interact in some other non-combative way. In these situations, characters with a high Charisma score will have a definite advantage. Remember to choose carefully which character will speak when faced with new NPCs. Those with a high Charisma will be more likely to make a good impression.

## INTELLIGENCE

This stat measures the character's mental acuity as well as such intangibles as knowledge, wisdom and memory. A character with a low Intelligence is slow-witted. A character with a high Intelligence is quick-thinking and perceptive.

During play, Intelligence determines the ability to understand information provided by the Foresight statistic. This means that a character with a high Foresight but a low Intelligence will not be able to understand the occasional flashes of insight he receives. Intelligence is also very

important to spell casters, as it's the basis for joining an order. Intelligence is combined with Strength to determine Balance. This stat can be modified by magic.

## **SECONDARY STATISTICS**

These three stats are derived from the primary statistics, and are measured on the same scale.

### **BALANCE**

The average of Strength and Intelligence, this statistic represents your character's courage when faced with terrifying creatures of legend. When you encounter certain powerful monsters, this stat is used to determine if your character has the willpower to do battle with the beast.

Characters with low Balance scores are weak-willed cowards who will be unable to fight from time to time. Those with exceptionally high scores are very brave, able to face the most menacing terrors without question or pause. Most heroes fall into the second category, and so should most of your characters, or you will run into trouble early in your adventuring career, when morale comes into play often.

### **ENDURANCE**

Calculated from Strength and Health, this is one of the most important statistics in the game. The higher your Endurance, the more staying power you have in combat. Characters with a high Endurance have the option of using heavier armor and using larger weapons than those with borderline values. See the section on Fatigue for more about Endurance and its impact on the game.

### **BODY POINTS**

The average of Size and Health, this statistic represents your character's wound status. The higher your Body Point score, the harder you are to kill. When you are

injured, the points that are inflicted are deducted from your Body Points.

The amount of damage taken by your character is represented by the red areas on your figure in the Combatant Window. This representation is relative to your character's maximum Body Point capacity, so a red area the same size on two different characters could represent very different amounts of damage. They are alike only in that they represent identical percentages of the wounded areas. When your character runs out of Body Points, he is incapacitated.

## **COMBAT**

Most of the basic principles of combat will be obvious after a couple of engagements, but sometimes it is the obvious that most eludes us. This section includes a more detailed explanation of the combat system that should help you lead your characters to more glorious victories.

### **FATIGUE**

One of the most important concepts in *Knights of Legend* is that of fatigue. All actions cost energy, and if a character uses more energy than he has available, he becomes fatigued. Fatigue is a dangerous thing. It makes you less efficient in combat, and if you really overextend yourself, you will fall unconscious from your exertions.

**BASIC ACTIONS** : Most actions have a basic energy cost. Some actions, like resting or walking, cost few (or no) points; others, like flying or berserk attacks, have the highest costs. The basic energy cost for a given action is modified by a character's encumbrance level. The character's helm, chest-piece, leggings, shield, and weapon have an encumbrance value based on their size and weight. The total encumbrance value of these items will limit the amount of energy available to the character each round.

**COMBAT**: The fatigue cost of an attack is determined by the encumbrance value of the weapon used, modified by the attack type chosen. For example, a thrusting attack results in a higher fatigue cost than a slashing attack.

The berserk attack has the highest fatigue cost of all. However, the fatigue cost associated with all attack types goes up as heavier weapons are used.

Defense and non-combat costs (running, flying, landing) are based on the total encumbrance value of the character's armor, shield and weapon.

**EFFECTS OF FATIGUE** : Accumulated fatigue reduces Foresight and Quickness. It also has a direct impact on the character's combat skill, making it more difficult for him to hit while leaving him increasingly vulnerable.

These factors make it important for you to balance your characters' armor and weapons against the kind of actions you will want them to perform. A Kelder, for example, is one of the most powerful characters in the game because of its great strength and its ability to fly. Still, its size means that it is limited to light armor. Heavy armor exacts a heavy fatigue price — a Kelder in platemail will only be able to fly in short hops, if at all, before he passes out from exhaustion. On the other hand, a dwarven warrior is small but powerful. Because of the reduced weight that goes along with his small size, he can afford to wear heavier armor than any other race in the game.

## WEAPONS & ARMOR

### Melee Weapons

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Dagger	Hack/Thrust	10	2-4	1H
Club	Hack/Slash	15	1-6	1H
Shortsword	Hack/Thrust	20	2-6	1H
Hand Axe	Hack/Slash	25	3-6	1H
Quarterstaff	All	25	2-7	1H
Scimitar	Hack/Slash	25	1-8	1H
Longsword	All	35	1-8	1H
Broad Axe	Hack/Slash	30	3-9	1H
Mace	All	40	4-9	1H
Broadsword	All	40	3-10	1H
Short Spear	All	40	2-11	1H
Battle Axe	All	40	1-12	1H
Heavy Maul	Hack/Slash	45	2-12	1H
Warhammer	Hack/Slash	50	3-13	1H

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Long Spear	All	55	4-13	2H
Morningstar	Hack/Slash	55	4-14	2H
Halberd	All	60	4-15	2H
Bastard Sword	Hack/Slash	60	3-17	2H
War Maul	Hack/Slash	62	3-18	2H
Great Hammer	Hack/Slash	66	4-19	2H
Flail	Hack/Slash	70	5-20	2H
Great Axe	Hack/Slash	70	2-24	2H
Great Sword	Hack/Slash	75	3-24	2H

### Missile weapons

Name	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Self Bow	30	2-13	2H
Light Crossbow	50	6-16	2H
Long Bow	40	1-20	2H
Elf Bow	40	3-22	2H
Heavy Crossbow	70	8-23	2H

Shield Size	Enc	Defense %
Small (Buckler)	20	20
Medium (Target)	40	30
Large (Kite)	60	40

### Comparison - Sword Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Dagger	Hack/Thrust	10	2-4	1H
Shortsword	Hack/Thrust	20	2-6	1H
Scimitar	Hack/Slash	25	1-8	1H
Longsword	All	35	1-8	1H
Broadsword	All	40	3-10	1H
Bastard Sword	Hack/Slash	60	3-17	2H
Great Sword	Hack/Slash	75	3-24	2H

### Comparison - Hammer Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Heavy Maul	Hack/Slash	45	2-12	1H
Warhammer	Hack/Slash	50	3-13	1H
War Maul	Hack/Slash	62	3-18	2H
Great Hammer	Hack/Slash	66	4-19	2H



### Comparison - Axe Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Hand Axe	Hack/Slash	25	3-6	1H
Broad Axe	Hack/Slash	30	3-9	1H
Battle Axe	All	40	1-12	1H
Halberd	All	60	4-15	2H
Great Axe	Hack/Slash	70	2-24	2H

### Comparison - Spear Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Short Spear	All	40	2-11	1H
Long Spear	All	55	4-13	2H

### Comparison - Mace Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Club	Hack/Slash	15	1-6	1H
Mace	All	40	4-9	1H

### Comparison - Flail Class

Name	Attack	Enc	Dmg	Hnds
Quarterstaff	All	25	2-7	1H
Morningstar	Hack/Slash	55	4-14	2H
Flail	Hack/Slash	70	5-20	2H

### Armor

Name	Enc/Head	Enc/Torso	Enc/Legs	Prt
Fur	6	54	36	1-6
Cloth	5	45	30	1-6
Leather	8	72	48	2-7
Cuirbolli	10	90	60	3-8
Ringmail	10	90	60	4-9
Scalemail	12	108	72	5-10
Brigandine	15	135	90	6-11
Chainmail	15	135	90	7-12
Platemail	20	180	120	7-17

## THE COMBAT ROUND

What follows is a step by step breakdown of combat and a rudimentary explanation of the mechanics in use.

### CHOOSING COMBAT OPTIONS

In the first part of the combat turn, all combatants select their actions. Depending on the Foresight and Intelligence of the characters involved, they may have foreknowledge of their opponents' actions when it comes time to select their options.

The order in which the characters and their opponents make their selections is based on their Foresight stat as modified by a randomly generated number. The resulting numbers are ordered from low to high so that combatants with lower modified Foresight are forced to choose their actions before they have had a chance to see what their opponents will be attempting.

When it comes time for a character to choose his action, he will have a chance of being able to see what options were selected by those opponents who had to choose before him. This chance is based on the character's Intelligence stat, modified by his rank.

All of this means that characters and creatures with a high basic Foresight will have a better chance to anticipate what their opponents are doing because they will have an opportunity to see their enemy's course of action before deciding on their own. This chance is based on Intelligence and will improve at higher rank. Wounds and fatigue will reduce the chances of anticipating an opponent's attack.

**REDOING COMBAT OPTIONS:** After all combat options have been selected, it is possible to go back and reselect. If this option is taken, all characters and creatures will go through the selection process again, but this time each character's Foresight score is reduced by half for purposes of determining order of selection. The redo option may be repeated as often as you like, but your character will stand less and less of a chance of successfully anticipating his opponent's actions.

## COMBAT EXECUTION

Once all characters have selected their options, the round begins and, one by one, the chosen actions performed.

**STRIKE ORDER** : The order in which characters and creatures carry out the actions selected for them is determined by their Quickness stat modified by a random number. The result is reduced to reflect accumulated fatigue and encumbrance as well as the type of action being performed. The modified values are ranked from high to low such that characters with the highest Quickness execute their actions first.

The formula used allows characters with a high base Quickness and/or light encumbrance to act before their opponents, possibly avoiding blows by moving or disrupting their opponents' attack with well-placed parries. Conversely, slow, heavily encumbered and/or fatigued characters will have difficulty escaping combat and are easily struck by faster opponents.

**ROLLING TO HIT** : Combat is resolved by comparing an offense number for the attacker with a defense number for the defender. The offense number is based on the character's offensive skill with the weapon being used, his Strength, and a random attack roll. The defense number is calculated by combining the appropriate defense skill with the defender's Quickness and a randomly generated defense roll. If the attacker's total is greater than the defender's, the attacker scores a hit.

**OFFENSIVE MODIFIERS** : The offense number is modified by accumulated fatigue, damage and encumbrance. An additional penalty is assessed for each hit the attacker received during that combat round. This simulates a disruption of the attack by recently inflicted damage.

There is also a bonus or penalty awarded for the combination of attack maneuver and defensive maneuver to reflect the effectiveness of certain forms of attack against certain forms of defense: A "slash low" maneuver against a "duck" defense would yield an offensive bonus; similarly, a "slash high" against the same defense would result in a defensive bonus.

**DEFENSIVE MODIFIERS** : The defense number is also modified by fatigue, damage and encumbrance. The defense skill is divided by the number of attacks already parried during the combat round, simulating the reduced ability to avoid multiple attacks. Finally, a standard shield bonus is added if applicable.

**HIT LOCATION** : The location of the hit is determined by the attack direction and the difference between the size of the attacker and the size of the defender. This allows characters to aim their blows at lightly armored or already injured areas and prevents unreasonable results such as a head blow against a fifteen foot giant.

**DAMAGE** : The damage done by a successful attack is based on several factors, including the weapon and attack form that were used, the strength of the attacker and the difference between the offensive and defensive totals. These elements allow not only for a hit or miss, but extra damage to reflect the quality of the hit. This will result in characters doing more damage with their attacks as they advance in rank and gain proficiency with their weapon.

Once the final damage total is determined, it is reduced by the armor worn on the location that was struck. Whatever damage gets through is taken by the character. If a location is reduced to zero, it is incapacitated. An arm or leg that is incapacitated becomes useless, and if the torso or head is incapacitated or the character's body point total drops to zero, he is knocked unconscious.

**EFFECTS OF DAMAGE**: In addition to reducing the body point total, wounds cause continual accumulation of fatigue. This simulates bleeding, which can be far more serious than the wounds themselves. All successful hits, whether or not any damage gets through, will cause additional fatigue on the round in which they occur, simulating the shock of the blow to the defender's system.

A tremendous blow can also cause the defender to be "knocked back" by the sheer physical force of the attack. This causes the defender to drop his weapon and be moved one space directly away from the attacker.

## END TURN

After every character has had a chance to perform his chosen action, all characters must pay the price for their labors in terms of fatigue.

Changes in the fatigue status of the combatants are based on the costs of their chosen activities and any losses resulting from wounds taken during the round. If more energy was spent than was available, fatigue is accumulated; if less was spent, accumulated fatigue is reduced.

When fatigue exceeds a combatant's initial endurance, he passes out. Most creatures will retreat from combat when their fatigue starts running low, but the point at which they do so varies from creature to creature.

Once all changes in fatigue status are determined, the next round begins. This continues until one side or the other is victorious or the party flees.

## ADVICE FROM THE FRONT

**RACES:** Make sure your party consists of a good mix of adventuring races. Each race — Human, Elven, Dwarven, and Kelden — has its own, unique capabilities. You want to be able to take advantage of them.

**MAGIC:** Magic users are quite powerful. Add one (or two) to your party as soon as possible. These spellcasters should put most of their money and adventure points into spells, but include some combat skills — magic isn't always dependable.

**MISSILE WEAPONS:** Always have missile weapons in your party — anywhere from a third to a half of your group should be so equipped. When firing a ranged weapon, try to do it from a tree space. The tree will protect you without hampering your accuracy. Try not to shoot across allies or into close combat — you risk hitting your companions. Force your enemies to cross their own lines of fire.

**ARMOR:** Light armor is better for low-level characters unless they have very high endurance scores, but find the

heaviest armor you can wear without becoming fatigued too quickly. Don't be afraid to try different combinations until you find something you are comfortable with.

**BACKUPS:** Always carry a backup weapon and be sure your weapons and armor are readied before you enter combat.

**FOES:** Concentrate on a few monsters rather than trying to kill all of your enemies gradually. Taking one opponent out of combat will keep it from doing any damage to your party while you go to work on its companions. Once you've selected an opponent, keep hitting it in the same location, rather than attacking its entire body.

If an enemy seems seriously wounded, leave it to die of blood loss. It will probably stand there resting just to stay conscious anyway, so it doesn't pose much of a threat. There are no guarantees, however, and a monster that rests long enough may rejoin the battle!

## CAMPAIGNING

It is possible to play a game of *Knights of Legend* that consists solely of forays into the wilderness to bash monsters without purpose, to no real end. This may be enough for some players, but if it is not enough for you, this section will explore some of the other options that are open to you as you adventure in the realm.

## CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

One of the main goals in any fantasy roleplaying game is to improve your character in one way or another. The easiest gauge of your character's status is his rank. Rank is a descriptive honorific that your character can earn by improving his skills to truly heroic levels. All characters begin the game as peasants who aspire to knighthood. Only a few will achieve this lofty goal, but those who do are respected throughout the land.

## THE RANKS

The members of the Order of the Silver Stave are the Knights of Legend, brave warriors whose heroic exploits are told far and wide. It is no small thing to be a knight, for they are the defenders of the land, fighting evil and injustice wherever they find it. The ranks in the game represent steps towards this ultimate goal. In addition, your overall ability to wield weapons and foresee your opponents' actions in combat will improve each time you go up in rank.

Below are the various ranks and what they represent.

**PEASANT** : Most characters begin the game at the very bottom of the social ladder, with no status to speak of. It will be a long and dangerous road to the top, and only the very best will make it to knighthood. Good luck and may the foresight be with you!

**PEASANT—SERF** : After a few combats, you will begin to build your reputation. It will go slowly at first, but do not be discouraged. Every knight was a squire first and every teacher a student. The first sign of your rising favor is that you will be added to the roles of the local lord. As a serf, you have been recognized as a vassal, the property of your lord. This may not seem like much, but remember that when you started the game you were literally nobody.

