

Ars Magica

# The Lion and the Lily

The Normandy Tribunal



by Timothy Ferguson, Richard  
Love, Christian Jensen Romer,  
Mark Shirley, Andrew Smith,  
Paul Tevis, Sheila Thomas



## The Lion and the Lily

# Credits

**AUTHORS:** Timothy Ferguson, Richard Love, Christian Jensen Romer, Mark Shirley, Andrew Smith, Paul Tevis, Sheila Thomas

**DEVELOPMENT, EDITING, & PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** David Chart

**LAYOUT, ART DIRECTION, & PROOFREADING:** Michelle Nephew

**PUBLISHER:** John Nephew

**COVER ILLUSTRATION:** Grey Thornberry

**INTERIOR ART:** Grey Thornberry, Ross Bonilla, Alphonse de Neuville, Charles Steuben, Hugo Vogel, J. Scott Reeves

**CARTOGRAPHY:** Andrew Smith, Alexander Bradley

**ARS MAGICA FIFTH EDITION TRADE DRESS:** J. Scott Reeves

**PUBLISHER'S SPECIAL THANKS:** To Jerry Corrick and the gang at the Source.

**FIRST ROUND PLAYTESTERS:** Donna Giltrap, Malcolm Harbrow, Aaron Hicks, Richard Love, Wendell "BSP" Joyner, Angus MacDonald, Brian Watson, Quetta Watson, Matthew L. Seidl

**SECOND ROUND PLAYTESTERS:** Angus MacDonald, Brian Watson, Wendell "BSP" Joyner, Sarah MacDonald, Eric Menge, Ann Sasahara, Scott Benfield, Lynn Reed-Kendall, Chris Day, Nicholas Peterson, Jennifer McPherson, Michael Pisarsky, Kristi Pisarsky, Erik Tyrrell, Carlo Veltri, Chad Vincent, greg Palechek, Greg Rothwell

### AUTHOR BIOS

**Timothy Ferguson** is a librarian on the Gold Coast, in Australia. He is up to his eyeballs in wedding plans, so he doesn't have time to write his biography. He'd like to dedicate this book to his family, and to his soon-to-be in-laws, and to Linda.

**Richard Love** lives beyond the bounds of Mythic Europe, and has never actually been to the Normandy Tribunal. However, he would like to visit one day. Hopefully the road signs haven't changed too much since the 13th century. Richard would like to thank his partner Paula for letting him out for Tuesday night geeking. He'd also like to thank Donna, Malcolm, and Aaron for being the other Tuesday night geeks, and especially for being geeks bearing chocolate.

CJ Romer is a Dane who lives in the Stonehenge Tribunal. His

last trip to the Normandy Tribunal ended in disaster after an unfortunate incident with a voracious hound, which resulted in his hospitalization. Despite that he still loves France. He would like to dedicate his efforts on this book to his parents, June and Gunnar.

**Mark Shirley** grew up less than 40 miles from the Normandy Tribunal, and was a regular visitor in his childhood. Now all grown up, he is a zoologist, mathematician, ecologist, programmer, or epidemiologist, depending on the day of the week. When he has time to himself, he enjoys woodcarving and teaching himself dead languages. He dedicates this book to the usual suspects — you know who you are!

**Andrew P. Smith's** tenuous connection to the Normandy Tribunal may be found in the murky depths of his family tree, consisting of some Norman ancestors by the name of Beaumains. The nobles fell from grace when one chap decided it would be a good idea to ceremonially impale all of his serfs. He suspects that the same insanity may inflict him — at least, he can find no other explanation for deciding to do a second Tribunal book — but don't let that put you off, he's really an okay guy!

**Paul Tevis** hails from lands yet undiscovered by explorers from Mythic Europe and makes his living working on contraptions not even dreamed of in the 13th century. During the writing of this book, he visited the Normandy Tribunal for the first time (and hopefully not the last). He would like to thank all of his co-authors and his editor for being so understanding with him and letting him contribute to this wonderful project.

**Sheila Thomas** has made several exploratory visits to the rural parts of the Normandy Tribunal, enjoying the food, wine, geology, scenery, and history, but lives near Cambridge in the UK. Her work for an engineering institute takes her to Paris for a few days every year to talk about welding. Thanks to Neil Taylor and his troupe, she played for several years in the Saxum Caribetum *Ars Magica* saga, set in Brittany; she is indebted to the troupe who inspired some of the ideas presented here. She dedicates this book to her sisters, Val Gregory and Christine Gray, although it probably won't aid their holiday plans.



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## Chapter One

# Introduction

Welcome to Mythic France! This is surely the most blessed and civilized realm in Europe — a temperate landscape of fertile fields and venerable cities, where splendid centers of learning and awesome new cathedrals are indisputable evidence of God's favor. The ancient blood of the French kings, divine and magical, has endured through three legendary dynasties — the Merovingians, the Carolingians, and the Capetians — each of which has left its mark on the land. The French, who are among the most prosperous and numerous of all folk, are deemed the most cultured of peoples. Monasteries throughout Europe look to their great mother houses here, and the renowned *trouvères* of France wander the land, singing tales of romantic love and Arthurian legend. In other, less fortunate lands, Frenchness is a fresh and virtuous quality to be admired and envied, with French customs and styles widely copied, including dress, literature, and architecture.

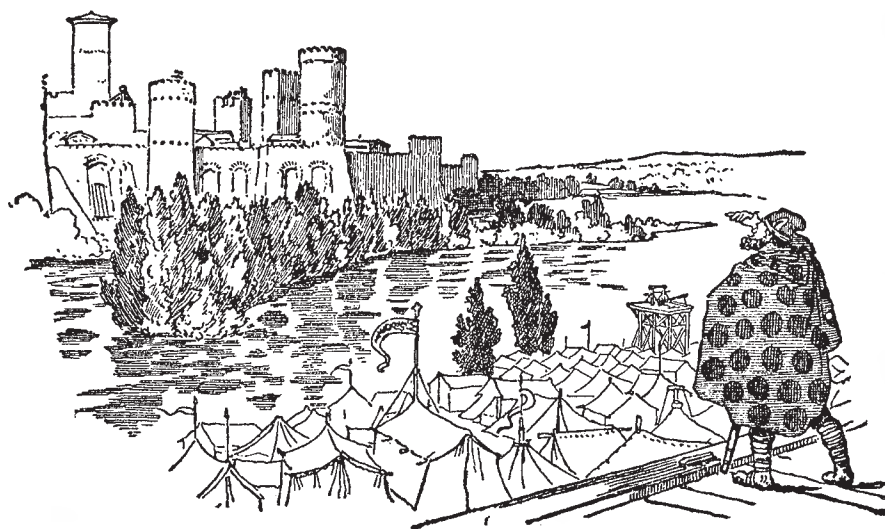
In ancient times, the French lands were dominated by primordial battles between elemental spirits of fire and water — these beings have long since retreated underground, but still reveal their presence in many hot and cold springs. The giants who followed left megalithic structures throughout the land. Few such beings now remain, but faerie folk of a more normal size are by no means uncommon. Human tribes moved in as the giants dwindled — firstly Celts and Romans, and later Breton, Franks, and Vikings — accompanied by the angels and demons who fought over their souls. The theme of conflict continues, most obviously in the struggle for land and political supremacy between the great French and English noble families. This *motif* drew the attention of House Tytalus from the earliest days of the Order of Hermes and, by setting up their *domus magna* in this Tribunal, Tytalus magi have ensured that challenge and strife flourish.

## France

What is France? The France described and referred to in this book is roughly the northern two-thirds of the country of the same name familiar to the modern reader. It may broadly be defined as the extent of the dominant *langue d'oïl* dialect of French, although it includes the Breton-speaking lands of Brittany and the Flemish-speaking province of Flanders, but excludes the French-speaking parts of Lorraine and Arelat that owe fealty to the Holy Roman Emperor. In 1220 AD, the standard date of *Ars Magica* 5th Edition and the time period described in this book, "France" more commonly refers to a somewhat smaller kingdom, or sometimes merely to the Ile de France at the center of this region — the personal demesne of the French king, Philip II "Augustus." This is the heartland of French power and the Capetian dynasty, symbolized by a coat of arms depicting a blue field scattered with gold lilies. The

French king's influence extends to French-speaking lands to the north and east, ruled by lesser branches of his own family. The Angevin dynasty, symbolized by a coat of arms depicting three gold lions on a red field, is the other great secular power in the region; they are the rulers of Aquitaine and England.

The northern half of France, which accounts for most of the Tribunal, is one of the most populated regions in Mythic Europe. There are many great cities, including Paris — deemed by the French to be the largest and most splendid city in the world. Cities depend on trade, so it is not surprising that the Normandy Tribunal also boasts the preeminent trade fairs of Europe, those of Champagne and Flanders. The swelling cities and rivers of trade are supported and fed by farms producing food and raw materials, such as flax and hemp, and by extensive vineyards. The Church is also the engine of much of French industry, as its great cathedral schools and monasteries thirst for eager minds and riches alike. Pilgrims ply many routes across the land and to the south, keep-





## A Note on History and Myth

Although this book describes many historical events, most of them faithfully, it is not (and should not be considered to be) a history textbook. In *Ars Magica*, myth is as important as history; where the historical record conflicts with myth, history must often give way. In Mythic France as told here, megalith stones were borne by giants, French kings have the power to heal by their touch, and the colorful tales of magic and romance spun by *trouvères* are likely true. Many non-mythical historical details are included throughout, as part of the rich tapestry of France, but these are not intended to stifle the reader — you should feel free to change or make history as it best suits your story!

ing holy sites and taverns in coin. France is only moderately forested, and the more tame of the remaining woodlands are exploited for timber, fuel, and food, although the nobility reserve much of it for their own pleasure in the hunt. The southwestern reaches of the Tribunal, approaching the uplands of Auvergne, are more sparsely populated, as they are lands intermittently blighted by dynastic squabbles and roaming brigands. Brittany, the westernmost realm, has a distinct character. It is a land of wild, rocky coasts, faerie forests, and megaliths, where magi have historically been numerous, attracted to its plentiful sites of legend.

## The Normandy Tribunal

From west to east, the Normandy Tribunal extends from the Atlantic Ocean over 400 miles to the edge of Lorraine and the River Sâone, marking the border with the Rhine and Greater Alps Tribunals and the Holy Roman Empire. The border here is well defined depending on whether the land owes its fealty to the French king or the German emperor. From the English Channel to the north, the Tribunal extends the same distance south, as far as the River Dordogne and

the Provençal Tribunal. The border between the Normandy and Provençal Tribunals has moved over the years, but for over a century the Normandy Tribunal has accepted that its southern boundary is marked by the River Dordogne. This leaves an area of uncertainty in the Massif Central to the southeast, but there is currently no dispute amongst the covenants closest to that area.

Life is not particularly easy for magi here. In a densely populated land, firmly controlled by bishops and secular rulers, covenants have had to adapt to survive, either hiding away or reaching an accommodation with their neighbors. Most have evolved a means to operate within the mundane world, if not amicably, at least without major antagonism. The hierarchical structure of the Church and feudal structures of the nobility are reflected in the way the covenants have organized themselves, with weaker covenants pledging loyalty to the stronger ones as a matter of survival. Magi here have adopted rigorous modes of contest and strife that other, more tremulous, Tribunals would consider excessively violent or outright forbid. As a result of these factors, covenants in the Normandy Tribunal are easy to found, but hard to maintain; they are great in number, but small in membership. By number of covenants, Normandy is very likely the largest in the Order of Hermes, but by number of magi, it is merely a somewhat large Tribunal of moderate history and importance. The various tides of fortune and strife, Hermetic or otherwise, have caused many covenants to fail — the land is strewn with many such forgotten ruins. Nevertheless, ambitious young covenants frequently arise to take their place.

There are 15 covenants described in this book, and it is intended that a complete Normandy Tribunal typically consist of nearly twenty covenants. A handful of additional covenants have thus been left to the troupe to devise, one of which might be the player character covenant. Many of the described covenants have also been given space for you to

define your own magi. With a typical Tribunal consisting of just over a hundred magi, there is not room in this book to describe them all.

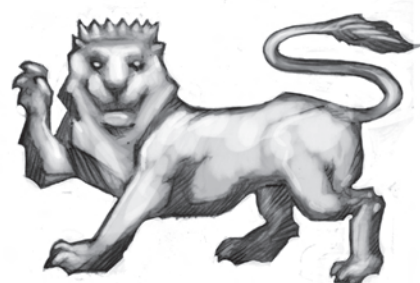
## How to Use this Book

This book is primarily designed for troupes whose saga is based in the Normandy Tribunal, but sagas set in neighboring or even distant Tribunals may be drawn here by any of several story ideas and Hermetic customs presented in these pages. If you have yet to define the locale for your saga, hopefully this book will inspire and persuade you that the Normandy Tribunal is a rich and colorful setting, full of many story opportunities!

Much of this book provides background information that most characters could be expected to know about their home territory, and is generally suitable for players to read. However, there are several suggestions offered for saga themes, as well as numerous story seeds and game statistics throughout, which the storyguide may prefer players not to read. Chapters 10 and 11 consist mostly of saga plans.

Finally, as with all *Ars Magica* Tribunal sourcebooks, nothing written here should be considered to be “set in stone.” Any elements — particularly Hermetic or story parts, but also historical or geographical details — may be adapted to suit your purposes or replaced entirely, if it fits your plans. In no way should this book restrict your ideas or the potential of your stories, and it is for you to decide how closely you want to follow real history, or the Tribunal as it is depicted here. Indeed, it is unlikely that any French saga will be conceived without at least some measure of customization of the Tribunal by the troupe.

And now, onward to France!





## Chapter Two

# History of Mythic France

The mundane history of this region is remembered in songs and stories, and much is recorded in books, notably those by Julius Caesar and Gregory of Tours. Mostly it concerns the doings of kings. In most Tribunals, Hermetic historians are regarded with great esteem, yet here in Normandy many look askance at magi who pry into the past. The terrible secrets of the Schism War lie in the Tribunal's history (see Chapter 3: Hermetic History and Culture, Drawn in Bloodshed), and the Quaesitores watch closely those who would inquire too deeply into the ancient conflicts.

## Ancient Gaul

The lands that today comprise the Normandy Tribunal were once home to the savage Gauls who made pagan sacrifices to the powerful spirits and faeries of the land. The Gauls held the boar, a symbol of their tribal kings, in particular reverence. The druids, who may have been precursors to House Diedne, led their faith.

Between 58 and 50 BC Julius Caesar successfully fought the Gauls, defeating King Vercingetorix at the Battle of Alesia. Roman rule was to reach all the way to Brittany, and even to this day Roman ruins can be found scattered throughout the region. Many druids fled to the wilder areas, and continued to exert their influence. The Gauls never wholeheartedly adopted the Roman pantheon, and continued to worship their own deities also. A Gallo-Roman culture flourished, and the region knew prosperity under the great Roman capital at Lugdunum (Lyon, in the Provençal Tribunal).

In the fifth and sixth centuries, a wave of British Celts, fleeing the collapse of King Arthur's kingdom and the incursions of Pictish, Irish and, above all, Saxon raiders, fled to the





Roman province of Armorica, which became known as Brittany. From that time onwards, Brittany has had its own language (Breton) and culture, and it has many times been independent, though often owing fealty to the French king.

## St. Denis

In the middle of the third century, Christian missionaries first reached Paris, headed by one Denis, with his assistants Eleutherius and Rusticus. The three Romans entered the pagan city and preached the gospel, to great acclaim. The leading Roman citizens were, however, dismayed, and the Roman governor had the three chief missionaries thrown into a dark dungeon to rot. There they languished for many years, resolutely praising God, and making converts by their steadfast faith, until finally they were taken out to the Hill of Martyrs, Montmartre. There they were beheaded in 275, and their bodies flung into the River Seine. By their example they had brought the light of Christianity to the city, and the abbey church of Saint-Denis was built to honor these saints and martyrs. Their feast day is October 9th, and St. Denis is today one of the patron saints of France, especially invoked by the royal family. He is personal patron to the king, but also patron of Parisians and called upon by many others in times of need.

# The Merovingian Franks

In the fifth century, Roman Gaul came under a new threat. For many decades the Franks, a grouping of fierce Germanic tribes, had been settling in the region. They were originally welcomed as *foederati*, that is barbarians bound by treaty to the Empire. Their king, Childeric, assisted the Roman defeat of the Visigoths. His successor, King Clovis, fought and defeated the Roman Governor Syagrius in battle in 486 and, having made a peace treaty with the Ostrogoths, came to rule a great empire, freed from Roman rule. His dynasty flourished and fourteen great Merovingian kings ruled over all the Franks.

Clovis ruled from 481 to 511. He extended his kingdom by war, treachery, and marriage. His wife, Clotilde of Burgundy, was a Christian and changed the course of Clovis's life. His first son died and the second fell gravely ill as a baby, but Clovis saw his wife's prayers to her God cure the boy. He was further swayed when, at the tomb of Saint Martin of Tours, he was witness to a miracle when the bishop of Arras, Vedast, gave a blind man back his sight. In 496, when facing the Alemanni in battle, Clovis vowed that he would convert from his worship of Mercury and Jupiter if the victory was his. He defeated them soundly and was baptized by Saint Rémi, archbishop of Reims (see the Holy Oil of Consecration).

Following the death of Clovis, the Frankish lands were divided among his four sons; further division and frequent civil wars marked the Merovingian period. The mayors of the palaces became increasingly important, and while there were periods of military glory such as the ascendancy of Dagobert I (603-639), which saw unification and foreign conquests, these were soon lost again. The period is well known in 1220 through the *Decem Libri Historiarum* of Gregory of Tours, which outlines the story of the Frankish kings (see Chapter 6: Anjou and Aquitaine, Famous Men of Tours for details of this book).

In 732 a great Muslim army marched into Christendom from the Iberian peninsula. Charles Martel, a Frankish hero, led an army to meet them at the Battle of Poitiers, where a great victory was won. In 754, Charles Martel's son, Pépin, seized the throne from a weak Merovingian heir, whose hair was shaved off to strip him of his magic powers before he was forced into a monastery (see insert: The Blood of Merovech). Legends persist, however, of other Merovingian heirs who carry the royal blood and escaped Pépin's usurpation of the throne.

## The Quinotaur

The Quinotaur is a supernatural creature with the fore parts of a bull and the hind parts of a great fish. Some maintain it is related to the bull-form in which Zeus carried off Europa, a Phoenician princess. It is said by some to be a form assumed by Poseidon and associated with Atlantis, and by others to be linked to Leviathan. The ancestor of the Merovingians is also said to be a creature of the Magic realm that lives in the Atlantic. A quest to discover the creature will probably settle the arguments concerning its nature. News of the sighting of a creature like this might reach the covenant through seafarers, or a book may turn up containing clues to its home.

## The Holy Oil of Consecration

After the great battle, as King Clovis knelt in humility before the archbishop. In sight of thousands of his warlike followers, a pure white dove descended from Heaven and placed an ampoule of oil on the altar.

## The Blood of Merovech

The line of kings of the Franks traces its origins back to Duke Francio who fought alongside King Priam at Troy. The first of this line about whom anything is recorded is Merovech. He was born in the first half of the fifth century, the offspring of the wife of King Clodio of the Franks and of a beast like the Quinotaur (see the main text).

The early Merovingian kings were sorcerers whose magical powers were said to be vested in their long hair, which they never cut. As a consequence of their ancestry, most of the descendants of Merovech have a Supernatural Virtue. This is most commonly the Major Supernatural Virtue Greater Immunity: Drowning, and

quite often goes undetected. All of the Merovingians bear a curious birthmark in the form of a red cross. Philip II, like many of the former kings of the Franks, has the Royal Touch, which cures the King's Evil (scrofula, see text). Many believe this is a Purifying Touch Virtue inherited from Merovech despite the fact that Philip's blood links to Merovech are apparently very tenuous. Another popular theory is that the Royal Touch was a gift from Saint Rémi to Clovis and his descendants. It is a gift from God bestowed on all Frankish kings by the anointing with the holy oil.

For saga story ideas based on this, see Chapter 10: Normandy Sagas, The Tradition of Kings.

## The Capetian Blood

Blessed by the Divine and strong supporters of the Dominion, if not always of the Church Militant, the Capetians are noted for their outstanding piety. Some members of the bloodline manifest this as the Virtue True Faith, and all show a proper reverence for things of the faith. The court demonstrates strong piety, and eschews the etiquette and more genteel manners of the southern lords (including Aquitaine) for piety, pragmatism, and strong links with the clergy.

Clovis had obviously earned divine favor. Saint Rémi used the holy oil to anoint the king as part of the baptismal rite. From that time onwards, it has been used at the coronation of every Frankish, and later French, king, and the sacred ampoule of oil, France's holiest treasure, is kept in Reims Cathedral. The oil never runs out.

The effects of coronation and anointing are described in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, pages 42-43, giving the king a Magic Resistance of 10, a Soak bonus of 2, and a Commanding Aura to Voice range with an effect equivalent to Aura of Rightful Authority with Penetration 0. Any additional benefits deriving from the divine origin of the holy oil are unclear because no one has been able to investigate it. Some believe, correctly, that it is the source of the Royal Touch (see insert *The Blood of Merovech*) and, incorrectly, that it bestows a permanent enchantment with the effect of Aura of Enobled Presence. If a maga could obtain some of the oil, she might be able to learn more of its powers. The ampoule is a 3-point relic, and kept very safely under lock and key, but if it were stolen and passed to a rival claimant to the throne of France, such as the English boy King Henry III, this would have huge consequences for the nation, and for Mythic Europe.

## Scrofula

Scrofula, also known as the King's Evil, results from an excessive retention of phlegmatic and melancholic humors caused by bad air, particularly that found in densely-populated urban areas during hot weather. The main symptom is growths on the neck, which develop a bluish-purple coloration. Fever, chills, and malaise are evident in more

advanced cases and the growths swell so that sufferers acquire the Disfigured Flaw.

It requires a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 6 or 9 (depending upon the time of year) to avoid catching the disease, which inflicts a Medium wound. This heals as normal and may be treated by use of the Medicine Ability (ArM5, page 66, 179, 180) or by magic using suitable Creo Corpus spells (ArM5, page 130). It is entirely cured by the touch of the King of France.

See Chapter 10: Normandy Sagas, The Tradition of Kings for story seeds based on the history of the Frankish kings.

## The Carolingian Dynasty

The new rulers, known as the Carolingian dynasty, made great efforts to bolster their legitimacy, most particularly by seeking the support of the Church. They used the name of Louis, derived from Clovis, for their sons and claimed that princess Blitild, daughter of King Clothar, was their ancestor. The abbot of the monastery of Saint Denis saw his opportunity and supported the new kings. In 754, Pope Stephen II pronounced that anyone who made a king for the Franks from any line other than the Carolingians would be excommunicated. (For details of excommunication, see *Realms of Power: The Divine* page 73). The Carolingian dynasty is named after Charlemagne, one of the outstanding mundane leaders in the history of Western Europe. His adviser, the British priest Alcuin, was an outstanding scholar, and under Charlemagne there was a great growth in scholarship and a flowering of culture.

Charlemagne ruled over a mighty empire, and was also the King of France. The minstrels and *trouverts* of 1220 sing tales based on the Epic of Charlemagne, a collection of stories of chivalry, romance, and passion analogous in their hold on the popular imagination to those of King Arthur, and including the famous tragic tale of Roland, slain at the Pass of Roncevaux. From the humblest peasant to the king himself, all know the adventures of Charlemagne and his paladins, and his heroism and customs have done much to shape contemporary culture.

The Carolingian Empire did not long survive the death of Charlemagne, as his grandsons split the inheritance, according to custom.

## The Capetian Dynasty

Hugh Capet became King of the Franks in 987. He was a descendant of Robert the Strong, a ninth-century King of Brittany, and Hugh the Great, effective ruler of France under the weak Carolingian kings Louis IV and Lothair. Hugh Capet received valuable aid from Gerbert of Aurillac, whom he helped to the position of archbishop of Reims in 991. It seems certain that Gerbert, a renowned scholar reputed to have some minor magical talent, was a significant factor in Hugh's success. However, Pope Stephen's ruling against non-Carolingian monarchs was still in effect and excommunication seemed inevitable. Hugh won back divine favor by recovering the bodies of Saint Valéry and Saint Riquier. His reward was that his line would sit on the throne for seven generations. Philip Augustus is the seventh in line. It is therefore highly probable that the Capetian dynasty will end on Philip's death, despite the healthy heir apparent, Prince Louis. Some tragedy doubtless awaits, and a change of dynasty is due.

## The Carolingian Blood

There still remain nobles in Mythic Europe who are of the Carolingian blood or, like the Capetians, are related by marriage. The strong claim they have to the imperial title is why the Holy Roman Emperor treats the King of France to this day as an equal, not a vassal. It is entirely possible that a maga may be descended from this noble dynasty, and therefore be of potentially great political importance, as the line has fragmented over the generations and many of the Carolingians are no longer great landholders. Some of those who lay claim to the blood of Charlemagne are doubtless false claimants, but Hermetic magic may well allow to the truth to be discerned, with potentially explosive repercussions. Those of Carolingian blood often have the Virtue Mythic Presence.



# Viking Invasion

In 845, 120 Viking longships made their way up the Seine river to Paris, sacking monasteries and towns *en route*. By the winter, the raiders had extracted tributes and ransoms from the city of Paris totaling 7,000 pounds. This was no unique event: from the late 700s monasteries in Brittany were raided, and as early as 800 Charlemagne organized coastal defenses against pirates in the Seine estuary. Indeed, Aquitaine was almost devastated in the mid-ninth century by Vikings. Many raids may have been guided by the divine hand; certainly monastic historians record that those towns and monasteries raided had often previously sinned. For example, the 845 Parisian raid was divine retribution for the years of Frankish civil war following the death of Louis the Pious in 840 — a war in which Christian slew Christian, and the Church shared in the spoils.

By the mid-ninth century, the Vikings had established semi-permanent bases — winter encampments — in Neustria (the earlier Frankish name for the geographic area roughly corresponding to the duchy of Normandy). These colonization attempts forced the French king, Charles III, to reach an accord with a Viking leader, Rollo, in 911. The king intended for Rollo to act as a buffer between the French heartland and his Scandinavian brethren, and as agreed, Rollo converted to Christianity, married the king's daughter, and was granted the counties of Rouen, Lisieux, and Evreux in the Seine basin. However, Rollo and his immediate descendants — who called themselves the earls of Ruda — encouraged immigration and reinforcement from Scandinavia and over the next decades they hungrily enlarged their territory, capturing several neighboring areas. The Franks began to refer to the area controlled by these dubious barbarians as the Land of the Northmen, and by 1000 the Norman pirates were a permanent presence in northern France.

Rollo's successors included William II, the bastard, who in 1066 conquered England. A later heir, Henry II, controlled almost half of France — he was Duke of Normandy, Duke of Aquitaine, and Count of Anjou — and was King of England, too. Henry's son, Richard the Lion-heart, inherited this territory in 1189, which passed to Richard's brother, John, in 1199 (see below). The present Norman claimant to the duchy is Henry III.



## Viking Raiders and the Hermetic Order

Hermetic covenants were raided too, and many in the Order assume that the Vikings mistook the covenants for vulnerable monasteries. Sometimes, however, raids were led by Gifted shape-changers who employed runic magic (see *Ancient Magic*, page 133). This

created a fear in the young Order of Hermes of a parallel, Scandinavian-based, "Order of Odin." Little definitive evidence for the Order of Odin exists, but the idea is still a cause of paranoia for some today.

**Baiocassium:** This Diedne-dominated covenant, near the town of Bayeux, was raided several times, prompting some of the magi to establish a spring sanctuary in a regio within the town. The spring sanctuary became a covenant in its own right, but the

### Story Seed: Sanctuary of Saints

In the ninth and 10th centuries, monks and townsmen housed near the coast or along river courses lived in terror that the summer months would bring hordes of rapacious, pagan, Scandinavian raiders, and the on-going fear led many monasteries to evacuate every spring. Relics, treasures, and books were all carried to an inland place of safety, to triumphantly return when the raiding season passed. However, such tactics were not always successful, as the Vikings often left their ships and traveled for long distances overland, frequently confusing and outflanking defensive forces. Some inland monastic sanctuaries have since become chapter houses or monasteries in their own right, but a forgotten cave complex near the covenant was once such a sanctuary. It still contains a powerful Divine aura, engendered by the repeated presence of the saintly relics, and some covenfolk claim to have seen the saint manifest in the caves.

### Story Seed: Lost Treasures

Last year a merchant arrived at Jumièges Abbey, in Normandy, carrying books that were thought lost during Viking raids more than 300 years ago. He claimed to have recovered the books from an ancient Viking wreck. The monks were skeptical of the books' authenticity — surely books could not survive such a wreck — but close inspection revealed that, miraculously, the books were genuine! News of the abbey's acquisitions reaches the covenant and it may occur to the magi that there is a regio, in the English Channel, filled with the magically preserved wrecks of Viking raiding ships. The ships could contain magical artifacts captured by raiders or even relics of the Order of Odin. English and French military ships are a possible threat to expeditions exploring the channel, though.

Schism War claimed both covenants.

**Dragon's Rest:** At the mouth of Seine River, this site was raided a dozen times over a hundred-year period, and the magi of the time became adept at battle magic. Much of the Order's early speculation about the Order of Odin arose from contacts at Dragon's Rest. At the time Dragon's Rest was the site of the Confluensis covenant.

**Fudarus:** Apart from the occasional skirmish with scouting parties, the island Tytalus domus magna did not suffer a significant Viking raid.

**Kerguntuil:** This Diedne covenant on the Brittany coast was raided several times.

**Montverte:** Not a raid site, but it was established by Scandinavian converts to the Order of Hermes.

**Pagus:** Located near Cherbourg, this covenant was heavily raided, and lost many vis sources. The covenant never really recovered and was eventually destroyed by the magi of Baiocassium during the Schism War.

**Rotomagus:** This young covenant, near Rouen, was destroyed in Viking raids.

**Spider's Palace:** This covenant was raided several times; at the time it was the site of the newly founded Florum covenant.

## Romance and Rebellion

In the late 12th century a new problem arose for the kings of France. On Good Friday, 1137, Duke William of Aquitaine died while on pilgrimage. His daughter, Eleanor of Aquitaine, inherited a vast territory including Aquitaine, Gascony, and Poitou. She was married swiftly to the sixteen-year-old heir to the French throne. The French royal demesne suddenly became much larger. When the king, Louis VI, died later that year, the young Louis VII became king.

The marriage started out very well, but soon ran in to problems. Eleanor is widely believed to have been highly promiscuous, and was accused of many affairs. The king was said by contemporaries to be more like a monk than a knight, and may have been scandalized by the troubadours and the more relaxed Aquitanian culture that his wife brought to the court. When Louis set off on the Second Crusade, Eleanor and a group of noble ladies accompanied the French knights, and scandalous rumors broke out. Many say that Eleanor and her ladies dressed

like Amazons, and rode equipped for war.

The military defeat of the French during the Second Crusade was blamed on Eleanor having countermanded Louis' orders — her critics in France had long accused her of having too much influence over the king, who was known to be passionately in love with her. She was then accused of having had an affair with her uncle, Raymond of Poitiers, ruler of Antioch. Whatever the truth, the marriage broke down, and Eleanor had to be abducted by her husband as he pressed on towards Jerusalem and ultimate failure.

On their return from the crusade, Eleanor sought a divorce on the grounds of consanguinity, and the lack of a male heir eventually forced Louis to agree to an annulment. Eleanor already had other plans however, and on Whit Sunday she married again — this time Henry of Anjou. Henry was the descendant of Rollo, ruler of Normandy and Brittany, and heir to the throne of England.

When, in 1154, Henry inherited the English throne, the French kings faced a new and terrible danger — the King of England, already Duke of Normandy, and later to inherit Brittany, was now also the Duke of Aquitaine, and ruler of a huge area of France. The Angevin family now had an Empire with vast possessions, which threatened to permanently eclipse French royal power. The very marriage itself, without permission from Louis (as the liege lord of both Eleanor and of Henry for his French possessions), was effectively an act of rebellion, and the resulting struggle between the Angevins and the French kings has shaped the last seven decades in the Tribunal.

## The Lions and the Lily

The furious Louis was unable to respond effectively to the new threat, and the years that followed the wedding saw the Church attempt to impose a series of truces. Henry undertook a careful fortification of the borders, and both sides entered in to political alliances with the other European dynasties. The Angevin Lion appeared ready to savage the Capetian Lily, the *fleur d'lys*.

Luckily for Louis, the sons of Henry II of England proved to be just as rebellious and scheming as their father, and their revolts against their father's rule, aided and abetted by their mother Eleanor, led to his being tied up in these struggles. Eleanor was imprisoned, albeit in some comfort, for the rest of Henry's reign. The infighting and treachery of the young lions, Henry's sons, greatly

## The Angevin Blood

The lords of Anjou have a family legend that is well known throughout Mythic Europe. Many centuries ago a lord of Anjou met a beautiful maiden called Melusine (a name shared by other supernatural maidens: see Chapter 6: Anjou and Aquitaine, Lusignan). He wooed and married her, and was happy in every way with his wife, who bore him many sons, the ancestors of the Angevin dynasty. But he noticed one fault in her — she would never stay through Mass, but always left before the elevation and blessing of the host. One day he asked four of his knights to prevent her, and they jumped on the hem of her gown as she tried to leave. Screaming, she tore off her dress and flew out of the window, and her husband never saw her again. It became clear that she was a faerie, or some say a demon, and that she could never face the Body and Blood of Christ. This tainted blood runs in the Angevin veins till this day, and may manifest in unpredictable ways. Henry II and Richard often joked about it, and took pride in their supposedly diabolical or faerie heritage, in a most disconcerting manner. The truth of their ancestry has yet to be settled — who or what was Melusine, and what Virtues did she grant to her descendants?

reduced the pressure on the French king, as they frequently turned to the French royal court for support against their father. This was support Louis was glad to give. Also, as the royal advisers had warned, the vassals of Aquitaine proved almost unmanageable, frequently rising in open revolt and playing the two warring factions off against each other.

## King Philip Augustus

In 1180 Louis VII died, and Philip Augustus (his son by his third marriage, to Adèle of Champagne) came to the French throne. Intelligent, belligerent, and able, he sought to consolidate French royal power and to undermine the Angevins.

Philip's own kingship clearly met with divine approval. When Philip was fourteen years old, his father, Louis, suffered a stroke and decided it was time he had Philip crowned as his successor. Before the ceremo-



ny was held, Philip fell seriously ill. Louis, himself in ill health, made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint Thomas at Canterbury to pray for his son's recovery and his prayer was answered. Philip's coronation took place in November 1179 and he assumed the throne when Louis VII died the following year.

There are those who claim that Philip's children are descended from the Carolingian dynasty through their mother, Isabella of Hainault, while others claim a blood link to the Carolingians through Philip's mother, Adèle of Champagne, and Hugh Capet's mother, Hedwig, the sister of Emperor Otto of Germany. Hermetic resources can probably sort out the truth of these claims and magi may choose to exploit their findings to the benefit of themselves and their mundane associates.

As a means of strengthening the succession, Capetian monarchs adopted the Carolingian and Byzantine practice of anointing the heir apparent as king early in their reign. In 1220 Philip has yet to anoint his heir, Louis, who was born in 1187 of his first wife, Isabelle of Hainault. He

also has a daughter, Mary, born in 1198, and a son, Philip, born in 1200, both children of his third marriage, to Agnès of Méranie. Philip may be delaying the anointing under pressure from enemies, perhaps supporters of the King of England, in which case the magi may have to take sides. Or he may be prompted to delay by a demon, eager to break the link between the French throne and the Divine, and the magi may be called upon to intervene.

## The Angevin Challenge

The last thirty years have been turbulent times in the Tribunal. King Henry of England had his eldest son, also called Henry, crowned during his lifetime. His refusal to cede any real power to him and his other sons, Richard, John, and Geoffrey, led to rebellion, and the sons frequently came to King Philip for support. Henry the Young King died in June 1183, and Geoffrey of Brittany died in 1186. This left Henry II's two sons, Richard and John, to divide the Angevin inheritance. When Henry died in 1189, Richard was acclaimed King of England, and King Philip Augustus faced his most dangerous opponent yet.

King Richard had already made his mark in the brilliant campaigns that conquered and subdued his rebellious Aquitanian vassals. A brave yet ruthless knight, he was to enter popular tales through his crusade against Saladin, and his undoubted personal heroism. He waged constant and brilliant war on the French king, building impressive castles, and swiftly gaining the upper hand by his military genius. Philip was now under great pressure, but events played into his hands.

While on crusade, Richard insulted Duke Leopold of Austria, striking down his banner when the duke had claimed some of the glory of a successful siege. On his return from the crusade, repeatedly shipwrecked, Richard was forced to travel in disguise through the duke's lands, but was recognized and thrown into prison. He was then passed to the custody of the emperor, who extorted a vast ransom, raised from the Angevin possessions. While Richard was in prison, his brother John treacherously plotted to seize the English throne. When Richard was eventually released, he made peace with his brother, and returned to his campaigns to secure the Angevin lands in France. But tragedy cut his life short, and he was killed by a crossbow bolt in 1199.

With Richard's death the succession passed to John, who became King of England.

This was by no means a clear succession. Richard on his deathbed decided in favor of John, at the urging of Eleanor of Aquitaine, who had rushed to her beloved son's side. During his life he had repeatedly stated his intention to leave the throne of England and Angevin lands to Arthur of Brittany, the son of Geoffrey and strongest candidate to be the rightful heir. However, three things conspired to prevent this. Arthur was still a child, and unlikely to be able to hold the Empire together, and Richard saw that a regency, even under his trusted friend William the Marshall, could be disastrous. Secondly, Eleanor of Aquitaine had a great dislike for Geoffrey's widow and Arthur's mother, Constance of Brittany. Finally, Arthur was under the influence of King Philip Augustus. Therefore on his deathbed, Richard nominated John as his successor, and he became King John. His reign was to prove disastrous for the Angevin empire in France.

## Bad King John?

John, despite early promise, succeeded only in losing much of his inheritance, and greatly increasing the power of the kings of France. He began by ignoring diplomatic advice and, enchanted by the beauty of Isabella of Angouleme, seized her and married her. She was already betrothed to Hugh de Lusignan, a major vassal and powerful supporter of the Angevins. Many suspected Isabella of bewitching the king, and it was said he appeared chained to her bed, ignoring all royal duties. His outraged vassals rebelled, and sided with Philip Augustus, yet John seemed incapable of any meaningful action. Was a love philtre used? Or witchcraft? No one knows.

King Philip summoned John, as his vassal, to his court to answer charges against him. John declined to respond, and in 1202 war broke out. Constance of Brittany had died, and Arthur, the Duke of Brittany, still with a strong claim to the English throne, had fled to the court of Philip Augustus taking many vassals with him. While John continued to be entranced by Isabella, Arthur and Philip marched against the English king.

Eleanor, who had resided at the famous and fashionable convent of Fontevraud a great deal since her release from imprisonment following Henry II's death, reacted. She marched with a small retinue towards Poitou, planning to take up residence in Poitiers and discourage further revolt. Arthur, hearing she was at the small castle of Mirebeau, set out immediately with Hugh de Lusignan to

### Philip Augustus, King of France

Philip lacks grace and charm, which for some people is sign enough that he is not properly royal. He displays great enthusiasm for diplomacy and administration, pushing aside some of the aristocrats who have acted as aides and advisers to the monarchy for generations in favor of educated members of the lower orders. By employing clerks and lawyers, he is building up an army of bureaucrats. Some see this as a sign that he is not truly kingly and he has gained a number of enemies among the old noble families. While he was keen enough to go to war when fighting to expand his own wealth and power, he has twice demonstrated reluctance to fight for God. He set out on the Third Crusade in 1190 but returned home after taking Acre, leaving King Richard of England, and many others, to question whether it was the claimed ill health or cowardice that drove him back. Then, in 1209, he allowed his nobles to follow the pope's command to mount a crusade against the Albigensian heretics in southern France, but did not personally participate. There are many among the traditionally minded nobility who consider that this is not the behavior of a real king.

capture her, planning to use her as a pawn in the ongoing struggle. John heard of this and, finally roused from his lethargy, led a brilliant forced march with a relieving force, which fell upon the besiegers, captured them, and rescued his mother. Arthur of Brittany was now John's closely guarded prisoner.

Despite this success, Philip Augustus' military skill was clearly paying off. He drove deep into Normandy, and even besieged the great Angevin castle of Chateau Galliard. Eleanor of Aquitaine finally died, and after her death many of John's vassals, seeing clearly which way things were going, had defected to Philip. In 1204 Chateau Galliard fell, one of the finest fortifications in Mythic Europe had been captured. Normandy was lost, and in 1205 Philip Augustus captured the county of Poitou.

John was forced back to England, where a dispute over ecclesiastical matters led the pope to place the nation under interdict in 1214, and John was eventually forced to do homage to the pope to prevent the possibility of a French invasion. In 1214 he made common cause with the emperor to attack France, but Philip Augustus decisively defeated the Anglo-imperial alliance at the Battle of Bouvines. John's constant attempts to raise revenues to try and recapture Normandy proved a major factor in the outbreak of the English barons' revolt in 1215, which led to the humiliating signing of the Magna Carta, restricting royal authority in England. When a baronial revolt broke out in 1216, Philip Augustus could not act, as he was unable to attack a papal fief, but he allowed his heir, Louis, to invade England.

The death of John in 1216 ended the invasion, as the English barons rallied behind the current English king, Henry III, who is still a minor. A regency council currently rules England, and the Angevins are not considered a threat to France and the Capetians, who have continued to greatly extend their royal authority over the realm. In 1220 the Normandy Tribunal, while still split between Angevin and French lands, is once again at peace.

## The Albigensian Crusade

In 1220, France is involved in another great war. Parts of the neighboring Provençal Tribunal have recently been wracked by a terrible crusade, declared not against heathens in a foreign land, but against the Cathar heretics who are most prevalent in the Langue d'oc. While the traumatic events of that ongoing

## The Golden Treasure

In March 1199 a ploughman discovered a pot of golden coins at Chalus, near Limoges, in the Limousin. By the time Richard heard of the treasure it had grown in the telling to a great golden statue of an emperor, and Richard set off to Chalus to seize it. While besieging the castle, Richard and companions went out one evening to survey the walls and, as things were quiet, he did not bother to don his armor, but merely picked up his shield and put on his helm. As he stood looking at the walls, a crossbowman, Bertram de Gurdun, loosed a bolt and struck Richard in his arm.

The king's companion, the mercenary knight and trusted friend of the Angevins Mercadier, immediately helped Richard back to the camp. Mercadier attempted to remove the bolt, but his skill at chirurgy proved poor and instead he mangled the wound horribly. While he finally succeeded in drawing out the metal tip, the wound soon became infected, and it became clear Richard was dying of blood poisoning.

The castle was taken, and all the defenders hanged save Bertram de Gurdun, who was brought before the king. "What have I done to you, that you have killed me?" Richard inquired, but the crossbowman stood firm and answered "You slew my father and my two brothers by your own hand, and would have killed me if you could. Therefore, take any revenge on me you see fit, for I will gladly endure any torments you can devise, so long as you have met your end, having inflicted evils, so many and so great, on the world." Richard admired his courage, and had him released with a sum of silver. However, that evening when Richard died, Mercadier had the man seized, flayed alive, and hanged anyway.

Of the treasure of Chalus there was no sign. Those who are wise in the lore of the Infernal say it may well have been a diabolical treasure designed to lure men to a terrible fate. Some, however, suspect Hermetic involvement in the whole matter — was the crossbow bolt magical? Did a covenant engineer Richard's demise?

struggle are taking place in the Provençal Tribunal, many knights and mercenaries from the northern regions have served in the armies that have attempted to extirpate the heretics, and may have seen the great massacre at Beziers or the siege of Carcassonne, just eleven years ago. It is entirely possible player characters may have seen action in this terrible conflict.

## Le Morte d'Arthur

Arthur of Brittany arguably had a stronger claim to the throne of England than John, and was a capable young man, happy to do homage to Philip Augustus as a vassal if it allowed him to take up the struggle for his rightful inheritance against his uncle, King John. When he was captured at Mirebeau in 1202, he was fifteen years old. The king could have had him executed for treason, but knew this would cause a scandal, so instead he was imprisoned in a number of castles held by loyal vassals. John tried to win him over by promises and threats, but Arthur remained defiant. On one occasion, John sent three knights to blind the boy and castrate him, but when the boy learnt his fate he broke down and the knights were unable to bring themselves to do the deed. In April 1203, William de Braose, who had acted as Arthur's

jailer, relinquished his duties, and the boy was moved to Rouen. There, after Easter, the boy simply vanished. Later accounts suggest John himself collected him from the castle, and took him, pleading for mercy, out alone on the Seine. There he slew him with a sword, and weighted his body down with a stone; a body believed to be Arthur's was later found and buried. The murder, if murder it was, had terrible repercussions for John, as many vassals found in this vile act a reason to desert the Angevin cause and go over to Philip Augustus.

Yet many rumors persist. While most of the discussion concerns who committed the murder, and many suspects and assassins have been named, the most popular rumor remains that John slew the boy with his own hand. Yet, others wonder, could he still be alive? John was a bookish man, and despite his terrible temper not personally sadistic. Could Arthur have been forced into a monastery? Or more intriguingly, what if he was instead placed in an Hermetic apprenticeship? A strange and willful lad, did he display The Gift, and entering a late apprenticeship at fifteen, was he instead placed somewhere in the Order of Hermes? If so, Arthur, his mind changed by Mentem magics, will have just undertaken his Gauntlet. Unaware of his true inheritance, may yet live on, and may one day come to understand who he once was ...



## Chapter Three

# Hermetic History and Culture

In the era of the Founders, the Order of Hermes was not divided into Tribunals as we know them today. The second Grand Tribunal in 865 created the Tribunals. The great debate confirmed the right of the new Tribunals to pass Peripheral Code laws, which were binding only in their own Tribunal.

The need for improved communications between covenants helped form the basis for the creation of the new Tribunals. The idea was first brought forward by House Mercere, who argued the Redcap network should be based regionally. Redcaps should be trained to work primarily within a small geographical grouping of covenants, so they grew to know the terrain, local magi, and prevailing mundane culture. Those covenants distant from Durenmar were distinguished by their own local customs and already dealt mainly with their neighbors. This sense of regional identity formed much of the basis for the new Tribunals.

The Tribunal of 865 is remembered as one of the most controversial. Despite the role of magical communications and Hermes Portals, it soon became clear that those who favored decentralization would win. The original Tribunals were the Rhine, the West

Franks (today the Normandy Tribunal), the Sanctuary of the Alps, and the Roman, the Theban, Britannian, and the Lotharingian Tribunals. The Lotharingian Tribunal covered roughly the kingdom of Lotharingia as it had existed under King Lothair — excluding the Italian area that was ruled by part of the Roman Tribunal, but including the area today known as Toulouse — but it did not survive for very long.

## The Shaping of the Tribunal

The Normandy Tribunal borders today are not those of the original Tribunal. This shaping of the Tribunal by subsequent events is currently an important subject in Hermetic circles. History is used as a powerful argument in the hands of the Lotharingian Tribunal movement, who are a group of covenants who wish to secede from the Tribunal (and the neighboring Rhine Tribunal) and reform

the ancient Lotharingian Tribunal. (See Chapter 10, Normandy Sagas, The Lotharingian Tribunal).

The West Frankish Tribunal initially included the county of Gascony, but did not include the regions of Flanders or Brittany. King Charles the Bald had been forced to acknowledge the independence of Brittany in 846, and faced with the Celtic culture, Breton language, and political independence of the region, it was decided at the Second Grand Tribunal that Brittany was properly situated in the Britannian Tribunal (which itself was later to divide into the Stonehenge, Loch Leglean, and Hibernian Tribunals). The association of Brittany with the British Isles went beyond the cultural, linguistic, and political however, for it also shared a magical heritage deeply influenced by the druids, House Diedne, and the stories of Merlin.

The eastern part of what is today the Normandy Tribunal was originally part of the Lotharingian Tribunal. The mundane kingdom of Lotharingia was split after the abdication and death of King Lothair in 855, his sons dividing the kingdom into three new kingdoms — Italy, Provence, and Lotharingia. Four years after the Second Grand Tribunal established the Lotharingian Tribunal, in 869, Lothair II died without heir. Charles the Bald, King of West Francia, attacked to seize the kingdom and was met with an army by Louis the German, King of East Francia. In 870, at the Treaty of Meerssen, the two kings divided the Lotharingian Kingdom.

This political move was met in Hermetic culture by the Rhine and West Frankish Tribunals likewise incorporating the covenants of Lotharingia. While greatly diminishing the size of the Provençal Tribunal, it was a move greatly appreciated by the covenants of that region, who had more in common with the covenants to their east and west and, being distant from the center of their former Tribunal in Provence, lacked political influence therein. There was no reason

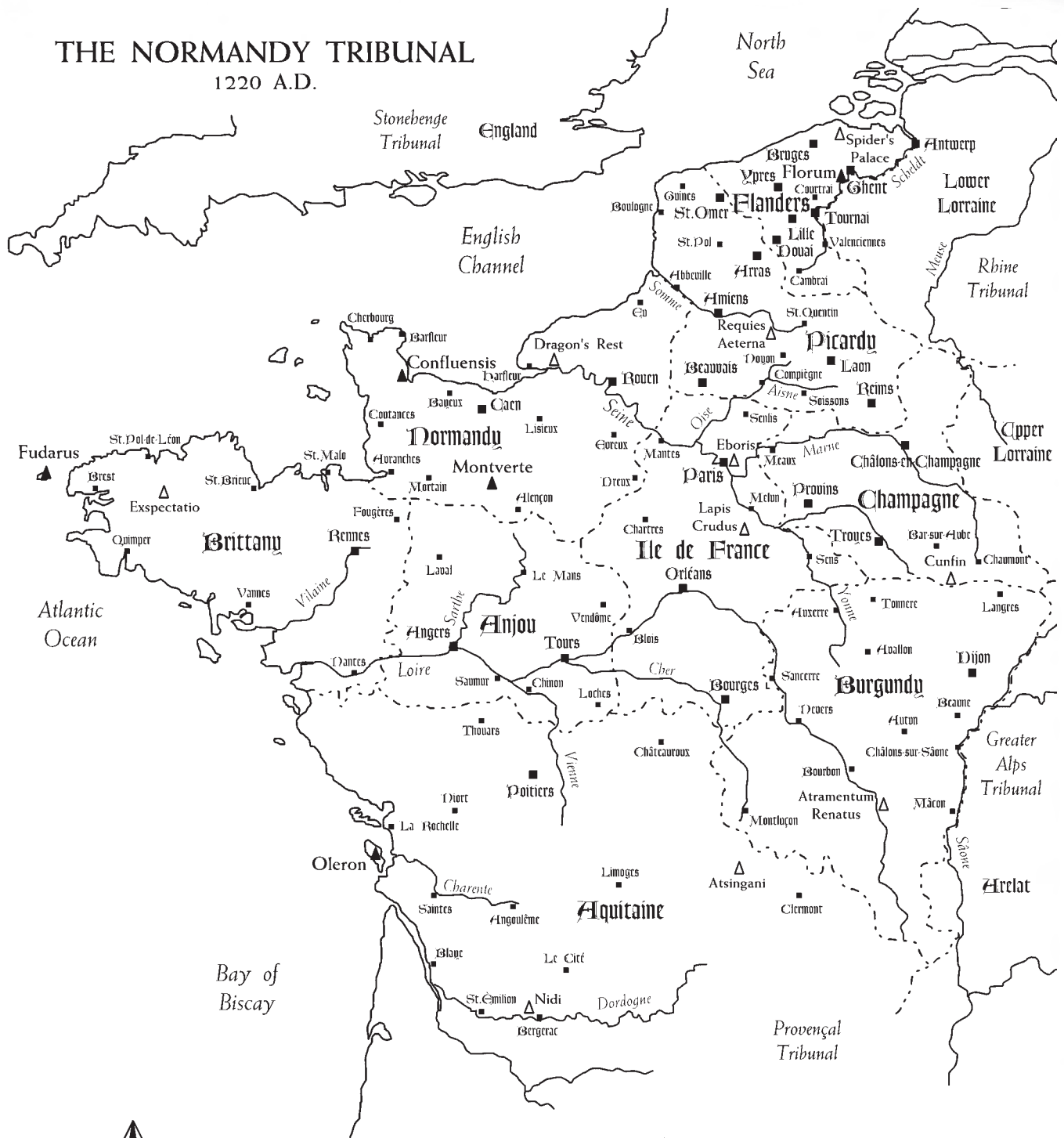
## The Lotharingian Movement

In the last few years the covenants in this region have recalled their heritage. Some now seek not reunion with Provençal, but instead a new Lotharingian Tribunal. This would increase their presence at the Grand Tribunal, allow them to pursue their own paths, and most importantly let them restructure the Peripheral Code. The Normandy Tribunal, while sympathetic to the problems of living with mundanes, is still too restrictive in its interpretation of the Code for the liking of urban magi

like those of Florum. The Lotharingians see exciting new possibilities for commercial and cultural development, yet feel stifled by the dead hand of tradition. Sympathetic with the Apple Guild of the Rhine Tribunal (see *Guardians of the Forest*, page 29), they seek freedom by appealing to the brief existence of their proposed Tribunal in the distant past. (See Chapter 10: Normandy Sagas, The Lotharingian Movement for a full discussion.)

# THE NORMANDY TRIBUNAL

1220 A.D.



## MAP KEY

Provincial Boundary

Major Town / City

Major River

▲ Covenant (Liege)

△ Covenant (Other)

0 50 100 150 200 250 300 350 400

miles



why mundane events should have caused such a revision, but they formed a pretext and in 898 at the Grand Tribunal the decision was upheld; the Lotharingian Tribunal ceased to exist, its southern region forming what is now called the Provençal Tribunal. There are, however, those who are working to resurrect it.

## Drawn in Bloodshed

The Viking invasions of the ninth and 10th centuries saw the sacking of several early West Frankish covenants, and the beginning of the fear of the Norse Order of Odin. Many legends spread as to the power of the Norse rune magi, though little is now known as to what their powers involved. Fortunately, within a century Paris was safe, as the fierce Vikings settled and deterred further raids from their kin. By 920 Robert, their leader, had become Earl of Normandy, and was a vassal of the French king. Their duchy, known as the Terra Northmanorum (Land of the Northmen), was eventually to give its name to the whole Tribunal, confirmed at the 17th Tribunal in 983. In light of the pre-eminence of the Duke of Normandy in the territories claimed by the Tribunal, and the decline of the Franks as a people, the Tribunal supported the proposal of Adrianus of Montverte, and the Tribunal of the West Franks was renamed the Normandy Tribunal.

The Schism War saw violence throughout the Tribunal, with some of the most terrible clashes occurring in the regions of Normandy and Brittany. Fudarus was itself assaulted, and for a long time the Diedne held the upper hand. When the Diedne finally fell, their history and purported crimes were purged from Tribunal records. However, many references remain extant in older books, personal memoirs, and the archives of the older covenants. Documents often possess peculiar gaps or erased pages, which are believed to be excisions carried out by House Guernicus censors. No attempt was made to purge the memories of those who fought, so a great deal can still be reconstructed from their later writings.

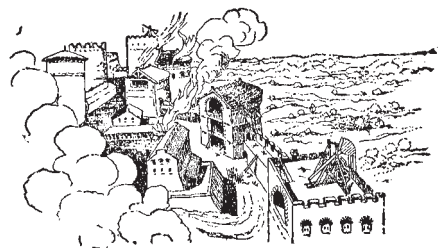
For over a century House Diedne had played an important role throughout the Normandy Tribunal, and the lack of a proper understanding of the nature and role they played prevents anyone fully understanding the forces that shaped the Tribunal. History has been to some extent forgotten here. It

is quite possible that magi can inadvertently stumble upon references and old texts that lead them into forbidden mysteries with dangerous implications for themselves and the Order.

Many of the ruined sites once frequented by the Diedne are still well known. Terrible magical battles have left scars on the landscape, and there are frequent whispers of the ghosts of those slain in the conflict haunting the living who trespass in these places. When the great House Diedne covenant of Branugurix was finally attacked, the entrances to the regio in which it lay were somehow sealed, and some of the attacking force were never seen again. The recent experience of Lapis Crudus, which reappeared after being trapped for decades in a regio, has reminded the Tribunal that the Diedne may well wait there, plotting their return and revenge upon the Order. Periodic scares have rocked the Tribunal, and many magi have over the years been marched on suspicion of being secretly Diedne sympathizers, or practitioners of their outlawed magics.

Brittany had been in political disorder throughout the 10th century, owing to Norman raids and a series of famines and crop failures. Many Breton leaders fled to the British Isles, and despite occasional victories the duchy was to take many centuries to recover. There can be no doubt this chaotic period was caused to some extent by the magical struggles of the Schism War.

Immediately following the defeat of House Diedne, Brittany was subsumed under the authority of the Normandy Tribunal. The reasons cited at Grand Tribunal were geographical, but there is no doubt House Tytalus and House Flambeau wished to control the former covenant sites of their enemies. Some of the Diedne sites are now forgotten, as the Quaesitores forbade the communication of their locations, while others were swiftly claimed by the victors along with their vis sources. The generation who fought there has long since died or been lost to Twilight, but the ancient Diedne sites still exist,



## Story Seed: The Language of Vis

A magus of the Provençal Tribunal claims a bounteous vis source within the southern reaches of Normandy, based on the fact that the villagers near the source use "oc" rather than "oeil" to indicate affirmation. The characters are asked to discover whether this is a true language isolate, or whether the magus is trying to pull a fast one.

some filled with magical traps and magical riches, and some, it is said, with secrets that might corrupt a maga's very soul.

This wealth of magical resources captured from House Diedne led to an immediate disagreement between the victors. Brittany was relatively vis rich, and some Flambeau and Tytalus magi squabbled over the spoils of victory. There were still deep wounds in the Hermetic community caused by the corruption of House Tytalus in the late ninth century, and despite the fact that they had fought alongside each other, the cessation of hostilities saw the Tribunal's magi begin to once again divide into Northern Tytali and Southern Flambeau. So great did the tension become that by the early 11th century it was feared open warfare might break out between the rival factions. The Quaesitores were now forced to act. With their support Pertheus of Tytalus proposed a set of Peripheral Code rulings that now bear his name (see The Perthean Compact). This granted all of the contested vis sources to the Tribunal as a whole, and required magi to compete on a seven-year basis for the right to harvest from them. Many members of Flambeau were disgusted at this, for it took from them what they considered their rightful spoils of the Schism War.

Denouncing the Perthean Compact as a swindle placing power in the hands of the Tytali, three Flambeau-dominated covenants in the south of France stopped attending the Normandy Tribunal and allied with the Provençal Tribunal instead. The matter was clarified at the next Grand Tribunal, dividing the territories of the two Tribunals along linguistic lines, the Langue d'oc region going to the Provençal Tribunal, and the Langue d'oeil to the Normandy Tribunal.

By 1050 the Normandy Tribunal had finally taken its modern borders.

# Contemporary Hermetic Culture

The empire of Charlemagne was not an empire in the same sense as that of the Romans; even the great Charlemagne did not try to directly impose his authority on his vast territories. Instead he relied upon the vassal system, where subject rulers pledged allegiance and fealty and ruled in his name. Vassalage, where the lesser swear oaths of fealty to the greater, is an important part of the medieval mindset.

Vassals owe loyalty to their overlord, but can sometimes war among themselves. As their own power waxes they may become real threats to royal authority, as the dukes of Normandy did after 1066. Vassals may hold land in many different regions, and may well have conflicting loyalties.

These ideas have impacted Hermetic culture. The great covenants of the Tribunal have adapted the idea of fealty, and vassals, into Hermetic terms, and have founded a series of daughter houses similar in some ways to those of the monastic orders (see *Liege & Vassal & Covenants*).

In the Tribunal there is little space away from the mundane population of the land. The power of the Dominion is made every year more apparent as new abbeys, cathedrals and great churches, and powerful castles spring up across the landscape. Vis sources may be becoming rarer, or is it perhaps that the Hermetic population is growing faster? Either way, vis is quite scarce in the Normandy Tribunal, and despite the great age and cultured traditions of many of the covenants, the lack of resources is leading to increased disputes over vis rights. The Tribunal is aware of this problem, and has made a number of rules to deal with it. Scarcity of magical resources, and the problems of interacting with mundane society, are the key issues facing the magi here. There are few places to hide from the mundane world — few untamed areas of wilderness in this civilized land of adventurous knights, warring lords, influential ladies, and great churchmen. How can the Order cope with the power and demands of the mundane world as it encroaches upon their studies, and their magical work? The compromises demanded when interacting with the mundane world form a key theme in

most Normandy sagas.

The sensitivity of the local rulers to military threats to their authority makes castles and fortifications hard to maintain without a noble supporter, but while a “tame” noble companion may be the nominal holder of the castle, what happens if inheritance, conquest, or royal decree removes him from a position of power? What if a rival covenant manages to seduce him over to their side? The covenants of the Tribunal are increasingly seeking new ways to deal with the mundane world, and the tensions are leading to what many magi see as dangerous compromises.

Furthermore, the seeking of companions to act as landholders has led many magi dangerously close to a position of vassalage to mundane overlords. What happens when the mundane overlord seeks the companion's support and feudal service, or even worse, comes asking for support from his magician friends? The Oath denies the magi the right to act as court wizards, and restricts the selling of powerful magic items, but when the liege lord is leaning on his vassal this tension can become deadly. The romances have many tales of knights who sought aid from magicians and faeries — will the magi dare deny aid, even if providing it means a gross violation of the Code of Hermes?

A central question is whether covert aid may be given. If there are no witnesses, or the magic may be explained away as natural events, is it legitimate? Exactly how should “interfering with mundanes” be interpreted? Rather than an academic question for House Guernicus to ponder, this is a real and pressing issue here in the Normandy Tribunal.

## Heroes of Christendom

Another great issue facing magi in the Normandy Tribunal is the shadow of Charlemagne. This mightiest of monarchs is renowned as great Christian king. The romances celebrating his exploits tend to make much of his role as a champion of Christendom, and a slayer and converter of heathens. The rising popular cult of knighthood derives much of its energy from the chivalric romances, tales which celebrate the crusading virtue of heroes who fight pagans, defeat Saracens, and trick Jews. The Crusades have demonstrated already that those who do not observe conventional piety can easily become victims. The horrific pogroms elsewhere and the Albigensian crusade to the south have acted as a terrible warning of what

could come to befall magi and heretic alike. Yet the romances have also some influence on the Hermetic community. Many House Flambeau magi love the tales of Roland and El Cid, and the struggle against the Muslims of Iberia. It is probable the intolerant spirit of the muscular Christianity espoused by these heroic tales may have been a strong influence on the decision of many magi to participate in the Schism War against the avowedly pagan House Diedne. Denouncing rivals as Infernalists, or Diedne, has a long tradition in the Tribunal. Hunting diabolist magi in the Order has become a dark yet significant fashion locally, following the Corruption, or Betrayal, of House Tylalus. Many of the darkest conflicts in Hermetic history took place here, and they cast dark shadows.

The Church is very strong in the area, and Christian virtues are also espoused very clearly by many knights. Even in the wilderness holy men live in hermitages, offering counsel to the greatest in the land, and reputedly working great miracles by their piety. It is a potentially dangerous situation for the Order, and every covenant will eventually have to seek compromise and some form of accommodation with the Church, especially in areas where the pious gaze of the French king falls.

## Regionalism

It has often been said nationalist loyalties lay behind the partitioning of the Order in 865 with the creation of the Tribunals. In fact, this may well have had more to do with House politics — some say the activities slowed House Tremere and was part of the Sundering, others claim it was part of their plan to take over the Order. Nonetheless, magi forced to live in close proximity to the kings and clergy of Mythic Europe may develop some sympathies for their homeland, and there is definitely a rivalry to this day between covenants from different regions of the Tribunal. Brittany and Normandy are historic enemies, while the Ile de France and Normandy eye each other with suspicion. Aquitaine has a much more southern culture, and is seen as relaxed and frivolous by some northerners. This does not apply so much to magi — the Order is a supranational organization, more like the Church, although even the clergy can be divided by national issues, as has been shown repeatedly in the last century. Magi may well rise above petty regional politics, and the affairs of dukes and kings, but a more



serious threat lies in the partisan politics of grogs and companions that has even led to brawling at Tribunal. Magi at Tribunal should carefully watch their followers for signs of disruptive local loyalties, and expect to have to deal with these prejudices whenever they travel far away from their home.

### The Call to Adventure

One of the aspects of the Hermetic culture of the Tribunal is the tradition of the magus errant. In knightly culture, the knight errant is a young, often newly knighted, man who seeks to establish himself politically by his heroic deeds, and win the attention of a powerful patron. An important part of this process is the romantic courting of fair maidens, yet even this disguises a political and temporal motive — the fair maiden is usually an heiress, and eventually the knight errant hopes to marry into wealth and stability, and to be able to hang up his spurs, manage his estates, and found a dynasty. The magus errant is similar; in an area where vis is a scarce resource, he (or she) seeks to demonstrate his usefulness, acquire vis or discover new sources by adventure, and make his name. While nominally allied to a covenant, such young magi travel to the furthest corners of Europe or beyond in search of adventure and magical wealth, then come home to retire to the covenants of Normandy to enjoy the fruits of their new-found magical power and reputation. Of course, the exact nature of the adventure sought by the young magus is determined by his House and personal interests, yet it is probably true to say Normandy magi travel further, and adventure more outside their home Tribunal, than many other members of the Order of Hermes.

### Blood, Sacred and Mystical

The magi of Normandy are, as we have seen, forced to dwell extensively on the issues of living with the mundane world. They are also aware of how much that world is shaped by the great noble dynasties, and the bloodlines that often seem to be somehow connected with particular realms — the Capetians, Angevins, Carolingians, and Merovingians are the most renowned examples. There is a lingering belief that Hermetic magic might

manifest in the blood, despite other evidence to suggest The Gift is not hereditary. Mythic Blood is known throughout the Order, and is so common as to not really provoke much comment or interest, though some famous bloodlines do exist — that of the Mercere lineage being the best-known example.

Yet some magi, in light of the importance of the bloodline in their world, have begun to try to trace the mythic bloodlines of the magi of Mythic Europe, and to try to use magic to uncover the genealogy back to their progenitors. While Mythic Blood manifests slightly differently from generation to generation (the magical ability of a magus' father may be slightly different to that of

his daughter or son) and often skips generations, these theorists hold that all magi bear Mythic Blood, but it is purer in some than in others. In most magi it is latent, manifesting as The Gift — but in those with the Virtue Mythic Blood the bloodline runs pure, and to these theorists they represent a true magical aristocracy, or a series of magical families, bound by ties beyond even those of membership in the Order. Obviously, this is a highly contentious theory, and very unpopular with those who happen to not be so blessed.

The theory was originated in the 11th century by Metrodorus of Thebes, a Jerbiton magus who became a Quaesitor, and who was obsessed with magical bloodlines and



mundane politics. His theory held all of the Founders to be descended from potent magical beings of antiquity, though subsequent theorists disagree on the origin of the blood, and the nature of their ancestral heritage. While not of Mythic Blood himself, he argued both the greatest Hermetic magi and many great noble families shared common ancestors, and felt that it was noble breeding which raised them above common men, not fortune, fate, free will, or even divine blessing. Arguing that magi should always search initially for an apprentice among the great families of Mythic Europe, where by his theory the mythic blood of heroes ran purest, Metrodorus was eventually marched after attempting to take a younger son of a king from a monastery. While this was the overt cause of his failure to win over the Grand Tribunal to his ideas, the divisions he created in the Order, and prejudices he briefly stirred up against those with Mythic Blood, were equally damning — the hereditary controversy of 1132 saw his books burned publicly, and three of his most vociferous disciples Marched alongside him for their role in his crimes. While the advocates were Marched for their actions, the Order made no ruling on the truth or otherwise of his ideas.

As the Order of Hermes swiftly dealt with the controversy, and most of those who carried Mythic Blood had no interest in his theories, Metrodorus' ideas largely died out, except in the Normandy Tribunal. There still remain a few magi who hold that Metrodorus had stumbled on a valuable insight. A few even believe that their Mythic Blood demonstrates they are the rightful rulers of the Order, and hold that councils and Tribunals should be replaced with a system of autocratic rule. Profoundly interested in tracing how the bloodlines are related, they perform extensive research into genealogy, blood parentage, and family relationships. These researches are dangerous and difficult, owing to the lack of mundane records, the secrecy with which magi guard their histories to prevent powerful Arcane and Sympathetic Connections falling in to enemy hands, and the fact that magic exists that can target an entire Bloodline, not to mention the obvious elitism and consequent unpopularity of the theory in the Order. Magi with Mythic Blood may be horrified at being approached by Mystery Cults who claim they are part of this great heritage, and who presume to sneer at "lesser magi." Magi not so gifted may be horrified to discover that their mundane family history is being carefully

researched by someone intent on learning their exact genealogy, and who claim they may have some distant claim to a mundane title. Worst of all, magi who indulge in this kind of research also often uncover unpleasant truths about powerful nobles and royalty — bastardry, consanguineous marriage within the forbidden degrees, and other secrets such prestigious personages would do anything to conceal.

With this in mind, the recent resurfacing of these ideas in the Normandy Tribunal following the Angevin and Capetian clash has led to some controversy, and while some magi say that the idea of "familia" of related magi is merely analogous to the guilds of the Rhine Tribunal, there are many who feel these matters are simply too dangerous to be allowed to be openly discussed. Some say the resulting practices could endanger the whole Order of Hermes. Yet the Order thrives on research and ideas — can an idea be too dangerous? The whole issue is bound to divide some future Tribunal if these ideas continue to spread, and as it is a matter of individuals, not covenants, the outcome is still unclear.

## The Hermetic Landscape

The Normandy Tribunal has a number of conventions which magi from other Tribunals find unusual or downright confusing. Many of these revolve around vis: a rare commodity in this Tribunal, known sources for it are jealously guarded. The Schism War left the Tribunal squabbling over the magical resources left behind by House Diedne (see History). So to avert further strife, all vis that does not originate from within the grounds of a covenant was declared to be the property of the Tribunal as a whole rather than of any specific individual covenant. This ruling of the Peripheral Code remains today, and every seven years the covenants of Normandy compete in a tournament to secure the lease for harvesting vis sources for the period between Tribunal meetings. The Tourney, as it is called, also offers opportunities to secure other resources — principally books — and a new covenant can get a good head start in its life by winning prizes in its first tournament.

## The Perthean Compact

The Normandy Tribunal is home to over a hundred magi, but its expanding mundane population and concomitant Dominion has resulted in a patchy distribution of its already-scarce supply of vis. The intense competition for what few sources of vis remain has shaped the entire Tribunal, affecting both the size and number of covenants, and the societal ties between them. The provisioning of vis is a matter of importance on the agenda of every one of the Tribunal's covenants, and more ink and parchment has been used detailing the disputes and laws regarding vis sources than any other section of the Tribunal's Peripheral Code.

Normandy's rules regarding the provisioning of vis are collectively known as the Perthean Compact, after Perthus, the magus who was responsible for drafting the first version of these Code rulings after the Schism War. The defeat of House Diedne left the vis coffers of many covenants severely depleted, and everyone sought to claim the resources left behind by the defeated House. The strife that resulted from the clash between Houses Tytalus and Flambeau (see History, above) left the Tribunal willing to accept a system that fairly distributed a dwindling resource and reduced quarrels over vis ownership. The Perthean Compact revolves around the ruling that all vis sources, whether they are exclusive access in perpetuity or a fixed term lease, belong to covenants, not to individuals. It categorizes vis sources into four types: seisins, legacies, tropaea, and luctationes.

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: SEISINS

The Tribunal of 1025 ruled that a vis source that is within a day's return march of an established covenant of the Normandy Tribunal is considered to belong to that covenant automatically; such a source is called a seisin. A seisin recognized by the Tribunal grants its owners exclusive right of harvest.

The Tribunal of 1109AD ruled that if a man can get from the covenant's council chamber to a vis source and back again, on his own two feet and unaided by magic, between sunrise and sunset on a day which is within a month of an equinox, then the vis



## Barnabé

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per -1, Pre 0, Com -1, Str 0, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +3

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 25 (Apparent age 25)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Standard Grog; Enduring Constitution, Improved Characteristics, Puissant Athletics; Covenant Upbringing, Proud (Minor), Social Handicap (arrogance)

**Personality Traits:** Self-Important +3, Loyal +2, Brave -2

**Combat:**

**Fist:** Init +3, Attack +4, Defense +6, Damage 0

**Dodge:** Init +3, Attack n/a, Defense +7, Damage 0

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, 0, -2, -4, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore 4 (roads), Athletics 5+2 (day-long running), Carouse 4 (relaxing), Awareness 2 (obstacles), Brawl 3 (dodge), Folk Ken 3 (grog), French 5 (covenfolk), Guile 1 (avoiding work), Latin 3 (Hermetic), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (seisins), Stealth 3 (woodland), Survival 2 (woodland)

**Encumbrance:** 0 (Burden 0)

**Appearance:** An athletic young man in the prime of his life; he has dark hair and a scant beard.

Barnabé is a cursor. He was chosen for this position at the covenant when he showed promise as a child, and received special training in athletics, both long-distance running and sprinting. Because of the attention given to him as a child he is now possessed of a remarkable arrogance, and has an over-inflated view of his own importance. He considers himself to be indispensable to the magi, and treats others as if he were better than them. Due to his facility with Latin, he is often chosen to accompany the magi as an interpreter.

source is a seisin of that covenant. This ruling superseded previous entries into the Peripheral Code which were unclear as to the definition of "a day's return march".

Nearly every covenant in the Tribunal has a specialist called a *cursor*, or "runner," usually a highly athletic grog, whose sole purpose is to prove to the Quaesitores in a trial run that their vis source is within this range. Cursors are prized members of any covenant, and some trade them like cattle. As a general rule, assume that a fit man can cover a number of miles in a day equal to 10 + (2 x Athletics) cross country. Through untamed wilderness, the distance can be reduced by five miles per day (or perhaps more), whereas well-traveled roads might add five miles per day.

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: LEGACIES

The Tribunal of 1025 ruled that a vis source which is too distant to be declared a seisin can be made a legacy of the discoverer by a vote of the Tribunal. A legacy lease issued by the Tribunal offers a covenant exclusive rights to harvest from the source, but the terms of the lease last only seven years. The Tribunal of 1032 instituted the need for holders of a legacy lease to acquire renewal of that lease from the Tribunal every seven years at the Tribunal meeting; if the Tribunal votes against the renewal of the lease, the Tribunal takes possession of the legacy and it becomes a tropaeum instead (see below).

Traditionally, any newly discovered vis source is a legacy of the covenant that found it, and it is very common for a new legacy lease to be granted without serious competition. The only exception is if the vis source is close enough to another covenant to be considered a seisin; the rulings regarding seisins take precedence over legacies. The renewal of an established lease is more difficult to achieve, and usually requires backing from other covenants to be successful. Such backing is often too expensive for young covenants, and there is often too much rivalry between the older covenants to achieve viable coalitions to keep legacies in their hands. At each Tribunal meeting, less than half of those covenants trying to renew a legacy are successful. Those that are not renewed become tropaea (see below). Occasionally, a vis source may remain a legacy for many lease periods if there is a reason why the vis would be very hard for another covenant to harvest. For example, it might require a unique item,

## Tricks and Cheats

All covenants have to have a legally recognized council chamber (see below), but this council chamber need not be at the same physical location as the covenant itself. A covenant could decide that having their council chamber in a village five miles down the road is strategically superior, allowing them to claim more vis sources. The Quaesitores occasionally check that the magi really do meet here, and that it is not a fake council chamber.

Some seisins are just assumed to be within the legal distance, but because of difficult terrain they actually take more than the requisite time to reach. However, a claim that remains uncontested stays a seisin until challenged.

Some vis sources have suspiciously easily traversed terrain en route to the covenant that claims them. Magi have financed the building of roads that allow their cursor to reach a source of vis that would otherwise be ineligible as a seisin; others have cut down forests, drained marshes, and so forth; one Merinita magus even moved a hill two miles south!

Covenants have also done the reverse: influence the terrain between a rival and its vis sources to invalidate a seisin. Such extremes are usually only worthwhile if the covenant is able to claim the seisin for themselves, but spite can also be a powerful motivator.

spell, or password, which the discoverers refuse to relinquish. Alternatively, it might be very close to a covenant, but take more than half a day to reach — it might be up a mountain, at the bottom of a lake, or deep within caverns.

While in possession of a legacy lease, a covenant is guaranteed exclusive rights to harvest its vis. If proof can be offered at Tribunal that a non-leaseholder has harvested vis from a legacy, the offender is automatically found guilty of the High Crime of depriving a magus of his magical power. Mitigating pleas for mercy are almost always granted (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 59), so the charge rarely ends in a Wizard's March.

The covenant that holds a lease is entitled to grant the harvest of the legacy to any magus or covenant it desires, including magi who intend to set up a covenant within

## Story Seed: The Trial of Marathon

A vis source is claimed as seisin by two covenants, so the Quaesitores organize a race to see which of the two cursores can get there soonest from their respective council chambers. All sorts of underhand tricks might be surreptitiously employed by either side to ensure that their grog wins the race.

## Story Seed: Judge, Herald, or Crook?

The player's magi secure an interim lease on a vis source, but do not gain a single harvest since another covenant with an interim lease gets there first. This happens again and again, with the same covenant contesting all of their new-found vis sources. The magi may come to suspect the Quaesitor with whom they are securing the interim leases of selling this information to their rival. Proving this allegation could be hard.

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: INTERIM LEASES AND PLUNDERING

The Tribunal of 1025 determined the procedure for establishing a seisin or legacy. Upon finding a vis source, the discoverer must report its location to a Quaesitor, who grants an interim lease on the vis until it can be officially declared at the next Tribunal meeting. An interim lease does not hold the same legal weight as a full lease; specifically it does not guarantee exclusivity due to the difficulty of determining which lease was granted first, and who has the stronger claim. Should another covenant discover the same vis source, it may also obtain an interim lease. Multiple leaseholders must settle the matter privately until a final ruling can be made at Tribunal.

All seisins, legacies, tropaea, and luctationes are a matter of public record, but they have the advantage of granting exclusivity of harvest. A covenant which harvests a hitherto unknown vis source but chooses not to secure an interim lease is guilty of plundering, a Low Crime under the Peripheral Code of the Normandy Tribunal. Traditionally the Tribunal has treated such cases harshly (fines have been in excess of three times the amount of vis plundered), and many magi consider that it is not worth the risk. At least a legacy guarantees them seven years of harvesting from a vis source. Nevertheless, given that legacy leases are notoriously difficult to renew, there is a definite incentive for a covenant to neglect to declare a vis source to the Tribunal but to continue to harvest from it clandestinely.

a day's march of the vis source (thus making it their seisin). This is how most new covenants are founded (see below for more details).

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: TROPAEUM

The Tribunal of 1032 ruled that the known vis sources that were not seisins of a covenant or currently held under a legacy lease were tropaea (singular tropaeum, meaning "trophy") and owned in common by the Tribunal as a whole. Tropaea are to be distributed among the members of the Tribunal on seven-year leases by being won in the Tourney. A vis source becomes a tropaeum, and thus the property of the Tribunal, if it does not qualify as a seisin, and a petition for a legacy lease has been rejected by the Tribunal. Only vis sources that require minimal effort to harvest are eligible to become tropaea; vis sources that require effort or skill to harvest are declared luctationes (see below) instead.

Tropaeum leases, like legacy leases, last from one Tribunal meeting to the next, and the holder of the lease has the same rights of exclusive harvest as the holders of legacy leases. However, a covenant that wishes to establish itself within a day's march of a tropaeum must seek the approval of the Tribunal before it does so, and if they win the vote the tropaeum becomes a seisin of the new covenant.

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: LUCTATIO

The Tribunal of 1039 ruled that a vis source owned by the Tribunal that relies heavily on the abilities or skill of the harvest-

er becomes a luctatio ("contest") rather than a tropaeum. The list of all luctationes owned by the Tribunal is a matter of public record and a copy is kept at Confluensis, although the method of obtaining the vis need not be detailed. Any magus can attempt to harvest this vis if he is prepared for the effort or danger that it poses, although succeeding in a luctatio does not confer any rights over that vis source in subsequent years. Like tropaea, the Tribunal's permission must be sought before establishing a covenant in close proximity to a luctatio, but it is usually marginally easier to do so.

Luctationes do not cost Build Points to acquire because they do not belong to a single covenant. If a covenant does have exclusive access to a luctatio for some reason, then it is costed as a vis source with the Contested Resource Hook.

## Example Tropaea

- On St. Martin's day, Aquam vis in the form of sea foam is cast up onto a secluded beach.
- Water from a secluded pool is worth Intellego vis if collected when the image of the second full moon in a month is reflected in it (this occurs about once every 3 years).
- If the weather atop a particular hill can be captured in a bottle of blue glass on midwinter's day, it becomes Auram vis.
- The discarded bandages of a certain leper colony are Corpus vis.

## Example Luctationes

- A tree in a forest has a basilisk family nesting in its roots; the fruit of the tree, if the basilisks permit collection, is Perdo vis.
- The mournful song of a ghostly maiden is Mentem vis; first she must be enticed to sing her lament, then the magus must capture the song in physical form.
- There is a cliff ledge upon which a falcon nests every year. On the same day every year, a serpent tries to steal an egg; if prevented, the egg contains Animal vis. If successful, the serpent contains Vim vis (if it can be caught).



## Consequences of the Perthean Compact

The Perthean Compact was instituted to clearly delineate the fair distribution of a dwindling resource of vis, and to free the Tribunal from its numerous squabbles over who owns a vis source. Given that it has served to promote more quarrels, not to mention cheating and outright raiding, it is perhaps no surprise that its original author, Pertheus, was a member of House Tytalus.

For example, a certain vis source is common knowledge to several covenants, but a political conspiracy keeps it from being formally registered. The covenants operate this secret vis cartel to ensure that they always receive its harvest rather than it being made a tropaeum for the Tourney.

For example, after a complaint from the Primus of House Mercere, it was clarified by the Tribunal that the various public operations of Redcaps involving the trading and lending of vis were not subject to the Perthean Compact, which only legislated the gathering of vis in Normandy, not its subsequent fate once it becomes the property of magi. However, the covenant of Praeda runs an auction where vis smuggled in from the southern Tribunals is sold to the highest bidder from among the covenants who are members of a consortium. This is contrary to the Perthean Compact because, as a luctatio, it should be a free contest to all, not available to an exclusive clientele who pay a fee to remain part of the consortium. Ironically, the actual plundering of the vis from other Tribunals is not itself a crime in Normandy; it is the manner in which it is distributed that contravenes the Perthean Compact.

## The Perthean Compact and New Covenants

Due to the scarcity of vis in the Normandy Tribunal, storyguides may wish to limit the number of Covenant Build Points that can be spent on vis sources and vis stocks. The limit depends very much on the individual saga, but 3 to 5 Build Points per magus to be spent on vis is reasonable. Note that a new covenant has to have vis sources (typically seisions) which produce a pawn of vis per year for every magus in the covenant, although some or all of this vis may be given away due to the feudal obligations of the covenant to its liege. Vis given away in this manner does not cost Build Points.

