

KENT DAVID KELLY



OLDSKULL  
KNIGHTS





# **THE MYTHIC WORLD OF OLDSKULL**

## **Book II: Oldskull Knights**

A **Basic** / **Expert** / **Advanced**

**Classic Rules Supplement**

**For Fantasy Role-Playing Games**

**V1.0**

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## Chapter I:

### Description

Wonderland Imprints is proud to present the second volume in the Mythic World of Oldskull series, providing the advanced modular rules developed for author Kent David Kelly's epic campaign adventure game. These volumes are designed to integrate perfectly with one another if you collect them all, or to stand alone if you prefer to pick and choose aspects from the Oldskull campaign that you're personally intrigued by. If you're looking for universal and directly compatible old school materials to bridge the original game editions created by Arneson and Gyax (1974-1985), Holmes (1977), Moldvay and Cook (1981), Mentzer (1983-1986), and other luminaries of TSR (1974-1989) into a single refined system, you've come to the right place.

This second supplement in the series provides a full examination of the labyrinthine rules for cavaliers and paladin-cavaliers, in addition to many other features. You will find six fully realized and refined classes of the knight archetype herein: the chivalric cavalier proper (with fuller, more sympathetic, and fairer rules advocating player free agency), the elven cavalier (complete with stag mounts and bows of course), the drowic cavalier, the paladin (replete with role-playing advice and a detailed coverage of alignment challenges), the anti-paladin Chaos Knight, and the mysterious demon-slaying Knight Templar. All classes have been fully integrated with world mythology, folklore, weird fiction, and detailed campaign notes from the author's campaign that will bring your knighted characters alive in the World of Oldskull. All of the classes and rules have been reimagined and updated throughout with extensive sagely advice along with out-of-print magazine and newszine errata, supplemented by notes and musings derived from E. Gary Gyax in accordance with his vision for his never-attained Advanced Second Edition.

Twenty-four of the new elements and systems you will find herein include: extensive themes and evocative level titles for all classes; clearer and more internally consistent rules for Yeoman and Noble Cavaliers; a rebalancing of strength of will vs. fear and mind attacks; detailed rules for equine and non-equine mounts (including the Templars' dungeon-prowling war beasts); parrying rules that make sense; pennon of glory advantages; cavalier henchman and squire details by level; errata-driven rules for weapons of choice; clarified lance usage guidelines; more reasonable systems for exemplary and dishonorable armor; elven and dark elven lore templates; the drowic Riding Lizards of Chthon; a fuller and fairer review of chivalry (it's not mind control, it's choice); details for Black Knights; more types of warhorses; more barding; the Chaos Knight class; cultural paladins by mythos; paladin aura of protection errata; better rules for palatine warhorses; disease curing clarifications; a Gygaxian treatise on the meaning and play potential of Lawful Good; the Templar class; twenty unique knightly orders for your campaign; and lots and lots of lore from the World of Oldskull.

I hope you enjoy this celebration of the old school TSR tradition. Be sure to watch for future volumes in this series which will detail the full array of character classes, new classes and races, adventuring rules, campaign setting details, and much more. Another fine gaming supplement from Kent David Kelly and Wonderland Imprints, *Only the Finest Works of Fantasy*. (200 pages, 60,000 words.)











## Chapter II:

# The Cavalier Class

### Overview of the Cavalier Class

**Description:** A cavalier is a noble-born knight horseman who follows a code of chivalry. They are martial champions, empowered by deities, archangelic powers, or the light of the sacred will. They are radiant exemplars of honor, valor, terrible wrath, and divine mercy. All such knights begin their lifelong crusade as vanguards of good and righteousness, standing – sometimes alone amongst the slain – against the rising tides of Evil, the Chaos Plague, the King in Yellow, and the imminent Apocalypse.

Despite their great power they are mortal men and women, and endless ages of warfare against the maddening dark exact a brutal toll. Those who at last fall prey to darkness either ascend as spirits of glory or rise again as Chaos Knights, empowered by arch-devils, demon lords, Orcus, the Great Old Ones ... or worse.

As a matter of play style, cavaliers are enjoyed by those players who wish to adopt the role of a flawed hero that others rely on and look to for leadership. But that role comes with a price, because the cavalier's station endures only through honor and adherence to reverence toward a deific power, a liege lord, an order of knightly brothers and sisters, and fulfillment of exemplary traditions in the name of heroic chivalry.<sup>1</sup>

**Cavaliers of Renown:** Famous cavaliers from history in the World of Oldskull include the Knights of the Round Table (although many are more properly deemed paladins or Templars), Edward the Black Prince, the warlord El Cid (Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar of Castile), King Richard the Lionheart, Sir Wilfred of Ivanhoe, and Sir William Wallace (the Brave-Hearted) of Caledonia.

**Immortal Cavaliers:** While feudal knighthood is primarily a medieval institution, there are earlier martial orders – such as the Cataphracts, the Clibinarii, and Alexander the Great's Macedonian cavalry – that reveal to us that even from a medieval perspective, the cavaliers have fought and served for nearly two thousand years. Therefore any deity of both war and justice has cavalier aspects of a deific nature. These gods and goddesses include Athena (of the Greek mythos), Forseti (Norse mythos), Jupiter (Roman mythos), Justitia (Roman mythos), Mandanu (Babylonian mythos), Marduk (Babylonian mythos), Nemesis (Greek mythos), and Raguel (a celestial angel).

### Becoming a Cavalier

**Alignment:** Cavaliers must begin the game with good alignment (CG, LG, or NG). Through later game play, they can change their alignment in a measured fashion (with requisite penalties for straying from their beliefs).

<sup>1</sup> For the original conception of the cavalier class, refer to Gygax's article in the April 1983 magazine.







Neutral and evil cavaliers are sometimes known as Gray Knights and Dark Knights. The most nefarious chaotic evil cavaliers are termed anti-paladins, and belong to the Chaos Knight sub-class (described later in this volume).

**Ancestral Limitations:** Only humans, dark elves, gray elves, high elves, and half-elves (of dark, gray, or high descent) can become cavaliers. Other races and other elven sub-races are forbidden from entering the cavalier class; such characters – regardless of their aspirations – mostly commonly become fighters instead.







**Minimum Ability Scores:** STR 15+, DEX 15+, CON 15+, INT 10+, WIS 10+, CHA 6+.

**Social Standing:** Unlike other classes, new characters can only become cavaliers if they are born to a family of sufficient social standing. This is because cavaliers are champions and exemplars of the martial ideals of their culture and ancestry, infused with power by the gods themselves. Only certain proven bloodlines and lineages are graced by the deities as honorable champions and chivalric incarnations.

If the player rolls for standing and the result is either Lower Class (LLC-1), Middle Lower Class (MLC-2), or Upper Lower Class (ULC-3), the character cannot become a cavalier, despite any qualifying ability scores. A kindhearted Game Master should strongly consider overruling this restriction, but in doing so the player's cavalier should only be granted horseman status and standing in the Lower Middle Class (LMC-4). The cavalier will thereafter gain glory and further respect through valorous deeds performed during play.

**Social Standing and Human Cavaliers:** If the character is a human created through ability score generation Method V, and standing is insufficient, then character creation would simply begin anew (and the player would likely opt again to become a cavalier, repeating the process with a second set of new ability scores). Because of this, it is logically recommended that a low social standing roll should simply be accepted as Lower Middle Class (tier IV) by the GM.

**Social Standing and Demi-Human Cavaliers:** If the character is a demi-human created through any other ability score generation method, the player is refused the cavalier class and should accept another class option that the character's scores qualify for. For example, the player might opt to play a ranger or a fighter instead. This is because the player is never promised a character class when he or she has decided to play a demi-human; luck-driven qualification is required.

## Archetypal Considerations for the Cavalier

**Combat Prowess:** As knights, cavaliers have the most efficient combat prowess progression rate in the game. They are equal to the warrior classes (fighters, barbarians, hunters, and rangers) in most martial respects.

**Hit Dice:** Cavaliers have special hit dice at levels 0 and 1, depending on whether they are noble-born or supported by a noble patron (as explained below). Beginning with experience level 2, regardless of origin cavaliers roll D10s for hit points, with constitution modifiers applying to each die, up through experience level 10. Beyond level 10, they gain +3 hit points per level (with constitution modifiers no longer applying).

**Iconic Armor:** Cavaliers can wear any type of armor, and can also use any type of helm and shield. As will be noted later in this chapter, as highly-regarded champions of their peoples they favor the finest and most inspiring armor possible. The ideal armor for a cavalier – at higher experience levels – will be field or full plate armor.

**Iconic Arms:** Cavaliers can wield any type of weapon. However as exemplars of honorable and heroic combat, they favor some types of weapons over others, as will be explained in the Limitations and Disadvantages section of this chapter.







**Prime Requisite:** Cavaliers have no true prime requisite, and therefore cannot gain an experience bonus due to high ability scores. (See however the Pennon of Glory advantage, and the Battle Valor advantage, each described later in this chapter).

**Saving Throws:** Cavaliers have saving throws that are similar to the fighter class, with some advantageous exceptions. Cavaliers are immune to fear (magical or non-magical), and resistant to mind attacks. They also gain a +2 bonus to all saving throws made vs. illusions or phantasms. See also the Champion's Strength of Will advantage for more information.







## Cavalier Progression

**Class Level Limit:** Cavaliers have no class-imposed maximum experience level.

**Non-Human Level Limit:** Importantly, elves and half-elves can progress in the cavalier class without any ancestral level limit. This is highly significant, considering the rather low experience level limits that are placed upon high-level elven and half-elven characters of the warrior archetype (such as fighters and rangers).<sup>2</sup> This is balanced by the fact that demi-human cavaliers cannot multi-class.

**Human Level Limit:** Human cavaliers can attain any experience level.

**Two Paths of Progression:** Middle-class horsemen are termed Yeoman Cavaliers, and upper-class horsemen are termed Noble Cavaliers.

**Low-Level Progression for Yeoman Cavaliers:** Middle-class cavaliers begin at level 0 (Yeoman Initiate) with -6.00 Experience Point Marks (XPM) and HD 1D4+1. Middle-class cavaliers must earn XPM in order to attain level 0 (Experienced Yeoman) at -2.00 XPM, earning an additional 1D4 hit die, bringing their total to 2D4+1. The middle-class cavalier must then, at 0 XPM, attain experience level 1 (Proven Yeoman) where her or she will earn an additional 1D4 hit die, bringing their total to 3D4+1.

**Low-Level Progression for Noble Cavaliers:** Upper-class cavaliers take a more direct progression path, beginning at level 1 with 0 XPM and HD 1D10+3.

Both types of cavaliers then use the same scale and progress normally to experience levels 2, 3, and beyond regardless of their upbringing.

**Pace of Progression:** The cavalier class has a somewhat slowed pace of progression in relation to other classes. Progression is similar to that of the fighter class (warrior archetype) with occasional differences. Yeoman cavaliers enter play at a disadvantage, but over time the progression balances out and becomes negligible by the time experience level 4 is attained. Cavaliers who attain 25 XPM are level 3, and those with 50 XPM are level 4. Those with 100 XPM are level 5, those with 250 XPM are level 6, and those with 500 XPM are level 7. In consideration of higher experience levels, those with XPM 1,000 are level 9, those with XPM 2,500 are level 11, those with XPM 5,000 are level 13, and those with XPM 10,000 are level 17.

**TABLE 1A:**

**Initial Experience Progression for Cavaliers of the Yeomanry**

Experience Point Marks	Experience Level	Earned HD / hp	Cumulative HD / hp	Exemplary Title
-6 to -2.01	Yeomanry 0 (Initiate)	1D4+1 hp	1D4+1 hp*	Light Hobilar
-2 to -0.01	Yeomanry 0 (Experienced)	+1D4 hp	2D4+1 hp	Hobilar
0 to 9.99	Yeomanry 1 (Proven)	+1D4 hp	3D4+1 hp	Sworn Blade

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the 1985 Unearthed rules for this often-overlooked Gygaxian advantage that is conferred upon elven and half-elven knights.







**Yeoman Progression:** Table 1A, above, shows the three tiers of experience progression for starting Yeoman Cavaliers. Play begins as a noble-patroned horseman at level Yeomanry 0 (Initiate), and proceeds through Yeomanry 0 (Experienced) as Experience Point Marks (XPM) are gained to reduce the negative deficit for the progressing non-noble character. Once the horseman achieves level Yeomanry 1 (Proven), the character is no longer a horseman, and is now a full cavalier. The special abilities of the cavalier class are fully attained at level Yeomanry 1. Once the Yeoman Cavalier's XPM exceed 9.99, the character bypasses progression Table 1B proceeds directly to experience level 2, as detailed in Table 1C, below.



\* **Special Note Regarding Yeoman Hit Dice and Hit Points:** In regards to a Yeoman Cavalier, the character's constitution (CON) bonus to hit points is applied only at level Yeomanry 0 (Initiate), not







at the other two experience levels. For example, when a Yeoman Initiate with CON 16 begins play, he will have 1D4+1 hp, +2 for CON, for a total of between 4 and 7 hit points. At level Yeomanry 0 (Experienced), the cavalier will gain an additional +1D4 hit points, but with no CON bonus. At further level Yeomanry 1 (Proven), the cavalier will gain another additional +1D4 hit points, but again with no CON bonus. The result will be that the Yeoman Cavalier will have HD 3D4+1, plus an additional 2 for CON bonus, accumulated for XPM tier 0 to 9.99.

Non-Player Character Noble Cavaliers will protectively treat level 0 Yeoman Cavaliers as “younger brothers and sisters” to an extent, until level 1 (Proven Yeoman), when the Yeoman will be regarded as a fully capable equal.

**TABLE 1B:**

**Initial Experience Progression for Cavaliers of the Nobility**

Experience Point Marks	Experience Level	Earned HD / hp	Cumulative HD / hp	Exemplary Title
<b>0 to 9.99</b>	Noble 1	1D10+3 hp	1D10+3 hp*	Sworn Lancer

**Noble Progression:** Table 1B, above, shows the single tier of initial experience progression for Noble Cavaliers. Play begins at level Noble 1 (Sworn Lancer), with the special abilities of the cavalier class fully in enabled. Once the Noble Cavalier’s XPM exceed 9.99, the character proceeds to experience level 2, as detailed in Table 1C, below.

**\* Note Regarding Noble Hit Dice and Hit Points:** Since a Noble Cavalier enters play directly at level 1, the character’s level 1 hit dice will be 1D10+3, instead of the multi-tiered Yeoman Cavalier D4 hit dice that are noted in Table 1A. Therefore, a level 1 Noble Cavalier with CON 17 would have HD 1D10+3+3, for a starting total of between 7 and 16 hit points.

**TABLE 1C:**

**Further Experience Progression for the Cavalier Class**

Experience Point Marks	Experience Level	Earned HD / hp	Cumulative HD / hp	Exemplary Title
<b>10 to 19.99</b>	2	+1D10 hp	2D10+3 or 3D4+1D10+1 hp	Scutarius
<b>20 to 39.99</b>	3	+1D10 hp	3D10+3 or 3D4+2D10+1 hp	Veteran Scutarius
<b>40 to 74.99</b>	4	+1D10 hp	4D10+3 or 3D4+3D10+1 hp	Cataphract
<b>75 to 149.99</b>	5	+1D10 hp	5D10+3 or 3D4+4D10+1 hp	Esquire and Master / Master Esquiness
<b>150 to 339.99</b>	6	+1D10 hp	6D10+3 or 3D4+5D10+1 hp	Knight / Dame
<b>340 to 559.99</b>	7	+1D10 hp	7D10+3 or 3D4+6D10+1 hp	Knight / Dame Justiciar







560 to 879.99	8	+1D10 hp	8D10+3 or 3D4+7D10+1 hp	Justiciar Cavalier
880 to 1,199.99	9	+1D10 hp	9D10+3 or 3D4+8D10+1 hp	Knight Commander / Dame Commander
1,200 to 2,399.99	10	+1D10 hp	10D10+3 or 3D4+9D10+1 hp	Sovereign Knight / Dame Commander
2,400 to 3,599.99	11	+3 hp	10D10+6 or 3D4+9D10+4 hp	Lord / Lady Cavalier
3,600 to 4,799.99	12	+3 hp	10D10+9 or 3D4+9D10+7 hp	High Lord / Lady Cavalier
4,800 to 5,999.99	13	+3 hp	10D10+12 or 3D4+9D10+10 hp	Marshal Cavalier
6,000 to 7,199.99	14	+3 hp	10D10+15 or 3D4+9D10+13 hp	Lord / Lady Marshal Cavalier
7,200 to 8,399.99	15	+3 hp	10D10+18 or 3D4+9D10+16 hp	Grand Marshal Cavalier
8,400 to 9,599.99	16	+3 hp	10D10+21 or 3D4+9D10+19 hp	Grand Master Cavalier
9,600 to 10,799.99	17	+3 hp	10D10+24 or 3D4+9D10+22 hp	Supreme Master Cavalier
10,800 to 11,999.99	18	+3 hp	10D10+27 or 3D4+9D10+25 hp	Glorious Master Cavalier
12,000 to 13,199.99	19	+3 hp	10D10+30 or 3D4+9D10+28 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the First Mark
13,200 to 14,399.99	20	+3 hp	10D10+33 or 3D4+9D10+31 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Blood Mark
14,400 to 15,599.99	21	+3 hp	10D10+36 or 3D4+9D10+34 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Argent Mark
15,600 to 16,799.99	22	+3 hp	10D10+39 or 3D4+9D10+37 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Aurean Mark
16,800 to 17,999.99	23	+3 hp	10D10+42 or 3D4+9D10+40 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Palatine Mark
18,000 to 19,199.99	24	+3 hp	10D10+45 or 3D4+9D10+43 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Mithral Mark
19,200 to 20,399.99	25	+3 hp	10D10+48 or 3D4+9D10+46 hp	Exalted Master Cavalier of the Mark Amaranthine
(+1,200)	(+1)	+3 hp	(+3 hp)	(Unique)

**Cavalier Progression:** Table 1C, above, applies to the progression of all cavaliers of experience levels 2 and higher, whether they originated in a Yeoman or Noble background. Hit Dice for levels 2 and up are as indicated, regardless of the cavalier's origin. The Cumulative HD/hp column shows the two potentially differing HD totals that will eventually result for Noble and Yeoman cavaliers respectively.

**Experience Point System Conversion Note:** For conversion purposes, when using older game supplements, the Game Master can consider an Experience Point Mark (XPM) to be equivalent to







approximately 250 experience points (XP) in the older rules. Therefore, XP totals in older rules can be divided by 250 and then reduced to two decimal places as an XPM conversion.

For example, an orc that is worth 15 XP in the old system would be worth 0.06 XPM; a potion of healing worth 200 XP would be worth 0.80 XPM; a trove of 2,367 gold pieces worth 2,367 XP would be worth 9.47 XPM; and so forth.



The following level titles are recommended for cavaliers in the Castle Oldskull campaign. For a PC the player can choose from among these options as appropriate, or with GM consultation.

**TABLE 2:**  
**Suggested Level Titles for Cavaliers**

Cavalier's Experience Level	Recommended Level Titles
<b>Yeomanry 0 (I)</b>	Horseman / Horsewoman, Light Hobilar, Military Page, Patron's Man / Woman, or Rider
<b>Yeomanry 0 (II)</b>	Armiger's Page, Blade, Cavalryman / Cavalrywoman, Hobilar, Knappe, Lancer, Shield Bearer / Shield Maiden, Squire, or Worthy Horseman / Worthy Horsewoman
<b>Yeomanry 1</b>	Herald of Arms, Joustler, or Sworn Blade
<b>Noble 1</b>	Armiger or Sworn Lancer
<b>2</b>	Joustler, Master of the Horse, Scutarius, Scutifer, Veteran Lancer, or Worthy Armiger
<b>3</b>	Esquire / Esquiress, Master Armiger, Master Lancer, Veteran Scutarius, or Veteran Scutifer
<b>4</b>	Banner Bearer, Cataphract, Esquire Peer / Esquiress Peer, or Knight Errant / Dame Errant
<b>5</b>	Esquire and Master / Master Esquiress, Esteemed Esquire / Esteemed Esquiress, Knight Bachelor / Grand Dame Errant, or Vaunted Knight Errant / Vaunted Dame Errant
<b>6</b>	Esteemed Knight Errant / Esteemed Dame Errant, Knight / Dame, or Royal Esquire / Royal Esquiress
<b>7</b>	Grand Knight / Grand Dame, Knight Hierarch / Dame Hierarch, or Knight Justiciar / Dame Justiciar
<b>8</b>	Banneret, Justiciar Cavalier, or Knight Banneret / Dame Banneret
<b>9</b>	Chevalier, Grand Justiciar Cavalier, Knight Commander / Dame Commander, or Sovereign Knight Banneret / Sovereign Dame Banneret







<b>10</b>	Cavalier, Grand Chevalier, or Sovereign Knight Commander / Sovereign Dame Commander
<b>11</b>	Grand Master Chevalier, or Lord Cavalier / Lady Cavalier
<b>12</b>	High Lord Cavalier / High Lady Cavalier, or Vice Marshal Cavalier
<b>13</b>	Cavalier Commander, Marshal Cavalier, or Warlord Cavalier
<b>14</b>	High Warlord Cavalier, Lord Marshal Cavalier / Lady Marshal Cavalier, or Overlord Cavalier / Dame Overlord Cavalier
<b>15</b>	Grand Commander Cavalier, or Grand Marshal Cavalier
<b>16</b>	Grand Master Cavalier (of the First Mark)
<b>17</b>	Grand Master Cavalier (of the Second Mark)
<b>18</b>	Grand Master Cavalier (of the Third Mark)
<b>19+</b>	(Etc.)







## **Powers and Advantages of the Cavalier Class**

Cavaliers have an impressive array of complex advantages, some of which are a result of training with the knightly order, and others which are instilled by the gods. These powers are balanced in play by the cavalier's obligations and limitations, as noted in the Disadvantages section.

### **Augmented Might, Agility, and Endurance**

Cavaliers drill and practice their weapon, parrying, and riding skills at every opportunity. On any game day where they are not adventuring, healing, traveling or otherwise declared to be engaged, the cavalier will be training – either alone, or with companions and/or nearby knights if at all possible. This constant training gives the cavalier increased percentile ratings in strength, dexterity, and constitution during the character generation phase.

The cavalier's player should roll percentile dice, as observed by the Game Master, to augment the starting strength score. If the character already has exceptional strength (for example, 18/57) due to having a STR score of 18, this step is skipped. Otherwise, the cavalier's generated strength score – either 15, 16, or 17, as earlier determined – will be augmented by the percentile score. Therefore if a cavalier has STR 16 and her player rolls 84 on percentile dice, the character's starting STR will be 16/84.

Once augmented strength has been determined, the process is repeated for dexterity and constitution.

From a rules standpoint, a percentile score has no bearing on the game as such. Therefore a STR score of 16/84 is identical to an un-augmented STR score of 16. However, cavaliers can increase these physical ability scores further during play, which means that the 16/84 will soon become a STR of 17, conferring new bonuses.

After the game begins, as the cavalier gains experience levels, his or her STR, DEX, and CON scores will continue to improve. Refer to the Deific Empowerment advantage as described later in this section.

### **Battle Mastery**

Mid- and high-level cavaliers gain additional melee (but not missile or thrown) attacks<sup>3</sup> per round as summarized below. These attack rates apply against all foes of hit dice (HD) 1 or experience level 1, or higher. Compare with the Merciless Onslaught advantage (later in this section).

Attacks with proficient weapons of choice are made at an even faster rate, as shown on the table below.

**Important Note:** If a cavalier performs parries, the cavalier can only defend and cannot attack in that round, even if he or she is normally capable of making multiple attacks in a single round.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the September 1982 newszine.







TABLE 3A:

**Melee Attack Rates for Cavaliers with Non-Weapons of Choice**

Cavalier's Experience Level	Melee Attack Rate with Proficient or Non-Proficient Weapon	Notes
<b>Zero to 5</b>	1/1 (1 melee attack per round)	Normal attacking ability (akin to the prowess possessed by non-cavalier characters).
<b>6 to 10</b>	3/2 (3 attacks every 2 rounds)	The cavalier attacks once in the first round that he or she engages in combat. Then, on even-numbered engagement rounds (2, 4, 6, etc.) he or she attacks twice in the same round.
<b>11 to 15</b>	2/1 (2 melee attacks per round)	The cavalier can attack twice every melee round.
<b>16 or higher</b>	5/2 (5 attacks every 2 melee rounds)	The cavalier attacks twice in the first round that he or she engages in combat. Then, on even-numbered engagement rounds (2, 4, 6, etc.) he or she attacks three times.

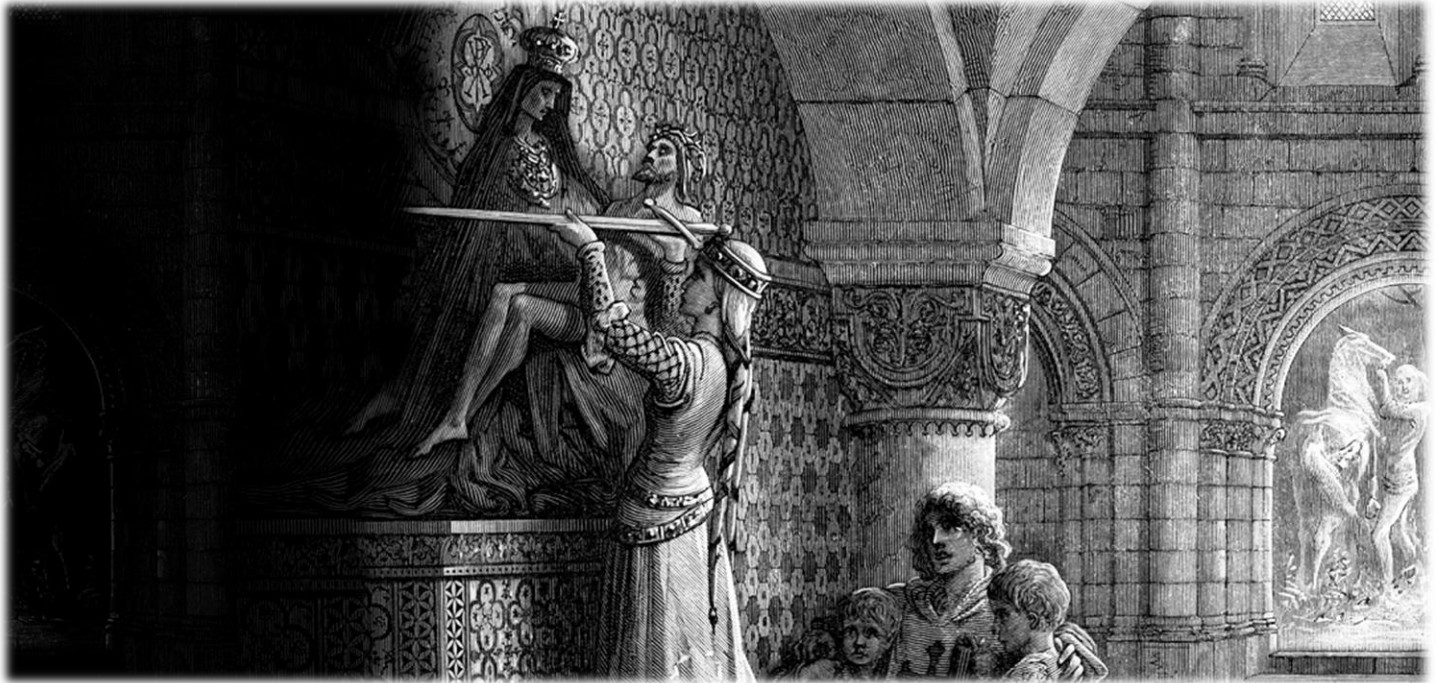






TABLE 3B:

### **Melee Attack Rates for Cavaliers with Mastered Weapons of Choice**

Cavalier's Experience Level	Melee Attack Rate with Mastered Weapon of Choice	Notes
<b>Zero</b>	1/1 (1 melee attack per round)	Normal attacking ability (akin to the prowess possessed by non-cavalier characters).
<b>1 to 5</b>	3/2 (3 attacks every 2 rounds)	The cavalier attacks once in the first round that he or she engages in combat. Then, on even-numbered engagement rounds (2, 4, 6, etc.) he or she attacks twice in the same round.
<b>6 to 10</b>	2/1 (2 melee attacks per round)	The cavalier can attack twice every melee round.
<b>11 to 15</b>	5/2 (5 attacks every 2 melee rounds)	The cavalier attacks twice in the first round that he or she engages in combat. Then, on even-numbered engagement rounds (2, 4, 6, etc.) he or she attacks three times.
<b>16 or higher</b>	3/1 (3 melee attacks per round)	The cavalier can attack three times every melee round.

### **Blessed Healing**

This minor form of divine protection is only conferred upon cavaliers of good alignment.

Good-aligned cavaliers will heal an additional 1D4 hit points for every full uninterrupted week of healing. These healed points are above and beyond any hit points healed as a result of normal healing. Therefore, on the seventh day, the cavalier would heal an additional +1D4 hp. This effect would occur again on the fourteenth day (if the cavalier has not already fully healed in that time), and for a third and final time on the twenty-first day.

As a rules reminder, any character who rests for four interrupted weeks (28 days' time) will fully heal to 100% of his or her normal hit points, regardless of damage taken. This month-long healing process is natural, without any magical aid being required for full recuperation.<sup>4</sup>

### **Champion's Strength of Will**

<sup>4</sup> Refer to the 1979 GM's Guide hardcover.







Due to their divine protection combined with strong willpower, cavaliers are resistant to hostile mental effects, including psionic attacks.<sup>5</sup>

The following abilities are considered mind attacks, in progressing tiers of power:

**TABLE 4:**  
**Summary of Mind Attacks and Tiers of Power**

<b>Mind Attack Power Tier</b>	<b>Includes the Following Spells and Abilities</b>
<b>I</b>	Charm Person, Command, Friends, Hypnotism, Mass Charm, Mind Blast (from a HD 1 or 1+ monster), Phantasmal Force, Sleep, Telempathic Projection (mastery level 1)
<b>II</b>	Forget, Hold Person, Mind Blast (from a HD 2 or 2+ monster), Ray of Enfeeblement, Telempathic Projection (level 2)
<b>III</b>	ESP (hostile intrusion), Mass Suggestion, Mind Blast (from a HD 3 or 3+ monster), Suggestion, Telempathic Projection (level 3)
<b>IV</b>	Confusion, Emotion, Fumble, Mind Blast (from a HD 4 or 4+ monster), Telempathic Projection (level 4), Telepathy (hostile intrusion)
<b>V</b>	Beguiling, Chaos, Feeblemind, Magic Jar, Mind Blast (from a HD 5 or 5+ monster), Quest, Telempathic Projection (level 5)
<b>VI</b>	Domination, Geas, Mass Domination, Mind Blast (from a HD 6 or 7 monster), Telempathic Projection (level 6 or 7)
<b>VII</b>	Finger of Death, Mind Blast (from a HD 8 or 9 monster), Rulership, Telempathic Projection (level 8 or 9)
<b>VIII</b>	Antipathy, Irresistible Dance, Mind Blast (from a HD 10 to 12 monster), Possession, Sympathy, Telempathic Projection (level 10 to 12)
<b>IX</b>	Mind Blast (from a HD 13 to 15 monster), Telempathic Projection (level 13 to 15)
<b>X</b>	Mind Blast (from a HD 16+ monster), Telempathic Projection (level 16+)  (Also includes any of the above-mentioned powers, if the source of the effect is a demigod, deity, artifact, or relic.)

The GM can add to this list as is deemed appropriate.

<sup>5</sup> In the Castle Oldskull game, the blanket 90% immunity (which is too powerful, particularly for low-level characters) has been reconstructed on a reasoned progression scale, built around spell levels along with the official design precepts found in the Wisdom section of the 1980 Deities hardcover, as contrasted and compared with the Wisdom section of the 1979 Player's Guide.







**Protection from Fear:** The following mind attacks are types of *fear*, which a cavalier is 100% immune to: Cause Fear (spell), Fear (draconian), Fear (monstrous), Fear (spell) and Scare. Good-aligned cavaliers (only) also radiate protection from fear in a 10' radius, which means that all allied companions within the radius will gain this protective benefit as well for as long as they remain in range of the cavalier.



When a mind attack targets a cavalier, the cavalier has an innate resistance that is equal a base chance of 20%, plus 10% per experience level beyond the first, -15% per tier of mind attack stronger than the level, +10% per tier of mind attack weaker than the level, to a maximum of 90%. Since this formula is fairly complex, it is pre-calculated and provided for reference in the next following table. (In the table “mind attack” is abbreviated MA; MA III for example means a tier III mind attack power.)







If the resistance roll succeeds, the mind attack – be it a spell, magic item effect, monstrous ability, or whatever else – completely fails to affect the cavalier. Even if the resistance roll fails, the cavalier is allowed a normal mind attack saving throw, potentially modified by a high or low wisdom (WIS) score.

**TABLE 5:**

**Cavalier Resistance to Mind Attacks**

Cavalier's Experience Level	MA I	MA II	MA III	MA IV	MA V	MA VI	MA VII	MA VIII	MA IX	MA X
<b>0</b>	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>1</b>	20%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>2</b>	40%	30%	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>3</b>	60%	50%	40%	25%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>4</b>	80%	70%	60%	50%	35%	20%	5%	0%	0%	0%
<b>5</b>	90%	90%	80%	70%	60%	45%	30%	15%	0%	0%
<b>6</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	80%	70%	55%	40%	25%	10%
<b>7</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	80%	65%	50%	35%
<b>8</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	75%	60%
<b>9</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	75%
<b>10 or higher</b>	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%







## Deific Empowerment of Might, Agility, and Endurance

In addition to the cavalier's ongoing training, the character will be watched "from on high" (or below!) by an immortal power that shares the cavalier's alignment. In this manner, cavaliers serve as champions for immortals who cannot fully manifest themselves within the terrestrial World of Oldskull.

The game effect of this immortal empowerment is that the character's STR, DEX, and CON are slightly increased upon the attainment of each new experience level, beginning with level 2. Part of this is due to the cavalier's training; more of it is due to the god or goddess who is watching over the character's fate.<sup>6</sup>

When the cavalier reaches level 2, the Game Master – not the player – should roll 2D10, and add the resultant sum to the character's augmented STR percentile score. To continue an earlier example, if a cavalier had STR 16/84, and then reached level 2 and gained 18 percentile points, the character's percentile strength would "roll over" and the new STR score would be 17/02. This 17/02 score would be treated as STR 17 for all normal purposes, including to hit and damage bonuses, carrying capacity, open doors rolls, and so forth.

After rolling for percentile strength, the GM should also roll 2D10 to add to the cavalier's percentile dexterity, and then lastly roll 2D20 to add to his or her percentile constitution.

The maximum scores that a cavalier can attain through deific empowerment are STR 18/00, DEX 18/00, and CON 18/00. Note that because this effect is supernatural, the cavalier can exceed the normal ancestral limitations placed upon that race. Therefore an elven cavalier can attain STR 18/00, given sufficient progression and empowerment over time.

The GM will want to record the number of percentile points gained per level, simply because if the cavalier ever suffers from an energy drain or similar level-depleting curse effect, the STR, DEX, and CON percentile points gained for the lost level will be lost as well.

## Eye of the Master of the Horse

The cavalier has the capability to assess the worth of a steed, or a creature that can be tamed as a steed. At lower experience levels, this ability can only be used in regards to the cavalier's ancestrally-favored mount types. Beginning at experience level 7, however, the cavalier can also learn to assess other types of creatures, such as pegasi and unicorns.

When this ability is used, the cavalier will know if the creature is of low worth (with 33% or fewer of the maximum potential hit points for the species), high worth (with 67% or more of the maximum potential hit points), or of middling worth (between 34 and 66% hit points). The GM will never tell the cavalier's player exactly how many hit points the creature has, however.

If the cavalier encounters a random horse, stag, or other mount-worthy creature, and then uses this ability prior to selecting the steed, the GM's hit point roll for that creature will be modified. Instead of rolling D8s for hit points, the GM will roll D8+2s instead, up to the creature's maximum potential hit points. The effects of this ability as it pertains to common mount types are summarized below.

<sup>6</sup> This is one of the reasons why non-cavalier characters cannot increase their ability scores in the same manner, regardless of how much additional training they perform.







TABLE 6:

### Comparative Hit Points for Cavalier-Appraised Steeds

Steed Type	Normal Hit Dice	Average Normal Hit Points	Cavalier-Selected Creature's Hit Dice	Cavalier-Selected Creature's Hit Points	Creature's Maximum Hit Points
Deer, Irish	4D8	18	4D8+8	26	32
Elk	4D8	18	4D8+8	26	32
Griffon	7D8	32	7D8+14	46	56
Hippogriff	3D8+3	17	3D8+9	23	27
Horse, Wild	2D8	9	2D8+4	13	16
Horse, Riding	2D8	9	2D8+4	13	16
Pegasus	4D8	18	4D8+8	26	32
Stag	3D8	14	3D8+6	20	24
Stag, Giant	5D8	23	5D8+10	33	40
Unicorn	4D8+4	22	4D8+12	30	36
Warhorse, Great Destrier	4D8+4	22	4D8+12	30	36
Warhorse, Heavy (Destrier)	3D8+3	17	3D8+9	23	27
Warhorse, Light (Courser)	2D8	9	2D8+4	13	16
Warhorse, Medium (Charger)	2D8+2	11	2D8+6	15	18

### Heroic Blood of the Exemplar

Cavaliers of good alignment (only) are empowered against evil, and to the extent that they are able the immortal powers will prevent the cavalier's death. This divine and supernatural protection comes at a price, as they cannot attack if he or she is standing solely as result of the immortal's grace.

Each cavalier has a heroic blood threshold (HBT). For a Yeoman Cavalier of level zero, this number is zero, which means that level zero cavaliers do not gain this protection until later in their adventuring careers. For a Yeoman Cavalier of level 1 (Proven Yeoman) or higher, this number is equal to the character's hit points achieved at level 1. Therefore a CON 17 Yeoman Cavalier at level 1 with 14 hit points would have HBT 14. For a Noble Cavalier, this number is equal to the character's hit points generated at level 1 (Sworn Lancer). This HBT number never changes, even if the cavalier gains additional constitution points at higher experience levels.

Non-cavalier characters can fight, move, and act until they reach zero hit points, at which point they immediately fall unconscious. Good-aligned cavaliers, however can move and act at zero hit points, or at a number of negative hit points equal to their HBT.

Continuing the example above, the cavalier with HBT 14 could fight, move, and act at any positive hit point total, and could also attack and act in an unhindered fashion at zero hit points. At between -1 and -14 hit points, the character is *vanquished*.

A vanquished cavalier can no longer attack, but can still move and act. A vanquished cavalier can also use non-weapon magic items, and can still ride a steed, or parry, according to the Parrying Mastery advantage (described later in this section). This borrowed time however should be used in a valorous fashion – perhaps to allow companions to flee, for example, while the cavalier diverts enemies







or engages in a fighting withdrawal – because despite the aura of divine protection, the cavalier will soon die if further wounds are taken.<sup>7</sup>



At a negative hit point total equal to HBT+1, the cavalier falls unconscious and begins to die. At a negative total equal to HBT+10 or worse, the cavalier dies. Continuing the example, the cavalier with

<sup>7</sup> See also Gary Gygax's commentary in the Dragonsfoot Gygax Q&A, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005.







HBT would fall unconscious and begin dying at -15 hit points, and would die immediately at -24 hit points.

If left alone and not saved and recovered, a dying cavalier will perish by the end of the day. If stuck in a vanquished state, the cavalier will not be able to attack until he or she heals to a minimum of zero hit points ... or hopefully, a positive hit point total.

### **Knightly Training Discipline (Disadvantage and Advantage)**

At experience levels zero through 5, cavaliers require the assistance of higher-level NPC cavaliers for training purposes. Regardless of experience point rewards, they cannot progress in level without NPC cavalier mentorship. The NPC cavalier must be at least level 4 if the progressing cavalier is currently level zero, 1, or 2. Thereafter, the NPC cavalier must be at least 2 levels higher than the progressing cavalier (a level 5 NPC can train a level 3 PC to reach level 4, for example).

If the GM allows and there are multiple PC cavaliers in the campaign, a higher-level PC can train a lower-level PC, either for payment or as a favor of fellowship and camaraderie.

Beginning with experience level 6, the cavalier is able to take all that he or she has learned and to manifest a fully effective self-training regimen. Therefore, a level 6 cavalier who gains enough experience to reach level 7 can train alone for a week, at no cost, and gain the earned experience level alone.<sup>8</sup>

### **Loyal and Trusting Steed**

The cavalier's mount(s) will trust the cavalier's actions, and can come when called from a fairly considerable distance (perhaps up to a mile, if the cavalier can be heard; or even up to 6 miles if a horn is sounded).

The mount will not follow the cavalier into a dungeon or the netherworld, but will fight valiantly even if the cavalier is not riding it. A cavalier's mount will have an 80% morale rating when fighting without being ridden, or a 90% morale rating while being ridden by the cavalier.

### **Martial Riding Mastery**

Cavaliers are masters of riding, especially in combat conditions. In any GM-dictated skill or ability score roll situations where the cavalier must succeed in a check involving mount speed, control, reaction, or mastery, the cavalier's character can roll advantaged dice. This means that the required dice are rolled twice, the more favorable result is taken, and the less favorable result is ignored.

**Quick Recovery Skill:** If a roll ever indicates that the cavalier will be thrown from the saddle, a quick recovery percentile dice roll can be made by the player. If the quick recovery roll succeeds, the cavalier character cannot attack or use special items during that round, but he or she will remain in the saddle. (Any non-knight character in this circumstance would fall to the ground, with no quick recovery option at all.) The chance of a quick recovery is 85% for a level 0 or level 1 cavalier, and

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<sup>8</sup> Refer also to Gygax's commentary in the Dragonsfoot Gygax Q&A, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005.





increases by +1% per further experience level to a maximum of 99%. Therefore, a level 8 cavalier would have a quick recovery skill of 92%.

**Quick Recovery from Falls:** Normally, a fall will stun for 1 round and cause the character to suffer 1D2 damage for a fall from a small mount (HD less than 2), 1D3 for a medium mount (HD 2 to 3), 1D4 for a large mount (HD 3+1 to 4), or 1D4+1 for a huge mount (HD 4+1 or higher). For a cavalier, however, there is a chance that a fall will cause no damage due to his or her instant reactions and training. Even when falling from a mount, the cavalier can make another quick recovery roll attempt – at the percentages given above – to prevent all damage. If the roll fails, the cavalier suffers normal damage; if it succeeds, no damage is suffered and there is no stun effect either.

When a cavalier is riding an ancestrally-favored mount, he or she attacks as if 1 experience level higher in regards to accuracy, to hit rolls, and number of permissible attacks per round. Therefore a level 7 cavalier would fight as level 8 while mounted.

The ancestrally-favored mounts are listed below:

**TABLE 7:**

**Ancestrally-Favored Mounts for Cavalier Knightly Orders**

Cavalier's Ancestry	Ancestrally-Favored Mounts
<b>Human</b>	<p><b>Horses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Excludes ponies, draft horses, and wild horses; includes palfreys, riding horses, and warhorses of any size.</li> </ul>
<b>Elf, Dark (NPC)</b>	<p><b>Riding Lizards of Chthon*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ These creatures are only tamed by drow in the netherworld, and therefore dark elven PC exiles will not have access to them.</li> </ul>
<b>Elf, Dark (PC)</b>	<p><b>Horses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Dark elven exiles train with a predominantly human knightly order, which means that the notes for humans – noted above – apply to Player Characters. During play and adventures in the netherworld, dark elves can train riding lizards of Chthon if they can find them.</li> </ul>
<b>Elf, Gray</b>	<p><b>Stags**</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Includes stags (HD 3), giant stags (HD 5), elk (HD 4 herd animals), and Irish Deer (HD 4 Pleistocene beasts).</li> </ul>
<b>Elf, High</b>	<p><b>Horses or Stags</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ For Player Characters, the player must choose whether the cavalier grew up in an elven enclave – training with stags – or in a mixed settlement of elves and humans – training with horses.</li> </ul>







<b>Half-Elf, of Dark Descent</b>	<b>Horses</b> ❖ As for dark elven PCs, above.
<b>Half-Elf, or Gray Descent</b>	<b>Horses or Stags</b> ❖ As for high elves, above.
<b>Half-Elf, of High Descent</b>	<b>Horses</b> ❖ As for humans, above.

\* For details on the riding lizards of Chthon, refer to the Special Considerations for Drowic Cavaliers section.

\*\* Elves cannot begin the game with stag mounts; they will begin with horse mounts and then proceed to be granted stag mounts at higher experience levels in accordance with their mount mastery.







## Merciless Onslaught

When facing minor foes in melee, the cavalier's superior mastery allows him or her to attack a number of times per round equal to his or her experience level. In other words, a level 5 cavalier would be able to attack 5 times per round, but only against minor foes. An attack against another type of foe would fall under the Battle Mastery advantage instead, as described prior.

The onslaught fighting technique can only be used in melee, not with ranged attacks.