**PEASANT—LABORER** : The life of a serf is not an easy one, so you will probably not be sorry to move on. As a laborer, you've earned a measure of independence. You will spend time working for the ruling lord, but eventually be given more responsibility, and begin to work on your own.

**PEASANT—FREEDMAN** : Those who serve as vassals to their lord loyally will be allowed to work towards buying their freedom by earning enough to pay off their own wergeld, or value. When you have accomplished this goal, you will no longer be the property of your lord. You still owe him fealty, but as your own man. This is a very important step on your road to independence. Well done.

**PEASANT—TRADESMAN** : The tradesman is a freed peasant working toward acceptance in one of the guilds so that he may become a merchant. This is one of the surest ways out of the peasant class. It is only a matter of time.

**COMMON** : As you advance you will notice that you reach key levels every fifth rank. These are the thresholds at which your social status is noticeably improved. Your progression to the rank of common, or commoner, represents true freedom at last. No longer are you a servant of the upper classes; you are a full citizen with rights and responsibilities. You have come to your first plateau.

**COMMON—APPRENTICE** : Now free to pursue whatever goals you wish, you start on your chosen path, be it warrior, mage, rogue or whatever else you might aspire to. Although you have been adventuring for quite some time, its not until now that you've the social influence to be an apprentice.

**COMMON—JOURNEYMAN** : The title for this rank comes from the parlance of the craftsmen's guilds. When an apprentice has learned the rudiments of his craft from a recognized master, he continues his education by practicing whatever skills he has acquired. This system has obvious parallels in the career of an adventurer. You are nearing mastery. All you need is a little more experience.

**COMMON—MASTER** : Seemingly endless hours of intensive training and no small amount of battlefield experience have brought you to this stage. You are a recognized master of your chosen art. As a master, you will find that, although you are still a commoner, your abilities command respect that might lead the way to a better life.

**COMMON—COURTIER** : At this rank, the most privileged of the common folk begin to enter into the circles of the ennobled. Such association represents a major improvement in your social standing and is only a step away from joining the circle yourself.

**GENTLE** : This is the first of the noble classes. Most of the gentry are born to their class, but a few come up from the common folk through marriage or noble decree. You have reached another important plateau. The gentle folk are no longer bound by the laws of vassalage and have the right to do what they will with their lives.

**GENTLE—WANDERER** : Many of the gentry take to travel at one time or another. At this point, you have earned enough recognition and status to be counted among these wandering gentles. It is best to allow yourself to be identified with those who are truly noble-born so that you can

associate and be associated with them.

**GENTLE—ADVENTURER** : After a time, your reputation will start to spread and you will be welcomed as the adventurer you have been all along. From here on you will receive honors greater than those you have already received. Keep at it and you may have a chance of reaching your goal of Knight.

**GENTLE—HERO** : Those who perform truly heroic feats become known for their valor. At this rank, that is exactly what has happened to you: You are known throughout the land as a heroic adventurer. At this point, you begin to attract the attention of the Order, who will keep watch over you to see if you have what it takes to be a squire.

**GENTLE—ARMIGER** : If you make enough of an impression on the local lord, your exploits will be recognized by the symbolic gift of a shield bearing your new coat of arms, a holdover from the early days of Ashtalarea nobility. This new station may well impart the status to bring you to the attention of a knight.

**SQUIRE** : Your adventures have impressed the Order and you have been given the chance to prove yourself. Leave the arena with a renewed sense of purpose, for your path is clear if you have the skill required to follow it. Until you earn your next rank, you will undergo a kind of probationary period where it will be determined if you have what it takes to cut it as a squire.

**SQUIRE—INITIATE** : During your probationary period, you have impressed the council enough that you have been made an Initiate of the Order. Your probation is over and you are truly a squire for as long as it takes to achieve knighthood. There are several levels of squire, each a step toward your goal. You have taken the first step. Onward and upward!

**SQUIRE—NOVICE** : This is the midpoint of your career as a squire. Do not be dismayed, the road to knighthood is a difficult path indeed and few have made it this far. Many squires give up the challenge at this rank. Very few have the dedication to remain true to their goal, the Order and themselves. Are you one of the few?

**SQUIRE—ADEPT** : You have been chosen out of the ranks of novices to vie for the honor of candidacy. Your

deeds speak well for you, and if you continue in this way, you will be considered for knighthood, the dream of every squire.

**SQUIRE—CANDIDATE** : At long last, after facing many dangers, your heroics have gained the attention of the Order. This is an important time, as the next step is knighthood. The Order will be watching you, so be sure to do your best.

**KNIGHT** : Congratulations! Through many trials and tribulations, you have emerged victorious. Your efforts have finally paid off with the recognition you so richly deserve. Revel in your accomplishment, for your name will go down in legends that your children's children will hear. During this initial period, you will learn what it is to be a knight in more than name, and then you may be ready for greater honors.

**KNIGHT—ERRANT** : Now that you have learned the basic tenets of the Order, you are on your own to wander the land under your own initiative. Go forth and right wrongs, for you are one of the chosen few.

**KNIGHT—COMMANDER** : Within the Order, there are several degrees of knighthood. When the Order was formed, the knights were actually minor nobility and military commanders. These days, there is little need for such designations, so the degrees have become honorary titles. A Knight-Commander was once the leader of an entire company of men. To be sure that the knights were up to the task, the commanders were chosen from the best of the best. This recognition of excellence is all the rank confers today.

**KNIGHT—MARSHAL** : When there were Knight-Commanders leading the troops into battle, there was a need for marshals to command the commanders. These knights were some of the finest warriors in the land. To distinguish oneself from this handful of legendary heroes is nearly impossible, but to strive to be the best you can possibly be is the responsibility of every Knight of the Order, so you must try. Who knows — you might succeed...

**KNIGHT—BARONET** : In the original social structure of the land, one of the ways to achieve nobility was to become a landed knight or Knight-Baronet. From this station it was possible to become a Marquis or even a Duke, but this meant an end to your adventures. Fortunately for

adventurers, the title Knight-Baronet has become solely an honorific — one that commands respect and inspires awe. This is the greatest honor that can be bestowed on anyone in *Knights of Legend*. If you have achieved this rank, you are to be congratulated — you are in a select group indeed!

## THE ARENA

To progress through the ranks, characters must periodically prove their worth by fighting in the arena.

There will come a time when the local weapons master feels you are ready to gain recognition for your prowess with your chosen weapon. It is wise to fight in the arena — if you don't, no weapons master will train you further. If you accept, the trainer then will send you to the arena. There you will be tested against a creature chosen by the masters. These creatures represent a match for warriors of the rank you wish to attain.

If you defeat your opponent, you will have proven yourself worthy of a higher rank and you will be promoted to that rank by the masters. This will allow you to continue until you are again ready for the arena and further recognition.

Concentrate on mastering no more than two weapons. If you feel you need more than this, specialize in one and keep the others at a reasonable level. Don't try to be a master at everything. It won't work.

Prepare yourself carefully before entering the arena — combat there is strictly one-on-one and there is no retreat. You will receive no help from your friends and can expect no quarter from your foe. Be prepared to fight with both missile- and hand-weapons, if possible, and be comfortable with the game's combat system before braving the arena.

## MAGIC



Elven is the language of Ashtalarean magic, and all mages must have at least a passing knowledge of this rich and beautiful tongue in order to practice their craft. For those who hope to achieve magical mastery, a detailed description of Elven can be found on pages 129. However, the information below will provide enough information to get you started as a spellcaster.

## CASTING SPELLS

Spells are cast by speaking a word of power. Each magical word consists of five or six parts, with each part describing a portion of the spell's total effect. The parts of a spell are always presented in the following order:

**RACE + STAT + SEVERITY + RANGE  
(+ DURATION) + SUBCLASS**

The first syllable of the spell describes the **RACE** the mage wants to affect. In Elven, as in most languages, each race is referred to differently:

Human	= DAY	Elemental	= VON
Elf	= AR	Giant	= KUM
Dwarf	= TYA	Legendary	= VAR
Kelder	= KEL	Undead	= VOR

After the race name comes the **STAT** affected. There's no need to worry about whether a spell affects a stat positively or negatively — when you cast a spell, you will be asked what effect you want it to have.

Strength	= DAN	Fatigue	= TWE
Quickness	= VA	Offensive skill	= KUT
Foresight	= DA	Defensive skill	= AND
Intelligence	= VOR	Body	= NA

Next, the mage specifies the **SEVERITY** of the spell, the amount of power he's putting into it:

Insignificant	= R	Great	= Y
Moderate	= L	Tremendous	= F
Serious	= W		

The **RANGE** of a spell can be either close or long. "Close" means the target is right beside the spellcaster — close enough to touch. "Long" range is anything beyond arm's reach.

Close = ON      Long = YR

The spell's **DURATION** — how long it lasts — comes next. A spell with the shortest duration possible may last just a single combat round; a spell with the longest duration may last through an entire combat encounter. Mages don't have to specify a duration for spells affecting the Body or Fatigue stats — such spells automatically increase stats for an entire combat (or until the target is defeated!).

Minimal	= A	Long	= O
Short	= E	Longest	= U
Medium	= I		

Finally, the mage specifies which **SUBCLASS** — which specific creature(s) — he wants to affect. In the case of Humans, Elves, Dwarves and Kelder, no subclass need be specified. For these races, simply end the spell with the suffix "TA." All creatures of the race specified at the beginning of the spell will be affected, regardless of subclass. Spells aimed at creatures other than Humans, Elves, Dwarves and Kelder must be more specific:

### ELEMENTALS

Golem	= MU	Djinn	= TI
Sylph	= FE	Salamander	= MI

### GIANTS

Goblin	= MU	Hill Giant	= A
Orc	= FE	Ettin	= UA
Hobgoblin	= TI	Ogre	= KE
Great Orc	= MI	Stone Ogre	= AT
Troll	= KO	Cyclops	= LO
Cliff Troll	= RA	Mist Giant	= RI

### LEGENDARY CREATURES

Minotaur	= MU	Binderak	= KO
Muck Thing	= FE	Sledge	= RA
Lizarion	= TI	Mist Grub	= A
Blom	= MI	Walbar	= UA

### UNDEAD

Gremlin	= MU	Zombie	= TI
Ghoul	= FE	Skeleton	= MI

Humans, Elves, Dwarves, Kelder = TA

Once you've created a spell, give it a name you'll remember easily in the heat of battle. A spell designed to hurt Orcs might be called "Orc Killer." One designed to heal Elves

could be named "Elf Restorer."

Below, you'll find a few sample spells. Using the lists above, try to break these magical words down into their component parts. Once you can do this, you'll be a mage worthy of respect anywhere in Ashtalarea!

Examples:

HURT ALL DWARVES SERIOUSLY AT CLOSE RANGE = TYANAWONTA

HEAL AN ELF MODERATELY AT LONG RANGE = ARNALYRTA

GREATLY INCREASE AN ORC'S FATIGUE AT LONG RANGE = KUMTWEYRFE

GREATLY INCREASE THE FORESIGHT OF A KELDEN AT LONG RANGE FOR MEDIUM DURATION = KELDYYRITA

GREATLY DECREASE THE INTELLIGENCE OF A SKELETON AT LONG RANGE FOR MINIMAL DURATION = VORVORWYRAMI

TREMENDOUSLY HURT AN OGRE AT LONG RANGE = KUMNAFYRKE

### **LEARNING SPELLS**

Training in the arts of magic can be found in a Magic Tower or Shop. There you will be offered the opportunity to select a spell from the list known to the proprietor. You may also be asked if you wish to join the magical order to which he belongs.

### **MAGICAL ORDERS**

Becoming a member of a magical order requires a substantial expenditure of gold, usually on the order of 500 gold. When you pay this initiation fee, you will be given a talisman as a symbol of your allegiance, which you must

swear to wear at all times. If you do not wear this token, you will not be recognized as a member of the order and your powers will be limited.

As a member of a magical order, you can modify any spell in your book of spells. Note that modification is a thing not easily done. You are essentially changing the basic formulae upon which the entire enchantment is based — almost like recreating the spell from scratch. Once you join an order, the option to modify your spells will be made available to you at shops or towers whose proprietors belong to the same order.

The various orders have different goals, different strengths and different weaknesses. For instance, some orders may be dedicated to eliminating reptilian races and creatures, and will specialize in spells that focus on this goal. Make sure you choose an order whose spells are in keeping with your objectives or you will find yourself at a loss later in the game.

### **MODIFYING SPELLS**

If you choose to modify the effects of any spell in your book, a scroll will appear. On the scroll, the spell will be broken down into its individual components. By modifying these components, you change what your spell can do.

Once you have finished modifying the spell, select the U-TURN icon. A text message will ask if you want to save the modified spell to your spell book. The YES icon will save the spell — if you have enough gold and Adventure Points.

For more information on the language and structures of magic, see the appendix on the Elven language on page 129 of this book.

### **SELECTING SPELLS**

When choosing your complement of spells, try to keep a few simple guidelines in mind and you will get the most out of your mages.

Remember that magical power has its price — fatigue. You may be tempted to go for ultra-powerful spells,



but they will have limited utility. You will only be able to cast them once or twice before you are exhausted. Because the ability to use magic is limited in this way, mages may want to wear light armor. Heavy armor protects better, but increased encumbrance results in still more fatigue.

It is very difficult to cast powerful spells while wearing truly effective armor, and attempts to do both usually leave the caster exhausted or unconscious.

Try to pick attack spells effective against as many different creatures as you can. If you have accepted a quest to take on something that sounds particularly nasty, it may be in your best interest to construct a special-purpose spell designed to soften it up for your fighters.



SCROLL

To see your lists of spells, select the **SCROLL** icon on the Character Profile Screen

In the long run, you may be better off concentrating on weapons mastery, but a little magic can go a long way in the early stages of the game. Get some magic as soon as you are able.

## QUESTING

From time to time, you will encounter a villager who asks if you will do something for him. This is the offering of a quest. Quests are the meat and drink of heroes — the completion of such tasks brings great glory to your character (and, incidentally, is the key to completing the *Knights of Legend* game).

When a quest presents itself, consider carefully whether or not you are ready to accept the charge. Most novice characters will not have the skills to take up the challenge. After some less rigorous encounters and a few visits to the local weapons master, your characters will probably be ready for their first quest.



MEDAL

*When you complete a quest, the person who gave it to you will present you with a medal. Accumulate enough of these medals and you will have proven yourself a true knight of legend.*

## NEW REGIONS

Explored all of Ashtalarca? Not to worry! Additional regions will be made available for use with *Knights of Legend*. These expansions will open whole new lands for you to adventure in.

To access these new areas as they become available from Origin, choose the **Install a Region** option from the main menu and follow the directions. When you create a character, you will have the option of starting him in the new region. Otherwise, you will have to travel there from Ashtalarca. The easiest way to do this is to take a ship. However, depending on the region, there may be a passage over land, if you can find it.

## THE REALM OF ASHTALAREA



"Sages? Bah!" the weathered man snorts derisively. "You want to learn about Ashtalarea, don't go wasting your time on those self-impressed scroll shufflers. You talk to someone who's been over the area, someone who's seen what he's talking about. You talk to someone like Cullen

of Kerlock." He taps his chest importantly.

"What's some dusty scholar going to tell you about Ashtalarea? That it's the holding of Duke Fuquan, vassal to old King Samuel back in Estrikan? That it occupies the peninsula of the same name, cut off from the rest of the Kingdom of Sondar by the Mountains of Tyme? What difference does that make to you?

"It takes a man like me, a man who's been to every town in the land, who's guested with folk from the Krag Barbarians to the Elves of Klvar. A man who earns his sup and cup telling the sort of histories that the good people want to hear—tales of heroes and monsters, of battles won and lost. The kind of stories a sage can't tell, 'cause he doesn't know 'em!"

