

THE BLACK ARMY OF BOURDELEAUX

- Est. 897 -



Black Army soldiers at camp in Bourdeleaux-occupied Westfal, c. 1503

Since its inception, the Black Army of Bourdeleaux has always maintained permanent, professional, and well equipped soldiers within its ranks. This has often been a boasting point from Black Army logistics officers and blacksmiths. No expense is spared to ensure the safety and lethality of Bourdeleaux's military.

Driven by divine mandate of the Sun, the men of Bourdeleaux fight with holy ferocity, willing to bleed and die to further the Great Plan. It is said as long as the Sun rises, that there is hope for the world afterall. Disciplined and regimented, the Black Army on the march is perhaps the most fluid moment a man may bear witness to.

With the clarion call sounded, the men of Bourdeleaux stand ready to uphold and assume the mantle of responsibility.

COMMAND STRUCTURE

Lord Marshal

The Lord Marshal is the supreme commander of the armies of Bourdeleaux. Appointed by the Emperor, and of renowned lineage and noble birth, the position is said to be the second most prestigious position in all of the Empire. He coordinates war efforts, raiding parties, and defense of the realm.

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Major General

The Major General commands the primary tactical infantry unit of the Black Army; the brigade. They are senior officers, who answer directly to the Lord Marshal. Unlike the Lord Marshal, they may either be of noble birth or rise among the ranks. Major Generals command upwards of 5,000 men, along with supporting auxiliary elements

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Colonel

A colonel commands a regiment; the second most important tactical infantry formation of the Black Army. Regiments are typically raised entirely from a single Imperial province. Regimental histories can often be traced backwards several hundred years, with the men proudly bearing the colors and arms of their unit.

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Captain

Ten companies typically comprise a regiment, appropriately lending to roughly ten captains. Captains are junior commanding officers who rose to their position through their leadership or prowess. Captains are entrusted to command over 100 men, and to make rapid battlefield adjustments in spontaneous and on-the-fly situations, using their professional judgment to make shifts in the front line.

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Decurion

The Decurion is the lowest ranking officer of the Black Army, assuming command of a squad of ten men. The Decurion is tasked with ensuring his men in line, training, and disciplining them. They are largely subservient to captains, with little autonomy of their own, as few operations are conducted at such a level.



BOURDELAIC MILITES, THE BLACK ONES

“The very backbone of the Black Army. Flexible and efficient.”

Designation: Medium Infantry, Foot

Notable Units: *‘Rock of Venendal’*,

Bourdelaic milites are the core of the Black Army’s infantry sector. As opposed to Bourdelaic levymen who return home after campaign, the milites are trained, professional and permanent. Their arms and armor come directly from the state, with the only exception being if a soldier possesses their own, better equipment. They are clad in black iron plate, covering the most vital of organs, joints, and other weakspots. As opposed to heavy infantrymen, they maintain a fair degree of flexibility and movement capability. Thus, regiments of milites are often shifted around the field of battle to make adjustments in the line. Universally they bear the golden sun of Bourdeleaux upon the center of their breastplates. However, upon their pauldrons may often be regimental insignia, which can typically be traced back numerous centuries to their founding. They are almost always deployed with large shields, while their weapon armament is subject to vary given the scenario.



BOURDELAIC MEN-AT-ARMS (HEAVY MILITES), THE BLACK VANGUARD

“Eight pounds of force bearing down upon your armor doesn’t feel too pleasant, I’d imagine.”

Designation: Heavy Infantry, Shock Troops

Notable Units: ‘Black Bastards’, ‘The Sluggers’

Similar to the milites, the men-at-arms are trained, professional soldiers. However they are often drawn from the ranks of the milites due to their strength, skill, and prowess. Men-at-arms typically field the best equipment and armor that Bourdeleaux can provide. Some of this is in part due to their heritage and wealthy background. However, not all men-at-arms are of noble blood. Others who are promoted to men-at-arms through service, often receive an appropriate pay raise befitting the rank. Many of these soldiers often find themselves with more money than they typically require and outfit themselves with the best protection Bourdelaic smiths can offer. They are Bourdeleaux’s first instance of specialized troop formations. They may wield weapons such as halberds to tear enemies to ribbons, greatswords to disrupt pike formations, etcetera. Men-at-arms are often deployed to break enemy formations and turn the tide of the battle at deciding crossroads. Notably, almost all Men-at-arms possess moustaches.



