

CIRCLE OF BLOOD

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Adapted for Warmaster by Tom Merrigan

Welcome to the second Warhammer Campaign adaptation for Warmaster. The first of these adaptations, *The Grudge of Drong*, appeared in *Warmag 16*. Those Warmaster players who are also veterans of Warhammer will remember when GW released several narrative based campaigns for Warhammer 4th edition. This was the third of these campaigns from way back in 1997.

This campaign pack describes the tragic ballad of the Red Duke, once a noble knight of Bretonnia, until he was struck down with the terrible curse of Vampirism whilst fighting in the Crusades. He was defeated in an ancient battle, and thought to be dead. But now the Red Duke has returned, and he has summoned his Undead servants for one final clash that will determine the fate of the realm of Aquitaine once and for all.

The Red Duke dreams of building a Kingdom of Blood, a realm of Undeath ruled by himself as an immortal Vampire King. First, though he has to defeat the knights of Bretonnia. The inhabitants of Aquitaine, unaware of this dire threat, are assaulted by the merciless Undead enemy. Only a valiant defence can save them!

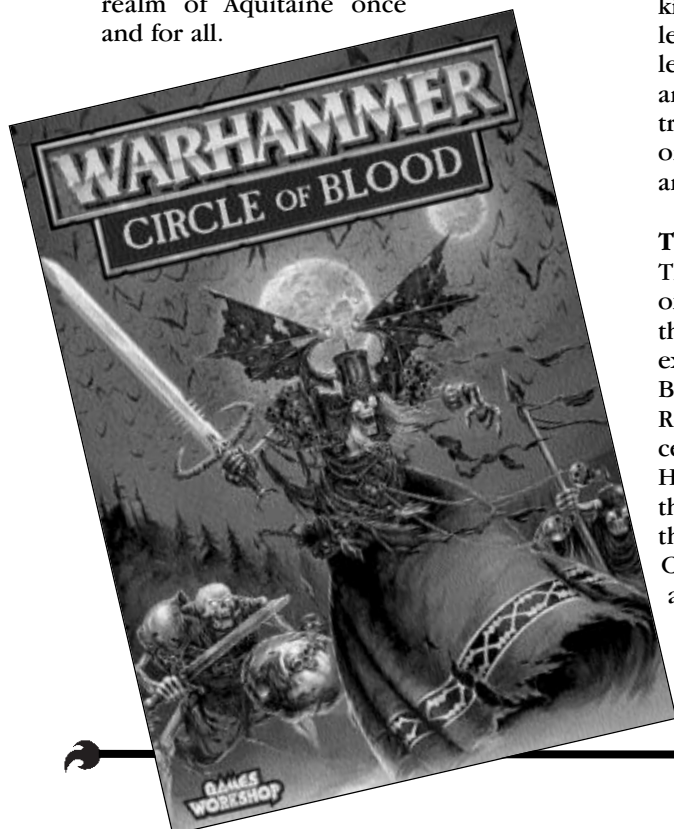
THE CAMPAIGN

In this campaign, there are three preliminary battles which then lead up to an all-out, death-or-glory final conflict. The first three battles are relatively small actions with up to 1,500 points per side. The final battle involves massed armies of 3,000 points or more.

The campaign is set in a particular time and place, and involves two of the great races or kingdoms of the Old World. The events leading up to each battle, the motives of the leaders and the story behind the campaign are all described. There are also hints on transporting this campaign to another time or place, and fighting it using different armies.

THE FOUR BATTLES

The campaign is designed so that the results of each of the three preliminary games affect the final battle in some important way. For example, if the Vampire Counts win the Battle at Mercal, then the Necromancer Renar has raised the heroes from the cemetery and they may include up to three Heroes per 1,000 points in the final battle, the Battle Ceren Field. On the other hand, if the Bretonnians win, then the Vampire Counts may only include the standard amount of Heroes.



In the fair land of Bretonnia, to the north of the dukedom of Brionne, on the banks of the river Morceaux, lies the dukedom of Aquitaine. It is a beautiful land, dotted with vineyards and fields, rolling pastures and valleys. Aquitaine has no large walled towns or great ports. The folk of the dukedom are rural people, content to tend their fields and vineyards, protected by the castles of their noble lords. They neither need nor require the comforts of city life.

Before the Crusades, Aquitaine was a much larger dukedom, but immediately after this great religious struggle, war visited Aquitaine. Since the dukedom lost many of its inhabitants and the population was simply not large enough to farm all the land available, some of its holdings were distributed between the neighbouring dukedoms. The legend of those times is told elsewhere in this tome.

While the fields in Aquitaine yield a plentiful harvest, it is the fine wine of this land, renown throughout Bretonnia, that makes the dukedom famous. Noble ladies of Couronne and Bordeleaux believe that the fine wines of Aquitaine are a powerful aphrodisiac, and thus they are very much in demand. The traders from the ports of L'Anguille and Brionne are always prepared to buy all the wine that Aquitaine can produce. The revenue from the wine makes Aquitaine very prosperous and the people of the land celebrate its harvest each year.

While it may lack cities and ports, there are several holy places and scattered Grail Chapels in Aquitaine, and the knights of Aquitaine are famous for their prowess in arms. Their castles often include high towers with beacons at the top, so during times of strife the knights can be assembled quickly. They are always eager for battle and it is a testimony to their exceptional valour that the knight chosen to carry the Battle Standard of Bretonnia has come more often from Aquitaine than from any other dukedom.

Knights of Aquitaine scorn excessive finery and comforts as decadent and foppish. Even during times of peace, they often make long hunting forays and sleep outside, in full armour, using their shields as pillows. The tournaments held in Aquitaine are hard-fought affairs, with no quarter given or asked, and most often the victorious

champions are knights of the dukedom. It is also a source of considerable pride to the dukedom that no war in Bretonnia has ever been fought without at least a single knight of Aquitaine taking part.

Many Grail Knights inhabit Aquitaine, for several of the sites where Gilles le Breton fought lie within its boundaries. The Tower of Wizardry, a holy place dedicated to the Lady of the Lake, stands near a blessed lake on the edge of Aquitaine, and Questing Knights often come to seek the aid of the Keeper in their search for the Holy Grail. The Keeper has always been a Grail Damsel, well versed in the ways of magic. Her advice is much sought after, and she ranks as one of the councillors of the Duke of Aquitaine.

Legends claim that in the old days, an entire regiment of knights of Aquitaine rode to war riding Pegasi. Though this is probably a mere fable, there is a tradition that the ruling duke will ride to battle atop a mighty Pegasus. As Pegasi will only accept the most pure hearted and noble of knights, the dukes of Aquitaine must be exceptional men indeed. The winged horse is also part of the traditional livery of Aquitaine, as the dukes claim to have royal blood in their veins.

The ruling house of Aquitaine has a long and honourable history. Their forefathers followed Gilles le Breton during the founding of the kingdom, and the Chanson d'Aquitaine tells that the first Duke of Aquitaine married Damsel Annabel le Bon, a blood relative of Gilles le Breton. The dukes of Aquitaine have distinguished themselves in the service of the King, and their banners have been seen flying above countless battlefields.