Minor creatures are level 0 characters such as normal men and men-at-arms, and also any monsters with fewer than 1 full hit die (1D8). Monsters with HD 1/8 (1 hp), 1/4 (1-2 hp), 1/2 (1-4 hp), 1/2+1 (2-5 hp), 1D6 (1-6 hp), or HD 1-1 (1-7 hp) are considered minor creatures. This classification includes bats, giant rats, goblins, kobolds, rats, and so forth.

## Parrying Mastery

Knights, being both highly visible champions and focused on in deadly melees, have considerably more defensive proficiency than warriors do. They train extensively with their peers in weapon parrying and shield blocking techniques.

Parrying prevents the cavalier from attacking in the same round. In large melees, it is used for personal defense while allied surrounding men-at-arms battle the enemy troops that are engaging the defending knight. In dungeon adventures, the tactic is used to protect spell casters, and to cover doorway retreats.

**Weapon Parrying:** When a cavalier parries in any given combat round, all of his or her melee to hit bonuses – for strength, magic weapon, spell effects, and/or weapons of choice – are added to the cavalier's Armor Class (AC) for the *first* melee attack received that round. (Missile attacks cannot be parried.) Therefore, if a troll attacks a cavalier with two claws and a bite, the AC bonus would apply vs. the first outreaching claw attack, but not vs. the second claw or the bite. Similarly, if four hobgoblins were attacking the cavalier with pole arms of different lengths, the AC bonus would apply vs. the hobgoblin with the longest pole arm, but not the other three hobgoblins.

**Active Shield Blocking:** If the cavalier is also holding a shield, a lesser defense can be mounted against the *second* attack received that round. Unlike a weapon parry, a shield block parry *can* protect against a missile attack. The cavalier's AC bonus against the second attack will be +1 for a buckler or small shield, +2 for a medium shield, or +3 for a large shield. Any magical shield bonuses would apply as well; for example, if a cavalier has a +3 magical medium shield, her total AC bonus against the second attack would be +5.

**Passive Shield Blocking:** In addition to active blocking, a shield also provides a minor protective bonus against other incoming attacks just because it is passively there as an obstruction between the holding cavalier and the incoming attack. The passive blocking benefit of the cavalier's shield applies as shown in the table below.

These bonuses only apply during a round when the cavalier is actively parrying, and only against the third and consecutive incoming attacks in any round. Magical shield bonuses do apply, however; therefore a +1 shield would add a further +1 AC bonus to the figures listed below.



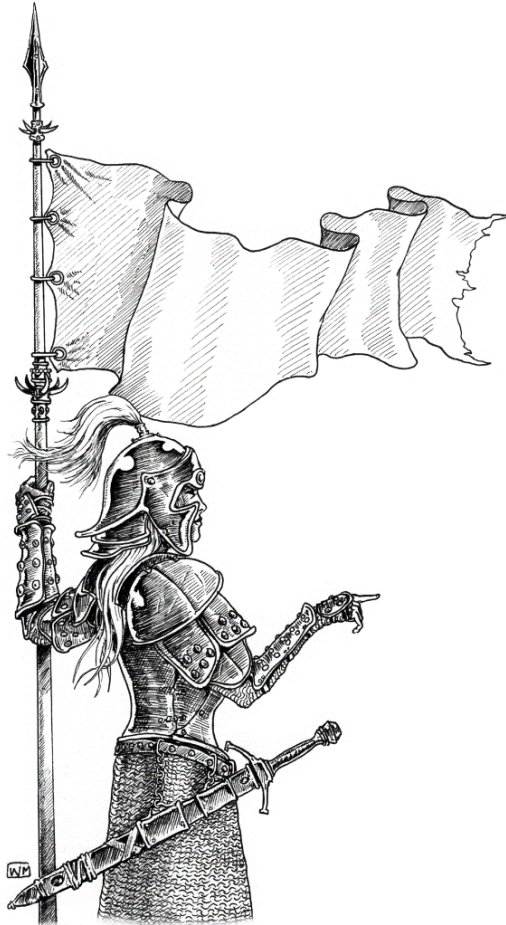




TABLE 8:

### Passive Shield Blocking Benefits for Parrying Cavaliers

Cavalier's Shield Type	Passive AC Bonus	AC Bonus is Applicable To:
<b>Buckler</b>	+1	3 <sup>rd</sup> attack only
<b>Small Shield</b>	+1	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> attacks
<b>Medium Shield</b>	+1	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> attacks
<b>Large Shield</b>	+2	3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 5 <sup>th</sup> , and 6 <sup>th</sup> attacks



### **The Pennon of Glory (Disadvantage and Advantage)<sup>9</sup>**

Beginning at experience level 4, the cavalier is awarded a pennon of glory by his or her knightly order, while the order widely and publicly proclaims the glorification of that cavalier's cause. This is an honorific battle flag, that can be used in outdoor engagements of any kind. It combines the order's colors with the cavalier's personal coat of arms.

<sup>9</sup> The rather nebulous rules have been elaborated upon in regards to the 1985 Unearthed hardcover, since the rules as written there seem to make the carrying of a pennon a fully non-beneficial disadvantage (it can easily be lost in battle, and the cavalier is better off not carrying one at all).





(If for any reason a cavalier is an exile, and/or belongs to no knightly order, a pennon of glory is not granted to the character. The cavalier is then welcome to craft a personal battle flag, but doing so would be merely a proclamation of aggrandizement; the flag would confer no special bonus.)

The cavalier is formally granted five pennons, and they should be protected; any replacements would require a week's time to craft along with a 150 gold piece payment to the order. The pennon has the mundane effect of being recognizable – due to the order's colors – by friend and foe alike. It also has the deific effect of instilling the cavalier with valorous inspiration.

To confer *full* benefits, the pennon must be affixed to a lance. The lance must be carried and used by the cavalier, and the cavalier must be mounted. There is nothing preventing the character from affixing the pennon to something else, or carrying it into a dungeon, or bearing it while walking, or whatever else; but the pennon only gives its full bonus while the cavalier is mounted and adventuring, which means engagement in outdoor battles and similar questing.

While mounted and adventuring outside, the pennon-bearing cavalier gains a +10% bonus to all earned experience. While adventuring in any other circumstances (for example, while unmounted, or while exploring a dungeon), the pennon gives a +5% bonus instead, but only while it is displayed. It could for example be hidden away in a backpack or a bag of holding, but in that circumstance it would confer no bonus at all.

Note that the cavalier will have up to four additional pennons as well, so trusted retainers can be granted their own personal pennon if cavalier entrusts them with the honor. The use of the word “retainer” here is very specific; it only includes NPCs (not PCs) who are henchmen (not men-at-arms or temporary mercenaries) with experience levels (not level zero, unless they are level zero Yeoman Cavaliers). Retainer pennon-bearers will also gain a +5% or +10% experience bonus for themselves.

The danger, however, is that losing a pennon to the enemy is a grave dishonor to both the cavalier and the patron deity. If the pennon is merely destroyed – let us say, it burns up in a fire trap – no dishonor is conferred, but the cavalier will likely want to replace it via the order's graces. But if one or more pennons are taken by any enemy, the cavalier suffers a -10% penalty to all experienced earned, until the pennon is either retrieved, or ransomed, or destroyed by the enemy.

If the pennant is (mercifully) destroyed, the GM will be able to state when that occurs, because the cavalier will – in a dream vision – sense the destructive act, no matter when or where it actually occurs.

Considering the risk, players should think very carefully about whether or not they want to carry a pennon, and when. Most NPC cavaliers only fly their pennons when engaging in significant battles alongside other members of their knightly order.

## True Companions

Cavaliers as a general rule tend to have more men-at-arms, henchmen, and retainers than characters of other classes. Their potential for leadership increases slowly under the watchful eye of the NPC lord and/or the order, as below.

**Before the Time of Command (Levels 0 and 1):** Level zero cavaliers cannot lead NPCs, unless they are hired mercenary men-at-arms. At experience level 1, a cavalier can begin to seek out prospective henchman NPCs, but these characters will not ally with the cavalier until he or she attains experience level 2 at least.







**Hired Henchmen and Armigers (Levels 2+):** If a cavalier of experience level 2 or higher wishes to hire henchman NPCs, this can be done per the normal rules. In addition to the listed benefits for charisma (CHA) however, the good-aligned cavalier gains a permanent threshold bonus of +3 henchmen if those additional henchmen are cavaliers of the same alignment. For neutral-aligned cavaliers, this bonus is +2; for evil-aligned cavaliers, this bonus is +1.

**Preparations for Squiredom (Level 3):** At experience level 3, the cavalier – unless a lone wolf with no liege lord, and no knightly order – will be expected to prepare for the leadership of NPC cavaliers.

**The Duty of Squiredom (Level 4):** At experience level 4, the cavalier must accept the command of an NPC cavalier of the same alignment. This faithful squire is provided by the liege lord or knightly order, with the expectation that the cavalier will lead the squire into battle and provide his lodgings and pay. If the PC cavalier rejects this duty, he or she will earn no experience during the play session in which the rejection is made, but there will be no further penalty (just disappointment on the part of the affected NPCs). If the PC cavalier accepts this duty, no gold is spent seeking the cavalier; he or she arrives as soon as the PC attains level 4. The NPC squire will be either (60%) a level 1 Noble Cavalier of the Lower Upper Class (with gear and mount as shown in the cavalier social standing table), or (40%) a level 2 Yeoman Cavalier of the Lower Middle Class (with gear equivalent to a starting cavalier of the Upper Middle Class, due to experience).

**Ongoing Squiredom and Tutelage (Level 5):** If the squire NPC survives, the cavalier PC will be expected to pay and lodge the squire and treat him or her well, just as for any other henchman. The squire will be special however in that he or she will not expect a share of treasures found during adventuring; the squire will accept gifts of armor, arms, and items if the PC wishes to provide them. In return for pay and upkeep, the cavalier PC will have a brave and loyal bodyguard who will slowly advance in experience level. If the squire dies – and it is likely – there will be no shame upon the PC cavalier, but another NPC squire will not be provided. The cavalier can of course seek out and pay for other henchmen outside of the knightly order if desired.

**The Honor of Esquiredom (Level 6):** At experience level 6, the cavalier must accept the command of a new NPC cavalier of the same alignment. This loyal esquire is provided by the liege lord or knightly order, as above. Rejection can be made as before, but if the PC cavalier accepts this duty, the new esquire arrives as soon as the PC attains level 6. The NPC squire will be a level 3 cavalier of the Lower Upper Class (with gear equivalent to a starting cavalier of the Lower Upper Class, due to experience).

**Ongoing Esquiredom and Adventure (Level 7):** The new esquire will serve under the same oaths and expectations as for the first squire, as described above. If the first squire is still alive as well, he or she will continue to serve with loyalty.

**The Honor of Leadership (Level 8):** Upon attaining experience level 8, the PC cavalier will be granted leadership of 1D4+1 level zero cavaliers (Yeoman Initiates) with standard gear and mount according to the Lower Middle Class. The cavalier can reject the offer if desired, but if accepted the men-at-arms will require only monthly pay, although they will accept lodgings and further gear if provided. They will either adventure with the cavalier if asked, or defend the cavalier's home sanctuary otherwise.

**Cavalier Freeholds, Colonists, and Men-at-Arms (Levels 9+):** Regardless of alignment, high-level cavaliers gain followers at high experience levels. Beginning at experience level 9, they have the option of establishing a freehold (as a fighter can). Refer to the *Oldskull Warriors* rules for fuller information on freeholds. High-level cavaliers will also gain mercenary men-at-arms as followers if the freehold is





established, as will be elaborated upon in the GM's campaign book.<sup>10</sup> Settlers who make their homes in a cavalier's freehold will willingly pay 14 silver pieces (instead of 7) per month of protection, which can lead to a fairly considerable stream of income if the lord cavalier is willing to establish, broaden, and protect the freehold throughout the high-level campaign.<sup>11</sup>

Cavalier Leadership in Epic-Level Play (Levels 15+): Eventually, if a cavalier has established and ruled over a considerable freehold and also raised one or more squires to levels 9 or higher, the honored cavalier lord then will perhaps be granted a noble rank – perhaps viscount / viscountess – and then the level 9+ squires would be able to establish freeholds of their own. If this happens and the epic-level cavalier PC assists the squires in their endeavors, the established freehold(s) would be loyal to the cavalier lord's viscounty and a noble lineage would begin.<sup>12</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Readers who do not wish to wait for this future Castle Oldskull publication can refer to the 1985 Unearthed rules tome for more details.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to the January 1987 magazine.

<sup>12</sup> See also Gygax's brief comments in the Dragonsfoot Gygax Q&A, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005.







## Veteran Riding Mastery

Mid- and high-level cavaliers gain additional advantages in regards to mounts. These further abilities accrue with increasing experience level, as shown in the table below.

**TABLE 9:**

### Veteran Riding Mastery Prowess for Cavaliers

Cavalier's Experience Level	Veteran Riding Mastery Abilities
<b>0 to 2</b>	(No veteran riding mastery abilities yet acquired.)
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Vaulting:</b> The cavalier can vault up into the saddle of a trusted steed in one segment's time (one tenth of a round), even if wearing full plate armor. The steed must be tame, trained, holding relatively still, saddled, and must be trusting of the cavalier. This ability always succeeds if the above conditions are met.</p> <p>For each condition above that is not met, the 100% chance is reduced by 20%.</p> <p>Failed attempts require all of a cavalier's actions during that round.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Huge Mounts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ A cavalier with horses as ancestrally favored can now purchase and learn to ride great destriers.</li> <li>❖ A cavalier with stags as ancestrally favored can now return to the home elven enclave and learn to ride elk and/or Irish Deer.</li> </ul> <p><b>Unicorn Maidens:</b> A female elven (but not half-elven) cavalier of good alignment can seek, tame, and ride a unicorn as a steed.</p>
<b>5</b>	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Urging Haste:</b> The cavalier can urge his or her mount to move more quickly, adding +20 yards to movement rate for as long as desired, up to 6 turns. Thereafter, the mount must move at normal speed for at least 6 turns before being urged to hasten again.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Pegasus Mount:</b> The cavalier can seek, tame, and ride a pegasus (winged horse) as a steed. This can only be done if the cavalier is of good alignment (CG, LG, or NG).</p>
<b>7</b>	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Eye of the Steed Master:</b> The cavalier's Eye of the Master of the Horse ability can be used to assess any type of creature that can be tamed and ridden up to this point (horses, stags, unicorns, pegasi, etc.).</p>





	<p><b>Unicorn Maidens:</b> A female half-elven or human cavalier of good alignment can seek, tame, and ride a unicorn as a steed.<sup>13</sup></p>
8	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Pegasus Training:</b> After having ridden a tamed pegasus for at least 6 months' time, the cavalier can sell the tamed pegasus to a good-aligned character (or bestow it upon a PC companion).</p>
9	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Eye of the Steed Master:</b> The cavalier's Eye of the Master of the Horse ability can also be used to assess hippogriffs.</p> <p><b>Hippogriff Mount:</b> Regardless of alignment, the cavalier can seek, tame, and ride a hippogriff as a steed.</p>
10	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Hippogriff Training:</b> After having ridden a tamed hippogriff for at least 6 months' time, the cavalier can sell the tamed hippogriff to an NPC (or bestow it upon a PC companion).</p>
11	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Eye of the Steed Master:</b> The cavalier's Eye of the Master of the Horse ability can also be used to assess griffons.</p> <p><b>Griffon Mount:</b> Regardless of alignment, the cavalier can seek, tame, and ride a griffon as a steed.</p>
12	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Griffon Training:</b> After having ridden a tamed griffon for at least 6 months' time, the cavalier can sell the tamed griffon to an NP (or bestow it upon a PC companion).</p>
13	<p>As above, plus:</p> <p><b>Dragon Riding:</b> The cavalier can ride a subdued or willing dragon of the same alignment without being killed outright.</p>
14 or higher	<p><b>Dragon Riding Companion:</b> The cavalier can ride a subdued or willing dragon, and also encourage the dragon to accept a second rider who is trusted by the cavalier.</p>

### **Honorable Weapons of Choice (Advantage and Limitation)**

Even outside of adventuring and combat, cavaliers train frequently with their knightly order. Regional nobles sponsor grand melees, jousts, and tourneys, in which kingdom-born cavaliers spar with chivalric orders and even champions from demi-human enclaves. These frequent tests of prowess

<sup>13</sup> Although the 1985 Unearthed rules imply that only female elves can perform this feat, the 1977 hardcover bestiary makes it clear that female humans of pure heart can do so as well. Therefore it stands to reason that half-elves would share this potential. However, since elves are most strongly associated with unicorns, this ability for non-elves is attained at experience level 7, not level 4.



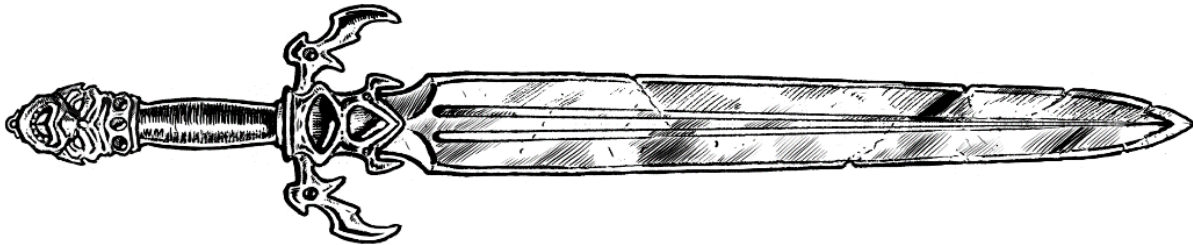




result in the cavalier becoming more proficient in the weapons that are favored in such challenges throughout the realms.

(Note that the term “weapons of choice” is a bit of a misnomer, because the choice is not necessarily that made by the *player*, it is chiefly the preference of the *cavalier* along with the knightly order.)

All cavaliers train frequently with honorable weapons of choice. These are the only weapons that are used by knights in grand melees, and NPCs of the knightly orders carry these weapons – almost to the exclusion of all others – into battle. In game terms, the weapons of choice rules integrate with the rules for weapon proficiencies. They have *no* bearing however upon weapon specialization, which is an entirely separate game system pertaining to the warrior character archetype in general (and the fighter and ranger classes in particular).



**TABLE 10:**

**Weapons of Choice for Cavaliers**

**The Traditional and Honorable Weapons of Choice**

**[I] The Lance (the First Weapon):** All cavaliers first become proficient with the lance.

- ❖ Level zero **Yeoman Cavaliers** with -6 XPM (Yeoman Initiates) know only the lance; all other weapons are non-proficient. At level zero-plus with -2 XPM (Experienced Yeoman) they learn their second weapon.
- ❖ \* Level 1 **Noble Cavaliers** know the lance, and also the second and third weapons as listed below.

**[II] The First Blade (the Second Weapon):** The second weapon all cavaliers become proficient with is a blade. The blade is either a broad sword, long sword, or scimitar. For Player Character cavaliers, the decision rests with the player.

- ❖ **Yeoman Cavaliers** learn this proficiency after character generation, during play, when they progress to experience level zero-plus (Experienced Yeoman).
- ❖ Level 1 **Noble Cavaliers** are proficient with this weapon at the beginning of the game.

**[III] The Horseman’s Sidearm (the Third Weapon):** The third weapon all cavaliers become proficient with is a horseman’s weapon. This weapon is either a horseman’s flail, horseman’s mace, or horseman’s military pick. For PC cavaliers, the weapon type is chosen by the player.

- ❖ **Yeoman Cavaliers** learn this proficiency during play, when they progress to experience level 1 (Proven Yeoman).
- ❖ Level 1 **Noble Cavaliers** are proficient with this weapon at the beginning of the game.





**[IV] The Familial Arms (the Fourth Weapon):** At experience level 3, the cavalier will gain a new weapon proficiency.

- ❖ The weapon type must be chosen from the following list, and cannot be one of the types that is already known: [1] bastard sword, [2] broad sword, [3] dagger, [4] horseman's flail, [5] horseman's mace, [6] horseman's military pick, [7] javelin, [8] long sword, [9] scimitar, or [10] short sword. This is the list for human cavaliers; careful readers will note that the vast majority of them are melee weapons.
- ❖ Significantly, for gray elves, high elves, and half-elves, there is an additional weapon option, the short composite bow. For full-blooded dark elves, the added weapon option is the hand crossbow.

**[V] The Bloodline Arms (the Fifth Weapon):** At experience level 5, the cavalier will gain another weapon proficiency. The weapon must be chosen from the those remaining unchosen weapons in the list above (IV, The Familial Arms).

**[VI] The Ancestral Arms (the Sixth Weapon):** At experience level 7, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing again from the above list.

**[VII] The Arms of the Order (the Seventh Weapon):** At experience level 9, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing from the list.

**[VIII] The Arms of Honor (the Eighth Weapon):** At experience level 11, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing from the list.

**[IX] The Arms of Glory (the Ninth Weapon):** At experience level 13, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing from the list.

**[X] The Arms of the Grand Marshal (the Tenth Weapon):** At experience level 15, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing from the list.

**[XII] The Arms of the Supreme Master (the Twelfth Weapon):** At experience level 17, the cavalier will gain another proficiency, choosing from the list.

- ❖ At this point, a human cavalier will have mastered all of the honorable weapons of choice.
- ❖ An elven or half-elven cavalier will have one weapon type remaining that will need to be mastered.

**[XIII] The Arms of the Exalted Master (the Thirteenth Weapon):** At experience level 19, the cavalier will gain another weapon proficiency.

- ❖ A human cavalier will – at long last! – be able to become proficient in any weapon type, regardless of whether it is honorable or not. If a ranged weapon is chosen, the glory and renown of the cavalier will be so great by this time that no one will question the honor or dishonor of such mastery.
- ❖ An elven or half-elven cavalier will now have mastered all of the honorable weapons of choice.







**[XIV] Further Progression for Epic-Level Cavaliers:** At experience levels 21, 23, and 25, the cavalier will gain further weapon proficiencies. Regardless of ancestry, the preferred weapon type will then be chosen by the player.

### Effectiveness of the Various Weapons of Choice

Cavaliers gain benefits whenever they wield weapons of choice. The details, by weapon type and degree of mastery, follow hereafter.

**[I] The Lance:** All cavaliers inflict additional damage while wielding the lance. Note that the lance is a relatively inferior weapon when it is used in dismounted combat, but it is ideal for mounted battles. There are actually three differing types of lance, the light (courser), medium (charger), and heavy (destrier). The cavalier can carry and effectively wield any of the three types, regardless of the size of his or her mount. Notably, weapon proficiency with the lance indicates proficiency with all three lance types.

While dismounted, a cavalier inflicts +1 damage with a lance. While mounted, the cavalier inflicts +1 point of damage per experience level. Therefore a mounted level 8 cavalier would inflict normal damage +8 when attacking with the lance.

The following table summarizes the effectiveness of the three types of lances in both mounted and dismounted scenarios. Note that “S-M” should be read as “a target is either small or man-sized”, while “L” should be read as “a target that is larger than man-sized”. Details of monster sizes are found in the bestiary volumes.

**TABLE 11:**

#### **Effectiveness of Lances Wielded by Cavaliers**

Lance Type	Damage Inflicted by a Mounted Cavalier*	Damage Inflicted by a Dismounted Cavalier	Notes for Dismounted Attacks
<b>Light</b> <b>(Courser Lance)</b>	<b>S-M:</b> 1D6 + cavalier's level <b>L:</b> 1D8 + cavalier's level	<b>S-M:</b> 1D6+1 <b>L:</b> 1D8+1	While dismounted, the light lance requires one hand and is treated as a spear (but it cannot be effectively thrown).
<b>Medium</b> <b>(Charger Lance)</b>	<b>S-M:</b> 1D6+1 + cavalier's level <b>L:</b> 2D6 + cavalier's level	<b>S-M:</b> 1D6+1 <b>L:</b> 1D8+1	While dismounted, the medium lance requires two hands and is treated as a long spear (that cannot be thrown).
<b>Heavy</b> <b>(Destrier Lancer)</b>	<b>S-M:</b> 2D4+1 + cavalier's level <b>L:</b> 3D6 + cavalier's level	<b>S-M:</b> 1D6+1 <b>L:</b> 1D12+1	While dismounted, the heavy lance requires two hands and is treated as an awl pike.





\* If the cavalier's mount is charging at full speed, the base damage – but not the cavalier's bonus damage – is doubled. This means that the above-noted figures are instead replaced with the following (rather extraordinary) figures:

- **Light lance with a charging mount, vs. a small or man-sized target:** 2D6 + cavalier's level.
- **Light lance with a charging mount, vs. a large target:** 2D8 + cavalier's level.
- **Medium lance with a charging mount, vs. a small or man-sized target:** 2D6+2 + cavalier's level.
- **Medium lance with a charging mount, vs. a large target:** 4D6 + cavalier's level.
- **Heavy lance with a charging mount, vs. a small or man-sized target:** 4D4+2 + cavalier's level.
- **Heavy lance with a charging mount, vs. a large target:** 6D6 + cavalier's level.

For the purposes of game balance in the World of Oldskull campaign, a cavalier on a charging mount can only make at most a single (lance) attack in a melee round. The mount must be able to move freely and cover at least 30 yards prior to impact. In the round following the attack attempt and potential impact, the mount will again require at least another 30 yards' space to reach charging speed once again. In practice, this means that if a cavalier charges and strikes an opponent with a lance in round 2, then round 3 will probably be spent wheeling around and recovering speed, and then another charging attack cannot be made until round 4.<sup>14</sup> The Game Master will need to determine the positions of potential targets and then make rulings on the number of lance attacks that can be made, depending on whether "theater of the mind" or a detailed battle grid gameboard is used in play.

In addition to the listed damage bonuses, cavaliers also gain to hit bonuses with lances that are wielded by mounted:

- Level zero cavaliers do not gain a lance to hit bonus.
- Level 1 to 6 cavaliers gain a +1 to hit bonus with the lance while mounted.
- Level 7 to 12 cavaliers gain a +2 to hit bonus with the lance while mounted.
- Level 13+ cavaliers gain a +3 to hit bonus with the lance while mounted.
- No cavaliers gain a to hit bonus if attacking with a lance while dismounted.

**[II] The Second Weapon of Choice (Broad Sword, Long Sword, or Scimitar):** The cavalier will gain a to hit bonus with this weapon type over time.

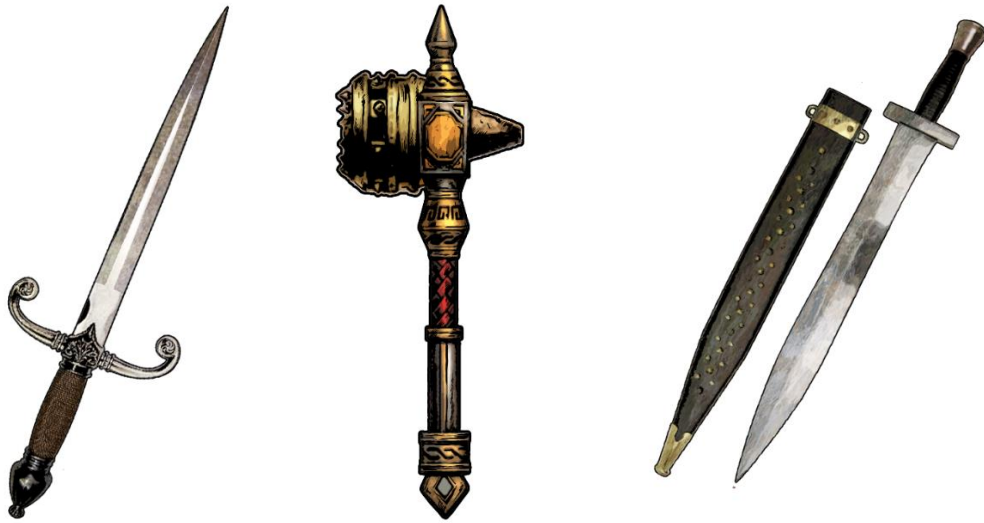
- Level zero, 1, and 2 cavaliers do not gain a to hit bonus with this weapon.
- Level 3 to 8 cavaliers gain a +1 to hit bonus with this weapon.
- Level 9+ cavaliers gain a +2 to hit bonus with this weapon.

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<sup>14</sup> Note that if these rules are not used, game balance will quickly fly out the window; a high-level cavalier could use multiple melee (lance) attacks to easily bring any opponent down in a single round, including (for example) a huge, unwounded, and ancient red dragon with 88 hit points. Even a level 1 cavalier could skewer a ridiculous number of gnolls or ogres if he was able to charge-attack every single round, instead of every other round with required distances, as described above. A fuller examination of charging and lancing maneuvers will be found in the World of Oldskull combat and adventuring tome.







**[III] The Third Weapon of Choice (Horseman's Flail, Mace, or Military Pick):** The cavalier will also gain a to hit bonus with this weapon over time.

- Level zero, 1, 2, 3, and 4 cavaliers do not gain a to hit bonus with this weapon.
- Level 5 to 10 cavaliers gain a +1 to hit bonus with this weapon.
- Level 11+ cavaliers gain a +2 to hit bonus with this weapon.

**[IV+] Additional Weapons of Choice:** Cavaliers do not gain to hit bonuses with these types of weapons; they are simply proficient with them, which means that they do not suffer an accuracy penalty for non-proficiency.

## **Limitations and Disadvantages for the Cavalier Class**

The cavalier's array of powers are balanced by the code of chivalry, along with the following inherent limitations.

### **A Disciple of the Earthly and Higher Powers**

Cavaliers are devoted to a patron deity or other immortal of their own alignment. If the player does not choose one, the GM will then choose one and secretly note the immortal's identity. This good-aligned immortal is the source of significant aspects of the cavalier's potency, included the **Blessed Healing**, **Deific Empowerment**, **Heroic Blood of the Exemplar**, and **Pennon of Glory** advantages.

In addition to this, the cavalier might well be answerable to a liege lord of some kind. This would be a high-level cavalier, either the master of a knightly order or the ruler of a minor realm. If the player chooses for the cavalier PC to belong to one of the knightly orders featured in this book, that character should be roughly designed by the GM for future campaign events. If the player does not opt for a





knightly order, the GM will then likely choose a local similarly-aligned noble – typically a baron, archbaron, viscount, or minor count – who serves as the cavalier’s lord. (The GM may need to devise a special noble NPC of experience level 12+ to assume this role in the campaign.)

If a cavalier loses his or her good alignment, the good-requiring special abilities noted above will disappear. If the cavalier fails to answer the liege lord’s calls for battles or quests, exile from the realm or order will likely follow.

Adherence to good alignment is a matter of the player’s play skill, role-playing, and in-game choices. The liege lord should be a background presence, unless either (a) the cavalier seeks the person out or (b) the Game Master decides that the adventuring party should experience a new adventure hook that will feature the cavalier PC as a prominent player.

These powers are not of major significance in the early game, but nevertheless the cavalier’s player should be mindful of them, because they will become more prominent and influential as the campaign continues to develop through ongoing play.

Cavaliers who willingly choose to change their alignment away from good will *fall from grace*. The fall for a cavalier is not as catastrophic as it is for a paladin, but it is tumultuous nonetheless.

**Alignment Change and the Earthly Power:** If the cavalier character’s alignment changes away from the evil / neutral / good axis of the liege lord, the character will be exiled from the realm. The player can then either choose to play the cavalier as a lone wolf (a Masterless Knight) without an order, or the character can swear allegiance to a new order with beliefs more in line with the fallen cavalier’s new alignment.

**Alignment Change and the Higher Power:** If the cavalier’s alignment changes away from good (CG, LG, NG), the powers listed above will be lost. If the cavalier is neutral, he or she will experience a dream vision in which a deity of the new alignment embraces the knight as a mortal champion. For example, a good cavalier who falls to neutrality within the realms of the Greek mythos might be visited and patroned anew by the Great God Pan.

If the cavalier becomes evil, a similar vision will occur in a nightmare. The difference however is that the Game Master, not the player, will choose the new immortal power that the cavalier is forcibly sworn to as a plaything of Fate. A cavalier that falls to chaotic evil will be lorded over by a demon lord, prince, or queen; a lawful evil one will be dominated by an infernal duke or arch-devil; and a neutral evil one will be ruled by a daemon prince or an evil god. Evil cavaliers are sometimes termed Dark Knights. Non-Player Character Dark Knights who commit truly atrocious acts will become Chaos Knights, losing their cavalier status forever.

A player could technically force a once-good cavalier to fall to evil so precariously that the PC cavalier becomes a Chaos Knight, but if this occurs, the PC cavalier becomes irrevocably mad and becomes an NPC controlled forever after by the GM. The GM should provide several stern warnings before this tragic event can occur, however. If it ever does happen, it will be because the player insisted upon it repeatedly.

**Empowerment of Fallen Cavaliers:** Unlike other characters, a good cavalier can – if the player deliberately states this intent – change alignment once, permanently, before experience level 4, with no experience penalty. The change can be to any alignment, even an evil one, as long as it is role-played well and with conviction. The player should of course be reminded of the powers that will be lost in making this grave decision.







If the alignment change is beyond the first decision (a second change, a third, etc.), and/or made after experience level 3, the normal penalties will be visited upon the character, including the loss of a full experience level. Refer to the standard alignment change penalty rules for further information.

No champion of the immortals stands alone for long, however, even in abandoning the higher power. When the neutral or evil cavalier is sworn to a new immortal power, the Deific Empowerment will be magically restored. Neutral cavaliers will also have the Pennon of Glory advantage restored, but evil cavaliers will not. The Blessed Healing and Heroic Blood of the Exemplar advantages will still remain untouchable, however, because these immortal powers are held only by their deities of good and righteousness.





## The Argent Bonds of Chivalry

From a role-playing perspective, cavaliers will be expected to abide by the code of chivalry, which will be the subject of our next chapter.

## Armor of Exemplary Station

Because the cavalier is the mortal champion of a deity, followers of all deities look to the cavalier as a symbol of hope (for those similarly aligned) or a symbol of nemesis (for those who are mortal enemies). When the cavalier fights defiantly in full regalia of the immortal, he inspires valor in the faithful and strikes fear in the heart of the enemy.

There are three significant aspects to the cavalier's champion manifestation: [1] the arms, which are the honorable weapons of choice; [2] the pennon of glory, the symbol of the cavalier's power in the earthly and spiritual realms; and, [3] the armor, which is the cavalier's badge of station and symbolic embodiment of the deity's might. The cavalier is thus a *Signifer*, a standard bearer and embodiment of spirit and strength beheld by all.

What this amounts to, in terms of armor, is a cavalier's forthright belief that the armor worn into battle is *extremely important*. It is the symbolic embodiment of the cavalier's deific aura. Well-armored champions are deemed minor incarnations of the deity itself; poorly-armored champions are regarded as mockeries of a deity's cause and immortality.

In game terms, this means that the cavalier *character* – not the cavalier's *player*, necessarily! – will always seek out the finest armor possible. Armor is not considered a means of protection; that is only its secondary purpose, and the cavalier's true protection is the power of the immortal. The armor's foremost purpose is to exhibit the manifestation of strength.







The following table exhibits the chivalric hierarchy of exemplary armor, in descending order of cavalier preference. For example the cavalier will favor full plate armor most of all; padded armor will be the most despised.

**TABLE 12:**

**The Chivalric Hierarchy of Exemplary Armor**

Armor Type	Order of Preference	Game Play Notes
<b>Full Plate Armor</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	Preferred by all cavaliers.
<b>Field Plate Armor</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 to 14 cavaliers.
<b>Elfin Chain Mail</b>	Special	For humans, considered respectable for level 1 to 10 cavaliers. For elves and half-elves, elfin chain mail is revered as traditional armor of glory; the player will be able to wear it in an exemplary fashion even if plate armors are available.
<b>Plate Mail</b>	4 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 to 6 cavaliers.
<b>Bronze Plate Mail</b>	5 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 to 4 cavaliers.
<b>Banded Mail</b>	6 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 and 3 cavaliers.
<b>Splint Mail</b>	7 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 and 2 cavaliers.
<b>Chain Mail</b>	8 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level 1 cavaliers.
<b>Scale Mail</b>	9 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for yeoman cavaliers; others will wear it with reluctance.
<b>Ring Mail</b>	10 <sup>th</sup>	Considered respectable for level zero cavaliers; others will wear it with reluctance.
<b>Studded Leather Armor</b>	11 <sup>th</sup>	Considered peasant militia or brigand garb; will be worn with fear of immortal disdain.
<b>Leather Armor</b>	12 <sup>th</sup>	Considered a thief's garb; will not be worn if at all possible.
<b>Padded Armor</b>	13 <sup>th</sup>	Considered a serf's garb; will not be worn if at all possible.

**Disfavored Armor:** Magical armor is not considered exemplary. If a cavalier possesses both magical leather armor +2 and non-magical ring mail, the ring mail will be preferred. If two types of non-magical armor are available, the cavalier will prefer the more exemplary armor, as shown in the hierarchy table above.

**Ornamented Armor:** Ornamented armor is considered exemplary. If the cavalier has the ability to gild, engrave, enjewel, or ornament his or her armor (spending considerable amounts of gold), he or she will strongly be tempted to do so at first opportunity. Any gold spent upon armor ornamentation should be awarded with an experience gain by the GM, at the rate of 1 Experience Point Mark (XPM) for every 250 gold pieces expended. As an example, if a cavalier spends 1,000 gp to embellish her worn and favored suit of plate mail, the GM should award 4 XPM once the work is complete. Generally, a master armorer will require 1 week of uninterrupted work for each 500 gp spent by the cavalier in this manner.





Note however that such an XPM award should only occur once per experience level, at most. If the cavalier in the above example is level 2, then no further experience gains of this nature will be available until level 3, regardless of additional sums spent.

If the ornamented armor is ever destroyed, the cavalier will not lose any experience, but of course the investment will be lost and the character will then be desperately concerned with the replacement of the armor with a similarly worthy type.

**Penalty for Wearing Dishonorable Armor:** If the cavalier does not wear exemplary armor and favors a different available armor type instead, the character suffers a -15% penalty to all experience gained during that play session. This could be offset, in part, by the bearing of a pennon of glory (given the pennon +XPM rules already described in the advantages section).

### Great Power with a Price

By design, the knight classes – especially at low experience levels, and in comparison to other characters – are quite overpowered in the hands of a skilled player, especially one who makes lucky rolls during character generation. However, these considerable strengths and potential power anomalies are balanced by the chivalric restrictions which are placed upon knights to hold them in “check” (*ahem*). The GM would be wise to be mindful of these built-in balances, and not to ignore them.

Also, the GM will find that the other Player Characters tend to rely upon the knight’s armor and endurance during deadly melees, which in turn leads to in-game situations where the knights are taking considerable chances and their mettle is being tested to the utmost.

This is an inherent disadvantage, which players tend not to complain about if they are lucky. But if the dice go against them during character creation, the GM should be sure to watch for potential disenfranchisement. Under no circumstances should the GM bend the rules to favor the cavalier’s player further, however; the class is already very strong and the player will need to become accustomed to hardship and the inherent Gygaxian balances deliberately placed within the design.

For more specifics in this regard, refer *The Uncontrollable Fate of Social Standing*, hereafter.

### Lack of Weapon Specialization

As a clarification, note that cavaliers can never engage in weapon specialization (as discussed in the *Oldskull Warriors* rules). Weapon specialization is a doctrine that can only be mastered by single-classed fighters and rangers, not cavaliers.

Cavaliers instead have weapons of choice, the traditional mode of training that involves becoming skilled with a dozen different weapon types, not just one. The two martial schools of thought – the one-weapon doctrine vs. the ten-weapon doctrine – are mutually exclusive.

### Sworn to a Great Cause

Every cavalier character, if role-played well, will harbor a secret or professed belief ... a sincere devotion to a great cause. Great causes must be approved and perhaps expanded upon by the GM. Cavaliers entering play will swear themselves to a cause in the name of good that is appropriate to







their immediate setting. Example great causes include “Wiping the evil scourge of the undead from our lands” or “Restoring glory to all of the fallen shrines and temples of Mielikki”.

The cavalier’s player should devise the cause and discuss it with the GM; the GM might refine the cause’s tenets depending upon the themes of the planned campaign. Over time the cavalier will either grow to further the great cause, or it will serve as a milestone in the past, a lost ideal that will cause the aging cavalier’s more jaded and world-worn personality to change in years to come.







### The Uncontrollable Fate of Social Standing (Common Limitation, Rare Advantage)

The randomly-rolled social standing of the cavalier will have a significant effect upon the character's early play. All cavaliers are powerful, but not all begin the game with the significant advantages of belonging to the upper class. Note that the player should be told that the random social standing roll will determine the character's early fate, and anyone who is uncomfortable with that situation should opt to play a different class.

By the dice – as shown in the Gygaxian social standing determination table – there is only a 13% chance that the cavalier will be born to the upper class. All other rolls pertain to results that indicate tiers of the middle class. This means that there is an 87% chance that any PC cavalier is going to begin play as a Yeoman, and only a 13% chance that he or she will begin play as a Noble.

The full summary of social standing D100 rolls for cavaliers is as follows:

**TABLE 13:**

**Social Standing Determination for Starting Cavaliers**

D100 Roll	Resultant Cavalier Standing and Station	Starting Gold	Starting Possessions
01-20	Lower Class (Social Standing Tier LLC-1, MLC-2, or ULC-3; conditionally esquired)	N/A*	(As for LMC-4)  The character cannot become a cavalier unless the GM allows it to occur.
21-35	Lower Middle Class (Social Standing Tier MLC-4; esquired)	20-80 gp (2D4 x 10)	Riding horse, light lance, medium shield, sword (a feature weapon of choice, type chosen by the player). Armor and additional gear must be purchased.
36-55	Middle Middle Class (Social Standing Tier MMC-5; esquired)	20-80 gp (2D4 x 10)	Light warhorse, medium shield, light lance, sword (broad or long, as chosen by the player), dagger. Armor and additional gear must be purchased.
56-87	Upper Middle Class (Social Standing Tier UMC-6; fully esquired)	20-80 gp (2D4 x 10)	Light warhorse, medium shield, chain mail, light lance, sword (broad or long, as chosen by the player), dagger. Additional gear must be purchased.
88-96	Lower Upper Class (Social Standing Tier LUC-7; knighted)	70-180 gp (1D12+6) x 10	Medium warhorse, large shield, plate mail, medium lance, sword (broad or long, as chosen by the player), dagger. Additional gear must be purchased.
97-99	Middle Upper Class (Social Standing Tier MUC-8; knighted)	70-180 gp (1D12+6) x 10	Heavy warhorse, large shield, field plate armor, heavy lance, long sword, dagger. Additional gear must be purchased.
00	Upper Upper Class (Social Standing Tier UUC-9; blessed and knighted)	130-180 gp (1D6+12) x 10	Heavy warhorse, leather barding, large shield, field plate armor, footman's mace, heavy lance, long sword, dagger. Additional gear must be purchased.





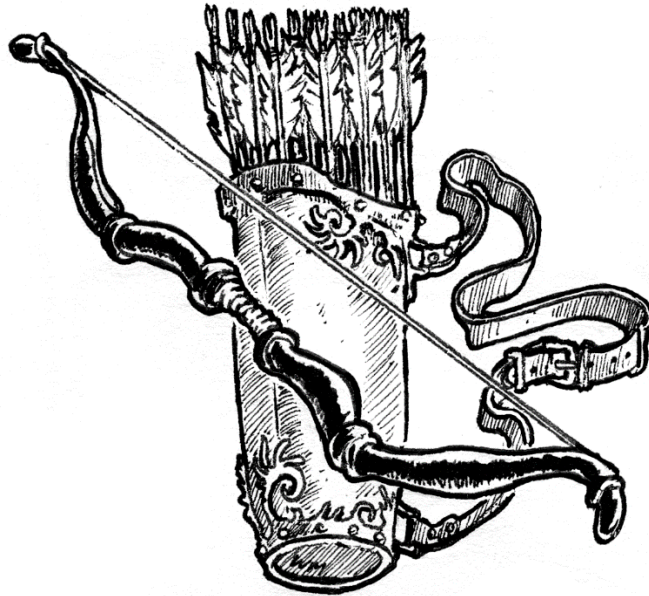


\* If a D100 roll between 01 and 20 occurs, and the player sincerely wants to play a cavalier above all else, the GM should strongly consider either rerolling, or letting the player's cavalier be admitted into the Lower Middle Class, as designated in this table.

Unlike characters of other archetypes, knights begin play with the above-listed amounts of gold, a mount, and armorial possessions. The listed mount and items are granted as beneficences by the cavalier's liege lord and/or knightly order. Cavaliers of middle class standing typically come from yeoman families that have served the lord or order faithfully for generations; those of upper class are born to nobility by blood.

Noted mounts for starting cavaliers do not come equipped with barding, unless a result of 00 (Upper Upper Class) is rolled. They do, however, come with tack, harness, a saddle, and two saddlebags.

Elven and half-elven cavaliers, regardless of the ancestrally favored animals, will begin the game with horse mounts as noted above.



### Weapons of Dishonor

Like any other character, a cavalier can – out of grim necessity – fight with a non-proficient weapon whenever required. The accuracy penalty while attacking with such a weapon is -3 to hit. There might be unique instances where a cavalier feels a dire need to use a non-proficient weapon; example scenarios include escaping from a monster's prison and wielding an improvised club (because it's the only weapon at hand), or brandishing a newly-discovered magic weapon because it is powerful ... even though the cavalier is not proficient with its use.

