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Charlemagne

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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

Historical **2nd Edition** Reference

Charlemagne's Paladins

Campaign Sourcebook



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Campaign Sourcebook

by Ken Rolston

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One of the greatest challenges facing a DM is to create a detailed, dramatic, and plausible campaign setting for role-playing. Adapting a historical setting like the Carolingian period offers some spectacular advantages for meeting this challenge. The historical and legendary personalities and events of Charlemagne's time provide a wealth of epic themes for a role-playing campaign.

We suggest you choose one of the following three strategies to develop an AD&D® role-playing campaign set in the time of Charlemagne. As you read this book and consider how to use it in your campaign, keep the following three options in mind.

The Historical Campaign

This type of campaign should be held to the same standards for accuracy as a historical novel or film. Such standards vary greatly, especially in the action-adventure genre. Often we forgive inaccuracies so long as the tale is dramatic, but a careless disregard for detail ruins our pleasure in the historical setting. Most significant for AD&D game players, the visible effects of magic in a historical world must be far more subtle than those found in a more typical AD&D campaign.

The Legendary Campaign

This type of campaign exploits the legends of Charlemagne and his Paladins as recounted in late Medieval tales. Unfortunately, certain aspects of these legends (plate armor, jousting, chivalric romance, and others) are historically inaccurate. However, the sorcerers, magical swords and rings, and marvelous fairy kingdoms should be retained and adapted to the Carolingian setting. They can enhance or expand any campaign.

In a legendary campaign, the restrictions on spellcasters and spellcasting are somewhat relaxed. Encounters with mythical creatures, such as hippogriffs and pegasi, and with sinister sorcerers are standard fare. Though spells and magical effects are somewhat restricted, a legendary campaign is considerably closer to the standard **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®** game than is a historical campaign.

The Fantasy Campaign

This type of campaign melds a weak-magic AD&D fantasy campaign with various historical and legendary elements associated with Charlemagne and his times. Except for some restrictions on player characters and magical items, players are expected to use their PCs pretty much like they would in any other AD&D game setting.

The big advantage of this is that the players get all the abilities they are accustomed to, while the DM has access to abundant campaign setting detail to adapt for fantasy scenarios (many historical books are available at the public library).

Historical Role-Playing

This is not a history book! This is a handbook for running AD&D game action-adventure campaigns in the time of Charlemagne. Our focus produces a necessarily narrow and occasionally distorted picture of the period.

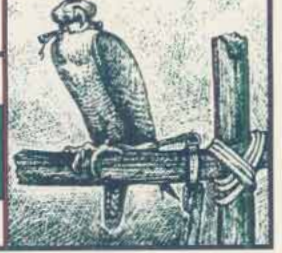
Great differences existed between east and west, north and south, in Charlemagne's vast European empire. For simplicity we have glossed over many distinctions. Historical details true of one region may not be true of another; details true to the period in general may not necessarily be true in various localities.

DM Tips

Your task is similar to that of a historical novelist. We have done the basic research for you, but the true pleasure of designing a historical campaign is in adapting the materials you find here and in the library.

As your research progresses, you will quickly realize that we don't know very much about folk in the Dark Ages. You'll have to piece together what you've learned from books, films, and other historical settings to imagine what things might have been like.

Finally, remember that role-playing is primarily a dramatic art. When given a choice between facts and drama, go for the drama. Satisfy your players' desire for authenticity, but don't be obsessed with facts. Your main task is to capture the feeling of the human drama and setting of the Dark Ages for your players.



"Illustrious race of the Franks, instituted by God himself, courageous in war, in peace constant . . . , of noble stature, brilliant whiteness of skin, exceptional beauty, daring, swift, and hardy, converted to the Catholic faith free of heresy. . . . Long live Christ, who loves the Franks."

—From the prologue to a compilation of the laws of the Franks

The greatest king of this fortunate race of Franks, Charlemagne (or Charles the Great, *Carolus Magnus*), by the grace of God, by boldness in war, and by mercy and enlightenment in peace, brought the Dark Age barbarian peoples of Europe together under one rule in the Carolingian Empire. Great in history and legends, Charlemagne and his Paladins became symbols of the struggle to rise from the violence, disorder, ignorance, and paganism of the Dark Ages toward the noble, heroic, just, and enlightened society idealized in chivalric Medieval romances.

Timeline

711: The conquest of Spain begun by Muslims of North Africa.
714: Charles Martel (1st Carolingian) inherits effective rule as Mayor of the Palace under a weak Merovingian king.
c. 725: Probable composition of *Beowulf*.
732: Charles Martel defeats Muslims at Battle of Poitiers.
751: Pepin, son of Charles Martel, crowned King of Franks.
768: Pepin dies and Charlemagne is crowned king.
773: Charlemagne invades Lombard Italy.
774: Charlemagne defeats Lombards and makes himself their king.
778: Charlemagne's Spanish campaign fails; Roland is killed at the Pass of Roncesvalles.
782: Alcuin, Anglo-Saxon scholar, joins Charlemagne's court and becomes head of palace school.
789: Anglo-Saxon chronicles record first Viking attack in England.
797: Irene becomes Empress of Byzantine Empire amidst doubts that a woman can legally rule the empire.

799: Charlemagne completes subjugation of Saxons.

800: Charlemagne crowned emperor of Romans by Pope Leo III. Charlemagne builds his chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen).

802: Empress Irene overthrown and succeeded by male ruler.

812: Michael I, emperor of Byzantium, acknowledges Charlemagne as his "brother" emperor.

814: Charlemagne dies; Louis the Pious becomes emperor.

840: Louis the Pious dies, dividing the Carolingian empire among his three sons. Viking raids grow in size and frequency.

843: After war among Louis's sons, Charles gets Aquitaine and western France, Lothar gets Italy and Lorraine, Louis the German gets Germany and the east.

870: Part of Lothar's kingdom is divided between Charles the Bald and Louis the German.

871: Alfred the Great becomes king of Wessex.

884: Carolingian empire reunited for the last time under Charles the Fat.

886: Alfred and the Anglo-Saxons make peace with the Danes and establish boundaries of the Danelaw. Great Viking raid on Paris.

888: Charles the Fat dies and empire is permanently partitioned.

911: Carolingian line comes to an end in Germany; Charles the Simple grants land in northwestern France to the Vikings (the future Normans).

962: Charlemagne's German empire is revived under Otto I.

987: The last Carolingian on the French throne is succeeded by Hugh Capet, first of the Capetian dynasty.

Charlemagne and His Times

The Decline and Fall of the Romans

In the Fourth Century AD, the western Roman Empire had united most of what is now modern Europe under the Pax Romana. In the Fifth Century AD that Roman Empire declined and fell as a result of internal political strife and external threats posed by invading tribes of Germanic and Hunnic barbarians. Four principle kingdoms succeeded the collapse of the western



Romans: the separate Gothic kingdoms of Spain and southern Italy, the Lombard kingdom that replaced the Goths in northern Italy, and the Frankish kingdom of Gaul (modern France) and Germany. The cultures of these barbarian kingdoms were but shadows of the sophisticated Roman civilizations they supplanted. Many Roman villas (large rural farms) were abandoned, and forests sprang up amidst their ruins. Many of the great urban centers of Roman Europe were largely unoccupied or altogether deserted. After the long reign of the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome, Europe had entered the Dark Ages.

The Carolingian Empire

In the Eighth Century AD, an energetic, forceful, benevolent, and enlightened king bonded most of barbarian Europe into a new Western Empire, the Empire of Charlemagne, or Charles the Great. The Carolingians, as Charlemagne's ruling family was called, sought to establish a new standard of law and Christian enlightenment for the people of the Carolingian Empire. They tried to secure its borders from the raids and invasions of the pagan Vikings, Slavs, Avars, and Moors. Historians and poets of the later Middle Ages looked back on the comparative peace and unity of Charlemagne's 46-year reign with a romantic awe and reverence, calling him the "father of Europe."

The Carolingian dynasty reigned for almost two centuries, from the accession of Charles (the Hammer) Martel on the death of his father Pippin in 714 to the end of Louis the Coward's reign in 987. *Charlemagne's Paladins* focuses on the years of Charlemagne's reign.

The earlier timeline provides a quick overview of important dates and events for the entire Carolingian period, while the following historical notes are presented in the style of excerpts from the Royal Frankish Annals. These consist of a year-by-year contemporary account of significant events in the Frankish kingdom during Charlemagne's reign. Remarks in parentheses add significant details that might be known to a noble of the period. For a brief review of the lands and peoples mentioned in these historical notes, see Chapter 4.

For more detail on the history of Charlemagne and the Carolingian Empire (and abundant inspirations for AD&D® game scenarios and campaigns), see the references listed in "Suggested Reading" section at the end of this chapter.

Adapted and Annotated Excerpts from the Royal Frankish Annals

732: Charles Martel (the Hammer) defeats the Moors at the Battle of Poitiers in southern France and turns the tide of Moorish invasions from Spain.

750: Pepin the Short, son of Charles the Hammer, is elected king according to the custom of the Franks. He is anointed and crowned king of the Franks by the hands of the Pope's delegate, Archbishop Boniface of saintly memory. (Saint Boniface was a famous Anglo-Saxon missionary who preached Christianity to the Saxon.)

754-56: Pope Stephen II travels to Pepin's villa called Quierzy and crowns Pepin again, along with his sons Carloman and Charles I (the future Charlemagne) and confers upon all three the title of Roman Patrician in return for Pepin's commitment to defend the Pope and Rome against the aggressive Lombards. Pepin and the Franks march against the Lombards, and by the grace of God and the intercession of the blessed apostle Peter, the Franks claim victory. Pepin presents the lands he wins to the Pope (the Donation of Pepin; these lands become the Papal States).

768: Charles I and brother Carloman come to the throne together upon the death of Pepin.

769: The glorious Lord King Charles marches to suppress revolt in Aquitaine and Gascony, and by the grace of God he gains the victory despite brother Carloman who declined to aid him in this campaign. (Carloman dies in 771, leaving Charlemagne sole ruler of the Franks.)

772: King Charles holds an assembly at Worms, and from thence he marches into Saxony. He seeks out and destroys the great Pagan idol Irminsul, the oak of Geismar, the Father Tree that supports the vault of heaven, worshiped by the Pagan Saxons, and takes away the gold and silver he finds there. He holds parleys with the Saxons, who make peace and give hostages, then returns to Francia. (The Saxons maintained their pagan worship of forest spirits and sacred



groves like the Druids of old times. Charlemagne's intent was to convert these ungodly peoples to the worship of the True Faith.)

773: Charles marches across the Alps into Italy to aid Pope Stephen against the insolent and oppressive King Desiderius of the Lombards. By the grace of God, the Franks gain the victory and besiege Pavia. The Lord Charles celebrates Christmas in Holy Rome. The savage and treacherous Saxons fall upon the borderlands left exposed by Charlemagne's absence and put Christians and churches to flame and sword.

774: Charles captures Pavia and returns home victorious. He then sends four detachments to Saxony, and with God's help has the victory and returns with much booty. (Though Charlemagne desired that the Saxons be brought to the Church, he also was pleased to enrich his lords and knights with the spoils of war.)

775: King Charles campaigns in Saxony, where he takes many hostages and much booty, and causes much slaughter among the Saxons.

776: King Charles marches into Italy and defeats the oath-breaking Lombard Hrodgaud, then returns victorious to Francia. Then, hearing that the treacherous Saxons have rebelled and abandoned their hostages and broken their oaths, he campaigns against them. Then all the Saxons came before him at the source of the Lippe River, to surrender their lands to the Franks, to put up security, to promise to become Christians, and to submit to the rule of King Charles and the Franks. Many are baptized and many more are taken hostage, and fortified camps are built and Frankish garrisons installed to guard them before King Charles returns to France.

777: A Moorish Embassy headed by ibn-al-Arabi comes to ask King Charles's aid in overthrowing Abd-er-Rahman, emir of Córdoba. (Ibn-al-Arabi, a partisan of the Abbassid caliphs ruling everywhere in the Islamic world except for Spain, hoped to obtain Charlemagne's aid in ousting the emir of Córdoba, a supporter of the Umayyad caliphate. Charlemagne hoped that the Christian population of Spain would rise in arms and join forces with his army once he entered Spain.)

778: King Charles marches forth with a great army of Franks, Lombards, Burgundians, Ro-

mans, Bavarians, and Goths and enters Spain. However, his campaign does not succeed, and he withdraws. In the pass of Roncevalles in the Pyrenees Mountains, treacherous Basques prepare an ambush and fall upon the baggage and rear-guard. The entire Frankish force is slain, including many officers of the palace. The baggage is plundered, and the enemy melts away into the wild lands, so vengeance is frustrated. (The Song of Roland is inspired by this battle; among the fallen Franks were Roland [Count Hruodland, warden of the Breton Marches], Egghard the royal seneschal, and Anselm, count of the palace. In legend Oliver and the Archbishop Turpin fell that day. Though the Spanish campaign was a failure, the establishment of the Spanish Marches, a defensive zone north of the Pyrenees, assured the security of Aquitaine from Spanish Moorish invasion.) Learning that the Saxons are in revolt, Charlemagne returns in haste and puts down the rebellion.

779-780: Lord King Charles campaigns in Saxony.

781: Lord King Charles celebrates Easter in Rome, where Pope Hadrian anoints Charlemagne's sons, Pepin and Louis, to be king of Italy and king of Aquitaine, respectively.

782: The Saxon chief Witunkind leads the Saxon tribes in an uprising, and Charles is drawn away from a campaign against the Slavs to put down the rebellion. The Saxons come once again to Charles and submit to the king, and they surrender the evildoers who fomented the rebellion—4,500 persons—who are put to death, though Witunkind, having fled into Nordmannia, is not among them.

783-84: Charles campaigns in Saxony.

785: Charles campaigns in Saxony. Witunkind is forced to sue for peace, and he is baptized. The whole of Saxony is then subjugated, and their stubborn treachery quiets for several years because they can find no convenient occasion for revolt. (Though minor Saxon revolts continued for years, mass deportations of Saxons into France and Frankish colonies established in Saxony achieved a final settlement of the region by the end of the 790s.) An ambitious conspiracy among the East Franks, led by Count Hardrad, is discovered, and its principals are deprived of their eyes and sent into exile.



786: The Lord King Charles sends into Brittany his army under his seneschal Audulf. By God's will they conquer many Bretons with their fortifications and strongholds in swamps and forest. They bring the leaders back to Worms to submit and render tribute to King Charles. Then King Charles in winter takes his army into Lombardy to assume its rulership, as he already has in his power its King Desiderius. (Henceforth northern Italy is part of Charles's empire.)

787: The most pious King Charles enters Rome with his expedition and is received with great honor by the Lord Pope Hadrian. There Lord King Charles accepts the oath of Duke Arighis of southern Italy. With Pope Hadrian he chastises the inconstant and deceitful emissaries of Duke Tassilo of Bavaria (who had sworn oaths of submission and loyalty to both Charles and his father Pepin). King Charles tells them that if the duke in his stubbornness disobeys the words of the pope, then Lord King Charles would be absolved of any sin or guilt in burning, murder, and other atrocities that might occur if King Charles and the Franks must enforce the oaths. Yet Duke Tassilo persists, and King Charles causes three armies to be raised and marches upon Bavaria. Duke Tassilo, seeing himself surrounded and that the Bavarian people prefer to concede the king's right rather than oppose him, comes in person to King Charles, places his hands in the king's, and commends himself into vassalage.

788: By the counsel of his rancorous wife, Luitberga, a woman hateful to God, Duke Tassilo forsakes his oaths and plots treason, causing the Byzantine Greeks and Avars to make war in the east and in Italy. With the help of God, the Franks prevail, and Duke Tassilo, granted his life by the mercy of King Charles, enters a monastery to do penance for his many sins. (The Kingdom of Bavaria becomes part of the Empire.)

789: A campaign into the land of the Wilzi (a Slavic tribe) is launched. By the guidance of God, King Charles receives submission, hostages, and oaths from the magnates and chieftains of the Slavs.

790: No campaign is undertaken. While in winter residence at Worms, his palace there is accidentally burned during the night.

791: The king campaigns in the land of the Avars. When they see the Franks approach, the Lord strikes them with fear, and they abandon their fortifications. Christ guides the king and his armies without harm into the Avar strongholds, and the campaign is accomplished without any misfortune, except for a plague that slays nine of every ten of the horses in the king's command.

792: No campaign is undertaken. A conspiracy of some Franks and the king's son Pepin is discovered. Some are executed by the sword for high treason; others are hanged on the gallows.

793: The Saxons revolt, intercepting and defeating a Frankish army, and Moors raid southern France and return home victorious after slaying many Franks.

794: The king sends two armies into Saxony, and the Saxons, seeing they are surrounded, promise to become Christians and be loyal to the king, though they had no intention of keeping their oaths.

795: The king campaigns in Saxony. Once the Saxons have been soundly beaten, their country laid waste, and their hostages received, the king returns to the palace at Aix-la-Chapelle.

796: Pope Hadrian dies and is succeeded by Pope Leo. Duke Eric of the Franks campaigns into Pannonia, defeats the Avars, and enters into the ring of the Avars (a fabled fortification of the Avars). There they find much booty and send many wagonloads of treasure home to the king.

797: The Lord King campaigns in Saxony and receives the submission of the whole Saxon people. The governor of Barcelona, Zatun, comes in person and submits himself and his city to the king. At his palace in Aix-la-Chapelle, Charles receives the Saracen Abdallah and an envoy from the governor of Sicily.

798: Faithless Saxons take prisoner the envoys sent to them, execute some, and hold the others for ransom. The king summons an army and lays waste to the whole of Saxony. He defeats them in battle and takes hostages, including the most treacherous Saxon nobles. Lord King Charles then returns to Francia. At Aix-la-Chapelle, he receives an embassy of peace from Empress Irene of the Byzantine Greeks of Constantinople.



799: The Romans capture the Pope, blind him, tear his tongue out, and cast him into prison. He manages to escape and is delivered into safety. There is war on the borders with the Avar and with the Moorish and Saracen pirates in the Balearic Islands (in the western Mediterranean). Count Wido, commander of the Breton March, enters Brittany, and conquers and subjugates the whole province to the Franks—something that has never happened before.

800: The king travels to Rome, where he holds an assembly to examine the accusations of crimes charged to Pope Leo. No one is willing to prove these charges, and with the Gospel in hand, Pope Leo invokes the name of the Holy Trinity and purges himself by oath of the charges. Thereafter, on Christmas, when the king rose from prayer in front of the shrine of the blessed apostle Peter to take part in the Mass, Pope Leo placed a crown on his head. Lord King Charles is hailed by the whole Roman people: To the august Charles, crowned by God, the great and peaceful emperor of the Romans, life and victory! Thereafter he is called Emperor and Augustus. (A great historical controversy has grown up over the issue of whether Charlemagne had anticipated and desired to be crowned emperor, or whether Pope Leo had surprised him and crowned him against his will. In any case, this title of Emperor of the Western Roman Empire was a great symbolic confirmation of Charlemagne's divinely inspired rulership over Western Europe.)

801: The emperor receives envoys from the king of Persia (Haroun-al-Raschid, 5th Abbassid Caliph of Baghdad, prominent figure in *Thousand and One Arabian Nights*), one a Persian from the East and another a Saracen from Africa and the envoy of Emir Abraham. The city of Barcelona is captured after a two-year siege and Zaton, its governor, is captured and condemned to exile.

802: Issac the Jew, whom the emperor had sent five years before to the king of the Persians, returns to the emperor at Aix-la-Chapelle and delivers, along with many other wonderful presents from the Persian king, an elephant whose name is Abul Abaz.

803: A great earthquake around the palace at Aix-la-Chapelle causes a large death toll. En-

voys from Emperor Nicephorus of Byzantium are received with a written proposal for peace. They are dismissed with a letter from Emperor Charles.

804: Charles meets with Pope Leo in the city of Reims and gives him many fine gifts. The emperor has heard rumor that in the city of Mantua the blood of Christ has been found, and he asks the Pope to inquire into the truthfulness of this rumor. (The Pope's report on this rumor is not recorded.)

805: The emperor sends an army under his son Charles into the country of the Slavs called Bohemia. Charles ravages the native land from one end to the other and slays their chief Lecho. The emperor gives his time to hunting in several of his palaces, then settles for the winter in his palace at Thionville, where he is joined by his sons Pepin and Louis for Christmas.

806: The emperor makes arrangements for the division of his empire among his sons: Louis the western empire, Pepin Italy, and Charles the east. (Charles and Pepin died before Charlemagne, which left the entire empire to Louis, thence to be called Louis the Pious.) Armies are sent into the lands of the Slavs along the Elbe River and in Bohemia, Corsica is defended from Moorish pirates, and Navarre and Pamplona (northeastern Spain) are once again placed under the emperor's authority.

807: The emperor receives an embassy of monks from Jerusalem from the patriarch Thomas. He also receives an envoy from the king of Persia, along with many fine gifts, including a marvelous water clock with many astounding mechanisms. The Moors on Sardinia and Corsica are defeated and put to flight.

808: King Godofrid of the Danes threatens war on the Saxon borders. Godofrid gains many Slavs as allies, but the emperor lays waste the lands of these Slavs and withdraws without receiving hurt to his armies. Eardwulf, king of the Northumbrians of Britain, is deposed from his throne and driven from his country. Eardwulf meets with the emperor and then proceeds to Rome; on his return from Rome the emperor sends him back to Northumbria with envoys of the Pontiff Leo III and of Emperor Charles.

809: A fleet from Greek Byzantium skirmishes with the forces of Lord Pepin, king of Italy. King



Louis enters Spain with his army, but, seeing he can achieve little quickly, returns to Aquitaine with his army unimpaired. Warfare between the emperor's Saxon allies and Godofrid the Dane's Slav allies causes the emperor to build, fortify, and garrison a castle on the Elbe River for defense.

810: The Moors with a fleet of enormous size invade Sardinia and Corsica. King Pepin attacks treacherous Venice and ravages the shores of Dalmatia. Godofrid and his Danes invade Frisia and take great tributes of silver from the vanquished Frisians. The emperor without delay sends out messengers to gather an army. The elephant that Haroun, king of the Persians, had sent the emperor dies suddenly. The emperor seeks battle with Godofrid, but the army of the Danes has returned home, and Godofrid has been murdered by one of his retainers. Hemming, Godofrid's son, succeeds his father and makes peace with the emperor. Emperor Nicephorus of Byzantium and Abul Aas, king of Spain, also make peace with the emperor. Charlemagne's son Pepin, king of Italy, dies.

811: Three armies are raised and sent into different parts of the empire: the first army against the Slavs across the River Elbe, the second army into Pannonia against the Slavs and Huns, and the third army into Brittany. They all return home unharmed after carrying out their emperor's orders successfully.

812: Hemming, king of the Danes, dies, and many Danes die in battles over the succession to the throne. Emperor Nicephorus dies in battle against the Bulgars after many remarkable victories. His son-in-law, Michael, becomes Emperor, and sends envoys to acclaim the emperor, after their own Greek custom, "Emperor" and "Basileus." Peace is made with Abul Aas, king of Spain, and with Duke Grimoald of the Beneventans, who pays tribute of 25,000 gold solidi.

813: The emperor invites his son Louis, king of Aquitaine, to a general assembly at Aix-la-Chapelle, places the crown upon his head, and shares the title of emperor with him.

814: While spending the winter at Aix-la-Chapelle, the Lord Emperor Charles departs this life on January 28, in about his 71st year, in the 47th year of his reign, in the 43rd since the conquest of Italy, and in the 14th since he had been named Emperor and Augustus.

The Decline of the Carolingians

Louis the Pious succeeded Charlemagne, but lacked his father's forceful will and energy. On his death in 840, Louis split the empire among his three sons. Aquitaine and western Francia went to Charles; Lothar received Italy and a broad belt of Eastern France (the Lorraine-to-be); and Louis the German got Bavaria and the east. The sons squabbled in civil wars; eventually Lothar remained emperor, though the title had no authority over his brothers.

For a short two years, Charles the Fat succeeded to rule the whole Carolingian empire, but the imperial title had lost all its power to the numerous strong dukes and kings who had divided the empire among themselves. Various later Carolingians received the title of emperor, without gaining any noticeable power or influence as a result, as the sundry Frankish dukes and kings refused to recognize their authority. The lack of respect these late Carolingian rulers commanded is suggested in their nicknames: Charles the Bald, Louis the Child, Louis the Stammerer, Charles the Simple, and Louis the Coward.

Though the stories of these later Carolingians are colorful, often filled with scheming, intrigue, and civil war, they lack the heroic, epic stature of the history and legend of Emperor Charlemagne. If you wish to set your Carolingian campaign during the reigns of the later Carolingian rulers, see the "Suggested Reading" section for the historical details.

Suggested Reading

A short game reference like this cannot possibly offer the inspiring historical detail, colorful maps, illustrations, and photographs to be found in abundance at your local library. For DM and player alike, much of the fun of a Carolingian campaign is in reading about the history and legends of Charlemagne and his Paladins and bringing them to life in your game sessions. The following books are recommended:

Dixon, Phillip; *Barbarian Europe*. Compact treatment of Charlemagne and the Franks; excellent archaeological presentation, with great illustrations, cut-away plans, and diagrams of buildings and settlements.



Einhard and Nottker the Stammerer; *Two Lives of Charlemagne*. Einhard was a contemporary and intimate of Charlemagne. Nottker never met Charlemagne and wrote years after his death; his account is more a collection of anecdotes along the line of the fable of George Washington tossing a silver dollar across the Potomac; it is therefore more interesting as a document of human values and the apotheosis of a culture hero than a historical document.

Heer, Friedrich; *Charlemagne and His World*. Good general introduction to Charlemagne and his era. Lavishly illustrated with color and black-and-white reproductions of period drawings, paintings, and art treasures.

Lamb, Harold; *Charlemagne: The Legend and the Man*. Well-written, almost poetic narrative personal biography.

Nicolle, David; *The Age of Charlemagne*. Osprey Men-at-Arms series. Concise military history of the period with excellent color plates of warriors and equipment from throughout the Empire.

Riché, Pierre; *Daily Life in the World of Charlemagne*. Oodles of concrete, specific detail about the peoples and customs of the period.

Scholz, Bernhard Walter; *Carolingian Chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard's Stories*. Contemporary historians' account. Lively and readable. Nothing beats reading the words of folks who were actually there.

Simons, Gerald; *Barbarian Europe*. Time-Life Great Ages of Man series. Good treatment of life and customs of the European barbarians.

Winston, Richard; *Charlemagne*. A Horizon book. A historical biography and survey of the events of Charlemagne's reign. Lavishly illustrated with color and black-and-white reproductions of period drawings, paintings, and art treasures.

For prose retellings of the tales of Charlemagne and his Paladins from the *chansons de geste* and Italian epic Medieval romances, see the following books:

Anderson, Poul; *Three Hearts and Three Lions*. This novel features Ogier the Dane, a great hero of the Charlemagne legends, as its central character.

Anonymous; *The Song of Roland*. This poem, renowned as the finest of the *chansons de geste*, can be found in various verse and prose translations.

Ariosto, Ludovico; *Orlando Furioso*. In the two-volume Penguin edition, 1252 pages feature epic action-adventure fantasy-historical poetry. Bulfinch and Baldwin give good Reader's Digest Condensed-style versions of the essential characters, settings, and actions, but for style and detail, lovers of language and storytelling should go to the source.

Baldwin, James; *The Story of Roland*. An excellent translation and re-telling of many of the best tales of heroes and wizards. Highly recommended.

Bulfinch, Thomas; *Bulfinch's Mythology: Legends of Charlemagne*. The classic collection of old fables, and a sentimental favorite.

de Camp, L. Sprague, and Pratt, Fletcher; *The Complete Enchanter*. The third of the fantasy-adventures of Harold Shea, *The Castle of Iron*, is set in Atlantes the Sorcerer's castle in the Pyrenees and features the principal characters and settings of *Orlando Furioso*.

Tarr, Judith; *Roncesvalles*. An alternate history story about Charlemagne's Spanish campaign.

Character Design

Character Class Availability

Because of differences between a standard AD&D® game campaign and one set in the Dark Ages, certain character classes are not available to player characters and are not suitable as non-player characters without a specific DM rationale. Also, some character classes may be subject to special restrictions.

The following table indicates which classes are available according to the type of Carolingian campaign you want to run (as discussed in the previous chapter).

Carolingian Character Classes Table

Class	Historical	Legendary	Fantasy
Fighter	A	A	A
Paladin	NA	A	A
Ranger	NA	NA	A
Mage	NA	NA	NA
Specialist Mage	NA	DM	A
Psionicist	NA	NA	NA
Cleric	A	A	A
Druid	NA	NA	NA
Thief	A	A	A
Bard	NA	DM	A

A = Available; NA = Not available;
DM = Available only with DM approval

Carolingian characters may not be psionicists. We also recommend that all PCs be either of noble background or plausible companions of nobles. Only the noble classes had the freedom and resources to travel, make war, and seek adventure. The background and adventure material in this supplement presumes that most PCs are of noble classes.

Listed below are the character classes available and any adaptations or restrictions required for play in Carolingian campaigns.

Warrior Classes

In any Carolingian campaign, warriors should be the most common player character.

Because of the enhanced role of fighters in historical settings, use of *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* supplement is recommended.

Permitted Warrior Kits

The Noble Carolingian Warrior Kit (see following) best represents the Frankish mounted warriors that were the foundation of Charlemagne's empire. Other appropriate Warrior Kits include the following:

Peasant Hero: Non-noble fighters who have learned their fighting skills as levies on Charlemagne's campaigns on the borders and marches of the empire, or in militia defense of their lands against Saracen, Saxon, or Viking raids.

Wilderness Warrior: Non-noble commoners or nobles who live on the Eastern Saxon, Slavic, or Avar frontiers and in the Spanish and Breton Marches, or foreigners welcomed in friendship, service, or embassy by the Franks.

Pirate/Outlaw: Non-noble fighters loyal to the Church and Empire but driven to outlawry by corrupt local noble and church officials.

The Noble Warrior and Cavalier Kits are not appropriate, even for legendary or fantasy campaigns, because of their later Medieval feudal and courtly features such as plate armor, jousting, heraldry, noble oaths, and other trappings.

Noble Carolingian Warrior Kit

Description: The Carolingian noble is trained from childhood in warfare, hard riding, and hard living. As an adult he represents the offensive and defensive strength of the empire, serving in the king's frequent campaigns of conquest, defending the empire against raids and invasions of barbarians and infidels, and loyally supporting the authority of the king and his chosen representatives, the counts and bishops.

Role: In education, culture, principles, and piety, the Noble Carolingian Warrior varies widely. To best develop a conception of your Noble Carolingian's role in society, study Chapter 4: The Setting. For simplicity, you may choose one of the following three simplified concepts of a Noble Carolingian's role in the empire.

- **The Sportsman:** This warrior is motivated by his love of action, competition, and self-testing, as best represented in the manly pursuits of hunting and warfare. He desires to develop his skills to his best advantage and to gain the respect of his peers.



- **The Ambitious Noble:** This noble wishes to increase his wealth and power by gaining booty on campaigns and by distinguishing himself as a leader of men. The wealth and power necessary for advancement can be won only on military campaigns.

- **The Christian Soldier of the Empire:** This noble fights to secure the benefits of Christian culture and Charlemagne's benevolent reign for his empire and for the poor misguided heathens on its borders.

Secondary Skills: Groom (care for your own horse).

Weapon Proficiencies: Long sword, lance (light or medium), short bow.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus—Riding (land-based). Recommended—Gaming, Hunting, Local History, Religion.

Equipment: Mail or scale armor, shield, long sword, dagger, short bow, horse, saddle, bit and bridle, horseshoes and shoeing, halter and saddle blanket.

Special Benefits: +3 reaction from anyone of his own culture; hospitality of other nobles, churchmen, and monasteries when traveling

Special Hindrances: Expected to honor his oaths and the Christian virtues; may be bound to his king or count by personal oath, obligation of service in return for protection, or family connection; must come at the king's summons for campaigning in spring and at need when raids threaten local region; must spend +10% to base cost of goods and services per experience level for quality befitting his social station.

Wealth Options: 150 gp & 5d4 x 10 gp

Fighters

The trained warrior class of the Carolingians was primarily a noble, horse-owning class, though all freemen were liable for military service in response to a local crisis. Most men would know how to use some weapon, since hunting was a part of everyday life, but only the noble classes could afford the armor, weapons, horses, and the leisure to train in their use. A less-well-trained-and-armed levy or militia infantry could provide a free commoner with some fighter skills. These, along with archery skills—a logical asset of a commoner who provides meat for

the table with his bow—could be the foundation of a non-noble fighter character.

All noble fighters must initially be proficient with the long sword, lance, and short bow. All non-noble fighters must initially be proficient with the spear and short bow. Additional proficiencies can be chosen as the player prefers (provided the weapon is available in the campaign).

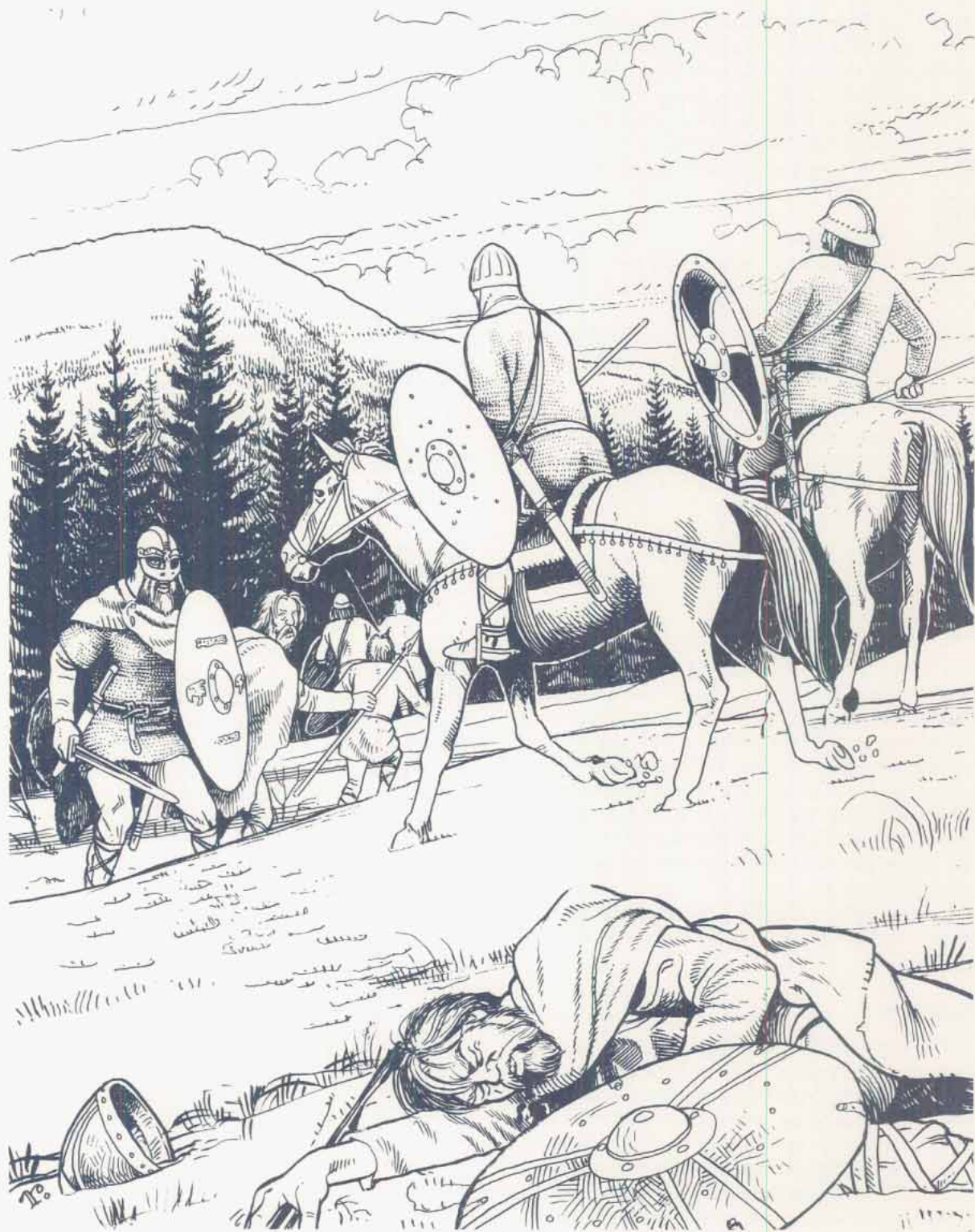
Upon attaining 9th level, a non-noble Carolingian fighter is granted a title and becomes a noble (if he has not already won this honor during the campaign).

Upon attaining 9th level, a Carolingian fighter can attract a body of warriors. However, instead of using the tables found in the *Player's Handbook*, the number and types of followers attracted are listed on the following tables.

To use the tables, roll once to determine the leader type, once to determine the troop type, and once to determine the elite troop type. For leaders, a suggested magical item is given in parentheses for fantasy campaigns only.

Carolingian Fighter Followers Table

d100	
Roll	Leader Type
01-40	5th-level fighter, chain mail, shield (<i>long sword</i> +1)
41-75	6th-level fighter, chain mail, high-spirited horse (<i>shield</i> +1, <i>light lance</i> +1)
76-95	6th-level fighter, chain mail, high-spirited horse (<i>light lance</i> +1, <i>long sword</i> +1, <i>shield</i> +1), plus 2nd-level priest, chain mail, shield
96-99	7th-level fighter, chain mail (+1), shield (+1), long sword (+2), superb horse (i.e., charger)
00	DM's option
d100	
Roll	Troop Type
01-50	20 cavalry with leather armor, shield, light lance, long sword; 100 infantry with leather armor, short bow, club
51-75	40 cavalry with leather armor, shield, light lance, long sword; 40 infantry with studded leather armor, short bow, long sword, spear





- 76-90 60 cavalry with studded leather armor, shield, light lance, long sword
91-99 60 cavalry with studded leather armor, shield, light lance, long sword; 20 infantry with studded leather armor, short bow, long sword
00 DM's option (100 men total)

d100

Roll Elite Type

- 01-50 20 mounted young nobles: 1st-level fighters with chain armor, shield, light lance, long sword
51-75 10 mounted noble veterans: 3rd-level fighters with chain armor, shield, light lance, long sword
76-90 10 mounted noble veterans as above, but mounted on high-spirited horses
91-99 10 mounted noble veterans mounted on high-spirited horses as above, plus 3 warrior priests: 2nd-level priests with chain mail, shield, mace
00 DM's option (legendary warriors, paladins, fighting priests, sorcerers, etc.)

Rangers

The special magical and nonmagical abilities of the ranger have no place in historical or legendary Carolingian campaigns. Rural levies, adventurers, and heroic outlaws with exceptional woodcraft and tracking skills are best represented in these campaigns by standard fighters taking a Peasant Hero or Pirate/Outlaw kit. On the other hand, the limited magical abilities of the ranger are compatible with a fantasy Carolingian campaign.

In a fantasy campaign, a ranger gains followers normally as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Paladins

The high ideals and magical powers derived from the purity associated with paladins are the product of later Medieval romance and chivalry, not of the Carolingian historical period. These abilities are more appropriate in a late Medieval historical setting like the Crusades or in legendary or fantasy Carolingian, Arthurian, or chivalric campaigns. A fighter inspired by

Christian ideals is not implausible in the historical Carolingian context, but he would be a standard fighter accepting all the limitations and restrictions of a paladin, but enjoying none of the game benefits of the class.

In a legendary campaign, the special benefits of the paladin class are restricted as follows:

- The detect presence of evil intent ability may be used only once per day.
- The paladin can use his laying on of hands only on another character or creature.
- A paladin of 9th level or higher may cast only priest spells from the divination, healing, and protection spheres; he may not cast spells from the combat sphere.

In a fantasy campaign there are no restrictions on the special benefits of the paladin class.

