

by Mat Smith • images provided by Wizards of the Coast

EBERRON

Dragonmarks, Dragonshards, and Dynasties of Power

From the deepest pits of Khyber to the encircling Ring of Siberys, magic infuses the world of EBBRON. This all-encompassing magic is most strongly evidenced in two distinct ways: dragonshards and dragonmarks.

Dragonshards are translucent crystals and rocks shot through with glowing veins of pulsating arcane energy. Whether incorporated into a magical device, used to harness powerful elementals, or utilized to enhance the power of a dragonmark, these rare magical stones are highly sought after for their potent energy and seemingly limitless applications.

Dragonmarks are unique, arcane sigils that manifest on the skin of certain members of particular dynastic families, granting their bearers spell-like abilities. It is the power and influence derived from these strange hereditary markings that enable each of the dragonmarked houses to dominate their respective areas of trade.

THE DRAGONMARKED HOUSES OF KHORVAIRE

For centuries, the great dragonmarked houses have held unwavering control over industry and commerce throughout the continent of Khorvaire and beyond. With enclaves and emporiums scattered throughout the continent, the extended family of each of the dragonmarked houses actively maintains its dominance over trade regardless of political or economic turmoil—even as the continent plunged into the Last

War, the dragonmarked houses maintained their control over their respective trade guilds throughout the devastating conflict while remaining mostly neutral.

The control and influence of these dynastic houses stems from the hereditary mystic sigils that manifest on certain individuals within the family—the dragonmarks. These arcane markings grant their bearers limited but very useful magical abilities associated with the commerce and trade guilds the family controls. For example, some members of House Cannith manifest the Mark of Making, which confers magic powers to mend or create material goods, placing them in a position of control over the Tinkers' Guild and Fabricators' Guild. Of course, most members of the extensive dragonmarked houses do not carry a dragonmark. These unmarked members are generally skilled in crafts or talents related to the family's sphere of influence (such as becoming accomplished metalsmiths or artisans, in the case of House Cannith).

Each house utilizes dragonmarked and unmarked family members, as well as other unrelated retainers, to effectively run their various business endeavors. Dragonmarked guild members make use of their specialized spell-like abilities, while unmarked members handle the mundane aspects of the trade. For example, the Windwrights' Guild (controlled by House Lyrandar) places family members who bear the Mark of the Storm to conjure wind and other favorable weather conditions

to power their ships, while unmarked guild members fill out the rest of each vessel's ordinary crew compliment.

THE APPEARANCE OF DRAGONMARKS

Dragonmarks are intricate, colorful patterns that appear on the skin of seemingly random members of the dragonmarked families. On extremely rare occasions, an individual who is not a recognized member of a dragonmarked house will manifest a dragonmark, although this is usually the result of some past indiscretion rather than a miraculous happening. Regardless of whether a character is a manor-born scion, a distant relation, or an illegitimate child, any individual who is related by blood to a dragonmarked house may manifest a dragonmark at any point in his life.

Whether this mysterious event occurs at a character's birth or at her bicentennial, it grants only minor spell-like abilities. In game terms, this is the point at which a character has taken the Least Dragonmark feat (see Becoming a Dragonmarked Character). Over time, the power (and complexity of the design) of a character's dragonmark may be increased by taking the Lesser Dragonmark and Greater Dragonmark feats, as well as by selecting the dragonmark heir prestige class.

BECOMING A DRAGONMARKED CHARACTER

Your character can manifest a dragonmark at any point during the campaign, providing your character meets the prerequisites for taking the Least Dragonmark feat. The first qualification is based on your character's race, which must be one of the standard DUNGEONS & DRAGONS character races (human, dwarf, elf, gnome, half-elf, half-orc, or halfling). The second qualification (which may need your Dungeon Master's approval) is that your character must be related to an appropriate dragonmarked house. Because the dynasties of each of the dragonmarked houses reach far back into the distant past, it's not surprising that about one person in a hundred has some blood relation to a dragonmarked house. Once the prerequisites for selecting the Least Dragonmark feat are met, you must choose one of the abilities listed with your house's least mark and also gain a bonus to a particular skill related to your house's sphere of influence.

Least Dragonmark [General]

You have a least dragonmark.

Prerequisite: Member of appropriate dragonmarked race and house.

Benefit: You gain a least dragonmark and the use of one spell-like ability associated with the least dragonmark of your house. (An abbreviated list follows.)