"Oh, a sage will try and hide his ignorance behind a list of names and dates," Cullen says, waving his hand absently. "But he doesn't know how it really happened. And even if he did, you'd never learn it of him. His manner of telling it would put you to sleep faster than a rap on the noggin from old Hvrad Myth!"

## BEFORE THE HUMANS CAME

*"A sage might tell you, for example, that the history of Ashtalarea begins a century and five years ago, when men from Salynn first came through the Pass of Tyme, where Brettle now stands. But it's wrong he'd be." The grey-haired storyteller waggles a reproachful finger in your face, as if you'd been the one speaking such falsehoods. "The tale of Ashtalarea begins nearly three hundred centuries before that, when the Dwarves broke through to the surface of the earth, and laid eyes on the sun for the first time!"*

The Dwarves are an ancient race, but their dealings with the folk above are a recent event in their history. All Dwarves originated in the Core of the Earth, it's said, where they lived by themselves for centuries. Then, there was a great falling out among the clans of the Dwarves, and many of the clans began to move away from the Core, digging tunnels out in various directions.

Now, the Dwarves had lived for eons beneath the earth, never knowing that there was anything in the world but endless stone. But one Spring day—the day the Dwarves call the Day of Lighting—the short ones of Ghor's Folk made an incredible discovery: One of their tunnels emerged from the rock, not onto a dark, subterranean cavern, but into the infinite world of light and space in which we have lived all our lives.

You can imagine what a wonder this discovery was to the folk of Ghor. Many believed they had reached the end of the world, and retreated down their old tunnels into the bowels of the earth. The more courageous among them, however, decided to brave the explosion of brightness before them, and venture forth onto the surface of the world. They named this strange new place Ashtel Arra, which is Dwarven for "upper world."

Now that Ghor's Folk have moved back into their own hills, their Prince has resurrected the celebration of the Day of Lighting. This is a somber event, devoted as much to the memory of their cousins who fled back into the earth as to the celebration of the world above.

## THE ELVES ARRIVE

*"But the Dwarves weren't the only ones to arrive here before us men," Cullen says, squinting at you through the smoke from his pipe. "The Elves came to Ashtalarea not long after. And if you think the arrival of the Dwarves odd, you'll never believe how the Fair Folk came to the land."*

For a generation after their emergence, Ghor's Folk settled the mountains that once stood where the Ghor Hills lie today. By 750, the Kingdom of Ghor had been established.

In the winter of 789, the Dwarves of Ghor began to notice a strange wind blowing out of the north. New as they were to the upper world, the Dwarves had no idea whether this wind was natural or not, so they waited, and they watched. The wind gradually built as the winter passed, and by spring it had grown to a steady gale. Again, many of the Dwarves predicted the end of the world—some sort of divine vengeance for leaving the womb of the earth.

Finally, some of Ghor's Folk spotted a dark cloud on the horizon—small at first, but growing steadily. When the cloud drew near, the Dwarves could see that it was no ordinary thunderhead. It was made up of thousands of strange riders on winged steeds. A few Dwarves panicked, believing the flying horde to be the instrument of their destruction.

But as the cloud passed overhead, it did not even pause. The horsemen flew on to the south, paying no attention to the Dwarves below. Yet as they passed, the Dwarves were able to see them well. They were tall and long of limb, fully twice the height of the tallest Dwarf. Their ears were pointed, but even more amazing to the Dwarves was the fact that not a one had a beard on his chin!

From this description, you and I know that these were the Elves, coming to Ashtalarea. But the Dwarves had no idea what these folk could be. Decades would pass before Ghor's Folk encountered another Elf, so that they might learn about them. Thus, the Elves lived for years in Dwarf lore, objects of mystery, wonder and more than a little fear.

The Elves flew on to the Plains of Lintle, and settled in the woods which dot those plains. What became of their winged steeds, I cannot say. Some of the oldest Elves in

Melod must surely have been part of that wondrous horde, but they have never told the story of their origin or their exodus to Ashtalarea to a single human.

About this same time, another clan of Dwarves, Zolod's Folk, emerged from the earth in the Mytrone Mountains in central Ashtalarea. Less superstitious and more free-willed than their distant cousins in Ghor, Zolod's Folk adapted to surface life with considerably less difficulty. As soon as he discovered the world above, the King of the Zolods set out to control the land around him.

So casually did Zolod's Folk regard their emergence into the light that they did not bother to record its date. Thus, the Dwarves of the Mytrones have no holy day corresponding with Ghor's Day of Lighting.

## THE OGRE WARS

*"For two hundred years did the Folk of Ghor live in peace, both above and below the mountains of their Kingdom." Cullen holds his pipe as he takes a deep swallow from his mug. "As they became comfortable in the land above, in their Ashtel Arra, they began to explore farther afield. It was during this time that they first encountered both Zolod's Folk and the Elves."*

Though they were polite enough to one another, the Dwarves and Elves did not become great friends. Superstitions regarding the flying horde still ran deep in Ghor's Folk, while the Elves looked down their long noses at the Dwarves, thinking them primitive and barbaric. Fortunately, Ashtalarea was a broad land, and sparsely peopled—there was no need for conflict between the races.

Ghor's meeting with Zolod's Folk, however, was a joyous one—centuries earlier, before the Dwarves left the Core of the Earth. Zolod and Ghor had been close friends. The two clans had been separated for generations, but Ghor's Folk considered it a sign of great good that they should find the folk of Zolod on the surface of the world, so close to their own emergence. Ties of marriage and diplomacy were made between the kingdoms, and a great alliance was formed.

Yet the Dwarves of Ghor met a third race in the early

years of the tenth century. While scouting the foothills of the Mountains of Tyme for deposits of gold and silver, Ghor's Folk first ran into the dreaded Stone Ogres.

Back then, the Stone Ogres were more than the savage beasts that roam the hills and forests today. When the Dwarves found them, they lived in large tribes, making permanent dwellings in caves in the lower Tymes. Territorial and superstitious, the Stone Ogres hated and feared the Dwarves who came to mine their hills. In 938, the Stone Ogres attacked and slaughtered the Ghor mining outpost near their caverns. That was called the First Ogre War, though it was really just one battle.

But Dwarves are famous for their goldlust, and they couldn't let those veins in the Tymes be. Another, larger expedition set out to re-establish the destroyed outpost in 952; it was destroyed that winter in the Second Ogre War.

They say you've got to hit a Dwarf three times before he'll leave well enough alone, and Ghor's Folk are certainly no exception. When a third expedition reached the mines in the spring of 963, they were met by a tremendous horde of Ogres—more than the Dwarves had ever known existed. After a brief but bloody skirmish, the Dwarves turned and fled for Ghor. But the Stone Ogres followed them . . .

For many months, the enormous horde of Ogres laid siege to the great hall of Ghor. The stone walls were pounded by battering rams. The Dwarves fought back, firing bolt after crossbow bolt into the mass of Ogres, until the sky was dark with deadly missiles. But the Ogres persisted and, with a rush, seized the inner grounds where the dwarven militia met them in a brave line. They say the echo of the dwarven battle cry can still be heard in those hills today. The line held for a time, but the Ogres poured through the breach in the wall in unthinkable numbers. Finally, the valiant Dwarves fell.

The King of Ghor stood with his private guard, awaiting his fate. Axe in hand, he fought valiantly, but even he could not withstand the Ogre assault. He fell at the hand of the Ogre Lord, old Ugwump himself.

The Ogres celebrated their victory and raided the treasure troves, but they never spied the hidden stone doors behind which the dwarven women and children lay in hiding. Only this bit of luck allowed the Ghor race to survive.

## HUMANS CROSS THE MOUNTAINS

*"And now, my friend, we come to the point where most so-called historians begin their records," Cullen smiles. "The arrival of humans in Ashtalarea."*

About the same time that Ghor and the Stone Ogres were destroying each other, humans from the Duchy of Salynn began to enter the region through the Pass of Tyme. They didn't go far once they crossed, though. Most settled the fertile lands right below the pass, where they founded the town of Brettle in 962.

In the late 970's, two expeditions set out from Brettle, one following the river that would come to be called the Tradewater, the other following what would eventually become the River Passing. When the southern expedition—on the Passing—reached Lake Eyren, they settled on its shores. There, under the protection of the Sheller Ridge, they built the village of Shellernoon. The year was 972.

The Tradewater expedition was led by two brothers, Feglar and Krell, from Brokenbridge in Salynn. They followed the Tradewater to its mouth, which emptied into a vast bay. Feglar named it the Great Dismal Bay, and sent word of the discovery back to Brettle, along with a request for further instructions from the king's governor there. Feglar and Krell camped on the shore of the bay, and waited. Tempers began to grow short. Krell and his men wanted to move on, while Feglar wanted to build a town at the mouth of the river.

Almost a year had passed when the governor's messenger arrived with orders to build the town on or near what the governor called "Feglar's Bay." Krell was enraged by the governor's message, both for its orders and for its renaming of the bay. Krell attacked Feglar one night in camp, and soon a fight broke out between the men loyal to each brother. The expedition was torn in two. Krell led his men through a great swamp and established the town of Thimblewald. Feglar and his followers retreated into the safety of the northern Mytrone Mountains, where they formed a friendship and alliance with King Zolod.

## THE DUCHY OF ASHTALAREA

*"Those were good, free days, when men were masters of their own destinies," the storyteller sighs, staring wistfully into the distance. "But every revel comes to an end eventually. In 977, the king back in Estrikan made Ashtalarea a duchy, and sent a new duke to rule it."*

Not that I'd speak ill of our good Duke Fuquan, or his fathers. But once the nobility moves into a place, it changes. As soon as he arrived, the new duke set up the Brettle Regulars, to guard the Pass. And he commissioned the Highwaymen, to build roads around the land. The first highways were planned to run from Brettle to Shellcrnoon and the Hobe, the fortress city being built by Feglar's men and the Mytrone Dwarves.

## CRELEK GOES TO GHOR

*"Awhile back, I said it takes three licks to make a Dwarf take notice," Cullen says, setting his mug down. "Well, there was one Dwarf in 1003 that must have had one more pop coming. Crelek, he was called then—now he's the Dwarf Prince of Ghor."*

Crelek was but a babe when he and the other refugees from the Ogre War fled the Ghor Hills for the safety of the Mytrones. The memory of his homeland burned brightly within him and he vowed to reclaim the land of his people. As the years passed, he grew stronger and stronger. Eventually, he gathered up enough of Ghor's Folk to make an expedition into the hills of their lost homeland. For good measure, Crelek took along a few humans, as well as a company of Zolod's Folk. Boldly, Crelek set off for fame or oblivion. It looked like it was oblivion he found, too.

The first winter in Ghor was especially harsh, even for the Ghor Hills. The humans in the expedition begged Crelek to break camp and head back to civilization. But Crelek refused, telling the men that if they wanted to leave,

they could. So Crelek's humans abandoned him, setting out for home in the middle of the worst winter in decades.

Despite the desertion of their human comrades, Crelek and his dwarvish followers stuck by their resolve to re-establish the kingdom of Ghor. To escape that first, harsh winter, they burrowed into the hills of their homeland. But no word came from Crelek the next spring. Zolod's Folk, back in the Mytrones, could only assume that their brave cousins had perished during the winter.

The humans, meanwhile, became lost in the hills, and wandered without direction for weeks. Finally, they emerged exhausted and dying from the hills on the north coast of Ashtalarea. They were following the coastline, looking for a settlement, when they found the ruins of an ancient town. Desperate, they took refuge in broken stone buildings, burning what wood they could find to keep warm. When the weather broke, the humans stayed, and built the town of Htron on the old ruins.

## THE WALBARS

*"But it wasn't humans alone that built that little village among the ruins into the Free City of Htron," Cullen continues, flagging the barman for another mug of ale. "The walbars were the ones that really made the difference."*

Just eight years after the village of Htron had been founded, the first walbar ships arrived. You've heard of the walbar warriors, I'll wager, running around in the northern forests, killing honest travellers. Great big fellows they are, with an oily hide, massive jaws, and long tusks like a beast's. But the first walbars that came to Ashtalarea weren't ravaging warriors. It's honest seamen and traders they were, and they're the ones that made Htron more than just a simple fishing village.

The first walbars were explorers, checking back on the north coast for any sign of civilization—centuries before, they had traded with the people who built the original city on the site of Htron. Though they were surprised to find humans there, they quickly realized that there was considerable money

to be made by establishing trade with them. Within a year, walbar ships were regularly arriving in Anchoring Bay. Only a couple of years later, the human population had more than tripled, as people flooded into the city to trade with the walbars. The walbars soon began to use human labor—cheap by their standards—to build new ships in Htron, adding to the commerce between Htron and the walbar homeland.

By this point, Brettle was becoming a large enough town to have a sizable population of undesirables—thieves, beggars, rogues. As the good folk of Brettle pushed them out, most of them drifted up to Htron, which was outside the Duke's control. As the number of lowlifes in Htron swelled, the walbar merchants grew less interested in trade there. Theft, vandalism, and vagrancy finally made it unprofitable for them to do business in Htron. In 1023, the last walbar merchant ship left Anchoring Bay. Not one walbar ship has been seen in Ashtalarean waters since.

But not all the walbars left with the merchants. A number of soldiers and marines were left behind, to live among humans who resented them for the merchants' abandonment of Htron. As the ill feelings in the free city festered, the remaining walbars fled into the countryside, becoming highwaymen and bandits. The walbar bands which prey upon travellers today are those same walbar soldiers—or their descendants. No one is really sure how long they live.

## POITLE'S PIRATES

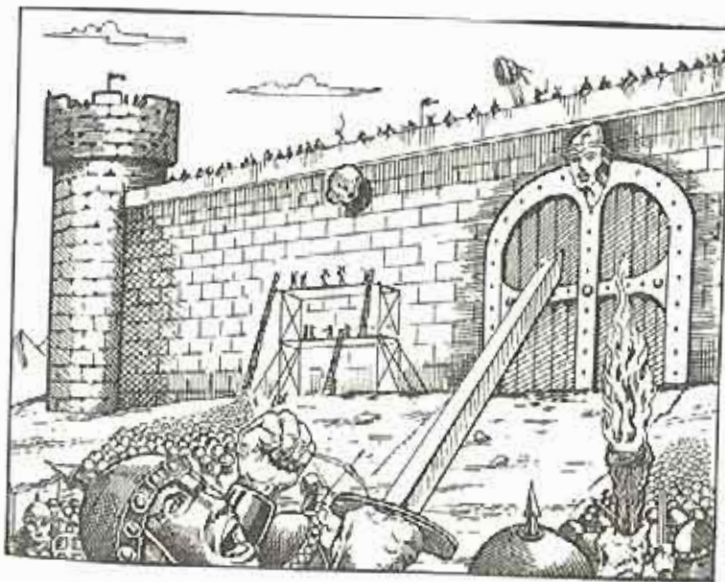
*"When the walbars left, they didn't take all their ships with them," the storytellers tells you. "A few of 'em—the smaller, less seaworthy ones—they left in Anchoring Bay. Even so, they were better vessels than any of the fishing boats or rafts that men had. So it was just a matter of time 'fore one of Htron's thieves figured out the idea of coastal raiding."*

The meanest, cleverest, richest thief in Htron at the time was a rogue by the name of Poitle. With a hand of loyal ruffians behind him, Poitle laid claim to the best three of the abandoned ships, and sailed out for adventure. For 18 years, from 1026 to 1044, Poitle terrorized the scattered coastal

villages of Ashtalarea. When others took to sea, Poitle invented piracy, capturing their cargoes and passengers, and burning their ships to the waterline.

By 1044, Poitle's pirate base at the mouth of the Westwash and Enchanted Rivers had grown to a small town in its own right. Too old for pirating anymore, Poitle settled down in the town which shared his name, and let his henchmen carry on the raiding. The next year, he captained one more voyage, this time up the Westwash. When they reached the Mytrone Mountains, where the river begins, they found Zolod's Folk under attack by the minions of the evil sorcerer. The War of Darkness was already under way.