However, for cavaliers there is a retributive danger involved in using such weapons. If the non-proficient weapon type is not listed in the weapons of choice section, it is a *weapon of dishonor*. These are weapons that the immortals do not accept as being worthy of a mortal champion's spirit in the endless battles between Law and Chaos, Good and Evil. To use a weapon of dishonor is to exhibit hubris in the face of one's immortal benefactor. And considering the fact that a cavalier is an *exemplar*,





a paragon of the immortal's ideals manifested in the mortal world of eternal struggle, this is a grave offense indeed.

Most weapons are considered dishonorable – from the perspective of a deific champion – because they strike from a distance in a way that does not test the cavalier's merit. This category includes not only ranged weapons, but also long melee weapons such as pole arms and two-handed swords. There is the exception of the short composite bow for elven cavaliers however, which is a time-honored ancestral weapon of the elf lord champions of old.<sup>15</sup>

If a cavalier wields a weapon of dishonor for any reason, he or she will gain no experience during that play session.



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<sup>15</sup> Refer also to the January 1987 magazine.







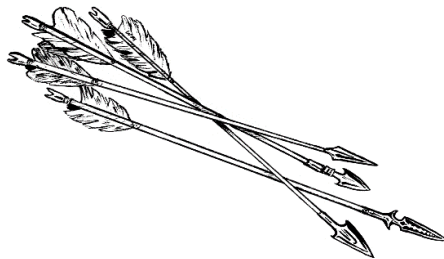
## Special Considerations for Elven and Half-Elven Cavaliers<sup>16</sup>

*(Half-elven cavaliers can pick and choose themes from this section, in accordance with the player's wishes. Full-blooded gray and high elf cavaliers should abide by all of the points listed hereafter. For information on dark elven cavaliers, refer to the following section.)*

Elven cavaliers have very different outlooks on the nature of knighthood. They are few in number, but they live for centuries and have defended their small kingdoms from evil against overwhelming odds. Many elves (and their empowering deities) are chaotic in nature, valuing freedom over obedience. Elven cavaliers do not organize themselves into knightly orders. Instead, they focus their efforts on the defense of ancestral lands, with wandering knights-errant journeying across the realms in search of evil powers to destroy.

### Elven Liege Lords of Renown

The most powerful elves are nearly immortal, due to longevity, wishes, and arcane Seelie masteries. The two most revered elven demigods, from a cavalier's perspective, are King Oberon and Queen Titania. The elven kingdoms – in the absence of the assassinated Faerie Queene – are each ruled by one of the Faerie Princes and Princesses, and it is to these protected elders that the cavaliers swear their allegiance. Other cavalier-allegiant elves of chivalric nobility (past and present) include Belpheobe Half-Elven, Caelia of the House of Holiness, Finvarra the Lord of the Daoine Sidhe, Gwyn ap Nudd, Joan the Wad (the shape-shifted and diminished Queen of the Pixies), Lady Aibell of Craig Laith, Lady Una of Knockmaa, and Sebile the Grand Enchtantress.



### Ways of the Elven Cavaliers

In game play, elven cavaliers are identical to human cavaliers, with the following important differences:

- **[I] Alliance of the Du'un-Aidai:** Elven cavaliers are strongly allied with elven, half-elven, and human rangers. The two factions frequently call upon one another for aid. A PC elven cavalier might be able to expect aid from NPC rangers, but can also expect to be called upon by the rangers to assist in battles against evil throughout the borderlands.

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<sup>16</sup> In various online comments, Gary Gygax hinted at the potential for specialized rules pertaining to elven and drowic cavaliers (with their own unique ancestral mounts and traditions, along with a preference for elfin chain mail). These rules have been developed from fragmentary notes (and hints within the Lake Geneva "Grey" campaign) to provide a cohesive set of concepts for unique elven cavalier concepts for play in the World of Oldskull.





- **[II] Elfin Chain Mail:** As noted in the chivalric hierarchy of exemplary armor, elven cavaliers revere elfin chain mail as the most exemplary form of armor, even above full plate armor. Elven cavaliers of experience level 3 or higher might well be rewarded with non-magical elfin chain mail if they engage in adventures and quests that aid the elven homeland. At experience level 6 or higher, they can be awarded magical elfin chain mail +1 if they engage in a heroic quest for their liege lord.
- **[III] Empowered Agility:** Normally, cavaliers who gain experience levels add +2D10 percentile values to their strength, dexterity, and constitution scores. Elven cavaliers, however, prize dexterity most of all and train to improve their agility. As such, when a PC elven cavalier gains an experience level, the player can tell the GM to roll the ability score empowerment dice in one of the following preferred manners: [1] normally, with +2D10 to STR, DEX, and CON; [2] with strength disregarded, giving percentile bonuses of +0 STR, +4D10 DEX, and +2D10 CON; [3] with constitution disregarded, giving bonuses of +2D10 STR, +4D10 DEX, and +0 CON; or, [4] with a sheer agility focus, resulting in bonuses of +0 STR, +6D10 DEX, and +0 CON. If an elven cavalier attains 18/00 DEX, he or she is instead granted a dexterity score of 19.
- **[IV] Forest Striders:** Elves do not focus their martial tactics on riding mastery. Since they value stealth and natural camouflage, elven cavaliers sometimes leave their mounts behind entirely.
- **[V] The Gods of the Elves of Oldskull:** In the World of Oldskull, most elves worship either the Norse mythos (of the Alfar), or the Celtic mythos (of the Seelie Court). A majority of NPC elven cavaliers are Chaotic Good.
- **[VI] Oaths of Oberon:** Elves term the virtues of chivalry as “the Oaths of Oberon”. They uphold the lawful virtues – namely courtesy, duty, forbearance, justice, and nobility – to a lesser extent than human cavaliers do. This means that the Game Master should not penalize an elven cavalier for violating the code in regard to these specific virtues, unless the violations are severe.
- **[VII] Titanian Cloaks:** Instead of the Pennon of Glory, elven cavaliers favor the Titanian Cloak. This is a peacock-like hooded cloak of many colors, which is crafted to be deliberately free of mottling for camouflage. The intent in wearing a Titanian Cloak is to exemplify chivalry in honor of the elven deities, and also to serve as a beacon of hope in battle, potentially drawing attacks away from more vulnerable companions. The elven cavalier cannot engage in stealth while wearing a Titanian Cloak, but can gain the full beneficial effects of a human Pennon of Glory, whether mounted or unmounted. Loss of a Titanian Cloak will confer dishonor, just as loss of a Pennon of Glory will.
- **[VIII] The Unseelie Court:** Elven cavaliers who fall to evil most frequently ally themselves with the Unseelie Court, which includes the banshees, dream witches, evil creatures of Faerie, half-drowic powers, mushroom and fungal creatures, Queen Nicnevin of Samhain, and nigh-unknown corrupting elfin godlings of the Dreamlands.
- **[IX] Weapons of Choice:** To elven cavaliers, the short composite bow is a revered ancestral weapon. Elven cavaliers can adopt the short composite bow as a weapon of choice, even as their very first weapon before mastery of the lance is learned. The bonuses conferred are similar to the human cavalier’s second weapon of mastery (+1 to hit at experience levels 3 to 8, +2 to hit at levels 9 or higher).







## **Special Considerations for Drowic Cavaliers**

**Important Note:** Non-Player Character drow cavaliers are nobles, and will be fully equipped as such with mounts (at times), fine arms, and armor. Player Character drow and half-drow however are exiles from the dark elven homeland, driven to the surface. This premise is a necessity, because such characters could not otherwise be near to the other PCs for level 1 fellowship at the start of the game.





PC drow can be of good alignment if that is what the player desires, which means that they would follow the rules for human good-aligned cavaliers in this volume. Otherwise, they can only be evil if the GM and other players are prepared to run an evil-only campaign. They could technically be neutral, but few players would select that option due to the restricted powers described for neutral cavaliers.

The vast majority of drowic knights are Non-Player Characters sworn to one of the nether noble houses. Dark elven NPC cavaliers are always evil.

## Ways of the Drowic Cavaliers

The following notes pertain to drowic knights, in addition to notes provided in the default (human) cavalier chapter.

- **[I] Armor of the Dark Elven Cavaliers:** All drowic knights will wear chain mail. They will use bucklers if unmounted by preference, or spiked small shields if mounted. Those of levels 1 to 3 will have +1 armor and shield (Dokkaflarian steel of the dark elven homeland), those of levels 4 to 7 will have +2, those of levels 8 to 12 will have +3 (mithral-alloyed steel), those of levels 13 to 17 will have +4, and those of level 18+ will have full +5 regalia (mithral seamed with amaranthine crystal).
- **[II] Death-Sworn Followers:** The low- or mid-level cavalier's followers, if any, will be accused and sentenced dark elven or half-drowic thralls who can be tortured and killed for the slightest disobedience. As such, they will fight to the death even if the cavalier retreats. High-level cavaliers will be guarded by bugbear infantry; epic-level knights will be guarded by armored trolls.
- **[III] Demonic War Bands:** If for whatever reason – gods help the adventurers – a considerable host of drow cavaliers are encountered, they will be in allegiance with an accompanying maze daemon (70% of the time) or a night daemon (30%).
- **[IV] The Fate of the Weak:** Those dark elven cavaliers who fail their masters are tortured and twisted into terrible spider creatures. Therefore if a drowic knight fails in a major mission or quest – perhaps to slay or capture the PCs – he or she is quite likely to flee into self-imposed exile.
- **[V] Mounts of the Dark Elven Aristocracy:** Higher-level cavaliers will have special mounts if they are aristocratic. The chance for any drow cavalier NPC to be aristocratic is 5% at experience level 7, +5% per additional experience level. The mount will be a hieracosphinx, nightmare, or shadow dragon.
- **[VI] Taming the Lizards of Chthon:** PC drowic cavaliers can, if they choose to do so, journey into the netherworld to seek, hunt, and tame a riding lizard. Those of HD 1+1 to 3+3 cannot be subdued, as they are too stubborn to be broken save by the NPC drowic torture and techniques (which remain a mystery). A level 4 or higher cavalier can tame a lizard of HD 4+4; at level 6 or higher, they can tame a lizard of HD 5+5; and at level 8 or higher, they can tame a lizard of HD 6+6 (all with above-average hit points due to being appraised and selected). These are excellent netherworld and dungeon mounts, and with practice the cavalier can even learn to ride them up walls or cliffsides.







- **[VII] Weapons of the Dark Elven Cavaliers:** Wood is a rarity in the underworld, and most weapons are made of steel. Drowic cavaliers will be armed according to GM preference, but the following options are recommended: atlatl and steel javelins (drow feel no shame in attacking from afar), hand crossbow, long sword, military fork (can be wielded as a light lance), or two-handed sword. Poison use will be common. Those of levels 1 to 3 will have non-magical (drowic) mithral-alloyed weapons of +1 power equivalency. Those of levels 4 to 7 will have +2 weapons, those of levels 8 to 12 will have +3 weapons, those of levels 13 to 17 will have +4 weapons (adamantine steel), and those of level 18+ will have +5 weapons (pure mithral or amaranthine crystal). Occasional drow of considerable repute might possess magical tentacle weapons or energy-draining lances.

### Drowic (Anti-) Chivalry

The drowic code of chivalry, exemplifying Chaos and Evil, has only ten precepts:

- **Elitism:** Nobility is solely born of blood.
- **Obedience:** Those not born to rule, serve.
- **Power:** Only the strong shall survive.
- **Bondage:** Those who are not slavers shall find themselves enslaved.
- **Enmity:** Good is guardianship of the weak, and therefore weakness.
- **Wrath:** Cruelty is the demonstration of superiority.
- **Hatred:** Kindness is the admittance of inferiority.
- **Malfeasance:** Fairness subverts the will of the strong.
- **Ruin:** Unfairness is the gloried harbinger of Chaos.
- **Destiny:** In the End, only Chaos shall withstand Eternity.

### The Riding Lizards of Chthon<sup>17</sup>

Over the centuries, the drow have tamed giant subterranean lizards, and have – through treated fungi, alchemical infusions, and selective breeding – created several different types of remarkable creatures. Noble villas and drow-allied troglodyte holdfasts in the underworld might be guarded by the sharp-fanged War Lizards of Velsathra; merchant caravans rely on beasts of burden known as the Pack Lizards of Tormeval; and cavaliers often ride the swift and long-necked Riding Lizards of Chthon.

The general statistics for these creatures are as follows:

- **Hatchling:** Armor Class: Armor Class 8, Move 30' (ground), Hit Dice 1/2, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D2, Intelligence 1, Size S (3' long). Can only be raised by NPC drow. Far too small to be ridden.
- **Sub-Adult:** Armor Class 7, Move 60' (ground or climbing), Hit Dice 1, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D3, Intelligence 1, Size M (6' long). Can only be raised and tamed by NPC drow. Too small to be ridden.

<sup>17</sup> The reader might note that these details were inspired by a 1978 Gygaxian dungeon module.





- **Young Adult:** Armor Class 7, Move 90' (ground or climbing), Hit Dice 1+2, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D4, Intelligence 1, Size L (8' long). Can only be raised and tamed by NPC drow. Too small to be ridden.
- **Large Riding Lizard (Adult):** Armor Class 6, Move 90' (ground or climbing) or 60' (ground) as a mount, Hit Dice 2, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D4, Intelligence 2, Size L (10' long). Can only be raised and tamed by NPC drow. Can be ridden, but only by an armored elven rider with no gear. Equivalent to a riding horse for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by 20% of level 1 or 2 drowic cavaliers.
- **Huge Riding Lizard (Adult):** Armor Class 6, Move 90' (ground or climbing) or 60' (ground) as a mount, Hit Dice 2+2, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D6, Intelligence 2, Size L (12' long). Can only be raised and tamed by NPC drow. Can be ridden by an armored rider with light gear. Equivalent to a light warhorse for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by 30% of level 3 or 4 drowic cavaliers.
- **Giant Riding Lizard (Old):** Armor Class 5, Move 120' (ground or climbing) or 60' (ground or climbing) as a mount, Hit Dice 3+3, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 1D6+1, Intelligence 3, Size L (14' long). Can only be raised and tamed by NPC drow. Can be ridden by an armored rider with normal gear. Equivalent to a medium warhorse for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by 40% of level 5 or 6 drowic cavaliers.
- **Great Riding Lizard (Old):** Armor Class 5 unbarbed (can carry light barding of +1 AC), Move 120' (ground or climbing) or 60' (ground or climbing) as a mount, Hit Dice 4+4, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 2D4, Intelligence 3, Size L (16' long). Can be raised and tamed by NPC drow, or can be hunted and subdued by a drow cavalier PC. Can be ridden by an armored rider with heavy gear. Equivalent to a heavy warhorse for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by 50% of level 7 to 9 drowic cavaliers.
- **Monstrous Chthonai (Very Old):** Armor Class 4 unbarbed (can carry medium barding of +2 AC), Move 120' (ground or climbing) or 90' (ground or climbing) as a mount, Hit Dice 5+5, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 2D4+1, Intelligence 4, Size L (16' long). Can be raised and tamed by NPC drow, or can be hunted and subdued by a drow cavalier PC. Can be ridden by an armored rider with heavy gear, and carry 2 saddlebags' worth of treasure or supplies. Equivalent to a great destrier for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by 60% of level 10 to 12 drowic cavaliers.
- **Elder Chthonai-Tor (Young):** Armor Class 4 unbarbed (can carry heavy barding of +3 AC), Move 120' (ground or climbing) or 90' (ground or climbing) as a mount, Hit Dice 6+6, # Attacks 1 Bite, Damage 2D4+2, Intelligence 4, Size L (18' long). Can be raised and tamed by NPC drow, or can be hunted and subdued by a drow cavalier PC. Can be ridden by an armored rider with heavy gear, and carry 4 saddlebags' worth of treasure or supplies. Equivalent to a great destrier for mount and lancing purposes. Ridden by all level 13 to 15 drowic cavaliers who are not aristocratic.

All riding lizards have excellent darksight (120' infravision). Those taken to the surface will suffer -10% morale, -1 to hit, and -1 to saving throws until they acclimate to conditions in the world above. This acclimation will occur naturally and will require 10D6 weeks' time, and will be permanent for the lifespan of the lizard.







## Chapter III:

# The Code of Chivalry

### The Nature of Chivalry

All cavaliers live and die by the tenets of chivalry. There are many types of chivalry, and all of them can impact the play of the game. In the World of Oldskull, *divine* chivalry is the immortal embodiment of an idealized system of belief that allows good-aligned deities to channel some of their powers through inspirational mortal champions in the name of destroying evil. There is also *medieval* chivalry, an historical code of warrior conduct; *fairytale* chivalry, the notion that knights in shining armor are always nice; and *game* chivalry, where the GM needs to restrict some negative modes of player behavior while also keeping the knight archetype balanced and fun to play.

Chivalry is not a straitjacket, but it is a code of honor. This means that the powers and advantages of the cavalier are concordant with behavior that befits a champion of good. There are some players who love chivalry, while others want to disregard it because it can limit the power of a neutral- or evil-minded character. But mythology – and the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, most especially – is filled with instances of good knights, cruel knights, falls from grace, atonements, and flawed heroes wrestling with duty and temptation. All of this means that chivalry is both rewarding and demanding, which makes the code rich with countless opportunities for interesting role play.<sup>18</sup>

Cavaliers are mostly good. To possess all of their listed and incredible powers, they must abide by one of the three modes of good defined in the game (Chaotic Good most rarely, Lawful Good most commonly, or Neutral Good). Players who do not enjoy playing good characters should certainly shy away from playing the cavalier. Those players can choose to run a Chaos Knight, or perhaps something more esoteric and free-spirited such as a barbarian, assassin, or bardic warrior. However, as is befitting the knightly traditions and tales, cavaliers who fall to neutrality only lose some of their sacred powers. Even those who fall to evil do not lose everything. The restrictions and disadvantages will all be made clear in this chapter so that any player who is willingly adopting the cavalier class can also be pre-informed as to the consequences and expectations that go along with all of that glorious strength.

### The Precepts of Chivalry

Before play begins, a starting cavalier is sworn to knighthood by an allied NPC cavalier of experience level 5 or higher. In doing so he or she swears to the oaths of chivalry, promising to advocate the principles of the good deity (or other immortal power) through virtues, battle valor, and exemplary behavior. Players who do not agree to this before-the-game oath taking (“No, see, because my guy’s an anti-hero, and he wields two blades and has a pet jaguar and …”) cannot be allowed to play a cavalier.

<sup>18</sup> For deeper research into aspects of chivalry, knightly orders, and cavalier honor, the GM can refer to the September 1987 and February 1992 magazines.







The accepted precepts of chivalry are termed knightly virtues, and their antitheses are the vices. The following summary table will allow the player and GM to understand what constitutes chivalric behavior, and what would be regarded a betrayal of those beliefs.







TABLE 14:

**The Chivalric Virtues and Their Associated Vices**

<b>Knightly Virtue</b>	<b>Revered Alignment and Dominant Principle*</b>	<b>Dominant Principle*</b>	<b>Associated Vice</b>	<b>Potential Alignment Shift for Misdeeds</b>
<b>Brotherhood</b>	Neutrality	Fellowship	Disaffiliation	No alignment shift (but weakens the knightly order)
<b>Courage</b>	Good	Gallantry	Cowardice	No alignment shift (but causes evil to prosper)
<b>Courtesy</b>	Law	Respect	Disrespect	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Duty</b>	Law	Responsibility	Negligence	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Enterprise</b>	Neutrality	Ambition	Apathy	No alignment shift (but causes evil to prosper)
<b>Faith</b>	Good	Belief	Disbelief	No alignment shift (but weakens the deities of good)
<b>Forbearance</b>	Law	Self-Restraint	Instability	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Generosity</b>	Good	Empathy	Greed	Shift toward Evil
<b>Glory</b>	Neutrality	Inspiration	Shame	No alignment shift (but reduces morale of worshippers)
<b>Guardianship</b>	Good	Protectiveness	Carelessness	Shift toward Evil
<b>Honesty</b>	Good	Trustworthiness	Deceit	Shift toward Evil
<b>Honor</b>	Law	Dignity	Disgrace	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Hospitality</b>	Good	Kindness	Cruelty	Shift toward Evil
<b>Justice</b>	Law	Fairness	Lawlessness	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Loyalty</b>	Good	Reliability	Treachery	Shift toward Evil
<b>Nobility**</b>	Law	Authority	Degeneracy	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Pride***</b>	Good	Self-Belief	Hubris	Shift toward Chaos
<b>Prowess</b>	Neutrality	Power	Helplessness	No alignment shift (but causes evil to prosper)
<b>Purity</b>	Good	Worthiness	Corruption	Shift toward Evil
<b>Zeal</b>	Good	Divine Fervor	Maleficence	Shift toward Evil

\* The dominant principles indicate the type of ethical violation that is caused by not deliberately acting against the virtue in question. Therefore when a cavalier acts against duty or justice, he or she is actually becoming more chaotic, which can also in some cases have ramifications toward a permanent alignment change. Note that a Chaotic Good cavalier would be less concerned about violations toward chaos, while a Lawful Good cavalier's deity would find such conduct to be of grave concern.

\*\* Nobility is not a sacred virtue. It is a knightly virtue because nobility is the foundation of the knightly orders' longevity in defiance of diabolic and demonic evil powers.

\*\*\* Pride is not often considered a sacred virtue, but it is a knightly virtue, because weaker and more vulnerable believers look to the cavalier for inspiration. The knight's deserved pride makes weaker





allies more courageous against evil. Note the associated vice is not modesty but rather hubris, boastful defiance of the gods.

Notable sacred virtues, which are not among the knightly virtues, include: chastity, foresight, forgiveness, gentleness, humility, mercy, moderation, peacefulness, temperance, and wisdom.



## **The Pronouncement of Chivalry**

Every cavalier who is either (a) of upper class standing, and/or (b) of experience level 5+ will have a coat of arms. This is a personal or familial heraldic symbol grouping that identifies the cavalier's realm, history (or destiny), and birthright. Cavaliers of low standing will only be regionally known, while those of the highest standing will be very well known to allies and enemies far and wide.







**Pronouncement and Black Knights:** To carry a shield, tabard, pennon, and/or banner bearing the coat of arms is known as chivalric *pronouncement*. A *Black Knight* (feel free to compare with the very different term in this volume, *Dark Knight*) is not necessarily evil, but is either unwilling or unable to make a pronouncement during a melee, joust, or battle. There are many reasons for temporary Black Knighthood, with possibilities including secrecy, arrogance, rivalry, misdirection, or a momentous and vengeful return for one believed to dead.

**Cavalier Precedence of Reputation:** Pronouncement can be tricky to judge in play. The Game Master cannot be expected to have foreknowledge of every random NPC cavalier's standing and background in an instant. Rather, it is recommended that one cavalier should recognize another on a base 0% chance, +5% per experience level of the stranger, -10% if it is a Black Knight, and -20% if the stranger hails from another realm. Therefore a cavalier (PC or NPC) observing an approaching cavalier stranger who is unpronounced (a Black Knight), level 8, from outside of the realm, would be known only 10% of the time. However a stranger who is pronounced, level 15, from the same realm, would be known 75% of the time. If a PC cavalier gains such knowledge of a stranger NPC, the GM can share some minor details about the approaching knight – name, level title (a valuable clue), goodness / neutrality or evil, and perhaps a single personality trait or deed.

**The Right of Respite:** Cavaliers who are not presenting as Black Knights can also ask for the *Right of Respite*. This means that when approaching another cavalier's manor, tower, keep, stronghold, or order citadel, the approaching knight and any companions will not be attacked so long as they are not stealthy and do not act in an aggressive fashion. The cavalier can justly ask for up to three nights' food, drink, and shelter from the place's cavalier lord or commander. This is not "freeloading" by the way; the tradition is rooted in the need for embattled and questing cavaliers to seek sanctuary in dangerous lands far from home.

Whenever respite is sought, each cavalier will experience an instinctive alignment response as a result of their guardian immortals' auras.

If the respite-seeking cavalier is of the exact same alignment as the situated cavalier, both will experience a brief flash of deific insight where they understand a brotherly kinship exists between the two. An NPC situated cavalier will then immediately offer three nights' respite to the cavalier, and also to any traveling companions.

If the cavalier is of the same moral (evil/good/neutral) alignment axis as the situated cavalier, but a differing philosophical (chaos/law/neutrality) axis, respite may be granted ... but the situated cavalier is under no obligation to honor such. Assume a 75% chance of an NPC situated cavalier granting respite if the seeker is alone, or 50% if traveling with companions, for 1D3 nights' stay.

Cavaliers of the good moral axis will tend to give neutral cavaliers one night's respite about 60% of the time (30% if with companions) and vice versa.

Neutral cavaliers will not freely give evil cavaliers respite, and vice versa.

Good and evil cavaliers will never give one another respite. However, this aspect of the code of chivalry is sometimes used between enemies for the purposes of détente, warning, or inferred negotiation. When good and evil cavaliers meet peacefully in this manner, any threats will be veiled if made at all. Challenges can be issued, warnings and proclamations of war can be made, and violence will not take place on any grounds within a day's ride of the situated cavalier's stronghold. The GM should be aware that evil human cavaliers – as "honorable bad guys" – will always embrace this code of conduct. Treacherous Chaos Knights or drowic cavaliers, however, will not.









## **Chivalry and Battle Valor**

As champions in the endless terrestrial and planar war waged between good and evil, cavaliers are expected to engage enemy leaders and champions on the field of battle. Non-Player Character cavaliers will compulsively act in a highly predictable fashion in battle, always adhering to the below hierarchy of conflict unless their wisdom (WIS) exceeds 15.

Player Character cavaliers are free to follow or ignore the hierarchy. Sometimes, charging the strongest enemy is merely a mode of suicide. And often in an adventuring party the PC cavalier must choose between glory and the defense of imperiled friends. Therefore, the GM is advised to consider the valor hierarchy as rewarding, rather than punitive. If at the end of any game session the PC cavalier – in review at the end of play – is deemed to have been fully compliant with the hierarchy, the GM should either (a) ignore all experience gain penalties the cavalier is currently suffering, or (b) if there are no current penalties, or only bonuses, give the cavalier a +10% bonus to all experience gained during the session.

The maximum temporary experience gain bonus that a cavalier can gain during a play session (even if a pennon is being flown) is +15%, regardless of valor or heroics. Bonuses of +20% or higher are never possible.

If the cavalier's play in other aspects has been so poor that his or her conduct is in the "no experience shall be gained this session" mode, then the cavalier *does* gain experience during that session due to valor, but the rewards are diminished by a flat -50%.

The hierarchy of conflict – observed in all battles great and small – is as follows:

**TABLE 15:**

### **The Hierarchy of Conflict and Valor for Cavaliers**

<b>Order of Combative Preference</b>	<b>Type of Enemy</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	The most powerful inhuman enemy monster or creature present
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Other powerful monsters (demons, dragons, giants, etc.)
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	The leader(s) of the enemy host
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	Pronounced enemy cavaliers of the highest known or perceived experience levels
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	Other enemy cavaliers (or knights)
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Enemy banner holders or standard bearers
<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	Elite or noble cavalry
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	Other enemy cavalry
<b>9<sup>th</sup></b>	Elite footmen
<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	Battlefield fortification objectives (encampments, headquarters, siege engines, etc.)
<b>11<sup>th</sup></b>	Footmen or melee troops
<b>12<sup>th</sup></b>	Archers, skirmishers, or ranged troops
<b>13<sup>th</sup></b>	Peasants, militia, thralls, slaves, etc.





Enemy cavaliers will insist upon one-on-one combat with the attacking cavalier, even if such a respectable honor puts them at a grave disadvantage. (To do otherwise would result in the dimming of the cavalier's aura, and a severe morale loss for all of his or her allies.) But non-cavalier opponents, especially evil ones, will feel no need to "honor" the attacking cavalier with a fair and balanced fight. In fact, intelligent evil opponents will taunt and mock, seeing the cavalier's charge as a perfect opportunity to exterminate a deadly threat.

NPC cavaliers of WIS 12 or less, in the name of immortal glory, will predictably charge headlong toward the foremost enemy of precedence. Many historical battles have been lost due to the charges of reckless cavaliers. Those of WIS 13 to 15 will charge alone if feasible, or otherwise while encouraging allies to advance if a solitary charge might prove suicidal. Those of WIS 16 or higher will charge if it is tactically advantageous to do so; otherwise they will advance at the head of their allies with the primary battlefield goal of reaching the priority target(s). PC cavaliers will act as the player desires, but only those who charge into every single battle in a play session will gain the (highly risky!) +10% experience bonus.

## **Temptation and Violations of Chivalry**

The code of chivalry will soon become second nature to the cavalier's player, but there will be many times when the wiser or more rewarding course of action is actually against the code. And since the game most strongly rewards skillful survival, vanquished monsters, and treasures gained any which way, this state of affairs presents an ongoing conundrum for cavalier behavior.

The GM will need to let the PC cavalier act sensibly, within reason. But at the same time, do not let the player manipulate the cavalier class just for greedy personal gain. Every time that the cavalier is clearly and significantly going against the code of chivalry in the Game Master's own opinion, the GM should issue a pre-warning and ask the cavalier's player if he or she would like to reconsider and perhaps change the intended act. ("Are you sure?") If the player is sure, then the GM should note that the cavalier has willfully violated the chivalric code for that play session, with potential ramifications for experience gained, personal reputation, and alignment change.

Because the cavalier class is so powerful in the hands of a skilled player, there are no non-combat experience gains associated with chivalric conduct (excepting battle valor, as already described). Violations to the code are punished, but to keep the game entertaining, multiple very minor transgressions can be either ignored or warned away.

Violating the code is not always a sign of bad role-playing; some players might deliberately, or even heroically, violate the code in a dramatic way to stay true to the character's beliefs, or to save a companion's life as a personal sacrifice. Such honorable breaches should still be punished through experience penalties, but also lauded by the Game Master! (Buy that player a pizza, or a miniature, or give them one of your lucky D20s, perhaps ...)

The quality of cavalier play must be considered in retrospect at the end of each session. In play sessions where the GM feels that the cavalier violated the code of chivalry once, all earned experience gained is halved. (Remember, there were warnings, and the player said he was sure!) In sessions where the GM feels that the cavalier violated the code more than once, no experience is gained, unless the instances of battle valor were commendable in that session. Then, if the cavalier was both unchivalric and valorous, the cavalier has all experience gains halves instead of eliminated entirely.







Players and GMs can discuss after the session where things went wrong, and whether the cavalier's alignment will be impacted going forward. As a rule of thumb I personally recommend not forcing a cavalier to change alignment, unless great evil is done (such as the murder of an innocent) or if the pattern of violations is willful, ongoing, and unlikely to change.



## **Neutral Cavaliers and Chivalry**

In addition to the already-noted losses of power due to alignment change, a neutral cavalier will have a profound change of philosophy as well. The neutral knight will therefore embrace a somewhat more nuanced perception of the code of chivalry, further instilled with the character's newfound personal beliefs.

In reference to the prior table of knightly virtues, some virtues – the neutral ones – will be more passionately upheld. These are the virtues of [1] brotherhood, [2] enterprise, [3] glory, and [4] prowess.







At the same time, other virtues – the good ones – will become less highly regarded. These are the virtues of [1] courage, [2] faith, [3] generosity, [4] guardianship, [5] honesty, [6] loyalty, [7] pride, [8] purity, and [9] zeal.



In some ways the neutral cavalier then becomes easier to play, because the GM will no longer need to focus so heavily on violations toward the nine good-aligned virtues noted above. Violations in this regard can still be penalized, but the GM should become more lenient in the interpretation of what constitutes a full violation (as opposed to a minor and unpunished one).

For example, in regards to courage, a neutral cavalier could flee from battle alongside protected companions without penalty. And in regards to honesty, while a good cavalier would be fearful of







telling a lie, the neutral cavalier might well consider it if the lie were to help one's friends, or possibly lead to the downfall of evil. The interpretation of the chivalric code thus becomes far more "gray" and open, although in all rendered decisions the GM's word is final.

## **Evil Cavaliers and Chivalry**

*(Note that this rules section does not apply to NPC dark elven cavaliers, because the drow adhere to a wildly different code of chivalric conduct.)*

For evil cavaliers, chivalry becomes a study in paradoxes, as the brooding and conflicted Dark Knight wages philosophical war both within and without.

Evil cavaliers – despite their losses of power and former allies – become quite a bit easier to role-play. They strip away the parts of the chivalric code that they see as weak. And they no longer have to worry about violations to the nine good-aligned virtues at all. They do, however, still abide by the neutral virtues. Also, unless the cavalier is Chaotic Evil, he or she will also still abide by the lawful virtues (courtesy, duty, forbearance, honor, justice, and nobility) as well.

In light of the disregarded virtues of generosity and guardianship, evil cavaliers will frequently adventure to enrich themselves as much as possible. Treasure seeking and treasure stealing become laudable destinies. They also do not care to fully concern themselves with the rule of respite, outside of the need to remain honorable to non-violent parley with good cavaliers near strongholds and other places of knightly power.



Evil cavaliers have much more freedom of will, but their newfound immortal masters regard them as fickle, unpredictably useful, and highly untrustworthy. They can use poison and evil magic items, and they can hire evil henchmen or find evil monsters to subdue and serve their cause. But as a significant penalty, evil cavaliers never again gain experience bonuses of any kind, even while flying a pennon of glory, or engaging in acts of battle valor. They can still suffer experience penalties due to the code of chivalry or other concerns, but they can never again enjoy beneficial experience bonuses of any kind.











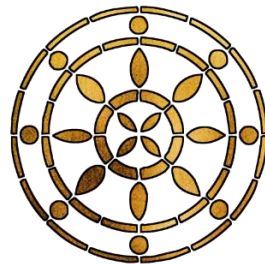
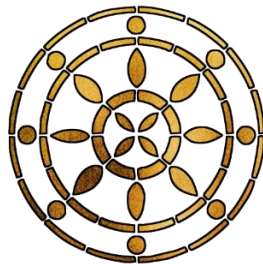
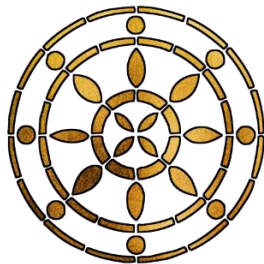
## Chapter IV:

# Warhorses and Other Mounts

### Overview of Equine Steeds

Cavalier warhorses can be some of the most important “animal NPCs” in the campaign. This is especially true at low experience levels, when the presence, boldness, and lethality of the cavalier’s mount might significantly increase the party’s chances of wilderness survival.

If the GM wishes to keep things character-focused, warhorses can simply be featured as they appear in the 1977 hardcover bestiary, supplemented by the mount acquisition and barding rules found in the 1985 Unearthed rules. For a deeper and more evocative cavalier game experience, however, the GM might want to consider some or all of the aspects presented in this chapter.



### Horse Breeds and Classifications

There are five major classifications of knightly mounts in the Gygaxian rules: riding horses, light warhorses, medium warhorses, heavy warhorses, and the paladin’s warhorse (not available to cavaliers, a troubling Unearthed-era oversight in my opinion). Given that the cavalier is the most equine-focused class, and there is a considerable gap between the heavy warhorse and the paladin’s warhorse, the Castle Oldskull game also features great destriers and other variants as well.

The heroic nature of the game presents a bit of a mid- and high-level challenge for the Game Master who is seeking to feature equine mounts in long-term play. At the beginning of the game a strong warhorse is more powerful than all humanoids, and might even be more deadly than some types of level 1 adventuring characters. But as the Player Characters gain hit dice and experience levels through play, their mounts become the most vulnerable aspect of the adventuring party. This situation is inherent to game play because of the nature of character hit points; horses do not become more heroic over time.

As the campaign proceeds, the issue can be alleviated to a degree by a combination of barding, cavalier-selected mounts (increasing hit points for selected horses), and skilled play. Great destriers can be purchased by mid-level characters once the “fragile horse problem” begins to manifest itself if outdoor adventure scenarios, typically around experience level 4 or 5.





The different types of horses available in the World of Oldskull are listed below.<sup>19</sup>

**TABLE 16:**

**Horse Breeds of the World of Oldskull**

**General Statistics for Equine Mounts, by Type**

**[I] Riding Horse (Hackney, Jennet, Palfrey, Rouncey):** Armor Class 7 unbarded, Move 240', Hit Dice 2, # Attacks 1 Bite (will only attack if wounded), Damage 1D3, Intelligence 2, Size L (commonly 14 hands if below average hit points, 14 ½ if average, 15 if above average).

Carrying capacity 300 lbs. for full speed, 500 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 90% (base), -10% per knight experience level.

Average costs 20 gp (below average), 25 gp (average), 35 gp (above average).

**[II] Battle-Trained Riding Horse (Grand Palfrey, Hoby):** Armor Class 7 unbarded, Move 240', Hit Dice 2, # Attacks 2 Hooves, Damage 1D3/1D3, Intelligence 3, Size L.

Carrying capacity 300 lbs. for full speed, 500 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 50% (base), -10% per knight experience level.

Average costs 40 gp (below average), 50 gp (average), 70 gp (above average).

**[III] Light Warhorse (Courser):** Armor Class 7 unbarded, Move 240', Hit Dice 2, # Attacks 2 Hooves, Damage 1D4/1D4, Intelligence 4, Size L (commonly 14 hands if below average hit points, 14 ½ if average, 15 if above average).

Carrying capacity 300 lbs. for full speed, 500 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 10% (base), -1% per knight experience level.

Average costs 120 gp (below average), 150 gp (average), 200 gp (above average).

**[IV] Mountain Horse (Fell Horse, Highland Horse):** Armor Class 7 unbarded, Move 210', Hit Dice 3, # Attacks 2 Hooves (but only attacking as a 2 HD monster), Damage 1D4/1D4, Intelligence 2, Size L (commonly 17 hands if below average hit points, 17 ½ hands if average, 18 hands if above average).

Carrying capacity 450 lbs. for full speed, 700 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 60% (base), -10% per knight experience level.

Bred for strength and stamina, and able to travel without hardship in cold and mountainous terrain.<sup>20</sup>

Average costs 160 gp (below average), 200 gp (average), 270 gp (above average).

<sup>19</sup> For those Game Masters who would like to make things more complex, and completely individualize the performance of each horse, consider the articles found in the December 1984 and March 1993 magazines.

<sup>20</sup> Refer to Gygax's 1982 Caverns module.







**[V] Medium Warhorse (Charger):** Armor Class 7 unbarbed, Move 180', Hit Dice 2+2, # Attacks 2 Hooves/1 Bite, Damage 1D6/1D6/1D3, Intelligence 4, Size L (commonly 15 ½ hands if below average hit points, 16 hands if average, 16 ½ hands if above average).

Carrying capacity 400 lbs. for full speed, 650 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 10% (base), -1% per knight experience level.

Average costs 180 gp (below average), 225 gp (average), 300 gp (above average).

**[VI] Battle-Trained Mountain Horse (Fell Steed, Highland Steed):** Armor Class 7 unbarbed, Move 210', Hit Dice 3, # Attacks 2 Hooves (attacking as a 3 HD monster), Damage 1D4/1D4, Intelligence 3, Size L.

Carrying capacity 450 lbs. for full speed, 700 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 30% (base), -10% per knight experience level.

Average costs 200 gp (average), 250 gp (average), 335 gp (above average).

**[VII] Heavy Warhorse (Destrier):** Armor Class 7 unbarbed, Move 150', Hit Dice 3+3, # Attacks 2 Hooves/1 Bite, Damage 1D8/1D8/1D3, Intelligence 4, Size L (commonly 17 hands if below average hit points, 17 ½ hands if average, 18 hands if above average).

Carrying capacity 500 lbs. for full speed, 750 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 10% (base), -1% per knight experience level.

Average costs 240 gp (below average), 300 gp (average), 400 gp (above average).

**[VIII] Great Destrier:** Armor Class 7 unbarbed, Move 150', Hit Dice 4+4, # Attacks 2 Hooves/1Bite, Damage 2D4/2D4/1D4, Intelligence 4, Size L (commonly 18 ½ hands if below average hit points, 19 hands if average, 19 ½ hands if above average).

Carrying capacity 500 lbs. for full speed, 800 lbs. maximum.

Chance of panic in dangerous situations 5% (base), -1% per knight experience level.

Average costs 600 gp (below average), 750 gp (average), 1,000 gp (above average).

**[IX] Royal Destrier:** NPC cavaliers above experience level 9, who are not using a special monstrous or animal mount of some kind, will be mounted on royal destriers. These are very rare and specially bred great destriers – some reach 20 hands in height – with maximum hit points. They never panic in dangerous situations, although their morale can still be broken in battle.

Royal destriers are available only to royalty and the most acclaimed cavalier nobility. To ever acquire one, a cavalier would need to perform a great service for a noble house (a higher place outside of consideration of the cavalier's liege lord and the knightly order).

Average value (not available for sale) 5,000 gp.





Note that only a cavalier, a person who grew up around horses, or a non-cavalier adventurer of experience level 3+ would be able to effectively appraise a horse's height without a long and careful measuring process. And only a cavalier can accurately assess a horse's worthiness (approximate hit points), due to health and endurance variances between individual horses.

Below-average horses will frequently be sold "as average" to unwitting buyers, at the average listed cost; a wise buyer or cavalier can usually talk the price to the more appropriate level. Above-average horses however will always command a premium.







## **Warhorse Barding**

There are many types of armor for steeds, called barding. For gameplaying's sake, the GM should assume that any array of barding can be modified by a skilled cavalier to fit any mount-worthy animal. Therefore, horse barding can be customized (perhaps over an hour's time) and replated to fit a stag, riding lizard, or even a griffon.

The types of barding are somewhat similar to armor for humans and demi-humans. The significant variances are the horse's inherent Armor Class (humans are AC 10, horses are AC 7), coverage (barding covers much less of an animal than armor does a man), and the added weight required to protect the most vulnerable parts of a large and moving beast.

Barding might seem like an extravagant expense to a low-level character, but over time – as heroic PCs increase their hit points and AC, while their hard-pressed mounts never change – casualties and deadly falls will come to point where outdoor adventurers will gladly endorse the expense. There is also the fact that without a mount, many of the cavalier's special abilities and attack bonuses are curtailed.

The table hereafter summarizes the types of barding that are available.







TABLE 17:

**Barding Types for Warhorses and Other Mounts**

Barding	AC Bonus	Material Type*	Weight	Burden Level**	Cost
<b>Padded</b>	+1	Cloth	12 lbs.	Light (I)	75 gp
<b>Leather</b>	+1	Leather	16 lbs.	Light (I)	100 gp
<b>Studded Leather</b>	+1	Leather and Metal	18 lbs.	Light (I)	125 gp
<b>Ring Mail</b>	+1	Hard Metal -3	20 lbs.	Minor (II)	150 gp
<b>Scale</b>	+2	Hard Metal -2	25 lbs.	Minor (II)	175 gp
<b>Chain</b>	+3	Hard Metal -1	35 lbs.	Impeding (III)	250 gp
<b>Splint</b>	+3	Hard Metal	40 lbs.	Impeding (III)	325 gp
<b>Banded</b>	+3	Hard Metal +1	45 lbs.	Impeding (III)	400 gp
<b>Plate Mail</b>	+4	Hard Metal +2	50 lbs.	Burdensome (IV)	500 gp
<b>Plate Armor</b>	+5	Hard Metal +2	60 lbs.	Burdensome (IV)	1,000 gp
<b>Articulated Plate</b>	+5	Hard Metal +2	50 lbs.	Burdensome (IV)	2,000 gp
<b>Elfin Chain***</b>	+4	Hard Metal +1	16 lbs.	Light (I)	3,000 gp

\* The material type mostly comes into play when a saving throw for the barding is required due to major damage inflicted. This is normally not a factor, and the frugal buyer might note that leather barding is cheaper than ring mail, and also lighter. However this technicality might become a bit more important when a fireball is cast, or a dragon is breathing fire upon mount and rider!

\*\* The burden level indicates how much the mount is impeded by the barding, as shown on the table below. Note that horses – especially considering their bulk, momentum, and lack of free will in a battle or charge – are much more impacted by burden than humans are when they are attempting to move and high speeds while carrying armor on a rider.

\*\*\* Elfin chain barding is not available for sale, and would only be given as a gift to a hero of great renown who has fulfilled a great quest (or rescue) for one of the elven kingdoms.







TABLE 18:

### Barding Effects on Maximum Horse Movement Rates

Horse Classification	Unhindered Movement Rate	Maximum Movement Rate, Burden Level I	Maximum Movement Rate, Burden Level II	Maximum Movement Rate, Burden Level III	Maximum Movement Rate, Burden Level IV
Riding Horse	240'	210' (-30')	150' (-90')	90' (-150')*	Cannot move with rider
Light Warhorse	240'	210' (-30')	150' (-90')	90' (-150')*	Cannot move with rider
Mountain Horse	210'	190' (-20')	150' (-60')	120' (-90')	90' (-120')*
Medium Warhorse	180'	170' (-10')	150' (-30')	120' (-60')	110' (-70')*
Heavy Warhorse	150'	150' (full)	140' (-10')	130' (-20')	120' (-30')
Great Destrier	150'	150' (full)	150' (full)	140' (-10')	130' (-20')
Royal Destrier	150'	150' (full)	150' (full)	150' (full)	140' (-10')

\* Note that such a heavily burdened mount can still move, but *cannot charge*. Array in light mounts in heavy barded is a tactic that cavaliers will rarely resort to in battle, as maneuverability is key to survival. But the tactic can be effective for preparatory defensive mounting (for example, when guarding a merchant caravan moving through a narrow pass that is known to be frequented by brigands).

