# The History of Britannia

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# *Disclaimer*

This document is a word-for-word digital copy of the printed "The History of Britannia" book that came with Ultima 4. It is intended to accompany the Ultima 1-6 CD compilation. Origin apparently decided that this document was not necessary for redistribution when putting the CD together. However, there's a wealth of information about the world of Ultima 4 within the pages of this document that help clarify the current state of affairs in Britannia, and ultimately the point of the game. There are also playing strategies, story embellishments, and hints and tips to the locations of places, items and monsters. I find the exclusion of this document from the Ultima 1-6 CD to be a gross oversight. The game can't be played or enjoyed to its fullest extent without the information provided here. Thus, the existence of this document.

I tried to keep the documentation as close to the original as possible. However, I did take the liberty to correct the spelling of traveller to traveler (preferred spelling), and corrected a few other minor grammatical errors and spelling errors. The original document had a mal-formed sentence. I fixed the sentence that once read, "In each town one may-indeed one ought to-converse with all the inhabitants." to read, " In each town one ought to-converse with all the inhabitants."

Additionally, I scanned in many of the images found within the original "History of Britannia" book and colorized every graphic you see in this document. You will also notice that there are no images for the bestiary. If you wish to scan in and colorize all 31 images, go for it--I've spent too much time on this project as it is. To get this project out to the public, I decided to sacrifice the Chapter IX graphic. I could include it, but this file would have never been released if I did. This document is provided "as is". No warranty is expressed or implied.

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If you have any comments, questions, suggestions or problems, direct them to louis@psyber.com. In the meantime, please enjoy!

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# *Chapter I*
# *Political History*

The Dark Ages of Britannia is the name given to that long span of time when the infamous Triad Of Evil stalked the lands and challenged all for the supremacy of the soul.

The First Era of the Dark Ages came to an end with the downfall of the evil Wizard Mondain and his many minions, as chronicled in Ultima I. The Lords of the lands were weak and scattered, rendered ineffective by factional wars. It was only through the efforts of an itinerant adventurer that the foul Mondain was tracked to his hidden lair and slain.

But a few years of restless peace followed Mondain's downfall. So long had the world shuddered beneath Mondain's yoke that many found it hard to believe he had been really vanquished. In truth, his teachings did not disappear. Mondain's apprentice Minax rose to power soon thereafter to challenge the fledgling city-states that were beginning to evolve. The Terrors had begun anew.

Minax's powers upon maturity greatly exceeded those of her evil mentor. With these powers she was able to rain wholesale destruction upon the planet, twisting and corrupting everything. Her foul web spread through time itself, ensnaring all who sought to oppose her. Finally, there arose a hero out of legend who dared face Minax in her own fiery castle and destroy her. Thus ended the Second Era of Darkness, as told in Ultima II.

Twenty years of well-earned tranquillity ensued and prosperity favored the land. Then disturbing omens appeared, followed by the mysterious appearance of a fiery island. The tale of the Third Era of the Dark Ages is told by Iolo the Bard in Ultima III--wherein Lord British, sovereign of an incipient empire in the land of Sosaria, called forth through time and space for Heroes of the People to assemble. Four diverse adventurers answered this clarion call. To them fell the ages of the Doom of Exodus. Long they labored on the trail of the mysterious Exodus, through many a deep dungeon which seared their souls.

To this day, each member of that team bears the marks of their journey. With the aid of the mystical Time Lord they were successful in bypassing the Great Earth Serpent and gaining access to Exodus' island fortress. The very bricks of the fortress rose up against them, and great is the Bard's tale of their struggle to reach their mortal foe. Of the final confrontation not one of them will speak, save to say that evil is gone from this plane. So passed the third member of the Triad of Evil and with this death, so passed the Dark Ages of Britannia.

From the rubble of Sosaria, Lord British was able to unite all the mainland and a few of the islands under his one rule. This new Empire of Britannia brought much sought-after peace and prosperity to its subjects. Many of the ancient pockets of evil were destroyed, so that the only remaining hazard to wayfarers was the occasional stray band of marauding orcs or hill giants.

Most of the lands were mapped, although a few unexplored regions still remain.

With the Triad of Evil destroyed, Lord British became known for his dedication to raising the quality of life of his subjects. To assist in this endeavor, three mighty structures were raised in distant parts of the realm. One was the Lycaeum, wherein lay the great observatory. Another was the Empath Abbey with its oak groves where wise men and women meditated upon the teachings of the ancients. The third structure was the great castle of the Knight's Order of the Silver Serpent. Only the flower of Lord British's chivalry was invited to join this order, which embodied the highest ideals and exemplary bravery. The rest of the land was divided among eight major towns, each with its own political faction. Numerous satellite villages also dotted the countryside between the towns. In this manner were Lord British's lands organized.

# *Chapter II*
# *Geography*

The final destruction of Exodus rocked the known world. Mountains rose; land masses sank. Most of the surface area of the world became fused together into one large mass. It is over this major continent-now called Britannia-that Lord British rules. Some nearby islands also pay homage to him, while beyond these islands lurk uncharted shoals and rumored pockets of evil.