## THE WAR OF DARKNESS



*"Now, old Poitle's taken us a bit ahead of our tale," says Cullen, tamping a fresh wad of tobacco into his pipe. "You youngsters may not remember it so well, but the War of Darkness wasn't so very long ago. Fought in it myself, I did, alongside the great knight Seggallion. Those were glorious days, and sad ones, too."*

The war began back in 1042, when Pildar sent an army of Orcs, Trolls and Ogres against old Zolod in the Mytrones. At first, the Dwarves were caught by surprise—Pildar had been a model neighbor until then, at least for a sorcerer. But it was just an act, to sucker the Dwarves in. By the spring of '43, every village in the southern Mytrones had been overrun by Pildar's hordes. When he laid siege to the capital, Dom Zolod, in '44, the fortress city was already bursting at the seams with refugees.

That same year, Pildar sent another army against the walled town of Shellernoon. This force was made up of Goblins and a race of men known as Dark Guardsmen. The Darkguards had been seduced by Pildar to fight against their human brethren, and though they since have foresworn their allegiance to the evil wizard, they are still feared and shunned by good folk.

The Shellernooners sent word to the Duke in Brettle, who quickly dispatched the Regulars to the besieged city. The Duke also recalled the Highwaymen from their work on the duchy's roads, and outfitted them as a fighting force. Even together, though, the Regulars and the Highwaymen could not break the siege of Shellernoon.

## THE BATTLES

*"There were some great battles fought in those years," Cullen says, lost in his own memories of the war. "Sodden Hills, Olegar's End, Sheller's Ridge, Raven's Point . . . all of them glorious, whether won or lost."*

The sieges of Zolod City, as we call it, and Shellernoon had lasted three years before Pildar suffered a defeat. It came at the Sodden Hills, on the south side of Lake Eyren. The Elves of Lintle circled 'round Lake Eyren from the south and hit Pildar's staging area on the west shore. Along the way, the Elves were joined by a small contingent from Poitle, which had sailed up the Astle to the hills. Their attack was a surprise, their battle a victory, but it was a costly one. Pildar was forced to abandon his landings and pull his armies northward, closer to the contested Mytrones. But the price of

this victory was paid by the Elves of the Usip Wood—their last lord, Elbaraman, was slain in the battle.

Then came the fall of Dom Zolod, in '48. After holding out for six years against the wizard's brutish armies and their wicked siege engines, King Zolod realized there was no hope for his starving, demoralized city. Experience had taught Zolod that Pildar's armies regarded prisoners as playthings. Rather than let Pildar's horde use his people for sport, Zolod decided—with the support of his advisors—to draw the enemy into the city, then destroy it.

When the time came, Zolod pulled his armies back from the perimeter of the city. Convinced they had broken their foes at last, Pildar's monsters rushed into the city in search of loot and prisoners. When most of the army had entered the city, Zolod burst the dams in the city's elaborate system of aqueducts and reservoirs. Dom Zolod was flooded within minutes; two-thirds of Pildar's minions were killed, along with the entire Dwarven population of the city. Today, the valley that held the city is now Lake Sanat—the Lake of Doom.

We must never forget the sacrifice of King Zolod and his people. If it weren't for their bravery and selflessness, Pildar's armies might have been strong enough to overrun all of Ashtalarea.

About the same time that Zolod was planning his trap for the Orcs and Trolls, I was serving under Sir Seggallion. Along with the squires of the Hobe, we were camped atop Raven's Point, on the west side of the Great Forest. Across the valley, atop the Sheller Ridge, was the back side of the Goblin army surrounding Shellernoon. In hopes of breaking through to the city, Seggallion led us down into the valley and up the Ridge. Only a small contingent, led by Seggallion's Old Guard, was left to hold the Point, because of its commanding view of the Sheller region.

But as soon as we descended into the valley, Pildar's forces were on the move. The bulk of the army on the Ridge pulled back to the city, while a crack force of Goblin cavalry swept around us to the north, heading for Raven's Point. When we crested the Ridge and found but a handful of Dark Guardsmen, Seggallion knew he'd been tricked. We turned about and made for Raven's Point at, but we were too late.

By the time we arrived, the Goblins had finished their work and fled. Every man was slain, except the members of the Old Guard—their fate was worse. At Pildar's cruel command, the Goblins had chopped off the hands of all surviving Guardsmen, condemning them to a life of dependence and humiliation.

Some folks call Raven's Point "Seggallion's Folly," but not those of the Old Guard who still live. Seggallion was out-maneuvered, plain and simple; the fate of the Guard was Pildar's doing, not the knight's.

After Dom Zolod and Raven's Point came the Battle of Olegar's End, in 1049. Olegar was a Highwayman officer, who led his forces against those of Tranzadeel, High Priest of the Orcs. Olegar cut Tranzadeel's Orcs off from the body of Pildar's army, pursuing them through the Thorn Hills and finally trapping them on the west coast of Ashtalarea, a few miles north of Prazen Point. In the battle that followed, Olegar's Highwaymen battled with the Orcs, while Tranzadeel and his acolytes were challenged by a Klvar mage in Olegar's band.

Eventually, the Elvish adept was able to distract Tranzadeel's coven long enough for Olegar to steal up to the High Priest and personally pierce his heart with a single sword thrust. But when the blade struck home, Tranzadeel burst into a vast ball of mystic fire, which devoured the scene of the battle and melted the land around it. When the fire consumed itself, the water of the ocean rushed in to fill the newly-made bay, which was named for Olegar.

## THE TIDE TURNS

*"After Raven's Point," Cullen goes on, "Seggallion was more determined than ever to stop Pildar. When he heard about Dom Zolod, he realized that we had to move against the Orcish army before it had a chance to regroup."*

The knight sent word to the Elves of Lintle, who had been camped on the west shore of Lake Eyren since Sodden Hills. Seggallion met the Elves in the Thanakesh Hills, and together we marched northward to hunt the Orcs and Trolls

scattered through the Mytrones. In a series of skirmishes that lasted through the summer of 1049, Seggallion managed to wipe out the remainders of Pildar's northern army. But even with these successes under our belts, we didn't have the strength to free Shellernoon from the surrounding Goblins.

But then, a miracle happened. While scouting the East Mytrones for straggling Ogres and Trolls, we spotted a large army that we knew nothing about. As we drew closer, we saw that the soldiers were Dwarves. It was Crelek, lost for over forty years in the Ghor Hills, at the head of an army of 2,000 Dwarves! Seggallion's joy was overwhelming. At last, the end was in sight.

The knight and the self-styled Dwarf Prince of Ghor met to discuss their strategy against Pildar's Goblins. They were joined by the commanders of the Brettle Regulars and the Highwaymen, as well as the Elfords of Lintle. In the spring of 1050, the five armies marched south to Shellernoon. Along the way, they were joined by a contingent of Tegal Amazons—word of Pildar's war had only recently reached the Amazons in their isolated forest homes.

The Battle of Shellernoon was a short one, considering the vastness of the armies involved. Pildar's forces, frustrated by six years of unsuccessful siege, were easily demoralized by the sight of the six armies cresting the Sheller Ridge. Before the first days' fighting was over, most of the Goblin battalions had been routed. Faced with certain defeat, the Dark Guard turned on their monstrous allies and joined Seggallion and his allies. With a handful of Goblin soldiers around him, Pildar retreated over Lake Eyren to his Dark Tower on the Isle of Pildar. The War of Darkness was over.

## RECENT YEARS

*"The years since the battle haven't been so exciting," allows Cullen, "but I imagine Ashtalarea's had about all the excitement she wants for a while. Last fifteen years or so, folks have mostly concentrated on rebuilding what was lost during the war."*

With the death of King Zolod and the return of



Prince Crelek, the center of Dwarvish culture has moved back to Ghor, where the old kingdom is being put back together. The Elves have returned to their woods on the Lintle Plains, and are learning to deal with the human settlers who moved onto the plains while the Elves were away fighting the war. The Highwaymen have returned to their first purpose, repairing the old roads, and pushing a new route through the Krell Swamp from the Hobe to Thimblewald. Working with the former rogues of Poitle, they've also built a series of locks which allow a ship to move from the sea, right up the Westwash into the Mytrones. The town's been named Poitle's Lock, in honor of the feat.

Olanthen was founded by some of Htron's wealthier families who, like the walbars before them, wanted to get away from the free city's seedier side. The Dwarf Dungar Stiffknuckles finished a road connecting the Ghor Hills with Brettle, which the Highwaymen extended on to Htron. Trade is growing steadily, and is especially heavy on the Tradewater, between Brettle and the Hobe.

### **THE KELDEN DESCEND**

*"But the most remarkable thing since the war's got to be the Kelderheit," Cullen asserts. "Came down from the top of the Mountains of Tyme, I've heard, just seven years ago."*

There's just a few of these funny birds running around in Ashtalarea so far, and no telling if any more might come. Of course, they aren't birds, really, 'cause they've got no feathers or beaks. But they do have big, bat-like wings, which let them fly.

They may be a bit large and scary-looking, but for the most part, the Kelders seem peaceful enough. It's said that they don't even have words in their own language for things like "kill" and "war," though they seem familiar with things like swords and bows. The ones which have come down off the mountains seem to be scouts of some kind, sent to examine our ways of living. How many more of them there might be up in the cyrics is anyone's guess.

But most folk take to Kelder quick enough. It's hard not to like them, with their trusting souls and wise minds. They may seem a bit slow at first, but don't be fooled—Kelder just don't believe in hasty speech. There's as much going on in their heads as in yours.

### **ASHTALAREA TODAY**

*"After the war, the realm got a well-deserved rest," sighs the storyteller, "but recently things have been changing. As quick as you get one problem worked out, another one pops up like a gopher hole, right where you just were."*

The Krag Barbarians, out to the northwest, keep attacking honest farmers and townsfolk up and down the River Downing. Eleven times in the last few years they've hit villages in the area, even attacking the town of Thimblewald. Dwarves were brought in recently to build a new fortress to stand against the barbarians—only time will tell us if stone walls can keep those fur-clad anarchists in line.

Some folks are spreading bad talk about old Seggalion, especially since he disappeared a while back. As a man who served under him, I can tell you he was the finest knight this land has ever known.

It looks like things are just about over for the Usip Elves. Their last Lady, Callicara, died last year. She was the widow of Elbaraman, and had no children. What's going to happen to the Usip that are left, I can't say.

And there's monsters in the woods like we haven't seen in years. Some of them are leftovers from Pildar's broken armies, but others are native. Either way, they're just as dangerous. To tame the wilderness and make her lands safe, Ashtalarea's going to need a few Knights of Legend . . .

## RACES OF LEGEND



*Greetings traveller.*

*Sit with me for a while and share the warmth of my fire. I have journeyed long and could use the company.*

*What's that? New to the land eh? If that's the case, there are some things that you should know.*

*Oh yes, forgive my rudeness. I am called Blacksteel, though I have had other names and titles in my time. I will tell you what I can, and if my tales amuse or inform you, feel free to share the rations in that rather full pack you carry.*

*We will start with the many peoples that dwell in our fair land.*

## HUMANS



By far the most prevalent race in Ashtalarea, humans are also the most diverse with a great capacity for adaptation — the many cultures in our land are proof of this. Though physically similar in many ways, the people of these cultures are very much the

products of their environment. Each group has a unique view of the world and expects different things of those they come in contact with. If you are going to survive as an adventurer, it is important that you learn what these differences are and how to use them to your advantage.

If you are ready, we will begin.

## BRETTLE REGULAR

Bettle. Now there's a place with some history to it. See, Bettle is where it all began, the first settlement established in Ashtalarea by human explorers from the east. Not hard to imagine why they chose the spot they did. Bettle is in a valley, surrounded by cliffs. At their base is a virtual maze of rivers running down out of the mountains. That combination of river and mountain has done more to protect Bettle over the years than any wall or moat ever built.



Actually, I served with the Regulars for a time. It was just after an unsuccessful quest that cost me my best sword and every last gold crown I had. Down on my luck and badly in need of a job, I enrolled in the Regulars hoping to settle for a bit and get some rest. No such luck. In less than a month after my enlistment, I found myself in the midst of a siege. Seems there is only one passage to the east — through the Peaks of Tyme — and that's where Bettle and the Duke's manor sit nestled in their valley.

We watched the enemy approach from three different directions. The cliffs make any kind of organized formation impossible, so they just poured down en masse. When they hit the rivers, they tried to regroup for a major thrust, but our boys struck hard and fast. It was unlike any large-scale battle I

had ever seen. The terrain had broken the army into small groups that the Regulars could face on their own terms, and in short order we had them on the run.

It was during that conflict that I earned a hearty respect for the Brettle Regulars. I have seen more impressive warriors in my time, by far, but none more dependable. Their loyalty and resolve have been an inspiration to me ever since it was my honor to be counted as one of their number. And I am not alone in this thinking — the Regulars are well-loved throughout the land.

## DARK GUARD



During my travels, I have enjoyed the companionship of many heroes. This companionship has brought me into contact with a quite a few unique individuals who have given me special insight into this world.

One such companion stands out

in my mind to this day. For some reason that, in truth, I cannot recall, I had come to the fortified city of Shellernoon. Just outside of town, a small group of men stood locked in mortal combat with a lone figure who held them all at bay with a mace, while obviously making an effort not to hurt any of them. Riding up alongside, I decided to throw in with the badly outnumbered man. I am a bit of a stickler for fair play, you see, and five against one is decidedly dishonorable.

We drove off the ruffians, then stopped to catch our breath. It was then that I noticed the brand of the laughing skull on his forehead. He quickly covered it with a helmet and explained that, during the Great War, he had been a member of the Dark Guard. For those of you who know nothing of history, the Dark Guard were the evil servants of Pildar.

The warrior explained that during the war, some of the Guard had seen the error of their ways and had fled Pildar's tyranny for a life of freedom. The stranger seemed very sad, and told me that he did not blame his attackers for hating him, for the mark he bore branded him an enemy of Ashtalarea.

I truly believe that he had changed the course of his life, but many are not so forgiving. My friend was shunned by most humans and elves, and eventually went to live in the east, where Pildar is less known. I hope my friend is well, though I realize now that he never told me his name.

## DREZIN RANGER

Western Ashtalarea is covered by the Drezin Wood, a lush forest of tremendous size. Though I have never been there, descriptions of its beauty have made me regret that I never found the time to make the journey. Most of my experience with those of the great forest



comes from an encounter with a hunting party from the Drezin Wood.

In my time, I have been many things, and for many years I was a knight-errant who wandered the land in search of good deeds to do and wrongs to right. It was during these halcyon days that I was sought out by a band of green-garbed hunters who spoke with a strange accent and had a mysterious air about them that I found intriguing.

They told me they were rangers from out of the west in search of a beast that had destroyed an entire grove of fruit trees. It seems this grove provided them with fruits that they traded for goods they could not produce in the wilds. Needless to say, they intended to hunt down the beast and slay it, so

that it could never again do damage to their beloved wood. Unfortunately, they had travelled so far from their home that the land was no longer familiar to them, and they feared they might lose the trail without a guide.

This seemed a good cause, so I agreed to join their hunt. In the course of the days that followed, I learned that these men had a composure and stolidness that made them poor company but excellent hunters. Though they seemed to prefer the rhythms of the wild to the sound of their own voices, I managed to wring from them a description of our quarry, the dread Sledge.

For those of you who have never encountered one of these horrible creatures, my advice is to avoid doing so at all costs. So that you can recognize a Sledge in order to flee its wrath, I will tell you that they are giants who seem composed of the very worst in men. But unlike men, the Sledge's hunger is such that they feed on trees. The particular specimen we were rushing to face was so massive and voracious that it was capable of ingesting groves whole. This description did not encourage me.