A saving throw against your dragonmark spell-like ability has a DC of 10 + the level of the spell + your Chaisma modifier. Your caster level for your least dragonmark spell-like ability is 1 + your level in the dragonmark heir prestige class (if any).

- Least Mark of Detection (House Medani): *Detect magic* 2/day or *detect poison* 2/day; +2 bonus on Spot checks.
- Least Mark of Finding (House Tharashk): *Identify* 1/day, *know direction* 2/day, or *locate object* 1/day; +2 bonus on Search checks.
- Least Mark of Handling (House Vadalis): *Calm animals* 1/day, *charm animal* 1/day, or *speak with animals* 1/day; +2



HOUSE CANNITH

The humans of House Cannith carry the Mark of Making, which grants the power to mend or fabricate material goods. Unmarked members of House Cannith are well-to-do artisans and, less often, mundane tinkers. Members of their Tinkers Guild often travel as widely as more traditional tinkers, stopping in villages to repair goods as they go.



HOUSE THARASHK

House Tharashk is a family of half-orcs and humans originally from the region around the Shadow Marches. Dragonmarked members of the family bear the Mark of Finding, which bestows powers related to locating creatures or objects, making those who carry it useful as investigators or bounty hunters.



HOUSE JORASCO

The halflings of House Jorasco carry the Mark of Healing, which grants curative magical powers. Unmarked members of House Jorasco are expertly trained in the healing arts, as well as in fields such as alchemy and herbalism. House Jorasco operates the Healers' Guild, which controls both the mundane and magical healing trades.



- bonus on Handle Animal checks.
- Least Mark of Healing (House Jorasco): *Cure light wounds* 1/day or *lesser restoration* 1/day; +2 bonus on Heal checks.
- Least Mark of Hospitality (House Ghallanda): *Purify food and drink* 2/day, *prestidigitation* 2/day, or *unseen servant* 1/day; +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks.
- Least Mark of Making (House Cannith): *Make whole* 1/day, *mending* 2/day, or *repair light damage* 1/day; +2 bonus on Craft checks.
- Least Mark of Passage (House Orien): *Expeditious retreat* 1/day, *mount* 1/day, or *dimension leap** 1/day; +2 bonus on Survival checks. (*see the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*)
- Least Mark of Scribing (House Sivis): *Arcane mark* 2/day, *comprehend languages* 1/day, or *whispering wind* 1/day; +2 bonus on Decipher Script checks.
- Least Mark of Sentinel (House Deneith): *Mage armor* 1/day, *protection from arrows* 1/day, *shield of faith* 1/day, or *shield other* 1/day; +2 bonus on Sense Motive checks.
- Least Mark of Shadow (House Phiarlan or House Thuranni): *Darkness* 1/day, *disguise self* 1/day, or *minor image* 1/day; +2

- bonus on Gather Information checks.
- Least Mark of Storm (House Lyandar): *Endure elements* 1/day, *fog cloud* 1/day, or *gust of wind* 1/day; +2 bonus on Balance checks.
- Least Mark of Warding (House Kunderak): *Alarm* 1/day, *arcane lock* 1/day, *firetrap* 1/day, or *misdirection* 1/day; +2 bonus on Search checks.

In addition to the dragonmark feat tree (Least Dragonmark, Lesser Dragonmark, and Greater Dragonmark), other options, such as the Aberrant Mark feat and the heir of Siberys prestige class, offer characters dragonmarklike powers and abilities.

DRAGONMARK HEIR

The dragonmarked houses are a significant force in the politics and economics of Khorvaire, although their political influence is usually behind the scenes and often quite subtle. Perhaps as many as one person in a hundred has a blood connection to one of the twelve houses. Of these thousands, however, no more than half actually manifest a dragonmark. Even more rare are the individuals who demonstrate a natural ability to improve and use their dragonmark powers in ways

that go well beyond others in their houses. These exceptional individuals are dragonmark heirs.

Dragonmark heirs have the ability to improve the dragonmarks they have manifested, and to develop additional abilities related to their dragonmarks. Dragonmark heir NPCs fill a wide variety of roles within the dragonmarked houses. To some extent, they command a degree of respect from unmarked members of the house, but a more powerful mark does not necessarily equate to a position of leadership. The economic realities of Khorvaire demand leadership from those with a keen mind for business, which does not necessarily go hand in hand with a more powerful dragonmark.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the dragonmark heir.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dragonmark heirs gain no proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Lesser Dragonmark: A dragonmark heir manifests the lesser dragonmark of her house. She receives the Lesser Dragonmark feat as a bonus feat without having to meet the skill rank prerequisite.