### Special Barding Considerations

**Compounded Barding and Mount Encumbrance:** Maximum movement rates are in addition to mount carrying capacity thresholds. If a mount is already reduced to half speed, the parenthetical penalties given above will further decrease the mount's possible movement rate (until movement becomes impossible). Encumbered, already slowed, and barded mounts *cannot charge*, regardless of just how badly the rider wants to use that double-damage lance.

**Classification of Non-Horse Mounts:** Similar tables can be worked out for non-horse mounts if necessary, based upon the relative strength of the animal measured in hit dice. For example, a great riding lizard has HD 4+4, which is equivalent to a great destrier. However, such a creature could probably not climb walls if arrayed in anything heavier than scale barding. Movement rate reductions can be calculated by comparing the unhindered movement rates above to the various burden levels, as sub-noted by mount size. The GM will need to adjudicate such instances as they occur, given the equine-focused information provided above. Always remember to factor in the weight of the rider, as well as the rider's armor, treasure, and equipment!

**Limitation on Barding for Flying Mounts:** Flying mounts – if the rider wishes to be carried, and for the creature to also still be able to fly – can only be arrayed in padded, leather, studded leather, ring mail, or elfin chain mail barding.











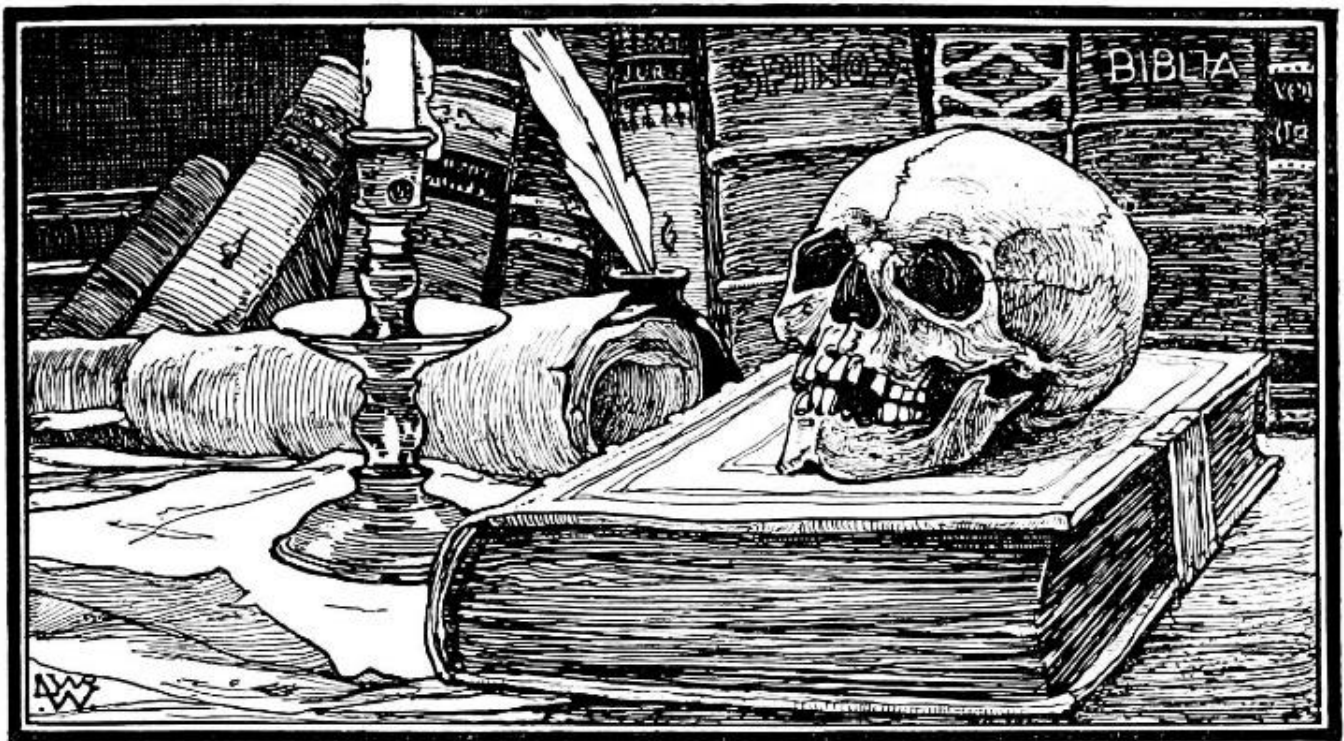
## Chapter V:

# The Chaos Knight Sub-Class

### A Word of Warning

Chaos Knights – more infamously known to game veterans as *anti-paladins* – frequently make very poor Player Characters, unless the *entire* play group (including the Game Master) wishes to run an “all evil” campaign that is filled with antiheroes, protagonist villains, and nefarious deeds.

The reason why they are featured here is because they also make absolutely perfect long-term villains, particularly as nemeses to PC paladins, Templars, and cavaliers. A significant amount of lore is provided for this class with the understanding that most of this information is for the GM’s benefit, not the players’. Despite the presence of Chaos Knights throughout the lore of the World of Oldskull, players *cannot* play this class unless the GM specifically allows such in his or her own campaign.<sup>21</sup>



<sup>21</sup> The Chaos Knight here is basically a second edition refinement of the class which first premiered in the *Oldskull Anti-Paladins* supplement. The class has been partly reconfigured to fit into the author’s much broader vision for the all-encompassing Mythic World of Oldskull series.

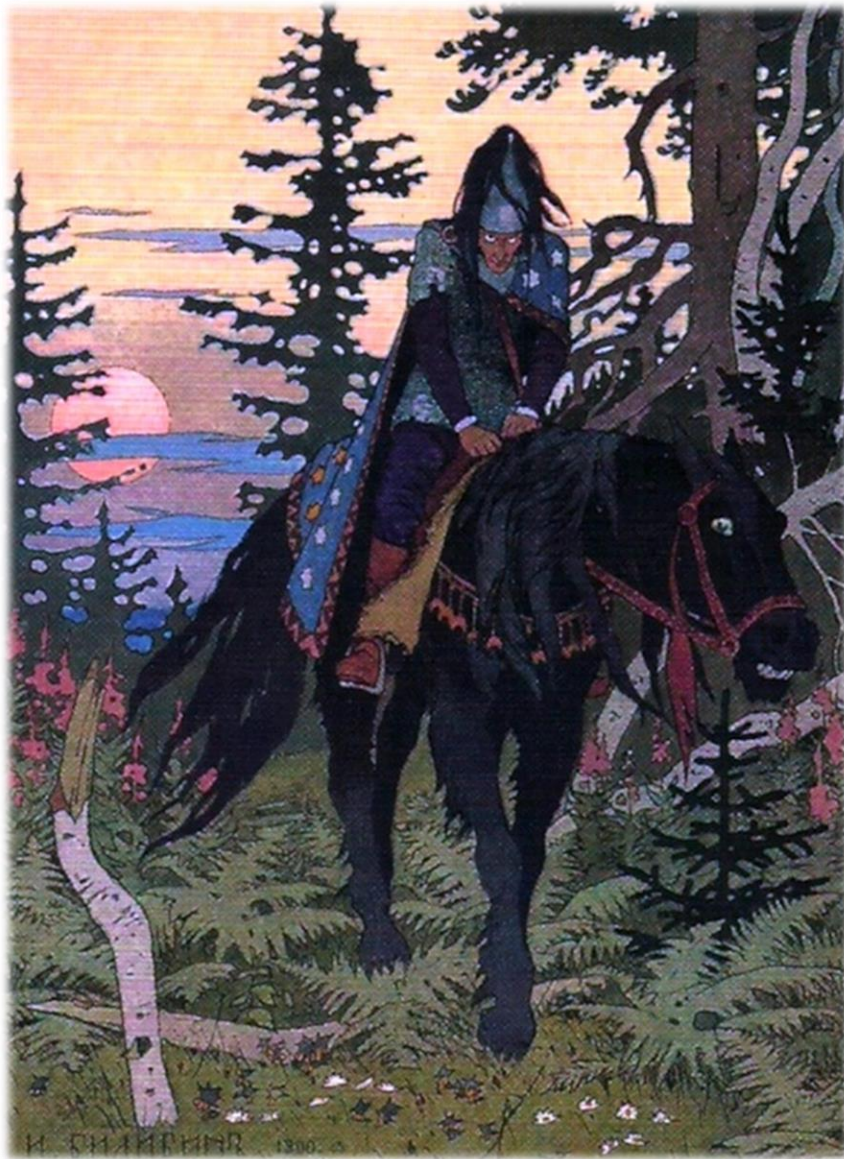






## **Arguments for and Against the Concept of the Anti-Paladin**

As grandiose and evil knights resplendent in their not-quite-shining armor, anti-paladins have a long and somewhat notorious history in Fantasy Role-Playing Games. The idea premiered all the way back in 1980 as an anti-heroic inversion of the favored — and some would say overpowered — paladin-fighter sub-class. When E. Gary Gygax read over the first published NPC anti-paladin archetype in a certain Draconic magazine, he declared the idea “as useful as a third leg.” But this was a bit disingenuous, considering that in 1978 he wrote up descriptions of the dark elf homeland, complete with chaotic evil noble fighters wielding “death lances” and riding about on nightmare steeds. And by 1983, he had introduced his own knightly cavalier class which specifically embraced the tenets of evil alignment alongside the more staid options of chivalric good, law, and measured neutrality.







So from the early years on, the idea of the evil knight was resisted and stigmatized, yet obliquely offered. Very interesting, to say the least! The tensions of resistance seemed to arise not from the class concept directly, but rather from the idea of allowing such an evildoer to potentially take center stage at the forefront of the campaign. But in the end, why should a black knight seem to be more unnerving than a demon lord, an arch-devil, a Great Old One, or any of the other terrible evils featured in the game? Perhaps it is the anti-paladin's *mortality* which makes people nervous, calling into question whether any human being could ever make a conscious *choice* to become a soulless monster. That question tends to unnerve people.

But the resistance to anti-paladins does not stop there. Even outside of the highly confused early precedents, some Game Masters might say that they don't want anti-paladins to be a valid character option, because the associated behaviors (cruelty, torture, treachery, etc.) are disturbing qualities which should not be represented in a game of heroic imagination. But that stance is abjectly incorrect, because those behaviors are already enfranchised in the game, under the moniker "Chaotic Evil." And evil Player Characters have been specifically written into the game since at least 1976 (with Elric being celebrated in 1971, and FRPG play examples in Gary's campaign dating back to 1972).

Anti-paladins are embodiments of both intelligent chaos and evil incarnate. As such they share that foundational villainous distinction with Great Cthulhu, demons, demon lords and queens, the drow, and even red dragons, which are arguably the most iconic villains in the game. Anti-paladins — being mortal and beginning their adventures at experience level 1 — are certainly no more evil than these already-established creatures of greater power are. If chaotic evil clerics, fighters, and magic-users are all allowed in play, why not an unholy amalgamation of the three? The FRPG is already built to support the existence evil characters, and logically a viable anti-paladin can simply be constructed to be "no more evil" than any of the other options already provided by the game.

Other Game Masters and designers have argued at length that anti-paladins shouldn't exist because there's no historical or mythic precedent for their existence. However, there actually is. The prototypical noble evil villain is the fallen angel Lucifer, especially as represented in John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. While honoring his personal code of behavior Lucifer fights in armor against good, conquering the weak and eventually establishing the infernal stronghold of Pandaemonium ("Kingdom of All Demons"). Of course it can be argued that Lucifer is an immortal example, yes, and perhaps as a devil therefore too far afield; but there are mortal examples of the noble villain-knight as well.

In mythic folklore, the prime example of the archetype is found in Mordred, slayer of King Arthur. The 1980 book of gods and demigods — as scribed by the esteemed messengers Ward and Kuntz — lists a baker's dozen of evil knights (Mordred foremost among them) in the Arthurian Heroes section. And of course there is more, because the idea of the evil supernatural knight has been played with for many years. Further iconic examples celebrated in modern literature and cinema include Dracula, Elric (he is a noble sword-wielder, after all), Randall Flagg (who stands diametrically opposed against a gunslinging paladin), and even Darth Vader ... from a certain point of view.

The historical trend of the evil knight becomes more interesting when we consider that each of these characters is instilled with *supernatural* villainry: Lucifer is an angel who becomes a devil, wielding black magic; the rebellious Lord Mordred is frequently associated with the dark faerie Morgan le Fay; Dracula (Vlad Tepes) was declared "noble" and a student of the unholy Scholomance, making him both a vampire and a devil-magic wielder; Elric is possessed by a demonic sword-spirit; Randall Flagg is a lesser demon lord incarnated as a man; and Vader is corrupted by the spirits of the Sith. We can see that anti-paladinhood doesn't just embody the idea of the martial, sword-bearing black knight; it





also incorporates the concept of *unholy power acting through an armored mortal vessel* — *whether it be willing or unwilling.*







And that concept, I think, is unique and distinctive enough to be fairly regarded as the creative basis for a specialized FRPG character class.

So, the beleaguering question as to whether or not anti-paladins *should* exist is in essence a deeply misguided one, because the legendary archetype is already well-established. You need to overlook *a lot* of existing material, going back to Sir Thomas Mallory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* (1485), if you want to argue against that evident reality.

The more pertinent question however remains as to whether those fabled evil qualities should be role-played by the players, which is an entirely separate issue of genuine importance. That is a decision that should be left exclusively to the GM for his or her own campaign. I can only say that if you already allow your players to play the roles of evil PCs, there's no reason why "anti-paladin" could not be added to the class roster alongside Gygaxian Evil High Priests and Priestesses (EHPs) and Arnesonian assassins. Conversely however if you have any doubts whatsoever, there's no reason to start allowing evil PCs in your game now. Take a measured approach to the matter. Talk to your players, come to a consensus about the themes, styles, and motivations that you all want to play with.

No matter how you prefer to play your game, I can whole-heartedly recommend the anti-paladin as an iconic NPC villainous presence. The class has a great deal to offer and will be certain to become an exemplar of foul and wondrous demonic glories that your players will love to hate.

## Overview of the Chaos Knight Class

**Description:** In the World of Oldskull campaign, "anti-paladin" is a pejorative term which mocks the importance of a considerable brand of devout and forbidden evil. The more correct in-game term for such a character would be *Chaos Knight*. That is what they call themselves, and that is the true encapsulation of their mission: to sow grief and murderous discord in a contemptuous, yet charismatic (and almost noble) fashion. They share less philosophical flair with a random serial killer, and rather more with Saruman or Professor Moriarty. But when stylistic flourishes all come to an end and it's time for senseless butchery, they will sardonically resort to whatever final means are truly necessary. The end, to an anti-paladin, truly justifies the means.

The word "paladin" by the way comes from the Latin *palatinus*, which in the late Roman and Byzantine Empires meant "an officer of the palace." The word implies eloquent speech and courtly graces to an extent, but it has nothing much to do with good deeds and chivalry until we get to the Age of Charlemagne (c. 800 AD).

In game terms a Chaos Knight is a mortal champion who devoutly serves an immortal extra-planar power of chaotic evil alignment. That power might be a demon lord, demon prince, demon queen, god, goddess, immortal monster (such as the Egyptian Apep / Apophis), or a Great Old One. For an NPC Chaos Knight, the immortal power should be chosen by the Game Master as appropriate to campaign circumstance; for a PC paladin, the choice is given to the player.

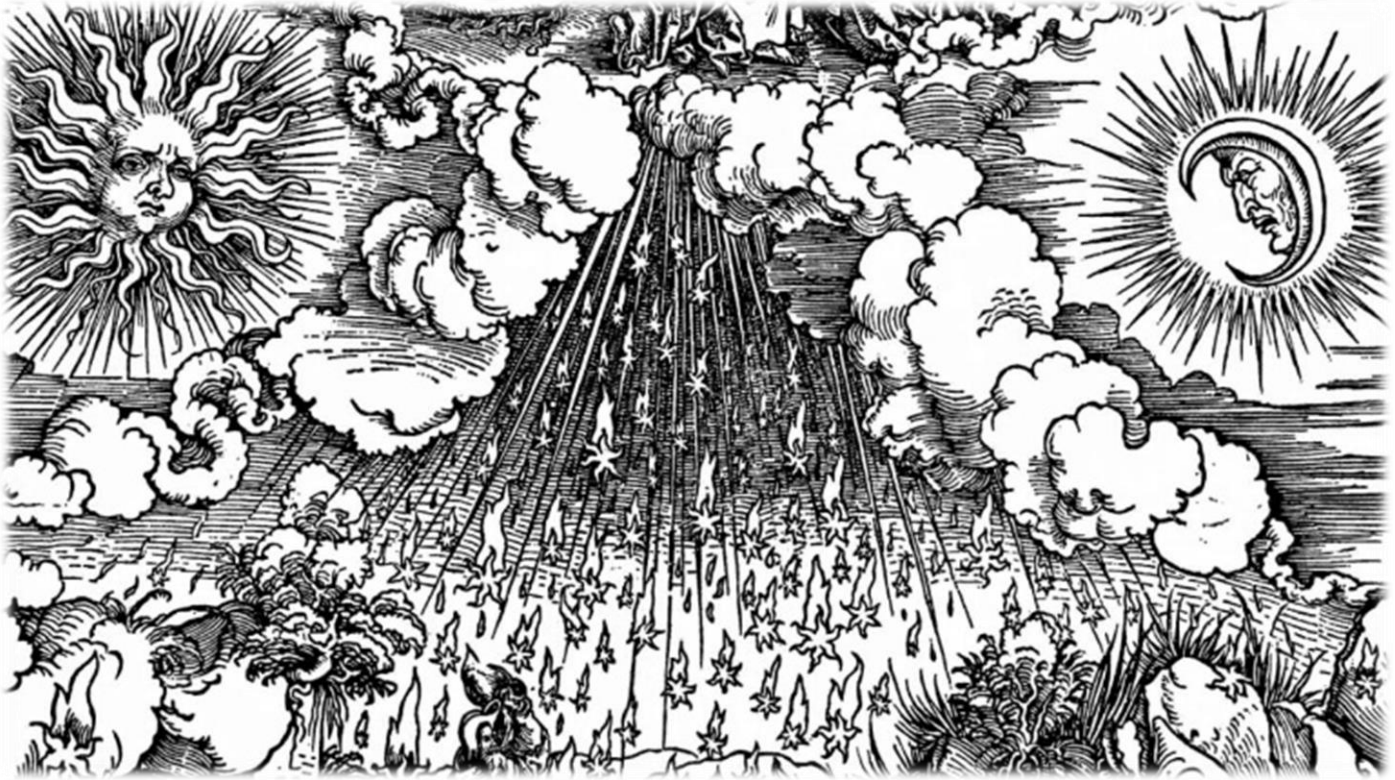
Although the Chaos Knight is technically a sub-class of the cavalier, it has very little to do with middling notions of horsemanship or chivalry. Many of the powers and advantages that apply to cavaliers are not considered for this infernally-focused class.

**Chaos Knights of Renown:** Infamous Chaos Knights known to the history and present of the World of Oldskull include the Mordred and his cabal, as well as the resurrected Romulus (the founder of





Magna Roma, now for centuries a revenant servitor to the Lich Queen). Refer to the Stricken Names section for more lore concerning the Knights Perilous of Mordred.



**Immortal Chaos Knights:** Besides the undead Knights of Saigoth (none of whom are truly immortal), there are no known deities who could be regarded as Chaos Knights. This is not surprising, considering that the Chaos Knights are in many ways the antithesis of the very idea of Deity.

The exact immortals who empower Chaos Knights are really up to the decisions of the Game Master. I can provide extensive helpful guidelines, however. In general every chaotic evil immortal (godly or demonic) should be considered by the GM. In the World of Oldskull campaign the real-world mythologies are in full force throughout the appropriate realms and homelands. As such, I can offer a very partial list of those dread and immortal chaotic evil powers that are served by Chaos Knights:

- **Babylonian Deities:** Anshar and Dahak
- **Chinese (Serean) Deities:** Lu Yueh, Ma Yuan, and Tou Mu
- **Deities of the Pegana Mythos:** Trogool the Un-God
- **Demon Lords:** Azazel, Baphomet, Belphegor, Hyaenoghul, Koschei the Deathless, and Shoggothlex, likely among others
- **Demon Princes:** Orcus, Pazuzu, and the Ulthrogorgon
- **Demon Queens:** Empusa, Ereshkigal, Lilith, Mormo, and Zagemotha







- **Egyptian (Khomite) Deities:** Apep
- **Finnish (Finnian) Deities:** Hiisi, Kiputytto, and Tuonetar
- **Great Old Ones:** Cthugha, Cthulhu, Dagon, Hastur, Nyarlathotep, Shub-Niggurath, Yog-Sothoth (among others)
- **Greek (Achaean) Deities:** Ares and Eris
- **Indian Deities:** Kali
- **Mesoamerican (Terra Novan) Deities:** Camazotz, Huehuateotl, Tezcatlipoca, and Tlazolteotl
- **Native American (Terra Novan) Deities:** Shakak
- **Roman (Tyrrhenian) Deities:** Alernus and Discordia



## **Becoming a Chaos Knight**

**Alignment:** Just as paladins are instilled with divine and holy powers derived from the great and sacred immortals, Chaos Knights are infused with demonic and unholy majesty by dread nemeses who lair in the lower planes. As such, they must always be Chaotic Evil.

Some GMs might allow Lawful Evil or Neutral Evil Chaos Knights on a case-by-case basis, but such exceptions should be rare. Despite the primordial example of Lucifer, a Chaos Knight exemplifies everything that a paladin is *not*; meaning specifically that they embrace the opposite of good (evil) as well as the opposite of law (chaos). The entire theme of the Oldskull class is dependent upon this rather exacting interpretation of the planar and cosmic order.

**Ancestral Limitations:** Chaos Knights must be human, elven (drow only), or half-elven (half-drow changeling only). Half-drow Chaos Knights, in particular, are Unseelie Court creatures who are raised by evil human nobles and demon worshippers as the “champions of two worlds.”

**Minimum Ability Scores:** a Chaos Knight character must have the following minimum ability scores to qualify for the class: STR 12+, DEX 9+, CON 12+, INT 9+, WIS 13+, CHA 17+. As a reminder, do consider that Charisma does not necessarily represent handsomeness or beauty, or one’s charming ideals; it represents an aura of command, the beckoning and “strange compulsion” arising in others, and the power of personal magnetism. To echo one of Gygax’s 1979 examples, Adolf Hitler could certainly be regarded as possessing an 18 Charisma.

Under the Advanced rules, note that Chaos Knights do not roll for exceptional strength; their maximum rolled STR is 18 (with no percentile sub-rating) at level 1. However, the Self-Mastery ability (described later) could potentially give a Chaos Knight exceptional strength gradually over time.





**Social Standing:** Unlike paladins and cavaliers, Chaos Knights have very poor social standing in any predominantly good or neutral cities. There, they will always be considered Lower Class, Tier 1 at low and mid-levels (1-8), just as assassins are; and even at high levels (9+) will be feared and Middle Lower Class (MLC-2).

But in predominantly evil cities, they are considered to be Lower Upper Class, Tier 7 at low and mid-levels, and Middle Upper Class, Tier 8 at high levels.<sup>22</sup>

Chaos Knights typically find shelter within non-evil cities in the underworld, either figuratively (criminal areas) or literally (in subterranean hideouts beneath the city). Those who live openly in good-aligned cities, without insinuating themselves into some deceitful household, will not survive for very long.

**Important Note and Clarification:** Even if Player Character cavaliers fall to evil, they do not become Chaos Knights. They simply become evil cavaliers. Normally, only NPC cavaliers who fall to evil have any chance of becoming Chaos Knights of an equivalent level. This is not the most common pathway into the dark powers, however; the vast majority of Chaos Knights adopt the mantle at the beginning of play (experience level 1). Even if the GM allows PC Chaos Knights to exist in the campaign, beginning as one is the only way for a Player Character to become a Chaos Knight.

## Archetypal Considerations for the Chaos Knight

**Combat Prowess:** In combat, Chaos Knights fight with the same level of prowess that cavaliers and paladins do. They cannot be weapon specialists, however.

**Hit Dice:** The Chaos Knight has ten-sided dice (D10) per experience level for hit point determination. They gain full hit dice for experience levels 2 through 9. At levels 10 and higher, they gain +3 additional hit points per level thereafter.

At experience level 1, due to demonic influence a Chaos Knight begins play with the maximum potential number of hit points (10 points + any constitution bonus). Additional earned hit points are determined normally by D10 die roll thereafter.

In the Advanced game, Chaos Knights have the same hit point bonuses that fighters and paladins do (+1 per hit die for CON 15, +2 for CON 16, +3 for CON 17, +4 for CON 18).

Assuming a constitution score of 16 as a baseline example, most NPC Chaos Knights will have approximate hit point totals as follows: experience level 1, 12 hit points; level 2, 19 hp; level 3, 27 hp; level 4, 34 hp; level 5, 42 hp; level 6, 49 hp; level 7, 57 hp; level 8, 64 hp; level 9, 72 hp; level 10, 75 hp; level 11, 78 hp; level 12, 81 hp; and level 13, 84 hp. This is a GM's guideline only; more powerful villains will certainly possess higher hit point totals.

**Iconic Armor:** Chaos Knights can use any type of armor. NPCs will favor plate mail or plate armor whenever possible. Further, NPCs will not wear padded or leather armor if something finer can be had, because such materials are beneath their station. Chaos Knights can also use any kind of shield, from bucklers to pavises. Spiked bucklers are a favorite when a magical shield cannot be had.

<sup>22</sup> Readers might wish to refer to Castle Oldskull supplement GWG1-D (*The Game World Generator, Deluxe Edition*) for individual social status levels, as personal status can change as a result of character actions, rumors, crimes, and reputation.







Non-Player Character Chaos Knights will typically favor two-handed weapons if they have never directly faced the risk of death. Any NPC Chaos Knight who has suffered a near-death experience, however, will carry a shield while wielding a one-handed weapon.

**Iconic Arms:** Chaos Knights can use any weapons. They prefer ghastly melee weapons which have barbs, spikes, or vicious cutting surfaces. Favored weapon types include harpoons, two-handed flamberge swords, morning stars, and heavy war flails. They can also use missile weapons of any kind, and due to their innate cowardice many of them do so.

**Prime Requisites:** The prime requisite abilities for the Chaos Knight are Strength and Wisdom (typically in the forms of wile, cunning, and self-preserving intuition). If either Strength or Wisdom is greater than 14, the Chaos Knight character adds +5% to all Experience Point Marks (XPM) awarded by the Game Master. If both Strength and Wisdom are greater than 14, the bonus is +10% instead of +5%. Chaos Knights of lower aptitude (STR<15, WIS<15) gain no such bonuses.

**Saving Throws:** Chaos Knights have the same base saving throws as paladins (using fighter saving throw numbers, with a permanent +2 bonus applied due to protective aura). They are not resistant to fear, mind attacks, or illusions however; those abilities are instead the domain of the good-aligned paladin and cavalier.

## Chaos Knight Progression

**Class Level Limit:** Due in part to their mortality, their demonic empowerment, and their relative difficulty of progression, Chaos Knights have no theoretical level limit, regardless of ancestry. However Chaos Knights can never be multi-classed, or characters with two classes.

As a very general rule of thumb for Non-Player Character populations and knightly orders, the Game Master should assume a 30% lethal attrition rate for Chaos Knights between experience levels. In other words, if you decide that your campaign's perilous homeland features 100 NPC Chaos Knights, then only 70 of those would reach level 2, only 49 would reach level 3, 34 would reach level 4, 24 would reach level 5, 17 would reach level 6, 12 would reach level 7, and so forth. Of course singular and favored arch-villains — those who you only want to leave the game when they are slain by the Player Characters — would never arbitrarily die behind the scenes in such an arbitrary manner.

**Pace of Progression:** Chaos Knights, despite some very dangerous disadvantages, are powerful. Their many abilities are partially balanced by their inherent weaknesses, particularly the threat of death in good-aligned civilizations and the mortal threat to their souls which prevents resurrection. However, these weaknesses are not quite enough to balance them properly, due to the terrible capacity of the class for power and great evil in mid- to high experience levels. Therefore to maintain campaign balance Chaos Knights are somewhat slowed in their experience level progression.

The Templar class has a fairly slowed pace of progression in relation to other classes. Templars who attain 25 XPM are level 3, and those with 50 XPM are level 4. Those with 100 XPM are level 5, those with 250 XPM are level 6, and those with 500 XPM are level 7. In consideration of higher experience levels, those with XPM 1,000 are level 8, those with XPM 2,500 are level 9, those with XPM 5,000 are level 11, and those with XPM 10,000 are level 15.











TABLE 19:

### Experience Progression for the Chaos Knight Class

Experience Point Marks	Experience Level	Earned HD / hp	Cumulative HD / hp	Exemplary Title
0 to 10.99	1	1D10 hp	1D10 hp	Caitiff
11 to 23.99	2	+1D10 hp	2D10 hp	Betrayer
24 to 47.99	3	+1D10 hp	3D10 hp	Malefactor
48 to 95.99	4	+1D10 hp	4D10 hp	Chaos Reaper
96 to 179.99	5	+1D10 hp	5D10 hp	Blackguard
180 to 359.99	6	+1D10 hp	6D10 hp	Paladin Slayer
360 to 699.99	7	+1D10 hp	7D10 hp	Black Knight
700 to 1,399.99	8	+1D10 hp	8D10 hp	Champion of Chaos
1,400 to 2,799.99	9	+1D10 hp	9D10 hp	Chaos Lord / Lady of Chaos
2,800 to 4,199.99	10	+3 hp	9D10+3 hp	Lord / Lady of Ruin
4,200 to 5,599.99	11	+3 hp	9D10+6 hp	Warlord of Ruin
5,600 to 6,999.99	12	+3 hp	9D10+9 hp	Overlord / Dame Overlord of Ruin
7,000 to 8,399.99	13	+3 hp	9D10+12 hp	Nemesis
8,400 to 9,799.99	14	+3 hp	9D10+15 hp	Vile Nemesis
9,800 to 11,199.99	15	+3 hp	9D10+18 hp	Arch-Nemesis
11,200 to 12,599.99	16	+3 hp	9D10+21 hp	(Unknown)
12,600 to 13,999.99	17	+3 hp	9D10+24 hp	(Unknown)
14,000 to 15,399.99	18	+3 hp	9D10+27 hp	(Unknown)
15,400 to 16,799.99	19	+3 hp	9D10+30 hp	(Unknown)
16,800 to 18,199.99	20	+3 hp	9D10+33 hp	(Unknown)
18,200 to 19,599.99	21	+3 hp	9D10+36 hp	(Unknown)
19,600 to 20,999.99	22	+3 hp	9D10+39 hp	(Unknown)
21,000 to 22,399.99	23	+3 hp	9D10+42 hp	(Unknown)
22,400 to 23,799.99	24	+3 hp	9D10+45 hp	(Unknown)
23,800 to 25,199.99	25	+3 hp	9D10+48 hp	(Unknown)
(+1,400)	(+1)	+3 hp	(+3 hp)	(Unique)

Chaos Knights gain level titles in accordance with the vileness of their past misdeeds. Here are 55 examples of appropriate level titles, which will give you potential ideas for NPC backgrounds (or possibly even some thematic ideas for developing Player Characters).

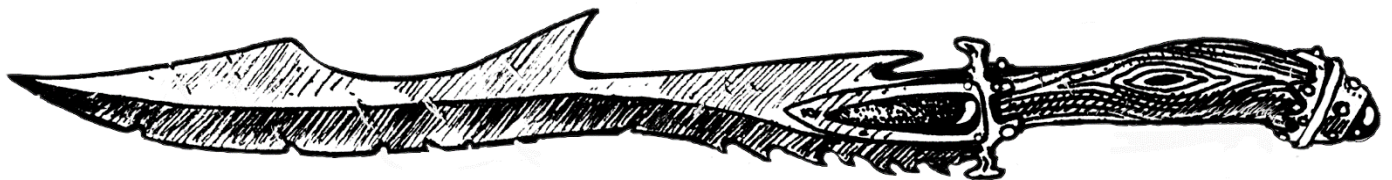




TABLE 20:

### **Suggested Level Titles for Chaos Knights**

<b>Chaos Knight's Experience Level</b>	<b>Recommended Level Titles</b>
<b>1</b>	Caitiff, Chaos Minion, Evildoer, Poltroon, Traitor
<b>2</b>	Betrayer, Chaos Bringer, Miscreant, Ruiner, Varlet
<b>3</b>	Chaos Warrior, Demon Worshipper, Grief Bringer, Hellion, Malefactor
<b>4</b>	Anti-Hero / Anti-Heroine, Chaos Reaver, Dire Malefactor, Hag Hunter, Hate Bringer
<b>5</b>	Black Malefactor, Blackguard, Knight Perilous, Nightmare Rider, Unforgiven One
<b>6</b>	Foul Blackguard, Paladin Slayer, Scoundrel, Shadow Knight
<b>7</b>	Black Knight, Dastard, Demon Singer / Demon Songstress, Hero Slayer
<b>8</b>	Anti-Superhero / Anti-Superheroine, Champion of Chaos, Demon Bringer, Villain
<b>9</b>	Arch-Villain, Bringer of Treachery, Chaos Lord / Lady of Chaos, Knight of Ruin
<b>10</b>	Blood Fiend, Demon Incarnate / Demoness Incarnate, Lord of Ruin / Lady of Ruin
<b>11</b>	Chaos Knight, Warlord of Ruin
<b>12</b>	Chaos Knight Lord / Chaos Knight Lady, Overlord of Ruin / Dame Overlord of Ruin
<b>13</b>	Hatred Incarnate, Nemesis
<b>14</b>	Chaos Incarnate, Vile Nemesis
<b>15</b>	Arch-Nemesis, Evil Incarnate

### **Powers and Advantages of the Chaos Knight Class**

Due to their unholy pact with a foul immortal power, Chaos Knights receive several unique special abilities above and beyond their potential for spell casting.

Chaos Knights are distinct from cavaliers and paladins, and the Game Master should not make the mistake of assuming that any listed advantages (or disadvantages) for those classes are conferred upon the entirely separate class of Chaos Knight.







### **Aura of Unholy Protection**

This powerful “always on” ability is gained at experience level 1.

The Chaos Knight is surrounded by a 10’-radius Protection from Good aura, per the spell, with a permanent duration. Keep in mind that this effect prevents enchanted or extra-planar (demon, deva, djinn, elemental, etc.), conjured, and summoned monsters from touching or attacking the Chaos Knight in melee. But once the Chaos Knight attacks such a creature, all bets are off and the protection aura is nullified (attacked creatures can defend themselves). Carefully read the spell description and note that this effect prevents bodily contact; however such a creature could still cast spells at the Chaos Knight, petrify him with a gaze, affect him with telekinesis, and so forth.

In addition to this effect, all good creatures and characters (CG, LG, or NG) within the radius suffer a -2 on all to hit rolls (melee and/or ranged) when attacking the Chaos Knight. Further, all good creatures and characters who attack the Chaos Knight with special attacks that cause a saving throw are disadvantaged. The Chaos Knight gains an additional +2 bonus to all saving throws vs. effects from such creatures.

**Battle Mastery:** Mid- and high-level Chaos Knights gain additional melee (but not missile or thrown) attacks<sup>23</sup> per round as summarized below. These attack rates apply against all foes of hit dice (HD) 1 or experience level 1, or higher. Compare with Merciless Onslaught (below).

<sup>23</sup> Refer to the September 1982 newszine.





TABLE 21:

**Melee Attack Rates for Chaos Knights (without Weapon Specialization)**

Chaos Knight's Experience Level	Melee Attack Rate	Notes
<b>1 to 6</b>	1/1 (1 melee attack per round)	Normal attacking ability (akin to the prowess possessed by non-Chaos Knight characters).
<b>7 to 12</b>	3/2 (3 attacks every 2 rounds)	The Chaos Knight attacks once in the first round that he or she engages in combat. Then, on even-numbered engagement rounds (2, 4, 6, etc.) he or she attacks twice in the same round.
<b>13 or higher</b>	2/1 (2 melee attacks per round)	The Chaos Knight can attack twice every melee round.

### Demonic Vigil

This powerful ability is gained at experience level 14.

Upon reaching level 14, a Chaos Knight has exceeded the highest level attained by an historical Chaos Knight (namely, Lord Mordred). As a result, the character – regarded as a false prophet and instigator of Chaos to herald the coming End of Days – will be protected and watched over by a physically present summoned demon while meditating for spells, but not while sleeping. The demon is always sent by the Chaos Knight's immortal protector.

The type of demon guardian sent is dependent upon the Chaos Knight's current experience level, as follows:

- **Experience Level 14:** Vulture Demon (70%) or Fly Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 15:** Leaping Demon (50%) or Fly Demon (50%).
- **Experience Level 16:** Toad Demon (70%) or Ebony Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 17:** Hound Demon (70%) or Toad Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 18:** Boar Demon (70%) or Hound Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 19:** Serpentine Demoness (70%) or Boar Demon (30%).
- **Experience Level 20+:** The player (for a PC) or GM (for an NPC) can choose 1 demon from the following options: Vulture Demon, Toad Demon, Hound Demon, Boar Demon, or Serpentine Demoness. The huge demon will have maximum hit points, as well as +1 bonus to hit and +2 to damage.







The demon will appear when the Chaos Knight begins meditating for spell recovery, and will end when the meditation ends. A demonic vigil will only be performed for a Chaos Knight once every 24 hours, at most.

The summoned demon will not take orders from anyone, and will not leave the Chaos Knight's side. It will attack and fight to the death if either it, or the Chaos Knight, is attacked; but it will not defend the Chaos Knight's allies.

When meditation peacefully ends, the demon will be unsummoned. If meditation ends violently, the demon will fight alongside the Chaos Knight as an ally. If meditation ends for a non-peaceful but non-violent circumstance (e.g., the sound of boulders falling in the distance startles the Chaos Knight out of his trance), the demon will remain for 1D6 rounds — to make certain that there is no threat of harm to the Chaos Knight — and will then vanish.

### **Detection of Good Auras and Entities**

This power is gained at experience level 1.

By concentrating, the Chaos Knight can detect good, somewhat equivalent to casting the clerical spell. The Chaos Knight can walk and move normally, but cannot perform major actions while using this power; this means that he cannot attack or cast spells, and being attacked would negate the ability until he could refocus.

To avoid this power being “always on” (Player: “As soon as possible I always start concentrating again,” etc.) the detection can only be attempted 3 times per day, with a maximum duration of 6 turns per attempt. Range of detection is 60’.

Beginning at experience level 6, the Chaos Knight has a chance (equal to his current experience level x 5%) to determine the true nature of any detected good, as either Chaotic, Lawful, or Neutral Good.

### **Disease Mastery**

This dual-option ability is gained at experience level 1.

For NPC Chaos Knights, the Cause Disease ability is known 70% of the time, and the Disease Immunity ability is known 30% of the time. For PC Chaos Knights, the decision of which power to possess is up to the choice of the player.

If the Cause Disease ability is known, the Chaos Knight is capable (once every 24 hours) of causing a serious disease, by touch; a saving through vs. death magic will negate the effect. The disease will have no effect on the first day; on the second day, it will cause a -1 penalty to all ability scores (or hit points, to hit rolls, saving throws, and damage rolls for a monster); this will become a -2 penalty on day 3, -3 on day 4, and so forth. Death will result if any ability score reaches zero, or after 18 days of contagion. A Cure Disease spell will remove the effect.

The victim's saving throw is at +4 if the Chaos Knight is level 1 or 2; +3 if his level is 3 or 4; +2 if his level is 5 or 6; +1 if his level is 7 or 8; or made at no bonus if his level is 9 or higher. And of course various types of monsters (such as the undead, golems, elementals, etc.) are immune to diseases of any kind.





Killing a victim with a disease, even if the Chaos Knight is not present to witness the creature's later death, gives the Chaos Knight a full Experience Point Mark award for the creature slain.

If the Disease Immunity ability is known, the Chaos Knight is immune to all natural and mundane monstrous diseases, including the bites of giant rats, gas spore infestation, and the touch of violet fungus branches.

At experience level 8, the Disease Immunity will also extend to powerful magical diseases, such as lycanthropy, mummy rot, and vampirism (but not energy drain).

### **Merciless Onslaught**

When facing minor foes in melee, the fighter's superior mastery allows him or her to attack a number of times per round equal to experience level. In other words, a level 7 fighter would be able to attack 7 times per round, but only against minor foes. An attack against another type of foe would fall under the Battle Mastery advantage instead, as described above.

The onslaught fighting technique can only be used in melee, not with ranged attacks.

Minor creatures are level 0 characters such as normal men and men-at-arms, and also any monsters with fewer than 1 full hit die (1D8). Monsters with HD 1/8 (1 hp), 1/4 (1-2 hp), 1/2 (1-4 hp), 1/2+1 (2-5 hp), 1D6 (1-6 hp), or HD 1-1 (1-7 hp) are considered minor creatures. This classification includes bats, giant rats, goblins, kobolds, rats, and so forth.

### **Minions and Guardians of the Chaos Knights**

Considering the Chaos Knight's terror of death, it logically follows that they will seek to protect themselves with expendable minions whenever possible. Player Character Chaos Knights will need to employ hard-won evil henchmen, tamed mounts, subdued monsters, or (if they are lucky) perhaps a subdued evil dragon, or even a summoned demon, or maybe an ifrit brought forth from out of an Iron Flask. These allies will be won through the course of play; they will not ever be granted freely or arbitrarily by the Game Master.

Non-Player Character Chaos Knights, however, will almost always be surrounded by evil thralls and servitors. This is because a PC Chaos Knight has the other PCs, chaotic evil or not, to protect him to some extent. The NPC Chaos Knight however is going to be outnumbered by the lethal PCs unless he has some protectors. After all, a crafty and classic arch-villain always needs *lots* of nasty minions to avoid certain death at the hands of determined and angry heroes.

In other words: This section of the supplement *only applies to Non-Player Characters*. Sorry, PC Chaos Knights! When you want evil creatures to serve you, you will need to fend for yourselves and earn their loyalty through threat and fear.

Here is a quick summary of the types of creatures that will perhaps be found protecting a Chaos Knight NPC. The numbers of such creatures will be up to the Game Master's discretion, but they will not be found in enormous legions (because Chaos Knights actually make terrible leaders, and no one will ever trust them for very long).

- **Experience Level 1+:** Brigand (Thrall), Manes Demonling (Servitor), Pirate (Warrior Minion), Svart Goblin (Minion), Vulture Man (Scout)







- **Experience Level 2+:** Drow Minion (Advisor), Frogman (Warrior Minion), Ghoul (Minion), Gnoll (Warrior Minion), Troglodyte (Warrior)
- **Experience Level 3+:** Bugbear (Warrior), Drow Warrior (Advisor / Warrior), Harpy (Scout), Lesser Cyclops (Warrior), Ogre (Warrior), White Dvergr (Scout), Very Young Black Dragon (Protected)
- **Experience Level 4+:** Blur Pixie (Scout), Drow Swordsman (Advisor / Warrior), Gargoyle (Guardian), Ghast (Minion), Lesser Nightmare (Mount), Peryton (Scout), Shadow (Servitor), Very Young or Young Red Dragon (Protected), Werewolf (Guardian), Young or Sub-Adult Black Dragon (Protected)
- **Experience Level 5+:** Demon Dog (Guardian Beast), Drow Anti-Hero (Advisor / Guardian), Quasit (Familiar Liaison), Sub-Adult or Young Adult Red Dragon (Protected), Young Adult or Adult Black Dragon (Mount)
- **Experience Level 6+:** Adult Red Dragon (Mount), Drow Blade Master (Advisor / Guardian), Jackalwere (Guardian), Leucrocotta (Guardian Beast), Minotaur (Guardian), Old Black Dragon (Mount), Salamander (Guardian), Shadow Demon (Scout), Succubus / Incubus (Consort), Troll (Warrior), Various Minor Demons (Guardians)



- **Experience Level 7+:** Chimera (Guardian Beast), Draconian Basilisk (Mount), Dream Eater (Guardian), Drow Mage (Advisor / Guardian), Ettin (Guardian), Frost Giant (Guardian), Hieracosphinx (Mount), Hill Giant (Guardian), Hound Demon (Guardian), Lamia (Consort), Night Hag (Advisor), Old Red Dragon (Mount / Advisor), Roper (Guardian Beast), Spirit Naga





(Guardian), Toad Demon (Guardian), Very Old Black Dragon (Mount), Vulture Demon (Guardian)

- **Experience Level 8+:** Ancient Black Dragon (Mount), Boar Demon (Guardian), Elder Night Hag (Advisor), Gorgonian Chimera (Guardian Beast), Lamia Noble (Consort), Pyre Demon (Guardian), Serpentine Demoness (Guardian), Will-o'-Wisp (Guardian), Very Old Red Dragon (Mount / Advisor)
- **Experience Level 9+:** Greater Pyre Demon (Guardian), Knight of Saigoth (Advisor), Mated Pair of Black Dragons (Mounts / Protected)
- **Experience Level 10+:** Mated Pair of Red Dragons (Protected / Advisors), Vampire / Vampiress (Consort)
- **Experience Level 11+:** Vampire Lord / Lady Vampiress (Consort), Vampire Patriarch / Vampiress Matriarch (Consort)
- Other chaotic evil creatures can be added by the Game Master, as seems appropriate to the campaign.

