

Brettonnia



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Brettonnia from a WFRP-point of view

by Peter Butterworth

"Brettonnia is one of the greatest realms of the Old World. It stretches from the coast of the Middle Sea in the north to the Irrana mountains in the south, and from the coast of the Great Western Ocean in the west to the Grey Mountains in the east. It is a vast land, upon which the mark of Chaos is less apparent than in the Empire or Kislev. The rolling hills and serene valleys of Brettonnia produce abundant crops, animal stockbreeding and fine wines, whilst the forestlands provide solid timber and good hunting."

Brettonnia from a roleplaying point of view

In this article, the much disputed Bretonnian background is presented, considered and discussed from a roleplaying point of view. Some suggestions are made as to why the Bretonnian setting is important to WFRP.

The main official sources for Bretonnian background

The WFRP rulebook's world section p274-277 contains 3 full-pages worth of Bretonnian background. It describes Brettonnia as a corrupt kingdom ruled by an absolute monarchy. Most of the population lives miserably, whilst the decadent nobility parties at the royal court. WFRP Brettonnia is depicted as an even worse version of pre-Revolutionary France. The description is inspiring, though maybe overdone. If the country's geography and cities are described in reasonable detail, the rest remains vague.

The WFB3 rulebook Warhammer world section p200-201 contains only 3 paragraphs of information, they confirm the general impression given in the WFRP rulebook, as one could expect since the two games came out at roughly the same time. WB3 Armies provides a Bretonnian army list. The ever so fashion-conscious Bretonnian knights fight for the glory of the battle but care little about the fate of their untrained peasant levies... The miniatures fittingly bore a hundred years war (France VS England) look.

The WFB5 Bretonnian Army book is 95 pages long, but arguably contains little useful background information. Brettonnia becomes a high fantasy Arthurian setting based on virtuous knights devoted to the fair Lady of the lake. The setting suffers from being uninspired (it's a plain rip-off of Arthurian legend) and lacks any kind of complexity. Also, it completely disregards the previously available material. A good review of the product is given in [1]. To sum it up, some official information is available, but not much, and Brettonnia is far from being completely described. Moreover, the descriptions in WFRP and WFB5 Brettonnia seem to be in complete contradiction.

The official Bretonnian background

The official Warhammer World legally belongs to Games Workshop, so the official Bretonnian background is the one in the current WFB edition. The previous statement is completely accurate, except we're talking about WFRP and not WFB. WFB started moving towards high fantasy with WFB4. This lead many GMs to ask themselves whether WFRP really had to be compatible with the latest instalment of the WFB background. The question probably doesn't

hold a unique answer. Some WFRP players support the current WFB vision, whereas others strongly dislike it arguing that the low fantasy approach is one of the key points of WFRP. Compatibility with WFB is visibly an issue for some WFRP players, but not for the others. Back to Bretonnia, some conclusive answers concerning GW's position can be found in [2] "the dark, brooding, grim world of perilous adventure is still there" while Hogshead writers [3] [4] have regularly stated that the WFB version represented the state propaganda, but that the truth figured in the WFRP version.

All this is fine and leads us to think that the official version of WFRP Bretonnia is the one featured in the WFRP rulebook, which seems sensible after all. To further support this idea, Bretonnian NPCs in the WFRP style have appeared in a number of WFRP supplements. In the semi-recent "Marienburg, sold down the river" published by Hogshead in 1999, the Bretonnian monarch originally present in the WFRP rulebook, Charles III de la Tête d'Or, hasn't been substituted for WFB5 Bretonnia's Louen Leoncouer.

However, despite claims that the official Bretonnian background is still the one featured in WFRP, I don't believe there is a clear official position on the subject. If there was there would not have been some much debate on the subject. How much freedom is Hogshead really given from GW ? Presumably a little bit, but not much (WFRP is published in English by Hogshead under licence from GW and must get approval before publishing anything). Can Hogshead get approval for a Bretonnian sourcebook contradicting with the current edition of WFB ? Would Hogshead take the risk of producing such a sourcebook ? Time will tell, but maybe the fact that there is no Bretonnian sourcebook currently on Hogshead's release schedule means something. Bretonnia as a roleplaying setting.

I will attempt to review the different settings available to roleplay in Bretonnia.

WFB5 based settings

A high fantasy setting based on WFB5 Bretonnia and disregarding WFRP

This will appeal mainly to WFB5 players who wish to roleplay in the WFB universe. In my opinion, the setting is extremely limited as WFB5 Bretonnia lacks both darkness and complexity : All the knights are virtuous, the society is feudal, etc. The PCs would probably be restricted to playing knights, squires or men at arms. It is suitable for a one-off game, but not for much else. On the other hand, using such a Bretonnian PC in a classical Imperial game could be fun...

A setting based on WFB5 Bretonnia and WFRP

This looks like it could offer more potential. Several people attempted to write articles to make WFB5 Bretonnia and WFRP work together. The object was to achieve compatibility between WFRP and the current version of WFB. Realistically however, the two version are not directly compatible, so you have to choose which bits you wish to keep from WFRP and which bits you take from WFB5 Bretonnia. The setting can be high fantasy or not accordingly. If you think the concepts in WFB5 Bretonnia genuinely add something to the WFRP description, you may wish to check out the material available at the Critical Hit website. Most of the text comes either

directly from WFB5 or from the WFRP rulebook. The resulting fantasy setting is acceptable, however it is questionable whether it actually holds water.

Non-WFB5 based settings

A low-fantasy setting based mainly on WFB3 Armies Bretonnia. The description in WFRP and the WFB3 Army list don't openly contradict, but it isn't obvious that they fit together either. Whereas WFRP is set in the renaissance era, the WFB3 Army list is medieval. Some GMs prefer having Bretonnia as an archaic feudal kingdom instead of a renaissance land. This dark setting featuring knights and serfs holds potential, but does suffer from one problem : There is a significant difference in technological level between Bretonnia and the Empire. This is unlikely to happen with neighbouring nations with relations with one another.

A renaissance setting based on WFRP but disregarding WB3 Armies

WFB3 was published some years ago and new WFRP players are unlikely to know about it, let alone own the books. The background is based on decadent nobles and courtiers. Musketeers replace the WFB3 Armies traditional knights. The serfs have been replaced by peasants, but remain just as miserable. The setting offers many possibilities from swashbuckling adventures to intriguing at the court. Social tension is also part of the picture. Some historical parallels with the French absolute monarchy are possible.

A renaissance WFRP-based setting making use of WFB3 Armies

Bretonnia is a modern nation with an absolute monarchy and a developed bureaucracy. Yet knights still exists in some remote feudal domains. The Bretonnia-Project makes use of this type of background. One of the advantages is that it is possible to include ideas coming from several of the other settings. Also, there are no problems of technological levels between Bretonnia and the Empire. Including WFB3 in the setting, means that WFB5 players are not lost (since it is not too much of a stretch to consider WFB5 as an evolution of WFB3). This is a handy to get new players into WFRP and remains more satisfying than including the WFB5 Bretonnia background itself.

WFB5 Bretonnia has made the Bretonnian background situation even more confused than it was before. I really can't see one single setting pleasing everybody. A distinction was made between the settings that use WFB5 material and those that don't.

A Bretonnian sourcebook

The lack of official information for a setting can be a benediction or a curse. On the one hand, it means more freedom for the GM to invent new material, but on the other, it really means more work is needed to play. Also, freedom for the GM is usually limited by what the players are willing to accept. A GM who comes up with something completely different from what the players expect/want is looking for trouble ! A sourcebook is useful because it provides the community with a broad common vision of what the setting is about. Further produced material tends to be compatible with the sourcebook material as long as the latter is sensible. But we lack

a sourcebook, so each author writes for his own vision and consequently what is written is not always of great use to others. One can safely assume that to run a Bretonnian campaign, a Bretonnian sourcebook, whether official or not, would indeed prove useful. But most WFRP games are set in the Empire and only rarely venture out of the country's borders. If your players aren't going to Bretonnia, the truth of the matter is that you don't really need a Bretonnian sourcebook. It may still be useful occasionally (when you have trouble creating a Bretonnian NPCs or when you need inspiration) but it's certainly far from indispensable. There is no need to discuss the exact nature of the Bretonnian society either. Who really knows what Bretonnia is like, until he has been there himself? The believability of the Old World as a whole is not all that important. The dominant trend in unofficial material has been to describe the Imperial society and the Empire in great (too much?) detail, but to neglect the lands situated outside the Empire, as they are not covered in official supplements.

Bretonnia is an important nation of the Old World too, so why is the Empire the main setting for WFRP? The rulebook doesn't describe The Empire in more detail than Bretonnia, but it states that all starting characters should come from that region and the scenario is set in Nuln. Also, a lot of background was released in the TEW campaign which was published shortly after the rulebook. This unity of the WFRP setting has been a very good thing. The game has developed with a strong common background and with a feel, "the fight against Chaos". But after stopping yet another group of Chaos cultists attempting to complete a dark ritual in a Reikland village, your PCs may begin to wonder whether there is not more to life than this. There is, in the glorious kingdom of Bretonnia "a vast land, upon which the mark of Chaos is less apparent than in the Empire or Kislev". Of course, as the country's decadence and corruption reflects, Bretonnia is not completely free from the perverting influence of Chaos. But at least, Chaos works in a less obvious way. It means Bretonnian scenarios will have a different feel from the Imperial ones. Sending your Imperial characters over to Bretonnia could make for a refreshing change as there will be plenty of new things for them to discover. Maybe the PCs outlook on Chaos will actually change?

If you go with the modern Bretonnian setting idea, a number of new ideas are introduced to WFRP: musketeers, privateers and pirates, world exploration and colonial expeditions, concept of nation, wars between different countries of the Old World, etc. Many of the themes can also be used in the Empire: smuggling, espionage, court life and intrigue, dealing with decadent nobles or corrupt bureaucrats, peasant uprisings, street life in large towns, etc. However they are really better suited for the Bretonnian setting than the Imperial one.

Bretonnia is a new setting for WFRP, which lies just the other side of the Grey Mountains. It could open up new possibilities for WFRP and give new perspectives to the players - in this respect, a modern Bretonnian settings is particularly interesting - however more Bretonnian background material must be made available for all this to be possible.

Conclusion

The Bretonnian setting as presented in the WFB5 Bretonnia army book certainly is very different from the one described in the WFRP rulebook. Trying to reconcile the two versions is certainly possible, but not necessarily the best solution. Probably because of the lack of a Bretonnian

WFRP sourcebook, there is no genuinely official Bretonnian setting, so Bretonnia can be played in a number of different ways. Some unofficial material is available on the Internet. It could be particularly useful, if you plan to base adventures in Bretonnia. An idea presented here was that playing adventures outside the Empire and particularly in Bretonnia could open up new possibilities for WFRP.

References

[1] Warpstone Issue 7: Autumn, 1997

[Reviews WFB: Bretonnia](#) by John Foody

[2] Warpstone Issue 10: March 1999

p7-9 the Phil Gallagher interview

questions by John Foody

Original WFRP author and current GW company secretary Phil Gallagher goes under the Warpstone spotlight

[3] Strike to Stun - [A. Ragan interview](#)

[4] Strike to Stun - [G. Davis interview](#)

[5] Strike to Stun - [T. Pirinen interview](#)

Brettonnia from a WFB point of view

by the „Lord of the Tournament“

Sire," shouted Asphalt, "I believe we are under attack!"

"You believe we are under attack!" bellowed Ricold, Lord of the land "surely we either are, or we are not?"

"Maybe sire," called Asphalt, "But that group of goblins don't seem to be attacking, they are just sitting there"

"How many?"

"About 200"

"200!" exclaimed Ricold "Call Sir Brand, and Lord Tristram! Call my squire, prepare the bowmen, and prepare my horse. Today we fight green skins in the lands, and, with the Luck of the Lady, we can hope for a swift victory"

WFB5 Brettonnia is a land, once populated by High Elves, who abandoned the land, after troubles with Dwarves, to Orcs and goblins, and to the primitive human tribes. The strongest one (the Bretonni) united all the human tribes under honour and chivalry.

WFB5 Brettonnia is based around a structure of the King, The Lady of the Lake, Lords, Knights, commoners and peasants. The King is obviously the head of all Bretonnian society, and then comes The Lady of the Lake. The Lady of the Lake is a mythological person, who was supposed to have given Excalibur to King Arthur. But in Bretonnian society, she is considered a god, and she protects the Holy Grail.

"Sir Brand and Lord Tristram are here, my Lord," the door man reported, "And your horse is saddled ready for battle"

"Then we leave now" declared Ricold

"There is one other thing, my Lord"

"YES?"

"The Lord Montgomery wishes to join you"

Ricold knew what this meant, Lord Montgomery was a grail knight, one who had received the blessing of the Lady of the Lake, and had drunk from the Holy Grail.

"Then we all ride to face the foe, together"

Knights come in 4 forms: Knights Errant, Knights of the realm, Questing Knights, and Grail Knights.

- Knights of the Realm are standard knights, hold an area of land (usually) and have a castle in it. This should be easily defendable, which is defined as; If he can see all of it from the highest tower in his castle, he can ride the boundary in one day, and if he can see the surrounding castles from his (So he can call for re-enforcements if needed).

- Knights Errant are would-be knights following a task or challenge in the hope of gaining knighthood.

- Questing Knights are knights that leave their castles in the search for the Lady of the Lake, and the Holy Grail. This requires much dedication and much peril to achieve, and not all knights will ever succeed it. It also requires guidance from the Lady herself, usually as dreams or visions.

- Grail Knights are those who have succeeded in finding the Lady of the Lake, and drunk from the Holy Grail. These knights have no realm, are expert fighters and usually live solitary lives on the edges of domains.

Commoners and peasants make up most of Bretonnia's population; the only encountered ones in WFB5 are Men at arms, Bowmen, and Squires. Men at Arms make up Bretonnia's rank and file infantry, wielding either spears or halberds. Bowmen are commoners who are adept enough at the bow, for the knight to expect them to follow him into battle.

Squires are the personal servants of the knight, and come both mounted and on foot, with spear or bow.

With the Bowmen deployed on the town walls, and the knights filling the town gate, Ricold gave a final prayer to the Lady of the Lake, and then gave the order to attack.

"Raise the Lady's banner, all bows ready, fire! And CHARGE!" Bellowed Ricold.

As the first hail of arrows landed on the green skins, the knights charged. The goblins, having realised what was happening, turned to face the attack

"4 knights?" the boss exclaimed, "This should be easy pickings lads."