Wizard Classes

Wizards play no recorded part in the history of the Carolingian Empire. They do appear in the romantic tales of the Charlemagne legends, usually as antagonists. However, two wizards, Malagigi (one of King Charlemagne's Twelve Peers) and Angelica (the sorcerer-princess of Cathay) are major protagonists in the Charlemagne legends. Thus, with DM approval, specialist mages, though rare, may be player characters in legendary or fantasy campaigns, with the following restrictions. Note that a player desiring a wizardlike spellcaster in a legendary or fantasy campaign may find the bard class a better match to the type of wizard encountered in the legends of Charlemagne.

Player character specialist mages in a legendary Carolingian campaign lack the effective combat resources of a wizard in a standard AD&D® game campaign. Game balance has been emphatically shifted in favor of fighters and priests, much to the detriment of wizards. Playing a wizard in a legendary Carolingian campaign is a role-playing challenge that is most likely to reward those who savor the distinctive role rather than the flashy power of wizard spellcasters.

Wizards are rare, solitary, eccentric figures in Carolingian romance (think of Merlin in the Arthurian stories). They do not gather in adventuring fellowships, provide heavy weaponry for monster hunts, or gain new spells when they ad-



vance in experience level as wizards do in most AD&D® game settings. There are no wizard shops or guilds, no magic colleges, no standard procedures for learning new spells.

Much of their power comes from their knowledge of ancient and exotic lands and their shrewd schemes, not from spellcasting. They do not attack directly at the object of their desire, but they council and beguile others into doing their bidding. The greatest benefits a wizard confers as an ally and counselor are his clever plans. They must rely on schemes and trickery rather than direct confrontation.

Another important magical resource for specialist mages in legendary and fantasy campaigns is their understanding of various magical items. Most of Malagigi's powers derive from the magical book he is always consulting. The ring that confers invisibility on Angelica of Cathay when she places it in her mouth is the primary source of her sorcerous abilities.

Playing the role of a wizard in the style of Carolingian romance requires study of the wizards encountered in the tales—in particular Malagigi, Angelica, Atlantes, Merlin, and Melissa the witch—to get an idea of how they fit into the legendary setting. See Chapter 6: "The Tales of Charlemagne and His Paladins," for examples of episodes featuring some of these sorcerers.

In a fantasy Carolingian campaign, the DM may choose to relax some or all of the restrictions on specialist mages. He or she may also introduce the notion of an ancient and international secret society of sorcerers that supports common AD&D game conventions, such as magic colleges. However, the more access that is allowed to typical AD&D game spells and powers, the less the campaign retains any distinctive Carolingian flavor.

DM Note: Specialist mage player characters of 11th level or higher can create many magical effects greater than those produced by magicians in the legendary tales.

Restrictions on Specialist Mages and on Spellcasting

- Only the following specialist mages are permitted: conjurers, diviners, enchanters, and illusionists.

- Specialist mages may only learn, cast, research, and create spells within their own school of magic, with the exception of the *read magic* spell, which any specialist mage may learn as though it were a spell in his school.

- Certain spells that are more closely associated with standard AD&D game settings than with the sorcery found in romantic tales of Charlemagne and his Companions are not available in legendary campaigns. (See the following list of prohibited spells.)

- When using these restrictions, a specialist mage is automatically successful when attempting to learn any spell of his college.

- Casting times for wizard spells in Charlemagne's world are longer than in most AD&D game worlds. Treat each segment of casting time as a round, each round as a turn, each turn as an hour, and each hour of casting time as a full day. The spellcaster must still concentrate during the entire course of the casting, and any disturbance will disrupt the spell.

- Wizard kits are not permitted.

Prohibited Spells

The spells in the following list should be prohibited. The DM may decide to exclude other spells to this list, or to permit the use of spells from this list. The DM should provide the wizard's player with a list of spells prohibited in his or her campaign.

Conjuration/Summoning: Find Familiar, Melf's Acid Arrow, Flame Arrow, Evard's Black Tentacles, Conjure Elemental, Leomund's Secret Chest, Invisible Stalker, Drawmij's Instant Summons, Limited Wish, Mordenkainen's Magnificent Mansion, Power Word Stun, Prismatic Spray, Maze, Power Word Blind, Prismatic Wall, Symbol, Power Word Kill, Prismatic Sphere, Wish

Enchantment/Charm: Sleep (permitted as if it were a 4th-level spell), Tasha's Uncontrollable Hideous Laughter, Leomund's Secure Shelter, Domination, Feeblemind, Leomund's Lamentable Belaborment, Guards and Wards, Charm Plants, Shadow Walk, Mass Charm, Otto's Irresistible Dance, Sink, Mordenkainen's Disjunction, Succor

Greater Divination: ESP



Illusion/Phantasm: Nystul's Magical Aura, Blur, Hypnotic Pattern, Mirror Image, Invisibility 10' Radius, Wraithform, Phantasmal Killer, Shadow Door, Shadow Magic, Mirage Arcana, Mass Invisibility, Shadow Walk, Simulacrum

Priest Classes

The Western Roman Church was a powerful unifying element in Charlemagne's empire. Churchmen—popes, archbishops, priests, chaplains, abbots and abbesses, monks and nuns—should be significant characters in historical campaigns. It was common knowledge that the supernatural powers of the Church as vested in the saints, in the clergy, in consecrated ground, and in holy relics could protect the faithful from disease, misfortune, and malign spirits. The miracles associated with ancient and contemporary saints and relics were as solemnly and credulously recounted as historical events. With some modifications and restrictions, the priest character class is suitable for historical, legendary, and fantasy Carolingian campaigns.

In a historical campaign, priests are ideal companions to warriors. They can serve either as chaplains, missionaries, or as educated clerks to kings and nobles on campaign or at home in the palace. One or more priests accompanied by an escort of warriors may venture as missionaries into the Saxon lands to baptize and preach the word, or to establish a frontier church in the wilderness. A monk or abbot may join forces with a local count and his men to defend his flock against bandits or the acquisitive designs of an ambitious noble. In a classic adventure, a group of noble warriors might be required to accompany several priests bringing a precious manuscript to a remote monastery for copying.

Permitted Priest Kits

The following priest kits are appropriate for Carolingian campaigns:

Nobleman Priest: The most common type of adventuring priest.

Peasant Priest: As a monk or hermit.

Scholar Priest: As a monk or hermit.

Prophet Priest: As a monk or hermit.

The Western Church

Priests of the Carolingian Empire are servants of the Western Roman Church. This church preaches redemption through faith and good works and through the sacrament of baptism, promising eternal life for the good and eternal torment for the wicked. The church teaches right action through doctrines (which are probably understood and appreciated only by the more educated clergy) and through the Gospels, parables, and homilies—practical stories easily understood by the people, guiding right action through dramatic example. The clergy of the Western Church is a hierarchy with the Pope living in Rome as the supreme authority. Archbishops and bishops are below the Pope's authority, and local chaplains and parish priests are at the bottom of the chain of authority. Also in the hierarchy are monastic communities, each governed by an abbot and consisting of monks dedicated to a life in service to the Church.

Priests of the Western Church who abuse their powers will lose them. Priests must be humble, and they must ask for spells and miracles only when necessary and when serving the needs of the Western Church and its followers. Use of spells or miracles for personal convenience or gain is a sin that may result in temporary loss of those powers. To regain his powers, a priest must do penance (see Penance, page 24). Ideally the player should humbly and sincerely strive to avoid calling on his special powers, but an occasional reminder from the DM in the form of a temporary loss of powers can be a wonderful inspiration to earnest role-playing.

See "The Western Church," in Chapter 4, for additional background, rules, and restrictions concerning the Western Church in a Carolingian campaign.

Requirements for Western Church Priesthood:

Attribute Scores: Standard for priest

Alignment: Any

Weapons Permitted: Bludgeoning weapons only

Armor Permitted: Any

Nonweapon Proficiencies Required: Religion

Nonweapon Proficiencies Recommended: Reading and Writing, Healing



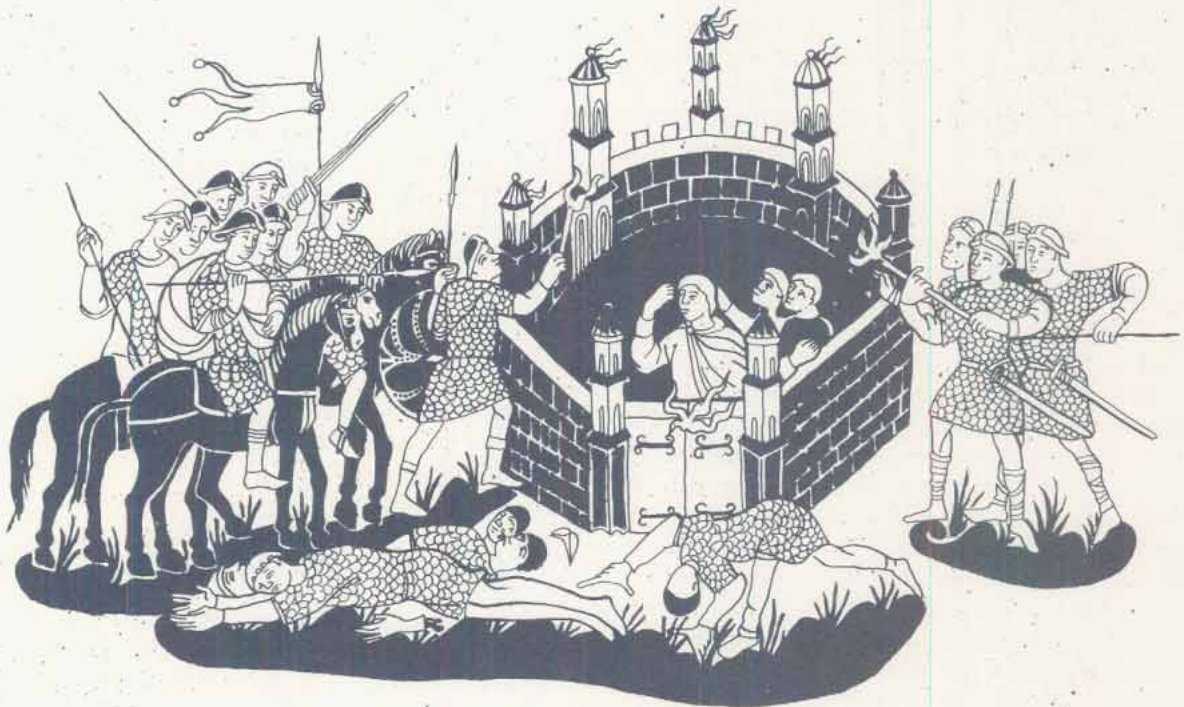
Weapon Proficiencies Required: None

Duties: Know the liturgy. Defend and advance the Faith by preaching the Scriptures and educating the faithful in virtue and doctrine through parable, homily, and sermon. Gather tithes, burn candles, give communion, attend Mass, scold those rude and idle chatterers who disrupt the sanctity of the Church. Observe the canonical offices (i.e., perform personal offices of prayer at appointed hours each day, and lead the Faithful in prayer and ritual during Church services). Baptize unbelievers and bring them into the faith. Avoid the Seven Deadly Sins. Honor the Seven Virtues. Admonish sinners and direct them from their wicked ways. Abstain from superstition and forbid pagan practices. Give obedience to your superiors in the Church. Do good works: comfort the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit prisoners, harbor the homeless, and bury the dead. Make confession and do penance for sins. Fear the Last Judgment and the torments of Hell. Look forward to death, salvation, and the bliss of eternal life in the hereafter.

Rights: The Western Church is the State Reli-

gion of the Empire, though it is nowhere near as powerful a force in government or society as it will become in later Medieval periods. The following rights are accorded to the priesthood, but may be limited as indicated.

- **Right of Coronation:** Priests have the honor of officiating at the coronation of the king or emperor, but they do not have the right to refuse to coronate.
- **Right to Church Trial:** Clergy have a right to be tried under church law.
- **Confirmation of Marriage:** The Christians would generally prefer to have marriage with the benediction of a priest, though it was not obligatory. The Church judges terms of divorce and annulment.
- **Tithes:** All lay members must tithe 10% of their annual income to the Western Church, payable in coin, in kind, or in service. In practice, corrupt nobles and churchmen might collect these tithes and divert them to personal use.
- **Separation from the Faith:** In rare cases the high-ranking clergy may excommunicate (cast out) members for serious offenses against the requirements of the Faith. An entire town or re-





gion might be placed under the interdict, prohibiting any Church ritual or sacraments within the interdicted area, threatening all members with eternal damnation. Such extreme measures were reserved for the most desperate and heinous crimes.

Restrictions: Priests may neither marry nor indulge in carnal pleasures. Priests may use only those magical items consecrated to Church use. Priests may not shed blood except in self-defense or in the protection of the Faithful or the poor, aged, or sick. Priests may not attack in vengeance, for vengeance is reserved to the Almighty. Humility forbids vain, prideful, greedy, or frequent request for miracles.

Spheres: Special; see "Spells Allowed" (next section).

Granted Powers:

- Historical Campaign—None.
- Legendary or Fantasy Campaign—Turn undead; at 3rd level, +2 bonus to saving throws vs. all wizard spells; at 7th level, laying on hands (heal self or other for 2 hit points per experience level once per day); at 10th level, saving throws vs. enchantment/charm spells are automatically successful.

Followers and Strongholds: Followers are received at 8th level. These consist of one 3rd-level priest and two 1st-level priests of the Church, five 1st-level fighters, and 40 normal men and women. The priest may take two priests and three fighters with him on adventures. The Church will pay for half of the stronghold construction, which may be started at 8th level. The stronghold may be a missionary stronghold on a frontier of the Empire (e.g., the Saxon or Avar frontier); such a stronghold must be constructed primarily as an easily defensible, rustic stockade with a chapel and living quarters. Or the stronghold may be a new or renovated town cathedral or manorial chapel within the borders of the Empire; such a stronghold need not concentrate on defense, but may glorify the Faith through the beauty of its decoration and treasure and the power of its holy relics. Prelates and abbots often compete with one another for prime relics to grace their missions or churches. Often a priest will be assigned a pilgrimage or adventure under the patronage of a high-ranking Church official or a local lord to seek out a relic suitable for his

chapel before he can build his stronghold.

Requirements for Followers:

Alignment choices: Any

Duties and Restrictions: Avoid the Seven Deadly Sins. Honor the Seven Virtues. Attend church, be quiet and respectful during services, and learn from the scriptures and preachings. Do good works. Make confession and do penance for sins. Fear the Last Judgment and the torments of Hell. Look forward to death, salvation, and the bliss of eternal life in the hereafter.

Priest and Follower Alignments: Most Western Church priests and followers are of good or neutral alignments, but evil and chaotic alignments are possible, so long as priests and followers with such alignments observe and respect the duties and restrictions of the Western Church. Sinning priests may lose their powers as a result of evil or chaotic actions, and both priests and followers may be separated and cast out of the Western Church by judgment of the priesthood. The Church, however, teaches forgiveness and repentance, and usually a sinner is given an opportunity to make confession, do penance, and rejoin the Faithful.

Spells Allowed

Which spells are allowed depends on the type of Carolingian campaign being played. The following paragraphs indicate the allowed spells for the three different types of campaigns. Also, certain spells may only be available as Miracles.

Miraculous Access Only to Certain Spheres and Spells: The priest may not normally cast spells from certain spheres listed as "Miraculous Access Only," and certain spells from permitted spheres are listed as "Miraculous Use Only." The priest knows that in special circumstances in the past these spell effects have been granted to priests of the Church as Miracles. If a priest believes the circumstances warrant it, he may pray for a Miracle.

Praying for a Miracle takes one round. Roll percentile dice. The chance of success is 1% per level of the priest, plus any modifiers the DM decides are warranted. Success means the Miracle has been granted and the spell takes effect. Failure means the request for a Miracle has not been granted. At the DM's discretion, he or she may



include positive or negative modifiers; for example, if the Miracle is desperately needed and of great importance to the Church, a +5% or +10% modifier may be appropriate. On the other hand, if the request is for the priest's convenience or for frivolous reasons, a -5% or -10% modifier may be called for. Also, praying for a Miracle on consecrated ground or in the presence of holy relics may confer positive modifiers, according to circumstances.

Historical Campaign: In a historical campaign, a priest has access to the following spell spheres:

- Major access to the all, divination, healing, and protection spheres. Only evil characters may use reversible versions of these spells. Miraculous use only of the following spells: *know alignment*, *speak with animals*, *locate object*, *speak with dead*, *reflecting pool*, *magic font*, *find the path*, *speak with monsters*.

- Miraculous major access only to the necromantic sphere. Only evil characters may use reversible versions of these spells.

- Miraculous minor access only to animal, charm, sun, and weather spheres. Only evil characters may use reversible versions of these spells.

- Prohibited spells: *barkskin*, *reincarnate*, *resurrection*.

Requesting Miracles in a historical campaign may be a sin of pride. If a Miracle is requested but not granted, the priest immediately loses all his priestly powers indefinitely until he completes a penance (see page 24) or is granted forgiveness for his actions by an *atonement* spell. On the other hand, the granting of a Miracle is a rare and marvelous event and may be regarded as a sign that the priest is destined for sainthood . . . or martyrdom.

Legendary Campaign: In a legendary campaign, a priest has access to the following spell spheres:

- Major access to the all, divination, healing, and protection spheres. Only evil characters may use reversible versions of these spells.

- Miraculous minor access only to the animal, charm, necromantic, sun, and weather

spheres. Only evil characters may use reversible versions of these spells.

- Prohibited spells: *barkskin*, *reincarnate*, *resurrection*.

Fantasy Campaign: In a fantasy campaign, a priest has access to the following spell spheres:

- Major access to the all, divination, healing, and protection spheres.

- Minor access to the animal, charm, necromantic, sun, and weather spheres.

Restrictions on Spell Effects

In historical and legendary campaigns, priest spells of the protection sphere can benefit only members of the Western Church in good standing. Pagans cannot benefit from protection spells cast by priests of the Western Church except if requested and granted as Miracles. Priests who have lost their priestly powers, or characters of other classes who have committed a grave crime against the Church, cannot benefit from protection spells cast by priests of the Western Church until they have done a penance (see page 24). At the DM's discretion, members of the Western Church may also be denied the benefits of healing magic, though the Christian virtue of charity demands that this benefit never be denied if the life of the character is at stake.

Rogue Classes

Of course there were thieves and outlaws in Carolingian times. A historical campaign or legendary Robin Hood-style campaign would work well in the setting—though the only class appropriate for PCs in such a campaign would be thieves, with perhaps an occasional monk or parish priest companion, such as Friar Tuck.

It is recommended, however, that most PCs in a Carolingian campaign be of noble background. All PCs should be at least compatible with predominantly noble PC parties, since this permits a wider variety of character classes in the PC party.

Permitted Rogue Kits

The Noble's Clerk kit (see following) is best suited for nobles or noble companions who have



rejected both the role of the warrior and the role of the priest in the Carolingian setting. Such characters may include scholars, historians, merchants, clerks, entertainers, counselors, and female characters denied access to the warrior's lance and shield and the priest's vestments.

Other appropriate Rogue Kits include:

Scout: Noble or common warriors who depend on stealth, caution, and deception rather than direct confrontation; such may be sent as scouts on campaigns or as couriers or emissaries on diplomatic or commercial ventures.

Spy: Nobles or commoners serving as diplomatic and intelligence agents or advisers to kings and counts.

Note: Most roles appropriate to a rogue character in a Carolingian campaign would be equally well played as a fighter or a priest and without the serious limitations on combat skills and equipment. Only in diplomatic and intrigue scenarios where much of the action takes place indoors without full armor and weaponry can a rogue character take advantage of the rogue class's distinctive abilities.

Noble's Clerk Kit

Description: A noble's clerk is an educated noble or commoner who rejects both priest and warrior paths.

Role: A noble's clerk may serve as an officer of the palace or manor for a noble, as a tutor or scholarly counselor, as an entertainer, or he may provide advice and services for an illiterate master. He may also be a royal courier or licensed merchant-adventurer. Since he is denied both the skills of the warrior and the authority of the Church, he must be more shrewd and indirect in his methods. Not being bound by the honor of the warrior or the sanctity of the priest, he may rely on deception and stealth to maneuver toward his goals. Further, since the clerk's status is lower than that of warriors and priests, he has readier access to the common classes, and he is able to obtain information and favors through them.

Secondary Skills: Scribe.

Weapon Proficiencies: Any weapon normally permitted to the thief class and available in the Carolingian period.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Bonus—Read/Write; Required—None; Recommended—Etiquette, Stewardship, Statecraft, Local History, Appraising, Alertness*, Fast-Talking*, Information Gathering*, Intimidation*, Observation*.

Skill Progression: The stealth and listening skills are most useful, along with picking pockets. Manual dexterity and fast-talking are essential in intercepting documents and parcels for private examination.

Special Benefits: Parchment, writing ink, and sealing wax are provided without cost by the clerk's patron.

Special Hindrances: The clerk has low social status compared with warriors or churchmen: -3 reaction unless in the company of lord or patron.

Thieves

In a historical campaign, a thief character is usually found in the role of clerk, scout, or emissary. A few characters resembling standard AD&D® game thieves are encountered in the tales of Charlemagne, but never as protagonists; with DM approval, however, such a character is possible in a legendary campaign. In a fantasy campaign, in addition to the other roles suggested above for Carolingian rogue characters, a thief might be played as a roguish companion of world-traveling royal emissaries, merchants, or adventurers.

Bards

The special magical and nonmagical abilities of the bard have no place in a historical Carolingian campaign. With DM approval, a bard may be played in a legendary campaign as a Provençal troubadour poet; even though the troubadours are associated with a somewhat later historical period, a bard fits well into the courtly setting of the legends. A bard could also serve as a wizardlike spellcaster in the style of the Charlemagne legends. With the exception of the restrictions on use of magical scrolls and books

* See *The Complete Thief's Handbook* for these non-weapon proficiencies.



to 10th level and above, the bard class is actually the closest in style and abilities to the wizards, such as Malagigi and Angelica, that are found in the legendary tales.

Other Details of Character Creation

In addition to a character's class, a host of other details about the character's background needs to be determined before he is ready to play.

Races

All characters in Carolingian campaigns are human.

Sex

In a typical historical campaign, all warrior player characters and almost all priest player characters are men. Strong-willed women play a part in Carolingian history, but typically they are portrayed as villains—scheming, beguiling, and misleading the noble rulers and counts.

Women had few rights in the male-dominated Frankish society—they could not inherit real estate if any male relative existed, and they could not buy and sell valuables at will. Grounds for divorce were few, but many husbands discarded wives almost casually. A “free” woman was forbidden to live according to her own free will; by law she must always remain under the power and rule of men. Thus, the good action-adventure roles seem to be reserved for men.

However, the option to play female characters should take precedence over strict historical accuracy for those players who enjoy playing female characters. Note that two of the predesigned player characters included with this supplement, Frida and Louisa, are females. Their appearance in the primarily historical settings of the two adventures presented in this supplement is not historical.

Names

A list of historical Carolingian names is provided here. During this period, people were known by one name; they did not use last



names. To distinguish one Egbert or Charles from another, a nickname may be added. The nickname may either identify the person by his father (Charles, son of Pepin), by his home, birthplace, or lands (Charles of Aquitaine, Egbert of Metz, Hemming the Dane), his title (Count Charles of Ardennes; Egbert, Count of the Breton Marches), or a descriptive phrase (Charles the Bald, Egbert the Wise, Grifo the Fat).

Selecting a name for a legendary campaign is a bit trickier. Since all the tales have been translated from French or Italian, various translations use different methods of rendering names into English. As a result, for example, Count Roland of the Song of Roland may be spelled Hruodland, Roland, or Orlando.

Building the Player Character Group

A unified player character group may be created as a group of family members, loyal retainers, and local confederates of one of Charlemagne's counts. Most beginning characters are young noble warriors, sharing the common experience of military training, hunting, and gaming of young aristocrats, owing honor and respect to their teachers—the older warriors in the count's service—and owing duty and obedience to the count, the head of the family, and the war band. Some player characters may be churchmen of the count's chapel or clerks helping to administrate the manor. With the possible exception of the churchmen, who may occasionally come from another region, most characters have the same backgrounds of geography, history, and culture.

The predesigned player characters provided with this supplement offer an example of a player character group centered in the northeastern region of the empire. This region was chosen because of its relative proximity to the rebellious Saxons and the warlike Danes, two fine sources of action, adventure, and conflict. You may use this setting for your own player character group, or you may design a similar one in another section of the empire.

The predesigned player characters have been culled from remote regions of the empire and its

Male Carolingian

Names
Adalbert
Adalhard
Amalwin
Anshelm
Arnulf
Bernard
Bertrich
Carloman
Charles
Donatus
Drogo
Eberhard
Egbert
Egfrid
Einhard
Emmon
Fardulf
Frederich
Fulbert
Gerold
Gervinus
Grifo
Guntbald
Halitgar
Hartrad
Hegibert
Hilduin
Hruodmund
Hugo
Lothair
Louis
Mathfrid
Meginhard
Nordbert
Odulf
Otgar
Pepin
Reginhard
Richard
Rudolf
Sigimund
Suidger
Theobald
Theodoric
Unroch
Vivian
Warin
Welf
Wido
Worad

Female Carolingian

Names
Ada
Adelind
Alberta
Anselma
Berta
Binga
Brunhilde
Charlene
Della
Eadith
Emilia
Ertha
Francesca
Frida
Gerald
Gerta
Gisela
Halfrida
Helga
Hildegard
Hruodtrude
Idelle
Irmengarda
Jarvia
Judith
Karolina
Leoda
Liutberga
Lorelei
Matilda
Odelia
Olga
Rica
Rilla
Rolanda
Solvig
Thora
Ulrika
Uta
Velda
Winifred
Yetta
Zerlina



frontiers (see page 93). Though such coincidental assemblages of people from widely separated regions are fairly unlikely in a historical context, we encourage you to follow our example in finding excuses to add individuals from various regions if players express an interest.

Proficiencies

You are encouraged to use the optional proficiency rules. Player characters may select their proficiencies freely according to the AD&D® game rules. The following proficiencies are not available for cultural or historical reasons:

- Heraldry
- Riding, airborne
- Charioteering

The following new proficiencies belong to the General (Nonweapon) proficiencies group:

Stewardship: This proficiency provides the administrative knowledge and skills to run a large estate. Land is wealth, and proper management of land resources and the servants and freemen on that land is essential to a noble's well-being. The noble himself needs at least a rudimentary understanding of stewardship, but loyal subordinates are usually entrusted with the management of day-to-day affairs.

A character who has this proficiency understands not only the technical business of land and estate management, but the politics and personalities of the manor and palace. He is alert and sensitive to power and influence in families and retainers of a noble household. He knows where to seek information and how to apply pressure to achieve the objectives of his lord and his own personal ends. He recognizes strengths and weaknesses in a noble household, and he knows how to take advantage of them. He also understands quality and luxury, and he knows how to impress and influence others with hospitality.

Statecraft: This proficiency includes the knowledge and understanding of politics within the state and in the state's dealings with other states. It also encompasses the diplomatic skills needed to analyze, guide, and influence people and events to achieve government and personal ends.

A character with this proficiency knows and understands the significance of current events

and the major personalities that shape them. He is knowledgeable about the cultures and ambitions of foreign allies and enemies. He also understands the conflicts between prominent counts, churchmen, and royal officers, and he studies the will and whim of the king.

Notes for Carolingian Campaigns

Healing

Frankish medicine was primitive when compared to the sophisticated knowledge of the Byzantines and Arabs. Most treatments consisted of bleeding, potions, or simples (herbs). The check modifier for the healing and herbalism non-weapon proficiencies is -5 rather than -2. Also, in historical campaigns no person or creature may be healed to more than 50% of his total hit points by magical means. Thus magic can speed healing, but it cannot miraculously remove wounds and injuries. A priest may attempt to heal a creature to over 50% of its hit points, but success would require a Miracle.

Priest Divination

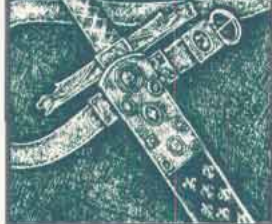
In historical and legendary Carolingian campaigns, the following priest divination spells work only in consecrated areas sanctified to the divine being that grants the magical effect: *know alignment*, *speak with dead*, *detect lie*, *divination*, and *commune*. Other magical divination abilities similar to these spells (i.e., the paladin's *detect evil* ability) are similarly limited.

Consecrated Areas

The DM shall determine all consecrated areas. Consecrating areas is not a player character function, though they may participate by providing holy relics, by being granted a Miracle, or by participating in consecration rituals conducted by NPC priests.

Consecrated areas are associated with certain supernatural powers and abilities that vary according to circumstances and DM whim. A few guidelines may be helpful:

- Usually the initial consecration of an area confers only a very modest effect. Such areas have two common features: *know alignment*



magical effects function within their boundaries, and the area is protected by a *protection from evil* effect when a priest of the Faith is present.

- Over time, and through continuous occupation and worship, consecrated areas may grow in power. For example, cathedrals and monasteries occupied since Roman times may be blessed and protected by more powerful magical effects, such as bonuses to healing magic or permanent *protection from evil* effects.

- The presence of holy relics may enhance the magical effects of a consecrated area. Typically the benefit of the presence of the relic cannot be gained if the relic is not on consecrated ground (that is, the relic may be a magical item that works only in consecrated areas). Even if the holy relic produces magical effects when not in consecrated areas, it usually produces more varied and powerful effects when in consecrated areas.

- The granting of a Miracle (see the “Spells Allowed” section) to a PC or an NPC may indicate that a location is destined to become consecrated. High-level priests often try to establish chapels or shrines in such locations.

The magical effects of consecrated areas and holy relics should be determined by the DM so that they may be tailored to his or her campaign. Any reduction of their magical effects to charts and tables would be counter to the marvelous and miraculous spirit of such holy and supernatural phenomena.

Loss of Powers

Priests who abuse the powers granted them may lose them. Members of the Church or other character classes may lose the ability to benefit from some priest magic. Loss of such benefits is at the DM’s discretion, but should result only from serious abuses or crimes.

Priests may lose their powers as a result of grievous or repeated commissions of any of the Seven Deadly Sins, most commonly for offenses against the sin of Pride (too frequently calling upon divine aid when simple diligence and courage would suffice), Covetousness (desire for personal wealth or power), or Anger (vengeful violence when patience, charity, mercy, and forgiveness are called for).

Characters of all classes may lose the benefits of priest magic through commission of grievous

sins, though for nonpriest characters this penalty is likely to accompany only the most grievous sins of violence (murder in particular) or sacrilege (destruction of sacred objects; defilement of altars, churches, or other consecrated areas; and verbal or physical attacks upon the clergy).

Penance

A priest or other character who loses the benefits of priest magic may make a penance to regain those benefits.

The penitent priest character must retreat from the world (into a church or monastery or, if none are available, into wilderness seclusion) and devote himself to fasting, meditation, and private prayer, observing the canonical offices strictly with a meek and humble heart. Normally the priest’s power will return after a day or two of strict penance, but cases of serious or repeated offenses against the Church may require longer periods of penance before the priest’s powers return.

Penitents of other character classes must first confess their sins to a priest, then perform a penance as directed by that priest. The DM shall determine the nature of these penances at his or her own discretion. The penance usually entails redressing the evil effects of any crime, while at the same time evidencing a meek and humble acknowledgement of the penitent’s true contrition for his act. The more heinous the crime, the more burdensome the penance. For example, a character guilty of looting a church of its sacred treasures must first return or replace the treasures, then serve as a humble guardian of that church under the orders of the church’s priest.

Trial by Combat and Ordeal

Priests are permitted to aid combatants by prayer or Miracles, but only by asking for magical benefits for the champion beforehand. Direct interference during a trial is an offense against custom and a sign of guilt. Sorcerous magic is corrupt and not permitted during these trials. Paying for a champion in coin or kind is not permitted, but a retainer can undergo a trial for his employer.

Oaths must be sworn in the presence of a priest before combat to renounce the use of evil sorcery or forbidden methods, and to abide by the judgment of God.

The Setting

Our interest in Carolingian history in this supplement concentrates on those details of the setting that will be useful for Dungeon Masters and players in historical, legendary, or fantasy campaigns based in the time period. As such we look more carefully at those aspects of society familiar to noble warriors and priests. Unlike most Carolingians of common birth, such persons will be well traveled, either as campaigning warrior noblemen and as men who answer the call of the king and his counts, or as churchmen who must balance their service for those nobles against the spiritual and worldly demands of their particular faith and their ecclesiastical superiors.

The Lands of the Age of Charlemagne

The Empire

Francia (Frankland, or Empire of the Franks): Francia, land of the Franks, is the nation Charlemagne inherited from his father, Pepin. It comprises five major regions: Austrasia and Neustria (the lands of the East and West Franks, respectively), Burgundy, Aquitaine, and a Mediterranean region (Septimania and Provence, two non-Frankish lands added to Francia through conquest).

Austrasia (East Franks): This heavily forested province along the Meuse and Rhine Rivers formed the political core of Charlemagne's Empire. Here were the loyal Frankish horsemen who were the backbone of the Carolingian military machine. The Carolingian Renaissance, a brief flowering of respect for scholarship and classical culture, had its focus at Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen) in the court of Charlemagne and in the Palace School of Alcuin of York. Here also some of the great Roman cities along the Rhine—Cologne and Mainz, among others—survived the barbarian invasions after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The churchmen of these cities and other Frankish cathedral cities surviving from Roman times became the conservators of the heritage of law, order, and culture that lingered as memories from the *Pax Romana*.

To the north along the North Sea was the Great Plain, the future Low Countries (the Netherlands

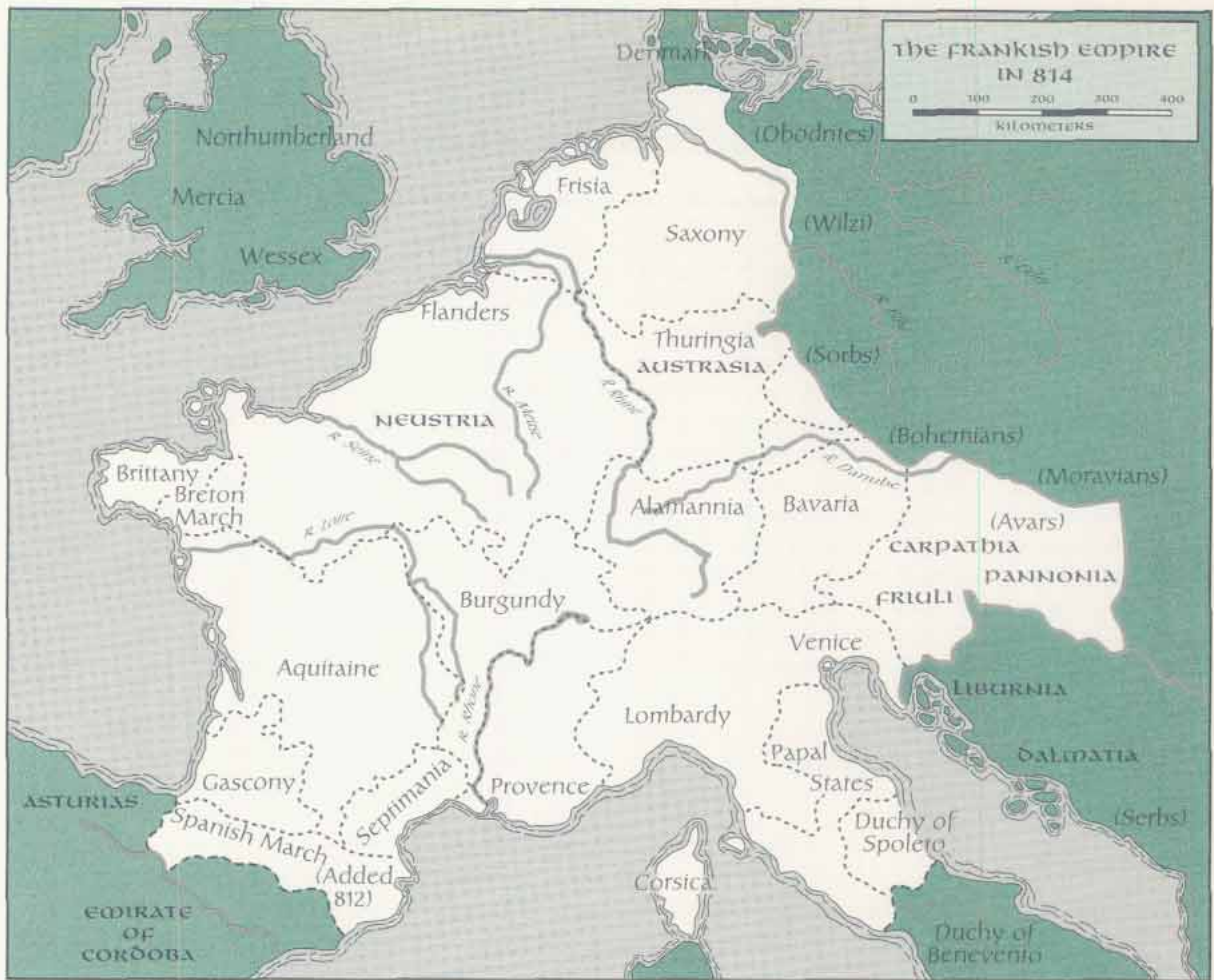
and Belgium). The Great Plain's proximity to the sea and numerous navigable rivers provided easy access for trade—and for the fierce Viking raiders of the later Carolingian period. The central heartland of Austrasia was hilly and heavily forested, drained by the Meuse and Moselle Rivers, and bounded on the east by the high Vosges Mountains and the Rhine River valley.

Neustria (West Franks): More Romanized than Germanic, this wine-and-wheat producing province flourished along the banks of the Seine and Loire. Here along the old Roman road net, many of the great Roman cities survived the Dark Ages to become cathedral towns that preserved the civilized legacy of Roman Gaul. Though this province was to play a major part in later French history as the focus of government shifted toward Paris, the eastern Austrasian province was the primary focus of Charlemagne's Empire.

Burgundy: This wealthy and powerful non-Frankish province of Francia was centered in the trough of the Rhone-Saone River valley, bounded on the west by France's central highland plateau and on the east by the Jura Mountains and the Alps.

Aquitaine: This independent and rebellious southwestern province of Francia, with its genial climate and wine and wheat, was an important Roman province. It retained the thoroughly Romanized customs, culture, and economy of Roman Gaul much later after the fall of the Roman Empire than did the Germanic lands. Early in his reign, Charlemagne put down the Aquitainian revolt inherited from his father Pepin. During Charlemagne's reign, the province was relatively loyal to the empire, if only because it depended on the empire for protection against the incursions of the Spanish Moors and the Moorish pirates.

Septimania and Provence: These southern provinces shared the warm, dry climate, agriculture, and heavily Romanized culture of the Mediterranean. Here olives, fruit, and grape vines flourished, and the summer drought limited the forest to evergreen trees and shrubs such as olive, myrtle, cypress, stone pine, and the evergreen oak. These provinces were frequently troubled with Moorish raids and invasions during Carolingian times.



Subject Lands of the Empire

Lombardy: The Lombards were Teutonic barbarians like the Franks who established a powerful society in the mountainous region of what is now northern Italy. This was among the first regions to be incorporated into Charlemagne's Empire by military conquest. Lombard cavalry became the backbone of Charlemagne's armies in Italy and in his eastern campaigns against the Avars.

Saxony and Thuringia: For most of the first half of his long reign, Charlemagne campaigned against the pagan Saxon tribes of these regions, seeking to bring their souls to the Western Church and their lands and peoples into the empire. The Franks saw the Saxons as savage, idolatrous heathens, oathbreakers, and murderers. At the end of each summer campaign, the Saxons would make peace with Charlemagne, accept the Faith, then turn and slay the missionaries and rise in revolt the next spring.

After decades of almost yearly revolts and raids along the empire's frontier lands, these proud and independent barbarians tribesmen

were at last conquered and subjugated by the ruthless application of fire and sword, by the establishment of colonies in the region, and by mass deportations of Saxon tribesmen to remote parts of the empire. Once accustomed to the new religion and Frankish rule, the Saxons became allies against the Danes and the Slavic barbarian tribes to the east.

The Italian States: The Latins were perceived as fashionable and corrupt, the soft, civilized remnants of the great Roman culture gone to seed. The Papal States, lands granted by Pepin to the Pope and lands won in conquest by Charlemagne, were ruled by Rome and the Pope of the Western Church. The other states, most important among them Venice and the duchies of Spoleto and Benevento, were allies of the Empire and were frequently threatened, raided, or invaded by the Byzantines and Moors.