The ruler of Aquitaine during the events described in the Circle of Blood was Duke Gilon. He was a great statesman and a mighty warrior, who had achieved the Grail Quest early in his youth. His son, Sir Richemont, was known for his martial prowess and valour, but also for his rashness and impetuosity. Duke Gilon would have liked to have left the dukedom to his son years ago and retired to guard one of the Grail Chapels. However he felt that until his son had learned patience and grown in wisdom, he could not give up his position.

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In the distant lands of the Great River, many centuries ago; Nagash, Supreme Lord of the Undead, created the Elixir of Life. This dark and evil potion granted its drinker immortality and rare mystical powers. But it was not without risks for it corrupted both the spirit and the body, and made the recipient crave for the blood of living things. Whomever drank the elixir would shun daylight ever after, and their skin become as pale and smooth as porcelain, and their eyes would burn with red balefires. In time, men would call these creatures Vampires. Mercifully, the secret of Nagash's elixir is now lost. However, seekers of its power still hunt for the formula in the tombs and crypts of the Land of Dead.

The cost of joining the ranks of the Undead is great, but the temptation of gaining the powers of the Vampire for some is worth the risk. Vampires are much stronger than any living man, capable of crushing the back of a bear with their bare hands, or cleaving a fully-armoured man in two with one blow. They have a natural ability to see and sense the dark winds of magic and harness them to their will. Spirits and the animated dead are theirs to command. Beasts naturally attuned to darkness are slaves to their merest whim, and packs of bats and wolves follow them where ever they go.

The unholy ritual that Vampires use to create more of their kind is called the Blood Kiss. Instead of draining their victim, the Vampire passes a portion of its own cursed blood to them, using its hypnotic powers to make its victim forget its ordeal. The doomed man or woman will then fall ill, grow weak, and eventually die of what will look like natural causes. Even if they were pure-hearted and good in life, the tainted blood of the Vampire will drive them deep into depravity and evil. The effect of the dark magic that is now attracted to the victim will corrupt any vestiges of their former life, and their hunger for human blood will erase any pity they feel.

It is said that the potency of each new generation is lesser than the original, so that the most powerful Vampires are always the oldest. Vampires can grant the Blood Kiss for only one mortal in all their existence. Since they seek companions for their long, lonely years, they select their victims carefully, choosing only the most

powerful, intelligent and beautiful amongst the living. This is a tragedy, for the soul of the victim will be forever lost to darkness.

The fair land of Bretonnia may not be as tainted with the curse of Undeath as many other areas of the Old World, but even the land of chivalry is not entirely safe from this evil. The cursed city of Mousillon in the west has always been tainted by the presence of the walking dead and the coastline towns and cities of Bretonnia are forever under the threat of raids by the Undead fleets of Settra.

Bretonnians have many customs to protect the deceased from rising from the grave. One such custom dictates how the deceased is buried. The corpse is first beheaded and then blessed by a Grail Damsel who sprinkles water from a sacred lake over it. Then the mouth of the deceased is filled with cloves of garlic and the grave that the corpse is lowered into is sealed with spells of binding. Even then these measures may not be enough to prevent a determined Necromancer.

Vampires in Bretonnia are very rare, but extremely dangerous. As they invariably belong to the noble classes, they can command considerable temporal power in addition to their own unnatural abilities. If they were powerful liege lords in their former lives, the vows of their knights and retainers in life will bind them beyond death, and if not freed from them, they are destined to serve their foul Undead lords for all eternity. Thus Bretonnian Vampires are served by a vast host of slaves, and the armies they raise are extremely deadly, serving their lord as faithfully in death as they did in life



BALLAD OF THE RED DUKE

The tale of the Red Duke is an ancient story, well known throughout the lands of Bretonnia. It is told in several different ways, in differing detail, and in some the Red Duke is not the heartless villain that he is painted in others. But still it is a sad and tragic tale.

Although the events described here are shrouded by the mists of time and distorted by legends, an attentive scholar can still reconstruct the real story, sorting the facts from the flowery language of the traditional chansons and ballads of the Bretonnian minstrels. What follows is this truth...

A LONG TIME AGO...

In the time of the Crusades, during the rule of Louis the Righteous, the fifteenth king of Bretonnia, the heathen Arabians, led by the thrice-accursed Sultan Jaffar, conquered Estalia and threatened the freedom of the rest of the world.

...IN A LAND FAR AWAY

Filled with righteous anger, the knights of Bretonnia gathered to oust the invaders. Amongst these knights was the Duke of Aquitaine: a handsome and powerful man, widely known as the most courageous knight in the land. When the noblest sons of Bretonnia raised their swords against the infidel, he was first amongst them, ever ready to protect the honour of Bretonnia.

During the war that eventually freed the kingdom of Estalia and saw the corrupt reign of Jaffar end, he won great fame. A multitude of songs were composed about his victorious battles against the warriors of the Sultan. That was until disaster struck.

During the siege of Lashiek, soon after the walls had been breached, the Duke of Aquitaine disappeared and was thought lost. For days rumours buzzed through the crusaders' camp about his fate until at last he was found, grievously wounded and delirious, but alive. The Duke's loyal retainers cared for him, and even when he fell into a deep coma they would not abandon him. Instead, they made their way back to Bretonnia and their homes, across burning deserts and through Orc and Skaven ambushes. All the time they bore their ailing lord with them on a shaded litter.

THE LORD RETURNS

Eventually they reached their homeland, and there they laid their master down to die. A gloom fell over the castle as the fallen Duke finally succumbed to his fever. His

knights mourned for him and vowed to serve him loyally beyond death, words that would be their downfall in the troubled times to come. They buried him beneath his castle as was the custom in those far off times, and sung chants for his soul far into the night.

THE RESTLESS DEAD

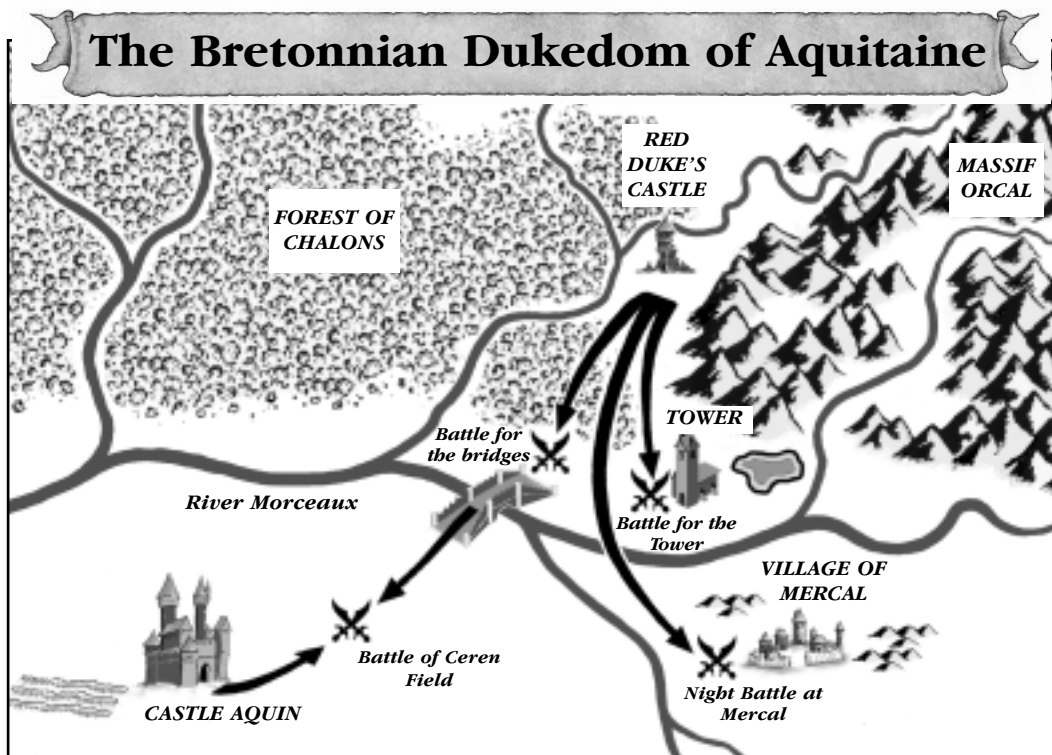
Three days he rested in his tomb, and then, in the midst of a dark, stormy night, he rose. No longer the Duke of Aquitaine, champion of the king. Instead he had become a foul Vampire, tainted by his unknown ordeal. How this had happened no-one knew, but they had other, more immediate worries. In a few terrible hours he slew all the inhabitants of the castle and then raised them from their untimely death with his newly acquired power. Soon he had a teeming army of Undead, and so began his evil reign of terror.