### Nemeses of Paladins

This powerful yet situational ability is learned at experience level 4.

In the same way that evil clerics can turn paladins, Chaos Knights can turn paladins as well. Only one turning attempt per paladin can be made per day. An unholy symbol is required.

The Chaos Knight's turning ability is equivalent to that of a cleric of the same experience level, minus 2. This means that a level 3 Chaos Knight can turn a paladin using the same numbers as a level 1 cleric; a level 4 Chaos Knight can turn using the same numbers as a level 2 cleric; and so forth.

Since (per the Advanced rules) a level 1 paladin is turned at the same power level as mummies are, this means that a paladin cannot be turned until the Chaos Knight is at least level 4. And even then, a 20 on 1D20 must be rolled.

If the turning is effective, the paladin will uncontrollably flee for only 1D4 melee rounds. This is because despite the Chaos Knight's demonic power, paladins are protected from evil, and Chaos Knights are not as powerful as evil clerics are in this regard.

The paladin will not drop weapons, a shield, or other carried items while fleeing. If the paladin is attacked or afflicted by anyone, the turning effect is immediately dispelled.

The specific abilities are as follows:

- A level 4 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 or 2.
- A level 5 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 4.
- A level 6 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 6.
- A level 7 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 7.
- A level 8 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 8.
- This scale continues thereafter; a level 13 Chaos Knight can attempt to turn a paladin of experience level 1 to 13.







Note that the minimum D20 target roll is 4, regardless of the Chaos Knight's power. This means that there are no automatic "T" turn effects vs. paladins, and a D20 roll of 1, 2, or 3 will always fail.



### **The Nightmare Steed**

This epic signature ability is gained at experience level 4.

It is the inverse of the paladin's ability to call for a divinely-protected warhorse; the normal paladin warhorse rules and restrictions apply. The Chaos Knight can call for a minor nightmare steed (as





opposed to a paladin's divine warhorse), which despite being "minor" is nevertheless a very deadly creature. The nightmare will be sent from the lower planes by the Chaos Knight's immortal protector.

As per the paladin rules, the mount must be called for, quested for, and won. The quest will be designed by the Game Master. Allies can assist along the way, but the taming of the nightmare (taming, not combat) will be the sole responsibility of the Chaos Knight. Questing for a nightmare is called "Hag Hunting," and sages believe that nightmares are intelligent because they harbor the imprisoned spirits of night hags or evil witches. It is said that nightmares can speak the chaotic evil tongue when they choose to do so. The taming process might even involve (for example) a game of riddles between the nightmare and the Chaos Knight, or some strange kind of arcane challenge in which the Chaos Knight proves his or her skills and prowess — and, yes, willingness to do evil — to the hag-spirit.

Once won, the Chaos Knight's nightmare will bond for life. It will not allow anyone else to ride it. The nightmare will be immortal until slain; it can attain any age.

Fully mature nightmares are extremely powerful (refer to the 1977 bestiary), and the lethality of the Chaos Knight's steed will be limited for purposes of game balance. The steed will be a young mare if called at level 4, and will then gain additional hit points and powers each time the Chaos Knight attains a new experience level.

The nightmare's increasing powers will be as follows:

- **At Experience Level 4:** Hit Dice 3+3, minimum hit points 18. Armor Class 2, flying speed 150', attack damage 1D3 hoof / 1D3 hoof / 1D3 fangs. Cannot exhale smoking clouds. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 5:** Hit Dice 4+2, minimum hit points 22 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at level 4). Armor Class 1, flying speed 180', attack damage 1D4 hoof / 1D4 hoof / 1D4 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once per week. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 6:** Hit Dice 5+1, minimum hit points 26 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class 0, flying speed 210', attack damage 1D4+1 hoof / 1D4+1 hoof / 1D6 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every 24 hours. Cannot enter the Astral Plane or the Ethereal Plane.
- **At Experience Level 7:** Hit Dice 6, minimum hit points 30 (or +4 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -1, flying speed 240', attack damage 1D6+1 hoof / 1D6+1 hoof / 1D6+1 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every 8 hours. Can enter the Astral Plane once a month, for up to 1 hour. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a month, for up to 1 hour.
- **At Experience Level 8:** Hit Dice 6+3, minimum hit points 33 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -2, flying speed 270', attack damage 2D4+1 hoof / 2D4+1 hoof / 2D4 fangs. Can exhale a smoking cloud once every hour. Can enter the Astral Plane once a week, for up to 2 hours. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a week, for up to 6 hours.
- **At Experience Level 9:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 36 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -3, flying speed 300', attack damage 2D4+2 hoof / 2D4+2 hoof / 2D4 fangs (the maximum for a nightmare). Can exhale a smoking cloud three







times every hour. Can enter the Astral Plane once a day, for up to 12 hours. Can enter the Ethereal Plane once a day, for up to 12 hours.

- **At Experience Level 10:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 39 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). Armor Class -4 (the maximum for a nightmare), flying speed 330'. Can exhale a smoking cloud at will. Can enter the Astral Plane three times a day. Can enter the Ethereal Plane 3 times a day.
- **At Experience Level 11:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 42 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level). A normal nightmare in all respects.
- **At Experience Level 12:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 45 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level).
- **At Experience Level 13:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 48 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level).
- **At Experience Level 14:** Hit Dice 6+6, minimum hit points 51 (or +3 hit points if already summoned at a lower level).
- **At Experience Level 15+:** Hit Dice 6+6, hit points 54 (the maximum for a nightmare).

### Self-Mastery

This passive demonic ability is gained at experience level 2.

In a manner somewhat similar to a cavalier, a Chaos Knight can gradually improve one ability score over time through level progression. The one affected ability score must be either Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, or Charisma. An NPC will have a random ability chosen for self-mastery; a PC's affected ability score would be chosen by the player. The choice cannot be remade later, and the other abilities are then forever excluded. For example, choosing Strength would only affect STR, but never DEX, CON, or CHA.

At each gained experience level, beginning at level 2, 3D10 are rolled to determine the decimal points that the chosen ability score improves by. For example a Chaos Knight with STR chosen, and rolled STR 15, would roll 2D10 (let us say the rolls are a 5, a 7, and a 2) to improve his 15 STR to 15/14.

Decimal scores have no considerable game effect until they "roll over." If the above-mentioned cavalier gained enough decimal points in STR to gain STR 16, then he would gain the normal benefits of possessing 16 Strength. And the gain of decimal points would still continue thereafter.

The maximum decimal rating for any ability score improved in this way is 18/00.

### Self-Sufficiency

This passive ability is gained at experience level 2.

You may have noticed the prevailing opinion that as incarnations of chaotic evil the Chaos Knights don't necessarily like or trust one another, at least in the long term. This is because each adheres to the principles of complete self-sufficiency and a full belief in narcissistic supremacy. As a result alliances between NPC Chaos Knights tend to fall apart over a period of several months, at best.





A beneficial side effect of this situation, however, involves the Chaos Knight's training for new experience levels.

Chaos Knights do not need to train under a higher-level mentor to gain experience levels. As such, they do not need to pay for training either.

They still require *time* to self-train, however (typically 1 to 4 uninterrupted weeks of training in the Advanced game, and a minimum of 1 week's time regardless).







## Strongholds of Evil

Beginning at experience level 9, a Chaos Knight (a wealthy one, at least) will have the option of establishing an unholy stronghold. This is mostly a matter of self-protection, however, because the Chaos Knight's chaotic evil nature will be known far and wide by this time. Few if any will care to willingly join his murderous cause.

A Chaos Knight will not attract men-at-arms to his cause by establishing a stronghold. He will also not attract a population of normal men and women seeking protection, who could be tithed.

Nevertheless high-level NPC Chaos Knights will typically seek to establish a stronghold as soon as they can so that they can fill it with traps, protective minions, escape tunnels, dungeon cells for imprisonment, and so forth.





## Unholy Fortitude

This major passive ability is gained at experience level 1.

A Chaos Knight always has saving throw target numbers that are equivalent to a fighter of the same experience level.

However, a Chaos Knight always gains a +2 bonus to all saving throw rolls. For example a saving throw roll of 13 would be treated as a 15 before any other modifiers are applied.

## Unholy Spell Casting

Chaos Knights gain clerical spell powers of the same potencies as paladins do. More specifically, this means that they are purely martial and possess no spell casting powers from experience levels 1 through 8.

At experience level 9, “the whispers” begin and they can meditate and pray directly to their patron immortal power (demon lord, goddess, Great Old One, etc.) for spells. Because these spells are received through meditation, they are in general accordance with the spell casting rules described for clerics in the game.

Afflictive spells can be cast upon any target, for any reason. The chaotic evil immortal will actually be quite amused if an angered Chaos Knight casts a deadly spell upon an errant minion who has failed an important task!

Importantly however, Chaos Knights are inherently selfish and live only for self-preservation. This narcissistic nature is 100% tied up in the unholy pact they have made as a representative champion of their chosen immortal. As such they can never cast beneficial spells on anyone but themselves; even beneficial area of effect spells must include the Chaos Knight in their area. Otherwise, the beneficial spell will fail and be wasted in the casting.

As examples:

- **A Cure Light Wounds spell** cast by a Chaos Knight would need to be cast on the Chaos Knight himself, only. Even if he desperately wanted to save an ally with this spell, casting it upon someone else would result in failure.
- **A Cause Light Wounds spell**, however, could be cast upon any target with impunity.
- Although a **Resist Cold spell** has a range of “Touch” (implying it can be cast on an ally or the self), the spell would only work properly if the Chaos Knight cast it upon himself.
- **A Cure Blindness spell** would only work if cast upon the Chaos Knight, curing his own blindness.
- **A Cause Blindness spell** however could affect anyone.
- *(Etc.)*











The Game Master can decide upon odd situations which arise in play on a case-by-case basis. Focus not on punishing the player, but rather on being consistent with the spirit of these rulings.

There are no limits to which spells a Chaos Knight can pray for; if it's on the clerical spell list, a Chaos Knight can receive it. Reversed spells (Blight, Cause Wounds, Curse, etc.) tend to be favored by NPCs however because their casting is more reliable overall due to the above-mentioned restrictions.

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Specifically, Chaos Knights can cast the following numbers of spells:

**TABLE 22:**

**Evil Clerical Spell Casting Ability for Chaos Knights**

Chaos Knight's Experience Level	Equivalent Cleric Level	Number of Level 1 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 2 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 3 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 4 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day
<b>1 to 8</b>	N/A	(None)	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>9</b>	1	1	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>10</b>	2	2	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>11</b>	3	2	1	(None)	(None)
<b>12</b>	4	2	2	(None)	(None)
<b>13</b>	5	2	2	1	(None)
<b>14</b>	6	3	2	1	(None)
<b>15</b>	7	3	2	1	1
<b>16</b>	8	3	3	1	1
<b>17</b>	9	3	3	2	1
<b>18</b>	10	3	3	3	1
<b>19</b>	11	3	3	3	2
<b>20 or higher</b>	(+1)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)







Maximum theoretical spell casting power is attained at experience level 20, and no higher numbers of memorizable spells will ever occur.

Chaos Knights are not clerics, and they gain no bonus spells for high Wisdom. Chaos Knights never gain 5th-, 6th-, or 7th-level spells. For the purposes of range, duration, and other spell factors, a Chaos Knight's spell caster level is equal to his or her experience level minus 8. This means that a level 9 Chaos Knight casts as would a level 1 cleric, a level 10 Chaos Knight casts as would a level 2 cleric, and so forth.

### **Vampiric Healing**

This conditional ability is gained at experience level 1.

Vampiric healing is similar to a paladin's "lay on hands" ability, but it is weaker and more limited.

Like a paladin, a Chaos Knight can magically heal himself once a day. The maximum healing amount is 2 hit points of damage per experience level; therefore a level 8 Chaos Knight could heal up to 16 points of damage. However, the spell-like effect requires touching a helpless living creature. The creature might be a willing servitor, a shackled prisoner, a paralyzed enemy, an unconscious hero, etc.

The vampiric touch cannot occur during combat, and it cannot ever be induced against a resistant, conscious opponent. Non-living creatures, such as golems and the undead, cannot be the victims of this spell because they have no life force. Evil extra-planar creatures (demons, devils, etc.) cannot be drained, but good and neutral extra-planar creatures can be ... if one can make them helpless first, that is!

The helpless victim suffers damage, with no saving throw, equal to the amount that the Chaos Knight healed for. The Chaos Knight *can* draw more healing out of a victim than the victim's hit point total might indicate. For example, an ultra-powerful level 20 Chaos Knight could heal himself for 40 hit points while draining an imprisoned maiden. The maiden, a normal human with only 3 hit points, would be slain and reduced to ash as a result of the vampiric healing.

Vampiric healing cannot be bestowed on an ally, as that goes against the Chaos Knight's nature of selfish supremacy.

### **Weapons of Evil**

Chaos Knights use poisoned weapons, unholy water, and flaming oil whenever they can. They cannot make any of these concoctions themselves, however. Poisons are brewed by assassins and alchemists; unholy water is empowered by evil clerics and their deities; and flaming oil is made by artilleryists and plague doctors.<sup>24</sup>

Remember that overuse of poison by Player Characters should result, over time, in dangerous accidents in which a Chaos Knight cuts himself with a mishandled weapon or something similar.

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<sup>24</sup> Refer to the *Oldskull Plague Doctors* supplement for details concerning the (good-aligned!) plague doctor sub-cleric class.





Such matters need to be carefully considered, of course, so that players are warned of the risk long before any potential self-poisoning occurs.

## **Limitations and Disadvantages for the Chaos Knight Class**

To balance their considerable powers, Chaos Knights have vulnerabilities and weaknesses as well. These weaknesses keep the class from becoming completely overpowered, and should not be revoked under any circumstances.

### **Accursed Exaltation**

Just as a paladin who falls from the lawful good ideal loses all of his divine powers, a Chaos Knight who rises out of chaotic evil loses all of his unholy powers. There is no chance for “redemption”; the character becomes a fighter (not a cavalier) of the same experience level. The fighter status is permanent and cannot be changed, even with a Wish.

Reasonable and merciful GMs might well rule that this severe restriction does not apply to situations of uncontrollable alignment change, such as that caused (temporarily) by a magical helm. But even in that case, if a Chaos Knight performs good deeds against evil creatures he will need to repent by undertaking a dangerous quest in the name of his immortal patron. An example of a quest might be to burn down a good lord’s castle, or to abduct an elven princess, or to slay a bronze dragon, and so on and so forth. Once the quest is completed — and allies can certainly assist the Chaos Knight in the dangerous and lucrative mission — forgiveness will be offered, and Chaos Knight class status will be restored.



### **Bonded Sigil of the Unholy**

The Chaos Knight must carry, wear, or wield an unholy symbol (appropriate to the immortal patron) to successfully use the following powers: compelling undead, turning paladins, taming a nightmare, praying for spells, and casting spells.







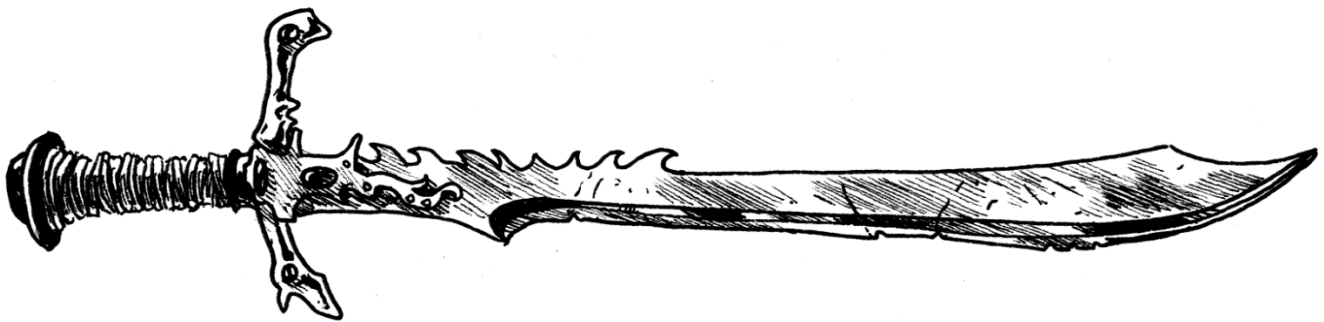
The symbol can be worn around the neck in order to keep the hands free for weaponry, shields, and spell casting. It must be visible and exposed, and of decent size, so that the Chaos Knight is identified as a bold and empowered champion of chaos and evil.

A wise enemy of a Chaos Knight will try to destroy the unholy symbol, of course. The GM might rule that if a knowledgeable foe attacks the Chaos Knight, and a natural 20 is rolled to hit, there is a 15% chance that in addition to normal damage the unholy symbol itself will be hit and destroyed (regardless of the material it is made of). The legend, actually true, that this is a vulnerable spot for a Chaos Knight is widely known in the superstitions of the realms. Therefore it stands to reason that Player Characters will know of this weakness and will be able to exploit it. Assume that all intelligent good-aligned creatures and characters will attempt to destroy the unholy symbol with every melee or missile attack made against the Chaos Knight directly.

There's nothing logically stopping a Chaos Knight from literally covering his entire personage (helm, neck, shield, umm ... codpiece ...) with garish and heaping unholy symbols to prevent any potential disempowerment. And some actually do so! But to be reasonable, the GM should rule that (much like the conflicting auras of magical rings) a Chaos Knight can carry no more than two *empowered* unholy symbols at one time. Any others that are carried will be merely symbolic and ineffective.

Chaos Knights also tend to keep at least one additional unholy symbol in their lair, in relatively easy reach.

A wise Chaos Knight, bereft of his unholy symbol, will likely retreat and live to fight another day.



### **Demonic Glorification**

When a Chaos Knight dies and his soul essence is taken by his patron immortal, he will be tortuously crafted to become an Instrument of Vengeance. This means that he will be reshaped to become a (Non-Player Character!) demon, and sent to the Prime Material Plane to either kill good creatures, or be annihilated in the trying.

The demonic flesh-crafting process involved in creating an Instrument is extremely agonizing, and it requires 666 days of toil as the immortal's servitors boil the soul's essence down into an ichor, and infuse the ichor into animated necrotic flesh, which then must grow in a colossal she-demon incubator (called a "Mother of Chaos") while feeding upon lesser evil creatures (such as lost souls, larvae, and manes demonlings).





When the fully-crafted demon — which was once the Chaos Knight — is sent to the Material Plane, it will bear a fragmentary and nightmarish collection of the mortal Chaos Knight's memories as its own. Most likely, the enraged demon will either kill every weak thing it can find in a vicious rage; or, it will find a way to gather followers, and then track and hunt down the people who destroyed its mortal form.

And in case you were wondering, yes this means that when a PC Chaos Knight dies, it will rise as an NPC demon in 666 game days to hunt any surviving members of the party!

The power level and type of the manifested Instrument of Vengeance will depend on the Chaos Knight's experience level when slain, as follows:

- **Experience Level 1, Lower Tier (meaning that the Chaos Knight was only 1-50% of the way through the XP range for experience level 1):** The immortal looks down on the Chaos Knight as a "Miserable Failure." The manifested demon is a Manes Demonling only, and will almost certainly be exterminated.
- **Experience Level 1, High Tier (meaning that the Chaos Knight was 51-99% of the way through the XP range for experience level 1):** The immortal looks down on the Chaos Knight as a "Pathetic Failure." The manifested demon is a Wretched Demonling. Perhaps it will be able to prey upon a few good men-at-arms, if it is careful ...
- **Experience Level 2, Lower Tier:** The immortal believes that the Chaos Knight suffered an "Unworthy Defeat." The manifested demon is a Quasit. There is a fair chance that the Quasit might be bound to an evil NPC spell caster as a familiar and advisor.
- **Experience Level 2, High Tier:** "Pyrrhic Defeat." Manifested as a Rutterkin Demonling. At this power level and above, the demon will likely be able to kill a fair number of good-aligned people before it eventually falls in battle.
- **Experience Level 3:** "Worthy Defeat." Manifested as a Shadow Demon.
- **Experience Level 4:** "Inglorious Victory." Manifested as either a Fly Demon (50%) or a Vulture Demon (50%).
- **Experience Level 5:** "Costly Victory." Manifested as a Lesser Cambion.
- **Experience Level 6:** "Victorious." Manifested as a Leaping Demon.
- **Experience Level 7:** "Victorious and Triumphant." Manifested as a Toad Demon if the Chaos Knight was male, or as an Ebony Demoness if the Chaos Knight was female.
- **Experience Level 8:** "Glorious Victory." Manifested as an Incubus if the Chaos Knight was male, or as a Succubus if the Chaos Knight was female. The demon has a 10% chance of establishing a lair and retinue servitors for 1D12 months before pursuing its prey.
- **Experience Level 9:** "Triumphator." Manifested as a Hound Demon. 20% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 10:** "Grand Triumphator." Manifested as a Boar Demon if the Chaos Knight was male, or as a Serpentine Demoness if the Chaos Knight was female. 30% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 11:** "Glorious Triumphator." Manifested as a Baronial Incubus or Succubus. 40% chance of establishing a lair.







- **Experience Level 12:** “Illustrious Triumphantor.” Manifested as a Death Stealer (50%) or Pyre Demon (50%). 50% chance of establishing a lair.





- **Experience Level 13:** “Grand Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Greater Pyre Demon (Balorian) with a minimum of 5 hit points per hit die. 60% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 14:** “Epic Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Noble Incubus or Succubus with a minimum of 6 hit points per hit die. 70% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 15:** “Mythic Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Baronial Cambion. 80% chance of establishing a lair.
- **Experience Level 16+:** “Legendary Victory of Chaos.” Manifested as a Cambion Marquis. 90% chance of establishing a lair.

If the demon is slain, its soul is sent back to the immortal power for re-crafting. However, this time the process will take 666 months, not 666 days, which will result in a berserk and fearless madness ...

### **Destiny of Damnation<sup>25</sup>**

The grimmest vulnerability of a Chaos Knight is this: The immortal power will gleefully empower a Chaos Knight with unholy might, turning him into a vessel of nigh-unstoppable destruction. However, chaotic evil powers also forever refuse to entertain any notion of forgiveness, mercy, or acceptance of the weak.

What this means is this: If a Chaos Knight is ever slain, he is forever dead. He cannot be resurrected. Even a Wish spell will not return his soul to his body, because his soul has already been forever claimed by the immortal power (as per the Demonic Glorification rules, above). The actual dread pact was made many years ago when the young adult Chaos Knight swore his soul to the immortal in the name of earthly power.

This is why Chaos Knights are sometimes seen as craven cowards, because they absolutely do not want to die! This is also why many high-level Chaos Knights seek to achieve a form of undeath, as a way to maintain sentient survival and to cheat their master of the soul ... for a time.

This is a permanent curse, which balances the might of the Chaos Knight class.

### **The Essence of Evil**

Chaos Knights can be damaged by vials of holy water, just as the undead can.

As a logical turnabout on this state of affairs, Chaos Knights can also use vials of unholy water as weapons. Unholy water will damage paladins, as well as extra-planar creatures of good alignment. However unholy water will not damage non-paladin good-aligned PCs, or good-aligned creatures who do not have an extra-planar origin. This is because holy and unholy water wound the planar essences inherent in the cosmic ideals (Good and Evil), not necessarily the flesh; and these creatures, paladins, and Chaos Knights are vessels of that essence.

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<sup>25</sup> If the Chaos Knight character class is offered as a PC option to the players, be absolutely certain that they read this section before committing to selection of the class.







Chaos Knights cannot craft unholy water themselves (that requires a temple font or basin), but they can purchase vials from unholy temples, even those that are dedicated to other immortals besides the Chaos Knight's patron.

### **Forever a Chaos Knight**

Chaos Knight demi-humans are never multi-classed. Also, human Chaos Knights can never be characters with two classes.

### **Hated by the Exemplars of Good**

The Chaos Knight is loathed by empowered intelligent monsters who are champions of good. This category includes the various angels, archangels, devas, ki-rins, lammasus, and shedus, among others. Basically, anything that is extra-planar, good, intelligent and quite powerful will (a) detect the Chaos Knight for what he is, and (b) hate his guts. Such creatures will attack the Chaos Knight and his allies on sight, and will fight to kill. And now those high experience levels for ultra-powerful Chaos Knights seem like a faraway and impossible dream, don't they?

Naturally, Chaos Knights either exterminate such creatures if they are able (preferably from a distance, and using poison), or run like mad to save themselves from utter annihilation.

### **Limited Starting Accoutrements**

Chaos Knights begin play with a random amount of gold, equivalent to a level 1 fighter. They do not begin the game with "free" cavalier benefits (a mount, armor, etc.) under any circumstances. All such things must be paid for using the Chaos Knight's starting gold.

### **Nemesis of the Holy**

Chaos Knights can be turned by good-aligned clerics and paladins. The turning effect will only last for 1D4 melee rounds at most, and is basically the same as the Nemesis of Paladins ability (which allows the Chaos Knight to attempt to turn paladins).

Remember that only one turning attempt per paladin or Chaos Knight can be made per day, and an unholy symbol is required.

This creates a brutal back-and-forth effect between mortal foes; an evenly-matched paladin and Chaos Knight will almost certainly try to turn one another, and one or the other might succeed! But it's basically a case of "the unstoppable force meeting the immovable object," and neither side can gain a turning advantage for very long.

Chaos Knights have, perhaps, the most to fear from powerful good clerics, because the cleric can attempt to turn the Chaos Knight and the Chaos Knight does not have the ultimate power to reciprocate.





### **Tumultuous Alliance of Evil**

There are several rules and guidelines which govern the Chaos Knight's ability to associate with others. The Chaos Knight is an irredeemable lone wolf who abhors submission to other powers. And yet, everyone needs minions to do their evil deeds, and at times even tumultuous friendship can exist ... although such dalliances tend to be doomed from the start.







Chaos Knights, in the long term, can only freely associate with chaotic evil, lawful evil, and neutral evil characters and monsters. They can consort with intelligent neutrals (CN, LN, TN) when needed, but only to corrupt them or to serve an evil end. They can never knowingly consort with good people or creatures (CG, LG, NG) unless they are deceitfully planning their destruction, which is actually a fairly common situation.





They can consort with unaligned creatures (unintelligent animals etc.) to commit evil acts; as an example, a Chaos Knight might use tamed lions to tear his imprisoned victims apart. They can ride warhorses or use beasts of burden or whatever else, provided the creatures are not of good alignment.

Chaos Knights can never submit in the long term to another creature, unless that creature is a servitor in service to the same immortal patron.

Also any *long-term* clerical followers, henchmen, or minions must serve the same immortal as the Chaos Knight does, or there will eventually be violence. For example a Chaos Knight in service to the Ultrhogorgon would only tolerate the presence of allied clerics of Shub-Niggurath on a single adventure basis, or a month-long expedition at most. Player Character Chaos Knights are welcome to push these limits if they like, and in doing so they will find that something always goes very wrong when the NPCs try to kill, imprison, or betray the Chaos Knight because he is simply too demonic and powerful to be trusted.

Also, a Chaos Knight cannot have long-term followers who are Chaos Knights themselves. The reason for this is that the lower NPC Chaos Knight would be entering a hierarchy with the higher Chaos Knight, a form of submission to another mortal, which is a forbidden tenet. However, several Chaos Knights who belong to the same knightly order, worshipping the same immortal, can bond together for a single Unholy Crusade. The crusade will have a specific evil goal; for example, Mordred's quest was to "Destroy Camelot by slaying Arthur, and too, take Queen Guinevere and the entire kingdom as my own." The crusade can last for up to 4D4 weeks before rivalries arise between NPCs and the alliance falls apart. Unholy Crusades are rarely successful due to their grandiose ambition; but they *always* leave a significant amount of wild destruction in their wake.

This is simply the abject nature of pure chaos and pure evil; the forces of destruction cannot ever endure in terms of any alliance, faithful sense of teamwork, or mortal compromise.

### **Unholy Sacraments of Chaos**

Much as a paladin must give away treasure to worthy temples and innocents, a Chaos Knight must sacrifice non-magical treasures to the immortal patron. The sacrifice of treasures is termed a Burnt Offering.

To perform a Burnt Offering, the Chaos Knight must invoke the immortal power's name whenever non-magical treasures are won. In game terms, this is an automatic action; the Chaos Knight is understood to invoke the name whenever new non-magical treasures are won. The prayer can be silent if the Chaos Knight is engaging in subterfuge, but most frequently it is whispered.

When the Burnt Offering is invoked, 10% of the won non-magical treasure evaporates in halos of cold, violet flames; the items are claimed by the extra-planar immortal as a sacrifice to its glory (and they are added to its hoard). This effect is somewhat "gamist" and arbitrary, and will require GM adjudication to make sense of various circumstances. For example if a Chaos Knight wins a share equaling 1,000 gold pieces, 100 of the gold pieces will vanish in cold flames and he will be left with 900 remaining. But if his share of the treasure is a necklace worth 1,800 gold pieces, the flames will damage the necklace — it will become pale and somewhat brittle — and it will only be worth (1800 minus 180 equals) 1,620 gold pieces as a result.

Magical treasures are never affected; they are the trophies of the Chaos Knight's evil deeds in the mortal realm.





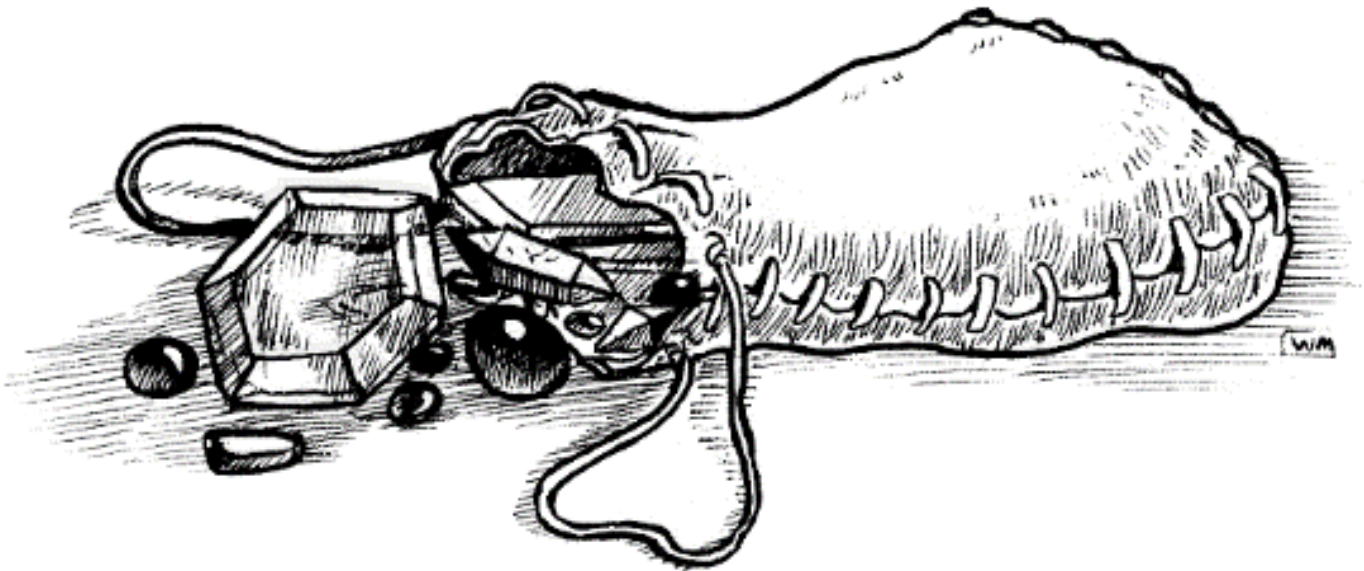


“Unwon treasures” are not affected either. This means that if a temporary ally pays the Chaos Knight 8,000 gold pieces, a Burnt Offering will not take place because the Chaos Knight did not win the treasure by either (a) killing someone or something, or (b) finding unguarded treasure. Similarly if a Chaos Knight sells a magic item for gold, the gold will not be affected by the invocation. (It was not hard-won, it was a mundane payment.) Game Master discretion must rule in borderline cases.

If a Player Character Chaos Knight wishes to tempt fate and to cease with these irksome automatic invocations, this can be done, but it is perilous. Let us say for example that the Chaos Knight is on a quest to obtain a jeweled crown for a mighty dragon, and the dragon has insisted that the crown must be received undamaged. The Chaos Knight’s player might choose to not invoke a Burnt Offering when the crown is seized.

If this is done, the Chaos Knight stops gaining Experience Point Marks until the invocations are re-enacted; and then, the immortal patron will demand arrears! As an example, let us say that the crown was worth 50,000 gold pieces; this means that the immortal has been cheated out of a Burnt Offering worth 5,000 gold pieces. If the Chaos Knight later discovered 20,000 gold pieces, the next invoked Burnt Offering will result in a loss of 5,000 gold pieces (for the crown’s arrears), plus 2,000 gold pieces (10% of the 20,000), leaving the Chaos Knight with an undamaged crown to give to a dragon, along with 13,000 gold pieces for himself.

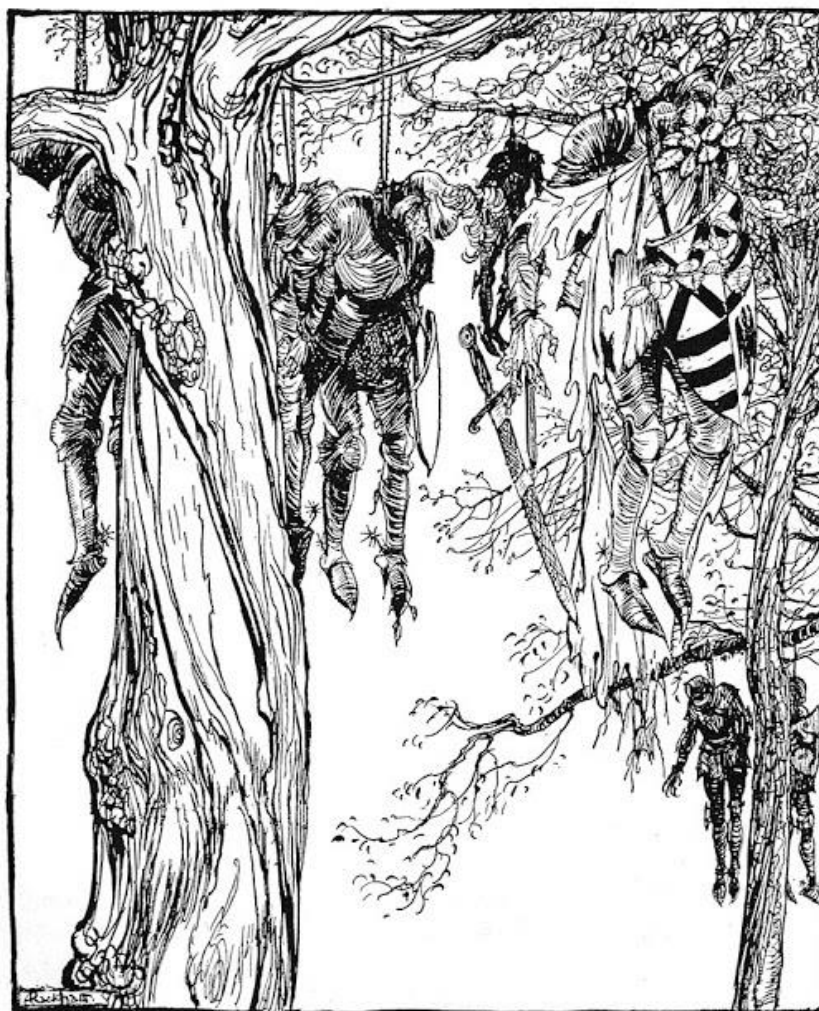
*The demon must have his filthy lucre.* Such is the price of blood-won gold in the dismal world of the chaotic evil champion!





## **Role-Playing the Chaos Knight**

Being a Chaos Knight simply means being irrevocably evil. Depending on the nature of the GM's campaign and the wishes of the player, that might mean gory and sadistic evil. Or, it might just mean cartoonish, mustache-twirling Vaudeville evil. Or, anything in between those two extremes.



As long as everyone at the table is comfortable with the mode of play and no one is being hurt or traumatized, the “level of evil” is ultimately up to the final decision of the Game Master. Play situations might be scaled back or glossed over (not described) if things are getting too grisly in the game.

You can add a bit of sardonic flourish to the Chaos Knight's personality if you like: They adore mockery and silent deception. They do not make oaths to higher powers, they make promises to themselves. They might mock paladins outright with their own secret practices; instead of a vow of silence, they might make a promise of lies. Instead of a vow of charity, they might make a promise of







thievery from the weak, and so forth. Their goals are not only to glorify themselves, but also to mock the forces of good and to humiliate the pure.

Chaos Knights are not chivalrous, but they are masters of the arts of manipulation. They fully understand the coins of the chivalric realm which hold value in the eyes of the holy; namely, honor, trust, love, loyalty, faith, and sacrifice. This wise knowledge of “what is sacred” gives them the ability to twist ideals into horrible things. They can feign acts of chivalry more finely than any other as they charm, betray, tempt, and seduce their way through civilization, ushering in an age of ruin.

Besides the base matter of villainy, Chaos Knights are the epitome of narcissistic and sociopathic behavior. They can be very charming indeed when they want to be, as killing isn't the only thing that they do. They also live to *destroy*, and destruction can take on many forms. Outside of the obvious (killing people, imprisoning innocents, conquering strongholds, setting fires to druidic groves, and defacing good shrines and temples), they can go for the subtle path, destroying trust, love, oaths, traditions, legacies, bloodlines, truces, alliances, and the bonds between loved ones. The aftermath surrounding a masterfully treacherous lie — creating a permanent severance between a prince and a queen mother, for example — can be just as sweet as bloody slaughter ... if not more so.

Chaos Knights do not seek long-term allies, except to exploit them or to protect themselves from harm. They wisely use their Charisma to charm and seduce; they seek victims that they can manipulate and exploit. They can convince many low-level NPCs to do their bidding in the name of evil (and personal reward), and then either discard or kill the person once their bidding has been done.





I will say further that Chaos Knights are not *inherently* cowardly, but they are frequently seen as such because they are self-preservationists above all. This of course is because when they die, they cannot be resurrected and their soul goes directly to their empowerer.

As such they will never charge foolishly into a battle they cannot win. They are not stupid; in fact, they are all of average human intelligence or higher. They are not berserkers either, and they tend toward a strongly innate sense of tactical patience. They make plans, attack from ambush, issue challenges to champions of good when outnumbered and then use poison, treachery, dolorous and unfair strikes, and so forth. They are villains and nemeses, and evil masterminds. Don't ever play them as being foolish and straightforward; they make their *minions* perform the rashest and most dangerous actions, not themselves, whenever possible.

### **Chaos Knights in the World of Oldskull**

***Heed to thy steps bestow,  
Lest haply by thy soles  
The heads be spurned of wretched brothers,  
Wearied in their woe ...***

\* \* \*

***With downcast face stood every one of them. To cold from every mouth, and to despair from every eye, an ample witness came.***

\* \* \*

***Search the whole malign Caïna, and thou shalt not any see more worthy to be fixed in gelatine; not he whose breast and shadow equally were by one thrust of Arthur's lance pierced through ...***

— Excerpts from the Sibbald translation of *The Inferno*, Canto XXXII, by Dante Alighieri

*(This section combines many conflicting sources from the real world's labyrinthine Arthurian tales, with some additional secrets of lore drawn from the author's own more encompassing game world history. You are welcome to do your own research if you'd like to know how I drew those many tales together into a single narrative of the unholyest of knights. ~K)*

To avoid confusion: Years in Oldskull lore are provided in Anno Calvariae, Year of the Skull (AC) notation, which is roughly equivalent to the Anno Domini (AD) / Common Era (CE) system used in the real.











In the World of Oldskull campaign — and outside of the existence of those unrecorded lone wolves who terrorized the world in earlier centuries — the first rebellious knightly order of Chaos Knights arose as the Dolorous Cabal in service to Sir Mordred, c. 534 AC, prior to the tragic Battle of Camlann (in the Year of the Pretender, 537 AC) which ended the reign of King Arthur.

Hagiographic histories beyond the *Mort Artu* have white-washed Arthur, and the endless bardic reiterations of his glory have rendered him stainless. But despite his paladinhood he was a real and deeply flawed man. Rather than being perfect, his disgrace and fall from the paladin mantle of holy power directly resulted in his doom, as well as a calamitous end to the illustrious Age of Camelot.

The whole tale is far too convoluted to be told in full here, but the general flow is critical to our subject. The grim tale of Lord Mordred gives full reasons for the establishment of the Dolorous Cabal of the Chaos Knights, and perhaps in the minds of some even justifies their fury.

And so:

Mordred was born of an incestuous union between the deceived Arthur and his half-sister, Queen Morgause. Morgause in turn was a sister to the high sorceress of the Unseelie Court, that sister being Morgan le Fay herself.

Upon horrified realization, rather than atoning for his sin, Arthur sought to have the young evil-born Mordred murdered. (Or more politely, “abandoned” and “exposed.”) Worse, all babies that were born on the same day were gathered up as well so that Arthur could be certain that the dark faerie threat to his throne would be annihilated. The abducted children were set adrift in a boat, which sank, drowning all but Mordred himself. Few knew of this terrible truth ... and no one human knew that through the crystal-gazing arts of Morgan the observer, the forsaken Mordred had indeed survived.

Arthur was disgraced in the eyes of the holy, and his paladinhood faded despite his continuing earthly majesty. A doom was born that day, which Morgan le Fay had long ago divined. Through an evil act wrought upon innocent souls, the gilded future of Camelot was forever destroyed by the same man who had caused its glory to arise.

Mordred was raised by one Lord Nabur, and it is believed that he learned the truth of his birth and background from Morgan le Fay and the elves of darkness. He harbored hatred in his heart and swore that he would one day claim the throne which his murderous father had forbade him. To that end he vowed his soul to unholy powers, the only that would embrace him, and so in secrecy as a young man the greatest Chaos Knight was ordained in the name of a terrible demon queen.

Once he came of age, Mordred insinuated himself into the royal domain of power by challenging and becoming a Knight of the Round Table. But his darker character emerged many a time, and others with evil hearts saw him as a dark savior of the fey and elven races which had fallen to fear and weakness during the time of Arthur. Sir Mordred at this time — as an occasional associate of Sir Lancelot — was fully chaotic evil, veiled by demonic auras; although he wisely pretended otherwise. Accusations of deceit, incitement to treason, murder, rape, and vile treachery were whispered yet never proven. He sired two secret sons with a dark elven maiden, and through black magics these half-human shades grew to maturity with unnatural speed.

Sir Mordred in the meanwhile proved himself in battle and he maintained a bold charismatic front of wounded innocence, thereby successfully portraying any of his detractors as envious fools. Through charm, wise counsel, and valorous deeds Mordred was eventually made a Worthy Lord by Arthur the accursed.







Thus emboldened, Mordred journeyed far and wide. He made alliances with various powers including the Picts, the Caledonians (Scotsmen) and even the grim Midgardian Saxones. He deceived distant nobles into believing that Arthur was dead, or near death, and proclaimed that he would need to wed Queen Guinevere himself in order to ensure continued stability throughout the divided kingdom.







Guinevere fled his advances and when the adventuring Arthur learned of this lecherous betrayal, he returned to his throne and furiously prepared to wage war upon the pretender.

Lord Mordred however had sworn other willing knights to his unholy cause, and the forces of Demonium were in play. The paladins and cavaliers loyal to Arthur defeated Mordred and his outnumbered knights in their first battle, forcing an inglorious retreat. The further and final battle occurred at Camlann. Virtually all of the knights on both sides were slain in this cataclysmic fray, and many awe-inspiring powers both sacred and unholy were visited upon the battlefield.

Mordred's demon blade mortally wounded Arthur. Arthur, barely standing, managed one final charge and impaled Mordred with his sacred lance. It is said that sunlight burst through Mordred's flesh and hollowed him into a wasted thing, writhing within his drowic armor. Arthur died beloved and redeemed as is known, but the tale of Mordred does not end there.

Through his foul powers of demonic healing Mordred saved himself from death, and he crawled from the battlefield into the remnants of an unholy shrine. He was saved in the nether through some manner of demonic sacrifice conducted by his sons, Melehan and Melou.

Later in life the vengeful Mordred was revealed once more and finally defeated by the aging paladin lord Sir Lancelot himself. Yet — even to the sages, many of the details remain unknown — in some terrible way, Mordred and his sons managed to either execute the widow Guinevere or to afflict her with a fatal wasting disease. The presence of demonic power was made clear in the tumultuous battle between the Knights Illustrious and Mordred, although Melehan and Melou escaped. It is said that Lancelot suffered a lunatic rage after Mordred was captured, in grief for Guinevere; or, that Mordred was seized by a mob and dragged through the streets. Perhaps aspects of both tales are true.