Brittany: This isolated, rugged, infertile region was of little interest to the Romans, and it retained a distinctive non-Frankish culture. Refugees from southwestern Britain gave Brittany both its name and its Celtic language. Its Christianity was of the independent Celtic rather than



the monolithic Roman variety. A number of military campaigns early in Charlemagne's reign subjugated the province, but it was never fully assimilated into the empire, retaining its character as a defensive "march" or border region.

The Spanish March: Charlemagne's early Spanish campaign ended in disaster with the Battle of Roncesvalles Pass, where Count Roland and various important officers of Charlemagne's court perished along with the baggage train and the rear guard of his retreating armies. The Basques of the Pyrenees and the Navarre region were hostile to the Franks, and the Moors mounted frequent raids into Aquitaine and Septimania from this area. Charlemagne established the Spanish March as part of Aquitaine under a count of the march known as a *markgraf*, *markgrave*, or *marquis*. This region south of the Pyrenees along with the independent Christian nation of Asturias and a pacified Basque Navarre region were established as a defensive buffer between Aquitaine and Moorish Spain late in Charlemagne's reign.

The Frontiers

The Lands of the Northmen: These savage, heathen Scandinavian peoples called themselves the Vikings, but the Franks knew them as the Nordmanni, or Northmen. During Charlemagne's reign, the most important Scandinavian nation was Denmark, a low-lying flat land of bogs, heaths, and sand dunes between the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. The Danes and their Slav allies fought a brief war with Charlemagne, but internal struggles weakened and forced them to sue for peace.

During Charlemagne's reign, the Frankish coastal defenses were sufficient to deter sea-borne attackers, but after Charles's death and the subsequent disintegration of the central government, the Northmen in their longships were able to raid the North Sea coastlands and the great cities along the rivers of northern Frankland at will. (For details, see the AD&D® game's Historical Reference HR1, *Vikings Campaign Sourcebook*.)

The Lands of the Avars: These Asiatic nomads had ruled the Slavic tribes of the central Danube plains as conquering overlords since the 6th

Century. They had grown soft after centuries of unchallenged rule. In a series of campaigns between 791 and 796, Charlemagne and his son Pepin invaded, conquered, and annexed the western half of Avar lands. The Avar capital was known in legend as The Ring, and it was probably a ring of concentric defensive fortifications. Within The Ring, the conquering Carolingian armies discovered the fabled treasures of the Avars and sent wagonloads of art objects and precious metals back to Charlemagne's palace at Aix-la-Chapelle. Via the Avars came many innovations in military technology from China, including the Central Asian stirrup, the framed saddle, light horse armor, and sophisticated siege engines, such as the mangonel.

The Lands of the Slavs: Various Slavic tribes were subjected to Frankish rule during Charlemagne's reign. Chief among them were the Wiltzi, Wends, Sorbs, and Bohemians along the eastern border of Saxony and Thuringia and the Croats on the southeastern border of the Empire near Lombardy and the Adriatic Sea. The word "slave" is derived from Slav, an indication of the number of captives taken during the Carolingian military campaigns against the Slavs.

The Lands of the Moors: Also known as Saracens, these proud and fierce followers of Islam ruled a stable culture in Moorish Spain, also known as the Emirate of Cordoba. In the Charlemagne legends, the Moors are often accounted as honorable and chivalrous warriors, shrewd, fearsome, and worthy enemies, even though they were, in the eyes of the Franks, pagan heathens. Late in Charlemagne's reign and throughout the rest of the Carolingian period, Moorish raiders and pirates controlled the western Mediterranean and raided, invaded, and at times occupied parts of southern Italy and Frankland.

Foreign Lands

England: Across the North Sea from Francia lay the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria, Wessex, and Mercia. Mercia's ruler, Offa, was the only European ruler, apart from the Pope, who could deal with Charlemagne on equal terms. The Anglo-Saxons of England were civilized Roman Christians, represented in the



Frankish Empire both by Anglo-Saxon missionaries, the Benedictine monks, and by learned men like Alcuin, the head of Charlemagne's palace school.

Byzantium: Also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, Byzantium with its great capital Constantinople was the center of Hellenistic Greco-Roman culture. This stable empire depended on an efficient administrative bureaucracy, shrewd diplomacy, a powerful army and navy, and a monolithic religious orthodoxy. It controlled Greece, Turkey, southern Italy, Sicily, Crete, and scattered lands and islands in the Balkans and throughout the Mediterranean. Though at times Byzantium challenged Charlemagne's assumption of the mantle of Roman Emperor in the West, in the end Emperor Michael acknowledged Charlemagne as a brother emperor.

The Arab Empire: North Africa and the Near East was ruled by the Islamic Arab Empire. From the Persian capital of Baghdad, the Abbasid caliph, the fabled Haroun-al-Raschid of the *Arabian Nights* entertainments, ruled an Islamic Arab Empire that stretched from the Near East across northern Africa to Spain. Though the Frankish Empire and the Arab Empire exchanged emissaries and gifts, there was little contact between these cultures except the occasional raids and invasions of Mediterranean Frankish lands by Spanish and north African Moors.

Other Lands: Real and imagined lands and landmarks known to the Carolingians include the Tigris, Euphrates, Ganges, and Nile rivers, India, Chaldea, the Kingdoms of the Magi, Armenia, the land of Amazonia, the land of Gog and Magog near the Caspian Sea, Aethiopia, and Far Cathay of the exotic Orient.

The World of the Frankish Empire

The Landscape of Francia

The southern regions of Charlemagne's Francia retained much of the urban civilized culture of the Roman Empire, with agricultural lands surrounding the towns, which served as centers of culture and trade. But in the sparsely inhabited northern Neustrian and Austrasian regions that were the heartland of Francia, the Roman towns grew up at crossroads and borderland

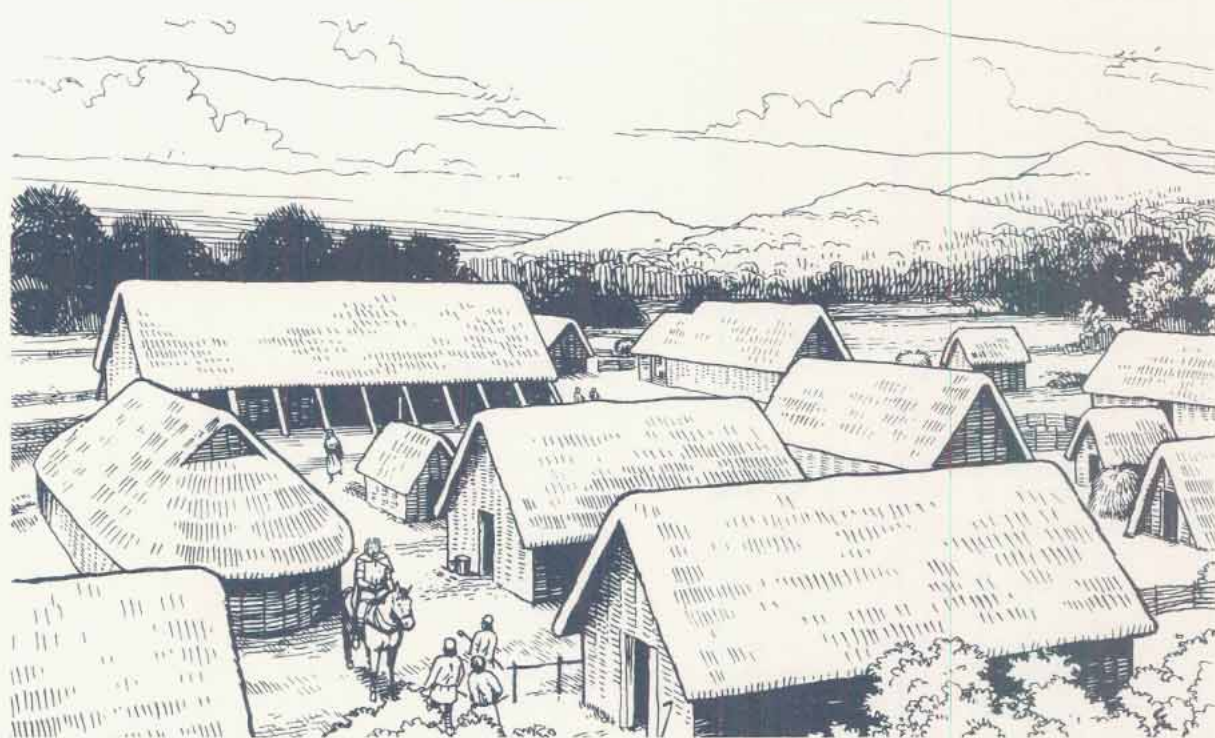
military camps and were less integrated into the life of the Germanic tribes. Though some Roman cities survived through the Dark Ages in the north, they had only a modest influence on the local culture. Most northern settlements consisted of numerous smaller village clusters under the rule of noble overlords. These mounted, sword-wielding warrior aristocrats were the foundation of Charlemagne's Frankish nation and the source of his military might.

The Wilderness of Nature

While civilization might have been the predominate image of the Roman European culture, the wilderness was the dominant image of the Dark Ages. Cities and settlements were relatively small, framed by the larger forest wildernesses that surrounded them. The energetic trade and industry of the fallen Roman Empire was gone, and with it the frequent traffic and communication between regions. Each settlement and town had to be more self-sufficient in its isolation in the midst of the vast, rugged northern woodlands.

From the Neustrian wooded countryside in the east across the vast forests of the Ardennes and the Vosges Mountains to the ancient Hyrcanian wilderness stretching from the Rhineland to the crags of Bohemia, the land was covered with dark, primeval forests. On the high mountains grew the dense conifer forests of pine and spruce; above the treeline were the bleak, wind-swept, often snow-covered alpine meadows. The rest of the land was covered with trees of the deciduous type—oak, ash, beech, hazel, poplar, hornbeam. These occurred sometimes as high-crowned, open forest and sometimes as dense thickets with close undergrowth often broken by swamp or thinning out into clumps of trees dotting grassy clearings. Nobles might hunt wild animals for sport and pelts, and commoners might hunt small game and cut wood for the hearth, but generally men did not stray far from the settlements into the forests.

At night the forest must have been most terrifying, when man might imagine that vast inhuman darkness full of wild beasts, thieves and bandits, malefic spirits, and the servants of the Devil. In truth, the wild beasts were a great dan-



ger, among them the stag, boar, bear, bison, buffalo, auroch, and most fearsome, the wolf—the scourge of the countryside.

Carolingian man was also desperately vulnerable to the vagaries of climate, weather, disease, and natural disaster. Though the temperatures were apparently somewhat warmer during Charlemagne's time (grapes were grown as far north as modern Holland and southern England), the winters were nonetheless long and brutal. Drought or too-heavy rainfall could spoil a crop, and famine and shortages were a common concern. Floods were disastrous. Human and livestock epidemics could decimate a settlement. The land itself could become exhausted and unproductive from excessive cultivation.

The Rural Manor

Low-lying lands with good drainage and river valleys supported small villages with surrounding cultivated fields—*islands of settlement* in the wilderness. These villages were collections of simple timber houses surrounded by cultivated

fields and the uncleared forest. The migratory Germanic tribal ancestors of the Franks lived in small villages of rough-built huts that were meant to be abandoned at whim. The Saxons and Slavs of Charlemagne's time probably lived much the same way as did the Franks' ancestors.

The Carolingian manor settlements—the hall of the count or local lord and the associated stables, barns, workshops, peasant houses, and rural church—were more permanent occupations than the barbarian hamlets. Also referred to as a *fisc*, *domain*, *demesne*, *villa*, or *estate*, the rural manor was the foundation of Frankish society. The manor's overlord might be a lay aristocrat or a churchman. The lay aristocrat might have had his lands granted to him by the king or handed down through the noble family. The churchman might have received his lands in the same fashion or through the Western Church, for bishops and abbots would administrate the lands belonging to the cathedrals and monasteries.

A peasant house had a sturdy framework of heavy timbers, with a thatched roof and walls of wattle-and-daub or of lighter timber or wicker

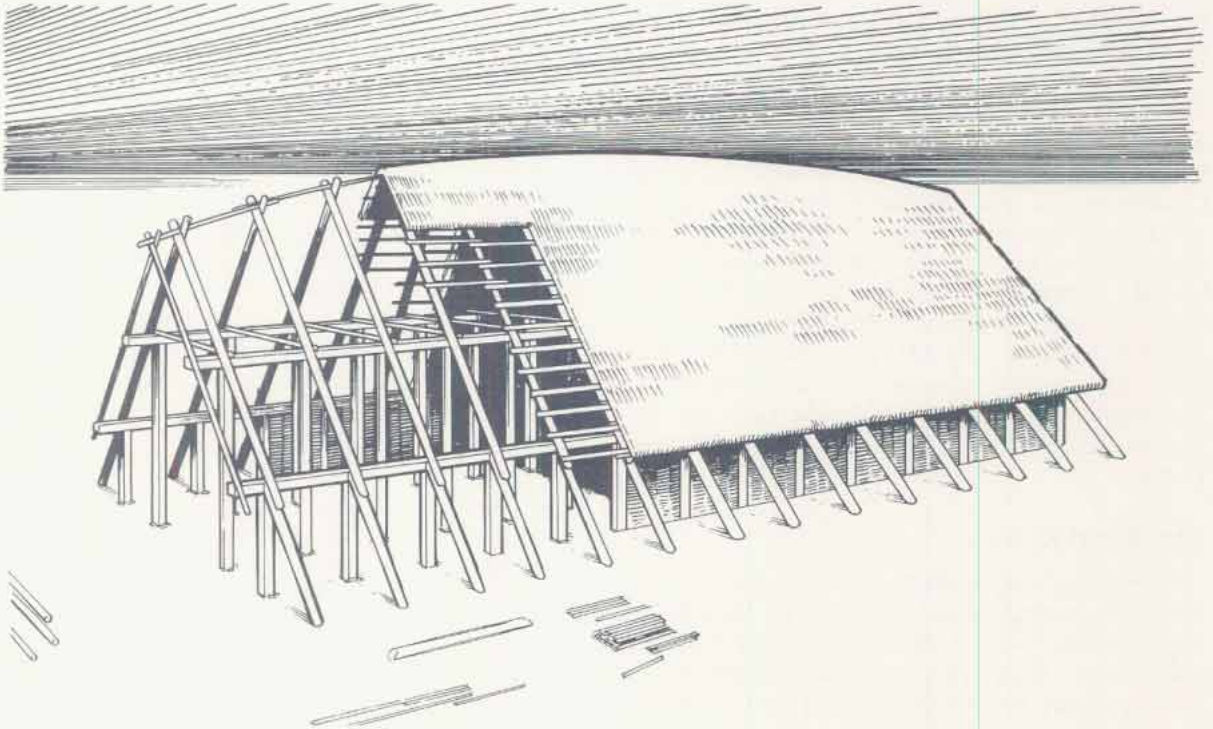


sealed with clay. In a more modest or frontier manor, the rural church and overlord's timber hall might be larger, but not substantially different in construction; only the wealthiest of lords and churchmen could afford stone masonry. None of the timber buildings from this period survived, and archaeology rarely gives us detailed floor plans like the one we have for the monastery of St. Gall (see page 35). Presented below are the imagined plans of two different rural manors—one the humble frontier outpost of Count Brego, the other the manor of the wealthy and powerful Count Dolan—for use in your adventures.

Peasant huts might be partitioned into small rooms, with a hole in the roof to permit the smoke from the hearthfire to escape. A modest manor's timber hall would be more elaborate. Two rows of posts down the central axis of the hall might divide the hall into central corridor and side aisles, or the roof-supporting timbers might be built into the walls and buttressed by outside braces, freeing the interior space of post rows. The timber hall might have a second story, and rooms might be partitioned for privacy.

On a larger estate, the hall itself (or "palace") might be only the largest of a complex of buildings, including kitchens, storehouses, and private chambers, perhaps surrounded by a stockade or arranged around a central courtyard along the lines of the old Roman villas. In addition to the central structures, the noble's complex would also have stables, barns, raised grain or hay shelters, workshops, servant or slave quarters, and a small chapel. All of this would be enclosed within a wooden palisade and perhaps a defensive ditch. In the more secure regions of Austrasia and Neustria, the stockade defenses might be modest or absent, but on the Rhine borders, the northern coasts, and in the buffer marchlands, where there was constant threat of heathen raids and revolts, the lord's stockade would be especially well fortified.

Rural manors had to be self-sufficient; commerce was small in volume and limited to luxuries. Near the peasant huts were intensively farmed vegetable gardens; farther out were the fields where grains were grown to provide bread, the staple of the Carolingian diet, and where orchards provided fruit. Beer, the chief





drink of the northern Franks, was brewed from malt made from oats. Grapes and wine were produced in a few favored areas (the Seine, Moselle, and Rhine valleys); the southern Franks preferred wine to beer. In the fallow fields and wastes at the edge of the cleared land grazed livestock, such as cattle and pigs. Beyond lay the forest where game birds, fish, rabbits, wild boar, and deer might be hunted with spear and bow, and where honey—the only available sweetener—might be gathered from the wild bees. The forest also provided timber for buildings, posts for fences, and fuel for fires. Simple furniture, utensils, and tools were made from forest timber. Sheep provided wool for clothing, and cowhide furnished shoes.

Much of the land was held in small parcels by free peasants, though the situation varied from region to region. Many peasants were sharecroppers (paid for living on the land with labor and payments in kind or coin) or slaves. Free and tenant peasants might owe their lords service in their fields and a portion of their produce as taxes. They must also answer the muster for military campaigns or defense of the land, but they were more or less free men.

The processes that created the “unfree” serfs and land-ruling lords of feudal Europe were already in progress, however. There was a strong tendency for small holdings to be absorbed by larger holdings. The free owner might donate his land to a monastery or a lay landowner, promising rent or service to that lord, and receiving in return that lord’s protection. Holdings of varying sizes were grouped into *fiscs* or *villae*: some were defenses (owned and worked by monastery or landowner), others were dependent tenures (sharecroppers) cultivated by peasants in return for labor services and payments in kind. Grain crops provided most of the food, supplemented by a wide range of vegetables and fruits from orchards.

The Town

Life in Neustria and Austrasia was predominately rural, but in the south the urban life of the late Roman Empire persisted, though greatly reduced by the collapse of trade and communications. Even in the north, many Roman cities

survived as cathedral towns, and small ports on the coasts and along the rivers accounted for the modest luxury trade that existed.

Rome, the mother of cities, was still the most celebrated city of the Carolingian West, though its population had dropped from 250,000 in earlier Roman times to perhaps 20,000. The residence of the Pope, the spiritual leader of the Western Church, on the Caelian hill of Rome was the religious and administrative center of Rome and the Roman Church. Visiting kings and emperors stayed in the annexes of the Basilica of St. Peter on the Vatican hill outside the walls of Rome. Pilgrims who came to the Holy City to view the tombs of saints and shop for holy relics could find accommodations in nearby hotels, hospices, and oratories. Italian cities (such as Pavia, Milan, and Venice) and southern Frankish cities (such as Toulouse, Narbonne, Nîmes, Arles, and Aix) retained much of the urban culture of the late Roman Empire.

In the north, however, those Roman cities that survived owed much to the bishops and the religious communities that centered on the cathedrals there. Through control of tithes received by the church, by taxes on markets and merchandise, and through the royal grant of minting rights, such bishops had considerable economic power. They could fund the enlargement and decoration of cathedrals or the construction of new cloisters and monasteries. The bishops could also employ and shelter the artisans necessary for construction and maintenance of the church communities.

Some merchants and artisans established permanent quarters in the vicinity of the regular market places, and tavern keepers set up shop near fair grounds and places of pilgrimage. On religious feast days, the urban populations would gather in the cathedrals, which were often too small to hold them. All these activities centered around the cathedrals and the bishops who ruled them. Though no reliable population figures exist for towns of this period, the town of Metz is estimated to have been home to about 6,000 souls, while Paris’s population might have been 4,000.

Monastic communities were also important communal centers, sometimes small towns within themselves. Around a core of buildings de-



voted to the religious function, a monastic town might extend, with storerooms and accommodations for the artisans and guards in the monastery's employ; hospitals and shelters for the aged, sick, and indigent; and guest houses for pilgrims and travelers. Like the bishops of the towns, the monastery's abbot might have the right to hold a market and tax merchandise sold there. Taverns to serve the needs of the thirsty merchant and pilgrim alike appeared to be a good source of income for the monks. The population of such a monastic town, including a religious population of perhaps 1,000 monks, servants, and indigents for the larger monasteries, formed a community comparable to the old Roman towns. The monastery's abbot served as the town's patron and protector in the same way that the bishop was in a cathedral town.

Everyday Life

Since no one had watches, the passage of time might be marked by candles or by hourglasses, but most usually by sunrise, noon, and sunset, and by the singing and saying of prayers in chapels, churches, and monasteries. Therefore Carolingians marked the passing hours, not as we do today by the clock (with terms such as "ten o'clock" or "five-thirty") but by the Canonical Hours, the names of the different prayers that were said at different times of the day. Next to the name of the Canonical Hour is the time it represents; instead of "at nine o'clock AM," they may say "at tierce."

The Canonical Hours

- Prime (6 AM or sunrise)
- Tierce (9 AM)
- Sext (12 noon)
- Nones (3 PM)
- Vespers (6 PM or sunset)
- Compline (9 PM)
- Matins (12 midnight)
- Lauds (3 AM)

The following gives an idea of how a day passes on a rural manor.

You are awakened by the bells of the lord's chapel at dawn. You rise from a peasant pallet or

noble bed, cross yourself, and say a prayer. After dressing and washing your hands and face, you go to the village church or the lord's chapel to pray or hear mass. Afterward you make a breakfast of bread or porridge, then the peasant is off to work, perhaps to plow the field or repair fences or cut firewood or tend the livestock. The noble may visit the fields or exercise his martial skills, or he may take his leisure, having a snack at tierce, then a more substantial meal at noon. The lady may supervise the affairs of the estate or join the peasant women in gossip and household labors, such as sewing or mending clothing or preparing food.

After the noon meal, the noble naps, gambles, gossips, or hunts, while the peasant, having finished his day labor for the lord, hurries back to work on his own land and to tend his own vegetable garden. As night falls, vespers is sung in the lord's chapel, and work ends. It's time for supper; the rich folk light candles, oil lamps, or resin torches, while the poor folk have the light of their hearth fires. By compline, the fire embers are covered, and noble and peasant are off to sleep, several to a pallet or bed, naked between the sheets.

Though Carolingian menus have not survived, we know the principal foods were bread, meat, poultry and dairy products, vegetables, fruit, and wine or beer. Rich folk ate white bread; servants and poor had to make do with rye, while many peasants ate a porridge of barley or oats as a substitute for bread. Meats for the well-to-do included deer, beef, poultry, sheep, fish, and, most popular, pork; the peasant had to make do with small game from the forest and meat on special occasions. Eggs, butter, and cheese were also available. Vegetables included legumes, such as beans, lentils, green beans, peas, and edible herbs, and root vegetables, such as leeks, garlic, onions, and carrots. Sweet and sour apples came from the orchards and grapes from the vines.

Honey was used as a sweetener and as the base for the fermented drink known as mead. Rich folk liked their food well seasoned: pepper, cumin, cloves, and cinnamon from the East were mixed with native spices to produce savory dishes.



Trade and Manufacturing

Trade and manufacturing, already in decline toward the end of Roman period, continued to decline during the Carolingian era. The lack of an effective government bureaucracy, the deterrent of aging, poorly maintained, and unguarded road networks, and the danger of Viking and Moorish pirates on the seas were among the many reasons why commerce during the period was small in volume and limited to luxuries.

Life in the Frankish Empire was predominately rural, and most of the food and products of the manor's workers (woven wool cloth, leather goods, ironware, and so on) were consumed locally. The only skilled artisans on smaller manors might be carpenters or blacksmiths. Larger manors of the more powerful and wealthy royal court, counts, and monasteries could employ blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, goldsmiths, parchment makers, saddlers, harness makers, shoemakers, and other workers with specialized skills.

Local town or monastery markets might be held on Fridays or Saturdays, at which time commoners and nobles could sell surplus farm produce or buy manufactured goods. The king administered and guarded local markets and collected taxes; these rights were granted to counts or bishops in many locations. Local potters, weavers, and smiths could sell their products at the market for eggs or chickens. Blacksmiths were scarce and celebrated as sorcerers, since the virtues of fine steel seemed almost magical. Carolingian steel long swords were exceptionally fine weapons, internationally prized by Saracens and Northmen. In addition to the local artisans and farmers at the fair, itinerant peddlers selling housewares, pottery, or other goods might travel from one market to the next. Important seasonal markets and fairs associated with major holidays and festivals might last several days and draw visitors from miles around.

Some professional merchants bought and sold commodities such as wheat, wine, salt, and iron within the empire, particularly eager to buy grain cheaply in times of plenty and sell it dear in times of scarcity. Beyond the empire, the few trade routes east to Russia were regulated and licensed by the king, and usually traveled by Ar-

ab and Jewish traders. Some trade in beaver and marten furs from Scandinavian countries and in cloth from England continued across the North Sea and the Baltic, though this trade was increasingly threatened by Viking pirates as the period progressed. Commerce on the western Mediterranean was intermittent and subject to Moorish piracy.

Trade in luxury goods from the Eastern Mediterranean—Byzantine silks, ivory, spices of the Middle East—continued throughout the period. Exports from Frankish lands included woven cloth, bear skins, beaver skins, black fox fur, marten fur, fine Carolingian steel swords—and slaves. Captives from campaigns against the Slavs on the eastern borders of Frankland were taken through Mediterranean ports to be sold as slaves to Muslims in the Near East, Africa, and Spain. In fact, as mentioned earlier, the word “slave” comes from the name of the Slavic peoples so often sold into bondage. Some Western Churchmen, scandalized by this slave trade, offered to buy the slaves and save their souls rather than have them sold into slavery to Islam.

Travel

Though the bustling commercial traffic of Roman Gaul was a thing of the past, there were other compelling reasons for travel. Perhaps the most important was the need of the noble class to visit their various, often widely separated land holdings. It was also vital for the king and his agents to represent in person the authority of the central government in the widely separated provinces of the Frankish empire. In the absence of the efficient government bureaucracy of the late Roman Empire, administration was vested in the person of the ruler and expressed through the ruler or his royal agents. The noble and king had the same problem—to make sure that subordinates in charge of remote properties were competent and loyal. Both noble and king also traveled among their different holdings to spread the immense cost of supporting their court and retainers among different resource centers.

The king traveled from palace to palace, and from city to city, with an entourage of several hundred people. He had to warn his hosts of his



approach if he expected them to be ready to offer their hospitality, for finding food and lodgings for several hundred people with noble tastes and royal connections was a serious undertaking.

Nobles traveled to give council to the king as required in the spring and autumn convocations, or when personally summoned by the king. They also visited other nobles for business, politics, and friendship. When nobles couldn't travel, they sent couriers with letters. Their correspondence might deal with serious affairs of state and economy, or it might simply share gossip and intimacies among friends. The king's emissaries also traveled among the districts with edicts and summons; they had the legal right to demand lodgings and provisions without cost for their men and mounts from the king's loyal subjects. Common folk also traveled the roads: groups of free peasants looking for better lands and kinder masters, slaves and outlaws in flight, refugees from invasions, missionaries, pilgrims, clerks who had broken vows, wine merchants with ox-carts piled high with barrels, and slave merchants with their human cargo.

In times of war, the roads were flooded with both noble and freeman traveling across the wide empire to remote border battlefronts. Barbarians from the frontiers of the empire marveled at the wondrous Carolingian highways, and in fact the great military successes of Charlemagne's Empire lay not so much in battlefield tactics, superior weapons, or armor as in its logistical support. Transporting troops, food, and supplies quickly and efficiently over long distances on the Frankish roads was the real secret of successful military campaigning in the empire.

Many inconveniences and dangers faced the traveler. Brigands and outlaws attacked the roads. Sly thieves disguised as beggars preyed on unwary guests and pilgrims in taverns and hospices. After a heavy rain, some roadways turned into channels of mud. Paths across the forest wildernesses were poorly marked, and a traveler might lose his way. Some rivers had wooden bridges, but even these were often destroyed by flood or fire. Travelers needed to know the locations of usable river fords, but they could never be sure a ford was safe when the river was in flood. In the winter, ice on the

road made footing uncertain for horses, and alpine passes blocked with snow and ice and deadly cold were particularly dangerous.

How did Carolingians know where they were going? Maps as we know them did not exist. Large *mappae mundi*—maps of the world—had only a vague and distorted correspondence to the world they represented. The standard sort of map used by travelers, military expeditions, voyagers, and territorial partitions was an "itinerary"—a basic list of place names and locations to be visited.

Where did the Franks find accommodations? Nobles could expect the hospitality of other nobles along the way, but the monastery or cathedral community was a place open to noble and commoner, rich and poor alike. Hospitality was a form of alms-giving, of honoring the Christian duty of welcoming guests.

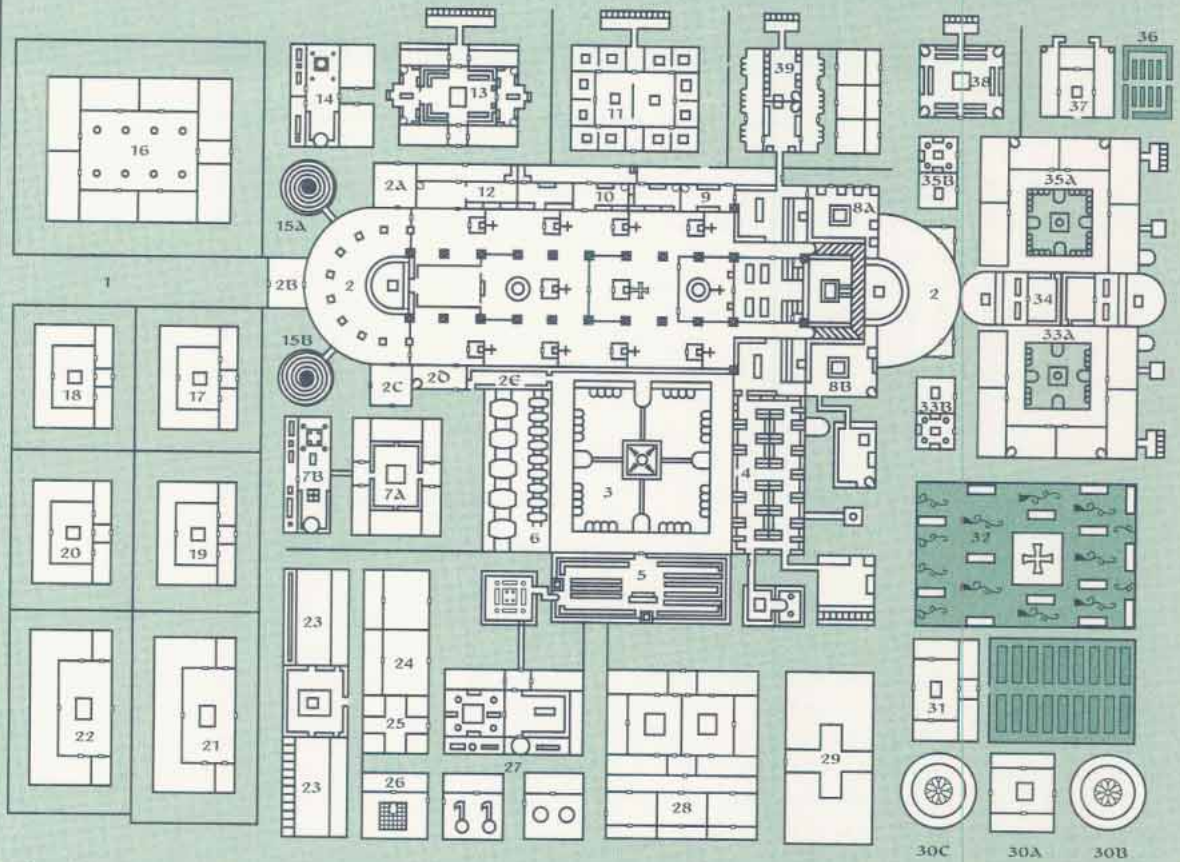
Monasteries

The spiritual function of Frankish monastic religious communities had declined after the fall of the Roman Empire when they became channels for the expression of the piety and wealth of the noble classes. Aristocrats seeking to impress the Church with their religious fervor and to daunt their neighbors made rich endowments to the monasteries. At the same time, a distrust of the pagan values of classical authors caused the Church to turn away from the Latin cultural foundations that had inspired the original founders of the monastic orders.

Nonetheless, the monastery's self-sufficient, self-ordered organization and common principles made it well suited for the isolated rural existence of its noble counterpart, the rural manor. In addition to serving the spiritual needs of its monks, the monastery sheltered the poor, aged, and infirm, and it provided education for fortunate laymen. It also provided hospitality for travelers and pilgrims, with guest chambers for the well-to-do and more modest accommodations for the commoner.

Charlemagne recognized the potential of the monasteries as centers of culture and learning. He used his authority to promote the reform of the monasteries according to the Benedictine rule, a strict code of monastic living. He had

PLAN OF MONASTERY OF ST. GALL



This diagram is a reduced copy from the 9th century original preserved in the present monastery library. It represents an ideal Benedictine house, and probably was never carried out in complete detail. The enclosure, surrounded by a wall, was about 400 feet long by 300 feet wide.

1. Entrance to the Church from beyond the walls.
2. Church with two apses and numerous altars.
- 2a. Vestibule for entry to hostelry for important visitors and to the extern school.
- 2b. Vestibule for entrance to the monastery for all visitors.
- 2c. Vestibule for entrance to the hospice for the poor and to the commons.
- 2d. Lodging for the master of the hospice for the poor.
- 2e. Monks' parlor.
3. Main cloister, showing arches.
4. Monks' dormitory above, room with heating apparatus below.
5. Monks' refectory below, wardrobe above.
6. Monks' cellar with foodstores above.
- 7a. Hospices for pilgrims and poor travelers.
- 7b. Kitchen, bakery, and brewery for pilgrims and poor travelers.
- 8a. Ground floor scriptorium with library above.
- 8b. Ground floor sacristie with wardrobe above.
9. Livingroom and dormitory for visiting monks.
10. Lodging for the master of the extern school.
11. Extern school; schoolroom for pupils with lodgings for teachers.
12. Porter's lodge.
13. Hostelry for important visitors.
14. Brewery and bakery for 13.
- 15a. St. Michael's Tower.
- 15b. St. Gabriel's Tower.
16. House for the emperor's suite (identification uncertain).
17. Sheepfold and shepherd's lodging.
18. House for farm workers and servants attached to the emperor's suite (identification uncertain).
19. Goat stalls and lodgings for goatherds.
20. Pigsty and lodgings for swineherds.
21. Stable for dairy cows and lodgings for dairymen.
22. Horsebarn and lodgings for grooms.
23. Stables for mares and oxen with haylofts above and quarters for servants in the middle.
24. Workshops for coopers and turners.
25. Storehouse for brewery grain.
26. Fruit-drying house.
27. Brewery and bakery for resident monks, showing mortars and hand-mills.
28. Workshops of shoemakers, saddlers, sword and shield makers, carvers, turners, goldsmiths, and fullers.
29. Granary and threshing floor.
- 30a. House of poultry keeper.
- 30b. Poultry yard.
- 30c. Goose yard.
31. Gardener's house, with monks' garden adjoining.
32. Cemetery and orchard.
- 33a. Infirmary cloister and living rooms of the novices and their teacher, and of convalescents.
- 33b. Novices' kitchen and bath.
34. Church for the novices and the ill.
- 35a. Infirmary cloister and living rooms, especially for the seriously ill.
- 35b. Infirmary kitchen and bath.
36. Infirmary garden.
37. Physician's quarters, apothecary-shop, and room for patients.
38. Surgery for bleeding and purgation.
39. Abbot's house, with kitchen, cellar, and bath.



copies of the Benedictine rule distributed to the monasteries and encouraged them to adopt it.

Monastic life according to the Benedictine rule meant that you surrendered your worldly goods and took a vow to remain within the monastery for the rest of your life. You promised to live in poverty and chastity, and to be obedient to the abbot and to follow the Benedictine rule. A lock of your hair was cut by the bishop (a ritual called the tonsure), transforming you from a layman into a clerk. Your life ideally would be happily filled with reading the Holy Books, manual labor, prayer, and sleep. You would rise before dawn, recite the matins and lauds, work at various occupations until the fourth hour. Your labors might include cooking; making or repairing clothing, housewares, or tools; working the fields or gardens; studying Latin; or copying manuscripts. Then you might read the Holy Books or recite psalms until dinner. After a period of rest, you resumed work until compline. After compline the whole community went to bed.

The abbot of a great monastery was one of the most powerful magnates of Carolingian society. He was usually a loyal friend or family member appointed by the king or nobles who endowed the monastic lands. Such an abbot was careful to serve the interests of his benefactors so that he could count on their protection for the monastery. And monasteries needed protection, for counts and nobles coveted their lands and economic power. A local lord might menace or harass a monastery, hoping to force its monks and abbot to give over lands to the lord in return for "protection." A monastery without powerful sponsors would be at the mercy of land-hungry nobles.

See the diagram of the plan of the Abbey of St. Gall (page 35). This plan was prepared in 820 as a guide to remodeling and reconstruction of an existing abbey. It represented the ideal monastery but may not have been carried out in all its details. A few terms may need explanation. A *sacristies* is a room where sacred utensils, vestments, and so on are stored. *Extern* means non-resident, and an extern school would be for those not belonging to the abbey community. The *refectory* is the monk's dining hall. A *scriptorium* is a room where monastic scribes copied

manuscripts of sacred and classical works. Monasteries often had large libraries of rare and valuable manuscripts. Manuscripts might be loaned to another monastery so they might make a copy. Monks were very reluctant to let a manuscript leave their libraries, however, since its loss might be irreplaceable, and failure to return a borrowed manuscript was a serious matter indeed.

The King and the Law

King Charles and the Royal Court

From Einhard, his biographer, we get the impression that Charlemagne was a great bear of a man with piercing eyes, a trifle heavy in the stomach, but vigorous and healthy, well built and often engaged in horseback riding, the hunt, and swimming. Though masterful, manly, and dignified in movements and speech, his voice was "thin for a man of his physique"—so you may choose, when your player characters meet the great King Charles, ruler of the Western World, to speak regally, but in a squeaky voice.

His feast clothes, or dress outfit, featured a suit of gold cloth, jeweled shoes, a cloak fastened with a great gold brooch, and a golden crown set with precious stones. However, he apparently preferred to dress like a common Frankish noble: Next to his skin he wore a linen shirt and linen drawers; over this he wore long hose and a tunic edged with silk. He wore simple shoes on his feet and wrapped long bands of cloth around his legs in the Frankish fashion. In the winter he wore an otter or ermine skin jerkin and a blue cloak. He always wore a sword strapped to his side, with hilt and strap of gold; for state occasions he wore a special jeweled sword.

In personal habits he was devout, going to Mass each morning and attending services at night, and he was quick to criticize faulty performance of religious rites. He liked company, conversation, and activity. He invited lords to consult with him on state matters during his morning bath, and he surrounded himself with learned men, seeking stimulating conversation on political, historical, aesthetic, and other less formal topics. Daily meals and banquets were among his greatest pleasures; he loved to eat, es-



pecially roasted meat, but he despised drunkenness. During meals he liked to be entertained by jugglers, jesters, and minstrels, or to have read aloud to him historical and religious works, particularly *The City of God* by St. Thomas Aquinas. He was also interested in the heroic legends and tales of his Teutonic ancestors, and wished them set down in writing for posterity.

Most of all, Charlemagne loved hunting. Often accompanied by his wives and daughters, the entourage would hunt wild game in the morning, then rest in clearings, with comfortable tents and plenty of wine and food. The day often ended at a hunting lodge, where more eating, drinking, and romantic pleasures were indulged.