In a short time the commoners came to shun his very name and began to call him the Red Duke, after the blood that soaked his clothes and deeds. Thousands of refugees fled northwards to seek the aid and protection of the king. When he heard of the events in Aquitaine, he gathered a powerful army and rode against his former vassal.

The Red Duke, wary of the power of the King, sought the aid of the Keeper of the Tower of Wizardry. The tower was an ancient, ruined building left by the High Elves of old, built in a place of great power. Its Keeper, Isabeau, was widely recognised as the most powerful magician in Aquitaine. The Red Duke offered her an alliance: together they would challenge the king and divide the Kingdom of Bretonnia.

Isabeau refused. She saw the Red Duke as he was, an inhuman monster from the realm of the Undead, and she fled to join the King's retinue.

The cataclysmic battle was fought on the fields of Ceren. Little is remembered from that conflict when the terrible Undead, still clad in the livery of Aquitaine, fought the nobility of Bretonnia. Suffice to say that no Undead creature could stand against the King, and the Grail Knights did not fear the spirits of the departed. The Keeper of the Tower, with all her power and wisdom, countered the death spells that the Red Duke had summoned in his rage. Finally the two former friends clashed, the King and his champion. The battle raged for an hour, but the Lady of the Lake was with the

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Bretonnian king and together they were victorious. The Red Duke's body was pierced by the King's lance, causing a deathblow that sealed the fate of his unspeakable army. His followers were scattered, his castle razed to the ground, and salt ploughed into the scattered ruins.

VANQUISHED

Isabeau advised the King to burn the remains of the Vampire, but he could not bear to see the body of his former champion desecrated. In death, the Red Duke seemed his old self again. His features were noble and peaceful once more, and he seemed purged of his curse. The King ordered a great tomb to be built for his former friend and had it sealed with the mark of the Grail to honour the fallen. Then he ordered the real name of the Red Duke to be stricken from all records so that the terrible shame would be forgotten, and the relatives of the Red Duke could live without constantly being reminded of the evil that once carried their name.

AN UNQUIET GRAVE

But the Red Duke was not dead. His body may have been pierced by the lance of the king, and his will shattered by the power of the Keeper of the Tower, but he had made plans for just such an instance. He had seen to it that part of his essence had been sealed

in a crimson jewel, formed from the blood of innocents and pure evil magic. The years he took to regenerate his shattered body were long, but finally he rose once more and prepared to cast aside the stone doors of his tomb.

This time though it was the Red Duke who was outfoxed. The Grail symbols, and magic sigils of the Keeper held the massive stone doors shut and sealed the Red Duke inside.

For countless years he raged inside the tomb that had become his prison, but to no avail: each time he attempted to open the doors of the tomb with his ferocious strength, the holy carvings and the warding sigils burned into his hands. He cast countless spells to release himself, and used all his cunning to summon unholy creatures from beyond the walls of death to aid him but nothing could move the seal that had been placed on the doors. The wards that bound him were far too powerful.

DELIVERANCE

Though the red jewel preserved the Duke's unnatural life, his hunger for the blood of the living grew until it drove him into a deep pit of madness from which there was no return. He could only scream his rage to the deaf stone walls and swear his revenge.

So it remained for centuries, and people gradually forgot the evil legend of the Red Duke, until one day...

For the first time in a thousand years he could breathe fresh air. He threw his head back and laughed. It was a cold, terrible laughter that promised death to all who heard it.

First, he had to restore his rightful domains. Secondly, the Keeper of the Tower of Wizardry had to pay for her disobedience. It didn't matter to the Red Duke that the Keeper Isabeau who had defied him was long dead. Her descendant would suffice for his revenge. Then he...

"Halt" came a thin, reedy voice. "You will do my bidding. I, Renar, master of the dark arts command you in the name of Nagash himself, um... Supreme Lord of, er..." The voice trailed off as the grim gaze of the Red Duke turned to look upon the robed figure in front of him. Then the Red Duke began to laugh once more, a laugh that was anything but mirthful.

So this puny specimen was the agent of his freedom. Pathetic. He almost felt like killing him for being so feeble, but no, he might be useful. The mortal seemed transfixed, "Master of the dark arts indeed!" He should be torn limb from limb for his presumption. Or perhaps he should be given the honour of providing the Red Duke's first sustenance. Blood. The thought was very tempting. But no, that would be rash. Instead he spoke, his unearthly voice filling the dusty tomb. "No, mortal, you will do my bidding."

For weeks the Red Duke prowled the night, preying on any who crossed his path, regaining his strength with their lifeblood. Guided by the awe-struck Renar, he fell upon those foolish enough to walk the night and soon the local villagers were too terrified to leave their hovels.

But as the Red Duke hunted, his unblinking eyes missed nothing. These were his lands; this was his domain, and the people were but a means to quench his thirst. He remembered the times of glory when he had almost overthrown the King of Bretonnia. Those days would return and so would his Kingdom of Blood, where he, and he alone would rule as an immortal god-king, served by Undead knights whose loyalty was eternal. In time, all those who defied him would call him their master. But now he needed to quench the thirst of a thousand years.

More weeks passed, until eventually the Red Duke felt his old strength return. His vengeance could wait no more. He returned to the shattered ruin where his castle had once stood and there, among the tumbled walls, at the darkest hour of the winter solstice, he cast the Great Spell of Doom.

Across the dividing years, through the layers of rotting earth, the dead heard his powerful words. He called out, reminding his knights of the oaths of service they had pledged to him when the world was young.

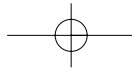
One by one they came to stand by his side. The bones of his retainers cast aside their tombstones, grasped the weapons that had been buried with them, and shambled to join his gathering armies.

Night after night, the dead of Aquitaine marched towards the shattered castle, until at last a host of Undead, thousands strong, stood ready to obey their master. Now he was prepared. He could not allow Duke Gilon, that foul usurper of his domain, any more time. He must strike without warning and without a chance of the mortals gathering their forces.

The Duke would attack in three places at once and catch his foe scattered and unaware. The fastest of his troops he would send to raze the Tower of Wizardry, exacting his vengeance by slaying the Keeper. His vanguard would ride ahead of the rest of his army, destroying all the villages and securing a bridge over the river Morceaux. He himself would ride with the main force of his troops to destroy any armies that the Bretonnians were foolish enough to raise against him.

