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# Foreword and Acknowledgements

**P**enants flying, platemail gleaming, a unit of heavy cavalry kicks up dust as it gallops across the field. Orc sergeants bark out guttural commands to their troops, and a wall of stout Dwarven warriors, long beards tucked into broad belts, stand ready for their assault ...

Those are the sorts of images that danced through my head as a young gamer more than 25 years ago. I spent many enjoyable hours creating fantasy armies for my campaign. When I grew up, my interest in military history—and to some extent gaming—led me to a career in the U.S. Army. Of course, this experience has made me look back and realize that my early creations were, frankly, lacking depth and variety.

*Dungeons & Dragons* is a great game, but it doesn't address exceptional leaders for non-humans, let alone the different types of soldiers in the ranks. I found the task of creating a "realistic" fantasy army to be a challenge. Sure, 3rd Edition included the Warrior class to relieve DMs of having another Evil Wizard or Half-Orc leading the bad guys. But what about the different types of soldiers?

As an infantryman, I learned the value of having artillery, engineers, and air cav there to support you. It is a lot easier to defeat the enemy after the artillery softens them up and the engineers have blown a way through the obstacles! The same thing applies to a battle in *Dungeons & Dragons* on either a large or small scale, if you think about it. A typical adventuring party parallels the combined arms team. You have Fighters (armor and infantry), Wizards (artillery and tactical air), Clerics (medics), and Rogues (scouts and commandos). That

is how I see it, anyway. Adventurers, of course, are elite, highly trained groups (special forces). Who and what makes up the armies of the world?

I wanted to create armies that had flavor. Every DM looks for things to add to the "feel" of their campaign. *Warriors* is here to help you. It is a sourcebook with dozens of Warrior subtypes, both military and non-military, along with new prestige classes and spells. Now you can easily develop forces that reflect the land where they come from. Longbowmen, thugs, fanatics, Worg-riding Goblins, Dwarven sappers, and Gnomish artillerists are all described within this tome. If you want to throw a real surprise at your group next session, how about a high-level Beast Driver NPC mounted on a heavily-armored Theran War Elephant!

Whatever your style of game-mastering, I am sure that you will find the contents of this supplement useful. Soon you will have your players interacting with all sorts of grizzled veteran NPCs or facing companies of realistic fantasy soldiers. *Warriors* should stoke the flames of your imagination. Go forth and forge something fun to test the mettle of your players!



Luke Gyax  
January 2003

## Acknowledgements

Many people contributed to making this book what it is. Authors Michael J. Varhola, Paul O. Knorr, and Sharon Daugherty, naturally, provided most of the material that appears within these covers and saw this project through, from beginning to end.

In particular, Knorr authored the section on medieval armies in the introduction, the Aerial Cavalryman, Combat Engineer, Sheriff, and Watchman prestige classes, the section on balloons and blimps, many of the new skills, some of the magic items, a number of the new feats, the dire mole, and the section on heraldry. Daugherty authored many of the magic items—including the *Armors of the Beast*—a number of the spells—including the *Battle Runes*—and several of the sample non-player characters.

Other Skirmisher Game Development Group members who contributed to this project include Dave Thomas—who provided the initial development on the Duelist, Gladiator, and

Nomadic Cavalryman prestige classes and one of the feats—and Perry Frix, who provided feedback on many aspects of the project and wrote a significant portion of the section on high-technology weaponry and a handful of the magic items.

Michael Andrus, Luke Gyax, Joe Kushner, Lissanne Lake, and Rafael Ovalle—along with members of their respective gaming groups, in some cases—provided invaluable comments on many aspects of this project throughout its development. Ovalle also wrote some of the text used in the introduction.

A variety of good art is invaluable to a fantasy role playing game book, and we have been very fortunate in that regard. Sharon Daugherty created about 50 pieces of art for this book, including the borders at the tops and bottoms of the pages and the back cover image. Artists Geoff Weber, Phil Kightlinger, and Bobby Ketros each provided custom artwork for this book, and painter Lissanne Lake provided the striking front cover image.