The WFB game

As its name suggests WFB is a game of fantasy battles. You collect miniatures which you can play battles with. There are several armies you can choose from. Each army has a different background. The Bretonnian WFB5 army has a pseudo-Arthurian background: it features virtuous knights and courageous commoners united in their devotion of the fair Lady of the lake...

Backgrounds are provided by Games Workshop for each army, however a very enjoyable game can be played without them, and the majority of players ignore them. Backgrounds are, however, heavily used to develop campaigns and scenarios, in order to fill the "What's-the point" factor. The WFB5 Bretonnians can appeal because they are the ultimate good guys in an otherwise very grim world, though not necessarily. Many people who collect "good" armies (Empire, dwarves, elves...) consider their armies to be the "ultimate good". WFB5 Bretonnia is appealing because every one has heard of King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, Robin Hood, etc... and like to have an army who's style is universally identifiable (if not completely correct).

A major aspect of Warhammer is it's complete randomness, resulting from the use of dice. The best-laid plans of a general can be put to waste with a few bad dice rolls, and with good rolls, a weak force can defeat a stronger. Some WFB players do find it a bit overdone, but an easily recognisable background can only be a good thing. One great advantage of the current Bretonnian background is that the Bretonnian army is very different from the Imperial one. Two volleys of arrows ran through the green skins before the knights reached them, causing reasonable casualties. But the knights still all charged, with Lord Montgomery wielding their banner. On impact, the knights killed 6 goblins, their mounts 3. This was sufficient to make the

green skins flee. The knights valorously chased down the marauders, destroying the lot. But as they searched for survivors, Ricold found another surprise...

Brettonnia lives by chivalric values, and so does not believe in the use of gunpowder or war machines, thusly the army has neither, making it one of the shorter army lists available. Brettonnia needs carefully thought out tactics to play, because you have basically Knights, squires, bowmen and Men at Arms, which make it an army which requires destroy first, ask questions later.

Brettonnia is a very fun army to fight with, as it is reasonably easy to work out army list (so few troops), and then requires a swift win to be effective, a lot less is achieved if the enemy is allowed to prepare.

Brettonnia has a great advantage in the form of the Lady's Blessing, with allows the Bretonnian player to miss his first turn (if he starts) and will then curse gunpowder weapons to a 50% chance to shoot.

I think WFB5 Brettonnia fits better to my opinion of how Brettonnia should be in the Warhammer world, then WFRP Brettonnia, though I don't think either is perfect. I have always thought that Brettonnia should be a bright and thriving country with strong sea trade, and very little to do with the empire, i.e. Brighter than WFRP portrays it, but I think WFB5 over does it.

Ricold saw a glinting in the forest, a bit further on. He followed this, to a clearing, where he saw a vision of the Lady of the Lake. The lady said nothing, but Ricold knew the signals. He was destined to be blessed by the Lady, but first he must leave his land to become a questing knight. When the Lady disappeared, Ricold left the clearing, and met up with the other knights. He told them of his vision, and Lord Montgomery agreed to look after his lands, until a suitable replacement could be found. The knights then all left to rejoice, and for Ricold to begin his quest to find the Lady of the Lake.

What happens when you start to mix in WFRP

These two below are two interesting questions that I was asked about the possibilities of me looking at Brettonnia from a WFRP point of view, rather than WFB.

When playing WFRP with a new GM, he states that the scenario takes place in Brettonnia, but that the background is different from the one on WFB5. As a player, how do you feel about this? It depends. If it were based in WFRP Brettonnia, I would not object, as I know the style quite well. If it were based in a different environment all together, then I would probably kick up a fuss. I know Brettonnia is not well documented in WFRP, but now WFB5 has it quite well mapped out, and partially documented, I would complain that it is totally inappropriate to set a different setting (to WFRP, or WFB5) to it. I would complain that places like Estalia, Tilea, Albion or Kislev would be better because they are still unknown, or the GM should find somewhere that has been documented, in the same style.

I feel that as GW develops lands, and changes the style of the people in them, HH, and WFRP, should not ignore this. I think that the work that GW puts into this should, if only to an extent, be accepted by WFRP. The GW army books are a starting point that could be developed for, and integrated into, WFRP. This does not need to be done by HH. Any GM could do it, either for his group only, or submit it to something like Warpstone whom, I am sure, would be perfectly willing to publish any reasonable work.

Would WFB5 Bretonnia be playable in WFRP? What is significant?

WFB5 Bretonnia is based upon a very strict command structure; I suspect it would hold little for adventurers. The lands are made up of a series of plots, each held by one Knight of the Realm. Each would contain one main town, possibly with out-lying villages, and with farms scattered across the entire plot. Some plots would have Grail Knights on their outskirts, but far from all. The larger Towns/cities would have a Knight of the Realm, backed up by an active army of bowmen and men at arms to defend it. I would expect the King on Couronne to have an entire army (Grail Knights, Knights of the Realm, squires, bowmen, men at arms) at his easy disposal.

To consider when playing:

Most Knights of the Realm's plots would be the same, even if the temperament of the Knights of the Realm are different.

Some scuffles may be seen between:

- Local Knight of the Realm and rebels/opposing humans.
- Local Knight of the Realm and evil forces in small numbers (up to 20 O+G).
- Around 4-5 Knights of the Realm and a reasonable evil force (possibly including some Grail Knights).

Most knights cannot be bribed, as chivalry does not allow it.

Many Knights of the Realm would not like uninvited strangers in their land without any trade/news etc...

OK so it is possible to role-play in Bretonnia, using WFB5. However, this may be a little limited. The players can play Bretonnian knights or could be an Imperial party.

WFB5 and WFRP?

How about mixing WFB5 and WFRP to make an almost WFB5 compatible role-play setting? Keeping WFRP Bretonnia would do this, and where it does not openly contradict WFB5 Bretonnia, applying the WFB5 background.

But, WFRP implies lots of nobles all after the crown of Bretonnia, and or the head of their households. The minor lords would have other plots of land (from the head of the household). This contradicts the image of lots of independent knights, all holding small plots of land.

So, would it be better to keep WFRP Bretonnia, and mix in WFB5 Bretonnia where they do not exceedingly disagree? WFRP Bretonnia is designed as a RPG and WFB5 Bret as a battlefield game.

Conclusion

It seem that mixing WFRP Bretonnia and WFRP Bretonnia is possible, if it is done in the correct way, however, it seem that the best thing would be to leave WFRP Bretonnia where it is, unless HH stand to gain a major profit by it. GW, on the other hand, will probably keep evolving the entire WFB world. GW sold WFRP because it was not profitable enough to keep it. This means WFRP will probably keep the WFB3 setting, and will be shelved with this setting along side games like Space Hulk, Warhammer Quest, and GorkaMorka.

Timeline of Bretonnia

by Natascha Chrobok

-2000 Dwarf/Elf War begins

-1600 End of Dwarf/Elf war, Elves withdraw from the Old World

-1000 Human Tribes settle the lands of Bretonnia. The greatesttribe, the Bretonni dominate the land

- 500 The southern parts of Bretonnia are absorbed into the Tilean Empire

-15 The Empire chieftain Sigmar Heldenhammer unites the human tribes and fights back the Orcs.

0 Sigmar Heldenhammer is crowned, the Empire is founded

100 An fleet of Undead from the lands of Settra lands at the coasts of Bretonnia and invades the lands. The land suffers long under the Undead plague.

577 Great incursion of Greenskins from the Grey Mountains. The Orc Warlords demand tribute from the Bretonni tribes but the human chieftains prefer to fight for their freedom. The expected support from Tilea doesn't come. For the next 400 years the Bretonni have to fight against the Orcs.

around 630 The Norscans start to raid the coasts of Bretonnia

936 Marriage of Maud du Goiscin, doaghter of Duke Simon Beaumanoir of Moussillon, to Arnout van Dalen, Baron of the imperial province of Westerland.

977 After a vision of a lady of unearthy beauty who predicts him a great future, the Bretonni duke Giles le Breton unites the chieftains of the Bretonni tribes und a banner and fights back

the Greenskin plague. He establishes the idea of a chivalric knighthood which takes care of the land of Bretonnia. Also the cult of the "Lady of the Lake" becomes the most important religion in Bretonnia.

1001 After the death of Giles le Breton, his son Louis is crowned as the first king of Bretonnia

1110 Devastating Outbreak of the Black Plague in the Empire. During the next five years the Plague spreads throughout the Old World and Bretonnia is not spared.

1142 Another invasion of Orcs is defeated under the command of King Guillaume

1240 The Corsairs of Arabia start their raids in the Southern Old World. The Tilean Island Sartosa becomes base for the Arabian raiders.

1240 - 1440 Durin the next 200 years, the Arabians conquer Estalia and parts of Tilea. The Bretonians try to get back the former lands of southern Bretonnia from the Tileans.

1245 King Boudoin slays the legendary Dragon Mergaste.

1325 The Tournament of la Damoiselle d'Artois. One hundred Knights joust for her hand

1425 Tournament of Ravola: The Elite of the Bretonnian Knighthood is defeated by Tilean Knights. The Bretonnians renounce their claims on the lands of Tilea.

1448, 1449 An alliance between the Empire, Bretonnians and Tileans against the Arabians is struck. They drive the Arabians out of Estalia. The Crusades in start

1451 Sultan Jaffar is overthrown by the crusaders in the Battle of El Haikik

1452 A mighty host of Bretonnian Knights goes forth to Araby by land. The crusaders only reach as far as Blood River as they are slowed down by the massive attacks from Orks and Goblins from the Dark Lands. Some of the Crusaders decide to settle the land and found the Border Princes. 1588 At the Tournament of Guyenne King Jules jousts with an mysterious Elf Knight and is victorious. 1597 Marienburg seized by Bretonnin army under the Duc de L'Anguille. Five year occupation ends when an army under the command of the Grand Duke of Middenland approaches the city.

1635 Battle of Castellet. Raiders from beyond the sea attack L'Anguille and are beaten by King Philippe the Strong and an army of ten thousand Knights. 1715 Fugitives of the Orc horde of Warlord Gorbag Ironfist, who was defeated by the Elector Count of Wissenland at the battle of Gruenburg, invade Bretonnia and are destroyed by the Bretonnian Knights.

1813 The Red Pox ravages Bretonnia. The foul Skaven launch attacks on Brionne and Quenelles. The Duke of Parravon strikes an alliance with the Elves of Athel Loren and marches against the Skaven.

1839 Birth of Genevieve Sandrine du Pointe du Lac Dieudonne.

1851 An army under the command of the great Enchanter Drachenfels sacks the city of Parravon.

1855 Genevieve receives the dark Kiss by the vampire Chamanac

1999 A twin-tailed Comet falls from the sky and destroys the city of Mordheim. Many Knights set off to the city of the Damned to find fame and glory within the ruins.

2007 A huge Chaos Army is fought back at the Battle of Couronne.

2201 King Louen Orc-Slayer declares an Errantry War to rid Bretonnia of Orcs. Much land is reclaimed and freed of the goblinoid plague

2297 Affair of the False Grail. Duke Maldred of Moussillon is dishonoured

2300 All the peasants of Moussillon and many nobles perish of Red Pox.

2301 Incursion of Chaos starts

2302 Magnus the pious asks King de Bastonne for help. Bretonnia sends 20.000 knights and countless men-at-arms to aid the Empire.

2320 Skaven raids upon the Western Ports.

2420 Inspired by the idea to rid the entire world of all greenskins, King Charlen renews the Errantry Wars and sends a host of Knights to the Border Princes to slauther Orks and Greenskins beyond the Blood River

2429 Marienburg declares the independence of the Wastland from the Empire and starts an never ending quarrel between Bretonnia and the Empire who both are interested in conquering the city.

2472 Charles de la Tete d'Or III is crowned King of all Bretonnia. Being a decadent Despot, the lands suffer hardly under this King. The peasants suffer hardly under the decadent nobles and the knighthood becomes more and more unimportant.

2476 Birth of Leon de la Tete.

2488 End of Errantry Wars as a great force of Bretonnian Knights ride forth into the Death Pass and never returns.

2491 Battle of La Maisontall. The Monastery of La Maisontaal is swarmed by Undead under the command of the Necromancer Heinrich Kemmler. Parravon is attacked. The Duc de Quenelles fights back the Undead Hordes.

2500 After the Death of King Charles the young Leon is crowned and renames himself Louen "Leoncour". Unlike his father the young king remembers the virtues of Knighthood and tries to reestablish a feudal system. In the far Kislev, the city of Praag lies under siege by a huge Chaos Army.

The History of Bretonnia

by Natascha Chrobok

The Early Days

The name Bretonnia derives from the name of the greatest human tribes who settled the woods west of the Grey mountains after the High Elves abandoned the Old World. Soon after their departure, the land was settled again by human and greenskin tribes. Among the human tribes were the warlike Bretonni. In constant struggle with rivaling tribes and living under constant fear of the Orc and Goblin hordes, the Bretonni learned how to forge metal to make swords and building strongholds made of wood and stone.

While Sigmar Heldenhammer was uniting the human tribes of the Empire under his command and fighting back the Greenskin Hordes into the Worlds Edge Mountains, the Bretonni clans were divided into several independent countries. Instead of uniting against the Orc treat, they often fought each other for land or the control of a ford or a mountain pass. The Bretonni chieftains controlled the plains and the fertile valleys while the greenskins infested the forests, hills, mountains and other wilderness regions. At those times it was almost impossible to travel from one country to another without going through land controlled by the Orcs.

The Rise of Bretonnia

In those dreadful days, a young Bretonni duke called Gilles de Bastonne, who had been quicker than the other dukes to gather his Knights together into an army prepared his men for the final fight against their green skinned enemies. They had bravely fought for weeks but their enemies forces were superior. Gilles' army camped beside a small lake in the margins of the Forest of Chalons. Although during the last days Gilles' men were joined with the remains of the armies of several other dukes they all knew that the upcoming battle would be their last. To great was the Orcish army they had to face. The next day would decide the fate of the lands of the Bretonni. When dawn came and they saw in the first sunlight that the lake was enshrouded in a swirling mist. Suddenly, the vapours rising from the water condensed into the form of a maiden of unearthly beauty. Gilles and his Knights were awestruck by this vision. The Maiden held a gleaming chalice overflowing with light which cascaded down like liquid into the water of the lake. It was Gilles who had the courage to step to the shore of the lake and to drink from the water of the lake. As he drank, new courage filled his heart and he took a look at his tattered banner and then held it towards the vision and asked it to bless it. He dipped the blood-drenched rag into the lake and when he raised it again, the entire host of Knights gasped. They looked at a new, gleaming banner bearing the image of this Lady of the Lake. The other dukes came to Gilles and asked him to command them into their final battle. As the rays of the sun lit the waters of the lake, the vision began to fade.