Lord British's magnificent castle is situated in the centre of the continent, overlooking Britanny Bay. This tall building is the greatest architectural structure of the new age. Loyal subjects may pay homage to his majesty, and renew fealty whenever they are in the vicinity of his castle. Nearby lies the arts centre of Britannia-the town of Britain-where Bards weave tales of legendary deeds and serenade visitors.

To the north of the castle of Lord British lies the great mountain range, known as the Serpent's Spine. The peaks of this range are the highest in all Britannia. During the summer months, a small out-of-the-way pass allows knowledgeable travelers to save much time on their journeys. Beware of the one-eyed Cyclops and fierce, two headed Ettins that inhabit this range.

Northwest from the mountains begin the vast woods known as the Deep Forest. Many a traveler has become lost among these tall, majestic trees. If they feet stray from the beaten path, do not despair, for within the woods lies the beautiful city of Yew, home of the mystic Druids. The High Court of Yew judges all the important cases in Britannia and is famed far and wide for the wisdom of the decisions rendered here.

Nearby is the spiritual centre of Britannia, the famous Empath Abbey. Within these hallowed walls, wise men and women study the ancient writings of past Masters, and meditate upon the Great Principles that govern the universe. A good meditation-focusing on a proper Mantra-will sometimes yield valuable visions to those whose patience and powers of concentration are strong. The experience is worth sampling.

East of the Deep Forest lie the High Steppes of Britannia, famous for beautiful horses. The only difficulties a traveler might encounter here are bands of thieving Rogues and unfriendly Wizards. The High Steppes border an interior lake fabled for mysterious disturbances.

Beyond the High Steppes lies the famous battlefield, known as the Bloody Plains, where the last major forces of evil were vanquished. Alas, many of our brave men perished here in the fight for virtue. Be very careful when thou passeth through this region. It is whispered that, at some phases of the moon, the undead rise and battle again.

Lost Hope Bay lies to the north of here, with the sturdy town of Minoc perched on its shore. Minoc is home to some of the finest craftsmen in the realm. The Tinkers of Minoc are known for their skill. A tired traveler will also find a refreshing place to rest at the Wayfarer's Inn. The northeastern tip of Britannia is rather wild. The treacherous mashes, with their noxious vapors that poison the unwary explorer, are home to swarms of insects and all manner of beasts.

South of Lord British's castle can be found a large plain, mountains, and a dense forest. On the southern edge of the continent is the magnificent town of Trinsic, from whence come Lord British's finest Paladins. The Tap in town has some of the best brew around, and the bartender is a great source of current gossip. Be sure to tip him well!

The claws of the southern tip of Britannia embrace the Cape of Heroes. Slightly to the west lie the Valarian Isles. The walled town of Jhelom provides Lord British with the best fighters and also has the largest inn of the realm, where the service is outstanding.

The headquarters for the Order of the Silver Serpent is on an island south of the Cape of Heroes. This wooded fortress was given to the members of the Order by Lord British in recognition of their outstanding service. A visit to Serpent Castle will instill within the traveler a true feeling for the ways of chivalry.

Off the western shore of Britannia is the island home of the doughty Rangers. Skara Brae is a beautiful city and spaciously laid out. For those suffering from rare diseases or grievous wounds, a Mystical Healer resides within those walls. The Healer will aid the destitute as readily as the wealthy, expecting no payment save what the sufferer can afford.

In the northeastern part of Britannia lies Verity Isle, famed as the home of the Lycaeum. This pillar of higher learning constitutes the centre for the sharpening of the finest minds in Britannia. The Lycaeum's observatory provides Lord British with valuable information about the course of the heavens and provides a vantage point to watch the happenings within his realm. On the southern end of Verity is situated the fabled town of Moonglow. The Magi of Moonglow are constantly improving their skills, being tireless in the pursuit of greater knowledge of the mystic arts. Within Moonglow, however, can be obtained the finest in mystical reagents. These herbs will help those with magical skills prepare and cast their spells.

This then is the known realm of Britannia. Several small villages also dot the landscape, but all are not recorded in the charts of the realm. Some other islands of varying significance hug the shoreline-most of which are uninhabited and barren. The only islands the traveler should be cautious about when exploring are known as the Fens of the Dead. Disembodied Wisps, Ghosts, long-dead Lichs, and savage Zorns have been reported here.

Existing maps are by no means complete. There are said to be other unexplored isles, wherein all manner of monsters and evil beings reside: flame-breathing Dragons, multi-headed Hydras, horned Devils, fiery Lava Lizards and even dreaded Balrons are rumoured to roam the distant shores. Somewhere, out beyond civilization, is also reputed to lie the ruins of the legendary town of Magincia, which the gods destroyed for the insufferable pride of those that dwelt there. All of the marble palaces and gardens were devastated, and the right, haughty inhabitants reduced to haunting spirits. No one has ever confirmed this legend, so it may just be a fable to frighten the weak of the heart and instill humility in those who overvalue their own worth.

Sea travel along the coast of the main continent is reasonably safe, although a bold band of pirates has been raiding Britannia of late, terrorizing the populace. Beware, for the pirates take no prisoners! Farther out to sea roam many mythical creatures. The unwary voyager will likely encounter Giant Squids, Nixies, poisonous Serpents, and mystical Seahorses. The ever present danger of whirlpools and waterspouts make seafaring a hazardous experience at best.