This time he would show no mercy.





Circle of Blood

SCENARIO I - NIGHT BATTLE AT MERCAL

DEATH STALKS THE NIGHT

Through the night they came. Silent, relentless, never tiring. With Renar the Necromancer at their fore, the Undead force had left the Red Duke's castle at dusk, marching over dank marsh and through tangled forests to fall on the village of Mercal in the dead of night. But why Mercal? The Keeper of the Tower was not there, neither was there a route over the river Morceaux. What value did this poor village hold?

A thousand years before, after the Red Duke's defeat, it was not only he that had been sealed inside an ornate prison. As the Red Duke died and his armies began to disintegrate around him, a small group of his most trusted and fanatical retainers had fought their way clear of the disaster. Hiding in the swamps and abandoned woodland where the commoners feared to go, they fought a running battle for days, until finally they were hunted down and slain, one by one.

Like the Red Duke, these once noble sons of Bretonnia were not burned. Instead they were entombed and a Grail Chapel raised next to them so that a holy knight could watch over their spirits for eternity. This chapel lay at the heart of the little village of Mercal.

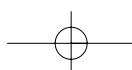
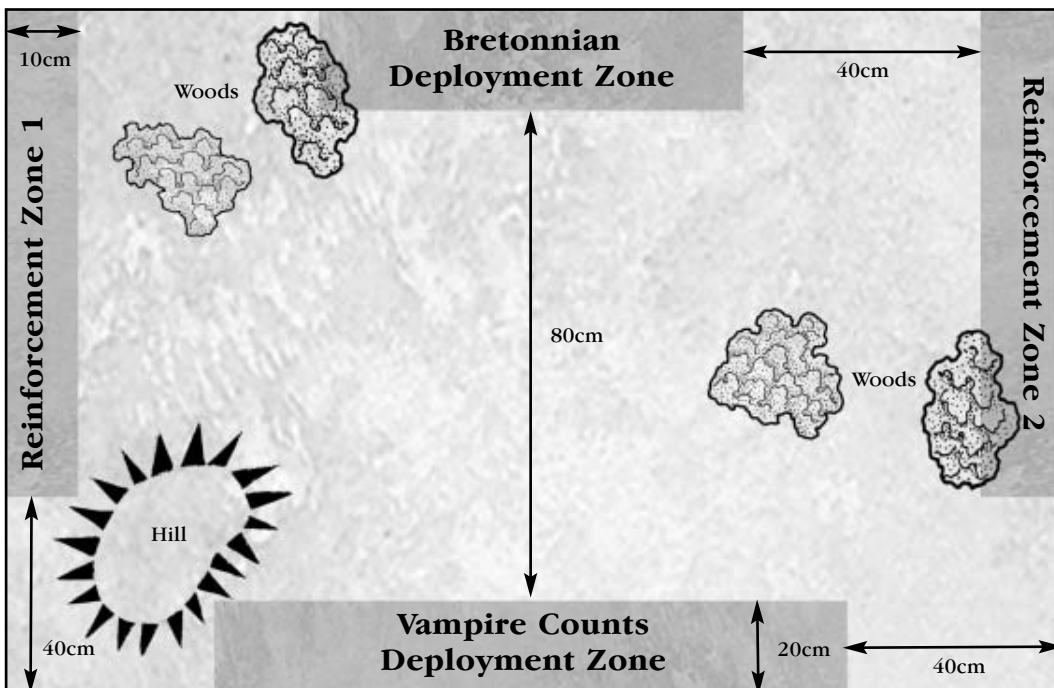
After the Necromancer Renar had freed him from his prison, the Red Duke had called his followers to arms, but these most loyal of his captains had not arrived. He was not pleased. Had they forgotten their vows? Into the darkness he sent his foul messengers, swarms of bats and tides of black, creeping fiends. Soon he discovered the fate of his favourites and it was as merciless as his own: they were entombed in Mercal. They must be freed!

THE CHAPEL SEREINE

In the little village of Mercal all was quiet. The common folk that lived there had retired to their beds after a long day's toil in their master's fields. All was at peace.

Then, without warning the bells of the Grail Chapel began to ring. Not the measured pulse of the call to the faithful, but a frenzied clamour of alarm. The men ran to see what the matter was, only to be met by the knightly guardian of that place telling all of alarm and disaster. He had been granted a vision by the Lady of the Lake and had seen an army of the most terrible things imaginable. The Undead were coming.

The villagers ran for their weapons, hiding their wives and children, readying themselves for the battle ahead. For a few minutes all was confusion, then, in the



centre of the village, the Holy Knight began to sing. It was one of the ancient battle songs of the Bretonnians, a rousing tale of bravery against all odds. Slowly the bowmen and men-at-arms began to form up around their leader, and their confidence began to build. By the time the end of the tale had been reached the villagers were all in place. Each man was ready, each knew his duty, and each hoped silently that the runners they had sent would bring reinforcements in time.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

Night Battle at Mercal is the first in a series of clashes between the Undead of the Red Duke and Duke Gilon's Bretonnian forces that will eventually climax in a huge final battle. Each of these encounters will influence that battle in some important way.

THE BATTLEFIELD

The battlefield is centred around the village of Mercal, which in turn has at its heart, the Chapel Sereine and its graveyard. It is this ancient and holy place that is the focus of the Undead assault. Set up the battlefield as shown on the map. Alternatively, agree on a variation of the battlefield to suit the scenery that you have available.

THE ARMIES

VAMPIRE COUNTS

The Vampire Count force is 1,500 points in size. The only restriction is that the Vampire Counts player may not choose any Grave Knights as part of their force. In addition, the Necromancer Renar leads the Vampire Counts army and replaces the General in the army list. Renar is a powerful wizard who may re-roll any failed attempt to cast a spell in the same way as a High Elf Wizard. Renar is a Necromancer but has a Command value of 8 and costs 90 pts.

BRETONNIANS

The Bretonnian force is 1,500 pts in size. The only restrictions are that the Bretonnian player may only choose up to three units of Knights and no units of Grail Knights.

DEPLOYING FOR BATTLE

In this battle, the Bretonnians set up first, deploying up to 1,000 pts of troops in the Bretonnian deployment zone. The rest of the army starts in reserve and may arrive during the course of the battle. If the Bretonnian player has any units of Knights they must start the game in reserve.

The Vampire Counts deploy second, setting up their entire force in the Vampire Counts deployment zone.

SPECIAL RULES

Night Battle: Because this battle takes place at night units, may only see up to a distance of 60cm for the purposes of shooting or charging.

THE BATTLE

STARTING THE GAME

The Vampire Counts are launching a surprise assault at night and so take the first turn.

ENDING THE GAME

The battle takes place at midnight and lasts until sunrise. To represent this, the game lasts for six turns, each turn representing an hour in the original battle. The game will also end if either army withdraws.

REINFORCEMENTS

The defender should roll at the beginning of each of their turns to see if any reinforcements arrive to help the besieged village of Mercal. Roll a D6 – on the score of a 6, reinforcements arrive (the Bretonnian player may add +1 to his score for each subsequent turn after the first). If reinforcements do arrive then the defender may place the remainder of their army in either of the two wide deployment zones marked on the map. Units that arrive as reinforcements may be issued Commands in the turn that they arrive.