With new courage filling their hearts, the knights under the Command of Gilles prepared for the final battle. The horizon ahead of the knight was darkened by the orcish hordes. Holding the Banner of the Lady before him, Gilles led his men into the battle and drove the Greenskins back. After fighting back the Orcs, the remaining dukes proclaimed Gilles "Leader of the Battle" at the lake where the Lady appeared the first time, which marked the origin of the Grail Knights and also the Kingdom of Bretonnia.

In the years that followed, Gilles led his Grail Knights from victory to victory and freed the dukedoms of Bretonnia from the hordes of Orcs and Goblins and also managed to fight back the armies of the Undead and Chaos. He led the Bretonnians into twelve great Battles and became known as "Le Breton" amongst his people, acknowledging his uncrowned authority throughout Bretonnia. It is said that Gilles le Breton struck an alliance with the Wood Elves from the Forest of Loren, who also fought against the Greenskins and that they swore everlasting friendship. For many years, Gilles reigned the lands of Bretonnia as uncrowned king until he was mortally wounded in an ambush laid by orcs near the lake where the Lady appeared the first time. According to the legends, the dying Gilles le Breton was laid into a boat which mysteriously appeared on the lake. On the boat there was a Maiden, the Fay Enchantress, who took care of the Gilles and they vanished into the mists over the lake. It is said that Gilles le Breton was cured by the Fay Enchantress and now waits on a mysterious place outside of time for the day, when the lands of Bretonnia are in great need to reunite them again.

After the death of Gilles le Breton, his son, Louis de Bastonne was crowned as king over all Bretonnians in the year 1001. It is said that the Lady herself had chosen Louis to be the king. One of his first acts as King was to turn the age-old knightly traditions into a true code of chivalry. Devotion of the Lady of the Lake became a fundamental part of this code. He also confirmed the dukes in their various dukedoms as his loyal and trusted deputies. Each of the dukes was given charge of protecting the borders of the realm or to conquering the remaining Orc Enclaves in the Pale sisters, the Grey mountains and the great forests of Bretonnia. During the next centuries, the land of Bretonnia established as a leading human nation of the old world. In the year 1110 the Great Plague broke out in the Lands of the Empire and in the following years it spread through the whole old World and Bretonnia was not spared. Around the year 1142 a large invasion of Greenskins was defeated by King Guillaume. During this time the Lands of Bretonnia began to flourish as never before.

The crusades

In the middle of the 15th century, the Arabians under the command of their despotic ruler Sultan Jaffar invaded Estalia and parts of Tilea with vast hordes of desert warriors. Soon the great city of Magritta fell to the invaders. This event spread alarm throughout the Old World. The current king of Bretonnia, Louis the Righteous, raised a mighty army of Knights and struck alliance with the lands of Tilea and the Empire. A mighty army consisting of Bretonnian and Empire Knights and mercenaries from Tilea marched into Estalia and drove the Arabians out of Estalia. Sultan Jaffar and the greater part of his army escaped back to Araby. The alliance decided to pursue Jaffar into his own land, as it was told that the lands of Araby were filled with untold riches. So a great fleet was hastily assembled and the crusading army set its sails for Araby.

When the crusaders landed on the shores of Araby they realised that they were unprepared for the desert heat and the lack of water. Their progress was slow and Jaffar's light equipped and highly mobile forces. At first it seemed that the crusaders would be defeated by Jaffar's troops. But the grim determination of the crusading Knights forced some of Jaffar's warriors, tired of his tyranny, to desert and disappear into the deserts. At the Battle of El Haikk the sultan's army was finally defeated.

When the news of the battles in Araby reached Bretonnia, another huge army of Knights began rally to reinforce the troops in Araby. The greatest problem of the military commanders was to decide which way should be chosen to Araby: the fast by ship or the long march over the mountains of Tilea and through the Badlands. Finally they decided to reach Araby by the long and hazardous land route to the east. Under the command of Baron Tybalt du Bois de Balzac, a large army marched through the southern parts of the Empire over the Black Mountains into the lands now known as the Border Princess. Their plan was to reach the Dwarf port of Barak Varr and to join there the forces of the Empire and Tilea. But everything came different. As they ventured into the lands south of the Black Mountains, the host of knights was slowed down by the Orc and Goblin tribes which settled in those parts of the Old World. It almost took them a year to reach Barak Varr, and when they arrived at the dwarf port, they heard the news of the defeat of Jaffar's army in the south. So Tybalt had to choose if he should continue the travel to Araby or to return to Bretonnia. As the morale of his troops was not all too great, he decided to conquer the lands they just crossed and make them a part of Bretonnia. Thus the region that now is known as the Border Princess came into existence.

The years that followed the Crusades

In the year 1597 the Duc de L'Anguille seized the city of Marienburg and so started a war between Bretonnia and the Empire. For more than five years the Bretonnians controlled Marienburg until the port was liberated by a huge Empire army under the command of the Grand Duke of Middenheim. Since that time there is a constant struggle between the two countries to get control of the port.

In spring 1635 a huge fleet of mysterious Raiders from the lands beyond the sea attack the port of L'Anguille. Under the tactical genius of King Philippe the Strong the attackers were driven back and defeated at the battle of Castellet.

In 1813 the Red Pox broke out and a huge army of Skaven launched attacks at the cities of Brionne and Quellenes. Only by renewing the age-old alliance Giles le Breton struck with the Wood Elves, the Duc de Parravon can fight back the Skaven and liberate the towns from their deadly grasp. In 1851 a huge army under the Command of Count von Drachenfels seizes the city of Parravon and sacks it. During the next centuries, there are constant wars with the Forces from the foul city of Skavenblight and the Greenskins began to increase again. The lands of Bretonnia once more became a dangerous place. In the 22nd century the Orcs and Goblins became a real menace to Bretonnia. Therefore King Louen Orcslayer declared an Errantry War to get rid of the Greenskin plague. Within the next years most of the land which had fallen to the Orcs was regained. By the end of his reign there were hardly any Orcs left.

The affair of the false Grail

When in 2290 King Jules the Just met an untimely death in battle, the lands were left in a perilous state. Jules had no male heir and left only a daughter, Isolde. According to an ancient custom, the kingdom would pass to that knight who could fulfil a quest set by the daughter of the former king. The quest set by Isolde was nothing less than slaying an ancient beast called the Jabberwock, who terrorized a remote part of the realm. For many years, no Knight was able to fulfil this quest. In the meantime Orc Warbands were massing in the Grey Mountains and started to raid the lands of Bretonnia. It was clear that the land needed a new king soon.

The Duke of Moussillon, Maldred decided to seize this opportunity to make himself king of Bretonnia. As he was already married to the sorceress Malfleur, he could not wed lady Isolde and therefore there was no need to start the quest for the Jabberwock. Together with his wife, who learned her craft at the Wizards-guild of Altdorf he planned a horrible intrigue. With the magical powers of his wife he was able to overwhelm the Fay Enchantress Morgaine and to prison her at the dolorous Donjon of Dol. With this enemy safely out of the way Maldred set off on the grail quest and returned after an amazingly short time, bringing a miraculous chalice with him. Maldred claimed that the chalice was the grail, given to him by the Lady of the Lake herself. He claimed the Kingdom for himself. The only person who could recognize the grail as false had mysteriously disappeared: Lady Morgaine, the Fay Enchantress. Although the Grail Knights knew that Maldred was lying, they couldn't proof their suspicions. It seemed that Maldred would become the new King of Bretonnia. But as fate always changes one of the Knights on the Quest for the Jabberwock, a certain Gaston de Geste found the fortress where the Fay Enchantress were held prisoner and rescued her.

The release of the Fay Enchantress sealed the Duc de Moussillon's fate. Gaston safely conducted Lady Morgaine to the Grail Knights and Maldred was stripped of his honour and dukedom. Together with his wife Malfleur he fled to his city Moussillon. For three years the Armies of Bretonnia laid siege before the walls of Moussillon until the Red Pox inevitably struck the city. Maldred and Malfleur also perished of the plague. In the meantime, Lady Isolde wed Gaston de

Geste, who became new king of Bretonnia. He decided not to appoint a new Duc de Moussillon and declared the city and its environs a Wasteland to be redeemed by Errantry.

The years decadence

In the following years the great Incursion of Chaos started and Magnus the Pious asked King Gaston for help. Gaston sent an army of 20.000 Knights and countless Men-at-arms to the battles in Kislev. It was the last great alliance between the Empire and Bretonnia. The good relations between the two greatest nations of the Old World became worse and the diplomatic relations reached their low when the port of Marienburg declared its independence of the Empire and was supported by the Bretonnians. Over the following two centuries the idea of chivalry became more and more unimportant to the ruling classes of Bretonnia and the most of Bretonnias nobles became a bunch of weak and decadent fops more interested in court intrigues and decadent lifestyle than in the politics of the land. The suffering of the land and its peasants reached their peak when Charles de la Tete d'Or III became King of Bretonnia in 2472. Also called the Sun king for his godlike lifestyle, King Charles was more interested in celebrating huge feasts in his great palace at Oisillon, 100 mile north-west of Gisoreux than ruling his kingdom. The faith in the "Lady of the Lake" becomes more and more unimportant and new cults of decadent gods become popular among the rich and noble people of Bretonnia. Everywhere the peasants started to revolt against the decadent ruling class. One of the most famous leaders of the revolts is Bertrant le Brigand, son of a gamekeeper. When in 2476 the King Charles heir, Leon de la Tete was born, the decadent king was not very interested in his son, sending him away to a remote castle in the forest of Chalons, not far away from the lake where the Lady of the Lake appeared the first time. It is said that young Leon was raised by the Fay Enchantress herself and trained by the best of the Grail Knights.

In 2491, a huge army of Undead lied siege to the monastery of La Maisontaal in the Grey Mountains. Commanded by the foul Necromancer Heinrich Kemmler the Undead hordes marched down from their vaults in the Grey Mountains and attacked Parravon. Only with great effort the Duc the Parravon was able to fight the Undead hordes back and to defeat Kemmler. After the death of King Charles III his son Leon de la Tete was crowned at the cathedral of Shallya in Couronne. Familiar with the old customs of Chivalry, the young king renames himself Louen Leconteur and starts to re-establish the old system of Chivalry. And it seems that he is successful in his plan...

The early History...

by Ryan Wyleman

-1000 - -800 I.C.

This period saw the lands that came to be known as Bretonnia inhabited by humans for the first time. Bands of hunter-gatherers gradually migrated over the Grey Mountains from the lands now known as the Empire. These kinbands were very primitive, and there was no uniformity of 'culture' as such. Clothing consisted of crude furs and weapons were stone and wood - essential in the constant fight for survival against the nomadic tribes of orcs and goblins that had already settled in the lands. The insular Wood Elves watched the encroaching humans with curiosity and some concern - whilst they were easily chased from the forest at present, they realised that the expansion and development of these men would bring fresh threats to them in time.

Collectively the people who moved into the land are now called the Bretonni, although the name was not yet used by the folk themselves. Their religion was too primitive to be compared directly with those of today, although worship of the Earth Mother is evident from some cave paintings that remain. As such the Bretonni followed an early incarnation of the Old Faith, trusting to nature and animistic spirits for survival and well-being. Wise men and women were early 'druids' - rare figures of mystery and power.

In addition to the migration from the east, there was limited migration north from the peninsula to the south. These people may have been forced north by the depredations of the skaven - the ratmen were beginning to encroach on the lands now known as Estalia, scouring the land for warpstone with little success.

Today, almost nothing is known of the earliest settlers of Bretonnia. The Dwarfs of the Grey Mountains have some records deep in their holds as do the Wood Elves of the Loren Forest, but neither has seen fit to tell the men of the land of their ancestors. Some druidic legends may refer to the people of this time, but these tales are veiled in allegory and symbolism. Examples of rock art has been found, most notably in the caves of the Pale Sisters and the Massif Orcal, and some standing stones may originate from this period. Most interesting is the recent find in a desolate part of Artenois - six stones stand around a deep lake in a grove of the forest. At the north edge of the lake is a cromlech, and painted on the interior walls is what seems to be a representation of a woman with broad hips. She is clutching two small humanoid figures, while dead bison, aurochs and fish lie at her feet.

-800 - 0 I.C.

This period saw the first true tribes begin to emerge in Bretonnia, with nomadic hunter-gatherers settling and establishing agriculture on a small scale. Kin-bands fused together around fertile areas such as the river valleys of the Grismarie, Sannez and Morceaux, and along the coastlines, and with settlement came stable hierarchies and craft specialisation. External threats from orcs and goblins encouraged banding together yet further, but with larger groups of people defence became easier, and the population grew accordingly. With agriculture came domestication of animals - horses (possibly stolen from the Wood Elves), pigs and cattle were raised for food and labour. Metalworking began, possibly with the dwarf influence.

Dependence on the land for subsistence led to the further reliance on the Old Faith, and it is at this point the true druids became more important amongst the Bretonni. Although some worship of Taal, Rhya and Ulric was apparent in the north, the role of the druids became dominant. They formed an important class within society - not just as religious leaders, but as judges, teachers and . Although affiliated with the tribes of the land, they were bound by no chieftain and they came and went as they pleased, establishing an aura of power and mystery around themselves. The expansion and settlement of the tribes did not go unnoticed by the Wood Elves of Loren, who began to perceive the potential threat of human civilisation to their kingdom. They made tentative contact with the Bretonni through the druids, frightening them to stay clear of the forest, and to leave the trees alone. The druids did not comprehend fully the nature of the Wood Elves, but through surreptitious insinuation the elves succeeded in imparting to the druids the means to increase their own power.

Towards the later centuries of this period the druid's power was at its height. Through the influence of the Wood Elves they realised that if the tribes were to advance and grow in numbers they would no longer fear and revere nature, but would begin to conquer it. The druids acted to suppress advancement and alliance between tribes, using the awe in which they were held to maintain the status quo.

A distinct culture within the Bretonni began to emerge during this period, and existing artefacts show a distinctive style which has some parallels with that of present day Albion. Metal was worked with swirling elegant designs, and heavily stylised animals are apparent. Warfare was conducted from horseback and on foot, with some use of primitive wooden chariots. The men would paint themselves with dyes such as woad, in imitation of the fearsome Wood Elf warriors that were occasionally glimpsed by terrified Bretonni.