It is hoped that with the next edition of the History of Britannia, travelers will have brought back more information on these unexplored regions, so that the map my be completely filled in. As a final caution for the would be traveler-Beware of the many Dungeons and their dark, subterranean passages!

# *Chapter III*
# *Fellowship*

Under Lord British's rule, each of the eight towns has developed into a cultural centre for one of the eight major professions. In this manner, an orderly society has evolved with little friction between the diverse inhabitants. No one is restricted to their town of birth, and one frequently finds people of various professions visiting a particular town. These are the eight major professions.

**Mage.** The Magi of Britannia gather in Moonglow, near the Lycaeum, where they can study the ancient mystical scrolls of the Library. The strictures of their profession permit Magi to wear only cloth armour and carry either a staff, dagger, or sling. Unconfirmed rumors indicate that the highest Adepts have acquired the use of arcane magical weapons. The primary weapon of the Mage is magic. As the Mage becomes more advanced, more powerful spells can be woven. Some of the greatest spells have been known to shake the earth, or raise the dead!

**Bard.** The Bards of Britain entertain the people with their ballads and tales of heroic deeds. Bards not only chronicle the deeds of valor, but perform them as well. The weapon of choice for a Bard is the sling, but they may use a crossbow at times. All armour save that of Leather is shunned by these minstrels, for they find metal harsh and too noisy for their sensitive ears. The Bard also dabbles in magic and makes a fine companion on a long journey.

**Fighter.** From the town of Jhelom hail the mighty Fighters. They pass their lives in training and have the use of all weapons and armour, though most prefer the double-edged Britannian sword, a devastating weapon in the hands of a skilled fencer. Fighters have little or no magical talents, for they believe only in the use of arms and fear that magical training saps the will and concentration of a true warrior. They possess a particular affinity for horses, and are most useful companions on travels to uncharted regions.

**Druids.** The Druids are fierce fighters, especially when defending their beloved groves. They hold all trees to be sacred and their town of Yew lies deep in the woods. Druids are also impressive practitioners of the mystic arts and their knowledge of herbs is without peer. They may fight with different types of bows, although their preferred weapon is the mace. The Druidic philosophy forbids the wearing of metal of any kind, so Leather is their armor of choice. The Druid's knowledge of the ways of the woodlands make them

invaluable as fellow travelers.

**Tinker.** The Tinkers of Minoc are both skilled artisans and superb fighters. They are generally suspicious of magic, believing that only hand-crafted artifacts possess true value, and thus use it seldomly. A Tinker may use any weapon, however, the double-bladed war axe is preferred. Tinkers will use any non-magical armour. A traveling party with a Tinker need never fear for repair of any metal or wooden items.

**Paladin.** These great fighters live in the town of Trinsic in the southern part of Britannia. They are expert in all forms of combat and weapon use, and are one of the few professions that will make use of the magical chain armour when it is available. Their deep beliefs in the value of good lend strength to their magic, which they wield with certain flair. Paladins are thus very formidable opponents and highly valued allies.

**Ranger.** Off the western shore of the mainland lies the fair island of the Rangers. Venturing far from their retreat at Skara Brae, they strive to improve the conditions of people throughout the realm. Rangers are well-versed in woods lore and fight fiercely with most weapons, but shun all but leather armour. They are also proficient magic users and faultless trackers in any wilderness.

**Shepherd.** It is uncertain whether Shepherds are skilled in any form of warfare or in the mystic arts. However, they are highly valued traveling companions for their humility and their knowledge of the ways of the land.

A traveler in Britannia need not journey alone. In each town one may-indeed one ought to-converse with all the inhabitants. If they personal philosophy of life is close to that of the town, then thou may ask one of the residents to join thy party. If amenable to your invitation, this person will travel with thee only as long as thou stay true to thy beliefs. If at any time, through actions or deeds, thou stray from the Path, then thy companions will desert thee to thy Fate. Remember, these are Free Companions-not servants or mercenaries. Such is their faith in the as their leader, that all gold and supplies held by the party is given into they care for the good of all. Use this trust wisely!!

# *Chapter IV*
# *Mercantile*

There is a thriving merchant class in Britannia. Each town and village has its own shops that specialize in local wares and services. The seasoned traveler will discover many delightful and useful items to purchase, as well as a wide variety of places to eat and sleep.

The monetary system of Britannia is based on Lord British's heraldic charge. It is a gold coin with a silver serpent cast vermeil upon the gold. The process is so difficult that the coin has never been successfully counterfeited or debased in value. This coin has been the foundation of the realm's stability and is universally accepted by merchants. Coins of the realm are also to be found in the chests that appear from time to time and are found below the surface in the dank dungeons. Beware, as most chests have diabolical traps in place to confound thieves.

Here is a partial list of some of the popular shops and their wares:

**Weapons Shop.** Here one may purchase the finest in weaponry that blacksmiths can forge. Depending on the skills of the local artisans, a shop might offer the following range of weapons:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Staff* | *Sword* | *Dagger* |
| *Bow* | *Sling* | *Crossbow* |
| *Mace* | *Flaming oil* | *Axe* |

The weapon shops also offer trade-ins on used equipment, although if thy axe is greatly notched from battle, do not expect much for it.