VICTORY OR DEFEAT

The standard victory conditions from page 63 of the Warmaster rulebook apply.

VICTORY GAINS

If the Vampire Counts win, the battle then Renar will cast aside the tombstones and raise the heroes that once served the Red Duke in ages past. In the final scenario, the Battle of Ceren Field, the Vampire Counts army may take up to three Heroes per 1,000 pts, instead of the usual two. In addition, the Vampire Counts may include Renar and he will take up two Wizard choices on the army selector.

If the Bretonnians win, the Vampire Count army will be denied the Heroes that were the scourge of the area when they rode with the Red Duke in their former lives.

*Circle of Blood***SCENARIO 2 - DEFENCE OF THE TOWER****REVENGE OF THE RED DUKE**

Countless years had passed, but the Red Duke had not forgotten the part that the Keeper of the Tower had played in his defeat. He decided to attack the Tower of Wizardry and Aquitaine simultaneously. Knowing the sorcerous power at the disposal of the Keeper, he sent one of his most powerful servants to confront her. This was the Banshee, a wailing spirit whose mere howl could kill mortals. The Red Duke ordered her to raze the Tower of Wizardry to the ground and pollute the holy lake that it was built to guard. He also sent the fastest of his servants with her, so that they could strike quickly and unexpectedly, and then speed on to join his main force as he assaulted the borders of Aquitaine. The Undead forces included Dire Wolves and cavalry, as well as Fell Bats.

But the Keeper was not without powers of her own. Using these sorcerous powers she watched the pale lake, and saw a writhing image of dark enemies riding against her. She considered fleeing to the relative safety of Castle Aquin, but in the end she could not abandon the holy place entrusted to her care. She sent her handmaidens to warn Duke Gilon of Aquitaine of the impending doom, advised the commoners to flee with their families, and prepared to sell her own life dearly.

Instead of abandoning their homes, the commoners of the surrounding areas hastened to her side, in respect for the help that she had given them as Keeper of the Tower. The word of a lady in plight spread and many Knights Errant from the surrounding countryside rode to her aid. The Lady of the Lake had not abandoned her faithful servant either. Questing Knights and the scattered Grail Knights gathered by the holy lake, driven by omens and dreams sent by the Lady of the Lake.

When the Banshee arrived, both Lake Tranquil and the Tower of Wizardry were heavily defended. The opposing forces were evenly matched, but the Banshee dared not disobey her master. She prepared to lead her forces into the field surrounding the tower. There they would wait until prayers were being said to the Lady of the Lake. The Banshee knew that at that time her enemies would be at their most vulnerable.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

Defence of the Tower is the second in a series of clashes between the Red Duke's Undead army and the Bretonnians of Aquitaine that will eventually climax in a huge final battle. Each encounter will influence that battle in some important way. The outcome of this battle decides whether the Undead manage to destroy the Tower of Wizardry and its guardian.

THE BATTLEFIELD

The most important features on the battlefield are the Tower of Wizardry and the Blessed Lake. The surrounding area is woodland typical to this part of Aquitaine.

THE ARMIES**VAMPIRE COUNTS**

The Vampire Count force is 1,500 points in size. The only addition is that the Vampire Counts player may choose up to three stone throwers (use the profile from the Orc and Goblin army list in the Warmaster rulebook). This allowance is made so it is possible for the Vampire Counts player to destroy the Tower of Wizardry. In addition, the Vampire Count army is lead by the Fell Banshee who has the same cost and profile as a Vampire Hero but also causes *terror* in its enemies, and therefore imposes the usual combat penalty.

BRETONNIANS

The Bretonnian force is 1,500 points in size. The army is led by Lady Iselda who is a powerful wizard and can cast spells in the same manner as an Enchantress. In addition, Lady Iselda may re-roll any failed attempt to cast a spell in the same way as a High Elf Wizard. Lady Iselda is a Wizard but has a Command value of 8 and costs 90pts. In addition, the Bretonnian player must take one unit of Grail Knights in their force.

**DEPLOYING FOR BATTLE**

Both armies deploy in their relevant deployment zones as shown on the map opposite. Each player takes it in turns to deploy a unit or brigade.

SPECIAL RULES

THE TOWER OF WIZARDRY

The Tower of Wizardry counts as a tower (obvious really!) and can only be damaged by the stone throwers that are taken as part of the Vampire Counts force. Use the rules on page 90 of the Warmaster rulebook for attacking the tower. In addition, the Bretonnian player may deploy troops in the tower if he so wishes.

THE BATTLE

STARTING THE GAME

The attackers (Vampire Counts) are launching a surprise assault at dawn and so take the first turn.

ENDING THE GAME

The battle takes place at dawn and lasts until midday. To represent this, the game lasts for six turns, each turn representing an hour in the original battle. The game will also end if either army withdraws.



VICTORY OR DEFEAT

VICTORY POINTS

The standard victory conditions from page 63 of the Warmaster rulebook apply. In

addition, the following bonus Victory points may be gained:

Vampire Counts

Win! The Tower of Wizardry is destroyed.

+ 200 pts Lady Iselda is captured/slain.

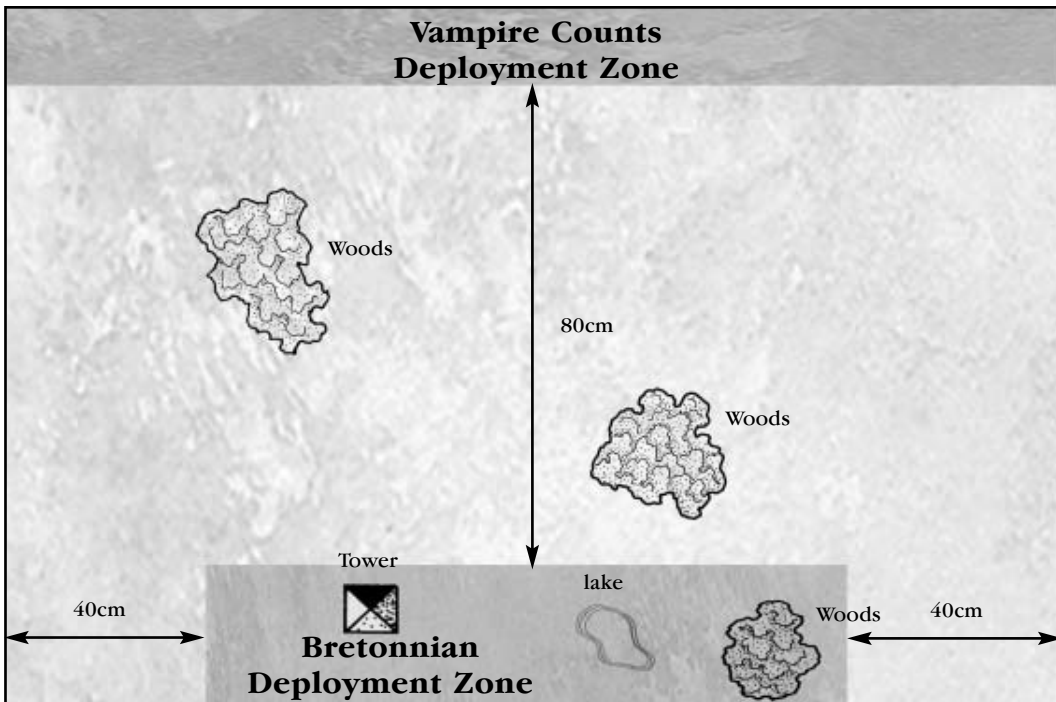
Bretonnians

+ 100 pts The Tower of Wizardry is not destroyed.