Alternatively, a new covenant can be created with one or more legacies or tropaea, vis sources that will probably pass from its hands at the next Tribunal meet-

ing. These are bought as normal vis sources, accompanied by the Vis Lease Hook (see below).

### MINOR RESOURCES HOOK: VIS LEASE

One of the covenant's vis sources is a legacy or a tropaeum rather than a seisin. When the lease expires, the covenant must campaign at the Tribunal to retain the lease on a legacy; or else compete in the Tourney to win the right to harvest a tropaeum. If taken for a legacy, this Hook presupposes that there is a reason why the vis source is not a tropaeum (for example, it might be newly discovered). This Hook can be taken more than once, affecting a different vis source each time.

## The Library of the Normandy Tribunal

A century and a half ago, a famed Hermetic author, Perpauca Bonisagi, wrote several great books for her covenant's library. However, her covenant jealously prevented most visitors from reading them, and Perpauca perceived that much of her effort was going to waste. Therefore, she initiated the practice of writing books and donating them to the Tribunal as a whole. She was widely lauded for her efforts, and achieved some measure of prestige and an altruistic reputation. Perpauca was able to convince several other magi to follow her lead, and, since then, this practice has been followed by others. As

a consequence, the Tribunal has a fairly large stock of books that are kept at the covenant of Confluensis, and they are distributed to covenants as prizes at the Tourney.

Contributing an original book to the Tribunal's library grants a magus an automatic prize at the next Tourney, the lease of a book of similar quality to the one offered. In game terms, a character may chose a book that is worth up to as many Covenant Build Points as the one he contributed. Books are assigned to contributors early on in the prize-giving procedure (see The Hermetic Tourney, below), and if more than one contributing author desires access to the same book, then certamen is used to resolve this conflict. Over the years, magi have left comments regarding the quality and subject matter of each tome in a pamphlet attached to each spine; perusing these pamphlets allows a magus to gain an accurate measure of the Quality and Level (if applicable) of the book.

## The Perthean Compact and Personal Vis Sources

Players who wish to give their magus this Hermetic Virtue should consider the Perthean Compact when they do so. A Peripheral Code ruling of 1144 makes it clear that any vis that is generated by the person of a magus (in his hair, blood, and so forth) is the sole possession of that magus, and not subject to the Perthean Compact. However, magi with an external vis source must consider the implications of their Virtue choice. The vis source

could be a seisin of the covenant, with an internal agreement between the magi of that covenant that the vis belongs to the character, for whatever reason. Alternatively, the vis might derive from a source outside the Normandy Tribunal, and thus not be subject to the Perthean Compact. Combined with the Dark Secret Flaw, the Virtue could be as a result of plundering an undisclosed source, with serious consequences should this be discovered.

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: THE LIBRARY OF THE TRIBUNAL

The Tribunal of 1081 ruled that the books owned in common by the Tribunal are available as prizes at the Tourney. Winning a book in the tournament grants exclusive access to that tome for a total of seven years; at which point it is returned to the Tribunal's store. The book store is maintained at Confluensis, and a list of the books and their

## Story Seed: Lending Library

The characters need a specific book (for whatever reason), which is currently leased to another covenant. What must they concede to the current leasee for them to lend the book to the characters? Further, since the original covenant is technically still the leasee, what happens when the book goes missing or is damaged?

authors is a matter of public record. These books cannot be consulted by any member of the Tribunal unless they have been won at the Tourney. The leasee is responsible for the book's safety during the seven-year lease, and it must be returned to Confluensis before the next Tribunal in an acceptable state. Books are leased under a Cow and Calf Oath (*Covenants*, page 95) which states that copies made of a book belong to owner (that is, the Tribunal), not to the copyist.

## Mundane Resources

In 1081, Florum Covenant was ordered by the Tribunal to dismantle its linen factory, which was equipped with blatantly magical devices for the production of cloth. It was ruled that the excessive amount of fine quality cloth produced was being used to unduly influence the mundane population of Ghent. At the next Tribunal, Florum appealed against the former ruling, citing that they were now so poor that their access to laboratory supplies was virtually non-existent. They claimed that their magical power was therefore being limited by the previous ruling of the Tribunal. The appeal was dismissed as spurious by Quaesitor Celestin, who remarked that "the mundane resources of a covenant cannot be considered to contribute towards the magical power of its members." This ill-considered comment was enshrined in the Peripheral Code of the Normandy Tribunal, although the legal loophole that it created would not be exploited for several decades. (Florum later reestablished its linen factories using more subtle means to enhance the quality of their cloth.)

In 1113, the magus Koilios staged a successful raid on the supply convoy of the

covenant of Lapis Crudus, and stole a significant amount of food and luxuries (but oddly, left vis and glassware alone). This caused Lapis Crudus considerable hardship, and they complained to the Tribunal. However, when challenged, Lapis Crudus were unable to explain what part of the Code has been violated by Koilios. Furthermore, Koilios was a skilled politician from House Tytalus, and cited the ruling of 1088, indicating that what had been taken from Lapis Crudus did not infringe the rights accorded them by the Code of Hermes. Koilios had picked his target well; Lapis Crudus was not well-liked, and Koilios was able to defeat Lapis Crudus and win exoneration for his theft. A succession of weak Quaesitors at subsequent Tribunals failed to put a stop to this quasi-legal robbery, and the tradition that mundane raiding is not a Hermetic crime in and of itself is now too deeply entrenched in the Peripheral Code of the Normandy Tribunal to be easily excised.

In 1220, this practice seems outdated, and many covenants deliberately avoid such tactics for fear of appearing barbaric to covenants of other Tribunals. Not all covenants in Normandy have such social compunction however. It has become a tactic used primarily to thwart rivals who have the temerity to establish a covenant near to a pre-existing one. Consistent and judicious tampering with a rival's supplies and income may ultimately cause the rival covenant to founder, and this licensed thuggery has resulted in a relatively high extinction rate of new covenants in the Tribunal. The Covenant of Montverte derives most of its mundane resources from preying on the wealth of nearby covenants; its victims are not allies and will not unite against the threat regardless of their common plight.

The consequences of conducting or suffering a raid depend on the targets chosen, the success of the raid, and the level to which the saga measures the cash flow of the covenant. Raids should be primarily a source of stories, but may result in the gain or loss of supplies. Being the repeated victims of a raiding covenant can result in the Poverty Hook, but most raids lead to only a temporary shortage. Likewise, being a raiding covenant could be a source of the covenant's income, but is more likely to lead to short-term luxury. If employing the Wealth & Poverty rules of *Covenants* (Chapter 4), the storyguide may wish to keep a precise track of which categories of yearly expenditure are increased or mitigated as a result of a raid.

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULINGS: MUNDANE RESOURCES AND RAIDING

The Tribunal of 1116 confirmed the earlier ruling of 1081 that the mundane resources of a covenant do not necessarily contribute to the magical power of its members. Specifically, food, consumables, building supplies, arms and armor, and luxury goods are not part of a magus's magical power. However,

## Books Held in Common

Below is just a sample of the books owned by the Tribunal. Storyguides are encouraged to expand this list to cover a wide range of subjects and Qualities.

- The Babble Within Thought*, by Hicuccus of Criamon, Summa on Mentem, Level 12, Quality 11. Build Points: 23
- The Dismal Itch*, by Azenis of Tytalus. Summa on Corpus, Level 10, Quality 11. Build Points: 21
- De Lapii*, by Jeremias filius Guernicus. Summa on Terram, Level 17, Quality 14 (this is one of the Branches of the Arts, see *Covenants*, page 93) Build Points: 31
- Insights from Twilight*, by Perpauca Bonisagi. Summa on Magic Theory, Level 6, Quality 11. Build Points: 28
- Mirrors of the Soul*, by Perpauca Bonisagi, Summa on Imaginem, Level 12, Quality 16. Build Points: 28
- The Mole's Work*, by Adanos Lutorum of Tytalus. Lab Texts for *Rock of Viscid Clay*, *Earth That Breaks No More*, and *The Forgiving Earth*. Build Points: 11
- The Peril of Phoebos*, by Perpauca Bonisagi, Tractatus on Ignem, Quality 11. Build Points: 11
- The Primal Power*, by Peter of Uist. Summa on Aquam, Level 9, Quality 17. Build Points: 26
- Research Notes on Aegis of the Hearth*, by Notatus and others. Tractatus on Mastery in *Aegis of the Hearth*, Quality 11, plus a Lab Text of a 20th-level version of the spell. Build Points: 15
- Subtle Knives*, by Jacinda of Flambeau. Summa on Penetration, Level 5, Quality 8. Build Points: 23
- Unveiling the Tempest*, by Daniel Tonatris. Summa on Auram, Level 8, Quality 12. Build Points: 20



completed or partially completed books, vis, enchanted items, and laboratory supplies all are components of a magus's magical power.

Later rulings clarified that livestock and covenfolk were not afforded any especial immunity, but clearly apprentices, familiars, and magical beasts were. Further, a maga conducting a raid cannot damage the physical buildings of the covenant itself, and must not break the Code in any fashion during the course of a raid, such as putting the life of another magus in danger. The raiding maga must challenge any accompanying magi to certamen; should she lose then she must abandon her raid. If she wins, then her opponent must retreat to a distance of at least a mile, and cannot return until the sun rises. Junior magi are often assigned the duty of accompanying supplies to the covenant; this prevents the raiding party from scrying ahead and restricts the use of area-affecting magic that might inadvertently affect the escorting magus.

## CROSS-BORDER DISPUTES

Raiders from Rhine and Iberian covenants have both successfully conducted raids on Normandy covenants in the past, since when in Normandy they are under the jurisdiction of the Normandy Peripheral Code (Houses of Hermes: True Lineages, page 56). All that the Normandy Tribunal can do in recourse to such cross-border raids is to judge foreign magi extremely harshly if they break the Code during one of these raids, hoping that it will be a deterrent to others. Such raids have been rare up to now, and it is not considered an important issue to the Tribunal as a whole; however, those magi who live within striking distance of another Tribunal disagree.

## Urban Covenants and the Town Senex

Parts of the Normandy Tribunal are heavily populated with covenants and mundane towns, and frequently the Tribunal has adjudicated disputed interactions with towns. Once towns were merely extensions of noble estates, but recently many towns have become more autonomous, leading to the possibility of complex entanglements between town law and the Code of Hermes. The ruling currently regarded as precedent setting was made during the Tribunal of 1200 to resolve a dispute between Fudarus and its new vassal Atramentum. Of course, the rulings of the Normandy Tribunal are not binding on other Tribunals, and may be subject to reversal.

In the case of 1200, the magi of Fudarus were claimed to have interfered in the mundane and thereby brought ruin upon the magi of Atramentum, by sending an agent to form an artificer guild in the town of Le Conquet. This, it was claimed, ruined the magi of Atramentum — as guild politics interrupted the work of artisans in the town whom they had commissioned to manufacture quality items for enchantment, which in turn delayed Atramentum's ability to collect vis from a newly discovered source. The Tribunal ruled that there was no case to answer. The basis was that Le Conquet was closer to Fudarus than Atramentum, and therefore Fudarus's activities in the town had precedence. Effectively, the Tribunal ruled, the magi of Atramentum had "ruined" themselves by relying on the work of mundane artificers, and not long afterwards the magi of Atramentum were evicted by senior magi leaving Fudarus.

## NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: THE TOWN SENEX

The Tribunal of 1200 determined that the agents of the covenant closest to a town, referred to as the senex, have superior rights to those of the agents of other covenants operating in that town. In particular, this means that if the actions of the senex collaterally damage the interests of another covenant, then ruin has *not* been caused. The senex is judged to be the covenant in which the town's church bells sound the loudest, as determined by a Quaesitor. Therefore, if a town's church bells cannot be heard at all in a covenant that covenant is too distant from the town to claim senex rights, and for many towns therefore there is no extant senex.



## The Order and Towns

*The Order and Towns* (Code of Hermes Ability summa; Quality 8, Level 4) was written by the Quaesitor Fluvius, in 1208, and is regarded in the Normandy Tribunal as the preeminent authority on mundane interactions allowed under the Code. The Tribunal rulings below are discussed in his book, along with a number of hypothetical case studies. It was partly an attempt to resolve issues that arose during the French annexation of the English lands in Northern France.

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: URBAN COVENANTS

The Tribunal of 1207 determined that a covenant may be sited in a town (see *Covenants*, page 11), and the normal interaction of covenant members with the townsfolk does not thereby cause ruin to other members of the Order of Hermes.

Further, the Tribunal of 1207 determined that a covenant may be granted a town charter by a mundane lord (see *City and Guild*, page 8). However, the magi themselves cannot take advantage of any privileges under the charter, as to do so would be effectively the same as swearing an oath of fealty. It is acceptable, however, for a covenant to collectively pay a tax, either in coin or mundane produce. It is also noted that while the contents of grants of charter are, of course, entirely at the discretion of a mundane lord, lords who propose charters should be reminded that magi cannot be held accountable to such a document. This may help avoid unnecessary future friction with the nobility.

Many towns are governed by officials either elected or appointed under their charter (see *City and Guild*, page 13). The Tribunal of 1207 also deemed it acceptable for eligible members of a covenant to vote or hold office in a town. Whatever the town charter might state, a magus, however, is not eligible as under the Code of Hermes he cannot swear an oath of fealty to mundane authorities.

### A COVENANT CHARTER

Charters are granted to towns by lords. It could be a good idea for a covenant to have a grant of charter as the document formally limits the powers of mundane authorities over the covenant. A feudal lord could

make any demands he likes of a covenant without a charter, and being forced to refuse such demands may create problems for the magi. Of course, if the lord doesn't actually know of the covenant's existence (for example, it is hidden in a regio) this is not a problem.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE RULINGS ON THE TOWN SENEX AND URBAN COVENANTS

The senex ruling has sometimes been used to determine the ownership of unclaimed, urban vis sources when competing claims are presented simultaneously, although runners are also used for determining vis source ownership. One reason that runners are not used to determine the senex is that an attempt to resolve the original situation with runners was vetoed, with veiled threats of Wizard War, by the powerful magi of the island covenant of Fudarus. In addition, as the sound of the town's bells only carry a certain distance, a covenant can only claim senex rights in a town that is near. Of course, magic and the geography of the region could affect the distance sound can travel.

The rulings made in 1207 followed the acceptance by several covenants of offers of charters made by King John, and his subsequent demands for military assistance during the French annexation of some parts of the Normandy Tribunal. Despite these rulings, the Tribunal did affirm that the solicitation of mundane grants of charter was acceptable, and indeed to be commended, as properly implemented charters are an avenue by which the relationship between the covenant and the lord can be formally limited — therefore discouraging lords from making rash claims over covenants built on their land.

It should also be noted that exactly what is allowed as "normal interaction" under these rulings is ambiguous.

## Mundane Interference

The Normandy Tribunal's interpretation of the parts of the Code that concern meddling with the mundanes is looser than that in many other Tribunals. A covenant is rarely convicted of meddling with mundanes if the covenant's actions do not "bring ruin upon" other magi. Magi interpret this to mean that magi are guilty of the offense of meddling

only after mundanes have carried out painful reprisals against Hermetic victims. To prevent that targeting of Hermetic interests, covenants often act through mundane allies who are called "masks". If the mask of a covenant is the target for reprisal, this does not, under Tribunal custom, indicate ruin and therefore is not interpreted as a breach of the Code.

It is vital for magi using this legal separation that their masks never identify magi, either a single covenant or unnamed members of the Order, as their sponsors. If they do so, they cease to provide protection from charges of meddling with the mundanes. Masks provide no protection from charges of depriving other magi of their power, so they cannot legally be used against the senex of a town. This traditional interpretation, which protects magi stringently and mundanes only when they strike at the Order, may be the result of centuries of Tytalan policy.

### NORMANDY TRIBUNAL RULING: MUNDANE INTERFERENCE

There have been no specific rulings, which sets the Tribunal's policy regarding the use of agencies and masks on unstable ground. Magi who are new to the Tribunal may witness events that would be considered violations of the Code of Hermes in other Tribunals, and even by a strict interpretation of Normandy's Peripheral Code. However, there are numerous precedents that give a defendant legal standing when testing whether ruin was actually caused by his actions, and the Tribunal rarely convicts in situations where damage to a Hermetic magus cannot be unequivocally demonstrated.

## An Ear for Distant Bells

InIm Level 15

R: Personal, D: Concentration, T: Hearing

This spell allows the caster to precisely determine the distance and direction from their location to the source of a sound. This spell was invented in the Normandy Tribunal by the Quaesitor Fluvius.

(Base 3, +1 Conc, +3 Hearing)



## FURTHER EXCERPTS FROM THE NORMANDY PERIPHERAL CODE

- 871 (The inaugural meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks.): Present are the covenants of Confluensis, Pagus, Baiocassium, Bibracte, and Sinapis (the covenants of Fudarus and Branugurix both attend the Britannian Tribunal meeting).
- 885 (3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks): Maga Adela of Jerbiton, a frequent attendant at court, was accused of acting as "court wizard" to King Louis III between 879 and 881. She maintained that the accusation was brought by a magus with whom she had a long-standing feud, and there was no evidence to suggest any risk to the Order resulting from her friendship with the king, who died in 882. The maga was acquitted.
- 899 (5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks): The Tribunal votes to support the decision of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Grand Tribunal, subsumes some of the former territories of the Provençal Tribunal and extends eastward to share a border with the Rhine Tribunal.
- 983 (17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks): In light of the preeminence of the Duke of Normandy in the territories claimed by the Tribunal, and the decline of the Franks as a people, the Tribunal supported the proposal of Adrianus of Montverte, and the Tribunal of the West Franks was renamed the Normandy Tribunal.
- 1018 (22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): The Tribunal welcomes Fudarus to its 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting; and since it is the only surviving Breton covenant, the Tribunal claims Brittany and all its magical resources.
- 1025 – 1039 (23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> meetings of the Normandy Tribunal): Perthus of Tytalus proposes a series of rulings to end disputes over magical resources in the Tribunal, later called the Perthean Compact. (see the Perthean Compact, above).
- 1095 (33<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Covenant of Nauche-Fleur was accused at Tribunal of entering into a feudal obligation with their local baron. The covenant protested that the oath was taken by an unGifted companion who acted the role of Lord of the Manor on behalf of the magi. The Tribunal ruled that the magi were innocent.
- 1102 (34<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): In response to a complaint from three Flambeau magi of Provençal, the Tribunal rules that lacking a clear geographical boundary between Provençal and Normandy, the border should be determined

on linguistic grounds. Territory disputed by the two Tribunals shall be henceforth decided by the language of the closest settlement; if it is a *langue d'oeil* then it is Normandy, else it is Provençal. Despite protests from Provençal at the Grand Tribunal in 1129, this decision is upheld.

- 1109 (35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Quaesitor Muirgheal encounters a group of hedge wizards who are fighting a plague of restless dead, and inducts many of them into the Order as the Ex Miscellanea tradition of the Donatores Requietis Aeternae (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Ex Miscellanea).
- 1116 (36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Raiding of mundane resources is explicitly permitted by Quaesitor Lothaire based on an earlier ruling (see *Mundane Resources*, above).
- 1116 (36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Magus Praecepheus of Flambeau was accused of using a sword enchanted with Perdo spells to cut down the enemies of the king during the raid on Paris by the count of Meulan in 1111. The Tribunal ruled that, since there was no evidence, to mundane eyes, that magic was involved, there was no charge to answer.
- 1123 (37<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Pandion of Flambeau was accused of depriving Antonin of Dragon's Rest of his magical power by stealing twelve valuable horses from the Redcap, one of which was a magical creature. Pandion was convicted, and ordered to return the magical horse, along with a fine of 10 pawns of vis, but was permitted to retain the other eleven horses as spoils from a lawful raid. The Tribunal noted that while livestock did not in general contribute to a magus's magical power, enchanted creatures — even those that were not familiars — certainly did. After a request for clarification, Quaesitor Lothaire extended this ruling to exclude covenfolk from a magus's magical power.
- 1130 (38<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Jacinth of Oleron was accused of deprivation in that, conducting a raid against the covenant of Infelicitas, he caused the collapse of the upper story of the covenant. Further, he was accused of attempting to slay a magus through the physical destruction of the covenant. This second charge could not be proved, but Jacinth was convicted of the first, since two laboratories were destroyed. Quaesitor Lothaire ruled that raiding magi are forbidden from damaging the physical structure of a covenant, and reminded the Tribunal that they cannot contravene the Code in an otherwise legal raid. Ja-

cinth escaped a Wizard's March, but suffered the loss of his familiar.

- 1144 (40<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Quaesitor Lothaire was publicly accused of partisanship by Jacinth of Oleron, who cited specific instances where the Quaesitor was a beneficiary of numerous raids conducted by the covenants of Montverte, Fudarus, and their allies. A subsequent Quaesitorial investigation exonerated Lothaire from any wrongdoing owing to lack of substance to Jacinth's accusations. Nevertheless, Lothaire did not regain his status as chief Quaesitor of Normandy, and was invited to join Magvillus in recognition of his long service to the Order.
- 1172 (44<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Atlax of Tytalus was accused of stealing and reading the messages carried by the Redcap Camille while the latter was hosted at Fudarus. Quaesitor Whent held the covenant responsible for their magus's crime, and stripped Fudarus of the lease of a legacy, and granted it to House Mercere instead.
- 1179 (45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Magus Pernix of Merinita was accused by Magus Visurgis of Tytalus of interfering with mundanes when he used magic to heal a young nobleman who fell from his horse. The accused argued that the only people who knew that magic was used were the injured man himself and the abbot, prior, and infirmarian of the monastery where he was taken to recover. All were friends of his covenant and so there was no scandal or "ruin." Magus Pernix was acquitted.
- 1179 (45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Camille of Mercere was accused by Buliste of Tytalus of interfering with mundanes, in that he used a local knight to secure the vis from one of his legacies. The knight later admitted to his confessor that he had "done the work of devils," and it was only the swift action of Atlax of Fudarus that prevented ruin from being brought on the Order. The Tribunal agreed; Camille was ordered to pay fifteen pawns of vis to Fudarus in damages, and the vis source in question was declared off limits for at least three decades.
- 1207 (49<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Normandy Tribunal): Pugnatiss had been found guilty by the 48<sup>th</sup> Tribunal of mundane interference in that she had used magic to control the mayor of Laval to obtain access to a vis source. She was ordered to create some enchanted items by way of a fine. She and the items failed to turn up at this Tribunal, and she was expelled from the Order.

# Founding a New Covenant

In principle it is simple to form a new covenant in the Normandy Tribunal. The only legal requirement is that the nascent covenant has exclusive access to one or more sources of vis that collectively supply a minimum of one pawn of vis per year for every magus in the new covenant (or at

least four pawns per year, if there are fewer than four magi). Even given the scarcity of vis in the Normandy Tribunal, this seems easier than, say, the stringent requirements of the neighboring Rhine Tribunal (see *Guardians of the Forests*, page 16). The new covenant must have an official meeting place, called (for want of a better term) the council chamber, although it need not be a room where the council (if there is one) meets. Instead it could be the home of the covenant's leader, a cave where the magi regularly meet, or even a grove of trees

distant from the magi's sancta, as long as it is positively identified to the Tribunal. This council chamber cannot be within a day's journey of another covenant's council chamber, which by tradition has been established that it should be impossible to reach one council chamber from another using the *Seven League Stride* spell. A provision in the Peripheral Code specifically prohibits a covenant from sidestepping the Perthean Compact through the establishment of chapter houses (see *Guardians of the Forests*, pages 83 and 110), which are

## Saga Seed: Feudal Duty

The player covenant begins as a vassal of another covenant. They will probably eventually want to win their independence from their liege covenant; the trick is doing this without making any enemies (see *Breaking Free*, below). The terms of the Oath of Fealty should be clearly recorded: each contains one or more duties of service for the vassal covenant to perform, and one or more duties of protection owed by the liege covenant.

### TYPICAL DUTIES OF SERVICE

- At every Tribunal, one quarter/one half/all the vassal magi must surrender their sigils as free proxies to a representative of the liege covenant;
- At every Tribunal, all the vassal magi must vote as directed by a representative of the liege covenant for one/three/five of the votes;
- Every year/three years/seven years the vassal covenant must provide one/three/seven pawns of vis (possibly of a specific type) to the liege covenant;
- Every year/three years/seven years the vassal covenant must spend one season copying or writing books to contribute to the library of the liege covenant;
- Every year the vassal covenant must collect the vis from a legacy of their liege.

### TYPICAL DUTIES OF PROTECTION

- The liege must not support any action at Tribunal that is to the detriment of their vassal;
- The liege must support any action at Tribunal that is to the benefit of their

vassal, unless they can prove that it is harmful to themselves;

- The liege is obliged to answer one/two/three requests for assistance from their vassal every seven years; this assistance can be refused if it would interrupt a season, or require the expenditure of the liege's vis;
- The liege covenant will gift the vassal covenant with a vis source that is legally theirs to grant/a certain number of books for the vassal covenant's library/a certain number of enchantments;
- The vassal covenant has the right to spend one/two/three seasons every seven years copying books from the liege's library, and these copies are protected under a Cow and Calf agreement.

Depending on the terms of the Oath of Fealty, the vassal and liege could acquire a number of Boons and Hooks. Terms that are favorable to the vassal may give them the Powerful Ally Boon, but most oaths leave the vassal with Hooks such as Beholden. The table below indicates the Boons and Hooks that are particularly appropriate for representing the Oath of Fealty between a liege and its vassals.

For descriptions of these Boons and Hooks, see ArM5, Chapter 6, and Covenants, Chapter 2.

### BREAKING FREE

To gain independence from a liege, a vassal covenant must either wait for its liege to default on the oath of fealty, or deliberately break it themselves, since either party can cancel the oath following a successful prosecution.

Example: A liege supports a vote at Tribunal that is detrimental to its vassal. The vassal now has a legal claim of a Low Crime against its liege. If it decides to prosecute this claim and wins, the liege will be forced to pay damages to its vassal. The liege can retaliate by canceling the oath, but it would lose the duties of service that it gains from its vassal. Alternatively, the vassal can decide to use this opportunity to escape from its oath, and cancel it.

Example: A vassal wishing to free itself from infeudation refuses one of its duties of service, leaving itself open to an accusation of a Low Crime. To cancel the oath of fealty, the vassal must allow itself to be convicted and pay the fine handed down by the Quaesitores. If the liege does not wish to lose the vassal, it may decide not to prosecute the case, but this would cause it to lose face. It might instead be able to persuade the Tribunal to hand down a particularly harsh fine on its defaulting vassal, making the payment of the service the preferable course of action.

COVENANT	MAJOR BOONS	MINOR BOONS	MAJOR HOOKS	MINOR HOOKS
Vassal	Powerful Ally	(none)	Beholden, Indebted	Beholden, Favors, Indebted
Liege	Favors Owed, Hidden Resources*	Promised Favors	(none)	Protector

\* Represents tithes of vis or other resources that are supplied at agreed intervals by the vassal.



remote sites of a covenant and could potentially be placed right on the doorstep of another covenant's seisin so long as its council chamber was legally placed. The Covenant of Fengheld in the Rhine Tribunal has a chapter house in Cherbourg (see *Guardians of the Forests*, page 83), but this is considered a coenobium (see below) by the Normandy Tribunal.

Note that a covenant needs only to have

sufficient vis supply when it is established. Should it lose the vis source, or acquire new members, the covenant does not lose recognition in the eyes of the Tribunal, so long as the source was genuine at the time of establishment. Vis extracted from the local aura does not count as a vis supply but as vis stocks, since its production is not guaranteed and thus cannot contribute to meeting the requirement of foundation.

The difficulty in establishing a covenant lies in obtaining exclusive access to vis sources of sufficient size. Because of the Tribunal's strict rules regarding vis sources, by far the most common way for a covenant to form is through the support of an established covenant. A covenant that obtains a legacy lease over a vis source may

## Past and Present Covenants

Because of the sparse distribution of vis in Normandy, and the way in which new covenants tend to form, most covenants are quite small, with an average of only four magi. This means there are about 15 to 20 covenants in the Tribunal, of which three quarters are either a liege or a vassal (or both), and there are usually only one or two coenobia among the remainder. There are also about half a dozen or so eremites.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of the covenants of the Normandy Tribunal, but indicates some of the most noteworthy of the Tribunal's covenants including all those mentioned in this book. The covenants are arranged in chronological order, by the date of their founding.

**Branugurix (791 – 1012):** Domus magna of House Diedne, located in a regio close to Mount Dol (see Brittany: County of Rennes). Its name was actually Bren Gwrac'h, but the Order adopted a Gallic version of the name for ease of use in Latin. The entrances to the regio were somehow closed by the Primus of the house during the climactic battle of the Schism War, and some Flambeau and Tremere magi were lost, trapped inside. The exact location and the former method of entering the regio is detailed in the records of House Guernicus (and perhaps elsewhere), but is not widely known. There are rumors that some members of House Diedne survived within the regio, and that there are some who are working to free them from their centuries-long imprisonment. House Guernicus takes a great interest in those who spend a lot of time in the area around Mount Dol.

**Fudarus (798 – present):** See Brittany: Fudarus.

**Confluensis (810 – present):** See Chapter

11: Confluensis. This covenant originally occupied the site now inhabited by the covenant of Dragon's Rest.

**Bibracte (822 – 969):** Vassal of Fudarus, located on Mount Beauvray in Burgundy (see Champagne and Burgundy: The Morvan), consisting of a small number of Diedne magi and a magus of House Tytalus. The covenant resurrected a cult worshipping the Gaulish hero Vercingetorix; however, the magi gradually became obsessed with anti-Roman ideals, firstly outlawing Latin in favor of Brythonic, and ultimately refusing all dealings with magi from "Roman" Houses. This earned them many enemies, and, seizing on the weakness of Fudarus in the aftermath of the betrayal of House Tytalus, four Flambeau and Tremere magi from Montverte simultaneously declared Wizard War on the magi of Bibracte, accusing them of devil-worship. These actions resulted in the sacking and destruction of the covenant.

**Pagus (840 – 1008):** Vassal of Confluensis. Founded at a ruined Roman outpost near the town of Cherbourg, it offered a commanding strategic vista over the English Channel. The magi invested a large amount of vis, during the late eighth century and early ninth century, restoring the Roman buildings, including a dock. Cruelly, the covenant then suffered enormous damage during the Viking raids, from which it never recovered. It was destroyed in the Schism War.

**Baiocassium (851 – 1011):** Vassal of Branugurix, located in the forest near Bayeux. The magi of Baiocassium, predominantly of House Diedne, were the descendants of Gallic druids and had good relationships with the local faeries.

**Sinapis (855 – 1063):** Located in Anjou,

near the center of France, this covenant was an important liege before the Schism War. Following the conflict between House Tytalus and Flambeau, it was abandoned as its members left for Provence and Iberia.

**Rotomagus (875 – 892):** Founded near Rouen by the first generation of apprentices from Sinapis, and destroyed less than a quarter of a century later when the Vikings sacked Rouen. The sole surviving member left House Flambeau in shame, and joined House Ex Miscellanea.

**Florum (907 – present):** See Flanders: Florum. This covenant originally occupied the site now inhabited by the magi of Spider's Palace.

**Ligurio (913 – 1011):** Vassal of Fudarus on the Aquitaine-Brittany border in the Vendée; it was destroyed by giants hurling huge boulders, presumed to have been sent by the Diedne covenant of Kerguntuil.

**Kerguntuil (920 – 1007):** Vassal of Branugurix. A coastal covenant situated on the Rose Coast (see Brittany: Mainland Armor and Argoat). The members of Kerguntuil were particularly interested in the many Breton tales regarding giants, and many of their covenfolk were larger than average humans. It is rumored that a Quaesitor suggested to the Templars that they built their chapel at Lanleff to cleanse the region from the diabolic taint of the Diedne.

**Baiocassium Minor (936 – 1005):** Vassal of Baiocassium located within the town of Bayeux. Destroyed in the Schism War.

**Montverte (941 – present):** See Normandy: Montverte.

**Caput Capra (981 – 1005):** Vassal of Branugurix, and the furthest east of Normandy's Diedne covenants, on the banks of

choose to sponsor a new covenant, often consisting of the former apprentices of the covenant. The vassal covenant is established within a day's march of the legacy, and ownership of the vis source passes from the liege covenant to the vassal, which may then register it as a seisin at the next Tribunal meeting.

The liege-vassal lines of covenants are the mainstay of the Normandy Tribunal's politics and demography. The liege covenant exerts

feudal control over its vassals through oaths of fealty, and five great lines dominate the politics of the Normandy Tribunal through these oaths: Fudarus, Confluensis, Florum, Oleron, and Montverte. Two further lineages are now extinct: one — dominated by House Diedne — was extinguished during the Schism War, and the line of Sinapis was abolished soon after by the departure of House Flambeau from the Tribunal (see History, above).

## OATHS OF FEALTY

When sponsoring a vassal covenant, the liege covenant demands an oath of fealty from its vassal. Each liege covenant has a single oath sworn to by all of its vassals, which details the rights and responsibilities of the vassal to the liege and vice versa. These terms vary from liege to liege, but the basic provisions are that the vas-

## Past and Present covenants (con't)

the Loire not far from Fleury (see Ile de France: Fleury). Caput Capra was the youngest of Branugurix's vassals, and was founded to protect the ancient druidic site at Fleury from the lawlessness of the late 10th century. Caput Capra was the first casualty of the Schism War in the Tribunal. Apprentices of Confluensis are brought to the scant ruins of the covenant to receive their lessons in history.

Aedes Salii (998 – 1063): Vassal of Sinapis. Established on Jersey (one of the Channel Islands), this covenant — named after the Salii, the priests of Mars — was founded to coordinate the Schism War in Normandy and Stonehenge. After the war, the Tremere members returned to their home Tribunals, leaving it in the hands of House Flambeau. It was disbanded when House Flambeau withdrew from the Normandy Tribunal; two of its members joined Lapis Crudus.

Orchard of Sour Apples (1020 – 1051): Vassal of Confluensis, formed after the Schism War. It was later the site of the relocation of Confluensis, and its members joined its liege covenant.

Lixivia (1021 – 1124): Vassal of Florum. Established in the duchy of Champagne just as the Champagne trade fairs were established (see Champagne & Burgundy: Champagne) for the express purpose of acting as an intermediary between the Order and mundane merchants. The covenant consisted of Redcaps and Gentle Gifted magi, and altruistically offered to source any material desired by any covenant. However, magi were suspicious of their motives, and they soon became the popular prey of raiding (see Demography of the Normandy Tribunal). Driven into poverty, the covenant disbanded.

Oleron (1028 – present): See Aquitaine: Oleron.

Vexatores (1048 – 1064): Vassal of Fudarus. Founded specifically to provoke Sinapis during the conflict between Houses Flambeau and Tytalus, Vexatores was founded 21 miles north of the Flambeau covenant (the minimum legal distance), at the site of one of the vis sources claimed from House Diedne. Vexatores was not intended to be a long-term prospect, and it was abandoned when the conflict between the Houses ended.

Dragon's Rest (1051 – present): Vassal of Confluensis; founded when Confluensis relocated to the Cotentin peninsula. See Chapter 11: Confluensis for more details.

Lapis Crudus (1063 – present): Considered to be part of the line of Sinapis. See Ile de France: Lapis Crudus.

Nauche-Fleur (1072 – 1166): Vassal of Montverte, this covenant operated a school near to Niort in Aquitaine, where instruction in both martial and academic subjects funded the opulent lifestyle of the magi. The covenant's role in mundane politics was ever a source of controversy in the Tribunal; consequently none of the apprentices it trained remained to continue its work. The covenant died when the last of its founders entered Final Twilight.

Infelicitas (1099 – 1158): Vassal of Fudarus, founded when Rancrax of Tytalus lost a wager with his rival, and was forced to leave Fudarus as per the terms of the bet. The covenant foundered when Rancrax was slain in Wizard's War by a member of Moles Magna, and the remaining two magi were not interested in continuing at the site.

Nidi (1100 – present): Vassal of Oleron;

see Aquitaine: Conventio Nidi.

Spider's Palace (1117 – present): Vassal of Florum; see Flanders: Florum.

Requies Aeterna (1123 – present): Vassal of Florum; see Flanders & Picardy.

Alcuin's Auberge (1124 – 1197): Vassal of Florum; a small Mercer House in the city of Tours, founded by Redcaps from Lixivia. It fell to unknown raiders.

Moles Magna (1136 – 1182): Vassal of Oleron. Located on the edge of the Morvan (see Champagne & Burgundy: The Morvan), this covenant was built actually within a dam of a minor tributary of the River Yonne. The river formed a small lake at the covenant's back, and cascaded over the dam hiding them from view. It was eventually destroyed when the river burst the dam after heavy rain; since the covenant had magically reinforced the dam against such a fate, it is assumed that they had angered a supernatural creature by restraining the river.

Atsingani (1187 – present): Vassal of Montverte; see Anjou: Atsingani.

Cunfin (1192 – present): Vassal of Confluensis; see Champagne & Burgundy: Cunfin.

Atramentum (1200 – 1201): Vassal of Fudarus; its founding was sponsored just as the battle between the two Tytalan Primi began. Cynics would say that the young magi were duped into preparing the ground for the magi of Exspectatio, who now occupy the spot. The founders went on to form Atramentum Renatus.

Exspectatio (1201 – present): Vassal of Fudarus; see Brittany: Fudarus.

Atramentum Renatus (1201 – present): Vassal of Exspectatio; see Champagne & Burgundy: Atramentum Renatus.

Eboris (1204 – present): See Ile de France: Eboris.



sal has a duty of support, and the liege has a duty of protection. Support is usually in the form of a tithe of vis, and granting the liege a free proxy of the voting sigils of the vassal's members. Some oaths ask for only a nominal amount of vis, or allow the vassal magi to use their own vote with direction from their liege. The duty of protection usually enjoins the liege to use the proxy votes wisely, and not to the detriment of its vassals; further, the conditions under which they may be asked for assistance are usually clearly laid out. Oaths of fealty between vassal and liege covenants are part of Normandy's Peripheral Code and legally enforceable, although covenants are still forbidden to take oaths of fealty to a mundane lord. The oath can be dissolved by mutual agreement of both parties, or else following the successful prosecution of one party by the other for defaulting on the terms of the oath. An example oath of fealty is given in the description of the covenant of Confluensis (see Chapter 11: Confluensis).

The moral obligation of a vassal to a liege is a strong one, and the protection offered to a young covenant of inexperienced magi can determine whether the vassal persists or founders. Further, the societal implications of betraying an oath to a covenant that has sheltered and protected another (or believes that it has) must not be underestimated; vassal covenants who break away from their line often find themselves with the bitterest of enemies — not just their former sponsor, but also the vassal covenants of that sponsor.

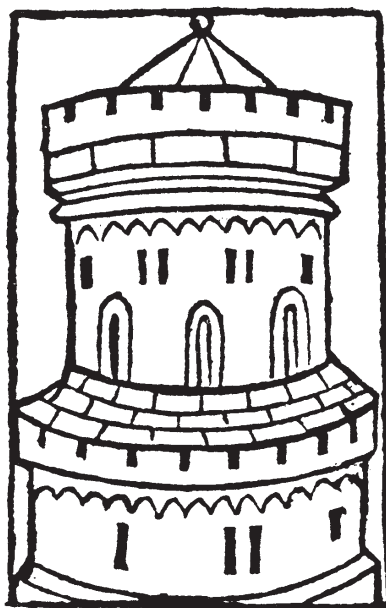
## Independent Covenants

Not all covenants come about through the liege-vassal system. A very lucky magus might discover a new vis source, and establish it as a seisin of a new covenant. Such an eventuality is the dream of every young magus raised in the Tribunal; in reality, finding a new vis source in such a magic-poor Tribunal is no mean task, let alone finding one that has a suitable site for a covenant within a day's return march.

Covenants may also become independent by severing the ties with their liege covenant. The same is true of covenants whose lieges founder, leaving them free of any feudal obligation. It is rare for a liege covenant to fail, because having vassal covenants strengthens its resources and political clout.

Nevertheless, covenants do die out, and as vassal covenants of the same liege have no obligation to each other, all are emancipated by this event.

Independent covenants are free from feudal obligation, but also lack the political support of their line. They often ally themselves to one of the five great lines, or attempt to form one of their own, although these minor lines have neither the weight of history nor the accumulation of resources to make them equal contenders to the great five.



## Eremites and Coenobites

Not all magi in the Normandy Tribunal are members of covenants, although the proportion of eremitic (or solitary) magi is much lower in the Normandy Tribunal than in many other Tribunals due to the scarcity of resources. An eremite is not the same as a covenant that consists of only one magus (perhaps due to attrition or accident). The latter has the capacity to grow, whereas an eremite has chosen a solitary existence for whatever reason. An eremite is forbidden by the Peripheral Code from owning a seisin, and he must rely upon tropaeum leases won at the Tourney or attending luctatio for his vis supply. There is one eremite who lives near Laon who is so well respected that he is always permitted to extend the lease on a legacy near to his home, because no one in the Tribunal votes against him, but this is an exceptional case.

Some covenants form without meet-

ing the formal vis requirements set out by the Peripheral Code. Such covenants are not recognized as valid by the Tribunal, but are instead considered as a community (*coenobium*) of independent magi rather than a true covenant. These coenobites, like eremites, are not permitted to own a seisin, and are hardly ever successful in establishing a legacy. Further, they must compete in the Tourney as if they were solitary magi rather than members of a covenant. Whereas eremites may get some measure of respect for choosing a solitary lifestyle, coenobites are considered to be flagrantly disregarding the traditions of the Normandy Tribunal, and are thought of as vulgar and uncouth.

## Tribunal Meetings

In the period following the Schism War, the tradition has developed of randomly choosing a covenant by the drawing of lots to host the next Tribunal meeting rather than it being at the Praeco's home. This means that even a new Spring covenant may find itself declared to be hosting the Tribunal, and the Hermetic Tourney that invariably accompanies it. The covenant is expected to provide a secluded area for the tournament, an excellent Aegis of the Hearth, and lavish hospitality. On top of all this, Quaesitors arrive in great numbers, and always take the opportunity and pretext of preparing the covenant, and ensuring its safety for the Tribunal, to conduct a series of lengthy though subtle investigations into the affairs and allegiances of the covenant. Hosting can bankrupt or seriously deplete the resources of even a Summer covenant, and often the only way forward for a Spring covenant called upon to host the Tribunal is to undertake loans and debts of obligation to either its mother covenant or another powerful covenant, and sometimes several. As so often happens, a gesture that on the surface seems to empower the young and weak actually serves to keep them securely in their place. Many covenants will, however, grant a pawn of vis, or a useful copy of a Lab Text, as a gesture to the hosting covenant from their own stores.

## The Hermetic Tourney

The great influence of knightly culture on the Tribunal is reflected by the tradition of Hermetic Tourneys. This idea was doubtless inspired by the magical tournaments of House Flambeau, and the fiercely competitive spirit of many Tylalus magi. The contests have been in existence since the Perthean Compact, but only in the last few decades have they come to be called tournaments, aping mundane culture. The events have grown and changed over the years, and are still open to further refinement or change in the future.

In recent years the Hermetic Tourney has become an accepted part of the Tribunal meeting, though the tournament occurs after the actual business of the Tribunal has been completed. It is the responsibility of the hosting Covenant to find a location within a day's travel where the tournament can take place. Tradition demands the location should be secure from uninvited guests. Concealing the camp site, market, melee field, and other required amenities from mundane gaze is not easy, though a casting tablet (see *Covenants*, p.89) for a ReMe35 Moon Duration version of The Shrouded Glen can be made available by the Tribunal. The actual design of the tournament site is left to the hosting covenant, guided of course by the ever-helpful Quaesitores. Each team that does not represent one accepted Normandy covenant must stake five pawns of vis per magi to enter; this can discourage entrants from other Tribunals, although the vis is used as part of the prizes. Teams are limited to a maximum of five members, excluding grogs and companions.

The primary purpose of the Tourney is to distribute the tropaeum for the next seven years, though many other prizes are on offer as well. Some have argued the practice of distributing vis sources via the Tourney has reduced the chance of a covenant being granted a legacy, as many magi enjoy seeing the excitement of the tournament contests. The contests are held to create an overall ranking for the team, and prizes are then distributed as discussed below.

There are traditionally six events that comprise the Tourney, usually fought over three days. One is always chosen by the hosting covenant — it is generally considered very bad form for the hosting covenant to win this event, and even a suspicion the contest favored another covenant may result in enmity from others and long-term political repercussions. Choosing a contest, which

## Story Seed: Fixing the Tourney

The Cabal of the Golden Coin secretly endeavors to engineer the outcome of the Tourney so as to maximize the prizes obtained by its members. While initiated by magi of House Tylalus, the cabal now consists mostly of magi from a variety of Houses. Many of the modifications to the prize levels were proposed by members of this cabal, ostensibly as a point of tradition, but with the real aim of introducing disparities in the prize distribution which can be exploited. Magi of the cabal typically make secret agreements among themselves to fix certain of the contests, so as

to optimize the placement of their teams. Certain magi belonging to this cabal opt not to enter with their covenant's team, but instead enter a separate one, which often achieves a very "lucky" placement. A mysterious team of three young magi, all from different covenants and Houses, has for the last three tournaments consistently achieved 14th place. A member of this team, or some other magus from the cabal, may surreptitiously approach the player covenant during the latter stages of the tournament, offering to fix one of the contests for a small bribe of vis.

must involve magical skill, is something of an exercise in diplomacy.

The traditional events that are held each Tribunal are the hastiludium — a "mounted" melee fought with "spears" of magic — the certamen tournament, the joust, the great melee in which the magi with grogs try to rush their opponent team's "castles," and the House Flambeau favorite, the dimicatio.

## WINNING THE TOURNEY

All competitors in the Tourney are graded according to the success they achieve. These points are tallied by the tournament hosts, and the Redcaps also keep tallies to ensure fairness. A team receives a starting tally equal to the number of members of their covenant, on the assumption larger covenants require greater resources. This also puts members of a coenobium and visiting teams at a disadvantage, for they are given a starting tally of one each. Further points to the tally are earned by competing in the various tournament events.

The scoring is as follows:

The team winning the hastiludium receives 20 points, the defeated finalist 10 points, and the other semifinalists five points each. All teams that participate receive an additional one point.

The certamen tournament is a traditional hermetic certamen contest, and has more prestige. The winner receives 25 points, the defeated finalist 15 points, and the other semifinalists eight points each. All teams that participate receive an additional one point.

The dimicatio is a popular event with Flambeau magi, who excel in this area. The

winner receives 23 points, the defeated finalist 12 points, and the other semifinalists six points each. All teams that participate receive an additional one point.

The melee is generally considered to be a light-hearted contest. The winner nonetheless receives six points, the second to fourth castles standing two points, and the fifth castle a single point. No points are awarded for participation.

The Hosting Covenant's Choice event provides the winner with 12 points, the second-placed covenant eight, and the third and fourth three points each. Participation in the event is worth an additional point to all teams who enter.

The Joust is more prestigious. The winner receives 20 points, the second-placed covenant eight, and the third and fourth three points each. Participation in the event grants an additional point to all teams who enter.

Once the points have been totaled a rank order is determined. The highest-scoring team is ranked first, and so forth in order. If there are ties, rank is determined by seniority, as determined by the date of foundation of the covenant or date of Gauntlet of an individual magus. Special "prize pawns" made of gold, not of vis, are then awarded, which are then exchanged by the teams for prizes to be held for the next seven years.

Tradition has shaped the awarding of prizes, as with so much else in Hermetic culture. The first place is known as the Siege of Normandy, and the second place the Siege of Valor. Achieving either of these ranks is a matter of considerable prestige, and such teams are richly rewarded.

The seventh position is known as the



## Tourney Events

Tradition and the rules demand there must always be an even number of teams in the tournament. The Redcaps will go to some lengths to attract visiting teams to ensure that this is so, and all teams must have registered. The hosting covenant's choice must also be declared by the summer solstice of the year preceding the event, by a Redcap-delivered message to Confluensis.

### THE HASTILUDIUM

The hastiludium begins with three members of two teams facing each other across the field, one member balanced or sitting on an object: wooden hurdles, pigs, iron cauldrons, washtubs, or other objects suiting their personal magics. Each team must choose an item as a "mount" that can be found in any peasant village, and which is no longer than a broom or wider than a beer barrel.

The two teams face each other across a field 120 paces long by 40 paces wide. Each magus may cast a single spell before the contest begins in order to prepare, and may then cast magic freely during the contest.

Each team tries to force the other magus off his "mount" using magic, and propel their own "mount" over their opponents' start line. Parma Magica may not be extended over the mounts, but both sides may freely cast magic on either mount. Inevitably, many magi are seriously injured, but tradition states that the magus responsible for the inadvertent injury must provide the vis for the healing. The winning team is the one to first get their mount and magi rider over their opponents' start line. Any magus who touches the floor is out of the contest, and the "mount" must pass over the central line of the playing area, so simply using magic to appear on the other side is not allowable. Each team plays a randomly drawn opponent in a knockout series of heats, until the final determines the winner.

### THE CERTAMEN TOURNAMENT

The certamen tournament works as a knockout certamen competition. Random lots are drawn for who fights whom. The

older magus chooses the Technique, the younger the Form. A single champion may be freely chosen for each round by the team, allowing strategy in selection.

### THE JOUST

The joust is a traditional contest of knightly warfare. Two magi, each armed and mounted, face off against one another in a field and charge together, each aiming to unhorse his opponent before he himself falls. The winner is the magus who prevails in a best of three match, and proceeds to compete against a new opponent. Some magi ride mundane horses, while others use magic to create or enhance their mounts. For example, one magus rides a giant dog familiar, another uses a flying mount, another has a mount of shadowy nothingness, and so on. The use of magic is permitted, but only to affect one's own person, mount, or weapons. The joust is the Tourney's most dangerous event — it is sometimes even deadly — and is taken very seriously by the magi. Teams compete in a knockout tournament to establish a winner, with one single magi elected as champion to participate on behalf of their team.

### THE MELEE

The melee is an unusual event, in that grogs or companions are the contestants. On foot, and using only blunt weapons (damage is fatigue unless botched) they struggle for mastery of a mock battlefield. Each team creates a "castle" with a Ring/Circle Creo Imaginem spell, spacing them equally around the field. Three grog or companion champions for each team attempt to charge across the field, and "capture" their opponent's castle by breaking that team's spell, damaging the ring drawn on the floor in the dust. The last team with a surviving "castle" is the winner. No magic may be employed, and owing to the importance of cursors (see Normandy Tribunal Ruling: Seisins), rapid running and attempted grappling is much more common than violence. Fast grogs often try to slide past the defenders and bring down the spell,

while the defenders try to block or grapple them down. Physical combat is allowable, but teams whose grogs seriously injure an opponent's grog forfeit the contest, receive no points, and are heavily fined in vis. This is a recent addition to the Tourney, and unpopular with conservative magi who detest a non-magical event being allowed.

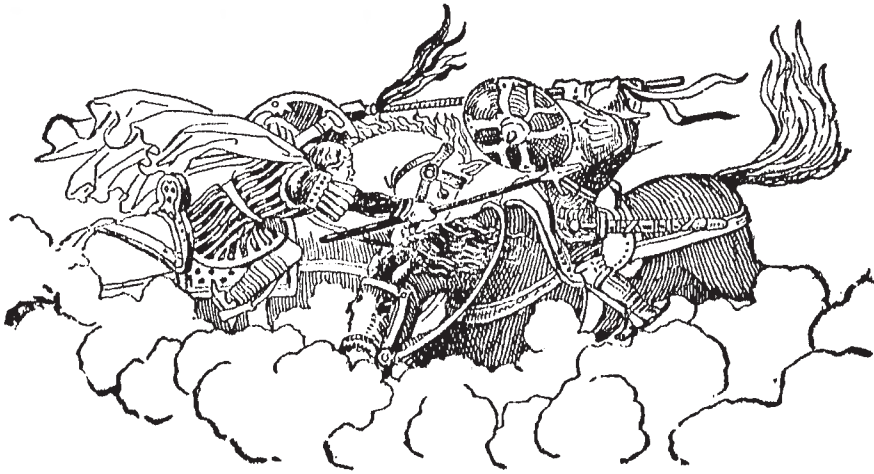
### THE DIMICATIO

The dimicatio is an event common at House Flambeau events. It is unrelated to standard certamen. Each side selects a single champion to participate. The competitors try to cast real spells at one another using the forceless casting option, which is deliberately casting spells with penetration at zero. Each magus uses a fast-cast defense (ArM5, page 83) to try to block the opposing spell. The first magus whose spell reaches his opponent's Parma is the winner.

Needless to say, this contest carries substantial dangers (though perhaps no greater than those a mundane knight faces when jousting with a blunted lance). Aimed spells that bypass Magic Resistance are strictly forbidden. The contest is always conducted under tightly controlled conditions in front of a referee and many spectators. The referee uses an Intellego Vim spell such as Sight of the Active Magics to determine the winner. If a magus' spell actually penetrates his opponent's Parma Magica, this is taken as foul play and he is likely to be immediately charged with a Hermetic crime. The rules of the contest permit any spell that directly targets one's opponent — and the higher the level of the spell, the harder it is to defend against. Ball of Abysmal Flame is a real crowd pleaser. Some magi prefer to limit themselves to non-lethal spells in case some mishap causes their spell to penetrate their opponent's Parma Magica.

### THE HOSTING COVENANT'S CHOICE

The Hosting Covenant's Choice varies each time. It must be a true test of magical ability, but beyond that may take any form.



Siege of Notatus, after that magus' well known affinity for the number seven and its role in his magical innovations. As Notatus is rumored to have sponsored a contest of magics in the early days of the Order, and he is a popular figure in the Hermetic folklore of the Tribunal with many tales of his activities and sayings still current, this position was granted a greater prize. While this explanation is generally accepted, in fact there may well have been a more pragmatic reason why it was originally introduced, hidden in the Tribunal records.

The Siege of Shame, the 13<sup>th</sup> position, is traditionally awarded no prize, the rewards being conferred upon the 14<sup>th</sup> team. This originated with a particularly competitive team from the Iberian Tribunal who in 1151 used a variety of then-legal tactics, immediately outlawed by Peripheral Code, which were widely felt to have brought the Tourney into disrepute. They earned 13<sup>th</sup> position, and were surprised when the Quaesitores declared that place the Siege of Shame. They stated that henceforth no prize would be awarded to the team that held that position, a tradition upheld by the next Tribunal to remind everyone of the shameful episode.

The 21<sup>st</sup> position, the Siege of Alms, is a consolation prize. Around 24 teams usually participate in the Tourney, and the last few teams do not therefore receive any prize.

To prevent the Tourney from being seen as entirely a way of supporting the status quo, and encourage entrants, a large prize was therefore voted for the 21<sup>st</sup> position. There is little honor in winning this prize, but the benefits to a new covenant are worth the gentle mockery of the more able teams. The team that achieves the Siege of Alms gets to keep half of their prize (6 pawns), but by tradition they donate the other half to any or all of the lower-ranked teams as they see fit.

Any covenant achieving one of the named ranks in the Tourney has an appropriate Hermetic Reputation of level 2 for the next seven years.

## TOURNEY PRIZES

Prizes are selected immediately after the results are announced, in strict rank order. In order to avoid the winning teams selecting all the choice prizes, each team is initially allowed to choose at most one single tropaeum or lump sum of vis of one Art, plus one single book or item. These selections proceed in rank order, until every team has taken something. Those teams with prize pawns yet unspent then get to pick again, in rank order, until all teams have taken their allocation of prizes. They are held until the next Tourney. Failure to return a prize invariably results in

charges being brought and disqualification from the next tournament.

Prize pawns may be traded at the following values:

**Tropaea:** A vis source yielding a number of pawns may be acquired for the equivalent number of prize pawns.

**Books:** Each book has been given a value in pawns by the Tribunal, according to perceived worth. (Calculate this as 1 prize pawn per 5 Build Points of the book. See ArM5, p. 71).

**Items:** As books. Charged items and those of limited duration are never made available as prizes.

**Entrance Fees (vis):** One prize pawn may be traded for an immediate once-only selection of 5 pawns of Form vis, or three pawns of Technique vis.

## Tourney Ranks & Prizes

Rank	Pawns	Rank	Pawns
1	31	12	5
2	24	13	0
3	18	14	11
4	15	15	3
5	13	16	5
6	11	17	4
7	17	18	3
8	8	19	5
9	7	20	1
10	6	21	6+6
11	6		

The prizes listed in this table assume at least 200 pawns worth of prizes are available in total, and 24 teams entering. You may wish to adjust these numbers if your version of the Normandy Tribunal is especially poor or rich in resources, or if the number of covenants and teams in your saga is dramatically different.



## Chapter Four

# Brittany

A rugged spur of crystalline rock juts out into the ocean from the western side of the continent. The prevailing northwesterly winds blow most days and often carry moisture in the form of fog, mist, and rain. The precipitation is greater in the north, the south being drier, sunnier, and warmer. Thanks to the ameliorating effect of the ocean, the region remains frost-free. The coastal Armor ("country near the sea") is very long and indented and there are numerous offshore islands where a covenant might be sited if reliable means of sustenance can be found. Much of the coast comprises high, resilient cliffs cut by flooded river valleys. The large tidal range, which affects all coastal activities, exposes extensive mud flats and rock platforms at low tide. Inland, Brittany's Argoat ("country of the wood") is a plateau broken up by deeply incised river valleys. The hills are mostly covered in forest or, where the trees have been cut down long ago, by moorland. The rocks — granite, schist, and gneiss — yield poor, thin soils and those who live here are among the poorest peasants in the Tribunal. The river valleys have more fertile soils and are sheltered from the winds, so here agriculture is relatively productive and the people live more comfortably. In the sparsely populated upland areas, a covenant might be able to avoid too much attention from mundane authorities.

At first, the country was occupied by

powerful faeries, giants, magical creatures, and a few pagan people who served them. Civilization arrived with Roman invaders who ruled for four centuries. When the Romans withdrew, the land was settled by Celtic people from Britain. Numerous saints came over to bring the light of Christianity to the whole country, either traveling alone and settling as hermits, or bringing monks with them to establish a monastery (see the insert for details). Brittany was established by the Frankish King Louis I "the Pious", son of Charlemagne, as a duchy under the leadership of Nominoé in the early ninth century, but the duke defeated Louis's successor, Charles II "the Bald" to gain independence for Brittany. Nominoé's son, Erispoë, assumed the title King of Brittany. The country grew and prospered under Erispoë and then under his cousin Salomon, who took the throne by assassination. The monarchy survived, repelling repeated attacks by Norsemen, until King Alain "Barbe-Torte" (Crookbeard) died in 952. Tussles for power among the nobility brought disorder that lasted a hundred years until Duke Alain IV "Fergent" gained the upper hand. Bonds of marriage and fealty between Breton nobility and other noble families, particularly the ruling house of Anjou and the Norman kings of England, resulted in the addition of Brittany to his other property in France by Henry II of England between 1158 and 1166. Independence from the Eng-

### Brittany Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Expectatio, Fudarus  
**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:**  
Branugurix, Kerguntuil

lish crown was achieved fairly recently as a consequence of the rumored murder by King John of England of his nephew, Arthur of Brittany. Peter I of Dreux currently holds the duchy on the basis of his marriage to Alice, a direct descendant of the former ruling house; he holds the post as regent for her son.

Most people in the eastern part of Brittany speak a dialect not greatly different from that of their neighbors to north, south, and east. The majority of the population in the western half of the region speaks Breton, and in rural areas it can be hard to find anyone who understands anything else. It is not often written. See the Appendix on languages for details.

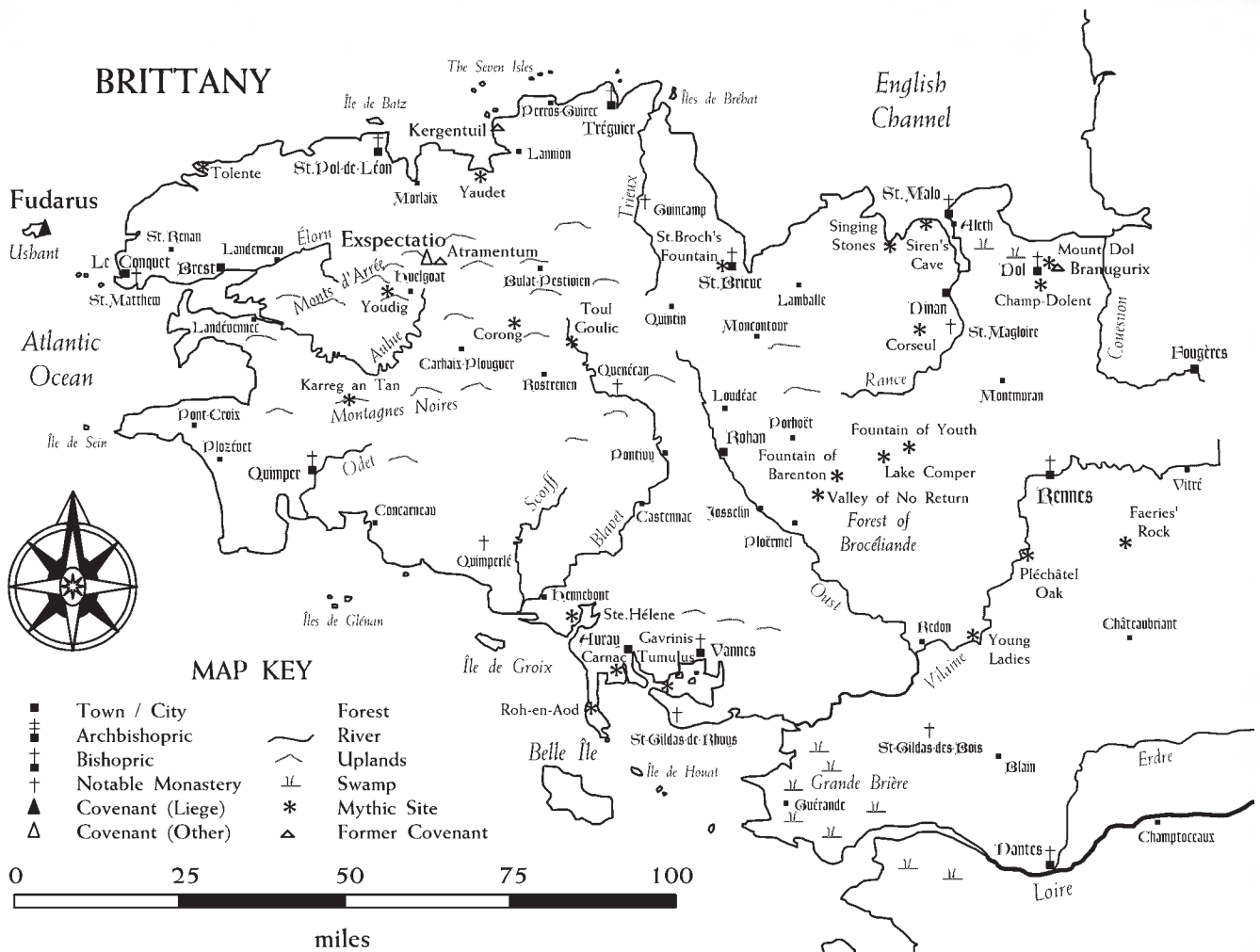
Music here is accompanied by the Celtic harp or Breton pipes, and dances are performed in lines and circles. Games and sports include lifting a heavy piece of wood representing a chariot axle, throwing heavy stones, and trying to make an opponent drop a stick about two feet in length while both players are seated on the ground facing each

### Breton Saints and the Tro Briez

Regardless of the when and whence of history, popular Breton belief is that Christianity was brought to them from Wales by saintly monks. The most important Welshmen honored as the founders of Breton Christianity are as follows:

St. Malo (commemorated at St. Malo)  
St. Broch (commemorated at St. Brieuc)  
St. Guirec (commemorated at Perros Guirec)  
St. Paul (commemorated at St. Pol de Léon)  
St. Samson (commemorated at Dol)  
St. Tugdual (commemorated at Tréguier)  
St. Corentine (commemorated at Quimper)  
St. Patern (commemorated at Vannes)

Bretons should visit each of these cathedrals at least once in their lifetime, completing the Tro Briez (Tour of Brittany) or else they will have to complete it after death, moving the length of their coffin every seven years.



other, their feet flat against a fixed, inch-high, ten-foot-long board. The most characteristic festivities are the *pardons*, religious processions preceded by prayers and followed by feasting and fun. These take place at different times of year all over Brittany, each of the older parishes having its particular date, usually linked to the feast day of the local saint.

## County of Rennes

The eastern part of the duchy is somewhat softer, drier, and more affluent than the rest. It is largely forested, but contains many strong fortresses used in defense against the Normans and Franks not long ago.

## Emerald Coast

The northern coast, adjacent to the sand and mud flats around Mont St. Michel at the Normandy border (see Chapter 5: Normandy), is low lying and often marshy.

## Mount Dol

Mount Dol, a granite outcrop, dominates the area although only 210 feet in height. It was a sacred place to the Gallic druids. Branugurix, domus magna of House Diedne, was here, concealed in a regio (see Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, Hermetic Landscape). Most Christians keep away from the mount. They tell a story that St. Michael fought the Devil here, casting him down with such strength that the indentation made by the impact and the scars left by his claws are clearly visible on the north side of the mount. Close

## Siting a Covenant

Brittany is the least-civilized, most sparsely populated part of the Tribunal, with many unclaimed vis resources. It contains numerous potential covenant sites — perhaps the PCs will find attractive one of the numerous small offshore islands, a patch of firmer ground in a deserted marsh, or a spot concealed within the forest. There are a great many more menhirs, tumuli, and dolmens scattered throughout its forests and along its coasts than mentioned here, many of which have a supernatural aura. All the land belongs to someone, so however remote the covenant, the player characters will at some time have to find a way to fit into, or evade, the feudal structure, and the enthusiasm of the Church to minister to them.



## Dolmen, Menhir, and Tumulus

These large stone features occur all over the western side of the Tribunal, but the landscape of Brittany is particularly rich in them.

**Dolmen:** One or more fairly flat, horizontal rocks supported by several vertical rocks. Many are giants' tables or meeting places of the fae, while a few are altars of the pagan past.

**Menhir:** A single standing stone placed vertically, with its base firmly planted deep in the earth. Origins vary: saints, angels, demons, giants, and faeries have all been responsible for erecting some of these.

**Tumulus:** A rounded hillock. Origins vary. Examples include a lump of earth thrown by a giant and a mound raised by the fae to cover an entrance to their home. If the mound of earth and stones is excavated, many contain a dolmen.

by is the cleft made by the saint's sword and into which he thrust his opponent. But the Devil reappeared a moment later on the isle of Mont St. Michel, taunting the saint, and the indentation made by the saint's foot when he leapt from the top of Mount Dol in pursuit is still there. In fact, what the story recalls is an assault on Branugurix.

The small town of Dol stands on a cliff on the southern edge of the marsh. Construction of a fortified cathedral dedicated to St. Samson is in progress here. South of Dol is the menhir of Champ-Dolent (Field of Pain), 30 feet high with a roughly square base and tapering towards a point; it marks the place where the final battle of the Schism War took place.

## ST. MALO

The coast from the western edge of the marshes to St. Brieuc Bay is rugged, rocky, and inhospitable. High cliffs shelter a few small beaches. St. Malo is a small port on the eastern side of the point where the flooded valley of the River Rance flows into the sea. It is close to the settlement of Aleth, where the Welsh St. Maclou converted the local Gauls in the sixth century. The town was extended toward the sea and fortified to defy

Viking invasions. When its Church of St. Vincent became the seat of a bishop in 1144, the new town at the point adopted the name of St. Malo, while Aleth took on a dedication to St. Servan.

At the base of the first rocky promontory west of the mouth of the Rance is a cave inhabited by a siren. She guards a natural bridge between the cliffs and Décollé Point but no one has yet discovered why she protects the point. Along the coast, overlooking the estuary of the River Arguenon, are the Singing Stones. Imaginem vis may be harvested here from the metallic sound produced when the pile of rocks is struck in the right way using a stone of the same sort.

## DINAN AND THE RIVER RANCE

Dinan, at the southern end of the River Rance, is a small port. A crusading knight erected the Basilica of St. Savior here in the 12th century, to fulfill a vow made concerning his safe return from the Holy Land. The building exhibits elements of eastern architecture otherwise unknown in this part of the world. A short distance upriver, at Léhon, is a castle and the Benedictine monastery of St. Magloire, which was founded in 850 by King Nominoé. The original building was badly damaged by Vikings but was rebuilt soon afterward, and has recently been extended by Geoffroy of Corseul in the new style. About five miles to the west is Corseul itself, site of a Roman settlement, where stand the remains of a temple of Mars. The site has a Magic aura of 3. All that is visible are the walls of a round building of thin Roman bricks, reaching higher than the surrounding treetops. Inside the walls, if one can penetrate the regio boundary, the building is intact and has a Magic aura of level 6.

## LAMBALLE AND ST. BRIEUC

Following the river inland leads deep into the forested hills of Hunaudaye, where streams run in deep ravines and granite boulders lie scattered among the trees. The only trade route through the forest runs between Rennes and St. Brieuc, passing through the town of Lamballe. Lamballe is the seat of the Baron of Penthievre and has a church to Our Lady and the Priory of Marmoutier. St. Brieuc lies close to the coast on a plateau cut by the rivers Gouet and Gouëdic. It is a small port with a weekly market and

two annual fairs. It contains St. Stephen's Cathedral and St. Broch's fountain, beside which the saint lived. Once a week, when leaving the cathedral on a Sunday after attending Mass, a character may dip his right hand into the fountain and devoutly make the sign of the cross to gain a Blessing that gives a temporary change to a Personality Trait by one step, to a maximum of +3 or -3. The trait affected by a negative step is that most likely to lead to sin, and that affected by a positive step is the trait most likely to lead to goodness. The blessing lasts until sunset. (See *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 51.)

## Rennes and the Eastern Argoat

In the center of the region is Rennes, a small city noted for its resistance to Normandy and currently the capital of the duchy. Inside the walls lies a church dedicated to St. Peter, founded in the sixth century on the foundations of a Romano-Gallic temple, and the Abbey of St. Mélaïne. The town is sited on the River Vilaine, which flows southwest between red stone hills. Along the valley is the village of Pléchâtel, close to which are some well hidden caves with a low-level Magic aura and an ancient oak tree, which yields vis in the form of a few unusually large acorns. Further long the narrow valley, the village of Langon stands on terraces on the hillside. It has a church dedicated to St. Peter and a chapel to St. Agatha. The structure of the chapel incorporates walls of what was in former times a Romano-Gallic temple to Venus. The group of standing stones on the moorland close by is related to the temple site. It comprises some 30 standing stones known as the Young Ladies. The local legend is that the young women preferred dancing on the moor to attending vespers and so were turned to stone by God. But the origin of the stones is ancient, being associated with the fate of the women who served at the temple.

## FOUGÈRES

The town of Fougères lies northeast of Rennes to the extreme east, at what was for so long the border between Brittany and France. A strong castle stands on a spit of land beside the winding River Nançon, be-

tween two towering rock faces and overlooked by the town that clings to the steep slopes above it. It is the home of the local baron. It was one of these, Raoul II, who led a band of rebellious Breton nobles against the takeover by Henry II of England. His castle was demolished in the three-month siege that brought the opposition to an end, but Raoul survived and started rebuilding at once. A chapel in the town contains a statue of Our Lady nursing the infant Jesus; some mothers who pray here receive miraculous help. The forest surrounding the town contains an unusually large number of megaliths, even for Brittany.

### FAERIES' ROCK

Southeast of Rennes, in the forest and half way to the Normandy border, is Faeries' Rock, a structure of 42 massive stones of purple schist. A wide, low entrance, which is oriented directly towards the winter solstice sunrise, leads into a corridor and then into a large chamber subdivided into compartments, which is high enough to stand up in. On the night before the winter solstice, a faerie court assembles here to try faeries, and sometimes mortals, whom it considers transgressors of its apparently arbitrary rules. Those summoned to appear are whisked from their beds and conveyed almost instantaneously to the chamber. There they are obliged to listen while anyone present who wishes to, including themselves, has a chance to speak briefly for or against the accusation. The faerie noble in charge of the proceedings decides the final verdict and sentence. Rewards and punishments are as unpredictable as the laws themselves. However long the proceedings appear to last, they end as the first shaft of morning light shines into the chamber. Any mortals still present have to make their own way home.

### Brocéliande

To the west of Rennes and the Vilaine lies the extensive, mysterious, and dangerous Forest of Brocéliande. Most of the forest has a Faerie aura of level 2 and there are places where it is considerably higher. A small monastery has been established at Paimpont, within the forest, to counter the other influences at work here, but they are making little headway.

### THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH AND THE STONE OF MERLIN

In the heart of the forest is the Fountain of Youth, a natural spring ringed with stones. Washing one's face in the water of the spring itself can make the skin of an elderly person appear less marked and wrinkled for a few hours, but as yet no one in the Order has discovered how to prolong or otherwise take advantage of this property, which is a faerie glamor effect. Here the wizard Merlin came seeking solitude, but he met the fairy Viviane, known as the Lady of the Lake, and fell in love with her. Before long she tired of him and, to put an

end to his attentions, she put him into a deep sleep. Many believe he is still there, asleep, under the nearby pair of rock slabs called the Stone of Merlin. It is said that if you let fall a drop of water from the fountain onto the Stone of Merlin, the water changes to vapor and the air becomes thick with shadows and the rumbling of thunder. This is probably the first step in the ritual necessary to gain access to the Faerie regio where Merlin may be sleeping still. The glade containing fountain and stones has a Faerie aura of level 5. A magus on the Path of Aging may drink from this fountain in the second quest (see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal*, page 38).





## LAKE COMPER AND THE JOYOUS GARDEN

Not far away, in the depths of the forest, is Viviane's home, Lake Comper. This is where Merlin conjured for her the Joyous Garden and the Crystal Castle filled with faerie knights, ladies, and maids. Legend tells that she raised Sir Lancelot here. It is probable that Viviane still lives there, within the Faerie regio that hides her estate. Research has indicated that it may be possible to find and enter this regio during the night before Midsummer's Day. However, considering Viviane's past treatment of suitors and powerful magicians, senior magi might run the risk of being detained by her, and a character with Curse of Venus is heading for trouble. The lake itself provides up to 5 pawns of Aquam vis in normal years, but in years of drought a local priest journeys here and dips a cross into the water to bring rain, which will prevent any vis being harvested that season.

Around four miles south of Comper, near the village of Beignon, is the Bridge of Secrets where it is said that Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere first kissed. The consequences of this betrayal suggest that there may be Perdo vis available here on the anniversary of the event, if the right way to harvest it can be discovered.

## BARENTON AND THE VALLEY OF NO RETURN

The Fountain of Barenton is about four miles west southwest of the Fountain of Youth. Stories say that water from the fountain, if splashed on a stone here known as Merlin's Step, summons wild storms and a ferocious knight clad in black armor. The fountain was sacred to the druids and is a source of Vim vis, treated as a tropaeum.

About four miles south of Barenton is a small lake used by faeries as a mirror. A little Imaginem vis can be harvested here if the mirror has not been used for a month. Just beyond it is the Valley of No Return. It is a deep valley where Morgan Le Fay, half-sister to King Arthur, imprisoned her unfaithful lover Guyomart. He was trapped here at False Lover's Rock. Legends say that no one who has done wrong may leave the valley, but in fact it is only those unfaithful in love who are held.

## The Lion and the Lily

# Lordship of Penthievre

This barony extends along the rugged central part of the northern coast, and reaches inland over the forested hills. Population is sparse.

Anyone attempting to collect vis or investigate the mysteries of the forest will have to contend with the korrigan (singular: korred). A korred is a hunchbacked manikin about three feet tall with cat's claws on its hands and goat's hooves for feet; with the expenditure of Might, it may take on the form of a beautiful young woman. They are known as dancers and magicians. Since their queen, Viviane, lost interest in the Brocéliande forest and them, the korrigan in this region have become very dangerous. Elsewhere, they may live in forests, caves, or dolmens, where they collect valuable objects. They administer severe punishments to those who annoy them, but periodically give rewards from their treasures. In some places, they like to dance in a circle holding hands under the moonlight at a crossroads and, if they are in a good mood, invite all who pass to join them. Those who accept may be given a gift, but those who refuse are punished.

These statistics apply to the korrigan of Brocéliande. Those encountered in other parts of Brittany are less dangerous; they are more interested in dancing and riches, though still unpredictable and short-tempered.

**Faerie Might:** Typically 5–10; rarely 15 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int –2, Per +1, Pre –2, Com +1, Str –1, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** –2

**Age:** n/a

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Avaricious +2, Capricious +2, Short-tempered +2

**Reputations:** Dangerous 3 (local), Tireless dancers 1 (local), Magicians 1 (local)

## Rose Coast

Pink granite forms the moor-topped cliffs between St. Brieuc Bay and Morlaix Bay. Many oddly shaped rocks surround small, sandy beaches and creeks. Many of the rock shapes resemble animals and people, and a few have supernatural origins. Offshore lie numerous islands; most are very small.

## Korrigan

**Combat:**

**Claws:** Init +1, Attack 7, Defense +8, Damage +1

**Club:** Init +3, Attack +6, Defense +5, Damage +2

**Stone (thrown):** Init +2, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +1

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** n/a

**Wound Penalties:** –1 (1–3), –3 (4–6), –5 (7–9), Incapacitated (10–12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore 3 (paths), Athletics 5 (dancing), Awareness 4 (gold, silver), Brawl 2 (claws), Guile 1 (bargaining), Speak Breton 4 (commands), Stealth 4 (hiding), Single Weapon 2 (club), Thrown Weapon 2 (stones)

**Powers** (not all have this):

**Human Form,** 5 points, Init 2, Corpus: The more powerful korrigan can assume the form of a beautiful young woman. The transformation lasts for one hour, or until the same amount of Might is expended to reverse it. In human form, the following changes apply:

**Characteristics (human form):** Int –2, Per +1, Pre +2, Com +1, Str –1, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik –1;

**Size (human form):** 0

**Club:** Init +0, Attack +2, Defense +0, Damage +2

**Stone (thrown):** Init –1, Attack +3, Defense +1, Damage +1

**Equipment:** Usually none.

**Natural Weapons:** Claws: Init –1, Attack +2, Defense +3, Damage +2.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Animal vis in hooves

**Appearance:** A hunchbacked manikin about three feet tall with cat's claws on its hands and goat's hooves for feet.

## BRÉHAT AND THE SEVEN ISLES

The two Bréhat Isles lie off the easternmost point. They have a Magic aura of level 4. They are each about a mile along and across, though the outline of both is very indented, and where they are closest to each other, the gap is very small. They enjoy an unusually mild climate and little rain. There are cliffs of pink rock on the northern, more rugged isle, lower shores of pink and gray sand and shingle along the east, and all around waters changing through many shades of blue and green around pink rocks that are only exposed at low tide. At the furthest extremity from the mainland is a deep chasm in the cliff. Once a year, a maiden may toss a pebble down here. If it lands directly in the water without touching either side of the chasm, she will be married within the year, otherwise she must wait for a husband as many years as the stone bounced. There is Intellego vis in the thrift plants that cling to the side of the cleft here and up to 5 pawns a year may be gathered, but to take more than 3 ruins the predictions for several years to follow.

The Seven Isles is an archipelago off the east side of Trégastel Head, toward the western end of this stretch of coast. It is far enough from the mainland to be disturbed only by seabirds that nest on the high cliffs, and seals that live on the rocks below. The clear waters are home to feathery weeds and many colorful sessile creatures, which typically yield 6 pawns of Herbam vis and 5 of Animal vis each year, plus eels, crabs, lobsters, and crayfish. The archipelago has a Magic aura: one isle with level 4, one with 3, two with 2 and three with 1.

## MAINLAND ARMOR AND ARGOAT

About half way along this north-facing stretch of coast is Tréguier, set on terraces along the sides of the River Jaudy and River Guindy, with its Church of St. Tugdual. Further on, the coast turns to form the northernmost part of Brittany, as a series of massive rocky headlands divided by deep clefts. A dolmen lies on the largest of the islands close to this stretch of coast. The rocks there are blue rather than pink because a giant dragged the whole isle here from southwest Wales long ago.

The Dolmen of Kerguntuil, believed to be a petrified giant, stands on a hilltop overlooking a west-facing stretch of the Trégastel headland. A Diedne covenant named after

the giant was founded here in 920 and was obliterated in 1007 (See Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, Past, and Present Covenants of the Normandy Tribunal). The members of Kerguntuil were particularly interested in the many Breton tales about giants, and many of their covenfolk were larger-than-average humans. It is rumored that a Quaesitor suggested to the Templars that they build along this coast to cleanse the region of the diabolic taint of the Diedne. They constructed a round chapel at Lanleff in the 11th century and, in the 12th, built Brélévenez Church at Lannion, a small town on the River Léguer. Quellen Marsh, covering 55 acres, lies behind dunes to the north of the Léguer estuary.

## YAUDET

Local people report that, on the south side of the estuary, at a rounded hilltop overlooking the sea called Yaudet, they have sometimes caught sight of strangely dressed men and women. The hummocks and ditches mark the site of a Romano-Gallic settlement and locals occasionally stumble into a regio there. A little further round the coast, at Plestin-les Grèves, are the remains of a Romano-Gallic bathhouse. There is a more reliable entrance to the Yaudet regio there, in the alcove where, according to the inscription on the wall, a statue of Teutates, or Mars, once stood.

## Central Argoat

Inland, the hilly countryside is almost entirely forested, with a few small, scattered settlements. The small market town of Loudéac, situated centrally and at a crossroads, serves as the commercial hub for a wide area. A fair for sale of animals is held here twice a year. Moncontour is a market town overlooked by a castle constructed on an outcrop where two valleys meet. Two miles southeastward is the chapel of Our Lady of Haut, where an unusual number of saints are petitioned for healing: St. Mamertus (colic), St. Livertin and St. Eugenia (headaches), St. Leobinus (eye diseases), St. Méen (madness), St. Hubert (sores), St. Houarniaule (fear). The chapel is decorated with offerings, mainly in the form of wooden carvings of the formerly afflicted body part, and has a Dominion aura of 5. In Quintin, another small market town, flax is grown in the valley of the River Gouët and the buildings occupy terraces on the valley sides. The

main church houses a statue of Our Lady of Deliverance, where expectant mothers come to pray for her protection in childbirth. On a hilltop close by stands the Long Rock menhir, which has a temporary Faerie aura at unpredictable intervals, and there is a small castle a mile to the south, at Robien.

There are a few religious foundations hidden away in the depth of the forest including Cistercian monasteries at Boquen, Quenécán, and Gouarec, a Benedictine monastery in the Lorge Forest, and a chapel at Bourbriac, where St. Briac is petitioned on behalf of those subject to fits.

## Lordship of Léon

This northwestern extremity of Brittany is a region of woodland and bleak moors, surrounded on three sides by a coastline of muddy estuaries and exposed beaches, with a scattering of islands. Quite rightly, the western extremity is known as Finistere — that is, Land's End.