THE PHOENIX BRIGADE (GARDE PHÉNIX), THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD GUARD

“Unlikely you should cut me down. Though, I will rise again.”

Designation: Imperial Guard, Special Forces, Retainers

Notable Units: ‘Noviquen Guard’

The Phoenix Guard, otherwise referred to as the Imperial Guard or the Phoenix Brigade, are the best infantry that Bourdeleaux has to offer. Only the most veteran, lethal, and loyal troops may ever bear the Phoenix insignia. Strenuous screening and training must be completed on top of whatever combat experience they may have already received. Typically, a man must have served five years with distinction before even being considered a candidate for the Guard. A Guard prefect may often sponsor an inductee to take under his wing for entry into the Guard. The Guard forgoes any privilege based upon social status or birth, selecting members solely on the basis of their capability; mentally and physically. It is said that no member of the guards stands beneath the height of 6’3”, and always possessed elaborate, well-kempt facial hair, and are held to a strict groomer standard. The epitome of discipline and courage, they have often proved to be the the immovable rock in a Black Army formation which other soldiers may look to for inspiration. They are directly responsible for the protection and security of the Emperor and his family.



BOURDELAIC LIGHT INFANTRY, THE BLACK TIDE

“In service of the Emperor, I go.”

Designation: Light Infantry, Militia, Conscripts

Notable Units: N/a

In times of deparation or when the Black Army’s ranks need to be padded out, the Emperor will either draw able-bodied men from his or his vassal’s territories and domains. However, the levymen are never relied upon to be the mainstay of a Black Army formation. Almost always, will they be deployed alongside milites to ensure integrity of the line and guide them into battle. In rare scenarios, the Black Army may break from typical doctrine and purposely field light-armored regiments to act as forward advance units and quick reaction forces. However, when the battle is done, light infantrymen may often be left behind to act as a garrison force and police local populaces - the services of their heavy counterparts typically being needed elsewhere. Light infantrymen may receive explicit training in variable terrain environments such as mountains and forests, going where others couldn’t feasibly.



BOURDELAIC ARCHERS, THE ARROWS THAT WILL BLOT OUT THE SUN

“We are the darkness that looms over the horizon.”

Designation: Light Archers, Skirmishers, Auxilia

Notable Units:

The Black Army’s units of archers and skirmishers have often been an afterthought in Black Army combat doctrine. No substantial effort is given to ensure the production of strong and skilled bowmen. Instead, the Black Army often enlists the aid of auxiliary elements from allied tribes or Bourdelaic civilians to fill the vacancy. Hunting has always been a preferred method of obtaining food. Naturally, the bow proved to be an efficient weapon in killing game such as deer or rabbit. Thus, the Black Army may often draw from mere commoners or peasants to comprise their corps of skirmishers. Despite this lack of professionalism, commoner archers have come to be fairly adept at their trade, more than capable of filling the role the Black Army left empty. Typically divided into battalions, skirmishers are attached to Black Army infantry brigades, operating behind the battleline to loose devastating volleys towards the enemy.



WESTFALIAN AUXILIARY ARCHERS, THE SCOURGE OF THE SOUTH

“A hit to their jewels is bonus points in my eyes.”

Designation: Medium Archers, Skirmishers, Auxilia

Notable Units: *‘Wardens of Westfal’*

In the *Westfal Resolution of 1504*, the Westfallian peoples were incorporated into the Empire of Bourdeleaux as the Province of Ouestphal. Due to their warlike background of raiding and pillaging, many found appropriate employment within the ranks of the Black Army. Namely, Westfalian longbow battalions became a valued auxiliary compliment to Bourdelaic brigades of foot. While Bourdelaic light archers are always kept back from the front, the Westfalian auxiliaries may often be forward deployed in melee combat due to their sheer ferocity. While few in number, many Bourdelaic commanders are grateful to find thee hardened warriors under their service. Their battle uniform resembles traditional Westfalian armor, clad in gambeson, mail, and nasal helm.



IMPERIAL CROSSBOWMEN (ARBALESTRIERS), THE THUNDERING BOLTS

“The Crossbow Guilds ensure a steady flow of professional skirmishers to the ranks of the Black Army.”