A famous relic of this period is kept in the royal palace in Oisillon - the incorrectly-termed 'Helm of Le Breton'. This horned helmet predates Gilles Le Breton by at least 1200 years. It is a beautiful artefact, worked in gold and bronze with the characteristic swirling patterns of the Bretonni tribes of the period.

Another famous artefact from this period is the 'Marguilles Cauldron'. This impressive iron pot was found in a lake near to the town that bears its name - cauldrons are known to have had symbolic significance to the Bretonni. The front of the cauldron bears the image of a woman's face - even the stylised representation conveys beautiful and fearsome aspects of her character. Scholars have identified her with the Lady, whose worship is generally taken to have spread throughout the Bretonni during this period. The celebrated and patriotic Imperial scholar Galirus of Nuln stated that the Lady was the 'anthropomorphic representation of a primitive water spirit, akin to those feared by superstitious Kislevites'.

Legendary figures

Therouix - several songs recount the adventures of this doomed hero, who fought against many legendary monsters in the Grey Mountains. He met his death at the hands of his fellow tribesmen, who did not recognise upon his return to his home 10 years since departing.

Merhuil - a mysterious druid who is said to have helped and terrified the mightiest warriors in equal measure. Myths tell that he had great power, and knew of things before they occurred.
Gringda - a witch who lived alone in the forests around what is now Gisoreaux. The stories tell that she had dealings with daemons and was the sister of Merhuil.

0 - 400 I.C.

The beginning of Sigmar's Empire heralded a period of disruption and struggle for the people of the land. Sigmar's wars with the goblinoids forced many of the routed out of the lands of the Empire, many of which found their way across the Grey Mountains. This triggered many battles and raids on the farms of the Bretonni, casting into disarray the settled lifestyle which many now enjoyed.

In 94 I.C., Imperial records state that the Emperor of the day sent a representative to the people of Bretonnia to open trade links and forge an alliance against the goblinoids. However, this was clearly doomed to failure - the Bretonni did not speak with one voice, and the petty kings that came into contact with the Imperial party would not have trusted the strangers.
During the same century humans discovered and traversed the Nuvolone Pass, the route through the Vaults from Tilea. This may not have been the first time that humans travelled through the mountains, but it heralded the opening of relations with the southern Old World. The lands of Tilea and Estalia had for centuries been more advanced than those in the north, and many settlers brought cultural and societal influence with them. For at least five centuries, they migrated into southern Bretonnia - some were fleeing the depredations of Arabian pirates, undead raiders and the skaven whilst others moved into the fertile valleys for economic reasons. Trade relations were established with the Bretonni tribes, which lead to the founding of Brionne and Quenelles on the ancient elven ruins that form their foundations.

Despite the increasing conflicts with the goblinoids, as well as the establishment of trading colonies on the south, this period saw some of the small settlements grow into towns, including Guisoreux and Couronne. As predicted by the Wood Elves, the influence of the Old Faith waned, and the people began to adopt the newer gods as they held more relevance to their existence. The influence from the southern Old World brought new gods, in the form of Morr, Verena, Shallya, Myrmidia and Ranald. The escalation of warfare favoured renewed worship of the gods of war, with Ulric's influence in the north and Myrmidia in the south. Particularly noteworthy is the influence of Shallya - at some point during the 2nd century, a miracle occurred in Couronne. The healing waters were discovered, and the people of the town began to make offerings to the goddess. The news spread during the subsequent years to the south, and pilgrims began to flock to the temple which was established there.

Around the year 100, there are records of raids on the north coast by fleets of ghostly ships. Bleached skeletons stalked the lands commanded by sinister figures swathed in bandages. The events are recalled in the legend of Vitran, in which the eponymous hero sees his entire village slaughtered or taken prisoner by the undead. After many adventures, he boards one of the shadowy vessels and attacks the commander of the fleet, the Tomb Lord Settra, with a magical spear. He wounds Settra and makes good his escape with his family. The legend ends tragically, as his wife and children are borne away by the waves in the attempt to reach the shore.

The declining influence of the druids was not entirely a consequence of man's increasing confidence in the face of nature. The leaders of the Bretonni resented the power of the druids, and their power in society was slowly decreased. The kings and chieftains relied increasingly on their retinue for advice - a band of trusted warriors and advisors who formed a powerful protection against pretenders to his position.

Most significantly in this period, worship of the Lady of the Lake reached its height. She became an important part of the pantheon of the pre-unification Bretonni, representing the homelands and taking elements of other deities, especially those with declining influence such as Rhya. The Lady became a common rallying point around which the Bretonni could gather against the orcs and goblins that lived in the forests and mountains.

Culturally, this was a rich period of history for the future Bretonnia. Many songs and tales have passed down through the ages, telling of the bravery of the people in their conflicts with the orcs. In the surviving stories, the heroes are typically leaders and warriors first and foremost. They are frequently pious worshippers of the gods, especially the Lady.

The Bretonni became more outward-looking, as contact with the Empire and the southern states increased. This was not always friendly - the Wasteland saw numerous skirmishes between the fledgling Empire and the peoples of northern Bretonnia. However, trade between the Empire and the Bretonni flourished - hampered only by the lack of unity amongst the latter.

Famous figures

This period was one in which the Bretonni had many figures of immense significance, revered for their deeds and admirable traits. Many of these and others from subsequent pre-Le Breton centuries were later adopted by the various cults within unified Bretonnia as saints, particularly as the religious hierarchies realised the importance of these sacred human agents to the people of Bretonnia. History books and epics were scrutinised for relevant figures who could be deemed as acting for the gods, and consequently allow each religion to maintain and often enlarge their sphere of influence. Some of these figures were probably acting under the divine will of one of the gods, and others may not have been - the motives for subsequent canonisation vary from pious admiration to cynical politicking.

Sonnus - king and war leader of the Bretonni tribes of the west coast. He is remembered for his bravery in repelling the depredations of Settra.

Franais - an early named priestess of Taal, favoured and respected by the people until she denounced the Lady. She is said to have disappeared the same night that she made her famous 'Prophecy of Franais' - now immortalised in the songs of minstrels.

Vitran - see above.

400 - 977 I.C

The centuries preceding the unification of Bretonnia, saw the establishment of more rigid social classes and the feudal system that survives to this day. The disparate tribal groups were now geographically allied leagues, which roughly correspond to the regions that exist to this day. The

leader of each league resided in the largest towns of the region, which had now become major centres of trade and government with formidable stone fortifications. During the 6th century the major cities of Bretonnia became truly established by formal declaration of the ruling parties. The various regions became kleptocracies - 'kings' extracted additional tribute from the rural peasantry to maintain permanent class of warriors and nobility, that had evolved from the tribal retinues of the past. The former have latterly been termed 'knights', and there is some evidence to suggest that the warriors adopted a code of honour, which by the time of Gilles Le Breton had become the code of chivalry. This code was centred around the Lady - who may have been adopted by the 'knights' as a patron at this time. She was assigned new traits of virtue and chastity - characteristics that suited the purposes of the new warrior class.

Artisans and crafts developed considerably, and a merchant class became well-established. This in turn opened up more trade with the Empire, and some cultural influence can be seen in the armour and weaponry surviving from the period. Contact with the lands of Tilea and Estalia became more fraught, as the knights and retinues of kings began to resist the uneven flow of revenue from the south into the city states of the southern Old World.

Orcs were still a major problem for the Bretonni. Even the fortified towns were frequently besieged by hordes of goblinoids. In 577, a large host swept from the Massif Orcal and besieged a number of towns and laid waste many villages. The warlords of the orcs demanded tribute from the Bretonni, but to no avail. The Bretonni did not give in however, and the goblinoid hordes fell to infighting and eventual dissolution as is usually the case. This episode is fondly remembered by the Bretonnians as an example of the resolve and bravery of their ancestors.

From 632, the Norse begin to raid the northern coasts of the land, destroying the small ports and settling along the shores. Although they were feared and despised by the Bretonni, they gradually became integrated into Bretonnian society. They brought their interpretations of religion with them, and the noble families of Armorique and L'Anguille have some Norscan ancestry.

Although modern Bretonnians are largely ignorant of the fact, there was an attempt to unite the people of the land over 300 years prior to the coming of Gilles Le Breton. Delovic was the king of the Bretonnian tribes in Parravon, and records show that he called a conclave of the other kings in 650. He told them that the Bretonni needed to learn from the men of the Empire to the east, and join together for the benefit of all. It is not known how the other kings reacted - Delovic was assassinated by one of his own 'knights' shortly afterwards. Bretonnian historians now say that this was because he was attempting to unify the tribes with the aid of orcish forces, which he commanded through half-orc allies.

The town of Couronne grew considerably during this period, through trade with other nations and the influx of pilgrims to temple of Shallya. Soon it was the largest settlement in the land, and the head of the cult became a figure of considerable importance in the region. In contrast, the worship of the Old Faith dwindled along with deforestation and the establishment of feudalism. It is now worshipped only amongst the simpler rural folk, while the more modern gods take precedence.

The Wood Elves occasionally communicated with the fledgling kingdoms of the Bretonni, but maintained their isolation and mystery. However, the rise in power and influence of the 'knights' disturbed the delicate balance of unspoken agreement between the two parties, and from 770-820 I.C. there were numerous skirmishes on the borders of the Loren Forest, as the local Bretonni warlords attempted to expand their lands. Inevitably these were unsuccessful, but relations were soured with the Wood Elves as the latter decided that the humans were still too immature race to be treated as equals.

Conflict also began to occur more frequently amongst the regions. The first half of the 10th century saw many clashes between L'Anguille and Mousillon, as well as between Parravon and Guisoreux. Although allegiances swapped and changed frequently, no king was able to make much of a dent in the territories of the others, and the constant threat of orc attack kept the various groups occupied on other things.

At some point in the 10th century I.C. Gilles Le Breton emerges, as celebrated in 'Le chanson de Gilles'. He was a knight in the retinue of a powerful king - the 'King' of Guisoreux. Gilles excelled at commanding armies against the orcs.

Historical figures

'King' Ysengrain - the leader that was foremost in his stalwart resistance of Orcish demands for tribute. 'Ysengrain's Proclamation' is still part of the pronouncement by the King of Bretonnia in an annual ceremony to commemorate the final 'defeat' of the goblinoids by Gilles Le Breton.

Delovic - see above

D'Arginan - a ship's captain known for his pioneering use of ancient naval techniques from the southern Old World to combat Norse attacks.

'King' Guilombe - the 'joyous' king. A figure of fun and humour in many Bretonnian stories, Guilombe was a notorious drunk and foolish leader. He is a popular character in some Bretonnian plays and children's entertainment. Although foolish, his ridiculous flights of reason occasionally have some perverted logic to them.

The Lady of the Lake

by Ryan Wyleman

Description: The Lady is a goddess particular to the lands of Bretonnia. What she represents is unclear -her realm of influence seems to overlap with that of the other gods. To the knights and soldiers who follow her as their patron, she is emblematic of national pride and honour, embodying the chivalric code. To the simple peasants who worship her, she represents the land and protection from external threats. In modern times, the Lady has been portrayed as a young and beautiful maiden with flowing tresses and a white robe, often emerging from a lake. On occasion her representation has been strongly influenced by other goddesses such as Rhya, Shallya and Myrmidia. The Bretonnians who revere the Lady have imposed a personality onto her - she is seen as a benevolent and virginal figure, who cares for her people as her children. However, in ancient legends she has a capricious and demanding character, expecting absolute devotion from the people of Bretonnia.



Alignment: Neutral

Symbol: The Lady is normally symbolised by the Grail that she is said to carry, along with the fleur-de-lis. The Grail is said to represent the abundance of life provided by the Bretonnian land and the lake from which the Lady emerges. The fleur-de-lis is symbolic of light and life, along with the martial defence of the realm. Her priests, who are few and far between and tend to be hermits, wear simple white robes bound at the waist.

Area of worship: The Lady is worshipped in Bretonnia only. There are no longer many Bretonnians who venerate her as their primary goddess - most will only pay lip service to her alongside the other, more important gods. In rural areas she is worshipped by superstitious peasants as in the verdant depths of the Bretonnian countryside her presence feels more 'real'. The knights of Bretonnia treat the Lady as their patron goddess, and as such they will revere her alongside the more modern gods. She is taken more seriously by those rural knights who stay away from the towns and cities of Bretonnia.

Temples: There is no head temple to the Lady, as she has no formal religious hierarchy as such. Those temples which do exist are known as Grail Chapels, and are typically found in secluded rural areas near to a body of water. Some villages may have a crude stone building with an altar to the Lady where offerings can be left.

Almost all Grail Chapels are ancient buildings, dating back to a time when worship of the Lady was more prevalent. All take a similar form - a simple stone hall with an altar at one end, surmounted by a statue of the Lady herself. The hall is entered at one end, while the altar stands at the other. Sunk into the floor of many chapels is a long rectangular depression filled with water. In the better-tended chapels the water acts a reflecting pool for the statue of the Lady. Occasionally, a local knight may ask to be buried beneath a Grail Chapel, and some will display the arms of the deceased on the walls.

Shrines of the Lady are far more common than chapels, and can be found situated at the roadside in many rural areas of Bretonnia. Each will be little more than a stone shelter with a small altar, on which travellers and peasants can leave offerings. They may feature a carved grail in the wall behind the altar.

Friends and Enemies: Those who venerate the Lady will mostly worship her alongside the other non-Chaos human gods, and as such there is little conflict between her followers and those of other cults. The lack of a cult hierarchy compounds this. However, followers abhor those who worship the gods of Chaos and any faith which is opposed to the well-being of the people of Bretonnia. In centuries past, there have been occasional conflicts of interest with the other faiths, with outspoken Shallyan, Myrmidian and Taalite priests voicing concerns that the Lady was little more than an aspect of their own faith. In recent times her importance has waned sufficiently for the other cults to effectively forget about her encroaching on their own sphere of influence.

Holy Days: There are two holy days devoted to the Lady, 20 Vorhexen (by Imperial reckoning) which is known as 'The Feast of Gilles' and the spring equinox, when she is revered alongside Taal. The former is traditionally taken to commemorate the day on which the Lady appeared to Gilles Le Breton, and in rural villages may be the occasion of a modest feast, while the few knights who are devout will spend the day in silent contemplation and prayer. The spring equinox is the beginning of the spring and the start of the campaign season, and offerings are made to the Lady to ensure a bounteous year and success in battle.

Cult Requirements: Initiates and clerics of the Lady must have been born on Bretonnian soil. They must also find a priest of the goddess - this is a difficult task, and those who become initiates often claim that the Lady appeared to them in a dream to direct them to a chapel where one may be found. Followers will usually come from a rural or knightly background.