He was very fond of his large family. He had five official wives and numerous concubines. His first son, the elder Pepin, was the deformed offspring of a concubine; this illegitimate hunchback later conspired with a group of nobles to overthrow Charlemagne. Pepin was permitted to withdraw into a monastery, where he died under mysterious circumstances. A number of the treasonous nobles died resisting arrest. His three legitimate sons—Charles, the younger Pepin, and Louis—were intended to rule after him, but only Louis survived Charlemagne. He became the next emperor, commonly known as Louis the Pious. Charlemagne also had a number of daughters. If the daughters had married, their husbands might have had a claim to the throne under Frankish custom, so Charlemagne forbade them to marry. He kept them always near him for the pleasure of their beauty and charming company. These daughters managed their romances in the royal court nonetheless, which caused their father some grief and embarrassment.

The royal court is the place where lay and ecclesiastical aristocrats gathered around the king seeking gifts, favors, and position. In the spring and fall, noblemen were summoned to the king's council at the royal court. Here the counts and the king's advisors met to discuss the business of Frankland and the empire; afterward, the king would issue capitularies, or edicts in the form of a series of articles, concerning the matters discussed. These capitularies contained regulations, recommendations, and royal commands on various legal, political, social, and economic

matters. Military musters before the summer campaigns assembled to organize and take counsel at the royal palace. At the royal court, the king also received foreign ambassadors, emissaries, and guests—Bulgar chieftains, Anglo-Saxon scholars and deposed kings, Byzantine court officials, and Arabs from Spain and the Near East.

The Palace School and the Carolingian Renaissance

Charlemagne had an apparently earnest love and respect for learning. He was interested not only in the practical aspects of education that might make his noble agents and counts more effective administrators, but also in poetry and the preservation of biblical and Latin literary manuscripts. He received instruction in Latin and Greek and unsuccessfully attempted to teach himself to write. (Reading and writing were then different skills.)

Alcuin, an Anglo-Saxon scholar from York, England, and friend of Charlemagne, was brought to Charles's palace at Aix-la-Chapelle to head the Palace School. Charlemagne planned that young men, noble or common, who showed promise would be brought to the Palace School and educated. In this predominantly uneducated age, most nobles, though they were responsible for the administration of the government and their own vast estates, could not read, write, or do arithmetic; they had to rely on churchmen or lay clerks to perform these services for them. A Palace School education would enable young nobles and clerks to handle their own reading, writing, and administrative tasks.

In addition to ecclesiastical history, Church doctrine, and Latin, students at the Palace School were instructed in the seven liberal arts of antiquity—the trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and dialectics) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). Latin was the foundation of all education in this period; already the foundation of the Western Church, it became the language of politics and administration, the one common denominator among various languages of the empire. Some young nobles undoubtedly found little pleasure or value in



schooling, preferring education in the manly arts of hunting and warfare, but others would someday become counts and abbots and royal agents. These nobles would pass on their respect for learning to their peers, their subjects, and their descendants.

Charlemagne's Palaces

As we have seen, King Charles, like other nobles, had to travel from one residence to another to make sure that his lands were being properly administrated. Carolingian nobles also traveled for a more practical reason: Apart from booty taken during military campaigns and gifts from the king or other aristocrats, a noble's only income was from the food and goods produced by his estates. In order to efficiently use these resources, he had to travel from estate to estate to consume them.

Charlemagne, for example, had many royal palaces on his estates through the empire. Some were probably little more than elaborate hunting lodges. Others were substantial country estates like Roman villas. Still others were grand complexes on the scale of palaces of the late Roman Empire. Run by a royal representative who supervised the estate's peasants and artisans, such larger palaces were designed to receive the king and his entourage for weeks or months at a time. They contained large chapels for religious ceremonies and accommodations sufficient to house hunting nobles, to shelter general assemblies and councils, or to serve as a staging area for a military expedition.

The only palace building still standing is the royal chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle (now known as Aachen). This chapel was based on the famous Roman church in Ravenna built by Emperor Justinian. On the ground floor is the altar of Mary, where palace servants gathered for services. The second level was a gallery with a royal throne opposite the altar of Christ; the king and nobles would gather on this gallery. Above all was the image of God, a gold mosaic on the ceiling of the dome.

Charlemagne meant the palace at Aix to be the New Rome, a symbol of the Frankish Empire's inheritance of the splendor, culture, and power of the old Roman empire. To this end, he

imported many examples of Roman art and statuary to decorate the palace. On the ruins of an ancient Roman bath house, he had a new bath house built using the natural hot springs of Aix. The palace domestic residences of family, friends, and entourage and the barracks of the emperor's elite royal cavalry troops were more modest timber buildings.

The King's Authority

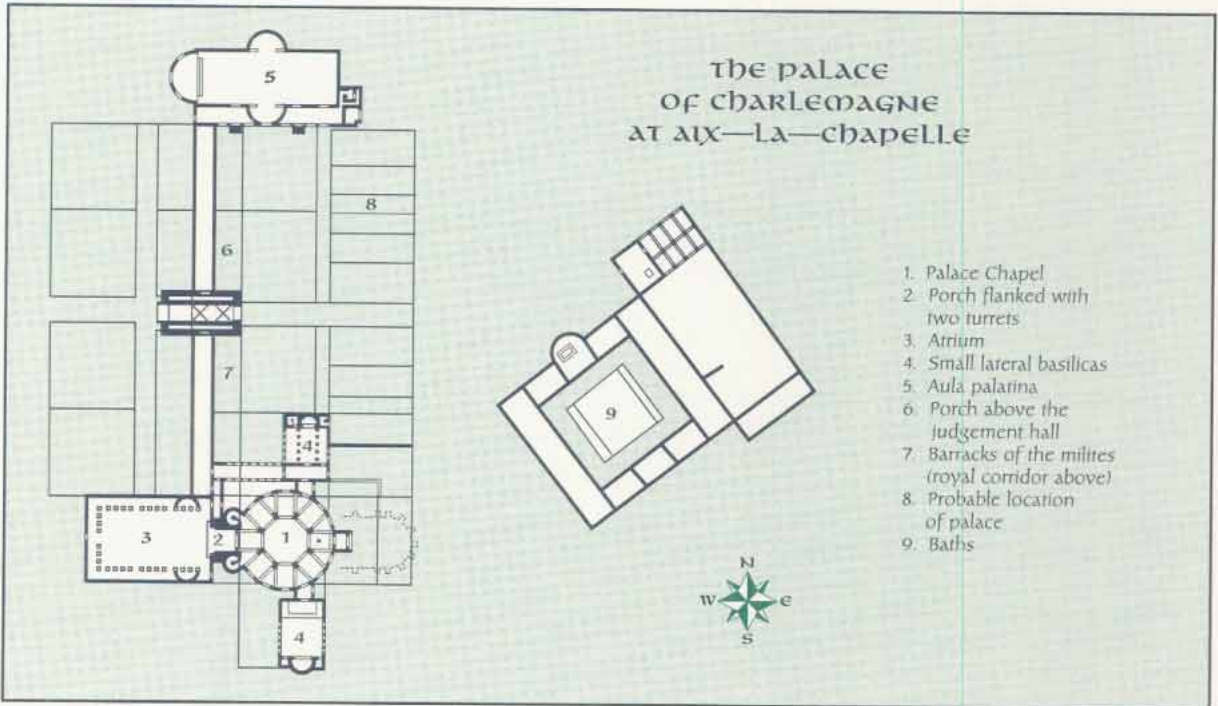
In Charlemagne's Empire, interest in education was not simply aesthetic. He had the practical desire to improve the efficiency of his administration. Through the schools he was teaching the future counts and administrators of the empire to read and write Latin and to understand laws and capitularies with the intent to centralize government administration.

Charlemagne's Empire was divided into counties. For each county a *graf* or count was appointed by the king. The counts appointed the local lords beneath them with the approval of the king; counts and local lords alike swore oaths of loyalty to the king. Within the counties, answerable only to the king, counts had ultimate authority as a royal deputy with wide-ranging powers. Each count was responsible for publishing the king's wishes to the local freemen and for collecting taxes and tributes. Some of these taxes were forwarded to the king; other revenues were retained by the count to carry out public works. The count assembled the local troops for campaigns or in local emergency musters and led them in combat. The count also presided over the local law court and administered justice. In return for his services, the count was awarded one-third of local taxes and court fines; he also often received gifts of lands from royal estates within his county or from remote regions of the empire. A count's office was granted for life; if he were competent, the count could expect his title to be handed on to a son or a member of his family.

In theory, the counts were to be extensions of the king's authority and concern for the welfare of the people. In practice, the counts and nobles were a landed class eager to increase their wealth and power. Where the interests of the nobles and the commoners conflicted, they of course fa-



THE PALACE OF CHARLEMAGNE AT AIX—LA—CHAPELLE



1. Palace Chapel
2. Porch flanked with two turrets
3. Atrium
4. Small lateral basilicas
5. Aula palatina
6. Porch above the judgement hall
7. Barracks of the milites (royal corridor above)
8. Probable location of palace
9. Baths

vored the nobles. The nobles also competed with one another for land, power, and wealth.

Initially Charlemagne's successful yearly campaigns provided him with abundant lands and wealth that he could distribute to encourage and assure the loyalty of his counts. But as conquests became difficult and newly acquired lands farther flung, and as the strain of administering and protecting the lands already conquered grew, the empire's needs outstripped its resources for rewarding loyalty to the king. The problem was, simply stated, that land was the source of all wealth in Frankish Empire. To purchase the loyalty of his counts, the king had to reward them with land, but once the counts had received the land, they held the power of the land. Only while the king could continue to hold out the promise of reward could he ensure the cooperation of his nobles.

When the king no longer had new lands and booty to reward his counts, ambitious nobles had to prey on one another, on the lands of the Church and monasteries, on the lands of the free peasants, and on the wealth and power of the king. As power tended to accumulate in the

counts, there was no central authority or system adequate to hold the center together. In later Medieval periods, the Church and the feudal system were to provide the necessary centralized hierarchical authority for a stable culture, but these institutions were only just beginning to develop during the Carolingian period.

The problems of administrating the huge, unwieldy Frankish Empire were almost insurmountable. Only through Charlemagne's personal energy and inspiration did he manage to hold it together during his lifetime. After his death, his son Louis divided the empire among his own sons. The empire collapsed into numerous pieces, each fighting with one another for dominance.

The Social Classes

The Franks divided themselves into three basic social groups: those who fought, those who prayed, and those who toiled. Those who toiled—the artisans and peasant freemen, serfs, and slaves who worked the land—were generally despised by those who fought—the noble



warrior class. Those who prayed were generally judged, not according to their piety and learning, but according to their wealth and noble or common birth.

The Noble Warrior

There was no clear definition of nobility for the Franks. Though the most powerful Franks were “gentlemen” from established families like the Arnulfings (Charlemagne’s family), the Etichonids, Rorgonids, the Widonids, the Girarids, the Unrochids, the price of access to the noble classes seemed to be the price of a warrior’s military kit. The required gear for a Carolingian warrior—horse, body armor, greaves, shield, lance, sword, and scabbard—costs as much as 20 oxen. During the years of Charlemagne’s successful conquests, a warrior might always hope to rise in station by amassing booty from a military campaign or by winning the friendship and patronage of more powerful nobles through feats in battle. There were very few merchants or artisans who could hope for such a rapid gain in wealth or power through the exercise of their

peacetime skills. The warrior class was also eligible to marry into one of the wealthy established families.

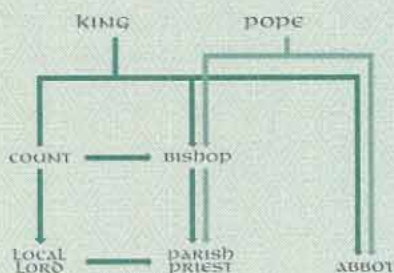
By tradition and according to Christian doctrine, the noble classes were supposed to protect the weak. In fact, most nobles scorned common folk and did not respect elevated folk (priest or lay) of inferior birth. Rich noblemen were often greedy for more privilege and wealth, securing military exemptions in exchange for gifts of lands, and taking land and wealth from the Church and the peasants at every opportunity. For example, the nobles often employed the taxes they collected from the peasants not for the welfare of the people, but for the benefit of their own holdings. The tithes granted to the parish priests and their churches were often diverted by nobles for their own use.

Land was wealth, and nobles were rich in land. Each noble had his own domain, or land holdings. The wealthiest nobles might own many domains scattered throughout the empire. Charlemagne, for example, owned over 1,000 private domains. Control over the products of a domain gave the noble economic power, and leadership and sponsorship of the warriors on his domains gave the noble military power.

In a noble family, the father or paternal uncle wielded the power. A family in theory often owed its authority over its holdings to the king, but in fact control of the holdings remained in the family and were divided among the surviving male heirs. Since Frankish nobles cherished illegitimate children as well as the legitimate children, and since illegitimate children and sons by marriage had rights of inheritance by Frankish custom, the division of a noble inheritance upon a family head’s death was a common problem. Siblings often fought bitterly for a larger portion of the inheritance. The themes of fidelity and betrayal, of family members switching alliances to suit circumstances and self-interest, are familiar elements in the histories of Frankish noble families.

The noble classes were hardly better educated or refined than the peasantry. Most noblemen were schooled only in the arts of war and hunting; the supervision and administration of their land holdings they left to their church-educated clerks and stewards.

FLOW OF AUTHORITY FROM CHURCH AND STATE



The King appointed the counts, who appointed the local lords.

The bishops and abbots were consecrated by the Church through the Pope and his ecclesiastical hierarchy and answerable to them in doctrine and Church affairs, but they were chosen by the king and the counts. The selection of the parish priest, nominally the privilege of the bishop, was often determined by the local lord who protected and provided for the parish.



The dissolution of tribal bonds had eroded communal values, and the Christian virtues and feudalism had yet to replace them as ideals. "Might makes right" and "more is better" were the guiding principles of the noble classes in Carolingian times, with few exceptions. Charlemagne himself and trusted courtiers and advisors, such as Alcuin, seemed to be exceptions to these ruthless principles.

A good player character will emulate these positive examples, while stereotypically crude, violent, impious, and greedy land barons will serve as excellent antagonists in historical Carolingian campaigns.

Following are a few NPC noble stereotypes the DM might use.

The Prosperous Baron: Splendidly dressed, stylishly overweight, surrounded by well-dressed friends, retainers, and clerks, he is nonetheless uncouth in speech and action, unself-consciously greedy and grasping, fierce and direct in person, quick to rage, and violent when frustrated.

The Grizzled Veteran: An aging warrior, grown wealthy and powerful in land and booty from campaigning, eager to marry his daughters into more genteel families and to provide his sons with abundant lands and wealth. A true and noble patriot and partisan of the Franks and a loyal servant of the king. Initially naive and pliable in the hands of scheming barons, but forthright and honorable when true villainy is revealed to him.

The Young Ambitious Warrior: A younger son intent on gaining his own wealth and privilege through excellence in warfare. Contemptuous of learning and churchmen, he trusts in his sword and his fellow cavalymen. A useful tool for good or evil according to his masters and mentors.

The Scholar: Indifferent or clumsy in the art of war, he prefers the intellectual challenges of history, politics, or the Church. He admires the lost civilization of ancient Rome and looks forward to a refinement of culture among the Franks. A comfortable student, he develops no strong principles or beliefs until confronted with a crisis such as war, cruelty, or injustice that touches him or his loved ones personally.

Peasants and Slaves

Four-fifths of the population were rural folk. Many of them were free farmers on small landholdings of 12-16 hectares (30-40 acres). A freeholder owning four or more manses (dwellings) was directly responsible for military service, and thus was, by our definition, noble; less fortunate freemen were permitted to combine resources and pay for the support of a warrior. On large domains, part of the land was worked by tenant farmers; the other part was the master's reserve, worked by serfs and slaves for the master's exclusive benefit.

Six days a week, the rural peasant worked hard by day according to the different rhythms of the seasons. He cultivated the fields and vegetable gardens, tended the domestic animals, made and repaired farm and household tools and implements, and cut wood for hearth fires and for charcoal. He also performed public works, such as road maintenance, forest clearing, or bridge building at the direction of the local lord. We have few clues as to how they spent their "leisure" time, but we may suppose they gathered with family and friends around hearthfires, ate and drank, gossiped and griped, swapped fantastic tales of heroes and wizards, and loved, laughed, and suffered much as we do today. Sundays and religious feast days were holidays with no labor. Peasants were obligated to attend Mass each Sunday as ordered by king and bishop, but the services might be short and rudimentary. Afterward the church might serve as a community center for fellowship, singing, or dancing.

The following are a few serviceable peasant stereotypes for NPCs encountered.

The Rabelaisian Peasant: Coarse and boisterously cheerful, extravagant and lewd. He accepts the hardships of peasant life with crude energy and enjoys the pleasures of food, dance, song, and flesh to their fullest.

The Salt-of-the-Earth Peasant: Naturally good-hearted, generous, and hard-working. He takes pleasure in his labors; loves his family and friends; and enjoys conversation, food, song, and drink, but in moderation and dignity. He exemplifies the Christian virtues in a naive, instinctive fashion despite his ignorance.



The Peasant Weasel: Mean-spirited, envious of other's good fortune, and desirous of gaining wealth and influence at the expense of his neighbor. He is never happy with what he has, blames his problems on others, and works his petty revenges on the world by devious and dishonest means.

The Brutish Toady Peasant: Strong, cruel, and sadistic. He does the dirty work of villains for coin and the pleasure of pushing others around.

Priests and Monks

Though in some ways priests and monks formed a separate class from the nobles and peasants, actually in Carolingian times they were little more than two subclasses of the noble and peasant classes. Noble churchmen enjoyed the same benefits of land, wealth, and privilege that lay nobles enjoyed, yet suffered few restrictions for their status as churchmen. With the decline of the Roman empire, there was a rapid decline in educational standards, doctrine, and pastoral duties among the clergy. In effect, the high clergy became indistinguishable from the ordinary large landowners. Though the clergy had always been permitted to acquire wealth to increase the Church's capital, to embellish the liturgy, and to aid the disinherited, they had originally been bound by many restrictions of poverty and propriety that set them apart from the secular aristocracy. Now, in Charlemagne's time, prelates and abbots engaged in blood feuds, went hunting, fought with the warriors on campaign, kept women, and established dynasties through which episcopal lands were handed down from father to son.

Though Charlemagne attempted to establish and maintain higher standards for education and performance of the liturgy, he did not attempt to reform the secularization of the clergy. In fact, he continued to appoint bishops and abbots as it suited him and his noble advisors, though in theory a bishop ought to have been elected by his clergy and flock, while an abbot ought to have been chosen by the monks of his abbey. He cautioned bishops and abbots to show restraint in hunting, drinking, and womanizing, but that's as far as it went. Essentially, Charlemagne decided it was more important for

the security and coherence of the Empire to have a loyal class of noble churchmen with modest or doubtful religious credentials than to challenge and risk losing the support of a large and influential landholding class.

The Palace School accepted promising students of humble origins as well as young noblemen. From time to time, Charlemagne was proud to appoint deserving men of lowly origin to high positions over the protests of nobles who coveted such profitable positions for themselves. Once placed in high office, however, even a sincere and virtuous priest might suffer temptations of wealth and power, and he might find it necessary to adopt a gentlemanly standard of living in order to maintain the respect of his ecclesiastical peers.

At the other end of the scale, the parish priest was often a man of limited qualifications. Most churches and chapels were built on lands set aside by the local lord for such purposes; the land and the church remained the property of the lord, and as such the lord exercised the right to appoint the parish priest and direct the manner of his service. Peasants were required to tithe 1/10 of their personal revenues for the upkeep of the parish, to be collected by priests in coin or kind. Instead of giving the parish an independent source of income, these proceeds were often confiscated by Church and lay proprietors. A parish priest remained essentially a household servant; he would, of course, say Mass, but he was as likely to be required to serve at the lord's table or to lead the hounds on a hunt.

Such a position was not very attractive to any self-respecting, educated man of ability. The lord might simply choose a serf who could not resist and have him consecrated by a cooperative bishop (usually an accommodating member of the privileged class); occasionally the village idiot or another equally useless person would be chosen since he had no other practical value to the landlord.

As a result, parish priests were often men of doubtful quality. They were usually illiterate, knew little or no Latin, and might have only a vague or grotesque notion of Church doctrine and ritual. They probably lived much like the members of their flocks, coarse and cheerful, drinking, carousing, and cursing like any lay-



man. A clever, enterprising, and unprincipled parish priest might believe that worldly values outweighed spiritual values and make himself modestly wealthy by skimming money intended for the upkeep of the parish.

Abbots and monks, though influenced as much as bishops and parish priests by their noble or humble origins, probably were better educated in general and more familiar with Church doctrine and ritual. Monasteries and abbeys were perhaps just other types of landed estates, but they were generally better organized, better run, and better endowed, with consequent benefits for their members.

Player character bishops, priests, abbots, and monks should be of exceptionally fine Christian virtue. This is particularly true if they enjoy the benefits of the priest class in a historical campaign, for the spiritual gifts of healing and divine protection should be granted only to those who have proved themselves worthy of them. Unprincipled and worldly characters would be better served to be of the warrior or thief classes. And how should we account for the use of priestly powers in villainous priests? Such powers must be understood as deriving from dark, pagan, unholy sources that all virtuous characters would spurn.

The following are a few serviceable priest and monk stereotypes for NPCs encountered.

The Worldly Bishop or Abbot: He hunts, eats, and drinks like a landed lord. His knowledge of Church ritual and doctrine is vague, but he is skilled at extracting income from his lands and from tithes meant for the bishopric or monastery. At best, he is simply a greedy, self-interested, self-centered noble like most other landed gentlemen; at worst he is a sinister, grasping villain who conspires with other landed lords to steal from the king, competing nobles, the Church, and the peasantry to enhance his personal wealth and privilege.

The Earnest Servant of the Church: Of humble blood, educated in a monastery or the Palace School, he observes the rules against hunting, warfare, wine, and women. He is a voice for mercy in the courts and a protector of fugitives and outlaws against harsh and unjust overlords. Of course, he is hated by the gentry.

The Mendicant Friar: He journeys about the

land, teaching the Gospel and Christian virtue in parables and sayings, accepting hospitality where he finds it or sleeping rough in the wilderness. He protects himself against outlaws and beasts with strength and wisdom, and he befriends the poor and unfortunate regardless of the risks.

The Weak, Ignorant, Well-Intentioned Priest: Made a parish priest by his lord for convenience, this priest does his best. He knows nothing of the Church or Christian doctrine, but he tries to help and protect his flock as best he can. He is scorned by the gentry and the high clergy and casually regarded by his peasant flock, but when a crisis comes, the peasants turn to him and the Church for help.

The Unfrosted Priest or Monk: Cast out of the Church for insubordination, drunkenness, or lechery, this rascal poses as a man of God to gain confidences and hospitality. He may be a common thief or scoundrel or a more complex character, on the surface a man of deep faith and Christian virtue, but at heart cynical of the corrupt values of the Church.

The Art of War

The vitality and coherence of the Carolingian Empire depended on its military might and on the lands and booty gained from its wars. After Charlemagne's death, when the frontiers were remote, difficult to defend, and no longer ripe for conquest, the king could no longer reward loyal subjects with plunder and new lands. The Empire began to dissolve amidst the squabbles between greedy land barons.

The Carolingian noble's most important possessions were his horse, his sword, and his armor. From youth, aristocrats trained in weapons and horseback riding and exercised their skills in mock combats and hunting. In almost every year of Charlemagne's reign, there was a general assembly in March or May in preparation for a military campaign. The promise of loot and recognition in battle was the dream of every ambitious noble warrior.

Heavy cavalry was the queen of battle. The king's personal guard was a small standing army comprised of elite troops known as *scarae*, small units of 50-100 heavy cavalymen led by the



king's sons. These young paladins were the most powerful, best-armed and -trained, and most mobile fighting units of Charlemagne's armies.

The count of a region gathered and personally led the mounted troops of his own region; such units varied in size and quality. Perhaps regional infantry levies were also mustered, particularly in response to an immediate crisis, like a Viking raid, but we are not sure.

The morale and discipline of Carolingian armies was generally high, probably because of the consistent successes of Charlemagne's campaigns and because of the abundant opportunities for plunder and personal advancement.

About the actual composition of Charlemagne's armies we are ill informed. In addition to the heavy cavalry outfitted with helmet, mail body armor, greaves, shield, sword, scabbard, lance, and horse, there were probably a large number of lightly armed horsemen. This light cavalry fought without helmet, body armor, or sword; such men would probably have moved about the battlefield on horseback, then dismounted to fight with spear and shield or bow. We know even less about the role of infantry in Carolingian armies; presumably local militias with spear, shield, and bow might be mustered against Saxon or Viking raids. Perhaps foot archers played a significant part in eastern campaigns where horses were more scarce.

Something must also be said about the arms and armor of the empire's allies and enemies. The Arabs of Muslim Spain probably fought primarily as infantry and light mounted skirmishers, with much use of archery. The Bretons had very effective heavy cavalry armed with sword, heavy spears, and light javelins; they also used horse armor. In Aquitaine, southern France, and Italy, urban infantry levies were used to defend city walls. Gascons and Basques fought primarily as infantry or as light cavalry skirmishers. Armed with lances and Chinese-style bows, Avar armored cavalry used cast-iron stirrups and lamellar horse armor. The Avars also introduced Europe to advanced techniques of siege warfare from the Orient. The Saxons, ferocious foes in the first part of Charlemagne's reign, then later allies against the Slavs and Danes, fought almost exclusively as infantry armed with spear, sword, and axe and were pro-

ted by little armor. The Slavs fought as infantry armed with shield, spear, and bow. The Viking raiders had infantry with shield and leather or padded armor, and chain byrnie and helmets for the wealthiest; they fought with broadsword, spear, seax (a type of short sword), and bow. They could use their longships as transport to strike swiftly and withdraw before effective resistance could be mustered.

Military campaigns and defensive garrisons in the Spanish Marches and Saxony are good settings for historical campaigns. Coastal defenses against the Danes and other Northmen are another possible campaign element. A plausible concept for a player character party is a small group of spies and scouts sent in advance of Charlemagne's armies to study enemy defenses.

Faith and Superstition

The Western Church

It is hard to know what people really believed twelve centuries ago, and harder still to generalize about the different personal faiths of millions of people in Charlemagne's time. Nonetheless, it appears that Church ritual and superstition were more widely accepted than the Christian ethic and spirit. A jeweled reliquary containing the bones of a saint was a more powerful, concrete, and accessible symbol of religious faith than the cross symbolizing Christ's sacrifice and redemption of man.

Christian Ideals

As mentioned earlier, the worldly higher clergy and the ignorant parish priests were poor vehicles for preaching by word and example the higher spiritual values of the Western Church. Copies of the Gospels and commentaries were rare and valuable, and literacy was extremely limited; at best most folk would have had to rely on the sermons and homilies of priests with doubtful educational qualifications. Some points could be made clear and simple: Baptism was essential to salvation, and salvation was essential for gaining everlasting life after death and avoiding eternal torment in the fires of Hell. Members of the Faith were taught to embrace the Seven Virtues: Faith, Hope, Charity (these



three called “the Christian virtues”), Justice, Fortitude, Prudence, and Temperance (called “the natural virtues”). They were also told to avoid the Seven Deadly Sins: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth.

In spite of the corruption and worldliness of its ecclesiastical hierarchy and the poor qualifications and education of the typical priest, the Church was a powerful symbol of aspiration to higher moral and ethical virtues. Perhaps the cathedral and monastery communities were the best example of the Christian virtues in action, with their dedication to charity and education, the food, shelter, hospitals, and orphanages. Church members of high and low birth alike were reminded by the clergy to do good works, and many wealthy nobles must have been sincere in their generous endowments of churches, monasteries, and relics.

Finally, Charlemagne’s legend features many anecdotes that tell of his piety and his preference for earnest, well-educated clergy over greedy, ill-tutored priests. Charlemagne’s numerous military campaigns and services to the Pope and Church were presented as crusades to extend the Faith and chastise the pagan. Whether or not Charlemagne actually took any effective action to reform the clergy, he nonetheless did much to add elements of the Christian ethic to tribal customary law. In the later Middle Ages, Charlemagne became a symbol of the pious and virtuous Christian monarch who upholds law and justice, protects the Church, defends and advances the Faith, and rules in accord with Christian principles.

Ritual and Superstition

The uneducated folk were easily awed and swayed by the sensational appeals of magic, superstition, and the supernatural. On one hand they were moved by the positive forces represented in the Faith: angels, saints, relics, visionary hermits and ascetics, wandering priests, and impassioned preachers. At the same time they were equally fascinated by the malevolent forces identified by the Church: devils, demons, malign spirits, deformity, madness, exorcism, torture, and inquisition.

Daunted by the malign influences in the world

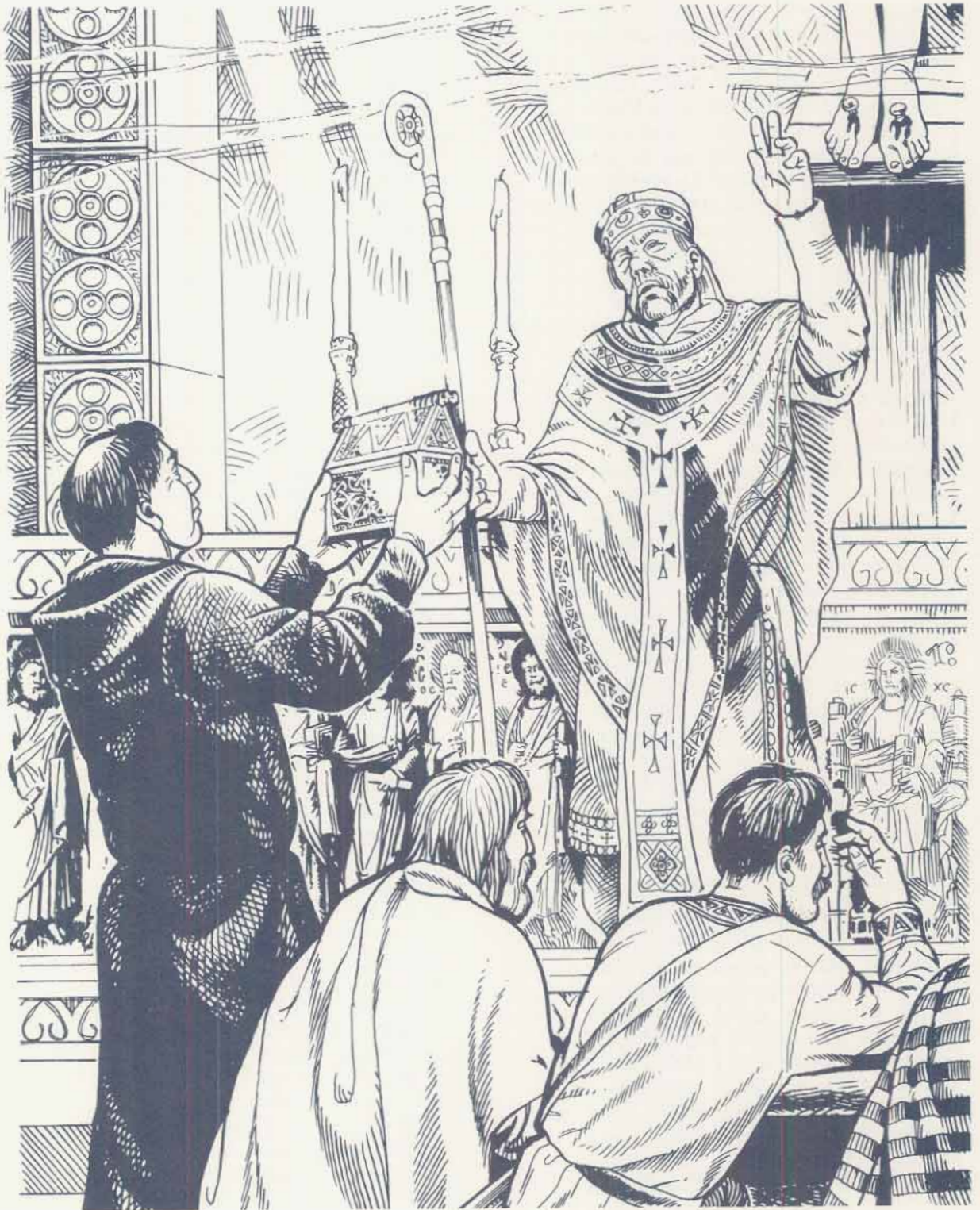
around him, the Christian appealed to the aid of angels and saints and miracles to strengthen his faith. “Protect me, Blessed Mother and all the Saints!” The veneration of saints suited the older pagan traditions of sacred sites and nature spirits, magic, and ritual. For many the pagan pantheons were simply replaced by a new assortment of intimate and personal saints, angels, and other divine personalities subordinate to the abstract and impersonal deity of the Western Church.

The veneration of holy relics was another adaptation of Church doctrine to Germanic traditions of worship. Holy relics could protect against natural, human, or demonic afflictions, cure disease, or repel invaders. Relics were used to consecrate churches and were regarded as valued possessions by nobles. Pilgrims made long journeys just to touch or view a glittering reliquary containing a fragment of a holy man’s remains or soil soaked in a saint’s blood.

Pilgrimages are further manifestations of the faithful searching for supernatural wealth. Those of modest means might make short trips to local churches and holy sites to visit famous relics. More wealthy persons might travel to visit saints’ tombs, the holy precincts and catacombs in Rome, or the most venerated sites in the Holy Land. Pilgrims might travel hoping to find or purchase a sacred relic, to fulfill a vow sworn before God, or to do a penance demanded by the Church to expiate a great sin.

The power of holy ground and sacred enclosures is another manifestation of the supernatural protective power of the Church. Worshipers entered chapels and cathedrals as though they were portals to another world. Censers and perfumes filled the silent, reverent air; bells were rung to chase away demons and disorderly persons; and lamps were lit to triumph over darkness. (See “Consecrated Areas” in Chapter 3.)

The dark supernatural forces that faced the Christian were terrifying beyond comprehension. The Devil and the Legions of Hell were not simply powerful monsters that could rend your flesh; the real terror of these evil spirits was their desire to steal your immortal soul and your promise of salvation and everlasting life. The Prince of Darkness was a devious creature, capable of assuming any shape, of crafting skillful





arguments, and of cloaking his evil intent in honorable words. The Devil's desires were simple: to fill Hell with souls and to torment the sinners.

In a historical Carolingian campaign, any hint of sorcery or witchcraft is immediately and unquestionably evil in the eyes of the Western Church. Eighth- and ninth-century capitularies denounce all magicians, enchanters, diviners, dream interpreters, and fortune tellers. Pagan practices were punished severely; worshipers of springs, trees, or groves could be fined and barred from church services; burning the dead to ashes in pagan rites was punishable by death. People suspected of witchcraft, most often women, were believed to be able to induce love or hatred through potions; to provide protection and healing through amulets, herbal concoctions, and incantations; and to tell the future through auguries, card reading, dream interpretation, and other means. Astrology and reading portents in the heavens, oddly enough, was a more or less respectable art practiced by churchmen, scholars, and historians.

In legendary and fantasy campaigns, most sorcery and witchcraft is still seen as evil, but some sorcerers (Merlin, for example) may be viewed romantically as neutral or even good. Their supernatural powers may be interpreted as scientific or scholarly, or even divinely inspired, rather than diabolic.

The Clergy

After the fall of Rome, uneducated barbarian nobles became dependent on literate, administration-skilled churchmen. Churches and bishops in major cities remained stable centers of culture as surrounding regions declined from Roman levels of economy and government. Many nobles entered the Church and used its resources as an alternate route to wealth, land, and power; the temptations of worldly treasures eroded and corrupted the spiritual values of the clergy. At the same time, abbeys and monasteries, though dependent on patronage, retained higher standards of learning and piety that could inspire later reforms.

The organization of the Western Church was a strict hierarchy, requiring canonical and abso-

lute obedience to superiors. At the top of the hierarchy was the Pope and his college of cardinals in Rome. Below the prelates in Rome were archbishops, and beneath them bishops, with each high priest responsible for church affairs within his jurisdiction. The parish priests answered directly to the bishops. Monks were responsible to their superiors, abbots who reported to the heads of their monastic orders, who in turn reported to the Pope. In theory, even the king ruled by the grace of God and was subject to sanction through God's representative on Earth, the Pope; as such, in Carolingian times, treason had become a sin as well as a crime.

However, as we have seen, the power and authority of the Church hierarchy was limited to Church doctrine and internal affairs in Carolingian times. The king, the counts, and the local lords were the economic masters of the Church hierarchy. Through control of the Church's income and of most appointments of archbishops, bishops, priests, and abbots, the king and his loyal noble supporters exerted great influence over the clergy in worldly affairs. Such influence might be exercised directly—by orders and demands backed by the explicit threat of armed force or confiscation of lands or tithes. Or the influence might be more subtle and indirect—by withholding support for candidates for high appointment or political maneuvering with secular and Church nobles to undermine a prelate's standing in the Church hierarchy.

The Teutonic Pantheon

The Saxons and pagan Franks probably worshiped a Teutonic pantheon similar to the Norse pantheon (see the *Legends & Lore* book), but sources for Germanic myths are unfortunately far more sparse and fragmentary than for the Norse. Woden (Odin) and Tiw (Tyr) were the gods of the noble and priestly classes. Woden was the magical priest-king, while Tiw represented the law, society, and monarchy. Woden was the ruling and dominant cult. Woden's wife was Frija (Frigga). Donar (Thor) was the god of the warrior class. The Vanir, a group of gods including Frey, were the gods of fertility, peace, health, and welfare of the agricultural common folk. Loki, the trickster of Norse myth, appar-



ently does not figure in Teutonic myths. The Norns, or Weirds, were the masters of wyrd, or fate. Teutonic faeries appearing at the cradle might offer gifts or utter maledictions that would follow a character all its life, as happened with Ogier the Dane, a famous paladin of the Charlemagne legends.

The Idisi or Waelcyrie (Valkyries) were dispensers of destiny to warriors. Recognized as swan-maidens as well as the familiar helmeted goddesses mounted on flying steeds and brandishing flaming spears, these female divine spirits gave victory to one side or another in battle. They also determined who should perish and who should be admitted to Woden's Hall in Valhalla. One myth associated with the Idisi is found in the *Neibelungenlied*: When a swan-maiden shed her feathery garment, a man who succeeded in stealing that plumage might force her to obey his will and to help gain victory in war. (The swanmay in *Monstrous Compendium II* may be readily adapted as a swan-maiden form of the Idisi.)

Pagan Myths

Supernatural Spirits: The visible world of nature to the Teutonic pagans was inhabited by an invisible world of supernatural spirits. These spirits, also known sometimes as "elves" or "goblins," were conceived as assuming humanoid forms, sometimes exquisitely beautiful, sometimes horribly shrunken, deformed, or grotesque. Some of these spirits were benign, others inconceivably malevolent and malignant.

Many familiar creatures found in the *Monstrous Compendia* are based on spirit creatures from Teutonic myth—for example, nixies are based on Germanic water-sprites. Our accounts of pagan myth are fragmentary, partly because these traditions are so old, partly because the myths were either not written down or the accounts have not survived, and partly because the Church energetically attempted to suppress these pagan beliefs. So, rather than limit DMs to the fragments of what is known about Teutonic spirit beings, here is a scheme for designing your own unique spirits that will be consistent with the mythic traditions, but will appear as mysterious and otherworldly to your PCs as the Teu-

tonic myths must have seemed to Christianized Franks.

First, name your spirit. Use one of the following schemes:

- [Name of a natural feature]-man, -woman, or -sprite (e.g., Waterman, Oakwoman, or Firesprite)
- [Color associated with a natural feature or process] Man, Woman, or Maiden (e.g., Green Man, Blue Woman, or Red Maiden)
- [Father/Uncle/Brother or Mother/Sister/Maiden] [Name of a natural feature, season, or elemental force] (e.g., Father Forest, Brother Autumn, Storm Maiden)

Next, imagine the personality of your spirit as the personification of the natural feature or process listed in its name. For example, a winter personality might be cold and cruel, a babbling brook might be soothing and restful, and a fire might speak with a hissing, popping voice and be greedy for things to destroy. The alignment of the personality may vary according to your whim; a field of wild wheat may be golden and generous with its gift of grain, or sinister and greedy for blood sacrifice to make its soil more fertile. As a guideline, think of spirits as bush-league gods with all the vanity, imperiousness, and inhuman eccentricity of personality associated with immortal beings but little of the power of real gods.