Whatever truly occurred, the terrible end is known: The curse which had destroyed the legacy of Camelot was twofold, and as a result of the defeated Mordred's panicked pleas, demonic insanity reigned once more. Lord Mordred was entombed alive by noble men who were driven mad; horrifically, he was sealed into the tomb of Queen Guinevere herself. There in the utter dark, he was offered the embrace of one final pact of darkness by a banshee spirit who hailed from the Unseelie Court. This he accepted, and to save himself from starvation — and to empower the banshee's terrible pact in his black heart — he ate of the dead flesh of Guinevere. In so doing he became an undead heir to the dread and ancient Knights of Saigoth, a hateful revenant. He was torn away into the dark faerie realm of the Unseelie and never seen again.

A later and anti-climactic revolt (led by Melehan and Melou) was ended by Lancelot and the surviving Knights of the Round Table, and only then did the terror-reign of Mordred's ill-omened legacy finally come to an end.

Chaos Knights persisted in their twisted machinations and scattered heresies throughout the Dark Ages of the lands, although regionally they were largely wiped out by the wrathful surviving peoples of Britannia and Caledonia. It was not until the 1300s that a collective order of multiple Chaos Knights once again arose beneath the realms, in abject defiance of all that is pure and holy.

The new terror came surrounded in vermin-touched dust, upon insect-clouded winds, from out of the Utter East. The civilized kingdoms in the realm of Tyrrhenia learned of this terrible demonic resurgence when the first Chaos Plague emerged as the Yellow Death, as manifested by an avatar of the King in Yellow in Anno Calvariae 1348. Refer to the supplement *Oldskull Plague Doctors* for further details concerning that foul contagion, the sieges of Grimrook and Serenisse, the King in Yellow, the heroic resistance of the plague doctors, and the deathless Triumphator known as the Lich Queen.







The Chaos Plague took over a million lives. The swarming legions of vagabond plague victims, undead, vermin, wererats, abominations, and demonic terrors were led into battle by a foul order of Chaos Knights who called themselves the Avengers of Saigoth.



When the Lich Queen was finally defeated and entombed, several of her Chaos Knight champions were sealed away along with her ... a gruesome echo of the fate of accursed Lord Mordred, imprisoned in the black sepulcher of Guinevere.

But several of the Lich Queen's most powerful lieutenants escaped the last battle in the ravaged Tyrrhenian lands, fleeing westward to establish themselves in the lost dimensional fanes which lie beneath the ruins of the Ushirian Manor, that magicked pile of ruin known to adventurers and mercenaries alike as "Castle Oldskull, upon yon farthest shore," beyond the city of Grimrook proper.

But nevertheless, the looming threat from the bloody Avengers of Saigoth had been ended, at least for a time.

Years passed and a fragile spirit of peace seemed to seep tenuously across the land. A short and severed generation of naïve humanity witnessed the birth of a shocking new heresy amongst the





younger folk, in which minxes and striplings would dare to play at “Plague Danses” in imitation of the nearly-triumphant legions of undeath. (“Ashes, ashes, we all fall down!”)

Resonating with taunt and prayer, demonic powers of shivering temptation stirred beneath the earth. The young people were emboldened, by fleeting glimmers of the supernatural, to turn their sinister games into far more active nocturnal imaginings. Occasionally, even the blood of hated rivals’ sons and daughters was shed by the over-zealous in petty rituals secretly known as the “Danses Macabre.”

Most of these outrageous young idiots were disciplined or disowned by their mothers and fathers, those who were veteran survivors of the Chaos Plague. Yet some few of these youths accidentally tampered a bit too far with the wrong grimoire, the wrong ruins, or the wrong skull of a fallen lord. Foolish promises were made to invisible black powers in the name of inkling envy or fleeting seduction.

A new scattering of weak Chaos Knights — a handful of caitiffs, poltroons, dastards, and outright fools — has now been instilled with unholy essence through obscene incantations whispered in the middle of the night. Only a few of these youths in exile have fully fallen to the path of darkness, and now exist as level 1 and 2 Chaos Knights who lead small gangs of brigands, or witchless rat-things, or limping zombies. But many more young lost souls remain completely unaware that their yearnings and spites are tallied even now by imprisoned demon lords who skulk and scheme, awakening, down in the deepest Oldskull infernos burning beneath the earth.

The Game Master should also take care to note that the true Order of Mordred still lives on in the caves and dungeons beneath Britannia; refer to the knightly orders chapter in this supplement for further glimpses of that foul sect.

## **The Stricken Names: Chaos Knights of the Arthurian Age**

There are several Knights Perilous, traitors, murderers, and foul Chaos Knights who are known in the tales of Arthur and his knights. Their most terrible crimes have been stricken from memory, as a protection against demonic invocations led by the curious and the power-hungry. But we do know a little of these Chaos Knights, their experience levels, and a few of their lesser deeds. It is likely that several of these foul men will be found in the campaign as undead lords, vampires, incubi, or perhaps even something worse.

The known black knights of Britannia were:

- **Lord Mordred the King-Slayer, Level 13:** The slayer of King Arthur at the Battle of Camlann. Whether he was slain by Arthur, or barely survived, is unknown to many. It is whispered by the wisest that he was entombed alive with the body of Queen Guinevere, and that he ate of her flesh before he starved to death in the utter dark. If true he likely arose as an undead Knight of Saigoth.
- **Sir Breunis Sans Pite (“Without Mercy”), Level 12:** A malefactor who killed Knights of the Round Table, as well as their damosels.
- **Sir Edward the Knight Perilous, Level 10:** Lord of the Red Castle. An evil lord who stole a Barony, and would only do battle with outnumbered heroes.
- **King Mark of the Viper, Level 10:** A noble man fallen to evil; he killed Sir Tristan with a poisoned lance for daring to love Isolde.







- **King Melegrance the Ensnarer (Maleagant), Level 10:** A dark half-elven black knight, and the abductor of Queen Guinevere.
- **Sir Melehan (Meleon) the Defiant, Level 9:** The eldest son of Lord Mordred, who defied the rule of King Constantine after the death of Arthur. Slayer of King Lionel.
- **Sir Damas the Craven, Level 9:** A cowardly castle lord who took courtly prisoners, while treacherously never doing battle on his own.
- **Sir Andred the False, Level 8:** Allied with King Mark in the treason against his cousin, Sir Tristan. A deceiver and failed kin-slayer.
- **Sir Helius the Heart-Spearer, Level 8:** A treacherous knight who killed King Hermance.
- **Sir Pinell the Black-Hearted, Level 8:** A coward who poisoned a feast of apples in order to slay Sir Gawain.
- **Sir Melou the Inciter, Level 8:** The younger son of Lord Mordred, who incited the resistance against King Constantine and the remaining Knights of the Round Table. Beheaded by Sir Lancelot.
- **Sir Garlon the Unseen, Level 8:** A black knight who slaughtered enemies through treacherous stealth and the magics of invisibility.
- **Sir Phelot the Beheaded, Level 8:** A treasonous deceiver who forced his wife to lie in hopes of murdering Sir Lancelot.
- **Sir Hue the Overthrower, Level 8:** Another knight of the Red Castle, who disherited the Lady of the Rock of her barony.
- **Sir Gringamore of the Dwarven Lands, Level 8:** A black and unholy knight, a coward and traitor of unknown deeds. His allegiance to the Dvergar and other evil dwarves remains a mystery.

The tombs of these NPCs are undoubtedly evil fanes, protected by demonic entities and filled with treasure, which good PCs might well want to seek out and raid ... if they can.

The reader might be surprised to see that none of the original Chaos Knights rose to experience levels higher than 13. This is due to the fact that Chaos Knights cannot be resurrected from the dead, as we will explore in the weaknesses section of this supplement a little further on. When a Chaos Knight is laid low, his soul is stolen away by the chaotic immortal who empowered him, to be tortured into a forever-agonized demonic shape. Only undeath can cheat the immortal's grasp, and that only for a few centuries at best. (And in realizing this, we might well sympathize slightly with Lord Mordred's banshee plight and the blasphemy which took place in the sepulcher of Guinevere.)

We also must consider that Chaos Knights either live as exiles surrounded by evil minions, or in the shadows, lest they be dragged out into the light and torn apart. They are the most hated of humankind. Given these facts it stands to reason that level 13 is a very high level indeed, and even reaching experience level 2 is a considerable accomplishment for many. If there are to be any Chaos Knights of experience level 14 or higher, they will exist as arch-villains in the Game Master's own campaign, or (!) perhaps even as Player Characters raised up from level 1 into infamous glory.





## **Chaos Knight Orders and the Worship of the Great Old Ones**

Each immortal's order will differ in the details, but not in their apocalyptic ideals. Examples of some orders of unique Chaos Knights, using the Cthulhu Mythos for the matter of demonstration, include the following. Note that unlike most demon lords and deities, the Great Old Ones simply do not care about mortals or mortal affairs, but their more powerful servitors (such as star-spawn) do grant spells on behalf of that higher power.

These orders are quite small, each being under 100 knights in number; but they are served by fanatical cultists, evil men-at-arms, and much worse powers besides.







The Great Old Ones' orders include:

- **The Knights of Cthugha** seek to immolate buildings and innocents, destroying everything with fire. Their spells are received from aching dreams of incineration, brought down through flame creatures and fire vampires.
- **The Knights of Cthulhu** serve to bring about the rising of R'lyeh. They receive their prayed-for spells through nightmare visions, brought by the star-spawn of Great Cthulhu. Deep Ones ally with this foul order.
- **The Knights of Dagon** seek to conquer seaside towns and villages insidiously, without being detected, in the name of the Deep Ones. Spells are received through the nocturnal whispers of Mother Hydra.
- **The Knights of Hastur** live for the glory of the Unspeakable One, and ultimate Armageddon. Spells are received as pleadings from beggar-souls as the Chaos Knight's spirit wanders the twisting dream-wrought alleys of Carcosa.
- **The Knights of Nyarlathotep** tempt dreamers to seek the forbidden mysteries of Kadath in the Cold Waste. Spells are brought by robed and dripping Men of Leng, who visit in the flesh to pass their deteriorating rune-scrolls down to the Chaos Knight.
- **The Knights of Shub-Niggurath** sacrifice innocents in the black forest-wilds, using either obsidian daggers or the grisly means of soil suffocation. Spells are brought through moist tendrils of rootlets, which crawl out of the ground and into the Chaos Knight's mind.
- **The Knights of Yog-Sothoth** hope to summon the great coruscating orbs of revelation through primordial circles of standing stones; these stones must be fed fresh blood when the moon is full. Spells are brought by crawling human-like spawnlings, which touch the Chaos Knight with their tongues and then melt away in to die.

You can come up with your own ideas for Chaos Knights who serve demon lords, chaotic evil goddesses, and so forth.

## Chaos Knights and the Knights of Saigoth

The Knights of Saigoth are an ancient heretical sect that is tied to the Pegana Mythos. They are undead chaotic evil knights of terrible power, similar to lichs.

A typical Knight of Saigoth has Armor Class 0, Movement Rate 120' (40') or 90' (30'), Hit Dice 9D10, a minimum of 45 hit points, Magic Resistance 75%, Intelligence Average to Genius (equivalent to the Chaos Knight's INT in life), unholy 18/00 Strength, and various deadly special abilities including but not limited to: Detect Invisibility, Detect Magic, Dispel Magic, Fireball, Gate (Demonic), Power Word (Any), Symbol (Any), and Wall of Ice. The Game Master will need to develop full details for this undead horror if he or she wishes to use a Knight of Saigoth in the campaign. These foul things will pose a challenge to Player Characters of experience levels 8 and up; anyone of levels 1 through 7 will probably not stand a chance.

The rite to become a Knight of Saigoth is rather horrific. When a high-level (at least level 13) NPC, *but not Player Character*, Chaos Knight is near to death there is a chance that he will be visited by a powerful banshee of the Unseelie Court. The chance is up to the Game Master, but is highly dependent





upon immediate circumstances. a Chaos Knight who is slain by a party of good characters will die and have his soul taken before a banshee can appear to intervene. However a Chaos Knight who is trapped by a cave-in and slowly dying, or drowning alone, or dying painfully in solitude, *will* probably be visited by the spirit.

Once the NPC Chaos Knight agrees to the rite (which he almost always will), the banshee's hymn will then bring forth a magically unearthed dead body, which might be years old or recently slain. The Chaos Knight must eat of the dead body's flesh and then swear to forever serve the Priesthood of Saigoth. When this is done the banshee will scream, fatally separating the Chaos Knight's soul from his body. The Chaos Knight's immortal patron will be cheated of the soul, and the banshee's ensnaring power will stitch the soul into the corpse which has been unearthed. The corpse's remaining flesh will wither away, to be only partially reformed into a vile and twisted countenance.







A magical mask will be conjured and seared into the animated corpse's face. In 13 nights' time, these tortured remnants will arise as a Knight of Saigoth, fully undead yet also possessing all of the fallen Chaos Knight's memories. The mask can be removed by the Knight of Saigoth at any time, but doing so will cause it to suffer 15 points of immediate damage. This damage cannot be healed in any way until the mask is returned to its former station.

Here is the relevant additional lore from Castle Oldskull supplement PM1, *The Pegana Mythos*, for those Game Masters who wish to know more of the forgotten Saigoth heresy:

### **Of the Dread Knights of Saigoth (The Speakers of Terror unto Mung)**

There are conflicting beliefs among Men, in regards to the ultimate fate of the Gods and Time when The End is come. Most believe in "orthodox" fashion that when all Men are dead and gone, and the Worlds come to an end, that Mana-Yood-Sushai shall have no need for Gods or Men or Time itself. The Gods of Pegana will be exiled, or perhaps (according to heresy) even slain; their playthings Men will be no more; and the Great Hound of Time itself, as the last living thing, will collapse feasting upon itself in meaninglessness and die. Then, Mana-Yood-Sushai will journey into other realities, perhaps avoiding the spirits of Fate and Chance, and perhaps creating new Gods in his own image as he had always secretly desired.

A very different belief, however, was held by the heretics known as the Saigoths. The Saigoths believed that the Great Hound of Time will in The End finally be unleashed, and will battle with Mung the Lord of Death for two days and two nights. Mung's cruel sword will finally fail him, and Time will tear his throat, thus proving that Time is the true immortal and is greater than all the Gods but one.

There was once a Priesthood of Saigoth (regarding the plural Saigoths, the people, as a singular entity and soul, one mind and one conviction), beneath the great mountain of Trehagobol. These priests not only believed in the Heresy of Immortal Time; they enslaved the peoples around them, falsely taking the name of Sish (who did not praise them, or ever answer their prayers), and creating their own kingdom in which bloody-jawed Time was worshipped as the Mightiest and Most Monstrous Beast. Sacrifices were made, severing the lives of the unworthy in order to bargain for far longer lives of the "pure." And indeed, the priests who believed in this foul practice and who performed blood sacrifice in the name of Time did live for centuries. But this priesthood lasted barely an extended generation, for while the priests were powerful warriors and blood-princes they were not instilled with any of the true and divine magics from the Gods. For the Gods had turned from them, and they were regarded by all as an unholy and unworthy people.

Nevertheless, their martial and deceptive powers upon the earth were considerable.

Before they could all be hunted down and wiped out by holier Men, however, some few of the arch-priests fled into the nether. There — seeking arcane and necromantic powers where divine magic had failed them — they made allegiance with the last of the Lich Maidens. (Which Maiden it was, some sayeth Hagath, others Annis, is unknown.) They twisted even the arts of Mung, who sent his own minions and the Monsters against them. But twenty-three of these arcane warriors of undeath endured these trials and torments, and rose in the World of Oldskull as terrible princely powers of wrath and hate.





These twenty-three were the Knights of Saigoth. They are warrior Liches of dreadful might, and each is worshipped by a death cult, lost in a different corner of the world. In the intervening thousands of years, eleven of the Knights of Saigoth have been destroyed. Twelve remain.

While their powers have waned, their hatred has not. They resist spells, instill terror, create walls of ice, hurl fire, and summon abyssal demons to their cause. Worst of all, they dwell in strongholds well-protected by death cultists, undead, guardian beasts and demons. Only the most powerful of heroes will ever dare to defy them. But surely, in their wretched temples and cultic strongholds there are century-heaps of treasures to be had by the victorious!











## Chapter VI:

# The Paladin Sub-Class

### Overview of the Paladin Class

**Description:** Paladins are the divinely-empowered champions of the gods, goddesses, saints, and archangels of Lawful Good. As mortal knights and vessels of holy wrath, they are not only far from perfect; hale and uncorrupted paladins rarely ever survive to greet their thirtieth winter. The forces of evil throughout the World of Oldskull are fully ascendant, and the bastions of good have been constricted into besieged kingdoms, perilous trade routes stretched taut between isolated city states, and xenophobic dwarven and elven enclaves that have readied themselves in grim defiance of the darkest age to befall mankind in over a thousand years.

As adventurers born into the diminished and fractured world that has newly emerged from out of the years of the Chaos Plague, paladins arise as the leaders of die-hard fellowships, last stands, hopeless charges, heroically-guarded *Exodoi*, and literally miraculous victories against the powers of Chaos and Evil. Those who accept the mantle of paladinhood know full well that they will die, be remade in the image of the gods, live again, and die once more in glory – almost certainly several times – before they are finally deemed worthy of ascension to the Exalted Heavens via their eminent temporal victories.

**Paladins of Renown:** Famous paladins known to the World of Oldskull include Artorius Rex (King Arthur), Charlemagne and his circle, Jeanne d'Arc (who perishes at a low experience level), Sir Galahad, Sir Gawain, Sir Lancelot du Lac (later fallen), and Sir Roland (or Orlando, the Many-Mirrored Strider Between the Worlds).

**Immortal Cavaliers:** All Lawful Good deities that possess a martial aspect have paladins who champion their names. While paladins are universally chivalric knights within the Occidental realms, holy warriors are not unknown to far distant or even primitive cultures. The following list is a brief summary of some of the deities who have at least a few paladins among their Oldskull champions:

- **Archangels:** Michael and Urael
- **Babylonian Deities:** Girru
- **Chinese (Serean) Deities:** Chung Kuel
- **Deities of the Pegana Mythos:** Skarl
- **Egyptian (Khomite) Deities:** Anubis, Osiris and Shu
- **Finnish (Finnian) Deities:** Ukko
- **Greek (Achaean) Deities:** Arete and Nemesis
- **Indian Deities:** Surya
- **Norse (Midgardian) Deities:** Forseti, Heimdall, and Tyr
- **Roman (Tyrrhenian) Deities:** Aeneas Indiges, Fides, Honos, Justitia, and Minerva







## **Becoming a Paladin**

**Alignment:** Paladins must be, and remain, Lawful Good. All those who begin the game are Lawful Good at experience level 1. Those who do not remain Lawful Good will *fall from grace*, becoming either Lawful Neutral Templars or cavaliers. For those players who dislike this deliberately restricted motif, the Templar class is recommended.

**Ancestral Limitations:** Only humans, half-elves of gray descent, and half-elves of high descent may ever become paladins. In some fantastical worlds afar, half-elves of drowic descent may become paladins within their own terrestrial spheres, but due to the irrevocable curse of heretical renunciation wrought upon the Dokkalfar and Svartalfar peoples, these purified “dark angels” can never exist as such in the World of Oldskull.<sup>26</sup>

**Minimum Ability Scores:** STR 15+, DEX 15+, CON 15+, INT 10+, WIS 13+, CHA 17+. The paladin class is by far the most difficult to qualify for, and deliberately so.

**Minimum Ability Scores and Human Paladins:** Importantly, in the World of Oldskull campaign, if a human character does not qualify for the paladin class via ability scores generated using Method V, the character’s low ability scores are still raised to the required minimums, but the character then begins play as a Yeoman Paladin (level zero). The character only begins play as a Noble Paladin (level 1) if the Method V rolls all met or exceeded the required ability score targets. This is because the paladin class represents the most powerful, rare, and demanding role in the game. Part of the interest in playing a paladin – or alongside a paladin – is in their rarity. No one should be able to play a paladin simply because they want sky-high ability scores.

**Minimum Ability Scores and Half-Elven Paladins:** For demi-human characters, the ability score roles achieved by the player must meet the paladin ability score minimums given above during character creation. If they do not, the player rolling the dice must accept play of a different class. As a result the character will never become a paladin.

These play precepts are strongly recommended, but can of course be overruled by the Game Master as desired.

**Social Standing:** Like cavaliers, as inspirational exemplars paladins must belong to at least the Lower Middle Class (LMC-4) at the beginning of the game.

**Social Standing for Human Paladins:** The character’s initial social standing is rolled with percentile dice. If a Lower Class standing is indicated, the paladin is raised to Lower Middle Class (LMC-4) prior to the beginning of the game. If the character was already destined to become a Yeoman Paladin (level zero) due to too-low generated ability scores as noted above, then the *maximum* possible starting standing tier for that paladin is Upper Middle Class (UMC-6). If the character was already destined to become a Noble Paladin (level 1) due to meeting all of the ability score requirements as noted above, then the *minimum* possible starting standing tier for that paladin is Lower Upper Class (LUC-7). This means that for a Yeoman Paladin, if the percentile dice indicate Upper Class status, the character’s standing must be lowered to UMC-6. Conversely for a Noble Paladin, if the percentile dice indicate Middle Class status, the character’s standing must be increased to LUC-7.

<sup>26</sup> Refer also the Unearthed rules; the author of this volume believes that the idea of making half-drow into paladins is a grave (rare) error on Gygax and company’s behalf.







**Social Standing for Half-Elven Paladins:** For half-elf characters, the social standing is rolled on a purely random basis as for the cavalier class.



### **Archetypal Considerations for the Paladin**

**Combat Prowess:** As knights, paladins have the most efficient combat prowess progression rate in the game along with cavaliers.

**Hit Dice:** Paladins have special hit dice at levels 0 and 1, depending on whether they are noble-born or yeomen supported by a noble patron (as for the cavalier class). Beginning with experience level 2, regardless of origin paladins roll D10s for hit points, with constitution modifiers applying to each die, up through experience level 10. Beyond level 10, they gain +3 hit points per level (with constitution modifiers no longer applying).

**Iconic Armor:** Paladins can wear any type of armor, and can also use any type of helm and shield. They prefer exemplary armor types as cavaliers do.

**Iconic Arms:** Paladins can wield any type of weapon. They favor, and train with, weapons of choice as cavaliers do.







**Prime Requisite:** Paladins have no prime requisite, and therefore cannot gain an experience bonus. (See however the Pennon of Glory advantage, as with the cavalier).

**Saving Throws:** Paladins have the same saving throws as cavaliers do, but at an additional +2 bonus to all saving throws (regardless of type), with additional protective auras as well.



## Paladin Progression

**Class Level Limit:** Paladins have no class-imposed maximum experience level.

**Non-Human Level Limit:** As a reward to counterbalance their exceptionally challenging ability score requirements (especially considering the lack of the highly advantageous human generation Method V), half-elven paladins have no level limit.

**Human Level Limit:** Human paladins can attain any experience level.

**Two Paths of Progression:** Middle-class horsemen are termed Yeoman Paladins, and upper-class horsemen are termed Noble Paladins. These paths are identical to the cavalier paths, except that the





human cavalier's path is determined by the ability scores rolled rather than a percentile roll for social standing (as already described).

**Pace of Progression:** Paladins have the same progression pace as cavaliers, but a significant number of them will begin play as yeomen as opposed to nobles. This has the effect of considerably slowing the pace of paladins, balancing out their array of powers due to survivability concerns at low experience levels.

Use the cavalier experience progression tables for paladins, but note that their level titles are very different, as detailed hereafter.

**TABLE 23:**  
**Suggested Level Titles for Paladins**

Cavalier's Experience Level	Recommended Level Titles
<b>Yeomanry 0 (I)</b>	Destinariarius / Destinaria, Palatine Horseman / Horsewoman, Palatine Page, or Prentice Hobilar
<b>Yeomanry 0 (II)</b>	Argent Hobilar, Argent Shield Bearer / Shield Maiden, Destinarian Squire, Palatine Cavalryman / Cavalrywoman, or White Lancer
<b>Yeomanry 1</b>	Gallant, Palatine Herald of Arms, or Sworn Silverbrand
<b>Noble 1</b>	Noble Lancer, Palatine Armiger, or Palatine Lancer
<b>2</b>	Argent Master of the Horse, Gallant Valorous, Keeper of the Faith, Keeper of the Light, Noble Armiger, Palatine Scutarius, or Palatine Scutifer
<b>3</b>	Palatine Esquire / Esquires, Protector / Protectress, Vaunted Scutarius, or Vaunted Scutifer
<b>4</b>	Argent Cataphract, Crusader, Defender, Defiant, Noble Protector / Protectress, Palatine Knight Errant / Dame Errant, or Silver Knight Errant / Dame Errant
<b>5</b>	Esteemed Palatine Esquire / Esquires, Great Crusader, Hospitaller, Noble Knight Errant / Dame Errant, Veteran Defender, or Warder / Warding Maiden
<b>6</b>	Argent Knight / Dame, Ennobled Esquire / Esquires, Grand Crusader, Guardian, Knight / Lady Hospitaller, Palatine Knight / Dame Palatine, or Veteran Warder / Warding Maiden
<b>7</b>	Grand Argent Knight / Dame, Grand Palatine Knight / Dame Palatine, Honored Guardian, Paladin Chevalier, Palatine Knight Hierarch / Palatine Dame Hierarch, Silver Knight Hierarch / Silver Dame Hierarch, Royal Knight Justiciar / Dame Justiciar, or Veteran Guardian
<b>8</b>	Grand Guardian, Justiciar, Palatine Banneret, Palatine Justiciar, Palatine Banneret, or Paladin Knight Banneret / Dame Banneret
<b>9</b>	High Justiciar, Paladin, Palatine Chevalier, Palatine Knight Commander / Dame Commander, or Royal Knight Banneret / Dame Banneret
<b>10</b>	Grand Justiciar, Lord / Lady of the Garde, Palatine Cavalier or Royal Knight Commander / Dame Commander
<b>11</b>	Lionheart, Lord / Lady Paladin or Noble Lord / Lady of the Garde
<b>12</b>	Aurean Lionheart, Palatine High Lord / High Lady Cavalier, Palatine Vice Marshal, or Royal Lord / Lady of the Garde







<b>13</b>	Paladin Warlord, Palatine Marshal, or Royal Lionheart
<b>14</b>	Palatine High Warlord, Paladin Overlord / Dame Palatine Overlord, or Royal Lord Marshal / Lady Marshal
<b>15</b>	Palatine Grand Commander, Palatine Grand Marshal, or Royal Grand Commander
<b>16</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the First Mark) or Supreme Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>17</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Second Mark) or Glorious Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>18</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Third Mark) or Exalted Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>19</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Fourth Mark) or Illustrious Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>20</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Fifth Mark) or Sovereign Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>21</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Sixth Mark) or Imperious Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>22</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Seventh Mark) or Mythic Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>23</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Eighth Mark) or Legendary Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>24</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Ninth Mark) or Unconquerable Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>25</b>	Grand Master Paladin (of the Tenth Mark) or Immortal Paladin Overlord / Dame Overlord
<b>(+1)</b>	(Unique)

## **Powers and Advantages of the Paladin Class**

Paladins combine the power set of the cavalier with additional divine and inspirational abilities that are derived from Lawful Good deities and the knight's own reverent zealotry. Game Masters should harbor no illusions that the paladin class is balanced as others are; rather, the class is designed to represent a leader archetype that the adventuring party can gather around. However this strength is also a weakness, because evil foes and monstrous entities will always focus their hatred upon the paladin regardless of circumstances. Players will also find that the paladin's presence basically restricts the group to good-aligned play, to the point that thief characters and those of neutral alignment will be hard-pressed to withstand the paladin's insistent credo; companionship with evil characters will be completely out of the question.

Keeping in mind also that the Castle Oldskull game is primarily cooperative and not competitive on an individual basis, a wise GM will see that the paladin's advantages should be regarded as *group* advantages, and therefore they are not entirely "fair" from a solitary character perspective. A fair amount of the paladin's "balance" is found in the fact that the character's presence enforces a certain good-minded (and therefore evil-restricted) mode of play upon the party.







As with the cavalier class, the limitations that are applied by the significant disadvantages of the class should be strictly adhered to throughout campaign play. The advantages and disadvantages sections in this chapter have a strong interplay with one another that should not be handwaved away.

Fear not, no paladin lives forever ...



### The Paladin as a Cavalier

Paladins have the following abilities that are shared with the cavalier class:

- **Battle Mastery**
- **Blessed Healing**
- **Champion's Strength of Will**
- **Eye of the Master of the Horse**







- **Heroic Blood of the Exemplar**
- **Honorable Weapons of Choice**
- **Knightly Training Discipline** (but the paladin must be trained by a paladin at levels 1 through 5, not by a cavalier)
- **Loyal and Trusting Steed**
- **Martial Riding Mastery**
- **Merciless Onslaught**
- **Parrying Mastery**
- **The Pennon of Glory** (but the banner must bear the sigil of the patron deity, not a liege lord or knightly order)
- **True Companions** (all cavalier NPCs will be Lawful Good, and the player can choose to rather be accompanied only by Player Characters with no cavalier NPC presence if that is his or her wish)
- **Veteran Riding Mastery**

All of these abilities are fully described in the cavalier chapter. Additional advantages that apply only to paladins are described hereafter.

### The Assensing of Evil

By concentrating for 1 round, the paladin can detect evil as per the clerical spell. Note that the holy symbol of the paladin must be held and presented for this power to function. The duration of the effect is equal to the paladin's time of concentration, performing no additional actions beyond walking (and not speaking).



### Aura of Protection

The paladin permanently emanates a protection from evil 10' radius aura, in a manner similar to the cleric spell. The aura functions even if the paladin is unconscious or vanquished, until death. All





allies and companions within the 10' radius will also benefit from the aura's effects.<sup>27</sup> Even a dispel magic spell can only disrupt the aura for a single melee round, at most.

Keep in mind that this power is not all-powerful, and as a level 1 spell effect it is subject to some fairly serious restrictions:

- Although the aura prevents hostile enchanted, extra-planar, or conjured creatures (demons, devils, elementals, etc.) from making bodily contact with the paladin, it does not prevent those creatures from using ranged or magical attacks against the paladin.
- Similarly, if the paladin attacks any of those creatures, those creatures can make bodily contact and inflict melee damage upon the paladin.

### **Deific Empowerment of Abilities**

The paladin has the Deific Empowerment of Might, Agility, and Endurance advantage of the cavalier, which increases STR, DEX, and CON by +2D10 percentile points per experience level beyond 1.

Additionally, paladins gain +2D10 percentile points to charisma (CHA) in the same manner, to a maximum ability score of 18/00.

### **Divinely Augmented Abilities**

The paladin also has the Augmented Might, Agility, and Endurance advantage, just as cavaliers do.

Additionally, paladins have divinely augmented charisma; other good-aligned characters can innately feel the champion knight's calling, and are drawn to it. They begin play with either 17 or 18 charisma (as rolled), with an additional percentile score (D100) further added.

### **Grace and Wrath of the Gods of Law**

After many crusades and triumphs against Chaos and Evil, high-level paladins are visited in devout meditation by the creatures, spirits, devas, or angels who serve the Lawful Good patron deity.

The result of this visionary contact is a revelatory awakening, in which the paladin champion is granted divine powers by the deity and its messengers. Therefore, beginning at experience level 9 – following a profound vision during the night immediately after completing training for level 9 – paladins are capable of casting clerical spells. This ability is gained whether the paladin is human or half-elven.

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<sup>27</sup> Due to a potentially erroneous reading of the old 1978 rules, with confusion caused by the “1 inch on a game board equals 10 scale feet” rule, it must be stated clearly that the range of this aura is 10', not one inch! Refer to the November 1980 magazine.







The paladin will then have the ability to pray for and receive cleric spells, just as a cleric does. The paladin can meditate in silence, or pray to his or her patron deity; in game terms, the resultant daily empowerment of spells will be the same.

A level 9 paladin casts spells as a level 1 cleric (for purposes of calculating spell range, duration, healing, and so forth).<sup>28</sup> Thereafter, the paladin gains further clerical spell-casting prowess one experience level at a time. Therefore a level 10 paladin is equivalent to a level 2 cleric, a level 11 paladin is equivalent to a level 3 cleric, and so forth.

Paladins need to use their holy symbol, as well as any other required material components demanded by the various spells, just as clerics do.<sup>29</sup>

(Refer to the cleric character class description for further details in this regard.)

Note that although they are holy knights, paladins will never be true clerics, regardless of the experience level they eventually attain. They cannot cast clerical spells from spell scrolls.

The following table summarizes the clerical spell acquisition and casting abilities for paladins. As an important aside, note that because paladins belong to the knight archetype – and not to the priest archetype – they do not gain additional spells for high Wisdom as clerics do.

**TABLE 24:**  
**Clerical Spell Casting Ability for Paladins**

Paladin's Experience Level	Equivalent Cleric Level	Number of Level 1 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 2 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 3 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day	Number of Level 4 Cleric Spells Memorizable per Day
<b>1 to 8</b>	N/A	(None)	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>9</b>	1	1	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>10</b>	2	2	(None)	(None)	(None)
<b>11</b>	3	2	1	(None)	(None)
<b>12</b>	4	2	2	(None)	(None)
<b>13</b>	5	2	2	1	(None)
<b>14</b>	6	3	2	1	(None)
<b>15</b>	7	3	2	1	1
<b>16</b>	8	3	3	1	1
<b>17</b>	9	3	3	2	1
<b>18</b>	10	3	3	3	1
<b>19</b>	11	3	3	3	2
<b>20 or higher</b>	(+1)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)	3 (no further gain)

<sup>28</sup> Refer to the August 1982 magazine.

<sup>29</sup> Refer to the August 1982 magazine, as well as the January 1984 newszine.





### Laying on Hands

Once every 24 hours, the paladin can lay on hands, magically healing minor wounds. The use of his power requires a holy symbol. The power will not cure diseases, blindness, deafness, poisoning, or other debilitations; it will only heal lost hit points. The paladin can use this power on him- or herself, or on a chosen ally who is touched for 1 melee round.<sup>30</sup>

In desperate circumstances the paladin can heal in this manner during combat, which requires all of the paladin's actions for that round (meaning he cannot simultaneously attack, parry, use a magic item, etc.).

The amount of healing is up to 2 points of damage per level of the paladin. A zero-level paladin can only heal 2 hit points; a level 10 paladin can heal 20 hit points. Points cannot be "saved" for multiple uses; the daily healing is an all-or-nothing affair.

### Mantle of the Pure

As noted prior, paladins have a +2 bonus to all saving throw rolls, regardless of type.

### The Paladin's Warhorse

Beginning at experience level 4, or any time thereafter, the Oldskull paladin has the ability to magically summon his or her spirit animal, a divine royal destrier. To summon the creature, the paladin must seek solitude in an idyllic place (such as a forgotten shrine or elven ruin), fast, and meditate for 24 hours. Upon "awakening", the paladin will find the warhorse standing over him in spirit form ... but not in the flesh. The paladin will see that the warhorse is waiting in an already-known and familiar wilderness or borderland locale, not more than 250 miles from the paladin's current location. It will wait for one moon's time (28 nights) before it disappears.

To claim the warhorse, the paladin will need to withstand a martial challenge, such as slaying a young dragon, exploring and cleansing a small subterranean shrine grotto, vanquishing (but not slaying) an evil cavalier who is attempting to imprison the steed, or something similar. Passing this test will earn the paladin +6 XPM and will allow the destrier to be claimed.

Once named, the warhorse will allow itself to be touched and ridden, but only by the paladin. No other creature can successfully mount the creature (it will resist, to the point of fighting to the death) unless the paladin allows it.

The power of the warhorse depends on the paladin's experience level, as shown on the table below. As the paladin gains levels, the warhorse will likewise increase in awareness and power.

<sup>30</sup> Refer also to the April 1981 magazine.











The warhorse is mortal – requiring food, care, healing, and shelter – but also essentially divine. It is Lawful Good and quite intelligent. It will be utterly fearless (unfailing morale, immune to fear effects) and will fight to the death to protect the paladin. It will have advantaged saving throws while the paladin is riding it, which means the D20 saving throw is rolled twice, and the higher roll is retained while the lower roll is disregarded. It will serve for 10 years before it becomes too old to serve as a war steed. It will not be able to effectively enter dungeons or the netherworld. If slain, it will be forever dead; the paladin will not be able to summon another for at least 10 years.

If the paladin ever falls from grace (permanently or temporarily), the warhorse will vanish immediately in a pallor of golden light.

**TABLE 25:**  
**The Paladin's Warhorse**

Paladin's Experience Level	Warhorse's Hit Points	Additional Game Notes
<b>0 to 3</b>	N/A	(Cannot yet summon a divine royal destrier.)
<b>4</b>	15 to 45 (6D6+9)	Armor Class 4 unbarbed, Move 180', <sup>31</sup> Hit Dice 5+5, # Attacks 2 Hooves/1 Bite, Damage 2D4/2D4/1D4, Intelligence 5, Size L (19 hands).  Carrying capacity 500 lbs. for full speed, 800 lbs. maximum.  Chance of panic in dangerous situations 0%.  Several of these base stats are modified at each further experience level, as noted below.
<b>5</b>	18 to 45 (3D10+15)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D3+1, Intelligence 5, Size L (19 hands). Carrying capacity 510 lbs. for full speed, 815 lbs. maximum.
<b>6</b>	20 to 45 (5D6+15)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D3+1, Intelligence 6, Size L (19 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 520 lbs. for full speed, 830 lbs. maximum.
<b>7</b>	23 to 45 (2D12+21)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D2+2, Intelligence 6, Size L (19 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 530 lbs. for full speed, 845 lbs. maximum.
<b>8</b>	25 to 45 (4D6+21)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D3+1, Intelligence 6, Size L (20 hands). Carrying capacity 540 lbs. for full speed, 860 lbs. maximum.
<b>9</b>	27 to 45 (2D10+25)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D3+1, Intelligence 7, Size L (20 hands). Carrying capacity 550 lbs. for full speed, 875 lbs. maximum.

<sup>31</sup> The movement rate for the paladin's warhorse is indicated in the 1975 Original Supplement for the Lake Geneva "Grey" campaign.







<b>10</b>	30 to 45 (3D6+27)	Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D3+1, Intelligence 7, Size L (20 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 560 lbs. for full speed, 890 lbs. maximum.
<b>11</b>	33 to 45 (1D4+1D10+31)	Damage 1D4+4/1D4+4/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (20 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 570 lbs. for full speed, 905 lbs. maximum.
<b>12</b>	35 to 45 (2D6+33)	Damage 1D4+4/1D4+4/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (21 hands). Carrying capacity 580 lbs. for full speed, 920 lbs. maximum.
<b>13</b>	38 to 45 (1D8+37)	Damage 1D4+4/1D4+4/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (21 hands). Carrying capacity 590 lbs. for full speed, 935 lbs. maximum.
<b>14</b>	40 to 45 (1D6+39)	Damage 1D4+4/1D4+4/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (21 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 600 lbs. for full speed, 950 lbs. maximum.
<b>15</b>	43 to 45 (1D3+42)	Damage 1D3+5/1D3+5/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (21 ½ hands). Carrying capacity 610 lbs. for full speed, 965 lbs. maximum.
<b>16 or higher</b>	45	Damage 1D3+5/1D3+5/1D2+2, Intelligence 7, Size L (22 hands). Carrying capacity 620 lbs. for full speed, 980 lbs. maximum.

If a paladin keeps a divine royal destrier over a period of time while progressing in experience levels, the destrier will gain +3 hit points every time the paladin gains an additional level, to a maximum of 45 hit points.

### **Purifying Touch**

Once or more every 7 days, the paladin can magically cure any disease, as the clerical spell. The paladin can heal him- or herself or a chosen companion. The use of a holy symbol is required. This power requires 1 full turn of concentration, and therefore cannot be used in combat. It will immediately cure any effect that is not on the “exceptions list”, as noted in the Vessel of Purity advantage section (hereafter).

The number of times this ability can be used, per week, is dependent upon the paladin’s experience level as follows: levels 0 to 5, 1 time/week; levels 6 to 10, 2 times/week; levels 11 to 15, 3 times/week; and so forth.

### **Turning the Undead**

At experience level 3, the paladin acquires the ability to turn the undead as a level 1 cleric. With each further experience level, the paladin’s level of power in this regard increases by 1. Therefore a level 13 paladin is equivalent to a level 11 cleric. The holy symbol is required.





## Vessel of Purity

A paladin is immune to all non-magical diseases (up to and including bubonic plague, leprosy, and parasitic infections), along with most monstrous or magical disease-like effects (including giant leech contagion, giant tick bites, rat bites, tentacle beast strikes, and the cause disease spell). There are some important exceptions to this general immunity, however.<sup>32</sup>

- **Blood Maggots'** burrowing is not a disease (although a cure disease spell will destroy the maggots); rather, it is a gory physical effect that paladins are not immune to.
- **Cursed Scrolls** that inflict a disease-curse can kill a paladin, but the rotting effect will be 20 times slower than it is for any other character (which will hopefully be enough time for the paladin to be magically cured).
- **Lycanthropy**, frequently termed a disease, is actually a curse. Paladins are not immune to its effects.<sup>33</sup>
- **Mummy Rot** is a necrotic form of unholy curse, and paladins are not immune to it. However they will not lose charisma as an effect of mummy rot, and therefore cannot lose paladinhood due to a mummy's unholy attacks.<sup>34</sup>
- **Periaps of Rotting** are too powerful for a paladin to withstand, but while the paladin is afflicted her or she will not lose charisma as others do (and therefore cannot lose paladinhood as a result of the periapt).
- **Vampirism** is only partly a disease; it is more properly termed a form of supernatural entropy. A paladin is not immune to a vampire's energy drain, and the only true solace is that if a paladin is slain by a vampire, he or she will remain slain (due to purity) instead of rising as a vampiric thrall.
- **Disease-Like Monstrous Powers** can affect the paladin; he or she will not be immune to them. This category includes non-disease powers that can be eliminated by the magic of a cure disease spell, such as (monstrous) brain parasite infestation, ear weevil egg laying, eye spore sprouting, green slime flesh attacks, violet fungal rot, and yellow mold spores causing choking.<sup>35</sup>



<sup>32</sup> Some of these side case rulings and clarifications are official errata, while others specifically address situations that have arisen in the author's campaign.

<sup>33</sup> Refer to the December 1979 magazine, as well as the Summer 1981 newszine and the October 1981 magazine.

<sup>34</sup> Refer to the October 1981 magazine.

<sup>35</sup> Refer to the October 1981 magazine.







## **Limitations and Disadvantages for the Paladin Class**

As already explained, for the longevity of a balanced and fair campaign the Game Master must ensure that the paladin's limitations are as fully enforced as the many advantages are.

### **The Paladin as a Cavalier**

Paladins have the following disadvantages and strictures that are shared with the cavalier class:

- **The Argent Bonds of Chivalry**
- **Armor of Exemplary Station**
- **Great Power with a Price**
- **Lack of Weapon Specialization**
- **Sworn to a Great Cause** (always, the cause of the chosen patron deity)
- **The Uncontrollable Fate of Social Standing** (in regards to starting mount and gear, but note that a human cavalier's initial standing is determined by ability score rolls, not a percentile roll, as indicated earlier in this chapter)
- **Weapons of Dishonor**

### **A Disciple of the Higher Power**

Unlike cavaliers, paladins do not need to swear themselves to a liege lord and/or knightly order if they do not wish to do so. They serve the patron deity of Lawful Goodness, not earthy temporal powers. This is regarded as a disadvantage, because it means that the paladin is held to a higher divine standard. A fall from grace can have disastrous consequences.

### **Fall from Grace**

If the paladin ever willingly turns away from Lawful Good alignment, then all paladin-specific advantages are immediately lost. The paladin then becomes a cavalier of the same experience level, and will never regain paladin status.

This fall to cavalier status however only occurs when the paladin falls to one of the following non-evil alignments: CG, CN, LN, NG, or TN. If a paladin knowingly and willingly commits an evil act – despite two warnings from the Game Master (“Are you sure?” “Are you really sure?”) – the paladin permanently loses paladinhood, and will never regain it. He or she becomes an evil cavalier of the alignment most appropriate to the nature of the evil deed performed (CE, LE, or NE).

If the change is unwilling – for example, the paladin falls prey to a helm of opposite alignment or a curse – the paladin will lose status as above. He or she will *not* however permanently lose paladinhood due to evil, if the change was fully unwilling on the part of the player. The status and power loss will be temporary and subject to atonement.

Sacred atonement will be required for the paladin to regain paladin status and to reinstate class advantages. Atonement must be assisted by a high-level cleric of good alignment (any good alignment, CG, LG, or NG) and experience level 7 or higher. The GM decides on what type of atonement is required, depending on the severity of the transgression. Escalating examples of atonement might







include swearing to adhere to the faith, making burnt offerings (sacrificing gold or valuables to be consumed in sacred fire), or fulfilling a quest to prove one's worth.

Even if the paladin returns to grace, if he or she had a divine royal destrier, that spirit animal is lost and will not return. A full ten years must pass before the paladin can attempt again to bond with a new holy warhorse.







### Infused with Extra-Planar Power

Unfortunately, the source of much of the paladin's power is the deific instillation of holy essence in a mortal vessel, which means that the paladin's soul is in part an extra-planar entity. This means that the paladin can be turned by an evil cleric, in the same manner that good clerics can turn undead. (Fortunately an evil cleric cannot *destroy* a paladin and blast him into ash with a turning attempt, because the paladin is still a living mortal and not entirely made of holy energies.)