House Status: A dragonmark heir

HOUSE LYRANDAR

The half-elves of House Lyrandar carry the Mark of Storm, which grants the power to control weather, primarily through the manipulation of clouds, wind, and rain. A character with this mark can create a localized drizzle or a powerful rainstorm, a light breeze or enough wind to propel a ship across the sea.



REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a dragonmark heir, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Member of appropriate dragonmarked race and house.

Skills: 7 ranks in any two skills.

Feats: Favored in House, Least Dragonmark.



CLASS SKILLS

The dragonmark heir's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Perform (Cha), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (n/a), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

THE DRAGONMARK HEIR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	Lesser Dragonmark, house status
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	Additional action points, improved least dragonmark
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Improved lesser dragonmark
4th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Greater Dragonmark
5th	+3	+4	+4	+4	Improved greater dragonmark

uses her level in this class as a bonus on all Charisma-related checks when dealing with members of her own house.

Additional Action Points: At 2nd level and beyond, a dragonmark heir's maximum action points per level is increased by 2.

Improved Least Dragonmark: Beginning at 2nd level, a dragonmark heir gains improved mastery of her least dragonmark. She can select a second spell-like ability associated with the least dragonmark for her house, or she can use the least dragonmark spell-like ability she already possesses one additional time per day.

Improved Lesser Dragonmark: Starting at 3rd level, a dragonmark heir gains improved mastery of her lesser dragonmark. She can select a second spell-like ability associated

with the lesser dragonmark for her house, or she can use the lesser dragonmark spell-like ability she already possesses one additional time per day.

Greater Dragonmark: At 4th level, a dragonmark heir manifests the greater dragonmark of her house. She receives the Greater Dragonmark feat as a bonus feat without having to meet the skill rank prerequisite.

Improved Greater Dragonmark: At 5th level, a dragonmark heir gains improved mastery of her greater dragonmark. She can use the greater dragonmark spell-like ability she already possesses one additional time per day.

DRAGONSHARDS

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DEVELOPING DRAGONMARKS

All along, one of the central ideas behind EBERRON was to create a world where magic has been incorporated into society. At the same time, we needed magic items to remain expensive, while we also wanted to avoid having lots of NPCs using PC classes—thus, we didn't want a lot of high-level wizards in the world. So, where does the magic come from? One of the first changes was the introduction of the magewright, an NPC class with limited but economically useful spell-casting abilities. What about more powerful or dramatic magic? Ultimately, the idea for dragonmarks evolved.

In the very beginning, the idea was that every humanoid would have some sort of minor (0-level) magical gift, which he or she could build up through a special class. This made the world a little too chaotic and unfocused, so the idea was given a tighter focus: there would be twelve extended families, each of which possessed a specific magical gift. The powers of these dragonmarks have given each family an important place in the world. Because of their economic influence, the dragonmarked houses are powers that exist beyond the rule of princes or kings; think of the Spacing Guild from *Dune*. Wizards and sorcerers can duplicate the powers of the dragonmarked, but they are rare individuals. As a result, magical transportation, communication, espionage, security, and many other fields are dominated by one of the dragonmarked houses.

In addition to working well with the idea of magic in the game, dragonmarked houses help add intrigue and mystery, creating twelve powerful forces that can be found across the world, each of which has its own agenda . . . not to mention infighting within the houses themselves. The houses create a host of possible stories for DMs to draw on. It also gives player characters considerable story opportunities to explore. By taking a dragonmark, a character not only gets a special power, he also gets a tie to one of the major powers of the world—something that the DM can use to take a campaign in a variety of different directions.

These are only the beginning of what can be done with dragonmarks. Where did the dragonmarks come from? Why is each mark tied to a particular family and race? Is there some greater purpose for the dragonmarked? What about the legends of a lost thirteenth mark, or the strange aberrant marks that have been appearing more frequently of late? There are many stories waiting to be told!

—Keith Baker

that drift out of the mists of time, EBERRON is a world divided into three parts, each tied to a great dragon of legend. The encircling ring of shards high above the surface of the world is associated with the powerful dragon known as Siberys. The fathomless depths of the realms below the surface are linked with the mighty wyrm called Khyber. The third dragon is connected with the land that lies between the two—the surface of the world that also bears its name: Eberron.