Finally, design the game characteristics of your spirit. Each spirit should be a unique creation, but they typically have the following features:

- Armor class of 0 or better
- Immunity to nonmagical weapons or magical weapons with less than +2 bonus
- High intelligence
- Immunity to many spells and magical effects
 - Ability of instantaneous travel to the Other World (a distant plane not accessible by PCs without knowledge of travel in Faerie); spirits may come and go as they please and cannot be easily threatened or coerced by mortals
 - Magical attack forms, such as *sleep*, *paralysis*, *fear*, *geas*, etc.
 - Magical powers, such as *healing*, *limited wish*, *commune*, and so on, which are available



by making offerings and paying respect to the spirit at its sacred site (spring, tree, grove, etc.)

- Demands for offerings that must be satisfied before the spirit will aid a petitioner
- Alignments vary, and the price of worship varies according to alignment (for example, a good or neutral spirit may simply require protection of the site and sacrifices of suitable treasures; evil or chaotic spirits may demand blood sacrifices or dark deeds performed)

The spirits you create should usually be associated with a specific site, perhaps a natural feature like a pool, ancient oak or grove of hemlocks, a massive rock outcrop, a deep cave, or a field cultivated with grain for many generations. Local pagans will have old tales concerning the site and strange events occurring there. If pagan practices are still common, some locals may still worship these spirits; if most local folk are converted to the Church, or at least intimidated from pagan practices by the harsh laws against such, the significance of the sites and their associated spirits may be forgotten or known only to the old folk and secret worshippers of the Old Ways. In historical campaigns, PCs should be terrified and threatened by pagan spirits. They will typically wish to cleanse the site of what they perceive to be evil demons. In legendary and fantasy campaigns, characters may have a more romantic fascination with and tolerance for enchanted sites and magical beings without necessarily endangering their souls.

Occasionally these pagan spirits are tricked by faithful Christians into performing services or useful deeds. For example, there is a tale of an evil giant spirit who offered to erect a church, but only at the price of human sacrifice. A clever saintly man found a way to outwit the spirit, the church was built, and the spirit had to abandon the site forever.

Elves and Dwarves: In historical campaigns, “elves” is just a general term for the Teutonic nature spirits mentioned earlier. In legendary and fantasy campaigns, however, “elves” and “dwarves” are specific types of otherworldly creatures of the world of Faerie. The world of Faerie and its inhabitants are more properly the subject of later chivalric periods, and they aren’t

covered in this supplement. However, since Faerie and a number of faerie enchantresses play important roles in the later legends of Charlemagne, here are a few notes to guide DMs who wish to add faerie adventures to their legendary Carolingian campaigns.

The faeries, or fays, of the Charlemagne tales are usually female enchantresses and sorceresses. They typically appear to be exquisitely beautiful women, but they may actually be wizened crones concealed by their magic. Some are sinister and scheming—Alcina, Morgan le Fay, and Falerina, for instance; others, like Logistilla, may aid mortals against the wiles of the wicked fays.

The scheming faeries usually have but one purpose in mind: to capture and ensorcel virtuous knights. The captive knights become so besotted with the timeless love, luxury, and leisure of Faerieland that they forget their paramours and perilous quests completely. And when Alcina tires of her latest knight conquest, she will turn him into a tree to keep him out of trouble; she has a whole grove of former knights close at hand. A faerie enchantress may have in her service a host of monstrous guardians, beasts, giants, and warrior-wizards to guard her stronghold. She can usually summon a variety of beasts and horrors to her aid.

In game terms, a faerie queen may be represented by a high-level elven wizard with powerful conjuration/summoning, enchantment/charm, and illusion/phantasm spells and magical items. Her monstrous guardians may be represented by any sort of grotesque humanoids, beasts, or giants. Her retainers may be represented by multi-class elven characters (e.g., fighter-mage or fighter-mage-thief with conjuration/summoning, enchantment/charm, and illusion/phantasm spells) outfitted with magical items and enchanted mounts and animal companions such as hawks and hounds. Usually these faerie queens are far too powerful and skillful of enchanters to be defeated in combat, even by the greatest knights who ever lived. Instead, rescuers must rely on wits and tricks, and usually the aid and counsel of a friendly faerie or a sorcerer wise in the ways of faerie lore.

The faerie queen’s domain is a palace surrounded by gardens, forests, and natural barriers, such as mountains, lakes, rivers, and



oceans. This domain is located in the world of Faerie, an alternate Prime Material plane. Not even the sorcerers and wizards of the tales seem to know how to travel to the world of Faerie. Seldom do faerie beings venture out into our real world, but sometimes humans may stray or be lured into Faerie through bridges. Bridges into Faerie may take many forms and may or may not be attended by faeries or guarded by marvelous or monstrous beings.

Faeries are also known to appear at the birth of great heroes, bringing blessing and prophecies about their futures. For example, at the birth of Ogier the Dane, six faeries appeared and gave him a brave, strong heart; opportunity, skill, and strength; fairness of speech; nobility of action; courtesy and kindness; and compassion. The sixth gift was brought by none other than Morgan le Fay, Queen of Avalon; she foretold that Ogier should one day visit Avalon and sit at the table with King Arthur and his heroes in eternal summerland.

The dwarves we encounter in the tales (like the Dwarf Brunello, the thief-sorcerer from whom Bradamante steals the Ring of Invisibility) may simply be grotesque humans of normal birth—usually short, deformed hunchbacks who have big heads, pale faces, and long beards. They may also be exceptionally ugly faerie beings exiled from the world of Faerie; though their sorcerous talents are too feeble to compete in the world of Faerie, here in our world even their modest magical talents give them an advantage over mortal beings. Even in a historical campaign, superstition might cause folk to imagine that any short, deformed normal man skilled in metalcraft or stonework was using faerie powers to enhance his products.

DMs interested in adding faeries and Faerieland to their Carolingian legendary or fantasy campaign will find ideas in Chapter 6 and in the various Charlemagne chivalric romances as represented in *Bulfinch's Mythology* and *Orlando Furioso*. For Faerieland sources from other medieval traditions, also see the myth of Orfeo who rescued his wife from a faerie king's court, the tale of Thomas the Rhymer who is shown a path to Faerieland by a faerie queen and bound to live beneath the earth with her for seven years, and the classic *Faerie Queen* by Edmund

Spenser. Another possible source of Faerieland adventures is PC1, *Tales of the Wee Folk*, a D&D® sourcebook on faerie creatures that may be easily adapted to AD&D® game play.

Carolingian Encounters

Creatures of Nature

The following beasts found in *Monstrous Compendium* Volumes I and II are suitable for inclusion in historical Carolingian AD&D® game campaigns:

Animal, Herd: The auroch was an aggressive variety of cattle found in the European woodlands. The males of the herd always attacked when the herd was threatened. Wild deer were hunted for food and sport; use the entry for antelope.

Mammal, Small: Wild pigs, rabbits, and squirrels were hunted for sport and food. Beavers, ermines, minks, muskrats, and otters were hunted for their pelts. Hoards of mice were encountered as supernatural plagues or divine portents.

Rat: Like mice, swarms of rats were encountered as supernatural plagues or divine portents.

Whale and Giant Squid: These sea monsters may be encountered on ocean voyages.

Horse, Pony, and Mule: Use these entries when a character's precious mount is threatened, for example, by wolves during a night encampment.

Stag, Giant: This powerful creature could be hunted as challenging and dangerous prey. A white stag (called a white hart) is a legendary symbol of purity—encountering it may be a supernatural or miraculous sign. To follow the hart is to seek something of special value or significance. To slay the hart is a tragic crime of pride and ignorance.

Boar: Wild boars were hunted for sport and food. The ancient, terrible giant boar may be encountered in isolated, lonely sections of the Great Forest.

Elephant: There is only one elephant in Europe: Abu Abbas, a gift to Charlemagne from Haroun-al-Raschid, the sultan of Baghdad. Since there is only one, it is inevitable that the PCs should encounter it. Charlemagne will want it returned unharmed, of course.



Dogs: Wild dogs may be encountered in the wastes surrounding settled areas. War dogs may be encountered as watchdogs, hunting dogs, or war dogs controlled by antagonists.

Wolf: The most commonly encountered dangerous animal of the European forests was the wolf. During harsh winters, they would even attack settlements. The legendary dire wolf is a rare and fearsome encounter limited to the deepest wilderness regions.

Bear: Black and brown bears were hunted for sport and food by the exceptionally brave and foolhardy. The ancient cave bear may still occasionally be encountered in the remote wilderness regions of your campaign.

Men: Many varieties of men may be encountered in the DM's Frankish lands and the frontiers. *Adventurers* may be retainers on a mission from their lord, military scouts, or deserters from a military campaign. *Bandits* and *brigands* may be otherwise common peasants moonlighting as marauders, hardened professional raiders, or honest peasants driven to outlawry by greedy landlords. *Barbarians* include many peoples encountered in Saxon and Slavic lands. *Berserkers* may be encountered as Northmen and as better equipped and belligerent Saxons, Slavs, and Basques. *Farmers*, *herders*, and *peasants* may be encountered as local militias mustered to meet a crisis like a Viking or Saxon raid, or as dissatisfied folk in search of a more just lord. Small groups may be hunting on wastelands or poaching on the lord's domain. *Gentry* are lesser nobles traveling to visit their own domains, to visit other noble domains or the royal palaces, to answer a royal summons to council or war muster, or to act as royal messengers and emissaries. *Knights* are Frankish warriors in chain armor on medium horses; they may be on campaign, traveling to muster, patrolling their lord's lands, or running errands for their lord. *Merchant sailors* and *fishermen* are found in rivers or North Sea ports. *Pilgrims* may be traveling to a local church or shrine, or they may be on a greater pilgrimage to a great cathedral city or Rome. *Pirates* as Northman raiders may be encountered along the North Sea coast or up wide rivers, such as the Rhine, Meuse, Seine, Garonne, and Rhone. *Priests*, often accompanied by guards, may be

clerics or monks performing Church or state business, seeking precious relics from distant Rome, or carrying a rare manuscript from one abbey to another for copying. *Slavers* are marching the latest captives from the Slavic campaigns to Mediterranean seaports for sale to Muslims. *Soldiers* are more lightly armed Frankish warriors, traveling to campaign muster, returning heavily laden with plunder from campaign, or responding to Viking or Saxon raiders.

Creatures of Legend

The following beasts found in *Monstrous Compendium* Volumes I and II are suitable for inclusion in legendary or fantasy Carolingian campaigns. Also see "Pagan Myths" earlier in this chapter for other suitable legendary or fantasy encounters.

Supernatural Spirits: The following AD&D® game creatures are similar to supernatural creatures from Teutonic pagan myths: nereids, pixies, brownies, dryads, sprites, nymphs, and nixies.

Haunts and Heucuva: Most standard AD&D game undead are not suitable for Carolingian campaigns. The haunt and heucuva, however, are exceptionally fitted to the Carolingian setting.

Lycanthropes: Do not use standard AD&D game lycanthropes. One example of a Teutonic werewolf legend features men who are forced to live in wolf form all but one day of each month; on that single day, the men may remove their skins and live as normal humans. A human who foolishly puts on the temporarily discarded wolf skin of such an enchanted creature then becomes a werewolf. For such a creature, use normal man entries for the man form and wolf entries for the wolf form; otherwise the werewolf has none of the magical abilities of the AD&D game's lycanthrope.

Legendary sorcerers like Malagigi and Morgan le Fay are always opening their magical books and summoning a variety of goblins, spirits, and other magical creatures to do their bidding. Entries listed under homunculus, imp, and gargoyle may be used to represent these summoned magical beings.

Money and Payments

Characters purchasing goods or services in a Carolingian historical campaign will use the following three types of payment: payment in kind, payment through barter, and payment in coin.

Payment in Kind: Most payments in a Carolingian campaign would be payments in kind, where characters exchange services rather than money. Such payments must be arranged between the DM and players through role-playing, with the DM the sole judge of the fairness and plausibility of such an exchange.

An example of this would be a fighter asking a blacksmith to fashion chain armor. The fighter does not have the coin to pay for it, but he is a man of good reputation, a retainer of the local lord, and he has land granted for his use by the local lord. The fighter grants the blacksmith the right to the use of that land for ten years, which the blacksmith in turn might grant to a peasant. In return for the grant of the use of the land from the fighter, the blacksmith agrees to make the chain armor for the fighter. The blacksmith might also demand a service, such as traveling to a distant market to obtain high quality ore or a special tool.

Payment by Barter: Barter is a straightforward swap of one type of goods for another. A peasant might offer a shoemaker 25 chickens and 10 geese for a pair of shoes. When obtaining most goods by barter, simply use the value of the goods given in the *Player's Handbook* as a guideline; at the DM's discretion, certain non-weapon proficiencies might give a character a chance to obtain a good deal (e.g., the cobbler proficiency might help get a good deal for shoes).

When exchanging trade goods with foreigners, a merchant adventurer can expect to gain value to compensate him for the expense and risk of his enterprise. As a guideline, merchants can sell export goods for 300% of their original purchase value when delivered to a trade port or in a foreign land. Further, while at a trade port or in a foreign land, they can buy import goods for 25% of their original value.

Payment in Coin: The only Carolingian coin minted in quantity during this period was the

denier piece (dp), a silver coin weighing 1/20 ounce. Two other types of coins might be encountered in this period—Arabian and Byzantine coins. The Arab *dinar* was a gold coin equivalent to the old Roman *solidus*; a dinar was worth 20 Arab silver coins called *dirhem*. The Byzantine *nomisma* was a gold coin also equivalent to the old Roman *solidus*.

The following tables of equivalent values for coins are simplified and distorted slightly for ease of play.

Carolingian Coins Table

Coin Type	Game Equivalent
Obole (op)	5 cp
Denier (dp)	1 sp

Foreign Coins Table

Coin Type	Game Equivalent
Byzantine nomisma	1 gp
Arab dinar	1 gp
Arab dirhem	5 cp

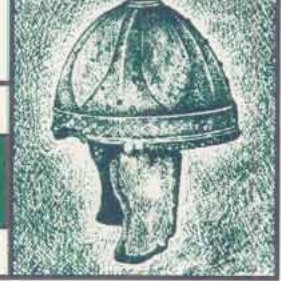
The electrum piece, gold piece, and platinum piece have no equivalent coins circulated commonly in the Frankish kingdoms. They convert to the denier piece as follows: 1 ep = 2 dp; 1 gp = 4 dp; 1 pp = 20 dp.

Available Equipment

The Carolingian Age was technologically and culturally different from the standard AD&D® game fantasy setting. Not all items on the *Player's Handbook* weapon and equipment lists are available. Some items had not yet been invented; others were beyond the resources of the Carolingians. Some extremely rare items might be found only in exceptional circumstances.

The following table modifies the equipment lists presented in the *Player's Handbook* for a Carolingian campaign. Price adjustments are marked for some items, giving denier piece costs. Any item marked "N/A" is not available for use in a Carolingian campaign.

For prices given in the *Player's Handbook* equipment lists in gp, multiply by 4 to get the cost in denier.



EQUIPMENT COSTS TABLE

Clothing

Item	Cost
Cloak (marten or otter)	360 dp
Monk's cowl	60 dp
Sheepskin cloak	12 dp
Silk jacket	1,600 dp

Daily Food and Lodging¹

Item	Cost
Abbey or monastery lodging (per day)	
Common	5 dp
Poor	1 dp

Household Provisioning

Item	Cost
Coarse sugar	N/A
Figs (lb.)	160 dp
Raisins (lb.)	160 dp
Spice (lb.)	
Exotic	800 dp
Rare	480 dp
Uncommon	160 dp

Tack and Harness

Item	Cost
Barding ²	
Half-padded	N/A ³
Half-scale	N/A ³
All other types	N/A

Transport

Item	Cost
Canoe (all types)	N/A
Caravel	N/A
Carriage (all types)	N/A
Chariot (all types)	N/A
Cog	N/A
Dromond	N/A ³
Galleon	N/A
Great galley	N/A
Sedan chair	N/A

Miscellaneous Equipment

Item	Cost
Lantern (all types)	N/A
Lock	
Good	N/A
Poor	960 dp
Magnifying glass	N/A
Oil, Greek fire	N/A ³
Paper	N/A
Papyrus	N/A
Rope, silk	N/A
Spyglass	N/A
Thieves' picks	N/A ⁴
Water clock	N/A

Animals

Item	Cost
Camel	N/A
Elephant	N/A
Horse	
Draft	N/A
Heavy war	N/A
Hunting cat	N/A
Peacock	N/A
Pigeon, homing	N/A

Weapons

Item	Cost
Arquebus	N/A
Blowgun	N/A
Bow	
Composite	N/A
Long	N/A
Crossbow (any)	N/A
Lance	
Heavy horse	N/A
Jousting	N/A
Mancatcher	N/A
Polearm	
Awl pike	N/A
Bill-guisarme	N/A
Fauchard-fork	N/A
Glaive-guisarme	N/A
Guisarme-voulge	N/A
Hook fauchard	N/A
Ranseur	N/A
Scourge	N/A
Staff Sling	N/A

Sword

Khopesh	N/A
Long (fine)	500 dp ⁵
Scimitar	N/A ³
Two-handed	N/A

Armor

Item	Cost
Banded mail	N/A
Brigandine	N/A
Bronze plate mail	N/A
Field plate	N/A
Full plate	N/A
Helmet, great helm	N/A
Plate mail	N/A
Ring mail	N/A
Scale mail	N/A ³
Splint mail	N/A

¹ Many aristocratic PCs should be able to impose on the hospitality of noble relatives and friends when traveling within the Empire. Short-term lodging for pilgrims and travelers may also be found at abbeys and monasteries; the cost listed represents an offering.

² Breton and Byzantine heavy cavalry employed horse barding. Count Roland of the Breton Marches and his forces, for example, might have employed horse barding. Nonetheless, horse barding was not widely available and is permitted only by DM approval.

³ These items are not available in the Empire. Dromonds, scale mail, horse barding, and scimitars may be found in Byzantine and Arab lands; Greek fire is a secret of the Byzantines.

⁴ With locks uncommon, there is no developed art of picking locks. A set of tools useful for breaking and entering can be made by a blacksmith for 300 dp.

⁵ The quality long sword of Carolingian steel was famed throughout the pagan world. This fine long sword has a +1 bonus to damage.



Treasure

Silver coins were primarily useful for merchants and peasants. Objects made from gold and silver, often decorated with wood and ivory carvings and precious stones and pearls, represented the real treasure hoards of the aristocracy and the Church.

The craftsmanship of a gold or silver object was often of less significance than the weight and purity of its metal. The value of gold and silver treasures can therefore be approximated in terms of metal weight, with some additional value for fine craftsmanship and decoration. One pound of silver is worth 320 deniers; one pound of gold is worth 3,840 deniers.

The value of other treasures (e.g., silk vestments, carved ivory book covers, illuminated manuscripts) is hard to judge, though in many cases the phrase “worth its weight in silver” or “worth its weight in gold” may be a useful guide. The following are examples of lay and Church treasures taken from contemporary records.

Manuscripts: Psalters, Bibles, and other books, some with illuminations (illustration and decoration of pages), some with covers decorated with carved ivory, silver, gold, and precious stones.

Swords and daggers: Carolingian steel was greatly prized, even in Byzantium and the Near East; the grip, guard, and blade might be gold and silver ornamented with precious stones and pearls.

Scabbards and baldrics: Decorated with gold, precious stones, and carved ivory.

Armor: Helmet, hauberk, greaves, gauntlets, spurs decorated with gold and precious stones.

Vestments (civil and Church): Fine linen or silk with silk and gold embroidery.

Vases: Carved from marble, horn, tinted glass, or wood and sometimes decorated with silver or gold.

Reliquaries: Containers for holy relics; ivory, crystal, silver, and gold with ornaments of carved ivory or precious stones.

Signet rings: Silver or gold with ivory inlay.

Jewelry: Brooches, rings, pins, pendants, bracelets in silver and gold with precious stones and pearls.

Sacramental items: Crosses, portable altars,

patens (plates), chalices, candlesticks, and other objects in silver and gold.

Magical Items

Many of the most familiar magical items in the AD&D® game are inspired by medieval fables like those told about Charlemagne and his Paladins in the *chansons de geste* and Italian epic poetry. However, rarely are these items found in the hands of the warrior heroes of these tales, who generally succeed through strength of character or arms. The magical devices are usually possessed and wielded by wizards, sorcerers, and enchantresses from exotic foreign or faerie realms; such magical treasures will seldom if ever be discovered in a treasure trove in Charlemagne's Empire.

To maintain the proper atmosphere for a Carolingian campaign, keep the magical resources of the player characters to an absolute minimum. Note, for example, that the predesigned player characters accompanying this supplement are 4th level, and yet they do not have a single magical item among them. If you wish to develop the fabulous fantasy aspects of the setting, give magical items to your NPC antagonists, and make those magical items incomprehensibly marvelous and completely unusable by player characters. Occasionally great magical items belonging to powerful NPC wizards may fall briefly into PC hands, or an NPC ally may temporarily loan a magical item to a PC, but such events in the Charlemagne legends are more often devices to move the story along than to give added magical firepower to a hero.

Try hard not to distribute many magical items in treasure troves; try even harder to avoid randomly determining those few that you do distribute. The table on the following page may be used instead of Table 88: Magical Items (*Dungeon Master's Guide*, p. 135) when randomly determining magical items found in Charlemagne's Empire.

In addition, the Unavailable Magical Items Table on the next page lists things unlikely to be discovered in Charlemagne's Empire. Do not distribute such items as randomly selected elements of a treasure trove.



Magical Items in the Empire Table

d100

Roll	Category
01-10	Potions and oils
11-20	Scrolls*
21-25	Rings
26	Staves
27-28	Misc. magic: Books and tomes*
29-30	Misc. magic: Jewels and jewelry
31-32	Misc. magic: Cloaks and robes
33-34	Misc. magic: Boots and gloves
35-36	Misc. magic: Girdles and helms
37-38	Misc. magic: Household items
39-40	Misc. magic: Musical instruments
41-55	Armor and shields
56-90	Weapons
91-95	Holy relics
96-00	Legendary magical treasures

* Any spells discovered in scrolls or miscellaneous magic must be spells permitted for use by clerics or wizards in Carolingian campaigns.

Unavailable Magical Items Table

Potions

and Oils Animal Control, Climbing, Dragon Control, ESP, Fire Breath, Giant Control, Human Control, Oil of Elemental Invulnerability, Oil of Etherealness, Plant Control, Polymorph Self, Treasure Finding, Undead Control

Rings

Blinking, Djinni Summoning, Elemental Command, Human Influence, Mammal Control, Shooting Stars, Telekinesis, Ring of Water Walking, Wishes (Multiple), Wishes (Three), Wizardry, X-Ray Vision

Holy Relics

Holy relics are sacred remains of saints and martyrs—sacred objects that confer supernatural powers. Typical relics include bones, earth soaked in a martyr's blood, the shroud that covered a martyr or saint, or bits of the Cross. Relics are always contained in special ornamented containers called reliquaries. Made from precious metals and often studded with gems, reliquaries are often fabulously valuable. Natu-

rally they are of great interest to thieves and pagan raiders, even though the relics contained within are of no value to either, who often simply discard or destroy the sacred relics.

A holy relic provides benefits only for members of the Western Church who have not lost the benefits of clerical magic for repeated or grievous sins (see "Loss of Powers" in Chapter 3).

The following are a few sample holy relics. To design others, assign the magical effects of one or more clerical spells to a relic. The spells may, at your discretion, be limited to spells normally available to priests of the Western Church, or they may include spells from spheres not normally available to such priests. Also determine whether the relic must be in a consecrated area to confer its benefits and whether laymen, priests, or both may obtain the benefits the relic confers.

Blessed Relic: A layman or priest of the Western Church bearing this relic is personally protected by the permanent effects of the 1st-level priest spell *protection from evil*.

Founder's Relic: When within a consecrated area, this relic provides the effects of the 1st-level priest spell *bless* for laymen and priests of the Western Church. If not within a consecrated area, this relic provides no additional benefits.

Martyr's Relic: When within a consecrated area, this relic provides a layman or priest of the Western Church with the effects of the 1st-level priest spell *sanctuary*. If not within a consecrated area, this relic provides no additional benefits.

Relic of Divine Wisdom: When within a consecrated area, a priest who touches this relic is granted one use of the 5th-level priest spell *commune*. Too-frequent use of this relic's powers is a sin against pride and may result in temporary loss of priest powers.

Saint's Relic: When within a consecrated area, a priest of the Western Church gains the power to cast the *dispel magic* spell. The area of effect is the entire consecrated area. A cleric may also cast the 3rd-level priest spell *prayer* three times a day, regardless of whether he is in a consecrated area. The bearer (priest or layman) of this relic is further protected at all times by the 1st-level priest spell *protection from evil*.



Legendary Magical Items

Magical items in the tales of Charlemagne are often identified as the previous possessions of famous persons of history or of classical myth and legend. For example, Roland's sword *Durandal* once belonged to Hector, a hero of the Siege of Troy as told in the classical Greek tales of Homer's *Odyssey*.

To give a magical item the exotic and antique flavor of "instant legend," invent a heroic historical or legendary owner for any magical item you introduce to your campaign. For example, potions and oils might have been created by the famous alchemist of Araby, Hermes Trismegistus. Books and tomes might have once belonged to Merlin or Saint Boniface or Morgan le Fay. Girdles, helms, armor, shields, and weapons might have belonged to Greek heroes, such as Perseus or Achilles; to King Arthur or his Knights of the Round Table; or to heroes of the Old Testament, such as Samson or David (of David and Goliath fame). When no suitable legendary personality comes to mind, make one up, like Al-Wazir, the Fell Wizard of Araby, or Lady Donabel, Princess of the Faerie Isles.

Further, magical items always come from foreign lands such as Araby, Far Cathay, Aethiopia, or Turkestan, or from Faerie lands such as Morgan le Fay's island of Avalon. A fabulous tale of how a device came to the empire adds to the exotic flavor of its magic.

The following are a few sample legendary magical treasures. Dozens of ideas for other legendary magical treasures can be found in the various versions of the Charlemagne legends.

Once again, such treasures should not become permanent possessions of player characters. At most they might fall temporarily into a PC's hands; thereafter, they should soon be either stolen by a master antagonist, graciously handed on to an epic hero of suitable stature, or given as a gift to King Charlemagne.

Durandal: Once owned by Hector, hero of the Trojan War, later owned by Roland. When used against a less honorable opponent, this sword confers a +4 bonus to the attack roll. When used against a more honorable opponent, this sword has a -4 penalty to the attack roll. The sword confers no damage bonus in either case. Determination of the most honorable opponent is at the DM's discretion.

The Horn of Roland: When blown, this horn may be heard by all within five miles of the user.

Malagigi's Book: This book contains all wizard spells of the Conjunction/Summoning and Greater Divination schools except for those specifically prohibited for use by wizards in Carolingian campaigns (see "Spells Allowed" in Chapter 3).

The Ring of Angelica: When this ring is placed within the user's mouth, the user becomes invisible. Also, no spells can affect the bearer while this ring is in his mouth.

The Shield of Atlantes: This shield is normally covered with a silken sheath. When the sheath is removed, any character or creature viewing the shield's dazzling front surface falls into a trance-like sleep for 1d4 + 4 rounds. Creatures with 8 or more Hit Dice receive a saving throw vs. spell; lesser creatures receive no saving throw.

The Tales of Charlemagne and His Paladins

The heroic and magical tales of Charlemagne and his Paladins represent some of the best-known, best-loved myths and legends of European civilization. The primary sources for these legends are four epic poems: the anonymous *Song of Roland*, *Orlando Innamorato* (*Roland in Love*) by Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando Furioso* (*Roland Mad*) by Lodovico Ariosto, and *Morgante* by Luigi Pulci.

The *Song of Roland* tells the tragic tale of the Frankish rear guard ambushed in the Pyrenees and slain to the last man in the Pass of Roncesvalles (see “The Horn of Roland” in this chapter). This 11th-century Breton epic poem and other 11th- and 12th-century *chansons de geste* (“songs of great deeds”) celebrated the historical and legendary deeds of King Arthur’s knights and Charlemagne’s Paladins. These became sources for the later 15th- and 16th-century Italian epic romances by Boiardo, Ariosto, and Pulci.

Orlando Innamorato tells how Roland (“Orlando” in Italian) and the other Paladins desert the court of Charlemagne to pursue their great loves. Through endless intertwined subplots, the Paladins battle with giants and pagan warriors and struggle with baffling enchantments, managing in one scene a desperate nick-of-time rescue only to lose what they had gained in the next scene to some new misfortune. Boiardo’s poem ends with the pagan warrior Roger still searching for the warrior maiden Bradamante.

Ariosto picks up Boiardo’s tale in *Orlando Furioso* and follows Roland as he pursues, finds, and loses his love Angelica. Driven mad with grief, Roland wanders off into the wilderness. The Paladin Astolpho flies to Aethiopia on his hippogriff, borrows the chariot of Elijah, and with Saint John as his guide, travels to the moon. There he recovers Roland’s lost wits, and then he returns those wits to Roland in an urn. Roger the pagan knight converts to Christianity. With the rest of Charlemagne’s Paladins finally reassembled, they lift the siege of Paris where the king is threatened and win a great climactic battle against the pagans.

Morgante was published before *Orlando Innamorato* and *Orlando Furioso*, but it covers the later adventures of Roland’s life up to his death in the Pass of Roncesvalles. *Morgante* is a

giant who becomes Roland’s faithful companion after Roland spares his life. Pulci’s treatment is comic burlesque rather than epic romance. For example, a giant friend of Morgante’s dies of laughter upon seeing a monkey wearing his boots, and Morgante himself dies of a crab bite.

In this chapter you’ll find a selected menu of incidents and characters especially suitable for an AD&D® game campaign. We suggest the following possible schemes for organizing such a campaign.

In Their Footsteps: The PCs are lesser noble warriors and retainers of Charlemagne sent out looking for the great heroes of the legends (Roland, Astolpho, Ogier the Dane, etc.) or their paramours (Angelica, Bradamante, etc.). Of course, the PCs never find the heroes, but they inevitably encounter the same adventures as they follow the legendary heroes and heroines across the globe.

Agents of the Sorcerer: The PCs are sent by Malagigi, Charlemagne’s sorcerer-advisor, on various secret missions—where they run into the same kinds of problems that the great Paladins do.

Faithful Companions of the Hero: The PCs are companions of one of the great heroes. When the hero disappears, as he inevitably does, the PCs are honor-bound to seek out and aid him. They may often successfully participate in their hero-patron’s rescue, but, as usual, their hero will almost immediately thereafter be drawn into some new adventure from which he must be rescued. And so on. Typically the sorts of physical dangers that mean nothing to the invulnerable heroes will give the PCs fits, while the sorcerous enchantments and amorous snares that always baffle their hero-patrons are immediately seen through by the clear-thinking and clever player characters. (Epic heroes, as a result of their noble, refined natures, are almost never careful planners; clever, cautious, or sensible; or capable of figuring out traps based on illusion, romance, or deceit. Thus well-played player characters can actually play a significant role in such a campaign.)

The following list is an abridged menu of characters and incidents. The original works are bursting at the seams with charming monsters,



sinister plots, scheming villains, and enchanted treasures that you can adapt for a legendary AD&D® game campaign.

A Partial List of Characters from the Legends

Charlemagne and His Peers

Charlemagne: In the legendary tales, Charlemagne is a powerful, passionate, Christian king, but often blind to the faults of subordinates—particularly Ganelon—and too proud to be practical, sensible, or even just at times. He is portrayed as a flawed personality, but nonetheless a great leader and worthy of the unquestioning loyalty of his Paladins.

Duke Namon: This venerable noble is old and no longer a powerful warrior, but he is wise in counsel and respected and trusted by all.

Ganelon of Mayence: The traitor. Ganelon is always scheming some treachery and treason, and though it is obvious to the reader, it never occurs to the other characters in the legends until at last he is revealed for betraying Roland to his death in the Pass of Roncesvalles.

Pinabel the Gascon: A petty, vain, and mean-spirited knight, kinsman of Ganelon. This villain rudely dumps Bradamante into a ravine and abandons her there.

Roland: The greatest of Charlemagne's Paladins. A peerless warrior, he is also the sensitive type; when spurned by Angelica, the woman he loves, he goes crazy and wanders as a mad hermit through the wilderness for years. A brief catalogue of Roland's personal treasures may suggest the sorts of extraordinary magical items that might be seen in a legendary campaign:

- A helmet fashioned by the Roman god Vulcan.
- A warcoat from Wayland, the Teutonic master smith; no thrust of lance or stroke of sword could harm its wearer.
- Spurs from Morgan le Fay.
- The sword *Durandal*, forged by Vulcan and borne by Trojan Hector.
- Roland's ivory horn, made from a sea-horse tusk or unicorn's horn.

Oliver: Roland's best friend and companion, a peerless Paladin in his own right.

Ogier the Dane: Son of the king of Denmark and one of Charlemagne's greatest warriors.

Archbishop Turpin: A fighting cleric, he accompanies Charlemagne on military campaigns and is always in the heat of battle. He dies a hero's death with Roland and Oliver in the Pass of Roncesvalles.

Bradamante: The White Knight, a warrior maiden, and sister of the gallant Reinhold of Montalban. The model of a female warrior, she is a skilled fighter, but at the same time she seems less likely to fall for silly tricks than most simple-minded male heroes.

Astolpho the English Knight: He flies around on a hippogriff and gets turned into a tree by Alcina. Actually, he has a lot of exciting adventures and does fairly well for himself.

Wizards and Faeries

Malagigi the Wizard: Charlemagne's sorcerer-advisor. Sometimes Malagigi seems to be an ally, sometimes an enemy of Charlemagne and his Paladins; in fact, Malagigi keeps his own subtle counsels. Like Merlin, he finally falls victim to a female sorcerer, Angelica, who imprisons him, but she frees him later when he promises to do her a favor. He and other wizards, such as Angelica and Atlantes, need only open their magical books and see plainly written the future, or by speaking enchantments from their pages and by making magical circles they may summon goblins, efreeti, or other creatures to do their will. They also rely on magical items, such as sleeping powders, to deal with troublesome warrior types.

Angelica, Princess of Cathay: A master sorceress and femme fatale, Angelica's main claim to fame is her marvelous magical ring; this convenient narrative device appears in the hands of numerous heroes and heroines throughout the legends. When this ring is placed in the mouth or to the lips, the bearer becomes invisible and may travel at the speed of thought wherever he wishes to go. This ring also protects its bearer against all enchantments.

Atlantes the Sorcerer: A well-meaning and terribly powerful wizard who builds a marvelous enchanted Castle of Iron in the Pyrenees, then kidnaps numerous knights and ladies. This



he does to provide diversions for his nephew Roger, the finest of pagan knights. Atlantes worries that Roger will go off and become a Christian, betraying his faith and saving Charlemagne from the Saracens, as Atlantes has seen prophesied in his enchanted Book of Fates. Atlantes flies around on a hippogriff casting enchantments from a magical book held in one hand and dazzling knights into unconsciousness with a magical shield he carries on the other arm. Both the hippogriff and the magical shield get quite a workout when they fall into the hands of various heroes later in the tales.

Brunello the Dwarf: An ugly master thief and sorcerer, he manages to steal Angelica's magical ring, then loses it to Bradamante while he's gaping at the spectacle of a hippogriff ridden by Atlantes.

Alcina, Logistilla, and Morgan le Fay: These are the three sisters of Arthur and are powerful fairy princesses. Alcina is a wrinkled, tiny crone who presents herself as surpassingly lovely through magic. She turns knights into trees and ensorcelers Roger into slothful idleness and excessive love. (Melissa rescues Roger from Alcina in the guise of Atlantes, using the famous magic-dispelling ring of Angelica.) Logistilla is a reasonable and friendly faerie and a sometime aid and ally of the heroes. Morgan le Fay is neither clearly a friend or foe; she brings a hopeful prophecy to Ogier the Dane at his birth, but she also thwarts Roland in his quest for the arms of Hector.

Melissa: She is a sorceress and confederate of Merlin and a friend and ally of Bradamante. She assists in regaining Angelica's magical ring from the Dwarf Brunello and in freeing Roger by tricking Atlantes from his hippogriff and confounding Atlantes's mesmerizing shield. Melissa also aids Bradamante in the rescue of Roger from Alcina.

The Hermit: Not any one specific character, but a commonly encountered stereotype. The Hermit may appear as a saintly poor man who is actually a wizard with a book, able to summon genies, or he may appear as a lustful old hermit with sorcerous powers who kidnaps Angelica, summons an evil spirit and conjures it into a horse for her to ride, and then dumps her on an island where he tries to take advantage of her.

The old hermit is also popular disguise for Malagigi the Wizard.

Pagans

King Marsilius, King Sacripant, King Gradasso, King Mandricardo: The principal pagan kings, antagonists of Charlemagne.

Roger: Nephew of Atlantes the Sorcerer, a handsome and noble pagan warrior who is destined to become a Christian and help save Charlemagne from the Saracen invaders.

Ferrau the Moor: A strong but ignoble Saracen knight who pursues Angelica.

Agramante and Rodomonte: Two principal pagan warriors.

The Horn of Roland

The most famous of the Charlemagne legends is the *Song of Roland*. The following is a condensed version of the story of Roland in Roncesvalles Pass ("the Vale of Thorns") from the epic poem.

King Marsilius of Spain sent to Charlemagne, entreating peace and promising rich tribute. He promised that he would come to Aix at Michaelmas to be baptized and do homage and hold Spain faithfully in fief for King Charlemagne. Charlemagne took counsel among his Companions. Roland counseled against trusting the Moor, but all the other peers, save Roland and Oliver, counseled peace.

"Who shall we send to Marsilius to accept his oath and receive his pledges of good faith?" said Charlemagne. It was a dangerous task, since ever did the Saracen plot and scheme. Roland volunteered, but the king would not consent, saying instead that Roland must choose the envoy. Roland chose Ganelon. Trembling with fear that he might never return from the false-hearted Saracen, Ganelon went, but he swore to himself, "This is Roland's doing, and I shall hate him all my life long."

Ganelon came to Marsilius in Saragossa, and, long-used to guile and cunning, he twisted the words of Charlemagne so as to provoke the fury of the proud Saracen king. Marsilius might have slain Ganelon, but shrewd counselors of the king noted the treachery on Ganelon's face.



They proposed instead to treat with him and plot treason and bloodshed. The Moorish king was well pleased and offered Ganelon wagonloads of silver, gold, silk, and red wine if he could deliver Roland, the king's nephew and the flower of Frankish chivalry. Ganelon said, "Send to Charlemagne tribute and hostages, and promise to be baptized at Aix and do homage for Spain. Then, when, well pleased, Charlemagne returns to France, have you set 100,000 Moors in ambush in the passes of Roncesvalles, the Vale of Thorns. There from the high ground you may fall upon the rear guard, containing Roland and Oliver and 20,000 Frenchmen, and destroy them utterly."

And Marsilius was pleased with this plan. Ganelon returned to Charlemagne, and it fell out as he had guessed, for as Charlemagne marched his army out of Spain, well satisfied with his peace, Ganelon counseled that Roland should command the rear guard. Roland was right willing to accept this dangerous trust, and with him were bold Oliver and great Archbishop Turpin and 20,000 valiant Frankish warriors.

High were the rock walls of Roncesvalles, and dark and shadowy the narrow pass between them, but the day was bright and the sky clear. Then the sound of horns was heard before them, and climbing a pine Oliver saw a greater army of Saracens than he had ever seen before. And Oliver bade Roland to sound his mighty horn, that Charlemagne might hear and turn and rescue them from ambush, but proud Roland refused, loudly saying so that all might hear, "Better I should die than that any say I show fear. For my king has placed his trust in me, and in you all his heroes, and better we should perish than should we be shamed. Draw your swords and we shall slay many a Moorish traitor." And aside to Oliver Roland said, "And so dire is this Saracen ambush that scarcely do I believe that the king might save us, even if he would hear our horn." And brave Archbishop Turpin said to the Frankish host, "The king has left us here, and for him ye shall stand, and if ye die, ye shall have a place in Paradise."