**Armoury.** Fine armour may be purchased in the armouries of Britannia. 'Tis just the item to keep highway men from slipping a dirk into thy ribs! The local armoury may offer any of the following selection:

*Cloth* *Leather* *Chain* *Plate*

The armouries will likewise offer trade-ins on used armour, although most would not consider them liberal. By the time most fighters get around to seeking improved armour, the old armour is almost completely falling apart, and its principal value is as scrap for the foundries.

**Pub.** The subjects of Lord British truly prize their pubs, and it shows in the gracious hospitality to be found in all public houses. Most offer an excellent array of drinks and food for the wayfarer. It is also commonly known that the bartenders are incurable gossips-if asked the right question and offered the right price-rare news may be obtained. Public drunkenness is prohibited throughout the lands of Britannia, so temper thy indulgence with wisdom.

**Grocery.** Little is worse than being far from town and finding thyself starving to death because the person in charge of the expedition hast forgotten to buy enough food. Be sure to lay in a supply at each opportunity. Thy fellow travelers will most certainly appreciate thy foresight.

**The Healer.** Some towns contain these invaluable places of aid where one may go to be healed when suffering from grievous wounds. Remember to heal thy companions also, for a healthy party ensures survival in the wild. The Healers are the only ones who may cure victims of the noxious venoms inflicted by the inhuman denizens of the land.

**Inn.** The numerous inns of Britannia provide tired travelers with a comfortable night's sleep, which refreshes and revitalizes each character. The character of the inns throughout Britannia varies, as does the price.

**Herb Shops.** All practitioners of the mystic arts will search far and wide to locate these rare shops. Within them is to be found the components-or reagents, as they are known to enchanters-for spell mixtures. Without these mixtures, no spell may be cast successfully. Due to the rareness of some of the herbs, many are not offered for sale regularly, if at all. The known magical reagents are:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Sulphurous Ash* | *Ginseng* | *Garlic* | *Spider Silk* |
| *Blood Moss* | *Black Pearl* | *Nightshade* | *Mandrake Root* |

Care should be taken to mix the herbs in the correct proportions, so as not to waste the valuable ingredients.

**Guild Shop.** The Thieves' Guild has been essentially driven out of Britannia, but rumors persist of its existence somewhere in the ocean, perhaps on one of the uncharted islands. Somehow, the Guild maintains contact with the mainland, perhaps through the brazen pirates. The goods once offered by the Guild were expensive, but invaluable to the traveler who sought to stray off the beaten path in search of novel experiences.

These are the main shops in Britannia. A few other places exist that are worthy of note:

**Shrines.** Here the devout of each town may meditate upon their Path in life. Each shrine responds to the meditation of a different Mantra (chant). Consistency and concentration are the keys to meditation. Enlightenment is attained only through care.

**The Seer Hawkwind.** Residing within Lord British's castle is the Royal Seer, Hawkwind. Many aspire to tread the Path, but very few find their way. Seek the advice of the Seer as to thy progress upon the Path. He can look into thy heart's heart and read thy progress or failure. Heed his advice, for feet that have strayed may be brought back upon the Path.

# *Chapter V*
# *Transportation*

Throughout the centuries most travel has been accomplished by use of the feet. While this method lends itself to scenic hikes, it is a terribly slow way to journey from one end of a huge continent to the other. Getting around Britannia, which may never be without risk, could soon become easier. Under the auspices of Lord British, studies of the properties of the Moon gates are beginning to yield a clearer understanding of the Gates' mystical workings. People forecast that future citizens will use these gates as a normal means of distant travel. The destinations of the gates appear to be rigidly bound to the phases of the twin moons Trammel and Felucca. The appearance and disappearance of the gates are definitely so linked. The location of the gates are represented on most maps of the realm as phases of the moons. The gate active is indicated by the phase of the moon Trammel. Once a gate is entered, thy destination is indicated by the phase of the moon Felucca.

Britannia is marked by six terrain types, each with its own features:

**Grass.** The smoothest and easiest to travel on, the grass of Britannia serves to fatten its herds. One may pass here without any impediment.

**Brush.** Low scrub growth and bushes hinder thy progress, permitting thy party to move but at three quarters of thy normal speed. Fine tinder for campfires may be found at the base of the larger shrubs.

**Forest.** The going is slow through dense woods, with thy speed cut fully in half. The oak so dearly loved by the Druids predominates here, along with healthy growths of Ash and Beech. There is quite a lack of visibility in the forest regions.

**Hills.** Hilly terrain, much favored by those who raise sheep, will slow thee down considerably, so much so that none but the sure-footed mountain goat can move at more than a snail's pace.

**Marsh.** The marshes and fens are particularly treacherous and should be avoided at all costs. While progress is only slowed to half one's normal pace by the muck underfoot, the marshes give off poisonous gasses which can severely harm members of the party.

**Mountains.** Mountaineering is not a well-known skill in Britannia, so the mountains are closed to the normal traveler. There is also a lack of visibility over the mountains.