## Pay de Léon

St-Pol-de-Léon, home of the count, is a bishopric founded by St. Paul the Aurelian, to whom its 12th century cathedral is dedicated. The saint established a monastery on the nearby island of Batz after he subdued a dragon that was terrorizing the island. He used his stole to capture it and led the now-docile creature to a pit, which is now covered by a low rock shelf known locally as the Monster's Hole.

When St. Paul had Christianized the local area, he asked the ruler, Duke Mark, to let him have one of seven bells used in his castle to summon attendance. The Duke refused, but soon afterward a fisherman caught a huge fish with a bell in its mouth and he gave the bell to St. Paul. This and the other bells have been lost.

Across the estuary, to the east, is Barnenez tumulus, an immense heap of stones, some greenish and others pink and gray. No way inside is visible, but should characters investigate they find entrances on the southeastern side, each leading to a passage some 20 to 40 feet in length and opening



## Anken

Death may appear at night in any part of mainland Brittany in the form of a skeleton in a white shroud, wielding a great scythe, and driving a spectral, creaking cart (*Karrig an Anken*) piled high with the bodies of the dead. Around the islands, he arrives in a boat (*Bag Noz*, the night boat). To hear the creaking of his approach is a very bad omen, indicating the imminent death of a loved one, and to meet him is almost certain death as he cuts people down with the scythe and flings the bodies on the cart.

into one of 11 chambers. Further west, on Pontusval Point, Men-Marz menhir stands, surmounted by a Celtic cross. From time to time, prayers are said here. The area has a reputation for lingering pagan practices linked to the frequent shipwrecks along this stretch of coast.

## Abers

The coast of this region comprises flooded river mouths and small sandy beaches with a great many islets and offshore rocks, many submerged at high tide. Strong westerly winds often sweep over the land, carrying salt to poison the soil, so it is very hard to make a living in the west of the region and population is sparse. The town of St. Renan, set well inland, is where Ronan, an Irish hermit, settled for a while in the fifth century. The most westerly of the north coast villages is Plougerneau, where the church was built directly over a pre-Christian cairn. The originally Romano-Gallic town of Tolente, which once stood in this location, vanished in 875 while under attack by Viking forces. It is highly likely that druids used magical means to hide it in a regio. The Quaesitores will investigate anyone known to be seeking a way into this regio. There is now no settlement on this stretch of coast until one reaches the village that has grown up around the abbey at St. Matthew's Point. The Benedictine monastery there, founded in the sixth century, once had the head of St. Matthew but it has not been seen for hundreds of years. The relic has the power to quell storms at sea. About 12 miles or so off the coast is the island of Ushant, where the Covenant of Fudarus is located.

## Brest and Crozon

Brest is a port at the mouth of the estuary of the River Élor, and lies on the northern shore of a largely enclosed bay, well protected from the adjacent Atlantic Ocean. The Romans fortified the site and a castle was constructed in the same spot during the 11th century. It has been strengthened recently. At Daoulas, on the east coast of the bay, is an abbey founded in 500 by followers of St. Columba, destroyed by Viking raiders in the 10th century, and recently rebuilt. It is home to a few men living according to the Rule of St. Augustine.

The Crozon peninsula forms the southern side of the bay. Its cliffs are high and steep, battered by the ocean waves and worn into pinnacles, arches, and offshore islets. At the eastern end is Landévennec, where St. Guénolé established an abbey in the fifth century. Close to its western extremity lies the tiny village of Ca-

maret, where pilgrims disembark on their way south to the shrine of Our Lady at Rocamadour (located close to the boundary between the Normandy and Provençal Tribunals). They can give thanks for their safe sea passage at the tiny chapel. Close by is an array of 143 menhirs, standing in a level 3 Magic aura. On the south side of the peninsula, at Morgat, are numerous caves, many having vivid natural coloration on the roofs and walls. One group of large caverns includes a cave known as the Devil's Chamber. The other group of large caves includes one known as the Altar. Numerous small caves are accessible only at low tide.

## Arrée Mountains

The highest part of the duchy reaches in an arc around the south and east of the County of Léon. Mist and fog often shroud the hills.

## The Black Dog

If the spirit of a deceased family member refuses to leave the house, a locally known folk ritual can trap it inside the body of a black dog. This involves taking the dog inside the house, tying a favorite article of clothing belonging to the dead person around the body of the dog, and making the dog eat a fist-sized goblet of meat stuffed with scraps of plants gathered in the cemetery. The dog is drowned as quickly as possible, to release the spirit from its ties to the world of the living. The Black Dog is only different to a normal dog between the completion of the folk ritual and the death of the dog. If the dog is killed in any way other than drowning, the spirit remains tied to the world in the place the dog expired. Similar creatures with an Infernal Might can arise if the deceased person was a notable sinner, or even more rarely with a Magic Might if the deceased was a pagan. The Might of the dog containing the spirit is typically 5, but may be as high as 10 if the deceased was especially holy or evil. Some rare black dogs are almost as large as a person (Size 0).

**Divine Might:** 10 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Cun 0, Per +2, Pre -4,

Com 0, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** -1

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics,

Long-Winded, Sharp Ears, Reckless

**Qualities:** Domesticated, Keen Sense of Smell, Pack Animal, Pursuit Predator, Vocal

**Personality Traits:** Loyal +3, Reckless +3, Brave +2

**Reputations:** Terrifying +3 (local)

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +1

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16), Dead (17+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (distance running), Awareness 3 (keeping watch), Brawl 3 (bite), Hunt 4 (track by scent)

**Natural Weapons:**

The weapon statistics for a dog's bite are Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

**Powers:**

**Fearsome Bark:** 1 point, Init 2, Animal or Mentem; as the spell *Panic of the Trembling Heart* but with Range Voice.

**Dreadful Howl:** 3 points, Init 2, Animal or Mentem; as the spell *Weight of a Thousand Hells* but with Duration Sun and Range Voice.

**Vis:** 1 or 2 pawns in the tongue when the dog dies by any means other than drowning. A drowned dog contains no vis.

The rounded summits reach to a little over 1200 feet in height at most, and are largely forested. The deciduous forest, home to deer, boar, and wolves, is particularly rich in mosses and ferns, which thrive in the damp air. Breaks in the tree cover are provided by a few bare, rocky summits worn into sawtoothed crests, gorse and heather moors where trees have been cleared, and a few fields in sheltered spots. Small, widely scattered communities mix Christian and pagan practices.

At Huelgoat there are piles of boulders that accumulated when the inhabitants of the adjacent hamlets, Plouye to the south and Berrien to the north, were at war and tossed the large stones at each other, only to have them fall in the middle. Rock formations in the vicinity include the Devil's Cave, the huge Trembling Rock (which rocks when pushed in the right place) and the Virgin's Kitchen. In the same area is a chasm where the River Argent disappears underground, a pool frequented by the fae, and a cave where King Arthur once slept. At Brennilis, an entrance to Hell known as Youdig is reputed to lie in the Yeun Elez, a peat bog that extends eastward from the foot of St. Michael's Mount. The entrance is only accessible in winter, when mists blanket the bog. Not far north is Mougau-Bihan, a giant's tomb in the form of a 45-foot-long covered walkway of megaliths.

Civilization is kept to the edges of this region. There is a Cistercian monastery to the east, at Abbey du Relecq, a castle overlooking the Elorn river valley to the northwest, and, on the southeastern fringe, a small church where King Salomon was martyred in the ninth century. Nearby is Landernaue, the main port of this inland region, at the head of the Elorn estuary.



## Fudarus

The domus magna of House Tytalus is the westernmost of Normandy's covenants, but its influence spreads out like a web across the whole Tribunal. Fudarus is the former home of three of the Order's most promi-

nent members — Tytalus the Founder, his filia Pralix who was founder of House Ex Miscellanea, and the infamous Tasgillia who was corrupted by demons in the 10th century. Few non-Tytalan members of the Order have set foot within its halls, although many have succeeded in landing on the island that bears it. Fudarus has acquired a sinister reputation thanks to this secrecy and the nefarious schemes perpetrated by its members.

A quarter of a century ago, Buliste, the then-Prima of House Tytalus, was declared to have entered Final Twilight, and Harpax was chosen as her successor. However, Buliste returned from her Twilight a few years later, and the two magi have battled for the leadership of the House ever since. The majority of Tytali in Normandy have declared loyalty to either Buliste or Harpax, but have allowed the Primi to settle the issue between themselves without interference. As the two are equally matched in power, it could be a long time before either is declared the sole Primus of House Tytalus. Until this day comes, both Primi are afforded equal respect and leadership of the House, and the rulership of Fudarus.

## History

In 798 AD Tytalus was introduced to Hariste, the apprentice of his former pupil Pralix. He fell in love with Hariste and stole her away, building Fudarus as a defense against the vengeful Pralix. He trained Hariste himself in record time, raising her to a full maga in just five years. However, his refusal to demonstrate his love for Hariste drove her away in frustration, and Tytalus occupied his magically-raised fortress alone. When Tytalus disappeared, Hariste claimed Fudarus as her own, and became the first Prima of House Tytalus. It has been the home of the Primus ever since.

Just under two hundred years later, Fudarus found itself at the center of a crisis. In 961 AD House Guernicus had discovered that Prima Tasgillia had been corrupted by Infernal powers, and had captured her far from Fudarus along with a substantial fraction of House Tytalus. When the Quaesitores and Flambeau hoplites arrived at Fudarus aiming to search it for further evidence, the new Prima refused. All of the current membership of the covenant had already been discovered to be free of diabolic taint, and Prima Kalliste insisted that House Guernicus had no right to invade the privacy of magi who had been found innocent. She was forced to relent under politi-

cal pressure, and yet the Quaesitores who entered the covenant found nothing suspect.

Fudarus has been attacked just once in its existence, during the Schism War. House Tytalus was considered to be a threat by House Diedne, and a force of magi approached Fudarus from the sea. The physical location and the magic of those trapped inside proved sufficient to prevent the Diedne ingress, so they besieged it instead. Primus Klynnoites and his sodales were assailed for several months by three mighty spirits summoned by the Diedne, until the Primus was able to wrest control over the spirits from the Diedne and command them himself. Once Klynnoites had wiped out those who opposed him, the spirits were bound into the walls of the covenant and protect it to this day. Prior to the Schism War, members of Fudarus attended meetings of the Stonehenge Tribunal along with other covenants in Brittany. As the only Breton covenant to survive the Schism war, Fudarus's defection to Normandy in 1018 effectively placed the rich resources of vis in its hands, and the domus magna was treated favorably by the Tribunal in the division of spoils.

## Setting and Physical Description

The Isle of Ushant lies 10 miles off the westernmost tip of Brittany. The seas around Ushant are treacherous, having swift currents arising from unexpected directions, and reefs that mariners swear move about at random. The bleak, storm-wracked mainland that faces Ushant has no inhabitants. Ushant is a small island, about four miles by two and a half miles, but its almost vertical cliffs rise 180 feet out of the sea, and its top surface is virtually flat. There is a small fishing community on the western side of the island where the cliffs are less steep, but it is otherwise deserted save for Fudarus.

Anyone approaching Ushant from either the sea or the land is assailed by the magical defenses of Fudarus: three mighty spirits (see insert) are bound into the walls of the covenant, and take it in turns to protect Fudarus from accidental discovery. Invited visitors and Redcaps are told to stand facing the island, with feet together and hands raised, upon uttering a password (which changes periodically) whichever spirit is currently protecting the covenant opens up a tunnel in its defenses in a straight line between the





visitor and the covenant. From any direction, magic is essential to scale the cliffs, for there are no steps or ropes provided, and few are capable of climbing such a height unaided.

Fudarus is a sprawling fortress crouching on the very edge of the landward-facing cliffs of the island, where there is a Magic aura of 7. It is entirely enclosed by a high wall of gray stone in a semi-circular sweep. Not content with its precarious placement on the cliff edge, the covenant actually extends down the face of the cliffs; its "towers" are upside-down, attached firmly to buttresses at the top of the cliff, but extending downwards like the petrified tendrils of an immense ivy. Most of Fudarus's inhabitants live in the fortress that spills over the cliff edge, and only one of the towers is usually occupied at any time, by the Primus. By tradition, upon the death of each Primus his tower is sealed by his successor, and a new tower built for him. The tower of Primus Harpax has been under construction for the last two decades, and, thanks to Prima Buliste's constant interference, it is not due to be finished any time soon. Likewise, Harpax has been devising more and more intricate

ways to seal the tower of Buliste and deny her entrance to her own sanctum. There are nine other towers, one for each of the eight former Primi and one for Tytalus himself; all are sealed and (apart from Tasgillia's) no one has entered them since the passing of their owners. Some are still believed to be inhabited by the ghosts or Twilight-transformed remnants of the Primi.

Immediately to the left of the gates of Fudarus is a clear circle of grass, marked because the area around it is blackened and blasted. This is the site of the martyrdom of St Nerius (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 91), and has a Divine aura of 1. Every year on the anniversary of that event, a single blue flower of an unknown species blossoms in the permanently burnt sward. Several pious magi come to witness this event every year, and they do not allow anyone to pick the bloom, which lasts only one day. The magi of Fudarus do not prevent magi coming on this pilgrimage, and do not interfere with the ceremony. Some have even joined them in the past, taking part in the solemn devotions with appropriate *gravitas*.

The Isle of Ushant belongs to the Heusaff family, who own the sole settlement on the island, a small fishing community on its south coast called Lampaul. The income from this minor industry is the main source of Fudarus' supplies. The fishermen are unaware that Lord Heusaff is a magus, nor do they know that his castle is a magical place, for they have very little to do with the ancient Breton family.

Members of the Order who are not followers of Tytalus have to earn the right to enter Fudarus, and if they fail or refuse they are housed in a dilapidated house just outside its walls. The challenge presented to visitors is set by the Primus, and is different for every magus; it typically involves conflict, in keeping with the philosophy of House Tytalus. Typical challenges are given in the nearby insert. By virtue of having passed the Apprentice's Gauntlet of the House, all Tytali are considered to have already passed the required challenge, and are free to enter.

Unlike some domus magnae of other houses, there is no particular cachet for a Tytalan magus in being a member of Fudarus. The philosophy of House Tytalus does not allow for empty gestures of pre-eminence and prestige; every magus is expected to make others recognize his superiority based on his actions. Consequentially, the membership of Fudarus is open to any member of House Tytalus that has sufficient reason to join, and sufficient puissance to force the current members to accept his right to join. Fudarus is an autocracy; the Primus is the leader of the covenant and makes all decisions on its behalf. Members are expected to act on their own initiative, but if the Primus feels that his authority has been usurped he can exact swift punishment using the enchanted Rod of the Primus.

Fudarus currently has two vassals, one of which is also found in Brittany. This covenant, Exspectatio (see Finistere) has a vassal of its own in Burgundy called Atramentum Renatus. These vassals are currently bound into harsh contracts of obligation to Fudarus, and must compete hard at the Tourney to afford the feudal debt. Fudarus repays this loyalty with generous political support. Fudarus has a long history of taking on vassals that win their independence, many of whom founder soon after they sever their ties. It shows no especial preference for vassals of House Tytalus.

## The Three Great Spirits

The three spirits of Ushant are called Mogidell (a spirit of mists and sea-fog), Kerseenn (a spirit of misdirection), and Arnev (a spirit of stormy weather). They obey the bearer of the Cirlet of the Primus (see below), although this item itself does not compel them; rather, the age-old pact made with the spirits by Fudarus's theurgists has made them *genii loci* of Ushant.

**Magic Might:** 40 (Auram)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +4, Pre +5, Com +3, Str +3, Sta +2, Dex -2, Qik 0

**Personality Traits:** Watchful +5, Capricious +3, Playful +3

**Virtues and Flaws:** Ways of the Island

**Powers:**

*Incorporeal*, 0 points, Init Constant, Mentem: All three spirits are both invisible and intangible, and cannot be influenced by the physical world. Magic may only directly target a spirit if the caster can sense its existence.

*Presence*, 0 points, constant, Mentem: The spirits are aware of everything that occurs on Ushant.

*Mastery of Mist*, 1 – 8 points, Init 0, Auram: Mogidell can duplicate any non-Ritual spell of 40th level or lower pertaining

to mist and fog, at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the effect.

*Mastery of Misdirection*, 1 – 8 points, Init 0, Imaginem: Kerseenn can duplicate any non-Ritual spell of 40th level or lower pertaining to misdirection and concealment, at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the effect.

*Mastery of Storms*, 1 – 8 points, Init 0, Auram: Arnev can duplicate any non-Ritual spell of 40th level or lower pertaining to high winds, rain, and other bad weather, at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the effect.

**Vis:** The presence of these spirits causes 12 pawns of vis to manifest on Ushant each year, four each of Creo, Auram, and Imaginem. Only the inhabitants of Fudarus know what form this vis takes.

**Appearance:** To those who can see them, each of the three Great Spirits of Ushant are immense, filling the sky. Mogidell appears as a huge gray bird; when she unfurls her wings the sea mist descends upon Ushant. Kerseenn is constantly shifting shape between weird amalgams of human and beast. Arnev takes the appearance of an immense serpent with the head of a horse.

## Challenges to Enter Fudarus

It is a matter of chance which Primus is informed of the presence of visitors, and therefore which Primus sets the challenge of passage. Challenges are assigned according to the abilities of the magus requesting entrance; to be set a task that is too easy is a subtle insult of the kind appreciated by Tytali, and indicates the type of reception the visitor is likely to receive. Conversely, a difficult challenge is a compliment, and a visitor who fails the challenge but comports himself well in meeting it may still be invited into Fudarus.

### BULLISTE'S CHALLENGES

Buliste's challenges are most often of a philosophical or overtly magical bent:

- Present a convincing argument that the Code of Hermes is outdated and detrimental to the Order;
- Persuade one of Lampaul's residents to do something he finds morally repugnant;
- Cast an unknown ritual spell from a casting tablet without falling unconscious;
- Open the main gate of Fudarus without moving a muscle.

### HARPAX'S CHALLENGES

Harpax's challenges are usually of the physical kind:

- Fight a magically created beast;
- Achieve a pin in a wrestling match against one of Fudarus' grogs;
- Catch at least seven of a dozen spears cast at the character from the ramparts;
- Retrieve an item from Lampaul before a water clock runs dry.

## Magi

For the last twenty-five years, Harpax and Buliste have been the only magi who live at Fudarus. When it became clear that the two Primi would not be capable of settling their dispute quickly, the other magi of Fudarus quietly left the covenant, leaving them to battle it out undisturbed. They moved to a vassal covenant of Fudarus in Brittany that they renamed Expectatio after ousting its former inhabitants. The magi of Expectatio are technically still members of Fudarus, and they return on a regular basis to retrieve covenant resources such as books, or conduct some laboratory activity in Fudarus' superior aura. Kybella (see below) casts the *Aegis of the Hearth* each year on behalf of both Primi, as neither will trust the other to do it. Harpax and Buliste have resorted to a pettiness that may be considered demeaning behavior for a Primus; but this is merely how they express their rivalry within Fudarus' walls. The feud they pursue on the stage of the Order is as vicious as any other pair of beloved rivals. For more details of these schemes, see Saga Ideas.

### Story Seed: Color Blind

A covenant sponsored or favored by Fudarus may receive a "gift" of some of its grogs. The Lesser Malediction that they suffer with regards to blindness to certain colors can be an annoyance, but anyone who knows their weakness (such as Fudarus itself) can exploit it to lethal effect.

### PRIMA BULISTE OF HOUSE TYTALUS

Age: 84 (Apparent age mid-60s)

#### Personality Traits:

Petty +3,  
Generous +2,  
Caring -1

Buliste filia Bulcis was Prima of House Tytalus for twenty years before she suffered a protracted Twilight episode that caused her to appear dead. She was wearing the Circllet of the Primus at the onset of this Twilight, and Harpax was unable to remove it from her body so she wears it still. She uses the invisible spirits commanded by the circllet to harry her rival; they remove stones from his uncompleted tower, add ground glass to his food, sew up his clothing, and commit hundreds of other petty annoyances that can verge on the lethal. More importantly to the House, Buliste controls Fudarus' vast agency of spies, and can mentally communicate with several key players in that network due to her puissance with the Art of Mentem and her collection of fixed Arcane Connections. This allows her to maintain respect and authority within the House, although she is largely impotent in the Normandy Tribunal.

Buliste is a woman apparently in her sixties, of regal mien and corpulent yet not obese physique. She wears rich clothes of violet satin and white Breton lace. She has very expressive features, and the most obvious of several Twilight scars is that her kindness and her anger are both palpable — one gentle, the other painful.

### PRIMUS HARPAX OF HOUSE TYTALUS

Age: 70 (Apparent age early 50s)

#### Personality Traits:

Mercurial +3,  
Impulsive +1,  
Sincere +1

Harpax filius Bulcis has forever felt limited by his elder "sister," and fought her with great vigor for the leadership of House Tytalus, only to lose to her in the end. He barely hesitated when she had seemed to pass on, but burst into her sanctum and stole the Rod of the Primus and the identity of Lord Heusaff (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Tytalus for more on deep cover disguises). Harpax uses the rod of his office to torture Buliste with distractions; one day her sanctum may be so hot that her candles melt, the next she might have to break the ice on her wash basin.

Harpax has a better grasp of the politics of the tribunal and the plots of his fellow Tytalans than does Buliste. He governs the wealth (in terms of both vis and coin) of the covenant as Lord Heusaff, and maintains the oaths of fealty of Fudarus' two vassals. However, without access to the agents of the covenant, he is limited to how much of the House's business he can control; he is more powerful than Buliste in Normandy, but she has the edge in the Order as a whole.

When playing the role of Lord Heusaff, Harpax uses his magic to change his appearance to that of the young lord, a dashing nobleman. However, Harpax played this



## The Rod and Circlet of the Primus

Fudarus owns two magical items that are of particular note, for as well as controlling aspects of the covenant, they are also the symbols of the leadership of House Tytalus. They were crafted long ago at the direction of Hariste.

The Rod of the Primus is used to control the physical environment of the covenant. It has a number of powers that are all tied to making any particular room a pleasant or uncomfortable place to be in. What is more insidious is that the rod can cause these effects to trigger at the presence of a particular person, so that every room that someone enters is freezing cold or plunged into darkness. The rod is owned currently by Primus Harpax.

### CONTROL ENVIRONMENT OF FUDARUS

Variable Technique, Form, and Level  
Pen: 0, unlimited uses per day  
R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Structure

The rod has six similar enchantments that use the same spell parameters, but have varying Arts and final levels. The rod can maintain any number of these effects simultaneously, but can only activate one per round.

- Vary light levels from total darkness to unbearable brightness. Mulg base 1, final level 25
- Vary temperature from below freezing to baking hot. Mulg base 1, final level 25
- Open archways or close portals between rooms. MuTe base 1, +1 stone, final level 30
- Create intense smells, either pleasant

or putrid. CrIm base 1, final level 25

- Create noises, either soothing or clamoring. CrIm base 1, final level 25
- Change textures of furnishings to feel as soft as down or as sharp as thorns. Mulm base 1, final level 25
- (variable base, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +3 Structure; +10 unlimited uses, +5 item maintains concentration)

The Circlet of the Primus commands the spiritual servants of the covenant. Although they can rarely be detected, every room has several invisible spirits within it that perform the simple, menial tasks of the covenant. The servants normally perform whatever task to which they were last set, and the wearer of the circlet is the only individual who can change the commands of a spirit. Prima Buliste currently wears the circlet.

### CONTROL SPIRIT

Rego Vim 55  
Pen: 20, unlimited uses per day  
R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind.

This power allows the wielder to command a single task of any spirit in her presence, or to whom the wielder has an Arcane Connection. The commands are issued mentally, and the circlet itself is inscribed with the names of (that is, Arcane Connections to) all of Fudarus' servant spirits. Any spirit whose Might is less than the Penetration Total of the circlet can be affected by this power.

(Base 5, +4 Arc, +1 Conc; +10 unlimited uses, +5 item maintains concentration, +10 for Penetration Total of 20).

role too well, and has had to develop some unpleasant personal habits to discourage the attentions of women of marriageable age. In his role as tenth Primus of House Tytalus, Harpax is a distinguished man apparently in his fifties, stick-thin and somewhat arthritic. He maintains several other disguises, and it is possible that he will be first met as a butler, or a sentry, or a tinker, or any number of other roles. His obsession (and sigil) of plurality has expressed itself on his body

through Twilight scars; the style of his clothing shifts gradually over the course of a day, while remaining the same signature color of forest green.

## Covenfolk

Most of the menial tasks of the covenant are performed by invisible spirits under the

## Story Seed: Iasper's Family

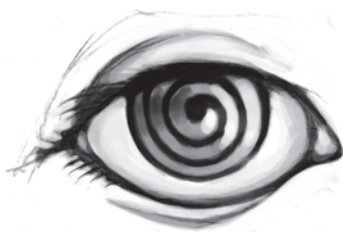
Iasper's close relationship with his mundane family is a potential cause for trouble. The Foutins are a large clan of local roustabouts and ne'er-do-wells; who, while not actually criminal by nature, have a knack of getting into trouble. One of the player covenant's grogs may be one of Iasper's cousins, or end up on the wrong side of a fight with one of them. When Iasper is called upon to smooth over matters with the local authorities, he manages to implicate the PC magi in a grandiose plot of mayhem to destabilize the region. He then approaches the PCs in contrition, and tries to assist them in untangling the mess he has created without revealing his own role.

command of the wearer of the Circlet of the Primus. These spirits do all the cleaning, repairing, lifting, food preparation, and so forth of the covenant, although there are a few human servants for performing skilled tasks, such as a chef and craftsmen. Due to these thronging spirits (it is never clear how many there are, other than "just enough"), Fudarus has little need for serving folk, laborers, or teamsters. This makes the covenant seem to be empty and silent most of the time.

Fudarus employs a small cadre of specialists: an alchemist and glassblower to maintain the laboratories; a barber-surgeon who governs the regimen of health of the covenant; and two craftsmen. The covenant has a large turb of grogs, who have divided equally into two camps based on their loyalty to either Harpax or Buliste. They wear swatches of cloth indicating their allegiance, and thanks to the Warping effect of the aura, do not even acknowledge the presence of anyone wearing a substantial amount of the opposing color (such as a hood, tunic, or cloak). Thus, Harpax's grogs cannot even see Buliste, or anyone wearing any purple clothing, and vice versa. This is not just affectation; someone removing a green hood can surprise one of Buliste's grogs by seeming to appear out of nowhere, and someone wearing a green cloak could stab one in the chest without resistance. Wearing both colors seems to nullify the effect; a grog of Fudarus does not ignore someone appareled in their own color.



## The Lion and the Lily



### Exspectatio

The rivalries pursued by Tytalan magi are highly personal and private; when it became clear that the feud between Harpax and Buliste at Fudarus was not going to be resolved quickly, the other magi of Fudarus looked around for somewhere else to stay. Their eyes fell upon the newly established vassal covenant of Atramentum, sponsored just one year previously. It was a convenient distance from Fudarus, so the elder Tytali evicted the two founding magi and took up residence. The new name means "waiting in hope or dread" — certainly a fitting name!

Exspectatio is found in a secluded valley in the Arrée Mountains of Brittany, about three days' journey from Fudarus. There are six magi living at Exspectatio, all members of House Tytalus, and all but one are at least four decades from apprenticeship. Although legally a vassal of Fudarus, the Oath of Fealty is very generous, having been drawn up in part by the magi of Exspectatio, and it is not uncommon to find one or more of Exspectatio's members absent at any one time, visiting Fudarus to use the library or a specialized laboratory. The two most prominent members are Adanos and Kybella.

### Story Seed: Iasper's Seeming Death

Seeking membership of the Cabal of the Leaden Cart (see Sagas: Plots of House Tytalus), Iasper attracts the interest of a crossroads faerie who governs the transition between life and death. The faerie blurs the border between the living and the dead, causing corpses to walk again and the living to fall into a death-like pallor. The player characters happen across the affected region, and must free Iasper from his death-state to break the faerie's spell.

### ADANOS LUTORUM OF HOUSE TYTALUS

Age: 57 (Apparent age 41)

#### Personality Traits:

Humorless +2,  
Unswerving +3,  
Loyal to Harpax +3

Adanos bears the blood of an earth spirit, and has a strong affinity for soil, stone, and clay. He is over seven feet tall and totally hairless, and his skin is the texture of rock. He is the youngest of the founding magi of Exspectatio and is a staunch supporter of Harpax since Buliste refused to take him as an apprentice. His signature tactic in conflict of any type (physical, verbal, or magical) is to allow his opponent to expend her energies fruitlessly against his impenetrable defenses, then to strike with

a crushing blow once she is exhausted.

### KYBELLA OF HOUSE TYTALUS

Age: 68 (Apparent age 48)

#### Personality Traits:

Loyal to Buliste +3,  
Suspicious +1

A leading member of the Titanoi, House Tytalus's cult of theurgists (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Tytalus). She is responsible for maintaining the enchantments that hold Fudarus's spirits in check, and is a close friend of Prima Buliste. She specializes in genii loci, and carefully inspects every place she stays for evidence of such spirits. Kybella's current interests revolve around her involvement of the Cabal of the Leaden Cart (see Sagas: Plots of House Tytalus).

### Iasper filius Adanos of House Tytalus

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per -1, Pre +2,  
Com 0, Str 0, Sta +2, Dex -1, Qik -2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 26

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 0 (4)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (6)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magic; Flexible Formulaic Magic; Affinity with Rego, Clear Thinker, Harnessed Magic, Magical Focus (Turmoil), Puissant Concentration, Puissant Terram, Self Confident\*; Chaotic Magic, Meddler, Close Family Ties, Incomprehensible, Weird Magic.

\*House Virtue

**Personality Traits:** Argumentative +2,  
Self-Disciplined +2, Brave +1

**Combat:**

**Fist:** Init -2, Attack +1, Defense 0, Damage 0

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5,  
Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5  
(11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead  
(21+)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 3 (literature), Brawl 2 (fist), Breton 3 (arguments), Concentration 2+2 (Rego), Finesse 2 (Terram), Etiquette 1 (politeness), French 5 (Norman), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Leadership 1 (brow-beating), Magic Lore 1 (earth spirits), Magic Theory 4 (Terram), Normandy Lore 1 (hostilities), Parma Magica 1 (Mentem), Penetration 1

(Terram), Philosophiae 1 (debating)

**Arts:** Cr4, In 2, Mu 2, Pe 2, Re 10; An 2,  
Aq 6, Au 6, Co 3, He 0, Ig 3, Im 5,  
Me 5, Te 6+3, Vi 4

**Spells Known:**

*Chaos of the Angry Waves* (ReAq 30/+24)

*Confusion of the Insane Vibrations* (ReIm 30/+22)

*Confusion of the Numb Will* (ReMe 15/+22)

*Crest of the Earth's Wave* (ReTe 20/+21)

*Panic of the Trembling Heart* (CrMe 15/+11)

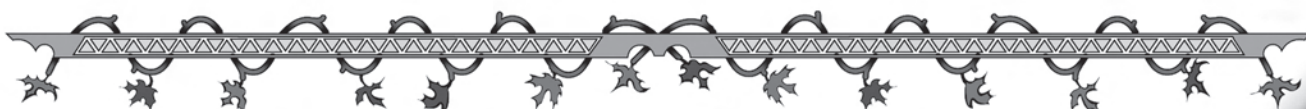
*Prying Eyes* (InIm 5/+9)

*The Earth's Caruncle* (ReTe (Mu) 15/+13)

*Wielding the Invisible Sling* (ReTe 10/+21)

**Appearance:** A thin man with long shaggy black hair and an unshaven face. In contrast to his unkempt features, his clothing is always impeccably turned out.

Iasper is the youngest member of Exspectatio, having passed his Gauntlet just four years ago. He is a study in contrasts, since his magic is simultaneously tightly harnessed and unpredictable. He prides himself on his self-control, and yet has a natural affinity for turmoil and chaos, and delights in its execution. Given his master's interests in Terram, he is fairly competent with this Art as well. Iasper is interested in reined chaos, which he believes is the route to self-understanding. Unlike many of his house, he provokes conflict beyond his capacity to control, seeing the vagaries of chance as a learning experience. There is no malice in his actions, although he rarely considers the implications of his actions for others.





## County of Cornouaille

Cornouaille covers a broad peninsula with projecting points at both the south end and the north, and a landscape of wooded hills and valleys inland. Locronan is an unusual pilgrimage site, where visitors retrace the path up the hill that was the daily walk made, while fasting and barefooted, by St.

Ronan. A Benedictine monastery close by provides accommodation for pilgrims. It is sited in a forest once held sacred by druids and is used as a place of retreat by brothers from other monasteries needing a change of scene. Quimper is the main town of Cornouaille. King Gradlon founded it when he lost his former capital (see the nearby insert). Its first bishop, St. Corentine, lived off a magical fish that was caught daily from the river. He ate half of it and threw the rest back. The next morning the fish was whole again. The fish, which had a Divine Might of

2 (Animal), may still be somewhere close by, and might make itself available should any deserving person seek it.

## Sein Island

The northern projection of the Cornouaille peninsula ends at Raz Point and Van Point. These two promontories lie on either side of the feared Bay of Troubled Souls, where the bodies of those drowned in shipwreck are most likely to be washed ashore. The bodies of druids who died on the mainland were put in boats here to be ferried over to Sein Island; its reputation as a druid burial site keeps local people away. This island is so low-lying that it is submerged at the very highest tides. There are two menhirs and a dolmen on Sein Island. The Roman historian Pomponius Mela claims that nine virgin witches with the power to raise winds and storms lived on it.

Between these rocky promontories and the cliffs of Penmarch, the southern extremity, the desolate coast is a twelve-mile-long shingle beach. Half way along it, an annual ceremony to bless the sea is held, involving a torchlight procession.

## Noires Mountains and Western Argoat

The hills of the Black Mountains are softer and lower than the Arrée Mountains, which lie to the north on the other side of the broad valley of the River Aulne. Some of the early Christian missionaries lived as hermits in the woods that still cover the hills. Ménez-Hom, an outlying summit to the western end of the range, provides a view over a very wide area encompassing the coast from the Cornouaille peninsula, across Crozon, over the bay where Brest lies, and as far as St. Matthews Point, plus the inland view over the two ranges of hills and the intervening valley. Another summit, further east, is known as Karreg an Tan, meaning Fire Rock; Ignem vis is found in the rust-colored lichen that slowly forms on the rock. In the east of the Black Mountains, at Rostrenen, is a hawthorn bush dedicated to Our Lady which blooms all year round and is a source of Divinely tainted Herbam vis. Carhaix-Plouguer lies in the valley between the two ranges of hills, at



## The Town of Is

In the sixth century, Gradlon was King of Cornouaille and his court was based in the beautiful town of Is. It was protected from the sea by a dyke with huge gates. The king held the key to these floodgates. His daughter, Dahut, was seduced by the Devil, who disguised himself as an attractive young man. He persuaded her to steal the key for him while her father slept. When he opened the floodgates at high tide, King Gradlon fled on horseback with his daughter. He soon realized the horse could not outrun the waves. A voice urged him to throw off the wicked woman so, reluctantly, he threw his daughter off into the onrushing tide. At once, the waves retreated sufficiently to allow the citizens to escape to the mainland, but Is was submerged. As for Dahut, she was transformed into an evil siren known as Marie-Morgane. She still sings her deadly songs, drowning sailors and using them to people her sunken city. It is said that if Mass is celebrated in one of the drowned churches on a Good Friday, Marie-Morgane will be banished.

their eastern end, and is the only sizable settlement for miles around. It grew up in Roman times where seven roads meet, and was named Vorgium. Further east is Bulat-Pestivien, where there are healing springs, and Burthulet, a desolate place said to be so frigid in winter that a demon died of cold there.

## CORONG AND TOUL GOULIC GORGES

At the Corong Gorge, a river disappears beneath a mass of rocks and flows out lower down in a series of cascades. Toul Goullic Gorge, where another river disappears beneath tumbled rocks, lies further east. Each is home to a temperamental genius loci (see *Realms of Power: Magic*). The pair has been locked in a feud for so long that neither knows why it started. The river owned by the one with the upper hand flows above ground. Both would be glad to end the fight and would reward anyone who can accomplish this without either appearing to back down.

## Broërec

Inland, this region comprises low, forested plateaus broken by numerous rivers that open out into wide, drowned estuaries when they meet the western coast. Crops are cultivated in sheltered valleys but food from the sea is very important too. There is a fountain at Ste. H  lene, beside the bay that forms the mouth of the River   tel, which is renowned for its prophetic powers: if a sailor's wife throws a scrap of bread into the fountain, she can tell by whether it sinks or floats if her husband will return safely. Also near this bay is the chapel of St. Cado where deaf petitioners may spend a night on the stone bed, resting on a stone pillow, in hopes of a cure.

## Morbihan

The most striking coastal feature is the almost land-locked Gulf of Morbihan, fringed with mud and salt marsh and scattered with a great many small, low islands. It is about 12 miles across and reaches nine miles inland. Peter Ab  lard, the renowned philosopher and theologian, retreated to St-Gildas-de-Rhuys, a monastery founded by St. Gildas in the sixth century and situated on the southern arm protecting the Gulf of Morbihan. He found it a wild place beset by dangerous animals, the language strange and horrible, and the monastic community unruly (see insert in Chapter 7: Ile de France, Ab  lard and H  lo  se).

## TUMIAC TUMULUS

The decisive battle between Julius Caesar's troops and the strongest tribe of Gauls, the Veneti, took place to the southeast of this stretch of coast. Over two hundred Gallic sailing vessels and some great Roman galleys met as Caesar looked on from his vantage point on the Tumi  c Tumulus, on the arm of land round the southern side of the gulf. It is highly likely that interesting artifacts still lie on the ocean bed.

## GAVRINIS TUMULUS

A more interesting tumulus is that named Gavrinis, on an islet not far from the

mouth of the gulf. It is a small hill about 20 feet in height made of stones piled over a covered passageway that leads to a chamber. Both passage and chamber are roofed with huge slabs standing on large supporting stones decorated with carvings of serpentine spirals, cup shapes, and rings. The chamber is constructed of eight huge slabs of a dark, fine-grained rock not native to the area. It has an evil reputation, with rumors circulating of dark magic practiced in here in the past, but it has a Faerie aura of level 3 and under the right circumstances acts as a gateway to a dark Faerie realm. On the isle of Er Lanic, just to the south of Gavrinis, stand stones in the shape of a figure eight, one circle of which is submerged at high tide; a Magic aura of level 5 covers the immediate area.

## RHUYS' MEGALITHS

Toward the end of the Rhuys peninsula, the arm of land that forms the west side of the Gulf of Morbihan, at Locmariaquer, is an outstanding assemblage of ancient stone monuments. The greatest of them, originally over 60 feet in height, stands broken in two. The stones, known locally as the Merchants' Table, are decorated with carvings of crooks and one ox, so the place is likely associated with ancient animal magic. Also in this vicinity, Er-Grah, Man  -er Hroech, Man  -Lud and Man  -Rethaul, Kerlud, and Flat Stones are other dolmens of immense dressed stones, many carved. Most take the form of a covered passage leading to a large chamber and were probably the homes of giants.

## QUIBERON

An elongated island, Quiberon, which is separated from the mainland only at high tide, has dunes on the north end, a stretch of rocks, cliffs, caves, and reefs where the sea pounds savagely along the oceanward western side, and wide, gently curving sand beaches on the sheltered eastern side. A stone called Roh-en-Aod, situated at the north end of the western cliffs, has five cup-shaped indents, which, if tapped with hammers at night by women, will ensure favorable winds for their husbands' boats. Auram vis can be obtained here, but only by females. Almost half way along the eastern side of Quiberon stand 22 menhirs in rows.



## Story Seed: Jean and Jeanne

Two menhirs stand on a gorse-clad moor towards the north of Belle-ile, one of pale granite and one of darker schist. They are named Jean and Jeanne, and are the petrified forms of a young, betrothed couple who could not wait until they were wed. A suitable Hermetic ritual could free them from the enchantment. Once returned to flesh, the pair are keen to join the covenant since the world they knew is long gone. The woman is pregnant and her child is due three months after the petrification ends. The child is Gifted and has a close affinity with Terram magic.

### BELLE-ILE

The largest Breton island, Belle-ile, is five miles out to sea from Quiberon. It is a schist plateau cut deeply by fast-flowing streams that end in creeks or small beaches, and is frequently swept by strong winds and rain from the west. Trees only grow in sheltered spots. On the southwest coast at Port-Goulphar, in the clear waters in a deep, sheltered chasm, brightly colored algae collects on the rocks; this is an unusual form of Herbam vis. A little further along the coast, at rocks called the Needles, the turbulent waves generate a great deal of foam that is a source of Aquam vis.

### Carnac

One of the most powerful magical sites in Mythic Europe, Carnac haunts the imagination. Over a thousand menhirs, aligned in a broken pattern of great avenues of stone, cover the heath near the village of the same name. Constructed on a scale that dwarfs Stonehenge, the rough unworked stones completely dominate the landscape, and the feeling of ancient magic hangs heavy in the air here.

The stones, mute guardians to forgotten secrets, range from the height of a child to well over twenty feet. By day, a Magic aura of strength 5 covers the heath, one of the largest Magical auras known to the Order, and in many places it is far higher. The location is vivid, brighter, and somehow more real than the surrounding heath; so strong is the magic that even the birds, flowers, and

animals that live here display unusual intelligence, strange powers, or sometimes the ability to converse with intruders. Once within the stones themselves and on the avenues, the aura is generally 6 or even higher, and many regiones are known to exist. Yet few would wish to come here at night. As the shadows lengthen the Magic aura fades away, and at night an Infernal aura replaces the magic. Then the sinister cackling of the hideous guardians of the stones ring out across the heath. It is for this reason that no covenant has ever been constructed here, and it is doubtful any ever will.

The legends of the Order place the meeting of Trianoma with Diedne the Founder here, on a bright summer's afternoon. Some say that the Diedne knew the secrets of the place, but who can tell? Here a fleeing remnant of the pagan magicians was hunted

down and killed. Some say the blood of that battle is what has led to the curse that haunts the area to this day, in the form of its strange and hostile inhabitants. Other disquieting legends hint at Diedne fleeing into the regiones, or even suggest that the stones may have magical portals, not dissimilar to Mercere Portals, which allow transportation to other groups of far-distant standing stones. Will the Diedne who escaped return through them one day, seeking revenge?

The ignorant locals blame faeries for the construction, and some are so foolish as to use hedge magics and ancient charms to try to command them to build houses for them in a single night, for the faeries can not stand the light of day. Others, more pious, claim that St. Cornelius was chased across the heath by the evil faeries, and as the ox cart he drove neared the sea he finally turned and prayed fervently,

## Nain

**Infernal Might:** 10 (Animal)  
**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per +1, Pre -3, Com +1, Str -1, Sta +3, Dex +3, Qik +2  
**Size:** -2  
**Age:** n/a  
**Confidence Score:** 0  
**Virtues and Flaws:** None  
**Personality Traits:** Sadistic +2, Lustful +2, Energetic +2  
**Reputations:** Demonic 5 (local), Tireless Dancers 2 (local), Magicians 1 (local)  
**Combat:**  
**Claws:** Init +1, Attack 7, Defense +8, Damage +1  
**Stone (thrown):** Init +2, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +1  
**Soak:** +3  
**Fatigue Levels:** n/a  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)  
**Abilities:** Area Lore 3 (Carnac), Athletics 5 (dancing), Brawl 2 (claws), Folk Ken 4 (temptation), Guile 1 (lying), Speak Breton 2 (yelping), Stealth 4 (ambushes), Thrown Weapon 3 (stones)

### Powers:

**Glittering Treasure,** 2 points, Init 3, Terram.  
Creates a number of silver coins that shine in the moonlight and tempt the greedy amid the stones. The coins vanish at dawn, but are usually used as a lure to bring the victim into an ambush.

**Deadly Dance,** 2 points, Init 3, Corpus. A group of up to 10 victims is compelled to dance wildly with the Nains until sunrise. Each hour's dancing requires a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6, and failure results in the loss of a long-term fatigue level until the dancer falls unconscious, after which Light Wounds are taken. A botch results in two levels being lost per 0 on the botch dice; if the victim is unconscious, the Wound increases by one level per 0. Many have danced themselves to death before dawn comes.

**Magician's Desire Denied,** 1 point, Init 3, Vim. Makes a pebble, leaf or other object appear to radiate magic as vis would to an InVi spell. If *Sense the Nature of Vis* is cast upon it, or dawn breaks, the "vis" collected simply vanishes.

**Equipment:** Usually none.

**Natural Weapons:** Claws: Init -1, Attack +2, Defense +3, Damage +2

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Animal vis in hooves

**Appearance:** Child-sized deformed humanoid creatures, with filthy heads of long hair, goat-like bandy legs, and eyes of burning red fire.

Nains usually attack in untrained groups of three per victim, relying on superior numbers to overwhelm their enemies if their magic fails to defeat them.

and God miraculously turned the pursuing faeries into the stones. Yet most who live near the stones are sure of one thing: demons, not faeries, haunt this place at night.

What are the secrets of the stones? Investigation and a Hermetic Breakthrough may perhaps allow some of the mysteries of the stones to be decoded. Magi with an interest in the mysteries of Hermetic Geometry and Hermetic Astrology often come here seeking new insights, while others are convinced the remains are associated with Fertility Magics, but no one is sure.

Magi fear the region, and no covenant has been established here because of the terrible denizens of the stones. The Nains are small, deformed, imp-like creatures with filthy heads of long hair, goat-like bandy legs, and eyes of burning red fire. They are the guardians of the mysteries of the stones, and can read the strange magical characters traced on the rocks, although these are only visible by starlight on moonless nights. Their unholy night is the first Wednesday in May, and it is said to be suicide to enter the vicinity of the stones then, when they conduct blood sacrifices and the Infernal aura rises to 6.

Jacques Vert of House Merinita once speculated they are the dreams of the dead Diedne, taken living form in faerie flesh. No one believed him, or if they did they did not care to investigate. He vanished amid the stones on a moonless night some fifty years ago, while seeking the legendary treasure of Carnac — a treasure the very nature of which is unknown. Such treasures are dubious, however, as the Nains are known to have the power to create magical silver in the shape of modern coins that vanish in the light of day. More disquietingly, they can create fake vis that radiates magic to a simple Intellego Vim spell, but on further inspection to ascertain the Form, simply melts away. The Nains love to tempt fools into their clutches by playing on their victims' greed.

Malicious, cruel, and deceitful, the Nains dance in orgiastic rituals among the stones, yet always vanish into hidden regions by the dawn. Those who try to treat with them sometimes find themselves compelled to join their weird dances, and to dance long after fatigue has rendered them unconscious. If the light of dawn does not arrive in time, the ensorcelled victim dances himself to death.

As well as the Nains, many magical spirits haunt the ruins, and locals frequently report long processions of the ancient dead. They take shelter in the Church of St. Cornelius, bar the doors, and pray till dawn each Midsummer night, when the Infernal aura reaches 5 even in the churchyard. Long ago the Nains were



Korrigan, faerie creatures, but their wickedness corrupted them and today they are clearly aligned with the Infernal realm. Nains attack in large groups, and are often accompanied by even darker, more horrific demons.

## Southern Argoat

The largest urban settlement, Vannes, stands on the River Marle, close to where it flows into the Gulf of Morbihan. It was Nominoë's capital of the kingdom of Brittany in the ninth century. The cathedral in Vannes is dedicated to St. Peter. Inland are the Lanvaux Moors, a crescent of largely bare, hard, flaking rock dotted with megaliths. The town of Ploëmel lies beyond the inland side of these

rocky hills. It was founded by St. Arthmael, who defeated a dragon here, and to whom the main church is dedicated. Northeast of Ploëmel is the petrified Giant of Kerderf and an isolated pillar named for St Cado, which women wishing to conceive a child rub their bodies against. It is a source of *Creo vis*, and possibly also a link to a form of magic that can overcome the sterility brought on by longevity rituals. The pillar would be of interest as a source of insight into fertility cult practice (see *Ancient Magic*, page 54).

## THE STATUES OF JOSSELIN AND CASTENNAC

The castle of Josselin is to the west, on the banks of the River Oust. A wooden statue of the Virgin Mary was once discovered near Josselin, in a bramble bush. One day, a scruffy beggar woman came to the village asking for water, but the local women drove her off, sending their dogs to chase her away. At once, their cruel shouts turned to dog-like howls. It was Our Lady in disguise, who had come to test their charity and found it lacking. Every year, at the feast of Pentecost, the local women must beg forgiveness in front of the wooden statue or else the curse will return.

Close to the border with the county of Cornouaille is Castennac, where a statue of a very different sort was discovered. It is obviously that of a woman and is known locally as their Venus, being used as the focus of pagan, sexually charged rituals. It has been thrown into the river on several occasions by the local churchmen, but so far has always turned up again.

## Folk Tales

Tales now told across Brittany contain many memories handed down about the mysteries of the region, and may give magi ideas of where to look for adventure and vis. The following crop up in folk tales across the duchy, so there is probably truth in at least some of them.

Two trees fighting; if spoken to in the right way, they turn back into an argumentative husband and wife.

A stranded fish that is king of all fishes, a trapped bird who can command all birds, and a bound demon king, each of which, if saved, will give help in return.

Three hermits, each of whom gives one piece of advice that builds into a solution.

Lushly fertile land where emaciated horses or cattle graze, beside barren land supporting plump, healthy animals.

A crust or loaf of bread that never diminishes, though eaten.

A silver whistle that brings help from birds.

A shirt which, when put on, keeps an importunate would-be lover frozen immobile through the night.

Apples that cause irresistible drowsiness.

A honey cake that, when eaten, can make a girl give birth to a magical cat that will help her win a good husband, despite the shame of her pregnancy.

A piece of cloth enchanted to serve food and drink when spread.



## Story Seed: Princess in the Tower

A young woman from the covenant is stolen away to be a companion to a beautiful young lady, who gives herself the title Princess of the Shining Star. Her father, to prevent her having any contact with other men, confines the princess to a tower. Female servants wait on her, but cannot communicate, so the princess is very happy to have a companion. The tower is part of a large castle of greenish, translucent glass, held in the air by gold and silver chains. The whole place is in a Magic regio.

## Story Seed: Too Much Wind

An air elemental decides to take an interest in the covenant — perhaps someone there has upset it. A strong wind blows round the covenant all the time, causing great inconvenience to all the inhabitants. Help may be available from a bearded old woman with long teeth who tends her fire in a cottage in the forest. She is the Mother of Winds and has four giant sons, whom she keeps in order by threatening to trap them in her sack.

## Story Seed: The White Fox

Characters from the covenant meet a white fox, near a menhir or a dolmen with a Magic aura. It is a Magic creature and, if they talk to it politely and promise to do it a favor, it gives them an ivory ball. If dropped, the ball rolls along the ground a little way, always in the same direction. If followed, it leads to a hermit dwelling in the forest.

## County of Nantes

The city of Nantes and the immediately surrounding area is, in some ways, hardly part of Brittany. There are few Bretons there and the Frankish population feels an affinity with Anjou and Poitou. Nantes, which stands on the River Loire, was an important location in Roman times and before. Now it is a political and ecclesiastical center. The cathedral is a site of martyrdom, where pagan invaders massacred the bishop and his whole congregation in 843. King Alain Crookbeard established this as the capital of the duchy.

The main road inland heads to Rennes, through forest, with very little settlement. At Blain, two minor trade routes cross. That trending northeast to southwest was important in Roman times, so is a much better road than might be expected. There is a small castle here, and a busy market.

A leper hospital is hidden not far away in the Gâvre Forest. The River Vilaine's highest port accessible by sea-going craft is at Redon where the Abbey of St. Savior was



established in 832. Several rivers meet at Redon, so it serves as a distribution point for trade over a wide area. On the higher ground close to the village of St. Just, north of Redon and to the west of the river valley, are several groups of gray stones in a small Magic aura of level 3.

## Grande Brière

Deep layers of peat, trapped behind coastal sands, form an immense expanse of marsh between the estuaries of the rivers Loire and Vilaine. Fish, eels, and wildfowl are abundant, but hardly anyone lives here although a few patches of firm ground rise above the swamp. On one, Kerbourg, located to the southwest, stands a covered alley of megaliths with a low Magic aura. The fortress of Ranrouët, which is under construction, guards the area on the north side of the marsh. There is also a settlement overlooking the marsh on the southwestern edge, at Guérande, where the church of St. Aubin stands on the site of a baptistery used during the conversion of the pagans here. In the crypt is a Merovingian sarcophagus. A ridge of rock forms a peninsula on the seaward side of the salt marsh that lies between the village and the ocean. Salt extraction takes place on a small scale here.

## Chapter Five

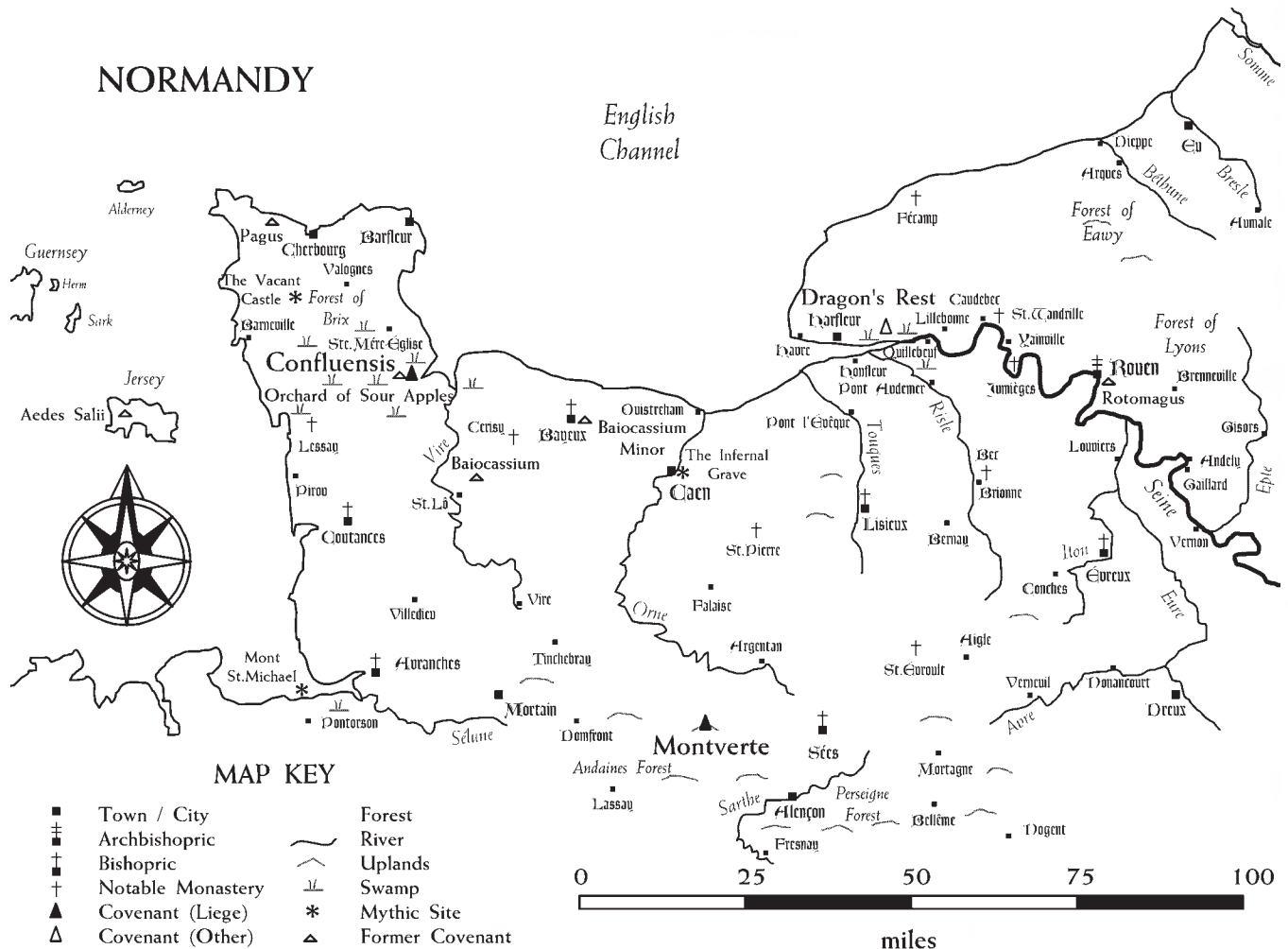
# Normandy

The duchy of Normandy is bounded by the English Channel to the north and west, along a coastline that is a mixture of beaches and perilous, alabaster cliffs. Across the waves squats misty England: a brooding presence on the horizon, and troublesome military foe of France. To the south are the duchies of Brittany and Maine, and the Royal Demesne; east are the counties of Flanders. Normandy is heavily forested, but the Seine

basin (in the east) has been partly cleared for farmland and, as the duchy has been the site of much conflict over the centuries, there are many castles.

Originally, Gallic tribes, who are fondly remembered by the many faerie creatures they once worshiped, inhabited the region that is now the duchy of Normandy. The tribes were conquered by the Romans and, under imperial rule, the area became Secunda

Provincia Lugdunensis. When the Romans left, the region became part of the Carolingian province of Neustria — but, during the ninth and 10th centuries, Neustria was overrun by Scandinavian vikings. Eventually, the Vikings colonized the region and their leader became the duke of Normandy (land of the north men). Since then, Normandy has been an occasional ally and frequent foe of the French crown until, in 1203-1204, the





## Normandy Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Confluensis, Dragon's Rest, Montverte.

**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:** Aedes Salii, Baiocassium, Baiocassium Minor, Orchard of Sour Apples (current site of Confluensis), Pagus, Rotomagus.

French king, Philip II, annexed the duchy from the English crown. England itself was conquered by the Normans in 1066, of course. More detail about the history and annexation of Normandy is given in Chapter 2: The History of Mythic France.

## The Duke of Normandy

The Normans considered themselves distinct from the other vassals of the French crown; they claimed Normandy was an *allod* granted absolutely to the duke. The French crown has not always agreed, and in 1220 Normandy is actually under the direct control of the French king. Therefore, there is no Duke of Normandy, but the Anglo-Norman claimant is Henry III. Feudal relationships within Normandy are more-or-less unchanged, however — the French crown merely substitutes for the duke at the head of the feudal table. Many minor Anglo-Norman nobles have retained holdings in both

Normandy and England, but King Philip has been careful to keep strategic holdings to himself and several close allies.

Under the Normans, the duchy was highly militarized; even so, when planning large military operations the duke hired mercenaries — from Flanders, Scandinavia, or Germany — whose leaders often become ducal vassals. The duke's existing vassals also provided troops and fielded their own armies, too. This militarization has remained under Philip and today, for example, the bishop of Bayeux has the service of 100 knights; 20 he owes to the ducal army, 10 to the royal army, and the remaining 70 are for his own use. The Norman dukes attempted to limit private wars between their vassals, preferring to settle disputes in the ducal court where the usual punishment was the confiscation of land, but internal war could not always be prevented. Even so, the duke imposed some rules: nominally, the defeated could not be ransomed or pillaged and their houses and mills could not be burnt. Philip also continues to enforce these rules.

A number of towns in the duchy have been granted charters, which allows the town burgesses to elect their own mayors and councilors and to hold their own courts. In return, the burgesses pay a collective tenure to the king, or in some cases to a bishop or to another noble (see *City and Guild* page 8). Most large Normandy towns have charters, and a number of small communities are also chartered, including: Beauvoir, Laigle, and Trun, all small forest communities; Conches, Lyre, and Saint-Evroult, each little more than a village outside an abbey; and Claville, in reality a large manor. The large town charters have been confirmed by Philip II since 1204, but the smaller towns are less assured. This is because many small towns

were granted charters in the frantic years prior to 1204 by King John to gather revenue to ward off the French annexation, and the French crown is less enthusiastic about such small independent towns. Hermetic covenants near small communities may have taken advantage of their neighbor's charter — for example, by acknowledging the jurisdiction of local (and easily manipulated) magistrates the magi may have avoided dealing with bailli (see below) — and if local charters are subsequently revoked the covenant may need to create new arrangements. Some covenants, as small communities, may even have been granted charters in their own right by King John.

## Norman Baillages

Under Philip, Normandy is divided into administrative units, called baillages, that correspond approximately to the historic counties of Normandy. Each bailliage is administered by a professional, educated bureaucrat who has the title bailli, and is appointed by the king. Bailli are wealthy, as they are paid personal salaries of several hundred pounds per annum, and some have held office since the annexation. However, if your saga follows history, from the 1220s onwards bailli typically hold office for only three or four years. Bailli are intentionally not drawn from either the ranks of the great noble families or the church, but some are minor nobles or were once military officers. Bailli are also generally honest and loyal to the king. In 1220 there are no native Norman bailli, and important bailli include:

Bailli of Rouen: Jean de la Porte, appointed in 1219.

Bailli of Caen: Pierre du Thillai, appointed in 1205.

Bailli of Bayeux: Renaud de Ville-Thierry, appointed in 1206.

Bailli of Cotentin: Miles de Levis, appointed in 1215.

The bailli know that the Order of Hermes exists, and although they do not know any specific details, they are aware of the location of some covenants, so should a magical calamity befall the duchy, these covenants may receive delegations seeking aid or suspects. Otherwise, as long as the known covenants pay their taxes and do not upset the feudal structural, the bailli have no particular interest in the Order of Hermes.





# The Archdiocese of Rouen

The Archdiocese of Rouen was an important battleground in the conversion of pagan France, and its borders are almost identical to those of the Normandy duchy. The first bishop of Rouen, Nicaise, was hardly successful — he was martyred after his arrival from Rome in the mid-third century — but his replacement, St. Mellon, survived and established the diocese, which in 744 rose to become an archdiocese. The current archbishop is Master Robert Poulain (a theologian, elected to office in 1208) who, if your saga follows history, is succeeded in 1222 by Thibaud d'Amiens.

In 1220, a notable number of the bishops answerable to the archbishop of Rouen are (like the archbishop himself) academics educated at Jumieges. Master Robert des Ablèges (elected to Bayeux in 1206) is a theologian, and Master Hugh Neret (elected to Coutances, in 1208) is a canonist as is Master William du Pont-de-l'Arche (elected to Lisieux in 1218). These academic bishops all know of the Order of Hermes and have met Hermetic scholars before. The archbishop believes that the Order of Hermes is heretical, but he has yet to do more than argue this point with the other bishops, who are not convinced. Other bishops include William d'Ostilly (a local dean, elected to Avranches in 1212), Luke of Evreux (elected to Evreux in 1203, also formerly a local dean), and Sylvester of Sées (elected to Sées in 1201, and formerly the archdeacon). If your saga follows history, the elderly bishops of Sées and Evreux both die in 1220. Gervase of Chichester, a foreign candidate favored by the papacy, is elected to Sées, which is controversial as the bishops prior to Sylvester were foreigners who profigately spent the diocese's treasury. In contrast, Evreux elects another local dean Ralph de Cierrey.

Church officials in Normandy were granted discretion by the pope to choose sides during the French annexation, and they chose to accept Philip as king. Unlike the Normans, Philip II has not yet interfered in episcopal elections, but like the Normans he has made significant grants of money and land to Normandy religious houses. On the other hand, there are tensions: in 1218 Philip forced the archbishop to concede to the king the right to excommunicate royal officials.

## Story Seed: The Vacant Castle

Since the annexation in 1204, a castle on the Cotentin peninsula has lain vacant, and it is now the lair of a terrible monster who endlessly patrols the dark, stone corridors seeking the flesh of men. She is related to Grendel from the *Beowulf* saga and was released by a fleeing vassal of King John. An Hermetic expedition in 1218 did not definitely locate the monster, despite the loss of several grogs, but

the investigators did find a strong Magic aura. They intend to propose, at the next Tribunal meeting, that colonists are sent to the castle to establish a new covenant. If the site is repopulated, French officials may try to gain influence over the castle and reintegrate it within the feudal system — some issues may be resolved in advance if the prospective colonists obtain a royal grant to occupy the site.

## Lutin

**Faerie Might:** 5 (Aquam)  
**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per +2, Pre 0, Com -1, Str -1, Sta 0, Dex +3, Qik +2  
**Size:** -2  
**Age:** n/a  
**Virtues and Flaws:** None  
**Personality Traits:** Servile +3, Dreamer +2  
**Reputations:** Helpful spirit (local) +1  
**Combat:**  
Dodge: Init +2, Attack n/a, Defense +4, Damage n/a  
Broom (improvised bludgeon): Init +2, Attack +6, Defense +3, Damage -3  
**Soak:** +0  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)  
**Abilities:** Area Lore: Normandy 3 (villages), Athletics (jumping) 4, Awareness (people) 3, Brawling (dodge) 1, Carouse (singing) 2, Etiquette (faeries) 4, Faerie Lore (nobles) 1, Guile (superiors) 3, Living Language (eavesdropping) 5, Profession: servant (cleaning) 5, Stealth (indoors) 5, Swim (rivers) 3  
**Powers:**  
*The Master's Things*, 0 points, Constant, Teram: The lutin is aware of exactly what is in the room that he is in, how many of those things there are, and where each item is. The lutin can only classify things by their physical appearance, and he will not necessarily know the purpose of items; for example, unless he had seen it used previously, he would identify a magical wand as be-

ing a "small stick." The lutin can find items that are disguised or hidden in the room by mundane means, but he cannot discern items hidden by magic with a magnitude greater than one. This power must also penetrate to find characters with Magic Resistance. This power has no effect outdoors.

*Soap and Suds*, 1 point, Init +1, Aquam: The floor in the room that the lutin is in becomes soapy and slippery. A character moving quickly in the room (including in combat), must make a Dexterity roll against an Ease Factor of 6 to avoid slipping each round. This power has no effect outdoors.

**Equipment:** Household items (broom, shovel, or cloth).

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Aquam vis, concentrated in the heart.

**Appearance:** Lutin are servile goblins. They look like small people, and sometimes perform cleaning services for households in return for offerings of offal or clean water. Lutin are quite common in the faerie courts of Normandy, and are also particularly attracted to villages that have no church. However, they usually avoid actually meeting people, even those that leave offerings for them. Lutin seem to universally dread a "goblin duke of Normandy," but the Order of Hermes has no information on who or what this individual might be.

## Saints at Rouen

A number of Rouen bishops have been canonized including St. Ouen (641-684), who converted or exterminated many pagans. Several important theological writers worked in Rouen, too, and original copies of their works are stored at Rouen Cathedral, including: St. Victricius (380-409), *De Laude Sanc-*

*torum*: a Theology summae of Quality 11, Level 5; and Liber Regularum: a Civil and Canon Law summae of Quality 10, Level 3.

Hugh of Amiens (1130-74), *Contra Haereticos*: a Divine Lore summae of Quality 10, Level 3, compiled with an Infernal Lore Ability tractatus of Quality 8.



# Seine River Basin

The meandering Seine River is the main link between Paris and the coast; the river basin includes the counties of Rouen, Lisieux, and Evreux, and at the mouth of the Seine is the covenant of Dragon's Rest (see Chapter 11: Confluensis). The river basin is the productive heart of Normandy, with many prosperous towns dotted along the river or its tributaries, and upstream of Rouen the river thrusts its way through the land towards Paris. Centuries ago large areas of primordial forest were felled, but some forest fragments remain including the Forest of Lyons, a favored hunting ground of Norman nobles. The heart of the forest is occupied by a castle, the construction of which eliminated the spirit of the forest (see *Guardians of the Forests*, page 30) — although wild woodsmen say that the forest is not dead and will rise to reclaim its heart.

Farms speckle the cleared countryside and many fields are divided by low stone walls into small allotments. This practice, called bocage, distinguishes the fields of Normandy from those near Paris, and the main food crops grown in the Seine basin are wheat and oats; both are milled to make bread. A small amount of barley is also grown, mainly to make beer, and some peasants pay rent in barley. Unfortunately, barley is temperamental, and lost crops can indebt the peasants. Wheat crops (sown in autumn) are also frequently lost to winter frosts, but the land can be re-sown in spring with dependable, fast-growing oats. Cattle are farmed in the Seine basin too, largely because the climate is really better suited to growing grass rather than bread crops. Finally, viticulture was introduced by monasteries, and today many farms have an allotment for vines; the largest vineyards are built on the banks of the Seine. Normandy wine is sent in large volumes by barge to local urban centers, but it is of poor quality and not normally exported to other regions. Creo Herbam effects might boost the productivity of farms, or produce high-quality wine, but a covenant that magically augments agriculture may find curious peasants knocking at the gate seeking similar assistance.

Also on the banks of the Seine are the ruins of fortified bridges, especially at strategic narrows. These were constructed to impede the upstream progress of Viking raiders.

Most have since been salvaged to build farm and town buildings, but some bridges have been maintained and are now used as toll-houses. Several are said to be haunted by the ghosts of Viking and Frankish warriors, who mutely re-enact their bloody deaths by the light of the waning moon.

## Rouen

Rouen, on the Seine River, was founded by the Romans near a small Gallic village. The Romans named the town Rotomagus, and it was the chief city of the province of Secunda Provincia Lugdunensis. Rotomagus was also the name of a covenant that was briefly sited near Rouen in the ninth century. Today, Rouen is the capital of the duchy of Normandy and was captured by Philip II in 1203. Parisian shipping heading to the Baltic passes through the town, and Rouen used to gather considerable revenues from cross-channel trade, but since the annexation it has undergone a recession. This forced Philip II, in 1207, to try to gain support for his regime by granting a very generous town charter.

There are a number of churches in Rouen, and the seat of the archdiocese is a large cathedral. Romans first built a church at the cathedral site in the third century, and successive generations of worshipers have added to the edifice. Many Norman nobles are interred in the crypt, including Rollo, and some magi speculate that the noble corpses are potent sources of Rego vis — but no one has dared to attempt their exhumation.

There was once a large community of Jewish money-lenders in Rouen, but during the Third Crusade renegade knights murdered many in the town who would not convert. The surviving Jews prospered for a time, secretly practicing their old faith, but since Normandy came under French control, their position has become even more precarious as Philip II has made many anti-Jewish laws (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 123). Nonetheless, a few remaining Jews are involved in Rouen mercantile businesses, and although their influence is much less overt, a magus who floods the Rouen markets with magically derived wealth will attract their ire. On the other hand, the Jewish families in Rouen hold a large number of Arabic and Hebrew texts, and if the persecution of the Jews becomes intolerable, they may seek to swap texts for magical aid to flee into Iberia. Of course, unscrupulous magi might join the persecution and seize the texts anyway.

## Story Seed: Gargouille

The Gargouille was a scaled, magical beast with large, pale, blue eyes that emerged from the Seine in the seventh century, projecting massive volumes of water and destroying crops. St. Romanus (archbishop of Rouen) called upon the townsfolk to help defeat the creature but, except for a prisoner awaiting execution, they were all too afraid. Undaunted, St. Romanus and the prisoner confronted the Gargouille, which St. Romanus paralyzed by making the sign of the cross. The prisoner then dragged the creature back to Rouen to be burned. In commemoration of this event, once a year the clergy of Rouen elect a prisoner from among those condemned for execution, and he is absolved of his crimes in the presence of the relics of St. Romanus.

Several slain townsmen are discovered near the covenant, and the magi are blamed. In a heated town meeting, Archbishop Robert declares that the perverse, unholy magi are the Gargouilles of the 13th century, who must be defeated just as the seventh century monster was. The prisoners held by the town — half a dozen thieves and murderers — are released and with the archbishop they march on the covenant carrying the shrine of St. Romanus (this has a Faith Point total of 5, see ArM5 page 189). If the magi are seen to harm the archbishop and the prisoners, the situation may escalate into a broad crusade against the Order of Hermes in Normandy, and if the magi are innocent they may have been framed.

## Jumieges

The Benedictine abbey of Jumieges was founded in 634 by St. Philibert on the northern bank of the Seine, downstream of Rouen, and over the last few centuries it has been lavishly patronized by the Normans — although they did burn it to the ground in the ninth century. Today, the abbey is an important center of scholarship and learning, and its libraries hold many religious and philosophical texts. The abbey is also heavily involved in French politics — many

## Norman Histories

There are many books, written by monks, on the mundane history of Normandy. Most clergy in Normandy have read at least one of these books, as have most nobles (or at least their officials have). Copies of these books can be found in typical cathedral or monastic libraries.

*Historia rerum Anglicarum* by William of Newburgh (1136-1198) includes an Area Lore: England summa of Quality 7 and Level 5; and an Area Lore: Normandy tractatus of Quality 8.

*The Ecclesiastical History*, by Orderic Vitalis (1075-1141) includes an Area Lore: Normandy summa of Quality 8 and Level 4; an Area Lore: England summa of Quality 8 and Level 3; and a Civil and Canon Law tractatus of Quality 7.

*Historia Normannorum*, by William of Jumieges (1025-1090) includes an Area Lore: Normandy summa of Quality 9 and Level 5; and an Area Lore: England tractatus of Quality 7. Some copies include a final chapter (an Area Lore: Normandy tractatus of Quality 8) added anonymously after the author's death, which updated the history to 1137.

*History of the Normans*, by Dudo of St Quentin (960-1025) includes an Area Lore: Normandy summa of Quality 8 and Level 4; and two Area Lore: Normandy tractatus each of Quality 8.

bishops in France are alumni of Jumieges — and the abbot of Jumieges is consequently an influential man. Over 1,000 monks currently live at the monastery, and a considerable town exists outside the walls to feed the brothers.

A day's travel further downstream is another large Benedictine abbey: St. Wandrille, which was founded by a seventh-century Frankish count, who with his wife, renounced all earthly pleasures on his wedding day. The two abbeys compete for patronage from nobles, but otherwise relationships between them are good.

## The County of Bayeux

Bayeux is a forested county to the west of the Seine basin, where isolated settlements, built in cleared valleys, are often centered on a monastery or manor house. There is also a ruined Diedne covenant, Baiocassium, in the forest. The population in Bayeux has increased over the last century and will probably continue to do so for the foreseeable future, gradually destroying the expansive forest. There are two large towns, near the coast: Caen and Bayeux.

Swine are the most numerous farm animals in Bayeux, although they are barely farmed at all; rather, they are allowed to roam in their natural woodland habitat. Most communities hold an autumnal culling of swine and salt their carcasses for the winter; a single boar carcass can provide up to one hundred servings of meat. Stewardship over the swine is claimed by a number of woodland faeries, and wise community leaders acknowledge the local faerie court (via a festival, or a payment, etc.) prior to beginning the cull. Church authorities, who are very skeptical of the orthodoxy and veracity of the practice, discourage these sacrifices.

The Diocese of Bayeux was founded by St. Exuperius in the first century, and is therefore one of the oldest in Mythic Europe. Bishop St Vigor destroyed a functioning pagan temple here in the early sixth century, and his desecration has not been forgotten by the faeries of Bayeux, who have plotted since to destroy the local influence of the Divine. Another notable bishop was the brother of William the Conqueror, Odo of Conteville (1050-1097); he built a fortified cathedral in Bayeux, and was present at the battle of Hastings, afterward commissioning a tapestry to commemorate the battle.

## The Town of Bayeux

The town of Bayeux was once Baiocasses — the capital of the Gauls — captured by the Romans in the first century BC. Parts of a few Roman buildings still stand, and some current buildings are constructed from stone salvaged from Roman villas or administration buildings. No Gallic structures remain, but the land remembers where they once stood, and there are rumors of a regio in the town

that housed a small Diedne vassal covenant (Baiocassium Minor), although no living magus has admitted to knowing its precise location. In the early years of the Norman duchy, Bayeux was a center for a rival group of Viking colonists, who occasionally rebelled against Rouen, but today it is an uncontroversial part of the duchy.

Important buildings in the town are the mills that service the surrounding countryside and Bayeux Cathedral. Stored in the cathedral is the tapestry, commissioned by Odo, which is really an embroidery almost 100 yards long and a yard wide. Its Latin-captioned images depict the life of Harold, King of England, until he was killed by the Normans. Magic was woven into the threads, and the tapestry forms a +2 Sympathetic Connection to the Duke of Normandy and the King of England.

## Caen

Built on the River Orne, Caen was, during the reign of William the Conqueror, effectively the capital of Normandy — he preferred Caen's remoteness from Paris — and

## Story Seed: White Ladies

The white ladies are a coterie of Sidhe fay, reputedly the sisters of Arthur's Lady of the Lake, who rule a group of faerie regiones scattered near the town of Bayeux. The white ladies love dancing and are constantly searching for mortal partners. Their favorite tactic is to wait at narrow defiles near their courts (bridges, fords, and gorges, for example) and when a potential partner passes, the white lady, with her minstrels, accosts him seeking a dance. Men who refuse to dance, and those that insult the lady by treading on her toes, are thrown from the road by jeering members of her court, but a particularly excellent dancer is rewarded for his prowess. He might even be invited to an extravagant ball, which is hosted every spring equinox by one of the white ladies for her peers. Bringing the best dancing partner is both a matter of pride and determines which of the white ladies is paramount for the following year.





the town was the staging point for many of his military operations including the 1066 conquest of England. Today, Caen's military past is gloriously manifested in an enormous fortress that dominates the town. Construction of Caen Castle began in 1060, and it now covers around 5 hectares, enveloped by a tall, stone crenellated wall, and a dry moat. A hall and keep were added in the 1120s, and recently Philip II built a number of new towers and a secondary, inner wall around the keep. In 1220, workmen are busily tearing down the original gatehouse and tower in the north wall and constructing new gates in the south and east walls. Extra laborers are always required, as are engineers and architects.

William and his wife Matilda also each constructed a large, fortified abbey — the Men's and Women's Abbeys — in Caen. The buildings were the price they paid to reverse their excommunication by Pope Nicholas II. He had excommunicated the pair due to the unwholesome nature of their relationship: they were cousins.

## Cotentin Peninsula

The Cotentin peninsula is a very lightly settled and poor region. This is because much of the land is horrible swamps and marshes, but a few castles and towns huddle on the dry areas. Travelers passing through the forest of Brix (which lies to the south of Cherbourg) run the risk of ambush by packs of ferocious faerie wolves that haunt the forest, but villagers who live in the forest are

## The Infernal Grave of William the Conqueror

William the **Conqueror** died at the age of 60 in 1087 — at the priory of St Gervais, in Rouen — from injuries he sustained by falling from his horse. William's body stank and rapidly decayed, it was defiled by servants, and abandoned by the sycophantic nobles who had gathered to his deathbed. This was a vile augury of Normandy's fate as the duchy fell into anarchy and revolt. Eventually, William was taken from the priory to Caen, and as his body arrived a fire broke out that threatened the town. Against a backdrop of acrid black smoke

and fire, beneath the bleak solidity of Caen Castle, William's funeral was conducted at the Men's Abbey. His bloated corpse burst free of the coffin during the ceremony, and the stench was so foul that the presiding bishops botched the rite.

An infernal text is found by the magi when they search the belongings of an infernalist (*The Conquered Bastard*; an Infernal Lore Ability tractatus of Quality 6). It describes how William's corpse is inhabited by a demon, who may have assisted his military exploits and was responsible for

the rapid decay of William's body. Unfortunately for the demon, the botched funeral rite trapped her in William's decaying corpse. The infernalist's laboratory notes suggest he was attempting to free the demon. The magi in turn may try to free or destroy the trapped demon; either necessitates an exhumation of William that may draw the magi into conflict with the church in Caen. It is, of course, possible that the text is a forgery designed either by infernal agents or Tribunal rivals to embroil the magi in an infernal plot.



able to safely negotiate the forest paths.

There was once a covenant built near the town of Cherbourg called Pagus. The covenant was destroyed during the Schism War, and today some of its vis sources are controversially claimed by a Fengheld (a large Rhine Tribunal covenant) chapterhouse that is built in Cherbourg. The large Quaesitorial covenant of Confluensis is also built on the peninsula (see Confluensis chapter).

### The Hague-Dicke

Ninth-century Norse invaders built a fortified earthwork — the Hague-Dicke — that separated the northwestern portion of the Cotentin peninsula from the mainland. The fortifications were used as barracks for warriors who became stranded and unable to cross the perilous winter seas to Scandinavia. Crews were also staged here during the raiding season. Today, the fortress is unmanned, overgrown, and ruined; its precise course is not even definitely known. Nonetheless, there are rumors of treasures that were looted from monasteries and buried along the earthwork by raiders already overloaded with booty.

### Barfleur

The harbor town of Barfleur was where much of William the Conqueror's invasion fleet was constructed. Since then, many military and mercantile vessels have been commissioned at the Barfleur shipyards. The harbor is not without its perils — William son of Henry I (king of England) was drowned after his ship, while leaving Barfleur, hit a rock in 1120. A number of maritime ghosts also haunt Barfleur, including a spectral fleet that sails past the town during torrential winter storms, futilely seeking a safe berth.

### Avranches

The small county of Avranches lies on Normandy's southern border with Brittany. The town of Avranches, built on the Couesnon River, is the seat of the diocese, but the most important religious site is the Benedic-

tine monastery of Mont St. Michael. Perched on a rocky outcrop near the border of Normandy and Brittany, at the mouth of the Couesnon River, the monastery was founded in the early eighth century by the archangel Michael and draws many pilgrims.

### Mont St. Michael

Once, the site of the monastery (known then as Mount Tombe) was used for druidic rituals by precursors to House Diedne, but this ended in 708 when the archangel Michael appeared before Aubert, bishop of Avranches. The archangel ordered the desecration of pagan graves on the island, and the construction of a chapel. Although initially reluctant, Aubert completed his work in 709, dedicating the chapel to the archangel. Hermetic scholars believe that Aubert destroyed a Magic aura on the island, and that removing the saint's relics might eventually revive that aura, but fear of the Divine and suspicion over the site's early connection to the Diedne have prevented any magi from yet taking this action. The relics held in the monastery today include Aubert's skull and right arm — his skull has a circular hole in it, made when the archangel Michael struck him out of frustration at his early reticence.

In 966 Richard I, Duke of Normandy, sponsored the colonization of the Mont by Benedictine monks from St. Wandrille Abbey, led by Abbot Maynard. Abbot Hilbert began additions to the monastery in 1020, but in 1203 a fire, started by the Duke of Brittany, destroyed many parts. In 1210, Abbot Jordan began an ambitious reconstruction program — if your saga follows history, his works are completed in about 1230.

During low tide, pilgrims can walk to the monastery over a sandy plain less than a mile across, but this is a perilous journey — even William the Conqueror had to be rescued from quicksand when he visited. During high tide, the sandy plain is covered with over thirty feet of water, isolating the monastery. This has mystical significance too, as during high tide the entire monastery enters a Divine regio with an aura of 8. No one may enter or leave the monastery at this time, and even characters who can fly or swim find they are unable to cross the regio boundary. An image of the monastery can still be seen from shore, but this is only an image and does not reflect events actually

### The Fen Ague

Travelers foolish enough to risk the Cotentin swamps must make a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 3. If the roll fails, the character contracts a disease called the fen ague, which causes a Heavy Wound and symptoms including shaking, chills, and a continual fever. Hermetic magic is efficacious against the disease (see ArM5, pages 130 and 180).