When at last we came upon our foe, it was in the process of uprooting a sizable oak that it obviously intended to use as a mid-day meal. The sight of the beast ripping the tree from the earth seemed to enrage the woodsmen, who attacked with a ferocity that seemed incongruous given what little I had learned about them. If you can imagine the kind of strength it would take to tear up an oak tree, you can probably guess that our battle was not an easy one, but the rangers fought well with bow and blade, and we managed to prevail with minimal losses.

The rangers tended their wounds with herbs and spells and bid me safe travel, explaining that they would return to their forest home with their dead. I wished them well and went on my way, and to this day I have never seen another of their kind. Maybe that is why many seem to regard tales of the Drezin Rangers as myths and folklore.

## DUKE'S HIGHWAYMEN

As you may have guessed by now, I consider myself something of a storyteller, but it was not always so. I learned the art of crafting a story from a fine fellow who spent his days building the roads that we tend to take for granted. He was, you see, one of the Duke's Highwaymen.



A big man and strong, he could best most men barehanded, or split a pegged log with a single blow. He had been everywhere, at least that's the way he told it, and had a tale for every occasion. When the seasons permitted, he worked with his crew under the watchful eye of the life-giving sun. I went with him once, to see what it was that had forged this man. Never have I worked harder, but the company of the Highwaymen bolstered my spirits and made me glad for the time I spent with them. At night, they camped, and that's when the Contest would begin.

Until I met the Highwaymen, I never thought of storytelling as a combat art, but the Contest changed my mind. These people had been from one end of Ashtalarea to the other and had seen many things, but always from a distance. Their work kept them too busy for any pursuit but building the road, so they took to habitual exaggeration.

The Contest was a kind of duel that began as soon as the workmen entered camp. They would start off slow, bragging of how many stones they had moved that day, or something similar. This would touch off a series of counter-brags, each more incredible than the next. No proof was ever required, and it seemed a terrible breach of etiquette to even suggest that anyone was speaking anything but the unadulterated truth. Once I understood that basic rule, I came to understand that what they said was of no consequence; what

mattered was how they said it. When someone had managed to make the definitive claim about the labors of the day, a tale so perfectly stated that it was unapproachable, the first round was over and the winner would bask in his victory.

Once the first engagement was out of the way, the Highwaymen would take their evening meal and begin the much longer, but less formal, second round that would often go long into the night. In turn, each man would tell some story of the deeds he had done in his youth. Many of these supposedly autobiographical retellings were obviously adapted from myths I had heard as a boy, but never with such a flair or attention to detail. Embellished reality or total fiction, it was difficult to ascertain, but the tales were always enjoyable. From these stories I learned much that would be of use later in my travels.

If you ever run across a band of Highwaymen, I highly recommend that you spend at least one night in their company. Just don't mention the Brettle Regulars. I made that mistake only once. It seems they feel that the Regulars are paid too highly by the Duke, and that the Highwaymen deserve more for the labor they perform. Having been with both groups, it is hard to say if this is true, but it is hardly worth discussion in any event — you will never win an argument with these master storytellers, even with the truth on your side.

## HOBEAN SQUIRE



When I was a lad, my father, a minor nobleman from the south, sent me to the Barony of Paraman-tathon UI'Hi. The otherwise unremarkable Barony is worthy of note for a Keep called the Hobe. Paraman-tathon was a knight of the King. Upon retire-

ment, the good knight moved to Ashtalarea, where he established his new lands on and around the Mytrone Hills. He was able to convince the dwarves who dwelled within to build a keep for him, hewn from the living rock. An impressive fortress, the Hobe also houses one of the finest schools in the land.

It is said that the Baron has devoted himself to the preservation of the chivalric ideal, and though I never met the man in person, his actions seem to bear it out. Shortly after the Keep was complete, he offered his hospitality and protection to any knight or man of learning who cared to live there, asking only that his guests pass on their knowledge to any who asked. Word spread of his generous offer, and eventually the Hobe became a center of learning for young men from throughout Ashtalarea.

Like many boys from privileged households, I entered the Hobe in hopes of attracting the attention of a knight so that I might become a squire. Many young men dream of becoming a knight, but when they find out how much dedication and hardship is involved in reaching their goal, they often choose another profession. This was not the case with me. I studied hard and learned everything I could. The sages and knights who were my teachers instructed me in more than just the arts and sciences. They taught me the meaning of honor and the value of the truth. In return, I tried my best to live up to their high expectations.

When I was finally singled out by a knight to be his companion, we left the Hobe to travel together. Most of the students are not so fortunate as I was. Some give up and return home, some become scholars but most eventually leave the Hobe alone. These young men wander the countryside looking for great deeds that need doing. Though they have no knight, these adventurers call themselves Squires of the Hobe. Only a few have what it takes to be a Squire in more than name, and those who are deserving are eventually sought out by the knight who will be their master. The rest will either give up, or continue their travels, ever hopeful that they will one day be chosen for the honor that has become their life.

## HTRON PIRATE



I am not sure if I am capable of giving you an objective appraisal of these roguish scoundrels, but I will do my best.

Every culture seems to have its downside. There are those who are obviously criminals, and there are those who carefully walk the line

between honesty and villainy. The Pirates of Htron are definitely the latter. Personally, I have little or no patience for shades of grey, but there are those who claim that these slippery thugs are quite charming when the situation demands.

Since I can recall nothing of the pirates from my personal experience that would be considered even remotely redeeming, I will recount a tale that I overheard once while in a port's tavern.

Eric the Masked was prince among pirates. Handsome and cunning, he was possessed of a reckless abandon that made him irresistible to women. One day, his ship came to port in a small village whose only feature worthy of notice was the daughter of its mayor. In fact, her features were the first thing Eric noticed, and this from the crow's nest. While his companions weighed anchor and prepared to go ashore, their hot-blooded captain dove into the waters of the bay to swim ahead.

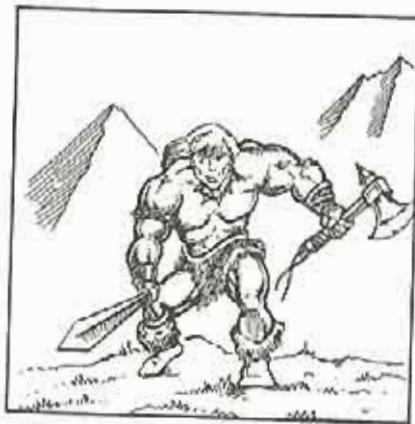
When his crew made it to shore, they were met by Eric, who was grinning from ear to ear. He told his first mate of the beautiful maid, and wagered that he would gain her favor in three days, or he would surrender his ship. The mate readily agreed, and put up all the gold he had. The pirate prince proceeded to stride right up to the nearest guardsman, and run him through with his sabre. In short order, the masked man was arrested and taken off to prison.

Puzzled, the first mate took the rest of his crew back

to the ship and waited. On the third day, a small boat pulled up alongside, bearing their captain and a stunning young lass who could only be the mayor's daughter. When they came aboard, Eric explained that it was the local custom for the most beautiful girl in the village to deliver the last meal. The rest was easy. When the rake tired of his conquest, he took her ashore and continued up the coast where he was arrested and sentenced to death on six separate occasions...

## KRAG BARBARIAN

There I was, surrounded by Hill Giants, with no more bolts for my crossbow, half a shield and a badly nicked broadsword. Things did not look good, but the quest was a noble one, so I prepared to die a heroic death. Suddenly, scores of huge figures came bounding down out of the surrounding rocks. At first, I thought they might be the rest of the giant tribe, but when they came closer I saw that they were men. Very huge men, yes, but men nonetheless.



My saviors laid into the Giants with a reckless courage that bordered on insanity. Most were armed with greatswords and axes, and some attacked our hulking foemen with their bare hands. As I redoubled my efforts, I wondered at their ferocity and the pleasure they seemed to derive from their sheer brutality. In a matter of minutes, they managed to fell the hapless giants. Though they had lost nearly half their number in the process, the barbarians seemed in excellent spirits. Before they stopped to tend their wounds, they built a cairn for the fallen on the spot where the battle occurred.

I tried to thank their leader for saving me, but he shrugged and explained that they were involved in a border

dispute with the Giants and would have killed them anyway. I learned that I had wandered into their lands, a rather barren chunk of rock they call the Krag. I pointed out that they could have saved themselves quite a few casualties by using missile weapons from the overhanging ledge, and offered to show them how to make bows, whereupon they suddenly beat me senseless.

When I awoke, I was told that they considered weapons that leave the hand cowardly — their leader had taken my suggestion as a personal affront. Since I had fought well against the Giants, however, they would allow me to prove myself in a drinking contest. I lost the contest, and after some rather humbling verbal abuse, was escorted out of the Krag. Needless to say, I have never found a reason to return, but my misadventure gave me a grudging respect for the barbaric warriors of the northern hills.

## KRELL WARRION



Ever had to travel through a swamp? Dreadful places. Miles of uncertain ground teeming with all kinds of life. After a few hours, you are sure that insects must be the dominant form of life and that in some insidious way the tangled overgrowth conspires to ensnare you and drag

you to your death in the murky depths. As the light gives way to the shadowdance of twilight, the swamp seems to watch you with uncountable eyes. And at night, you are surrounded by half-imagined creatures that you are convinced will pounce at any moment. Camping in a swamp is an unpleasant experience at best.

It was under these sorts of conditions that the Duke's Highwaymen had to labor to build the Krell Way, a road

leading through the northern swamplands. The Highwaymen are some of the best storytellers in the land, and the bog fuelled their imagination, resulting in the creation of some of the most chilling tales that I have ever heard.

Many of these stories seem to involve a creature called the Warrion that dwells beneath the swamp. The Highwaymen would tell of the beast rising from the slime to claim its victims. Eyes glistening in the moonlight, it would wrap them in its slime, drain the blood from their bodies and return to its watery lair. After hearing several such stories, I dismissed them as exaggeration and imagination. That is, until I had to ride the Krell Way alone after sundown.

Night crossings are never a good idea, and to attempt them alone is to court disaster. At first, the constant stream of peculiar noises that the swamp beasties make was enough to set me on edge. Eventually, I grew used to them and talked myself into being brave.

When I first spied the bodies, I could not tell what they were, but as I grew closer I saw that there were nearly a score of men lying dead at the side of the road. They were covered in a putrid black slime. On closer examination, I realized that they were not crushed or smothered, as the tales of the Warrion suggest. The unfortunates had been struck down by far more conventional means. I could see crossbow bolts and the distinctive wounds left by swords.

As I rode away, I thought that I glimpsed several figures in the cover of the trees. Black-skinned they were, but men for sure. They did not attack as I withdrew, but I felt them watching me all the way to the edge of the swamp. At least I thought I did.

## LINTLE PLAINSMEN

Southeast Ashtalarea is a vast land of rolling plains broken only by the elven forests. This is the Lintle, home of the plainsmen. The plainsmen have no villages, as such, but are nomadic, wandering their lands free of the burdens permanent dwellings represent. They claim very little, only that the plains are theirs, and in this they are most firm.

Over the years, the plainsmen have not been known



for their tolerance of newcomers. They will endure almost anything, save violation of their territorial rights. This they consider an act of aggression. They have become involved in several battles over this point, even engaging in a full-blown war with the Orcs.

As I am sure you know, it can be very difficult to locate a weapons' master with sufficient expertise to train you after you reach a certain degree of proficiency. When I had reached this point with the bow, I decided that I would try to find aid from the plainsmen, who I was told were archers of unsurpassed skill. After a long and arduous trek, I reached the Plains of Lintle, but no plainsmen could I find. Disappointed, I made camp and settled in for the night.

The distinctive thunk of an arrow biting deep into the wood of a large tree awakened me from my slumber. Instinctively, I leapt to my feet, snatching up and drawing my blade in a single motion. Glancing at the tree where the arrow was buried, I saw that it had punctured my wineskin, which was now in the process of pouring its precious contents into the soil below. The second arrow struck my torch, sending burning embers flying in all directions, like a fountain of flame. Rolling away, I peered into the darkness in an attempt to make out my attacker. As I spotted the outline of an archer surmounting an overlooking hill, his third arrow hit my sword just above the tang. The impact stung my hand and forced me to drop my weapon, effectively disarming me.

I had found my master.

## **OLANTHAN HUNTER**

An interesting culture. Not actually immoral, just impartial. The neutrality of Olanth is near legendary. Their



village lies protected by a horseshoe ring of hills that makes up a barrier not so much impenetrable as it is inconvenient to surmount. This has given the Olanthans the luxury of decision regarding their involvement in the wars that the rest of Ashtalarea had no

choice but to fight. From the Plains War to the War of the Ghor Trolls — even the Great War itself. In every case, their decision was to remain isolated. This has not made them very popular among the peoples who suffered in these conflicts.

The Olanthans themselves are a bit mysterious. Possessed of superior reflexes and a kind of sixth sense, they are natural-born hunters whose skills have allowed them to remain self-sufficient during the long periods of isolation that preceded the wars and often lasted quite a while after the last battle was over. It seems that many of the people of Ashtalarea are unwilling to trade with the Olanthans. These embargoes are the only retaliatory action that has been taken against them so far.

Personally, I am in agreement with those who find the Olanthans' policy of non-intervention reproachable. Sometimes inaction is injustice, and that seems to be the case with the hunters. On the other hand, the few Olanthans I have met were not what I had expected. They do not seem a cowardly or inhospitable people. Quite the opposite, in fact. The hunters I have seen in action were bold and decisive, able to take down their opponents before they had a chance to prepare a defense. It is almost like they know what is going to happen. This knowledge gives them an odd sort of grim determination, bordering on melancholy, and may explain their reticence to become involved in full-scale war. Explain, perhaps, but not excuse.



## POITLE ROGUE



These men are thieves. Pure and simple. The scum that could not survive in the world of honest men and had not the skill to avoid the forces of justice fled to a labyrinthine complex of cave-warrens that would eventually become Poitle's Lock.

When the actual village was established, a few legitimate businesses set up shop, but this could not legitimize them. Not by a long shot.

In a village founded by wanted criminals, it is not surprising to find a rather lenient set of laws including numerous loopholes. The aim of these rogues is to come as close as they can to total freedom without risking direct intervention by the Duke. Even so, the Duke's men make occasional sojourns into the Lock to search for escaped prisoners. They have never come out empty-handed.

Only once was I forced to spend any considerable length of time with these thugs. One of my quests involved the retrieval of a certain artifact from a well-guarded chamber protected by a series of complex mechanical traps. Unfortunately, I have no skill whatsoever with such things and the only ones that I knew of who did were the rogues of Poitle. Reasoning that the ends justified the means, I hired Nirek the Weasel, a "locksmith" of some renown.

I am man enough to admit that I have made my share of mistakes during my adventuring career, and Weasel was one of my worst.

To my surprise and relief, he got me to the inner chamber all right. I thought I had my eyes on him every minute. I was sure he was going to try to trap me and take my prize for himself. When we got out, I was so delighted with his apparent honesty and skill that I started to relax. When we arrived at the next village, I paid him in full, with a generous

bonus. I should have been suspicious when he offered to buy me a drink.

When I awoke, I was lying naked in the back room with my sword, the object of my quest, and a single gold piece. The maggot must have known that I had to return the artifact with all haste and would not have time to give chase. Never again will I have dealings with those who flaunt their contempt for the law of the land. I have to admit that Weasel taught me an important lesson. The ends *do not* justify the means.

## SHELLERNOON WATCHMEN

My heart soars at the mention of these stalwart guardians. Good men and noble, every one. In many ways, they embody the values I have striven to follow all the days of my life.