Horses may be obtained and greatly speed travel on land. The sages of the Lycaeum are reputed to have been working on a lighter-than-air device for Lord British, but it was stolen some months ago and its whereabouts is not known.

Since while traveling, thy party members' hit points may be diminished by unexpected confrontations, every so often thou should Hole up for the night and camp. If thy rest is not interrupted by wandering creatures, then thy party will by greatly refreshed.

At sea, masterful control of thy ship is necessary for survival. Ships have powerful cannons, but they can only fire broadside. To learn seamanship, thou must understand the ways of the water and the wind.

The ocean is made up of three types of water: Large waves mark deep water; small waves indicate shallow water; tight ripples show shoals, too shallow for ships to pass over. Remember that a change in wave size signals approaching land. This will aid thy navigation.

The winds of Britannia blow very constant in a given direction, then shift to a new direction for another long period. This fact allows the skipper of a ship to sail strategically. If the ship is facing into the direction of the wind, (such as sailing East against an East wind) then the ship's progress is at its slowest-1/4 Speed. If the ship is sailing with the wind, (as in sailing West with an East wind behind thee) then the ship's speed is faster-3/4 Speed. It is only when one tacks across the wind that the ship reaches maximum speed, (such as sailing North or South against an East wind)-Full Speed.

Strive to maneuver thy ship so as to bring either the port or starboard batteries to bear before creatures or pirates can close and try to board. Thy ship has armour which, if reduced to zero, will cause it to sink and thy party shall perish. A captured pirate ship can be use din place of a badly damaged ship. Practice near shore until thou develop seafaring legs. The ship's cannons also serve for firing upon land-bound creatures. Beware, some of the land creatures have the power of flight and can pursue thee over the waves!

# *Chapter VI*
# *Weapons and Armour of the Realm*

**WEAPONRY:**

**Hands.** If thou lose all of thy weapons, this is what thou hast left. Although it is possible to kill some of the lesser monsters with thy bare hands, the odds of success truly are not very high.

**Staff.** A six foot piece of carved ironwood that has been magically attuned, the staff sold in the weapons shop of Britain is more formidable than it seems. It is the favorite weapon of the Magi.

**Dagger.** Ten inches of beautifully worked steel make the standard Britannian dagger. The traditional basket hilt looks very functional. A favorite weapon of novices.

**Sling.** The common sling is fashioned from twenty-four inches of cloth, folded in half, with a leather cup. The projectiles-small rocks-are easily collected, making this an inexpensive missile weapon. A perennial favorite with travelers down on their luck.

**Mace.** Upon the 1 1/2 inch oaken stem of the Britannian maces rests a glove of iron studded with knobs. The impact of this weapon has been known to shatter the skulls of enemies. A favorite among the Druids.

**Axe.** With a double-sided two-foot blade, a warrior wielding a battle axe can really wage war. The axe is a favorite among Tinkers, as many of them are workers of wood and metal.

**Sword.** Ah, a true fighter's weapon. Four feet of wicked, blue steel will strike fear into the heart of any opponent. The sword is an automatic favorite among Fighters.

**Bow.** A truly competent long-range weapon. Get thy enemies before they can get thee! The Britannian bows are made from the finest yew wood. Each longbow is hand-rubbed and ornamented with horn nocks on the tips. A favorite among those with poor armour.

**Crossbow.** Now here is a real missile weapon. The impact of the crossbow will stop a rampaging troll. The crossbow is traditionally made of mahogany with a carved mapled veneer on the sides depicting Lord British's device, the Silver Serpent. A favorite among Bards for the singing of the crossbow's string.

**Flame Oil.** The use of flasks of Flame Oil constitutes an innovation in Britannia. Any of the Eight Great Professions can use it. The wielder casts the ignited oil in a chosen direction, creating a corridor of flaming oil which lasts several minutes. Any enemy entering the flaming oil suffers burn damage for each turn passed in the inferno. A favorite weapon among those hurt and in need of rescue--a last ditch defense.

Halberd. Seven feet of stout wood topped with a blade of deadly steel. The halberd requires excellent coordination to be used effectively. It is the most deadly of weapons in the

hands of an expert, who uses it to strike over the heads of his fellows. A favorite among Paladins.

Several magical weapons are said to be found hither and yon, but the location of these are not known for certain. It is said that a traveler must be worthy of such a weapon before it will become available.

**ARMOUR:**

**Skin.** What thou art left wearing when thou hast no armour at all.

**Cloth.** Peasant's garb for those who can afford nothing better, or those restricted by the vows of their profession from wearing aught else. A reluctant favorite among Magi.

**Leather.** The workhorse of novice travelers, leather armour is found throughout Britannia. Many of the professions are restricted to leather as their best choice. A favorite among Bards, Druids, and Rangers.

**Chain.** Used by those who can handle the weight of chain mail while fighting, this armour offers excellent protection. Only the finest steel is used, with double-thickness on the shoulders. All links are individually riveted for strength. A favorite among Fighters and Tinkers.

**Plate.** The aristocrat of the armourer's craft, plate affords more protection than any other conventional armour. Each suit is tailor made to thy shape. The cost is naturally sizable, but the effect is inspiring. A favorite among Paladins.