### A Foundation Record

The foundation story of the monastery is well known and described in detail in the widely disseminated, anonymous *Apparitio Sancti Michaelis Archangelis in Monte Tumba* (a Divine Lore tractatus, Quality 11).

### Story Seed: The Uncovered Crypt

A covenant member dreams of the archangel Michael pointing towards Mont St. Michael. The dreams become increasingly insistent and urgent, and until the character travels to the monastery, she wakes every morning with a splitting headache — this halves her Study and Lab Totals, and she has a –3 penalty to Concentration rolls. As she arrives at the monastery, construction laborers uncover a crypt beneath the foundations of a tower. Interred within are the fragile skeletal remains of a dozen individuals, and, among the bones, an untitled book. The book is a Holy Magic Theory summa of Source Quality 17 and Level 3 (see *Realms of Power: The Divine* page 66) and a magus who studies this book is visited by the archangel Michael. Michael wants to supplant Hermetic magic, which he views as pagan, with a Divine variant.

occurring within the regio. During low tide, characters may enter or leave the monastery as normal and the monastery has a Divine aura of only 4.





## Montverte

he Autumn covenant of Montverte, one of the five great lieges, is among the most venerable in the Normandy Tribunal and is shrouded in mystery due to its highly secretive inner council. Oft-vilified, it is feared and hated by many due to its aggressive and warlike tendencies. Magi of Montverte were largely responsible for establishing the tradition of Hermetic raiding, and it is only because of their followers' considerable martial and political strength, exercised ruthlessly, that this shady practice endures.

## History

The Viking invaders of the region that would come to be known as Normandy, in the ninth and 10th centuries, were accompanied by sorcerers, some of whom gained acceptance in the Order of Hermes. There were two particularly warlike brothers, Haland and Harivald, who were distant relatives of the Viking chieftan Rollo. Harivald, the younger, was a master of elemental magics — he was inducted into House Ex Miscellanea but later joined House Flambeau and founded a lineage of Flambeau magi that exists to this day. The elder, Haland, was not Gifted, but the two together captured an old Carolingian fort in a prime defensible spot and settled there, erecting a Norman keep. The early history of the covenant, whose founding was announced at Tribunal in 941, is intermingled with that of the descendants of Haland, the lords of Montverte ("green mount"), who took their name from their hilltop castle.

The magi of Montverte grew to dominate and control the lords with whom they cohabited, and co-opted their warriors into their schemes, which involved dubious acts of raiding and racketeering. They began to rob from other covenants, surreptitiously at first, but with increasing bravado. These acts grew into outright aggression during the Schism War, during which the covenant served as a rallying point for many martial Tremere and Flambeau magi.

Montverte's magi were responsible for slaying many of the Normandy Diedne, and the covenant gained significant prestige as Houses Tremere and Flambeau prevailed. In the decades of reconciliation following the Schism War, however, Montverte's raiding continued. Their deeds caused significant discontent among several other covenants until a magus of Montverte, Koilios, deliberately brought matters to a head with a calculated and brazen raid on the covenant of Lapis Crudus (see Chapter 3: Hermetic History and Customs, Mundane Resources), ensuring tacit permission for the practice of raiding by precedent of Tribunal ruling.

In all, the Hermetic history of Montverte has been marred by various controversies and sanctions, and they are widely held to have been responsible for the demise of several past covenants. Nevertheless, they have endured and prospered, becoming one of the major powers in the Tribunal.

## Setting and Physical Description

The covenant occupies a sprawling and formidable Norman keep perched atop a rocky outcropping amid the uplands of southern Normandy. In appearance it resembles a miniature version of the mount of Laon in Picardy (see Chapter 8: Flanders and Picardy, Laon), which inspired its construction. An extensive set of concentric fortifications extends down the hillside, and a series of lush and exotic hanging gardens are arrayed among the walls and turrets. A spring rises near the top of the hill — it was supposedly summoned forth by the ritual magic of one of the early magi of Montverte, who was responsible for the gardens. It descends in an intricate network of diminutive streams, flowing through and feeding the various gardens. In all, the hill somehow manages to combine the appearance of idyllic beauty with stern oppression; it has a Magic aura of 5. A large village, part of the domain of the lords of Montverte, lies beneath the hill in the valley below.

The large inner curtain wall at the top of the mount has the shape of an irregular pentagon, with five square towers at its corners, each of which houses one of the five magi of the inner council. The bulky central keep contains important communal buildings such as the covenant's library, and its meeting and guest chambers. The top floor of the keep consists of the council chamber — a spacious hall, gloomy and dark, which is empty apart from the ancient council table in its center.

## Culture and Traditions

The cornerstone of the comfortable and unchallenged residence of the magi in the castle of a mundane lord — a somewhat unusual situation for a covenant — is the manner in which they completely dominate the will of its ruler, the Baron of Montverte. Although the founding magi began with an alliance with the lord, for many generations the noble family has been completely but unwittingly subordinate to the whims of the magi. The magi are an invisible hand, guiding the noble family with a mixture of crafty persuasion and, where necessary, subtle magics. The status of the magi is seldom questioned; they are referred to by various vague euphemisms such as "the resident scholars" or "our valued guests." The dealings of the covenant with the mundane world are mostly exercised through this pet baron — this has caused him problems with his peers on several occasions, although the strength of his defenses has always prevailed in any number of armed conflicts through the years. Other magi have frequently questioned the Hermetic legality of this arrangement. The magi of Montverte claim (rightly) that they have no oath of allegiance to this mundane lord, and (somewhat less honestly) that they leave him to run his mundane affairs by himself.

The covenant is ruled by an inner council of five elder magi, of which the Archmage Geirlaug is the unquestioned leader. Each member of this council has a different role (described below), and only they are permitted to participate in council meetings. The number of magi in this council is always five — whenever an existing member passes on, a replacement is promoted as needed, usually from the junior ranks, but sometimes instead from outside the covenant, such as a prominent magus from a loyal vassal. The arcane working of the secretive inner council is unknown to the ignorant junior magi, but is a subject of considerable speculation. It is in fact largely dysfunctional — each of its members exercises his role with great individual competence, but with little coordination. Council meetings have a veneer of politeness, with the magi appearing to be submissive to the rule of Geirlaug, but there is a subtle battle of wills underneath.

Throughout its history, Montverte has usually had between one and three vassal covenants, which are subordinate to its will to a greater or lesser extent. Its vassals are often instruments of Montverte's troublemaking, but benefit from the protection of a strong

liege. Due largely to the raiding undertaken by itself and its vassals, Montverte is one of the wealthiest covenants in the Tribunal, and its magi live in considerable luxury.

## Magi

There are five elder magi who constitute the inner council. Traditionally, and currently, it is dominated by magi of Houses Flambeau and Tremere. The number and composition of the junior magi is left for the storyguide to determine, but it is suggested that they number between four and six; the covenant is especially suited to magi of Houses Tremere, Flambeau, Bonisagus, Verditius, and Jerbiton. There is likely a resident Redcap.

### GEIRLAUG OF HOUSE FLAMBEAU

Age: 150? (Apparent age mid-60s)

Personality Traits:

Unpredictable +4,  
Reclusive +3,  
Vengeful +2

An ancient Flambeau Archmage from the lineage of the covenant's founder, Harivald, Geirlaug is an erratic, Twilight-ridden woman who has been the leader of Montverte for more than half a century, and who is very obviously a supreme master of Ignem magics. For many years now, she has hardly ever been seen in person but remains in her tower, an extreme recluse. Certainly she has spent many years in Twilight, although no one is exactly sure when, or for how long. It is widely rumored that her body has somehow become dependent on fire — often great flames may be seen within her tower.

Geirlaug does not attend council in person; instead she appears in a great mirror at the head of the council table. She has the seeming of an elegant but elderly woman with stern, blazing eyes. Her mood is unpredictable; sometimes she is coherent, at other times cryptic, and her frame of mind is often reflected by the dance of flames in the background of the mirror's image. Sometimes she is silent but watchful, at other times she is completely absent. The eccentric nature of her countenance has lead most of the others to question her sanity (although never openly). Geirlaug brooks no insubordination in the council and it acts largely according to her design. She bears an almost irrational hatred for the covenant

of Oleron, resulting from an ancient insult hurled by its former leader many decades ago, and an antipathy towards the other lieges. The covenant's dealings and enemies reflect these prejudices.

### THORMOD OF HOUSE FLAMBEAU

Age: 87 (Apparent age 48)

Personality Traits:

Scheming +2,  
Tidy +2,  
Emotional -3

Thormod, filius Geirlaug, is in many ways the complete opposite of his mater. He is a scrupulously neat man who almost always keeps his emotions and plans hidden well away. He is widely believed to be a specialist in the Art of Perdo, although no one really knows anything at all about his preferences, magical or otherwise. Given that Thormod almost freakishly never exhibits any signs of weakness or doubt, he is secretly the most despised and feared of Montverte's magi. His role is to act as the Hermetic ambassador of Montverte, a job that he conducts with cold efficiency, and he is also responsible for directing the covenant's vassals.

Unlike the other council members, Thormod appears to be utterly untroubled by the erratic behaviour of Geirlaug, and demonstrates absolute confidence in her leadership. If anyone knows her true state of mind, then it is her filius. But if he does know, he's certainly not saying anything.

### EDUARDUS OF HOUSE TYTALUS

Age: 67 (Apparent age 43)

Personality Traits (persona of Edward):

Persuasive +3,  
Charming +2,  
Lecherous +2

Eduardus joined House Tytalus several decades ago. He was apprenticed in House Jerbiton and possesses many of the talents one would expect of a Jerbiton magus — he is artistically cultured and has the Gentle Gift, for example. He serves the council as the steward of the castle, a job which in most covenants would be considered beneath a magus, but which in the case of Montverte has a special importance. The steward is actually a persona he adopts, with the name of Edward. However, the magus is so often in this persona that to everyone else

## Story Seed: Through a Mirror, Darkly

The face of Geirlaug in the council mirror begins to adopt two alternate personalities, which privately struggle against one other. What is causing this, and will the other magi (apart from Thormod, who seems totally unconcerned) notice, and take action? One possible explanation is that a powerful demon has usurped the Flambeau Archmage and is attempting to rule the covenant in her stead, for its own nefarious ends.

## Story Seed: Odin's Magus

The secretive magus Thormod is in fact a prominent member of a Mystery Cult named the Children of Odin (see Chapter 10: Normandy Sagas, The Boar and the Dragon). He has learned to practice Viking magic, and uses his considerable political influence to further the goals of the cult. Perhaps he is related to its hierophant, Queen Skuld, either through blood or tryst.

## Story Seed: The Pirate Covenant

The inner council of Montverte has cultivated an alliance with the pirate magi of Waddenzee, in the Rhine Tribunal (see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal*, page 66), who reside on an island to the north of Flanders. Montverte is aware of the plan of certain Normandy covenants to secede and found a "Lotharingian Tribunal" (see Chapter 10, Normandy Sagas, The Lotharingian Tribunal). In cahoots with the pirate covenant, Montverte aims to thwart it. Waddenzee would initially join the secession but then suddenly declare allegiance to the Normandy Tribunal instead, as a vassal of Montverte. This would likely cripple the nascent Tribunal and partially encircle them in a trap of predatory Normandy covenants. For their part, Waddenzee would welcome membership of a Tribunal that tacitly admits their pirate raiding as legal.



## Rotgiers de Gerberoy of House Tremere

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per -1 (1), Pre +1 (1), Com +1, Str +2 (2), Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik -1

**Size:** +1

**Age:** 78 (52)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (4)

**Warping Score:** 6 (25)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (10)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Gentle Gift; Affinity with Rego, Affinity with Terram, Cautious Sorcerer, Improved Characteristics, Large, Minor Magical Focus (certain)\*, Puissant Single Weapon, Subtle Magic; Feud, Proud; Deficient Form (Imaginem), Driven, Poor Hearing, Susceptibility to Faerie Power

**Personality Traits:** Blunt +3, Honorable +2, Violent +1

**Reputations:** Tourney Champion 4 (Hermetic), Overbearing and Violent 2 (Local)

**Combat:**

*Mace and heater shield (mounted):* Init -2, Attack +15, Defense +13, Damage +10

*Mace and heater shield (on foot):* Init -2, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +10

*Lance and heater shield (mounted):* Init -1, Attack +16, Defense +13, Damage +7

**Soak:** +11

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 1 (horses), Artes Liberales 3 (music), Code of Hermes 1 (acts of aggression), Concentration 3 (Rego), Craft Figurines 2 (of magi), Etiquette 2 (nobility), Finesse 5 (certain), French 5 (Norman), Hunt 1 (mounted), Intrigue 2 (Hermetic), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Leadership 3 (battle), Magic Theory 5 (Rego), Normandy Lore 2 (nobility), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (Tourney), Parma Magica 5 (Corpus), Penetration 5 (Terram), Philosophiae 1 (Ritual magic), Profession: Scribe 2 (about Rego), Ride 3 (battle), Single Weapon 5+2 (heater shield), Teaching 2 (apprentices)

**Arts:** Cr 10, In 7, Mu 7, Pe 17, Re 24, An 11, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 13, He 4, Ig 5, Im 5, Me 8, Te 14, Vi 7

**Twilight Scars:** Rotgiers instills an unnatural fear in weak-willed people, his

old wounds bleed anew whenever his magic strongly fatigues him, objects of metal worn by him never rust, he is deaf to compliments.

**Equipment:** Full chain mail, mace, heater shield, lance. His ornate mace is enchanted as his talisman and his armor is imbued with protective effects. (The listed combat totals do not include the bonuses from these items.)

**Encumbrance:** 2 (4)

**Spells Known:**

*Piercing Lance of Bone* (CrAn 20/+25), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Fast Casting)

*Soothe Pains of the Beast* (CrAn 20/+23)

*The Wizard's Mount* (CrAn 20/+24), Mastery 1 (Multiple Casting)

*Beast of Outlandish Size* (MuAn 15/+20)

*Agony of the Beast* (PeAn 15/+30)

*Commanding the Harnessed Beast* (ReAn 30/+37)

*Purification of the Festering Wounds* (CrCo 20/+25)  
*Preternatural Growth and Shrinking* (MuCo 15/+22)

*Gift of the Bear's Fortitude* (MuCo 25/+22)

*Grip of the Choking Hand* (PeCo 25/+32)

*Stance of the Firm-Buttocked Knight* (ReCo 20/+39)

*The Leap of Homecoming* (ReCo 30/+39)

*Posing the Silent Question* (InMe 20/+18), Mastery 1 (Quiet Casting)

*Aura of Rightful Authority* (ReMe 20/+35), Mastery 1 (Quiet Casting)

*Wall of Protecting Stone* (CrTe 25/+26)

*Edge of the Razor* (MuTe 20/+25), Mastery 2 (Multiple Casting, Quiet Casting)

*Crest of the Earth Wave* (ReTe 20/+40)

*The Unerring Lance* (ReTe 20/+40)

*The Earth Split Asunder* (ReTe 30/+40)

*Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi 20/+26)

*Wind of Mundane Silence* (PeVi 25/+28), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Quiet Casting)

*Maintaining the Demanding Spell* (ReVi 30/+33)

**New Spells:**

*Piercing Lance of Bone*, CrAn 20, R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind: Creates a sharpened lance of hardened animal bone in the caster's hand; this weapon has the same statistics as a normal lance. (Base 10, +1 Touch, +1 Diam)

*Stance of the Firm-Buttocked Knight*, ReCo 20, R: Personal, D: Sun, T: Ind: Prevents the caster from falling off a seat or saddle, even when vigorously disturbed. (Base 10, +2 Sun)

*The Unerring Lance*, ReTe 20, R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind: Cast upon a thrusting weapon such as a lance or spear, this spell will allow it to move in precisely one direction only, directly forward, without any perpendicular deviation. A Rego Terram spell of higher level is needed to deflect it, otherwise it can only be dodged, not parried. (Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Diam, +1 complexity)

**Appearance:** Rotgiers is a very large and burly middle-aged man, stern and gruff, with iron-grey hair and beard. When travelling, he usually adopts the trappings of a knight dressed in chain mail, carrying an ornate bejewelled mace and a giant shield bearing the arms of Mont-verte. Otherwise he wears his charcoal-grey Tremere robes over ostentatious clothes befitting a nobleman.



## Rotgiers de Gerberoy of House Tremere (con't)

Rotgiers, the senior Tremere magus of Montverte, takes great interest in and is responsible for the covenant's martial affairs, organizing its defenses (mundane and otherwise) and its raiding activities. A formidable warrior, he has adopted the mannerisms and trappings of a knight — indeed the baron of Montverte considers him as such. The aggressive raiding conducted by his covenant is sometimes a bloody business, which he conducts ruthlessly, but he is known to treat his victims fairly. His familiar is an ancient warhorse named Simo. Rotgiers holds the

sigils of the majority of the Tribunal's Tremere magi, which is not many since his House has a weak presence here.

Rotgiers is renowned as a fearsome competitor in the Tribunal's Tourney, especially in the joust and certamen contests. In the joust, two of his signature moves are a calculated lance strike that typically hits home with devastating effect despite the commonly employed Rego Terram defensive spells of his opponents, and a surprise attack with a suddenly con-

jured lance of animal bone, which is immune to such magical defenses. He is not above employing some slightly underhand tactics to improve his chances if needed; his servants may surreptitiously gather an Arcane Connection to his likely opponent, which he secretly uses in conjunction with a prepared figurine to increase the penetration of the latter attack, or he will covertly assault his opponent's magical defenses with a silently cast *Wind of Mundane Silence*.

he is indistinguishable from the real Eduardus, about whom very little is known. His primary function is to oversee the baron, and through him the mundane dealings of the covenant and castle. He is a trusted advisor to the noble family, often to be seen sitting by the baron's side — the high chair of the baron is a centuries-old artifact that was enchanted by one of Montverte's early magi with a subtle Mentem effect, so as to ensure its occupant's compliance. (The drawback of continued use of this item has historically been a series of slightly Warped barons.) His secondary function is to ensure the smooth everyday running of the castle. Edward is a sociable and silver-tongued fellow, a womanizer who has entranced several of the female covenfolk, who provide him with valuable gossip that allows him to keep his finger on the pulse of the community.

Eduardus is one of the few members of the purple Fideli, backing Buliste as the true Prima of House Tytalus. He is a proponent of

the Hippian school of thought (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*).

### RUNILD OF HOUSE TREMERE

Age: 64 (Apparent age 43)

Personality Traits:

Oblivious to Mundanes +3,

Catlike +2,

Inquisitive +1

The youngest member of the inner council, Runild, is quite unlike the domineering and larger-than-life personalities of the other four. She is a quiet and unassuming woman who is responsible for overseeing the magical resources of the covenant: its library, its vis stores, and the labwork of the junior magi who are required to donate seasons of work. Runild has just finished training her first apprentice, but has not yet gained her own voting sigil. Her familiar is a

black cat from the lineage of Jerbiton's familiar, and she associates with all of Montverte's numerous cats.

## Covenfolk

The covenfolk of Montverte are synonymous with the household staff of the baron — the large retinue of servants and lackeys that one would expect of a landed noble. The grogs of Montverte, however, are rather too numerous, and too well trained and equipped for a typical baron. All but a trusted and select few of the serving folk and soldiers simply consider themselves part of the baronial household, and are largely ignorant of the truer and more arcane inner nature of the castle — they are unaware of the existence of the Order of Hermes and the fact that they live in a covenant.



## Chapter Six

# Anjou and Aquitaine

Anjou and Aquitaine are united in that both were until recently ruled by the Angevin Dynasty and in conflict with France (see Chapter 2: The Mythic History of France, Romance and Rebellion).

## Anjou

Anjou currently encompasses the counties of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine. The region has seen many great struggles for power. The earliest inhabitants, backed by their druids, strongly resisted Roman conquest, but the cities of Anjou all contain traces of their Roman origins. The Norsemen's attempts to invade in the ninth and 10th centuries saw major cities sacked, and many fortresses were consequently constructed for defense. Weakness in the Carolingian dynastic rule allowed local barons to build up their power, and great rivalries developed in this part of the kingdom. Fulk Nerra (The Black Falcon), who was the Count of Anjou from 987 to 1040, and Count Henry, who became King Henry II of England, are the most significant of these rulers. Under Henry, Anjou became part of a kingdom that reached from the Scottish border to the Pyrenees. Under King John I of England, Anjou was acquired by the French king, Philip II, but he was obliged to fight for many of its strongholds individually. There has been no count of Anjou since 1203, and all of the historic rights, powers, and duties of the count are claimed by the French crown. As in the duchy of Normandy (see Chapter 5: Normandy), Philip delegates his authority to professional bureaucrats called bailli, who each administer a region of Anjou in his name.

The center of power in the once-great Angevin lands, Anjou retains a plethora of castles, monasteries and churches, such that there is little evidence of any powers

other than the church and mundane nobility. These buildings are concentrated in the river valleys, leaving the uplands between clad in forest (pine to the north, deciduous to the south) as the hunting territory of the nobility. Many menhirs and dolmens from earlier times remain among the trees.

The most important river is the Loire, which flows from east to west through the southern part of Anjou. In summer, it is reduced to a few braided streams flowing around islets and sand banks, and in spring and autumn it is prone to flooding, but it is the chief route for trade and travel where flat-bottomed boats with square sails ply. Channels of stagnant water along the sides of the river are refreshed when the river bursts its banks. Fish, eels, and waterfowl are caught here. Tributaries of the Loire cut down through the soft white tufa of the plateaus to expose coarse sands and gravels, which make up many of the valley sides and are excellent for growing vines. These tributaries then flow over fertile alluvial plains. Along many of the tributary river valleys, where there are caves in the white limestone cliffs, up to half the local people live in homes built into the sides of the cliffs, using caves as rooms.

## Angers

Angers, capital of the county of Anjou and for long the center of Plantagenet power, lies on the River Maine. Its buildings combine the pale tufa of "White Anjou" with the dark schist and locally quarried slate of "Black Anjou." The cathedral, dedicated to St. Maurice, is reached from the quay by a long flight of steps; pilgrims come to pray for relief from gout and cramp. Among the monastic buildings of the city are the abbey of Ronceray, founded by Fulk Nerra, the Abbey of St. Serge and the Abbey of St. Aubin. The fortress was a favorite abode of King Henry II of

England, Count of Anjou, and it was he who founded Angers' Hospital of St. John.

Southwest of Angers, on Béhuard Island in the Loire, is a small Christian oratory built over an ancient shrine dedicated to a goddess of the sea. Local people come here to pray for those who work on the river; their attentions have raised a Dominion aura to swamp the level-2 Magic aura of the old pagan shrine. To the north of Angers, the River Mayenne flows through a valley unsuitable for habitable caves and too steep for construction, and so is one of the few places in this vicinity free of a Dominion aura.

## Chinon

Chinon, on the banks of the River Vienne, was a favorite residence of Count Henry, the first Angevin King of England, and he had the great castle built here. The fortress extends along the top of the wooded north bank of the River Vienne, about a quarter of a mile from one end to the other. The buildings of the town below line the narrow streets that run parallel to the river at the foot of the slope. Wine is the most common local trade commodity handled at the quay. The church is dedicated to St. Maurice. Caves in the cliffs to the east are inhabited, and one of these has been expanded to form the Chapel of St. Radegonde. Beyond the town bound-

## Anjou and Aquitaine Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Atsingani, Nidi, Oleron

**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:** Alcuin's Auberge, Ligurio, Nauchefleur, Sinapis, Vexatores

aries lies the Forest of Chinon. It was at Chinon that Henry died in 1189, and John, his son, married Isabelle of Angoulême here in 1200. The Treaty of Chinon, signed in 1214, gave the city to Philip II.

## TAVANT

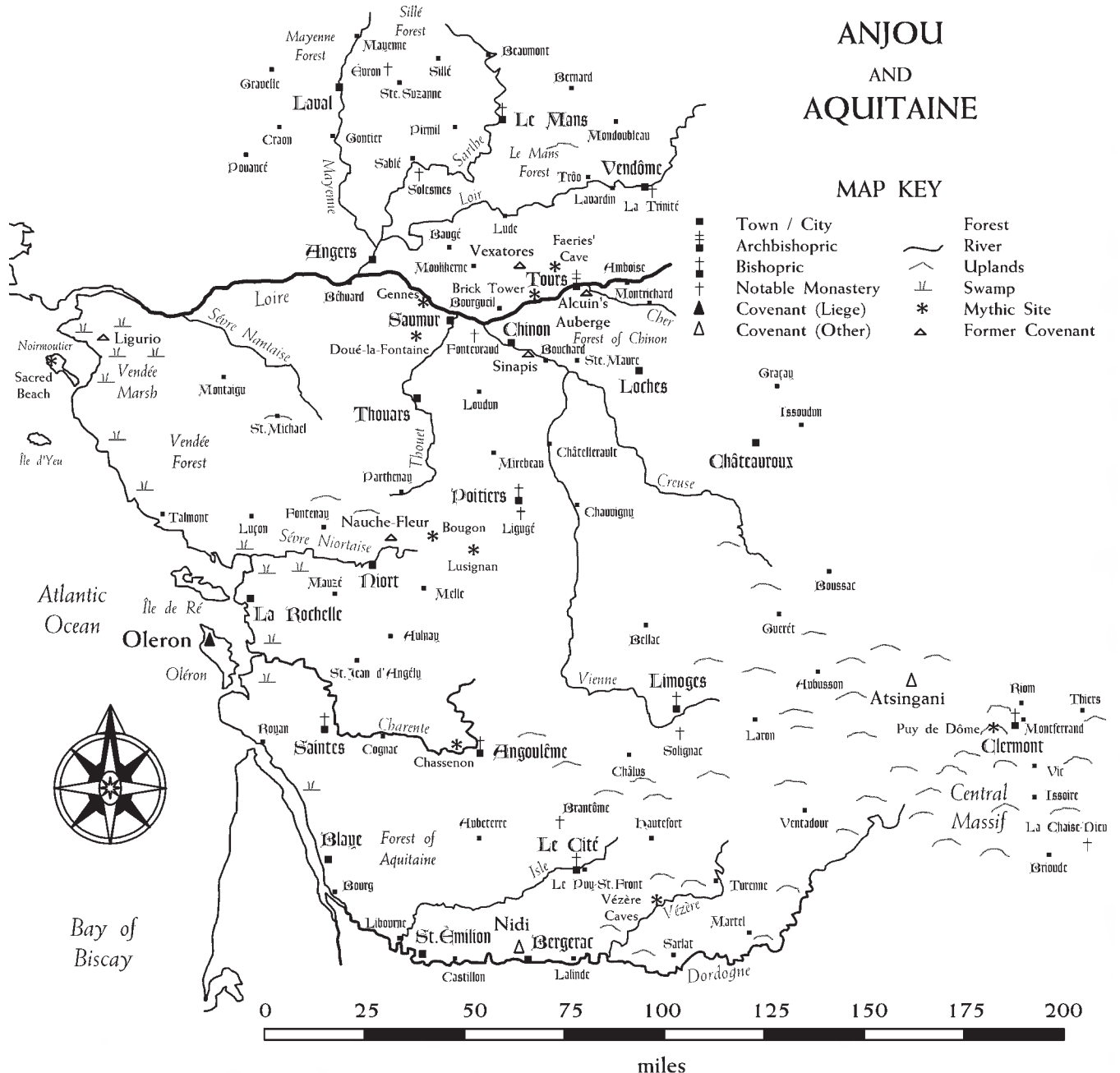
Six miles upstream, at Tavant, vivid paintings of astonishingly life-like figures decorate the inside of a small church. Christ in Majesty adorns the ceiling of the apse, but the paintings in the crypt are less

obviously religious. The people depicted to either side of the crypt entrance hold lilies. The church is also decorated with fine carving, including griffins, sirens, a monster with two bodies, and a tree with a serpent. This building is all that remains of what was once the powerful covenant of Sinapis. Founded in 855, it spawned several vassals including Aedes Sali, Lapis Crudus, and Rothomagus (See Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, Past and Present Covenants of the Normandy Tribunal). Following the conflict between House Tylalus and House Flambeau, it was abandoned in 1063 as its

members left for Provençal and Iberia. Ignorant of its past, a parish that was too poor to build a stone church took advantage of the existing structure. The residual Magic aura can only reassert itself when the Dominion aura is at its weakest.

## Le Mans

The capital of Maine stands beside the River Sarthe and is encircled by the original Gallo-Roman city wall. It contains a





## Story Seed: Leftovers

The menhir was the ritual center of a fertility cult. Folk memory has become somewhat confused (it was not fingers that were put in the holes) and the primary ritual has been forgotten, in which the blood of a sacrificed sheep was poured over the stone at the equinox. If the blood is left to dry, it may be scraped off as several pawns of *Creo vis*. The early Christians wished to plant their church on the same site to quell the cult, but a nasty accident befell anyone who attempted to move the stone, so in the end they incorporated it. The menhir used to generate a small Magic aura in its immediate vicinity of level 6, but as the cult died this faded; now it would give a level 4 aura if it were not for the cathedral. About a year ago, some drunk, local lads rediscovered the old use for the stone's holes, and their wives and sweethearts produced strong, healthy babies nine months later. The tale spread and others have been trying their luck. The church wants it stopped. Their own attempts to deal with the problem have failed. They do not want to ask for help from other clergy, since rivalry is rampant, or to say anything in public that might only encourage the practice to spread; so, through a contact, they ask the magi to find a discreet way to remove the stone.

The menhir might be investigated by a Seeker, as a source of insight into fertility cult practice (see *Ancient Magic*, page 54).

cathedral dedicated to St. Julien, the sculptural decoration of which is rivaled only by that of Chartres. At the south corner of the west front of the building stands a striped, pinkish-hued menhir with a few indentations. When seen from the side in a certain light, it looks like a cowed figure. The menhir is left from the days when this site was sacred to pagans, and the belief continues that it is good luck to put one's fingers into the holes; see the nearby insert for details.

The Abbey of St. Peter at Solesmes, to the southwest of the city, owns a Holy Thorn from Jesus' crown of thorns, brought from the Holy Land by the Lord of Sablé. The relic has a Faith score of 2 (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 45).

## Tours

This city lies on the south bank of the Loire, where it is well placed to draw in trade. The fortress and major ecclesiastic buildings stand within the repaired Roman walls. The major buildings of interest in the old part of the city are the Basilica of St. Martin, an important place of pilgrimage where the saint is interred, and the Abbey of St. Julien. An extension to the city was built beyond the old walls to the west following Viking raids in the ninth and 10th centuries. King Philip took the city from the Angevins in 1205.

As a center of learning, well placed for roads and river transport, with pilgrims coming and going from all parts, Tours seemed a good place for a Mercer House. When the covenant at Lixivia disbanded in poverty in 1124, the Redcaps moved to Tours and a pilgrim hostel was extended below ground to provide accommodation for two resident Redcaps and for Redcaps and magi passing

through the city. Alcuin's Auberge prospered but, like its predecessor, drew unwanted attention and fell to raiders in 1197. Some believe Fudarus sent the ruffians, but nothing has been proven.

To the west of Tours, on a ridge above the north bank of the Loire, is a Gallo-Roman brick tower, 16 feet square and about 100 feet tall, without openings. Its purpose is unknown locally. Roman soldiers constructed it as a vantage point for a Mercurian magician during the conquest of Gaul. The bottom of the tower is in a level-1 Magic aura, but the top is in a level-5 aura.

Southwest of Tours, on the banks of the River Indre and around the village of Azay-le-Rideau, are several small settlements where the people live in caves in the cliffs of soft white tufa. An enclosed valley about four miles to the south, where the many damp caves are currently unoccupied, has a Magic aura of level 4 and a steady source of a little *Aquam vis*, so it might be made into a suitable covenant location.

## Famous Men of Tours

### SAINT MARTIN

For details of this saint, see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, pages 79 and 90. In 371, Martin was living as a hermit near Poitiers but was tricked into visiting Tours. As he neared the city, he heard the shouts of a great crowd assembled to welcome him as their new bishop. He did not want this honor so hid, but a flock of geese honked so loudly that he was quickly found. He then accepted the role and served as bishop for 26 years, although he chose to live simply in a monastery by the city gate, at Marmoutier, during this time.

### GREGORY OF TOURS

In 563, Gregory was miraculously cured when praying at St. Martin's tomb. He stayed in the city and became the bishop there in 573. He wrote books on history and theology including:

*Decem Libri Historiarum* (History of the Franks, in ten volumes): Summa, Organization Lore: Frankish Royalty (Level 4, Quality 14); Summa, Area

Lore: France (Level 3, Quality 14); Summa, Magic Lore (Level 3, Quality 12); Summa, Divine Lore (Level 2, Quality 14); Summa, Intrigue (Level 2, Quality 10). Contains details of the Merovingian rulers, who were known to have supernatural powers.

*Lives of the Fathers*: Tractatus, Church Lore (Quality 10)

*Books on the Miracles of St. Martin* (in four volumes, the last incomplete): Tractatus, Dominion Lore (Quality 8).

*On the Courses of the Stars*: Tractatus, Artes Liberales (Astronomy) (Quality 6); Tractatus, Church Lore (Quality 12).

A commentary on the psalms with details of how to use the position of the stars to determine the time when the night office should be sung.

### ALCUIN OF YORK

When he retired from his post as adviser on education at the court of Charlemagne in 769, Alcuin became abbot at St. Martin's Abbey in Tours. There he established a school teaching Artes Liberales and developed a highly productive scriptorium, which still flourishes.

About six miles northwest of Tours, deep in the forest, is the Faeries' Cave, a dolmen of eight large stones supporting three enormous slabs to form a covered chamber 12 feet long and 4 feet high. A horizontal stone cuts off one end of the chamber to form a small private space. The structure normally has a Faerie aura of level 3, but this rises to 5 when the fae are present; they hold a feast here at least once a year.

## Samur

A fortified monastery was built here in the 9th century for the relics of St. Florent, and a town grew up around it. It was fought over by the counts of Blois and Anjou and, perhaps in memory of the conflict, tournaments are held here during the last week in July. The castle has been damaged and rebuilt repeatedly, most recently following conquest of the town by Philip II in 1203.

## GENNES

Downstream of Samur, at Gennes, is a Roman amphitheatre. There is a small Magic regio close beside this, where several nymphs live in a Gallo-Roman shrine. They will happily talk to visitors about the water cult that gave them honor in Roman times, and may give gifts of Aquam vis to those who amuse, honor, or serve them. However, male visitors might have trouble leaving the regio since the attractive and attentive nymphs are very persuasive and loathe to part with male company.

## DOLMEN OF BAGNEUX

The forests covering the hills around the town hide many menhirs and dolmens. The Dolmen of Bagneux, the largest in the region, is a chamber 66 feet long and 23 feet wide, formed by 16 vertical slabs supporting a roof of four flat rocks, with one central rock pillar. This has a low Magic aura, as do many of the other megaliths that are far enough away from Dominion influence.

## FORTEVRAUD

Upstream, at Candes-St-Martin, a chapel marks where the saint died. It has its porch on the north side, towards the river

where pilgrims arrive. South of here is the Abbey of Fontevraud, where the Plantagenêt family tombs are. It was founded in 1100 by an ascetic hermit who lived in the woods and gathered about him both men and women. He insisted that the foundation should continue to house both sexes and be under the rule of an abbess. The post is usually held by a member of an Angevin noble family. The abbess guides six communities that live close together but independently, for priests, lay brothers, contemplative nuns, lepers, invalids, and lay sisters. Eleanor of Aquitaine spent the last ten years of her life here and was buried here in 1204.

## DOUÉ-LA-FONTAINE

Southwest of Samur, at Doué-la-Fontaine, is an exposure of rock that contains Creo vis and has the power to preserve flesh. During the Merovingian dynasty, thousands of stone sarcophagi were carved out here, but the properties of the stone have been forgotten. To the south, at Le Puy-Notre-Dame, is a church much larger than needed for the local population, but which is a stopping point on the pilgrim route to Santiago de Compostela. It houses the Girdle of the Virgin, an aid in childbirth, brought here from Jerusalem not long ago. This relic has a Faith score of 1.

## Vendôme

Vendôme is criss-crossed by streams, because the River Loir splits into several braids as it flows through the town. Geoffrey Martel, Count of Anjou, founded the Abbey of the Trinity in 1032 when he saw three flaming spears fall from the sky and pierce the ground near a spring. He donated to the abbey the arm of St. George (Faith score of 2) and a tear of Christ, shed at the tomb of Lazarus (Faith score of 3). It is one of the most powerful religious foundations in France. The castle overlooks the town from an outcrop on the south side.

Many of those who live in the valley of the River Loir dwell in caves. The greatest concentration is at Trôo, where the damp caves of the poorer homes are at the foot of the cliff, and steps carved into the rock lead to the homes of the more wealthy on the higher level.

## Story Seed: Three Spears

One spear is on the wall in the castle of Vendôme, where Count John IV of Montoire lives. It looks unusual, having a surprisingly short, dark wooden shaft and a plain, dark iron head of a very out-dated shape. It is useless as a thrown weapon, having no lift and always landing flat. There are two elderly people in the castle who believe that this is one of the spears in the legend. It should not be too difficult to swap it for a new one, but safer to do so by negotiation than theft. One of the others lies forgotten in the bottom of an old chest in a dark corner of the oldest part of the abbey crypt. A farmer's wife who lives a few miles from the city treasures the third as a family heirloom.

Each spear acts as an Arcane Connection to the other two. Once reunited, a drop of red flame containing a pawn of Divine-tainted Ignem vis drips from the point of each on the first Sunday after Pentecost.

## Aquitaine

The duchy of Aquitaine is the largest in France. It extends over 240 miles from the Bay of Biscay on the west coast to the upper reaches of the River Loire, and the northern boundary lies 100 to 150 miles from its southern border. The west is limestone plateau covered in deciduous woodland and carved deeply by rivers, which flow north into the Loire or south into the Dordogne. Both of these two great rivers rise in the Central Massif, a rugged area of hard volcanic rock punctuated by mountain peaks known as puys, which makes up the eastern part of the duchy. The mountain climate is harsh, supporting little agriculture but suiting sheep and goats. The south-facing slopes in the limestone country are perfect for viticulture. The primary special trade goods carried away from here along the great rivers are wine, truffles (see insert), and walnut oil. Along the coast, extensive marshes lie behind sand dunes. Castles stand guard over every road and river route, and there are monasteries, churches and chapels almost everywhere, leaving little space outside the direct influence of the mundane authorities



## Vis Sources Under Threat

Drainage of the marsh by five abbeyes wishing to increase their agricultural land, and hence their wealth, will damage or destroy several vis sources in the vicinity. These include:

**Animal:** Molted tail feathers from pintail ducks over-wintering at a certain pool. Yield 4 pawns per year.

**Auram:** The leaves of a particular aspen tree that quiver as if in a breeze even when in still air. Yield 3 pawns per year.

**Creo:** Unusually large seed cones from a certain alder tree. Yield 3 pawns per year.

**Imaginem:** Plume feathers from some of the egrets that nest in a particular grove of trees. Yield 2 pawns per year.

**Rego:** The bark of a certain white poplar tree on which the usual pattern of black diamond-shaped marks is particularly regular. Yield 4 pawns per year.

and the Dominion.

This area was civilized when Gaul was part of the Roman Empire, and the cities all contain traces, at least, of former Roman occupation. The kingdom of Aquitaine was founded by Charlemagne in 778. By the tenth century, powerful barons in their strongly fortified castles were locked into feuds with each other, largely ignoring any central authority. When Eleanor of Aquitaine married Louis, heir to the Frankish throne, in 1137, their united territory included Poitou, Limousin, Périgord, Saintouge and the Auvergne, which currently make up the duchy of Aquitaine. Following Eleanor's divorce from Louis and marriage to Henry, Duke of Anjou, in 1154, Aquitaine has been central to the ongoing political struggles between the King of France and the King of England. Henry, the present Duke of Aquitaine and second to bear that name, is also King of Engand (Henry III).

The northern part of Aquitaine, north of the River Dordogne, is generally considered to be part of the Normandy Tribunal, even though the people in its southern regions speak Dordonha, which is one of the *langues d'oc*. The only covenant in the region,

Nidi, predates the 1103 ruling of the Grand Tribunal (see Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, The Shaping of the Normandy Tribunal). However, any new covenants founded that far south belong by rights to Provençal, not Normandy.

## Vendée

The northwest corner of Aquitaine is largely thinly populated forest, moor, and marsh. There are no cities in the region and so the Breton city of Nantes (see Chapter 4: Brittany, County of Nantes) is the center of trade. The highest point in the area is Mount Mercury with its village of St. Michael, where the church stands on the site of a former shrine to Mercury, patron of travelers. Since a maga with a particular interest in seeking out such places identified the former dedication, this has been viewed as a place of pilgrimage by Redcaps, who come to pay their respects to Mercury or the saint and take in the excellent view over the forest out to the ocean.

The most extensive of the Vendée marshes covers over 80 square miles. The covenant of Ligurio, a vassal of Fudarus, endured here for about one hundred years (see Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, Past and Present Covenants of the Normandy Tribunal). Very little remains of its buildings as they have sunk into the marsh. A few people live here by fishing and wild fowling. There is a priory of monks from Marmoutier built on a higher patch of land at Sallertaine, and a Benedictine abbey at Chauvet. The local ruler, lord of Montaigu-en-Vendée, lives on the northeast fringe of his watery lands, in a castle at La Garnache.

The coast to the south of the pine-forested dunes, which hold the sea back from the marsh, is rocky and rugged. A demon is trapped in a cave, well below sea level, in the cleft at the far end of one of the rocky promontories. As the waves break and the sea surges up the cleft, his frustrated wailing can be heard and, at high tide when the wind blows strongly, he bellows loudly and shows his anger by sending great explosions of spray up over the cliffs. Longer ago than anyone living here can recall, the sea surged over the low-lying land. The desperate people prayed and St. Hilary came to their aid. He found that a demon was causing the floods, captured him, and drove him down beneath the waves.

## NOIRMOUTIER

The island of Noirmoutier lies off the coast just south of the Loire estuary. It is low lying and marshy in the center, while the southern part is elongated toward the mainland. A dangerous current limits crossings at this point. The isle has a Magic aura of level 3. A sheltered beach on the northwest coast, where the aura rises to 5, was sacred to Gallic druidesses and still has a reputation that keeps most people away. A covenant on this island would benefit from the wealth of seafood available and could gather and sell salt from the marshes.

## La Rochelle

The port of La Rochelle was granted a charter of independence in 1199, and has strong trade links with England and Flanders. Stout stone walls protect it, because ownership of this important port has been disputed between France and England. Currently it belongs to England (although if your saga follows history, a siege in 1224 ends in its transfer to France). There is a castle, a mint, a church belonging to the Templars, and a nunnery dedicated to St. Catherine.

North of the town is an extensive area of marshland around the rivers Vendée and Sèvre Niortaise. Five local abbeyes have recently begun a project together to drain the northern part of the marsh, in order to create more land suitable for cultivation. Unknown to them, this threatens several minor vis sources (see the insert for details). A fortress at Niort, to the east beyond the marsh, guards the region. The extensive Argenson Forest of oak and beech covers the hills to east and south.

## Poitiers

The city stands on a promontory between the River Boivre and the River Clain. The earliest Christians of the region congregated here, and it has remained an important ecclesiastic center. Until the last century, baptisms in Poitiers were only ever celebrated in the fourth-century Baptistry of St. John; the Dominion aura there has faded to level 4. Other church buildings in the city include the magnificent Church of Our Lady the Great, St. Peter's Cathedral

(still under construction), the Cluniac Abbey of Montierneuf, the Abbey of the Holy Cross, and the Church of St. Hilary, the most famous of the bishops of Poitiers. The relics of this doctor of the Church are venerated here.

Just south of Poitiers is the Abbey of Ligugé, the oldest monastery in the west. It was founded by St. Martin in the year 361, when he came here to learn the Christian faith from St. Hilary and lived here for ten years. A small and very ancient basilica stands on the ruins of the Gallo-Roman villa where St. Martin lived; it has a Dominion aura of 5.

Just north of the city is the site of the battle of Poitiers, where Charles Martel defeated the Moors and turned back their advance through France (see Chapter 2: The Mythic History of France).

## Lusignan

The castle at Lusignan was built by faerie magic. A family related to the Counts of Poitiers owns it, and whenever a count is about to die or a new one is about to be born, a female water sprite appears on the castle ramparts. She is named Mélusine, a name taken more than once by supernatural females. Long ago, the Count of Poitiers and his adopted son, Raymond, were tracking a boar through the forest. Cornered, it attacked the count, and while trying to defend his father Raymond accidentally slew the count. Raymond fled away through the forest in panic and did not stop until he entered a glade where three beautiful women stood around a bubbling spring. One of them, Mélusine, agreed to become his wife on condition that she be allowed to spend the Sabbath alone. The couple had many children, all fine people but each with some odd defect. The second son took up residence at Parthenay, where his mother conjured a castle for him, and his descendants live there today. Raymond eventually learned why his wife required a day in solitude: she was under a curse that meant that she spent that day with the lower half of her body in the form of a serpent. He loved her so kept silent on the matter until one day, under stress because one of their children had been murdered during a raid by the Norsemen on the monastery where he was a monk, he let on that he knew her secret. On learning this, she fled the castle forever.

## Story Seed: Mélusine's Warning

Mélusine is seen on the ramparts of the castle for several days on end, although the count is known to be in fine health and his wife is not expecting. A maga is asked to make contact with the sprite and find out what she knows or what she wants, while the count is kept as far from hazard as possible. Mélusine seeks help to protect her spring, which is being turned into a well for a new convent.

## Story Seed: Mélusine's Legacy

The eldest child of Mélusine and Raymond had drooping ears and eyes of differing colors. The second had a red face. The third had one eye higher than the other. The fourth had claw-like nails. The fifth was missing an eye. The sixth had two protruding teeth like little tusks in his lower jaw. Several people displaying one or other of these characteristics turn up at the covenant. They all have Undine Blood and might make useful recruits. One has the same curse as his ancestor and seeks help from the magi to remove it.

## Bougon Tumuli

Bougon lies about half way between Niort and Poitiers. Six grass-covered mounds built of stones and earth are hidden in the forest. It is believed to be haunted, and local people avoid the place. This is an undiscovered pagan necropolis, which could be of great interest to some magi. It was constructed by a tribe who lived here long ago as the burial place for a tribal leader, his family, and a retinue to guard and serve them. Three mounds are grouped close together.

The largest of these is circular, covering a chamber 27 feet across with a domed roof built up with carefully placed small stones. A smaller slab, tipped on edge, divides this chamber into two sections. Close by is an elongated barrow containing two burial places at each end. The smaller of the two circular mounds in this group is 17 feet in height and covers a chamber containing a rectangular platform. Three more mounds are separated from the former three by a low earth wall, and similar walls surround a rectangular enclosure about 260 feet long in which there are two small oval mounds,





## What the Tumuli Might Contain

It is possible that wild animals or darkness-loving fae have taken up home in one of the mounds. Another suggestion is that they are entirely undisturbed. In the largest are meager remains of about 20 skeletons amid a scattering of stones; these were hunters and warriors. The elongated barrow is empty. The smaller of the two circular mounds contains decayed pieces of one disassembled skeleton in a filled-in pit beside the platform; this was a tribal shaman. In each of the two small mounds beyond the earth wall lie fragments of a female skeleton, each with a couple of jet bracelets; these were the chief's daughters, or perhaps his concubines. In the two chambers in the last mound are the remains of a man and a woman; these were the chieftain and his wife. One or more of the mounds probably holds a ghost.

each of which has a passage leading to a rectangular chamber. An entrance at the east end of the sixth mound leads down a low passage to two chambers.

## Angoulême

Angoulême occupies a promontory overlooking the River Charente. Stone walls surround the city, which has a cathedral that was built last century and dedicated to St. Peter. The castle is home to the beautiful Isabella, Countess of Angoulême and widow of King John of England. She is currently betrothed to Hugh X of Lusignan, Count of La Marche. Outside the walls, houses and business premises cluster around the small port.

To the west, at Chassenon, are the remains of a Roman city built around healing springs. A short section of the city wall still stands, and overgrown remnants of the temple and theatre can be found by searching. The only Roman building that is easy to locate is the baths. The roofs fell long ago but much of the walls, pools, hypocausts, and tunnels remain, and the traditional series of changing room, warm room, hot room, steam room, cold room, plunge pools, and exercise room is visible. The healing water

contains *Creo vis*, but its flow is now weak and intermittent. The pagan statues in the temples and shrines were torn down and thrown into the gutters and sewers when Christianity reached here, then buried when invaders demolished the buildings. The water flow will become stronger and predictable if the statue of the right god can be retrieved from the rubble in the ancient drains under the Roman bath complex, and restored to its rightful place in the ruins of the temple.

## Limoges

Limoges is divided into two rival settlements. The ecclesiastic center, known as the Cité, surrounds the Cathedral of St. Stephen, and close by a bridge of the same name was built over the River Vienne in 1210. The foundations of a temple to Jupiter lie below the cathedral. The commercial center has developed away from the river, on the slopes around the castle and the Abbey of St. Martial, which stands on the site of a necropolis where St. Martial was buried. He converted the people of this region to Christianity, and his relics are held in the abbey. The scriptorium here is particularly noted for the splendid quality of its work. Three other churches are grouped around the site of the saint's tomb, to accommodate the great number of pilgrims. The abbey, too, has a new bridge, put up in 1215 and named after its saint.

To the south of the city, at Solignac, is a major monastery set up in 632 by St. Eligius, who was first a goldsmith in Limoges then adviser to King Dagobert I in Paris. To the west, at Noblat, is the Monastery of St. Léonard, a godson of Clovis who lived as a hermit in the forest there.

## Saintes

Saintes is a regional capital on the River Charente where the Romans built a bridge, on which stands the Arch of Germanicus, a Roman votive arch. There is an almost constant stream of traffic crossing here, including many pilgrims on the Way of St. James. Pilgrims rest at the Monastery of St. Eutrope on the west bank or the "Ladies' Abbey," a convent dedicated to St. Mary, on the east bank. The town clusters around the Cathedral of St. Peter on the western side of the river. The hillside to the east of the river was the site of a Roman settlement. Only two places

associated with this are still frequented: in woodland to the west of the town, a small, elliptical, grass-covered bowl that covers the amphitheatre is known for the spring named for St. Eustelle, and, to the northwest, the ruins of the Roman baths still house a warm spring, now dedicated to St. Saloine. The warm spring yields a little *Ignem vis* and the other a little *Aquam vis*.

## St-Èmilion

St-Èmilion stands on a south-facing hillside on the north bank of the River Dordogne. Èmilion, a monk from Brittany who set up a hermitage here, founded it in the 8th century. The town is surrounded by a wall, beyond which lie extensive vineyards that produce the best red wine in the country. Export of this to England is so important that Richard I of England granted the town a charter giving it the status of a self-governing commune, and it is still ruled by the *Jurade*, an assembly of citizens that oversees justice, tax, defense, and the quality of the wine. In the town center adjacent to the marketplace is an underground church excavated around the hermit's cave. The church is about 130 feet long, 65 feet wide, and up

## Lanterns of the Dead

One night, a novice at the monastery at Charlieu was visited by his deceased uncle, who guided him outside to stand in the cemetery. There he saw a vision of a stone tower with a lamp shining from the top of it. The dead man urged his nephew to light a lamp every night in honor of the holy men who rested there. Since then numerous stone towers have been put up in cemeteries across Berry, Limousin, and Dordogne. The height of each is six or eight times the diameter. In the largest, steps lead up to a small platform large enough for two or three people, and there is a place to stand a lantern so its light shines out across the graves. In smaller ones the lantern is raised from inside by pulleys. If a covenant has its own cemetery, tradition-minded grogs request such a tower, but if those buried there are not worthy an angel takes action to have it pulled down.

to 35 feet high, carved to form three aisles divided by square pillars. Many catacombs have also been dug into the soft limestone under the town.

Northwest of St-Émilion, on the bank of the Gironde at Blaye, is Rudel castle. The troubadour Geoffroy of Rudel was born here about a century ago. He composed some of the greatest songs of courtly love and followed its ideals in his own life, being devoted to the far-distant Countess Hodierna of Tripoli.

## Le Cité

Le Cité is situated in fertile, wooded countryside by the River Isle and is the capital of the county of Périgord. A spring, called Vésone and located on the south side of the Isle, was sacred before Christianity arrived. The site is known to some local people, and is a source of Aquam vis. St Front converted the area and established St. Stephen's Cathedral over a temple to Mars, part of the extensive remains of the Roman city of Vesunna. He was buried outside the city, on a hilltop close by, where pilgrims and trade have built up the town of Le Puy-St-Front. The basilica over the saint's tomb is in the Byzantine style. There is great rivalry between the citizens of Le Cité and those of Le Puy-St-Front. In the

latest manifestation of this, Le Puy-St-Front sided with King Philip II while Le Cité, under the Count of Périgord, remained loyal to King John as Duke of Aquitaine.

North of Le Cité is Brantôme, on an island in the River Dronne. The rich Benedictine abbey just outside the town, below the cliffs on the north bank, was founded by Charlemagne in 769. Charlemagne donated a relic of St. Sicaire. The formerly pagan Fountain of the Rock, in caves in the cliffs here, has been taken over by the monks. Pilgrims come to bathe sickly infants in the water.

Downstream, the town of Aubeter-sur-Dronne clusters around the Church of St. Jacques, its western door decorated with carved zodiacal signs. Beside the river, monks are nearing completion of a church carved from a single block of rock. Unlike a traditional church, this has a gallery, a baptismal pool, and side-chapels with tombs. A hexagonal structure, carved out of the same block, is said to contain relics brought back from the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem by Pierre de Castillon, the crusader whose family owns the castle that stands on the cliff above the monolithic church. A steep passage connects the castle to the gallery in the church.

East of Le Cité is Hautefort. The castle here belongs to the de Born family. Not long ago, Bertrand de Born, a well-known troubadour, fought over the castle with his jealous brother, Constantine. Bertrand was a favorite of Henry II of England, who gave him the castle in 1185. Constantine, supported by Henry's son Richard, ruined it the following year. Bertrand's supernatural gift with music was matched by something darker and more destructive in his brother, and it is probable that magic was used to bring down the fortress.

## Bergerac

Bergerac is on the north bank of the Dordogne, where the broad river flows into a wide valley. It is an important crossing point and a port, where wine is the chief commodity. The riverbank behind the town is covered in vineyards.

Upstream is the village of Lalinde, where the river flows through rapids. A dragon, La Coloubre, lived in a cave on the south bank of the river, making it hazardous for anyone skirting the rapids on foot. St. Front (see Le Cité above) defeated the dragon and burnt its body in a great bonfire on the hill above the cave mouth. A chapel marks the spot and commemorative fires are lit here annually. It

## Truffles

A nodular fungus grows around the roots of certain oak trees growing on the limestone plateaus around Le Cité and as far south as the Dordogne. It is valued as an aphrodisiac and some of the nodules contain *Herbam vis*. Each nodule has a purplish-black skin, while the inside is paler and finely veined in white. Fresh ones smell earthy, but over-ripe ones smell horrible. They are harvested from December to March with the aid of pigs or dogs. While the fungus is common, the potent and vis-containing truffles are rare.

is possible that the fires act as a warning reminder to keep other dragons from taking up residence in the cave.

Further still upstream, beyond where the Dordogne forms two great loops, near the village of Limeuil, is a small chapel dedicated to St. Martin that was completed in 1194. A foundation stone set into the wall of the nave reports that it was built at the expense of King Henry II of England in penance for the murder of Thomas à Becket and completed by his son, Richard I.

## Vézère

The River Vézère flows southwestwards to join the Dordogne close to Limeuil, winding between high limestone cliffs. There are very few settlements in the valley, the only one of any size being against the cliffs at St. Christopher's Rock, about half way along the valley. Here, people live at five levels up the cliff face, in homes that are partly caves; these are built on ledges and reached by staircases.

An extensive Magic aura lies under much of the lower part of the valley and stretches tongues out to Rouffignac on the west side and along the Beune valley to the east. The aura reaches the surface in a few places at level 1. Below ground, and as yet undiscovered, lie numerous caves and passages. The walls and ceilings of many of these are decorated with carved or painted images of creatures — deer, horses, powerful bulls, and massive beasts with great curved tusks. Places with the most vivid depictions have a Magic aura of 5 or 6, aligned with Animal (see *Realms of Power: Magic*). Members of Clan Ilfetu in House

## The Way of St. James

After Jerusalem and Rome, Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain is one of the great places of pilgrimage. The main overland route traverses Anjou and Aquitaine, taking in Tours, Poitiers, Melle, and Saintes, to a crossing over the Dordogne at Libourne near St-Émilion. Alternative popular routes are via Angers and Niort, and from Poitiers to Angoulême and Aubeterre. Pilgrims from England, Normandy, and Brittany are likely to travel by sea and join the route at one of the ports on the Gironde estuary. Hostels and hospices along the way accommodate the travelers. They call at a great many shrines, chapels, and churches along the way. Joining such a group is a good way for magi to travel without exciting too many questions, as long as they are careful.



## Story Seed: The Rivals

The rivalry between the bishop of Clermont and the Count in Montferrand (see the section on Clermont), and that of the bishop of Le Cité and the Count of Perigord with the bishop of St. Front (see the section on Le Cité), are both potential traps for the Order. Both sides in each dispute want the higher prestige nationally, the greater respect and influence in the surrounding area, and the maximum opportunity to gain income from taxes.

A covenant, or an individual magus, comes to the attention of one of the protagonists, in circumstances where it is not easy to escape. Someone has been seen using magic, perhaps, or has been discovered flouting the law of church or state. The incident will be forgotten, if only the magus, or the whole covenant, will use their abilities to aid one side against the other. What if both sides are trying to use members of the Order to help their cause?

Bjornaer know of a cave in this vicinity that is an ancestor site, suitable for House rituals (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 25). There are also other caves adorned with the natural sculptures of colored rock, stalactites, stalagmites, and crystals. The most spectacular have the highest aura, up to level 6, and one or two of these are aligned with Imaginem. A series of linked small caves and low passages leads into a regio. At the lowest level, with a Magic aura of 3, there is enough light to see unaided and the pictures on the walls look fresher. The higher level has an aura of 5. Within it, a wide landscape opens up of rolling hills, grassy plains, dense forests, and broad rivers populated by a wide range of animals, some very familiar and others only recognizable from the pictures on the cave walls.

## Clermont

The site now occupied by Clermont was formerly a sacred wood used by druids when the Romans ruled here. There is nothing left of this now except a clump of stunted trees on a site to the southwest of the cathedral, adjacent to a market, where the soil is infil-

trated by a mineral-rich spring. Some members of House Diedne knew of this place and discovered a way into a regio containing a healthy grove of trees with a Magic aura of level 3. Inside the regio, a spring yields Teram vis. The way in and out is only accessible when the moon is full.

The Lord Bishop of Clermont rules the city. The buildings, largely of the local black stone, include a basilica and cathedral, both dedicated to Our Lady, and over thirty churches and chapels. The adjacent town of Montferrand developed around the Count of Auvergne's castle. There is great rivalry between the two rulers and the fortifications of Montferrand are being strengthened at present.

A road leads south from Clermont between two vast areas of upland forest, where population is sparse and confined to the valleys, and winters are harsh. The forest to the east covers the lower slopes of the Livradois uplands and, beyond, the slopes of the granite mountains of Forez. The summits are moorland, and often shrouded in mist. In summer, women and children tend livestock here while the men till the valleys where the villages are located; the moors are deserted the rest of the year. The area of Forez is ruled from Couzan Castle. The most powerful ruler on the southern part of the plateau is the abbot of the monastery of St. Robert at La Chaise-Dieu, who is responsible directly to the pope and whose monastery of around 300 monks heads a network of over 200 priories in France, Spain, and Italy.

## Auvergne Mountains

On the west of the road south from Clermont lie the ancient volcanoes of Puy de Dôme, Puy de Sancy, and the Cantal Mountains. On top of the Puy de Dôme is a shrine, dedicated originally to Lug and then to Mercury, and finally to St. Barnabas. Local belief is that the sorcerers of the Auvergne meet here at the dead of night, but this is a memory passed down from the days of the Mercurian magicians of Rome. The remains of a Roman road lead up to the summit through the forest that covers the steep sides of the Puy de Dôme. If one ascends on foot, staying exactly on the road, the route leads through a regio boundary into a small regio with a level-3 Magic aura where the temple of Mercury stands abandoned and roofless. As yet, no one has found the higher regio level here, where the temple is intact, nor a pre-Roman route up the puy to the shrine of Lug.

Long before people lived here, this region

was the scene of a great struggle between powerful magical creatures of air, water, earth, and fire (for details of such creatures, see *Realms of Power: Magic*). Their battles left the dramatic mountain scenery. There are numerous places with a low-level Magic aura, usually where there is a particularly lovely lake or waterfall, or a distinctive rock formation; some of these yield vis. For example: a rock at Tuillière looks like gigantic sheaves of wheat and contains Creo vis; throwing a piece of polished black basalt into Lake Pavin on the darkest night of the year summons up a great storm, from which several pawns of Auram vis can be gathered; Rego vis is contained in certain pebbles, reminiscent of foodstuffs in shape, caught periodically in the hollows known as giants' cauldrons at Bort-les-Orgues, and Bort is also a source of Imaginem vis, contained in the echo off the gray columnar rock there, when the right sound is made.

A powerful fire elemental has dwelt deep underground here for eons. Its presence has given rise to the hot springs and heated gases found at Royat, le Mont-Dore, and la Bourboule. Both the water and the gas can aid healing — the water for skin complaints and aching joints, the gases for respiratory ailments. Treat half an hour spent immersed in the water or breathing in the gas as giving a +3 to the recovery roll (see ArM5, pages 179 and 180). Prolonging the exposure is counter-productive and will cause injury, due to the temperature and noxious composition of the water and gas. Aquam, Auram, Creo, and Ignem vis can be gathered in these places as tropaea.



## Oleron

The covenant of Oleron is descended from a faerie court of the Arthurian Age. Its members are Merinita magi who enjoy stories of feats of arms, passionate wooing, and tragic deaths. For members of their House, they display an unusual interest in certamen and in the lives of the peasantry. The covenant is linked to the mortal world at an orchard, called the Apple Mile, where the leadership of the covenant is contested.

## History

In the time of King Arthur, a young knight named Lanval won the heart of Triamour, the Faerie Queen of Oleron. After an adventure of love, loss, and reunion, he was taken there to live forever. Knights of Arthur's court were invited to challenge him at the entrance to the regio any Midsummer's Day, to prove their manliness. None who fought him prevailed. In time, memory of the challenge site's location was lost, retained only in folksongs. The challenge site, an orchard whose trees produce small, sour apples, was shunned as unlucky.

In 1028, Kherion of Merintia found the challenge site and defeated Lanval. He married Lanval's daughter, who had become the Faerie Queen of the Court of the Apple Mile. The covenant's isolated location, and the enormous defensive capabilities provided by the Sleepers on Stone Couches, described below, has allowed the covenant to take part in the Order's crises without suffering reprisals. The covenant is now ruled by Caprican of Merinita, the consort of Triamour's great granddaughter. The covenant has five members, three of whom are Merinita magi.

## Setting and Physical Description

The Apple Mile is a regio on a small island in the Bay of Biscay, named Oleron. The island is famous for its fisher folk and traders. The regio corresponds to a portion of the north of the island, and some of the surrounding sea. The people of Oleron know that the Apple Mile exists, and generally avoid its inhabitants.

Within the regio, which has a Faerie aura of 5, it is always summer. The magi and their chief servants live in a splendid castle, surrounded by a town that houses their lesser servants. The town has a harbor, and is surrounded on the landward side by cropping fields that peter out into an endless orchard filed with sweet apples. Roads appear to lead to other places, but after long detours come back to meet each other, so that the covenant lies isolated. Only two roads, one leading to the mortal world and the other to the Stone Couches, lead to anywhere of significance.

The Stone Couches are tumuli: cenotaphs built from great slabs of stone that have been covered with earth to produce artificial hills.

Each Stone Couch commemorates a particular hero. Over time, the cenotaph creates a skeletal corpse as its inhabitant. This faerie duplicate of the commemorated hero gains flesh over the years, until after many decades it begins the slow, steady breath of a sleeper. The Sleepers are roused during crises, but otherwise await a prophesied day when they will awaken to wage war against evil.



## Culture and Traditions

This covenant's traditions are a curious mixture of historical chivalry and contemporary romanticizations of the past. The covenant changes slowly, so that its buildings and inhabitants seem suited for historical stories of courage and love. Magi interested in history will notice many discrepancies. The three most significant examples are the castle in which the magi live, which could not have been built in Roman times, Lanval's coat of arms on many ancient items, when knights of his period did not use coats of arms, and Lanval's armor in the dining hall, which is too modern and too shiny.

The covenant is ruled by a faerie queen, her magus consort, and his council of advisers, which includes most of the covenant's magi. The inhabitants of the covenant are a mixture of humans and faeries, gathered together

from a multitude of cultures and times. Faeries have been spiriting people away to the Apple Isle for thousands of years. Human abductees, faerie versions of these humans, and the descendants of these humans, mix under the distorting influence of the ascending queens, maintaining an eclectic, colorful culture.

## THE QUEEN'S CHAMPION AND THE CHALLENGES

The consort of the faerie queen, who embodies the realm, rules the Apple Mile. The right to act as consort is won by defeating the previous champion in a contest of arms at the entrance to the regio on Midsummer's Day. The challenger drives an axe into one of the apple trees that surround the site, a desecration of which the faerie queen is immediately aware. The champion must confront the challenger before sunset on the following day, or the link between the mortal realm and the Apple Mile will fail, a detail known only to magi within the covenant and a handful of outsiders.

The confrontation must be a demonstration of arms, although it need not be fatal: in recent decades, certamen has sufficed. If the challenger flees or is defeated, he must apologize and make restitution to the faerie queen. This takes the form of a difficult task, set by her and enforced by the mystical traditions of the site. This may be resisted as a ReMe effect with a Penetration of 75 (due to the mystical connection forged by the process of the challenge), that forces the magus to complete the task. The queen cannot set suicidal tasks, but challengers tend to be magi skilled in combat, and tasks that such challengers merely find extremely difficult are acceptable.

If the challenger is victorious, he must marry the daughter of the current faerie queen, who takes her mother's role once the ceremony is complete. If the current queen has no daughter, one appears the evening following the challenge, already an adult and with a lifetime of memories. The faerie residents of the regio, and the humans without Magic Resistance, also remember the princess' life. If the challenger refuses to marry the princess and take the role of champion, he is considered defeated and must apologize, as detailed above. When a new queen embodies the land, it often changes slightly to suit her personality.

The defeated consort and his emeritus queen generally continue to live in the Apple Mile. Some ex-queens take the



opportunity to travel the mortal world, visiting major faerie courts and Merinita covenants. Some defeated consorts allow their Magic Resistance to fail at an appropriate time, so that they can recall the life they are believed to have led with their new daughter.

## SPREADING STORIES AND CREATING HEROES

The Stone Couches, described above, are like kilns used to craft faeries that duplicate folk heroes. The creation of new tumuli is one of the powers of the Faerie Queen of Oleron, so Stone Couches are not known to be found elsewhere. The power of the faerie that the Couch creates is strongly tied to the Reputation of the original folk hero among the common people of the lands touching the Atlantic.

A tumulus will build a skeleton for its hero after three years, and grow his flesh over the next eighteen. At this point, the hero begins to breathe and is called a Sleeper. Sleepers continue to gain power: even the oldest Sleepers are continuing to do so, although the rate at which their Might increases slows dramatically after the first one hundred and fifty years. The powers, abilities, and Might of Sleepers conform to what they are believed able to do in the folklore of the communities that border the eastern Atlantic Ocean.

The Sleepers wake only when the covenant itself is endangered, when awakened by the faerie queen, or when roused by a particular incident suited to their story. After this disruption is complete, many return to their Stone Couches to wait for a time when, the covenantfolk say, all the Sleepers will wake, for a final battle against an unnamed evil. This belief may itself be a story designed to wake all of the Sleepers at the covenant's most desperate need. Some Sleepers remain awake, living in the Apple Mile or other places. The Couch of such a Sleeper begins growing a duplicate of him, which, if roused, has all of his memories.

Real humans, not aligned to another realm, may be buried in a Stone Couch. They become faerie versions of the previous human and suffer the lassitude of most Sleepers. They are generally not famous enough with the common people to be more than minor faeries, unable to safely venture from the Apple Mile. Faerie magi consider this style of life as a minor faerie far less than their due, and prefer the Mys-

## Oberon

An example of the construction of faerie heroes is Oberon, who was a Sleeper but is now active in the Apple Mile. Several centuries ago, the magi here began to grow a faerie version of Alberich, the magician brother of Merovech, the founder of the Merovingian Dynasty. Recently, they decided he would not be as useful as they had hoped. The rise of the Capetians had eclipsed his usefulness, and some Merinita magi had claimed to have met a similar creature already, in Arcadia. They decided to change his character, and have been spreading a song called "Les Prouesses et faitz du noble Huon de Bordeaux" ever since.

This tale is based very loosely on fact and set in the 9th century. The wicked son of the Emperor Charlemagne ambushes Huon of Bordeaux, who kills him in self-defense. Huon is banished from the imperial court until he can visit the palace of the Amir of Babylon, steal a hank of his hair and four of his back teeth, kill the amir's finest knight, and kiss the amir's daughter three times. Huon does this with the aid of a dwarf-king named Oberon, who has

many magical powers and a cup of plenty.

After the story became popular, the Faerie Queen of Avalon permanently woke Oberon. He is sufficiently powerful and cunning to be able to work as a servant of the covenant in the mortal world, but he looks like the most beautiful three-year-old boy ever born, and his appearance limits his usefulness in towns. He is said to be the son of Julius Caesar and Morgana Le Fay, which might indicate the abilities that he uses on behalf of the covenant. He has a horn that banishes hunger and thirst, cures sickness, draws people to the horn regardless of their will, and lifts heaviness from the heart. It is a simple roll on Faerie Lore to recall that he has a power that captures the will of those who speak to him. He is skilled in illusions, and either owns many other magic items, or creates their semblances using his powers.

Now that the childlike Oberon is permanently active, a second Oberon is growing on his Stone Couch. This one is surprisingly tall — larger than human size. The magi of the covenant do not know why the new version appears so strange.

tery of Becoming detailed in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*.

## LOOKING FOR OTHER EXITS

Magi from this covenant worry that their link to the mortal world might be severed by failing to meet a challenger. Those skilled in Arcadian travel often explore the roads leading from the covenant, or voyage on the covenant's sea, hoping to find links either to the mortal world or to Arcadia. None of these voyagers has yet been successful.

## Magi

The covenant's magi embrace its culture of romantic feudalism, so they are more interested in warfare than is usual for members of House Merinita. They also have an ideal of the obligations required of nobility, so they patronize their common people to an unusual degree. The three magi most likely to interact with outsiders are described below.

## CAPRICAN OF MERINITA

Age: 92 (Apparent age 55)

Personality Traits:

Loves Wife and Family +4,  
Proud +3,  
Suspicious of Tylalus Magi +2

The covenant's leader and champion is an older magus who spent his early years fighting as a mercenary in wars between the faerie courts. He became leader of the covenant at the request of the previous champion, who feared he would die without being bested by a challenger, which would have unknown results. Caprican's wife is called Lysette, and he has an infant daughter named Columbine. Caprican sees Columbine's birth as an indicator that he is likely to lose the right to rule the covenant in the next few decades.

Caprican follows the careers of other magi, and the gossip that surrounds them, with a great deal of interest, attempting to determine the identity of his heir. Lacking any promising challengers, he may begin to cultivate a character that catches his interest. He dislikes Tylalus magi, and is willing to use Wizard's War, even war between covenants,

to prevent his heir coming from that House. His history of rivalry with Tytalus magi aside, he knows that his daughter will necessarily love his heir, regardless of his qualities as a man, and cannot see how a woman could be happily married to a creature dedicated to strife and subjugation.

Caprican's dislike of Tytalus magi has been fruitful in recent years. Fudarus is all but empty, its leaders busy with their internal struggle and its members decamped to Britany. During this time of weakness, Caprican has assisted other covenants in claiming the resources of his rivals. He has increased the number of vassals his covenant has, and fortified them. He knows that if the Tytalus magi discover his role, he will suffer reprisals when the House coheres behind a new leader. This does not trouble Caprican: given the persistent desire to inflict strife on others found in House Tytalus, and the proximity of Oleron to Ushant, periodic attack seems almost inevitable anyway.

Caprican has Strong Faun Blood, and his magic is focused on controlling the emotions of people and animals. He is an active member the Keepers of a Thousand Tales, but his role is controversial. He does not share that group's focus on Arabic stories. Some members of the group, who are aware of the Stone Couches, see them as directly opposed to the group's goal of making sure

that stories live on in Arcadia. They see the Couches as fixing stories to a single place, and a single version.

## AMELIE OF MERINITA

Age: 33 (Apparent age 33)

Personality Traits:

Curious +3,  
Meddlesome +2

Amelie is the maga most likely to act as spokeswoman for the covenant, and to travel on the covenant's behalf. She is shorter and slighter than average, and uses illusions to give herself blonde hair. She has the blood of a river nymph in her ancestry, which in her particular case causes her to be naturally bald. She also has webbing between her toes and fingers, so she always wears mittens and shoes in public.

Amelie is not a particularly skilled negotiator, but she knows this and so she is willing to allow deals to fail, or to ask potential partners to make their case to Caprican. She uses her role as spokesperson and negotiator for her covenant as an excuse to travel and visit interesting places and people. Her magic is focused on the art of Aquam, and she is particularly skilled at creating unnatural liquids.

## QUINTINUS OF VERDITIUS

Age: 40 (Apparent age 35)

Personality Traits:

Self-effacing +2,  
Enthusiastic +2

Quintinus is an odd Verditius magus who came to this covenant because he was interested in magical brewing, particularly using cider. When an earlier member of the covenant who was skilled in similar things passed away, Quintinus asked for membership and access to the laboratory of his predecessor, which was granted. Quintinus is now the magus charged with the construction of new Stone Couches for the queen. He sees his current work, helping the queen make faeries by constructing their incubators to her design, as far more rewarding than his House's culture of magic item creation, and he might soon request to change Houses.

He refused to participate in the games of status played by Verditius magi, which has allowed him to avoid the antagonism of his Housemates in the Tribunal. His refusal to discuss his work with the Stone Couches does, however, make it appear that he is lazy or incompetent, so his reputation and status within his House is very poor.

## Ogier the Dane

One of Charlemagne's paladins was a Danish prince named Ogier. Folklore says he was carried off by Morgana le Fay, to the Isle of Avalon. She gave Ogier a magic ring that rejuvenated him, and she kept him as a lover for two hundred years. After this, Ogier accidentally dislodged the crown of forgetfulness she had placed on his head, and he escaped Avalon. He traveled to the court of one of the Capetian kings, marshaled the French forces against a Norse invasion, and was about to marry the widowed Queen of France when Morgana recaptured him. Myths in Denmark say he will return when his homeland needs him. Some of the Sleepers predate Hermetic colonization of this regio, and there is one Sleeper who might be a powerful faerie version of Ogier the Dane.

Denmark is of interest to select Rhineland and Norman magi, who see the

potential to colonize it. The assistance of a mythical hero might make this simpler. The problem is that Ogier, if the myths of his French adventures refer to this faerie, is very difficult to control. One of his first actions would be to seek service with Phillip II, which would almost certainly bring unwanted attention. Ogier has awakened and escaped the regio at least once already, so he might spontaneously do so again if something terrible happens in Denmark.

The Sleeper is wearing a ring that seems similar to Ogier's rejuvenating ring. A person who puts it on dies instantly: his soul flees his body. In his place is a faerie that believes it is, and might even actually be, the person's spirit. These faeries are rarely powerful, and Merinita magi who follow their House Mysteries become faeries that are far more significant.

## Vassals

This covenant prefers vassals who have strong defensive features, and arranges vassalage as an economic relationship in which surplus is harvested in the regio of Oleron in exchange for mundane resources that the vassals procure. This supplements supplies purchased through House Mercere. The covenant has traditionally refused to take vassals lacking strong defensive features, but has accepted unusual vassals to exploit Fudarus' present weakness.

Oleron usually limits its acquisition of vassals for fear of harassment by House Tytalus. The faerie regio itself is likely unsailable — any invader would face the combined power of the magi and all of the Sleepers, including a few designed specifically for home defense in the covenant's earliest years. The easiest way for Fudarus to harass its rivals, then, is by attacking their interests outside the regio. Weak vassals are perfect targets, and have been the foci of battles between Autumn covenants.





## Nidi

Bjornaer and Merinita magi usually see urban spaces as wasteland, but the magi of Conventio Nidi are exceptions. They see that as towns grow into cities, and the communities within them fragment, wildness creeps back into urban spaces. They seek niches in towns that they can exploit. Their symbol is the badge of Henri, the nobleman who serves this covenant. Nidi has no distinctive mark of its own.

## History

This covenant was founded as a vassal of Oleron in 1100. Its site was lightly forested and

far from mundane settlements. As the cities of the tribunal grew in the twelfth century, this area was transformed into cropland. The thriving port of Bergerac lies barely an hour away by foot. Most of the Merinita magi of the covenant left for wilder places. The two remaining magi, Regulus of Merinta and Micropedus of Bjornaer, decided to embrace urbanization. They were recently joined by Luna of Bjornaer. This covenant changes its name each time a new magus becomes its leader – its current name refers to the starling heartshape of Micropedus.

## Setting and Physical Description

The magi live, and have their council chamber, in a small castle belonging to Lord Henri, a minor nobleman of Aquitaine. Henri's father was recruited as nominal overlord of the covenant once deforestation made the covenant's discovery by mundanes inevitable. Henri knows that his "guests" are wizards, and that in exchange for acting as their host and providing other services, he will be granted a healthy and extended old age. Henri retains his pride, and so the magi never give him orders, but instead make requests of him. Henri has never actually declined a request, but it would rankle him to be treated like a grog.

The manor that Henri now governs was originally the covenant's main building, and the forest to the south and east has been cleared for farmland. The land to the west is used as "waste:" forested land where peasants can leave their animals to forage and collect wood. To the north of the covenant is the chase — a piece of land kept exclusively for the lord to hunt in.

The chase hides the rich vis source that justified the covenant's foundation. It is a grove of oaks, possibly druidic, overgrown by enormous lilac bushes that are perpetually in flower. These flowers produce *Herbam vis*. Regulus has found a way of converting the vis in the flowers into honey that contains Animal vis, but one third of the vis is lost in this process. The areas around the grove are scattered with wax statues of classical heroes, created by Regulus and his bees.

The entrance to the covenant's laboratories is hidden within a clay riverbank half a mile north of the castle. To enter the laboratories it is useful to be of smaller than human size. The one human-accessible entrance is through a hollowed tree that is infested with bees. The stings of these tiny soldiers encourage local people to leave the significant portion of the riverbank alone. This part of the river was once the home of a water nymph, and has a weak Faerie aura.

## Culture and Traditions

Starlings are wild birds, but they make their nests in the eaves of human houses. This allows them to use humans as protectors, because mundanes are unwilling to allow predators to survive near them. The starlings also consume any overlooked resources, like spilled food or water. Micropedus of Bjornaer convinced his colleagues that this philosophy might serve magi just as well.

A small group of magi can, they believe, survive in the spaces ignored by mundanes. It can draw unconscious protection from nearby people, and live as a parasite on their communities. They have adopted the family of a minor knight as their nobleman, arranging for him to have mundane title to the lands and buildings that comprised their covenant. This hides their presence from other landowners, and provides them with shield grogs. They have declared their key sites a chase: an area which people expect the knight's men to patrol, to dissuade trespass and prevent settlement. This should prevent the Dominion from spreading to them.

## Story Seed: Deliberate Weakness

Nidi is relatively feeble: it has few magi, relatively few magical resources, and is very close to mundane settlements. Its apparent weakness is a deliberate ploy on the part of the Oleron, its liege. Nidi has many magical items that it never uses, and the Covenant of Oleron has rapid travel magic that will enable it re-enforce Nidi when it faces particular challenges. The magi of Nidi are forbidden to use these extra resources except with the permission of their liege, or when threatened by magi from Fudarus.

Oleron's leadership believes that eventually the magi of Tytalus will resolve their civil war, or the lieutenants of each side will tire of it and leave to seek their own challenges. When this occurs, the Oleronese believe the Tytalus magi will return to their historical pattern of provocation in the Tri-

bunal. Oleron is a powerful covenant, and therefore a suitable challenge for them, but so self-reliant and well defended that only trivial troublemaking is possible. Nidi, which is the weakest vassal of Oleron, has been designed to appear as a suitable proxy.

Nidi has been subtly reinforced so that the Tytalus magi involved in any serious challenge underestimate it, are repelled, and can be revealed to the Tribunal. Its hidden resources include many small magic items, copies of a very impressive *Aegis of the Hearth*, and servants trained by awakened Sleepers. Nidi also makes a show of paying its tithes, by Redcap and at Tribunal, but has had this vis reimbursed or traded at favorable terms for other types for over thirty years. Nidi's magi have been promised membership of Oleron, or one of its other vassals, should their covenant fail.

## Magi

The magi of this covenant are from Houses whose members traditionally favor living in wilderness. They see themselves as pioneers of a new future for magi, and as trailblazers into new, urban territories. They are aware that Micropedus is near the end of his life, so they wish to recruit more covenant members.

### REGULUS OF MERINITA: THE BEE KING

Age: 72 (Apparent age 21)

Personality Traits:

Joyful +3,  
Fierce +2

Regulus has blond hair, amber eyes, and golden skin. He smells pleasantly of candles. His unusual and attractive appearance is a result of his Strong Faerie Blood. Regulus is a Bee King.

Bee Kings are extremely rare. Some Merinita believe they are created when a young woman accidentally swallows a drone from a faerie hive. Such creatures are the steeds of the tiny knights who serve a queen of the diminutive sprites. Her court progresses through Mythic Europe, and so Bee Kings appear, rarely, in many kingdoms.

### LUNA: A NOBLE RAT

Age: 26 (Apparent age 26)

Bee Kingship is a variety of the Strong Faerie Blood Virtue. It grants the following advantages:

Bee Kings do not appear to age, but every Bee King not killed by circumstances dies of a rapid illness precisely a century after birth.

Any Bee King may command any group of bees to perform any action of which they are physically capable, even if it will lead to their deaths. Usual instructions like attacking people, increasing the population of the hive, or constructing objects from wax continue to be performed until the instruction is countermanded (Penetration 50). Simple

commands of a sentence or less long can be given orally.

Bee Kings may communicate complex messages to bees by having a single bee land on the Bee King's tongue. This bee then acts as the king's representative to the hive. Bee Kings can understand the speech of hives, and can read the minds of bees that they are touching.

Bee Kings are never stung by any variety of biting insect. An attacking bee swarm is treated as an environmental effect, rather than an opposing mêlée group. The swarm does +10 damage automatically each round. This damage may be Soaked normally.

Personality Traits:

Sly +3,  
Shy +1

Born in Sicily, Luna has the dark hair and eyes common to people of mixed Italian and Arabic ancestry. She is far shorter and slighter than average, just under five feet tall. Luna is in her twenties, and prefers clothing with a minimal number of layers, so that she can slip into and out of her heartbeast more easily. She does not have a talisman yet, and is looking for a suitable object to enchant.