Strictures: Initiates and clerics must obey the following strictures:

-Fight the enemies of virtue and order

-Protect and defend the domain of the Lady from all transgression

-Ensure that the Lady receives a portion of all crops grown in her soil and meat from the animals raised on her lands.

-Spend no more than 30 days of the year away from Bretonnia

-Never break faith with a friend or an ally

These strictures are similar to the chivalric code of the knights, but are more orientated towards non-warriors. The strictures of the chivalric code will also be required of knightly followers of the Lady.

Spell Use: Priests of the Lady can use all Aura Spells (Aura of Resistance, etc.), and the Battle Magic Spells Enthuse, Cure Light wounds, Mystic Mist, Zone of Sanctuary, Zone of Steadfastness, Rally, Arrow Invulnerability, Cure severe wounds, Enchant Weapon and Zone of Missile Protection.

Skills: Initiates gain Heraldry and Etiquette.

Trials: Trials set to a follower of the Lady will vary according to background. Non-warrior clerics may be sent to recover a lost Grail Chapel deep in the forests of Bretonnia, or to protect a village of peasants from some external threat. Knightly clerics of the Lady may be sent to clear an abandoned chapel of goblinoid or some other creature's habitation. The trial to reach 4th Level will always consist of a quest to find the Grail. A Grail quest is an extended journey, on which the candidate for advancement must give up all worldly possessions and undergo many trials and hardships before being granted a vision of the Grail and possibly even the Lady herself.

Blessings: The Lady favours any skill used in defence or aid of the people of Bretonnia against an external threat. Knights blessed by the Lady will be favoured in battle. She does not favour any specific tests.

History: The origins of the Lady are shrouded in mystery and lost to the past. Some (non-Bretonnian) scholars have proposed that she was a nature spirit who took advantage of the superstitious Bretonni tribes to grow in power and influence. Bretonnians would have that she is the soul of the land itself, and as such has been in existence for as long as the planet existed. The growth in worship of the Lady before the coming of Gilles Le Breton is outlined elsewhere (see History pre-Gilles document). In short, by the coming of that great war leader she was an influential goddess within the land - adopted by rural peasants, the early 'knights' and 'kings' alike. She was held in awed reverence, and was afforded respect and devotion. Then came Gilles - a 'ducal knight' of great prowess in combat, and with skills of leadership that some said were the blessings of the Lady herself. He was certainly pious in his words, and would pray fervently before every battle. Tales of his valour and religious feeling were widespread. Early in his campaign against the perils that beset the country at the time, it is said that the Lady appeared to him and his retinue of knights and blessed their banner and weapons. His subsequent success in the battles to unite the nation were attributed to his being chosen by the Lady to drive the scourge of the goblinoids from her realm. 'Le chanson de Gilles' recounts his encounter with the Fay Enchantress - a mythical character who is a prophetess of the Lady, who appears in Bretonnian legends dating back to the times when the druids were all-powerful. As the Lady's champion, Gilles became the knightly principle embodied and ever since his passing the tradition has strived to maintain his values and emulate his prowess in battle.. Some blame this adherence to an ideal for the perceived 'backwardness' of the Bretonnian knight, although it also makes them a fearsome opponent in battle.

For centuries after the passing of Gilles Le Breton, the Lady continued to be revered. However, never did she appear again in so spectacular a way, and the Fay Enchantress was never sighted. Some began to whisper that the Lady had turned her back on Bretonnia with the passing of her champion, but most stayed faithful, fearful that to turn thier back on the Lady was to invite the dissolution of the realm. In 1178, an old woman stormed into the court of the king and announced herself as Morghaste, prophetess of the Lady and Fay Enchantress. As the court stared in disbelief at her impertinence, she was unfazed and repeated a lengthy prophecy, which she claimed was given to her by the Lady. Although much of it is now lost, the details that remain narrate a tale of doom and demise. Morghaste claimed that the Lady was no longer interested in the affairs of men, but that she would return some day with a new champion, a man chosen by her to restore her faith to the nation that forgot her so quickly after freeing them from the brink of destruction. She then departed, and was not heard of again. The 'Augury of Morghaste' is still known to scholars of Bretonnian history, but is assumed to be the ramblings of a mad woman - the immediate effect on the court was dramatic, but with the passing of kings and increased contact with other nations, worship of the Lady began to atrophy. Morghaste was dismissed as a mad woman deluded into believed that she was the Fay Enchantress. Nevertheless, of all the people of Bretonnia many knights stayed true to her and treated her as a patron goddess, even when others began to worship the newer martial gods - particularly Myrmidia. The nobility gradually turned away from the Lady, as dependence on the land became a more distant concern over the centuries, while many of the peasantry clung to the old ways.

The Lady Today

In the 26th century, over 1500 years since she appeared to Gilles Le Breton, the Lady has been all but forgotten by the majority of Bretonnians. All pay respects to her in little more than name, invoking her blessing along with other gods and goddesses. The ceremonies surrounding the coronation of a new king or queen contains words spoken in respect to the Lady, but they have become just that - hollow words. The only remaining true worshippers fall into two classes: knights and peasants.

Other than that, there is a small order of nuns devoted to the Lady, known as Demoiselles du Grail. These sisters consist of a handful of maidens, frequently drawn from the poor who feel the calling to the Lady. They are very few in number - in fact there are only four or five small convents in the country, each consisting of no more than 10 sisters. Each is located alongside a Grail Chapel, far from the cities and towns of nation and few urban Bretonnians are even aware of their existence. The Demoiselles du Grail spend their time in contemplation, and in occasionally assisting the local peasantry through good works.

The Lady does not have any templars in the same sense as Ulric, Sigmar and Myrmidia do. There is no formal order of templars, but those knights who are especially devoted to her are effectively her holy warriors. During the crusades in Araby, units of knights devoted to the Lady banded together under her banner, and the deeds of the 'Knights of the Lily' and the 'Knights of the Grove' are recorded for all posterity. Official histories record that these groups were either killed or disbanded soon after the crusades, although some believe that they returned and continue to this day.

In the Empire, there are two or three eminent scholars who have studied the Lady in conjunction with the practices of the Old Faith. Galirus of Nuln has hypothesised that she is a water spirit, whereas his colleague Wolfgang Kreutz at the Collegium Theologica in Middenheim contests that the Grail represents the feminine principle, while the fleur-de-lis is the masculine - indicating that the Lady is a fertility goddess of the primitive Bretonni. Needless to say, this dry academic speculation is restricted to lands beyond Bretonnia's borders - the Lady may have been ignored for centuries in her homeland, but few are foolish enough to tempt fate.

Recent events at the Royal tournaments of Couronne have some bearing on the standing of the Lady in modern Bretonnia. A knight who worships the Lady devoutly has won the last two years running. His name is Leoncoeur, and his deeds have earned him the position of the King's personal champion and he can now be seen at the royal court. His religious views are seen as slightly strange by the nobles at court, and behind his back many snigger at the unsophisticated belief he has in an outmoded religion. That said, he has a small faction of knights who pride themselves in their piety and upholding of chivalric values, along with a patriotism that borders on the fanatical. Leoncoeur's rise to prominence has been the cause of some wild rumours in the land - superstitious peasants claim that he has received the blessing of the Lady, and that his martial prowess and pious behaviour are the consequences of that. Henri Sonnebleu, a hermit who dwells near to the village of Lipres in the Duchy of Parravon, has spoken for the first time in 30 years to tell the villagers of a stanza in the 'Augury of Morghaste' that states that 'the lion shall serve the swine, but nature will run it's course and Gilles Le Breton shall be amongst us once

again, to herald the return of the Lady'. Sonnebleu claims to have seen the Fay Enchantress abroad in the forests, and says that she spoke with him awhile before leaving him alone.

Bretonnian Religion

by Rev. Garrett Lepper

What strikes both the informed student and casual observer alike about Bretonnian religion is their peculiar penchant for the worship of human servants of the divine deities. "Beholden to the Image of Deified Men: A Sincere and Scholarly Account Rendering the Peculiarities and Curiosities of Bretonnian religion."

-By Professor Ehrlich, University of Nuln

Religion in Bretonnia is in many ways different from the worship of the gods in the Empire, but the primary difference is the Bretonnian focus on Sainthood. There is considerable dispute as to what exactly constitutes what a saint truly is, but it is typically defined as an individual who led an exemplary life in the service of a deity or embodied the virtues of the faith, and has after their death been revered for their piety and are believed to act on behalf of those requesting their patronage. In this way a Saint is seen as an intermediary between the worshipper and the deity, who acts as a patron to the worshippers. Despite the claims of Imperial scholars to the contrary, the Saints are themselves not revered as gods, but rather the channels by which the gods and their worshippers interact. The Saint, in their role of neither human nor god are able to empathize with both deity and devotee and attend to the needs of the devoted. For Bretonnians, the role of the Saint makes their religion very human and close. The nature of Sainthood ensures that the Bretonnian knows how close the divine truly is to them.

Shrines of Saints

The cults of Saints are a wildly popular and public means of worship. Nearly every temple of any faith in Bretonnia has the relics of a past Saint enshrined in their altar and in other locations in the temple. So prominent is the temple's saint that most temples are not referred to by the name of the deity that they are dedicated to, but rather to the Saint that has been enshrined within the altar. The temple usually has a shrine dedicated to the Saint while in some places the entire temple is a shrine dedicated to that saint alone. In both cases the shrine or temple will have murals, stained glass windows, and other art depicting the life, tribulations, triumphs, and miracles of the patron saint. Saintry motifs decorate the entire shrine and the center of the shrine is the reliquary, a coffin, box, or sarcophagus that is elaborately decorated to the highest of standards. This reliquary houses some physical object or objects that were the saints in life, usually containing all or part of the reliquia, the body of the saint. If it does not house the body it houses some other significant physical object that is believed to be imbued with the power of the saint.

A large temple may house a number of significant saints who each have their shrine, and in this case the altar of the church holds the most important of all the saints, and it is this saint that the temple will be named after. It should be noted that not all temples have saintly reliquaries as their altars, but most do. Smaller temples will usually have one saint of whom they take great pride and is often the center of worship for the entire community.

Nearly all monasteries in Bretonnia have at the heart of their monastery a shrine to the founder of their monastery, and it is these saints that are amongst the most cherished of all. Some monasteries were founded by visionaries who, after their death, were then revered and interred as saints, other monasteries however were dedicated and built to an individual that had already died and been recognized as a saint. These monasteries are built near some place that had significance in the saint's life, where they worked a miracle, where they were born, where they had a religious epiphany, or where they died. Such monasteries are dedicated specifically to the doctrine that the saint proclaimed.

It should be noted that not all shrines are temples and monasteries, although over the years most important places have had a temple built near them. Some places are recognized as shrines even though no formal temple exists there. A well where a respected saint paused to cleanse the poisonous water may very well be a shrine, an informal place where pilgrims and other travel to as an expression of their devotion and as a means of rededicating their lives.

The Worship of Saints

The traditional means of showing devotion to a saint and consequently to the deity the saint serves is through worship at a temple or shrine on a particular day of the week. This particular day always falls on the same day of the week but is carefully calculated to not interfere with other religions or saint days of neighboring churches. In areas of long standing religious animosity though, it is quite common for saint days to clash dividing worshippers not only between religions, but sometimes within a religion if there are two shrines to saints of the same god in conflict over doctrinal matters. Regionally the days of the week are often named after local saints, with each day bearing the name of a different saint, although this is more common in small towns rather than the larger cities.

The ceremonies on such days are fairly typical and usually entail a sermon of religious doctrine, prayers, and songs with the choir. On such normal occasions a few small artifacts may be flourished by the priests or paraded through an aisle of the church. After the ceremony the worshippers may approach the altar, shrine, or other areas within the church invested with religious significance, bearing a candle and petition the saint to intervene on their behalf with the deity. The petitioner then leaves a small monetary offering behind to aid in the maintenance of the shrine.

It should be noted that few Bretonnians worship one saint, but rather look to a number of them to fulfill the various spiritual needs the individual has. However it is not uncommon for people to relate closely to one particular saint above all others, and this is not seen as amiss, and such a saint is referred to as a patron saint. Each house usually has a small shrine dedicated to the patron saint of the house whom they appease with daily prayers and more elaborate weekly rituals.

The central event of a saintly cult however is the feast day of the saint, or feast days since some of the more popular or pretentious saints have more than one day commemorating them. The feast day is always a date marking an important event in the saint's life, the date of their birth, a day marking a grave tribulation or triumph, spiritual ascendance, public recognition, return from a spiritual journey or pilgrimage, canonization, or death (particularly if martyred). These saint days are in most cases festive occasions in which the entire community takes part, including

many related shrines and even other temples if relations are particularly close. The day begins with the tolling of bells from the temple and possibly other temples if they are participating as well. A crowd usually gathers at the site of the shrine where a service is performed. The clergy wear their formal vesture and bear the regalia of the cult and provide a stirring oratory. Then the reliquary is usually lifted aloft and heads a procession to the center of the town or city in an event known as the saintly procession, and this entourage walks along a given path usually packed with spectators, and when they arrive at the heart of the town or city, the clergy renew the saintly covenant, a claim that the saint will continue to protect and nurture the people due to their dedication.

The allure of the event is that the cults patrons, usually the wealthy and rich, have donated considerable funds for the feast day, which takes place shortly after the saintly covenant is read. Those who have donated money to the saints feast day are mentioned in the covenant by name, those providing the largest donation first. Then food is distributed to those participating in the procession and considerable feasting and merriment begins. Venders distribute food as well for those who have the money, others bring their own food to share in the spirit of this charitable event, while others must eat the bread distributed on behalf of the donors.

After a few hours, the ceremony ends and the procession returns to the temple or shrine to the tolling of bells, and the donors and their invitees are allowed to attend the return of the rq to its place at the altar. For those outside the feasting may continue all night since the day is a holiday and there are numerous diversions on hand, usually street performers and other entertainers taking advantage of the occasion. Many theatre groups appear as well performing moments of the saint's life or commemorating other notable events in local or Bretonnian history.

There is one other dimension to the worship of deities through saints, and that is the pilgrimage, which plays an important aspect in saintly cults. The pilgrimage usually entails following the path that a saint took during important events during their life, although some of the more devout pilgrims will follow all the travels of a saint. The intention is that by following the path of the saint that one comes not only closer to replicating in their own lives the spiritual growth of the saint, but to also understand the saint by the experiences they had. The roads of Bretonnia see thousands of pilgrims traveling every year to shrines both near and far, and this pilgrimage plays an important part in the local economy as pilgrims spend their money on the pilgrimage or perform services or sell goods to afford their travels.