The hearts of the Franks then were light, and Roland brandished his blade *Durandal*, and pointed toward the Moorish foe, and said, "Comrades, ride onward! The day shall be

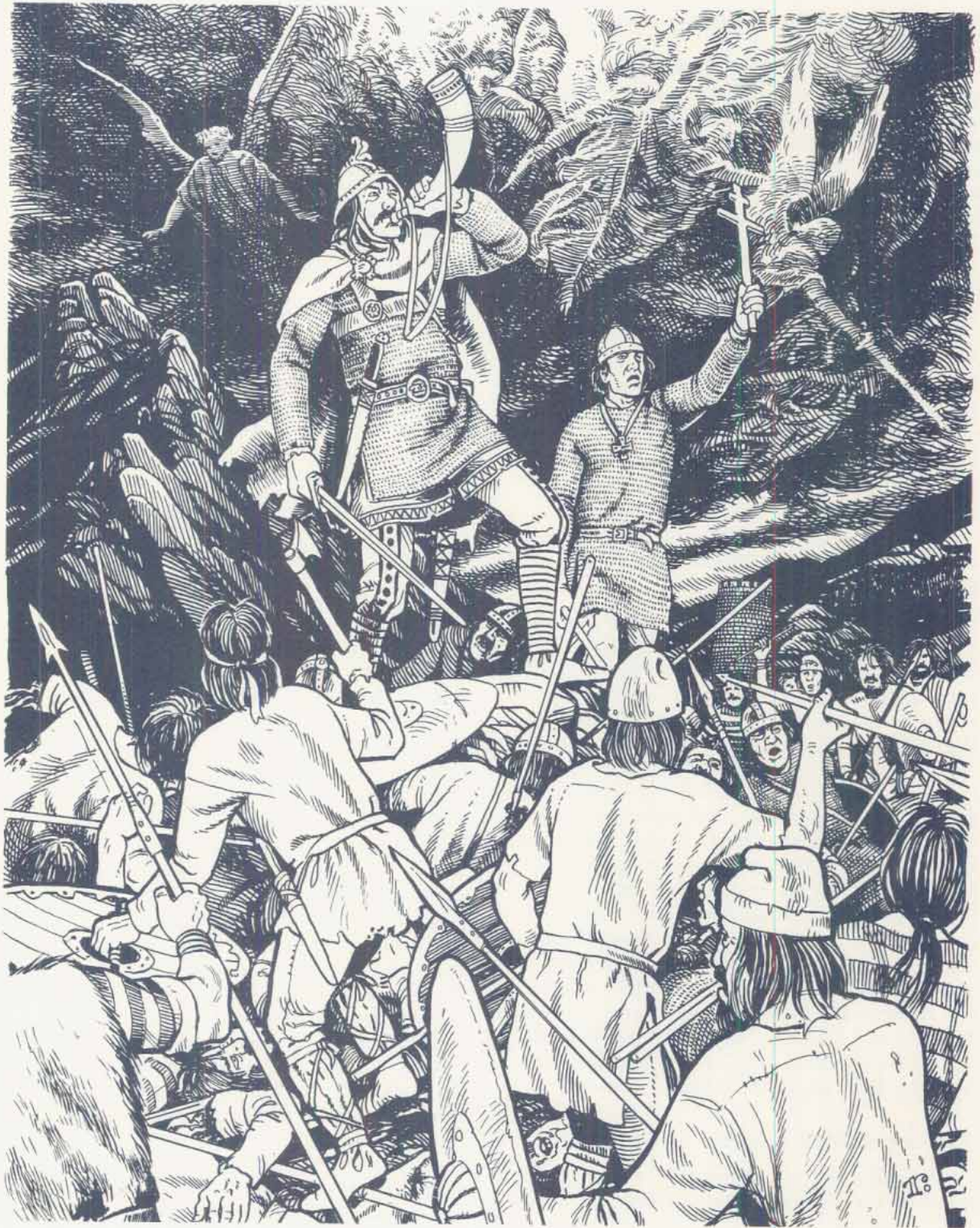
ours!" And Oliver said, "Forget not the war-cry of our beloved Charlemagne," and at once the Franks swept forward with cries of "Montjoy! Montjoy!"

And for a time it seemed the Franks might carry the day, for many a Moor was slain, and many a valiant deed was achieved by Roland and his peers. But at last Marsilius sent down a fresh troop of 7,000 Moors, and the Frankish heroes fell on every side. At last Archbishop Turpin persuaded Roland to sound his horn, not to summon Charlemagne to rescue them, but that the king might protect the bodies of the doomed rear guard from scavengers and wild beasts.

Many miles away Charlemagne heard the horn. Ganelon pretended the king had but imagined it, but the king knew then that Ganelon had betrayed him. He had the traitor made prisoner and bound, and rode at once with all his host back to Roncesvalles.

Now the end was near, for in the Vale of Thorns the Moors had overwhelmed the Franks. All but Roland, Oliver, and the archbishop were slain. Then Oliver took a mortal wound, and he parted from his Roland with great love and sad words of farewell. Then, fearfully hurt, with blood flowing from many wounds, Roland feebly sounded his ivory horn a last time. Charlemagne, in the pass not far away, heard Roland's horn. Knowing Roland in great distress, he bade his men blow their trumpets loudly so Roland might know rescue was nigh. And Roland did hear and rejoiced, but the pagans heard also and rushed upon Roland and the archbishop and struck them down. Then hearing once again the horns of the mightiest king of Christendom, the Saracens fled in great haste from the field.

Roland and the archbishop had received the wounds of death, and Roland could do aught but move about the field and gather the slain heroes closer to the archbishop so they might receive his last blessing. Roland took his blade *Durandal*, and rather than have it fall into the hands of pagans, he sought to smash the blade upon a rock. Shatter it he could not, though he broke the rock in many pieces. Then he lay down on the grass, placed his horn and sword beneath him, set his face toward the foe, and raised his glove and offered it to God in heaven. Then did the angels come down, and they took





Roland's glove, and with this token they bore his soul to Paradise.

Sad was the scene that Charlemagne beheld, arriving too late to save a single man. He flung himself from his horse and wept upon the bosom of dead Roland, and swore vengeance upon the false-hearted Saracens and the traitor Ganelon who contrived his end. Charlemagne and his host pursued the Saracens. They besieged and took Saragossa and burned it, and they hung Marsilius the Moorish king. Ganelon the traitor was hung, drawn, and quartered in the Pass of Roncesvalles amidst the curses and contempt of his countrymen. And the Franks buried their dead in the Vale of Thorns, but Roland and Oliver and the archbishop the king bore to Blaye in Frankland. There they were laid in white marble tombs in the chapel of St. Romans. The ivory horn of Roland was taken to Bordeaux and filled with fine gold. It was laid upon the altar of the church there.

Adapting the Vale of Thorns to Role-Playing

Many players should know that no one survives from the ambush at Roncesvalles Pass. This gives a DM a wonderful opportunity to torment his or her players with suspense: Are their characters really doomed or is there some hope that history and legend were wrong, and that someone lived to tell Roland's tale?

Events leading up to the Vale of Thorns may develop the skirmishes and sieges with the Saracens in the Spanish March. Player characters may then be assigned to the rear guard with Roland and Oliver to help protect the baggage. They may suspect Ganelon's treachery and be frustrated by Roland's refusal to summon help. Finally, will they choose to stand and die like heroes, and become part of the legend, or will they try to escape? Are they taken captive by the Basques and Saracens, only to escape later and have to make their way alone through hostile territory back across the rugged Pyrenees?

Sir Ogier the Dane

The following is an incident concerning the youthful Ogier the Dane and Roland before they

became knights of renown. Such a story might also be the occasion for a group of humble low-level player characters to come to the attention of a count or king through heroic performance on a battlefield. The scene of battlefield knight-ing, the details of plate armoring, and the convention of mistaken identity while concealed in armor belongs to the Age of Chivalry rather than Charlemagne's time, but the spirit is so noble and stirring that it may honorably be adapted to a Carolingian setting.

The Saracens came forth to give battle. Lordly Duke Namon led the vanguard of Charlemagne's force. The golden banner of the King, Oriflamme, was borne by Alory the Lombard. Ogier and Roland, not yet recognized as knights, remained in the rear of Charlemagne's army with the squires.

Namon at first drove back the Saracens, but the pagans stiffened and suddenly the cowardly Lombards—Alory the standard bearer included—fled from the battle. The pagans were heartened, the tide of battle turned. Duke Namon and other knights were taken prisoner. Charlemagne was unhorsed and unlanced, yet still he fought on.

Seeing this desperate situation on the field, the rank of squires advanced, challenging the cowardly Lombards, dragging them from their saddles, and taking their arms and armor. Ogier the Dane retrieved and held aloft Oriflamme, the king's standard.

Only 100 knights remained on the field for the defense of Charlemagne, now once again on horse. The pagans were already gloating, but Ogier and Roland and the ranks of squires swooped down and surprised the Saracens. Captive French knights were rescued and squires took the armor from slain Saracens and pursued the shaken pagan armies from the field. Charlemagne followed, his sword *Joyeuse* in hand.

Corsuble, the Saracen king, fled and Charlemagne pursued. Two pagan knights came to Corsuble's aid, slaying Charlemagne's horse and throwing the Frankish king to the ground. Seeing the golden eagle on Charlemagne's casque, the Saracens dismounted to deal the death blow, when Ogier the Dane appeared, rode over one Saracen and buffeted the other with Oriflamme.



Ogier, his face and features concealed by the armor he took from the cowardly Alory, then helped Charlemagne to his feet and saw him mounted on a Saracen horse. Charlemagne, seeing the coat of arms, thought Ogier was Alory. He praised the knight and promised a reward for bravery. Ogier said not a word, but took off in pursuit of the fleeing Saracens.

The Saracens were in full retreat, leaving the field to the victorious Franks. Archbishop Turpin gathered the army, laid aside his helmet and sword, said "Te deum laudamus," and led the assembled host singing in praise of the Lord. While they sang, Ogier the Dane brought Oriflamme, all torn and covered with dust, and laid it at Charlemagne's feet. The king spoke kindly, praising the noble warrior for his bravery; Turpin held his hands above their heads and blessed both men.

Roland then suddenly threw off his helmet and Ogier's, and the other squires were also revealed. Charlemagne and his knights showed great wonder at being saved by squires. The king embraced Roland and Ogier and called down the choicest blessings on their heads for the honor they had done him by being so brave and by serving the cause of Christendom. Namon then asked, and the king granted, that Ogier and Roland be invested immediately as knights.

The young men knelt before their king. After a short, solemn service by Turpin, warning of the duties of the knight and the temptations in their way, the archbishop then took prepared swords and laid them on a rude altar. Charlemagne stepped forward, smote the young men three times on their shoulders and said "In the name of God and St. Michael, I dub thee knight: be loyal, valiant, and true."

Then knights arrayed Ogier and Roland in knightly garb. Namon laced their golden spurs. Turpin blessed their white armor and vested each in his coat of mail. Duke Richard of Normandy buckled on breastplates. Guy of Bourgogne presented arm-pieces and gauntlets. Charlemagne brought them their swords. To Ogier was given a plain steel blade marked with the words, "Wear Me Until You Find a Better." To Roland was given a wondrous weapon with a jeweled hilt, marked with many a fair device—

the sword *Durandal*. The new knights then took an oath of chivalry: to be faithful to God and loyal to the king; to revere all women; to be ever mindful of the poor and weak; never to engage in unrighteous war; never to exalt oneself to the injury of others; always to speak the truth; to love mercy; and to deal justly with all men.

Charlemagne then blessed them and promised to love them as sons; in turn they vowed to love and honor him as their father in knighthood. Then they donned their helmets, mounted steeds, and received honor as full knights.

The cowardly Alory was sought and brought into Charlemagne's presence. Poor Alory had nothing to say in his own defense; his peers judged him disinherited and forbade him to show his face in court or to mingle in the company of true knights. But Ogier and Roland, hearing of the sentence, begged leave to speak in Alory's favor. "Do not deal harshly and unmercifully with another man's weakness. If all who fled from battle were disinherited, greatly thinned would be our ranks. One gifted with the heart of a hare cannot exchange it for a heart of a lion. Forgive Alory, and do not entrust him with duties too great for him." Charlemagne and his peers, well pleased with the new knights' words, forgave Alory for his unfortunate deeds.

Malagigi the Wizard

The following incident suggests how easily supposedly wise kings and peers are deceived by the wiles and tricks of wizards.

Reinhold of Montalban owned one of the most famous horses of the Charlemagne legends, a splendid beast named Bayard. For a time Charlemagne held Reinhold to be a traitor, because of Bayard. Once Reinhold fell asleep in a wood. A passing countryman who knew something of wizardry used spells and enchantments to steal Bayard. The countryman brought Bayard to Paris and gave him to Charlemagne, who rewarded the thief with a generous grant of land.

When he awoke, Reinhold was greatly distressed at the loss of Bayard. The wizard Malagigi, ever pursuing his own plots, appeared to Reinhold in the guise of a hermit. After testing Reinhold's patience and courtesy by repeatedly asking for gifts, Malagigi revealed himself to



Reinhold and offered to provide him with a disguise and ruse that might regain Bayard.

In Paris two beggars, their features concealed in the cowls of their poor robes, waited at a bridge as four grooms leading Bayard approached. Charlemagne, Roland, and all the peers were close behind the grooms. One beggar approached the king. The peers would have pushed the beggar away, but the charitable king bid him draw close and speak.

"Most gracious king, I pray grant us a boon," the beggar said. "My poor brother (he gestured at the beggar standing with him) has been deaf and dumb and blind for these many years. A wizard told me if he could but ride ten steps on Bayard he might be cured." The king and his retainers laughed. Charlemagne said, "I've a mind to let him try. I've heard of, but never seen, a miracle." The grooms then lifted the supposed beggar to Bayard's back. At once Bayard sprang away, joyful at the touch of his master Reinhold's hand, and stopped not once until they were back in Montalban. The other beggar disappeared in the confusion, but Charlemagne was not deceived further. "Curse that Malagigi! Fooled again! If that wizard comes in my reach, he shall suffer for it."

Roland's Quests in Fairylands

The following is a partial account of Roland's adventures in Faerie. Player characters entering Faerie may expect to confront similar monstrous guardians, subtle tricks and puzzles, and peaceable but defiant faerie antagonists.

Restless at court, Roland was given leave by Charlemagne to seek out the Faerie Gardens of Falerina, in the Far East, where the arms of Hector awaited the coming of a hero. "I already have his sword," said Roland, "and would fain have his armor." All tried to dissuade him, for none knew where Faerie lay, with no maps or guidebooks in those days. Undaunted, Roland set out, headed for the rising sun, veering now and then southward. For many days he traveled, and left behind the broad lands of France, and the fair plains of Lombardy, and the towering Alps, and the great sea. In every village and town he was welcomed and kindly entertained as a Christian knight. Everywhere he asked about the gardens of Falerina, but all pointed east and shook their heads, and encouraged him to give up his quest.

One day he came to a bridge over a slow-





flowing river; the other side was hidden in a dark mist. A pretty maiden stood to take toll. Roland asked the way to Faerie.

"It is not far from here," she told him. "Drink this cup of water from the river and you shall see clearer through the mists which hang over Faerie and hide it from mortal sight." But the maiden was speaking of the Faerie of Forgetfulness and not of Falerina. Roland drank and forgot all friends and quests and himself, and he thought only of the fair country he saw across the river, and the tall castle. He was led by the maiden into the halls of the castle where he and many other entrapped knights passed many days in pleasurable forgetfulness.

Fortunately, Angelica of Cathay, owner of the magical ring of invisibility, came to rescue Roland and the other knights from the Castle of Forgetfulness. She put her ring to her lips and was at the bridge with the maiden. The maiden offered the cup, but Angelica dashed it aside and entered the castle. In the banquet hall were Roland and Reinhold and many other brave knights drinking and making merry. Angelica stood with her book of enchantments in one hand and her trumpet in the other. She blew on the horn, and the knights awoke and rushed to outfit themselves. They vowed to follow Angelica wherever she wished, on whatever adventure. And they rode back over the now-dry River of Forgetfulness into the world of reality.

Reinhold and other knights hurried back to Charlemagne, but Roland wished to try once more to find Falerina. He traveled alone through many lands toward the setting sun till he came to a wood where he heard a fair lady in distress, bound hand and foot to a tree and guarded by a knight. The knight said the woman was Deceit, who was dishonest, untrustful, and treacherous. Were she liberated, no end of mischief she would result. Roland challenged the knight, but the knight said, "If after what I've told you, you wish to befriend such a creature, not a word further can I say," and with disgust he turned and rode away. Roland released the lady and put her up behind him on his horse.

He went forward and at the edge of the wood encountered another young lady, a beautiful damsel, riding on a white palfrey. "How lucky! Had you gone ten yards farther, you would have

been in plain sight of the gardens of Falerina, and you would have been slain by the watchful dragon before the gate," the beautiful damsel said. "Wait here until sunrise, when the gates are thrown open for a time; if you are wise, you may enter the garden—but watch the dragon!" The damsel gave Roland a little book with a map of the enchanted garden and a picture of Falerina's palace, and directions how to reach it and enter it. "The faerie queen," continued the damsel, "has been long shut up within, forging a magical sword that might be proof against all witchery and sharp enough to slay even those protected by the unseen powers, for she has seen in the book of Fate that a hero will come out of the West and that he will trample down her garden and take from her all her witch's powers. The sword is finished, and if you can snatch it, you will be safe from her snares."

Roland lay down to sleep, and the false-hearted lady he saved took his steed and his sword *Durandal* and rode away. When Roland awoke, he was downcast but resolute. Taking an elm branch he approached the gates. Thrusting the elm branch into the jaws of the dragon, he vaulted over the dragon's back and through the gates just as they opened to admit the floods of light of day.

Within Roland saw a marble image of a river nymph in the middle of a stream; in Greek it said, "Seekest thou the enchanted palace? Follow the river." Never doubting, Roland followed the stream and came in a short while to the faerie palace of Falerina. He entered, and the faeries, never having known an enemy within their walls, took no note. He came to Falerina's chambers and found her admiring herself with the sword leaning nearby. He paused to admire her for a moment, then snatched up the sword. "Yield, and I will spare thee."

She said nothing.

"Show me the Trojan Hector's arms, and thou shalt live."

"Surely thou art brave to threaten me in my own dwelling," Falerina said calmly. "Surely you are Knight Roland of the West."

"Roland is my name, and I have come for the Arms of Hector. Tell me where I shall find them."

"I shall tell thee nothing," she replied, folding her arms.



Finding that neither threat nor prayer would persuade her, he took her and bound her gently with ropes given him by Malagigi. He then followed the stream further, took out the book the damsel gave him, and noted a gate that was always open. Between that gate and the palace was a large lake; on the lake, the book said, was a siren whose song charmed passers-by and caused the death of many brave knights.

Roland stuffed his helmet and ears with flowers so he could not hear. From the lake rose a creature, not beautiful, part fish, part bird, but its song was so sweet it charmed the animals nearby. At last it ceased its song. Roland pretended to be charmed. The siren swam close thinking to seize him, but Roland grabbed its neck and severed the head with the magical sword of Falerina. Roland wandered about further and questioned many faeries, but none had heard of the arms of Hector, save one old faerie, who said it had been carried into another garden and that he could not hope to find it without undergoing many hardships and dangers of which he knew nothing.

Roland returned to the palace, but the splendor had faded, the birds flown away, the flowers closed, and the light was supplanted by shadow. The hapless faerie queen was no longer happy and defiant, but weeping bitterly. Roland asked for the arms of Hector once again, and she said, "They are given over into the keeping of Morgan le Fay, whence you must go, and take care not to let the golden opportunity slip by unimproved." Then Roland freed the faerie queen and gathered her worried attendants and said he had no desire to hurt her or them. Then he went forth from her gardens and sought out the stronghold of Morgan le Fay.

The castle of Morgan le Fay was guarded by a grim giant wearing steel armor and wielding a great club guarding the bridge, never beaten nor foiled in battle. The giant challenged Roland to battle; Roland was happy to accept combat with one whose only virtue was strength. The magical blade of Falerina struck through the giant's armor, and the giant would have been slain, but he swiftly snatched Roland to his chest and leapt into the moat. The giant could breathe water, but Roland, though half-choked, forced the giant to let go. Roland rose to the surface, found

the gate open and unguarded, and walked boldly through.

He found himself in a broad field covered with diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, and every other gem stone. He stopped not to admire but proceeded to a garden even more beautiful than that of Falerina. He was not tempted by this pleasure, but kept on. In the middle of the garden was a fountain and a nearby bower of surpassing loveliness where he beheld Morgan le Fay asleep, and was all but smitten with her charms. But he heard a voice that said, "Seize the beauty by the forelock while yet the golden moment lasts!"

The knight saw Morgan's head-back was bare and smooth, but her forelock was rich with golden hair. Roland looked about for the source of the voice, not thinking to follow its strange command. Looking up he was amazed by a strange vision of a great and busy city, and he forgot himself. The vision faded, and he looked down, but Morgan had arisen and was dancing around the fountain, singing a verse that chided Roland for losing his one chance. Then she sprang away, and Roland followed in vain, for she led him a merry chase, and was never seen by him again.

At last a storm arose, and a hag appeared before him out of a cavern and scourged him with a leather thong and drove him down into the valley. "My name is Repentance, and it is my duty to punish every one who through hesitation and neglect fails to seize the faerie fortune at that one golden moment which is allotted him. Go back, now, to France. Thy quest is vain. The prize you sought has been won by another."

Roland went down, hoping to find the faerie castle, but found only the desert and rocky mountains of Persia. In his hasty pursuit he had lost his magical sword, and he was now alone, a stranger in a strange land, far from France.

An old man on a mule appeared, leading a war horse—Roland's own horse *Brigliadoro*—and bearing *Durandal*. The old squire said, "Let us hasten back to France, for while you waited and dreamed, an Oriental prince went in, seized the prize, and went away. He is on his way now to France even as we speak, where he has vowed to win from you *Durandal* and make all Hector's arms his own."



Bradamante the Warrior Maiden

The model of the warrior maiden is Bradamante, the White Knight, sister of Reinhold. The following is a brief account of several of her more famous adventures.

Bradamante came upon a downcast Pinabel, kin of Ganelon of Mayence. Asked of his woes, Pinabel told her that his fair maiden had been borne away by a winged horse to a Moorish magician's castle in the Pyrenees. Bradamante offered to aid him in rescuing his maiden; Pinabel, as treacherous as his kinsman Ganelon, immediately began to plot how he might betray and kill Bradamante, since Pinabel was enemy of all of Montalban blood.

He led Bradamante up a mountain and to a great cleft in the rock. At the bottom of a deep gorge could be seen a flood of light coming from a narrow door. Pinabel peered into the cleft and excitedly reported that he had seen a damsel clothed like a princess trying to escape, but she was caught and dragged into the inner cave by a ruffian jailor. Bradamante fashioned a crude ladder from a broken limb and bid Pinabel to hold it while she descended to rescue the maiden. But Pinabel let her fall. Bradamante lay there, stunned and helpless, as Pinabel, chuckling with delight, mounted and rode away.

When Bradamante recovered her senses, she went in the door she found at the bottom of the gorge and came into a well-lit cavern with an altar. Bradamante knelt to pray, and a weird woman, disheveled and barefooted, entered through a secret door.

"I am Melissa the witch," the weird woman spoke. "This temple was built by Merlin, and this is the cavern cell where he lay when he was outwitted by the Lady of the Lake—here he still lies sleeping but not dead." Melissa brought Bradamante to Merlin's bier, where she heard the wizard's voice and long conferred with him. He promised her that she should be the most favored of women, the mother of kings and heroes as noble as those of ancient Rome. Then Melissa brought Bradamante back to the chapel. Melissa told her the story of the winged horse and his master and the steel-bright mountain fortress.

Atlantes, the most knowing of sorcerers, had

a nephew, Roger, the bravest and noblest of Moorish princes. Atlantes read in his Book of Fates that Roger was destined to leave home and kindred and friends and to ally himself with Christian foes. Atlantes was determined to confound Fate. In a day and night he built a mountain stronghold of shining metal, the Castle of Iron, and took Roger there. He brought wise men to teach Roger, and minstrels from north and south to entertain him, and brave knights and fair ladies, so Roger should be content and not leave.

Agrimant, king of Africa, wished to defeat Charlemagne. He was told by a counselor that he must get Roger to aid him, and that to get him from the castle, he needed the ring of Angelica. "Send Brunello, dwarf and greatest thief in the world, to Cathay to steal the ring," the counselor had told Agrimant. Brunello, a wizard himself, had little trouble getting to Cathay and stealing the ring while Princess Angelica slept.

Melissa told Bradamante that she must get the ring from Brunello before he arrived at Atlantes's castle and tried the ring's powers. "Go out of the cavern down the road to the seashore and to an inn where you will meet Brunello. Make an excuse to travel with him on his way, but do not touch him until you are in sight of the wizard's tower." More Melissa whispered in Bradamante's ear. Bradamante then rested, and in the morning they set out. Soon they came to the seashore, where Melissa bade farewell.

In the appointed inn Bradamante met Brunello and made his acquaintance. Wily Brunello saw at once that she was one of Charlemagne's warriors. He was on his guard, answering her questions with falsehoods, then asking her in turn, but the maiden met guile with guile. She answered with many a feigned story while checking his hand to see if the ring was there. Finally each withdrew to their respective rooms.

In the morning Bradamante and Brunello were awakened by a clamor outside the inn about a winged horse ridden by a knight in armor with an open book in his hand. Bradamante told Brunello she wished to visit the bright Castle of Iron and to challenge Atlantes to a duel. Brunello offered to act as guide, since he had with him a book that described the road and



country. Bradamante bought a palfrey while Brunello followed on a mule as they traveled together toward Atlantes's stronghold.

When they arrived, Bradamante contrived to take the ring from Brunello, but she would not stoop to harm a creature so weak and unskilled in self-defense; she slipped it from his finger as he gazed rapt upon the towers. She bound him to a tree and heeded not his cries and tears.

She blew her horn and the winged horse and enchanter appeared, he carrying a shield covered with a silk shroud in one hand and a book in the other. She could not strike past the shield with her lance, and Melissa had warned her of the shield's magic powers; when the silk cover was removed, the magic light from its polished surface had the power to blind, disarm, and overthrow all who looked upon it. Angelica's ring made Bradamante proof against the shield's enchantments, but when at last Atlantes descended and showed the bright face of the magical shield, Bradamante pretended to be affected and fell to the ground as if asleep. Atlantes drew near, and Bradamante seized him. She would

have slain the wicked wizard, but she took pity on his sorrowful face and snow-white hair; she bound him with his own cord. Atlantes mournfully explained that he captured knights only to provide pleasing company for Roger in the mountain stronghold. He claimed that though the Castle of Iron was a sort of prison, it was more delightful than many a palace. Bradamante dismissed Atlantes's excuses, claiming that liberty was the sweetest of enjoyments.

Together Bradamante and Atlantes ascended the narrow way. Coming to the golden gates of the enchanted castle, Atlantes lifted a broad flat stone to reveal a chamber filled with all kinds of crucibles and lamps burning secret wizard fires. Atlantes took these vessels and threw them into the valley below. At once the illusion of the castle disappeared, revealing a bleak and cheerless mountain cave. A long procession of knights, ladies, and damsels came forth, including Roger the Moorish prince, King Sacripant, Ferrau the Moor, Gradosso, Roland, Astolpho of England, and Angelica of Cathay. Atlantes sneaked away, grieved, shamed, and disappointed.

Adventures on the Saxon Frontier

To make it easier to get started with historical role-playing in a Carolingian setting, here are two adventures, complete with predesigned player characters and background handouts for your players.

You may use the player characters provided, or your players may create their own characters using the predesigned characters as models.

Both adventures use the manor of Count Brego of Eigenmachtig as a home base. The adventures may be run separately or linked in sequence as a mini-campaign.

The adventures and characters are specifically designed for historical settings with a minimum of magic and a maximum of period setting. If adapted for legendary or fantasy campaign play, PCs and NPCs may require additional magical resources, and the adventures may need revision to maintain play balance.

Brego and the Boar

The PCs follow their lord, Count Brego, on a hunt for a Christmas boar in the dead of winter. The lord disappears while pursuing a marvelous boar; later, the PCs discover evidence that their count may have met with foul play on a rival count's land. Will the PCs be permitted to search for Brego on the rival count's land? Was the rival count, who had a long-standing feud with Brego, involved in an attack on him? The PCs are courteously invited to share the hospitality of the rival count's Christmas Eve feast; here they must mind their manners while searching for clues to the disappearance of their lord. On Christmas Day the rival count discovers that his chaplain is missing. While searching for both the missing chaplain and Brego, the PCs are ambushed. If they survive, they discover a trail leading them to the missing chaplain and Brego and a strange explanation for their sudden disappearances.

Background

In the winter of 773, Charlemagne spent Christmas in Rome. Much of his army was engaged in the siege of Pavia, but certain Eastern Frankish nobles were required to return with a portion of their household forces to safeguard the peace of the land. Among those nobles were

Count Brego of Eigenmachtig and his retainers. The count's fortified frontier manor sat on a small tributary of the Rhine eight miles south of the confluence of the Moselle and Rhine. It was well situated for defensive reaction against Saxon unrest or river piracy.

Count Brego and his retainers (including the PCs) arrived home three days before Christmas. The adventure begins as Brego and his party crest a rise of ground and catch their first glimpse of Eigenmachtig Manor, their home.

Brego and Retainers (NPC Profiles)

Count Brego of Ardennes: AC 8 unarmored; MV 12; F10; hp 70; THAC0 11; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+5; ML 15; AL LN; Riding proficiency check 20; Mount of High-spirited quality, MV 32

Brego is a noble warrior in the tradition of his barbarian forebears—hard riding, hard fighting, hard-living, with little patience for the clerkish preoccupations of literacy, education, and religion. Like any Frankish noble, he loves hunting, family, feasting, and conquest.

Berta: Brego's wife (no statistics necessary). Still attractive in middle-age, Berta is more ornament than substance, charming and well-bred, but excitable and high-strung. Excessively affectionate and dependent on Brego and her family members, Berta lives for the happy days when everyone is home at the manor and bitterly resents worldly affairs that draw her brood away from her.

Warnar the Forester: AC 8 unarmored; MV 12; F1; hp 9; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (dagger)/1d6 (bow); ML 14; AL LN; Proficiency checks: Hunting and Weather Sense 14, Tracking 15, Direction Sense 16, Survival 12

Warnar succeeds his father as Brego's forester and huntmaster. Still young and inexperienced, Warnar nonetheless knows Brego's lands extremely well.

Mother Karla: AC 10 unarmored; MV 9; HD 1/2; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4-2; ML 10; AL LN

Mother Karla is an ancient crone, a favorite of Brego. This tough old bird always accompanies the hunts "so the lord can have a proper feed."

Buchard and Hardrad: AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6,5; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 (club); ML 10; AL LN



These two peasants accompany the hunt as bearers. Normally this duty is a treat, but a winter hunt may not be so much fun.

Race to the Gate

When Count Brego sees the manor, he lets out a whoop and gallops at full speed toward the bridge and the gate to the stockade. This is clearly a challenge to a race.

What do the PCs do? Explain that they may choose to accept the challenge and race to the gate, or they may follow at a safe but conservative speed, or they may proceed slowly or not at all.

In the race to the bridge and gate, Brego and all PCs face three Riding challenges. The following guidelines for using Riding proficiency checks supersede those presented in the *Player's Handbook*.

1. *The flat-out gallop to the bridge.* First Brego and his retainers must race to the bridge over the flooded ditch outside the walls of the manor stockade. This race is represented by three successive rounds of Riding proficiency checks. Ex-

plain that PCs who choose to race may increase their horse's normal movement rate by 1 for each additional -1 modifier they are willing to receive to all Riding proficiency checks. For example, increasing their mount's normal rate by 4 requires them to roll all Riding proficiency checks with a -4 penalty. PCs may also choose to move slower than their horse's normal rate in order to gain positive modifiers. At the beginning of each round, each player secretly marks on a scrap of paper the movement rate of his mount. Then all reveal their mounts' movement rates and roll Riding proficiency checks. In each round, if a Riding proficiency check is failed, the player moves only the normal movement rate of the horse, and then must check his Riding proficiency again immediately. If this second check is failed, the PC falls from his horse.

The PC whose horse has traveled the farthest at the end of the three successive rounds of checks is the leader of the race to the bridge. The other PCs still in the race are in descending order behind him according to their total movement.

2. *The maneuver at the bridge.* To remain in the race, each rider must pass another Riding





check at the bridge. If the check fails, the horse does not make the turn at the bridge and plunges into the flooded ditch before the gate. The rider must then make another Riding check; if this check is failed as well, the mount suffers 1d6 + 2 points of damage from the mishap.

3. *The leap of the gate.* Leaping the gate into the manor would be an elegant feat of horsemanship. Any PC who remains in the race must pass another Riding check with a -4 penalty for exceptional difficulty. If this check fails, the mount does not clear the gate cleanly, and both horse and rider suffer 1d6 + 2 points of damage crashing to the ground.

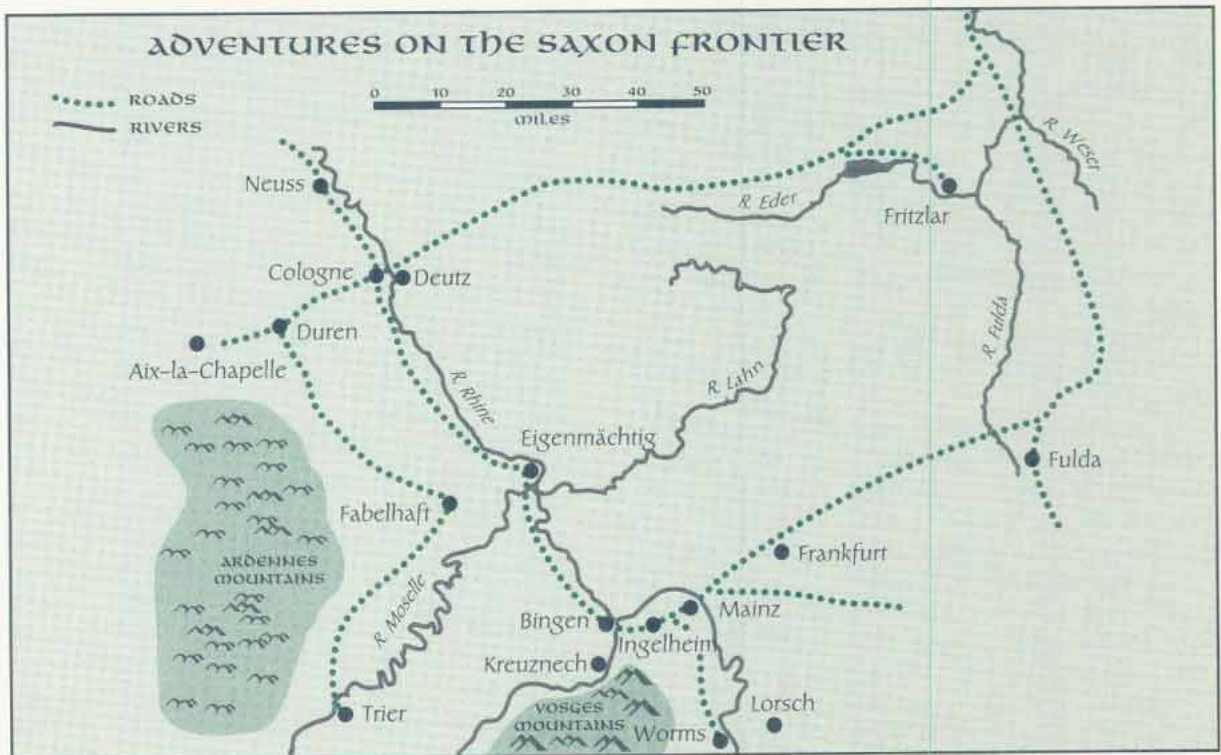
Note that this race has a large audience of peasants and servants who gasp and frown scornfully at poor riders or cheer wildly for spectacular feats of horsemanship. Note also that Count Brego has the advantage of a high-spirited mount and an exceptional Riding proficiency; as DM, you decide how much he chooses to increase his mount's movement rate in the gallop to the bridge. Initially Brego does not press his advantage, hoping to encourage his offspring and retainers to an exciting race. If

challenged, however, he will spare no risk to be first to enter the manor.

Winter Hunt

It is the morning of the second day before Christmas. Count Brego wakes the PCs and tells them to prepare to accompany him on a hunt. Of course, as loyal retainers of the count, there is no question about whether they are willing to accompany him. By tierce Count Brego is mounted and ready to go, accompanied by the peasants Buchard and Hardrad to carry the boar, forester Warnar to guide the party, the old woman Karla to prepare the midday hot meal, and the PCs. Everyone is dressed to hunt (i.e., no armor or shield, armed only with bow and lance), but since the count and his retainers are theoretically here to keep the peace, the count encourages everyone to pack his sword and armor for the journey. Again his wife privately begs him not to go, but he dismisses her and sets out.

The hunting party encounters a variety of small game in the morning, but no boar is seen.





The weather is cold, but the sky is clear. Game is easily sighted with the leaves gone from the trees, but the horses make a lot of noise moving through the downed limbs and fallen leaves covering the ground.

Tell your players that hunting etiquette permits small game (birds and rabbits, for example) to be shot by bow from the saddle. Larger game, such as wild pigs and boars, may be attacked with the spear (i.e., light lance) from horseback, but that this is considered poor form among the young noble warriors. It is far more respectable to dismount and challenge the pig or boar on foot with the spear. One does *not* attack game with anything but arrow, lance, or spear; attacking game with a sword would insult the dignity of the warrior's profession. Pursuing game on horseback in rugged terrain is tricky, and may also give young nobles many opportunities to display their fine horsemanship.