At the end of the Great War, Pildar and his henchmen fled to his black tower at the center of Lake Eyren. The Duke tried to roust the evil one from his lair, but nothing he could do seemed to have any effect on the dark bastions of the mystical fortress. After months of siege, the Duke abandoned his attempts to destroy the tower. Instead, he built a fortress of his own on the shores of the lake to guard against the day when Pildar will doubtless emerge to take his vengeance on the peoples of Ashtalarea. That fortress is Shellernoan.

The watchmen are chosen when they are young by wise ones who travel the land searching for men who show promise in the martial arts. In addition, the potential watchman must have a good moral background and certain unknown personality traits needed by those who stand guard over the tower. Those who have all the necessary require-



ments are offered the chance to train for a position with the watchmen. Most accept, as there are few stations that carry more respect. It is considered a great honor to be chosen.

New arrivals are instructed by some of the finest weapons' masters in all of Ashtalarea. This training is of indeterminate duration. It also serves as an indoctrination period, during which the captains of the watch teach the novices the history of the Great War, everything they know of the enemy and how best to confront him when the time comes at last. When and if the masters are satisfied that their student is ready to join the watch, they come before the captains, who administer the Great Oath. None who is not of the watch knows what the Great Oath is, but I know it is the keystone of their order.

The watchmen await the second coming with a combination of anticipation and dread. Their lives are spent keeping themselves at the peak of readiness for a battle they hope will never come. This strange state of affairs keeps tensions running high in the Fortress, but the numerous taverns therein provide a much-welcomed diversion from their chosen task. I do not envy them their charge, but I admire their courage.

## GHOR TIGRESS



I was wondering when you would get around to the distaff side. Strange that you would start with the Tigresses of Ghor, but so be it. Though I have never encountered this legendary race of women-warriors, a Dwarven friend of mine has told me something of their ways.

You must have heard the tales of how these savages bred with tigers to free themselves from the clutches of men.

My comrade assures me that these stories are fabrications. His cousin was working in a mine in northern Ashtalarea, just south of the village of Hiron. The miners were searching for a vein of some metal precious to the Dwarves when, quite unexpectedly, they stumbled upon a rather large cavern complex.

These caves were home to a race of men with pale skin and white eyes who moved without sight, like the lizards that swim in underground lakes. The Dwarves tried to make contact with these strange humans, but found them shy and defensive, running to the back of their cave to guard their young with spears and handaxes.

As the miners were preparing to return to their work, they saw the light of approaching torches. Deciding that caution was the wisest path, they retreated to the entrance they had made to see who had come to visit. To their surprise, a band of dark-skinned women garbed for war entered the cavern, carrying two stags and the head of a Troll. The men started to clean the deer as the women settled down to wait for their evening meal.

The Dwarves surmised that these people were forced into the caves by the Trolls that hunt the hills. While the males stayed to guard the children, the Tigress women would venture forth in search of food. It seems a reasonable theory to me, but I am unwilling to risk the roving bands of Trolls to satisfy my curiosity.

## LITTLE PLAINSWOMAN

You have touched a nerve, my friend. I do not hold it against you since you had no way of knowing. As I believe I already mentioned, I spent a few years in the Plains of Lintle honing my archery skills. My instructor was more than a master — he was an artist. An older man with the reflexes of someone half his age, he has forgotten more about his craft than you or I could learn in a lifetime. During our time together, we became more than teacher and pupil. We became good friends.

My mentor had only one child, a daughter whose name I cannot bring myself to speak, though she has been



gone for over a decade. If you have never heard tell of the beauty of the plainswomen, know you that they are called the fairies of the field by those who have beheld them. Many a man has journeyed to the plains in search of a bride. I had come for another reason entirely, but from the moment I saw her, I

knew I had found the woman I would marry.

My love shared many traits with the other women of the plains. Stunning to behold, she had waist-length golden blonde hair, eyes as green as twin emeralds and the deeply tanned skin of one who has spent her whole life in the outdoors. She was also an archer, the only other student her father had ever trained. With a keen eye and sure aim, she was a match for any bowman I have ever met. As the days passed into months, I came to love her and she came to love me.

Sadly, when I told my master of my intention to marry her, he was furious with me. The plainsmen are a clannish and insular folk, and marriages outside their society are not encouraged. To make matters worse, he had married outside the clan and been betrayed by a fickle woman, giving him a dim view of such things. He cast me out, and forbade my love from so much as seeing me.

Unwilling to hurt my friend any more than I already had, I left the plains with a heavy heart. I would return from time to time for clandestine meetings with the only woman I have ever loved. For seven years we went on like this, until at last I heard that she had died. I have been told her sadness made her reckless, and she was killed by a roving band of Orcs. I still return to the plains from time to time to gaze out over the tall grass and think of what might have been.

## OLANTHAN HUNTRESS

The women of Olanth are the equal of their male counterparts in nearly every way but size. They share household responsibilities equally, including hunting, defending the home and raising the children. It is said that no bond is stronger than an Olanth



marriage. The strange sixth sense of the Olanth is nearly as strong in the women as it is in the men, and doubly so in relation to their mate.

There is a story of an Olanth couple, a man and woman very much in love. The husband was a hunter and spent days and sometimes weeks in the wilds past the hills that surround the village where they lived. One night the woman awoke from a sound sleep with a sharp pain in her shoulder. She knew immediately that her husband needed her. Dressing quickly, she took up her bow and headed out into the darkness alone.

For two full days she searched, with only her instincts to guide her. Not once did she give up hope, even though it had been 48 hours since she struck out. At midnight on the second day, she happened upon an overgrown crevice. Without looking, she knew that her husband had fallen inside. Reaching in, she helped him escape his rocky prison.

When he recovered, the hunter explained that his party had been set upon by feral wolves. Most of the party was killed or wounded in a matter of minutes. It seemed hopeless until he espied the crevice, which was too narrow for the wolves. He ran for cover as fast as he could, but sustained several wounds in the process. Sliding in to safety, he passed out from loss of blood. The last thing he remembered was calling her name.

## TEGAL AMAZON



So you want to know about the Amazons. Not surprising. They are one of the strangest cultures in the land, and very interesting when viewed from a safe distance.

I have told you of the Tigresses of the Ghor Hills. The Amazons are distant relations of that tribe

who left the mountains long ago to be free of the caves and the Trolls once and for all. They travelled south to make a new home in the forests of Tegal.

They quickly discovered that their men were no longer well adapted to life outside the caves. Sensitive to sunlight and nearly blind during the day, they were dependent on the women for protection. This dependence became more and more pronounced, until the women treated them more like slaves than mates. As the years passed, the Amazons became more and more domineering, and their men more submissive.

These days, the Amazons have no respect for the "race of men" with the possible exception of the barbarians. The idea of male warriors is ridiculous to them — what man could match their prowess? A primitive and brutal people, these women are not above making off with males to strengthen their breeding stock and will make occasional raids into other lands to capture "choice specimens." For this reason, they are feared far and wide. Especially by handsome young men.

## DWARVES

Every race has its priorities. For some, the highest priority is the pursuit of happiness, for others, the pursuit of knowledge. For Dwarves, it is the pursuit of gold. Dwarven

society is very straightforward. There are those who mine the gold, there are those who guard those who mine the gold, and there are those who work the gold.

Tradition is very important to the Dwarves. Longer-lived than humans, they have developed structured rituals to give them a sense of their past. When you live hundreds of years, thinking beyond your own time can be difficult indeed. Take care to learn the customs of every Dwarven community you encounter, for some will have very strict taboos. Violate them at your own risk.

Dwarven psychology is easy to comprehend — when in doubt, attack. The Dwarves are a very physical race, direct and often warlike, with volatile temperaments and a definite nasty streak. In my experience, Dwarves are deadly fighters, with a bloodlust that can only be quenched with steel.

As far as I know, Dwarven women do not adventure. However, after watching a Dwarven woman preparing a Troll stew (with a reluctant Troll as the main ingredient), I would say this isn't true. The female of the species simply take adventure where they find it instead of seeking it out.

## GHOR DIGGER /MYTRONE TUNNELER

Oldest and most respected of the Dwarven professions, "Tunnelers" (called diggers in the Ghor Hills) are chosen for their small size and great strength so they can work in narrow places that no other miners can get to. They seldom leave the



underground, and most will keep at their job until they are ready to retire to a life of luxury. Some are more ambitious, and use the status of their position to become adventurers in the world above.

During the War of the Goblin Lords, it was the tunnelers who turned the tide of battle. The Goblin horde had smashed the outer gates of the dwarfhold and overrun the levies serving as the first line of defense. A tide of evil bristling with weapons, the Goblins ravaged the home of the Dwarves, far too many to resist.

The creatures were unstoppable until they reached the great gates that led to the inner chambers where the Dwarves had taken their women and children. Consumed with battle frenzy, the Goblins threw themselves against the gates, one after another, in endless succession. It was obvious that it was only a matter of time before they would batter down the gate and slaughter those within.

Only the tunnelers had an answer to the dilemma. Taking up their picks and shovels, they tore into the wall with all their might. Using every bit of craft and skill they had learned, the workers burrowed through earth and stone with inhuman speed. Those in the front lines would tear at the rock face until they were too tired to carry on, but even then they would not rest. Those that lacked the strength to cut the stone erected wooden braces to keep the tunnel open.

Dozens died of exhaustion during those desperate hours, but their deaths would not be in vain. The tunnelers had built a passage all the way around the enemy army, allowing the remaining defenders to attack the Goblin horde from behind. When the creatures rallied and turned their attentions to the warriors that had come out of the passage, the tunnelers threw wide the gates and struck the fatal blow against the foe that had cost them dear.

This incident, among others, has given the tunnelers a tremendous sense of pride in their job and themselves. Having seen the work they do, that pride is well-earned.

### **GHOR SPIDERGUARD /MYTRONE RATGUARD**

Many things dwell in the underworld besides the Dwarves, some of them predators. Sometimes these creatures make their way into the Dwarven tunnels to prey on the unwary. Unwilling to accept the gradual attrition these en-

counters create, the Dwarves of Ghor and Mytrone have developed whole classes of citizen devoted to fending off the sporadic incursions of these subterranean beasts.

These guardians are specially trained for fast and furious skirmishes with ruthless, inhuman opponents. (Come to think of it, that's a pretty good description of Dwarves in general.) In any event, the guardian training emphasizes the importance of getting in the first blow, because if you fail to strike first, you may not have a chance to strike at all.

A Dwarven companion of mine once described a duel with a spider of enormous size in the tunnels beneath the Mytrone Mountains. It seems the creature had fallen into some kind of trance state in a cavern barely big enough to hold it. The monster must have been washed into the cave through one of the many crevices in the top of the chamber. Unable to escape because of the running water, the beast fed on rats and insects, eventually growing to huge proportions.

While following a vein of silver, a work crew broke through one of the walls of the spider's prison. Awake and aware, the ravenous arachnid devoured most of the tunnelers before they managed to slip into a side passage too small for it to enter. By the time the guard arrived, the critter had reached the inner chambers. Unwilling to collapse the walls of their own home to kill a single foe, the tenacious warriors fought a pitched battle with a creature many times their size.

Selfless bravery and dogged determination won the day, though ten of their finest fell prey to the monster's mandibles and poison stinger. At the end of the battle, as the ichor issuing from the burst belly of the beast mingled with the blood of its victims, one of the guard, a hard-bitten veteran, was heard to say "Only one. Pity. I was just warming up."



## **GHOR TROLLBANE /MYTRONE ORCBANE**

Though most Dwarves prefer the underground to the world of light, there are a few on the fringes of Dwarven society who venture out of the tunnels on a regular basis. These adventurers wander the land in search of new experiences. Their eccentricities are tolerated because they provide an important "early-warning" system for the Dwarven community, bringing home reports of events occurring in the surface world of which they might otherwise be unaware.

As the only Dwarves with any kind of experience in the outdoors, they have made wilderness survival and combat their specialty. They are uniquely prepared to do battle with the beasts of the wild. A robust and sturdy people, they often use their training to seek out and destroy nests of Trolls and Orcs that would normally be beyond the reach of their people.

It is one of these that I met during my wanderings in the Dwarven mountains to the south of the Hobe. Our first meeting was early in my career, just after I had left the service of the knight to whom I had been a squire for most of my youth. Sadly, my dealings with the sons of the earth were few and far between, so I was woefully innocent in the ways of the Dwarven people.

Coming around a narrow pass, I encountered a lone Dwarven warrior locked in a pitched battle with three huge trolls. The feisty little fireball was shouting a withering barrage of insults at his opponents, each epithet punctuated by a mighty blow. He was covered in wounds and slick with blood, but this didn't seem to faze him.



Unslinging my sword, I charged into melee shouting a battle-cry that sounded positively pathetic compared to the harrowing exclamations of the outnumbered axeman. Relying on every ounce

of my training, I used the element of surprise to the full and took down two of the trolls in as many strokes. As the last turned to run, the Dwarf buried its axe in the creature's spine, splitting it like a log.

The Dwarf stared at me for a long time, quivering with a rage that I took to be the remnants of battle lust. I tried to introduce myself, but he leapt at me and slammed his gauntleted fists into my gut again and again until I lost consciousness. When I awoke, all that remained of the Dwarf was the pain in my stomach.

I didn't understand at the time why the enraged Dwarf did what he did, but when I met another (under less intense circumstances), he gave me a bit of advice that I will pass along to you:

Never stand between a Dwarf and his chosen foe.

## **GHOR MILITIA /MYTRONE LEVIE**

These are the warrior elite of their respective Dwarven societies. Individually, they are some of the finest fighters I have ever encountered, and as a group they form the backbone of the mightiest army in Ashtalarea. Dwarven warriors are born into their position.



Military rank is inherited, a legacy that passes from one generation to the next. Given several centuries to perfect their skills, it is no surprise that they are as good as they are.

Dwarven soldiers are incredibly tough. They have a resistance to physical pain that is awesome to behold. On an adventure in the north, I was engaged in a battle to eliminate an Orc encampment that had been causing the locals some trouble. One of my comrades in arms was a Dwarven Captain

named Grulden who was sent by the militia to provide whatever assistance he could against our mutual enemy.

Grulden had a hard edge to him, to be sure, more so than most of his race. I have been told that his men called him Ironheart, and during the time I spent with him, I could see why. When I was introduced to him, I was told that he had been impaled by a spear once but had used the opportunity to disarm his foe and turn the tables, beheading the unfortunate with a single stroke. Supposedly, he withdrew the spear with his bare hands, bound the wound himself and grumbled that he should never have allowed his opponent to come that close in the first place. I dismissed the story as the kind of tale that is frequently attributed to warriors of note with little or no basis in fact.

During the assault on the Orc camp, the captain's arm was ruined by a lucky blow from the Orc commander. Without so much as a wince, the wounded soldier killed his opponent one-handed before passing out from loss of blood. When he was taken off the field, his arm was amputated and he was returned to his unit to recuperate.

A few years later, I had the pleasure of fighting at Grulden's side again. Since our last meeting, he had learned to wield his battleaxe as though it were a hatchet and had become deadlier than he was when he had both arms. I wonder whether the impaling story might not have been true after all.

## **KELDEN**

No one knows much about these mysterious creatures. As far as I have been able to tell, the Kelden come from the Mountains of Tyme on the eastern border of Ashtalarea. This ancient race is vaguely humanoid, but just barely. Tall and slender, they have huge wings on which they soar the skies like giant birds.

The Kelden seem to prefer living alone. Which makes learning about their history and culture difficult. Only occasionally will one of their kind be outgoing enough to interact with human society. Another problem is the fact that they have their own language, which can be difficult to learn.

Since they seem to have the same problem with our language, there is a communication barrier which complicates matters considerably.