Benefiting from pilgrimage as well are the shrines themselves, who can expect gracious offerings from those who have traveled far as further signs of their devotions. Many temples and shrines, the exception being those dedicated to Shallya, see pilgrims as an opportunity to further spread their doctrine, good faith, influence, and profit as well, and provide relics to pilgrims in exchange for their donations. Often resourceful or unscrupulous individuals sell similar items for slightly cheaper prices outside of the temples and shrines.

Saintly Relics

At the heart of saintly cults is the physical remnants or manifestations of the saint, usually their body but often their worldly possessions, known as relics, which are highly revered. It is these

items that are the focus of the cults for they embody the human dimension of the saint, an aspect long discarded by the figure who now serves the deity spiritually. Although physical rather than spiritual, these objects are believed to be imbued with potent religious energy from the saint and as such should be carefully treasured and protected as sacred artifacts of both the saint and the deity.

As mentioned earlier, the most important relic are the remains of the saint, known as the *reliquiae*, the mortal shell of the spiritual being. It is claimed that the saints will one day return to their bodies, and therefore it is important that they be safeguarded. Furthermore the fact that the body is left behind is a sign that the saint still has a vested interest in returning to the earth and is therefore receptive to the pleas of devotees.

It is this *reliquiae* that is housed in the reliquary, a richly decorated coffin that is often carried forth on important occasions and even taken on campaigns with armies to ensure the saint's continued blessing on the enterprise. In many cases the saint's body may even be separated into parts with some portions sent out to other shrines to that saint as a means of legitimizing the new shrine as well as spreading the influence of the original shrine. Some are horrified by such a prospect of separating the remains of a saint but the sheer demand by worshippers and other clergy for an authentic manifestation of the saint and the political and religious influence attached overshadows such concerns. By gifting parts of the saints, the original shrine is increasing its political influence, and therefore nearly all churches turn a blind eye to this practice.

Almost as significant as the *reliquiae* are the saintly accoutrements that the saint had with them in their life. These items are held in awe not only because of their association with the saint, but because they were the tools by which the saint often did their sacred work. The practical and spiritual applications of such saintly trappings are attributed great powers and are not to be underestimated; the shrine may often use these artifacts to fulfill the designs of their saint and deity. In some cases items of incredible religious significance may be more valued than the remains of the saints themselves, although this is quite rare.

Enjoying less significance, are the *brandia*, or objects that had been associated with the relics of the saint, such as stones in a shrine, vestments worn during ceremonies, and other paraphernalia. These items are donated to lesser shrines or used in common ceremonies, or in many places sold to the devout. A step beyond these *brandia* are the items related to the cult of the saint but having no claims to a direct association with the saints themselves, the *memorabilia*. These items include prayerbooks, bead necklaces, locketts with pictures of the saints, and other such items that serve to remind people of the importance of the saint.

The authenticity of the relic can be problematic. *Reliquiae* especially are a source of friction, for it is not uncommon for two or more shrines to claim to possess the remains of a saint, claims that due to the politics of cults are very difficult to authenticate. Similar problems occur around other relics as well, complicated by the fact that the very desirability and power of all saintly artifacts means that they are the subject of many thefts. After centuries of thefts, false claims, new discoveries, splitting up of *reliquiae*, losses of artifacts on battlefields, destruction of temples and shrines, and countless other events that the genealogy of many cult artifacts is questioned or uncertain.

There are always those unscrupulous individuals who claim to sell true artifacts of the saints, often powered bone for potions or other curiosities, and so great is their reputed power that there is no shortage of people to pay outrageous prices for items that may be illegitimate or illegally obtained. Countless thefts have been suppressed by cult authorities or never even recognized, and religious authorities would be horrified to discover how many artifacts had been stolen and switched by not only thieving outsiders, but by the very members of their own cult!

To address the issue of authenticity of cult artifacts, the cult hierarchy has many scholars versed in cult lore and history and claim to be able to identify cult artifacts with unerring accuracy. Items deemed authentic by the cult leadership, usually after exhausting research, are given a document attesting to their validity, and item known as *authenticae*, which as proof of the items authenticity are worth almost as much as the item itself.

Becoming a Saint

For the common person in Bretonnia it is quite clear how one becomes a saint, to live a good and virtuous life embodying those things that a deity encourages, and for years of service you are recognized by the deity and called to serve them spiritually.

The truth of the matter is that the process of becoming a saint, known as canonization has become far more political than most people understand. There are two groups controlling the process of sainthood, the church hierarchy and the nobility. The church hierarchy controls church doctrine and policy and those who contradict or challenge the church are unlikely to ever be canonized. Many charismatic wandering holy people who practice unorthodox opinions are popular and well liked but are rarely ever officially recognized, and upon their death an unofficial shrine may be built but this can be destroyed by the church authorities as heresy; a few outside cults have gradually been accepted by the church hierarchy, but this is exceedingly rare. The nobility, of whom many are in the various churches and upon whom the clergy often rely upon for financial, military, and judicial assistance, they too have considerable power to influence whether or not an individual is recognized, and for this reason few common folk regardless of their devotion are canonized.

Those who are canonized tend to be those who do not challenge church authority, and who work closely to the church. Over the years it has been common for nearly all heads of the church to be canonized as a means of legitimizing the spiritual dedication of the church. Not all are fully invested as saints, but it is a formality that has become commonplace. Likewise, those wealthy nobleman who give often and give generously are likely to be canonized based more on their charitable nature rather than their adherence to church doctrine. As such the process of canonization can be a political one that all too often reinforces the existing status quo.

Over the years the sheer influx of saints has been regarded cynically by the common people, who react coldly to another church head or nobleman being granted sainthood upon their death. For this reason those saints from common backgrounds or with an ancient and legitimate tradition are held in high esteem, while more contemporary saint cults are pointedly ignored. As another means of rejecting church and noble controls, the common folk often worship unrecognized

saints who are known as les saints des personnes which provide an alternative to formal religion. These movements are quite popular, but are often brutally repressed by the authorities.

History of Saints

Before the formation of Bretonnia, the Bretonni people inhabiting the lands had a strong belief that although there was a clear divide between the natural and the supernatural, the profane and the sacred, that some special individuals were specially chosen by the deities to serve as examples to others. Some early Bretonni were renowned for their solemnity and their ability to put the dead to rest, others for their compassion and ability to heal, but most importantly were those warrior cults dedicated to Myrmydia that sought to epitomize martial skill as the means to defeat the threats that beset the Bretonni. These early holy people had great power and influence and were revered upon their death as models to emulate.

So before the formation of Bretonnia the Bretonni had in place early assumptions about the relationship between the human and the divine. This would be reinforced upon the unification of Bretonnia under Gilles le Breton. Gilles was a devout follower of Myrmydia who formalized not only the relationship between warriors and leader, but between commoners, nobility, and royalty. His leadership and policies resulted in the rigid hierarchy present in Bretonnia and would prove important in the rise of saintly cults.

When Giles le Breton was called by Myrmydia to serve her it confirmed the earlier traditional belief that some people were called by the deities to serve special roles. Soon the cosmology of Bretonnian religion paralleled the social structure of the society, so that just as the nobility mediated between people and king, so there were people such as the clergy that mediated between people and deity. The clergy were held in high regard, and after death clergy and other holy figures continued to be consulted by noble and commoner alike. During this early period hundreds of people both inside the church hierarchy and among commoner and nobility alike had visitations from the dead providing advice and knowledge. It was then, about a century after the disappearance of Gilles le Breton, that saintly cults began to spring up being reinforced when news came of the elevation of Sigmar to deity. These events proved that there was a close relationship between humanity and deities, and since then the saintly cults have dominated the churches of Bretonnia.

Saintly Cults of Myrmydia

Saint Jean Claude Thibodeaux

Countless noblemen have died in the wars between the Bretonnian nobility and for most peasants and many nobles, their names and deaths largely forgotten. One nobleman has transcended this danger of ignominy and few would not recognize the grisly image of Jean Claude Thibodeaux and his final act in death. His tale is one of the earliest of the Myrmydian Saints and the tale is a popular and bloody one recounted constantly throughout all of Bretonnia.

And Jean Claude Thibodeaux, beloved nephew of the King was dispatched to put an end to the villainous deeds of his nefarious cousin, L' Morte, for it was claimed that L' Morte had spurned the code of chivalry and ate the flesh of babies, consorted with demons and commoners, and laughed at the gods. With a small band of brave knights Jean Claude rode forth to slay his

degenerate foe. And L' Morte had surrounded himself with brutes and thugs and murderers and blackhearts and anarchists and others of that ilk and his terror spread throughout the kingdom. The brave and daring Jean Claude however maneuvered L' Morte and his rabble into battle. The evil L' Morte however eschewed the honorable laws of battle and resorted to such dishonorable weapons such as bow and poison. His man bravely shrugging off the cowardly shower they waded in deep, hewing off the arms and legs and heads of their foes, their proud heraldry sullied by the ichor of their foes. At the height of the battle Jean Claude smote L' Morte's second in command upon the head when L' Morte cravenly, without throwing a gauntlet, issuing a challenge, or raising his pennon rode down upon the engaged Jean Claude and directed his lance into the noble Jean Claude's torso, piercing his heart. Although his heart was shattered into fragments, Jean Claude defied death, enraged at the ignominy of the act. Pushing himself up along the length of the lance, to close with his foe, Jean Claude raised his great sword and issued a challenge to the horrified L' Morte. Before L' Morte could turn and flee, Jean Claude cleaved him in twain from crown to groin. Only then did Jean Claude slump in his saddle, issue his last dying words: "Without Chivalry, I have no Strength, without Honor, I have no dignity." His small force victorious against a larger and more treacherous foe, Jean Claude was received with honor and his story told far and wide, and a reminder to all of the virtues of the nobility.

-Tales of Valor for Young Lords and Ladies

Shrines

As befitting one of the most popular of Bretonnian saints, the monument erected to Jean Claude Thibodeaux is a shrine only in name. The seat of this saintly cult is a monastery shrine one overlooking a large gifted fief. The monastery is attended by a dozen priest-monks, a dozen knights and templars dedicated to serving the monastery, and a score or so squires learning the noble arts. This monastery shrine is one of the wealthiest Myrmidian shrines and the site of many important rituals, convocations, and other cult activities.

Small shrines exist in many noble estates and in all towns and cities as a constant reminder of the importance and dignity of the nobility.

Relics

Upon his death his body was interred at the shrine contributed by his family and all his possession carefully guarded as relics. As such every item in his possession upon his death was carefully preserved. His sarcophagus serves as the base of the altar and his arms and armor hold treasured positions on the altar. The most prized relic is his sword which is believed to be imbued with remarkable powers to strike down foes in a single swing. His heraldry is reputedly able to inspire warriors to greater valor and the mere touch of the bloody rag used to treat his wound is known to work miracle on grievous injuries. The powers of his lance are more disputed and unclear but it is believed by most to have some sort of mystical powers on a lesser scale than his sword. All these relics have been wielded on the field of battle with great effect except for the bloody punctured breastplate that has always remained at the shrine.

There are a number of accounts of the various relics being lost in battle and taken but such accounts are dismissed and all the relics are believed to be legitimate.

Attendants

Positions in this saintly cult are highly coveted in the Myrmidian priesthood and many of the

most important and shrewd priests spend some time serving this cult. As such the cult has considerable power and many important cult functions are held at this monastic shrine. This cult has long served an important role of bringing together noble and religious agendas and it continues the tradition by training and assisting both secular knights and templars of Myrmidia. Furthermore the shrine is also attended by squires who receive their training for their knighthood here and this opportunity is considered a great honor.

Important Dates and Rituals

This saintly cult is constantly busy attending tournaments and other noble functions where the cult serves to remind the nobility of its duty. The most important celebration is the day of Jean Claude's demise and his recognition as a martyred saint. The cult of Myrmidia has successfully expanded the occasion as a day of worship amongst the nobles to pay heed to the strictures of Myrmidia as well as give charitably to the church. The cult clergy celebrate numerous other occasions as well, including commemorating important events during the crusades where the cult played a prominent role.

Saint le Marck

And in the year 1887, Taal slumbered leaving Ulric and his followers to prowl the earth under the cover of winter. The snow covered the earth and all the people of the villages and all the animals of the forests shivered under the blanket of snow and nibbled at their spare winter larders. So great was the hunger and bitter the cold that even the fierce creatures that lived high in the mountains and deep in the forests prowled about the lands of humanity, demolishing the simple peasant huts and scooping up the inhabitants into their maws. A young knight, Pierre le Marck, answered the Duc d' Parravon's demand of feudal duty astride his mighty horse, wearing armor, carrying a great lance, and bearing as a beautiful banner an ancient family heirloom. This devout knight crossed the trail of some sort of monster and followed the trail, noting that it led to a nearby village. As this courageous knight crested a hill, he noted a giant of immense stature and girth wielding an ancient tree as a club setting upon a village.

Pierre le Marck paused only to say a brief prayer, and then charged this giant, the largest of its kind to ever walk the lands of Bretonnia. Pierre's steed gained momentum as he charged down the hill, and the giant turned about to attack his new foe. The two met in a thunderous collision - the giant with Pierre's lance transfixing through its stomach, and Pierre thrown from his horse. His steed was smashed to a bloody pulp by the great tree wielded by the giant. For the next minute Pierre struggled in the snow as the mortally wounded giant staggered about and tried to crush him with the hammer. Lest the giant's thrashings demolish the homes of the honest people, Pierre led the giant up the hill, and the peasants below watched the struggle on the hillside from below - shouting out words of encouragement to the beleaguered Pierre. Pierre attacked the creature's legs, and when it fell to its knees and reached for him, he slashed off its giant fingers, and when the horrible beast finally fell he stood atop its neck with a woodman's axe and severed its monstrous skull from its body. Since then, the village that he has saved, Camberlain, has built a monastery and shrine to their noble savior. When Pierre le Marck died, his remains were interred at this shrine.

-Excerpt from the 'Introduction to the Saintly Precepts of Pierre le Marck'

Shrines

Although there is only one shrine to Pierre le Marck, in the village of Camberlain, he is respected throughout Bretonnia and many temples to Myrmidia usually have some relief or stain glass window detailing his epic battle. The clerics of Myrmidia believe that this story has a lesson for all: for the peasants should rely upon their benevolent lords, for the petty nobles there is the lesson of following feudal deities, and for the high nobility to make good use of their retainers.