As is the case with weaponry, rumors abound of magical armour that will withstand the breath of a dragon. But, who knows? Perhaps these are but rumors spread by Orcs to lure fighters into illusory searches resulting in death.

# *Chapter VII*

# *Magical Arts*

Most of us understand only those things that we can see and feel. Yet there is a segment of the population that can see the unseeable, and can feel that which has no substance. The perception and use of these ethereal forces is called magic. To some it is an art, to others a science. It is difficult for this historian to describe the art in which he is totally unfamiliar. He can, however, comment upon what purports to be the science.

The basis of all spellcasting is the proper mixing of the necessary reagents. Reagents are the physical materials which are said to provide the initial energy to begin the spell. Each spell uses a different reagent formula. These formulas are jealously guarded by magic users, for quite often the difference between life and death is knowing a spell that thy opponent knows not. From the bill of fare at the herb shops, the observer can glean the names of the reagents: sulphurous ash; ginseng; garlic; spider silk; blood moss; and black pearl.

Furthermore, there are reputed to be two others, more powerful still than those just listed. However, they are not for sale according to the proprietors of the herb shops. They are nightshade and mandrake root.

Only certain classes of the eight major professions have any talent for magic. Some are quite strongly endowed, such as Magi and Druids, while the Paladins, Bards, Tinkers and Rangers have but a little power. Fighters and Shepherds have no magical ability at all. In fact, Magi are so tuned to the special energy that comprises magic that when they cast a spell, a blue aura glows around their head and shoulders.

While most spells are reputed to possess either offensive or defensive abilities, some are utilitarian in nature, such as Light, Open and View spells. The rare aeromancer can harness the power of the winds. An ancient scroll on display in the library at the Lycaeum tells of different types of energy fields created by means magical. It lists the following fields and discusses their properties.

**Sleep.** A green field that may bring sleep to anyone who passes through it.

**Lightning.** A blue field that serves as an impenetrable barrier which inflicts damage upon any who touch it.

**Flame.** An orange field that imparts massive damage upon those foolish enough to try to

cross it.

**Poison.** A violet field of noxious vapors that poisons anyone passing through who is not quick to hold their breath.

Whether these fields may be controlled by magic is uncertain. However, the scroll was concerned with the tale of a Wizard's battle! One can only ponder whether the writer survived the encounter.

# *Chapter VIII*
# *A Bestiary*

**Bat.** A non-evil subterranean dweller found in the deepest caverns, the principal diet of the bat is animal blood. They are quite large and may attack any who disturb their rest.

**Cyclops.** These evil giants can hurl half-ton boulders down from the heights. Even a grazing hit will do considerable damage to a member of thy party. The Serpent's Spine is said to be the best hunting for them.

**Dragon.** The dragon is an evil, flying serpent which can cross water and blast ships with huge fireballs. Not many ships can withstand a couple of passes by an attacking Dragon.

**Ettin.** These evil two-headed aberrations of nature can cast huge boulders down upon thy party, causing immense damage. It is best to try to kill them with long-range weapons and spells. A large clan of Ettins is said to live along the Serpent's Spine.

**Gazer.** These hypnotic creatures snare their prey by putting them to sleep. The deep forests are the favorite habitat of these evil, floating eyes.

**Ghost.** The restless spirits of those trapped between planes, ghosts can pass through walls, so use extreme caution when they are thought to be nearby. Evil Ghosts are often found in ruins, battlefields and crypts.

**Gremlin.** These hungry denizens of the underworld love to sneak up to unwary travelers and steal all their food. Do not let an evil gremlin get close to thee!

**Headless.** Another evil being best suited to terror and destruction, the Headless is indeed a creature of nightmares. Many a traveler has fled in abject horror at the sight of a headless torso bearing down upon them.

**Hydra.** Beware the evil breath of the multi-headed hydra! The massive fireballs can fry most members of thy party.

**Insects.** If thou dost stay clear of these non-evil vermin, they will not bother thee. Marsh and dungeons are their favorite locales. Insects can fly, so they can chase thee over water.

**Lich.** This undead shade of a powerful wizard can still cast very powerful magic spells. The lich is a most dangerous opponent under even favorable conditions.

**Lava Lizard.** These reptilian creatures love fire and dwell in infernos. In combat, they have been known to spit flaming lava thirty feet, so beware these evil beasts.

**Mimic.** One of the most treacherous and evil creatures in all of Britannia, the mimic can assume any shape, although they seem to prefer assuming the likeness of treasure chests. Upon

spotting one, the careless traveler greedily rushes toward the chest. When the traveler gets close enough, the mimic casts out a poisonous venom. When the traveler succumbs to the poison, the mimic feasts upon him. The only known way to detect a chest mimic is to wait until it gets curious enough to peer out at thee by lifting the lid of the chest.

**Nixie.** These aquatic first cousins of the ancient race of elves rise from the depths to strike terror into the hearts of seafarers. The evil Nixies wield sharp tridents which can be hurled against a ship's crew from afar, causing great damage.

**Orc.** Would that every orc had been destroyed with the fall of the Triad of Evil! They breed like rabbits and still infest the woods and hills, though in much smaller numbers than before.