This is not a fear effect; it is an unholy abjuration. If the evil cleric's turning attempt is successful, even a PC paladin will temporarily forced out of the player's control as he or she attempts to flee the cleric. As always, if the paladin is attacked by the cleric or the cleric's minions while being turned, the turning is automatically negated. Similarly, if the evil cleric attempts to cast a spell on a turned paladin, the turning is immediately negated, whether the evil spell's evil effects (due to saving throw, resistance, immunity, etc.) are successfully manifested or not.







### Loyal Retainers of Pure Heart

Only lawful good NPCs can remain in a paladin's service for long. This includes henchman NPCs and expert hireling NPCs, along with men-at-arms and normal hireling NPCs who are retained in service for more than one month's time. It does not include other Player Characters; for the PCs, the more nuanced guidelines in the next section (Lawful Good and role-playing) should be followed instead.

### A Modest Stronghold

If the paladin ever creates a tower or small keep as a personal stronghold (at experience level 9 or higher), the fortification must be modest in both scope and scale. The paladin cannot spend more than 200,000 gold pieces on the fortification's construction, and can never have more than 200 total followers and men-at-arms to defend it.<sup>36</sup>

### Reliance Upon the Divine, Not the Arcane

The paladin can never keep more than ten magic items, as follows:

- **One suit of magical armor**, or a magical armor-type item (such as a helm of brilliance)
- **One magical shield**
- **Four magical weapons** (a javelin of lightning would count as one weapon; a magic bow and magic arrows would count as one weapon)
- **Four non-martial magical items** (this category includes potions, rings, rods, and miscellaneous magic items)

Any items in excess of any one of these four item categories will result in *arcane hubris*, causing the paladin to fall into temporary divine disfavor. The game effect of this is that the paladin character will gain no experience during the play session wherein the arcane hubris is manifested.

Edge cases can be dealt with lightly; for example, if a paladin slays a dragon with his companions, is already carrying ten owned magic items, and picks up a potion and hands it to an ally, hubris will not manifest. The GM should interpret edge cases with some lenience. The core of the matter is, if the player is trying to weasel around the restriction to retain personal power, the arcane hubris rule will certainly apply.

The paladin is encouraged to gift companions (PCs or NPC retainers) with magic items in excess of the ten items allowed to the paladin. However the paladin cannot hide items, bury items, keep items at home, stash them in bags of holding ("I'm not really carrying them!") or use any other such glaring loophole; hubris will manifest for the session in all such attempts.

### Sacrifices to the Holy Temple

Paladins will never hoard treasure. They will only keep as much wealth as they require to support themselves and their loyal retainers (NPCs) modestly, along with lawful pay to allies, city state tithes, and so forth. Any "spare" treasure beyond a month's worth of such expenses should be given to the temple(s) of the paladin's patron deity.

<sup>36</sup> Refer to the Original 1975 supplement for the Lake Geneva "Grey" campaign.



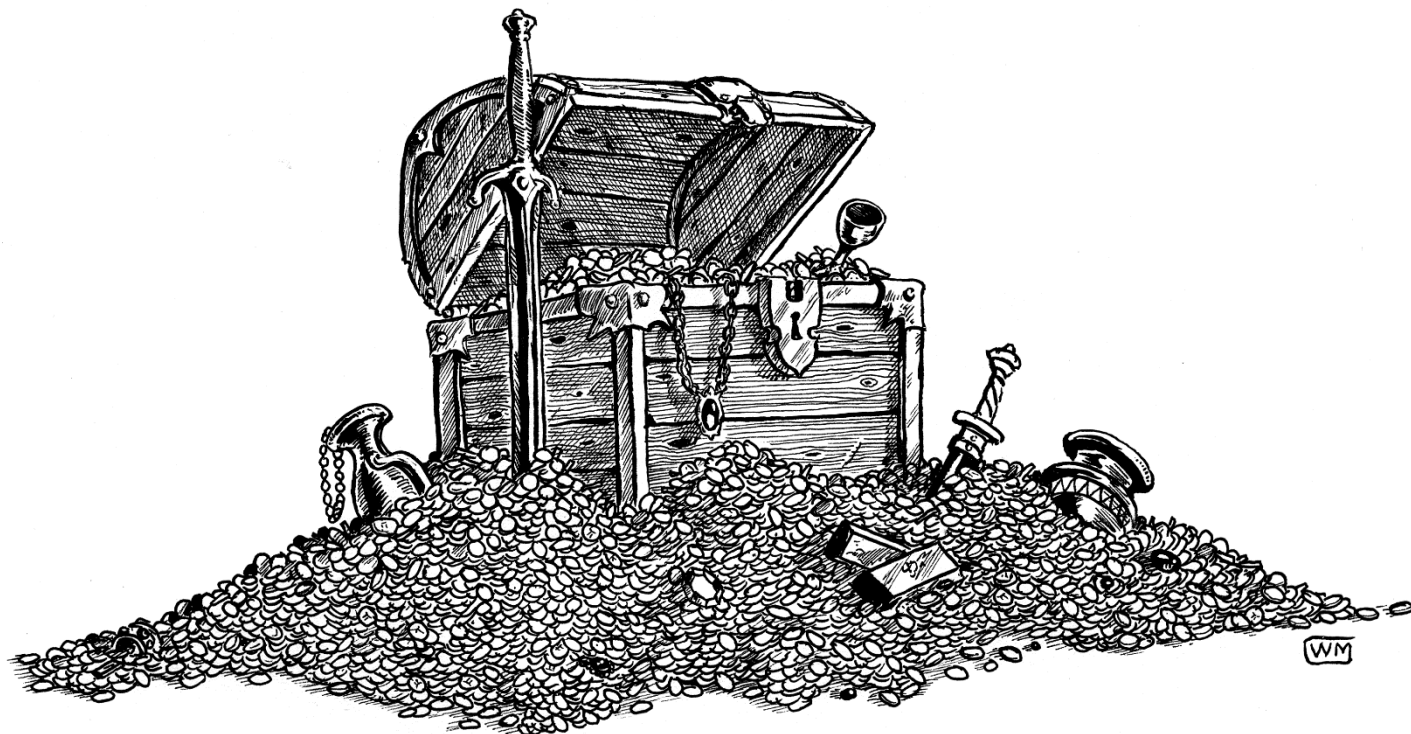




However, if a paladin is establishing a stronghold of some kind, all required fees – even in the tens or hundreds of thousands of gold pieces – can be allowed to pass through the paladin’s hands, so long as the character does not retain the excess wealth for more than one month’s time.

If – in the Game Master’s sole opinion – the paladin has disregarded these divine proclamations, *arcane hubris* will occur (as already described).

Note that paladins do not need to give their treasures directly to the poor; they can instead give them to entrusted priests at their patron deity’s temple. The NPC clerics and Templars therein will then decide how best to distribute the wealth to the worthy, or how to use the wealth to further the deity’s cause. If significant contributions are made to the temple, the paladin might well see direct results to his or her sacrificial offerings, including a better-defended temple, increases in personal social standing, more level zero worshippers (all of whom will greatly respect and aid the paladin if they can), and perhaps cadres of NPC clerics or Templars who will serve with the paladin during one future adventure.



## **Lawful Good Alignment and Role-Play of the Paladin**

Following the introduction of the paladin class in 1975, enough misunderstandings occurred over the decades that Gary Gygax felt the need to repeatedly clarify the meaning of the Lawful Good alignment – particularly from a paladin’s point of view. Considering this ever-present confusion, this volume





provides definitions for the Gygaxian interpretation of Law and Goodness. To choose an iconic quote from Gary, we must first remember: “Good is not stupid.”<sup>37</sup>

Alignment is also cultural, which is where the paladin’s patron deity and background culture within the World of Oldskull must be considered. A Lawful Good paladin of Girru (the Babylonian god of fire) will believe for example that enemies should be purged in fire, with their dead bodies branded by torches or even burned with flaming oil whenever possible. But a Lawful Good paladin of Anubis (the Egyptian god of guardianship of the dead) would believe that burning the dead would lead to the rise of evil spirits, and would therefore be a chaotic act. Both of these deific credos are Lawful Good approaches, but they differ in cultural morals because they reflect the beliefs of two very different civilizations.<sup>38</sup> The paladin player and the GM may therefore need to develop a “god-bound code of honor” that pertains to the paladin’s patron deity specifically, as this code of belief will be emulated in the game. Cultures throughout the World of Oldskull should be considered *mythically*, as if the gods were real and battling with one another through mortal champions, not *historically* or through a modern lens.

To understand the Palatine Code there are two components to Lawful Good that must be considered separately and then together; namely, Law and Goodness.

**Law** is the belief that order must exist, or else sentient life has no meaning. Long-term traditions are frequently celebrated, because they maintain order; new ideas are often frowned upon because abrupt change can bring upheaval to that “natural” order. Law is also the enemy of Chaos (anarchy, wildness, and entropy), which means that Chaos should be suppressed or converted when it is peaceful; and if Chaos is destructive, the source of that Chaos should be destroyed.

**Goodness** is the belief that all innocent people and creatures should be allowed the gift of life. It is also the belief that empathy and civility are pure, while selfishness and cruelty are not. Good is also the wrathful enemy of Evil, which means that evil creatures should be slain whenever and wherever possible. Shades of gray in regards to evil are for neutrality to contend with, not goodness.

**Lawful Goodness** is the belief that “what is good for the most, is the best”. Without law, goodness cannot be ensured for as many people as possible, which means that good would weaken and then fade away before the onslaught of evil. (This belief is not shared by those who believe in Neutral Goodness, or Chaotic Goodness. Neutral Goodness is pure good embracing fairness and equity,<sup>39</sup> while Chaotic Goodness advocates personal liberties over all authority.)

In Lawful Goodness, evil must be mercilessly destroyed because it is the antithesis of divine purity and immortality. Evil is quite literally the existential death threat against the goods of Good.

Considering all of these notes, what can paladins do, and not do, in the name of Lawful Goodness? Remembering that the Lawful Good alignment is indeed a mythic medieval philosophy, *not* a 21<sup>st</sup>-Century ethos, we can clarify play of the paladin as follows:

<sup>37</sup> Refer to Gygax’s essay in the June 1980 magazine.

<sup>38</sup> For a fairly interesting consideration of the possibly varying beliefs of paladins by upbringing and patron deity, refer to the August 1989 magazine.

<sup>39</sup> Refer to the Dragonsfoot Gygax Q&A IV, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005.







- **[I] Paladins can kill evil creatures, including non-combatants, elderly, and the young.** In the Castle Oldskull game, creatures are born to goodness, neutrality, or evil, because of their inherent essence and/or the essential nature of the deities that their parents worshipped. To quote Gary once again, “Black is black, gray is gray, white is white”.<sup>40</sup> The paladin’s *detect evil* power is granted by the gods specifically for this purpose, allowing the holy knight to freely become judge, jury, and executioner. Evil is not a modern social construct in the game world, it is a manifestation of the will of the existence-proven and immortal gods of death, horror, and madness. Player Characters can shift alignment, either voluntarily (by the player) or involuntarily (by the GM); but the vast majority of monsters will never change unless the Game Master says they do.
- **[II] Paladins can kill neutral creatures, but only when attacked or imminently threatened by them.** Unaligned animals can be slain if they are known to be dangerous, such as lions and tigers.
- **[III] Paladins cannot kill innocent or good creatures without suffering an alignment shift.** Finding wriggle room in this precept is difficult to justify by the means.
- **[IV] Paladins will never knowingly suffer the presence of evil companions.**<sup>41</sup> A paladin cannot adventure with or ally with chaotic evil, lawful evil, and/or neutral evil characters knowingly. (And *detect evil* should identify such cretins fairly quickly.) Likely, any such companions would be threatened with death if they do not leave the paladin’s party. During the play group’s character creation process, the GM should note that if a PC paladin is going to be in the game, the campaign will *not* function if any other Player Characters are evil. This includes any PCs who are “really good friends with that pally guy”, or “sneaky and secretly evil”, or situations where the paladin “just looks the other way”. This fact should be stated during session zero when the campaign is being developed for play; the players must either collectively accept the presence of the PC paladin, and forbid all other PCs from beginning the game with evil alignments; or they must reject the PC paladin, forcing the paladin’s player to reroll (likely, to a LG cavalier or Templar) for the sake of the group. Any softness on this issue will lead to grief, and likely the future collapse of the play group.
- **[V] Paladins cannot kill evil people within a city without severe ramifications.** This is because cities are (supposedly) manifestations of law. Evil people who attack the paladin in a city can be harmed, but not slain; they should be brought to justice and with their ultimate fate left to the authorities. Paladin transgressions of alignment in this regard might well be rebellion against Lawfulness, not Goodness.
- **[VI] Paladins cannot exhibit abject cruelty without an alignment shift.** This includes the torture of evil creatures. Such creatures should be slain, not dealt with in a circuitous way that causes the paladin to become impure.
- **[VII] Paladins need not trouble themselves with the ethics of evil.** Evil creatures could be taken captive, if non-tortuous interrogation would lead to the gaining of crucial information. Evil characters could also be converted to the paladin’s faith upon threat of death, but such conversions are hardly sincere. It is far better to put evil creatures to death; “kill the unclean

<sup>40</sup> Refer to the June 1980 magazine. Gary was also fond of quoting the grim saying “nits make lice” in this regard, which is the flat implication that the eggs of vermin grow into adult vermin, and are therefore vermin themselves, by irrevocable nature. See for example the Dragonsfoot Gyax Q&A II, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005.

<sup>41</sup> Refer also to the March 1981 magazine.





and let the gods sort them out".<sup>42</sup> Evil creatures who surrender to the paladin should expect to be put to death ... not always, but frequently!<sup>43</sup> The reasoning is simple: evil creatures who are allowed to live will go on to commit more evil, because that is their very nature.

- **[VIII] Paladins need not battle against the advocacy of neutrality.** Paladins do not need to fight against the territories of druids, for example. The enemy of Lawful Goodness is not neutrality, the enemies are Evil (to a greater degree) and Chaos (to a lesser degree, and often only when combined with Evil).
- **[IX] Paladins do not like thieves, with good reason.** As a wrinkle to the above note about druidic evil, keep in mind that paladins have only a minor problem with a neutral thief's neutrality. What they really have a problem with is the thief's abject disregard of Law (theft) and abject selfishness (which is not necessarily evil, but is against goodness). Evil thieves, of course, are evil through and through; consideration of them would instead fall under the "Paladins cannot kill evil people within a city" notation above.
- **[X] Paladins will countenance the presence of chaotic neutral, lawful neutral, and/or true neutral PCs and/or NPCs on a single expedition basis only.** An expedition constitutes an adventure (roughly equivalent to a published dungeon module, requiring several sessions to complete), not just an individual play session. But after this expedition, the paladin and the neutral character(s) must part ways.<sup>44</sup> If during session zero the players and GM discuss this matter, and realize that the presence of neutral characters will result in a permanent schism with the newly-founded adventuring party, a decision must be made. The likeliest approach is that the paladin's player agrees to play a Lawful Good cavalier or Templar instead, so that the multiple neutral PCs can also play the game.
- **[XI] Paladins can acquire treasure, and benefit from it, although excess must be sacrificed.** Specifically from a pure game rule perspective, paladins can find unguarded treasures in a dungeon and take them back to a settlement in order to gain Experience Point Marks (XPM). They can also take treasures from evil creatures, or threatening neutral creatures, and gain XPM in that manner as well. They cannot acquire treasures through thievery in a city, or from vanquishing good creatures and seizing their possessions. And after XPMs are awarded, the paladin must sacrifice the excess treasures (as described in the Disadvantages section).
- **[XII] Paladins do not need to convert people to the cause of their patron deity.** Paladins know in their hearts that their one deity is more powerful than all other good deities. (If they did not sincerely believe this, the deity would not have instilled them with the essential grace that empowers their youthful paladinhood in the first place.) There is no need to despise the other gods of goodness, or their followers; the common enemy of all good faiths is Evil.
- **[XIII] Paladins do not need to take historical chivalric oaths** (of chastity, celibacy, temperance, silence, isolation, etc.) to retain their paladin status. The only exception to this is

<sup>42</sup> To quote Gary once again, "A paladin can freely dispatch prisoners of Evil alignment that have surrendered and renounced that alignment in favor of Lawful Good. They are then sent on to their reward before they can backslide." Refer to the Dragonsfoot Gyax Q&A II, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2005.

<sup>43</sup> Refer to the Dragonsfoot Gyax Q&A, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Refer to the March 1981 magazine.







a limited oath of poverty, which involves giving away excess treasures, as explained in the Disadvantages section.<sup>45</sup>

- **[XIV] Paladins are not Saints ... yet.** As a final note, paladins can take lovers, wed, and create lineages. Such role-playing aspects might well be “behind the curtain” in most campaigns, but for those players and GMs who want to explore life’s ways within the fantasy world, there is no reason why a paladin could not marry and have children, potentially establishing a Lawful Good dynasty in the name of the patron deity. After all, what could be more good than ... more good?



<sup>45</sup> Refer to the April 1980 magazine.









## Chapter VII:

### The Templar Sub-Class



#### Overview of the Templar Class

**Description:** In the World of Oldskull, the Templar is a knightly class archetype that is akin to the paladin, with much less of a focus on horsemanship or old traditions of reverence. The templars focus on destroying heretics, rooting out evil, and slaying demons and devils.<sup>46</sup> In many ways they are warriors more than they are knights, but their knighthood is nevertheless assured by the fact that they live and die for a singular knightly order ... that is, the Knights Templar.

<sup>46</sup> Astute readers will note that the Templar class is strongly similar to the 1975-1978 old school paladin class, prior to the hardcover publication of the cavalier class in 1985. The Templar class and its lore emerged through Oldskull campaign play when veteran players of paladins were dismayed to learn that their devil-slaying crusaders had been turned into politically-minded and chivalry-obsessed cavaliers, leaving the original paladin class and its devil-smiting ideals behind. Therefore the 1975-1978 paladin class is returned to its rightful place of honor here. Note that in the Castle Oldskull game, the cavalier represents the 1985 Unearthed knight ideal, while the Oldskull paladin (as featured in the prior chapter) is the 1985 Unearthed paladin-cavalier. The Templar, defiant of these two Unearthed archetypes, maintains the 1978 original paladin's distinct identity for those players and GMs who wish to have both types of knight in shining armor – the chivalric horseman, alongside the dungeoneering champion – available as class options. The Oldskull Templar was designed as a tribute to artist and demon lair crafter David C. Sutherland III.







The Templars are a dying order, for reasons that are made clear in the history section featured later in this chapter. They are sworn to the cause of saving the World of Oldskull from Apocalypse and extra-planar incursion. With the Unholy Lands largely lost, they spend their lives slaying demons, devils, daemons, and hags, as well as evil humanoids, giants, cultists, and dragons that are sworn to the infernal powers.

Very few of them are horsemen any longer, and the order mostly fights on foot. This is because rooting out extra-planar evil frequently requires raids against witch- and cult-held ruins, dungeoneering, netherworld expeditions, and even hopeless (and pathetically small) planar crusades against the Hells and Hades.



To distinguish the Templars from other knightly archetypes, the Game Master and prospective players should consider the following:

**Templars Are Knights:** They indeed belong to the knight archetype, along with cavaliers, paladins, and Chaos Knights.

**Templars Are Not Cavaliers:** They have only the advantages and disadvantages listed in the chapter. If a feature is not listed in this chapter, it is not a feature of the Templar class.

**Templars Are Also Not Paladins:** They do not have the benefits and penalties related to paladins as defined in Chapter VI. Most specifically, Templars do not need to adhere to Lawful Good alignment throughout their existence. Lawful Neutrality is a perfectly acceptable alignment for the Templar. They will lose some, but not all, of their powers from violating Lawful Goodness. Such things can be atoned for.

**Templars of Renown:** Famous Knights Templar from the history of the World of Oldskull include Andre de Montbard, Count Fulk the Younger of Andegavia, Count Hugh of Campania, Godfrey de Saint-Omer the Destitute, Hugues de Payens (the Order founder and first Grand Master), and many others. Few famous Templars are still alive.







**Immortal Templars:** Templars worship and revere the chivalric martial deities, just as cavaliers do. They also honor the gods of Lawful Neutrality, which include Anu (of the Babylonian myths), Dorozhand (of the Pegana myths) and Enki (of the Sumerian myths). The Empyrean and Etrurian deities of Lawful Neutrality are many, which means that the remaining Templars hold considerable power throughout the city states and minor order holdfasts throughout Tyrrhenia. The mostly-







worshipped Tyrrhenian gods and goddess include Athrpa, Concordia, Janus, Jupiter, Nerio (a favorite of female Templars), Palatua (especially in the Free City State of Grimrook), Pietas, Securitas, Sol Invictus, and Virtus.

## **Becoming a Templar**

**Alignment:** Templars must begin the game with Lawful Good alignment. Through later game play, they can change to Lawful Neutral alignment once with no penalty. Templars of Lawful Goodness are known as Vigilants, and those of Lawful Neutrality are known as Pragmatists. These two philosophies coexist fully within the order and frequently Templars of both beliefs fight side by side and die for one another. Beyond LG and LN alignments however, Templars who shift a differing alignment will fall from grace and lose of their power until sacred atonement occurs.

**Ancestral Limitations:** Only humans and non-drowic half-elves can become Templars.

**Minimum Ability Scores:** STR 12+, DEX 6+, CON 9+, INT 9+, WIS 13+, CHA 17+.<sup>47</sup>

**Social Standing:** Templars have their social standing rolled randomly on percentile dice during character creation. However, if the randomly-indicated standing level is Lower Class (LLC-1, MLC-2, or ULC-3), they are granted status instead in the Lower Middle Class (LMC-4).

## **Archetypal Considerations for the Templar**

**Combat Prowess:** As knights, Templars have the most efficient combat prowess progression rate in the game. They are equal to cavaliers and paladins in this regard.

**Hit Dice:** Templars do not have the split and specialized low-level hit point pathways that cavaliers do. Instead, they have D10 Hit Dice, with constitution modifiers applying to each die, up through experience level 9. Beyond level 9, they gain +3 hit points per level (with constitution modifiers no longer applying).

**Iconic Armor:** Templars can wear any type of armor, and can also use any type of helm and shield. As members of a dying order they have little to no regard for exemplary armor and champion status, as cavaliers and paladins do.

**Iconic Arms:** Templars can wield any type of weapon. They do not train with honored and traditional weapons of choice as cavaliers and paladins do. Therefore, although they gain no weapon specialization or mastery bonuses, they do not need to abide by any restrictions to weapon selection either. They also no longer harbor any idealistic doctrine against the use of ranged weapons, which means that they can use bows, crossbows, pole arms, and similar long-ranged weapons with impunity.

**Prime Requisite:** The prime requisites of the Templar are strength and wisdom. If the Templar has STR 16+ and also WIS 16+, he or she will gain a +10% bonus to all earned experience.

<sup>47</sup> Note that these are the ability score requirements for the Advanced 1978 paladin class, before the 1985 hardcover-volume introduction of the Unearthed paladin-cavalier.







**Saving Throws:** Templars have saving throws that are similar to the fighter class, with an additional +2 bonus to all saving throws regardless of type.



## Templar Progression

**Class Level Limit:** Templars have no class-imposed maximum experience level. However, in the World of Oldskull campaign, no NPC templars of experience level 18 or higher are currently left alive.

**Pace of Progression:** The Templar class has a fairly slowed pace of progression in relation to other classes. Templars who attain 25 XPM are level 3, and those with 50 XPM are level 4. Those with 100 XPM are level 5, those with 250 XPM are level 6, and those with 500 XPM are level 7. In consideration of higher experience levels, those with XPM 1,000 are level 8, those with XPM 2,500 are level 9, those with XPM 5,000 are level 11, and those with XPM 10,000 are level 15.

Player Character Templars will frequently tend to progress more quickly than cavaliers and paladins, because they do not have a chance be slowed into Yeoman (vs. Noble) status at the beginning of the game.





TABLE 26:

**Experience Progression for the Templar Class**

Experience Point Marks	Experience Level	Earned HD / hp	Cumulative HD / hp	Exemplary Title
<b>0 to 10.99</b>	1	1D10 hp	1D10 hp	Templar Brother / Sister
<b>11 to 23.99</b>	2	+1D10 hp	2D10 hp	Templar Herald
<b>24 to 47.99</b>	3	+1D10 hp	3D10 hp	Templar Vigile
<b>48 to 95.99</b>	4	+1D10 hp	4D10 hp	Templar Signifer
<b>96 to 179.99</b>	5	+1D10 hp	5D10 hp	Templar Knight Errant / Dame Errant
<b>180 to 359.99</b>	6	+1D10 hp	6D10 hp	Knight Templar
<b>360 to 699.99</b>	7	+1D10 hp	7D10 hp	Templar Castellan
<b>700 to 1,399.99</b>	8	+1D10 hp	8D10 hp	Knight Templar Justiciar
<b>1,400 to 2,799.99</b>	9	+1D10 hp	9D10 hp	Demon Slayer
<b>2,800 to 4,199.99</b>	10	+3 hp	9D10+3 hp	Devil Slayer
<b>4,200 to 5,599.99</b>	11	+3 hp	9D10+6 hp	Templar Baron / Baroness
<b>5,600 to 6,999.99</b>	12	+3 hp	9D10+9 hp	Templar Arch-Baron / Arch-Baroness
<b>7,000 to 8,399.99</b>	13	+3 hp	9D10+12 hp	Templar Viscount / Viscountess
<b>8,400 to 9,799.99</b>	14	+3 hp	9D10+15 hp	Templar Count / Countess
<b>9,800 to 11,199.99</b>	15	+3 hp	9D10+18 hp	Templar Marquis / Marchioness
<b>11,200 to 12,599.99</b>	16	+3 hp	9D10+21 hp	Royal Templar Marquis / Marchioness
<b>12,600 to 13,999.99</b>	17	+3 hp	9D10+24 hp	Templar Duke / Duchess
<b>14,000 to 15,399.99</b>	18	+3 hp	9D10+27 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>15,400 to 16,799.99</b>	19	+3 hp	9D10+30 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>16,800 to 18,199.99</b>	20	+3 hp	9D10+33 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>18,200 to 19,599.99</b>	21	+3 hp	9D10+36 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>19,600 to 20,999.99</b>	22	+3 hp	9D10+39 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>21,000 to 22,399.99</b>	23	+3 hp	9D10+42 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>22,400 to 23,799.99</b>	24	+3 hp	9D10+45 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>23,800 to 25,199.99</b>	25	+3 hp	9D10+48 hp	(Non-Extant)
<b>(+1,400)</b>	<b>(+1)</b>	<b>+3 hp</b>	<b>(+3 hp)</b>	<b>(Unique)</b>

The following level titles are recommended for Templars in the Castle Oldskull campaign. Their ranks include a much-embellished historical ranking system, along with pseudo-cavalier, noble, and warrior titles. Note that the achievable ranks of nobility (baronet, baron, count, etc.) are traditional for the order and remain respected by citizens and nobles as symbols of the Crusaders' lost glory, but these honorific titles no longer directly imply leadership of a baronetcy, barony, county, etc.

For a PC the player can choose from among these options as appropriate, or with GM consultation.





**TABLE 27:****Suggested Level Titles for Templars**

<b>Templar's Experience Level</b>	<b>Recommended Level Titles</b>
<b>1</b>	Templar Brother / Sister, Templar Footman / Footwoman, Templar Guardsman / Guardswoman, Templar Shield Bearer / Shield Maiden
<b>2</b>	Templar Armiger, Templar Bailiff, Templar Esquire / Esquires, Templar Herald, Templar Watchman / Watchwoman, Veteran Templar
<b>3</b>	Templar Scutarius, Templar Scutifer, Templar Sergeant, Templar Swordsman / Swordswoman, Templar Vigile
<b>4</b>	Templar Banner Bearer, Templar Confanonier, Templar Hero / Heroine, Templar Sergeant of Arms, Templar Signifer
<b>5</b>	Templar Esquire and Master / Master Esquires, Templar Knight Errant / Dame Errant, Templar Steward
<b>6</b>	Vaunted Templar Steward, Knight Templar, Templar Captain, Vaunted Templar Knight Errant / Dame Errant
<b>7</b>	Cult Hunter / Huntress, Esteemed Templar Knight Errant / Dame Errant, High Templar Steward, Templar Castellan, Veteran Templar Captain
<b>8</b>	Chief Templar Steward, Elite Templar Captain, Grand Knight Templar / Dame Templar, Hag Hunter / Huntress, Knight Templar Justiciar / Dame Templar Justiciar, Templar High Castellan, Templar Seneschal
<b>9</b>	Demon Slayer, Royal Knight Templar / Dame Templar, Hag Slayer, Templar Grand Castellan, Templar High Seneschal, Templar Under-Marshal
<b>10</b>	Devil Slayer, Knight Templar Hierarch / Dame Templar Hierarch, Templar Baronet, Templar Grand Seneshcal, Templar Vice Marshal
<b>11</b>	Daemon Slayer, Knight Templar Commander / Dame Templar Commander, Knight Templar Illustrious / Dame Templar Illustrious, Templar Lord / Lady, Templar Baron / Baroness, Templar Marshal
<b>12</b>	Sovereign Knight Templar / Dame Templar, Nemesis of Demons, Templar Arch-Baron / Arch-Baroness, Templar High Lord / High Lady Templar, Templar Lord Marshal, Templar Master and Commander
<b>13</b>	Nemesis of Devils, Templar Grand Commander, Templar Grand Marshal, Templar Viscount / Viscountess, Templar Warlord / Lady of War
<b>14</b>	Nemesis of Daemons, Templar Count / Countess, Templar Overlord / Dame Overlord, Templar Royal Commander
<b>15</b>	Templar Marquis / Marchioness, Templar Overlord of the Garde / Dame Overlord of the Garde
<b>16</b>	Royal Templar Royal Marquis / Marchioness, Templar Grand Master / Mistress of the First Glory, Templar Grand Overlord / Grand Dame Overlord
<b>17</b>	Templar Duke / Duchess, Templar Grand Master / Mistress of the Second Glory (etc.; level 17+ NPC Templars no longer exist, but heroic PCs might attain and reclaim these titles)
<b>18</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>19</b>	(Non-Extant)







<b>20</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>21</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>22</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>23</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>24</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>25</b>	(Non-Extant)
<b>(+1)</b>	(Unique)

Most of the few surviving NPC Templars of experience levels 13 to 17 are elders ensconced within the Boreal Garde, who are more like sagely benefactors than active knights in the field. Many NPC Templars of low level are quite young indeed.







## **Powers and Advantages of the Templar Class**

### **Cavalier and Palatine Ways of the Knights Templar**

The following cavalier and/or paladin advantages do apply to Templars:

- **The Assensing of Evil** (as a paladin)
- **Aura of Protection** (as a paladin)
- **Battle Mastery** (as a cavalier, but only with regard to non-weapons of choice, because Templars do not train with weapons of choice)
- **Grace and Wrath of the Gods of Law** (paladin-like spell casting ability at high experience levels)
- **Knighthly Training Discipline** (as a cavalier; Templars of experience levels 1 through 5 can train under an appropriately-leveled Templar, cavalier, or paladin; those of levels 6+ can train themselves)
- **Laying on Hands** (as a paladin)
- **Mantle of the Pure** (as a paladin)
- **Merciless Onslaught** (as a cavalier)
- **Purifying Touch** (as a paladin)
- **Turning the Undead** (as a paladin)
- **Vessel of Purity** (as a paladin)

Cavalier and paladin advantages that are not listed here do NOT apply to the Templar class.

### **Empowerment of the Dying Order**

Due to the desperate need of the order to attempt a rebuilding before it goes extinct, Knights Templar can gain Experience Point Marks (XPM) for sacrificing excess treasures to the Boreal Garde, the last Templar stronghold. However, this can only be done in a limited fashion.

Any Templar-won treasures that are permanently sacrificed to the Garde will provide the Templar with experience gains on a 2,500 gp / 1 XPM basis, to two decimal places. In other words, if a Templar sacrifices 5,000 gp worth of treasure to the Boreal Garde, he or she will gain 2.00 XPM. If a sacrifice of 14,982 gp worth of treasure is made, the XPM gain will be 5.99 XPM.

### **Pragmatism of the Last Knights Templar**

Unlike paladins, Templars can shift from Lawful Good to Lawful Neutral (LG to LN) alignment without penalty or losing powers. This effect can only occur once in any Templar's lifetime, however, and it is a one-way choice. If the LN Templar later wishes to return to the divine ethos of Lawful Goodness, atonement is required (as per a paladin).<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> This special exception harkens back to the introductory 1975 appearance of the paladin class (then a sub-type of fighter). At that time, paladins were only Lawful, not Good or Evil, because the alignment-enforced concepts of Good and Evil did not yet exist in the game. As such, paladins were granted more behavioral leeway





### **Templar Destriers and War-Beasts**

Beginning at experience level 4, or at any time thereafter, a Templar can summon a divine royal destrier just as a paladin can. However, given the order's unique and centuries-long mission – tunneling into the underworld to destroy devil worshippers, infernal temples of the nether, demons, and worse – Templars also have a special option available to them.

Alternately, beginning at experience level 4, a Templar can instead summon a Golgothan War-Beast. War-Beasts are extra-planar creatures from Arcadia and the Twin Paradises, and were used during

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than they were in their first hardcover appearance (1978). The original philosophical doctrine is honored in the World of Oldskull game.







the Crusades in many netherworld battles beneath the ruins of Babel and Aidonaia. They are fully ready and willing to be led or ridden underground, and within dungeons. Some say, despite their enormity, that they are distantly related to blink dogs.

They cannot engage in charging attacks effectively (a Templar cannot ride one solely to wield a lance to inflict double damage, in other words). They have a movement rate of 120', emit a dim halo of golden light in a 20' radius, and possess darksight (infravision) to a maximum range of 90', but otherwise – from the perspective of game statistics – they are identical to paladin destriers. Therefore, a level 7 Templar could have a War-Beast of the following game statistics (akin to a divine royal destrier): Armor Class 4 unbarded (capable of wearing custom barding), Move 150', Hit Dice 5+5 (23 to 45 hit points at Templar experience level 7), # Attacks 2 Trampling Claw Strikes/1 Bite, Damage 1D6+2/1D6+2/1D2+2, Intelligence 6, Size L (4 ½' high at the shoulder).<sup>49</sup>

Each Templar must decide for himself or herself which type of mount is more appropriate, for they are mutually exclusive to one another. In all other ways, Templar mounts follow the rules and guidelines provided for divine royal destriers in the paladin chapter.



<sup>49</sup> This unique option is provided because the lack of horsemanship skills (for the 1978 paladin) coupled with the divine warhorse does not really make sense, Poul Anderson novels notwithstanding. Those who want to have paladin mounts can do so; those who want something more emblematic of the unique Oldskull Templar class can instead choose the more esoteric option. The choice basically boils down to campaign type and preferred play style.





## Limitations and Disadvantages for the Templar Class

### **Cavalier and Palatine Hindrances of the Knights Templar**

The following cavalier and/or paladin disadvantages apply to Templars:

- **A Modest Stronghold** (as a paladin)
- **The Argent Bonds of Chivalry** (as a cavalier)
- **Fall from Grace** (as a paladin, but a Templar will not fall and lose power if changing to the Lawful Neutral alignment for the first time; also Templars do not lose their LG patron deity if they shift to LN)
- **Infused with Extra-Planar Power** (as a paladin, but if the Templar becomes Lawful Neutral, he or she can no longer be turned by evil clerics)
- **Lack of Weapon Specialization** (as a cavalier)
- **Loyal Retainers of Pure Heart** (as a paladin, but the Templar's henchmen can be of LG or LN alignment)
- **Reliance Upon the Divine, Not the Arcane** (as a paladin)
- **Sacrifices to the Holy Temple** (with some variances, see below)\*
- **Sworn to a Great Cause** (that of the Knights Templar and the survival of the Boreal Garde)\
- **The Uncontrollable Fate of Social Standing** (Templars begin with the starting armor and weapons listed, but not the lances and mounts listed, for the cavalier class)

\* Treasures acquired by the Templar can either be sacrificed to the Boreal Garde to strengthen the dying order, or to the temple of the Templar's patron deity. Temple sacrifices will give indirect benefits (in priestly aid and reputation) as noted in the paladin class description. Sacrifices to the Garde will provide the Templar with experience gains on a 2,500 gp / 1 XPM basis. In other words, if a Templar sacrifices 5,000 gp worth of treasure, as noted in the Empowerment of the Dying Order advantage description.











## The Rise of Evil and the Origins of the Templar Order

The chronicle of the Templars in the World of Oldskull is tumultuous and long, filled with many triumphs and tragedies. A brief summary of historical highlights is provided here for the needs of Templar players and the Game Master. Years are provided in Anno Calvariae, Year of the Skull (AC) notation, which is roughly equivalent to the Anno Domini (AD) / Common Era (CE) system used in the real world.<sup>50</sup>

In the eastern regions of Phoenicia, the city state of Tyre, and Petraea, there arose a good-aligned cult (c. 1 AC) known as the Conclave of the Golden One. The Conclave was originally a gathering of disillusioned outsiders. These diverse forsaken followers, exiles, vagabonds, and desert mystics – despite the absence of any divine protection from a beneficent patron deity – believed that the one true deity of Oldskull was yet to emerge, and that only devout worship held in the fallen ancient temple city of Aidonaia (the Citadel of the Ancient Holies) could bring about the Golden One’s true awakening.

The devout yet intolerant Emyrean civilization purged itself of Conclave worshippers (c. 10-335 AC) through cruel pacts of exile, imprisonment, and violence until the eventual rise of Constantinus, the first palatine and “concordant” Emperor who deeply sympathized with the Conclave’s plight. The Conclave in this time of relative peace eventually turned the crumbling remnants of Aidonaia into a shining city and even established a capable martial host, which capably – through much bloodshed – repelled the legions of evil. During the Emyrean Age of Schism – c. 340-470 AC, cresting with the Dragon Scourges in c. 375-415 AC – discordant waves of challenge and belief led to the rise and fall of concordant emperors, pagan emperors, and several disasters exacerbated by humanoid invasions from out of the Utter East. The fall of the Emyrean heartland surrounding Magna Roma and the fracturing of Tyrrhenia into city states (c. 475-565 AC, with humanoid-pushed barbarian hordes surging c. 500 AC) led to mass waves of exodus as the powers of evil grew ever mightier than before.

Shrouded events in the dungeons beneath the Ushirian Manor (Castle Oldskull)<sup>51</sup> – near to the ruins of Magna Roma – led to the disruption of the elemental anchors which kept the netherworld dimensional ruptures there in check, in turn causing the eruption of infernal gates beneath Tyrrhenia, Byzantia, and Babel (c. 550-700 AC). Demon princes, arch-devils, and daemon lords – despite the defiance of less evil arcane powers such as Baba Yaga, the Ushirian Cronos, and Queen Tuchulcha of the Chasms – struggled to manifest themselves in the unconquered World of Oldskull. The infernal ones, despite being hindered by the Cronos, sent their minions to destroy the strongest human- and elf-held cities of the Occident.

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<sup>50</sup> In keeping with Gygaxian tradition and reverence, the World of Oldskull does not feature monotheistic religions such as Judaism, Islam, or Christianity. This is a deliberate design decision instituted for thematic purposes, a consideration of potential player offense (to a reasonable degree), and to allow the pagan pantheons to flourish in the campaign in accordance with the old school game’s inclusion of deities, demigods, Great Old Ones, and mythic heroes from many cultures. The author (KDK, that’s me) is less shy about introducing dark and potentially controversial themes to the World of Oldskull campaign, but Game Masters and players who are uncomfortable with aspects of the Oldskull lore are free to change their campaign history to something less upsetting and more idealistic as desired.

<sup>51</sup> Instigated by the Great Boyg (elder she-spawn of Trogoon, the god of troll-kind) and also by adventurers against, and arcane ripostes in turn from, the carnal avatar of the Mad God, one Groohlz-Drakha.







The endlessly beset kingdoms of the west largely ignored the existence of the Conclave of the Golden One during these Ages of Shadow (c. 600-850 AC, with Tyrrhenia and Nova Roma particularly beset 700-800 AC), but repeated waves of war, plague, and humanoid invasion displaced significant numbers of borderland peoples over a century. Western kingdoms and rulers focused on the defense of cities, strongholds, and critical trade routes, a grim strategy of necessity that frequently left the rural peoples at the mercy of evil.





Throughout the Time of Anabasis and Exodus (c. 850-1000 AC) many suffering peoples fell back into any city state strongholds that would receive them; others journeyed northwest, toward Aquitania and Britannia; while still others fled east to Byzantia, and those who found the city gates shut to them everywhere else traveled at last to Aidonaia.

In the Years of Burning Blood (c. 1000-1100 AC) the infernal gates beneath Tyrrhenia were successfully diminished by the Ushirian Cronos, along with adventurers and champions from the Free City of Grimrook (formerly Elder Roma). Those gates beneath Byzantia were destroyed, but many venturesome patriarchs and their followers were secretly possessed or replaced by demonic powers. Due to netherworld resistance the gates beneath Babel could not be sealed, which led to demonic and diabolic invasions that eventually turned the city of Aidonaia into the dystopian citadel of Golgotha, the City of the Skull. The blasted regions around Aidonaia and ruined Babel became known as the Unholy Lands.

Zealous and resurgent Occidental kingdoms – inspired by the manifestation of good-aligned avatars, temple godlings, and deific incarnations – began strategic movements to reclaim the legacy of Aidonaia from evil. The high priests of many gods learned that although the deities of good could never fully manifest themselves in the World of Oldskull due to the ancient corruptions of the Great Old Ones, the infernal powers could gain a foothold through Babel's fractured netherworld. If left unopposed these rising infernal powers could, eventually, use Golgotha and its relics to conquer the entire world.

Thus were born the Crusader factions, well-intended legions of knights, priests, peasant warriors, mages, and steadfast men-at-arms. The Age of the Crusades (c. 1100-1270 AC) was tragically marked by as many atrocities as victories, because there was no one leader and no one righteous god; some leaders were possessed by demonic powers; and flawed mortals frequently fought against other mortals of disparate alignments instead of the Golgothan evil.

One of the most devout and powerful Crusader factions was paladin-led, the Knights Templar. This highly aggressive knightly order was bloodily founded in 1119 AC quite near to Golgotha, in Tyre. Demon and devil worshippers were slaughtered mercilessly, and the remnants of other scattered Crusader factions allied themselves with the Tyrians and Templars in the name of mutual survival (1119-1124 AC). Further Crusades (1147-1271 AC) led to the sealing of many infernal gates, the razing of Nether Babel, and the slaughter of many surviving demonic and diabolic powers. Golgotha was never retaken, but without gated reinforcement the diminished infernal legions were left with only the Unholy Lands and scattered cults throughout Arabia, Sumer, Stygia, and Khom.

Throughout this time of Pyrrhic victory the Templars grew in power, but nevertheless they were infiltrated by spies, assassins, and instances of demonic possession. The brief era of exhaustion and homecoming that followed after the crusades (c. 1271-1306 AC) was marked with paranoia, factional in-fighting, corruption of the pure, witch burnings, and widespread accusations of heresy. Eventually (1307-1312 AC) in vicious cycles of evil retribution many of the Templar commanders were driven mad, assassinated, fully possessed, replaced by shape-shifters, or worse. The surviving members of the Templar order were met with a hostile and distrusting populace, and for a time (1312-c. 1325 AC) the order's knights and patriarchs were forced into exile. It was not until the emergence of the avatar of the King in Yellow and the Chaos Plague (1348 AC) that the Occidental peoples longed guiltily for the protective might of the exiled Templars once again. But by then, a generation had passed, and the only remaining uncorrupted citadel of the order was the hidden and magically-reached stronghold known as Boreal Garde, locked away against the borderland of unreachable Hyperborea.







In the present age (early to mid-1400s AC), true Templars are rare, and they are frequently met with a mixture of awe, reverence, doubt, and superstitious whispers. Some regard them as saviors, some fear them as “Bewitchers”, while others lay centuries of blame before their feet.





## Chapter VIII:

# Oldskull Orders of Knighthood



### The Nature of Knightly Orders

Although players are welcome to devise their own small NPC-led knightly orders to flesh out their knight character's background, the larger orders that will immediately impact the game world should only be devised and detailed by the Game Master. This chapter lists the twenty largest and strongest knightly orders found in the Occidental World of Oldskull. (Sadly this only barely includes the Knights Templar, as their order has been reduced to a mere 300 remaining members, if that.)

These orders mirror the actual medieval orders of Europe, with some major liberties taken to fit their hierarchies properly into the adventure-filled Oldskull campaign world. Players are welcome to align their knight PCs appropriately with one of the orders listed here, but this preference must be subject to GM approval depending on the size and scope of the campaign. For example, if a player wants to base his knight in Britannia, this might not be possible if the campaign is going to begin in far-off Khom or Scythia. Nevertheless the GM is welcome to work with the player to iron out the details; perhaps the new knight was lost in a shipwreck, or kidnapped and taken afar (before escaping and joining the other PCs in fellowship), or he or she engaged on a long palatine pilgrimage immediately prior to the character's introduction in the campaign. Templar characters are quite easy to insert into the milieu, because they are lone wanderers by nature and their backstory naturally leads them to seek the companionship of like-minded evil-slaying adventurers in any other land beyond the Boreal Garde.