Each of the three sections of the world produces mysterious stones and crystals known as dragonshards. Infused with arcane energy, these rare and hard-to-come-by crystals are used in a number of different ways, from empowering various dragonmarks to creating potent magic items to controlling powerful elementals. The region in which a dragonshard originates determines its appearance as well as the type of magic for which it has an affinity.

Siberys Shards

It is said that the Ring of Siberys, which circles high above the world of EBERRON, is composed entirely of dragonshards. When these Siberys shards fall from orbit, they usually land in regions near the planet's equator, such as Xen'drik. (It's rumored that vast fields of Siberys shards may be found in Argonnessen, although no known prospector or explorer has ever ventured to that distant realm to gain proof one way or another.) Veins of golden energy pulse through the depths of these clear crystals, which are sometimes called "sunstones" or "starmotes." Siberys shards are highly sought-after by dragonmarked individuals, as the shards have an affinity with the magic powers inherent in their dragonmarks. By attuning a shard to a particular dragonmark, it may be fashioned into a focus item that will enhance the spell-like abilities of that individual. Heirs of Siberys prize unattuned Siberys shards, as they can be used to power the unique magic abilities possessed by those individuals.

Inquisitive Goggles: A dragonshard is positioned between the lenses of these cumbersome goggles, making them a boon to the Tharashk inquisitive. To access the powers of the goggles, the wearer must possess the lesser, greater, or Siberys Mark of Finding. If this condition is met, the wearer can use the gog-

gles to see the trace auras formed by the passage of living creatures. This has the following effects:

When examining an object, the wearer can make a Search check to identify the aura of the last living creature to touch the object. The DC is 15 + 1 per day since the last contact occurred. If the wearer is familiar with the being who left the aura he can match the two together; otherwise he can simply identify the creature's type. If he succeeds on the Search check by 10 or more, he also discerns the gender and race of the creature. If he succeeds by 20 or more, the creature counts as a "known or familiar creature" for purposes of the *locate creature* spell. Transmutation effects that alter the apparent race or type of a creature (such as *polymorph*, *shapechange*, or *alter self*) do fool the magic of the goggles, but illusion effects (such as *disguise self*) do not.

Once the wearer has identified an aura, he receives a +5 insight bonus on Survival checks made to track the creature that left the aura, as long as he continues wearing the goggles.

When the wearer uses *locate creature*, the goggles allow him to follow the recent movements of his target. Even if the target creature is not in range, if the target creature has passed through the spell's area in the last 24 hours the wearer can detect the path that she took.

The wearer receives a +2 insight bonus on Sense Motive checks while wearing the goggles.

Strong divination; CL 12th; Craft Wondrous Item, *find the path*, creator must have the Mark of Making; Price 16,000 gp.

Eberron Shards

Blood-red swirls of energy course through rose-tinted crystal of Eberron shards, which are sometimes referred to as "bloodstones." Most often found in clusters encased within geodes buried in soil (never in solid rock), Eberron shards are discovered throughout the world, making them the most common type of dragonshard. They are also the most versatile of the dragonshards. Eberron shards have an affinity with arcane magic, which makes them ideal vessels for crafting magic items and focuses of all types.

Eternal Wand: During the final years of the Last War, the artificers and wiz-

DEVELOPING DRAGONSHARDS

As early as Keith Baker's initial concept, there was the idea for a source of power that would be singularly part of EBERRON's make up. Originally, it was more mundane than magical, and seemed too much like oil from our world. So, the team got together and started discussing how to improve upon the concept (the team being Keith, James Wyatt, Chris Perkins, and myself). It wasn't long before dragonshards were born. At first, we had only one variety—dragonshards that fell from the Ring of Siberys that encircles the world. As time went on and our needs developed, we attached a different type of dragonshard to each of our "progenitor" dragons. Now, the Dragon Above, the Dragon Below, and the Dragon Between each provide a dragonshard variety, and each variety has a different look and a different function in the magical technologies of the world. For example, Khyber dragonshards, found in the depths of EBERRON's Underdark, appear as translucent crystals with writhing veins of midnight blue swirling within them. These dragonshards have binding properties and are used to trap demons and bind elementals into items, thus allowing for the creation of elemental-powered vehicles and weaponry. In EBERRON, dragonshards don't help you perform magic, they help you to make your magic better.