Designation: Crossbowmen, Arbalestriers, Skirmishers, Auxilia

Notable Units: *‘The Harriers’*

Drawn from the ranks of the imperial crossbow guilds, the Imperial Arbalestriers represent the trained and professional corps of the Empire’s skirmisher units. Wielding state of the art crossbows and devastating armor piercing bolts, a unit of disciplined crossbowmen can cut down any unit of infantry or cavalry within moments.. Experienced crossbowmen are entrusted to far more aggressive action than units of archers, approaching enemy lines, unleashing a hail of bolts, and reloading behind their shields before they repeat the process. Many a crossbowmen have become quite proficient at this task, achieving astonishing volume of fire. Imperial crossbow regiments have garnered a large degree of renown within the ranks of the Black Army, with many of their fellow soldiers grateful for their presence.



BOURDELAIC OUTRIDERS (CHASSEURS), THE HEADHUNTERS

“A bonus for every head they collect. Pft. Why aren't I in the cavalry?”

Designation: Light Cavalry, Scouts, Raiders

Notable Units: ‘Headhunters’

Bourdelaic outriders represent the light cavalry component of the Black Army. Many are not more than simple commoners, barely scraping by to afford themselves a horse than their own. They forgo any sort of barding and heavy armor as to quickly be deployed about the field of battle. Away from the battle, they serve as forward scouts who relay crucial intelligence back to High Command. In the thick of their deployment, they are utilized as brutal and efficient raiders, dealing incredible damage to any populations and infrastructure. Colloquially known as ‘the Headhunters’ they take upon Beninbingian styled garb to strike fear in the hearts of their foe. Captains of squadrons of headhunters are given immense autonomy from the battle line, allowing them to devastate the enemy however they see fit, unrestricted by the law of commanders of foot.



MOUNTED MEN-AT-ARMS (HOMME D'ARMES A CHEVAL), THE BLACK RIDERS

“Been crackin’ skulls and taking names since o’ three. You?”

Designation: Medium Cavalry, Mounted Serjeants

Notable Units: N/A

Mounted Men-at-Arms comprise the intermediate cavalry component of the Black Army. They sport heavier armor than their outrider counterparts, but less so than the full plate and barding of Bourdelaic Imperial Knights. Though, not all men-at-arms are necessarily knights, they can afford fairly elaborate and protective arms and armor. In Bourdelaic doctrine, mounted men-at-arms are used as melee cavalry instead of shock, heavy-hitting lance-armed cavalry - delivering crushing blows with their warpicks and mauls from above. Mounted men-at-arms are professional riders funded and trained with coin from the Imperial coffers. Mounted men-at-arms have often been described as ‘not great, but good.’ at the role they fulfill. When skilled cavalry auxiliary is lacking, it is the mounted men-at-arms who assume their role.



KNIGHTS OF THE REALM (CHEVALIERS), THE SONS OF BOURDELEAUX

“My wife would be jealous, knowing how much time I spend with my weapon over her.”

Designation: Heavy Cavalry, Shock Cavalry, Chevaliers

Notable Units: *‘Therevault Tactical Company’*

The Black Army’s corps of chevaliers, or knights, are the Black Army’s heavy cavalry element. They are sons of the wealthy elite, influential aristocrats and the old nobility. As expected of their status, Bourdelaic knights are expected to bring their own arms and armor to the battlefield. Due to this non-standardization of kit, units of knights are often a varied mix of colors and heraldry, flying the heraldic arms of their house proudly. They are well-versed in combat, having trained with horse and lance since they were a boy. Knights serve for a myriad of reasons, love of their country, to make peace with God, or to earn honor and glory in battle. In melee, they may often find the need to discard their lances, perhaps splintered or lodged deep within an enemy. Thus, they may carry a bec de corbins as a typically secondary weapon to continue the fight upon horseback or dismount.



KNIGHTS OF OGRUN, THE TERROR OF THE DARK

“Grown men should not fear the dark. Until now.”

Designation: Medium Cavalry, Trackers, Chevaliers

Notable Units: ‘Dire Pack’

When Bordereleaux conquered the Carrow Lords in 1514, the Black Army absorbed many remaining elements of the Carrowlander Army. Among those to willingly join the Black Army’s ranks were renowned and infamous Knights of Ogrun. Throughout the campaign that was the Carrow Wars, the Knights of Ogrun proved to be a serious thorn in the side of Black Army commanders and scouts. Hunting in the dark, they isolated and killed numerous unwary soldiers with thrashing maw and ruthless efficiency. Their skills which were once used against the Black Army, were now used against Bourdeleaux’s foes. The Black Army may often use Knights of Ogrun to screen formations as an early warning system or as shock cavalry to decimate enemy forces in a whirlwind of teeth and steel. They are few and number and have been cherished by Black Army commanders.