Luna lives at Conventio Nidi because her Housemates consider her a freak. She trained, initially, in the Beast Master tradition within House Ex Miscellanea. Micrope-

pus was able to draw out her heartbeast and have her accepted, if not respected, as a member of his House. Heartbeasts are supposed to be wild and noble, but Luna's is a rodent. She feels that rats are noble creatures: sneaky, tenacious, and durable. They are also perfectly suited to life alongside humans, who are messy and wasteful, but skilled at making small, dark, dry spaces near food.

Luna has developed a psychological quirk. She spends at least an hour per week sitting, in her heartbeast form, on a rafter near the roof of the granary that feeds the covenant. She stares down at all of the food, more than a rat could eat in a century, as the impulses in her rat brain tell her that life cannot be better, or more surprising,

## Story Seed: Child in the Hive

Peasants a few days south of the covenant found a wild hive of bees, and when they domesticated it, they found a baby inside. The girl is unharmed, but there is something strange and repulsive about her. A Redcap reports the child to the covenant, knowing she will be of interest to Regulus. Regulus can do little for the child, but may seek the aid of the player characters.

Regulus feels for the child, because she is either the child of similar faeries to him, or his child by a forgotten sexual adventure. He cannot aid her

directly, because Bee Kings can never meet. Just as bees cannot accept two monarchs in a hive, if Regulus comes within scent of the child, he will enter a homicidal rage and be forced to kill her. He wishes to see that she is raised happily, but far away. Characters may aid by transporting or fostering her. Regulus is interested in her progress partially due to his sense of kinship, and partially because he has never heard of a human Bee Queen before, and he wishes to see how her powers manifest themselves.

## Blood of the Bee King

This Minor Supernatural Virtue provides the following advantages:

The children of Bee Kings age more slowly than other humans, reducing their Aging total by 1.

The children of Bee Kings may give simple instructions to bees they touch, and may understand the thoughts dominating hives of bees. They are unable to give bees instructions that will kill them, except to command warrior bees to attack, since warrior bees are so willing to die. (Penetration 25)



## Story Seed: Faeries Return

Nidi thinks of itself as inhabiting agricultural space, but seen from another perspective, it inhabits those spaces that faeries have abandoned in the face of the encroaching Dominion. In many areas, after the initial appearance of the Dominion

the forces of Faerie adapt, and generate harder forms. The two sites most vulnerable to repossession are the riverbank laboratories, and the vis-harvesting site in the chase. The loss of either might prove a fatal blow for the covenant.

than this. Luna also does this whenever she feels stressed.

Luna's strongest Art is Animal, although her studies have not been as focused as those of other magi. She has learned the Arts she requires to study certain tricks she finds useful. She has mastered a spell that allows her to tunnel through stone or wood while in rat shape. Her combat spells are poor, but she has retained her original tradition's ability to call and command animals, so she can defend herself with hordes of rats.

### MICROPEDUS OF BJORNAER: THE STARLING

Age: 93 (Apparent age 60)

Personality Traits:

Determined +3,  
Fidgety +1

The covenant's name, which means starling, refers to Micropedus. He spends a great deal of time in his bird shape, and has difficulty transforming back into a human. A Twilight Scar has left him unable to change patches of his feathers into scalp hair when

he takes human form, and he is finding the process slower and more painful as his Warping score increases.

His name, which means "small feet," refers to a scar suffered in Twilight, so that his heartbeast looks more like a starling from folklore than from a forest. Many people think starlings lack feet entirely. Macropedius's feet have become progressively smaller as he has aged. They are now child-sized, and he suspects that they will fall off entirely when he enters Final Twilight.

Micropedus was the magus who had the idea that small covenants could exploit the uncharted spaces within towns. He has written extensively on his philosophy, and trained a few apprentices, but many of his Bjornaer sodales reject it. He is grooming Luna as his heir, although he was not her teacher.

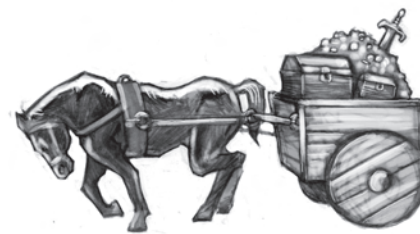
Micropedus is an Auram magus, skilled particularly in control of the weather. The covenant will miss him when he enters Final Twilight, because he sometimes uses his spells to break drought with rain and kill grain fungi with frost. His meddling, and the prosperity it bought to the area, is arguably responsible for the founding of a town so close to the covenant.

## Story Seed: A Suitable Boy

Nidi's members pretend to be the guests of Henri, the local nobleman. A difficulty is that Henri has only one child, a daughter, and will soon desire to take a longevity potion. For the covenant's long-term welfare, it is vital that Lila, Henri's daughter, marry a man suited to manipulation. There are several covenants that hide behind mortal families, and a son from any of them would be ideal, but there is the difficulty of assuring Lila's happiness, on which Henri insists. Young magi, newly made members of this covenant, might be sent on a tour of similar covenants to al-

low Lila to select a husband. Or characters from another covenant might instead travel to Nidi, to present a servant as suitable.

After he takes his longevity potion, Henri will age far too slowly to remain inconspicuous. For a few decades, simple cosmetics will allow him to seem to age. After that he will require illusions to maintain his role as an elderly man. In his true old age, he will need to be hidden away from public view. There are several other people like Henri in Mythic Europe, and the covenant may be asked to find a place for a similar man who is inconvenient.



## Atsingani

The small Spring covenant of Atsingani, a vassal of Montverte, is mobile, consisting largely of soldiers of questionable repute, with wagons and tents. They make a living of sorts either by brigandage or by serving as mercenaries. Once they have stirred up enough trouble and resentment in their current resting place, they flee, only to set themselves up somewhere else where they will attract less attention.

### History

The covenant's founding maga, Aureliana, was from a Byzantine tradition of wandering sorcerers named Atsingani, from which the covenant takes its name. These itinerant seers served the Latin Emperor Constantine IX for a time in the middle of the 11th century, protecting his lands from wild beasts and rebellious peasants. However, these wizards later fell out of favor among the Byzantines. Aureliana left the Theban Tribunal as the Byzantine Empire was declining in the 12th century, with one other magus and her apprentice Viviana, wandering westward in search of a Tribunal that would accept them. They were hounded out of the Transylvanian Tribunal, and the Rhine Tribunal refused to recognize them as a covenant, and so they finally ended up in the Normandy Tribunal, where a covenant may establish itself with considerably less difficulty. As a practical matter of survival they needed to pledge allegiance to a liege, and chose Montverte as that liege most closely aligned with their philosophy.

Since their arrival a few decades ago, the magi of Atsingani have moved about mostly in the southern reaches of the Tribunal, and have begun to make a nuisance of themselves by raiding some of the weaker covenants. Their acts have attracted few friends and gained them considerable mistrust in the Tribunal.



## Setting and Physical Description

The covenant is currently located in a sparsely populated region in the uplands of Auvergne, in the east of Aquitaine. It consists of a large semi-mobile camp, hidden a short way inside a forest: a semicircle of wagons, numerous tents including some that are sturdy and opulent and others in a poorer state of, a temporary barracks, and a corral for the horses. Moving from place to place the covenant has no native

aura, although the magi usually set themselves up in a Magic aura if they can find one.

The permanent council chamber of Atsingani is a ruined and windswept hilltop tower, which was originally gifted to them by their liege, Montverte. It is a couple of days travel from their current camp; the magi travel here every summer to hold council and gather vis. The Tribunal's customs forbid them from moving their council chamber, which is a matter of some inconvenience. On more than one occasion, Quaesitors have checked that the magi do indeed hold council at the tower.

The wandering nature of the covenant is highly suitable for a community that consists largely of Brabançons (see insert), brigands of questionable legal status, and which has a habit of whipping up trouble. They have been known to move entirely several times. On the other hand, the lack of a permanent base presents several hardships. The covenant is unable to establish any permanent, stable source of income, and instead the magi live from year to year; they are lucky when their mercenaries have wealthy masters to serve, and when not, they subsist on robbery, either from isolated villages and monasteries, traveling merchants and pilgrims, or from weak covenants. Atsingani has no stone buildings or fortifications, and can only establish rather poor temporary laboratories (apart from the one belonging to Viviana) in tents, which they share. They have only one permanent source of vis, harvested at their neglected and uninhabitable "council chamber." The remainder comes from what they can find or win at Tourney. Adversity does, however, draw the magi and covenfolk together — they are a close-knit and loyal community, and the magi are not at all aloof from their valued servants.

## Story Seed: The Covenant of Atsingani Attacks

The covenant of Atsingani settles down not too far away from the player characters' covenant. They soon notice the weakness of the covenant and begin to prey upon their supply convoys. As they get more confident, the Brabançon mercenaries begin to stage more daring and crippling attacks. Fighting them off may be a viable approach, but will surely anger their liege, Montverte.

Alternatively, the magi of Atsingani may offer their services to the covenant of the players. They will likely appreciate being pointed in the direction of any juicy targets and are not afraid of dirty work, provided they are ensured a generous share of the spoils.

## The Brabançons and Capuchonnes

Brigandage is widespread in the south of the Normandy Tribunal, with organized troupes of highly trained but disaffected soldiers roaming and blighting the land.

The Brabançons, also known as Brabanters for the duchy of Brabant to the east of Flanders where they originate, are active in Aquitaine. In 1179, Pope Alexander III included freebooting soldiers in a ban against heretics, mentioning the Brabanters specifically by name, and ordering the excommunication of anyone who attempted to hire, retain, or encourage them. However, few took any notice. Philip, the King of France, recruited a troupe of Brabançons to harry the lands of several of his troublesome vassals, including the count of Sancerre. When they were done, he sent them to Aquitaine to assist the son of Henry II of England (also called Henry) to make war on his father. On the way to Limoges, they massacred the town

of Noialle and made off with its wealth. When they met up with the younger Henry, they were welcomed until they discovered that the rebel could not afford to pay them, at which point they cut loose and started pillaging monasteries.

In the 1180s, a freeman named Durand started a movement specifically to eradicate the brigands and bring peace; they were called the Capuchonnes, and were exhorted to wear a particular style of dress, to live honest and moderate lives, and not to gamble or frequent taverns. They spread from Le Puy through the southern part of France (including southern Aquitaine), and attracted noblemen, abbots, and bishops, as well as freemen. They massacred 3000 brigands in Auvergne in 1183. Things being what they are, however, the Capuchonnes soon became brigands themselves, robbing from the rich and keeping the spoils.



## Magi

Two of the magi of Atsingani are detailed below. It is a small covenant, but it may possibly count one or two additional magi among its members, should you so wish.

### VIVIANA OF HOUSE EX MISCELLANEA

Age: 54 (Apparent age 41)

Personality Traits:

Restless +2,  
Passionate +1,  
Thoughtful +1

Viviana, the spiritual leader and guide of the covenant, is a fading beauty of Mediterranean descent. She is the filia of the eldest founding maga of Atsingani, Aureliana, and is a soothsayer and healer from the same Byzantine tradition. She owns a grand wagon of faerie origin, which is the covenant's most valued possession. The interior of the wagon is far larger than it appears from outside and is opulently decorated; it has room for a laboratory as well as a bedchamber, and it provides fresh supplies of clothing and linens for its owner that are never exhausted. The wagon has an unnaturally smooth ride; its contents are thus undisturbed by what would normally be jolting travel along uneven roads.

### JACQUES OF HOUSE FLAMBEAU

Age: 44 (Apparent age 39)

Personality Traits:

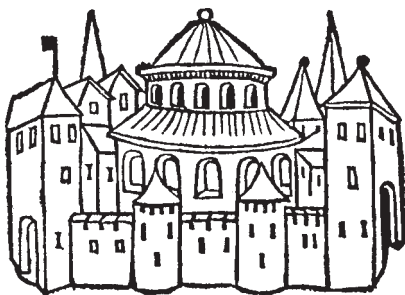
Disciplined +2,  
Questionable Ethics +2,  
Greedy +1

Jacques leads the mercenary contingent of the covenant. He began his apprenticeship under the tutelage of an Ex Miscellanea eremite at the relatively late age of 18, by which time he was already an accomplished Brabançon warrior; thus he is only about ten years past his Gauntlet. Upon becoming a magus,

## Baudouin

**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik +2  
**Size:** 0  
**Age:** 32 (32)  
**Decrepitude:** 0  
**Virtues and Flaws:** Branded Criminal; Puissant Bows, Tough; Weakness (loose women), Depressed  
**Personality Traits:** Surly +2, Brave +1, Bored +1  
**Combat:**  
*Dagger:* Init 0, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +4  
*Axe and round shield (mounted):* Init +1, Attack +17, Defense +14, Damage +7  
*Axe and round shield (on foot):* Init +1, Attack +14, Defense +11, Damage +7  
*Crossbow:* Init +5, Attack +16, Defense +10, Damage +8  
**Soak:** +7  
**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)  
**Abilities:** Animal Handling 3 (horses), Aquitaine Lore 2 (wilderness), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 3 (keeping watch), Brawl 3 (dagger), Bows 5+2 (crossbow), Carouse 1 (dice), Concentration 1 (ambush), French 5 (Walloon), Hunt 3 (rabbits), Profession: Carpenter 2 (wagons), Ride 4 (long distance), Single Weapon 6 (axe), Stealth 3 (ambush), Survival 2 (forest)  
**Equipment:** Partial leather scale armor, axe, round shield, crossbow, grog pack containing carpenters' tools and his lucky dice.  
**Encumbrance:** 2 (3)  
**Appearance:** A shifty-looking man with an unkempt beard and fierce blue eyes, whose face is somewhat marred by his criminal brand. He carries his weapons expertly.

Baudouin is one of the more experienced Brabanters and has been in the service of Atsingani since his youth, when he received his criminal brand for thievery. Banditry has become second nature to him, although he is not particularly satisfied with the wandering life of the covenant, intermittent poverty, and lack of available womenfolk. He is usually selected for the vanguard whenever a raiding party is assembled, since he is reliably violent although not a natural leader.



he immediately left the covenant where his pater had settled to rejoin his kinfolk. Soon after, he joined House Flambeau. One of his burning goals is to exact revenge on the Capuchonnes who murdered his father in 1183.

## Covenantfolk

The covenant consists of about fifty persons, among which are a troupe of three dozen Brabançon mercenaries, and nearly as many horses. They are a mixture of Byzantine and Brabant origin, mostly young and middle-aged adults — the covenant can hardly support the infirm, and women who have children often choose to leave the covenant and settle down. The Brabançons are coarse, crude men, but they are expert soldiers and horsemen, skilled with the crossbow.

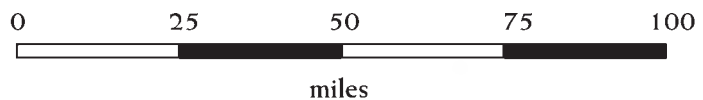
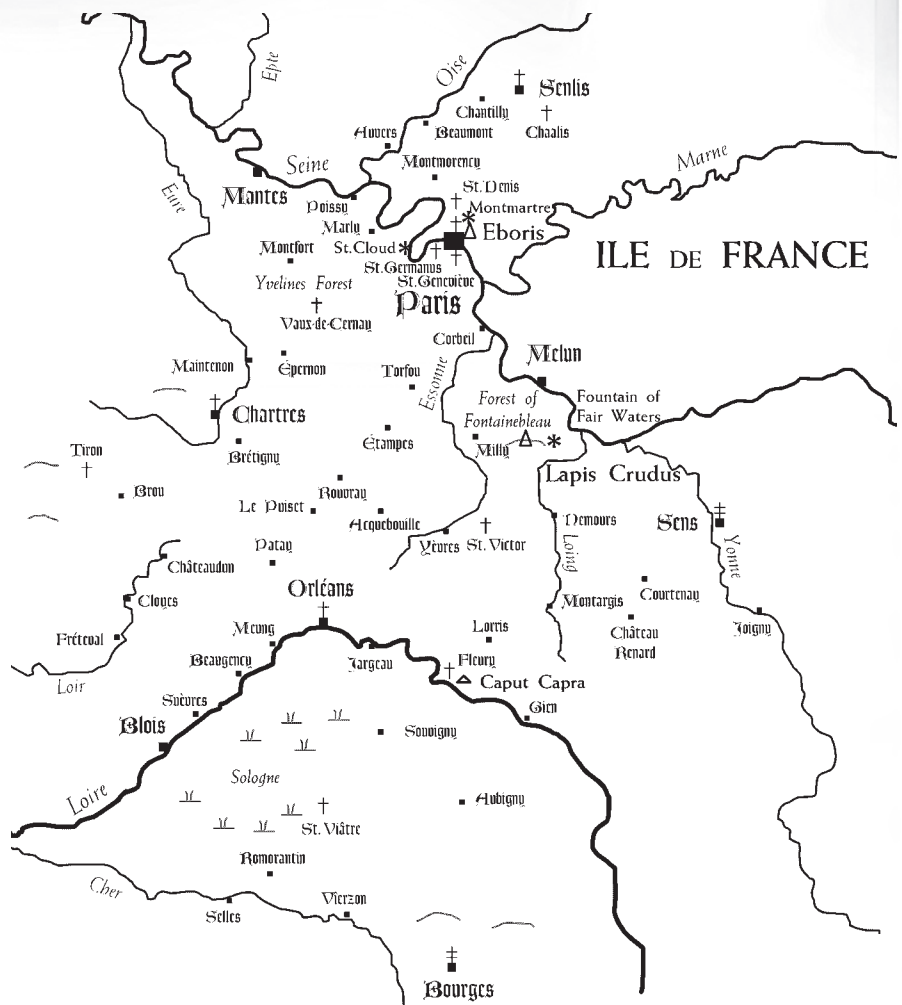
## Chapter Seven

# Ile de France

The rich lands known as the Ile de France are located at the geographical center of the Normandy Tribunal; correspondingly, they are the center of power of the French kingdom. All roads lead to Paris, the greatest city in northern Europe and the seat of the French monarchy, whose influence extends across the whole region, and beyond.

Most of the lands here consist of the historical domain of the royal Capetian house, which rose to prominence when Hugh Capet was elected king in 987, in Senlis. The kingdom is now sufficiently prosperous that the royal court no longer travels, but has settled permanently in Paris. The current king, Philip II, rules completely over numerous loyal baronies, from which much of the royal army is drawn. These petty nobles also constitute the bulk of his advisers and provide many of the provosts and bailiffs that manage his estates in his absence. There are numerous ancient and wealthy royal abbeys here, since the Merovingian kings donated many lands to the Church. The monks performed the dual function of cultivating the wild lands they were given, and praying for the souls of their generous benefactors. When the pilgrims here gape at the majesty of the newly-completed cathedrals of the Ile de France, those of St. Denis, Sens, and Chartres, it is clear that these prayers were not in vain. Without doubt, this land is blessed by God. These churches have established a miraculous new style that is beginning to be copied widely in French lands.

Much of the Ile de France is gently rolling farmland, some of the richest agricultural land to be found anywhere in Europe, the generous harvests of which support a density of population surpassed only by Flanders. Two great rivers, the Seine and the Loire, flow through the province from the southeast to the northwest. The northeastern edge is bordered by the great forest of Cuise (see Chapter 8: Flanders and Picardy, The Forest of Cuise). There are a few other sizable forests, including Yvelines and Fontainebleau to the south of Paris in the center of the realm, and the Sologne, a marshy heath-land forest south of Orléans bordering Anjou.



### MAP KEY

■	Town / City	—	Forest
⦿	Archbishopric	~	River
+	Bishopric	⬆	Uplands
+	Notable Monastery	⬆	Swamp
▲	Covenant (Liege)	*	Mythic Site
△	Covenant (Other)	△	Former Covenant



## Ile de France Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Lapis Crudus, Eboris  
**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:** Caput Capra

## Paris

The stupendous city of Paris, the largest in northern Europe and home to more than fifty thousand souls, is strategically located at a crossing point of the River Seine, with an island in the river as its center. It serves several functions: it is a royal capital, an ecclesiastical and scholarly center, and a center of trade. The city has grown to spread from the central island, the Île de la Cité, onto both banks. The right bank is the newest and most populous part, and perhaps half of the inhabitants live here; the remaining half is split between the Île de la Cité and the left bank. The stern city walls of Paris encompass the settlements on both banks in two semicircles; the area spanned by the walls is 3 miles from north to south, and two miles from east to west. Perhaps a third of the population of each bank lies outside the city walls, in clusters of a few large villages and towns. The city thus resembles about a dozen towns and villages that have partially morphed into one city, interrupted by walls, moats, and river channels, and connected by

gateways and bridges. The various churches and chapels of Paris are nearly too numerous to count — from afar the horizon of Paris appears as a forest of spires. Smoke and stale air wafts from the city, day and night.

All kinds of folk may be found in Paris, but many Parisians are serfs — they lead a curious mixture of urban and rural life, working the extensive and rich farmland that extends for many miles around the city on behalf of their king. Paris is thus not a city that is dominated by industry or commerce, such as Ghent or the other huge cities of Flanders, although it certainly has a vast commercial district and just about any kind of craft may be found within. While Paris has much to recommend it, and some areas have a high Divine aura, there are without doubt Infernal auras hidden

he had Abélard castrated, and both Abélard and Héloïse took vows as a monk and nun.

After the affair was discovered, Abélard retreated to St-Gildas-de-Rhuys, a monastery founded by St. Gildas in the 6th century on the southern arm protecting the Gulf of Morbihan (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Morbihan). He found it a wild place beset by dangerous animals, the language strange and horrible, and the monastic community unruly. The monks tried to poison him, but he escaped through a secret passage in 1132. Abélard later became a monk at St. Denis, and later, at the end of his life, at Cluny.

in the seediest parts of the city. On the whole, the place is a melting pot of avarice, heresy, petty crime, vice, and disease. All kinds of entertainments (of various degrees of lewdness, which may easily either horrify or seduce innocent visitors) and luxuries are available, for the right price, of course. One of the largest and most populous heretical cults is the Brethren of the Free Spirit (see also *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal*, page 46), whose members believe themselves heralds of a new age of the Holy Spirit and consider themselves immune to sin, enjoying pleasures wantonly and without remorse. The Brethren originated from theologians in the schools of Paris, but has found favor with many of the common folk. Secret meetings and masses are held regularly all over the city. Writers

## The Templar Treasury

The Knights Templar have a great temple in Paris, whose fabulously wealthy treasury is an early form of bank. The financial services offered by this Order arose from the need of pilgrims to the Holy Land to have access to their funds without wishing to carry large amounts of coin with them, for fear of robbery and destitution. A pilgrim may thus deposit suitable monies at a local commandery, sufficient for the costs of the whole pilgrimage (which are considerable, typically including outward and return travel, accommodation, and money for gifts and alms) in exchange for a receipt in the form of a coded parchment. Credit is issued by Templar establishments en route,

and the coded receipt is adjusted accordingly. A similarly large "bank" exists in Jerusalem, where funds may be withdrawn.

Such services are by no means restricted to pilgrims; the Templars accept deposits and arrange transfers of money for merchants, nobles, kings, and the Church. Money can also be borrowed — the restriction on usury (the charging of interest) is sidestepped by the charging of "rents" which are payable when funds are borrowed. The treasury in Paris has accumulated a vast fortune from these practices. The Order of the Knights Templar finances wars, crusades, trading enterprises, and grand building projects.

## Story Seed: A Dangerous Loan

A covenant in need of funds may be able to secure an extremely large loan from the Knights Templar. However, the magi should take care to attend to their repayments promptly and keep their magical activities secret from the holy order, otherwise they will find themselves with a very powerful enemy. Should the Knights discover that a group of questionable or heretical magicians seem reticent to pay their dues, they are not likely to delay in kicking up a storm, either politically or militarily.







condemn the idolatry and sorcery practiced by Parisians, although this is mostly nonsense — the majority of the inhabitants are pious, to a greater or lesser degree.

## The History of Paris

Paris takes its name from the Parisii, a fishing tribe who first settled on the island in the Seine. Under the Romans, it was a town of moderate importance named Lutetia;

the settlement spread and was centered on the left bank of the river. From the end of the 3rd century, the city declined with the waning of Roman power, and endured repeated disasters and troubles during the Dark Ages. In 451, Attila the Hun arrived at the city. The prayers of a pious peasant girl, Geneviève, kept his army from the gates, and the Huns moved on to Orléans instead. She later thwarted a Frankish siege of the city undertaken by Childeric, by smuggling food into the city by boat. Geneviève died in 512 and became the patron saint of Paris;

many miracles were subsequently attributed to her. She is buried at the Benedictine Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, founded by Clovis.

The city burned to the ground at the end of the sixth century, and Viking raids were the bane of Paris in the ninth century. The first attack in 845, by savage raiders sailing up the Seine in shallow-bottomed ships, resulted in the sack of the city; the invaders had to be paid off with a huge ransom. In 885 Paris faced an even greater invasion, an army of tens of thousands on many hundreds of ships. Odo, Count of Paris, courageously led the defenses of the city and successfully ended the siege after ten months. The year 911 saw peace with the Vikings, now Normans, and in 987 Hugh Capet was elected King of France and made Paris his capital. Ever since, the city has flourished.

The appearance of the city in 1220 owes much to the current king, Philip II. It was he who erected the walls with their moats, and his giant castle, the Louvre. Under his direction, the cathedral of Notre-Dame has begun construction, a huge covered market has appeared, and many streets have been paved.

## Île de la Cité

The mile-long island in the middle of the city, the site of the pre-Roman settlement, is the ecclesiastical and administrative center of Paris, with the grandest churches. This, the oldest part of the city, is a crowded and suffocating labyrinth of ancient timber houses. The giant cathedral of Notre-Dame, in the new French style, is located at the upstream end of the island atop the ruins of a Gallo-Roman temple. Construction work on this ambitious project began in 1163; the chancel was consecrated in 1182, and the nave is just about complete. Much work remains to be done, but when finished it will surely be the greatest church in western Europe. The Petit Pont, a short stone bridge built in 1186 to replace an older wooden construct, connects the Île de la Cité to the left bank. Two longer stone bridges cross the wider channel to the right bank. There are no great docks in Paris — the Seine is too shallow to allow ocean-going ships — although there is a bustle of river traffic consisting of smaller vessels. Most of the wares to and from distant lands are transported along a well-traveled road leading from the north of Paris to the harbor city of Rouen, in Normandy.





## The King of the Beggars

This "monarch" controls a large gang of beggars, filchers, and burglars in the Parisian underworld, and sometimes goes by the title of "the Grand Coësre." The king claims taxes from his subjects, in the form of a share of their spoil. It is suspected, but not proved, that the king pays the mundane authorities of Paris to keep them out of his affairs. The king's edicts are enforced by the *cagoux* (master-thieves), who look after his interests and who are treated as his chief nobles. The *cagoux* collect the king's taxes, and drive out beggars who impose on his territory, which encompasses all the best spots in Paris. Beneath the *cagoux* are the *archisuppôts* (arch-thieves), who are usually recruited from the dregs of the clergy and who teach the king's law and train apprentice beggars. In return, the *cagoux* and *archisuppôts* have the right to beg in any manner they please, and are free from the taxes owed to the King of the Beggars.

Those beggars who work for the king are taught a slang or argot, from whence they get the name of *argotiers*. The *argotiers* are licensed by the King to beg in a specific way, and the number of beggars in each court is regulated so not to glut the market of potential dupes. The principle courts of *argotiers* are as follows:

*Marcandiers* pretend to be merchants who have been robbed;  
*Francs-mitoux* pretend to have fainting fits in public places;  
*Malingreux* use fat mixed with ashes on their face to give the appearance of a dreadful disease;  
*Piètres* hobble around on crutches feigning lameness;  
*Sabouleux* daub themselves with blood and use soap to make themselves froth at the mouth;  
*Polissons* go about naked begging for clothes;  
*Courtauds-de-boutanche* carry the tools of various trades and pretend to be out of work;  
*Hutins* pretend to have been bitten by mad dogs;  
*Coquillards* carry forged pilgrim certificates and ask for alms;  
*Calots* sit slack-jawed, apparently dotards lacking in wits;  
*Capons* trick their marks from their coins in card games;  
*Narquois* are pensioned soldiers and extort money with threats of violence;  
*Millards* travel into the countryside in groups and practice racketeering among the peasants;  
*Orphelines* slit the money pouches of the rich to steal their wealth.

Not all the criminals of Paris are subjects of the Grand Coësre, but it is fair to say that he dominates the Parisian underworld.

## Story Seeds: Beggar King Exploits

Two of Anacrôn's Hermetic ancestors (his great grand-parents, and that individual's own mater) still live among his unwashed hordes, bound into their moribund bodies and riddled with Decreptitude and Warping by the lineage's Death Prophecy. They long for death to end their plight, but Anacrôn will not allow it, for each death brings him closer to his own extinction. An enemy who wishes to strike at Anacrôn (and he has several) might start with his enfeebled and helpless ancestors.

A grog who has demonstrated his prowess in Paris is kidnapped by beggars; Anacrôn intends to make him into one of his *cagoux* in the coming year.

A group of characters passing through (or based in) Paris get involved in a "turf war" between Anacrôn and a pretender to his throne.

Anyone making an enemy of Anacrôn has to deal with his Hermetic allies, as well. He knows many dirty secrets about the members of the Normandy tribunal, as well as having some genuine allies who recognize his worth as a source of information. He might also claim support from unlikely allies through a cabal or Mystery Cult, or be acting as a double agent for the Quaesitores to uncover any High Crimes orchestrated by his apparent allies.

A couple of smaller, mostly uninhabited islands are located a stone's throw upstream. These are overgrown with large copses of trees and are places of ill repute.

## The Left Bank

The south bank of the Seine was the center of the Roman city of Lutetia. Some Roman remains may be found, but the majority have long since disappeared. The forum and bath houses of Lutetia are now built over, and an ancient Roman necropolis a short distance to the south of the city walls is long overgrown and buried. The most visible Roman ruin is the amphitheater of Lutetia, just to the southeast of the city.

Nowadays, the left bank is the intellectual and scholarly district of the city. Numer-

ous cathedral and abbey schools are located here; they have recently achieved the status of a university. (A forthcoming supplement, *Art and Academe*, will describe the university of Paris in more detail.) The outer reaches of this part of Paris, at least, are less crowded; the area resembles a contiguous group of villages, with some green spaces in between. The abbey church dedicated to St. Geneviève is located on a prominent hill. A short way to the west is the Abbey Church of St. Germainus, burial place of most of the Merovingian kings (except, notably, Clovis).

## The Right Bank

The bustling right bank is the largest city district, home to its commercial heart. It is also known as Le Marais (the marsh),

since a couple of centuries ago it was nothing but swamp. The Capetian kings oversaw the draining of this land and claimed much of it for themselves. The great central market, Les Halles, was expanded and covered over in 1183 by Philip II so as to shelter the merchants; it attracts traders from far afield. The Hanse Parisienne is the name of the principal league of merchants in Paris, and they have great influence in the city. Just outside the city walls to the west is the Louvre, the monolithic fortress of Philip II, erected in 1190. This tall, square giant of a castle is home to his residence, treasury, and arsenal. Grand royal gardens and estates stretch off into the distance.

Just over a mile to the north of the city walls is the Montmartre (martyr's mount), a hill named after the martyrdom of St. Denis. Formerly known as Mons Mercurius (mount of Mercury), it used to shoulder a Roman temple, but a new abbey is now to be found on its slopes.



## Anacrôn, King of the Beggars, Magus Ex Miscellanea

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per 0, Pre +2, Com +2, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex -2, Qik -2

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 56 (Apparent age 40)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 4 (2)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3 points)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Death Prophecy\*, Life-Linked Spontaneous Magic, Affinity with Corpus, Minor Magical Focus (infirmity), Personal Vis Source\*, Piercing Gaze, Puissant Leadership, Quiet Magic, Social Contacts, Crippled, Envious, Painful Magic\*, Deficient Form (Imaginem), Infamous, Magical Animal Companion (Boiteux, a mastiff).

\*House Virtues and Flaw

**Personality Traits:** Jealous +3, Spiteful +3, Bitter +3

**Reputations:** King of the Beggars 3 (Local)  
**Combat:**

Club: Init -2, Attack +2, Defense +1, Damage +3

Dodge: Init -3, Attack 0, Defense 0, Damage 0

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Argot 4 (Parisian beggars), Ar-

gotiers Lore 4 (Cagoux), Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (potential marks), Brawl 1 (self defense), Chirurgy 2 (bruises), Civil and Canon Law 2 (begging), Code of Hermes 1 (regarding mundanes), Concentration 2 (when in pain), Finesse 2 (Corpus), Folk Ken 2 (potential marks), French 5 (Parisian), Guile 4 (to the charitable), Ile de France Lore 3 (criminals), Intrigue 4 (Hermetic), Kingdom of France Lore 2 (beggars), Latin 3 (coarse), Leadership 5+2 (beggars), Legerdemain 3 (slitting purses), Magic Theory 6 (studying from vis), Paris Lore 4 (underworld), Parma Magica 4 (Corpus), Penetration 3 (Corpus), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (rivalries), Single Weapon 1 (club), Stealth 3 (sitting still)

**Arts:** Cr 13, In 6, Mu 8, Pe 10, Re 8; An 8, Aq 5, Au 5, Co 15, He 4, Ig 5, Im 3, Me 14, Te 5, Vi 8

**Twilight Scars:** His Gift attracts rather than repels vermin, his breath smells of violets, his shadow is blood red rather than gray.

**Equipment:** A wooden trolley with rickety wheels. His talisman is a wand crudely carved from a human leg bone, and inlaid with three small bloodstones. It grants him the following bonuses: +4 destroy human body, +4 blood and wounds. The talisman currently has two enchantments:

**Agony of the Uncharitable Stranger**  
PeCo 30

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

Pen: 20, 24 uses/day

The target is riddled with stabbing pains. (Base 4, +2 Voice, +1 Conc; +10 for Penetration Total of 20, +5 24 uses per day)

**Hobble the Foul-Mouthed Wretch**  
PeCo 40

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

Pen: 20, 24 uses/day

The target is lamed for the duration of the spell.

(Base 5, +2 Voice, +2 Sun; +10 for Penetration Total of 20, +5 24 uses per day)

**Spells Known:**

*Agony of the Beast* (PeAn 15/+19)  
*Arm of the Infant* (MuCo 20/+24)  
*Aura of Rightful Authority* (ReMe 20/+31)  
*Bane of the Decrepit Body* (PeCo 25/+40)  
*Circle of Beast Warding* (ReCo 5/+28)  
*Cripple the Howling Wolf* (PeAn 25/+23)  
*Disguise of the New Visage* (MuCo 15/+24)  
*Gift of Frog's Legs* (ReCo 15/+32)  
*Loss of But a Moment's Memory* (PeMe 15/+25)  
*Panic of the Trembling Heart* (CrMe 15/+28)  
*Posing the Silent Question* (InMe 20/+21)  
*Prison of Flames* (MuIg 20/+14)  
*Stench of Twenty Corpses* (CrAu 10/+19)  
*The Irresistible Pressgang* (CrMe 40/+28)  
*The Twisted Spine* (MuCo 25/+24)  
*The Wound that Weeps* (PeCo 15/+26)  
*Trust of Childlike Faith* (PeMe 10/+35)



## Eboris

A covenant is a home, but it is also a tool. Many covenants look similar, because most magi desire to study in comfort. Conventio Eboris is not a tool for study. Its leader, the most prominent witness to the death of history, has not recovered from his loss. He designed this covenant as a commemoration, but it is really a mechanism for his grief.

## History

Constantinople, the new Rome, was the center of civilization. It was the tool of God. Its civilization was meant to usher in an age of peace and stability, in preparation for the return of Christ. In 1204, foreigners murdered the city and scraped off its skin. For Archmagus Mathieus, as his city died, the autumn of the world ended.

Mathieus once had a covenant, sodales, family, servants. He had plans, ambitions, and dreams. When the crusaders marched on the City, he returned from Valnastium, where he was consulting the library. He was able to cross the besiegers' lines using his magical abilities, but was unable to avert the sack of the City. Afterward, Mathieus was able to gather some of his covenfolk and smuggle a few of his covenant's resources to a ship in

the harbor. His family was dead, and his covenant was destroyed, so he commanded his servant to sail to Marseilles. From there they traveled overland to Paris. The reasons behind his choice remain unclear, but he seems to have desired to leave the Latin Empire.

Mathieus is the scion of an aristocratic family in Constantinople, and plays the role of exiled nobleman. For the first two years, he did not have a covenant: he was legally a wandering magus. His political role was insignificant, so he did not annoy the Quaesitores. He seemed to content to provide patronage to artists and scholars in the vibrant community gathering around the court. But Mathieus has been slowly drawn back into Hermetic circles by his Primus.

At the Primus' request, Mathieus has acted as host or guide for the Itinerarium on several occasions. The Itinerarium is a great tour of artistic cities designed to acculturate

## Anacrôn, King of the Beggars, Magus Ex Miscellanea (con't)

**New Spell: The Irresistible Pressgang**  
CrMe 35

R: Touch, D: Year, T: Group, Ritual

A group of men are granted a Loyal +4 Personality Trait, with the object of this fanatical loyalty being the caster. This spell is both a powerful and a continuing mystical effect, and the targets will accumulate a total of 5 Warping Points by its end.  
(Base 4, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +2 Group)

**New Spell: The Twisted Spine**  
Mu(Pe)Co 20

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

The target is crippled as his backbone warps and twists. He will be in agony every time he tries to move.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +1 requisite)

**Vis:** Anacrôn's Personal Vis Source is in the skin he scrapes from his leg-stumps. This yields Corpus vis, but is also very painful for him.

**Appearance:** Anacrôn's legs were removed above the knees when he was just a boy, and since then he has propelled himself on a two-wheeled cart, sometimes pulled by two mastiffs. His ragged clothes mark him as a beggar, but nevertheless he is possessed of a remarkable personal charm, and underneath the layers of filth and seething hatred is a handsome man.

Anacrôn is an eremite magus of House Ex Miscellanea who lives in the streets of Paris. He is a deeply unpleasant character, embittered with the world and possessing a general loathing for all of humankind. Anacrôn has no legs, and is pulled around on a wooden cart by two huge dogs, one of which is his familiar and the other his Magical Animal Companion. His master cut off his lower limbs when opening him to the Arts, for the magic of his tradition is one founded on pain, hatred, and infirmity. The lineage shares a Death Prophecy, which states that one can only be killed when he is the eldest of his tradition alive. When Anacrôn became of sufficient power to take over the gang of criminals in which he was raised, his pater invested him as the new King of the Beggars (see insert) and left Paris, just as his own pater had done to him. Where they went, and what they are doing now is a mystery to Anacrôn, who greatly enjoys the power he currently commands. Through his position as King of the Beggars, Anacrôn has access to individuals who are prepared to perform any task for the right coin, and hears all sorts of gossip and news that is of interest to the Order. He sells access to his resources for vis and enchantments, and his most common clients are Eboris (see below) and Fudarus. He is never involved directly in the crimes he orchestrates, which are committed through the agency of his gang. He has twice been accused of interfering with mundanes. The

first time the Tribunal ruled that his activities had not brought ruin. The second time did not even make it that far, a declaration of Wizard's War against his accuser by Harpax (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Fudarus) resulted in no charges being filed. Suffice it to say that Anacrôn has powerful allies, and many wonder why he is so strongly supported.

Eboris is the senex of Paris, but this covenant is new to the city, having existed only sixteen years. Anacrôn and his family have been here for over a century, and he and Mathieus are still negotiating the terms of their relationship through their actions within the city. If it comes to war (something which both seek to avoid), Anacrôn has the advantage of numbers on his side, as well as an intimate knowledge of Paris and the instinct of a killer.

Every year, assuming he can find the vis, Anacrôn rounds up at least ten capable fighting men, casts *The Irresistible Pressgang*, and promotes them to the rank of cagoux. When this spell expires after a year, the Warping incurred often leaves the cagoux mentally deficient (Simple-Minded, Short Attention Span, and so forth); so they join the ranks of the calots and Anacrôn searches for more victims.

Anacrôn's familiar is a brindled mastiff called Affreux, and Affreux's son Boiteux is Anacrôn's Magical Animal Companion; the two dogs pull his trolley. Affreux has been invested with the power to create a ward that repels people, and the ability to grow to the size of a bear.

Jerbiton apprentices. Following graduation, some of these apprentices have returned to Paris, to explore its culture more fully, and they often stay with Mathieus. His home is now a small covenant whose members do not perform magical research. A Redcap also lives at Mathieus' home. He acts as Mathieus' chief household servant (his majordomo).

## Setting and Physical Description

Paris is the greatest city in Europe. Late last century the King of France established a permanent home here. This has led the major nobles of France, and some small surrounding states, to build palaces in the city also. This influx of wealthy patrons has made Paris a center

of culture and learning. The foundation of the court and university has changed the character of the city. It is filled with wealthy young men who need have little fear of mundane authority due to their social connections. At night, the city seethes with sex and violence, turning at daybreak into a center of commerce and philosophy. Other magi are interested in the opportunities the city provides by day, but Mathieus' guests revel in the city's nocturnal life.

Mathieus' house is on the Rue de la Tabletterie, and is the office for an ivory-carving business. It was once a pilgrims' hostelry, and is impressively large for this part of town. The house is three stories high, with many levels of basement. It has been refaced in a style that local aristocrats see as belonging to the new money.

Mathieus explains that he chose to live well, but in a poorer part of town, so that he would not seem to be threatening the local nobility. It also allowed him to ignore the

fools at the university. The lacuna (space lacking any Aura, including the Dominion) in the basement also likely influenced his choice. A few of Mathieus's sodales do not live in his house, but are scattered through the city.

Mathieus has a lot of informal influence in this part of town. He does not officially own a brewery, a public house, or a brothel, but he has silent shares in at least thirty businesses in the quarter. He has some contacts within the criminal class, and most of the local thugs have been warned that his guests are never as unlucky as those who harm them.

## Culture and Traditions

Magi of House Jerbiton believe that magic tempts them to waste their lives, and that places like Mathieus' house act as a pre-



ventative by engrossing the young. Old magi need less protection from the temptation to do laboratory work, because senior magi receive less additional power for every season of a diminishing lifetime. Young magi are at the greatest risk of disappearing into a laboratory for a few decades, emerging with skills that are in no way novel, viewed historically. Sending senior apprentices, or young magi, to a vibrant city provides them with enough experience of a properly lived life that they can resist the addiction to laboratory fumes that so many other magi seem to develop. Further detail on the House's philosophies and goals may be found in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*.

## POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

Conventio Eboris owes no feudal dues, and seeks none. The advantage of their lifestyle, which precludes Hermetic study, is that they do not want most of the resources over which other magi feud. This makes them wealthy, because even their modest vis income provides a surplus for trade. The House of the Ivory Carvers is increasingly a neutral site for negotiations between covenants in conflict. Mathieus' neutrality aside, magical warfare under the nose of the King of France and bishop of St. Denis is a crime that few magi would be foolish enough to engage in.

## THE INTINERARIUM

It was traditional, before the fall of Constantinople, for Jerbiton magi to send their apprentices there for a few seasons, so that they

could develop the rudiments of taste and polish their manners. After Constantinople fell, this tourism needed a new focus. In most years, it travels from Paris through the Alps to Valnastium, then down into Italy. Conventio Eboris serves as host for the initial stage. The young, rich almost-magi are expected to get into trouble, and to do the stupid things that are forbidden the dignity of a magus. Mathieus ensures that his guests remain on the right side of the line between foolish and asinine, or finds ways of hiding their mistakes. Under Hermetic law, the masters of the apprentices remain responsible for their behavior, so some accompany their charges. Mathieus is handsomely repaid for his hospitality in favors and social contacts.

## REVELS

Mathieus attracts magi from other houses to his home with celebrations that eulogize great magi. These celebrations are feasts and games played through the Parisian night. Some magi have noted that if Mathieus designs an interesting entertainment, his revel might eulogize an obscure magus from hundreds of years ago. At least one of the magi he has eulogized never existed at all.

Mathieus always claims to eulogize real individuals, for real accomplishments. He claims that an unnamed Tylalus magus tricked him with a false biography. The participants remember it as a particularly amusing event. Some suggest that if the maga commemorated did not exist, then surely she should have.

Mathieus collects items for his revels from all over Europe. He often sends letters offering payment for strange items to young

magi about whom he has heard amusing stories. This is a way of inviting them into his circle of acquaintances.

## ASSISTING THE QUAESITORES

Mathieus is the Warden of Paris. That is, members of House Jerbiton accept that he has dedicated himself to its preservation, and usually inform him of their activities. Local Jerbiton magi are expected to give him some assistance if he requests it, when Paris is endangered. Mathieus is also a convenient injured party for the Quaesitores.

That is, Mathieus is willing to assist the Quaesitores by claiming that the activities of other magi have caused him difficulty with the mundanes. An injured sodalis makes an undesired activity a breach of the Code. Paris, as the home of many important mundanes, is considered a particularly sensitive site by members of this Tribunal, so even minor infractions are punished if a sodalis demonstrates that he has been harmed by meddling with Parisian potentates.

Mathieus is not a hoplite, but is willing to enforce the Code in Paris. His skill with illusions, experience in urban spellcasting, knowledge of the resources available within Paris, and band of young allies make him a formidable opponent for a covenant of young player characters. His political connections make him a dangerous opponent in extended conflicts.

## INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

Marcus of Paris, Mathieus' chief servant, is a Redcap who can be hired to provide information about life in Paris to other covenants. He haggles the details of each contract, so they can be as simple as a weekly letter, or as complicated as the recovery of private documents. Marcus sometimes passes work on to the younger magi of the covenant. When nobles disperse back to their regional seats of power, he hires the servants of local magi to keep him informed of their activities, on behalf of his clients.

Marcus also finds skilled people willing to enter the service of covenants, in exchange for a fee from either party. Many characters, with all kinds of unlikely backgrounds, drift to Paris. Marcus recruits the best of them, trains some in a little Latin, and sends them to covenants throughout the tribunal. A young covenant using Marcus' services will gain a complete complement of servants, but they are likely to have colorful histories.

### Story Seed: Rescuing Constantinopolitans

Venetians enslaved many of the people of Constantinople after the invasion. One slave, sold to a covenant in the Roman Tribunal, overhears Mathieus' name while his masters converse over dinner, and arranges for a Redcap to carry a message. He asks for rescue for himself and some other members of the fallen covenant. Mathieus fears this is a snare set by Venetian magi, who know how much he loathes them. He asks young magi to scout the situation for him, and to smuggle away anyone they can.

### Story Seed: Treasure in Constantinople

Mathieus was able to remove only a small portion of the wealth of his fallen covenant when he fled Constantinople. To keep the treasures of his friends from theft by the scum who had murdered them, he sealed them away. Now that sufficient time has passed, he feels it might be possible to extract these items. He will not travel to the East himself; he does not want to see the parasites feeding on the corpse of his city. A band of trustworthy young magi, of sterner constitution than his usual companions, might find aiding him lucrative.

## Magi

ARCHMAGUS MATHIEUS  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE,  
FILIUS OF MARIA OF  
CONSTANTINOPLE,  
FOLLOWER OF JERBITON

Age: 104 (Apparent age 65)

Personality Traits:

Brave +3,  
Genteel +2,  
Debauched +1, Sad +1

Mathieus follows the Jerbiton philosophy of sufficiency. He believes he has learned enough magic to allow him to do as he likes for the rest of his life. Further study would allow him to fool larger crowds, and perform better in certamen, but this fails to recompense him for his effort. Further study simply isn't worth the time.

For a long while, Mathieus knew that increasing his ability to perform magic was not fulfilling, but did not know what he wished to do instead. He spent those years indulging in many of the vices of the rich. He now has a series of goals, although he does not believe he will fulfill any of them. They include:

- Support of the French Crown, because its strength is redesigning Paris into a city with the potential to sponsor great acts of beauty. This may cause conflict with the agents of significant French dukes, agents of the English Crown, and the minions of Italian princes.
- Support for the rising generation of Jerbiton magi, called Antigones. Mathieus supports the Order as the best tool for peace currently available, but simultaneously believes it is a poor and weak tool, which he hopes the Antigones will repair. He hosts part of the Intinerarium, which provides leading Antigones with an opportunity to meet almost every aspiring Jerbiton magus, and evangelize antagonistic philosophy. This may provoke concern from more traditional magi when the Antigones begin to make political demands of the Order.
- Revulsion for Venice, and for those covenants he blames for the success of the Fourth Crusade. This includes support of the French Church, which Mathieus

### Story Seed: Folk Magicians

The Gift is rare, but Paris is the largest city in Western Europe. Hidden in its population are many people who Hermetic magi did not discover before their Gifts manifested. The Order is blamed for the failings of these people, so Parisian magi need to police these urban hedge magicians. Some can be bought into the service of the Order. Some can be warned to avoid attention. Some are executed.

sees as a counterbalance to Venetian influence on the pope. He also dislikes and distrusts the many covenants in the Roman Tribunal that have chapter houses in Venice.

### SWEATED SHILLINGS

**Young Magi:** Usually Fun-loving +1 and slightly manic in their attempt to fit a whole lifetime into a year.

The Sweated Shillings are the gaggle of young magi who live with Mathieus. The

### Story Seed: Succession

This covenant is dependant on a single magus, who is elderly and has no surviving apprentices. Many magi would find it convenient to be designated as Mathieus' heir. He claims not to want anything that they could provide for him. Currently his designate is Constantina filia Andru of Jerbiton, a young firebrand trained by the Primus, but he selected her mostly to annoy people badgering him to choose an heir. He could be convinced to select the player characters if they can offer an event or experience sufficiently novel.

membership of this band is in constant flux. The name refers to coins that have been shaken in a bag so that some of their silver is broken off. They often repay Mathieus' hospitality with a crisis that they flee, leaving him to fix. He is repaid in "bad coin." Magi from other covenants often find it hard to keep track of who Mathieus' followers are: they seem as interchangeable as coins with the details rubbed off. There are always at least three magi here with Mathieus. During the Tour this number rises sharply, as magi volunteer to keep an eye on the apprentices.



### Story Seed: Tremors at the End of the World

The supply of ivory that comes to Paris enters Europe through a tiny kingdom called Trebizond, at the edge of the Hermetic World. This means that disruptions in the trade routes through Asia are reflected very accurately in this covenant's ivory supply. If the supply suddenly stops, Mathieus may warn his Primus that something odd is happening out in Asia. Andru knows that the last time this happened the Huns were coming, so he will arrange for a group of magi to investigate. A glut of inexplicable ivory also attracts Mathieus' attention. If a huge consignment of walrus ivory finds its way to Paris, Mathieus will want to know who harvested these animals, how they managed it, and what they plan to do with that much money.



# Lands Surrounding Paris

The lands around Paris, the heart of the French kingdom, are rich fields dotted with numerous ancient monasteries and densely populated with prosperous villages. About a day's travel out from Paris, a ring of large towns may be found on the roads radiating out from the city, or up and down the River Seine. Just beyond, to the south, southwest, and northeast, the expansive forests of central France begin.

## St. Denis

The great royal abbey and famous Basilica of St. Denis enjoys the patronage of the French kings, whose predecessors are buried in its crypt. The wealthy royal town is located a half-dozen miles north of Paris, downstream on the Seine (although the distance along the river is at least twice as long), at the site of an old Roman town where the road from Paris to Beauvais passes by a wide bend in the Seine. The martyr and patron saint of France, St. Denis (see Chapter 2: History of Mythic France, St. Denis) was buried here, and pilgrims soon followed. The monastery was founded by Dagobert I in the seventh century and further expanded by Pepin the Short in the following century. Its most famous abbot was named

Suger — he became a firm friend of Louis VII while they were both studying at the abbey as boys. He was later elected abbot in 1122 and remained a close confidante of Louis when he became king. When the king departed on the Second Crusade, he nominated Suger as his regent, and his loyal and just stewardship of the kingdom won him great acclaim and the moniker "father of the land."

The Basilica of St. Denis, dating from the 1130s, is a miraculous and groundbreaking structure — the first ever church in the new "French style" (the modern reader may know this as "Gothic," although this term is not used in the 13th century). Abbot Suger received a divinely inspired vision of the heavenly Bethlehem, and resolved to build the church in this image. It has a graceful, airy nave with pointed arches and slender columns that seem almost impossibly tall, allowing the use of stained glass windows to an extent never before seen, and giving an astonishing display of color and light. These innovations are beginning to be copied, although the new style has yet to spread widely outside of northern France. Recently, a huge spire was added to one of the towers. The richly decorated royal tombs are the resting place of the first Christian Frankish king, Clovis, and his son Childebert, as well as most of the French kings since the seventh century.

The Lendit fair is held annually in the month of October, in fields just outside St. Denis. It was started by the abbey in 1109 as a means to raise funds, and it has grown rapidly since, even attracting international merchants. Many hundreds of traders' stalls may be seen. Parchments and writing materials are a particular specialty of the fair, as buyers from the university in Paris arrive to purchase

parchment in bulk. Several Normandy covenants have noticed this trade, and send their representatives to source their parchments, quills, inks, and related paraphernalia here.

## St. Cloud

In the sixth century, Clodoald, a grandson of the great Merovingian king Clovis, fled to this spot by the banks of the River Seine, six miles downstream from Paris. His father, Clodomir, had perished in battle and his brothers had been murdered. To avoid the same fate, he cut off his hair, something the Merovingian kings never did, since their locks granted them mystical powers. The young man took refuge in the small settlement of Nogent and founded a monastery there, becoming its abbot. He died in 560 and was buried here; his tomb soon became a site of pilgrimage and the town was named after him. St. Cloud now belongs to the bishops of Paris.

## THE BRIDGE OF ST. CLOUD

A centuries-old wooden bridge crosses the River Seine at St. Cloud. It has been patched up several times, and bears a tall wooden tower at each end. This is the place at which Clodoald tore off his hair, symbol of his kingly blood, and swam the river. A legend relates that any king who sets foot on the bridge will be struck down dead. No one knows if this is true, although, mindful of this curse, French rulers take care to always cross the river here in a boat. Even a faerie king may be subject to this fate. The bridge has a Magic aura of 2.

## The Oriflamme

The greatest treasure of the Abbey of St. Denis is a sacred banner known as the Oriflamme, the royal standard of the King of France. The name stems from the Latin Aurea Flamma, meaning "flame of gold;" indeed the banner is the color of flame. It is unfurled and flown from a lance at the head of the king's forces in battle, although it may only be displayed in the king's presence. The Oriflamme was taken by Clovis from the Roman king Syragius at the Battle of Soissons (see Chapter 8: Flanders and Picardy, Soissons) and was possessed by Charlemagne.

The Oriflamme certainly has great powers; it may bolster the morale and physical stamina of the king's troops, and it seems to override any other supernatural effect that may be present. It was most recently deployed at the Battle of Bouvines in 1214 in Flanders, where King Philip won a great victory and captured the Count of Flanders, Ferdinand, as a hostage. Magi have taken an interest in the artifact, but are unable to ascertain whether the relic is Divine or Magical in origin — no magus is willing to admit to having tested his magical powers against the banner.

## Chartres

Chartres, named after the ancient tribe of the Carnutes, lies beside the River Eure in the rich Beauce plain, lands owned by the Counts of Champagne. Atop a gentle hill near the river is an ancient well, which has been a site of worship in various ways down through the ages. First it was a druidic sanctuary, and then a Roman temple to the mother goddess. Christian missionaries conveniently interpreted the latter as a representation of the Virgin Mary, and the site has been dedicated to the veneration of the saint ever since. This explains Charlemagne's gift to Chartres of the Sainte-Chemise, the tunic worn by the Virgin Mary when giving birth to Jesus. Chartres

was sacked by Vikings in 858, and the bodies of martyrs were thrown down the well.

The Cathedral of Chartres now stands proudly at the summit of the hill, next to the old well. Disaster struck in 1194 when lightning caused the Great Fire of Chartres, destroying much of the city and nearly all of the church. (There were two earlier serious fires, in 1020 and 1134, each destroying much of the town.) One of the giant steeples survived the fire and remains. The good folk of Chartres feared the worst, that the Sainte-Chemise, their treasured relic, had been destroyed. Three days after the fire, however, a group of priests were found huddled and locked in the treasury with the relic. A visiting papal legate declared the relic's survival to be a miracle; this was interpreted as a sign that a greater cathedral should be built, and precisely this was undertaken. Monies for this project were donated generously from far afield, and the city folk took to the task with fervor, voluntarily hauling the stones from the nearest quarry. The construction proceeded at an incredible pace, and in 1220 the new giant nave, modeled after St. Denis in the French style, has just been finished. Plans are afoot to add yet further to the cathedral and build a greater steeple. The crypt of the church is the largest in France.

Chartres prospers from and is largely dependent on its fairs for pilgrims. On each of the four feast days of the Virgin Mary (the Purification, the Annunciation, the Assumption, and the Nativity), the streets and markets surrounding the cathedral are converted into a bustling fair, visited by hordes of pilgrims who have come to view the holy relic.

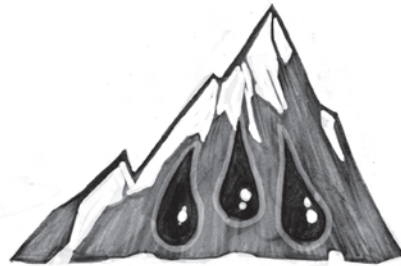
## The Forest of Fontainebleau

About 30 miles south of Paris, on the left bank of the Seine, is the forest of Fontainebleau. This is a rocky and diverse wilderness, about 20 miles across in each direction, consisting broadly of parallel sandstone ridges interspersed with limestone — a dry landscape of hillocks, ancient druidic groves, and small gorges. The majority is a woodland rich in game, but it is not thickly forested; occasional hunts are held, and there are a few hunting lodges. Apart from these, the only settlement of note is a tiny hermitage, although it is rumored that Parisian criminals often come here to hide. The wettest part of the forest resembles a moorland dotted with ponds and crevices. Another part is barren and desert-like in

appearance, with strangely shaped boulders scattered all around, several of which seem to resemble animals, or even people.

## THE FOUNTAIN OF FAIR WATERS

In the middle of the forest of Fontainebleau is a Faerie regio, at the center of which is a spring named Fontaine-Belle-Eau, from which the forest takes its name. It has a Faerie aura of 6. A beautiful nymph, whom the ancients believed to be an embodiment of the goddess Diana, dwells by the waters and is accompanied by a placid white stag. All kinds of tame forest creatures, often boars, may be found within her domain. Seldom does a person stumble into the regio, but keen-nosed hunting hounds occasionally find it by accident. Any dogs (and their owners) who act with humility may be tolerated, or even rewarded, but those who persist with their hunt will likely be cursed, and may never return. This may explain the anthropomorphic shapes of the boulders in the nearby forest, which may be harvested for Animal and Corpus vis.



## Lapis Crudus

Once one of the great covenants of the Normandy Tribunal, Lapis Crudus is a shadow of its former self following a number of severe setbacks, the most serious of which trapped the magi within their regio for over eighty years. The magi of Lapis Crudus have recently discovered a way in which they can circumvent their faerie-wrought trap, and are now trying to rebuild their former reputation.

## History

Lapis Crudus was founded on the spoils of the Schism War, and was an important player in the politics and culture of the Normandy Tribunal for the century that followed. Its for-

mation was sponsored in 1064 by the Grand Tribunal in an attempt to heal the rift which had formed between the Houses of Flambeau and Titalus (see Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture, History of the Normandy Tribunal), and consisted of two members of each, plus a follower of Jerbiton and a Bonisagus of Trianoma's line. Many of the modern followers of Flambeau in Normandy can trace their descent back to the members of Lapis Crudus; for a while they were the only two Flambeau in the tribunal. Over time, the membership became more cosmopolitan as the covenant grew, and the covenant sponsored two vassals, both of which were short-lived.

An unfortunate incident in 1118 revealed the location of the covenant and the nature of its inhabitants to several prominent noble families, who all sought to use the magi for their own ends. Lapis Crudus was forced to retaliate with a combination of subtle threats and blackmail, but neither were sustainable in the long term. Seeking a way to free the covenant from this political mire, Aries of House Flambeau tricked a powerful faerie called Candidus (see insert) into providing protection and concealment for the covenant, keeping it safe from harm. Candidus fulfilled the pact by moving the covenant into a faerie regio; but, resenting the manner in which he had been dealt with, he also sealed the borders of the regio, trapping everyone within. Fortunately, some of the covenant's sources of vis were located within the regio, but the magi needed to consume the output of these seisins to provide themselves with food and tools. That is, until one of their number devised a way to transfer non-living goods into the regio, and the magi got their first taste of meat and wine for nearly seven decades. The trapped magi were forced to rely on their fortunately large vis stocks for their study, and between them exhausted the library's capacity to teach them. There were some attempts to free the trapped magi, but Lapis Crudus's vassals, seeing a chance for independence, were not sufficiently motivated to achieve this goal, and the covenant was quickly forgotten.

Five years ago Aries succumbed to Final Twilight. With his demise, Candidus was prepared to renegotiate the pact. Since this time, members of the covenant have been able to leave the regio, but only if they are simultaneously replaced by someone from the outside entering the covenant. Further, the transfer must be between people of the same social standing, thus if a magus wants to leave, a magus must replace him. However, the person entering the covenant can bring with him whatever he is able to carry.



## Candidus

Candidus is a powerful faerie who dwells in the forest of Fontainebleau. He seems to accumulate power by making bargains with mortals; simply making a pact with a human grants him the ability to fulfill its terms. It is possible that he does not actually possess the seemingly limitless power to grant wishes, but instead acquires them from other faeries or humans through other pacts. He always requests unusual things in return, such as the breath of a stone, or a person's reflection, or the lament of a dying dragon; with a magnitude of difficulty commensurate with the task being asked from him.

Candidus appears to be a short man with skin the color and texture of chalk, which is where he acquired the name (which means "chalky white" in Latin) given to him by Lapis Crudus; they do not know his real name. He has no eyes, not even any eye-sockets, just skin where his eyes should be, although he does not appear to be blind. His hair is also white, and he affects clothing of dark blue.

## Setting and Physical Description

Lapis Crudus is situated in the forest of Fontainebleau in the Ile de France. At the western end of the forest is a barren sandstone massif called Les Trois Pignons, with deep dry valleys forming star-like patterns between the bouldered rock. At the middle of one of these stars is the covenant of Lapis Crudus. Because of the regio in which the covenant is trapped, the only visible sign of the covenant is a few rough shacks that house what appears to be a band of outlaws, but who are actually some of the covenant's grogs. One of the huts straddles the regio boundary, and anyone within the hut can see and converse with anyone in the same hut on the other side of the regio using a magical mirror placed there for this purpose. For many years this hut was the schoolroom and scriptorium of Somnifer, who actually managed to train an apprentice from the other side of the regio. He also copied books held up to the mirror, then used magic to rearrange the ink from its mirrored form. Before the recent change in circumstances, the magi used magic to transfer supplies placed in this room,

but no living thing could make the passage. Now, this room is the gate to the regio — if two persons each walk towards the mirror (and each other) from opposite sides of the regio boundary, then they change places. The persons must have comparable (but not necessarily identical) Social Status Virtues or Flaws to effect the passage to or from the regio — a magus must swap with a magus, a churchman with another churchman or academic, an outcast with another social pariah, and so forth. This is the only manner by which people may cross the regio, and grogs heavily laden with supplies regularly swap places with those trapped inside.

Within the regio, the covenant sits in a Faerie aura of 7. It is a collection of a dozen or so buildings made of the same sandstone as the surrounding rocks. It only receives direct daylight when the sun is at its zenith because of the height of the rocks surrounding the regio. Each arm of the star-shaped valley contains the sanctum of a different magus, with the central area containing the living quarters of the grogs and servants. The Bleeding Stone — from which the covenant gets both its name and its Corpus and Terram vis — is located in a cavern below the council chamber at the center of the central valley. The vines that grow down the sandstone cliffs to the valley floor are a source of Herbam vis. The covenant has numerous minor magical enchantments employing the arts of Herbam and Terram, created by the magi during their captivity. Thus, doors open up inside walls as persons approach them; all of the roofs can be commanded to become transparent to let the light in, and even the lowliest cook has a magical chopping knife. The covenant also has a large magical library, including several rare tomes of high quality, and many tractatus written by the trapped magi until their supplies of ink and parchment were exhausted.

## Culture and Traditions

Lapis Crudus has been separated from the rest of the world for nearly eight decades. While the scrying magics of Somnifer (see below) have allowed the covenant to keep abreast of the major events of this time, the magi have a strange disconnection regarding the Order, and seem unusually naïve. They are keen to leave the covenant and experience the world anew, but their perceptions have been warped by the strong Faerie aura and they have a twisted view of the world beyond their bounds.

## Magi

Lapis Crudus has three magi, two of whom are detailed below. All are ancient, and all are unusually specialized due to the restricted resources they have had access to for the last eighty years. Each magus has accrued one Warping Point a year for the last eighty years of entrapment from the aura alone, and more from their Longevity Rituals. The opening of the regio might be just in time to rescue them from a descent into Final Twilight. Somnifer's filius, a magus by the name of Languidus, has been representing the covenant's interests at Tribunal for the past decade, but has refused formal membership of the covenant. Lapis Crudus has not participated in the Tourney since its sealing-off, and all its legacies are deemed to have lapsed.

### SOMNIFER OF MERINITA

Age: 113 (Apparent age 30)

Personality Traits:

Sleepy +5,  
Thoughtful +2,  
Attentive -2

A master of magic pertaining to dreams, Somnifer kept the rest of the covenant appraised of the outside world during their captivity thanks to his ability to cast his mind forth in spiritual form and enter the dreams of those he encounters. He managed to find his apprentice through his dreams, and entice him to Lapis Crudus to receive training through the enchanted mirror. Somnifer has difficulty distinguishing dreams from reality, thanks to his Warping, and it is often difficult to determine whether he is awake, or just sleepwalking.

### MNEMON OF TYTALUS

Age: 97 (Apparent age 60)

Personality Traits:

Impatient +3,  
Sly +2,  
Apparently Trustworthy +1

Mnemon was just one year from his Gauntlet when the covenant was trapped in the regio, and has never fully partaken in the culture of conflict within his House. He is a master of Rego magics, and has become adept at creating spells of transportation while trying to find a way to escape Candidus's trap. He created the mirror that now forms the gateway to the covenant, and was the architect

of the renegotiation that relaxed the walls of the covenant's prison, although no one is sure what he was forced to promise Candidus in return. Mnemon is frustrated by slow modes of movement — like walking, or running — and has a disconcerting habit of instantly transporting himself over short distances, or summoning items instantly to his hands.

## Covenfolk

Although new blood has entered the covenant in the last few years, most of the covenfolk were born here, and some are members of the second or third generation within the regio. Consequentially, most of the covenfolk are heavily Warped; acquiring a Warping Score of 3 by the time they reach puberty, and a Score of 5 in their late forties (ArM5, page 167). They are used to employing magical items to assist their tasks, and express surprise if they discover that this is not the norm in the Order.

## Southern Ile de France

Beyond the forests of Yvelines and Fontainebleau lie the southernmost holdings of the French king. The wide valley of the River Loire emerges from Burgundy and stretches around in a huge, gentle loop, before passing into Anjou. The Church has an extremely powerful presence in these lands, with the seats of two archbishoprics, and a handful of ancient scholarly centers.

## Sens

Sens takes its name from a Gaulish tribe, the Senones. Under the Romans, the city was the capital of the province of Senonia. Nowadays, Sens is noteworthy for its status as the seat of an archbishopric, which oversees most of the bishoprics of the Ile de France, including Paris, and several in Champagne and Burgundy. The splendid Cathedral of St. Étienne is the second-earliest church in the new French style, after St. Denis. Work on it began in the 1130s, and the majority is now complete; its construction has been copied by several other

## Story Seed: Though the Looking Glass

Now capable of leaving their regio, the magi of Lapis Crudus must entice other magi to take their place within the regio should they wish to rove abroad. They may offer seasons of study in the vast library of the covenant as an exchange, but once out of their prison, they are reluctant to return.

Assuming he can get someone to take his place at the covenant, Mnemon has to fulfil his agreement with Candidus. Sensing his desperation to leave, Candidus bound him into a fearsome task, which could impact the site or the resources of

a player covenant. He might destroy a vis source that was dependent on the local fae, or kill a magical guardian, or interfere with mundane politics in an attempt to have the covenant disbanded.

Before becoming trapped, Lapis Crudus was one of the liege covenants of the tribunal, but without the ability to enforce its Oath of Fealty, its vassals have become independent. Now Lapis Crudus is able to partake once again in politics, it will try to reassert its former control. The player characters may be members of a covenant that Lapis Crudus claims as a vassal.





cathedral architects, for example William of Sens, who worked on the Cathedral of Canterbury in England. Sens is also home to a rich episcopal palace and treasury holding numerous relics, including the alb (a large outer vestment) of St. Thomas Becket. Much of the city is on the right bank of the River Yonne, adjacent to an island in the river and surrounded by ancient ramparts and a moat.

## Orléans

Orléans, by the River Loire, sits at a spot that was once the center of Gaul, and home to the Carnutes tribe. A great annual assembly of druids was held nearby (see Fleury, below). The Romans named the settlement Aureliannum, after the emperor Aurelius; it narrowly avoided destruction in 451 when an army of Visigoths and Romans relieved the siege of Attila the Hun at the last minute. In the early sixth century, Orléans became the capital of the Merovingian kingdom of Burgundy under Clodomir, the second son of Clovis, whose territory was split among his four sons.

Orléans is most famed for its venerable cathedral school. The sixth-century Burgundian kings commonly sent their sons here for education, and it was developed by the renowned bishop Theodulf in the eighth century. The eldest sons of both Charlemagne and Hugh Capet were educated here, and it has attracted students from many of the Christian kingdoms of western Europe. A recent ban on the teaching of law in Paris, handed down by Pope Honorius III in 1219, has resulted in a new influx of students into the city. If your saga follows real history, the pope will bestow the status of university on the school of Orléans in 1235.

## Fleury

Fleury lies 20 miles upriver of Orléans on the Loire; its famous abbey is the resting place of St. Benedict and is a significant site of pilgrimage. The establishment was founded by Benedictine monks from Orléans in the middle of the seventh century, by an ancient

sacred grove where an annual assembly of all the druids in Gaul took place. Soon thereafter, the remains of St. Benedict, the founder of western monasticism, were relocated here from Monte Cassino in Italy. Numerous miraculous healings were attributed to this relic, and pilgrims soon began to arrive in the thousands. The exquisite Basilica of St. Benedict, a lofty structure in the old style built of white stone, was recently finished in 1218 after a century and half of work. It houses the shrine of St. Benedict in its crypt.



One of the most famous figures in the history of the monastery is the Goth Theodulf, a brilliant poet-scholar from Charlemagne's inner circle, who became bishop of Orléans. He founded the monastic school, which soon became a source of great manuscripts. However, Theodulf fell out of favour after the death of Charlemagne, and the abbey later suffered Viking raids. The fortunes of Fleury were restored in the latter half of the 10th century under Abbo, a close confidante of Robert II, and an influential and famous scholar. Under his leadership, the library was expanded and attracted greater fame. A tome entitled *History of the Franks* was written here at this time by a monk named Aimon, which has since become adopted as the semi-mythical official chronicle of the royal Capetian house. (This should not be confused with the more famous and ancient work penned by Gregory of Tours; see Chapter 6: Anjou and Aquitaine, Tours.) The book has the following statistics:

Summa, Organization Lore: French Royalty (Level 3, Quality 9);  
Summa, Area Lore: Ile de France (Level 2, Quality 9);  
Summa, Divine Lore (Level 3, Quality 9).

## Bourges

A sturdily fortified city at the southern end of the Ile de France, Bourges is the seat of an archbishopric which has primacy over much of Aquitaine. In 1100, the Count of Bourges sold his lands to the French king, Philip I, to finance his crusading, and they have been in royal hands ever since. After the marriage of the Plantagenet Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine in the middle of the 12th century, however, Bourges was left in the somewhat precarious position of being the only royal domain belonging to the French crown south of the Loire. As a result, the French kings massively strengthened the defenses of Bourges, a project lasting three decades and completed under the current king, Philip II, in 1190. A giant stone wall, replete with extensive earthworks and surrounded by a moat, encompasses the whole city. The southern wall is interrupted by the Great Tower, a prototype of the fortress of the Louvre in Paris and a mighty keep in its own right, with its own moat and towers. Even the bridges of Bourges are fortified. The end result is that Bourges is an unmistakable symbol of the strength of the French crown to the duke of Aquitaine, the English king Henry III.

The half-built Cathedral of Bourges is in the new French style, started in 1195 under the direction of the then-archbishop, Henry de Sully, and is also a project partly designed to convey the power and prestige of the Capetian line and of the archbishops. The successor of Henry de Sully, William de Donjon, oversaw the project with great diligence and industry, but he died in 1209, causing the work to mostly cease for a number of years. However, this was a blessing in disguise for the cathedral, since William was canonised in 1218 — ever since, pilgrims have flocked to the city, and many generous donations have funded the project, such that construction has resumed at an eager pace. With the steady flow of pilgrims and monies into such a well-fortified city, the population of Bourges is expanding rapidly.

## Chapter Eight

# Flanders and Picardy

Flanders and Picardy are the two northernmost realms of the Normandy Tribunal, with the North Sea and the English Channel to their west, and the lands of the Rhine Tribunal to their east. Flanders is a great industrial center, densely populated, with many large and wealthy cities. Picardy, a more spacious land to its south, consists of more typical rolling farmland dotted with a handful of venerable Carolingian cities, in several of which grand cathedrals in the new French style are at various stages of completion.

As far as the Order of Hermes is concerned, this area is a bit of a backwater — the few covenants here are dominated by the liege of Florum; it and its vassals isolate themselves somewhat from the rest of the Tribunal, who have little interest or influence here. Sites of interest to magi — such as vis sources — are relatively few, apart from the somewhat tame wildernesses of the Boulonnais coast, the valley of the River Somme, the Forest of Cuise, and the Montagne de Reims.

## Flanders

Flanders is a small, flat lowland province bounded by the North Sea, and the River Scheldt to its east. Despite its modest geography, it has an importance far outstripping its size, for it boasts a great density of population with numerous sprawling cities. Uniquely in Mythic Europe, it is primarily an industrial, not an agricultural region. Flanders is renowned for its production of fine woolen cloth, based largely on raw wool imported from England, and nearly all the major cities are centers of textile production.

Many centuries ago, this land was largely deserted and consisted of nothing but coastal marshlands and creeks. The first firm settlements were monasteries, and from the

seventh century onward their monks gradually began to reclaim the land from the sea, constructing ditches to drain the land, and dykes to protect and enclose grazing fields. Flanders came into being as an administrative entity in 866, when it was granted to Baldwin Ironarm, son-in-law of Charles the Bald. Successive counts have continued efforts to reclaim marshland by organizing societies of landowners (called Wateringues), and have built fortifications that protected the north of France against Viking raids.

After the threat of raiders vanished in the 11th and 12th centuries, Flanders grew rapidly and achieved great prosperity. The clothmaking industry and the wool trade with England were established, towns were chartered, churches and belfries were erected, and the counts built several castles to maintain order in the new cities. The main castle and palace of the Counts of Flanders is in Lille, but they have castles in all the major cities. Among the grandest is the great keep in Douai; it is surrounded by giant ramparts and has walls twelve feet thick.

Unlike the rest of the Normandy Tribunal, serfdom is waning rapidly in Flanders. The burgeoning population cannot nearly be fed from its own lands, and so it is reliant on imports of grain, which is traded for wool cloth and linen. Powerful merchant guilds and patrician families control most of the cities, who have gradually extorted power from the counts, and who control the lucrative wool trade. The rival craft guilds (weavers, spinners, and dyers) are more sympathetic to the counts, who often ally with them to counteract the power of the merchants. With this rivalry, and the lurking resentment of the hordes of grimy workers who make barely enough to survive, there is currently considerable tension in all strata of Flemish society. The majority of the folk here speak Flemish, a dialect of Low German.

The current ruler of Flanders since 1205 is Joan of Hainault, niece of King Philip of

France. Her father and predecessor, Baldwin IX, was elected Emperor of Constantinople in 1204 during the Fourth Crusade, but died in captivity a year later. Her husband, Ferdinand, a scion of the King of Portugal, currently languishes in a prison in Paris, where he has been held for ransom for the last six years. Joan, who has little love for Ferdinand, refuses to pay her uncle the ransom of ten thousand pounds, and runs the county by herself, which Philip does not appear to mind.

## Bruges

Bruges (Brugge) was founded in the ninth century when Baldwin Ironarm, the first Count of Flanders, built a castle to protect against Viking attacks. It was an early port, accessible from the sea until the channel gradually silted up, causing growth to stagnate. In 1093, Robert the Frisian made Bruges the capital of his county. In 1134, a great tidal wave struck the North Sea coast, reshaping much of the Flemish coastline and causing a deep channel to appear in the Zwin estuary — a new navigable link to the sea. A harbor was thus built on this estuary at Damme, five miles away, which has since been linked to Bruges by canal. Thus the city prospered once more, growing to become Flanders' greatest port, and one of the most important centers of the wool and weaving industries. Some merchants in rival cities appealed to

### Flanders and Picardy Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Florum, Spider's Palace, Requies Aeterna

**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:** Infelicitas



the Church to investigate the tidal wave — the more fanciful claims held that it was conjured by some sorcery in conspiracy with patricians of Bruges. Quite separately, this incident attracted the suspicion of several magi who thought that either the covenant of Florum or Infelicitas might be to blame, but sufficient evidence was never presented for the Quaesitores to mount a full investigation.

The castle is at the center of the city, surrounded by brick ramparts that also enclose a spacious market square and the church of St. Donatius, the city's largest. Amongst a

cluster of other churches is the Basilica of the Holy Blood, which houses a reliquary containing the Blood of Christ, brought from the Holy Land after the Second Crusade by Thierry of Alsace, a former Count of Flanders. As with many Flemish cities, there is a large cloth market. The council of patricians that governs the city has granted a number of tax immunities and trading privileges. They allow foreign merchants, unlike local craftsmen, to purchase property — these traders have established a number of enclaves outside the city walls.

## The Flemish Cloth Fairs

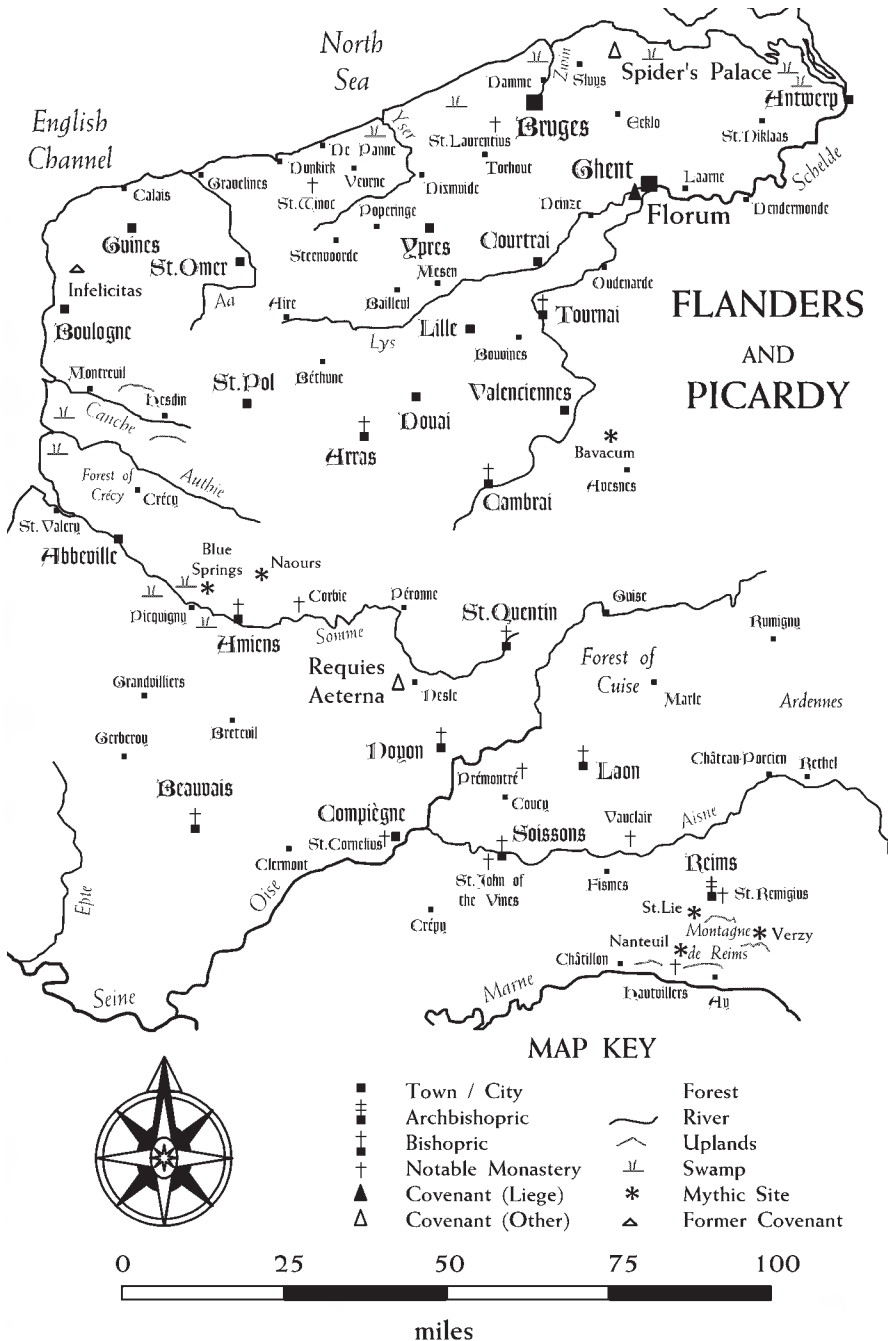
The cycle of trade fairs in Flanders runs from February to November, and is held successively in the towns of Lille, Mesen, Ypres, Torhout, and Bruges. Unlike other trade fairs in Mythic Europe, these fairs are dominated by the trade in fine woollen and linen cloth. The Counts of Flanders ensure the security of these fairs, keeping the roads and waterways (along which most of the goods pass) safe. For more information on trade fairs, see *City & Guild*, page 97.

For the legend of Bruges' founding and a possible explanation of the channel of the Zwin, see *City & Guild*, page 33.

## Ghent

St. Amand, an apostle of Flanders, founded two monasteries, those of St. Bavo and St. Peter, in the seventh century. The settlement that grew up around them, at the confluence of the rivers Schelde and Lys, was named Ghent (Gent). In the ninth century, Ghent was plundered twice by Vikings; in the following century Baldwin II erected a stone castle and the settlement thus recovered. The abbey now stands in the center of a great city that has grown to become not only the largest in Flanders, but the biggest in northern Europe after Paris. With perhaps forty thousand inhabitants, Ghent is easily bigger than either London or Cologne, and many merchant routes meet here at this wealthy center of trade for northern Europe. As with all the great Flemish cities, trade is dominated by wool and cloth, but just about any goods imaginable may be bought and sold in Ghent's huge markets. Many kinds of luxuries from the Mediterranean and Orient arrive here via the trade fairs in Champagne. A nascent banking industry is run by Italians, Jews, and the Knights Templar. Among numerous guilds in the city, the wool workers' guild is becoming increasingly powerful.