Their history and culture are still beyond our understanding, but given time, we will come to know our new neighbors. Already, they have adapted words from our language, a fact which seems to be helping them understand our society. Unfortunately, the words they needed were for concepts like "kill," "hate" and "war," which seemed to be alien concepts to them until they came into contact with us.

There seem to be three fairly distinct classes in Kelden society, each with its own special function. Doubtless, these are pitiful simplifications of what seems to be a rather complex culture, but they are all we know at this time.

## **CLIFF GUARD**

The strongest of their kind, it is the responsibility of these Kelden to care for the nest, protecting it when necessary.

Those that have not left to live among the humans spend all their time in the warren.

The only time the nest is left without guards is during the mating



season, or "Klakar." At the end of this five-day period, those that have not conceived rip their own wings and are tossed from the cliffs to their doom. They believe this ritual will preserve their race and ensure stronger young. I am not sure how much can be attributed to their mating customs, but they are some of the strongest creatures I have ever run across.

## ROCK RANGER



These Kelden gather food for the nests. Not quite as strong as the Cliff Guards, they have a great deal of stamina, which is required during their hunts, which can last several days. The mating rituals of this caste differ from those that watch the nests.

During the 15 days of "Kelkret," they go behind the inner wall with their mates. On the last day, a hunt begins during which any who were unable to conceive take on the strongest foes they encounter — without weapons. Those that can survive the hunt under those conditions leave the nest forever and will eventually become Far Seekers.

## FAR SEEKER



The most mysterious of the Kelden race, these outcasts venture thousands of miles from the nests that were once their home. No one knows why the seekers go where they do. It may have something to do with the grief they feel at being unable to add to the family. We may never learn the secret of the seekers as

it appears to be a very private thing that the Kelden are unwilling to share with us.

## ELVES

These delightful creatures live in the six forests that lie in the plains of Lintle. According to legend, elves came to Ashtalarea on winged steeds. They settled in the plains, which

they call "Allaranethel," which means "beautiful lands." They were here for countless generations before the arrival of mankind. With the incursion of settlers in the plains and forests, the Elves have become more and more secretive and may be in danger of dying out.

Lately, the Elves and plainsmen have become more friendly. The Elves have taught the plainsmen some of their magic, and in return, the plainsmen have become the self-appointed protectors of the Elven people.

## BREK

I understand that it was the Breks that first encountered the settlers who had come to their lands. Their good-natured, open and friendly personalities have made them the unofficial diplomats of the Elven race. In the Dark War, it was the Breks who convinced the other tribes to form an army to help defeat Pildar. Kindhearted and charming, they are well-loved by all, even those who have no reason for such sentiments.



There is a story of an eager young Brek named Gurps who was tired of listening to legends of the great adventures of the past and was determined to see the world for himself and have some adventures of his own.

Gurps set out one fine summer morning across the plains of Lintle. He crossed the plain, the River Passing and the Great Wood, coming at last to the Hills of Mytrone. All of this, and without an adventure. Disappointed, he was just about ready to turn back and go home when he spotted a giant cresting the ridge.

"Greetings, large one. I have come a very long way and am in search of an adventure. Can you please help me?"



The creature stopped dead in its tracks. It had grown quite used to panicked flight or desperate attacks from its victims. Conversation was quite beyond its ken.

"I say, are you deaf? That would be wonderful! I could befriend you and help you find a cure. My adventure would be assured! What say you?"

Unable to comprehend the foolish prattle of the little morsel that had run right up to its massive feet, the monster reached down and clutched poor Gurps firmly in one hand, unleashing a hideous battle-roar. The Elf was startled, and gaped helplessly as the great beast swallowed him whole.

Satisfied, the giant lumbered off to digest his strange meal. No sooner had he entered a nearby wood, a voice echoed up through the labyrinthine bows of its cavernous gut.

"I understand now. You are my adventure. I'm sorry, I did everything all wrong. Let me try again. Please? You'll see, I will run in terror and everything! Just give me a second chance. C'mon..."

The little elf kept this up until the giant became so upset that he disgorged the babbling wanderer, who proceeded to flee with all haste, as promised. He didn't stop until he reached his home, where he impressed one and all with the story of his marvelous adventure.

Having come into contact with quite a few Giants in my time, I can be fairly certain that this little tale is no more than a fable, but it does capture the unparalleled ability of the Breks to turn a situation from bad to good with a few well-placed words of encouragement.

## KLVAR



Very magical and very secretive, these Elves have a mastery of mystical forces that is unknown to others of their race. These peaceful creatures generally choose not to use weapons of any kind, preferring to devote their efforts to arcane learning. The most famous

Klvar was Glandamin, a powerful mage who allied himself against Olegar against Tranzadeel only to be killed by the fires that formed Olegar Bay. Often solitary and reclusive, little more is known of this tribe or their unique talents.

## MELOD

I was passing through the village of Ebbwater a few years back with a few companions and a load of valuables liberated from some bandits who had liberated them from various caravans that they had overcome. We were in the process of returning the valuables to



their rightful owners when we first heard the music.

Preoccupied as I was with our task, I did not notice the melody at first, but I saw it in the faces of my comrades. They had stopped what they were doing to look out over the plain with the strangest expressions on their faces. Something like the look of those asleep, it was, as though their troubles had been drained away, leaving only peace. At first I thought them ensorcelled, but I could see nothing as far as the horizon but grass and a few clumps of trees.

Then I heard it.

My friend, there is no sweeter sound than that which caught my ear that day. In my dreams I can hear dim echoes of the sweet harmony off in the distance, just out of reach. It is difficult to describe with words alone a near-tangible sensation that you feel with your heart. Entranced, I stood motionless, straining to hear it, like a flower turning its leaves to the sun. To this day, I have no idea how long I stood there. Hours, minutes, all sense of time was surrendered to the moment, a blessed respite from the rigors of this world.

As suddenly as it had come, it was gone.

Astonished, I asked one of the villagers where the exquisite music had come from. With a voice low and full of reverence, he told me that it was the Elves of Melod Wood. He recounted some of the legends men have told in an attempt to put the unearthly beauty of the music in terms they can understand. It is no wonder that the people of Olanthan claim that the Melod Elves sing the stars out at night and make the trees sway on a still summer's evening. The plainsmen believe that the sounds of the wood are a tune played on their flutes, lingering in the wind forever. On reflection, I believe that they sing to express the joy of life, a joy only they can truly understand.

## PYAR



When you think Elf, you are probably thinking about the Pyar. You will find as you become more acquainted with the rest of the tribes that this is very far from the truth. Just as there are rogue elements in our society, the Pyar are rogue Elves. Less secretive by far than the rest of their

people, these explorers have paved the way for those who wish to enter human society.

The only Elves to engage in open trade with the other peoples of Ashtalarea, they sell Pyar wood, which is some of the finest available for crafting bows. Unfortunately, Pyar wood dries out quickly unless treated properly, which is a secret the tribe has kept to itself. In Brettle, an Elf has gone so far as to open a shop, something the other tribes definitely do not approve of.

With extended contact, some of our traits have started to creep into Pyar society. In many cases, the elements first acquired are those least desirable to the majority of the

Elven race. For instance, the other day one of their children tried to pick my pocket. Fortunately, the pocket was empty and the child's father was nearby. I can only hope this was an isolated incident.

## THISM

Largest of the six tribes, this is easily the most numerous of the Elven races. Their forest lies beside the Mountains of Tyme and they live in tree-houses made of twigs and leaves tightly woven into a very tough material. The Thism love the wood, and despise those who would dare defile it. This tribe comprised most of the army the Elves sent to fight in the Dark War, partially due to their great numbers, but also due to an uncommon courage and sense of duty sadly lacking in the Pyars.



## USIP

It is sad irony that the last tale I tell you must be a tragic one, but that is often the way of the world.

The Plains of Lintle seem to stretch out forever. There is so much room that those who live on the plains are nomadic, wandering from place to place



in large caravans, setting up camp wherever there is good hunting. It would seem that the plainsmen would have little need for expanding their lands. This is basically true, but expand they have, unintentionally or not.

The source of the problem is that the plains contain precious little in the way of trees whose wood is useful for crafting the spears, bows and tent poles that we tend to take for granted. Without meaning any harm, the plainsmen took this wood from the forests that border their homeland. This slow pillaging has gradually cut back the forests to the point where at least one of them is in danger.

On the eastern edge of the Plains of Lintle is a small wood, smallest of the six inhabited by the Elven tribes. This wood is home to the Usip, who are also the smallest tribe. Very shy, these meek creatures hid in the underbrush while the plainsmen savaged their home with handaxe and flame. Peaceful and unaggressive, they had no way to defend themselves and were unable to bring themselves to confront what they believed was a race of deadly savages.

Eventually, they sent an emissary to the Breks, who explained the situation to the plainsmen. Unfortunately, things have gotten out of hand, and many fear that the Usip are in danger of dying out. The plainsmen, who have a great deal of respect for most of the Elven tribes, were repentant when they heard what they had done. They put the Usip under their protection and have set guards on the wood. Only time will tell if this will buy the smallest Elven tribe time to recover what has been lost before it is too late.

## APPENDIX 1: THE ELVEN LANGUAGE

### Introduction by Zebin Al Zored

*I have attempted, in this minor work, to describe the basic structure of the Elven language as used in the performance of magical rites and incantations.*

*The major references on the use of Elven in magic are held in the tower of Astimiah Eckhart, Mage of Brettle. It was he who so kindly allowed me to spend many days delving through his library's extensive stacks. To him and the brothers of his order I am indebted.*

*Original research on ancient Elven was conducted by the mage Yonden Clang in the years 734 to 767. He discovered the fifteen "trees" of Elven speech, and documented the various historical variations which define modern Spoken Elven. In this summary of his research I will endeavor to do justice to his fine linguistic research.*

### HISTORY OF THE ELVEN LANGUAGE

Use of Elven in Ashtalarea began, of course, with the appearance of Elves on the continent around the year 686. At that time, there were three forms of Elven in common use: Anfél, Kafarifél, and éavorfél.

Anfél, is the commonly-known Elven language, spoken by all Elves in one dialect or another. This is the language taught to non-Elves by Elven sages.

Kafarifél is the secret language of the Elven Lords, and is used ostensibly in the preparation of Elven military plans and other Elven secrets. Presumably the location of the famed "Secret Elven Wood-City" is discussed in Kafarifél.

The last, éavorfél, is the language of magic and incantation.

All three Elven languages trace their etymologies to the fifteen "Trees."<sup>1</sup> These Trees are the roots of both Anfél and

<sup>1</sup> The Elven term is éna (tree). In English these éna would be called "roots" or "stems", but I have used the Anfél translation.

ëavorfél. Of Kafarifél I was able to learn nothing, but it is likely that it derives in some form from these fifteen Trees as well.

The Trees describe all that the most ancient Elves knew of their world, and they are divided into three "families": natural, familial, and unnatural. These categories haven't any linguistic significance, although the three "families" form a consistent theme in the literature of the Elven houses. It is interesting to note the existence of the "unnatural" family, and that it contains fire, stone, and noise, which comprise the Anfél word for Dwarf, Tuyaswä. Elven hatred of Dwarves is a result of the historical Elven disdain for linguistic members of the unnatural family.

In this text I will discuss only the Anfél and ëavorfél languages of Elven speech. A reference to "Elven" should be taken to refer to both languages. Items appearing only in one or the other will be clearly identified as such.

### NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION

1. Not all Common letters are represented in Elven. The Elven alphabet (transcribed into the Latin alphabet) reads as follows:

**a, b, d, e, f, i, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, y, z.**

2. Vowels follow the general European patterns:

A = ahh (as in "father")

E =ay (as in "way")

O =oh (as in "go" or as in "bought")

I =i (as in "him")

U =oo (as in "loop")

3. Double and Special vowels are read as follows:

oo =ooh (as in "school", longer than "u")

ee =ee (as in "he")

é = eh (as in exit)

ë = ä (as in "make" or the German "Räder")

4. Accents are quite simple to learn. The only general rule is that verbs in their infinitive form are accented on the final syllable (manya, lawënya, kütyu). In all other cases the accent must be learned, and the Elves themselves are undecided on the proper pronunciations. Stress, it would seem, is a major factor in distinguishing between the various dialects of Elven speech.

Thus, the new learner of Elven is often left to decide upon his own accents. This creates enormous difficulties in the lexicography of Elven. A positive note is that, however pronounced, magical incantations all seem to work, and I have heard some quite horrendous pronunciations of the spells by mages across Ashtalarea (especially among the Krag Barbarians).

### THE THREE "FAMILIES" AND THE FIFTEEN "TREES"

All words in Elven are derived in some way from one of the Fifteen "Trees." These Trees (or "root words," if you prefer) are the basic ideas which the ancient Elves first put into language. They also represent the letters of the Elven alphabet. The Trees are divided into three "Families" which reflect the bases of all Elven thought.

#### THE NATURAL FAMILY (ANÓN)

The natural family is comprised of the "Trees" which the Elves hold most sacred. They are the things which nurture and nourish the Elves and the children of the forests:

an	the woodlands	ëa	water
la	the sun	na	foodstuffs
fä	the wind		

#### THE FAMILIAL FAMILY (ONÓN)

The familial family represents the relationships of the Elven family and their magical heritage:

ma	mother	da	father
vorra	the Elven gods	ri	Elf,
			Elvenkind
fë	singing, speech	óno	family, clan

#### THE UNNATURAL FAMILY (ASÓN)

The unnatural family consists of the things which are opposed to the natural and, to a lesser degree, the familial Families:

tu	stone	awë	fire
asa	noise, sounds	kú	the moon

## THE USE OF ĚAVORFĚL IN MAGIC

ěavorfěl, the Elven language of magic, is typically the first Elven which non-Elves learn. It is actually a simplified form of Anfěl with a few syntactic changes. These changes will not be discussed here, but must be dealt with at some future point if one wishes to become fluent in Anfěl.

Since all Elven magic concerns itself with its effect on living things, the vocabulary of the incantations is actually quite limited.

### FORMATION OF SPELL NAMES

The object of the spell is written first — that is, the race on which the spell will have effect. Next comes the particular personal statistic affected: All spells increase or decrease some stat.

For example, increasing or decreasing the Body stat is the magical way to cause or heal wounds. In Old ěavorfěl the affix for the body was declined according to the Family from which the targeted race is derived (The Natural Family= "a," Familial Family= "o," and Unnatural Family="u"). "Human Body," for instance, derives from "Daysa" (Humans), whose stem is asa, which is in the Unnatural Family. The word for Human Body therefore is "Dayvu," whereas "Elven Body" is "Anvo" and "Animal Body" is "Anva." In modern ěavorfěl, however, these declinations are no longer used, and the generic affix "na," of unknown origin, is used regardless of the etymology of the creature affected by the spell.

The severity of the spell is affixed next, followed by the range of the spell and its duration. Finally, a suffix denotes the particular subclass(es) of creature at which the spell is targeted. These creature suffixes are derivations of the Anfěl cardinal numbers, and relate directly to historical listings of creatures of the lands which were first made by the Elf-Druid Elandrohil hundreds of years ago.

## SPELLING AND VOCABULARY

In actual practice, spellings of Anfěl and ěavorfěl words have undergone a number of variations since their introduction in Ashtalarea. In general, diacritical marks are seldom used in ěavorfěl text. Except in special cases, omission of the diacriticals does not change the pronunciation or meaning of an incantation.

Anfěl is less forgiving, not only because fewer non-Elves use it but also because the much richer vocabulary of an active language requires more subtle differentiation between lexical items. In short, if you're casting a spell, you can ignore diacriticals, but if you're writing a poem, you'd better use them.