IMPERIAL SOURCERER

“State sanctioned pyromancy and arson? Count me in.”

Designation: Adept, Mage, Arcanist, Wizard, Sourcerer

Notable Individuals:

Since the creation of the modern Bourdelaic state, the Bourdelaic peoples have always sought to study and capitalize the gifts bestowed upon them by the Great Sun. Rather than have civilians apply this knowledge for base applications, Archmage Deliviere’s *Magus Auxilia Act of 1522* would see many sourcerers conscripted into the ranks of the Black Army as magic-wielding auxiliaries. In the Souvesian College of Sourcery they hone their skills and channel their magic. On campaigns, they march with the Black Army and cast various combat and support spells to aid their brethren. The Order of the Solar Arcane recruits from both genders, the only prerequisite being an affinity towards the Great Sun. Unskilled wielders are referred to as adepts, while experienced sourcerers may be called magi.



IMPERIAL SAPPER, HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S CORPS OF ENGINEERS

"If only we can get our men over those walls as easily as these stones."

Designation: Assault Sapper, Demolitions, Engineer

Equipment in Service: N/A

FORMATIONS OF INFANTRY

1ST ‘BOURDOGNE’ BRIGADE

- 1st Infantry Regiment, *‘The Emperor’s Fist’*
- 2nd Infantry Regiment, *‘Second Sons’*
- 3rd Infantry Regiment, *‘Righteous Hand’*
- 4th Infantry Regiment, *‘Prince John’s Merry Men’*
- 1st Independent Heavy Infantry Battalion, *‘Black Bastards’ - Elite (200)*

2ND ‘AVENDAL’ BRIGADE

- 5th Infantry Regiment, *‘Jolly Band’*
- 6th Infantry Regiment, *‘The Clairvoyant’*
- 7th Infantry Regiment, *‘Spears of Light’*
- 8th Infantry Regiment, *‘The Indomitable’*
- 2nd Independent Heavy Infantry Battalion, *‘The Sluggers’ - Veteran*

3RD ‘FRIGIVANTI’ BRIGADE

- 9th Infantry Regiment, *‘Poor Sodding Souls’*
- 10th Infantry Regiment, *‘Rideaux Reavers’*
- 11th Infantry Regiment, *‘God’s Chosen’*
- 12th Infantry Regiment, *‘Summer’s Crown’*

4TH ‘PHOENIX’ BRIGADE (MUSTERING)

- 1st Phoenix Guard Regiment, *‘Souvesian Skullcaps’*
- 2nd Phoenix Guard Regiment, *‘The Dawnbringers’*
- 3rd Phoenix Guard Regiment, *‘Crown Prince Adrian’*
- 4th Phoenix Guard Regiment, *‘The Vindicators’*
- 5th Phoenix Guard Regiment, *‘Deliverance’*
- Special Tactics Group, 1st Company, *‘Noviquen Guard’ - Elite*

5TH 'ANAPAI'S' BRIGADE

13th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'The Bad Batch'*

14th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'The Invincible'*

15th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'The Watchmen'*

16th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Sun's Smile'*

6TH 'VYTRELOR' BRIGADE (MUSTERING)

17th Heavy Infantry Regiment *'Vagabonds of Vytrelor'*

18th Heavy Infantry Regiment *'The One Thousand'*

19th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Scrappers'*

20th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Unto Dawn'*

7TH 'SUTTRE' BRIGADE (MUSTERING)

21st Heavy Infantry Regiment *'Massone's Keening'*

22nd Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Duke Reginald's Own'*

23rd Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Buckethelms'*

24th Heavy Infantry Regiment, *'Pointy Codpieces'*

8TH 'OUESTPHAL' BRIGADE (MUSTERING)

25th Infantry Regiment, *'Blue Lobster'*

26th Infantry Regiment, *'Forlorn Farmhands'*

27th Infantry Regiment, *'Scourge of the South'*

28th Infantry Regiment, *'Despoilers'*

9TH 'VENENBOURG' BRIGADE

10TH 'EPSOMME' BRIGADE

11TH 'ACHEULIA' BRIGADE