Many of the wealthy merchants of Ghent have built themselves stenen, grand fortified stone townhouses. Responding to this perceived threat to his rule, in 1180 the then-count, Philip of Alsace, responded by rebuilding and enlarging his castle in an ef-



fort to assert his authority over an increasingly rebellious mercantile class. The construction was inspired by the crusader castles of the Holy Land, and consists of a sturdy keep with an elaborate curtain ring of watch turrets, surrounded by a moat formed from the adjacent River Lys. The huge Church of St. Nicholas stands half-complete, with a second phase of building having just begun. The Graslei, Ghent's main docks, run north-south through the center of the city.

## Antwerp

In Roman times, a giant by the name of Druon Antigon plagued the estuary of the River Scheldt, waylaying and wrecking many ships. The villainous beast exacted a toll, and cut off the hands of those who refused to pay, or of those to whom he simply took a disliking. A soldier named Silvius Brabo challenged the giant to a duel and ultimately prevailed, severing the giant's hand and tossing it into the river. This hero was granted the land at the site of the battle, and thus was the city of Handwerpen, meaning "hand-throwing" (later Antwerpen in Flemish, Anvers in French) founded. To this day,

### Story Seed: A New Lifestyle

A new beguinage is established near the covenant, and the mother of the convent proselytizes in the local area, to great effect. This new lifestyle appeals to many of the disaffected womenfolk of the covenant, who promptly quit en masse, living the covenant seriously short of staff. How might the magi be able to persuade them to stay?

### Story Seed: Neighbors in Need

A beguine convent is being oppressed by an overbearing landlord, and looks to the covenant for help. The pious women of the beguinage may be willing to labor for the covenant in exchange for protection and being freed from their debt, although the magi may make an enemy of the landlord.

## Cat Hurling

Ypres is home to a sizable population of cats, many of which live in the city's central Cloth Hall. During the winter, the cats are tolerated since they help to keep the voluminous hall free of mice and rats that might otherwise damage the cloth stored there. Come springtime, however, the cats are unfortunately surplus to requirements. The superstitious townsfolk of Ypres regard them as agents of witchcraft, and catch all that they can lay their hands on. The luckless cats are taken in sacks up to the top of the belfry of the Cloth Hall, adjacent to the large cloth market, and are hurled down to their deaths, in a ritual known as the Kattenfeest. The wisest and stealthiest felines manage to hide up and avoid this grisly fate, ensuring that there will be enough cats left over to hunt next winter's vermin.

### Story Seed: Save the Cats

An intelligent cat at the covenant, perhaps the familiar of one of the magi, hears of the plight of the cats of Ypres and beseeches the magi for aid. If they are able to stop the killing, they will earn the eternal gratitude of the cats.

## Story Seed: Magical Cats

An odd-looking and sinister fellow in motley garb is the principal agitator of the Kattenfeest. He whips up the townsfolk into a frenzy of feline-grabbing and leads the procession to the belfry of Ypres with macabre laughter. Later on, [the jester may](#) be seen skulking around the corpses of the cats, seemingly collecting something. Perhaps this is an urban hedge wizard who is collecting vis from the cats?



## The Beguines

The Beguines are a spontaneous movement of widows and unmarried women who have begun to settle into urban convents. Taking their name from St. Begga, the mother superior of a covenant in Andenne, Brabant, in the seventh century, beguines differ from nuns in that they are not bound by vows, nor do they renounce the possibility of marriage, although there are other rules. The single women who choose to enter such convents are mostly drawn from the wealthy classes — the apostolic poverty (which in any case is not overly severe) espoused by the beguines is a matter of choice. A woman's decision to enter a beguinage might be based on personal piety, unfortunate family circumstances, a desire to lead a simple communal

life with some measure of independence, or some combination thereof. Manual labor is valued in such communities and the women typically occupy themselves with acts of charity such as caring for the sick, or small cottage industries such as sewing and weaving.

A typical beguinage, or beguine convent, takes the form of a tiny walled town on the outskirts of a larger town or city, consisting of terraced rows of cottages arranged in one or more large square courtyards around a convent church. Beguinages have just started to flourish in Flanders. By the middle of the 13th century, large beguine convents are established in both Ghent and Bruges, and several other cities in Flanders, Brabant, and northern Picardy.



the city's coat of arms depicts two severed hands before a castle.

The settlement that grew up around a Roman fort was Christianized by St. Amand in the seventh century. Antwerp has long since been an important harbor, although the city itself is not so large or noteworthy as the great Flemish cities. It prospers on the trade of fish, grain, and salt, as well as the import of raw wool from England.

## Ypres

Ypres (Ieper) is located on the site of an ancient settlement from Roman times and was re-founded in the 10th century, growing to become one of Flanders' largest and most important cities. As with all such populous cities here, its success derives largely from the production of woolen cloth — there is a large cloth market in the center of the city near to the Church of St. Martin. Ypres also specializes in linen weaving, since the waters of the River Lys are suitable for retting flax, which is grown all around.

To the south of Ypres lies the Heuvelland, Flanders' modest uplands and most sparsely populated region. A ridge of wooded hills up to 500 feet high affords a commanding view of much of the Flemish lowland.

### Story Seed: The Giant of Steenvoorde

A clever giant by the name of Yan den Houtkapper (John the Woodcutter) lived in the town of Steenvoorde and crafted a pair of everlasting boots, which he gifted to Charlemagne. In return, the emperor presented him with a princely (and suitably huge) set of armor. To celebrate their hero, the folk of Steenvoorde dress up a giant mannequin with the set of armor, which they proudly carry through their town in a procession to this day.

The armor might be blessed or magical, and attract the interest of a character with Giant Blood (the only kind of person whom it would fit). However, the townsfolk would surely become enraged if their most prized possession were to be stolen.

## Tournai

Tournai, the seat of Flanders' bishopric, has an ancient pedigree and is a cultured and pious city, in stark contrast to the unrelenting industry and commerce of most of Flanders' towns. The Roman town was converted to Christianity by St. Piat, and it became the capital of a Frankish realm under the kings Chilperic and Clovis, the former of whom is buried here, and the latter of whom was born here and established the bishopric. Since 1187, the city has been independent from the Counts of Flanders, being now directly subordinate to the French crown.

The city is dominated by the grand cathedral of Notre-Dame and its belfry. It is split in two by the River Scheldt, but its walls still manage to encompass it completely, crossing the river in a series of elaborate stone arches, which forces river traffic to stop and pay a toll. Tournai is home to many kinds of artisans, and its gold- and silversmiths are especially famed.

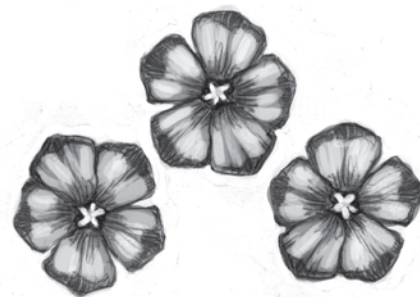
## Bavacum

In the county of Hainault, hidden in the forest on the eastern edge of Flanders at the border with Brabant and Picardy, lies a crumbling milestone at the meeting point of seven ancient Roman roads, which are now disused and overgrown. A short distance away from this monument may be found the remains of the Roman city of Bavacum, now thickly covered with forest and undergrowth. This settlement, an administrative and supply center sacred to Mercury as well as a military post, was sacked and subsequently abandoned at the end of the third century.

Around the junction and the adjacent ruins is a Magic aura of 3. On any given time and date, one of the seven straight roads radiating out from the milestone may be found to have a special property: it provides a clear route through the forest, and after only a morning of travel, one will emerge from the woods within sight of the destination city at the other end of the road: a much-shortened journey of hours instead of days. The other six roads function exactly as one would expect — an awkward trek along an overgrown forest road that is not particularly useful and proceeds to its destination at the usual pace. The particular road with this power depends on the configuration of the seven heavenly bodies in the night sky, and may perhaps also be governed by some

long-forgotten Mercurian magic. For example, the southernmost road is active when Mars is ascendant, since that route emerges from the Forest of Cuise on the road to Reims, within distant view of the Roman Porte de Mars in Reims' north wall. Starting with the road leading directly south and proceeding clockwise, the roads lead to Reims, Soissons, Cambrai, Boulogne, Utrecht, Cologne, and Trier. An Intelligence + Artes Liberales roll against an Ease Factor of 12 may be made to accurately predict which road will be active at any given time.

On the day of Mercuralia, the Roman festival of Mercury (May the 15th), it may be found that *all* roads possess this magical journey-shortening power. On this day, ancient footsteps may also be spotted on the road. If they are dug up carefully, each imprint is worth a pawn of Rego vis.



## Florum

This covenant and its vassals depend on the emerging industrial area in the Low Countries. The odd rules for claiming magical resources in this Tribunal have forced this cluster of covenants into a tight alliance, since each has a portion of the resources usual for a covenant in another tribunal. As a group, these covenants want to opt out of the Tribunal, and are supporters of the putative Lotharingian Tribunal.

## History

A group of the native magicians who dwell in this covenant has an odd origin story. It includes a magical oak, a spider who marries a princess, and the creation of flax. These folk magicians do not have the Gift; Pelagius of Jerbiton discovered them soon after the formation of the Order, and drew them into the service of his House. The blue flowers of the flax plant give the covenant its name, and serve as its symbol.

Florum, as the covenant is usually called, was for most of its early history a small Jerbiton House covenant situated between Bru-

ges and Ghent, at the site of the covenant now called the Spider's Palace. It avoided the Schism War entirely: most of its members moved to Ghent temporarily, so that they could not be attacked without rousing the wrath of the Church.

House Jerbiton has experimented with many fashions of covenant governance, each of which has affected this covenant. In the 10th century, the Primus advocated living for much of the time in cities. The Jerbiton magi from the Spider's Palace moved back to Ghent, but founded a vassal house at the Palace so that they would not lose their claim on its magical resources.

During the 12th century, a different Primus asked all Jerbiton covenants to open their membership to magi of other Houses, which the two covenants both did. The modern covenant remains in Ghent, and has members of many Houses.

## Setting and Physical Description

The city of Ghent is rapidly expanding, as the wealth generated by its textile industry draws people from the countryside. The spreading suburbs are filled with strangers and foreigners. Florum predicted this, and fifty years ago established a large flax farm a mile south of Ghent. The city has enveloped the farm, which the covenant has developed into an industrial complex. This supplements the smaller sites that the covenant has acquired in Ghent over the centuries.

The Farm, as the covenant's servants continue to call their neighborhood, has a population of almost three hundred. In its middle is a huge factory, but this is not used for its obvious purpose. The covenant uses the magical powers of a family with a unique faerie heritage to create most of its cloth, but needs a factory to make its source of wealth inconspicuous, and therefore legal according to the Tribunal's Peripheral Code. Under the cover of illusions, the covenant uses this space for the magical processes of cloth creation.

Around the factory are a series of tenements, which take up several city blocks. These are of higher quality than is usual for accommodation in the newer sections of Ghent. The tenements were originally constructed for the workers of the factory by the de Spinnens, a fictional family maintained by the magi. The tenements house the covenant's staff and their families. Not all of these

people know that they work for magicians, although all know that their landlords are the old family, currently led by Piet de Spinnen.

## Culture and Traditions

The covenant pretends to be a suburb inhabited by a group of families who have resided here since the area was agricultural. All of the property is owned by the old farming family, and so it is never sold or rented to outsiders. The oldest families share a secret magical power that has proven lucrative to their Hermetic masters.

### THE FALSE LEADER: PIET DE SPINNEN

Piet de Spinnen is actually Petrus, the mundane son of Calvinus of Jerbiton, described below. He was born in Valnastium, and like many young Alpine men, served as a mercenary in Italy. He was modestly successful, and became wealthy and famous enough to develop such strong rivals that he faked his own death and returned to Valnastium. The House needed to provide an heir to Arne de Spinnen, who was childless. Petrus was trained by an old Redcap for the role.

Many of the leading de Spinnens have been people who owe their lives and success to the House. Arne, who was also not who he seemed to be, accepted this "bastard of his youth" as his heir. Piet's bastardry is a convenient form of dismissal by aristocratic rivals, and explains Piet's deep interest in the works of the Church. Petrus is the willing spokesman of the covenant, and is very pleased with how his life has turned out. He has several children, two of whom have been sent to the new university in Paris. They spent a year there and then secretly went to Valnastium for further training as servants of the House.

### THE SPINNEN

Characters with Spinnen blood are all members of a family founded soon after the arrival of Christianity in Belgium. Knowing that the old ways were ending, the ancestral oak of a fair maiden summoned a series of faerie and mystical princes as potential husbands. She declined them all, and then the oak explained that its thousand years were done, and that the best way to preserve her family was to wed Spin Head, the last and

## New Minor Virtue: Faerie Blood (Spinnen)

A character who has Spinnen Blood can convert his or her own body weight of fiber into cloth per day, simply by touching it. Old cloth, or products made of cloth fibers, can be unwoven using the same ability, but this counts toward the maximum weight of cloth a character can alter per day. Some Spinnen, particularly those who have served as companions to magi, create other useful objects, like tents, ropes, or sails in lieu of the same weight of cloth.

ugliest of the princes. He would give her a great gift as dowry, which would replace the fallen forests. The oak then died and after a simple test, the spider was able to take human form. As her dowry, Spin Head gave his wife the first flax plant, and wove its fibers with his fingers into a wedding dress.

Only a few of the descendants of this strange match, in each generation, have the magical ability to weave cloth with their fingers. When Pelagius discovered the Spinnen, there were a dozen people with this ability. In 1220, there are almost thirty. The covenant employs all of the Spinnen, who live far better than before, now that the covenant can sell their wares to international traders.

The covenant keeps the existence of the Spinnen secret by hiding them in plain sight. Many of the Spinnen are members of the Weavers' Guild in Ghent. The covenant maintains a large workshop where some of the relatives of the spider-kin weave garments using mundane methods. Much of the spider-kin's output is secretly exported. The origin story for flax is widely known in Belgium, so a character who has sufficient clues to develop suspicions might guess the nature of the spider-kin.

## Magi

The membership of the covenant is fluid. It generally has between four and six members. Two of the members currently reside at the Palace of the Spider, described below, to use the excellent laboratories there. The covenant is also hosting three visitors, a Quaesitor, a Tytalus hoplite, and a Redcap, who are us-



ing it as a base for exploring sites for a House Guernicus covenant should the Lotharingian Separation occur. The four members currently in residence are described below.

## RHESUS OF VERDITUS

Age: 85 (Apparent age 54)

Personality Traits:

Proud +3,  
Dependable +2,  
Stubborn +1

Rhesus of Verditus is the leader of the covenant, among the magi. He is a clean-shaven, muscled man who appears to be in his fifties. Rhesus is interested principally in the magical uses of flax. Rhesus came to Florum, from the Roman Tribunal, in part because of the professional jealousy that infects members of his House, and in part because he is a weaver and was interested in the spider-kin. He supports the Lotharingian ideal because he finds Normandy's culture, where he needs to keep defending resources that in any other tribunal would simply be his, to be tiresome.

## CALVINUS OF JERBITON

Age: 59 (Apparent age 45)

Personality Traits:

Wily +3,  
Aloof +1

Calvinus is a middle-aged magus with the Gentle Gift. He is believed, in Ghent, to be the younger brother of Piet de Spinnen's father, who left Ghent to go trading in Italy decades ago. It is readily apparent that Piet takes notice of his counsel. Many people say that Uncle Calvin's money allowed the family to pay for the last round of construction on the Farm. Calvin is a private man, who spends a lot of time reading his books. He is believed to speak five languages, so he often negotiates on behalf of his nephew, or translates for him.

Calvinus, like many Jerbiton, is trained in urban magic. He is skilled at illusions, spying on the covenant's mundane rivals, and arranging criminal actions. He had a (fictional) wife in Italy, and his supposed daughter, after being raised by her (equally fictional) maternal grandparents, has recently arrived in Ghent. Calvinus' apprentice, named Sophia, is charming but as bookish as he is, which makes some of her cousins worry that she might never marry.

## ALROY OF FLAMBEAU

Age: 82 (Apparent age 60)

Personality Traits:

Brave +3,  
Easily bored +1

The Norman tradition of fighting for resources requires most covenants to have a champion. For this covenant it is Alroy, an older Flambeau magus with a distinguished record of combat in the Levant. Alroy decided five years ago to train an apprentice, and he chose to settle at this covenant because it was wealthy, comfortable, far from Muslims, and promised the occasional excitement of Tourneying.

Alroy is at a difficult stage of life for a Flambeau magus. He has lived far longer than he expected to, and has killed most of the things he considered frightening when he was younger. Raising an apprentice and fighting Tytalus magi are challenges that he hopes will rekindle the fire in his spirit. Alroy is a creature of passionate enthusiasms attempting to throw off a veteran's ennui.

## PRUNELLIE OF MERINITA

Age: 104 (Apparent age 61)

Personality Traits:

Generous +3,  
Secretive +1

Prunellie of Merinita is an elderly maga who travels throughout the Low Countries attempting to understand the strange nature of the Faerie realm here. In ancient times, the Belgians had a series of gods and were guided by ancestral trees. Close to the coming of the Christians, however, the trees and faeries came to some sort of understanding, and actively encouraged the spread of the Dominion and the domestication of the forests.

Faeries assisted the transition to agriculture in many ways. The faeries taught men how to fell the forests, to plow, to plant wheat and flax, and to drive piles into the muck so that they could build dikes and claim land from the sea. An emissary was sent to teach the use of flax, and a gnome developed starch as a gift for humans. The kabouters, a sort of dwarf, made a hundred bells and gave them to all of the missionaries of whom they approved. A choir of kabouters, conducted by a gnome, also sang the first carillon in the Low Countries.

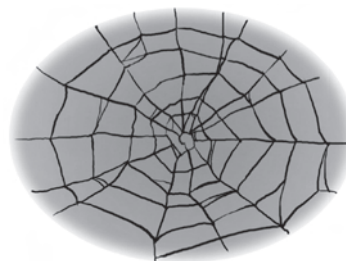
Not all of the faeries of the Low Countries agreed to aid the Christians. The friendly faeries, however, aided the humans by teaching saints where and how to attack the recal-

citrants. These destroyed faeries are usually found as large stones, sitting unaccompanied in fields. Prunellie could restore these goblins, but usually chooses to harvest them for vis instead.

Prunellie's focus on urban faeries is considered a little bizarre by her fellows in House Merinita. That being noted, she has a firm alliance with a tribe of kabouters, and has trained others in her urban faerie magic. Prunellie selected the site of the Farm. It is directly above an ancient kabouter workshop, which provides it with a Faerie aura. Prunellie's support for the Lotharingian Tribunal stems from her belief that the strange capitulation of the faeries to the Divine is unique to Flanders and Brabant, and perhaps Frisian lands.

## Vassals

Florum has two vassals. Requies Aeterna, described at the end of this chapter, is a covenant in decline. The Spider's Palace, described below, is closer and is significant to the operation of the covenant.



## Spider's Palace

The Spider's Palace is the original site of Florum. This was the site of the thousand-yearold oak spirit that guarded the local people, and guided their ancestress into marriage with the spider prince. The spider built a fine palace here for his wife, which in time faded from the mundane world. It is used as the covenant building by magi.

The Palace of the Spider is slightly more than two days' travel north of Ghent. A single magus usually lives here, to maintain the covenant's claim to the surrounding resources, but at the moment two visitors from Ghent are using the laboratories here. That two places so close have to be divided into two covenants, just so that other magi have no legal right to attempt to steal these resources, demonstrates what the magi of these covenants see as a flaw in the Normandy Tribunal's way of apportioning resources.

## Picardy

Picardy is a relatively poor relation to the great regions of Flanders, Normandy, Ile de France, and Champagne, which it borders. A land of rolling hills and plains, dotted with woods and containing most of the sprawling Forest of Cuise in its southeastern reaches, it neither benefits from centers of trade or industry, nor from vast tracts of rich agricultural land. Nevertheless, it is home to several rich bishoprics, including the great Archbishopric of Reims, and numerous wealthy abbeys.

Picardy has no single ruler, but the influence of the French king, Philip, predominates. Since 1180 he has annexed several counties bordering the Ile de France, including Valois, Clermont, Artois, and lands around Amiens. The bishops rule most of the other counties. The northernmost towns of Picardy have swelled from a recent influx of disaffected Flemish workers, bringing prosperity and a nascent cloth-making industry. However, these city folk have also brought the seeds of rebellion and unrest with them, causing the local bishops and the French king to respond with fairly brutal treatment.

## Soissons

Soissons is favorably located in the center of rich farmland in the valley of the River Aisne. It was at a time the capital of a large fragmentary Roman kingdom — the kingdom of Soissons — under a king named Syragius. The Franks, united under Clovis, were a great rival to this realm, and at the Battle of Soissons Clovis defeated Syragius at the gates of his city. The Frankish king immediately ordered the return of a precious vase from Reims, but a rebellious Roman soldier refused him and smashed the vase at his feet, retorting that the king would have only that which his destiny grants him. The next year, Clovis happened upon the selfsame soldier while reviewing his new troops. He promptly raised his sword and cleaved the soldier's skull, declaring "Thus you did with the Soissons vase." For a time Soissons was the Frankish capital under Chlotar, son of Clovis.

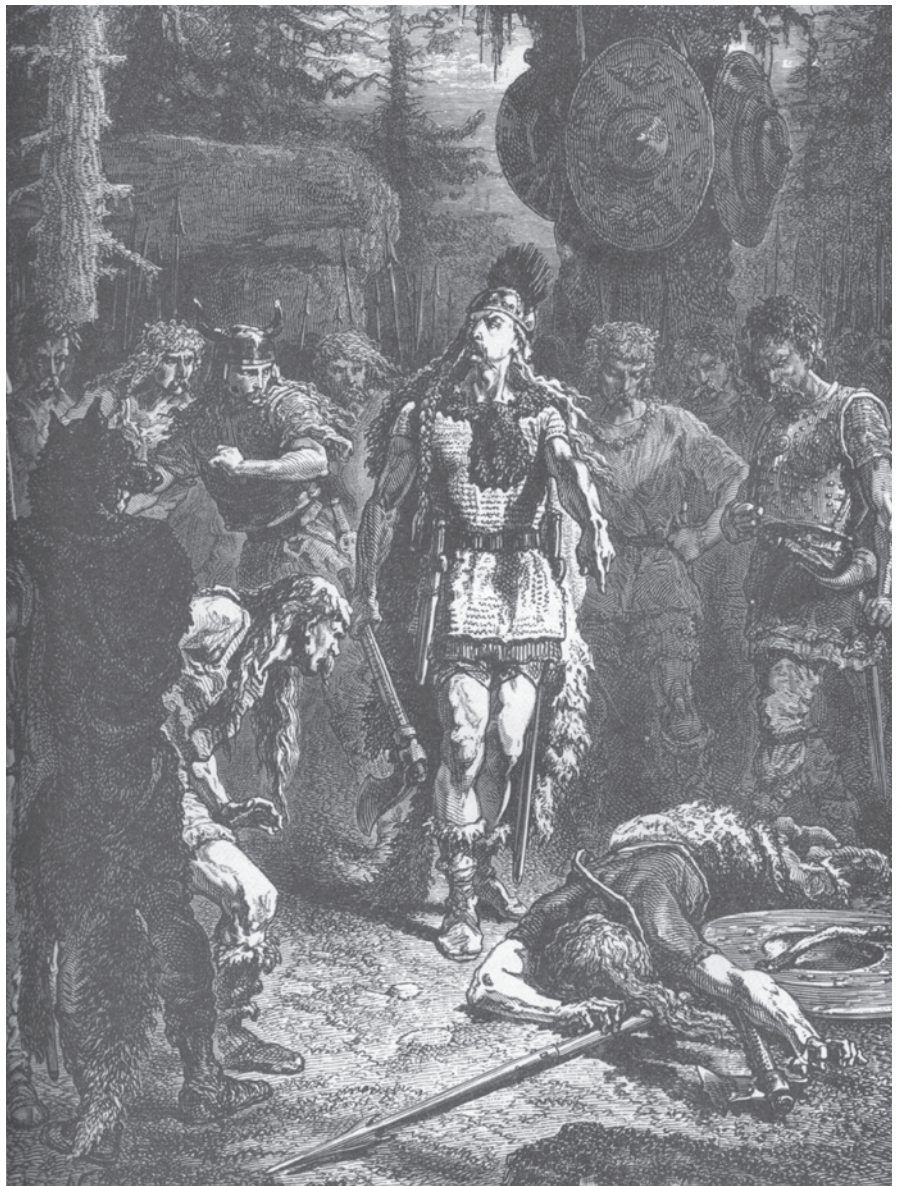
The city's Monastery of St. John of the Vines, founded in the 11th century, has enjoyed the patronage of the French kings, becoming one of the richest abbeys in France. Its wealth has funded a great abbey church and the town's cathedral, dedicated to St. Gervais, which are both regularly enlarged and improved.

## Reims

The great city of Reims, the largest in Picardy, is the seat of the most powerful archbishopric in France, and is famed as the site of the coronation of the French kings. Its name comes from a Gaulish tribe, the Remes, of which it was the capital. It later became an important and wealthy Roman city, and several roads were built to its gates. On a Christmas day at the end of the fifth century, Clovis, the Frankish king, was baptized by St. Remigius (Rémi), bishop of Reims. The phial of holy oil used to anoint him was miraculously brought from heaven by a dove. To this day the Kings of France cite this miracle as a symbol of their divine right to rule. The phial — a potent

relic — is still used by the archbishops in a grand ceremony to crown the King of France (see Chapter 2: History of Mythic France, The Holy Oil of Consecration). The power and privilege of the archbishops of Reims to anoint the king has been used wisely to ensure the prosperity of Reims through the ages; they enjoy a powerful role of arbitration between potential contenders for the throne. The great cathedral school of Reims has been a shining light of the liberal arts for centuries. The Archbishop William White Hands granted the city a charter at the end of the 12th century, and it has swelled since.

At the north end of the city are remains from Reims' Roman days. The north entrance of the city walls, the *Porte de Mars*, is a triumphal arched Roman gate. Nearby are





the remains of a temple to Mars and the ruins of an ancient Roman forum. In the center of the city is the eighth-century Monastery of St. Remigius, the patron saint of Reims. He was buried in 533 and a basilica was built over his grave. Since then, the Basilica of St. Remigius has been rebuilt into a much grander structure. The outline of the vast cathedral of Notre-Dame, which begun work in 1210, to be built in the new French style, is at the southern end of the city. The opulent archbishop's palace is home to a famed collection of relics that are used for the coronation, including the aforementioned holy phial; Charlemagne's talisman, believed to contain a fragment of the True Cross; a coronation chalice; and the reliquary of the Holy Thorn.

### The Montagne de Reims

In stark contrast to the cultured civilization of Reims, there is a hilly forest wilderness that begins immediately to its south, extending southwards for 15 miles as far as the valley of the River Marne, and which is 25 miles across. Trees densely cover a limestone plateau with a crazed and uneven geography, featuring tiny lakes, underground rivers, and chasms. This makes these woods, unlike the Forest of Cuise, somewhat unsuitable for hunting — not that hunting is a pursuit that would interest the archbishops of Reims anyway. As a result, all sorts of wild beasts roam with relative impunity. The Montagne de Reims is home to several peculiar sites and sources of vis.

#### THE GROVE OF ST. LIE

Atop a ridge on the northern edge of the forest, with a commanding view of Reims and the surrounding plain, is an ancient Gaulish burial mound surrounded by a grove of oaks. This tranquil place has a tiny chapel dedicated to St. Lie, a fifth-century hermit-saint. The pale flowers that grow on the mound may be harvested for a few pawns of Creó vis; this constitutes a tropaeum.

#### THE FAUX DE VERZY

In the eastern reaches of the forest is a sinister grove of deformed, twisted, and stunted black beeches. This place, which has a Faerie aura of 4, is shunned by the

### The Miracle of Our Lady

In the year 636, a small congregation in the chapel of Boulogne was visited by an apparition of the Virgin Mary. Following her divine guidance they rushed out to the sea shore, whereupon they witnessed a boat with neither sails nor crew gently come aground, bearing a statue of the saint. The famed relic is now housed in the cathedral of Notre-Dame, which has become a magnet for pilgrims — it is believed to grant safe journeys to them. The Kings of France traditionally undertake this pilgrimage and several English kings have also visited.

nearby peasants. According to some of the wilder tales, villagers who stray here are often taken captive by a dark dwarf-like folk. When they return, they are scarred with some deformity and sullenly refuse to speak about their ordeal.

#### NANTEUIL

Near to the center of the forest is a remote vale where the Knights Templar have founded a priory. This is a decidedly odd place to house such an establishment, for it is very difficult to reach, and doesn't seem to lead anywhere. It is recorded in the writings of the magus Norlanus that he once visited the site and found it to be a regio, possibly of Divine origin. Leaving the priory as a guest, he writes that he found himself in a completely different, lighter version of the forest. Others claim, however, that Norlanus merely experienced a potent Twilight episode.

#### HAUTVILLERS ABBEY

Not far from the north bank of the River Marne is Hautvillers, founded in 660 by St. Nivard. There is a large abbey church in a secluded and idyllic spot, surrounded by vineyards. This monastery is now a branch of the Reims school, and some of the most magnificently decorated manuscripts to be found anywhere are produced here. A few miles upstream is the ancient Gaulish town of Ay, a diminutive community of vintners with a royal residence that is infrequently visited by the Kings of France.

### Arras

Arras is the seat of the county of Artois, bordering Flanders, and tribal town that was originally the capital of the Atrebrates people. The Romans settled here and named it Atrebatum. The Benedictine Abbey of St. Vaast was founded on the slopes of the Baudimont hill in the seventh century by St. Aubert; it houses the relics of St. Vaast, the first bishop of Arras. There is a large grain market frequented by Flemish traders, who sell woolen cloth in exchange for grain. Arras is home to numerous troubadours and entertainers of repute, a tradition established in the 12th century by its most famous trouvère (minstrel), Gautier d'Arras. His most popular and enduring work is a romance named *Eracle*, in which the hero Heraclius becomes Emperor of Constantinople.

### Boulogne

Boulogne, sited where the River Liane meets the sea between two hills, has been an important port since Roman times. Then named Bononia, the Roman emperor Claudius used it as his base to invade Britain; thereafter it served as the principal port connecting that new province with the rest of the empire. Nowadays it is the seat of an important county, a sizable port and fishing town, and a site of pilgrimage (see insert). The upper town has grown up around an old Roman castle; the current count has just started to rebuild its ruined ramparts and walls.

The Boulonnais hills form the coastline north of Boulogne. This is a windy and wild region of chalk cliffs, capes, and dry valleys. On a clear day, the coastline of England may be seen from the cliffs.

### Amiens

Amiens, the historical capital of Picardy, was the principal settlement of one of the largest Gaulish tribes, the Ambiani. The Romans named it Samarobriua. In the fourth century, St. Martin of Tours, then a Roman horseman, sliced his cloak into two and gave half to a beggar who was sitting freezing in the winter winds. The cloak of St. Martin is one of Amiens' two great relics. The other, and greater, is the head of John the Baptist, brought back from the Fourth Crusade in 1206. In 1218 the main church of Amiens burnt down, but the bishop

and his subjects have already started construction on a much larger cathedral church, which will be more worthy of this holy relic.

For about a dozen miles downstream of Amiens, the River Somme meanders so slowly that its valley becomes a swamp of peat bogs and water meadows. The shallowness of the waterway limits river traffic and the swampland is thus sparsely populated, apart from a few hamlets of peat-cutters and hunters.

### THE BLUE SPRINGS OF THE SOMME

On the edges of the swamplands of the Somme are scattered a number of enchanted pools, some of them alongside poorly traveled roads. Revolving shafts of blue light seem to emerge from within these springs; if you look closely (which is not advisable) you may even spy wealth-laden carriages and other treasures slowly spinning around beneath the waters. Mischievous water sprites are believed to dwell here and steal anything that falls into or becomes trapped by the pools, and waylay travelers with their enchantments. On the other hand, a toddler or babe who slips into one of the springs will be blessed with beautiful blue eyes, and gifts willingly given to the waters may be rewarded. The pools have *Faerie* auras of differing strengths, up to 3.

### The Caves of Naours

A half-dozen miles north of Amiens, on a limestone plateau, is the village of Naours. From above ground it appears to be a perfectly normal settlement of a few hundred peasants, surrounded by plots of dreary farmland. However, barely half of the village is above ground, while the rest is hidden in a giant network of caves that amounts to nearly an underground town in its own right. Centuries ago, the villagers dug out a series of caves known as *muches*. During the Viking invasions, they hid down here and discovered a powerful cave spirit, a *genius loci* (see *Realms of Power: Magic*). They entered into a pact of mutual protection with the spirit, a compact that has been honored ever since.

The complex of underground passages and caves is about 100 feet below the surface, linked to it by chimneys, a couple of stairways, and a steep road. The subterranean dwelling has hundreds of rooms capable of sheltering more than a thousand souls, with more than a mile of "streets," a smithy, a brewery, storerooms, bakeries, cattle sheds,

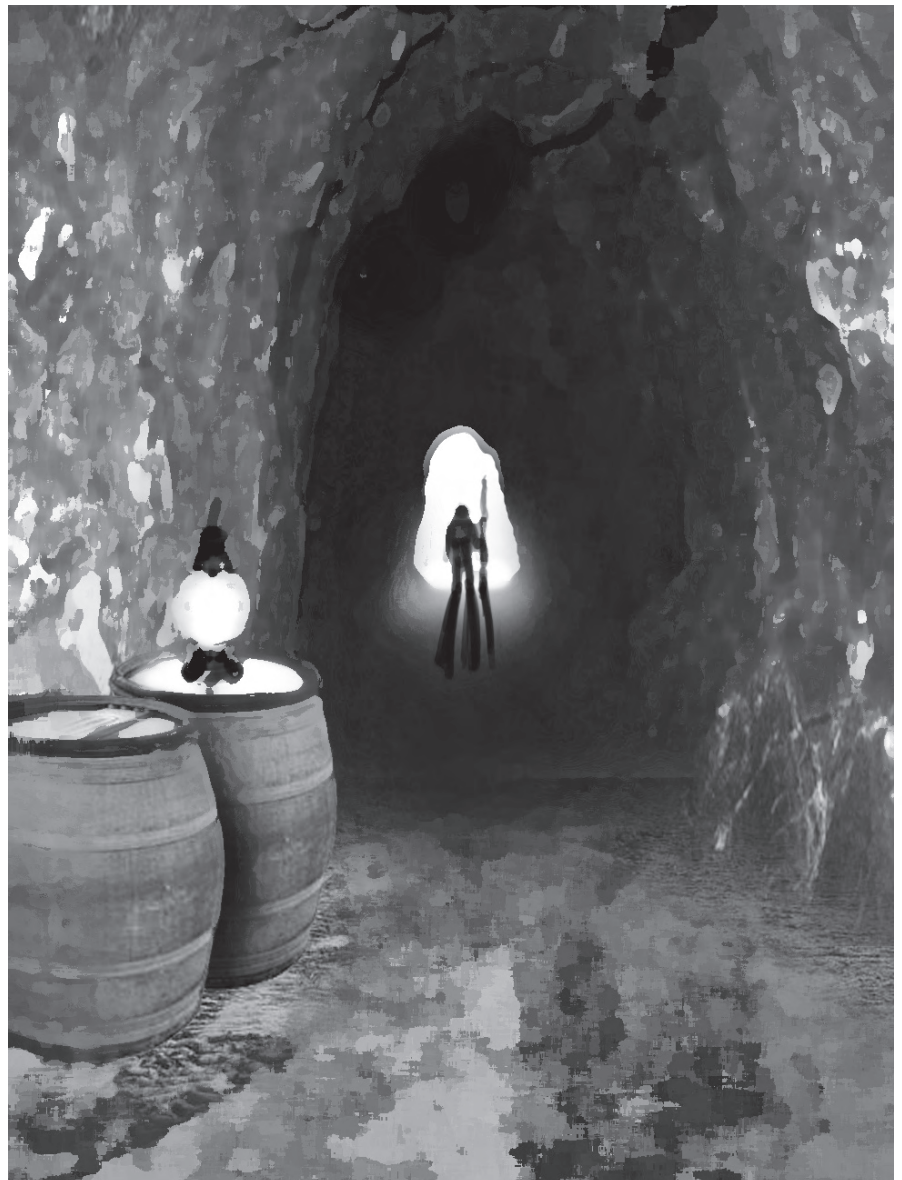
stables, and even a "town square." A Magic aura of 2 pervades throughout. The secretive folk of Naours are quite shy about revealing the existence of their caves. They are, however, not pagan; there is a small church in the village above ground that they attend.

### Corbie

The famous Benedictine Abbey of Corbie, the principal monastic center of northern France, is located in a secluded spot in the valley of the Somme, upstream from Amiens. It was founded in 657 by the wife of Clovis II, St. Bathilde, and rose to ascendancy under the direction of the cousin of Charlemagne, St.

Adalard. The monastery grew to house hundreds of monks, and became famed as a great theological center and for its library, where the Carolingian script was first developed. Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards, was exiled here in the eighth century. At its peak, Corbie was arguably the most important center of western Christianity, and founded and inspired numerous daughter houses.

St. Ansgar, the Apostle of the North (see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal*, pages 69 and 77), was born in Corbie in 801. He spread the practices of the abbey further north to the borders of Christianized lands, to a site in Saxony. The abbey there came to be known as Corvey. St. Ansgar later became archbishop of Hamburg and went on to proselytize in Norse lands.





## Laon

The city of Laon is perched dramatically atop an irregular rocky outcropping, over a mile long and quarter of a mile wide, which looms 300 feet above the surrounding plains. Unsurprisingly for such a naturally defensible site, it has been long prized and oft disputed. Fortified by the Romans, who named it *Laudunum*, it successfully resisted invasions of the Germanic tribes in the Dark Ages. The bishopric of the town was established by St. Remigius, an archbishop of Reims (see below) who was born in Laon, and who baptized Clovis. Laon reached its zenith under the Carolingian kings in the ninth and 10th centuries; Charles the Bald donated richly to its church and his successors resided in a palace here, so that it was the nominal capital of France for a time.

In the late 10th century, Hugh Capet conspired with the bishop of Laon to wrest control of the city away from the Carolingians; he established his capital in Paris, thus Laon was no longer a capital and ceased to be of great political importance. Nevertheless, the ancient and stern city remains a significant intellectual center, with a famed cathedral school that flourished under Anselm of Laon in the 11th century. About a century ago, the citizens of Laon seized on the weakness of their bishop, Gaudry, to secure for themselves a communal charter. The bishop purchased the revocation of this grant from the King of France and ruthlessly exacted his revenge on his subjects. Many townsfolk rose up in revolt, torching the episcopal palace and executing the bishop and his lackeys, before running into hiding. The conflagration also consumed the ancient cathedral. Ever since, the people of Laon have had a distinctly uneasy relationship with their bishop; the Kings of France have alternately ruled in favor of him and his subjects.

The spires and wall towers of Laon culminate in the splendid new cathedral of Notre-Dame, which is nearly completed in the new French style. Adjacent to the older Church of St. Martin is a chapel and commandery of the Knights Templar. From the craggy gates of the city above, a couple of roads snake down the sides of the mount, whose south-facing slopes are carpeted with vineyards, to the smaller lower town.

An elderly eremite magus, Norlanus of House Jerbiton, spends much of his time at Laon's cathedral school. He is well respected for his wisdom and for the clarity of his writings; consequently he has been granted the sole rights to a small vis legacy for many years. He lives in the city, but his sanctum is hidden in the rocky cliffs, where the *Terram vis* may be harvested.

## The Lion and the Lily

### Compiègne

Compiègne is a small but ancient city by the banks of the River Oise, in the south of Picardy. It came into being when a palace was built by Charles the Bald as a country retreat, as a copy of Charlemagne's palace in Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle). A royal abbey that is now named after St. Cornelius and that houses that saint's relics was founded afterward, and the town grew up around it. This monastery is the predecessor of St. Denis as the royal burial site, and ancient Carolingian kings lie at rest here.

### The Forest of Quise

To the south of Compiègne is a huge expanse of woodland, a long finger of forest stretching from the edge of the Ile de France to the Ardennes, with a mostly uninterrupted length of seventy-odd miles. Much of the forest is a royal chase, reserved for the French kings to hunt. It is generally a pleasant, sunny, and spacious place of winding rivers and ponds, gently rolling hills carpeted with beech and oaks, and is rich in deer, wolves, and boar — in short, an ideal place for a hunt. The forest is dotted with occasional small villages and monasteries, crossed by a few roads and numerous hunting paths. Magi of the Tribunal are unaware of any significant faerie presence in these woods; if there is any faerie ruler of this forest domain, then he or she is surely both reclusive and generously inclined to mortals.

### Prémontré

The abbey of Prémontré lies in a secluded valley in the Quise Forest about ten miles west of Laon. St. Norbert, a German from near Cleves, discarded his worldly possessions and vowed himself a life of poverty after a divine revelation — he was thrown from his horse in a storm. He came in midwinter in 1120 with the bishop of Laon to a clearing in the forest, at the site of a former failed monastery, where the bishop ordained him. Norbert founded a monastery there and soon became a friend of St. Bernard of Clairvaux. The order that he founded, the Premonstratensians, also known as Norbertines, was inspired by the Cistercians and formally recognized by the Pope in 1126. They are a severe order of canons — their work is to preach — who have adopted the rule of St. Augustine and who wear a white habit. The Premonstratensian order has since established several hundred monasteries throughout western Europe, principally in northern France, Germany, and England.



## Requies Aeterna

Requies Aeterna (Eternal Rest) is a small Winter covenant of Ex Miscellanea magi from a tradition known as the *Donatores Requietis Aeternae*, "Givers of Eternal Rest," who are dedicated to assisting the dead in leaving the world of the living. A vassal of Florum, the covenant is politically unimportant, but it has attracted the unwanted attention of the Tribunal's Quaesitores in the past. Nowadays, the covenant is little more than an empty shell, most of the *Donatores magi* having since moved away from this place, the site of their tradition's founding.

### History

A rise in sinister encounters with the restless dead was observed in many parts of France during the 11th century, with frequent hauntings and visitations, and hordes of the walking dead blighting some areas. These occurrences were blamed on a cult of the dead, which was believed to be especially active in Picardy. Early in the 12th century, a group of hedge wizards, clergy, and others combined forces to combat this threat. They received divine instruction to travel to the town of Nesle in Picardy, which was being ravaged by a band of undead warriors. They prevailed in a great battle, banishing the restless dead, although many of the group lost their lives and the town was ruined. Thus were the *Donatores* formed, and several of the hedge wizards in the group decided to remain at the ruins of Nesle, in case the undead should return. The Quaesitor Muirgheal met with this group and ultimately arranged for them to join the Order of Hermes, despite the misgivings of many magi in the Normandy Tribunal. For more details of these events, see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*. Those of the newly inducted Ex Miscellanea magi who stayed in Picardy declared themselves a covenant in 1123, arranging an oath of fealty with Florum.

Since its founding, Requies Aeterna has been closely monitored by the Tribunal's Quaesitores, who remain suspicious of their mundane dealings, especially their contacts with

the Church — a number of the Donatores magi were trained clergymen. It gradually became apparent that the local problem with the restless dead had been permanently resolved, and so most of the magi of the covenant moved away and spread across western Europe, in search of those blighted places where they might practice their art. Thus Requies Aeterna became neglected and slipped into Winter, although it remains the spiritual center of the Donatores and the main repository of their collected lore.

## Setting and Physical Description

The covenant is located amid the abandoned ruins of the old town of Nesle, in the plains of central Picardy. The site, widely believed by the locals to be haunted, is centered around an unconsecrated graveyard that was the site of the final climactic battle in which the Donatores banished the undead. As a result of the powerful magics that were unleashed, the site has a Magic aura of 5. The magi of the covenant constructed a set of catcombs beneath the graveyard, where most of the covenant's modest structures are hidden. The new town of Nesle has been rebuilt a couple of miles away from the ruins.

## Culture and Traditions

Donatores magi are dedicated to aiding the dead in passing from the world of the living, and banishing the restless dead; for more details of this tradition, see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*.

Requies Aeterna now has so few magi that its internal organization is practically nonexistent; they struggle to maintain their sancta and the library, but otherwise take no interest in outside affairs, Hermetic or otherwise. The local townsfolk have long forgotten the heroics of the Donatores, now simply regarding the place as a haunted ruin, and relations with the Church have lapsed. When they travel, the magi pass themselves off as monks, for they wear humble robes. The covenant has a minimal relationship with Florum, its liege, and the Tribunal at large, although it attracts Hermetic interest in two ways. Firstly, the site is rich in vis, roughly half of which finds its way to Florum, and secondly, the covenant is home to the noted library of Donatores lore.

## Magi

The covenant currently consists of only two magi, both Donatores, although, as always, you may add magi of your own devising should you so wish. The decrepit magus



Eulogius, one of the founders of the Donatores, runs the covenant; he is assisted by his youngest filius Henri, who stays mostly out of a sense of duty to his tradition, taking it upon himself to preserve the covenant's library and lore for future generations.

## EULOGIUS OF HOUSE EX MISCELLANEA

Age: 130? (Apparent age 104)

Personality Traits:

Added +3,  
Forgetful +1,  
Sinister +1

Eulogius is perhaps the only remaining founder of the Donatores, but his years of fame and active search for the restless dead are many decades behind him. Now an elderly man, he is likely not far from Final Twilight. One of his most crippling Twilight scars is that his body is slowly becoming cadaverous; he is now almost impossibly gaunt and his skin is withered and lifeless. Another is that he is pained by sunlight, therefore he mostly remains in his subterranean sanctum. Despite these handicaps, Eulogius is a peerless banisher, and he has become a master in the Arts of Perdo, Corpus, and Mentem in the long years since his induction into the Order.

## Covenfolk

Virtually all of the covenfolk of Requies Aeterna either died off or departed some time ago, and the magi were unable to recruit replacements in the local area, their site being a place of ill repute. They begged for some

replacements from their liege, Florum, in exchange for an increase in their vis tithe. Every year, therefore, Florum sends a small contingent of servants to labor at the covenant. The covenfolk of Florum dread picking the short straw, which means they are assigned a full year of service away from Ghent at this dreary ruin, and do everything they can to try and avoid it.

## Story Seed: Donatores' Destruction

A plot is hatched among some of the more aggressive magi and covenants, who have always been leery of the Donatores, to destroy the covenant and claim its valuable sources of Perdo and Corpus vis. One way of accomplishing this would be to engineer grounds for a Wizard War against Eulogius; without him, the covenant would surely fall. This would obligate Florum to come to the aid of their vassal, possibly alienating them further from the rest of the Tribunal.

## Story Seed: Restless Dead

The characters have a problem with the restless dead near their covenant and decide to consult the magi of Requies Aeterna. However, it will likely be difficult to persuade Eulogius or his filius to leave and help. Even finding and gaining access to the covenant amid the old ruins may not be trivial.



## Chapter Nine

# Champagne and Burgundy

The eastern and southeastern lands of the Normandy Tribunal are a network of ancient pilgrimage and trade routes, liberally dotted with Gallic and Roman ruins. Ever since Roman times when a great road was built from Lyon to Boulogne, this region has been the main link between Mediterranean lands and northern Europe. The pilgrimage routes head south through many vineyards, passing by Europe's greatest monasteries, several of which are sites of pilgrimage in their own right.

There are few covenants in these lands, perhaps due to the exceptionally strong presence of the Church here, although the roads are oft-traveled by Redcaps who ply the route to and from the Rhine, Greater Alps, and Roman Tribunals. The Mercer House at Cunfin lies strategically on this route, and is also close to the trade fairs of Champagne, where Redcaps often surreptitiously establish their own trading tents.

## Champagne

The region named by the Romans as Campania ("Land of Plains") is a rolling and prosperous territory bounded by the upper Seine to the south and by the forested uplands of the Ardennes and Argonne to its north and east. It is mostly good farmland except for the St. Gond swamp, the large forest of Orient, and a few smaller forests. Champagne's main source of prosperity and fame in 1220 is its cycle of trade fairs, bringing merchants, wares, and wealth from far afield. Over the last century, St. Bernard of Clairvaux founded numerous Cistercian abbeys in Champagne, and their industrious monks have established several cottage industries. Champagne is also known for its red, slightly sparkling wine.

### Champagne and Burgundy Covenants

**Current Covenants:** Cunfin, Atramentum Renatus

**Ruined, Abandoned, or Lost Covenants:** Bibracte, Lixivia, Moles Magna

## Châlons-en-Champagne

The ancient city of Châlons is sited on the River Marne, at a point where the roads extend from the trade fairs north to Reims, Picardy, and Flanders. Unlike the trade cities of Champagne, Châlons is more important as an ecclesiastical city; the bishops of Châlons play an active role in the coronations at nearby Reims, and the city is dominated by two great churches. The basilica Notre-Dame lies on the pilgrimage route that leads further south into Burgundy and ultimately to Santiago de

Compostela, and is a place of pilgrimage in its own right, being sited on a spot where shepherds discovered a statue of the Virgin Mary in a burning bush. The freshly built Notre-Dame-de-Vaux is a collegiate church in the new French style, with pointed vaulting and two Romanesque towers. The adjacent college has a famous courtyard of arcades with sixty statue columns of prophets and saints.

Immediately to the south of the city is a large and placid meadow by the river, lightly grazed by flocks, which is part of the estate of the bishop. St. Bernard of Clairvaux (see below) and Pope Eugene III both famously preached here; nowadays the site is considered an auspicious and convenient meeting place for all sorts of travelers, some of whom may be on considerably less-pious business.

## Provins

Provins prospered greatly under Henry I of Champagne in the latter half of the 12th

### Theobald IV, Count of Champagne

The current Count of Champagne is a charismatic 19-year-old named Theobald. His lands include many lesser counties and baronies in Champagne, and he is also the overlord of Blois and Chartres in Île-de-France, and Auxerre in Burgundy. However, his mother Blanca of Navarre, who is loyal to the French king Philip, currently rules as regent. The young man is less interested in the usual pursuits of the nobility, such as hunting and castle building, but instead is a budding and gifted poet and musician with a love of literature and travel. His romantic ways and wanderlust cause his mother considerable consternation; she is already beginning to organize a political marriage for the lad.

If your saga follows real history, Theobald will come of age in 1222 and the early half of his reign is troubled, with considerable financial and political difficulties and three marriages. In 1235 his fortunes improve dramatically as he inherits the kingdom of Navarre (in northern Iberia), due to his mother being the daughter of its deceased king, Sancho VI. Theobald will become one of the most accomplished troubadours and poets of his time, to the extent that he becomes known as "the Chansonier." He famously brings roses from Syria to grow in Provins, from whence Edmund Lancaster of England will add them to his coat of arms.

## The Champagne Trade Fairs

There are six main trade fairs in the great Champagne cycle, two each at Provins and Troyes, and one each at Lagny and Bar-sur-Aube, plus several lesser fairs in the other towns. These fairs are one of the principal points of exchange for goods from northern and southern Europe. Woolens from Flanders are typically traded for Oriental spices and luxuries, and merchants from as far afield as Constantinople and Scotland may be found here. The influence of the trade fairs is such that Troyes has even established a system of measurement, the Troy ounce.

Redcaps, mostly organized by Confluensis and Cunfin, erect temporary Mercer Houses at most of the fairs, and trade in vis, books, and other Hermetic items, while also exchanging news and messages. For more information on trade fairs, and those of Champagne in particular, see *City & Guild*, page 104.

century, becoming one of the region's principal cities. It is famed for its two annual fairs, the first held from May to June in the upper town, and the second from September to October in the lower town. During the fairs, the city swells into a huge marketplace crammed full with visitors from Mediterranean and northern lands. Apart from numerous merchants, innkeepers, and moneychangers, there are many cloth-makers, dyers, and weavers, and there is a sizable Jewish community. The court of the current count, Theobald IV, stays for extended periods in Provins; it is beginning to become a center for the arts under his patronage.

The lower town of Provins is centered on an 11<sup>th</sup>-century Benedictine priory, where the relics of St. Ayoul were miraculously located. The upper town has grown around a hilltop castle, which is held by the counts of Champagne. The pinnacle of the upper town's fortifications is the Caesar Tower, a great square watch tower and prison believed to have been erected by Julius Caesar himself.

## Troyes

Troyes, also hosting two of Champagne's annual fairs (from late June to early August, and from November to mid-December) is

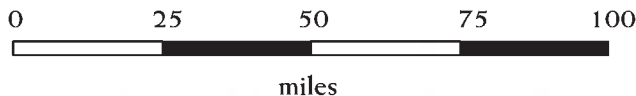
## The Lion and the Lily

### CHAMPAGNE AND BURGUNDY



#### MAP KEY

■	Town / City	—	Forest
+	Archbishopric	~	River
+	Bishopric	^	Uplands
+	Notable Monastery	W	Swamp
▲	Covenant (Lieu)	*	Mythic Site
Δ	Covenant (Other)	▲	Former Covenant





## Rashi

One of Troyes' most famous sons, after perhaps Chrétien de Troyes, is Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaki (1040-1105), better known by the acronym Rashi. A Jewish community was established in Troyes in the 11th century under the protection of the Counts of Champagne. Born in Troyes, Shlomo went to study at the Jewish academies in Worms and Mainz before returning at the age of 25. He is famed for his two great commentaries on the Tanakh and the Talmud, which masterfully combine literal and non-literal interpretation with allegory and symbolism, and he is thus one of Judaism's greatest meforshim (commentators). Copies of his works may be found in Troyes and in other prominent Jewish communities; the two great commentaries are both tractatus in Theology (Judaism) with a Quality of 13.

equal in stature to Provins, but considerably more venerable having been founded on the site of a Gaulish fortress. An early bishop, St. Lupus, spared Troyes from Attila the Hun's onslaught by offering himself up as a hostage, and

returned only after many years of captivity.

Like Provins, Troyes has two centers: an ecclesiastical district around the cathedral, which has hosted important Church councils in centuries past; and a commercial district where both fairs are held, around the older castle. Henry I, known as "the Liberal," was also responsible for the flourishing of Troyes, founding 13 churches and 13 hospitals in the town. The famous 12<sup>th</sup>-century poet Chrétien de Troyes (see Chapter 10: Normandy Sagas, The Arthurian Cycle) lived in Troyes for much of his life. A blessed young man from Troyes, Jacques Pantaléon, the son of a local cobbler, will grow to become Pope Urban IV in four decades if your saga follows real history.

## Clairvaux

Clairvaux Abbey ("clear valley") was founded in 1115 by St. Bernard and is one of the largest and most important Cistercian abbeys in French lands. It consists of a sizable set of austere quadrangles and precincts, comprising mostly lodgings and workhouses, encircled by a sturdy wall replete with watchtowers. Its 300-footlong abbey church, in the shape of a Latin cross, is severely plain and lacking in any ornamentation such as stained

glass, carvings, or steeples. In and around the buildings are several placid vegetable gardens and orchards. There is also a spring and a large set of fishponds that are lovingly tended.

Despite the austerity and plain style of the place, the monastery has flourished and served as a model for many other Cistercian houses. The monks are industrious; the abbey workshop produces a great volume of manuscripts, and they have recently founded an industrial forge at nearby Wassy, where iron is smelted. Clairvaux also maintains a townhouse at Bar-sur-Aube. Pope Eugene III, elected in 1145, was a former monk of Clairvaux. The entire abbey has a Divine aura of 6.



## Cunfin

Located in the Champagnois village from which it takes its name, the covenant

## The Catalaunian Fields

The Battle of the Catalaunian Fields, one of the greatest and bloodiest battles of the early Dark Ages, took place in 451 in fields not far from the Roman city of Catalaunum (Châlons-en-Champagne). Earlier that year, Attila the Hun, accompanied by his allies, the Ostrogoths, had seized on the weakness of Roman power in Gaul and invaded westwards. By mid-year he had already mercilessly sacked Reims and besieged Orléans; Paris was saved by the prayers of St. Geneviève. The Roman general Aetius led a force of auxiliaries from Italy, and they were joined by the Visigoths under Theoderic, and the Franks lead by their legendary sorcerer-king Merovech. The two forces, each fifty thousand strong, met at the Catalaunian Fields at midsummer.

Attila's diviners correctly foretold disaster for the Huns, but also the death of one of their opponents' leaders. As the Huns attempted to seize a strategic ridge on the battlefield, they were repelled by the Roman alliance, precipitating a rout back into

the main body of the Hunnish forces. During the ruckus, Theoderic was slain by an Ostrogoth's spear, although the Visigoth advance fell upon Attila's household guard and forced them to retreat to their fortified camp. They held out long enough to force the Visigoths, who were short on supplies and weakened, to withdraw, allowing Attila's escape. Although his westward conquests were thus thwarted, he lived on to menace Europe for another two years.

The savagery and carnage of the battle was unprecedented, and more than forty thousand were brutally slain. The sixth-century churchman Jordanes wrote that "a brook flowing between low banks through the plain was greatly increased by blood of the slain. It was not flooded by showers, as brooks usually rise, but was swollen by a strange stream and turned into a torrent by the increase of blood. Those whose wounds drove them to slake their parching thirst drank water mingled in gore. In their wretched plight they were forced to drink what they thought was the blood they

had poured from their own wounds."

Today the battlefield, about a dozen miles out from Châlons, consists of mostly deserted fallow and scrubland, which is roamed only by a few straggly sheep and grimy peasants. A Malevolent Infernal aura of 3 (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 15) is present at this foul place. A dark brook runs below the ridge at the center of the fields. On the anniversary of the battle (at the night of the summer solstice), the stream runs red with blood and the terrifying screams of dying men and horses may be heard. On this night, an ascent of the stream will lead into a nightmarish Infernal regio, where shades of the ancient combatants fight on, goaded relentlessly by warrior demons, and where the dead and dying are piled in great heaps. Any magus prepared to brave these horrors may find that significant quantities of Perdo and Corpus vis can be harvested. Some, but not all, of this vis might be Infernally tainted. A few miles to the east of the battlefield lie the overgrown remains of Attila's camp, fortified with a low wall.

of Cunfin is home to both magi and monks. This is an unusual arrangement, but it has proven to be a useful one as it allows the Order of Hermes to stay informed about matters within the Church that might concern them. It is here that the concerns of the Order mingle with the matters of the world in more ways than one.

## History

Although the covenant of Cunfin was recognized by the Normandy Tribunal of 1192, magi have occupied the site for much longer than thirty years. Rumor persists that the monastery with which it shares its name was founded by Valoran, a student of St. Neriis, in 1136. The covenant proper was founded by Eloi of Jerbiton, with the support of his parens Jerome, as a vassal of Confluentis. Despite the current presiding Quaesitor's concerns about the potential for conflict with the mundanes, the covenant's close ties to the Church have proved useful to the Order.

Cunfin also plays an important role in House Mercere's operations within the Tribunal. When the old Mercer House covenant in Tours was raided in 1197, the magi of Confluentis saw an opportunity to take advantage of Florum's weakness and suggested that Cunfin host the new one. Given its proximity to the trade fairs of Champagne and Confluentis' agreement to pay for the construction of a Mercere Portal, the Redcaps agreed. That this gave Confluentis and its vassals a monopoly on Redcap services was not lost on their rivals.

The last major event in Cunfin's formative period was the arrival of Celeres of Bonisagus in 1199. An ancient and eccentric magus, upon his arrival he announced that he was seeking the Holy Grail, and that Cunfin would be the castle from which he and his knights would search for it. Many in the Order viewed this proclamation as final proof of Celeres' madness, but he has become an integral part of the covenant.

## Setting and Physical Description

Like all Cistercian monasteries, Cunfin is a rough and simple place. It lies in a deep, well-watered valley, as most Cistercian monasteries do, and its simple buildings are devoid of all but the crudest ornamentation.

## St. Bernard of Clairvaux

Bernard de Fontaine (1090-1153), later St. Bernard of Clairvaux, was one of the greatest churchmen of the early 12th century and a leading figure in the reforming Cistercian order. Born into a noble family and entering the monastery of Cîteaux at the age of 21, by the age of 25 he was sent to found the monastery of Clairvaux from the ground up. Great physical hardships were endured at this site — the monks were said to have lived on nothing but boiled vegetables and water, to have slept on pallets, and to have had no heating. Some argue that these circumstances were merely misfortune, others say that such a strict regime was in fact according to Bernard's design. Either way, the survival of the community under such harsh conditions was close to miraculous. The monastery was soon a great success, despite the

living conditions not having gotten much less severe; indeed the simple life free of luxuries and a regime of voluntary deprivation attracted many devout followers.

Bernard's personal humility and wisdom, combined with a deep conviction and eloquence, led to his rapid rise in the Church. He quickly became prominent in the elections, councils, and schisms of his day, and he preached the Second Crusade at Vézelay in 1146, ultimately coming to be regarded by many as a leader of Christianity. Throughout his life he continued to eschew luxury and adhered to Clairvaux's spartan regime. He was a vigorous opponent of the liberal intellectualism of Peter Abélard (see Chapter 7: Ile de France, Abélard and Héloïse), and served as prosecutor in his trial for heresy. Bernard is the patron saint of farms and farmhands.

It has a single, low tower, and its windows are plain and undivided, lacking the stained glass one might expect. Its crosses are made from nothing fancier than wood.

Unknown to most of the mundane inhabitants, a Magic regio covers the area around the abbey and within it is the covenant proper. Originally in the ruins of a Roman fort, the covenant has been rebuilt by Celeres according to his own vision, so that now visitors are confronted with the sight of a miniature castle, pennons flapping the breeze. While Eloi spends most of his time at the monastery and Angelus rarely ventures forth from his cave, the rest of the covenant's members live here in romantic style.

The regio itself is somewhat of a mystery. Exactly how a Magic regio can co-exist with the strong Divine aura of the monastery is unknown, although it has been the subject of extensive study by several Bonisagus magi. The regio's single level can be accessed by anyone holding a charm made from the stones of the fort.

cribe these manifestations to his obvious piety and holiness. There is some truth to this, but the abbot knows about Eloi and the Order, and he shares their aims. All of the magi at Cunfin, with the exception of Angelus, have the Gentle Gift, which greatly reduces their problems with the mundanes. In addition, Eloi uses his Holy Influence to give the Dominion surrounding the monastery a Calm temper, further dampening potential conflicts.

In addition, Cunfin serves as one of the Tribunal's Mercer Houses. Providing shelter to travelers is a sacred duty to the monks, and as the abbey lies very close to the trade routes of Champagne, the brothers are quite used to a large number of people coming and going from the monastery. The covenant is a major focus of House Mercere's mercantile activity in the Normandy Tribunal, and a small group of Redcaps call Cunfin home. The covenant also houses a Mercere Portal to Dragon's Rest.

Cunfin also plays host to a number of unusual magi: Grail seekers. Celeres' aims are well known among the Order, and while many question his sense, none question his scholarship. The Bonisagus magus is reputed to possess every book ever written on the subject of the Grail, as well as a great number of works on King Arthur and his legendary adviser, Merlin. More than a few magi have made their way to Cunfin to consult these works for their own research, and Celeres is always happy to have company. Anyone who has visited the covenant can tell stories of his peculiar brand of hospitality.

## Culture and Traditions

Cunfin's primary purpose is to serve as a buffer between the Order and the Church. As prior of the monastery, Eloi wields a great deal of influence over the monks, especially the abbot. The monks know that their prior is reputed to have mystical powers, but they as-



## The Grail Library

Few published works on the subject of King Arthur and the Grail exist in 1220, but that has not stopped Celeres from assembling a formidable body of texts. The books fall into several categories, of which the major works are described here in detail.

### FOLK TALES

Many of these books are written by Celeres himself, recording the numerous stories he has encountered on his travels. They contain the original stories in their native languages, translations into Latin, and commentary on the works in Latin.

#### *Legends of Brittany*

Summa, Faerie Lore (Level 3, Quality 5)

Author: Celeres of Bonisagus

Description: A collection of stories told by Breton conteurs, transcribed by Celeres of Bonisagus. This large volume describes numerous locations in Brittany that are tied to Arthur, and usually to faeries as well. Arthur's battle with a giant atop Mont St. Michael and Merlin's disappearance into the Forest of Broceliande feature prominently.

#### *Arthur Among the Britons*

Tractatus, Area Lore: Britain (Quality 5)

Author: Celeres of Bonisagus

Description: Numerous Welsh tales tied in some way to King Arthur. These include the story of Culwyd and Olwen, in which Arthur and his knights must recover numerous treasures so that Olwen's father will allow the knight Culwyd to marry her, and the Welsh Triads, short tales told in threes, like The Three Fortunate Concealments and The Three Great Queens of Arthur. Excerpts from the works of the sixth-century bard Taliesin are also included.

Minor Works: *The Book of Taliesin*, *The Life of St. Eflam*, *The Life of St. Illtud*

### BRITISH HISTORIES

These books are primarily historical accounts that include occasional mention of Arthur. All are written in Latin.

#### *The Llancarfan Saints' Lives*

Tractatus, Dominion Lore (Quality 6)

Authors: Various monks at the monastery of Llancarfan in the twelfth century.

Description: A collection of hagiographic texts containing numerous references to Arthur. The *Life of St. Cadoc* mentions

him twice, the *Life of St. Padarn* once, the *Life of St. Carannog* once, and the *Life of Gildas* numerous times. These works bridge the gap between the stories and tales of the first group and the histories of this one.

#### *History of the Britons*

Tractatus, Area Lore: Britain (Quality 5)

Author: Nennius, eighth-century British monk

Description: The author of this work begins by stating "I have made a heap of all that I have found" concerning the history of Britain, beginning with its founding by Brutus, the great-grandson of Aeneas. This is the earliest book to give an account of the life of Arthur.

#### *History of the Kings of Britain*

Tractatus, Area Lore: Britain (Quality 9)

Author: Geoffrey of Monmouth, a twelfth-century Oxford cleric

Description: This book greatly expands upon the work of Nennius, focusing on Arthur's adventures. It also includes the Prophecies of Merlin, a series of prophetic utterances from the legendary wizard. The section on Arthur ends with the king being wounded grievously by his traitorous nephew Mordred and leaving for the Isle of Avalon to treat his wounds.

Minor Works: *Annals of Wales*, *Concerning the Ruin of Britain*, *The Life of Merlin*

### ROMANCES

These books are almost all written in French and represent a new development in the Arthur cycle. Instead of histories or folk tales, these are long-form poems that celebrate chivalrous virtues and use the story of Arthur and his knights as instructional devices. These works are Celeres' favorites.

#### *The Lais of Marie de France*

Tractatus, Charm (Quality 5)

Author: Marie de France

Description: Marie de France was a fixture at the court of Marie of Champagne, daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine. This widely popular collection of her "lais" (poems set to music) honored love and chivalry. The original sources for many of these were Breton tales, and their wide dissemination laid the groundwork for the romance form.

#### *Arthurian Romances*

Tractatus, Etiquette (Quality 6)

Author: Chretien de Troyes

Description: A collection of Chretien's four major Arthurian poems, *Erec et Enide*, *Cliges*, *Yvain*, and *Lancelot*. These deal primarily with the nature of courtly love and the ideals of chivalry.

#### *Perceval*

Tractatus, Dominion Lore (Quality 6)

Author: Chretien de Troyes

Description: An unfinished story about a naive boy who became a knight through a series of misadventures, this is the first work to mention the Grail. His life is changed when he visits a mysterious castle and encounters the equally mysterious Grail. Discovering that his failure to ask about the Grail's true nature has prevented his host, the Fisher King, from being healed of his grievous wound, Perceval sets out to rectify his error. While both Perceval and his fellow knight Gawain triumph in a series of adventures, the secret of the Grail is never revealed, as Chretien died before completing the poem. No fewer than four later authors published their own "continuations," each bringing the story to a close in their own ways.

#### *Joseph d'Armetbie*

Tractatus, Dominion Lore (Quality 5)

Author: Robert de Boron

Description: Also called *The Romance of the Grail*, this book expands upon the mystery of the Grail, explaining that it was the vessel in which Jesus had broken the bread at the Last Supper and that Joseph of Arimathea used to collect Jesus' blood at the Crucifixion. Following the Resurrection, Joseph and his family took the Holy Grail (as Robert calls it) to England, where they and their descendants, including Perceval, guarded it.

#### *Parsifal*

Tractatus, Magic Lore (Quality 5)

Author: Wolfram von Eschenbach

Description: Written in German, rather than the French of the other major romances, this story is a greatly expanded version of Chretien's masterpiece that differs significantly from the French retellings and continuations. Wolfram is writing about a very different type of Grail from his predecessors, and this book is rich with alchemical and astrological imagery and shows abundant Arabic influence. The story describes the resting place of the Grail as a castle called Munsalvaesche, where is guarded by an order of Templars.

Minor Works: *Roman de Brut*, *Perceval Continuations*, *Perlesvaus*

## Magi

### ELOI, FOLLOWER OF JERBITON

Age: 62 (Apparent age: 52)

**Personality Traits:**

Pious +3,  
Diplomatic +3,  
Forgiving +1

Eloi is the lynchpin that holds the covenant of Cunfin together. The monks know him as Brother Eligius, the prior, a man respected for his wise council and beloved for his devotion to God. The magi know him as a man deeply concerned about the Order's relationship to the Church. Eloi sees himself as a follower of St. Nerius, a man attempting to bridge the gap between the Magical and the Divine. It is his charisma and devotion that binds together Cunfin's otherwise fractious elements into a workable whole.

A younger son of a minor noble family, Eloi was bound for the church from an early age. His parents intended for him to be a priest, and the boy himself was quite excited by the prospect, but he was found by Jerome of Jerbiton and became a magus instead. While he proved to be a useful tool for Jerome at Confluens, he was never quite able to reconcile his desire to serve God with his Gift. In 1191, however, he met Angelus, who taught him about St. Nerius. Seeing a way to reconcile his two natures, Eloi moved to Cunfin to join the monastery and founded the covenant. His parents saw this as an opportunity to establish closer ties with the Church, and Eloi agreed. His unique skills and obvious piety led the monks of Cunfin to elect him prior not long after, and he has maintained control of the monastery ever since.

Although he is not a member, he has close contacts with the Priory of St. Nerius (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 94). Like them, he seeks to have St. Nerius recognized by the Latin Church, but this is secondary to his goal of maintaining peaceful relations between the Order and the Church. With his influence in the powerful Cistercian order, he seeks to smooth over potential conflicts between magi and the clergy. His current concern is the newly created Dominican Order and their vigorous pursuit of heretics. He hopes to keep them away from the Order of Hermes.

## The Lion and the Lily

### ANGELUS OF EX MISCELLANEA

Age: 97 (Apparent age 75)

**Personality Traits:**

Calm +2,  
Merciful +2

When Eloi found Angelus in 1191, in a small cave a stone's throw from the monastery of Cunfin, neither of them expected to have such an impact on each other's lives. Eloi told the eremite of his dream to bring together his faith and his life as a magus, and Angelus told him of the life of St. Nerius. After Angelus showed him the monastery and its regio, Eloi had a vision of the future. At the next Tribunal meeting, the covenant of Cunfin was recognized, with Eloi and Angelus as its founding members.

Before Eloi encountered him, Angelus had not left his cave in several decades. The only record of him the Order of Hermes possesses dates from the Tribunal of 1144, where he presented himself and then entirely withdrew from view. He keeps to himself about his lineage, but Eloi believes that his parents was Valoran, the filius of St. Nerius himself.

Angelus is a holy hermit, living alone in his cave, contemplating the Divine. He believes that Magic is an emanation of the Divine and that to experience Twilight is to see the Face of God. Magi are blessed, in his view, but also cursed. Twilight is a blessing bestowed by God, but to seek it out is sinful. Doing so presumes that one is worthy, while only God can make that judgment.

Angelus is rarely involved in the cove-

## Arthuriana in the Early 13th Century

If the history of Mythic Europe follows our own, then in 1220 two major French Arthurian Romances remain to be written: the *Lancelot-Grail* cycle (also called the Vulgate Cycle) and the Romance of the Grail (the Post-Vulgate cycle). These are sets of stories by unknown authors that contain mostly pre-existing Arthurian tales, but in a collected form that focuses primarily on the Grail. The former is a five-part cycle that will be completed by the mid-1230s, with the latter being finished by mid-century. The two are largely the same, though the latter substitutes Arthur for Lancelot as the central character in an effort to de-emphasize Lancelot and Guinevere's adulterous relationship. Both of these are increasingly moralistic, and the *Lancelot-Grail* cycle is the primary source for Sir Thomas Mallory's telling of the story, the version perhaps most familiar to modern readers.

nant's affairs, though Eloi and even Celeres have been known to seek his counsel on important matters. The monks of Cunfin know that he lives in the hills above their monastery, and between their holy hermit and their pious prior, they count themselves doubly blessed.

## A Grail, a Graal, or a Gral?

The twelfth century French word *grail*, used by all of the French authors of the romances, was not invented by Chretien, though it is not common. What exactly is meant by it, however, is not entirely clear. In *Perceval*, the Grail is clearly a dish of some size, as a maiden needs two hands to carry it, and Chretien is quite explicit in what it does not contain, "a pike or lamprey or salmon." Robert de Boron and Chretien's continuers confirm that it is a dish or a vessel. (Robert de Boron is the first to call it the Holy Grail; Chretien refers to it as "such a holy thing" but calls it only "the Grail.") In the later romances, however, its form becomes uncertain, as in *Perlesvaus*, where it is described as going

through a number of changes and ending as a chalice. In all of these, however, the Grail is closely linked to the Eucharist.

Wolfram, on the other hand, uses the word *gral* in *Parsifal*, and it is clear he means something very different. He is very explicit in describing the Grail as a stone, and it is linked to the heavens. Wolfram's account differs markedly from the French stories, and his description of the Grail is the most obvious feature.

It is also worth noting the while Wolfram describes the guardians of the Grail as "Templars," he does not mean the Knights Templar. Wolfram's word is *templeisen*, while the Knights Templar were usually referred to as *Tempelherren* in German.



## CELERES, FOLLOWER OF BONISAGUS

Age: 150? (Apparent age 100)

### Personality Traits:

Forceful +3,  
Charming +2,  
Absent-minded +2

Celeres' life changed in near the end of the twelfth century when he discovered a copy of Chretien de Troyes' *Perceval*. What was this "grail" that Perceval was seeking?

What gave it such powers? Celeres' perhaps overactive imagination was captured. He immediately set out to find as many books about King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and especially the Grail, as he could. When he heard about the covenant of Cunfin, with its community of monks and its holy hermit, it seemed like something out of the romances he had been reading. Celeres made his way there at once and through sheer force of personality convinced Eloi to admit him as a member.

Celeres is obsessed with the Grail. He is

no longer concerned with finding it, as he knows he is not as young as he once was, and he has come to believe that the Grail is something that perhaps cannot actually be found. Still, he wishes to know as much about it as he can and to share that knowledge with his fellow magi. A true Bonisagus, he has begun composing a great story cycle about the Grail, which he hopes will enlighten others about its true, spiritual nature. His time at Cunfin has clearly influenced his views, as more than a few traces of Cistercian thought can be found in his manuscript.

Celeres gets on quite well with the Redcaps that call Cunfin home, and he refers to them as his "knights." He relies on them to bring him any news or word of the Grail that they encounter. He is also quite close to his last apprentice, Artorius, and he hopes that, if he is unable to finish his Grail cycle, Artorius will finish it for him.

## Hervé filius Évrard, Follower of Mercere

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +2, Pre +2,  
Com +1, Str 0, Sta 0, Dex 0, Qik 0

Size: 0

Age: 35 (35)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Redcap; Clear Thinker, Educated, Gossip, Piercing Gaze, Social Contacts; Ambitious; Busybody, Envious.

Personality Traits: Driven +3, Jealous +2

Reputations: Capable 3 (Hermetic), Gossip 3 (Hermetic)

### Combat:

Dodging: Init 0, Attack n/a, Defense +3, Damage n/a

Soak: +0

Fatigue Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

Abilities: Bargain 5 (appraisal), Brawl 2 (dodging), Charm 5 (building trust), Code of Hermes 3 (political intrigue), Etiquette 3 (merchants), France Lore 3 (trade routes), French 5 (mercantile), Folk Ken 5 (merchants), Guile 2 (redirection of blame), Intrigue 5 (gossip), Latin 5 (academic usage), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (politics)

Equipment: A collection of enchanted devices useful to a mercantile Redcap, whose effects include Scales of the Magical Weight (InVi 5), Sense the Nature of Vis (InVi 5), Posing the Silent Question (InMe 20), and Trust of the Childlike Faith (PeMe 10), all with Penetration 0 and 24 uses per day.

Encumbrance: 0

Appearance: Hervé le Brun is a stocky,

middle-aged man with dark brown hair and olive skin. He bears a strong resemblance to his father, Évrard of Tours, including the latter's tendency to dress in simple town garb. His reassuring demeanor hides a calculating and driven mind.

Although he would never admit it, Hervé would not be where he is today without his foster brother, Renaud Fouinon. Hervé has always felt that his father lavished more attention on Renaud. To some degree this is true, as Évrard is aware of the obstacles Renaud would face within House Mercere as one not of the blood of the Founder. It was during their time at the University of Paris that Hervé's jealousy of his brother came to full flower. Renaud's natural intelligence allowed him to eat, drank, and sleep his way through his coursework while Hervé struggled with the difficulties of Latin, a tongue he had never fully mastered. Yet even when Renaud joined the Goliards, Évrard's support never seemed to waver. Hervé swore then and there to best his brother, and rededicated himself to his studies.

While he has never had the academic mind that his father wished for him, he has proven a shrewd judge of character and a capable negotiator. Hervé has found his calling among the merchants of France, deftly maneuvering his way through trade fairs and always emerging with a substantial profit. While he has taken over as head of the temporary Mercer House at the Champagne fairs, his father has still not given him the acknowledgment he desires. As a result, while Renaud wanders the countryside of France, reveling in his debauchery, Hervé has set his sights on even higher positions within House Mercere.

## ARTORIUS FILIUS CELERES, FOLLOWER OF BONISAGUS

Age: 33 (Apparent age 33)

### Personality Traits:

Loyal +2,  
Regal +2

A newly Gauntleted magus, Artorius was brought to Cunfin as an orphan at the age of sixteen by Eloi, who intended to make the boy his apprentice and train him as his own successor. Celeres, however, proclaimed that he found himself in need of a "squire" and exercised his right to take Eloi's apprentice as his own. When Artorius passed his Gauntlet (a process Celeres refers to as his "knighting"), his parents gave him the name of legendary king of Britain. Artorius' future plans are unknown.

## ÉVRARD DE TOURS, REDCAP

Age: 87 (Apparent age 49)

### Personality Traits:

Stubborn +2,  
Grumpy +2

Évrard is the senior Redcap of the Tribunal, and the only one of the covenant's Redcaps to have served at the old Mercer House. He was responsible for the relocation to Cunfin, and now, having rebuilt the network and trained his apprentices, he is ready to retire. He is semi-retired already, as his official duties now require him only to oversee the

Mercere Portal to Dragon's Rest. He quite enjoys spending time with Celeres, despite what other magi think about him, Celeres has a playful sense of humor that Évrard finds refreshing after living in a monastery for so long. Évrard appears to be in his late forties, as he did not begin taking a longevity ritual until later in life.

The covenant is home to two other Redcaps, Renaud Fouinon and Hervé le Brun. Both were trained by Évrard, and while Renaud was a foundling brought to the covenant by Eloi, Hervé is Évrard's son. Hervé has taken over his father's position running the temporary Mercer House at the Champagne cycle fairs (see *City & Guild*, page 104), a position Renaud wanted but was denied, likely because of his membership in the Goliards (see *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 93). Renaud, along with Celeres and Eloi, is part of the covenant's hastiludium team. They have won the event three times in row, something that Renaud is quite proud of.

## Covenfolk

Most the monks of Cunfin are ignorant as to its true nature, though most of them have met all of the magi at one point or another (with the possible exception of Angelus). The abbot, the cellarer, and several of the brothers know the truth, and, thanks to Eloi's example, they support the magi's aims. The abbot, a middle-aged man named Martin, is especially sympathetic, and he has used his considerable influence within the Cistercian Order to help the magi as much as he can.

## The Future of Cunfin

While the magi of Cunfin currently enjoy an amicable relationship with the Cistercian Order and the larger church, it seems unlikely that the situation can last. The covenant has survived thus far due primarily to Eloi's use of his personal charisma, his Holy Influence, and his relationship with his parens Jerome to keep both the Church and the Quaesitores at bay. Without Eloi, the entire experiment would certainly fall apart. Even with him, the covenant faces significant challenges that it may not survive. (See Chapter 11: Confluens, The Specter of Rome.)

## Burgundy

The southeastern realm of the Normandy Tribunal was the former heartland of the Gauls, and has several ancient settlements that they founded. The duchy of Burgundy itself came into being at the treaty of Verdun in 843, which divided the empire of Charlemagne among his grandsons. The northwestern part of the ancient kingdom of Burgundy fell within the lands apportioned to the western kingdom of Charles the Bald. In the 11th century, Henry I of France granted these lands to his brother Robert, thereby founding a junior branch of the royal Capetian house, which has since proven loyal to the French kings. The Burgundian dukes are also related to the royal houses of Castile and Portugal, partly as a result of their valiant crusading in Iberia.

Unlike Champagne, which relies on trade, pilgrims are the lifeblood of Burgundy and the Church has unsurpassed power here as a result of Burgundy's many influential monasteries, most notably Cluny and Cîteaux, several of which lie along the pilgrimage routes. The current Duke of Burgundy, Hugh IV, is only eight years old. His mother, Alice de Vergy, rules as regent in his stead; like the regent of Champagne, she is also loyal to France.

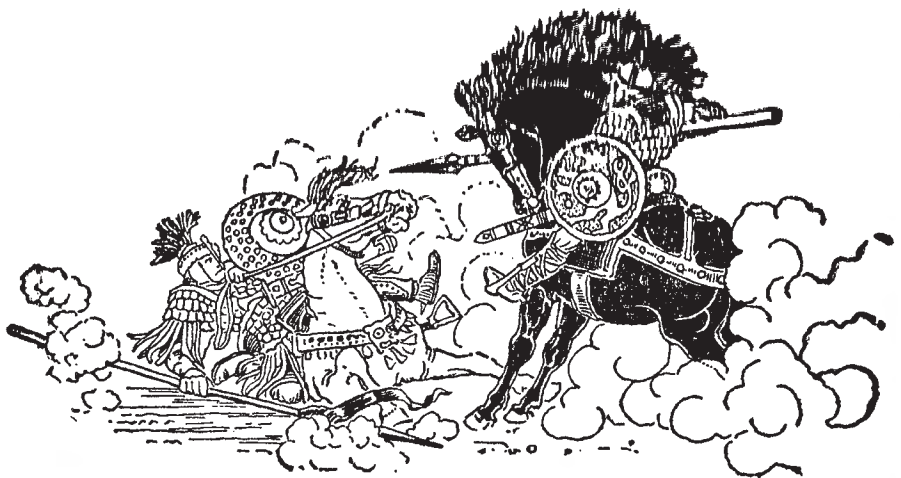
The duchy of Burgundy should not be confused with the larger kingdom of the same name that lies to its southeast, which is also known as the kingdom of Arelat, being the larger part of the old kingdom of Burgundy that was divided at the treaty of Verdun. That kingdom is split between the Greater Alps and Provençal Tribunals.