The Shrine of Pierre le Marck in Camberlain is a modest but well cared for temple. The altar itself is constructed out of the original giant's skull with little additional adornment, as befitting a simple temple. Beneath the altar are the buried remains of Pierre le Marck and in a separate vault are the relics of the order brought out on special occasions and sometimes given to the Shrine's champions on quests.

Relics

The most prized relic is Pierre le Marck's lance that still bears the blood of the giant. The lance is claimed to be a weapon of great power to those who serve Myrmidia. The other possessions are a battered set of armor which is reputed to defend its wearer.

Attendants

This Sainly cult has always had a modest membership, usually a lone priest and a couple of initiates. This clergy has always been highly respected but has never had an power in the Cult of Myrmidia. This cult's minor status and their lack of widespread noble acceptance and its popularity regionally has marginalized the cult. Unlike some of the other saintly cults of Myrmidia this sect is immensely popular with the local populace.

Important Dates and Rituals

This cult is the focal point of all local celebrations, such as feast days and solstices, as well as having a number of days celebrating le Marck's accomplishments as well as those of his priests and champions.

Sainly Cult of Young DesRuisseaux

And at a time when the world was as cold as the human heart can be, men with their bellies full only with envy spied the beloved of Myrmidia and DesRuisseaux, the first born son of an aged count. And the villeins covetous of the knights armor, fine steed, and noble bearing let loose with a cowardly flight of arrows. And the brave lone knight, his horse fallen and himself pierced grievously with the wicked barbs stood and received the rush, slaying one of the blackguards and gravely wounding two others before being smote upon his scalp by a treacherous attack from behind. Robbed, stripped, and left for dead in the winter night, the younger DesRuisseaux held on to life until his father found him, and with his last dying breath he spoke the names of his murderers.

And Monsieur DesRuisseaux, rather than act in vengeance, called forth for some Templars and Priests of Myrmidia to prosecute those responsible. With their execution and his son avenged, Monsieur DesRuisseaux then had the families of the villeins and the all the villagers who had hid

them moved from their land and gave their land to the Cult of Myrmidia to found a monastery and shrine in remembrance of his son.

-Chardonnay Memorial Prayer Book (Abbreviated Pilgrim's Edition)

The Cult of Myrmidia has always been elitist in Bretonnia and often prejudiced against the lower classes, and at the extreme end of this intolerance is the saintly cult of DesRuisseaux. A returning knight was murdered and those responsible were brought to justice by a small and unusual group of Myrmidians who had some knowledge of law. The martyred knight's father then donated land and money to the Myrmidians in honor of his son to create a monastery which would focus its attention on bringing to justice those guilty of offenses to Myrmidia or responsible for assaulting followers of Myrmidia. The cult has a particular vehemence for those who assault their social betters.

Shrine

The DesRuisseaux shrine is a private one on the DesRuisseaux estate with a immense adjoining law library. There are few visitors, all of whom are invited; but countless "clients" arrive and there is the family priest and his attendants who care for the place. In truth though, the knowledge of this cult extends far further, being part of fable and myth rather than part of accepted religious practice, it is viewed as more of a moral lesson on the depravity of the common men and the noble nature of the lords and ladies.

Attendants

There are a dozen of templars, priests and other clergy here who are devoted to the Cult of DesRuisseaux. Despite their size and distance from the cities they have considerable power. They are the only clergymen versed in law and its prosecution and this gives them considerable power within their cult. Their distance from major populations seems to lend them an air of impartial detachment.

Relics

At the heart of the monastery in the chapel element of the monastery lies the stone sarcophagus of the fallen DesRuisseaux and laying with the body are those possessions of his that were stolen by the knaves who murdered him. There are no powers directly attributed to the various items, but it is believed that any who would ever steal such relics would never be able to hide from justice, as the former thieves were unable to.

Saint Biancore

And what folly drives the vulgar people? Bereft of the guidance that a kindly lord gives them, they naturally turn to evil, their base nature drawing them to the unnatural as a moth to flame. Alas! While Monsieur Biancore was called to serve honorably, his tenants and servants strayed from his example and turned their ears to those whispering of forbidden things. The nature of such secrets are simply not fit for noble company such as this - let us not worry about the monstrous things coarse people talk about! Hearing of the atrocious deeds carried out by the commoners, Mr. Biancore returned and exacted the vengeance of the righteous. The scoundrels gathered to fight but Biancore and his men at arms rode them down and broke their will, and cut them down as they ran. None that bore arms against him that day lived to recount to others the

fury of Biancore. Biancore then turned to those witches who had conspired against them and the fiends that they had given birth to after their outrageous couplings with demons and other fiends. And only when all the sinners had been slain and their tainted village burned down did Mr. Biancore receive a vision that here, at the sight of his victory over the insidious forces of darkness that he should build a shrine to serve as a memorial to the good done that day in the name of Myrmidia.

Shrine

The local shrine is much beloved and cared for by the local nobility, they worship here regularly as well as hold many family rituals and weddings here. The baroque and well cared for place is reviled by the locals though, and cases of vandalism have been known to occur.

Role in the Cult of Myrmidia

Unimportant for the most part - enough spurious rumors and accounts have spread to give critics and cynics room to question the validity of the victory. Mostly serves as a prop for local elites - and serves to antagonize the locals. These rumors are that the negligent landlord had hostile overseers who overworked them and demanded they work on the vineyard longer than the demanded and that they were frequent with their whips and that the overseers and his assistants took liberties with the women and girls regardless of their age or condition. There is a long series of myths about a servant of Ranald who dropped the grape down his throat while he slept, which he inevitably choked on.

Saint Guivaché

I can assure you that those things that had been whispered about Mademoiselle Guivaché were most scandalous and I am far too polite to repeat such things here - after all, look at the fates of those who spread such disgraceful gossip. It is another story as to how Mr. Guivaché did so, but within an hour Guivaché had challenged all who had spread the rumor regarding his wife to duels to the death that day. Thus it was at noon that Guivaché faced the first of twelve that he had challenged to a duel. A crowd gathered, for never before had one person challenged twelve people to a duels to the death a half hour apart each, and the rumors about Mme Guivaché ensured that many would show up to find out how the days events would play out.

Guivaché stonily faced his first opponent, and within seconds of crossing blades, Guivaché's foe lay dying from a mortal wound. An onlooker commented that the brevity of the duel and the suddenness of the kill was very ungentlemanly to which Guivaché responded that he had little time for dilly dallying - he had another eleven men killed. As each duel continued the crowd grew even greater. The second and third duels ended as quickly. By now Guivaché's foes had no illusions as to his determination. The following foes were prepared and the duels now famous - for it appeared that Guivaché's honor had demanded that he challenge some of the most deadly and famous of Bretonnia's duelists. The following duels cost him dearly but they have long been studied for their beauty and ingenuity. Still Guivaché prevailed time and time again, pausing only to clean his blade and pray to Myrmidia between duels. By the time his tenth foe fell dead, Guivaché was close to death himself. He had a brief reprieve while his eleventh foe had to be hunted down by his second, and dragged from under the bed he had been hiding. He had to wait longer for his twelfth duel, for horsemen had to pursue the fleeing duelist and return him. And

after he had restored the honor of his family and wife Guivaché collapsed from the countless wounds inflicted upon him, and as he died he thanked Myrmidia for the strength that allowed him to overcome his foes. All those who witnessed

Saintly Cults of Morr Saint Vадnais

And the rest of both the living and the dead was shattered by the fierce strike of a piece of the heavens that had come hurtling down to smite the earth. With horror the living awoke to find that the dead had awoken as well. Families were pulled from their beds by those hungry for their warm breath, beating hearts, and pulsing blood. Human flesh was the grisly feast for the awakened. Fear and blood flowed, but one mortal moved with righteousness that dark night, commanding the dead to return to their graves. When the mortals heard his prayers and commands, they took heart, when the dead heard they returned to their graves or raised their cold fists to attack the lone priest that moved among them. And when they turned to destroy the lone priest, his very touch lay them to rest. Thus it was that the peace returned to Vilmorre through the miracles worked by Nicholas Vадnais the Priest of Morr.

Saintly Cults of Taal Saint de Chenrie

"Forgot not, sons and daughters of Chenrie of our brave Hubert de Chenrie. As it is told, that winter was cold - doors froze shut, bones snapped, and hungry things lingered, starved and craving human flesh. If not for Hubert, the hunter, the entire village would have starved... For everyday, before the sun rose, when the winter wind was at its most bitter, Hubert would begin his day with prayers to Taal as he sought out his prey. Yet on this very day, five hundred years ago, Hubert, who had been blessed by keen senses by Taal, sensed something evil on the wind, a stench of men who were beasts. Craving flesh, they had crept out from their foul forests and sought out Chenrie.

Despite their bestial nature, they did not sense Hubert. Hubert lay in wait, and as they neared, he fired one, two, three, four, five arrows, and five foes fell. Yet dozens remained, and enraged they pursued Hubert. Hubert, endowed with the cleverness of the fox, the eyes of the eagle, and the swiftness of a stag craftily led them away from Chenrie and back to the wretched woods from which they came. All day and all night, they pursued Hubert, who continued to enrage them by ambushing them and then eluding them time after time.

Other hunters, his three brothers, discovered the trail, the pursuit, and the bodies of Beastmen and sought out to aid their dear brother Chenrie. The brothers found beastly body after beastly body, and it had appeared that the hunters had now become the hunted. The brothers followed the winding and twisting trail for three days and three nights - to discover Hubert standing over the last corpse of the Beastman. Tired and ragged, Hubert had a single regret even though he had saved Chenrie single handedly and killed some fifty Beastmen. Hubert's regret was that he had been unable to return with any game to Chenrie for three days."

Shrine

There is but one true shrine to Hubert de Chenrie, in his native village Chenrie. It is a simple

shrine cared for by a single Cleric of Taal and his three initiates symbolic of Hubert and his three brothers. The shrine is a single roomed shrine with a nearby house for the cleric and initiates. The building was one a hunter's lodge but has been rebuilt out of stone over time. Its interior is covered in beautiful skins, carefully cut and tanned by Hubert himself hundreds of years ago. His body is interred beneath the altar along with other cult artifacts with which he was buried and have not been disturbed since.

Although the shrine itself is one building, nearby is a small pillar of rocks with a stag's skull on top, and it was here where Hubert first noticed the invading band of Beastmen. Known as the Hunter's Stoop, today many of the rituals to Taal occur here and every day the hunters of Chenrie, exiting the village, stop here to offer prayers to Taal. The Hunter's Stoop has spread to countless other villages in Bretonnia and many other villages claim that Hubert came from their village or reputedly have a similar ancestor in their village's history.

The Hunter's Stoop is only part of the extensive shrine - for where each Beastman fell there is a pillar of rocks covering the tainted earth where the body fell. Each of these pillars is known as a quiet and serene place and countless people carry out pilgrimages wandering from point to point. Since Hubert's hunt, never have any beastmen been seen anywhere in the vicinity of Chenrie.

Relics

After Hubert's hunt, he fully dedicated himself to Taal and became a prominent cleric in Taal. Many of his church possessions are still highly valued in the cult - but these artifacts are not in possession of this saintly cult. The possessions that are held by the cult are his bow and arrows, both interred with his body. His bow is reputedly blessed so that its arrows never miss, and the arrows that had slain the beastmen are believed to slay Beastmen. It is claimed that Beastmen intuit the power of the arrows from miles away and thus never approach the village of Chenrie.

Attendants

The cult of Taal is highly decentralized with no hierarchy. Nonetheless the Taal cleric presiding over this saintly cult is highly respected, and is always a hunter of exceptional renown. Many Taal clerics make a pilgrimage to the area to meditate and visit with other Taal priests. The three brothers are initiates who upon their completion move on to another area to preach. In this way, the reputation of the cult has spread widely throughout Bretonnia.

Important Dates and Rituals

In winter there are a number of feast days, every eighth day, in which the clergy of this saintly cult hunt down animals and provide food freely to the villagers to symbolize the crucial food that Hubert was able to procure that dreaded winter. And there is a three day ritual that occurs in the winter as well on the date of the famed hunt in which a group of initiates and clerics and pilgrims make the long three day trek as a pilgrimage. Their return symbolizes a great feast and much revelry, a welcome reprieve from the isolation and misery of winter in Chenrie.

Saintly Cults of Ulric

Saint Adaim

The Winter respects only the Strong, for Winter is but a trial for the strong, and those that emerge from the Cold have proven themselves worthy of Ulric. Listen to the testament of

Strength.

Frowning upon the weak and civil ways that the people had taken to, Ulric sent forth a great winter storm to punish the weak and test the strong - to remind them that winter and hardship are inevitable and to be embraced and respected, not feared or forgotten.

One man was not bothered by this storm - brave he was, and his laughter carried on the winter storms, courage and ale warmed him. His name was Adam, and he was born in the dead of winter under the harsh stare of Ulric. A warrior he had become, and he raised his fist at the heavens and beseeched Ulric for a true trial of strength. And thus it was that a mob of orcs, under cover of the storm came and set upon Billerfouage.

Adaim and his fellow villagers were not complacent and awaited something dreadful. Battle was joined and Adaim rose above the fray, setting about with axe and sword cleaving the hated orc foe. Orc blood flowed like ale and was just as intoxicating for Adaim. Although all of his friends were killed or grievously injured, Adam continued the fray, and when it seemed as though all might be lost, Adam cried out to Ulric in praise and thanks, and an army of wolves descended from the nearby forest and set upon the orcs from behind, and they were slain to the last orc. A few of his friends survived the battle and told the tale - something of which Adaim never discussed, for he disdained words forever more and dedicated his life to action.

Shrine

The shrine of Adaim the Grey is the village of Briconeur near the Grey Mountains, a village with a very independent reputation and famous for its warriors and mercenaries. So independent is the village and the surrounding area that for the last several hundred years no noblemen have been able to control it and the area is under the nominal control of the Cult of Ulric. The area is known as inhospitable and there is little to be gained by controlling it.

The shrine itself is a bit unorthodox by most standards, resembling more of a stone alehouse rather than a temple, and the similarities between the two do not end there. The Shrine of the Grey is a place of boisterous activity and considerable drinking - and when no rituals or significant events take place it is often occupied by lay people of the cult drinking and taking part in acts of physical prowess. At the raised end of this rather large shrine are the sepulcher holding the revered body of Adaim the Grey.

Although he is noted for his battle with orcs, he traveled extensively and fought in many great battles and as a consequence a number of trophies are kept in the altar above his sepulcher. The artifacts and trophies in the altar are ascribed all number of incredible powers, but it is a credit to the reputation of the saintly cult that no sane person would ever think of taking anything.