# Introduction

**C**ombat is one of the most exciting aspects of a fantasy roleplaying gaming session, and characters with strong martial abilities are among the most rewarding to play, make the staunchest and most critical allies, and are among the most fearsome to face as enemies.

The intent behind the development of this book has been to help make such characters and the encounters they are part of even more interesting, diverse, and realistic—without introducing an excess of new character classes or overly complex rules and game devices. It has taken a lot of research, writing, playtesting, and editing, but we think we have successfully created a book that will be a fun, useful tool for both dungeon masters and players. And, if you think so too, then we will have accomplished our mission.

An underlying philosophy behind this book is that real life is often more strange, exciting, and provocative than fiction. Fantasy worlds can often gain more from the examples of the real world than they can from the minds of would-be creators who have not experienced that world.

We're not saying everything in this book is based on personal experience. Some of it is, however, and much of that which is not is based on research and extrapolation of relevant sources. And that said, one of the things that makes this gaming book notable is the level of relevant expertise enjoyed by its major contributors, three of whom are combat veterans. Paul Knorr jumped into Panama as a machinegunner with the 82nd Airborne Division, subsequently served as a Combat Engineer officer in the 2nd Infantry Division, and now works as a geologist. Luke Gygax fought as a cavalryman with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment in the first Gulf War (and, at the time of this writing, had been recalled to active duty for the second Gulf War). And Michael J. Varhola served as a mechanized infantryman in Germany during the Cold War, as a member of a Special Operations Group team attached to the 3rd Armored Division in the first Gulf War, and spends his free time climbing mountains and sailing. This sort of real-world experience has a lot to do with the attitude behind this book and the material that appears within it.

Accordingly, you won't find pompous quotes from made-up characters in this book (after all, the authors are already pompous enough without creating equally obnoxious alter-egos), or character abilities that are purely fanciful, farcical, or baseless. This book tries to go beyond the prevailing limitations of the game by presenting subtypes, prestige classes, and special rules that can allow players and DMs alike to create characters as exciting and deadly as the combatants of history, myth, legend, literature, and film. Were Bellerophon or Colonel Kilgore deadly airborne opponents because they could

cast *Fly* spells or had fancy magic items? No; they were fearsome foes because they were trained as Aerial Cavalrymen and had mastered the necessary aerial beasts and devices (discussed in several sections of this book). Were the Teutonic Knights, who led a war of subjugation and extermination against the people of the Baltic coast, all sober Paladins? A few might have been, but most were probably Warriors and Fighters, led by a hard core of Fanatics, Templars and Zealots (all subtypes or prestige classes described in this volume).

None of this is to say that Blackguards, Dwarven Defenders, and Arcane Archers do not have suitable places in the game; however, when a player character party boards an enemy warship, it is probably going to be crewed by Mariners and defended by Marines. When they attempt to pass through hostile mountainous terrain, they are probably going to be opposed by Pathfinders and Mountaineers. And when they fall afoul of the prevailing law, they are most likely to be pursued by Provosts, Militia Leaders, Sheriffs, and Watchmen (all of which you will also find described here).

## The Warrior NPC

One of the truly brilliant innovations in the 3rd Edition *Dungeons & Dragons* game is the inclusion of five non-player character classes—the Adept, the Aristocrat, the Commoner, the Expert, and the Warrior, intended to fill every need for a character not met by a PC class or type of monster (Skirmisher Publishing devoted a previous publication to the expansion of the Expert class). Most of the rules in this book are designed to modify, expand upon, or augment the martial character classes, especially Warriors. Some of them may serve equally well for other classes, such as Clerics and Rogues.

Essentially, Warriors are second-rate Fighters, enjoying the same attack and saving throw bonuses, as well as weapon and armor proficiencies and skill points, but lacking the bonus feats accorded to the latter class and receiving only d8s, rather than d10s, for hit points. In short, they are tough but unrefined combatants that lack the edge of professional adventurers but are still worthy of being reckoned with. The differences between Fighters and Warriors are similar to those between professional firefighters and volunteer firefighters, or active duty troops and reservists.