## The Monasteries of Burgundy

Burgundy is undoubtedly home to the greatest monasteries of Mythic Europe. It boasts Cluny, the mother house of the Cluniacs, Cîteaux, the mother house of the Cistercians, and Vézelay, which houses the relics of St. Mary Magdalene and which is the region's greatest site of pilgrimage. There are many other significant monasteries, including Pontigny (where Thomas Becket spent part of his exile from England), Molesme, St. Seine, St. Benigne, and Fontenay. Clairvaux (see above) is on the northern edge of Burgundy. Many of the monasteries have large vineyards — due to both the favorable geography and climate, and the industry of the monks, Burgundy is one of the richest grape-growing areas of Europe, renowned for its wine.

## Auxerre

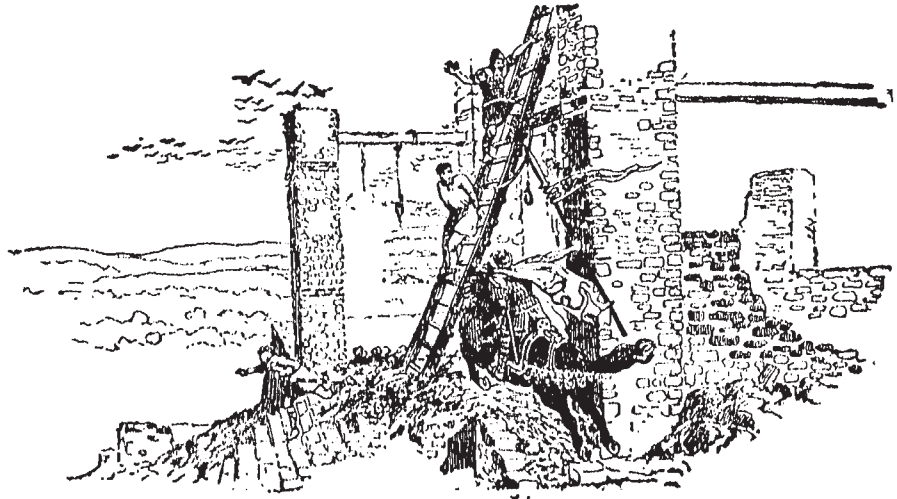
Originally a Roman town named Autesiodurum located on the Roman road from Lyon to Boulogne, Auxerre has been a spiritual center since the fifth century. One of its earliest and most famous bishops was the fifth-century St. Germanus, a brilliant nobleman who studied in Rome and who was appointed by the Roman emperor as governor of the Gallic provinces. Initially a proud and impious man, he was miraculously converted to a life of prayer and charity by the previous





bishop St. Amator, who burned his hunting trophies and gave him the tonsure against his will. Later bishops expanded Auxerre's influence, and it was home to a famous school in Carolingian times. The city has since waned; nevertheless, the pope declared Auxerre a Holy City in the 12th century.

The most venerable establishment in Auxerre is the Abbey of St. Germanus, a Benedictine monastery founded in the sixth century by Clotilda, the wife of the Frankish king, Clovis. Underneath is a large Carolingian crypt adorned by magnificent frescoes, where St. Germanus is buried and which is a site of pilgrimage. The Cathedral of St. Étienne, which started construction in 1215, is little more than a massive building site.



### Avallon

Avallon is a walled town set on a granite hilltop above lush terraced slopes overlooking the River Cousin, on the site of the Roman citadel Aballo. The ancient settlement was sacked by the Goths; fortification of the later town was begun after successive attacks by Moors and then Normans. Nowadays the defenses are formidable, and Avallon is a strategic asset of the Dukes of Burgundy, which has thwarted more than one besieging army in the last couple of centuries. The main attraction, and a major draw for pilgrims, is the Church of St. Lazarus, which is just over 100 years old and houses a relic, a piece of the skull of St. Lazarus, which offers divine protection against leprosy.

### Vézelay

The Benedictine monastery of Vézelay is home to the relics of St. Mary Magdalene, one of Christianity's holiest saints, to whom many miracles are attributed. It has been a major site of pilgrimage since the 11th century, and is the starting point for one of the principal pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela in Iberia. St. Bernard of Clairvaux preached the Second Crusade at Vézelay, and Philip II and Richard the Lionheart met here before departing on the Third Crusade. Thomas Becket in exile here announced the excommunication of supporters of the English king Henry II in 1166.

The original monastery, founded by Gerard de Roussillon, was destroyed in the

ninth century by the invading Normans who also sacked Avallon. Afterward, it was rebuilt and reestablished on a nearby hilltop, an idyllic location amid scenic hills on the edge of the Morvan, which affords a splendid view of the valley of the River Cure and surrounding lands. A burgeoning town has grown up in the valley below, which prospers from the steady flow of pilgrims.

Despite the sanctity of Vézelay, the place does have a slightly checkered history. Overwhelmed by the flow of visitors, in 1096 the ambitious abbot commenced construction on a much larger abbey church, to be funded by stringent taxes that were levied on the local peasants. The serfs responded by rising up in revolt and slaying the abbot. Then in 1120, after the church was finished and perhaps in Divine retribution, it burned down in a conflagration on the day of the great pilgrimage (22nd July), engulfing a thousand pilgrims. The hilltop Basilica of St. Mary Magdalene has since been rebuilt.

Furthermore, although the monks seem to be in no doubt that the relics, which are housed in the church's crypt, are indeed the true relics of Mary Magdalene, their origin is nevertheless a little hazy. According to one version of events, a saint by the name of Babilo brought the relics from the Holy Land in the ninth century. Another story relates that the tomb of the revered saint was discovered in a crypt at St. Maximim in Provence. A scene of the Unction at Bethany was carved on a sarcophagus, depicting the anointing of Jesus' head by a woman of Bethany, who was presumed to be Mary Magdalene.

### The Morvan

The only true wilderness of any size in Burgundy is known as the Morvan; its name, of Celtic origin, means "Black Mountain." This basalt massif is somewhat higher than the surrounding lands, an upland that is frequently wreathed in rain, snow, or mist, and where the rivers are prone to becoming suddenly turbulent and engorged. Much of the Morvan is forested with oaks, hornbeams, and beeches, with some conifers on the higher slopes amid the rocky escarpments. This rolling, impoverished land is sparsely populated, with no fertile fields or vineyards. The few errant peasants who eke out an existence here are mostly shunned by those who dwell in more-civilized parts. Magi here know of several vis sources amidst the Morvan, most of them contested due to the presence of the dark faeries that lurk by the lakes and streams and in the forests.

### BIBRACTE

Mont Beauvray, in the southern Morvan not far from Autun, is the site of the ancient Gallic city of Bibracte, where in 52 BC the Gallic chieftain and king of the Arveni Vercingetorix led the local tribes against the Romans. In the following winter, Caesar began writing his *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars* here. Its name derives from the double line of wooden and stone ramparts surrounding the hilltop. Bibracte subsequently fell into decline as Autun rose to prominence, and was abandoned.

Centuries later, a covenant of mostly Diedne magi rebuilt the site and its fortifi-

cations, and established a cult worshipping Vercingetorix. Many in the Tribunal came to regard them as increasingly insular and intolerant, and their covenant was attacked and destroyed by Flambeau and Tremere magi a few decades before the Schism War. The crumbling ruins have been largely forgotten and overgrown ever since.

## Mont Auxois

A short distance to the northeast of the Morvan and a half-dozen miles to the south of the abbey of Fontenay lies the peak of Mont Auxois, 1300 feet high. Here lie the remains of Alesia, a Gallo-Roman oppidum (a fortified hilltop settlement). It is the site of the famous Roman siege where Caesar won a final victory over Vercingetorix, who was forced to surrender (he was subsequently taken to Rome in chains and strangled years later). Amid the abandoned ruins on the hilltop are bronze-working forges, and a subterranean temple to a Gallic mother goddess, Matres. The place retains a Magic aura and might make a suitable site for a covenant, despite being haunted by the shades of pagan dead.

## THE FOUNTAIN OF ST. REINA

On the southwestern edge of the hilltop, a Divine aura prevails. St. Reina, a young Christian woman, was beheaded for refusing to wed Olibrius, the Roman governor of Alesia, and a fountain miraculously sprang forth from the spot of her martyrdom. The waters were held to have curative powers and attracted pilgrims for a time, although the place gradually became forgotten and was abandoned in later centuries. The old fountain may be found, shrouded by trees next to the ruins of a Merovingian chapel dedicated to the saint.

## Autun

The greatest Roman city in Gaul, besides perhaps Lugdunum (Lyon), was named Augustodunum after its founder, the emperor Augustus, and was sited on the principal Roman road between Lyon and Boulogne. The city has endured through the ages and houses probably the most complete Roman remains in the Normandy Tribunal. In the Merovingian era, Autun became an important bishopric and

one of the earliest in all of France, which later hosted several Church councils, including one that regulated the Benedictine monasteries in the seventh century. In 1220 the city has become somewhat less important, with the rise of Dijon as the new ducal capital.

Two of the great arched Roman gates still serve as entranceways. The Gate of St. Andrew is in the eastern wall, and the Porta Senonica, leading to Sens, guards a bridge over the River Arroux at the northern edge of the city. On the eastern edge of the town is a vast Roman theater, which held twelve thousand spectators, but which is now used merely as a quarry. In a meadow just across the river and outside the town lie the remains of a temple to Janus, the two-faced god of gates and portals, beginnings, and endings. The remains of miles of ramparts and an extensive system of aqueducts may be found around the old city walls.

The Cathedral of St. Lazarus is at the city's southern end, housing the relics of that saint, which Gerard de Roussillon brought here from Provence in the 10th century — he wanted to establish a pilgrimage site to rival Vézelay, but met with little success. This grand church serves as the chapel of the Dukes of Burgundy and an adjacent episcopal palace is their former seat. In fields about a mile to the southeast of the cathedral is a strange fifty-foot-high ruined pyramid — likely the tomb of some forgotten Roman worthy.

## Langres

Langres, a walled hilltop town and the northern gateway of Burgundy, takes its name from the Gallic tribe the Lingones, for it was their capital. The Romans fortified it as Andemantunum; at its peak it was at the intersection of twelve Roman roads. In more recent times, Langres has been ruled by its influential bishops. One of the earliest bishops was the martyr St. Didier — during his brave defense of the town against barbarian invaders, he was beheaded, yet he picked up his head and left on horseback. A chapel was founded on the spot where he later died.

## THE CAVE OF SABINUS

In 70 AD, a chieftain of the Lingones, Sabinus, seized on the Roman weakness after the death of the emperor Nero and led a rebellion in Langres. Sadly for him, the rebellion ended in failure, and so the warlord fled the city and took refuge in this secluded cave about ten

miles to the south of the city. The cave is adjacent to a forest spring — which is the source of the River Marne — and is home to a powerful genius loci (a spirit of nature). Sabinus bargained with the spirit for its protection, and thus was able to hide away in the cave for nine years, after which time the spirit became tired of his company and he was discovered. Sabinus was taken away to Rome for execution, but the cave and spirit still remain. Aquam vis may be harvested from the spring with the spirit's permission; the site is, however, considered a *luctatio* by the Tribunal, since the genius loci is notoriously difficult to please.

## Dijon

Robert I of Burgundy moved his ducal seat from Autun to Dijon in 1051. Ever since, the city has prospered and grown fat off the ducal court, becoming an artistic and commercial center, home to poets, artisans, and numerous visiting minor nobles and their toadies. Dijon is now the largest settlement in Burgundy. The only interruption to this burgeoning growth was a major setback in 1137, when a huge fire after a riot destroyed nearly the whole city. Duke Hugh II rebuilt, expanding the walls and erecting a grand ducal palace. In 1220 the foundation stones for a great new church to be built in the new French style have just been laid. The Abbey Church of St. Benignus houses the tomb of the city's founder and patron saint in its crypt.

## Cîteaux

In 1098, there was a Benedictine monk and abbot of Molesme named Robert (later St. Robert of Molesme). Dissatisfied with the decadence of his own monastery, he left with twenty monks to found a new establishment in a horrible swamp about a dozen miles south of Dijon. Among the *cistels* (reeds), which gave their name to this new abbey, the monks gradually drained the land and forged a working community, suffering considerable hardship. In the following century Cîteaux prospered under the leadership of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and became the mother house of the new Cistercian order. Now it is the mother of more than 500 Cistercian monasteries spread across Europe, and thus is an important center of Christianity.

Despite its importance, and the great welter of buildings that have sprung up, Cîteaux



retains an atmosphere of austerity and pious humility, where rigid discipline and manual labor prevail. The great abbey church, finished in 1193, is the new burial place for the Dukes of Burgundy; they were formerly interred at the cathedral of Autun. Since 1147 there has been an attached monastery called La Trappe, where Trappist monks lead a life of solemn contemplation.

## Cluny

Cluny, founded in 910 by William I of Aquitaine, is quite simply the most awesome and powerful monastery that has ever existed. As the mother house of the Cluniac order, consisting of a thousand monasteries all over Europe, it is at the center of a giant network of power and authority over the Church. All subsidiary houses are answerable to its abbot, with the priors meeting annually here; the abbot himself is answerable only to the pope. Ever since the Gregorian Reforms instituted by Pope Gregory VII and leading to an increase in papal authority, Cluny has been strongly associated with the papacy. Given that many popes were themselves former monks of Cluny, it is easy to appreciate its greatly favored status. Pope Urban II, one of those from Cluny, at the end of the 11th century declared it "the light of the world." However, St. Bernard of Clairvaux later condemned Cluny's decadence, retorting "Will the light shine only if it is in a candelabra of gold?" Cluny's supreme power waxed in the 11th century under a series of talented administrators, sucking in vast amounts of gold from generous kings and dukes across Europe, although it suffered a few intermittent financial

crises. In 1220 Cluny has waned slightly with the rise of the Cistercian order, but it remains arguably the most powerful center of Christianity in Europe, rivaling even Rome, and is the leader of western monasticism. In stark contrast to Cîteaux and the Cistercian order, which preach austerity and poverty, Cluny embodies the opposite — wealth, splendor, and magnificence. The abbots of Cluny are well aware of their elevated stature, and are not at all afraid to adopt all the pleasant trappings of such status, living as well as kings.

The abbey proper is a sprawling complex of palatial constructs, dominated by the stupendous Abbey Church of St. Peter and St. Paul that was built by the famed abbots St. Hugh and Peter the Venerable. It is the largest church — indeed the largest building of any type — in all Christendom. Nearly 600 feet long, it has two transepts, four aisles, and five belfries, and has grandiose ornamentation of a magnificence befitting its size. Cluny's library is one of the richest and biggest in Europe. The abbots also maintain an opulent town house in Paris. A large and wealthy town is located adjacent to the monastery — it produces many of the luxury goods demanded by the monks, and is home to specialist craftsmen such as jewelers and goldsmiths. The town exists largely to cater to the needs of the wealthy monks, but also benefits from a steady flow of visitors to the place.

As a great center of the Church, Cluny assuredly has a strong Divine aura. However, many have commented on the extravagant and excessive lifestyle of many of the monks, claiming that they have been corrupted by the temptations of wealth. Therefore, as an optional, somewhat dark take for your saga, you may decide that certain sinister supernatural powers are orchestrating Cluny's gradual

corruption and fall from grace. In this case, it is certainly possible that servants of the Devil hide amid its byzantine hierarchy, and that one or more Infernal auras are to be found inside its Divine aura, or that the Divine aura is weaker than it should be in some places.



## Atramentum Renatus

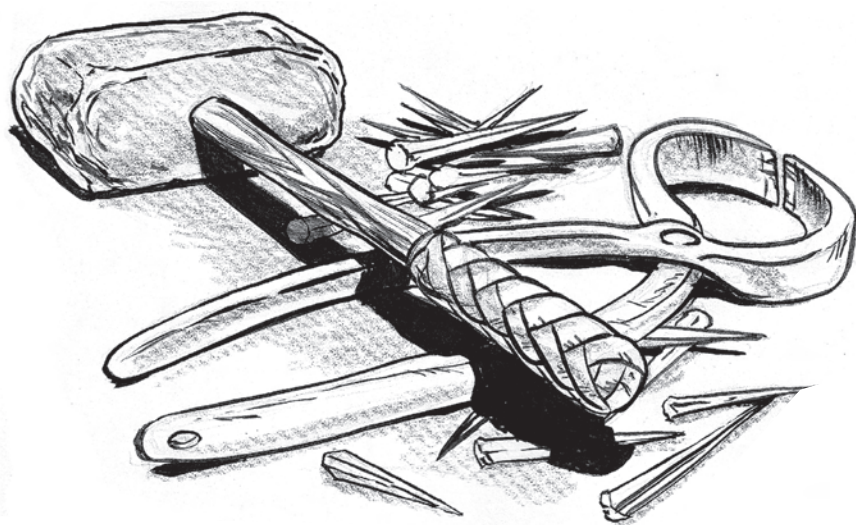
Helios of House Tytalus and Gulo Midusulfis of House Bjornaer founded a vassal covenant of Fudarus in the Arrée Mountains of Brittany in 1200, which they named Atramentum ("Ink") after their sodalis who died during the founding of the covenant. One year later, five of Fudarus's magi left Fudarus and ousted the two young magi from the site, renaming the covenant Exspectatio (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Exspectatio). Exspectatio did compensate Helios and Gulo by providing resources for a new covenant in Burgundy, around a former legacy of Fudarus. This covenant was named Atramentum ("reborn"), and they have since been joined by Iacula of House Bonisagus and Philip of House Ex Miscellanea.

Helios filius Kybella is a Tytalan theurgist who is fascinated with the schemes of the former covenant of Bribracte (see Chapter 2: Hermetic Culture, Past and Present Covenants), and is investigating whether they succeeded in raising the spirit of Vercingetorix.

Philip is a member of the Donatores (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Ex Miscellanea), a tradition which seeks to give final rest to the unquiet dead. Philip was formerly a member of Requies Aeterna, and has only recently joined Atramentum Renatus. He too is interested in the former covenant of Bribracte, and is concerned that Helios's actions are making the ghosts angry.

A Quaesitor is interested as to whether the reports of a ravaging wild beast in the area of the covenant constituted a breach of the Code by Gulo of Bjornaer.

Iacula is fascinated with projectile motion, and as part of her research has come up with a number of spells with great martial potential.



# Normandy Sagas

This chapter presents a number of ideas for sagas set in the Normandy Tribunal. A diverse range of sagas can be set in the Tribunal, and Tribunal politics are strongly influenced by the interaction between the Order of Hermes and mundane authorities. Of course, not all sagas set in the Tribunal need to be political in this way. The Tribunal is populated with plenty of faerie, magical, and Hermetic characters to tell other stories with.

The saga seeds described in this chapter are only ideas to get your troupe started. You will need to add some flesh to these ideas to suit the particular style and interests of your troupe, and you may want to take a plot in a completely different direction to that suggested here. On the other hand, you shouldn't feel that you need to spend hours deciding the minute details of how a particular plot will play out before beginning the first session, as the actions of the player characters may strongly influence how events unfold. You probably only want to pick a few of the saga seeds described here to be "active" during your saga at any one time, otherwise Normandy will be a very busy place.

If you are not a storyguide for your troupe, you should check with them before reading the rest of this chapter.

## The Lotharingian Tribunal

In Hermetic law, a Tribunal must consist of twelve or more magi from at least four different covenants. A political movement started in the Rhine Tribunal is working towards instituting a new Tribunal, taking the north and west territories of the Rhine and the adjacent portions of Normandy to reform the Lotharingian Tribunal (see Chap-

ter 3, Hermetic Culture: Hermetic History). Four covenants of the Rhine have pledged their partial or total support for the scheme, along with three covenants of Normandy. The consortium intends to propose their objective at the next Grand Tribunal in 1228, but do not plan to actually establish the Tribunal until later on, for they suspect that the Grand Tribunal will resist the concept. The founding principle of the movement, as conceived by the covenants of Florum and Triamore, is to establish a tribunal in which magi are no longer forced into hiding from the mundane world, but can be open about their abilities and arts. This they intend to do gradually, with the help of ecclesiastical allies in the cities of the Rhine. They dream of using their knowledge for the betterment of mankind, while remaining true to the Hermetic Oath of not interfering with the affairs of mundanes. They believe they hold sufficient power as a consortium of covenants to prevent the nobility from forcing them to interfere in political and martial situations. By being able to write their own Peripheral Code, they can determine precisely what is deemed to be interference with mundanes, and grant themselves more permission than the Rhine does, but more restrictions than Normandy.

The issue of the formation of a new Tribunal could form the backdrop for a whole saga. Rather than individual story seeds, this section offers story elements that can be integrated into such a saga. A covenant located in Flanders, Picardy, or Champagne (or alternatively, in Upper or Lower Lorraine in the Rhine Tribunal) should play great attention to the developments regarding the Lotharingian Tribunal, for it is these regions that will partly or wholly compose the territory of the new Tribunal. It is also important to consider where the liege, if any, of the player covenant is situated. If they are a vassal of Florum, one of the architects of the new Tribunal, they will be expected to

follow their liege into the new Tribunal. However, a player vassal covenant that has one of the other lieges must decide whether they support or repudiate the plan to secede from Normandy, and how this will affect their relationship with their liege. Further, covenants may possess leases to legacies within the disputed territory, even if they are not there themselves, and may find that they no longer own those sources under the Lotharingian Peripheral Code.

The establishment of a new tribunal is not unheard of; the most recent was the Novgorod Tribunal in 1008. However, the Lotharingian Tribunal would be carved from lands that have belonged to the Rhine and Normandy for many centuries rather than from virgin territory, and the tradition-minded members of the Order — including most of the Rhine Tribunal — are horrified at the suggestion. The opposition might seem overwhelming, but both of the Tribunals set to lose territory have detractors who wish to see them fail, and the more-distant Tribunals do not care. The supporters of the new Tribunal are marshaling resources and arguments they can use to win over the leaders of the Houses. The Provençal Tribunal may welcome the new tribunal and attempt to combine with it, or else become worried that its own territory in Arelat and Provence (which was also part of the original Lotharingian Tribunal) will be poached. With all eyes focused on Lotharingia, Normandy Tytali might decide to recapture territory lost to the Provençal Flambeau. The whole political map of the Western Order of Hermes could be affected by these plans.

Characters might be sent into the region on speculative missions: to discover the quality of certain vis sources, the properties of mystical places, or the availability of certain other resources that can be used as bargaining chips.



## The Normandy Covenants

The Covenant of Florum is the most prominent of Normandy's covenants that support the Lotharingian movement. Their dissatisfaction with Normandy regarding mundane interference and raiding are made clear at every Tribunal meeting, and Florum sees the new tribunal as an opportunity to start again from scratch. Spider's Palace is also an enthusiastic proponent of the movement, in support of their liege.

Florum expects that Requies Aeterna, as its vassal, will join it in the new Tribunal. While the members of this covenant have little interest in politics, they are likely to acquiesce to the wishes of Florum. They suspect that the Rhine magi who join the new Tribunal will reject the concept of vassalage, and that they will have their oath of fealty to Florum annulled by the new Peripheral Code of the Tribunal. They do not chafe under this oath; they merely see their independence from their feudal duty as a bonus.

## The Rhine Covenants

The Rhine Tribunal is known for its ancient traditions and stagnating politics that stifle any attempt at innovation or reform (see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal* for more information on the Hermetic landscape in the Rhinelands, including the covenants mentioned in this section). It is perhaps not surprising therefore that there are some who seek to escape from its yoke.

Triamore is a covenant on the edge of the Ardennes in Lower Lorraine, and is the principle Rhine instigator of the new Tribunal. Daria la Gris of House Tremere seeks to move her covenant from a rather minor role in the Rhine Tribunal to a major role in the Lotharingian Tribunal, and grant greater license to their existing mundane relationships.

Fengheld is a huge covenant in the center of the Rhine Tribunal, and about half of its 23 members are supportive of the new Tribunal, at least in theory. They are too distant geographically to join the Tribunal as a whole, but they already have a chapter house in Cologne, and plan to establish more. These outposts are intended to mature into full covenants if the new Tribunal thrives.

Waddenzee is a martial covenant sited on the Frisian island of Terschelling. Their piracy in the North Sea is viewed with suspicion

and/or hostility by the Rhine Tribunal, but would not be out of place in Normandy. Given their location, they cannot in all honesty *not* be part of the new Tribunal if it forms, so by coming aboard early they hope that they will be able to manipulate the new Peripheral Code to permit their current lifestyle.

Oculus Septentrionalis is another covenant that is likely to be too distant to become part of the new Tribunal. However, they support its goals despite their feud with Waddenzee, which has targeted them specifically in the past. They want the Order in the new Tribunal to have an open relationship with mundanes, particularly with respect to trade. Like Fengheld, they may establish a covenant in the region that will seek to counter whatever Waddenzee proposes.

## The Cabal of Frankish Gold

This Tytalan cabal (see *Schemes of House Tytalus*) works to ensure the success of the Lotharingian Tribunal. Some members of the cabal have a genuine interest in the new Tribunal, seeing it as an opportunity to set up a utopian society for magi — specifically Tytalus magi. They relish the opportunity to be free from the historical weight of the Peripheral Code of their respective Tribunals, and while they may not actually be members of a covenant that is proposing to formally join, they intend to establish a new covenant in the territory.

The motives of other members of the cabal are not so simple. Augustina of Confluensis is a surprising member of the cabal, but she supports its goals on a theoretic level. She cares not one wit for the actual Lotharingian Tribunal, secretly believing it is doomed to fail, but appreciates that it should be possible for dissatisfied magi to become independent from one of the established Tribunals. Augustina is interested in the Order's reaction to such an assault in the heartland of its power. Prima Buliste is a member of the cabal purely because it distracts her rival from concentrating on her other schemes. At least one member of the Cabal of Frankish Gold is a saboteur, seeking to hinder rather than help the new Tribunal's supporters. A covenant interested in the Lotharingian Tribunal might discover that someone is actively working to sour relationships between them and the other covenants in the region.

## A Romantic Saga

In 1220 one of the major cultural influences in the Normandy Tribunal is the body of literature known as the romances. Recited by poets, minstrels, and trouvères, and increasingly the subject of books, the romances are a driving force behind the celebration of knightly culture, chivalry, and romantic love. The romances tell tales of ancient heroes, mysterious magics, and faeries and devils. Almost everyone, from plowboy to the greatest noble, knows the stories and thrills to hear them recited. They are not just history or drama, but an inspiration to heroism, and in fact are a form of secular literature vying with the hagiographies (lives of the saints) in popular appeal and in providing role models for life.

The best-known tellers in Normandy are the trouvères, known as troubadours in the south of France and minnesingers in Germany. Of noble birth, these knight-poets sing the praises of war, chivalry, and courtly love, and compile their poems in books called *chansonniers*. The lower-born equivalents were minstrels known as *jongleurs*. The *jongleurs* might lack the Free Expression so vital to their aristocratic counterparts, but are

### Story Seed: The Grail in Iberia

A knight associated with the covenant returns from a tournament with copy of *Parsifal*, a German version of Chrétien's *Perceval* by the knight-poet Wolfram von Eschenbach. There are rumors that Wolfram's *Parsifal* was actually written by the Rhine magus Gunnar Von Falster, but in the margins of this volume Wolfram claims that his story is a translation of a book originally written by "Flegetanis the heathen" (who is alleged to have known the "mysteries of the heavens") and found by a "Meister Kyot" in Toledo. The story also describes the Grail's resting place as the castle of *Munsalvaesche* (in Latin, *mons salvationis*). Next to this passage is scrawled the word "Montserrat." Could Montserrat, the jagged mountain above Barcelona that was once home to a now-disappeared covenant, be the resting place of the Grail?

skilled storytellers and musicians who relate the great romances, the chansons de geste. Many undoubtedly do engage in elaboration and creativity rather than just repeating the traditional tales, as proved by the many variants of those legends in circulation.

In the last century, the subjects of the songs, which are usually accompanied by a fiddle, have diversified from knights, heroism, and warfare to include the new themes of courtly romance, brave Saracen opponents, and increasingly magic, wizards, faeries, and the supernatural. Court wizards appear, and characters call upon the faeries for help, ride faerie horses, or are tricked by devils. These themes reflect the reality of Mythic Europe, though they are often distorted and exaggerated just as the tales told of Charlemagne and other historical figures are doubtless inaccurate. (Charlemagne and his knights are always described in terms of the contemporary world, not the historical reality of their period.)

While the trouvères and jongleurs know the tales they spin are often fictional or embellishments on real events, they often contain much material of interest to magi. The chansons de geste include references to real monsters, magics, regions, and treasures, and it is said that many can be an invaluable guide for those with arcane knowledge, leading to vis sources and magical places, or faerie locations. The tellers do not realize that they are imparting such lore, but they find avid listeners at many covenants. Interestingly, many of the tales mention old books from which the stories they tell apparently derive, and some may actually be based upon lost Hermetic works that are now only extant in the form of the romances based upon them. Some trouvères are very aware of the Order of Hermes, and even tell stories based upon the adventures of magi to please their Hermetic patrons.

There are two main cycles in the chansons de geste, the Arthurian Cycle (or Matter of Britain) and the stories of Charlemagne and his twelve paladins (the Matter of France).

## The Arthurian Cycle

The late 12th and early 13th centuries have seen a blossoming of Arthurian literature. Inspired by numerous sources, French writers have transformed the Matter of Britain from its Celtic origins into a recognizably French form: the Arthurian romance. Chrétien de Troyes, the master of these types of

stories, took the foundation that Geoffrey of Monmouth had established in his *History of the Kings of Britain* and used it to tell fantastic tales about the adventures of Arthur's knights. These stories, written not in Latin but in the vernacular, are romances instead of histories. The works of Chrétien and his followers are poems that celebrate great feats of chivalry and question the nature of courtly love.

The Arthurian romances have proved exceedingly popular, especially among the nobility. Two of the continuations of Chrétien's unfinished *Perceval* were commissioned by Joan of Flanders, in part to demonstrate the legitimacy of her claim as Philip of Flanders' rightful heir. This should come as no great surprise, as the romances celebrate chivalrous virtues. Knights are expected to serve their God and their king, to practice justice, to champion their ladies, and to help people in need. The romantic knight is at once a military paragon, a virtuous Christian, and a social adept. The stories created the ideals to which the knightly class aspires. Yet, even in the romances, these ideals are unrealized. In Chrétien's stories, the drama arises from the discrepancies between the theory and practice of chivalry. It is from those moments in which the characters fail in their chivalrous duties that the stories derive their power. The romances create an ideal that not even their heroes can live up to, but it is one that the nobility of France continue to pursue.

The Arthur stories provide several jumping-off points for players interested in a romance-centered saga. Magi may also be interested in tracking down the "lost books" cited by so many of the authors of the ro-

## Story Seed: The Unbreakable Blade

Some of the covenant's grogs embark upon the great pilgrimage to the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Iberia. Upon their return, they present the magi with a strange souvenir: a tiny fragment of metal that radiates residues of powerful magic. The grogs explain that it was sold to them in a village near the Roncevaux Pass, in the Pyrenees. The man who sold it to them claimed it was a fragment of Durendal, the legendary sword of Roland, whose hilt contained relics of St. Peter, St. Basil, St. Denis, and the Virgin Mary. As Roland lay dying, he attempted to break the blade rather than let it fall into the hands of his enemies. He failed to break it, and instead the sword cut a huge gap in a mountain, now called La Breche de Roland. Could this be a chip from the great sword? Where does the sword now lie? Is it in fact in the church of Notre Dame in the village of Rocamadour, as the locals claim, or is it somewhere else?

manes, as they almost certainly contain more magical secrets than the mundane writers passed on. Geoffrey of Monmouth claimed to have based his work on a "very ancient book" found in Brittany, while the German poet Wolfram von Eschenbach said

## Story Seed: The Strange Fate of Chrétien de Troyes

The magi of Cunfin receive a shock when Celeres is found unconscious in the covenant library, slumped over a book. Having merely fainted from shock, he recovers quickly and shows the magi what caused him such a fright: the book he has just received from one of the covenant's Redcaps. The book appears to be a journal that once belonged to Chrétien de Troyes. In it, he lays out his plans for a trip to Brittany to investigate some of the Arthurian sites there so that he can finish his poem *Perceval*. He expresses concern, however, as he believes that he is being shadowed by a group of knights, and he is worried that

they mean him harm. Celeres explains that Chrétien's description of these knights exactly matches Wolfram von Eschenbach's description of the Grail Templars. The journal ends abruptly just as Chrétien is ready to set out on his trip.

Did Chrétien ever visit Brittany? Was he being followed by knights who served the Grail? Was he killed because he knew too much, or did he disappear into a faerie regio like Merlin did? (In reality, the date and exact nature of Chrétien's death is unknown; we know only that he was at the court of his patron Philip of Flanders in 1182.)



## Salvirius

Age: Unknown (apparently 50)

Personality Traits:

Reclusive +3,  
Manipulative +2

Salvirius has a frighteningly large scar in his chest — almost as if he had been mortally wounded by a spear — but the scar is usually covered and he dresses as if he were a hunter or woodsman. Salvirius advises the Boar King, but travels independently of the main court and usually he only makes an appearance when the court is encamped. Even then Salvirius partakes in few of the

courtly feasts and entertainments.

Salvirius can grant Virtues to other characters, through a process whereby he assigns to the character a mystical quest that requires a sacrifice (acquisition of a Flaw). The Virtues he can grant include Strong Faerie Blood, [Shapeshifter](#), Animal Ken, Faerie Blood, Second Sight, and Wilderness Sense. In your saga, you may also wish to allow Salvirius to grant some Hermetic Virtues. Salvirius might be a faerie, a magus who has become a faerie, or a magus living in the faerie court; he may even be a Diedne refugee from the Schism War.

that his story came from a book discovered by “Meister Kyot” in Toledo. The search for missing tomes such as these consumes the attention of more than one Seeker.

Arthurian literature in Mythic Europe is recognizably similar to the stories players may be familiar with, but several key elements are missing. Notably, Galahad is absent, the fall of Camelot is not caused by Lancelot and Guinevere’s adulterous affair, and many of the romances feature Arthur only as a minor figure. The stories were about knights, and Arthur was used only as a reason to have them go out and adventure. Because of these differences, storyguides wishing to incorporate Arthurian themes into their sagas are strongly encouraged to read the original romances, particularly Chrétien’s works. For more on the most important period stories, see The Grail Library in Chapter 9: Champagne: Cunfin.

## The Matter of France

The Matter of France is the story of the great King Charlemagne, who despite what the Germans might say, in the romances was King of France and had his capital at Paris. The stories tell of his great campaigns, most notably against the Saracen foe in Spain, though he conquered much of Mythic Europe. He had twelve heroic companions, the paladins, though the names of these worthies vary from account to account. Generally featured are the wise Duke Naymes, the brave Archbishop Turpin, chivalrous Roland, Oliver, Ogier the Dane, and the villainous Ganelon whose treachery leads to tragedy in the Pass of Roncevaux where Roland is killed.

Some of the older stories depict the Basques as the aggressors there, but in the tale as told in 1220 it is generally the Saracen who is the foe. The Saracen enemy, however, is often depicted as clever and honorable, and many fights involve discussions of the Trinity alongside the expected swordplay. Nonetheless, the romances glorify Charlemagne as a great Christian king, and while conversion of the heathen is a central theme in some of the romances, usually they are just enemies to be slain.

Roland is possibly the greatest hero of the romances. Charlemagne’s nephew by his sister, Roland suffered the exile of his parents in his childhood, but his childhood bravery brings about reconciliation and his mother’s

return from disgrace. As a child he fights and defeats a formidable giant, and by his valor soon gains Charlemagne’s favor so that eventually he is adopted as if a son. (Charlemagne’s own son appears in many of the romances as a villain of the darkest hue). The tale ends tragically but heroically, with Roland falling while fighting a rearguard action in the Pass of Roncevaux, blowing his magic horn to bring back the army who arrive too late to do anything but exact vengeance on his killers. The tragedy is one of the best-known stories in all France, and one of the great themes of the romances. The Matter of France includes many other stories, however, and some are little-known to modern audiences. Because of the rich mythic and supernatural elements, and the prevalence of wizards, faeries, and magic in them, they are an excellent resource for the storyguide to mine for inspiration, as the song of a trouvère has inspired many a group of magi to seek out some ancient magical secret.

## The Romances and the Order

Most magi regard these stories as pure fantasy, but not all view them this way. Some see them as containing kernels of truth — pieces of old legends that have been recast into a new form. These magi read the romances not as guides to behavior, but as

## Story Seed: The Secret Master

The subtle courtier, Salvirius, offers to teach a Major Hermetic Virtue to the Boar King’s magus ally. This is something he has not offered before, and he claims that it is the last of his knowledge, although he will not reveal precisely what he offers. In return he asks the magus to deliver a message on a specific day at a specific time, to the Hill of Martyrs in Paris.

The message is sealed in red wax with an imprint of a snake swallowing its tail and, if it is opened, it is blank. If the magus does deliver the message, he finds that the recipient is a drunkard and a dullard, who merely throws the message into the Seine. In fact, the magus is scryed upon as he walks down the road to the Hill of Martyrs. It is the vellum the message is printed on that is targeted by the effect

(Intellego Animal, magnitude 3 effect with a Penetration of 50), via an Arcane Connection. Of course, the magus will not be aware that he is being scryed upon, unless the effect cannot overcome his Parma Magica or he is able to detect scrying in some way. The magus is the real message; Salvirius is identifying him to a third party who periodically scrys the road leading to the Hill of Martyrs.

If the magus delivers the message and returns to Salvirius, he is taught the Major Hermetic Virtue Diedne Magic (see ArM5, page 41); this takes one season and means that the magus acquires the Major Story Flaw Dark Secret. This Flaw is part of the Virtue and doesn’t count for balancing Virtues; thus, in addition the magus acquires a Major Hermetic Flaw.



clues to lost magics. They are particularly interested in the lost books that so many of writers of romance based their tales upon.

There are also magi who believe the romances tell the true story of the Grail, and that unlocking their secrets will reveal the resting places of a great artifact. Few of these magi agree on the precise nature of that artifact or how to decode the cryptic references in the stories, but they are undeterred. The Knights of the Green Stone are one such group (see *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 131), but there are undoubtedly others.

Finally, there are a few magi who do believe in the chivalric ideals espoused by the romances, and who strive to live their lives according to this code. Celeres of Bonisagus, who now lives at Cunfin, is one such magus, though more than one member of the Order questions his sanity.

## Romantic Saga Structure

The romances can provide a template for a saga structure. A group of heroic magi may undertake quests not unlike those of the knights in the stories. In a high fantasy-style saga, the magi would be continually falling into faerie regiones where the chivalrous behaviors of the romances are the norm and faerie knights stand at every crossroads to challenge all who would seek to pass them.

Sagas inspired by the romances may well include a quest for the Grail, which was first introduced into the literature in Chretien's *Perceval* but which quickly came to dominate the story cycle. If the players wish to explore this path, the troupe should decide on the nature of the quest. In the early romances, the Grail is a physical object that may be recovered, while in the later stories it is more a symbol of spiritual perfection rather than something that can be obtained. Both types of stories are worth telling, but it is best if the troupe decides on which of two they want to pursue.

# The Boar and The Dragon

The boar was the fierce symbol of the kings who ruled Gaul more than one thousand years ago, and the dragon was a powerful symbol of the Viking raiders who for a time, more than three hundred years ago, dominated the region. Today, boar and dragon are both eclipsed by the lion and the ascendant lily, but anachronistic remnants of those courts jealously remember their apogee and plot their revival. The Boar King and the Children of Odin are each possible antagonists for a hoplite saga (or any other sort of saga) set in Normandy. Alternatively, the characters could become members of the court of the Boar King, or join the Children of Odin.

In a particular saga, one, both, or none of these groups may exist — this is left for the troupe to decide.

## The Boar King

The Boar King is a faerie once worshiped by the Gauls. He lives in a wooden fortress in a regio with a Faerie aura of 7, which can be accessed from several dark, dank forest groves, where the sun barely penetrates the fetid air. The Boar King claims to own the forests of the Normandy Tribunal — although as other supernatural creatures also make this claim, the situation is clearly complex. At any rate, he hunts boar in the autumn, and hunters who take too much from the forest find themselves hunted by the Boar King and his court.

From his forest fortress, the Boar King has brooded on the encroachment of men and especially the Divine into his forest, and he has slowly concluded that merely hunting down the odd greedy hunter has done nothing to slow the advance of men. Several centuries ago he had good relationships with the local members of House Diedne, who helped him patrol his forest estates. The Boar King is aware that House fell during the Schism War, and has recently decided to seek replacements for his fallen Diedne allies, probably among Merinita and Bjornaer magi, who he hopes will help prevent (and reverse) the destruction of his forest.

## Story Seed: The Hidden Enemy

A Tribunal Quaesitor visits the covenant. The Quaesitor is gathering hoplites to investigate, forcefully, rumors that a Diedne magus thought to have died in the Schism War has been seen in the forest in the company of the Boar King. The Boar King meets the hoplites outside his regio, ordering them to leave, and he will not allow the magi to enter his regio.

If a magus of the covenant is allied with the Boar King, then he may be called upon to help defend the Boar King's realm from the Quaesitor. This might throw him into opposition with his covenant sodales.

## Story Seed: Desecrated Temple

Several pagan temples dedicated to the Boar King were destroyed by Christian missionaries, but a newly revived cult of the Boar King is attempting to re-consecrate one. If members of the covenant are allied with the Boar King, they are approached by the cultists seeking assistance in a brewing confrontation with the church — maybe covenant members even lead the cult. Alternatively, local church officials who have learned of the revival might approach the covenant seeking allies to suppress the cult, and to also confirm that the covenant is not involved.





## The Boar King

**Faerie Might:** 40 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int -1, Per +1, Pre +2, Com -2, Str +4, Sta +5, Dex +2, Qik 0

**Size:** +1

**Age:** n/a (30)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (6)

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Reckless +3, Proud +2, Wrathful +1

**Reputations:** King of the Forest 3 (local), Ally of House Diedne 2 (Hermetic)

**Combat:**

Boar Spear (foot): Init +3, Attack +13, Defense +9, Damage +11

Boar Spear (mounted): Init +3, Attack +16, Defense +12, Damage +11

Tusks (gore): Init +0, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +7

**Soak:** +10

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 5 (boar), Area Lore: Normandy Tribunal 5 (forest), Athletics 5 (running), Awareness 3 (trespassers), Brawl 9 (gore), Carouse 3 (lament), Dead Language: Latin 3 (hunting terms), Dead Language: Gaulish 5 (druidic terms), Etiquette 1 (courtly), Faerie Lore 5 (worship), Folk Ken 3 (hunters), Great Weapon 7 (boar spear), Hunt 10 (hunters), Leadership 5 (faeries), Living Language: Breton 3 (hunting terms), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (House Diedne), Ride 5 (hunting), Stealth 7 (forest), Survival 10 (forest), Swim 3 (swamp)

**Powers:**

*Voice of the Woods*, 0 points, constant, Animal (Herbam or Mentem): The Boar King can converse with any woodland creature or plant. They will also obey any order he issues to the best of their abilities.

*Sylvan Sanctity*, 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: When he uses this power, the Boar King is aware of the approximate location and number of all human intruders in his forest. Normally, this is quite a large number of people and there is too much information for the Boar King to fully understand. However, he can easily identify when

trespassers enter areas that are normally empty of people. This power needs to penetrate to be successful, but groups of magi (for example) often travel with grogs and companions who have no Magic Resistance. As it takes several days to penetrate into the heart of the forest, and he uses this power daily, the Boar King can be well prepared for visitors.

*Ancient Rage*, 5 points, Init -10, Animal: The Boar King enters a frothing fury; he has +3 to all his Attack and Soak scores, and a -3 penalty to his Defense. He also ignores all Wound Penalties except Incapacitated when enraged. His rage lasts for a day, and during this time he attacks anyone at the slightest provocation, and he may neither retreat nor give quarter.

*Impaled by the Thorn*, 5 points, Init -5, Corpus and Mentem: The Boar King may hurl a boar spear at any human target within Sight Range. No roll is required to hit the target, and if this attack penetrates she is paralyzed and cannot move, speak, see, smell, or otherwise act or think (including casting a spell). The character does not age either. Wrenching the spear from her body ends the effect, but inflicts a Heavy Wound — although magic may be able to overcome this difficulty.

*Call of the Hunter*, 10 points, Init 0, Herbam: Using this power, the Boar King can appear at any location in his forest.

**Equipment:** The Boar King carries a number of boar spears, but his court can furnish him with anything he desires, although some items may be glamour, not real.

**Vis:** 4 pawns of Animal in each tusk.

**Appearance:** The Boar King is a large man with the head of a boar. His speech is oddly accented due to two large tusks that protrude from his jaw. His arms and naked torso are adorned with abstract tattoos and bronze bracelets, and he normally wears animal-hide trousers and a cloak. He often rides a wild horse bareback, accompanied by a group of faerie knights. He is also travels with a number of other courtiers.

## Story Seed: Master of the Hunt

If a Merinita or Bjornaer magus passes through the forest, the Boar King, accompanied by a more-subtle member of his court, approaches him, preferably when he is alone. The courtier, named Salvirius, will try to gently establish the magus' attitudes to the wilderness, and if he appears suitable will offer him a part of the forest's power in return for a sacrifice and completion of a quest — perhaps destroying a newly established settlement in the forest. By mimicking the Forest Paths (see *Guardians of the Forests*, page 35), the Boar King hopes to entice the magus into becoming a forest guardian. Whether the Boar King's path is a true Forest Path is debatable, but his court can certainly provide many resources to a magus ally, so it might not effectively matter. Salvirius, in particular, can teach a number of Virtues.

## The Children of Odin

The Children of Odin is a Mystery Cult whose members view themselves as the heirs to the magic of ninth-century Viking raiders. Despite this purportedly ancient pedigree, the cult itself is new: its Hierophant, Queen Skuld, only began to initiate her followers a decade or so ago. The cult is secretive, small, and yet to be exposed to the wider Order.

The philosophy of Queen Skuld is purely a philosophy of power. She believes that the duchy of Normandy rightfully belongs to the Normans, and that she is herself the true descendant of the Viking earl Rollo who captured Normandy in 911 (see Chapter 2, History of Mythic France). For the Children of Odin, the annexation of Normandy by King Philip II of France is an abomination that must be reversed via the installation of Skuld as the maga-Queen of Normandy. Of course, the megalomaniacal pursuit of mundane power holds little interest for most magi, and such a scheme offers no obvious mystical benefits to the other cult members. However, Skuld has managed to learn many secrets of Viking magic — or so she says — during her exploration as a young maga of Viking wrecks and ruins. These secrets have lured other magi to join Skuld's cult.



## CULT MEMBERS

Exactly which magi in the Tribunal are in the cult is a matter left to the discretion of the troupe. There are unlikely to be more than half a dozen current members, and all members should have a relatively good Ignem Art score, which may favor Flambeau, so that they could survive the first Quest to the burning ships (see below). Members of Montverte who can claim descendant from the covenant's Scandinavian founders might be particularly interested in the cult.

## MYSTERY SCRIPTS

The cult currently has Initiation Scripts that grant the following Virtues:

Minor Hermetic Virtue, Life Boost: see ArM5, page 44.

Minor Hermetic Virtue, Minor Magical Focus (Shape-shifting): see ArM5, page 46.

Major Hermetic Virtue, Life-Linked Spon-

aneous Magic: see ArM5, page 44.

Ordeals endured during the cult's Initiations may include gaining the Flaws:

**Minor Hermetic Flaw, Blood Haze:** The maga is crazed by bloodshed, and if she is directly involved in a combat situation she has a -10 penalty to Formulaic magic and has a -3 penalty to her Concentration Ability Score. The character is considered in a combat situation if she is close enough to smell blood that has been shed through violence (about a dozen paces).

**Minor Hermetic Flaw, Flawed Parma Magica (Vim):** see ArM5, page 54.

**Major Hermetic Flaw, Deficient Technique (Creo):** see ArM5, page 53.

## THE SHIPS OF FLAME

These three perpetually burning Viking longships, mortuaries to dead Viking warlords, are each located in a different small Magical regio of aura 6 on the river Seine. Each regio can only be entered by drifting



## Queen Skuld

Age: 77 (Apparent age 37)

Personality Traits:

Driven +3,  
Proud +2,  
Secretive +2

Queen Skuld is the Hierophant of the Children of Odin, and given the small size of the cult she has acted as Mystagogue at all initiations completed thus far. She was once merely Skuld, an unremarkable Tytalus maga resident at Atramentum. She left House Tytalus for House Ex Miscellanea in the year 1178, and disappeared a few years later; Skuld was last seen heading through the English Channel in a small boat towards Scandinavia. She now resides in a regio on the River Seine (see below). Apart from her initiates, other magi are unaware of her return to the Tribunal in 1205.

Given her long absence, it is possible that Queen Skuld is not really the Skuld who left for Scandinavia at all, but an impostor. She might be some kind of faerie or magic creature, or a powerful hedge wizard (maybe even an actual member of the Order of Odin). She may even really be a refugee from the Schism War.

## Mystery Cults

Mystery Cults are Hermetic traditions that incorporate secret modifications to Hermetic theory that are revealed only to members. Full rules that describe how Mystery Cults reveal their knowledge (Initiation) are given in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults and The Mysteries: Revised Edition*. If the troupe does not have access to these titles, then Initiation can be approximated by a superior cult member (the Mystagogue) assigning the Initiate a Quest that should take about a year to complete. During the Quest, the Initiate undergoes an Ordeal (gains a Flaw) and comes to a higher understanding of the Mystery (gains a Virtue). The instructions for an Initiation are contained in a special Laboratory Text called an Initiation Script.



## Story Seed: Attack Ships

A group of monasteries on the Normandy coast are raided by Vikings, and as the covenant is nearby the magi are asked to perform (or assist in) an investigation. There are also a number of merchant ships missing in the area. As it is more than two hundred years since the age of the Viking raids, it will be obvious to the characters that there must be some kind of trick or magical explanation behind such an anachronistic assault. Investigation might reveal that Hermetic magic has contributed to the raids, but any Hermetic sigils appear to be shrouded (see ArM5, page 159). In fact, the assault is the work of the Children of Odin, and the spell *Nordic Triumph* has been used to produce the effect. Mounting these attacks was a Mystery Initiation Quest, and the investigators may discover the responsible cult member. Alternatively, if a player character magus

is a Child of Odin, he may in fact be the responsible cult member.

### NORDIC TRIUMPH

MuMe(He)(Te) Level 65  
R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Structure, Ritual

This ritual is cast while on board a ship, which the spell transforms into a dragon-prowed longship, and the crew are transformed into fierce Viking warriors who view the caster as their chieftain. The spell does not give the crew any Abilities they did not already have, but it makes them think and act as if they are Viking warriors, including acting as a trained group in combat.

(Base 15, +1 Touch, +3 Moon, +4 Structure, +2 Requisites)

down the Seine in a boat aflame on a particular day — the date corresponding to the death of the Viking warlord. It is a simple matter, however, to leave the regiones by merely swimming to the banks of the Seine.

Each Viking longship burns fiercely and inflicts fire damage (+20 each round) on anyone standing upon the deck. This is a magical attack with a Penetration of 30, which may be resisted as normal. The fire does not require fuel and does not consume the Viking longship, but foreign material brought into the regio is consumed unless protected by magic. A high-magnitude *Perdo Ignem* effect might be devised to extinguish the fire, but this will probably also destroy the regio.

Cult Initiates must (as their first Quest) find their way, unaided, onto the deck of one of the longships and recover an axe from a fallen Viking warrior, but Queen Skuld is the only long-term resident in the regiones. She has constructed her Laboratory on the deck of one longship. Other cult members sometimes travel to her burning ship, but the difficulty of timing visits means that Skuld usually communicates via *Haunt of the Living Ghost*.

## THE ORDER OF ODIN

The Children of Odin Mystery Cult is *not* the Order of Odin. It is a Mystery Cult that claims to have discovered the secrets of some of the magic of the Order of Odin. How-

ever, the cult may be wrong in this claim. If, in your saga, the cult is in fact an authentic heir to the Order of Odin, then you might like to add to the cult's repertoire some of the rune magic powers described in *Ancient Magic* (page 133). Alternatively, during the course of your saga, a researcher in the cult may manage to integrate rune magic with Hermetic theory. Either option could increase the power of the cult considerably. On the other hand, if the Mystery Cult is

not authentic it is possible that Queen Skuld is aware of this fact; that is, for some reason she is lying to the other cult members about the true nature of the cult's magic.

## The Tradition of Kings

Philip II, called Augustus, sits on the throne of France. He rules with absolute authority under a divine mandate to protect the church and to rule his subjects with justice. His position seems very strong and secure, but there are many questions in the background that have stirred up a number of schemes.

This story arc draws on the historical background in Chapter 2: The Mythic History of France. It depends upon the player characters having some link with mundane nobility. The nobility themselves are linked by blood, marriage, and feudal oaths, and it is through this network that the characters are most likely to learn of the plots. Others will emerge through contacts in the Order of Hermes.

Several plots are targeting the oil of anointing and/or the throne of France. For details of the holy oil, see Chapter 2: The Mythic History of France, The Holy Oil of Consecration. The player characters should come across each plot in turn, and have the opportunity to learn something about them. Fully resolving some of them should, if possible, be

## Story Seed: A Norman Conquest

A covenant magus with a strong Norman pedigree is approached by a relative seeking support for an Anglo-Norman invasion of the French mainland. In fact, the relative is under the control of a Child of Odin and is merely sounding out the character's attitudes to the French occupation of Normandy. If the character appears enthusiastic about the prospect of an invasion, he will be formally approached by the Mystery Cult, which claims to have a more-realistic plan for Normandy. If the character joins the cult, the troupe can tell a number of stories about his Initiation through the degrees of the Mystery Cult.

## Story Seed: The Tapestry

If a character is a member of the Mystery Cult, he is sent to retrieve the Bayeux Tapestry from the town of Bayeux (see Chapter 5: Normandy). Queen Skuld wishes to use the tapestry to aid her Penetration on a spell cast on the French king (who is the current "Duke" of Normandy).

Alternatively, a group of Viking warriors appear at the gates of Bayeux and proceed to hack their way through into the cathedral to steal the tapestry. Either the covenant is approached by the church post facto to recover the Bayeux Tapestry or covenant members are present in the town during the assault. In either case, the raid should be suspiciously anachronistic to the characters.

saved to the end, when several plots are about to come to fruition at the same time.

It seems unlikely that the power and authority of the king lies in his family background, or else how could the Carolingians and Capetians rule? Perhaps it resides in the holy oil, and could be acquired by anyone bold enough to take and use this. Perhaps it resides in the oil but requires the ceremony and blessing of the church to activate it. Maybe it lies in the crown or the throne? It may lie in the blood of Merovech, a notion supported by the continuing tradition among the Frankish kings to have themselves depicted with the long hair and beard traditional for the Merovingians, even if they do not favor the same style in reality. A magus who unraveled the mystery of kingship and learned its secrets might make use of the knowledge to assume power within the Order.

## Saints

There are numerous saints closely linked to the Frankish king. One may answer a supplicant's prayer and guide characters to information about the mysteries surrounding the kingship.

**St. Clotilde:** Wife of Clovis I, the first Christian Merovingian king. Patron of the lame; invoked against sudden death and iniquitous husbands.

**St. Martin of Tours:** Fourth-century soldier

A powerful magus, who has probably experienced one bad Twilight too many, has decided to take the holy oil and intends to apply it to himself, convinced it will help him become Primus of his House. He is working on enchantments using the spells he thinks he will need to walk into Reims Cathedral and take it. He might visit the player characters' covenant to consult a book on mundane history or talk with a senior magus. Alternatively, he might be met at Tribunal and let slip a clue to his plans. Can the characters expose his plot before it brings the wrath of the mundane authorities down on the Order, but without being themselves accused of spying on a magus? Before the Quaesitores, would they stand a chance of being believed? If it

came to a Tribunal vote, could they muster sufficient support against a senior magus, one who would make a very powerful and dangerous enemy?

A small group of German nobles plans to steal the holy oil so they can stop Philip II anointing his son. They think this will break the Capetian succession and give them the chance to put a Carolingian back on the throne. Their candidate is from the East Frankish line and can trace his ancestry to Charlemagne. They know of the ruling of Pope Stephen II, and erroneously believe the "seven generations" reprieve is about to expire. It is quite likely that this plot only comes to the attention of the player characters when they are in Reims, either going for the oil themselves or guarding it.

turned monk then bishop. Noted for giving half his cloak to a naked beggar. Played an important role in stamping out paganism in Gaul.

**St. Remi:** Bishop of Reims, known as Apostle of the Franks. Baptised Clovis I, his family, and 3,000 followers.

**St. Riquier:** Seventh-century pagan from northern France. Converted by Irish missionaries and became a priest, then bishop, but ended life as a hermit.

**St. Valery:** Sixth-century shepherd from the Auvergne who became a monk and later lived as a hermit near Amiens.

**St. Vedast:** Bishop of Arras who prepared Clovis I for baptism. Usually depicted with a wolf, often carrying a live goose.

**St. Louis:** If your saga follows history, Louis IX (currently 5 years old) ascends to the throne of France in 1226. His reign is notable for his piety, and he is canonized as St. Louis in 1297. Factions within Mythic Europe, especially those with access to divination powers, might try to encourage or hinder this outcome.

## Story Seed: Does it Depend on the Man?

A small group of French nobles feel that the king is not behaving in the correct kingly manner. They think they can manipulate his young son and turn him into the sort of leader that a king should be, so they are plotting to remove Philip, probably by means of a "hunting accident." The player characters' closest contact among the mundane nobility comes across the plot and asks the characters for help.

An educated young man with high Presence arrives at the covenant with an unusual request: he is seeking someone capable of giving him a permanent, non-scarring tattoo of a red cross. He is part of another plot involving several of the French nobility to replace Philip's line entirely.

Philip's own ascension clearly met with divine approval, but has he retained divine

favor? If not, characters will find it easier to challenge his position. His reluctance to join the crusade in southern France suggests that he has not.

Through their contacts in the nobility, the characters are asked to aid investigation of the suspicion that King Philip is being badly advised. The growing army of clerks at court is not entirely to the king's liking. Some of his advisers and bureaucrats are covertly recruiting their own friends and relations to swell the bureaucracy at the king's expense. Some are over-protective, keeping him from the crusade for fear he will be injured, and others are exploiting him to further their own interests, so do all they can to keep him close at hand and misinformed. Behind it all is a truly evil man on the king's staff, prompted by a demon.

## The Noble Life

In the Normandy Tribunal the harsh realities of living in close contact with mundane society have led some covenants into very close relationships with the nobility. Some have come to embrace a companion as nominal holder of their lands, thereby hoping to evade the problems of land ownership in the feudal system. It can be very difficult to hold a castle or manor in the Tribunal without some apparent relationship with a liege lord — yet magi are forbidden by the Oath to enter into such relationships, so a companion is often required to fulfill that role.

This relationship with the landholding



knight can drive many stories, and indeed the whole saga. It is particularly suited to a slow saga (see ArM5 page 218) where the companions and grogs can play a central role. It is not possible just to appoint somebody and then let them get on with representing your interests, as knighthood makes its own demands and can frequently impact the whole covenant. Making the covenant nominally held by a companion draws those characters into focus, and grogs and companions can gain new life as they are seen in the natural context of the mundane community, becoming valuable intermediaries between the mundane world and the magi. When designing your companions, it is important to think about how they fit into the local political, clerical, and mercantile environment, and they will frequently inspire stories that have repercussions upon the magi. Montverte is a good example of a covenant that has entered into such an arrangement, which has an obvious appeal in the Normandy Tribunal.

A castle or manor with a "tame" knight is not the only option. Cunfin has managed to

survive by being associated with a Cistercian monastery, and a monastic establishment is an option even though it is subject to the attention of the Church. Another popular method is to establish a covenant in the manor or castle of an heiress or widow, but this lays one open to romantic or opportunistic suitors. Even a mercantile establishment such as Florum faces the problem of the guild's scrutiny. If armed and armored grogs are required, a castle or manor may be an obvious choice for a covenant, in a Tribunal notably devoid of wastes and wilderness for magi to hide within.

## Duties of the Knight

Just because the magi do not owe fealty to a lord, that does not mean the companion who is holder of their estate does not. Each knight owes military service to his liege — forty days every year — and he is expected to turn up suitably armed and equipped. This and the customary attendance at the liege's

court, often at important events like Pentecost, Easter, or Christmas, can be considered to be part of the seasons spent working by the knight. Wealthy companion knights may consider paying Écuage, a payment made in lieu of the military service so as to increase their free time to study or train. Écuage is very common, and the French army consists largely of mercenaries and paid serjeants, as well as knights seeking glory in battle and the resulting spoils of war.

Another duty of the knightly class is to enforce law and justice. In the Normandy Tribunal the legal system is based on Frankish Tribal Law, and is best represented by the ability Common Law, though it is not the same as the Common Law of England. (The Provençal Tribunal in the south uses Civil Law based upon the Roman model, and this is one of the great differences between the *langue d'oc* and *langue d'oïl*-speaking regions of France.)

Most capital crimes are tried by the higher nobility or royal court. Trial by combat is still a right occasionally invoked, and even witnesses can be challenged, though champions are often used. A loss, however, results in very severe penalties, so it is often a method used by the strong to avoid justice. Knights may well be called upon to act as champions of the poor and the oppressed, including those who feel themselves ill-treated by a magus.

Along with the duties inherent in knightly status there come many privileges. Knights can use their rank to demand respect and obedience from commoners, and enjoy better food and drink. They are much given to the pleasure of the hunt, and many knights indulge in poetry or music. Some become *trouveres*, as the romantic troubadours are known in the Normandy Tribunal, and sing the tales of Charlemagne and Arthur at the courts of the nobles, who are great enthusiasts for these performances.

The other great sport of the knight is the tournament, which is often frowned upon by the church and sometimes by the king, as it provides an opportunity for his vassals to meet and plot rebellion. Stakes in the tournament are often a ransom equal to the knight's equipment. Successful tournament knights can and could become wealthy, but at the risk of grave injury or accidental death. Still, so popular are tournaments that they have come, like much of the knightly culture, to be reflected in the Hermetic culture of the Tribunal. Rumors of magical assistance given to tournament knights by their covenants frequently emerge, and are treated very seriously by the Quaesitores as potentially leading the Order into conflict with mundanes.

## Story Seed: Does it Depend on the Bloodline?

A maga of House Jerbiton has found a boy descended from Merovech in whom the heritage is strongly expressed. He displays some of his illustrious ancestor's special powers: he always wins brawls even though he may be much slighter than his opponent, can often understand what an animal's call means, he has some ability at divination, and he has the Purifying Touch. He wears his hair uncut, which marks him out as strange to mundane eyes. The maga has taken the boy as her apprentice even though he is unGifted. She intends to get her protégé as close to the throne as possible, believing that he will use his mundane power and influence to the benefit of the Order, with her working behind the scenes to ensure this is so. She believes she can do this without being seen to breach the Code.

She spends plenty of time in the laboratory with him, studying his Virtues and making sure he learns Latin and the Liberal Arts. While the boy is getting a good education, she is starting to cultivate suitable mundane contacts so that when she believes he is ready, she can introduce him to noble society at the highest possible level. The characters may have to investigate suspicions about her motives in building close relationships with powerful nobles,

without bringing down upon themselves a charge of scrying.

Scattered across Europe in both noble and less-exalted families, there are descendants of the Merovingian Dynasty. One of these may manifest the supernatural legacy of the Quinotaur strongly enough to have The Gift. A magus who decided to claim his birthright would be a significant challenge to the political stability of the realm, and a problem for the Quaesitores. A lone maga (a Peregrinator, see *Guardians of the Forests: The Rhine Tribunal* page 20) of House Ex Miscellanea living in the Rhine Tribunal has discovered that she is descended from Merovech and plots to claim the throne of the Western Franks for herself. She mistakenly believes her goal will benefit the Order so much that the Quaesitores will approve. Her investigations have led her to believe that she must somehow secure for herself the correct coronation ceremony. Should a female claimant make herself known, she would face hostility from the Church, the nobility, and most of the rest of the world. It is likely that only a sign from Heaven could convince the world of her claimed right. The player characters may discover her plans and can be called upon to thwart her before any obvious harm is done.

Young knights often choose to become knights errant, a description rather than a title or social class. Like the heroes of the romances, the knight errant rides out in search of adventure, which can take many forms. Slaying monsters, dealing with faeries, fighting in wars, and wooing a lady in courtly romance all form part of this experience, and what knight can resist the allure of the rumors of the tower of magicians in the haunted forest? Many a companion has first come to the Order's covenants while seeking adventure.

Errantry is, however, a passing phase, usually associated with the younger knight. At some point he is expected to have amassed enough wealth and respect to be granted more lands and a comfortable manor house, and hang up his sword as much as possible to concentrate on his wife (hopefully a rich heiress), his estates, and the hunt and pleasures of court life. His chief aims are always to produce an heir and to further his family's reputation and wealth by enlarging their estates and fortune. Companions may expect to be supported by the magi they associate with in these ambitions, which can cause conflict with the Code.

## Legal Issues

The relationship between the magi and the knight companion can be problematic. In 865 the Grand Tribunal made a ruling that was to have serious repercussions on those who live with a mundane lord. Magi are bound by this ruling not to work as "court wizards," yet they have a natural desire to support the titular owner of their home, magically or mundanely. If they live in a covenant that is situated in a manor or castle, they will wish to use magic to improve living conditions and further their own interests against potential mundane threats. To what extent does this run the risk of breaching the Code?

The vital aspect is that even if one lives within the actual home of a mundane noble, no vassal relationship exists. Court wizards are generally defined as "employees," but employee here is not a function of economic support, but rather a relationship of subordination enforced by vows (usually of vassalage). This distinction was first made by Iola of Guernicus in 1047. The claim was made by enemies of the covenant of Montverte that they were acting as court wizards by residing within the home of a mundane lord. They argued in their defense that they held no oath of vassalage, and that they left

### Story Seed: A Romantic Interlude

The essence of courtly love is the pursuit of an unobtainable woman, often one whom the lover has only glimpsed, or has hardly spoken to. When a maga learns she is the subject of a number of love poems and ballads, some so enchanting they have become popular ditties sung even by the covenfolk, she may be baffled, concerned, or irate. When the lover turns up to press his suit, completely unaware that she is a maga, not a noblewoman, the whole covenant may be less amused and more concerned, especially as he starts to compose songs and poems about her home and "court." The *trouvere* is an important noble and landowner in his own right, so direct action would be disastrous. If he learns his love has no husband, the genuinely smitten *trouvere* may actually go as far as to propose marriage. This situation will require very delicate diplomacy, or some clever ruse. The fact that the *trouvere* is carrying a minor relic in his ring does not make things any easier, as it grants him some Magic Resistance.

### Story Seed: The Knight Errant

Young questing knights looking for wealth and fame who turn up at the covenant are nothing unusual, and the stories they bring of monsters, faeries, and hidden treasures are sometimes worth listening to. One young knight, however, provokes a flurry of interest in the covenfolk when they mistake him for one of the magi about the same age. He is almost identical. The magus (or maga) was taken from his home at an early age, and has no recollection of who he was. Nor did his parents, who is currently lost in temporary Twilight, think it wise to inform him. If the two meet, however, the story may come out and the missing past will be dredged up. More worryingly, the twin brother, if such he is, forms an Arcane Connection to the magus, and the covenant may well not be the only people to see the family resemblance. The magus risks having his true name, date of birth, and many other details perhaps best not known exposed, but the young knight will be delighted to find his long lost sibling. How will the magi cope?

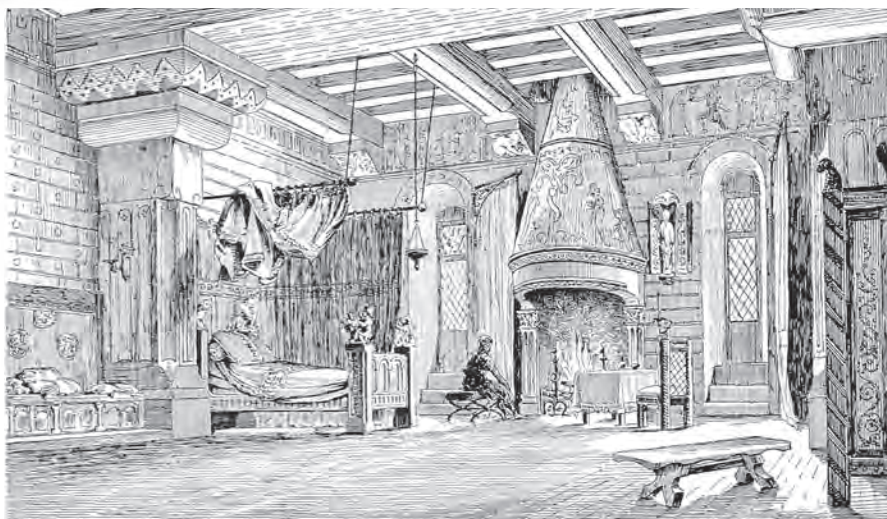
him to get on with running mundane matters. While their interference in the latter was clearly proven, the precedent was set based on Iola's distinction under pressure from Verditius magi who argued that if an economic relationship was deemed inadmissible, all sales of magical items would become suspect. (In fact, the Grand Tribunal ruling of 1061 was to limit sales of magic items to mundanes). It was agreed that magi had a right to defend themselves and their covenant, and its physical location was irrelevant. The Tribunal ruled that, in accordance with the "not bringing ruin upon my sodales" clause, providing no danger to the Order was brought about by their actions, the situation of a covenant within a castle or manor was legal. Magical support may be offered to the companion lord as a consors — that is, as an acknowledged asset of the covenant.

However, in 1088 a ruling was made against Florum, who by their actions were said to be upsetting the local economy. They argued that limiting their mercantile actions was depriving them of magical power, but this was found to be a spurious argument. This precedent has limited the extent to which covenants can interfere in the mundane

realm. An aggressive campaign of expanding a companion's estates or magical wealth generation which impacts on the local economy would clearly be a cause for a case at Tribunal, so covenants must maintain a delicate balance between maintaining their interests and protecting their homes. As mundane resources are not protected under the infamous 1116 ruling, rebellion and mundane raiding is technically legal in the Tribunal, providing that the laboratories and libraries of the magi themselves are not damaged. The latter are clearly protected, as demonstrated in the ruling of 1130 when the covenant of Infelicitas had been damaged by a raid that destroyed two laboratories, and was declared an illegal action.

Despite these rulings, it is clear that one must be careful at all times when intervening in mundane affairs. In 1179 Pernix of Merinita healed a young nobleman of life-threatening injuries after he fell from his horse, but as covert magic was used, and those with knowledge of the event were limited to friends of the covenant, the earlier precedent clearly applied. No ruin had been brought upon the Order, so Pernix was acquitted. The Normandy Tribunal is understandably reasonable about the necessities and accommodations of





life in such a settled and civilized land, but it is all too easy to accidentally bring calumny upon ones sodales by interfering in mundane matters, and such assistance should always be circumspect and covert if possible.

It is worth noting that most nobles are aware of the existence of the Order of Hermes (see ArM5 page 15) and if faced with an aggressive foe who appears to be using magic against them are likely to quickly appeal to the Church, king, or other magicians for assistance. Blatant magical aid could easily result in "ruin" and serious charges being brought against careless magi.

## Possible Homes for Magi

Not all magi who decide to have a close relationship with a mundane lord will actually live within his home.

### MANORS

No matter where you go in the Tribunal, you will not be too far from the residence of a local knight. The knightly class resides

largely in manor houses (*manoir*, in French), many of which are fortified as a result of the warfare of the last few decades. Often surmounting a low *motte*, or mound, the manor is enclosed by a wooden or stone wall. The manor itself is usually stone and timbered for support, with a thatched roof.

A typical manor consists of a large two-story hall, with the upper story being a duplicate of the ground floor. A doorway leads in from one end, with a large door for livestock to be driven in on one wall, and a smaller door opposite. Inside the space is a single room (occasionally divided by movable screens) with an archway at the far end leading into a kitchen or service area. On the upper story, reached by internal spiral stairs built into the wall, or by wooden stairs inside, the family and more-important servants live and sleep, the room above the kitchen being the family's private chamber. The upper story is elaborately decorated with bright murals and stone carvings to display wealth, but both floors usually have a proper fireplace and often a chimney. This arrangement, with most folk sleeping in one of the two halls — the *salle inferior* (ground floor) or *salle superior* (upper story) — gives vivid physical expression to social class distinctions. Both stories have many windows, with square windows and window seats increasingly common. There is usually a barn, wooden outbuildings, and sometimes a small chapel within the enclosure.

## Story Seed: The Miller's Son

The magi are approached by a loyal member of their covenfolk who has served the covenant well for many years, perhaps having performed an exceptional service such as saving a magus' life. He has come to ask a boon of the magi. His son has always been good with horses, and has worked for many years in the covenant as a stable hand, but now he is approaching maturity. He has a secret ambition — to become a knight. While his low birth, coarse manners, and lack of adequate equipment prevent this dream from being realized, the miller asks if the magi could help in this matter. The miller is popular in the area, as is his son, and a rude refusal might offend many of the covenfolk, but to train the boy as a knight and then find a way of introducing him to a noble court where he can be knighted will require all the magi's wits if they consent to assist.

## Story Seed: The Warring Vassals

The covenant enjoys good relations with at least two landowners, both of whom are knights and also possibly companions. They are firm friends, yet owe fealty to two different lieges who have suddenly fallen into a deadly dispute that is leading towards a war. Both will clearly call upon their vassals to support them, probably by raiding and attacking their friends' lands, as well as by providing military service. The resulting deaths and injuries may well result in tragedy, and the fighting might even destroy covenant vis sources. Backing either side would result in a clear breach of the Code of Hermes, so can the magi find a way to resolve the conflict before their friends are drawn into the bloodshed?

## Story Seed: Cheating at Tournament

A well-respected but older knight who is a great friend of the covenant has suffered a run of appalling bad luck. Poor harvests and the need to pay a heavy tax toward his liege's daughter's dowry, and then a fine after losing a court case over land, has led him into near-destitution. He plans, however, to ride to a great tournament nearby, and despite his advanced years hopes to make money from ransoms and his winnings. Sadly, he realistically stands little chance of success against the younger men, and far more of being accidentally maimed or slain. A proud man, he would refuse any assistance, financial or magical. But it is possible the magi may be able to covertly help him win at the tournament. The only complication is the presence of another magus, who is there as a spectator, and who must be distracted or fooled if magic is to be used.

## CASTLES

Throughout the Tribunal are castles of all sizes, dating from successive generations of warring landholders. They are especially common on the border between Normandy and Brittany, and on other provincial boundaries. Brittany, for example, has over six hundred mottes, and forty major castles. The wars and revolts have resulted in many vassals having their castles slighted (demolished) by angry overlords, so ruined castles are also quite a common feature of the landscape.

While a ruined castle may manage to evade detection if the magi use magic or are suitably discrete, usually possession of a castle ties one immediately into the web of vassal relationships, and will require that the landowning knight be a companion. Each castle is supported by a network of manors, and mundane relations are therefore vital. Castles are so obvious and party to problems that they are defined as a major hook (*Covenants*, page 12), and the possession of a castle will therefore result in stories and problems for the inhabitants.

## Magi and Landholders

These story seeds all presume a close relationship between the magi and a landholder, and are designed to draw the magi into the mundane world, which they might be keen to avoid.

## The Advance of the Dominion

This saga seed suggests stories that may develop if the spread of mundane settlements exacerbates the pressures on the covenants of the Normandy Tribunal. This may serve as a central arc for a saga that the characters struggle to resolve, or may act as a background theme providing occasional stories.

## The Growth of Towns

The need to feed and employ the residents of Europe's towns, which are rapidly increasing in number and size, places relentless strain on Hermetic covenants. Each city transforms

the land around itself for a distance of twenty miles, gradually converting wild spaces into farmland. Farmland is usually covered by the Dominion, which impairs magical practice and corrodes vis-harvesting sites. This story seed does not examine the rise of the cities in detail, only the effect this has on magi in the Normandy Tribunal. Players desiring further information may find *City and Guild* useful.

## Paris

Paris is a city swelled to enormous proportions, with a population rivaling some kingdoms. It houses people from everywhere in Europe, and draws in all who lack anywhere else to go. It is a center of culture, and a den of vice. Angels and demons struggle for the souls of tens of thousands of humans, in battles of persuasion hidden just beneath the surface of a million daily transactions. Faeries find new shapes, and hide in the alleyways and ale-houses. For magi, Paris is a fiery diamond that they long to seize, but cannot grasp.

Anything that harms Paris harms many of the magi in this Tribunal, who depend on it for exotic supplies. The covenant of Eboris, deeply versed as its members are in the undercurrents of Parisian life, may be able to send up a cry for help if something monstrous threatens the city. How can magi, hindered as they are by the Dominion, defend it? There are many potential foes that might harm Paris.

## THREATS TO PARIS

A story or arc of stories might focus on attempts to save the city from any of the following:

## Story Seed: War!

After many years of peace, the covenant is suddenly faced with raids from neighboring lords, rebellion by vassals, and constant warfare as crops are burned, villages sacked, and castles besieged. Why has this come about? Suspicion must fall upon the covenant's Hermetic rivals, seeking to use mundane forces to destroy them without infringing the Peripheral Code, as only mundane resources are being attacked. Can the covenant identify their foes and somehow manage to turn their enemies away, or are they doomed to fall?

- A religious leader, who wishes to reduce the city's culture to a joyless, repetitious round of prayer.
- A conspiracy of diabolists among the city's ruling class, royal court, city guard, or clerics.
- A plague of unknown origin.
- Famine.
- Invasion, either by a rebellious duke or by the king of another country.
- Civil unrest between the rising mercantile class and the nobility, or between the French and immigrants.

## THE ROYAL COURT

The largest of the cities, Paris, has housed the court of the King of France for the last few decades. Prior to this the court wandered the royal demesnes, but the French king is so rich and powerful that he can have his retainers supplied with food and luxuries all year round, without needing to visit the Crown lands where much of his wealth is produced. The great nobles of France, and some from as far away as Italy and Germany, have settled in the capital. This provides them with unusually close access to the wealth and power of the king, which threatens magi who oppose them.

Magi far from Paris, however, may find this situation favorable. When a great noble lives for most of the year in Paris, his lands are left in the stewardship of his retainers. These are often more easily suborned by Hermetic magi than their masters. Nobles of the next-lower level of influence, those unable to maintain permanent lodging at the court, have greater autonomy while their lords are away. Magi living in this political environment find that their activities arouse



less notice than usual, but that reprisal, if provoked, is far stiffer than ordinary.

These tendencies toward looser control and sterner enforcement become stronger as the court continues to centralize power. The favor of the king, lavished on those who stay close to him, is too significant for the great lords to ignore. The vassals of the great lords become increasingly independent, and are bought back into line with progressively blunter methods by their absentee rulers. Characters might support either side in such a war, or simply suffer by living near the site of conflict.

## MORAL HAZARD

The court of France is a moral hazard for magi, because it is a place where those

mundanes powerful enough to tempt magi to break the Code congregate. Most of the senior nobility of France know that the Order exists. Some, particularly those with relatives who are members of House Jerbiton, have a rough idea of the extent of action permitted under the Code. As mundane incursion continues, covenants will become more desperate, while noblemen will become more powerful. The Quaesitores fear that some of their more-interventionist sodales may be tempted into active alliance with the French crown, or with a rebellious vassal.

During the war between Henry II and Philip II, both sides offered the magi of the Order substantial concessions in exchange for assistance. Some doubtlessly faltered, and many covenants have Dark Secrets from that period. Oleron, for example, was

formally censured by the chief Quaesitor of the Stonehenge Tribunal for attempting to rescue Eleanor of Aquitaine from captivity. There would have been serious consequences if that Tribunal had been quorate at the time. Incidents like this will increase in frequency and flagrancy as the covenants of the Tribunal weaken.

## The French Church

The French church has become enormously wealthy in recent times. The conversion of forest into cropland, a duty of some monks, provides harvests. The need for skilled clerks to assist in the administration of the lands, homes, and courts of great no-

## Masks

Each of the subsections below mentions the use of disposable agents, called "masks," by magi. These are mundane agents who act on behalf of a covenant. If the magi wish to keep their involvement in a plan secret, they need only hide or kill this middleman. Agents are usually motivated by money, ideology, coercion, or the desire for excitement. The agents presented here can be used in the complex system given in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, but Troupes preferring a simpler system should instead allow characters to use Intrigue rolls to demonstrate the effectiveness of the agents a character can control. For further information on the use of masks, see Chapter 3: Hermetic Culture.

### MASKS FOR PARISIAN STORIES

Many covenants find it useful to have agents of influence within Paris. These can come from many backgrounds, because the immigrant community of Paris is so large that virtually any fictional background is supportable. The oldest covenants have French masks with legitimate ties to Parisian society. As a rough guide, the following covenants have extensive influence in the listed areas of Parisian society:

**Confluensis:** The covenant has a great deal of influence among the shipping companies that carry goods along the Seine. This includes much of the food supply for Paris, so these companies have political in-

fluence within the city. Some members of the law faculty of the University of Paris are also in communication with the covenant, and may help its members if asked to, although they are not formal agents.

**Fudarus:** The Dyer's Guild is infiltrated by agents of Fudarus. Easily recognized by their stained hands and arms, this guild is small but prosperous due to the magically enhanced dyes it can produce. Securing the loyalty of the Parisian Dyer's Guild was a major coup for Fudarus against Florum, and there is noted rivalry between the agents of these two covenants in the city.

The guildmaster, Jon Baudin, is an excellent spy due to his apparent guilelessness but keen intellect. He once answered to Daniel, a magus of House Tytalus, but Daniel died six years ago. Jon has continued to receive instructions from a mundane servant of each Fudarus faction using illusions to impersonate Daniel. Jon knows that Daniel is dead, and has deduced that he is answering to two different impersonators. He occasionally uses this to his advantage by reminding one Daniel of agreements he claims to have already made. The Daniel he is speaking to, assuming the agreement was made with the other Daniel and not wanting to break his role, often pretends to remember the agreement.

Fudarus also maintains a number of other independent agents in Paris, who are not aware of each other's alliance. Two are even partners in the same merchant business, who scheme against each other on

behalf of their magical patrons, unaware that the patron is the same individual.

**Eboris:** The Ivory Carvers have a great deal of financial influence in the district where the covenant is placed. They are able to seek the assistance of many seedy people from that district; either those who perform crime directly, or those who profit from it. They provide patronage for many artists, some of whom have useful social connections. Byzantine émigrés see the covenant as part of their community, and occasionally pass on useful information.