VICTORY GAINS

If the Bretonnians are victorious, and assuming that the unit of Grail Knights is not reduced to one stand or less, then they will be able to ride to the aid of Duke Gilon in his hour of need. In the final scenario, The Battle of Ceren Fields, the Bretonnian player may include an additional unit of Grail Knights above the normal allowed. Note that the Grail Knights still need to be paid for and will cost the standard 120 pts.

In addition, if either general survives the game then they can be included in the final game, The Battle of Ceren Fields. If the Vampire Counts player chooses to include the Banshee, she will take up two Hero choices on the army selector. If the Bretonnian player chooses to include the Lady Iselda, she will take up two Wizard choices on the army selector.



Circle of Blood

SCENARIO 3 - RACE FOR THE BRIDGES

THE RETURN OF THE YOUNG HEIR

As the number of tattered refugees from the ravaged border villages increased to a steady stream, Duke Gilon of Aquitaine raised his battle standard over Castle Aquin. His heralds rode out to gather the knights of the Dukedom, and warn his neighbours of the impending danger. Little help could be expected from outside his fiefdom, for severe weather made roads and passes useless for moving large forces. Most of the knights were in the east anyway, fighting in the King's war against the Orcs. The men of Aquitaine would have to face this terror alone.

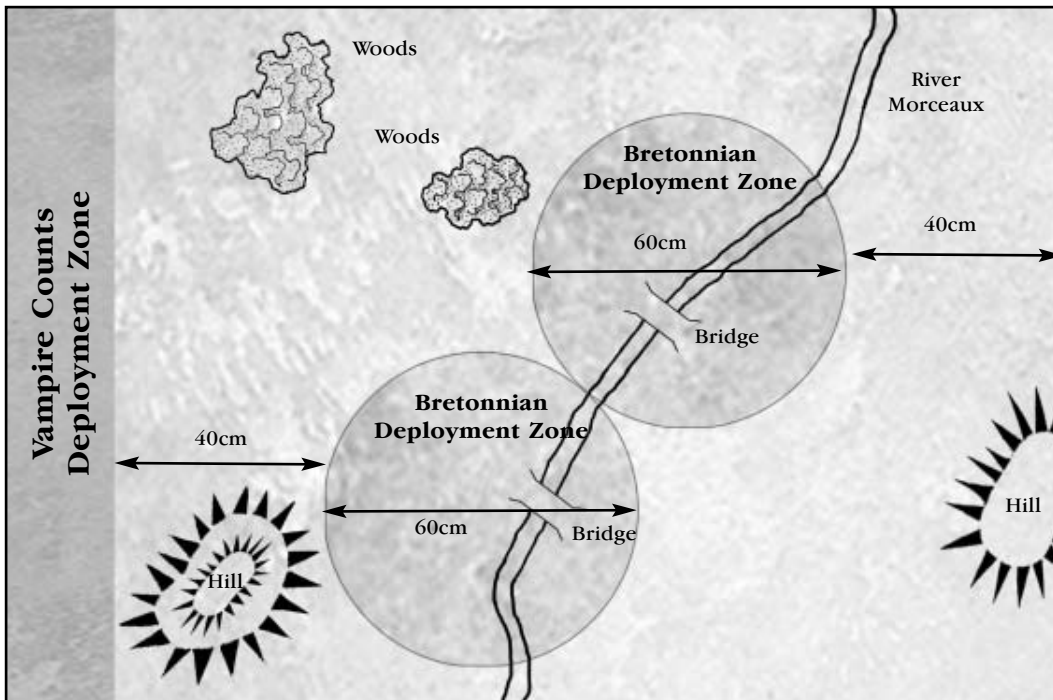
While Duke Gilon was gathering his forces, his son Richemont unexpectedly returned from his pilgrimage to the Grail Chapel in Couronne. He had visited the Great Chapel of the Lady of the Lake and the tombs of the heroes of Bretonnia. While he had been fasting and praying, he had fallen asleep in the Great Chapel. In a dream he saw a vision of his home being assailed by a terrible Undead host, and had immediately ridden back to his father's castle.

Sir Richemont claimed that he had found a way to thwart the Undead advance. According to the dream, no vampire could

cross running water without a bridge. Since there was only a couple that crossed the river Morceaux for miles, the destruction of these bridges would force the Undead to take a long detour and give the Bretonnians much needed time to gather their forces. The sappers of Castle Aquin could easily demolish the bridges, and Sir Richemont offered to lead a force of knights that would ride ahead to secure them. He asked for volunteers to accompany him as he rode to defend the bridge. The council of knights was divided. Some supported young Sir Richemont, believing that his vision was sent by the Lady of the Lake, while others dismissed his plan as foolhardy and dangerous.

In the end, many of the younger knights followed him, for Sir Richemont was charismatic and popular amongst his fellow Questing Knights. But practically all the Knights of the Realm and most of the other soldiery elected to stay, for they had vowed to remain in the castle and guard the fortress of their liege lord.

Early in the morning, Richemont led his small force towards the bridges while the sappers of the castle followed in their carts as quickly as they could. But their enemies were approaching fast.



BRIDGES ON THE RIVER MORCEAUX

Meanwhile, the Dark Knight, the most terrible of the Red Duke's captains and the herald and champion of the Kingdom of Blood, led the vanguard of the Undead army through the countryside, razing villages, burning crops and slaughtering any living thing, man or beast, that was unfortunate enough to cross his path. The bodies were left lying unburied, so that his master could perform his Necromantic rites over them and swell his army with more walking dead.

His Fell Bats were sent to scout ahead of the army, and they chattered the news of the fast approaching force of Bretonnian knights that were on their way to the bridges on the river Morceaux. The Dark Knight, consumed with anger and pride, immediately led his force towards the river, determined to crush the Bretonnians and secure the bridgeheads for his dark master. He sent his Fell Bats to carry the news to the Red Duke, and arrived at the river just as Sir Richemont was crossing it. Without waiting to form a proper battle line he charged, determined to crush the pitifully small force of knights that opposed him.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

The Race for the Bridge is the third violent clash between the knights of Aquitaine and the Undead forces of the Kingdom of Blood, as the realm of the Red Duke is sometimes known.

Like the other encounters, this battle will influence the characters and troops available for the final battle. The outcome of this struggle decides whether the knights of Bretonnia can demolish the bridges and gain time for their ruler to gather more forces, or whether the Undead capture the bridges intact, allowing their dark master to march against Castle Aquin without delay. If the Undead are victorious then the Bretonnian army will be smaller than the Undead army in the final battle.

THE

BATTLEFIELD

The most important features on the battlefield are the two ancient stone bridges over the river Morceaux. The surrounding area is typical plains scenery, with forests and rolling hills.

THE ARMIES

VAMPIRE COUNTS

The Vampire Count force is 2,000 points in size. The Vampire Count army is led by the Dark Knight who has the same cost and profile as a Vampire General.

BRETONNIANS

The Bretonnian force is 1,500 points in size. The army is led by Sir Richemont who has the same cost and profile as a Bretonnian General.