Staging Hunting Encounters: Stage at least one minor hunting encounter to familiarize the players with hunting game procedures, to give the nobles a chance to role-play their competitive delight in the sport of hunting, and to give restless players a chance to bounce the dice. Here is a procedure for staging a hunting encounter:

1. *Spotting the Prey:* Determine the party order, then determine which side of the party the animal approaches from. Check Hunting proficiencies for appropriate characters to see who spots the game first and therefore gets first shot at hunting it. Determine what prey is spotted and how many at your discretion. Here are two suggestions:

Rabbit (1): MV 12, AC 6, no attacks, 3 hp

Wild Pigs (5): MV 12, AC 9, HD 2, #AT 1, Dmg 1d4

2. *Determine Terrain and Modifiers:* Determine the terrain at your discretion. According to the type of terrain, the following modifiers are appropriate:

Clearing: no modifiers to Riding or missile fire

Open Parkland: -2 to Riding, -2 to missile fire

Moderate Forest: -2 to movement for large animals (especially horses), -2 to Riding, -2 to missile fire, no missile fire at long range

Dense Forest: -4 to movement for large animals (especially horses), -4 to Riding, -4 to mis-

sile fire, no missile fire at medium or long range

Wetlands: -6 to movement for large animals (especially horses), -4 to Riding, -2 to missile fire, no missile fire at long range

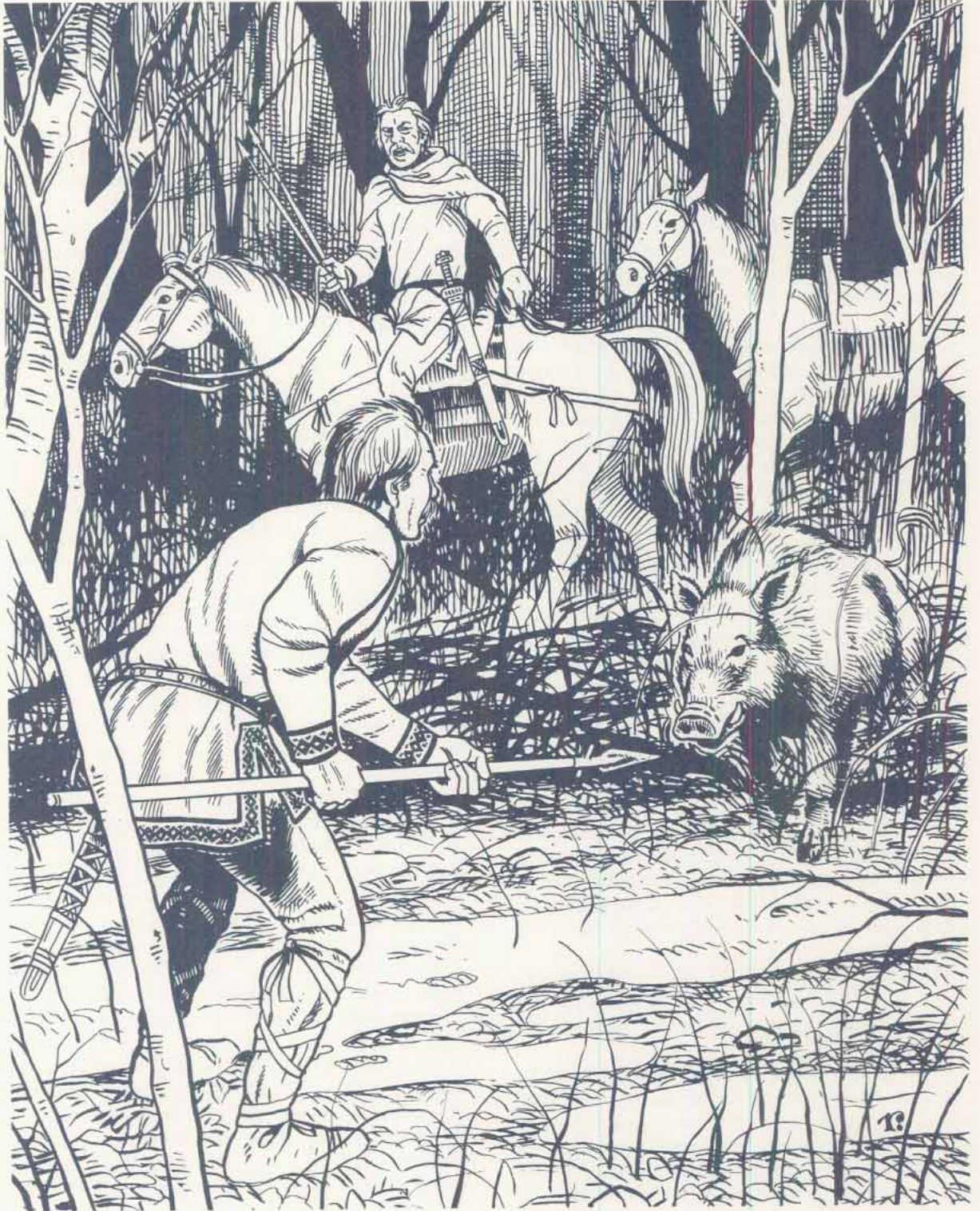
3. *Pursuing the Prey:* Roll 2d10 to determine how many yards away the prey is when it is sighted. Roll for initiative and surprise. The prey usually flees at maximum speed from the party. Daring horsemen may increase the speed of their mounts at a cost in penalties to their Riding checks as described previously in "Race to the Gate."

4. *Killing the Prey:* The rabbit may be shot with bow from horseback without dishonor. The pigs may be attacked from horseback, though it is considered poor form and will earn Count Brego's amiable scorn and mocking jests from the other PCs. To attack from horseback, the PC must successfully pass a Riding check before he rolls his normal attack; if the Riding check fails, he has no attack that round. To dismount and attack with a spear in the same round requires a successful Riding check; this elegant maneuver is considered very fine form.

Chill of Waning Light

The party stops at midday for a modest meal, then continues. Continuing a winter hunt after midday is unusual; the forester cautiously questions Brego about it and is told that the hunt will continue until a suitable Christmas boar is found. The forester acknowledges his lord's command, but he speaks privately of his concerns to one of the PCs chosen at random. First, the hunting party is not prepared for a winter overnight camp, and there is no hunting lodge or shelter in the neighborhood. Further, the count is headed west toward the lands of Count Dolan. Tell any PC who hears the forester's words that a successful Local History check is required to get further information.

A successful check indicates that the PC knows of the old feud between Count Brego and Count Dolan. For many years there was a feud between the families of the two counts. Finally, seven years ago, Pepin, Charlemagne's father, decreed that the feud would be at an end. He forbid Count Brego or Count Dolan to provoke one another lest they incur the wrath of the king.





For seven years both counts have honored the royal decree, have been polite to one another in public and on campaign, and have not given each other any cause for complaint. In particular, neither count nor any of their retainers have set foot on one another's lands for seven years. The boundary of Count Brego's and Count Dolan's lands is still about a half-day's travel west, but the forester is concerned. Count Brego is in a strange mood; if a suitable boar is not found, the hunting party may find itself making a winter camp unprepared, and Brego may continue in the morning—possibly on to Count Dolan's land.

The PCs know that Count Dolan might well consider Brego hunting on Dolan's lands as a provocation of the old feud. They also know, however, that the chances of Count Dolan or his men being out on a winter hunt along the borders of his land are extremely slim. If a PC confronts Brego about the idea of making a winter camp or traveling on to Dolan's land, Brego sternly says that a winter camp is no serious risk—veteran campaigners should hardly notice such modest discomfort. In any case, he continues waspishly, he has no intention of going on Count Dolan's land, and he intends to honor the royal decree just as he has for the previous seven years.

Late in the afternoon, as the temperature has begun to drop, the clouds roll in and it becomes dark and gloomy. Suddenly a group of four boars is spotted. Stage the hunt of the boars as described above.

As DM, make sure your NPC Count Brego is in the thick of the hunt, and make sure also that Count Brego's superior mount and horsemanship force the PCs to take risks if they hope to compete with him or impress him with their skill and daring.

Wild Boars (4): AC 7; HD 3+3, hp 17; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SA at 0 hp the boar continues to fight for 1d4+1 rounds, the boar dies at -7 hp

If no boar is slain, Brego orders the hunt to continue. However, it is extremely likely that most parties will kill at least one—and probably all four—of the boars. The forester arranges for the largest boar to be carried on a long pole between the two peasant bearers and prepares to

head back toward Eigenmachtig Manor. But Count Brego loudly proclaims that the boar is too small to be suitable for a Christmas boar and that the hunt must continue.

The PCs should be reluctant to challenge their lord's command, but his continuing the hunt as evening approaches is unreasonable. The forester suggests that they should make camp now before the light fades so enough firewood can be gathered, but Brego insists on continuing, saying he feels in his bones that a great Christmas boar will be slain on this day.

The Great Boar

The hunting party continues as the light continues to fade. The forester is not sure where Count Dolan's lands begin, but he believes it is still some distance west. Just at twilight, Brego, who insists on leading the party, shouts and gallops forward into the forest. The terrain is open parkland; before them the PCs see Brego charging a boar of immense size that stands near a thicket ahead. The giant boar turns and disappears into the thicket; Brego crashes through in pursuit, and the chase is on.

Brego and the giant boar have gained surprise and initiative, and they lead the party by one round. The PCs may pursue as they wish and may risk Riding check penalties by increasing their mounts' movement as described previously in "Race to the Gate."

Almost immediately the giant boar and Brego—and the pursuing PCs—break into a large clearing. The wall of dark, dense forest is solid around the boundaries of the clearing; the clearing itself is dimly lit by the fading daylight. The giant boar runs to the opposite side of the clearing and begins running around its outer edge with Brego in pursuit.

The giant boar is a very unusual, perhaps magical, possibly other planar, creature.

Giant Boar: AC -4; HD 7; hp 100; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3d6

In the first round that the PCs observe it, it moves at a rate of 15. However, in each succeeding round, its movement increases by 3, so that it becomes faster and faster. As it runs around the edge of the clearing, Brego and the PCs may make attacks, but they discover that it is very



hard to wound and it moves miraculously quickly. In a typical AD&D® game campaign, the players would assume that the boar must be magical. If they question you about this, tell them that a person of this period is more likely to imagine that he is witnessing a miracle or witchcraft. Belief in sorcery is very uncommon, and certainly one wouldn't expect to find a sorcerer in the middle of a Frankish forest.

The climax of this encounter must have the giant boar escaping the clearing with Count Brego in hot pursuit. The PCs must fail to follow the escaping boar and Brego to permit this adventure to continue as planned. The boar is almost invulnerable and moves quickly enough that the players should easily imagine it could escape them.

On the other hand, though Brego is better mounted and a better rider than most PCs, clever or lucky PCs may devise desperate plans to prevent Brego and the boar's escape (a reckless PC may even attempt to slay Brego's prized horse to prevent Brego's getaway).

Run the pursuit as long as possible, forcing the PCs to make desperate Riding rolls to keep Brego in sight. If a PC increases his mount's speed, report that Brego speeds up also. At some point, all the PCs will have failed their Riding checks, and Brego and the boar are lost to sight.

Darkness is falling, and the trail cannot be followed unless a character who has Hunting or Tracking proficiency searches on foot—thus ensuring the mounted Brego and the fleet-footed boar must escape.

Noble and persistent characters will pursue nonetheless, even if the chase is futile. Sooner or later they will discover that they have lost the trail in the dark, or on rocky ground, or in a wet slough. They will also belatedly realize that they have left the forester, old woman, and two peasants behind, and they probably are thoroughly scattered in the cold winter night. The shouts of the forester are audible over long distances, however; he is calling everyone to return and make camp as soon as possible.

The Dark Forest

The PCs and the remaining NPCs now must struggle to make camp as best they can. Most

gamers are familiar enough with overnight wilderness camping that they can role-play the problem, but you may permit Survival proficiency checks or make hints through the forester if the players seem to need help.

To the 8th-century noble, even the hardened veteran warrior, an overnight camp in a freezing, wind-swept forest is a nervous venture. The best procedure would be to find an easily defended spot sheltered from the wind, and to gather enough wood for an all-night fire for light and comfort and to keep animals away. In the dark both of these activities will be difficult. Further, the nobles will sensibly expect the two peasants and the forester to do all the hard physical work.

Brego and the Boar

And what has happened offstage to Count Brego and the giant boar?

Brego has pursued the giant boar onto Count Dolan's lands. There Brego caught the boar and in a mighty, epic battle, Brego slew the boar. Realizing that he is lost and wounded and exhausted from his battle with the boar, he makes a fire for warmth, then goes to sleep.

By incredible coincidence, a peasant from Fabelhaft village is out poaching this evening. He smells the smoke from Brego's fire and comes to investigate. Finding one of the count's boars slain and a strange man sleeping nearby, the peasant assumes he has discovered a poacher. He runs back to his village to report to Dolan's forester, Felix, hoping to get a reward for his service. By another incredible coincidence, Father Fulrad, Count Dolan's steward, chaplain, and chancellor, happens to be awake and overhears the peasant's report to the forester. Father Fulrad immediately suggests that the forester keep the matter a secret. Fulrad suggests further that Felix, Fulrad, and six other trusted peasants immediately go capture the poacher for the count's justice.

When Fulrad, Felix, and the six peasants armed with spear and bow arrive at Brego's resting place, Brego's horse takes alarm, and Brego is awakened by the whinny. Brego sees men in the darkness around him, draws his sword and dagger, and attacks, killing three peasants.



However, a single arrow from Felix's bow strikes Brego in the throat and kills him. (A single arrow never kills a high-level AD&D® game character, but Fulrad has cast a *hold person* spell on Brego, unbeknownst to Felix.)

Felix examines Brego's body and immediately realizes from his victim's possessions that he has killed a nobleman. Fulrad makes Felix and the other peasants swear a solemn oath of secrecy. At Fulrad's suggestion they take Brego's possessions, his horse, and the three dead peasants and hide them in a cave in a nearby river gorge. From the cave Fulrad, Felix, and the three remaining peasants take different routes back to Fabelhaft. By morning Fulrad and Felix have returned to Dolan's manor, three peasants have returned to their homes in the village, and the three dead peasants have apparently disappeared.

Then, without consulting Fulrad, Felix takes a pair of horses and drags the giant boar back to Dolan's manor, delivering it to the amazed cooks to be served to Lord Dolan for the Christmas feast. When Fulrad discovers the presence of the PCs from peasant informants, or when he discovers the pig roasting in the kitchen, Fulrad seeks out Felix. Together they leave the manor and head for the refuge of the cave in the river gorge.

The PCs Search for Brego

The PC hunting party awakens on the morning of Christmas Eve. The forester can follow the trail easily in the daylight. The PCs must decide whether to return to Eigenmachtig or to search for Brego by following the trail.

PCs who return immediately to Eigenmachtig are commanded by Berta to return and search for her husband. She threatens to go by herself if they are reluctant.

Following the boar's trail southwest for an hour, the party enters Dolan's territory. One hour farther down the trail they come upon a scene where some great struggle obviously took place. By this time the forester is certain that they are now on Count Dolan's land. (See the "Scene of the Struggle" map.)

At the scene the PCs find evidence that someone—perhaps Brego—had built a fire and

made camp here last night; the embers beneath the ash are still warm. A large number and confusion of footprints here suggest some sort of struggle, but they reveal little about what actually occurred. There are no bodies, but in several places something large, at least man-sized, fell and bled copiously. In one place some very heavy body (perhaps a giant boar) was slain; the undergrowth has been crushed by a great weight and there is far more blood than one would expect from a man's death.

A special clue is found by anyone who specifically searches the nearby woods beyond the area disturbed by footprints; here Brego's distinctive carved-horn-handled dagger lies hidden some ten feet northeast of the disturbed site, undiscovered by Brego's killers.

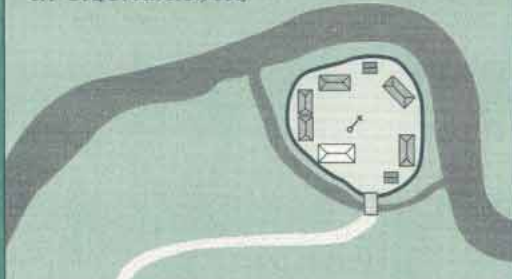
Only two trails lead away from the site. One trail leads south toward the river gorge; the signs suggest that four or five men and a heavily laden horse without a rider went this way, but that trail disappears on rocky ground 15 minutes from the site and about two miles from the river gorge. The other trail appears to lead northwest toward Fabelhaft, where the village and manor of Count Dolan lie. This trail is confused with many recent footprints. All that is certain is that many more men on foot came to this place than went away from it in this direction, and that a two-horse-team and cart came here after most of the men on foot (since the hoofprints cover most of the men's footprints). Then the heavily laden cart headed back toward Fabelhaft.

Now what?

The evidence at the site strongly suggests that the giant boar they saw the day before was killed here, then carted away toward Fabelhaft. Signs also point to the serious injury or death of one or more men here, but there are few clues as to their identities. However, Brego would not have allowed his horse to be led away into the wilderness without him on it unless he were severely injured or dead.

The PCs realize they have trespassed on the lands of their lord's ancient enemy, lands Brego was forbidden to enter by royal decree. The PCs must discover the fate of their missing lord, but since Brego seems to have trespassed and possibly poached on Lord Dolan's lands, they are in a difficult position requiring delicate judgment. A

COUNT BREGO'S MANOR AT EIGENMÄCHTIG



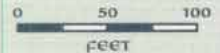
- Shed
- Brego's Hall
- Warrior's Hall



FABELHAFT VILLAGE & COUNT DOLAN'S MANOR



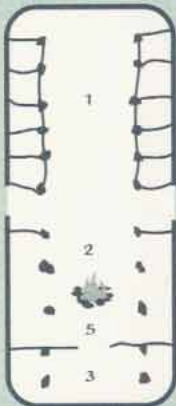
- Peasant Dwelling
- Peasant Vegetable Garden
- Parish Church
- Shed



TWO FRANKISH RURAL MANORS

COUNT BREGO'S MANOR AT EIGENMÄCHTIG AND COUNT DOLAN'S MANOR AT FABELHAFT

BREGO'S HALL



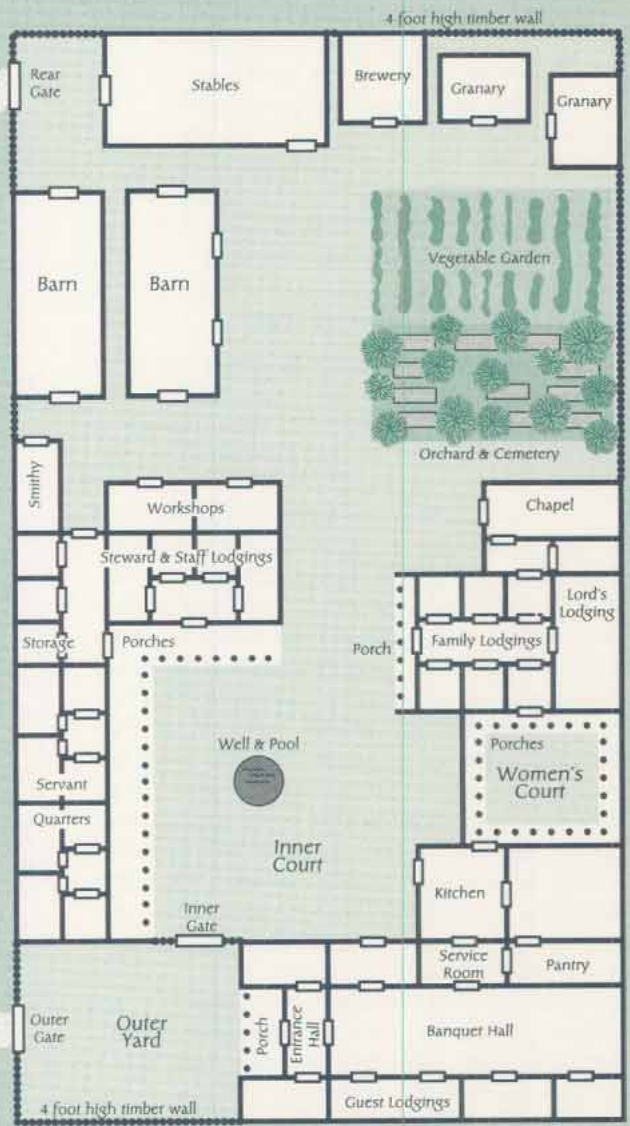
WARRIOR'S HALL



1. Private platform spaces for retainers
2. Hearth Hall
3. Brego's Quarters
4. Stalls for horses and livestock
5. Living Spaces
6. Private Quarters



SCENE OF THE STRUGGLE
ONE HEX EQUALS 1/2 MILE



COUNT DOLAN'S MANOR





successful Statesmanship proficiency check suggests that failure to inform Count Dolan immediately of their discovery of possible foul play may be construed as complicity on the part of the PCs, if some crime was committed here.

The PCs may follow the first trail toward the river, then try to search beyond the point where the trail disappears on rocky ground. If they do, go to the section called "Following the Dead End Trail."

The PCs may follow the trail toward Fabelhaft. If they do, go to the section called "The Village of Fabelhaft."

The PCs may return to Eigenmchtig. If they do, Berta demands that they go to Fabelhaft immediately and find her husband. She threatens to do it herself if the PCs are reluctant.

Following the Dead-End Trail

The ground along the river gorge features large expanses of exposed bedrock. No trail can be found to the cave where the dead peasants, Brego, his horse, and his possessions are concealed.

If you intend to railroad your players back to Fabelhaft so they can enjoy the role-playing encounters there, make it immediately clear that any further searching here is a dead end by emphasizing the ruggedness of the terrain, the vast area to be searched, and the impossibility of finding tracks on the exposed bedrock. The forester, an expert in local terrain, can tell the PCs that a clever man, and a man familiar with the territory, has taken advantage of the rocky ground and river fords to confound any attempt by a small party like the PCs to search the area in a reasonable period of time. As DM, also, you may remind the players that certain types of opponents may have special abilities (such as magic, for instance) to conceal trails.

Nonetheless, some players may sensibly expect that a horse and men are bound to leave a trail or some sort. Further, they may insist that a systematic scheme for searching—for example, searching only along the banks of the river—cuts the area to be searched to more manageable dimensions. At this point you must decide whether to forcibly steer your players back to Fabelhaft, or to let them enjoy devising their

own methods of finding Count Brego. Much of the charm of this scenario lies in the Fabelhaft role-playing sessions, but if your players are action-adventure fans who prefer hunting and fighting to role-playing, they may be better served by missing Fabelhaft and playing out the search for Brego along the river gorge.

Searching for the Cave: Use the following notes to improvise the details of a wilderness search for Brego (using the "Scene of the Struggle" map):

- Only characters with Tracking or Hunting proficiencies have a chance to discover hints of a trail or the cave. Other characters may contribute clever suggestions that earn modifiers to basic chances of success, but individually such characters lack the skill to succeed on their own.

- For each hour spent in a hex searching for evidence of a trail, a character with the Tracking or Hunting proficiency has a basic 5% chance of discovering a clue. At your discretion, clever or thorough search schemes may increase the chance to a maximum of 50%. All percentile rolls are made in secret by the DM.

- A successful roll means a clue is discovered. The clue indicates through which edge of the hex the trail leads toward the cave. If the PCs are in the cave hex, a successful roll means they find the cave.

- Felix knows the terrain and keeps a careful watch. Felix has a 75% chance of knowing when the PCs enter a hex adjacent to the cave's hex; he automatically knows when the PCs enter the cave's hex.

- At any time when PCs are in the cave's hex, Felix and Fulrad may ambush the PCs as described in "Ambush in the Forest," page 85, gaining automatic surprise. They may also ambush the PCs in any hex adjacent to the cave's hex, but surprise must be rolled for normally.

Suggested Tactics for Fulrad and Felix: To distract and discourage the search, Felix and Fulrad may use any of the following tactics at your discretion:

- Sniping: In any hex adjacent to the cave, Felix gains automatic surprise with two bow shots from cover at medium range. He always shoots at the least armored character. In the following round he withdraws, taking advantage of terrain to move without being seen and with-



out leaving a trail. The PCs may get a glimpse of him and know the direction from which the arrows are fired (which should be misleading), but they do not under any circumstances get a chance to return fire. Felix can snipe no more than once per day.

- **Felix's Night Camp Raid:** If the PCs build a campfire, Felix moves within close range and shoots two bow shots at an exposed individual, preferably someone on watch. As in sniping above, he immediately withdraws, leaving no trail and permitting no chance of return fire. If the PCs keep the campfire going, he returns and attacks again in the same fashion an hour later.

- **Fulrad's Night Camp Raid:** Fulrad summons eight wolves and sends them to attack the camp. He then moves close enough to cast a *continual darkness* spell on the scene of the combat. In addition to rendering missile fire impossible and giving a -4 penalty to all melee combat within the area of effect, players should be encouraged to role-play terror, since the darkness is obviously supernatural and unlike anything they've ever experienced before. Fulrad, however, is not skilled at concealing his trail like Felix. If by a stroke of luck the PCs guess which direction to pursue, Fulrad uses a second *continual darkness* spell to confound pursuit, then flees to the river gorge. At night it is impossible to follow his trail, but in the morning PCs with Hunting or Tracking proficiencies have a 50% chance per hour that they search to find Fulrad's trail. Further, once found, this trail leads directly to the cave. If the PCs follow this trail to the cave, Felix and Fulrad ambush as described in "Ambush in the Forest" later on in this chapter, but they do not automatically gain surprise; roll for surprise normally.

- **Full-Scale Night Camp Ambush:** If you choose, Felix and Fulrad may take advantage of darkness—and Fulrad's spell abilities—to attack the PCs in camp as described in "Ambush in the Forest." Fulrad would only attempt this if he thought he had a good chance of killing every PC in the party; otherwise he would prefer to hope that the PCs will fail to find the cave and abandon their search. A pitched battle is the last thing Fulrad wants.

Concluding the Search: The logical conclusion of an extensive search for the cave will be

one of the following:

- The PCs fail to find the cave, abandon their search, and head for Fabelhaft. The only adjustments necessary to the village and manor encounters are according to the date. If the day is Christmas Eve, no changes are necessary. If the day is Christmas, there is a Christmas feast but no giant boar. The village and manor are astir with the rumors of Father Fulrad's disappearance. If the day is after Christmas, the PCs may be greeted by an armed search party from the manor led by Thunar, Dolan's eldest son; they are initially suspected in Father Fulrad's disappearance. In the heightened tension of the circumstances, the PCs receive a chilly, even hostile welcome from Thunar.

- The PCs fail to find the cave, abandon their search, and return to Eigenmachtig. Berta commands them to return and find her husband. The PCs arrive in Fabelhaft after Christmas. They are greeted by an armed search party led by a suspicious, hostile Thunar as described in the previous paragraph.

- The PCs find the cave, and Felix and Fulrad ambush them as described in "Ambush in the Forest" later in this chapter, leading to the conclusion of the scenario.

The Village of Fabelhaft

See the "Scene of the Struggle" map.

The obvious trail leads through open woodlands to a road where the hard-packed surface leaves no hint of footprints and only occasional marks of hoofs and cartwheels. To the north the road leads toward the nearby village of Fabelhaft and Count Dolan's manor, and beyond that toward distant Duren and Aix-la-Chapelle. To the south the road leads several miles to a bridge across the river gorge and farther south toward distant Echternach Abbey and Trier. A successful Tracking proficiency check indicates that the most recent cart and hoof signs point toward Fabelhaft. PCs heading north quickly find encouraging evidence that the heavily laden cart has passed this way. PCs headed south travel as far as the wooden bridge over the river gorge without finding any further signs of recent cart travel. The forester strongly suggests going north.



As they approach Fabelhaft through the surrounding fields, PCs see many peasants bustling about. The smell of baking bread and special Christmas pastries is in the air. A number of people are gathered outside the parish church, which is decorated for the holiday. In particular, several men and women stand at the church front door speaking in animated gestures with the parish priest.

As the PCs approach, all the villagers stop what they are doing to stare and point. The arrival of a strange party of noble warriors at Christmastime is a very unusual event, and it could mean anything. Mutterings and rumors like "Saxon uprising, you bet! Call to muster!" or "Heavens! The king is coming for Christmas! And not a word of warning!" are heard among the crowd as they swarm out to the road to examine the visitors.

If the PCs initially do not mention Brego, the boar, or the cart, and inquire instead about local news, a peasant boy quickly tells them that three peasants are missing in the night, and no one knows where they went. If the PCs immediately tell about their missing lord, the peasants instinctively keep quiet and are evasive if questioned, since they know nothing good can come of these questions.

If questioned directly, the parish priest willingly explains that the peasants disappeared without a trace from their homes last night. If the PCs directly question the families of the missing peasants, most family members are reluctant to admit that they occasionally slip out at night to poach on the count's land. One wife, however, admits that her missing husband occasionally slipped out at night, but that she never asked him what he did, since she didn't want to know.

The three surviving peasants who accompanied Felix and Fulrad stay out of sight to avoid being questioned. There might be clues hidden among these three peasants' possessions (perhaps small tokens stolen from Brego's body), but the PCs have no right to question peasants under Dolan's protection. Dolan and his three sons immediately arrive in a dangerous mood if a peasant comes to the manor complaining of mistreatment by strange warriors.

The village encounter permits the PCs to role-

play interactions with the peasants and parish priest, but no important clues to Brego's death can be found without Count Dolan's aid and consent. If Dolan permits or assists in questioning all the peasants about the matter, the three guilty peasants are skilled liars (as poachers must be). Though the PCs may have reason to suspect that these peasants know something they are not telling, no direct evidence or testimony can be obtained to reveal what has happened to Brego.

Invitation to the Christmas Eve Feast

See the diagram of Dolan's manor and the profiles of the count and his retainers.

The outer gate is open, but the inner gate is closed. If asked, any peasant will run to the manor to announce the arrival of noble visitors; otherwise, the PCs may approach the door to the entrance hall directly and knock or otherwise announce their arrival. In time a servant arrives at the entrance hall door and asks the party's business. The servant then asks the party to wait while he informs his lord of the arrival of guests.

The party waits for a very long 15 minutes. Finally Thunar, the count's eldest son, appears at the door. Thunar is very courteous; regardless of what the servant or other peasants have told him about the purpose of the PCs' visit, he behaves as though unpopular, poor, and socially clumsy relatives have arrived unannounced and must be treated with formal hospitality. He insists that the party join the family for the Christmas Eve banquet that evening. He is careful not to offend PCs by belittling the gravity of their problems, and he generously offers them any physical aid they might request (e.g., a group of men to search for Brego). He insists that nothing should be done in haste, and that he and his father will give all matters their complete and careful consideration, but that it is impossible at present to interrupt the preparations for the Christmas feast.

He firmly refuses to discuss or consider any specific charges, and he treats Brego's disappearance as a troubling incident but not immediately important.

Thunar carefully avoids directly accusing the



PCs of any crime or social offense in entering Dolan's lands uninvited, but he implies by his manner that the PCs are intruding where they have no right to intrude and that their host is bending over backward to show how sensible, understanding, and fair he is. If the PCs are crude enough to directly or indirectly suggest that Count Dolan, his retainers, or peasants may have caused Brego harm, Thunar maintains his calm poise, though he becomes more icily polite, insisting that such charges must be made formally to the count. Unfortunately, the count is unable to grant a formal audience at this time; the earliest that a court could be called to consider the matter would be in a week's time.

Now what?

The PCs may accept Count Dolan's hospitality, thinking it an opportunity to meet the count and his retainers and snoop around. Once the PCs agree to accept the invitation to the banquet, Thunar assigns them to guest lodgings attached to the banquet hall, and he assigns three or four serving boys and girls to attend them. Thunar politely suggests that it would be unwise to go anywhere unattended, and pointedly directs the serving boys and girls to stay with the PCs at all times.

The PCs may refuse Count Dolan's hospitality, but if they insist on continuing to search for Brego on Dolan's land, Thunar politely but firmly refuses. He points out that the PCs have no right to seek justice on Count Dolan's lands without the count's consent, and he also manages to imply that retainers of Count Brego actually have no right to even be on Count Dolan's lands, according to the king's decree.

Continued insistence on searching Dolan's lands forces Thunar to withdraw as quickly as possible and bar the door. Thunar then sounds an alarm, summons his father and brothers, sends messengers to muster the peasant militia, and makes plans to arrest, capture, or kill the PCs. If the PCs leave immediately before Thunar organizes the militia, the PCs may return to the river gorge and search for Brego. If they find Brego and Fulrad, Dolan and Thunar will forgive the PCs' rude and illegal disregard of the count's authority over his lands. If the PCs wait around and get into combat with Dolan, his sons, and the militia, the PCs have become out-

laws. Whether or not they survive or escape Dolan's forces, the PCs can look forward to a trial for treason if apprehended. Blinding awaits them if convicted of treason; blinding and execution await if they are convicted of killing the count or any of his sons.

Snooping Around the Manor: Once having accepted the invitation to the banquet, the PCs may poke around the manor looking for clues in the guise of getting a tour from the servants attending them. In the process they may meet any of the manor's NPCs, with the exceptions of Count Dolan, his wife Alvina, Felix the forester, and Father Fulrad, who avoid contact with PCs on purpose. In addition, they may meet any number of cooks, servants, and manor craftsmen and laborers. These improvised role-playing encounters let the PCs learn about the various important NPCs at the manor. In addition, there are several significant things that may be discovered.

The most important is that the giant boar that Brego killed is roasting on a spit in the yard behind the kitchen. The DM can lead the PCs to this clue at any time by noting the lovely smell of roasting pork in the air. (Alternatively, the DM may leave this revelation to the banquet, when the roast boar is brought before the guests.) The cooks note that the forester, Felix, brought the magnificent beast in that morning and offered it for the Christmas feast. No one but Felix and the cooks know about the giant boar. The PCs may search in vain for Felix; they are told he is probably out hunting for fresh game for tonight's table. If the PCs report the discovery of the boar to Thunar or any of Dolan's family, they express polite interest, promise to ask Felix about it as soon as he returns, and promptly forget about it.

If the PCs are thorough and persistent in their poking about, they may learn that only four major figures at the manor manage to avoid meeting them personally: Dolan, Alvina, Felix, and Fulrad. The PCs may infer that they are all guilty of something, but in fact only Fulrad and Felix avoid the PCs out of guilt.

Felix and Fulrad have gone into hiding at the river gorge, where they intend to ambush anyone who comes looking for them. Felix successfully avoids leaving any trace of his and Fulrad's



path to the river gorge; all attempts to track Felix or Fulrad from the manor are futile.

Count Dolan and Alvina are in their private quarters where they have left strict orders that they are not to be disturbed. Dolan is furious that Brego or Brego's retainers have stepped on his lands despite the king's decree. Count Dolan is a good, old-fashioned war lord; his idea of justice would be to kill the PCs for their trespass on his land. The sensible Alvina and Thunar have prevailed upon Dolan to control his temper and to let Thunar handle the matter, but neither Alvina nor Thunar trust Dolan's restraint. Thus they are keeping him away from the PCs.

The Christmas Eve Banquet

The banquet begins at compline (9 PM) in the banquet hall. The room is decorated with greens, holly, and colorful ribbons; a minstrel recites poetry to quiet musical accompaniment. Three tables are set: two long trestle tables facing one another with a short table across the bottom ends of the long tables, forming a "U."

Along the right-hand trestle table are seated all the manor's servants (along with Brego's forster, Warnar, who accompanied the PCs). Along the left-hand trestle table are the lord's six children and the PC guests. At the short table are places for Count Dolan and Lady Alvina in the center, with two places at either side of them, one reserved for Father Fulrad, the steward and chaplain, the other reserved for any priest accompanying the PCs.

The count's male children are seated with the eldest closest to the count's table. If there are any eligible female PCs, they are seated alternately at the left of the eldest males of the Dolan family. If there are no female PCs, or not enough to alternate between Dolan's sons, Dolan's daughters are seated at their brothers' left hands. Then, farther to the left, the male PCs are placed in descending order of distinction (as perceived by Thunar, who makes all such judgments on seating). The intent is to seat the eldest children of Dolan as close as possible to their father's table, to alternate eligible female visitors close to Dolan's male offspring, and to give Dolan's daughters (Gisla, Judith, and Adelaide) either social precedence or, if Thunar deems any PC socially

significant enough, a suitable PC dinner companion. As DM, seat the party to create the greatest possible opportunity for conversation and conflict between the PCs and Dolan's offspring.

The following events ought to occur during the banquet in the order presented. Other events may occur spontaneously as you or your players invent them.

1. *Seating the Guests:* The servants' table is filled first, then the table for the PC guests and Dolan's children; any PC priest is seated at the head table to await the arrival of the count and his wife. Finally, after suitable delay and fanfare, Count Dolan and Lady Alvina arrive. Everyone stands and cheers the lord and lady's entrance, and the lord asks a priest for a benediction. Dolan notices with some puzzlement that his chaplain, Fulrad, is missing from the feast (neither Fulrad nor Felix appear for the banquet, and their empty places are conspicuous), but he smoothly turns to any PC priest or to Thunar and asks for a prayer and blessing for the feast.

2. *The Starting Courses:* Plenty of food and ale is served, and servants stand at the wall behind each table to get whatever the guests require. During this period all the Dolan children are well-mannered and more or less polite, and they make pleasant conversation with their dinner companions.

3. *The Count Leaves and Returns:* Visibly annoyed, partway through the feast Dolan leaves the table and the hall. He returns in a few minutes, still fuming, but politely adjusting his mask of social propriety. He has gone out to inquire after the absence of his steward and chaplain, and he has been informed that Fulrad is inexplicably missing and nowhere to be found. He has returned angry and puzzled, but resolved to leave the matter for later.

4. *The Main Courses and the Serious Drinking Begin:* All Dolan family members, with the exception of Thunar, begin to eat and drink with abandon. Fardruf, Dolan's second son, begins to needle various PCs and casually challenges them to minor contests of eating, drinking, witty banter, and accounts of honor, courage, skill, and prowess. Colmar, the third son, immediately has more to drink than he ought; he is either exceptionally friendly or exceptionally touchy and



hot-tempered, according to whether PCs treat him with friendliness or hostility. Gisla begins a campaign to either seduce or embarrass a suitably gullible PC. Adelaide drives her dinner companions mad with idle and incessant chatter; she is obviously headed toward embarrassing drunkenness. Judith is initially reserved, but warms to anyone who treats her with respect or genuine friendship. Thunar is carefully cool but hospitable, and he is clearly keeping an eye on his siblings and the PCs.

5. *The Roast Boar Arrives*: The servants bring in the Christmas boar, causing an instant surprise and sensation. Never has so huge and succulent a boar been presented to the count. The count is genuinely impressed and pleased, and he loudly claps and asks, "To whom do I owe thanks for this fine boar? Let him speak up, and may he ask me for a generous reward!" Unless the PCs speak, there is a silence that grows uncomfortably long. The count becomes impatient and demands to know where the boar came from. No one in the hall seems to know, so the count once again stalks out of the hall to question the cooks. Lady Alvina rescues the awkward moment by entreating everyone to dig in and enjoy the fine Christmas boar.

If the PCs try to bring up the matter of Brego and the boar with Count Dolan at this point, Count Dolan, already irritable, may snap and challenge the PCs one and all to a duel. Lady Alvina will try to intervene as a peacemaker; Thunar will intervene as a fierce and threatening defender of the hospitality of the feast. If the PCs and Dolan and his sons come to blows here, the scenario must end disastrously in the rekindling of the Dolan-Brego feud at the very least and may result in death or outlawry for the player characters. Sensible PCs will recognize that offending against their host's hospitality is a serious crime and a poor testament of their character. Reckless, impulsive, or proud PCs may trigger an immediate and disastrous climax to the whole adventure.

6. *The Post-Feast Show*: The feast has reached its dramatic climax and begins to decline into a loud party fueled by overindulgence in ale. Lady Alvina and most of the servants leave the banquet hall, but Lady Alvina encourages her children and guests to continue the party in her

absence. At this point both Fardruf and Colmar separately challenge some PCs to either a wrestling or drinking contest. Wrestling contests are judged as described in the *DMG* on pages 59-60.

Drinking contests are judged by the following procedure. For each round drunk by a character, roll a Constitution check. If the check succeeds, the character loses 2 HP. If the check fails, the character loses 1d4 + 2 hit points. The loss of hit points counts just as though it were real combat damage, but the injuries are neither serious nor permanent. The last character standing wins the drinking contest. Losers are unconscious for 1d4 hours and cannot be revived by herbal or magical healing. Furthermore, losers (those rendered unconscious by drink) are hung over the following day and suffer a -4 penalty to all combat and proficiency rolls. Gisla arranges a late-night rendezvous with a chosen PC; she arranges this rendezvous in a freezing barn and fails to arrive at the scheduled time.

If at any time the festivities seem about to get out of hand, Thunar steps in and guides his brothers to bed, graciously thanking the PCs for their company and pointedly suggesting that the PCs should also go to bed.

If questioned about the absence of Fulrad or Felix, all characters except for Dolan and Thunar are openly puzzled, acknowledging that it is very odd for both to be absent under such circumstances. Dolan rudely observes that it is nobody's business but his own, while Thunar is instinctively circumspect, assuming that Fulrad must have his reasons, but that the PCs ought not to trouble themselves on his account.

After the feast, however, Thunar also makes inquiries among the staff, then personally searches the manor for both Fulrad and Felix. He is beginning to suspect that something potentially embarrassing to the family is going on, and he wants to find out about it before the player characters do.

Count Dolan and His Household (NPC Profiles)

Count Dolan: AC 8 unarmored; AC 2 armored; MV 12; F12; hp 90; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 + 3; ML 15; AL LN; Riding proficiency check 15; Mount of High-spirited quality, MV 32



An old man at 57 but still in fighting form, Dolan looks and acts like the lord of all he surveys. He earned his present power and influence as a young man in Pepin's service against the Saracens, when his martial prowess and courage endeared him to his men and his superiors. Neither Dolan's advisors nor the loyal folk of his county nor Charlemagne are aware of the decline of his grasp of government and estate management, so skillfully have his wife and steward advised and manipulated his judgments. Unaware of his role as beloved figurehead, Dolan is proud, impulsive, and overbearing, as he believes a gentleman should be. He can also be generous and forgiving to those loyal to him.