**Montverte:** The covenant has several contacts in the Hanse Parisienne, the principal merchants' league of Paris, who profit from supplying these rich magi with many types of luxury goods. They also have sketchy contact with the eremite magus Anacron, who has in the past collaborated with them on furtive raids on the urban storehouses of some of the other covenants.

**Oleron:** Oleron is self-sufficient enough to not desire a presence in Paris. But on the few occasions its members have desired to cause trouble, they have been able to recruit roaming gangs of sailors, many of whom are native to the island of Oleron, to do so.

The masks of warring covenants have often clashed. Proxy battles using masks are convenient for magi. They have little immediate expense, and may distract rivals from more-significant avenues of attack. Traditionally this has meant that, in a way that seems almost random to mundane observ-

bles provides influence. Royal patronage and the increasing popularity of pilgrimages and trade have also swelled the treasuries of the church. This wealth has bought power not only in France, but also within the Church.

To small covenants in France, the rise of the Church is a terrible thing. Unlike noblemen, who are expected to spend their wealth on displays of status, the Church's members spend wealth on good works. The Church is the greatest source of industrial research in France, and servants of the Church are avid seekers of ways to make money by exploiting untapped resources. These good works extend the influence of the Church, spreading the Dominion and hastening the decline of Magic.

To the larger covenants of the Normandy Tribunal, and to covenants in other

Tribunals, the rise of the French Church is an excellent opportunity. Under the cover of the larger struggle for control of the French Church between the king and pope, magi can settle their own scores with senior churchmen. The Church is not formally split along national lines, but the wealth of, and prestige demanded by, the French Church is a fracture that magi can exploit. As the French Church becomes more wealthy and powerful, its demand for a greater say in the management of the Church as a whole will become increasingly strident, and its opposition to centralist popes more severe. This favors magi, because a weak pope cannot muster the might of Christendom against the Order, but it does mean that the Order needs to keep the peace with dozens of local Church magnates.

## Hermetic Culture

Hermetic culture, particularly as practiced in Normandy, favors the strong over the weak. As the pressure on covenants increases, the weaker will become the prey of the stronger. Young covenants that falter will become the vassals of older, more-secure covenants. The cost of being a vassal will likewise increase. Ways of diminishing the pressure will appeal to many magi, and will find support at Tribunal meetings.

## VASSALAGE

Vassalage is a system in which the weak pay the strong for protection, either from a known

## Masks (con't)

ers, sections of Parisian society would attack each other. The presence of the royal court in Paris has made such battles a risky proposition for all magi within the Order, as punishment may fall on them indiscriminately.

These disruptions, usually provoked by Tytalus magi, are now illegal because Eboris is the senex of Paris. This grants its members the right to pursue the sponsors of masks if those sponsors can be determined. Masks defend sponsors from charges of meddling with the mundanes, not of charges of depriving magi of their resources and power. Similar proxy battles still occur in other major cities and less-overt conflict in Paris remains common.

### MASKS FOR OBSERVING AND CONTROLLING NOBLES

A covenant's agent requires proximity either to the noble's person, or to the noble's activities.

Masks that are physically close to the person, like servants or family members, are able to report on the movements of the noble, who they meet, and elements of what they discuss. Some use emotional bonds to sway the nobleman on the covenant's behalf, while others use familiarity with the noble's business to seed his retinue with other masks. The sedentary court of France, fixed as it is in Paris, makes its noblemen far easier to influence with casual contacts than members of pro-

cessional courts are.

Common types of masks include:

**Administrators:** Most great French lords are absent from their demesnes for extended periods, and the administrators they leave to maintain their interests are ripe for corruption by Hermetic magi. Many of these are churchmen.

**Family Members:** Most noble families have younger sons or daughters who lack real opportunities for advancement and dislike being under the lifelong control of a father or older brother. Covenants can provide them with excitement and money in exchange for petty treasons against the head of their family.

**Household Servants:** These include servants of all sorts, but particularly those who wait immediately upon the noble.

**Mercenary Leaders:** It is risky to provide direct military support to a nobleman, because if the sponsorship of the mercenary company by a covenant is discovered, then that is a definite breach of the Code. Sponsorship of mercenary companies is, however, very lucrative because the coin-rich nobility of Paris need a source of manpower to be used against rebellious administrators in the provinces.

**Periodic Visitors:** Visitors to the noble's household like priests, tradesmen, and merchants of luxury goods. In Paris, particularly, the court's competitive opulence brings most nobles into contact with a scant handful of merchants who provide fineries, and these are excellent masks. The

merchants who provide the most fashionable clothes in Paris, for example, are servants of the Covenant of Fudarus.

**Procurers:** Those who provide the means of vice for the noble. These include mistresses, but any noble with a Weakness flaw can be easily exploited.

### MASKS WITHIN THE CHURCH

Members of the Order find masks within the Church particularly useful, because for most people the Church acts as the mediator of the one realm to which Hermetic magic is clearly inferior. House Jerbiton currently has many agents in the Church, but comparatively few in France. The House has usually focused its attention on the Greek east and the papal court in Italy, so the rapid and recent rise of the French Church has created many powerful churchmen and women who are suitable as masks or allies, but are not controlled by any House.

It is difficult for covenants to secure as masks those French churchmen who have influence in the papal court. These are few, and in recent years they have tended to be pious, or puppets of the French king. Most covenants instead allow the French king to continue weakening the papacy through his bishops, while they themselves influence the regional leaders of the Church. They are influenced by masks similar to those that are used to manipulate nobles.



aggressor or from those paid the fees of vassalage. This sort of protection racket becomes even more significant when the mundane environment is increasingly hostile. As the Dominion spreads, covenants who are able to fulfill the protective function of lieges will be able to charge more for their services. Other lieges will fail, leaving their vassals at the mercy of the mundanes or in the difficult position of needing to seek a new liege. Covenants may even seek lieges from outside the Tribunal, splitting it apart.

## COLONIALISM

Normandy's magical areas are under assault, but its most powerful covenants are still wealthy, effective, and bellicose. A coalition could form, dedicated to colonizing an area with fewer mundanes and covenants. Denmark or West Africa might lure a colo-

nial party, but it is possible that vis-rich Tribunals might also be targeted.

## CRACKING OF OLD WARDS

As magic fails across Normandy, ancient wards will fade away. These might have been placed during the Schism War to hold back the magical allies of the druids, or during the Corruption of House Tytalus to deprive them of demonic assistance. Sites that have contained powerful, subdued magical creatures for centuries are likely to have weak auras and be prime sites for colonization by spring covenants. Wards may fail individually as the Dominion rises in an affected area, or could crack in clusters as regional events cause the Dominion to spike upward briefly, then fade back to its usual level. The martyrdom of saints often has this effect, for example.

## Story Seed: The Demon of Vendée

A demon is trapped in a cave, well below sea level in the cleft at the far end of one of the rocky promontories at Vendée. As the waves break and the sea surges up the cleft, his frustrated wailing can be heard and, at high tide when the wind blows strongly, he bellows loudly and shows his anger by sending great explosions of spray up over the cliffs. This demon, maddened by the seawater, is held by a ward that magi discover is Magical, rather than Divine. As the Dominion spreads to this area it will harm the demon, certainly, but not as quickly as it will corrode the ward that contains him.

## Tytalus Schemes

The central wisdom of House Tytalus is that there is a constant struggle between one's nature and the constraints of society; the most laudable goal possible is the pursuit of that which serves self-interest. They believe that conflict is the means by which improvement is sought, and that anything that is easily won is, by necessity, of low value. With its domus magna a key player in the Hermetic landscape of the Normandy Tribunal, it is not surprising that House Tytalus forms a prominent part of the Order's membership in this Tribunal. Many naïvely assume that Fudarus is at the center of numerous convoluted plots that affect every aspect of politics in Normandy. The problem with this assumption is that it fails to take into account the fact that Tytali magi are proud, independent, and competitive; and its Primi are too busy pursuing their own feuds to coordinate any grander plots.

This is not to say that this intrigue-loving House is devoid of interest in Normandy; it is just that each individual member of the House is nurturing her own schemes, and Tytali are not good team players. Nevertheless, they occasionally find the need to work toward common goals that promote mutual self-improvement, and to do so they form clandestine organizations called cabals. The membership of a cabal is anonymous by agreement; its members meet in disguise or else not at all, employing mundane or magical correspondence instead. They may include both local and distant Tytali; it is not usual for two or more Tribunals to be represented in a cabal's membership. Cabals are formed for the tactical resolution of a specific goal, but the motive for pursuing that goal may be different for every member



## Story Seeds: Burdens of the Cart

The cabal captures a spirit of the night, but it proves to not be the Death they sought. A character who is a member of the cabal might be asked to release the spirit well away from Brittany (perhaps in another Tribunal), so it cannot exact revenge on its captors. Characters who are not members of the cabal might be in the way of this spirit once it is released.

A Tylalus maga obsessed with preventing death is the sole surviving member of her covenant; the others have succumbed to the insidious effects of her experimentation. She requests admittance to the characters' covenant, offering her old covenant's library, vis stores, and enchantments as inducement. Unfortunately, she also brings Death.

The cabal's research has surmised that the prophesied Death, when it comes, will come from the East. A long-standing opponent has fled east, and the characters "coincidentally" end up in the foreseen origin of the catastrophe. They will be questioned by the cabal upon their return.

of the cabal. This section discusses two of the most-important cabals currently active in the Normandy Tribunal, and a third is described in the section on the Lotharingian Tribunal, above. In addition, this section details the wider ramifications of the rivalry between House Tylalus's two Primi. More information about the philosophy and culture of intrigue (including cabals) within the House can be found in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Tylalus.

## Cabal of the Laden Cart

Twelve years ago, Kybella of Tylalus (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Expectatio) experienced a vivid vision precipitated by an episode of Wizard's Twilight in which she saw Death reaping the souls of Europe, showing no mercy to kings, bishops, commoners, and magi alike. Convinced of the truth of her vision, she instituted this cabal with an ambitious goal: to entrap Death and hold it ransom. She meant this goal quite literally, although some of those who joined her to find this cabal see the goal more metaphorically, and seek ways in which to prevent death due to diseases or the ravages of time. The other members of the cabal assume that Kybella is a member, but they never know which one she is when they gather.

Kybella and another Tylalan of her theur-

gist lineage have become obsessed with the Ankeu, the spirit of Death that haunts Brittany (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Ankeu). Anyone who reports hearing the creaking of Ankeu's cart can expect a visit from a member of this cabal, for they are eager to confront it and have seeded the region with agents listening for stories of the terrible spirit. They believe that by imprisoning Ankeu they can either prevent the realization of Kybella's vision, or else learn from it how to stop the visitation of another Death in the future.

Needless to say, if this cabal is actually successful in its goal, Death won't take too kindly to being tamed.

## Cabal of the Crushed Viper

This is the most recently formed of the cabals active in the Normandy Tribunal, although most of its members are from the Stonehenge Tribunal. The goal of the cabal is to hinder the promulgation of the chivalric ideal, both in England and in France. The Welsh magus who instigated this cabal did so out of spite against William Marshal, a prominent English nobleman renowned at tourney, who led many attacks against the Welsh. The cabal holds as its central tenet that the romantic image of the knight is unhealthy to the social development of the people. Honor and justice are crutches for the morally inept. Like all cabals, they work covertly, but since this group skirts so close to contravening the Code of Hermes, they are especially cautious. Those members who are involved in mundane politics (such as "Pellinore," below) do so without magic and without revealing the existence of the Order. This might not be a valid defense if their actions are brought to Tribunal, but so far no one has raised a case against them.

The reasons for membership in this cabal vary considerably, and the methods they employ are similarly diverse. Each member of the cabal takes a pseudonym from the Arthurian cycles of stories that reflects his chosen role in the cabal. Its membership includes:

"Lancelot" is specifically opposed to the rise of the milites within House Flambeau (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, House Flambeau), a society of honor-bound knight-magi. He works against them by becoming their closest friend and most ardent supporter, seeking to outdo them in honor. He then betrays his new friend in the worst manner possible, shaking his former friend's resolve in the code of chivalry to which he has sworn himself.

"Vivian" detests faeries. She is concerned specifically that the popularity of the legends of King Arthur and his court are strengthening the fae, who thrive on such fantasies. She therefore targets the troubadours who spread

these songs, seducing them and, when their defenses are down, doing horrible things to their bodies and minds.

"Pellinore" believes himself to be descended from the real King Arthur, a tribal chieftain and magician of the Welsh, not some fanciful creation of the minstrels. He campaigns in the ecclesiastic arena, seeking to manipulate high-ranking churchmen to condemn the licentious stories and the bloodthirsty tournaments that masquerade as upholding the notion of chivalry.

## The Primi Tylali

House Tylalus is currently experiencing a situation hitherto unknown in the Order; two Primi claim the right to lead the House. Any other Hermetic House in a similar situation would have undoubtedly dealt with the problem swiftly and decisively, but that is not the way of Tylalus. The condition of Primus-hood for House Tylalus is that one magus must force the others to accept his right to lead. Since neither Harpax or Buliste has achieved a decisive victory over the other, and no other contender

## Story Seeds: Challenges of the Viper

A knight who is a close friend of the covenant (perhaps even a companion) is targeted by this cabal. He faces a number of challenges that force him to choose between practical necessity and the high-minded notions of honor and justice. Only after several such encounters will the magus at the root of all these stories be uncovered.

A new minstrel arrives in the region, taking up the popular theme of King Arthur. However, the stories he sings depict the king as a buffoon and make a laughing stock of the stuffed shirts who make up his court. The heroes of his tales are the tax-paying peasants and the hard-working clergy who live good, honest lives without obeying a code of honor. The magus' disguise works a little too well, however, and he unwittingly finds himself at the head of a commoner's uprising against the local lord.

Members of the cabal who are player characters might seek to end the Hermetic Tourney. It is a parody of the chivalric ideal and for all its supposed fairness, merely ensures that the powerful stay powerful and that the weak remain in their place.



has come forth, the House is waiting for the two Primi to sort things out between them. In the opinion of the House, both Primi have an equally valid legal right to the position, since both have defeated all challengers to earn the title. Since both candidates have rejected arbitration from outsiders, the Order is forced to sit back and watch how the situation will resolve itself, as it has no power to force a settlement outside of the Grand Tribunal.

The House has polarized into two camps: those who call themselves Decimi, who wear the tenth Primus' sigil; and the Fideli, who are loyal to Buliste's purple banner. But this choice is based on personal preference rather than on the perceived merits of the candidates. Tytali of opposing camps, when they meet, will declaim loudly the merits of their champion with unusual vehemence. Magi from other Houses who try to mediate between the parties are often left with the impression that they have been the victims of an elaborate joke.

The rivalry between Harpax and Buliste themselves is definitely not a joke, however. They pursue their two-decade-old feud with an intensity that only Tytalan siblings can achieve. Both are powerful magi trained by the same master, and have similar magical strengths and interests. Buliste, as the oldest, has the most raw power, but several unfortunate Twilight episodes (including the one that resulted in Harpax's claim) have placed constraints on her magic. The more-careful Harpax is diverse in his interests; he might lack the focus in Arts of his elder sister, but he has a wider *gemoire* of

spells and enchantments at his disposal.

Politically, Primus Harpax is the most influential of the two when it comes to local matters within the Normandy Tribunal. He controls all the resources of Fudarus: its vis sources, its money, and most of its enchantments, as well as the physical building itself through the Rod of the Primus (see Chapter 4: Brittany, Fudarus). He has used these resources to buy the loyalty of many magi, and the Decimi are more prevalent in the Normandy Tribunal than their rivals. Prima Buliste, on the other hand, has the most influence outside of the Tribunal. House Tytalus has always derived much of its strength from networks of spies and informants, as well as mercenaries and suppliers of unusual services or goods. By controlling this network, Buliste remains at the center of Fudarus' web of power.

There are only three possible solutions to the feud between the two Primi. The first is that one of them acknowledges the superiority of the other, and withdraws his or her claim to the title. As already discussed, the two magi are at an impasse and it would require a major change in the current situation to procure a victory in this manner.

The second solution occurs following the death or disappearance of one (or both) of the Primi. The "rules of engagement" for a Tytalan feud preclude deliberate and overt acts of this nature; regardless of the underhanded tactics used by the Primi, both are members of the Order of Hermes and will not entertain any tactic that constitutes a High Crime. That is

not to say that one will not place his rival in a life-threatening situation, but the contest is about superiority; it is not a Wizard's War and is unlikely to escalate into one.

The third solution occurs in the unlikely event that a third challenger succeeds in defeating *both* Harpax and Buliste, and claims the title of Primus for himself. This will not end the rivalry between the siblings, but it will at least place the House on a more-stable political footing, and restore the power of Fudarus in the Normandy Tribunal. There are without doubt members of the House who are more powerful than both competitors; but they seem reluctant to interfere with the feud, for these rivalries are almost a sacred institution in House Tytalus. The one thing guaranteed to cause Harpax and Buliste to set aside their feud, at least temporarily, would be the appearance of a third challenger. As strange as it seems to other Houses, they would actually work together to neutralize such a threat, jealously preserving the right to be each other's sole opponent.

There is an immediate and practical crisis point in the current feud: in a scant few years there will be a Grand Tribunal, and there is only room for one Primus of House Tytalus in the Forum of Hermes at Durenmar. Tytali can expect the feud to escalate over the next eight years as the two Primi hasten to bring their quarrel to a conclusion. Without a doubt, the magus who occupies the seat of House Tytalus at the Grand Tribunal will be demonstrating his clear superiority over his competitor.

## Story Seeds

### The Dangerous Device

Fudarus is currently offering a generous deal to new vassals, for Harpax wants new pawns to help him in his feud. The characters are required by their oath of fealty to locate the pieces of a powerful, pre-Hermetic item to assist him against his sister. What Harpax does not know is that the item is actually a relic of House Diedne, that Buliste has manipulated him into wanting to find it, and that she intends to frame him once he possesses it. In the meantime, the characters are left holding a potentially dangerous device, both in a political and magical sense.

### False Charges

A merchant commonly used by the characters disappears. Unbeknownst to them, the merchant has been a vital part of Fudarus' network of spies for many years, and Harpax has arranged for him to be im-

prisoned on false charges (this imprisonment might be caused by either a mundane or a supernatural agency). In attempting to free their ally, the characters receive help from a spirit dispatched by Buliste.

### A Third Contender

Three years ago, Porphyron of Tytalus moved from the Rome Tribunal to Normandy. This powerful Archmage (who has been living as an eremite up until now) asks to join the covenant of the player characters. The political and magical power he brings could prove a major boon to a young covenant. However, local Tytali who have investigated this magus conclude from his personality and reputation that he is considering the leadership for himself, either before (or more likely) after either Buliste or Harpax is defeated. His motives for joining a weak covenant surely must further this goal, if indeed that is his intent.

### A New Threat

The feud need not end with the Grand Tribunal; many sagas will only just be getting going by this point. For example, after a tumultuous few years within House Tytalus, the Grand Tribunal comes around and Prima Buliste is in attendance alone. The House and the Order see this as tacit acceptance that Buliste is the true Prima of House Tytalus, and that the feud is over. On the last day of the Grand Tribunal, Harpax arrives at Durenmar. He carries news of a major threat to the Order, and claims that he was serving the House and the Order by putting his life on the line, rather than politicking in the comfort of Durenmar. He believes that he has therefore proved his superiority. Not only is the feud renewed, but the Order has a threat to face. However, it is possible that this danger has been manufactured by Harpax in a desperate bid to win the mantle of Primus Tytali.

# Confluensis



The Covenant of the Confluence is the largest of the Quaesitorial covenants in the Tribunal, hidden in the swamps of the Cotentin Peninsula. Normandy is one of the more turbulent Tribunals, so investigators and hoplites dominate Confluensis. Constructed in the shape of giant stone flowers, the covenant represents both growth and stability for the region. Its location at the point where the fresh river water meets the salty seawater is emblematic of its purpose as well: it exists to maintain a balance between the covenants of Normandy. To this end, the covenant maintains several vassals, including the lesser covenants of House Guernicus in the Normandy Tribunal and Dragon's Rest, a Mercer House on the Seine. The covenant itself has suffered a major setback recently, and it remains to be seen if it has the strength to continue in its role.

## History

The covenant was established on the instructions of the Founder Guernicus, to ensure that Hermetic law was respected at the edges of the Order. The initial site for the covenant was the lair of the dragon Gargouille in the swamps that lie between Rouen and the mouth of the Seine. It operated successfully there for many decades, and in time incorporated a Mercer House. Following the Schism War, the Primus of Guernicus increased the size of the covenant, and this, coupled with the increasing volume of traffic along the Seine, made the covenant too

large to continue its activities undetected.

The covenant's current site was originally settled as vassal covenant, named the Orchard of Sour Apples after a nearby vis source. Thirty years later, when it was clear that Confluensis needed to relocate, it negotiated the absorption of the client covenant's members and the appropriation of their site. The magi of House Mercere did not relocate; they retained the older site as a vassal covenant called Dragon's Rest, which remains active. At this time, the covenant's symbol was changed from a dragon spewing a fountain of water, which was retained by Dragon's Rest, to a stylized whirlpool. In 1220 the two covenants retain a very close relationship, with the excellent laboratories of Dragon's Rest and the beautiful library of Confluensis used by members of both covenants.

Throughout its history, the covenant has served the policies of the Primus of House Guernicus. During the many crises of the Order, its current location has served as a mustering point and logistical base for the House. In its previous location it was sacked by Diedne magi during the Schism, although three of its members, who were active in other parts of the Tribunal at the time, survived to restore it. It also played a significant role in the effort to cast down Tassillia, the diabolic Prima of Tytalus.

road access to the peninsula has reduced the interest of outsiders, so that it is both sparsely populated and free of large noble holdings.

The covenant is further hidden by a ring of magically generated mist and unfavorable currents. The covenfolk are trained to navigate the usual pattern of the current, which can be varied using a magical device in the council chamber of the covenant. The watch grogs have items that allow them to see through mist, and the turb captain has a device that makes the mist more or less severe. The covenant also has a ring of active defenses, which the magi claim to alter regularly.

The covenant was constructed in the swamp's tidal zone. Most of its buildings sit above the water on a series of stone structures, and are connected by a lacework of bridges. The site's high aura and rich vis sources, combined with the Normandy Tribunal's unusual rules for claiming exclusive use of resources, made raising such an unusual covenant feasible. While it does make for a striking display of power, perhaps intended to overawe prisoners and Tribunal delegates, it also served a more practical function. Only a few select magi know that one of the covenant's founders had developed a flaw in her Gift that made this unusual arrangement necessary.

## Setting and Physical Description

Confluensis hides within the complex network of brackish marshes that separate the Cotentin Peninsula from the rest of Normandy. The swamps cover over 2500 acres of untamed land. Cotentin is sometimes referred to as an island, because the swamps divide it almost completely from the mainland. The lack of easy

### A Place to Begin

This covenant provides a detailed setting for troupes unfamiliar with the unique features of the Normandy Tribunal. Confluensis is part of the Tribunal, but is in many ways aloof from it. It is in France, but away from mundane French settlements. It is a liege, but deals straightforwardly with its vassals. It is subject to the Peripheral Code of the Tribunal, but rarely attempts to breach it. The Confluensis setting illustrates the distinctive features of this tribunal, but allows players to absorb these slowly, over a series of stories



## Buildings

The covenant's major buildings were constructed with a mixture of magical and mundane tools. The central buildings were created magically, as is obvious from their whimsical design. They are raised above the water on platforms that form enormous stone flowers, which lends some weight to the conjecture that the site was colonized by followers of the Terrae cult tradition within House Guernicus.

Any skilled stonemason can tell that the flowers are single pieces of unnaturally shaped rock. The buildings they support seem, superficially, to be made of dressed granite blocks. The stone is similar to that produced by the quarries that provided the stone for Mont Saint Michel. Some buildings were produced with human labor, while others appear to be dressed stone simply because it suited the aesthetic preferences of the magi who created them.

### THE GREAT HALL AND GUESTS' QUARTERS

Most of the covenant's buildings stand on an enormous stone sculpture that resembles,

with remarkable attention to detail, one of the sundew plants native to the marshes. It has five broad pads that mirror the insect-capturing pads of the sundew, although one of these pads is insufficiently unfurled to be useful as anything other than a tethering point for boats. Each of the open pads is surrounded by a ring of stone globes that connect to the pad with covered walkways that look, from the air, like the sticky threads of a sundew. The pads are connected by walkways that take the form of stems leading to a central nexus. At the center is a spike of stone six stories high. The magi have recently begun engraving the spire with scenes from the history of their covenant in a way that is deliberately reminiscent of Trajan's column. At the top of the spike is a watch post.

The largest and westernmost pad supports the Great Hall. Its lower floor provides dining and training space for many of the covenant's staff. Its upper floor has a ring of mezzanine rooms, which are used to store supplies and for covenant administration. One end of the hall rises from the very edge of the pad, and on this side a pulley system has been installed to land cargo from the covenant's small fleet of lighters. These are pulled up to the balcony on the upper floor where they are unloaded and their contents stored.

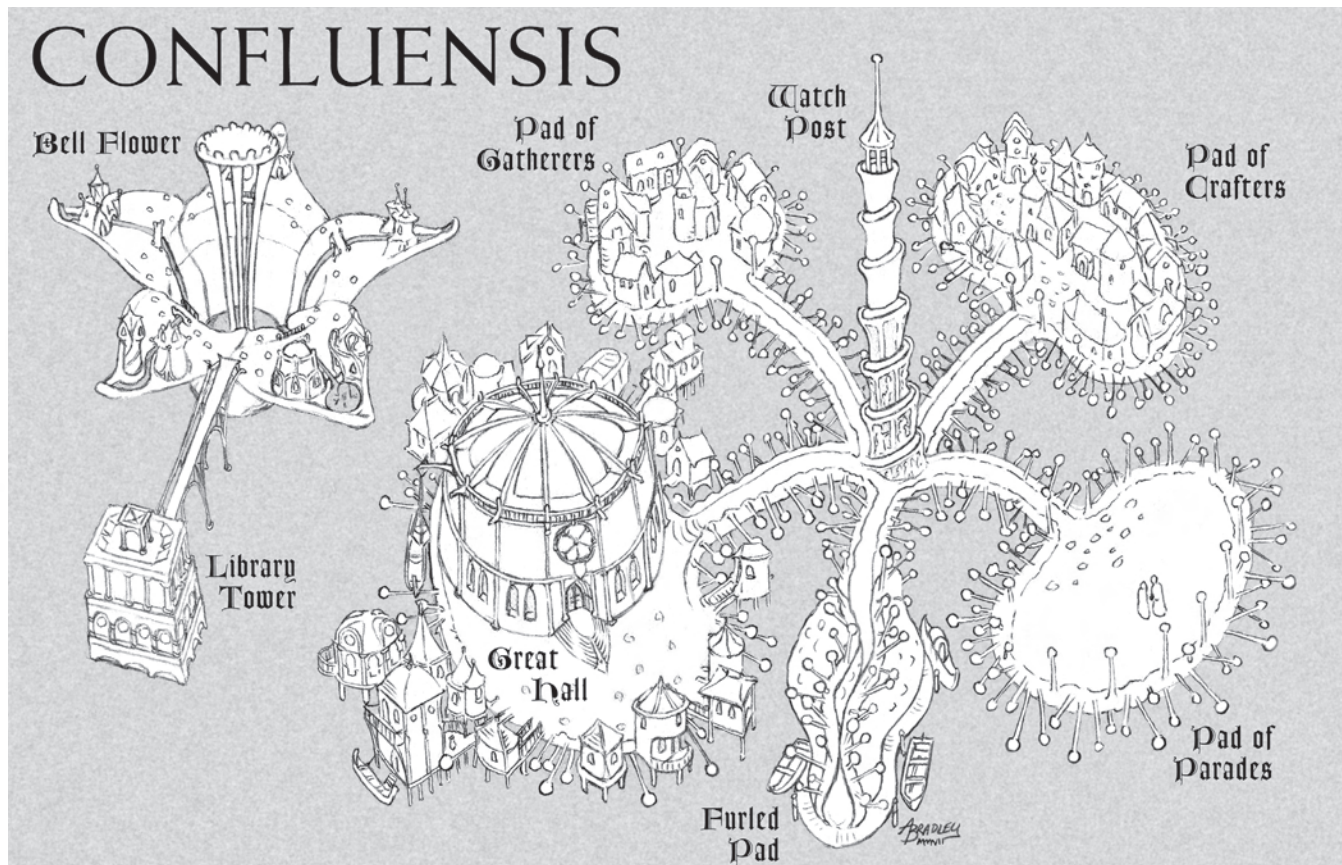
A cluster of eighteen houses surrounds the Great Hall. These houses are of various degrees of luxuriousness, the finest of which are used by the covenant's visitors and senior staff. These houses have supporting columns descending to the swampy earth below, but it is obvious that these were added after the sundew was originally created.

### PAD OF GATHERERS

Proceeding clockwise from the Great Hall, the closest pad houses covenfolk who are involved in the covenant's food production. The covenant's diet is rich in seafood and chestnuts. A mill, a granary, a brewery, and a bakery are also on this pad.

### PAD OF CRAFTERS

The next pad, which is slightly larger, is home to the covenant's tradesmen. The currents underneath this pad are dependably tidal, and with careful timing they can be used to dispose of the waste of industry. The folk here are cunning ceramicists and gather many varieties of clay from obscure





locations in the swamp. The covenant also produces a great deal of paper, made from papyrus reeds. These plants were introduced to the area and were magically propagated by Quaesitors who found temporary paper records convenient.

## PAD OF PARADES

This is an open area used for public events, sports, and Aegis rituals. In addition, the Pad of Parades frequently hosts Tribunal Meetings. When lacking more significant use, it is left to flax driers, rope makers, and other artisans who require large, clear spaces.

## FURLED PAD

This pad seems unformed, or perhaps curled around an enormous fly. It is not sufficiently wide to be used for residences. Instead, the pad and the stem that leads to it are used for mooring points for the covenant's boats and ships.

## BELL FLOWER

To the west of the Sundew are eight buildings that serve as the residences of the magi. Each is two stories high, and the group rests on the petals of a marvelous, bell-shaped flower. Its center is open to the water, so its petals form a ring about an ornamental lake. Rising from the center of the lake are three massive stone stamens, which support a stone disc that is technically the covenant's council chamber. As access without flight is impractical, it is rarely used.

## LIBRARY TOWER

South of the Bell Flower is the Library Tower. It is square, three stories high, and rises directly from the ground. It is the oldest structure in the covenant, and it was created with a ritual that was not designed for this location. Its lowest floor is not used because it is always partially flooded and is filling with silt. The next floor is effectively the covenant's council chamber. It is linked to the Bell Flower with a graceful bridge. The highest floor contains the covenant's library and magical storeroom. The roof is used by sentries, for ceremonies, and very occasionally to light signal fires. A Mercere Portal between Confluensis and Dragon's Rest is also here.

## Story Seed: The Bud and the Venelli

The covenfolk awaken after a night of astrological phenomena to discover that a huge stone flower bud has emerged from the swamp. Subsequent research determines that the covenant is not, as was guessed, the creation of magi interested in Terram magic. It is the site of an older compact between the faerie powers and the native Celtic tribe of this region. A faerie with the body of a man and the head of a wild boar rises from the swamp to explain that to bring the bud to flower; the magi need to fulfill their half of the pact. He pours back into the marsh's waters when his message is delivered.

Very little is known about the historical Venelli because their culture was erased first by Romanization, then by Norman conquest. Characters seeking information about the Venelli, by subjecting ancient artifacts to examination, may find that although Christian foundations have obscured all trace of the Venelli on the mainland, on the Channel Island of Jersey some of their relics may still be found. Jersey men were hired as mercenaries by the last King of the Venelli in his battle against Rome.

Characters seeking the graves of Jersey mercenaries may be attracted to sites said to be haunted by shipwrecked men. Characters may have adventures with the undead, wreckers, and faeries that collect ghosts. Alternatively, it is also said that once a year, on All Hallows Night, a ship departs Le Havre carrying the souls of all drowned sailors off to Hell. The Captain is a terrible creature, but will play fairly for the soul of one of the men he collected hundreds of years ago, and deliver it if beaten. The ghost of a Jersey man can describe the sacrifices of the Venelli.

The pact between the powers of the marsh and the kings of the Venelli originally involved the sacrifice of enemy kings captured in battle, but by the coming of the Romans, the Venelli had found a simpler alternative. The Venelli would declare a pig their king, truss it up, and fling it into the swamp. The legs have to be trussed correctly, but fortunately the ritual is commemorated on the coins struck by the last king of the Venelli to hire mercenaries to fight Caesar. They show a pig skeleton, trussed with his legs spelling the initials of the king. Characters seeking such a coin may find it:

- On Jersey, allowing characters who dealt with the Ship of the Dead to instead visit the wreckers, ghosts, and faeries;
- In the collection of a numismatic Jerbiton magus, who dispatches the characters to distant places to find a better coin for trade;
- In the hands of a demon, who needs to be tricked into parting with it.

If the characters complete the story and drown a regal pig, the result might be any of the following:

- The covenant gains a source of Rego or Animal vis.
- The covenant gains a new flower on which to build structures. Lacking a player character strongly tied to a floral motif, it is a valerian. When people rest inside the small chambers formed from the valerian's flowers, they find a deep, restorative sleep that heals wounds rapidly and remedies many other medical complaints. It is perfectly suited for a hospital, but why would the spirit of the swamp give the covenant a hospital suited for dozens of people?
- The senior remaining Venelli, the new king of the tribe, gains the ability to sense the proximity of vis, much as pigs can snuffle up truffles.
- Select characters gain the ability to skinchange into gigantic boars, or creatures half-man, half-boar. These are the successors to the Venelli king's bodyguard.
- The characters gain the ability to call up the ghosts of past boar kings, which defend the swamp from intruders. They take the man-boar shape, but their bodies are constructed of water and debris, so they are very difficult to destroy with mundane weapons.
- A white lady, a local faerie, is sent to the covenant as an emissary by the powers of the swamp. Over time she will teach them its mysteries, and lead them on other adventures.



## Magical Resources

Confluensis's powerful Magic aura derives from its location. It lies at the precise center of the band where nutrient-rich fresh water turns back the sterile salt. Beneath the raised floors of the covenant, at the rise and ebb of the tide, the forces of creation and destruction strive ceaselessly against each other. On spring tides these forces create dancing vortices, which the magi snare in enchanted nets and harvest for vis.

Most of the covenant's buildings and infrastructure are scattered throughout the swamp, but many covenfolk reside on an island, called the Orchard, northeast of Coutances. This island has a useful aura and a vis source, which led to its seizure from a faerie court not long after the site was colonized. On the island is an orchard that produces small, sour apples. If a virgin peels one of these apples with her left hand, the skin takes the shape of her future husband's initial. The flavor of the fruit varies by taster and is thought to predict the sweetness, or otherwise, of the marriage. Few apples have ever been used for this purpose, since the hedge magicians who knew of them were usually illiterate, and Hermetic magi value the Intellego vis they contain too much for them to be wasted. The island's aura, once Faerie, has gradually been transformed to Magic, although a minor Faerie aura reappears on the solstices.

## Covenfolk

The covenfolk are all that remain of the Venelli tribe. These Celtic people had their capital at Coutances but were first conquered and then colonized by the Romans. Most of the tribe entered the service of the Order when the invading Normans burned their capital in 998. The Venelli were originally pagans; their final king represented himself with a boar, as was common for Celtic monarchs. Their indigenous magical traditions were repressed by the Romans, and then obliterated by House Guernicus after a pagan sympathizer assisted House Diedne during the Schism War.

The modern Venelli make their living providing services for the magi. They sometimes seek goods or services in the southern English ports, but no longer have any role in mundane Norman society. Most speak Norman French or English as a second language. Their native tongue is mutually intelligible to Breton speakers, but has an accent and expressions not found anywhere else. Few have mili-

tary experience, but their knowledge of the marshlands makes them formidable guerrillas.

The covenant's people dress in wool garments, the raw materials for which are acquired in English ports. Their clothing is brightly colored, using a mix of herbal and mineral dyes. This makes them quite distinct from the surrounding populations and has occasionally led to them being mistaken for faeries.



## Culture and Traditions

The covenant was founded to maintain the peace along the sometimes-lawless periphery of the Order, and it has fulfilled its purpose with distinction for several centuries. The Quaesitors of Confluensis are known both for their extensive knowledge of Hermetic law and for their dedication to practical solutions. Over the years, the Presiding Quaesitors of the Tribunal have been known to be merciful when times allow it and harsh when conditions demand it.

The entire Tribunal has suffered a great loss recently. Renita Bjornaer, the Praeco and leader of Confluensis, died last winter. The Presiding Quaesitor, a ruthless magus named Proctor, has stepped in her role as leader of the covenant, but the matter of who will fill her role as Praeco remains to be seen.

Before the Praeco's death, Proctor served as one of the three supporting legs of the Tribunal. As the magus most responsible for policing the relationships between magi, he was Renita's closest ally, though he often preferred a more aggressive approach, while she favored diplomatic solutions. The other two members of this stabilizing triumvirate were (and still are) Jerome of Confluensis and Eloi of Cunfin, both of House Jerbiton. Jerome, the more worldly and diplomatic of the two, acts as the

Tribunal's primary liaison with the nobility of France and Flanders. Meanwhile, the pious and revered Eloi, with his contacts in the powerful Cistercian Order, maintains the Tribunal's limited relationship with the Church. With the passing of the Praeco, these three see themselves as the primary force keeping the Tribunal from sliding into chaos.

## The Traitor

The Traitors volunteer to be exiled from House Tytalus. They are considered to have lost all of the conflicts in which they were participating. They are untouchable foes, unworthy of the attention of a Tytalus when selecting rivals. There is usually a single Traitor, although elderly Traitors are often accompanied by a younger successor in training.

The first Traitor was Promethea, filia of Kalliste. She agreed to not participate in the struggle against Tasgillia, the demonically corrupted Prima of House Tytalus. Instead, Promethea went to Magvillius and waited for the struggle to end. If the uncorrupted members of House Tytalus had been destroyed, she would have restored the House. Waiting for the defining struggle in the history of the House to end was, however, a deep moral error, according to the Analects of Tytalus. Promethea was unable to participate in the culture of her House and became a hoplite, and eventually a Quaesitor, instead.

The Traitor has a single obligation to House Tytalus: to restart the House's conflicts if they stall. The members of House Tytalus understand that it is useful to have someone outside their games who can make them interesting again if they become stale. The magi of House Guernicus, who have the right to select Quaesitores from other Houses, occasionally select the Tytalus magus who volunteers to be Traitor. The Traitor understands the excesses of Tytalus magi, and for the last few generations has often been trained for their role since early apprenticeship. If the Traitor is not selected as a Quaesitor, she is usually accepted as a hoplite.

Since the time of Tasgillia, the Traitor has borne a magical key as her symbol of office. They do not discuss with others what it is that it does, but most magi conjecture that it weakens the defenses of Fudarus in some way. Others suggest that even were that to have been true centuries ago, some Tytalus Primus in the intervening time must have enhanced the defenses so that the key is now little more than a symbol.

# Magi

The magi of Confluensis have been selected by the Ruling Council of House Guernicus for their commitment to Hermetic Law and their ability to maintain the peace in this fractious and difficult Tribunal.

## PROCTOR, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS

Age: 93 (Apparent age 60)

### Personality Traits:

Ruthless +3,  
Strict +2,  
Distrustful +2

Proctor is the Presiding Quaesitor of the Normandy Tribunal, and with the death of Renita Bjornaer, the nominal leader of Confluensis. He has served as Presiding Quaesitor for the last two Tribunal meetings. He seems unlikely to let his housemates elect anyone else for the next Tribunal, despite his House's tradition of rotating the position. His likely successor, in case of accident or Twilight, is his filius Aristarcus.

Proctor's grandparens was killed by Tytalan diabolists, leaving his parens with an abiding hatred of that House. This has been passed on to Proctor, making him extremely suspicious of the Tytalus magi within the Tribunal. He is a strict enforcer of the Code, but also a staunch Transitionalist. His paranoia may yet lead him to take extreme measures in the name of the Order.

Proctor is an older magus, who wears a white beard but has no mustache. His favorite robe is slate green. It is usually clipped with two crossed pins, each a miniature swan's feather, one of lead and the other of ivory. His familiar is a sacred ibis, a souvenir of his youthful rambling. His face is weathered and his hands are leathery, but his skin is pale.

His talisman is a fool's cap bell. It is a palm-sized sphere of brass that has a metal ball within it, so that it chimes when he walks. Proctor carries his talisman in his pocket. He does not discuss its origin with people he distrusts, and so many members of the Tribunal think he carries it to remind himself not to act foolishly. He believes it to be one of the bells worn by Richard the Devil when serving his penance in Rome. It is enchanted with effects that defend against Infernal influence.

## ARISTARCUS, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS

Age: 52 (Apparent age early 30s)

### Personality Traits:

Focused +2,  
Garrulous +2,  
Aloof +1

Aristarcus filius Proctor is a legal-minded magus who most often argues cases before the Tribunal. His rhetorical skills are unmatched. Proctor's distrust of House Tytalus has not been passed on to him, and although Aristarcus holds to more of a Traditionalist position within their House, the two are frequent allies and have a similar faith in the power of law.

Aristarcus still appears to be in his early thirties, because of a powerful longevity potion. His hair is blond, and he wears it waist-long, which is unusual among mundanes. This choice, mixed with his strong views on mundane non-interference, have caused some to conjecture that he is of noble, perhaps Merovingian, blood. Wise magi do not mention this speculation to him, because he sees it as an accusation of bias. Such accusations are one of the few things that can rouse him to anger. He wears clothes that are considered fashionable among the nobility of Paris, provided fashion does not become too ridiculous. His familiar is a swan, his talisman a sword.

## CAVILLOR, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS

Age: 43 (Apparent age 35)

### Personality Traits:

Energetic +3,  
Optimistic +2,  
Trusting +1

Cavillor is a younger magus of Transitionalist leanings, originally from the Roman Tribunal. He is Aristarcus' counterpart and most often appears before the Tribunal arguing in defense of magi accused of Code violations. While his skills are not as practiced as those of Aristarcus, he is earnest and tenacious in his pursuit of what he believes is right. He is currently being retained by some of the magi of the pro-Lotharingian faction as a legal advisor, which Proctor is likely to interpret as a personal betrayal.

Cavillor is a clean-shaven young man, with gray eyes and black hair. His skin has a dark tone, which he explains through ref-

erence to his family's partly Arabic heritage. His clothing is plain and generally brown. He is married, and wears a ring that entirely lacks magical powers. His talisman is a six-ounce block of iron that was a Carolingian exemplar for standard marketplace weights. He has no familiar.

## VALERIAN, FOLLOWER OF GUERNICUS

Age: 78 (Apparent age 45)

### Personality Traits:

Indifferent +3,  
Deliberate +2,  
Reliable +2

Valerian is the Tribunal's chief hoplite and enforcer. A known master of Terram, he (along with Adanos Lutorum at Exspectatio) is reputed to be part of the Guernicus Terrae cult. (See *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 68.) A slow and methodical man, he is relentless in pursuit of his quarry. He has direct, muscular views concerning the dispensation of justice.

Valerian has dark hair, black eyes, and perfect teeth. He does not smile: a rapid sideways quirk of the mouth is as close as he comes, when pleased. He wears robes of the slate-green fabric produced in this covenant. As a magus who has agreed to serve as a hoplite for an indefinite, extended period, he wears the Tribunal's sash of crimson and grey swirls on significant occasions. His sash is edged with leopard fur, to denote his rank as chief hoplite for the Tribunal, the general to whom the Praeco would entrust military planning during a Wizard's March. His talisman is a five-foot-long steel crowbar of the kind used by masons to lay foundations, which he uses as a walking staff.

Valerian's familiar is an invisible magical spirit. It is able to manipulate dozens of objects in a room simultaneously, and appears to be able to fly. Such a familiar is beyond the ordinary power of Hermetic magic to bind, so Valerian must be a member of some Mystery Cult. To make Valerian's membership less obvious, the spirit often takes the form of a crow.

Valerian is surprisingly popular with the covenant folk, possibly because he does not consider their actions his legitimate concern. He also likes gardening, and his tools and methods have spread among the covenant's food gatherers, making their duties easier. Valerian also occasionally repairs the structures of the covenant using magical rituals. This



includes the homes of the covenfolk, and they are grateful for his help even if he is not overly warm.

## JEROME, FOLLOWER OF JERBITON

Age: 87 (Apparent age 50)

### Personality Traits:

Caring +3,  
Friendly +2,  
Modest +2

Jerome is the Tribunal's primary contact with the nobility of France. The son of minor noble, he was abandoned by a power-hungry uncle after the death of his parents. He was found near death by a Redcap and nursed back to health by a Jerbiton magus who took him as an apprentice.

Unknown to Proctor, Jerome is secretly responsible for saving the lives of dozens of "troublesome heirs." He rescues children who are likely to be killed because of their birthrights, using Mentem magic to convince people they are dead, and then places them in either in monasteries or covenants. Occasionally he finds a Gifted child this way, as he did with Artorius. He knows this is very likely a Code violation, but he continues anyway. He recalls all too clearly what it is like to have someone desire your death simply because of your birthright.

Jerome's relocations cannot be accomplished without the assistance of magi from other covenants. His chief partner in this matter is his former apprentice, Eloi of Cunfin. Any character who is part of this network gains the Dark Secret flaw, but can also count Jerome as a strong ally. Jerome's network of contacts may be ancient; for example, William the Bastard disappeared for eight years during childhood, before returning to claim first Normandy, then England.

When not rescuing children, he takes great joy in his mediocre skill at chess. He maintains many boards in his laboratory, and plays games by letter with several far finer players. He is a popular correspondent, because he does not quit when it is clear he will lose, and plays well enough to be a challenge. He and his correspondents have agreed that one day they must seek the magical chessboard that is one of the Treasures of Britain. He is entirely undeterred by other magi who claim that "chessboard" is a poor translation for the name of an earlier, more obscure Welsh game.

Jerome takes pains to not dress like a nobleman. He looks much like a member of one of the preaching orders, although they generally attract younger men. He carries a wand, and has a bearded vulture as his familiar. The odd things it eats in the swamp have changed the color of its chest plumage to a mossy green.

Eloi, Jerome's fillius, is a politically important member of the Covenant of Cunfin (see Chapter 9: Champagne, Cunfin).

## AUGUSTINA OF TYTALUS, THE TRAITOR

Age: 46 (Apparent age 36)

### Personality Traits:

Concerned About House Tytalus +3,  
Carefree +1

Augustina is a small, assertive woman who looks both tired and happy much of the time. Her hair is black, but her eyes are blue. Her familiar is a small ape, and her talisman is either a locket on a ribbon or a dagger; no one is sure which, because one is kept permanently wrapped about the other.

The current Traitor, Augustina was trained by the mater of Buliste, the Prima of Tytalus. Augustina was prepared for the role of Traitor from early apprenticeship, and was trained as a hoplite primarily by the previous Traitor. Like most Traitors, Augustina has served for the majority of her life in the Normandy Tribunal, advising her covenant's leader on the games of House Tytalus. Given Proctor's feelings about House Tytalus, it comes as no surprise that she is usually given high-risk and low-trust assignments by the Quaesitores.

# Vassals

Confluensis has three vassals. One is a small covenant with only two members, a Quaesitor and a hoplite. Its location is not defined in this supplement, so that troupes can choose a location convenient to their sagas' needs. Cunfin, described in Chapter 9, Champagne is also a vassal of Confluensis. The last vassal, Dragon's Rest, is a Mercer House.



## Dragon's Rest

This vassal covenant inhabits the original site of Confluensis. As its name indicates, it lies around the submerged cavern that served as lair for the dragon Gargouille. It is situated in the estuarine swamps that have formed in a bend on the north bank of the Seine. Its covenfolk are few, and engage in trade. Many are descended from the man who helped kill Gargouille, and other men spared annually by the Bishop of Rouen often enter this covenant's service. Dragon's Rest is the hub of the Tribunal's Mercere Portal network, with connections to Cunfin, Confluensis, and Harco, among others.

One of the officers of the Normandy Tribunal is the Evangelium. This person, always a Redcap, travels to each covenant to report the results of Tourneys. Dragon's Rest is the home of the current Evangelium, Myrina.

The oath of fealty between Dragon's Rest and Confluensis is wordy, but comparatively equitable because of the positive relationship between the Houses of Guernicus and Mercere. The two covenants have agreed to the following points:

- Each will aid the other when any member of either covenant is subject to Wizard's War.
- Each will vote with the other on matters discussed by Tribunal, accepting that Redcaps who lack The Gift are reluctant to vote at Tribunal.
- Each will offer membership to members of the other in case of cataclysmic destruction.
- Each will offer, as rapidly as is possible, any information learned that will influence the fortunes of the other, as far as the duties of Quaesitores and Redcaps permit.
- The trading enterprises of the two covenants will, in so far as is possible, not compete with each other, and will offer each other aid in times of distress.
- Dragon's Rest will pay a tithe of one pawn of vis per year per member to Confluensis.
- Dragon's Rest will provide hospitality to the members of Confluensis who wish to use its laboratories, and Confluensis will provide the same hospitality to Redcaps wishing to use its library. (Confluensis has also allowed members of Dragon's Rest who were not Redcaps to study at its library.)

# Confluensis Sagas

As the heart of the Normandy Tribunal, Confluensis makes an excellent place for player character magi, presuming they do not mind having other, more senior magi around. Sagas involving the covenant will likely have a political bent, as the leadership's primary concern is holding the often-fractious Tribunal together. The following are few possible starting places for sagas of this type.

## The Praeco is Dead, Long Live The Praeco

With the recent passing of Renita Bjorn-aer, the Tribunal faces a crisis of succession. The previous Praeco was a powerful and unifying figure in Tribunal politics, despite her advanced age. Now that she is dead, the future is much less certain.

After Renita, the oldest member of the Order in France was her sept-mate, Stellatus. He has no interest in politics, however, and has recently departed for Iberia, where he can be closer to other members of his clan (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*). This leaves the next-oldest magus as Celeres of Cunfin.

It would be hard to find a magus who was less like Renita than Celeres. His eccentricities and influence on the Redcaps of Cunfin already worry the residents of Confluensis. Proctor is concerned that he would misuse additional authority. Proctor would like Celeres to be set aside in favor of a more-suitable candidate. Unfortunately, Somnifer of Lapis Crudus, or perhaps Geir-laug of Montverte, is next and each presents a set of difficulties.

In this saga, the players would be working to defuse the succession crisis at the behest of Proctor. His difficulty is that he does not wish to jeopardize his appearance of impartiality in the matter, so he cannot act directly to influence the process. Proctor's criteria for the new Praeco are simple: he wants either someone whom he can trust or someone whom he can control. More than a few magi would rather see Proctor's power checked. The next Tribunal meeting is in a little more than a year. Can the players fulfill the Presiding Quaesitor's demands by then, or will he be forced to step in and act directly?

## The Lion and the Lily

### Riches and Vis

The pro-Lotharingian Tribunal faction may be a minor annoyance for the Rhine Tribunal, but it presents a serious issue for the Normandy Tribunal. The area that would be taken for the new Tribunal represents not only considerable mundane wealth, but some of the Tribunal's richest vis sources as well. With the loss of these sites, Brittany, already the most vis-laden area within the Tribunal's borders, would produce more vis than all of the rest of the Tribunal combined. With this area dominated by House Tytalus, this could upset the delicate balance of power in the Tribunal (see *The Haunted Woods of Broceliande*, below).

In this saga, the players would act as Confluensis' agents within and without the Tribunal in advance of the Grand Tribunal of 1228. They would be working to defeat the creation of a new Tribunal, either by convincing the covenants that would make it up not to pursue independence, or by rallying the voting members of the Grand Tribunal against the measure. These efforts could take any number of forms.

Players might also be involved with the formation of a new covenant within the new Lotharingian Tribunal. Confluensis has already made preliminary investigations into a site for a new Quaesitorial covenant and Mercer House. Magi in this type of saga would be the "new law" in a frontier covenant, and while they would have strong connections to the Normandy Quaesitores, they would have their own set of problems to deal with.

## The Haunted Woods of Broceliande

Brittany holds more vis and more faerie sites than anywhere else in the Tribunal, with only Fudarus and its vassals anywhere near the area. Numerous covenants have been founded in the area, particularly within the forest of Broceliande, but none have survived. Whether this has been due to territorial faeries or territorial magi is open to debate.

In this saga, in order to combat the growing influence of House Tytalus, a new covenant is to be founded in Brittany with the support of Confluensis. Players can, of course, take on the role of the magi of the new covenant, but they might also be more-

senior magi acting as the covenant's sponsors. Either way, the new covenant is likely to be the target of both faerie mischief and Hermetic interference.

## The Specter of Rome

One cause for concern among the Order of Hermes is the newly formed Order of Preachers, also known as the Dominicans. Charged with combating heresy, they have been at the forefront of the Albigenian Crusade in the Provençal Tribunal, leading the fight against the Cathars. One troubling development in the last several years has been the issuance of a Papal Letter of Inquisition, granting the individual bearer extraordinary power backed by the throne of St. Peter. These are extremely rare; only one Dominican has one to investigate the Cathars. Still, they point to a change of stance in Rome, and several magi in the Tribunal, including Eloi of Cunfin and Jerome of Confluensis, are concerned that when the Cathar threat is ended the Church's inquisitors may turn their attention northward.

In this saga, the players are charged with maintaining the Order's tolerable relationship with Rome. This may require acting as troubleshooters who bring back into line magi who provoke the Church and its agents, or it may result in opening diplomatic channels with the Church. This is likely the trickiest of the example sagas to pull off, as the player characters may have enemies on both sides. No matter what they do, there is likely to be someone who disagrees with their approach. Still, many magi believe that the Order's current relationship with the Church cannot persist indefinitely, and it may be better to act sooner, rather than later.

## City of God

The Order of Hospitallers has recently founded a small settlement nearby that they hope will grow into a City of God. Cities of God, if they develop as designed, should be perfect habitations that are ruled by the Church, in which all people are devout and worldly sins do not occur. Such pure cities, magi fear, must have high Dominion auras, and will likely attract saintly figures and pilgrims. The magi of Confluensis would prefer the Order removed its institution from the Cotentin Peninsula.



The City of God is currently little more than a grant of land and a hospital staffed by three superannuated knights of the Order. Several factors make removing the knights difficult. The knights are:

- Often bearers of the True Faith virtue or Relics.
- Living in a Dominion aura of 4, since their settlement is, in effect, a small monastery.
- Piously devoted in their cause, so countering them is likely to attract the covert assistance of demons.
- Acting under the orders of the leader of their Order, and sworn to vows of obedience.

Many Cities of God fail, becoming little more than retirement homes for aged Hospitallers. Characters able to maintain good relationships with the Church may turn this to their advantage, as the old crusaders have military experience, the ability to train grogs, and may have faced djinns, demons, and faeries in battle. Characters serving Confluensis are required not to set precedents that other covenants could later abuse, so they are required to act in this matter with the closest attention to the limitations imposed by the Code.

### The Strange Saint of Cotentin

St. Giles is venerated in many places within Mythic Europe, but his veneration in Cotentin has taken a strange turn. His statue is used as a fertility charm, and equipped with a large and obvious member from which people shave wood to make a healing infusion. If this were merely an interesting folk superstition, then magi could ignore it, but locals claim that the statue miraculously regrows the wood slivers taken from its member. Either God operates in a way not usually endorsed by his Church, a demon or faerie is manipulating the saint's statue, or it is a magical device. It would be wise for magi to investigate before the Hospitallers become aware of St. Giles. Belief in phallic saints is heretical, and the Hospitallers may feel this is a task for the Preaching Orders.



### The Chapter of Cherbourg

The covenant of Fengheld, in the Rhine Tribunal, has founded a chapter house near Cherbourg. Chapter houses are not recognized under the Peripheral Code in the Normandy Tribunal, so the single magus who lives in the Cherbourg covenant is considered a cenobite. The presence of a cenobite is usually a minor problem, but her links to the Rhine Tribunal, her proximity to the City of God, and her harvesting of resources that have traditionally been collected by Confluensis make this one difficult to dislodge, or ignore.

The distraction presented by the cenobite will become more severe as time passes. The cenobite will continue to seek recognition for her covenant in the Tribunal, and in time she may gain covenant-mates from the other chapter houses of Fengheld. Eventually, formal recognition of the covenant would become inevitable. Fengheld itself, however, is likely to face a crisis in the near future (as described in *Guardians of the Forest*, page 82). Skilled player characters may be able to break Cherbourg away from its distant masters, bringing it under the protection of a local liege.

### Young and In Charge

The other saga and story seeds in this section presume that the characters will be working as agents for Proctor or other senior

magi, but some troupes may prefer games in which their characters decide their own activities. This can be accommodated with a few simple adjustments. When the characters join the covenant, they take the roles assigned to some of the NPCs described earlier in this section. These characters either do not exist in the saga, or have been encouraged to fulfill other duties in distant Tribunals by the House. The characters serve Proctor's goals for a few missions, allowing them to become familiar with the local political situation. Then Proctor is removed from the game, either in a way that generates a story, like murder, or through a laboratory accident.

Proctor will be replaced by House Guernicus with a senior Quaesitor of excellent reputation, able to demand the respect of the leaders of the other covenants in Normandy. This older Quaesitor will not, however, have a sufficient grasp of the local political situation to formulate policy. If he first trusts, then depends upon, his predecessors' lieutenants, the simplest path for him is to divide the tasks of the House with his younger colleagues. He will continue to act as the public face of the House and negotiate on its behalf. The player characters need to grapple with one or more of the story seeds given in this chapter without detailed instructions from a senior magus. Magi who operate effectively in this way are certain to be considered useful by House Guernicus, and are given interesting assignments by its representatives.

## Appendix A

# Timeline

This appendix provides a summary of the major events of mundane and mythic history in the Normandy Tribunal, and a short excursus into the future.

The dates of the meetings of the Normandy Tribunal are: 871, 878, 885, 892, 899, 906, 913, 920, 927, 934, 941, 948, 955, 963, 969, 976, 983, 990, 996, 1004, 1011, 1018, 1025, 1032, 1039, 1046, 1053, 1060, 1067, 1074, 1081, 1088, 1095, 1102, 1109, 1116, 1123, 1130, 1137, 1144, 1151, 1158, 1165, 1172, 1179, 1186, 1194, 1200, 1207, 1214, 1221, 1227, 1235, 1242, 1249, 1256, 1263, 1270, 1277, 1284, 1291, 1298. Dates in italics indicate Tribunals that were displaced by a year to accommodate the 33-year cycle of the Grand Tribunal.

## Past Events

- 51 BC Julius Caesar successfully concludes his campaign in Gaul; he writes the *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* (Commentaries on the Gallic Wars).
- 250 AD St. Denis and his companions begin to evangelize in Paris. He is imprisoned by the Governor.
- 275 St. Denis is martyred at Montmartre near Paris.
- 337 St. Martin of Tours gives half his cloak to a freezing beggar.
- 371 St. Martin becomes bishop of Tours.
- 397 St. Martin dies and St. Perpetuus becomes bishop of Tours.
- 4th century The Huns begin invading Europe.
- 445 Attila murders his brother and becomes undisputed leader of the Huns.
- 447 Merovech becomes king of the Salian Franks and rules until 458.
- 450 St. Geneviève prays for the Huns to avoid Paris, and they ignore the city.
- 451 The Battle of Châlons — an alliance of Romans, Franks, and Visigoths lead by the legendary Merovech defeat the Huns and Ostrogoths in Gaul, ending Attila's westward conquests.
- 458 Childeric inherits his father's position as king of the Salian Franks.
- 464 Childeric besieges Paris, but the

- citizens are saved by St. Geneviève, who leads a party down the Seine at night to bring in food.
- 470 – 485 Successful campaigns of the Visigoth King Euric across Western Europe.
- 476 Fall of the Western Roman Empire as Italy is conquered by the Gothic king Odovacar; the beginning of the Dark Ages.
- 481 Clovis, a descendant of Merovech, rises to become King of the Franks; the start of the Merovingian dynasty.
- 496 Clovis is baptized and becomes the first Christian Frankish king. His people follow suit, although paganism takes centuries to fade among the Franks.
- 507 Clovis has by now defeated the Romans, the Burgundians, and the Visigoths, united the Franks, and established a capital in Paris.
- 511 Death of Clovis, though his magical lineage endures. One of his four sons succeeds him as Childebert I.
- 558 Childebert dies childless; the kingdom passes to his brother Chlotar. Under him, the Frankish kingdom has grown to include all of Provence, Burgundy, and Swabia.
- 567 Sigebert wars on Chilperic, son of Chlotar; the Frankish kingdom fractures and becomes corrupted.
- 573 Gregory appointed bishop of Tours.
- 584 King Chilperic I dies leaving his wife, Fredegund, as regent for his unborn son, Chlotar II.
- 594 St. Gregory of Tours writes the *Historia Francorum* (History of the Franks).
- 613 Chlotar II "the Grand" reunites the Frankish kingdom and rules until 628.
- 628 Dagobert, king of Austrasia and son of Chlotar, becomes King of the Franks, ruling Austrasia, Neustria, Burgundy, and Aquitaine.
- 637 Dagobert I dies and the kingdom fragments again.
- 679 The kingdom of the Franks is again united, now under Theodoric III, but the monarchy is subservient to the Mayor of the Palace, Ebroin.
- 687 Pepin "the Large," of the Frankish mayoral dynasty, gives himself the title *Dux et Princeps Francorum*, and rules most of the Frankish empire. The power of the Merovingian kings is by now

- insignificant — they are little more than puppets.
- 731 – 767 Trianoma travels widely and contacts numerous wizards who visit with Bonisagus — many of these become Founders.
- 732 The Battle of Tours — Charles, illegitimate son and successor of Pepin II, wins a great victory over an Islamic army lead by Abd er Rahman, thereby halting the northward advance of Islam from Iberia. As a result of his tactical brilliance, he is hereafter known by the moniker Martel, meaning "hammer."
- 738 Charles Martel campaigns successfully against the barbarian tribes.
- 742 Birth of Charles (later Charlemagne), son of Pepin III.
- 751 Pepin III "the Short" becomes king proper, crowned by St. Boniface; the start of the Carolingian dynasty, as the last of the Merovingians, Childeric III, is shorn and retired to a monastery. Pepin III is the first king to seek the pope's anointment.
- 767 Foundation of the Order of Hermes. Bonisagus and the other Founders swear the Oath of Hermes. The first Tribunal gathering takes place at Durenmar.
- 768 Charlemagne becomes king of the Franks.
- 773 Second Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. Procedures for lesser Tribunals are established: a Tribunal shall consist of at least twelve magi from at least four covenants.
- 774 Charlemagne defeats Desiderius and becomes King of Lombardy. He confirms the "donation" of these lands to the pope, and becomes protector of the Church.
- 778 The kingdom of Aquitaine is founded by Charlemagne.
- 782 Charlemagne initiates schooling in the Frankish kingdom, and promotes literacy and education.
- 789 The Founder Jerbiton meets with Charlemagne, after having adopted a number of apprentices of the emperor's mage-smith, Carolinus. Charlemagne issues a decree outlawing sorcery and paganism, but permits "benevolent magic" such as that practiced by Jerbiton.
- 791 Branugurix, the domus magna of House Diedne, is founded in Brittany.
- 798 Tytalus steals the apprentice Hariste from Pralix, and founds Fudarus to provide a defensible

- place to train her. Pralix becomes the acting leader of House Tytalus.
- 799 Third Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 800 Charlemagne is crowned emperor in Rome; re-establishment of the western (Holy) Roman Empire.
- 807 Tytalus leaves Fudarus dressed only in a leper's robe and veil, and carrying a staff. After visiting his followers, he enters the Maddenhofen Woods in Bohemia, and is never seen again. Hariste becomes the first Primus of Tytalus.
- 810 Covenant of Confluensis is founded.
- 814 Death of Charlemagne; he is succeeded by his remaining son Louis "the Pious."
- 817 Fourth Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 822 Covenant of Bibracte is founded.
- 832 Fifth Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. From henceforth, Grand Tribunals will meet every 33 years, regional Tribunals every 7 years from 836 AD.
- 840 – 855 Reign of Lothar I. Covenant of Pagus is founded.
- 843 The Treaty of Verdun ends four years of civil war among the grandsons of Charlemagne — his empire is divided between them.
- 845 Paris is sacked by Viking raiders.
- 851 Covenant of Baiocassium is founded.
- 855 – 875 Reign of Louis II. Covenant of Sinapis is founded.
- 865 Sixth Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. The boundaries of the Tribunals are formally set according to the break-up of the Frankish Empire, and they are also named as the Rhine, West Franks, Lotharingian, Britannian, Roman, Theban, Eastern, and Greater Alps Tribunals.
- 871 Inaugural meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks.
- 875 – 877 Reign of Charles II "the Bald." Covenant of Rotomagus is founded.
- 881 Charles "the Fat" reunites Charlemagne's empire, becoming emperor. By now his realm is beset by attacks from Norsemen.
- 885 Paris is besieged by Viking raiders.
- 887 Charles "the Fat" is deposed and the Frankish empire is split into half a dozen kingdoms, most of which are ruled by Norse kings.
- 888 Odo, Count of Paris, is chosen as king of the Franks on account



- of his brave and skillful resistance of the Norse invaders.
- 892 Covenant of Rotomagus is destroyed as Vikings sack Rouen.
- 898 Seventh Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. Charles "the Simple," son of Louis II "the Stammerer" and nephew of Charles "the Fat," succeeds as king of the Franks on the death of Odo.
- 907 Covenant of Florum is founded.
- 910 The monastery of Cluny is founded.
- 913 Covenant of Liguria is founded.
- 920 Covenant of Kerguntuil is founded.
- 922 Odo's brother, Robert, drives out the discredited Charles "the Simple" and is crowned king.
- 923 Robert I dies in single combat with Charles "the Simple" and Rudolph, Duke of Burgundy, takes the throne.
- 931 Eighth Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 936 Louis IV, son of Charles "the Simple," is recalled from refuge in England and crowned King of the Franks, but he has scarcely any influence over the feuding nobility. Covenant of Baiocassium Minor is founded.
- 941 Covenant of Montverte is founded.
- 954 Lothair inherits his father's crown; conflict with neighboring states and within the kingdom continues throughout his reign.
- 961 The Betrayal of House Tytalus occurs at Fudarus. Tasgillia, the Prima of that House, is executed for diabolism, and replaced by her filia, Kalliste.
- 964 Ninth Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 969 Covenant of Bibracte is sacked by magi from Montverte.
- 983 The 17th meeting of the Tribunal of the West Franks decides to rename the Tribunal as the Normandy Tribunal.
- 986 Louis V "the Indolent," Lothair's son, becomes king, only to die the following year as a result of rivalries among the senior clergy and nobility.
- 987 Hugh Capet becomes King of France with the support of the Holy Roman Emperor, Otto III, and Archbishop Adalberon of Reims. He makes Paris his capital.
- 996 Robert II "the Pious" is crowned by his father Hugh in 987 and takes the throne on Hugh's death.
- 997 10th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 998 Covenant of Aedes Salii founded.
- 1004 The Schism War is declared against members of House Diedne.
- 1005 Covenants of Baiocassium Minor and Caput Capra destroyed.
- 1007 Covenant of Kerguntuil is destroyed.
- 1008 Covenant of Pagus destroyed.
- 1011 Covenants of Baiocassium and Liguria destroyed.
- 1012 Branugurix is destroyed in the final battle of the Schism War, called the Tempest.
- 1018 The Schism War has ended. The Quaesitores present the Tribunal with a list of magical resources seized from magi and covenants destroyed during the conflict. Fudarus attends the Normandy Tribunal meeting, adding Brittany to the Tribunal's territories. Pertheus of House Tytalus successfully proposes that the aggressors have the right of conquest over these vis sources and books, but that in seven years' time, a tournament should be held to redistribute them.
- 1020 Covenant of Orchard of Sour Apples is founded.
- 1021 Covenant of Lixivia is founded.
- 1025 The 23rd meeting of the Normandy Tribunal adopts several statutes proposed by Pertheus, which later become known collectively as "The Perthean Compact." This compact sets out the rights magi have over vis sources close to their covenant, but also allows for the possibility of covenants acquiring more vis as they grow in power. The compact is refined over successive meetings of the Tribunal.
- 1028 Covenant of Oleron is founded.
- 1030 11th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 1031 Henry I, having been crowned in 1027, succeeds on the death of his father.
- 1037 Conrad II, the German emperor, defeats Odo of Champagne in a massive battle at Bar in Upper Lorraine.
- 1048 Covenant of Vexatores is founded.
- 1051 Confluensis moves to Orchard of Sour Apples; the latter covenant is taken over and disbanded, and the covenant of Dragon's Rest is established at the former site of Confluensis.
- 1061 Philip I "the Fair" succeeds his father at the age of 7. His mother, Anne, acts as regent with Baldwin V of Flanders until 1066.
- 1063 12th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. The conflict between Houses Tytalus and Flambeau is formally ended by the latter withdrawing from all hostilities. As a consequence, the Flambeau covenants of Sinapis and Aedes Salii are abandoned, and Lapis Crudus is founded as a joint covenant between the two Houses.
- 1064 Covenant of Vexatores is abandoned.
- 1066 The Battle of Hastings — William of Normandy defeats Harold Godwinson, the Anglo-Saxon King of England, near Hastings in southern England. This leads rapidly to the Norman conquest of England.
- 1072 Covenant of Nauche-Fleur is founded.
- 1079 Philip I defeats William of Normandy and supports the claims of his son, Robert.
- 1081 Perpauca's books are declared the first tomes of the Library of the Normandy Tribunal. Access to these books is made into prizes in the Hermetic Tourney.
- 1096 The First Crusade.
- 1096 13th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 1098 The monastery of Cîteaux, later to become the mother house of the Cistercian Order, is founded.
- 1099 Covenant of Infelicitas is founded.
- 1100 Covenant of Nidi is founded.
- 1102 The 34th meeting of the Normandy Tribunal determines the border with the Provençal Tribunal on linguistic grounds.
- 1108 Louis VI "the Fat," Philip's son, is crowned king in Orléans because his half-brother, Louis, prevents him reaching Reims. Ralph, archbishop of Reims, challenges the validity of the coronation and anointing.
- 1109 A plague of restless dead stirs in Picardy; they are banished by a group of hedge wizards who join the Order of Hermes, founding the Donatores lineage within House Ex Miscellanea.
- 1115 St. Bernard founds Clairvaux Abbey.
- 1116 The 36th meeting of the Normandy Tribunal makes a landmark ruling on mundane resources, implicitly permitting mundane raiding.
- 1117 The covenant of Florum moves; Spider's Palace is founded at its former site.
- 1118 Peter Abélard comes to Paris. Lapis Crudus becomes trapped in its regio and is considered lost.
- 1123 Covenant of Requies Aeterna founded by Donatores magi.
- 1124 Covenant of Lixivia disbanded. Covenant of Alcuin's Auberge founded.
- 1127 Geoffrey V of Anjou marries Matilda, daughter of Henry I of England.
- 1129 14th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. Normandy's ruling on the border between itself and the Provençal Tribunal is upheld.
- 1130 Pope Innocent II takes refuge in France.
- 1134 A huge tidal wave strikes and reshapes the coast of Flanders; Bruges regains access to the North Sea.
- 1136 Covenant of Moles Magna is founded.
- 1137 Louis VII "the Young," the second son of Louis VI, is crowned king and marries Eleanor of Aquitaine.
- 1144 Geoffrey V of Anjou conquers Normandy and becomes its duke.
- 1146 – 1147 The Second Crusade, preached by St. Bernard of Clairvaux.
- 1151 Henry Plantagenet, son of Geoffrey V of Anjou, inherits Normandy.
- 1152 Henry marries Eleanor of Aquitaine.
- 1154 Henry becomes Henry II, King of England; beginning of the Angevin Dynasty.
- 1158 Covenant of Infelicitas is abandoned.
- 1162 15th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 1163 Construction on the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris begins.
- 1166 Covenant of Nauche-Fleur is abandoned.
- 1180 Philip II "Augustus" is crowned king.
- 1182 Covenant of Moles Magna is destroyed.
- 1187 Covenant of Atsingani is founded.
- 1189 Richard, later known as "the Lionheart," with the connivance of Philip II, defeats his father Henry II of England at Ballans and succeeds him as King of England, Duke of Normandy, and Count of Anjou.
- 1189 – 1192 The Third Crusade.
- 1190 Philip II erects his huge fortress, the Louvre, in Paris.
- 1192 Richard is imprisoned by the Holy Roman Emperor; Philip II and John, Richard's brother, offer him 80,000 marks to keep him hostage, but are refused. Covenant of Cunfin is founded.
- 1194 Eleanor of Aquitaine pays a ransom of 150,000 marks and Richard is released. He wins a victory over Philip II at Freteval. The Great Fire of Chartres; much of the city and the cathedral is destroyed.
- 1195 16th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 1197 Covenant of Alcuin's Auberge destroyed.
- 1198 Richard again defeats Philip II at the Battle of Gisors; Philip flees with his troops and is rescued from a river.
- 1199 King Richard of England is slain by a stray arrow during a siege in Limousin; he is succeeded by John.
- 1200 Philip II charts the University of Paris. Covenant of Atramentum is founded.
- 1201 Covenant of Expectatio is founded on the site of Atramentum; the latter covenant is disbanded and reformed as Atramentum Renatus.
- 1202 King John of England fails to respond to a summons to attend a French court; Philip II of France claims Anjou and invades Normandy, and supports the claims of Arthur of Brittany against John. This marks a turning point in the struggles between the Angevins and Capetians; thereafter, Philip II holds the upper hand in most of France.
- 1202 – 1204 The Fourth Crusade.
- 1204 Death of Eleanor of Aquitaine. The covenant of Eboris is founded in Paris.
- 1209 Beginning of the Albigensian Crusade; many nobles from France assemble at Lyon and proceed to Languedoc.
- 1212 The Children's Crusade is started as a shepherd boy from Châteaudun works miracles at St. Denis.
- 1214 The Battle of Bouvines — Philip II, supported by Frederick II, the presumptive German emperor, defeats the combined armies of the Saxons, the English, and the Flemish.
- 1215 Lapis Crudus re-enters the Hermetic scene having won freedom (of sorts) from their trap.
- 1217 The Fifth Crusade.
- 1219 Papal ban on the teaching of law in Paris.

## Future Events

If your saga follows real history, the following events may occur:

- 1220 Frederick II of Germany becomes Holy Roman Emperor.
- 1223 Louis VIII becomes King of France.
- 1226 Louis IX (later St. Louis) be-

- comes king.
- 1228 The Sixth Crusade. 17th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- Papal ban on teaching of Aristotle at the University of Paris.
- 1229 End of the Albigensian Crusade.
- 1235 The pope grants the cathedral school of Orléans the status of university.
- 1248 – 1254 The Seventh Crusade.
- 1250 The university of Angers is

- formed.
- 1258 The Treaty of Corbeil, settling territorial claims between France and Aragon.
- 1261 18th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes. Jacques Pantaléon, son of a cobbler from Troyes, becomes Pope Urban IV.
- 1263 Single currency adopted by the kingdom of France.
- 1265 Guido Le Gros from Saint-Gilles

- becomes Pope Clement IV.
- 1270 The Eighth Crusade. Philip III becomes King of France.
- 1281 Simon de Brie from Touraine becomes Pope Martin IV.
- 1285 Philip IV "The Fair" becomes King of France.
- 1294 19th Grand Tribunal of the Order of Hermes.
- 1297 King Louis IX canonized as St. Louis.

## Appendix B

# Languages and Names

## Languages in France

The following Living Languages are spoken in France and bordering lands. Each consists of several distinct regional dialects, which are given in parentheses; most characters should take the appropriate one as a specialty. Educated or well-traveled speakers will have tried hard to rid themselves of their dialect, and may have standard specialties (see ArM5, page 66).

**French** (Orleanais, Norman, Picard, Walloon, Champenois, Bourguignon, Lorrain, Poitevin)

**Occitan** (Gascon, Limousin, Auvergnat, Provençal, Catalan)

**Breton**

**Low German** (Frisian, Flemish)

French, the group of dialects also known as the *Langues d'Oïl*, is spoken throughout most of the tribunal. Orleanais is the dialect of the Ile de France, including Paris. Those from other parts of the country who need to communicate with the nobility also speak this language. This includes many merchants and tradespersons. Picard and Walloon are spoken in the northern-most region — Picard to the west and Walloon in Lower Lorraine. Frisian and Flemish are used in the far north. Lorrain is spoken in Upper Lorraine. Champenois is the dialect of the Champagne. Bourguignon is that of Burgundy. The Norman dialect is spoken in Normandy and the eastern parts of Brittany. Anglo-Norman, as spoken by the ruling classes in England and those in England involved in overseas commerce, is very closely related to the Norman dialect and a very similar dialect of French is spoken in the

Channel Islands, also. Poitevin is the dialect of Anjou and western Aquitaine. In the rest of Aquitaine, dialects of Occitan (also known as *Langues d'Oc*) are spoken; in the central region it is Limousin, and Auvergnat further east. Breton is spoken in all but the eastern region of Brittany; it is closely related to Cornish and Welsh. The Occitan dialects of Gascon, Provençal, and Catalan are spoken by people living beyond the southern borders of the Normandy Tribunal.

Educated people speak and write some Latin, as usual. It is rare to find a book written in anything other than Latin, but accounts and letters are sometimes written in other languages. Breton is the only one that is hardly ever written.

**Same language, different dialects:**

–1 penalty to both speakers

**French vs Occitan:**

–2 penalty to both speakers

**Breton vs Cornish:**

–1 penalty to both speakers

**Breton vs Welsh:**

–2 penalty to both speakers

**French (Norman) vs Anglo-Norman:**

–1 penalty to both speakers

**Low German vs English:**

–3 penalty (only –2 if Frisian dialect) to both speakers

The other pairs are so distinct from each other that comprehension is likely to be based on signing and good guesswork, or magic.

Example: A character from Normandy with French 5 (Norman) speaks to fellow Normans with an effective score of 6, French speakers with no dialect with an effective

score of 5, Parisians with an effective score of 4, all Occitan speakers with an effective score of 3, and can communicate with visiting English merchants with ease, as long as they speak Anglo-Norman (effective score 4).

## Lists of Names

Lists of suggested medieval names suitable for characters from the Normandy Tribunal are given below, for French, Breton, and Flemish. Many French names can also be used for Breton.

### MALE NAMES (FRENCH)

Adam, Aimon, Alain, Alenard, André, Anseau, Artaut, Aubert, Aubry, Baudouin, Bernard, Bertran, Charles, Colin, Denis, Didier, Dreux, Durand, Enguerrand, Érad, Estienne, Étienne, Eudes, Eustache, Évrard, Fiebras, François, Frédéric, Foucaud, Gautier, Gerard, Gervais, Geoffroy, Gilles, Gobert, Godefroi, Guignes, Guillaume, Guillot, Guy, Henri, Hervé, Hugues, Jacques, Jean, Jehan, Josse-lin, Josserand, Julien, Louis, Martin, Mathieu, Marcel, Maurice, Michiel, Naimes, Nicolas, Olivier, Orthon, Perrin, Philippe, Philippot, Pierre, Ponce, Raoul, Raymond, Renaud, Renier, Renouart, Regnault, Richard, Robert, Robin, Roger, Roland, Simon, Tancred, Thibaut, Thierry, Thomas, Vilain, Vincent, Yves.

### FEMALE NAMES (FRENCH)

Adeline, Agnes, Agnesot, Alison, Ame-



line, Amelot, Anne, Aude, Blanche, Catherine, Chrestienne, Clarisse, Collette, Denise, Deniset, Dorian, Edine, Emmelot, Florence, Genevieve, Gervaise, Guillemette, Guille, Guiote, Honnorée, Ide, Isabelle, Jaqueline, Jaquette, Jehanne, Jehannette, Joie, Juliete, Loyse, Lutisse, Mahault, Margot, Marguerite, Marie, Marion, Martine, Mathilde, Mesot, Mirabelle, Nicole, Odette, Oudine, Pasquette, Pernelle, Perrette, Perotte, Philippote, Plantée, Poubelle, Rixenda, Serena, Sybille, Symonne, Typhainne, Ysabeau, Ysabel, Ysabelet.

## MALE NAMES (BRETON)

Adiuni, Alan, Arthur, Belado, Benabic, Bertho, Britou, Budnouen, Corentin, Conbriti, Disideri, Deniel, Erwan, Felix, Gaël, Gallmau, Guilloic, Guiomarch, Gwenaël, Gwenneg, Gwilherm, Heranal, Huon, Io-

cilin, Lagu, Loïc, Maël, Maonirn, Mihael, Padrig, Paol, Per, Pierrick, Rioc, Roparz, Turtouald, Winoc, Yann.

## FEMALE NAMES (BRETON)

Agace, Annick, Armelle, Beatrice, Beladore, Berthildis, Drilego, Franseza, Gaëlle, Gwenaëlle, Heranneun, Ivone, Katarin, Katell, Maëlle, Maëlys, Mari, Melita, Nolwenn, Oanez, Prostlon, Rimoet, Rozenn, Yuone.

## MALE NAMES (FLEMISH)

Abelkijn, Alard, Albertus, Amilius, Andreas, Arend, Arnulphus, Baldwin, Bartholomeus, Bernart, Bertoldus, Clais, Conrad, Daniel, Dodo, Elias, Engelbert, Eustacius, Everart, Florens, Frederik, Gerart, Gerrit,

Ghyse, Gilis, Godefroy, Goesin, Hanne, Henric, Herman, Hugh, Jacob, Jan, Johannes, Kerstiaen, Klaas, Laurens, Lubertus, Lucas, Ludolf, Martin, Mattheus, Michiel, Nicolaus, Olyer, Otto, Pauels, Philips, Pieter, Reiner, Robert, Rodolf, Rutger, Segher, Sois, Stephen, Symon, Thieman, Thomas, Volkard, Wellin, Wilhelmus, Willem, Wouter, Ysebrand.

## FEMALE NAMES (FLEMISH)

Aghete, Agnes, Alene, Alijt, Alisa, Annen, Aue, Auesote, Bela, Bata, Beatrix, Berta, Clemense, Elisabeth, Ermgart, Flore, Gele, Gertruid, Grieta, Haedwien, Heile, Helwigis, Hildegard, Iseburg, Johanna, Jute, Katrine, Kristine, Ligardis, Lisebette, Machteld, Marie, Matilde, Mabelie, Margareta, Mette, Nannen, Pernele, Reynildis, Sara, Siburg, Sophia, Sybillie, Tetta, Thedwi, Ude, Weindemode, Yde, Ysabella.

## Appendix C

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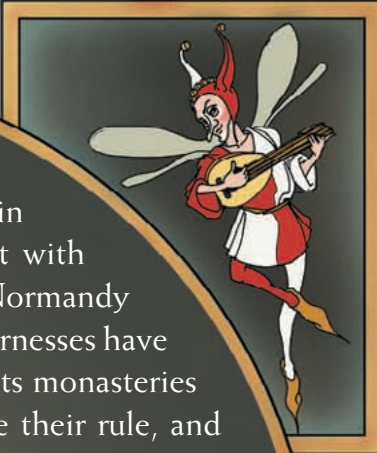

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# Ars Magica



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