Relics

There are over a dozen relics and trophies that this cult has, and many have been used on multiple occasions with great effect giving this cult a powerful reputation. The axe and sword that Adaim the Grey had worn is reputed to be weapons of considerable power, the Grey's symbol of Taal is a potent symbol reputed to keep one warm no matter how cold and the bearer is able to communicate with wolves, while his hunting horn has the power to call wolves. His battered tankard is reputedly able to turn even the vilest ale into a nutritious meal so that one can subsist solely on ale. There are a dozen lesser items that the Grey had reportedly used or taken

from foes with great power as well, but many of these lesser items are less credible and having been taken, used, and returned their histories and reputed powers are unclear.

Attendants

Half a dozen clerics preside over this saintly cult, with another dozen or so initiates taking tutelage here. This saintly cult is very popular and powerful, but also fairly arrogant and has tense relationships with other saintly cults of Ulric and other religious sects. As such they are fairly marginalized within the cult despite their popularity.

Important Dates and Rituals

Adaim the Grey is a prominent and controversial figure in Cult of Ulric, one with a rather colorful history involving over two dozen significant battles and fights, any one of which alone would have sufficed to elevate one to sainthood. His first fray was the most significant and the cause of much ritual and celebration at not only the shrine but also throughout most of the cult. Each of the other significant battles has a ritual associated with it, many of them are practiced not only at the shrine but also at other locations in Bretonnia where the battle occurred.

Saintly Cults of Verena

The Gallows Priest

This Priest of Verena's name is known only to the Verenan Church, to the public he is known simply as the Gallows Priest. It was said that five centuries ago dark and foul deeds were committed against children of the streets, yet this seemed to bother none, save for a priest of Verena who often served as a councilor for the poor - for months he investigated the deaths. Despite the grisly deeds, none paid the crimes any attention until the children of poor families fell victim. Within a week over a dozen people were falsely accused and killed by rampaging mobs thirsty for vengeance. The mob finally accused an innocent beggar who located the most recent body and was accused of the act. The vigilantes began to lynch the man and set fire to his body when the Priest of Verena intervened - telling them that this man was innocent and that the heinous criminal would be brought to justice. Frustrated by his intervention and the lack of concern by the authorities, they strung the priest up first and set fire to him, yet before they could lynch the accused it was discovered that despite the burning of the body - the priest's hand was unmarred and miraculously clutched in his left hand a signed confession of the murder - its ink still wet. This dedicated priest has single handedly hunted down, captured, and received the confession of the murderer minutes before his death. Although his sacrifice was not enough to save him, the accused was released and the murderer executed. Ridden by guilt, the city folk gave an outpouring of wealth that created a shrine and a single priest to serve the temple and give legal representation to the poor - a custom which continues to this day. This sainthood cult continues to be revered in his city of his death as a symbol of dedication, justice, and courage.

Shrine

The primary shrine of the Saintly Cult of the Gallows Priest is in the heart of the slums of Bordeaux at the square where the Gallows Priest was hung and burned. It is a small and simple shrine with multiple floors. The first floor serves as the place of worship for those seeking justice, the second floor serves as an office and library for those seeking the service of the priest,

and the top floor is the residence of the priest and attendants. Since the mission is concerned with providing spiritual and legal assistance to the poor, the shrine is not elaborate, but local people do much to repaint the shrine and provide it with flowers on holy days.

There are two dozen shrines spread out about Bordeaux at the locations marking the place of the murders and serving as a reminder for people to be both vigilant and just.

Despite the lack of influence this cult has in the Church of Verena, this cult's power has spread in a very modest way. Every city in Bretonnia has a single priest known as the Gallows Priest who is funded by contributions in the name of the Gallows Priest cult and who serves as a legal advisor to the poor. Although there are no shrines dedicated outside of Bourdeau, one temple in each of the cities provides this service in one manner or the other.

Relics

This cult has one lone relic - the unscathed hand of the priest that had clutched the confession. It is claimed that in the presence of an innocent man wrongfully accused the hand will glow, although this is not legally recognized in court as proof of innocence. According to legend however, the hand has never failed, and even those acquitted by the hand and punished by the court have allegedly been discovered innocent later. Although the confession the hand once clutched is long gone, stolen by a thief, it was claimed that it too had powers - that when a murder was committed and the confession held by the accused that they're signature would appear at the end of the confession magically. It was claimed that the confession was stolen by an associate of an accused murder who feared that the confession would indict them.

Attendants

This shrine, its priest, and its library are all funded by humble contributions from the locals and occasionally larger contributions from the wealthy, and as such is barely self-sufficient. The temple's priest must fulfill the duties by himself or herself but are often assisted by students of law or initiates of Verena sent to the temple as part of their training. These positions are voluntary and not paid for, but have certainly aided in bringing the plight of the poor to some of these young middle or upper class students. The urban poor have little love for the learned ways of the Cult of Verena, yet the Gallow's Priest and attendants are among the most beloved of priests. Recently the good will between both has been strengthened by some of the instructions that the latest priests have given to the local poor children.

Important Dates and Rituals

The Rite of Intervention is the most significant cult ritual day, one that occurring on the day of the priests death. The shrine's priest solely performs the main rite although the entire cult commemorates the occasion. This main ritual occurs at the shrine where Gallows priest was martyred, and entails the priest making the walk from the city jail to the shrine. Awaiting at the shrine is a disadvantaged person selected by the local worshippers who is given a blessing and a sizeable monetary gift, symbolic of the boon that the Gallows Priest gave the wrongfully accused.

The second part of the ritual is conducted with less fanfare, for the Cult of Verena and the civic authorities traditionally pardon one person in jail who is deemed reformed or who has served enough time. This is a gesture to further commemorate the courage of the Gallows Priest, a rare act of goodwill towards the poor.

The Gallow's Priest also has one other function, and a controversial one at that, which is to attend every execution in Bordeaux and to offer, with the priests of Shallya a last religious ritual. The purpose of the attendance of the priest is to remind all of the solemnity of putting someone to death, but among the poor it is also symbolic of the fact that those to be executed may not be guilty, and the presence of the Gallow's Priest seems to reinforce this. The Gallow's Priest is also the Verenan clergy member who works most closely with and respected by the Cult of Shallya.

The True Nature of Sainthood

Belief in a saint does not necessarily entail efficacy. It is up to the GM to decide the true nature and power of saints, if any. Below are some suggestions as to the various roles a saint may play, but it should be noted that there are a number of saints and their origins, power, and authenticity may vary so it may be applicable to provide different saints with different natures.

Simply living embodiments

The Saints were merely people who embodied those principles that the deity held highest. The deity may bless these people with powers in which case the saint may be legitimate and have powers, or they have never been truly recognized by their deity even though their own accomplishments were noted by their fellows and therefore the saint may have no powers at all and the worship of them is actually just the worship of the deity.

Possessed by the divine

The Saint may very well have been possessed by the divine essence or a servant of the deity, who guided their lives and allowed them their miraculous powers that they were reputed to have had in everyday life. If this was the nature of the saint, than it is quite likely that the saint is capable of interacting on behalf of the followers. Like being influenced, the divine work through mortal flesh, although in possession, the mortal shell temporarily houses the divine, infusing the body with great power. The gods themselves use the bodies as tools, and the glory and magnificence of the god is readily apparent to all whom watch. Those who have been possessed by some manifestation of the divine are never the same again, their souls have been eternally transformed, and they either tend to live far longer than normal mortals or die soon after, their body unable to deal with the shock of the manifestation.

Influenced by the divine

Saints may have not been possessed by the deity, but they may have been guided by the divine, in which case the saint was chosen with a specific agenda, and were capable of miracles and other measures since the deity would have allowed for such things to occur, but the frequency and power would have been much less than if they had been possessed by the deity.

Retroactively a Saint for political reasons

As mentioned earlier, not all people canonized as saints lived exceptional lives, and many were saintly appointments are political. In this regard the worship of the saint is quite empty and has little power, and the deity in question will probably not even recognize the cult as being its own, meaning that those worshipping the saintly cult will be denied blessings and spells.

A Sham

The Saints are mere mortals, nothing more, nothing less. Worshipping them is an empty act, and those few priests who do exhibit powers do so unknowingly by tapping directly into the patron deity rather than the empty saint standing between mortals and the gods. The gods may view Saints as a form of heresy, or useful camouflage, but in truth the saints have no power, nor do their artifacts.

Minor Gods

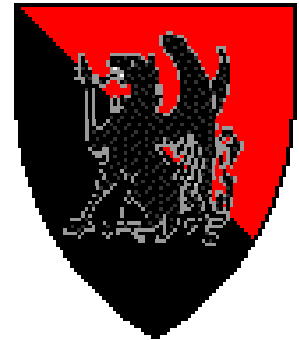
The Saints are actually minor gods, elevated to godhood by their patrons on their behalf on the occasion of their death, and they are able to intercede on behalf of their mortal followers. Some may not be minor gods, but rather divine servants acting on behalf of their gods as well.

to be continued...

Heraldry

by Natascha Chrobok

Coat of arms are used by the Knights of the Old world to identify themselves. One man in armour looks a lot like another, so the coat of arms is used to identify knights in a battle. In a society where few people are able to read and write, pictures are very important. Therefore a coat of arms is more like a label for instant identification than it is a painting. From the Bretonnian Knights over the Imperial Knightly Orders and various Imperial noble houses to the rich Merchant-families of Marienburg and Tilea, the coat of arms are an important instrument of identification in the Old World. Even primitive races like Orks and Goblins use symbols to show their membership of a warband. The origins of the coat of arms are not clear, many scholars believe that the use of signs has its sources in the old civilisations of the Dwarfs and High Elves to identify the troops in battle. The early human barbarians copied the banners and signs of the elder races and over the years they created new signs and symbols.



Only the oldest son would inherit his family's coat of arms unchanged; his younger brothers would usually add a symbol to show who they were, in some parts of the Old World they only get the right to use the colours of the coat of arms. When a woman marries, especially if she is the only heir, the coat of arms of her family is often added to her husband's arms.

In Bretonnia it is usual that the young Knights don't get their coat of arms before they haven't spend several years as Knights Errant in the retinue of a senior Kinght, baron or duke. During this time they wear the plain, unadorned heraldic colours of their family or the liege-lord whom they serve. The humble commoners are not entitled to wear personal heraldry. Instead they war the livery colours of the Lord in whose retinue they serve. This will be the plain undadorned heraldic colours from his own heraldry.

Heraldry in the Empire seems to have gone to the opposite extreme - arms are not used so much as badges - all members of the same order bear the same symbols; all soldiers of the same city or country bear the same colours. It is usual that members of the same Knightly Order

use personal variations of the same coat of arms. The Knights Panther for instance all use the Panther as charge but in different variations. Other Orders like the Reiksguard or the Order of the Fiery heart all use the same badge.

In some parts of the Old World, especially in Estalia, the arms are quartered, or divided into parts. In this case, the man's family coat of arms is in the upper left quarter (as you look at the coat of arms) and lower right, while the woman's family's arms are in the other two quarters. Shields are generally "read" like a book, starting at the upper left, going across and then down. This system seems to be very complex and is not very popular in the rest of the Old World. A coat of arms can have several parts. The main part is a shield, which can have a crest above it, a motto, and animals supporting the shield. This article will deal only with shields. The "blazon" was a description of the shield in words, using a special vocabulary. The terms used in heraldry are similar to a kind of old Bretonnian. The idea is that a shield can be described by one expert in heraldry so that another expert could draw it correctly without ever seeing it. To draw the coat of arms from the description is to "emblazon" it.

Colours and Metals

The background of a shield is called the "field" and the symbol shown on the shield is called "charge". Some shields are divided, while others are not. Traditional heraldry uses only the following colours and metals:

Colours

Gules	Red
Azure	Blue
Vert	Green
Purpure:	Royal Purple
Sable	Black
Metals	
Or	Gold (yellow)
Argent	Silver (white)

Another colour designation is "proper", which means in the most common colours found in the nature for that object. A "boar proper" would be redbrown and a "tree proper" would be a green with a brown trunk.

The Metal/Colour Rule

There are special heraldic rules how to assemble the colours of a shield. The basic rule is "metal on colour or colour on metal, but not metal on metal or colour on colour". At the first moment this might be a little confusing but it just means: if the "field" of a shield is a colour (red, blue, green, purple, black) the "charge" should be in metal (gold/yellow, silver/white) and vice versa. This rule is not always used when the "charge" is "proper".

However, if the background is divided, the colours are considered as being next to each other, not on each other, so you can use two or three colours or two metals. This rule about colours and

metals provides contrast, making the shields bright and easy to see. If you have a shield with a circle and a Grail-symbol on it, then to follow the metal/colour/metal or the colour/metal/colour rule. A green shield with a golden circle and a black grail would be correct (colour/metal/colour) while a green shield with a golden circle and a silver grail would be not (colour/metal/metal). Easy, isn't it?

Charges

A charge is what is shown on the base colour of the shield. Animals were frequently used as a main charge. They are often shown in a certain traditional posture, which are not meant to be realistic pictures of the animals. Generally the animals chosen are fierce, and are often shown in postures of combat. Whatever their main colour, fierce animals are often shown with red tongue and claws. Small details on a charge do not have to follow the metal/colour rule.

A silver panther can have red claws on a blue field.

The most common animals on shields are: Lion, Bear, Boar, Eagle, Horse, Dragon, Griffin, Panther, Basilisk, Cockatrice, Dolphin, Dog, Haphy, Stag

The most common names for the positions in which the animals are shown on shields are

rampant	standing on hind legs
rampant guardant	standing on hind legs, face turned toward viewer
passant	walking
couchant	lying down
sejant	sitting

But not only animals are used as charges. Symbols like towers, castles, ships etc. can also be used.

Badges

Badges are important for marking an army as opposed to a rabble of random knights. Usually a sign is used everybody can identify (i.e. the Crusaders adopted the Cross).

Symbolisms of Heraldry

Each charge and colour has a specific symbolism. The following list shall give you an idea about the meaning of a shield:

Colours & Metals

Or, yellow or gold - Generosity.

Argent, white or silver - Peace and sincerity.

Sable or black - Constancy, sometimes grief.

Azure or blue - Loyalty and truth.

Gules or red - Military fortitude and magnanimity.

Vert or green - Hope, joy and sometimes loyalty in love.

Purpure, purple - Royal majesty, sovereignty and justice.

Tenne or tawney - Worthy ambition.

Murray or sanguine - Not hasty in battle, and yet a victor.