Lady Alvina (no statistics necessary). Count Dolan's wife, Alvina is 14 years her husband's junior. She is energetic, shrewd, and ambitious, skilled at stewardship and statecraft. She plays the role of a fashionable simpleton and works through her husband and his children, intelligently manipulating them toward her ends. She recognizes her husband's limited intelligence, dim grasp of statecraft, and impulsive temper; she handles him carefully to preserve his current power and influence.

Father Fulrad: AC 10 unarmored; AC 4 armored; MV 12; C10; hp 65; THAC0 14; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 15; AL NE; Spells (6/6/3/3/2): *cause fear, cause light wounds (x2), darkness, pass without trace, sanctuary; charm person or animal (x2), enthrall, hold person (x2), withdraw; call lightning, continual darkness, feign death; animal summoning I, spell immunity, undetectable lie; cause critical wounds, commune*

Father Fulrad, Dolan's steward, chaplain, and chancellor, is a dynamic villain who was formerly a true neutral, but is now on his way down toward chaotic evil. A gifted scholar and theologian in his youth and well respected in York, England, where he was schooled, Fulrad began his service to Dolan pleased to be able to guide and temper the count's judgments and actions toward more enlightened and humanistic policies.

Fulrad, however, believes himself to have been regularly visited by an angel whom he initially believed to be a miraculous messenger of divine inspiration. This angel has told Fulrad to keep his visits secret and has offered visions of the future along with access to powerful magical

spells as a sign of divine favor. On some level Fulrad now realizes that he is being guided and supported not by an angel, but by some other sort of powerful spirit, but he does not consciously admit this to himself.

As DM, you may decide what Fulrad's "guardian angel" actually is. If the PCs somehow discover the source of Fulrad's unusual priest abilities, they may reasonably conclude that Fulrad is in the thrall of some servant of the Great Fiend, but some witch, sorcerer, or an independent ancient pagan spirit might also be responsible.

Felix the Forester: AC 10 unarmored; AC 8 armored; MV 12; F6; hp 45; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 + 2 (bow)/1d4 + 2 (dagger); ML 15; AL LN

Felix is a good person and a good forester, though he's quiet and solitary by nature, and no one claims to know him well. Felix earnestly believed Brego to be a poacher and trespasser when he slew him. Felix is a shrewd forest fighter, always aiming at the character with the poorest armor, attacking by surprise and swiftly withdrawing, concealing his route, before he can be spotted or pursued. Fulrad arranges to murder Felix and frame him with Brego's death.

Thunar: AC 8 unarmored; AC 2 armored; MV 12; F7; hp 55; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8 + 4 (sword)/1d6 + 4 (light lance); ML 15; AL LN; Riding proficiency check 17

The eldest son of Count Dolan and Alvina has inherited both his father's warrior traits and his mother's wit and social skills. He has also inherited his father's temper and his mother's ambition, but he keeps them both under control. He wants to be an even more powerful and renowned count than his father—not out of greed or lust for power, but because he simply wishes to use his god-given talents to their fullest. He is exceptionally fond and protective of his parents and siblings, and he cannot be easily tricked into fighting when wit and diplomacy would serve him better.

Fardruf: AC 10 unarmored; AC 4 armored; MV 12; F3; hp 20; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 + 3 (sword)/1d6 (light lance); ML 12; AL LN; Riding proficiency check 14

The second son of Dolan and Alvina has most of the charm and twice the good looks of



Thunar, but he has been spoiled and has done nothing to improve on his inherited abilities. He is always in Thunar's shadow; though outwardly respectful of Thunar, he secretly resents his brother's greater status.

Colmar: AC 9 unarmored; AC 3 armored; MV 12; F2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+1 (sword)/1d6 (light lance); ML 15; AL LN; Riding proficiency check 15

The third son of Dolan and Alvina, Colmar is a born fighter, courageous, generous, and likeable, but he is self-centered and not particularly clever. He tends to excess in all emotions; he either hates or adores, and he always exaggerates the intensity of his own and other's feelings.

Gisla (no statistics necessary). The eldest daughter of Dolan and Alvina is intelligent, good-looking, and bored. Gisla amuses herself by tormenting men and by establishing dominance over women. She controls men by her feminine wiles; women she controls by a more subtle application of status and psychology.

Judith (no statistics necessary). The second daughter of Dolan and Alvina is independent, rebellious, and imaginative; Judith is the black sheep of the Dolan family. Skeptical and cynical, she is at first cool and suspicious of strangers, but she responds to sincere respect and interest.

Adelaide (no statistics necessary). The third daughter of Dolan and Alvina is sweet, scatterbrained, and impressionable. Adelaide is kind and generous to all, particularly with her ever-flowing stream of aimless babble. Though she is always eager to be of help, such help is often a great burden on its beneficiary.

The Morning After

When the PCs rise in the morning, they are invited to breakfast with Dolan and the family. At breakfast Thunar offers to accompany the PCs in a search for Brego, so long as they do not leave until after Christmas morning mass and so long as they can return for the evening Christmas feast.

After breakfast, the family and PCs go directly to the chapel, where they discover that Fulrad is still missing. A PC priest, if available, is asked to conduct the services; immediately af-

terward, Thunar comes to the PCs, admits that he is concerned about Fulrad's disappearance, and suggests that they set out at once to search for him. Thunar is mounted and armed for combat, and he brings two peasant guides on foot and armed with bows. Thunar suspects that Fulrad and Brego's disappearances may be connected, so he is eager to examine any trail leading from the site where the PCs believe that Brego may have been slain.

Ambush in the Forest

PCs searching the trail toward the river eventually run into an ambush staged by Father Fulrad and Felix.

DM Note: PCs searching the trail toward the river after the Christmas Eve feast are accompanied by Thunar and two peasant guides. When ambushed, Thunar concentrates on protecting his peasant companions and expects the PCs as warriors to be able to defend themselves.

Fulrad's Ambush: See the "The Ambush" map. Felix begins firing from hard cover (behind tree trunks) when the PCs come in range. After two rounds of missile fire from Felix, the five bears magically summoned by Fulrad rush through the woods to attack the PC party as indicated.

Black Bears (5): AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 24; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1d3/1d3/1d6 (paw hits for 18 or better do additional damage of 2d4)

While the bears attack the party, Fulrad casts a *call lightning* spell, blasting Felix to death with a lightning bolt (which the PCs certainly hear, even if they do not see exactly where it strikes). Fulrad then hastens back to the cave where the bodies of the three dead peasants and Brego's body, horse, and possessions are concealed, leaving an obvious trail of broken branches, disturbed piles of leaves, and other marks in the undergrowth that anyone can follow, even without a Tracking or Hunting proficiency.

A Deceptive Solution to the Mystery

In the cave Fulrad slashes the throats of Brego and the peasants. He then slashes the throat of Brego's horse, killing it, and beheads a black cock. Taking the blood from the horse and cock,



he splatters it upon a rune-inscribed rock he has previously prepared to simulate the evidence of a witchcraft ceremony. He then casts two *cause wounds* on himself, making the wounds appear as though he has been struck from behind by a heavy object. He then lies down among the bodies of Brego and the peasants and casts a *feign death* on himself.

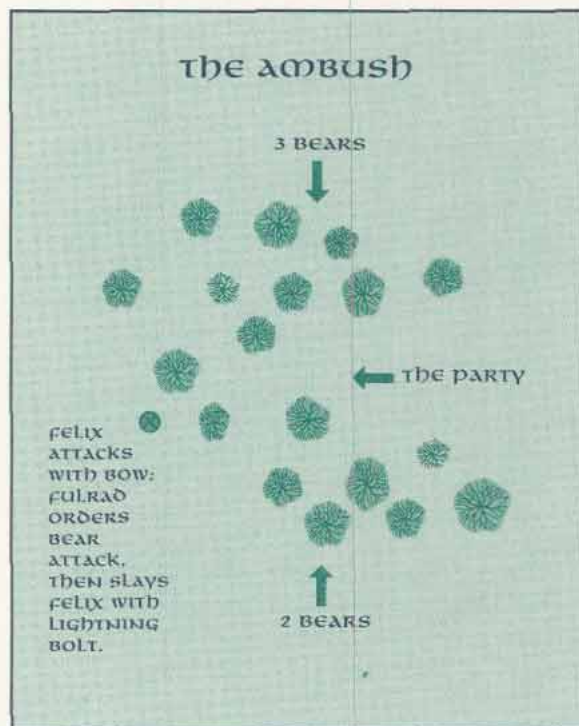
PCs who survive the bear attack will certainly discover Felix's blasted body and an obvious trail back toward the river gorge and the cave. Do not tell the players that the trail is of a single person and leads away from Felix's body unless the trail is specifically examined in detail, or if the PCs specifically mention that they are looking for number and direction of travelers along the trail.

When they follow the trail back to the cave, they discover the bodies of Brego, the three peasants, and Fulrad, along with Brego's dead horse and his possessions, the slain black cock, and the blood-stained, rune-inscribed rock. Fulrad waits until he has been definitely identified as dead, then after a period of time he moans and twitches, revealing that he is miraculously not dead after all. He pretends to be delirious unless magically or otherwise healed, when he appears to feebly recognize his surroundings. After a plausible time to recover, he tells the following story.

Fulrad explains that early that morning he had seen Felix bring the giant boar to the kitchen. Fulrad asked Felix where the boar came from, and Felix replied in a curiously evasive way that the boar was a Christmas gift from heaven. Fulrad was puzzled and persisted in questioning Felix, but Felix remained evasive and left abruptly, claiming he had important affairs to attend to. Fulrad impulsively followed Felix outside the manor and down a game trail. Fulrad says he doesn't remember what happened after that.

Fulrad plays dumb about all recent events until other PCs or NPCs report these events to him. He does not recognize the cave he's in, the bodies, or anything else in the cave. He leaves it to other PCs or NPCs to suggest a chain of events that might explain the death of Brego and Fulrad's disappearance.

Felix, of course, must have been a witch or a servant of a Dark Power. The dead cock and



blood-splattered, rune-inscribed rock are the most obvious evidence, and superstitious faithful folk will immediately see the bolt of lightning that killed Felix as a miraculous judgment from Heaven. It is not clear how the peasants or Brego were killed, but the assumption is that they were unholy sacrifices for evil powers. The giant boar and the bears are also assumed to have been witchy sendings under Felix's control.

Fulrad does not suggest any of these interpretations; in fact, he goes out of his way to dismiss the notion that Felix was a worshiper of evil. He admits that the evidence is strong, but he claims to suspect instead that Felix was the unwilling puppet of some more powerful evil being. Fulrad insists that the cave and nearby forest be searched for evidence of another evil creature's comings and goings.

Resolving the Adventure

Thunar and Count Dolan are quick to accept the hypothesis that Felix was the tool of an evil power and that Brego was killed by Felix, perhaps with the aid of another evil being. Thunar



persuades Count Dolan that Brego did not come on Count Dolan's lands voluntarily, but only as a result of being compelled or ensorcelled by some evil enchantment. Count Dolan therefore is happy to graciously grant that there has been no breach of the king's decree in the PCs' trespass. He henceforth treats the PCs cordially, expressing sympathy and horror over the manner of their lord Brego's death. Dolan admits that he hated Brego in life, but says that he would not wish such a death even on his worst enemy.

The PCs may discover indications that contradict the above hypothesis and point toward Fulrad's guilt. For example, the PCs may question any of the corpses under *Speak with Dead* spells. Also, three peasant accomplices survive as live eyewitnesses to the killing of Brego. In addition, the obvious trail leading to the cave from Felix's lightning-blasted body may be discovered upon close examination to be a single pair of footprints, and headed away from Felix's body, not toward the body, as might be expected if they were Felix's footprints.

However, for political reasons, both lay and Church officials find it convenient to believe that Felix and an unknown evil mentor are responsible. Conversely, no one would find it convenient or plausible to suspect Fulrad of any complicity in the killing. Fulrad's reputation is beyond reproach, and Count Dolan and Fulrad's Church superiors are powerful enough to suppress any accusations aimed at Fulrad, regardless of the quality of the evidence.

Speak with Dead Special Effect: If you like, Fulrad may have been granted a special magical ability by his evil patron that permits him to block *Speak with Dead* spells. This magical ability essentially causes a premature separation of the spirit from the body, causing the *Speak with Dead* spell to work as though the creature had been dead longer than the maximum length of time for a successful casting. Further, a spirit torn away from its body before its natural time would be added support for the hypothesis that a great supernatural evil power played a part in the incidents of the scenario.

If this adventure is run as an isolated scenario, you may prefer to give the PCs a chance to confront Fulrad in an action climax. If Fulrad were

convinced that the PCs might be a danger to him, he could conceivably attempt to destroy them individually or collectively. Even a high-level character such as Fulrad has little chance against a party of PCs, but the odds could be evened by giving Fulrad some strong NPC or summoned assistance.

If this adventure is run as part of a campaign, Fulrad is an excellent continuing NPC villain, always appearing ostensibly as a PC ally, but always working secretly at cross purposes to foil or destroy the PCs. It is especially galling, and therefore dramatically effective, to constantly confront PCs with an NPC who must be treated publicly like a trusted friend and ally, but who is privately suspected of being a deadly enemy.

Rewards

If the PCs successfully discover Brego's corpse and provide a plausible explanation for his death, Charlemagne, on his return from Italy, grants the player character with highest status the lordship of Eigenmachtig on the behalf of Berta, Brego's widow. The player character does not receive Brego's former status of count; instead, Eigenmachtig is placed under the authority of Count Dolan, and the player character, Berta, and his companions are answerable to Dolan's authority. Further, the substantial increase in status for each PC is represented by an immediate gain of 10 pounds of silver.

If the PCs fail to discover Brego's corpse or account for his disappearance, they gain no increase in status or wealth. In addition, Count Dolan is granted sovereignty over Eigenmachtig, and Berta, Brego's widow, and the PCs are henceforth subject to Count Dolan.

Since this adventure offers relatively little in terms of treasure or combat experience points for very great risk, the following experience point bonus awards are suggested:

- For good role-playing, particularly in the village of Fabelhaft and Count Dolan's manor: award 5-10% of the PC's current XPs.
- For cautious and diplomatic handling of the tricky situations with Count Dolan and his sons: award 5% of the PC's current XPs.
- For shrewd analysis or guesses about the real explanations behind Brego's death, whether



the PCs are able to do anything about it or not; award 5-10% of the PC's current XPs.

The Church and Saxon Fire

While Charlemagne was in Rome over the winter of 773-74, the Saxons fell upon neighboring Frankish lands with a large army. The church at Fritzlar had been consecrated by Saint Boniface, who had prophesied that it would never be destroyed by fire.

Background

The PCs are at Eigenmachtig Manor when they receive word of the Saxon uprising across the Rhine. The "Player Briefing" section summarizes their mission and what they know about the settlement at Fritzlar.

The church is a simple timber one inside a stockade, along with the hall and stable of an aged lesser noble and five smaller huts for the colonists. Father Egfrid, the church's missionary priest, is an energetic, fervent apostle with visions of sainthood. Wigman is a gallant veteran with illusions of grandeur; his wife Hruoditrude is a middle-aged, pragmatic woman of common birth with coarse manners and good sense. The peasant colonists are four 0-level farmers and one 0-level blacksmith, who has six 0-level sons. They have no armor; their militia training simply enables them to take orders and wield their spears.

The stockade and two more huts are incomplete, with only 75% of the stockade finished. The church's modest treasures include silver plates, cups, a cross, and most valuable, a reliquary containing soil stained by the blood of Saint Boniface. The reliquary itself, made of gold and ornamented with gems, is worth 2,000 dp. The holy relic provides the effects of the 1st-level priest spell *sanctuary* to any priest of the Western Church within the confines of the church.

Player Briefing

The Saxons have been quiet for the preceding year, but late this winter they have risen in rebellion once again. Raids with sword and fire against Frankish settlements across the Rhine are

reported.

A royal messenger from Aix-la-Chapelle arrives from the mayor of the palace, who is in charge while King Charlemagne remains in Italy. You are charged with the responsibility of protecting the church mission at Fritzlar, its people, and the treasures of the church against the savage Saxons.

You must cross the Rhine at Cologne and take the road east into Saxony. Fritzlar lies three days along this road near the River Eder. Once in Saxony the road is poor. Since there are few secure settlements there, plan to make camp along the road.

The church at Fritzlar is a simple timber hall inside a stockade, along with the timber hall and stable of an aged lesser noble and several smaller huts for colonists.

The population of the church compound includes the venerable missionary priest, Father Egfrid; his two servants, the noble veteran Frankish warrior Wigman and his wife Hruoditrude; and 11 able-bodied men.

The church's treasures include silver plates, cups, a cross, and a reliquary containing soil said to be stained by the blood of the Martyred Boniface of Sainted Memory. The church itself was consecrated by Boniface, and a prophecy is attributed to him that the church shall never be burnt by fire.

The Road to Fritzlar

The player characters are well-armed and unlikely to invite attack along the road. The weather is poor, however, with alternating periods of raw cold and freezing rain. Once across the Rhine at Cologne, failed Survival proficiency checks indicate that no suitable camp can be made; each PC must pass a Constitution check or lose 1d3 hit points from exposure. As they approach Fritzlar, the weather becomes even wetter. This is difficult weather for mounted fighting, and the weather further complicates any plan to evacuate Fritzlar in case of attack, since the Saxons might easily pursue and attack the slow-moving refugee column delayed by the muddy roads.



Approaching the Settlement

As the PCs approach, they see the following things:

- The northwestern section of stockade is not completed.
- The fields around the settlement are very wet and covered with low stubble and brush. This is terrible terrain for mounted warfare. Each round of mounted combat requires a Riding check before attacking. If the check succeeds, normal movement and attack are possible; if failed by fewer than 5 points, no movement is possible; if failed by more than 5 points, both horse and rider go down for 1d4 points of damage each. Mounted Franks will be at the mercy of infantry—particularly if they have archers—in these conditions.
- The wooded hills to the northeast and northwest provide excellent cover for scouts to watch activity at the settlement.

The Problem

The Saxons greatly outnumber the defenders. The wet fields surrounding the compound are unsuitable for mounted combat. Because of their hit points and armor, the PCs can expect to handle Saxon raiders easily, but the people of the settlement are likely to die like flies if they try to defend the settlement, and a large enough mob of Saxons could combine to overbear and capture the PCs. Completing the stockade with a makeshift barricade might take 100-200 man-hours, but such an activity might only encourage the Saxons to attack immediately before the defenses are completed. At present, the size, location, even the existence of a nearby Saxon force is uncertain. The PCs will, of course, want to scout the neighborhood, but they should be aware of the desperate risk in engaging even a fraction of their small force. Moving into the forests nearby assures Saxon infantry and archers of terrain ideally suited to skirmishes with Frankish cavalry.

Unfortunately, evacuation is not much more promising. The only mounts in the settlement are the two horses belonging to Wigman; there are also two ox carts and oxen to pull them, but on the poor roads they would be desperately slow moving. Abandoning the stockade could

give the Saxons a slow-moving, highly vulnerable target to pursue and attack on the road. Worse yet, the priest, confident in the prophecies of Boniface, and the old veteran, stubborn and proud, absolutely refuse to evacuate. They might finally consent to the evacuation of the settlement's other inhabitants, but they refuse to leave under any circumstances. Egfrid further refuses to permit the PCs to carry away the church treasures for safekeeping.

Possible Solutions

Evacuation is a poor solution. Egfrid and Wigman could conceivably be evacuated against their will along with the church treasures, but defending the entire evacuating group successfully is almost impossible. In practical terms, rescuing the priests, nobles, and the church treasures is a limited victory of sorts, but hardly a heroic or honorable triumph.

Successful scouting of the Saxons and a determined series of raids directed at the weaker, less well-armored opponents can greatly improve the odds of defending the settlement. On the other hand, the loss of two or more player characters during such raids could be a disaster; the Saxon ability to direct all missile fire at a single target can be deadly. Even without scouting and raids, a defensive plan that shields the more vulnerable folk of the settlement and permits the better armored PCs to wreak havoc among the rank-and-file of the Saxons has a good chance of breaking Saxon morale. Challenging the leader of the Saxon forces to a personal combat to decide the fate of the settlement is another possible ploy, though considering the toughness of the Saxon leader, Abbi, it may not be a wise scheme.

Clever plans that exploit the superstitious fears of the Saxons, when combined with effective scouting, raids, and defense plans, assure the PCs of complete victory. Magic and Miracles, particularly if perceived as a sign of otherworldly divine powers, are certain to terrify and intimidate the Saxon rank-and-file.

Role-Playing the Inhabitants of Fritzlar

Four major NPCs provide numerous role-playing and problem-solving challenges for the



PCs: Father Egfrid, Wigman, Hruoditrude, and Mathfrid, the blacksmith's son. The other NPCs are less important and may be portrayed as cardboard stereotype figures or improvised as colorful supporting parts at your discretion.

Father Egfrid: AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; C3; hp 15; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 15; AL LG; Spells (4/3): *bless*, *cure light wounds* (x2), *protection from evil*; *augury* (x2), *resist fire*

Stubborn and fearless, Father Egfrid is certain that God will not forsake him and his church. He has complete faith in Boniface's prophecy that the church will be protected from Saxon fire. Even if he did have doubts, he would rather die than flee before the savage pagans.

Wigman: AC 10 unarmored; AC 4 armored; MV 12; F6; hp 20; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+3; ML 15; AL LG; Riding proficiency check 12

Wigman is a lovable but foolish old warrior. He has a completely unrealistic assessment of his own diminished combat skills and the actual courage and competence of the Saxons. Senior in years and campaign experience to the PCs, he expects to be placed in charge of the settlement's forces. All the other Fritslar folk instinctively follow his orders, no matter how unwise they may seem. If a PC questions Wigman's orders, Wigman challenges the PC to personal combat. If politely or forcibly convinced of his folly, Wigman becomes a humble and self-sacrificing hero.

Hruoditrude: AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1/2; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; ML 15; AL LG

Hruoditrude is a willful, vigorous woman in late middle age. Though accustomed to yielding to Wigman in major policy decisions, she actually manages most of the administrative affairs of the settlement, and the settlers look to her for guidance in the absence of Wigman. Hruoditrude has a much more practical and realistic grasp of the current problems than Wigman. If enlisted on the side of the PCs and common sense, she can persuade Wigman to listen to reason. During the defense of the settlement, she can be counted on to remember details the PCs forget, such as keeping fire-fighting materials close to hand and keeping noncombatants out of the line of fire.

Mathfrid: AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 15; AL LG

The son of the settlement's blacksmith, Unroch, Mathfrid admires the young PC warriors and longs to become a warrior himself. He is the first to volunteer for any scouting mission, boasting accurately of intimate knowledge of the surrounding lands.

Haido and Nanthar: AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1; hp 2,2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; ML 5; AL LG

Father Egfrid's servants are meek and timorous creatures who hate this frontier outpost and would love an excuse to return to civilization.

The Male Settlers (10): AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6,6,5,4,4,4,4,3,2,2; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 7; AL LG

Five husbands and five sons: Unroch, Otgar, Pepin, Odo, Old Warin, Young Warin, Sinbert, Ebbo, Machelm, and Amalwin.

The Female Settlers (10): AC 10 unarmored; MV 12; HD 1; hp 3,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,1,1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4; ML 5; AL LG

Five wives and five daughters: Olga, Ramona, Amelia, Leonarda, Erme, Velma, Alarice, Charlene, Lorraine, and Garnet.

The Saxons

The Saxons hope to plunder the church and manor of its silver and gold; in revenge for Charlemagne's bloody campaigns and his destruction of the Irminsul, they also hope to kill everyone in the settlement. Their chieftain, Abbi, is unconcerned when he hears of the arrival of the PCs to stiffen the defense, but his spiritual advisor, Cobbo, warns that the black priests are powerful sorcerers. The Saxons, awaiting the arrival of most of their troops, have carefully scouted and kept the settlement under continuous observation for the last two days. The bulk of Abbi's followers arrive tomorrow during the day, and the attack is scheduled for that night.

The Saxon camp is in a small hollow in the forest to the northwest, in a ravine cut by the small brook. Four well-concealed sentries guard the camp from scouting or ambush. If intruders approach, the sentries use bird calls to warn the



camp; if possible, the sentries remain hidden and attempt to backtrack and ambush intruders as they withdraw. If the camp is approached by intruders, the Saxons melt into the woods and count on bow fire to discourage attack. If the intruders are located, the 2nd-level fighters direct the farmers to pursue and attack or remain in defensive positions. Abbi, Cobbo, and the 4th-level fighter bodyguard avoid engagement, the better to observe and direct their troops.

Attacking the Settlement: Every Saxon farmer carries a torch during night attacks. The plan is for six groups of ten farmers (each led by a 2nd-level fighter) and the command group (consisting of Abbi, Cobbo, and the five 4th-level warriors) to sneak within bow range of the stockade but to stay beyond the range of the torch-lit stockade walls under cover of darkness. If the stockade is still incomplete, they approach the open section; otherwise they attack the wall opposite the gate.

When everyone is in place, three groups of farmers light their torches and charge while the other three groups provide covering bow fire. Once the first three groups are inside the stockade, they are to engage in combat or set fire to thatched roofs or other flammable targets. At the same time, the archers and the command group move forward to the walls—the archers to mass their fire against targets of opportunity, the command group to charge any strong pocket of resistance.

The Saxons are all aware of Boniface's prophecy, and they initially avoid approaching the church. If the attacks seems to be succeeding, then they head for the church and the treasure it promises.

Once engaged in battle, the Saxons do not roll morale checks until 50% of their force has fallen or they witness a significant magical event that in some way confirms the prophecy that the church and the settlement are protected by the powerful god of the Franks. Western Church priests asking for miraculous use of any spell involving light or producing effects that suppress fire are automatically answered favorably. One or more heroes withstanding mass attacks while mowing Saxons down like wheat may also seem like a supernatural intervention. A character protected by *endure heat*, *resist fire*, or *protec-*

tion from fire spells to smother flames with his own body should have an especially terrifying effect to the Saxons.

The Saxon Forces

Abbi (7th-level chief): AC 2; MV 12; F7; hp 65; THAC0 14; #AT 3/2; Dmg 1d8+4; ML 15; AL LN; Armed with a fine long sword, shield, and chain armor

Cobbo (3rd-level shaman): AC 7, MV 12; C3; hp 17; THAC0 20, #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 14, AL LN; Armed with short sword, shield, lighted torch, and leather armor; Spells (4/3): *cure light wounds* (x2), *cause fear* (x2); *augury*, *obscurement* (x2)

4th-level Fighters (5): AC 4; MV 12; F4; hp 32, 30, 27, 25, 21; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8+2; ML 14; AL LN; Armed with long sword, shield, short bow, and chain armor

2nd-level Fighters (6): AC 7; MV 12; F2; hp 19, 17, 15, 14, 12, 10; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 12; AL LN; Armed with spear, shield, short bow, lighted torch, and leather armor

0-level Farmers (60): AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp (roll each as needed); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6; ML 11; AL LN; Armed with spear, shield, short bow, lighted torch, and leather armor

Rewards

If the PCs successfully defend Fritzlär, its church, and treasures with minimal loss of life, each PC receives an XP bonus award of 10% of his current XP total, in addition to awards gained for killing Saxons. The Saxons, intimidated by the power of the Frankish god to protect his own shrines, abandon their raids and withdraw deep into Saxony. In gratitude, the bishop of Cologne also grants each PC the gift of 2 pounds of silver.

If the PCs successfully defend Fritzlär, its church, and treasures, but only at considerable cost in lives (i.e., a total of 50% of the settlers killed, or the death of four major PCs or NPCs), each PC receives an XP bonus award of 5% of his current XP total, in addition to awards gained for killing Saxons. The Saxons abandon their attacks on Fritzlär, but continue their raids on other Frankish settlements nearby.

If the PCs fail to defend Fritzlär and its



church, but rescue the church treasures with minimal cost in lives, each PC receives an XP bonus award of 5% of his current XP total, in addition to awards gained for killing Saxons. The Saxons, emboldened by the failure of Boniface's prophecy, set upon the isolated Frankish outposts all along the Rhine. Charlemagne must abandon his siege of Pavia and return at once to put down the Saxon revolt, and the reputations

of the PCs suffer.

If the PCs fail to defend Fritzlar, its church, the church treasures, or its people, the PCs receive no mission experience point bonuses. Further, the PCs as a group gain a reputation for foolhardiness, incompetence, or cowardice. When Charlemagne returns from Italy to quell the Saxon rebellion, the PCs are sent as colonists to the inhospitable Spanish or Eastern Marches.

Predesigned Player Characters

Brother Thierry

Priest (Nobleman Priest Kit)
Lawful Good
Level 4 (6,100 xp)
Male, 29 years old
5 feet tall, 188 pounds

Str 12	Dex 9	Con 14
Int 9	Wis 15	Cha 14
AC 4	THAC0 18	hp 18

Weapons: Mace, sling
Weapon Proficiencies: Mace, sling, club
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Religion, Local History, Healing, Language (Latin)
Spells: Five 1st, three 2nd

Lotho of Ardennes

Fighter (Noble Carolingian Warrior Kit)
Lawful Good
Level 4 (8,300 xp)
Male, 26 years old
6 feet tall, 192 pounds

Str 12	Dex 12	Con 10
Int 11	Wis 13	Cha 17
AC 4	THAC0 17	hp 25

Weapons: Fine long sword, lance, spear, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword, Spear, Short Bow, Light Lance (specialized: Attacks 3/2)
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Stewardship, Local History, Gaming

Frida of Ardennes

Fighter (Noble Carolingian Warrior Kit)
Chaotic Good
Level 4 (8,600 xp)
Female, 23 years old
5 feet tall, 148 pounds

Str 15	Dex 17	Con 15
Int 16	Wis 10	Cha 17
AC 1	THAC0 17	hp 32

Weapons: Fine long sword, lance, spear, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword (specialized: Attacks 3/2), Spear, Short Bow, Light Lance
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Local History, Hunting, Endurance

Louisa of Ardennes

Fighter (Noble Carolingian Warrior Kit)
Lawful Good
Level 4 (8,200 xp)
Female, 23 years old
5 feet 8 inches tall, 142 pounds

Str 15	Dex 17	Con 15
Int 16	Wis 16	Cha 15
AC 1	THAC0 17	hp 27

Weapons: Fine long sword, lance, spear, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword, Spear, Short Bow, Light Lance (specialized: Attacks 3/2)
Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Local History, Stewardship, Animal Lore, Weather Sense



Pinabel the Gascon

Rogue (Noble's Clerk Kit)

Chaotic Neutral

Level 5 (11,500 xp)

Male, 22 years old

6 feet 1 inch tall, 168 pounds

Str 11	Dex 18	Con 15
Int 17	Con 15	Cha 17
AC 3	THAC0 18	hp 23

Weapons: Fine long sword, dagger, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword, Bow, Dagger

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Language (Frankish), Fast-Talking, Etiquette

Alonzo the Moor

Fighter (Wilderness Warrior Kit)

Lawful Neutral

Level 4 (8,600 xp)

Male, 23 years old

6 feet 2 inches tall, 189 pounds

Str 17	Dex 17	Con 15
Int 11	Wis 13	Cha 6
AC 1	THAC0 17	hp 26

Weapons: Long sword, lance, spear
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword, Light Lance (specialized: Attacks 3/2), Spear

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Tracking, Hunting, Language (Frankish)

Einar the Dane

Fighter (Wilderness Warrior Kit)

Neutral Good

Level 4 (8,350 xp)

Male, 21 years old

6 feet 4 inches tall, 191 pounds

Str 15	Dex 11	Con 17
Int 9	Wis 10	Cha 15
AC 4	THAC0 17	hp 39

Weapons: Long sword, lance, spear, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword (specialized: Attacks 3/2), Light Lance, Spear, Short Bow

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Riding, Hunting, Seamanship, Navigation

Esica the Saxon

Fighter (Wilderness Warrior Kit)

Lawful Good

Level 4 (8,150 xp)

Male, 20 years old

6 feet 5 inches tall, 195 pounds

Str 18/30	Dex 16	Con 12
Int 8	Wis 12	Cha 8
AC 2	THAC0 17	hp 20

Weapons: Long sword, spear, short bow
Weapon Proficiencies: Long Sword (specialized: Attacks 3/2), Spear, Short Bow

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Hunting, Survival, Endurance, Language (Frankish)



Brother Thierry: The eldest son of Brego, Thierry is his father's chancellor and chaplain. A worldly scholar with deep spiritual values, he is something of a disappointment to his father, the warrior. Thierry was educated in York where he gained a respect for the ancient wisdom of the pagan classics. Thereafter he led the cloistered life of an academic, though he has served in the abbey hospices of St. Gall. He has gained a sensitivity to the central role of the church in protecting the weak, poor, and infirm. He believes the Church must provide a counterbalance to the rapacity of the ignorant, uneducated warrior-lords.

Lotho of Ardennes: Lotho is the second son of Brego and the heir apparent. A competent warrior and leader, this self-assured, charming, and persuasive young man has been raised to rule as his father's successor. Lotho's instinctively generous and noble impulses have won the hearts of his father's servants. His faithful adherence to his father's will has assured him of his right to succeed.

Frida of Ardennes: Sister of Lotho and Thierry, Frida is more aggressive and impulsive than her identical twin sister, Louisa. Frida styles herself as nobly chaste and virtuous in the Christian fashion, but in fact she cheerfully employs shrewdness, guile, or deceit when her will is crossed. She is a naive tomboy in romantic matters, but an inspired warrior in battle. Frida is also obsessively competitive; she finds it almost impossible to decline a dare or challenge.

Louisa of Ardennes: Sister of Lotho and Thierry, Louisa is more cautious and sensible than her twin, Frida. Where Frida is the typical, aggressive warrior maiden, Louisa is an excellent horsewoman and outdoorswoman, devoting less time to the sword. More practical and experienced than her sister in most things, Louisa is steady and reliable where her sister is impulsive and obsessive.

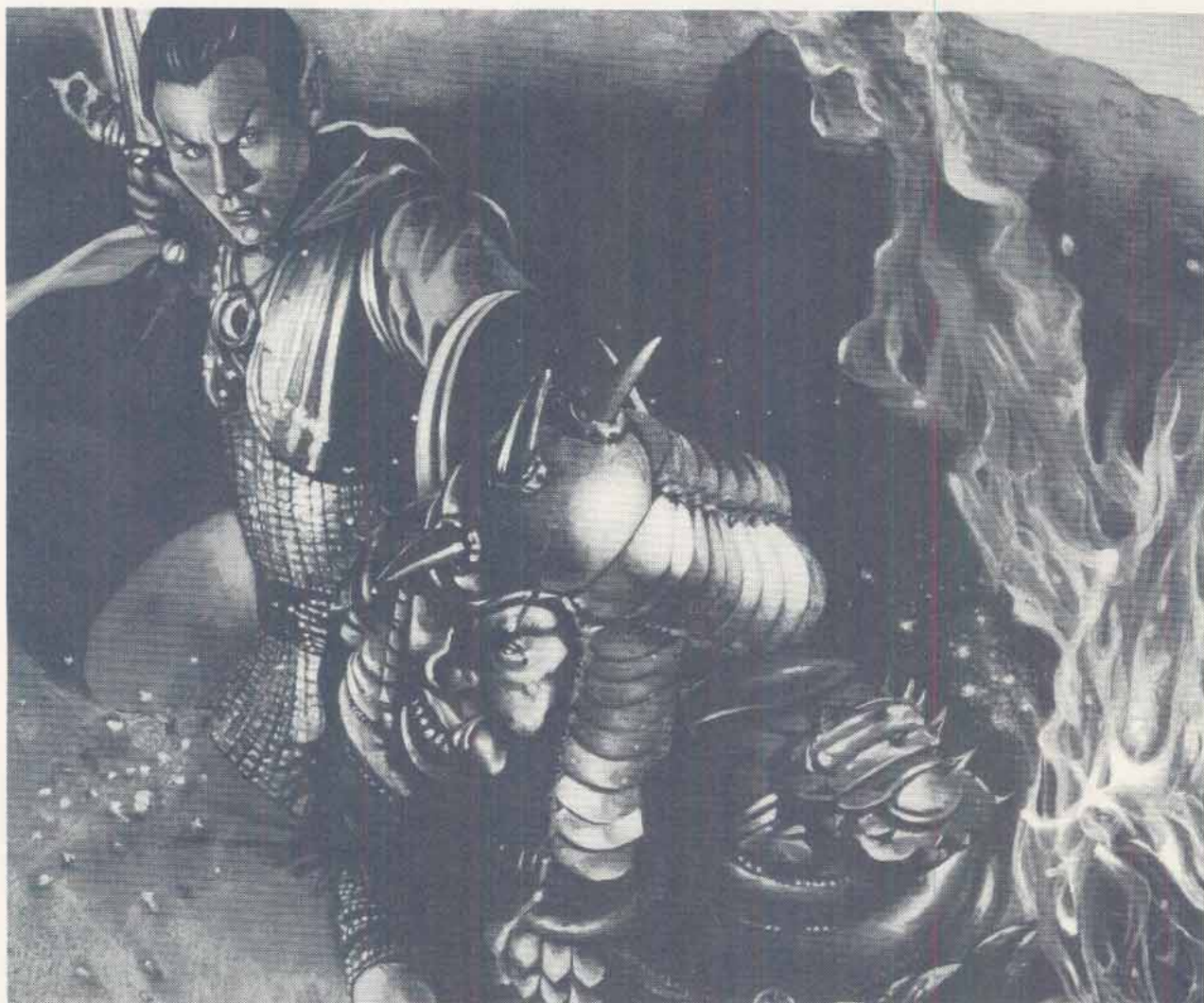
Pinabel the Gascon: The fifth son of Count Guillem of Gascony, Pinabel serves as clerk and seneschal to Brego. Pinabel's education and business sense are matched with a skill at handling a household's affairs; the prosperity of Brego's

holdings is largely the result of Pinabel's skilled management. Because he is a rather poor fighter, Pinabel is somewhat cynical about the vigorous, manly codes of the noble Christian Frank. Hunting and military campaigning are dreary, dirty work, and Pinabel finds the professed Christian piety of Frankish aristocrats a bit hypocritical.

Alonzo the Moor: Alonzo is the fourth son of Marsilius of Barcelona, a pagan Spanish king. He is a hostage of the truce between Charlemagne and Marsilius. Alonzo is a ferocious, strong warrior, but he is unfamiliar with Frankish and Western Church customs. What Alonzo respects most are skill in combat, fine horsemanship, courage, and daring. Finding all these things in Count Brego, and to some extent in his offspring and retainers, Alonzo is fairly happy and comfortable with his hostage status. He looks forward to winning glory and booty in battle.

Einar the Dane: Einar is the third son of a lesser Danish noble, given as hostage to Charlemagne as pledge of loyalty by the Danish king. He has been granted hospitality by Brego at the king's request. Einar is a lusty barbarian fighter with little of the polish of Frankish civilization. Loud, cheerful, hard-drinking, and violent, Einar's rash temper and touchy pride make him a difficult guest and companion at times. His close friend Esica the Saxon keeps the big Northman from getting into too much trouble and also tempers his anger.

Esica the Saxon: The son of a Saxon chieftain defeated and now subject to Frankish rule, Esica has been sent to Brego to learn the ways of the Franks. Esica is a recent convert to the Western Church and a sincere and pious believer in Christ's tenderheartedness and the future City of God, where all things shall be ruled by Christian virtue. Esica is a dedicated student of all modern and civilized Frankish ways. He is always eager to impress his hosts by his enthusiastic if clumsy attempts to ride, hunt, and fight like a Frankish warrior. Any Saxons not yet under Frankish dominion are likely to look with hatred upon Esica's acceptance of the conqueror's culture, and they may seek to do him harm.



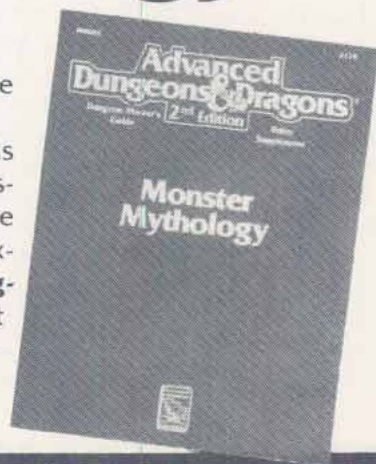
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