This fundamental character class is intended to represent

# Introduction

the vast majority of fighting men and women in the game world—it is not by chance that it is the default class for humanoids like Dwarves, Elves, Goblins, and Orcs—and can be pressed into all sorts of service for the DM. The Warrior class can provide statistic blocks for virtually any sort of soldier, can provide add-on levels to many sorts of monsters, and even simulate tough but otherwise normal people. As written, however, the Warrior is limited in scope, and one Viking Marine is likely to be pretty much the same as the next Zulu Light Infantryman. This book and its contents are designed to remedy this, and to quickly and easily employ Warriors in an incredible variety of roles.

## Subtypes

Of all the innovations in this book, perhaps the one we are proudest of is that of the *subtype*. Essentially, each subtype is a feat that can be “plugged into” a Warrior character, usually when it is created, neatly transforming it from a generic NPC into a particular type of soldier. Through the benefits they provide and the feat substitutions they allow, subtypes allow for the creation of virtually any sort of soldier, along with many sorts of non-military but martially competent characters (e.g., Bandits, Thugs).

Naturally, all of the subtypes are compatible with the Warrior NPC class, most can be used with the Fighter class, and many can be used in certain circumstances with other classes, whether for NPCs or PCs. Fighters, for example, would be the most likely officers for many bodies of Warriors, and would quite possibly be of the same subtype (e.g., a company of 30 1st level Warriors of the Heavy Infantry subtype might be led by three 2nd level Fighters and one 3rd level Fighter, all of the same subtype). Similarly, a Cleric attached to the unit as a chaplain would probably also be a Heavy Infantryman.

## Previously Published Material

This book does contain some material from one of our previous publications, *Experts*, that we deemed appropriate for inclusion in this book—notably the Militia Leader prestige class and a number of the new skills. We could have just as easily referred readers of this book back to our previous volume, but thought this might be unnecessarily aggravating, and wanted to make this volume as self-contained as possible.

We are also hoping a great number of *Experts* owners will also decide to purchase this book; however, we do not want any of those discerning readers to feel shortchanged in any way. Accordingly, this book is 16 pages longer than *Experts* but available at the same price. Thus, the previously published

material—and a few appendices as well—can be considered “bonus” material that we have included for the convenience of all our readers.

## D20 Version 3.5

As much as possible, this book has been edited to conform to the version 3.5 d20 rules. However, as it was scheduled for publication ahead of the release of the updated rules, this conformance may be imperfect. We will, however, create an ongoing errata sheet of errors as they are detected, and appreciate feedback from our readers in this regard (contact information is listed on page 2 of this book).

Likewise, we want readers who have not yet switched over to the version 3.5 rules to be able to use this book easily, and believe that they should be able to. One of the only areas that might be confusing is the substitution throughout the book of the new skill Survival for the version 3.0 skill Wilderness Lore. As noted above, however, we welcome readers’ questions and comments and will respond to them as appropriate.

## Medieval Armies

A traditional fantasy roleplaying milieu is loosely based on the world of medieval Europe, so having a basic understanding of how warfare was conducted in that setting can be helpful for gamemasters interested in running campaigns with a strong martial influence.

## Background

Medieval armies were a hodge-podge of different types of units, troops, social classes, equipment, and motivations. Four general categories existed.

Knights and nobles typically arrived for war with retinues, barded horses, heavy armor, multiple weapons, and ample supplies. Sergeants—non-noble sub-tenants of the manor who owed fealty—typically arrived in similar fashion, albeit without barding or plate armor.

Peasant levies arrived en masse and were responsible for arming themselves, typically with padded or leather armor—or none at all—and makeshift arms that were often converted farm implements. Being poor fighters, the primary role of the levies was to dispatch the remnants of a defeated enemy. They were rarely supplied and depended heavily on foraging. As a consequence, their morale was typically low and they were as likely to run as to fight.

Militias were often responsible for garrisoning city walls, policing settled areas, and guarding local borders. They were better equipped than the peasants but were rarely mounted.