In addition, ěavorfěl names for spells are written using twelve characters or less, due to the necessity for speed in speaking incantations during combat. Many ěavorfěl words therefore are difficult for the non-specialist to analyze linguistically.

In the lists below the original spellings of ěavorfěl words and phrases have been kept to aid in formation of future incantation names. The most frequently-used abbreviated ěavorfěl words are listed alongside their Anfěl variants (Anfěl spellings minus diacritical marks):

### STATISTICS:

<u>English</u>	<u>Anfěl variant</u>	<u>ěavorfěl</u>
STRENGTH	DANTURA	DAN
QUICKNESS	VAVA	VA
FORESIGHT	DAVORA	DA
INTELLIGENCE	VORNIFA	VOR
FATIGUE	TWE	TWE
OFFENSE	KUTWĚ	KUT
DEFENSE	ANDANA	AND
BODY	NAVA	NA

### CLASSES:

<u>English</u>	<u>Anfěl variant</u>	<u>ěavorfěl</u>
HUMAN	DAYSA	DAY

## CLASSES:

English	Anfél variant	ëavorfél
ELF	ANRIëA	AR
DWARF	TUYASWA	TYA
KELDERHEIT	KELDAR	KEL
ANIMAL	ANNEA	AN
DRAGON	DAKU	DAK
ELEMENTAL	VORNEA	VON
GIANTKIND	KUMATWE	KUM
LEGENDARY	VORANNEA	VAR
REPTILE	ENNEA	EN
SPECTRE	KUNEA	KUN
UNDEAD	VORKUNA	VOR

## SEVERITY:

	Anfél	ëavorfél
Insignificant Healing/Damage:	Ri	R
Moderate Healing/Wound:	La	L
Serious Healing/Wound:	Wa	W
Great Healing/Wound:	Ye	Y
Tremendous Healing/Wound:	Fe	F

## RANGE:

Close (Adjacent Or Touching)	ON
Long	YR

## DURATION:

Minimal	A	Long	O
Short	E	Longest	U
Medium	I		

## SUBCLASS:

### The ëavorfél Numbers

1	LA	10	KÉ
2	MU	11	ãT
3	FÉ	12	LO
4	TI	13	RI
5	MI	14	õT
6	KO	15	Yö
7	RA	16	U
8	ä		All, every TA
9	Uá		

## MODERN COMMON DERIVATIVES

There are, surprisingly, a number of Modern Common words which derive from Elven:

**FLORA:** derived from Old Common *flora*, the goddess of flowers in one mythology. She was, in fact, an Elven princess from the Tinyu Forest in Astrikan. Her name, *fëlorra*, derives from the Old Anfél *fëlavorra*, "song of the sun god."

**FAUNA:** derived from the Old Common *Fauna*, the goddess of fruitfulness in ancient mythology, and the sister of Faunus. An Elven wizard-maiden named Féanna is the basis for this name. It derives from Old Anfél *fëlaan*, "song of the woodland gods."

**FAIRY:** derived from Old Common *fata*, "goddess of fate," which is derived from the noun *fatun*, "fate." Continuing the etymology into Elven, we find that it derives from Modern Anfél *fëari*, from Old Anfél *fëëari*, "water songs of the Elves."

## APPENDIX 2: TIMELINE FOR ASHTALAREA

- 604 Dwarves thrive under the mountains of Mytrone and Ghor unaware of the worlds above them.
- 604 Ghor Dwarves surface from beneath the Ghor Mountains.
- 686? Elves arrive on the backs of mystical winged steeds.
- 764 Dwarves carve their way out of the Mytrone Mountains.
- 794 The Reign of King Zolod begins in Ashtalarea.
- 936-38 Ghor Dwarves encounter Stone Ogres. First Ogre War.
- 952 Second Ogre War.
- 960 First Humans cross the Tyme Pass into Ashtalarea
- 962 Brettle Founded.
- 963 Third Ogre War destroys Ghor mountains, reducing them to rubble.
- 972 Time of Human expansion. Shellemoon founded. Feglar discovers Great Dismal Bay.
- 973 Krell and Feglar fight. Krell flees into swamplands. Feglar enlists the aid of the Mytrone Dwarves in building the Hobe.
- 977 Brettle is made a Dukedom. Formation of the Brettle Regulars.
- 978 Duke forms Highwaymen's Guild by hiring henchmen to build roads to Shellemoon and the Hobe.
- 980? Pildar, the Dark Lord, begins amassing Orcs and Goblins in Drezin and South Tantowyn Forests. Pildar breeds humans for soldiers (Dark Guard).
- 984 Small group of Elves leave their homes and follow Pyar in the interest of trading with Humans.
- 997 Pyar convinces Plainsmen to settle the border areas of Lintle despite other Elves' complaints.
- 1003 Dwarf Crelek goes North in search of Ghor remains and disappears into the hills. Htron founded.
- 1004 Elf-Human skirmishes break out.
- 1011 Walbars sail into Anchoring Bay and begin sea-trade with Htron.
- 1026 First Htron ships set sail under command of the

- Rogue Poitle. Ship Olanth's Folly sets sail from Htron.
- 1042 The Dark War breaks out. Pildar's Orc and Ogre army attacks King Zolod in the Mytrone Hills. Goblins and Darkguard attack Shellemoon. The city is besieged until 1049.
- 1044 Dwarven city of Zolod is laid siege by Orcs and Ogres. City of Poitle founded.
- 1047 Elves from Lintle attack rear lines of Pildar's army in the Sodden Hills. King Usip dies, ending the lineage of Usip.
- 1048 King Zolod orders destruction of water supply for his mountain city, thereby flooding it and committing suicide with over 1000 Dwarves. Olegar fights Pildar's mage Tranzadeel near Prazen Point. Sir Segallion and the Hobean Squires arrive in Mytrone too late to save Zolod, but they push Pildar's army south into the Valley of the Damned.
- 1049 In the Valley of the Damned, Pildar's army is defeated by squires and Elves. Victory in the West. Shellemoon counterattacks against the siege. Regulars, Highwaymen, Amazons, Crelek and a new Dwarven army from Ghor attack and defeat Pildar's only remaining forces.
- 1050 Pildar retreats into the Dark Tower. End of the Dark War. Plainsmen settle all of Lintle before the Elves can return from the Dark War.
- 1057 *Olanth's Folly* enters Ebbwater and beaches. Town of Olanthen founded.
- 1065 Locks built in Poitle. Town renamed Poitle's Lock.
- 1067 First Kelden arrive in Ashtalarea, in Brettle.
- 1077 Last female of the Usip line dies.
- 1079-96 Barbarians of Krag attack Thimblewald.
- 1088 Hrondar the Learned enters Ashtalarea through the Tyme Pass.
- 1092 Dungar Stiffnuckles finishes road from Ghor to Brettle. Highwaymen extend it all the way to Htron.
- 1096 Thimblewald Keep constructed on the River Downing to defend against the Barbarian attacks. End of Barbarian Wars.
- 1100 Present Day

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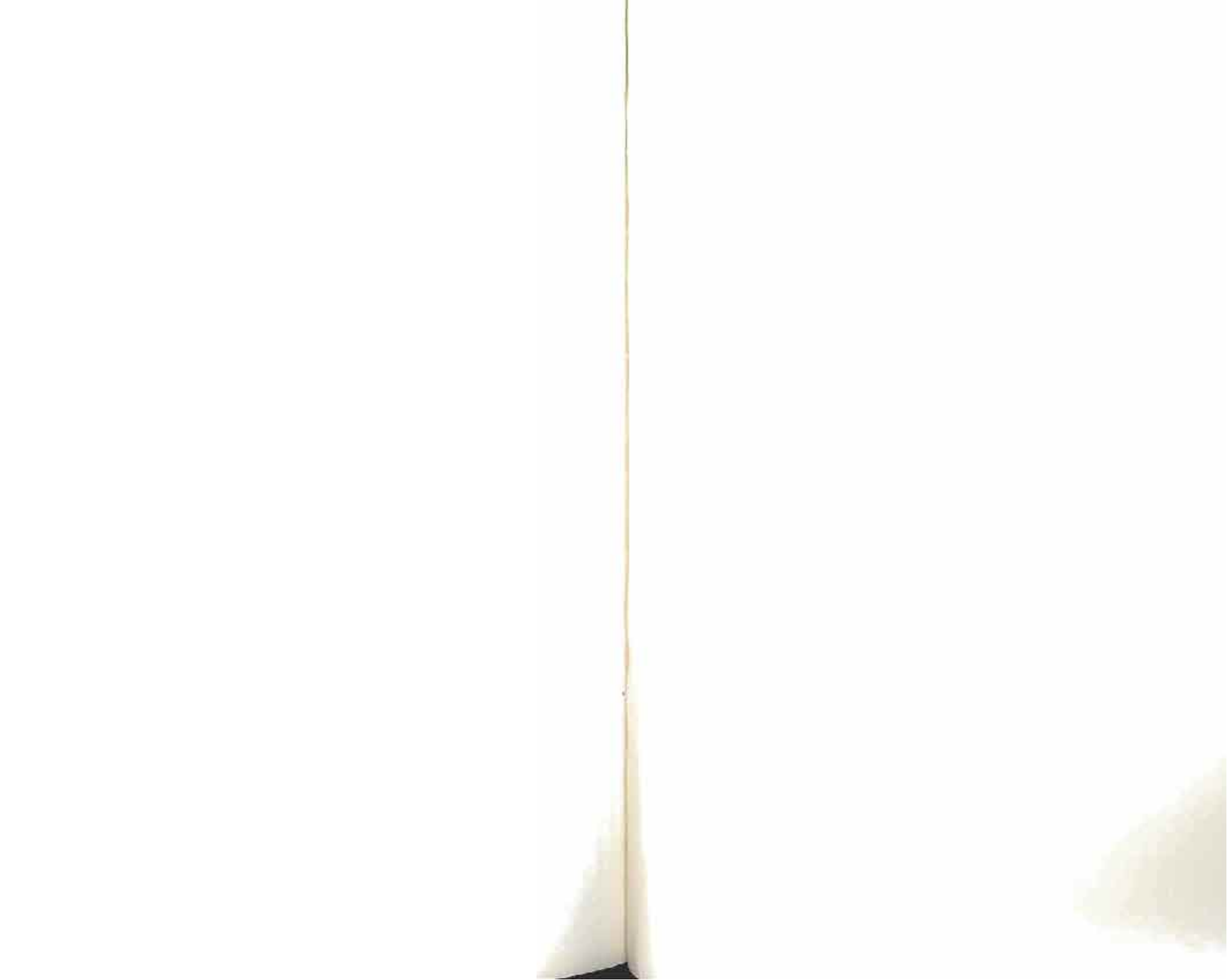
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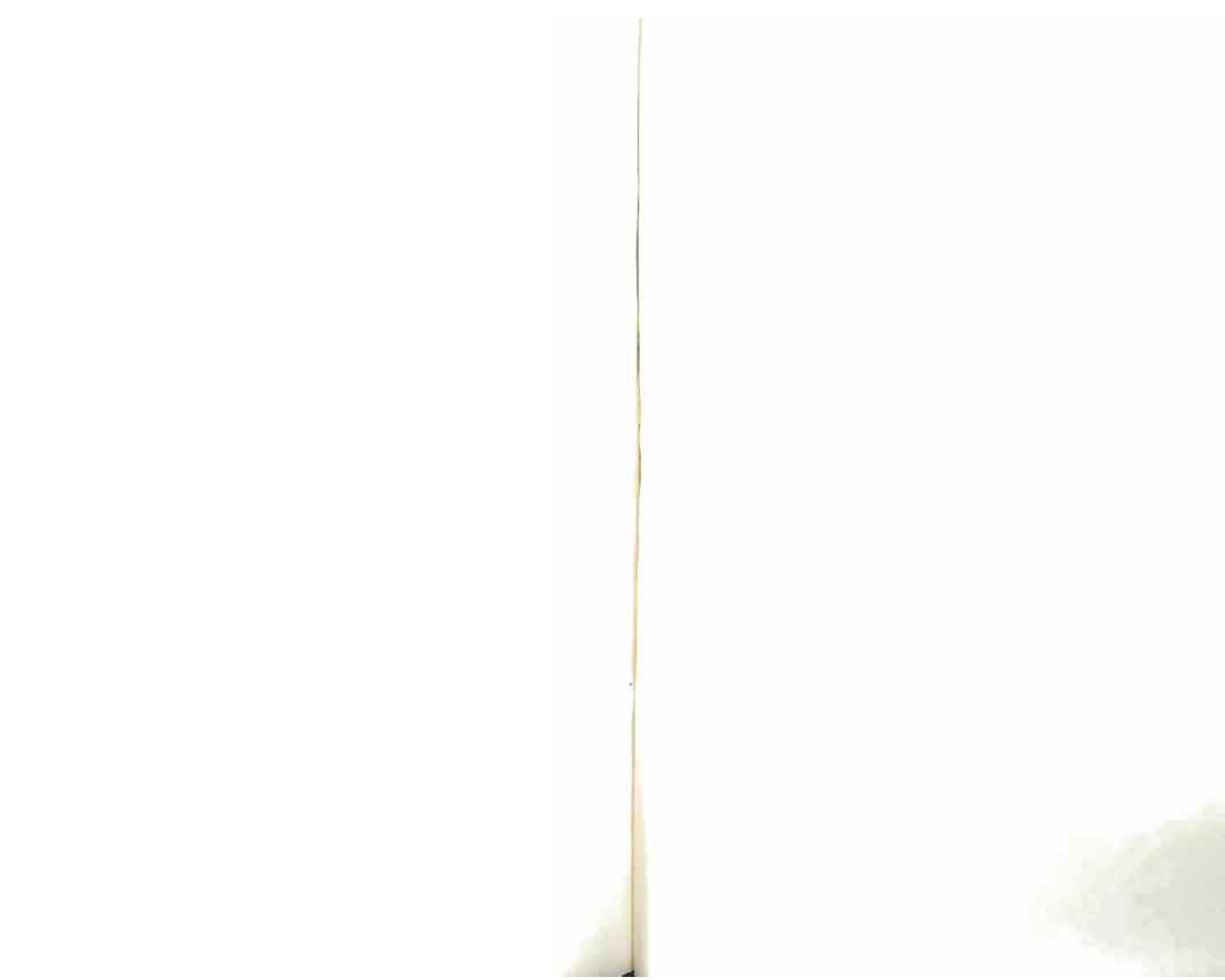
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## About the Author...

Growing up in the tree-lined suburb of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, Todd Porter certainly had the ideal playground to test the limits of his imagination. As a child, Todd enjoyed making up games to entertain his friends, using whatever he could find

around the house or yard for "props." With four brothers and two sisters, Todd had plenty of "playtesters" to try out each of his new games.



*Todd Mitchell Porter*

After high school, Todd enrolled in Central College, a pre-ministry private school in Pella, Iowa. During this time, Todd concentrated his studies on Linguistics and History, discovering an insatiable appetite for the history of medieval England. Soon came Todd's discovery of the Dungeons and Dragons roleplaying game. The realm of fantasy role-playing gave Todd a medium for his inventive storytelling skills. "After three years, I left school and spent all of my money on an Apple computer to play a really neat game called "Ultima." Although he had what seemed to be a strong start on a straightforward path towards computer gaming, it was actually several years before any of his creations would be taken before the public.

In 1981, Todd joined Penguin Software and assisted in the development of several products. He later relocated to San Marcos, Texas and refined his programming skills as a Computer Research Associate at SouthWest Texas State University. Todd was a member of the first team to design an inexpensive laser-disc interactive system for educational purposes. In 1987, Todd joined ORIGIN as a Computer Game Designer and completed the development of Knights of Legend, a fantasy roleplaying game that he had been working on for several years. The game reflects many of the influences on Todd's life and is the crowning achievement of his career to date.

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