As the campaign develops, the NPCs in the PC knight's order might grow stronger or more numerous. Rivalries or friendships, grudges or oaths may develop over time. And in game years to come, a new order might well be founded by a powerful Player Character paladin or cavalier.<sup>52</sup>



### [I] The Order of the All-Beholding Eye

**Lore:** This is the only large knightly order in the surface world that openly worships the Great Old Ones (in this instance, Dagon, Hydra, and Cthulhu). This centuries-old bane has proven difficult to wipe out, due to the locations of its strongholds near the Unholy Lands. Many of the members are mad, or “visionary”. The order is believed to have roots in ancient Stygia. They strive to conquer

<sup>52</sup> For a good example of how to create in-game knightly orders from real-world inspirations, refer to the July 1993 magazine.





villages and passing ships, turning isolated human gatherings into Deep One seeding enclaves. There are allied minor orders that worship other Cthulhoid entities, but they are small, cabalistic, and hidden in deep dungeon strongholds within the netherworld. All are opposed by the vigilant warriors of Khom and Aegyptus.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 400 (average level 3<sup>rd</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,200 (pirates, raiders, skirmishers, archers)

**Colors of Renown:** Red (primary) and yellow, signifying bloodshed and fear; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Knights Draconis (XIII).

**Homeland Realm:** The Unholy Lands and the shores of the Crimson Sea

**Inspired By:** H.P. Lovecraft

**Knightly Character Classes:** Chaos Knights, Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Deep Ones and Deep One hybrids, some humanoids and monsters

**Patron Mythos:** The Cthulhu Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Neutral, Chaotic Evil

## [II] The Order of the Argent Stag

**Lore:** The Argent Stag cavaliers and their soldiers comprise the main defensive fighting force of the ancient kingdom of Lyonesse (in far southwestern Britannia). The Empyrean civilization scarcely managed to scout or claim this area, and it has remained in elven hands for thousands of years. Following the Chaos Plague, the elves became highly secretive and withdrew from the Faerie-warded borders of their homeland. Animal spirits, fey illusions, and thorny labyrinths guard Lyonesse's landward eastern edge. The order sends out patrols and diplomatic entourages four times a year, at each equinox and solstice; these events are regarded with superstitious awe by the humans of the Duchy of Kernow and other bordering lands.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 600 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 3,100 (archers, scouts, sword-bearers)

**Colors of Renown:** Silver (primary) and green, signifying stag pelts and verdure; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of Sun and Moon (XVII).

**Homeland Realm:** Lyonesse

**Inspired By:** Rangers and *The Faerie Queene*

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Half-elves, rangers, giant eagles, and Faerie folk

**Patron Mythos:** The Celtic and Elven Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Gray Elves







**Required Social Standing:** Upper Middle Class or higher

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Neutral Good



### [III] The Order of Baphomet

**Lore:** This order, first established by Templars who fell prey to demonic corruption during the Crusades within the Unholy Lands, rose out of the betrayal of the Knights Templar. These evil knights are demon worshippers, and their numbers in the underworld are growing. It is said that if this order is not wiped out within a decade, a resurgence of the infernal gates beneath Golgotha is likely. Most good-aligned knightly orders have the annihilation of this unholy order as one of their major goals.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 350 (average level 4<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 1,800 (pole arms, harpoons, nets)

**Colors of Renown:** Black (primary) and red, signifying darkness and bloodshed; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of Mordred (XIV) or the Knights Templar (XX).

**Homeland Realm:** The northern reaches beyond and below the Unholy Lands







**Inspired By:** Scandalous rumors pertaining to unholy Knights Templar

**Knightly Character Classes:** Chaos Knights, Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Demons and daemons

**Patron Mythos:** The Infernal Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Drow (few)

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Evil, Neutral Evil

#### [IV] The Order of the Black Star

**Lore:** This order is allied with a strong subterranean culture of dwarven warriors. The dwarves defend the land of Gaul from netherworld invasion, while the Black Star – assisted by the Sun Kingdom's armies from time to time – protects the surface. The order has grown wealthy through robust trade, bartering dwarven jewels for the betterment and fortification of both groups. By tradition elven and half-elven knights are very rare within the order. The famed symbol of the Oriflamme flies above the Black Star's own banner in many battles, particularly against the Britanniains.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 650 (average level 6<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 3,100 (hammers, axemen, crossbowmen)

**Colors of Renown:** Gray (primary) and black, signifying stone and darkness; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Gray Sails (XII).

**Homeland Realm:** Gaul

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Star

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Dwarves, crystal elementals, earth elementals

**Patron Mythos:** The Celtic and Dwarven Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** Upper Middle Class or higher

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral, Neutral Good

#### [V] The Order of the Bladed Spire

**Lore:** This is a relatively young order, with unproven leadership and few major battle victories to its name. The knights and soldiers are currently active in slaying evil creatures in northern Afrik, with some daring expeditions moving as far east as Cyrenaica. They hope to ally with the Order of the Blood Defiant against the Order of the All-Beholding Eye in years to come, but the marshals of the Blood are too embroiled in naval battles to seriously consider such a grand expansion of their martial efforts at this time. Bladed Spire knights and troops tend to be young, ambitious, and relatively inexperienced. It is said that the Kings of Lusitania and Iberia are attempting to infiltrate the order,







interesting in gauging the sincerity of its leadership's intentions (while simultaneously rebuffing diplomatic efforts by the Bladed knights themselves).

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 350 (average level 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 1,600 (armed with a wide array of weapons, yet with limited unit uniformity)

**Colors of Renown:** Yellow (primary) and gray, signifying dawn emerging from clouds.

**Homeland Realm:** Lusitania

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Tower and Sword

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Few

**Patron Mythos:** Various (disparate members banding together)

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Half-Elves

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements, those of Upper Classes might actually be suspect

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Neutral Good

## [VI] The Order of the Blood Defiant

**Lore:** This highly aggressive order owns a significant number of ships. In fact, due to the non-kingdom city state nature of Tyrrhenia, the Blood Defiant are only rivalled by the armada of Serenisse (folkloric Venice) on the peninsula's opposite shores. The soldiers – but not knights – of the Blood Defiant are typically mariners, and they are responsible for slaying pirates, sea monsters, sea devils, and Deep Ones throughout the Inner Sea. In recent years the order has fallen into several ambushes, which leads the marshals to believe that they have been infiltrated by the knights of Dagon. Notably, the Blood Defiant have a long-standing tradition forbidding the presence of more than 7 paladins among the knights, as their tactics are not always pure. They do what needs to be done.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 700 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 3,400 (tridents, nets, boarding axes)

**Colors of Renown:** Blue (primary) and red, signifying the seas and sacrifice.

**Homeland Realm:** Iberia

**Inspired By:** The Order of Montesa

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Sea elves, tritons, sea giants

**Patron Mythos:** The Tyrrhenian Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Half-Elves (Aquatic)

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Neutral Good, Chaotic Neutral (few, but including some in leadership)









## [VII] The Order of the Chrysomallus

**Lore:** This defensive order is long-lived and highly secretive. Having long ago been forced into the west, they are said to have been founded by the lineages of Jason and the Argonauts many centuries ago, and this legend is greatly strengthened by the fact that the order has one artifact within its holdings ... the Golden Fleece. Over hundreds of years the order has become cabalistic and hereditary; no outsiders (PCs or otherwise) from non-order bloodlines will ever be admitted into its ranks. The bloodlines are split between the noble-born knights and the yeoman-like men-at-arms; but the two hierarchies fight together as united brothers and sisters, with the fanatical soldiers willing to serve silently and to give their lives freely in order to ensure the order's continuing survival.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 800 (average level 7<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 4,400 (hoplites with sword and shield, few scouts or skirmishers)

**Colors of Renown:** Gold (primary) and burgundy, signifying sacred gold and Burgundia; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Golden Mantle (XI).

**Homeland Realm:** Burgundia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Golden Fleece

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Centaurs and Maenads

**Patron Mythos:** The Achaean Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Half-Dryads, Half-Satyrs

**Required Social Standing:** Lower Upper Class or higher

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral

## [VIII] The Order of the Dragon Slayers

**Lore:** One of the most famed orders in the Occidental World of Oldskull, the Dragon Slayers embrace all good alignments. In any given year, between eight and fifteen good dragons can be found living in full allegiance along with the knights and soldiers who dwell within the castellated aeries of the Grand Marmoreal Sanctum (which is often simply called "The White"). The order is matriarchal and its citadel is familial, which means that the women and men who serve dwell within the walls of The White for all their lives, along with their immediate families. The more powerful knights of the order wear dragon-hide armors, and at times hate-filled evil dragons and their minions attack the stronghold or the vigilant patrols. Despite all its good and righteous deeds, some fear that that order is slowly drifting away from concerns over the "petty" human concerns of the mortal kingdoms.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 750 (average level 7<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 3,900 (archers, crossbowmen, slingers)

**Colors of Renown:** Orange (primary) and gold, signifying twilight and gold dragondom.

**Homeland Realm:** Hungaria

**Inspired By:** The Order of Saint George





**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

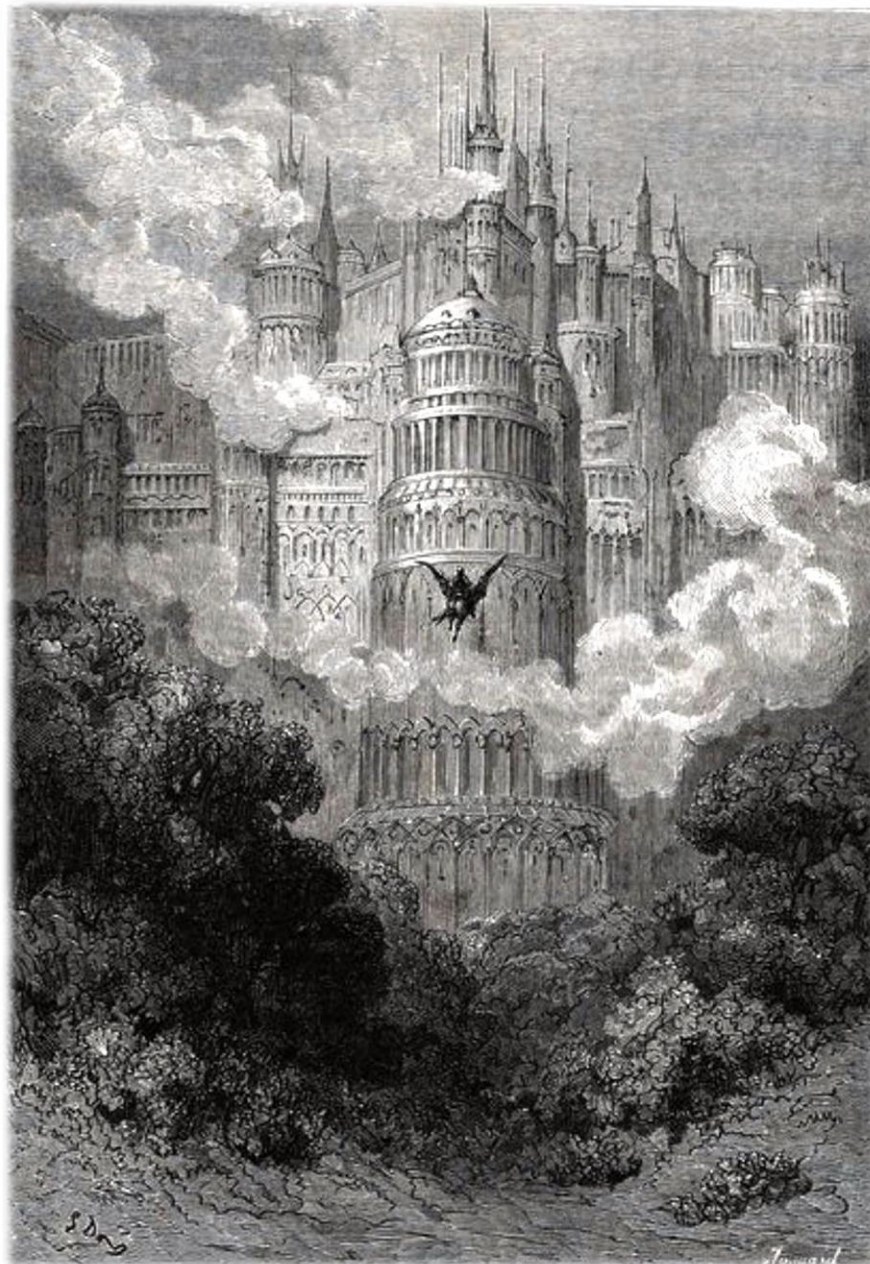
**Known Allies:** Dragons of good alignment, hippogriffs

**Patron Mythos:** The Britannian and Magyar Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Half-Elves

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Lawful Good, Neutral Good







### [IX] The Order of the Emerald Bough

**Lore:** The knightly heroes of Hibernia (mythic Ireland) belong nearly one and all to the order of the Emerald Bough. These are iconic Celtic knights, frequently half-elven, are known as much for their capriciousness and mischief as they are for their valor and hatred of evil. What the Emerald Knights are not, however, is organized. The knights tend to gather in small fellowships alongside adventurers, and are far more interested in dungeon delving and Dreamland expeditions than anything resembling politics. The Emerald Knights and their “Waywarders” (hard-drinking human soldiers) are brave and disorderly to a fault.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 450 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,000 (archers, scouts, skirmishers)

**Colors of Renown:** Green (primary) and brown, signifying the leaves and trunks of ancient trees; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Royal Wolf (XVI).

**Homeland Realm:** Hibernia

**Inspired By:** Fables of Celtic knights

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Half-elves, rangers, druids, bards, wood elves, Dreamlanders

**Patron Mythos:** The Celtic and Elven Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** High Elves

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Neutral Good, Chaotic Good, True Neutral

### [X] The Order of the Envenomed

**Lore:** This is the dominant order of evil cavaliers in the drowic netherworld. Wishful members must endure the bite of a giant spider to enter the order; those who fail have their lives prolonged to serve as sacrifices. The order is fragmented due to age-old allegiances and faction rivalries between the noble houses, but annual conclaves take place where truces are made and hatreds are laid to rest for a time. If this order was not so chaotic and beset by self-annihilation, the dark elves would likely grow strong enough to invade and dominate Midgard in the world above. Fortunately, no all-powerful charismatic lord has risen in recent centuries to attempt such an unholy union.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 450 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,100 (thralls and slave warriors, tunnel skirmishers with ranged weapons such as javelins and throwing darts)

**Colors of Renown:** Purple (primary) and silver, signifying amaranthine crystal and mithral.

**Homeland Realm:** Svartalfaheim under Midgard

**Inspired By:** The legacy of the drow

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Bugbears, troglodytes, trolls, and worse besides



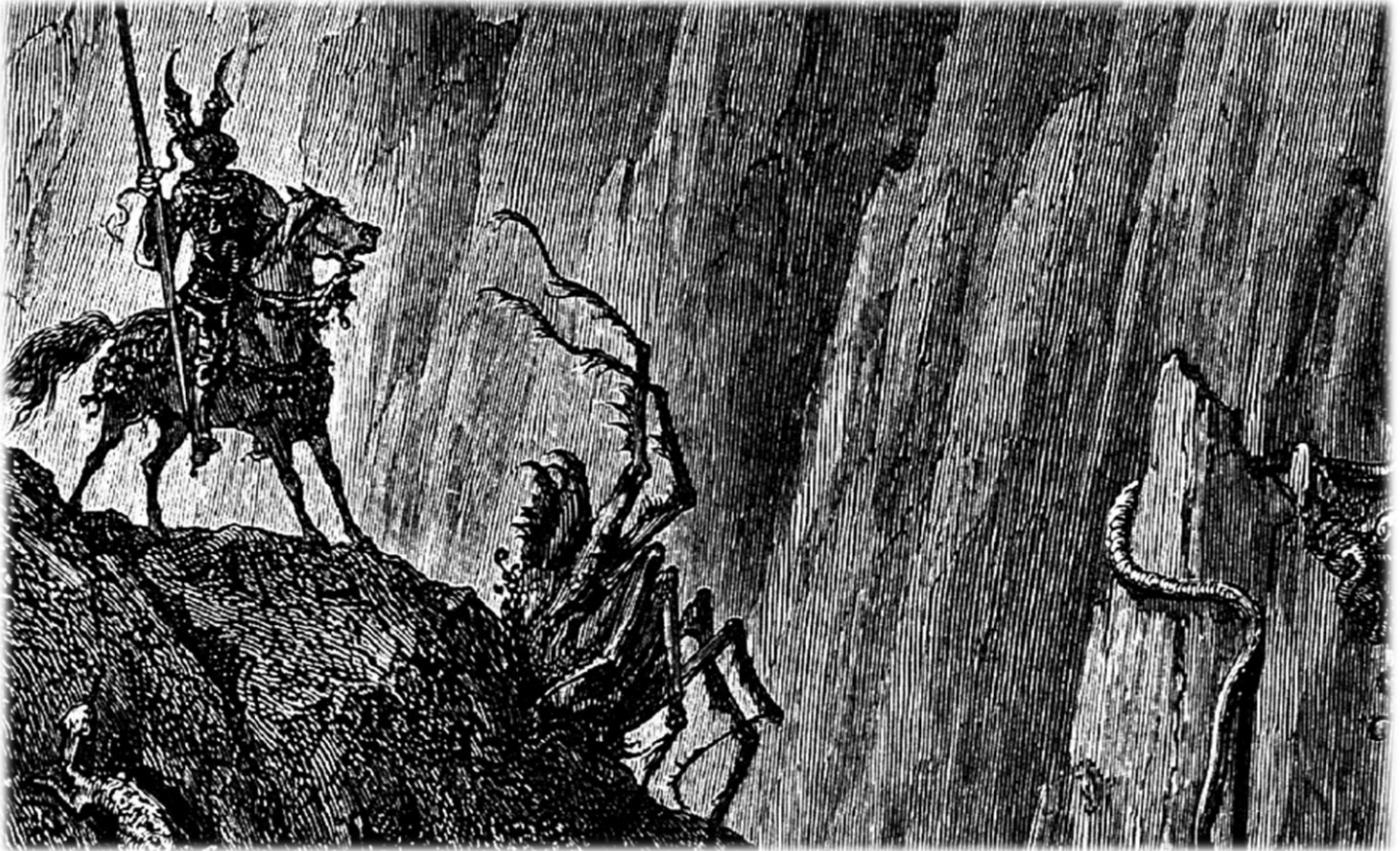


**Patron Mythos:** The Infernal and Norse Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Drow (xenophobic)

**Required Social Standing:** Upper Middle Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Evil



### [XI] The Order of the Golden Mantle

**Lore:** Having in recent decades attempted to fill the void left by the crumbling of the Knights Templar, the Order of the Golden Mantle is devoted to fighting heresiarchs, ebony witches (as opposed to white witches), demon worshippers, cultists, and extra-planar evils. The order is fully unforgiving of Chaos however, and CG knights will never be admitted to the order. Those who fall to a chaotic alignment, in fact, are exiled (CG, CN) or even executed (CE) for crimes against the faith. This order will only admit new knights of “hinterland blood” if they are both Lawful Good and noble-born. Ever since the time of the Chaos Plague, the order has become quite dangerously zealous against evil, advocating witch burnings, inquisitions, and forced confessions. Some who have left the order willingly fear that the accursed possessions that defiled the Templars might soon infect the Golden Mantle, despite all their vigilant efforts.







**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 850 (average level 7<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 4,100 (heavy footmen, pikemen)

**Colors of Renown:** Gold (primary) and white, signifying power and purity; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Chrysomallus (VII).

**Homeland Realm:** Iberia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Band

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Knights Templar (to a degree), half-elves (few)

**Patron Mythos:** The Catalan and Celtic Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** Middle Upper Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Neutral Good

## [XII] The Order of the Gray Sails

**Lore:** This once-naval order has, since the age of the Crusades, become a martial force that is dedicated to the cleansing of the netherworld. The wars waged in and under the Unholy Lands led the “Graydelves” to become skilled siege miners, spelunkers, cave fighters, and dungeon delvers. This order has not-so-secret ties to the history of the Overlord of Grimrook, and its leaders sometimes ally with the mercenary Order of the Scarlet Tabard for expeditions beneath Tyrrhenia (including the labyrinths running far beneath the Ushirian Manor, Castle Oldskull itself). The force has few horsemen, but many willing guides fighters. They will not ever ally directly with outside adventurers as the Scarlet Tabard will, however.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 550 (average level 4<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,700 (marines, javelineers, archers)

**Colors of Renown:** Gray (primary) and blue, signifying swift ships and wild seas; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Black Star (IV).

**Homeland Realm:** Tyrrhenia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Ship

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Order of the Scarlet Tabard, mariners, seahawks, adventurers

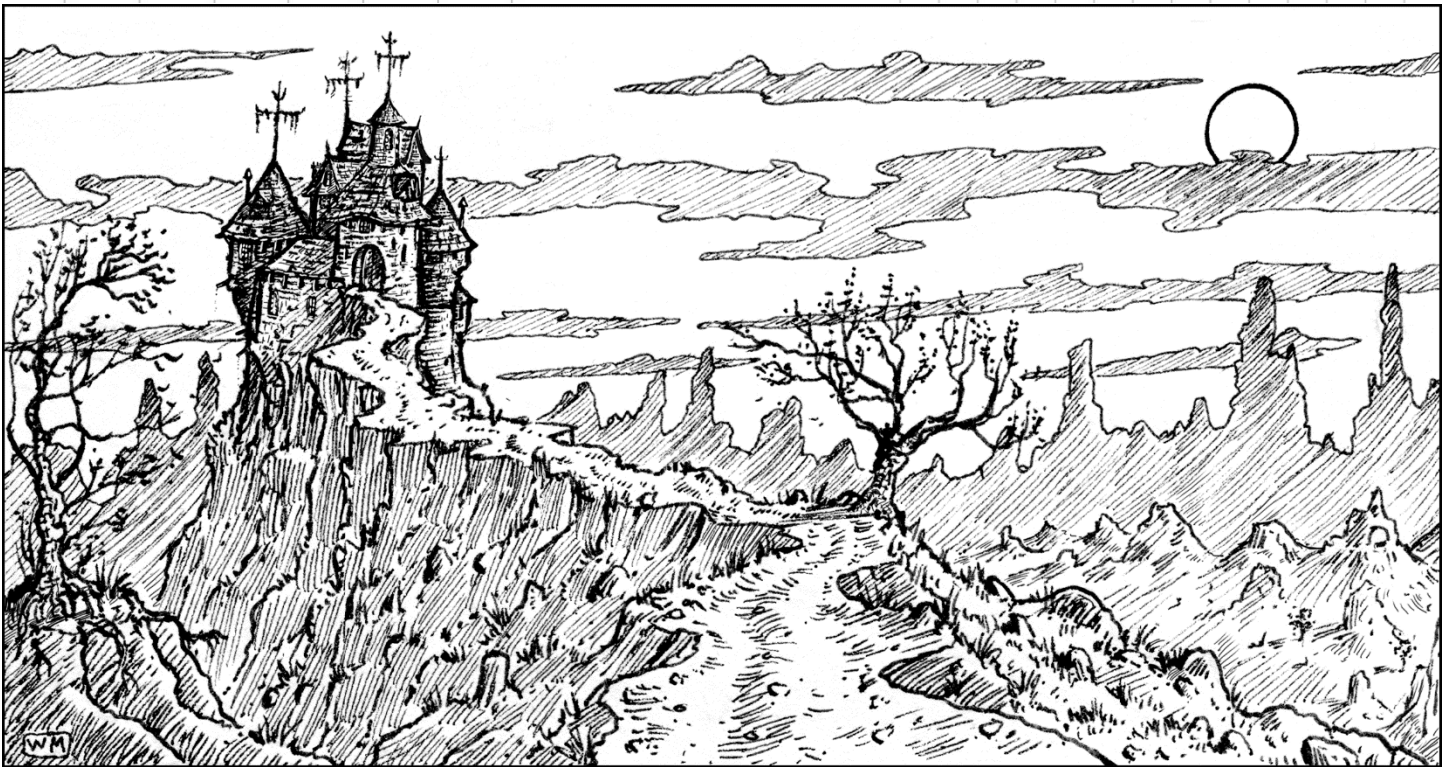
**Patron Mythos:** The Tyrrhenian and Etrurian Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Neutral Good





### [XIII] The Order of the Knights Draconis (Societas Draconistarum)

**Lore:** This order, newly risen out of sworn secrecy and apparent nothingness, is a mystery to many. It is clear from the Draconis knights' experience, worldliness, and mastery of battle tactics that they have been training for at least one lifetime in an unknown shadow realm and for an unknown purpose. While not evil, they are at this time sworn only to the defense of the once-minor Teara Rumaneasca region. It is said that – in light of the plight of the Templars – the Dracones believe that good cannot fight evil without being corrupted, which means that the obligation of the next Crusade must fall to these unknown Lotharingian powers of neutrality. Sages believe that the order is now seeking lore pertaining to the time-lost Scholomanta, a dangerous plane-shifting arcane school of magic and forbidden wisdom. The Game Master may be interested in knowing that the order's liege lord, Prince Vlad II Dracul, will soon father the great Voivode warlord, Vlad III (the Impaler), who will in centuries hence be known as Lord Dracula. But this is the time of the Oldskull heroes, and those events lie somewhat in the future ...

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 500 (average level 6<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,600 (two-handed swords, pole arms, pikes)

**Colors of Renown:** Crimson (primary) and white, signifying killing and blessings; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the All-Beholding Eye (I).

**Homeland Realm:** Lotharingia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Dragon

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Templars (exiles)







**Known Allies:** Dreamlanders, shadow people

**Patron Mythos:** The Romanian Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Half-Elves (Drowic Exiles)

**Required Social Standing:** Lower Upper Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Neutral, True Neutral

#### [XIV] The Order of Mordred

**Lore:** This is the primary order of the Chaos Knights, as alluded to in the Chaos Knight chapter. It is enshrouded in mystery but gaining in power once again.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 350 (average level 4<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 1,900 (armed with envenomed thrown weapons and crossbows)

**Colors of Renown:** Black (primary) and yellow, signifying Abyssal reaches and the conquest wrought by plagues; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of Baphomet.

**Homeland Realm:** The netherworld beneath Britannia

**Inspired By:** Tales of Mordred and King Arthur

**Knightly Character Classes:** Chaos Knights, Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Demons, daemons, hags, trolls, undead

**Patron Mythos:** The Infernal and Arthurian Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

The anti-paladins of my supplement

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Evil, Neutral Evil

#### [XV] The Order of the Pale Maiden

**Lore:** This reclusive and defensive order, allied with the gnomish laird clans of the mountain vales, is primarily responsible for the border defense of the sophisticated yet rarely-seen kingdom known as Helvetia (mythic and folkloric Switzerland). Only those few esteemed and gnome-guided knights errant who choose to leave the Helvetian lands in search of adventure are known to most peoples of the lower kingdoms. The Knights of the Maiden are skilled mountaineers, and although they are known to tame giant rams as war beasts they rarely ride horses. The wandering knights from this realm are warmly received despite – or in part because of – their stilted and charming ways and utter fascination with the “very, very strange” customs quite common to the lowland climes.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 900 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 4,100 (picks, axes, spears, and renowned skill with defensive pike formations)





**Colors of Renown:** White (primary) and brown, signifying snow and mountainsides; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Undying Will (XVIII).

**Homeland Realm:** Helvetia

**Inspired By:** The Supreme Order of the Most Holy Annunciation

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Gnome clans, snow nymphs, swan maidens

**Patron Mythos:** The Swiss and Gnomish Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** Upper Middle Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral, True Neutral



## [XVI] The Order of the Royal Wolf

**Lore:** This Celtic-fathered order of Aquitania has been tasked with the defense of the great Sun Kingdom for more than a century. As the king's forces fight endlessly with the Britanni and their allies, the Royal Wolves guard the forest borders and preserve the hidden protective shrines that (many say) have kept the kingdom from being fully defeated many a time. Outsiders are not welcome







to this order, but their requests are always rebuffed with remarkable and wistful kindness. Even enemy knights grow to have rival-friendships with the Wolves over the years, and they are known to accept nearly all non-fatal challenges and duels requested in chivalry. The order is rumored to be somehow connected to King Arthur, if only distantly through the lighter-magicked kindred of Morgan le Fay. The matter is never discussed in the presence of the knights themselves; this is the only topic they universally greet with silence.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 950 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 4,300 (swordsmen, heavy footmen, hound masters with half-wolf war dogs)

**Colors of Renown:** Green (primary) and white, signifying wilderness and wolves; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Emerald Bough (IX).

**Homeland Realm:** Aquitania

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Ermine

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Wild elves, Cu Sith, white wolves

**Patron Mythos:** The Celtic and Arthurian Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Half-Elves

**Required Social Standing:** Lower Upper Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Neutral Good

## [XVII] The Order of Sun and Moon

**Lore:** This order harbors the flower of chivalry for the Ljosalfar, the Light Elvenfolk of Midgard and veil-locked Alfheim. Only elven cavaliers can belong to the order, but many of their soldiers are human or half-elven (as are the rangers who frequently ally with the order in hunting down evil humanoids and giants). The order sets itself apart from any human kingdom, yet has been known to ride to the glorious defense of hard-pressed men in the hour of darkness. Surprisingly little is known of their inner ways and destinies despite the revered longevity of the order. It is said that no evil knight has ever fallen from the grace of Sun and Moon.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 500 (average level 6<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 2,300 (archers, spearmen)

**Colors of Renown:** Silver (primary) and gold, signifying the rising moon and setting sun; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Argent Stag (II).

**Homeland Realm:** The elven lands south of Midgard

**Inspired By:** Tales of the Ljosalfar and exiles

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers

**Known Allies:** Half-elves, rangers, cloud giants, giant snow owls

**Patron Mythos:** The Elven and Norse Mythoi







**Predominant Ancestry:** High Elves

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Neutral Good







### [XVIII] The Order of the Undying Will

**Lore:** Once a glorious order, the knights of the Undying Will are gradually descending into ill repute due to their strange and xenophobic behavior. The leaders of the Will have become paranoid, fearful of incoming corruption. Sadly their concerns are justified. In recent winters, succubi, incubi, and demonic shape-shifters sworn to the demon-god Alernus have all been slain within the order's halls. The individual knights of the Will remain devout, if conflicted, and more than once in their history have been visited by the sacred avatars of archangels. People throughout Tyrrhenia and the near kingdoms have learned to both admire the solemn knights of this order, while greatly distrusting their leadership and war-gatherings. What will happen in near-future years – when the Blood Defiant and Gray Sails seek allegiance with the Will in order to combat a great approaching evil from below and the Beyond – will be a tomorrow-tale for the ages.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 550 (average level 6<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 3,100 (flamberge swords, maces, pole arms)

**Colors of Renown:** White and cerulean (blue), signifying clouds and pure skies; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of the Pale Maiden (XV).

**Homeland Realm:** Tyrrhenia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Holy Spirit and the Order of the Knot

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins, Templars (few)

**Known Allies:** Clerics, angels, guardian spirits, hounds of time

**Patron Mythos:** The Pegana Mythos

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans

**Required Social Standing:** Upper Middle Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good

### [XIX] The Order of the Untouchable Crown

**Lore:** This firmly ensconced elite (and elitist!) order draws membership from the royalty, aristocracy, and high gentry of Britannia. Some of its past members (such as the Black Prince) are renowned, while others are privately regarded as “snoots in armored suits” barely worth the silvered swords they carry around as objects of authoritarian prestige. Recurring lawful good vs. chaotic good skirmishes along with the burning of the Aquitanian paladin maiden Jeanne d’Arc have left a growing number of Britanniens disillusioned by the imperial dreams that are harbored by some of the royalty. Only nobles can enter the order, and only humans; elves are rebuffed and half-elves are dealt with in haughty prejudice. This advocacy of the “Newfound Order” is celebrated by Lawful Neutral cavaliers, yet soundly rejected by an inward circle of Lawful Good paladins. Collectively the Untouchables have an unquestionable history of triumphs, rescues, honorable ransoms, and great deeds in the name of good; but unfortunately fewer and fewer of its members seem to be worthy of their ancestors’ hard-won glory. (A generation or two from now Britannia will suffer a civil war before an age of glory.)

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 350 (average level 8<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 4,200 (pole arms, halberdiers)







**Colors of Renown:** Purple and gold, signifying royalty and the power of wealth

**Homeland Realm:** Britannia

**Inspired By:** The Order of the Garter

**Knightly Character Classes:** Cavaliers, Paladins

**Known Allies:** Few (highly insular)

**Patron Mythos:** The Celtic and Arthurian Mythoi

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans (xenophobic)

**Required Social Standing:** Middle Upper Class

**Worthy Alignments:** Lawful Good, Lawful Neutral, Neutral Good







## [XX] The Order of the White Temple (The Knights Templar)

**Lore:** Refer to the Templar class chapter for a history of the Templar Order.

**Approximate Number of NPC Knights:** 300 (average level 5<sup>th</sup>)

**Approximate Number of NPC Men-at-Arms:** 1,600 (highly varied weapons with moderate unit uniformity)

**Colors of Renown:** Black and white, sometimes with red elements, signifying the eternal divide and conflict between good and evil; at a distance, might be mistaken for the colors of the Order of Baphomet (III) or the Order of Mordred (XIV).

**Homeland Realm:** Borderlands of Hyperborea

**Inspired By:** The true Order of the Knights Templar, with folklore and legendry

**Knightly Character Classes:** Templars, paladins (very few)

**Known Allies:** Free City State of Grimrook, Dukes of the Winds, wind godlings, griffons, ice magi, wind walkers

**Patron Mythos:** Various (survivors from many lands)

**Predominant Ancestry:** Humans, Aeolians (rumored)

**Required Social Standing:** No requirements

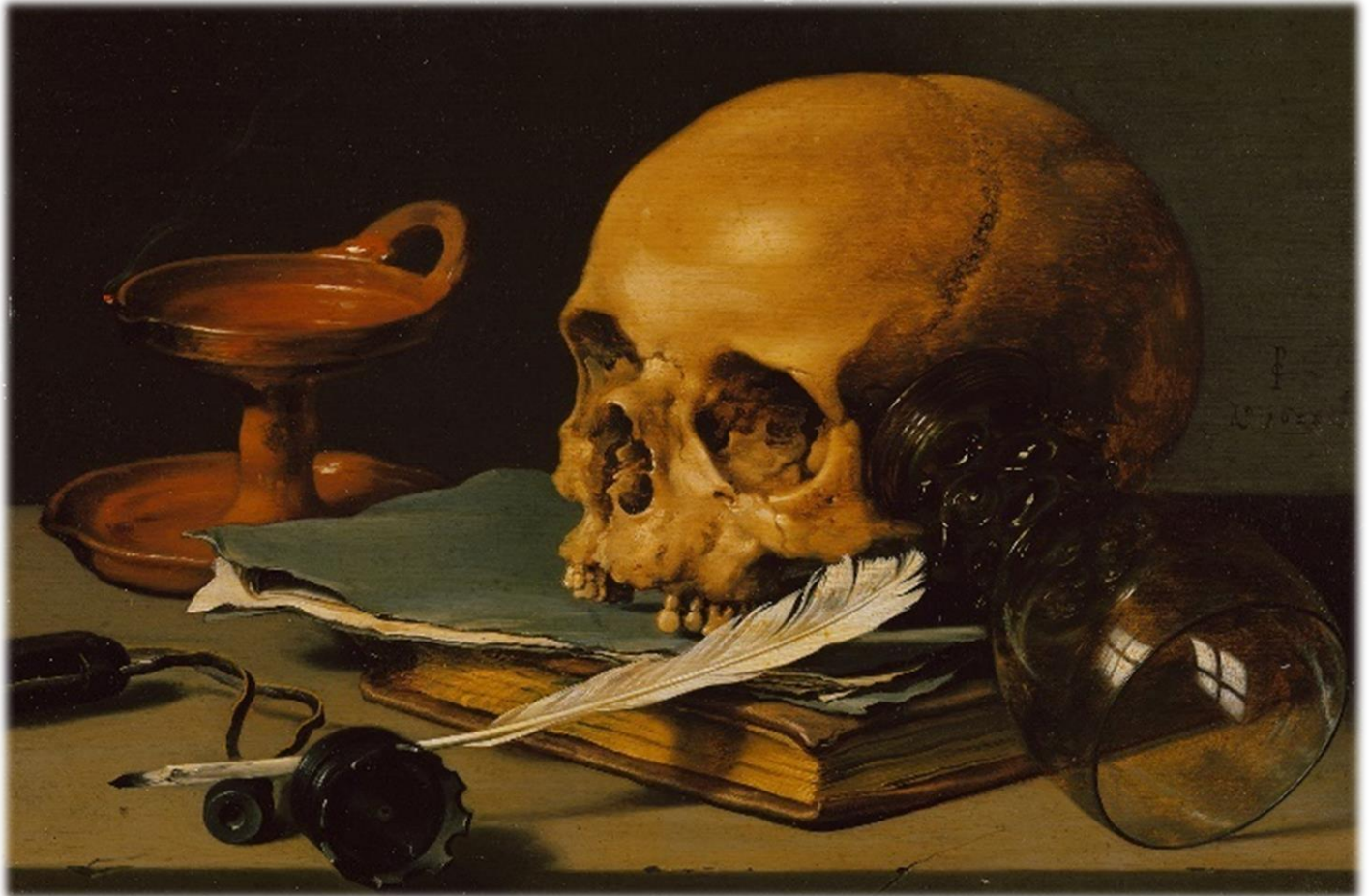
**Worthy Alignments:** Chaotic Good, Lawful Good, Neutral Good







## About the Author



Beginning play as a chaotic neutral normal human with one measly hit point to his name, KENT DAVID KELLY eventually became apprenticed to a magic-user of ill repute ... a foul man who dwelt in the steamy deeps of the Ivory Cloud Mountain. After this mentor carelessly misplaced an intelligent soul-sucking sword and then died under suspicious circumstances, his former henchman Mr. Kelly escaped to the deeper underground and there began playing Satanic role-playing games. This, the legends tell us, occurred in the year 1981.

Hoary wizard-priests who inspired Mr. Kelly in his netherworldly machinations included the peerless Mr. E. Gary Gygax, Carr, Arneson, Cook, Hammack, Jaquays, Bledsaw, Moldvay, Kuntz, Schick and Ward. Sadly, a misguided made-for-the-basements movie entitled *Mazes and Monsters* gave Mr. Kelly's parents conniptions in 1982. As a result of that blasphemous Tom Hanks debacle (and other more personal lapses in judgment), Mr. Kelly was eventually forbidden from playing his favorite game for a considerable length of time.







Nonplussed but not defeated, he used this enforced exile to escape to a friend's alehouse, and there indulged himself in now-classic computer RPGs such as Zork, Telengard, Temple of Apshai, Ultima, Tunnels of Doom, The Bard's Tale, Phantasie, Pool of Radiance, Wizard's Crown and Wasteland. He then went on to write computer versions of his own FRPGs, which led to his obsession with coupling creative design elements with random dungeons and unpredictable adventure generation.

Mr. Kelly wrote and submitted his first adventure for Dungeon Magazine #1 in 1986. Unfortunately, one Mr. Moore decided that his submission was far too "Lovecraftian, horrific and unfair" to ever serve that worthy periodical as a publishable adventure. Mr. Kelly, it must be said, took this rejection as a very good sign of things to come.

In the late 80s and 90s, Mr. Kelly wrote short stories, poems and essays ... some of which have been published under the Wonderland Imprints banner. He wrote several dark fantasy and horror novels as well. Concurrently, he ran Dark Angel Collectibles, selling classic FRPG materials as Darkseraphim, and assisted the Acaemum with the creation of the Valuation Board and other minor research projects.

At this time, Mr. Kelly and his entourage of evil gnomes are rumored to dwell in the dread and deathly under-halls of the Acaemum, Dragonsfoot, ENWorld, Grognardia, Knights & Knaves, ODD, and even more nefarious levels deep down in the mega-dungeon of the Web.

There he remains in vigil, his vampiric sword yet shivering in his hand. When not being sought outright for answers to halfling riddles or other more sundry sage advice, he is to be avoided by sane individuals *at all costs*.

## **Other Play Aids in the Castle Oldskull Supplement Series**

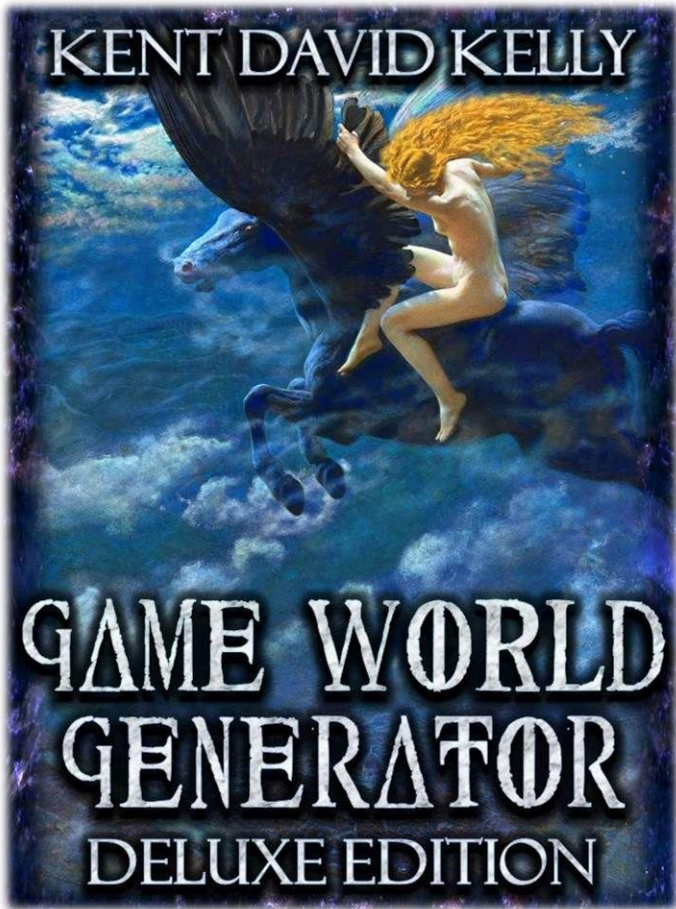
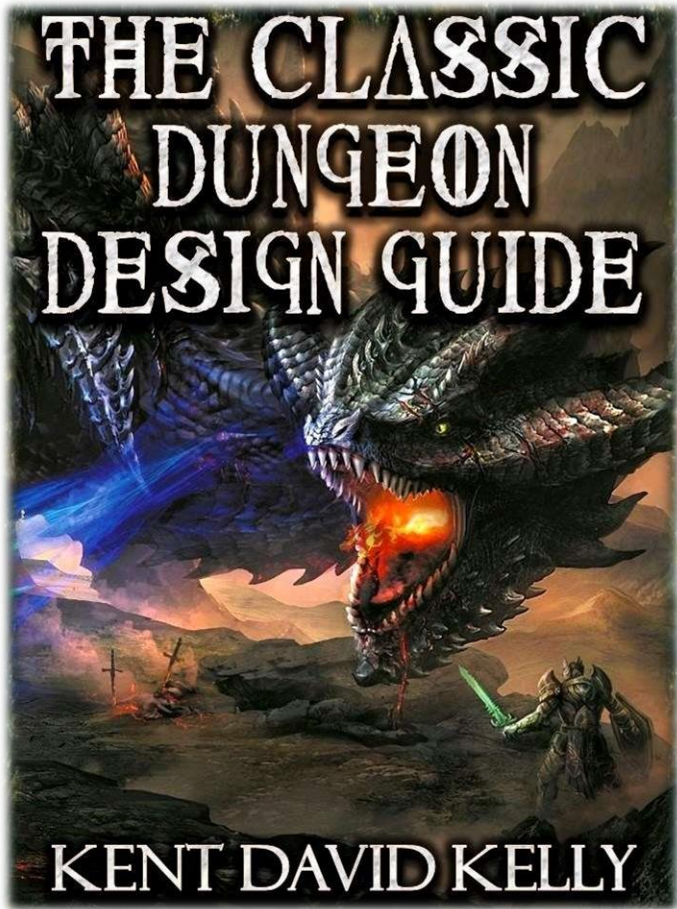
Since 2010, Wonderland Imprints has provided many books celebrating the arts of gaming, dreaming, and enthusiastic overindulgence in the realms of the imagination. Over 70 volumes including novels, novellas, poetry, history books, and role-playing gaming aids have been featured throughout the years. For those intrepid readers who have followed the Castle Oldskull series since 2012, I would like to personally thank you for your steadfast loyalty and patronage. Through your ongoing interest over 130,000 Wonderland Imprints e-books and print titles have been sold through Amazon.com, CreateSpace, the popular and occasionally best-selling Mithral, Gold, and Platinum Medal offerings available on DriveThruRPG (2017-present), as well as the esteemed charity-supporting Bundle of Holding. (In 2019 I was honored to raise thousands of dollars for cancer charity in my mother's name, entirely through the fans' enthusiastic support of the Castle Oldskull gaming line. Over 30,000 e-books were sold in March 2019.)

If you would like to browse my other titles, or to leave a review, please feel free to look here:

<https://www.drivethrurpg.com/browse/pub/7178/Kent-David-Kelly>







Thank you as always for helping my family with your purchases and devotion. I hope to be able to write for you in the near future once again!

~K







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**Long live the indefatigable Plague Doctors and the OSR!**

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