DEPLOYING FOR BATTLE

The defenders (Bretonnians) set up first, deploying up to 500 points of models within 30cm of either of the two bridges. The remainder of the Bretonnian force starts in reserve. The attackers (Vampire Counts) deploys second, setting up their entire force in their deployment zone.



Circle of Blood

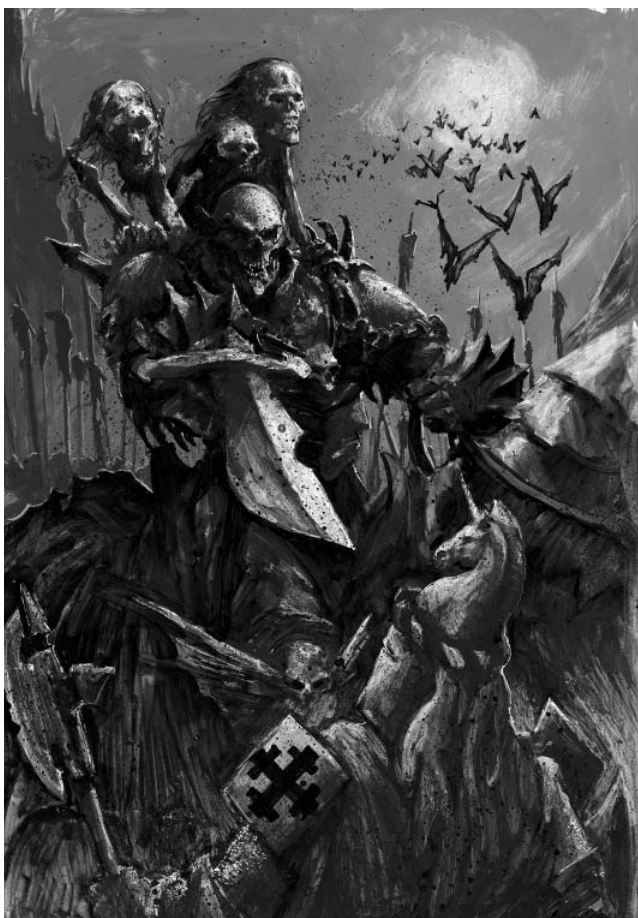
SPECIAL RULES

RESERVES

The majority of the Bretonnian force starts in reserve. At the beginning of each turn (including the first) roll a D6 for each brigade of Bretonnian troops in reserve. On the roll of a 4+, place the brigade on the table anywhere in the Bretonnian reserve deployment zone. The unit can then be issued orders from then on. Characters in reserve are not rolled for. Instead, you can deploy up to one character free of charge per brigade that becomes available.

The River Morceaux: No unit (with the exception of flyers) may cross the River Morceaux at any point apart from at one of the two bridges spanning its waters. For all intents and purposes, the River Morceaux counts as impassable terrain for this scenario.

The Bridges: Players may only cross the River Morceaux by one of the two bridges. Each bridge should only be wide enough so that an infantry unit arranged in column formation or cavalry unit arranged in line formation can cross un-obstructed.



THE BATTLE

STARTING THE GAME

The Vampire Counts take the first turn.

ENDING THE GAME

The battle takes place at midday and lasts until late afternoon. To represent this, the game lasts for six turns, each turn representing an hour in the original battle. The game will also end if either army withdraws, giving the other side an automatic victory.

VICTORY OR DEFEAT

VICTORY POINTS BONUS

Normal Victory points are not used for this scenario. Instead, the following decisive victory conditions are used.

Vampire Counts

Win! There is at least one Vampire Count unit comprising of three stands on the Bretonnian side of the river at the end of the game. This may be any type of unit with the exception of Fell Bats.

Bretonnians

Win! There are no Vampire Count units of three stands on the Bretonnian side of the river at the end of the game.

VICTORY GAINS

If the Vampire Counts are victorious, then the Red Duke's army will be able to cross the River Morceaux and attack the hinterland of Aquitaine without delay. Duke Gilon will not have enough time to gather his forces before the Vampire Count's attack. This would be a great boon to the Red Duke when the final battle is fought.

If the Bretonnians are victorious, they will be able to bring sappers and stonemasons to destroy the bridges over the River Morceaux. This will force the Red Duke's army to travel many miles to find another safe crossing over the river. This in turn will allow Duke Gilon to gather more forces to his war banner. If this happens then the Bretonnians will have a full 3,000 pts in the final battle instead of just 2,500 pts.

SCENARIO 4 - THE BATTLE OF CEREN FIELD

THE DARKNESS FALLS

The border villages of Aquitaine lay empty, razed by the foe. The fields were untended and winter would destroy the crops. Fell Bats flapped across the skies, the spirits of those departed were seen to walk across the fields, and the remains of the newly dead lurched to their feet to bear weapons against their sons and brothers. Each passing day swelled the foul ranks of the Red Duke. Each passing day brought victory nearer to the claws of the Undead.

The lanterns and torches of Castle Aquin burned late into the night as Duke Gilon and his advisors held council. The captains of the knights argued about which course of action to take next. No help could be expected from the King or the neighbouring dukedoms, for most knights were fighting an Errantry War against the Orcs, or defending the border. No one had expected a war here in the heart of Bretonnia. Aquitaine stood alone against an ancient evil.

The council was divided. Some, led by young Sir Roget, wished to ride out and challenge the Red Duke to single combat. Others, grizzled veterans all, suggested that they fortify Castle Aquin further and hold out until reinforcements could be sent for. In the end, Duke Gilon himself dismissed both ideas.

"We cannot expect this ancient evil thing to honour the rules of chivalry," he declared. "And there are not enough supplies here in the castle to sustain a prolonged siege, while our enemies need neither rest or food. They do not rebel against their master or grow bored. The vigilance of their sentries does not wane. We would be holed up in here like rats. And we must also think about the people of Aquitaine who have no shelter from the merciless enemy." The old duke sighed heavily. "No, our only option is to ride out to challenge our enemy where they stand, and pray to the Lady of the Lake that she will bring victory to our weapons. Who is with me? I will ask no man to accompany me against their will."

One by one the barons and knights of Aquitaine drew their swords and laid them on the table. All of them swore to follow Duke Gilon to the death. Moved by the loyalty of his men, Duke Gilon spoke. "I am

proud of you all." Then he called for his squires. "Now bring me my broadsword and saddle my Pegasus! The Duke of Aquitaine goes to war!"

Within days, the war host of Aquitaine had assembled, ready to march forth to confront the Undead. Rank upon rank of knights clad in glittering armour and decorated with the magnificent heraldry of Aquitaine stood ready to defend their land. Stalwart men-at-arms and nimble bowmen formed massed units, ready to challenge the Undead legions of the Red Duke. Squires fanned out into skirmishing units, ready to scout the land ahead of them. Duke Gilon, atop Fulminer, his loyal Pegasus, received the ovation of his forces. The legends say that Aquitaine had never gathered a greater or more courageous army than the one that rode out against the Undead of the Red Duke.

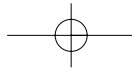
THE HOLY GROUND

The army rode through the gates of Castle Aquin and vanished into the gloom. Duke Gilon chose the fields of Ceren in which to do battle against his enemy. Here, according to the minstrels, King Louis had once won a great victory against the Red Duke.