**Phantom.** These tragic souls have been captured by evil and forced to reenact their battles throughout all time. They are bodiless, but can be detected because their swords and shields remain visible. Phantoms are tough opponents as dying is meaningless to them.

**Pirates.** Truly the dregs of Britannia, most of these crews have death warrants hanging over their heads. Remember that the evil pirates take no prisoners! Their ships are equipped with heavy cannons, and the crews are well-trained to quickly move their large galleons into battle position. It is a rare skipper indeed that can survive a broadside duel with a pirate vessel. Thy best hope is to "dot the T" or to close with thy enemy. If thou art able to defeat the crew, the ship itself becomes thy prize. For castaways on remote islands, this is the only hope for salvation.

**Python.** The venom of a Britannia python is highly poisonous. These non-evil constrictors can spit their foul venom a full eleven paces, and should be treated with the utmost respect.

**Rat.** The common giant rat, while not evil by nature, will still enter human camps in search of food. They pose a threat to any dungeon explorers foolish enough to startle them.

**Reaper.** These grim creatures stand upright on trunk-like bodies and wave many tentacles at their prey. The evil reaper can also reputedly cast different energy fields, and this is considered a most vicious opponent.

**Rogue.** The rogues that are to be found throughout the land are often escaped prisoners who now make their livelihood as highwaymen by attacking travelers. If they get near to thee, they may pick thy pockets.

**Seahorse.** These magical creatures appear fair and are not evil, but if offended they make devastating enemies. They are possessed of powerful magical abilities which can wreak havoc among the party.

**Serpent.** The sea serpent is an aquatic relative of the dragon. The fireball cast by the serpent can sink a ship long before it has a chance to close with the beast. The best defense against a sea serpent is to engage It in close combat as quickly as possible. It is thy only chance, albeit a slim one, to survive the encounter.

**Skeleton.** Animated bones, the skeletons are the undead incarnations of a variety of creatures. These tools of evil strike fear into ordinary travelers. With the proper enchantment, however, they can be dispelled.

**Slime.** Dungeon walls fairly ooze with slime. Most slime just sits there, this evil variety comes after thee!.

**Spider.** Beware of inadvertently wrecking a spider's web and this non-evil creature will probably leave thee in peace. If thou suffer the misfortune of crossing one, take care to avoid the venomous spittle.

**Squid.** When the tentacles of the giant squid close around a man or a ship, the very power of lightning is released upon the prey. Tis best to try to destroy the evil squid within cannon fire before it can engage thee at close quarters.

**Troll.** These large and evil creatures can hurl axes--of which they carry a plentiful supply--with frightening accuracy. Beware their tricks. Trolls are usually found in hills and mountains.

**Wisp.** More insubstantial than most evil creatures, wisps can actually teleport around the battlefield and attack from anywhere. It is most disconcerting to be involved in an encounter that contains a wisp.

**Wizard.** Not all magic users follow the path of good. These evil renegade wizards make very dangerous adversaries when crossed.

**Zorn.** Zorns are the antithesis of everything. They pass through walls and obstacles, and negate all nearby magic. If an evil zorn closes with thee, thou probably will not escape its embrace.

LORDS OF THE EVIL DOMINION

**Balron.** It is believed by some that all of these Marshals of Evil were destroyed when the triad fell. If any do exist, it would be better for one to quit life itself than to face the fury of a balron. The ancient scrolls describe them as flying creatures which cast devastating fireballs as well as weave massive enchantments that once felled entire armies.

**Devil.** These flying Lieutenants of Evil may sweep offshore and chase thee across the waves. They are powerful magic users and should be avoided at all costs. Devils are particularly fond of torturing their victims when the opportunity arises.

# *Chapter IX*
# *The Skills of Combat*

The historian is a man of intellectual pursuits and therefore little acquainted with the ways of combat. For the following information on such skills, we are deeply indebted to the Master at Arms of the Order of the Silver Serpent.

**Before Fighting.** Be certain that thou art properly equipped for the ensuing fray. Dost thou have the proper weapon and armour? If not, then thou must equip thyself anew. When thou commence to ready a weapon or wear some armour, thou wilt be offered a selection of such items that are available in thy party's common pool. If thou dost choose an item inappropriate for thy class, thou wilt be asked to select again.

**Initiating Combat.** When thou art next to an enemy, thou may attack in the direction of thy foe. Thou wilt then be able to view thy combat location, and battle shall ensue.

**Being Attacked.** If thou dost not attack a creature, then assuredly the creature will attack thee at its earliest opportunity, assuming that the creature is evil or hungry.

**How to Fight.** Each fighter and magic user will have an opportunity for separate action. Thou may only attack in the main cardinal direction (North, East, South, and West). When it is a fighter's turn, those with hand weapons may Attack an adjacent area by specifying the direction. Those with missile weapons may fire them across the battlefield by denoting the direction of fire. Magic users can Cast a spell when it is their turn. Again, only spells for which reagents have been prepared will function. The spell must be selected and the direction fixed. Most combat spells are functional across the field of battle. Energy fields, however, can be cast only in small areas adjacent to the caster.

**Victory.** When all of the monsters have been destroyed, thou wilt return to the surrounding countryside. If the monsters were carrying any treasure, this will now be available to thee. Care should be used in Opening any treasure chests, as they are frequently trapped.