—Bill Slavicek

The goal of dragonshards was to create a unique, magical resource required for most of the major, society-altering uses of magic. The existence of such a resource helps to explain the relatively limited presence of magic in the world, even after centuries of development. Airships, the lightning rail, message stones—dragonshards are used in all of these things. This is what prevents House Orien from connecting the lightning rail to every village and thorp in Khorvaire: they simply don't have enough dragonshards to establish coach paths. Aside from the effect on the economy of Khorvaire, dragonshards provide a host of options for dragonmarked characters. Dragonshard focuses can enhance the existing powers of a mark, or they can allow a character to use his mark in new ways. This creates a new form of treasure, and it provides the basis for a wide range of adventures, from lost or haunted mines to villainous masterminds scheming to gain control of hidden deposits.

—Keith Baker

ards of House Cannith perfected a new form of wand built around an Eberon shard. An *eternal wand* holds an arcane spell of 3rd level or lower with a maximum caster level of 6th. Unlike a traditional wand that holds 50 charges, an *eternal wand* allows any character who can cast arcane spells to use the spell contained in it twice per day.

The development of the *eternal wand* allowed magewrights to take the place of war wizards during the final days of the Last War, supplementing their passive spells with more aggressive magic. While the artificers of House Cannith have been searching for ways to streamline the process of creation, the technique is still in its infancy. Currently the wands are rarely seen outside of military units, but a few magewrights who served in the war brought their *eternal wands of magic missile* home from the front lines.

Eternal wand (0-level spell): Faint (any school); CL 1st; Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, the spell contained in the eternal wand; Price 460 gp.

Eternal wand (1st-level spell): Faint (any school); CL 1st; Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, the spell contained in the eternal wand; Price 820 gp.

Eternal wand (2nd-level spell): Faint (any school); CL 3rd; Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, the spell contained in the eternal wand; Price 4,420 gp.

Eternal wand (3rd-level spell): Faint (any school); CL 5th; Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, the spell contained in the eternal wand; Price 10,900 gp.


Khyber Shards

Deep underground, within treacherous volcanic caverns, Khyber shards may be found growing on the walls—often near magma pools or sulfur vents. While Khyber shards can be found in such an environment anywhere throughout EBERRON's Underdark, they are most common in areas linked to fiendish or elemental activity. Veins of energy that shift from midnight blue to an oily black throb within these smoky crystals, which are also known as "nightshards" or "demonstones." Khyber shards have a strong affinity for the type of magic used for binding creatures, making them ideal for use in binding diagrams, casting *trap the soul* (and similar spells), and crafting items empowered by elementals.

Elemental Galleon: The elemental galleon is a vessel that uses a bound air elemental to propel it at great speed

over the water. In basic shape, an elemental galleon is similar to a huge galley, but a massive tower rises from the rear portion of the vessel, supporting the Huge air elemental bound into the form of a ring. The vessel actually runs on two finlike structures. The bound elemental propels the galleon at a speed of 20 miles per hour across calm seas. An elemental galleon requires a crew of 20 and can carry 150 tons of cargo.

Strong conjuration; CL 15th; Bind Elemental, *greater planar binding*; Price 64,000 gp.

The exciting, new *EBERRON Campaign Setting* should be prominently displayed on the shelves of your favorite bookstore or hobby shop this month. Once you've got it in your hands and have started to explore the world of EBERRON, you'll want to keep looking in *DRAGON* for more material, insight, and articles. 



ON BENDED KNEE

The *EBERRON Campaign Setting* hits the shelves this month, but a few players got a special sneak peek at the setting at a convention in February. In the photo above, you can see a hunchbacked Keith Baker, author of the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, imitating a hunchbacked vampire during an EBERRON adventure he ran for Greg Wassinger, Tim Hitchcock, Shannon Caravello, Carol Hooper, Dmitry Aginsky, and Carl Smith.

"I do recall that one of the players in one of my demo sessions was taking pictures. They were a good group," said Keith.

"During the session, a member of the party ended up separated from the group and hauled before the vampire commanding the enemy forces. The player's character pretended to be a messenger, and in the photo the vampire has instructed him to deliver his message—on his knees. He did an admirable job of thinking on (or off) his feet, and managed to bluff things out long enough for his companions to arrive and rescue him. The vampire was described as 'a tall, hunched figure.' Hence my posture."