Also at this sacred site was buried Duke Galand, an ancestor of Gilon, who fell fighting valiantly against the enemies of Bretonnia. Gilon, who understood the hearts of men well, knew that the place would spur his troops to brave deeds and raise their spirits. If Bretonnians had been able to defeat the Undead here before, they could do it again.

Half a day after the Bretonnians had arrived on the fields of Ceren, the army scouts brought word that their enemies were on the march and would arrive within the hour. Suddenly, a great shadow fell over the host of Duke Gilon. The descending darkness heralded the arrival of their enemies.





Circle of Blood

The rays of the sun were hidden by an enormous flight of great Blood Bats, summoned by the Vampire Lord. By the beat of human-skinned drums legion after legion of yellow-boned Skeletons marched into the field. Zombies shambled after them, their rotting brains obsessed with but one thought: slaying all living things. Skeleton Horsemen galloped forward as a grim reminder to the knights that they too were mortal. And in the midst of the host, the ivory-white face of the Vampire Lord showed no emotion, his eyes burning with balefires that promised eternal damnation for any who dared challenge him.

The Red Duke, blessed with senses keener than any living thing, scanned the battlefield. His gaze penetrated all shadows and caught the glitter of the armour of Duke Gilon. He raised his golden sword in a mockery of the traditional knight's challenge. There could never be peace between these two mighty men, one a fallen knight, the other a shining example of the high ideals of the code of chivalry.

The battlefield was littered with the bones of the heroes of old, the warriors who once fought against Orcs and Goblins in these fields and built the Kingdom of Bretonnia with their blood and sacrifice. This was a holy place for the Bretonnians. But the Red Duke smiled, his eyes cold as midwinter, for the winds of dark magic whirled across the

fields, concentrating around the remains of the fallen warriors. The Necromantic spells of the Red Duke would be easy to cast today.

Under the dark wings of the bats, the two forces prepared to do battle, and the gods gazed down to witness the struggle for the destiny of Aquitaine.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE

The Battle of Ceren Field is the final battle in a series of encounters between Undead and Bretonnian forces. Each of the earlier battles will have influenced this final conflict in some important way. The outcome of this battle decides whether the Red Duke is defeated and driven back to the nether realms of the Undead, or manages to rebuild his Kingdom of Blood again.

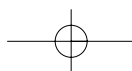
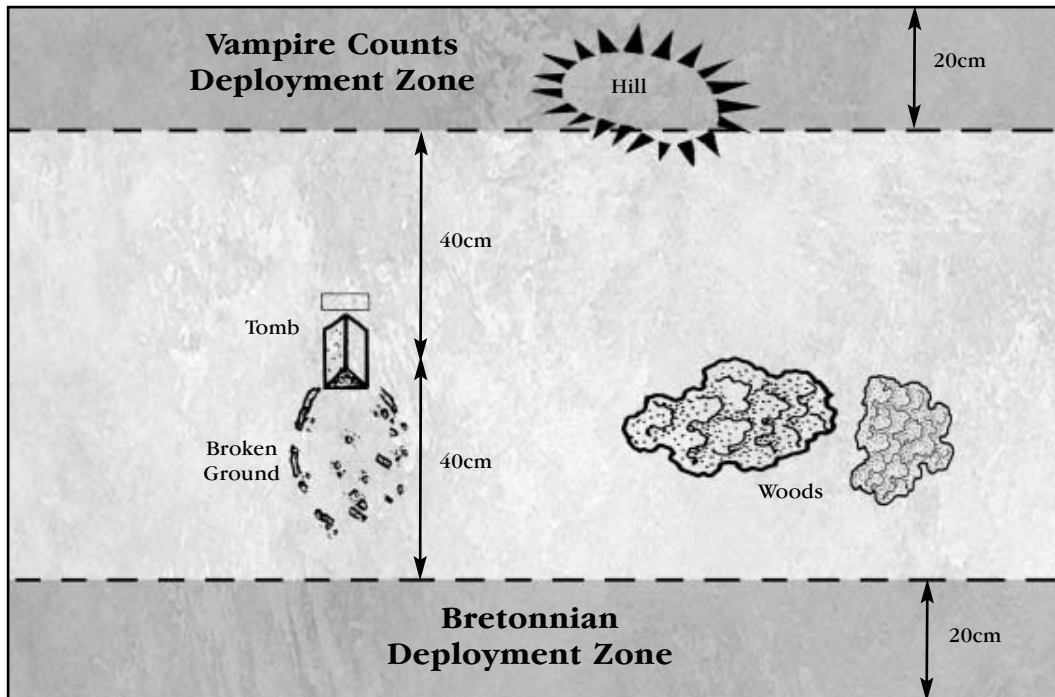
THE BATTLEFIELD

The main feature of the battlefield is the tomb of Duke Galand, placed on the battlefield as shown on the map. Otherwise, the scenery consists of a mixture of woods and low hills. Set up the battlefield as shown on the map.

THE ARMIES

VAMPIRE COUNTS

The army of the Red Duke consists of 3,000 points, commanded by the Red Duke himself. It can be larger than this if both players agree to a higher points value; any



points bonus or penalty resulting from victory or defeat in a previous battle will still apply. If the Vampire Counts won the Night Battle at Mercal, the Vampire Counts army may take up to three Heroes per 1000pts, instead of the usual two. In addition, they may include Renar and he will take up two Wizard choices on the army selector. The army is chosen from the Vampire Counts army list in the Warmaster 2003 Annual.

BRETONNIANS

The army of Duke Gilon consists of 2,500 points commanded by Duke Gilon. The army can be larger if both players agree to play a higher points value; however, any points bonus or penalty resulting from victory or defeat in a previous battle will still apply. If the Bretonnians won the battle, the Defence of the Tower, they may include an additional unit of Grail Knights above the normal allowed.

In addition, if the Bretonnians won the third battle, Race for the Bridges, then they may increase the army size in this scenario from 2,500 points to 3,000 points. The Bretonnian army is chosen from the army list in the Warmaster 2003 Annual.

DEPLOYING FOR BATTLE

Each army is deployed in its respective deployment zone as shown on the map. Each army takes it in turns to deploy a unit or brigade, one after the other, starting with whichever player rolls the highest score on a D6.

THE BATTLE

STARTING THE GAME

The Bretonnians take the first turn.

ENDING THE GAME

The battle lasted from mid-day to dusk. To represent this, the game lasts for eight turns.

SPECIAL RULES

THE TOMB

The tomb of Sir Galand is a blessed and holy place. As long as the tomb stands, it disrupts the flow of dark magic and foils Necromantic spells. To represent this, any spells successfully cast by any Wizards in the Vampire Counts army are dispelled on a D6 roll of 4+. If a Vampire Counts unit comes within 10 cm of the tomb, it is considered desecrated and this special dispel is immediately lost.

VICTORY OR DEFEAT

Determine who has won in the usual way, counting up Victory points as described in the Warmaster rulebook.

If the Vampire Counts win this final battle, the army of Aquitaine will be scattered forever and the Red Duke will carve out his Blood Kingdom in the middle of Bretonnia. Even if the Bretonnian King eventually defeats the Red Duke and drives him out, Aquitaine will never recover and become little more than a barren wasteland.

If the Bretonnian Knights are victorious and destroy the Undead host of the Red Duke, he will be driven from Aquitaine or perhaps even slain for good. Aquitaine will thrive and the chivalric way of life of the Bretonnians will be preserved for years to come.