**Fleeing.** There will come times in thy quests when thou wilt be confronted with superior forces. Whenever one of they team is near death, guide him or her off the combat field to save them. If the tactical situation deteriorates completely, removing all members of the party from the field will disengage thee from thy enemy. There are those who will call thy actions cowardly, but a wise leader will know the value of preserving the life of one's fellows.

**Terrain Considerations.** Devote considerable time to the study of the fields of combat. Locate defensible positions for thy party, making sure to maintain an avenue of escape should the battle go badly. Remember our heritage! A few valiant fighters strategically placed in a narrow rocky pass can stand off an army numbered in the thousands.

**Weapon Considerations.** There are three distinct classes of weapons available to the warrior. They are: Missile Weapons which permit the striking of foes at a distance; Polearms which allow one to smite over an obstacle or companions; and hand-to-hand weapons which necessitate engaging one's enemies at very close quarters.

**Ethics of War.** Do not feel that it is thy birthright to slay everything that walks, flies or swims. The Code of Chivalry states that before engaging in combat with a foe, the warrior should ask, "Is this for truly evil?" If it is not, then thou must not kill it, but stand thy ground and force it to retreat. The Code is thy touchstone, for without it thou are but a speck of dust in the whirlwind of Chaos.

# *Chapter X*
# *Modern Civilization*
# *And Our Universe*

We have just emerged from the darkest period in recorded history. With the vanquishing of the Triad of Evil, we need no longer anxiously watch our backs for fear that evil will fall upon us in the first unguarded moment. The stability achieved by the New Age seems to herald a Golden Age of Peace and Prosperity.

What kind of people will inherit this New Age? Surely our destiny is not to perpetually fight as warring tribes throughout all time. Is there not a higher calling--one worthy of our efforts and capabilities?

If one accepts that the next area of human growth should not be fostered through aggressive territorial expansion, then a possible answer emerges--we must turn inward. Of late, a small group of inquisitive philosophers at the Lycaeum have been asking such questions of each other. While their musings seem quite radical and new, they are worthy of consideration:

Is living a life of virtue an essential element of civilization, or can society survive the test of time without such principles?

How might we ensure the long-term continuation of our new-found peace? What systems of laws and ethics will ensure the continued happiness of all our people?

Why doth Evil still stalk the world and can it ever be vanquished?

If the public set of ethics which evolved from the days of primordial survival is impure, how can we achieve a clean foundation upon which to build a life of virtue?

Given the premise that to understand purity, one must strive to be so, how does one strive for that which cannot be understand?

If our true purpose here is to achieve a balance with our surroundings as suggested in the ancient scrolls of the Library--how can we face nature without first facing ourselves?

Meditation seems to hold the key to perspective. In the transcendental state one is freed from the shackles of modern living. The whole of the universe resonates with thee, and thou dost feel for once as if thou dost belong to a greater whole. Yet all too soon the meditation ends, and thou dost return from this brief glimpse of the sublime to the daily need for survival.

It is time for all to put aside their warlike ways and begin fighting the evil that lurks with themselves. It is far too easy to sit and espouse the path of Virtue, yet never set foot upon it. The ancient rule of treating others as thou wouldst be treated thyself takes on new meaning when put in the context of universal harmony. We must become living examples of our beliefs!

How does one being to first walk along this new way? Do road markers exist if we but open our eyes to see them?

To be at peace in all areas is a state of mind only achieved by an Avatar. Is such a state attainable by any human, fallible as we all are? The true answer can only be found by those who quest forth in search of it--for who can see the end of the path before beginning the journey? Yet it is also written that for each person the path is different. Perhaps the seeker of wisdom and knowledge of the ways of the land is great. Conversing with him may help one to determine where lie the centres of the Eight Virtues of the Avatar.

Many philosophers hold the opinion that the path is in reality but a series of separate small paths. Each minor path leads tot he fulfillment of an aspect of ourselves. Treading one of these minor paths may be construed as a life's goal, and many people have debated which is the most advantageous to follow.

Yet is not the whole much greater than the sum of its parts? Take up the challenge and tread not one but all of the minor paths in thy search for enlightenment and perfection. Perhaps only then will thou find the beginnings of the great path. The Quest of the Avatar awaits. It is not the Heritage that thou does seek, 'tis thy Destiny!

# *Afterword*

As an addendum to this work, I, Lord British, would like to speak of the Quest of the Avatar mentioned in these pages.

The Quest of the Avatar is the search for a new standard, a new vision of life for which our people may strive. We seek the person who can become a shining example for our nation and guide us from the Age of Darkness into the Age of Light.

We have sent this message out to the farthest reaches of the known universe. Is there One who can complete the Quest of the Avatar? Many have tried already, and have met with partial success, becoming enlightened in one or more of the Eight Virtues of the Avatar--but none have yet attained the true state of being an Avatar.

The secrets of the Avatar are buried deep in the hearts of both our people and the land in which we dwell. The search will be arduous and One who shall succeed must be able to assemble all the parts of the great mystery in order to solve the quest.

Gaze upon the device portrayed below. Learn it well, for when thou dost gaze upon it again, then shall thy life's quest be revealed.

# *Credits*

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