

SUB ROSA

THE ARS MAGICA MAGAZINE

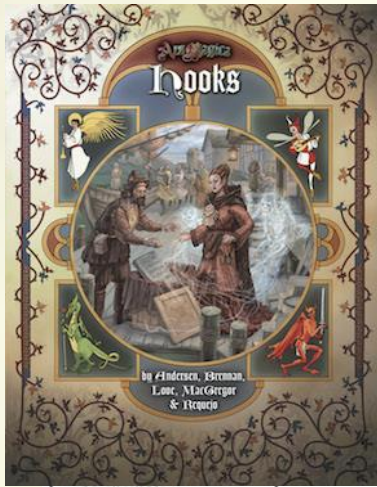
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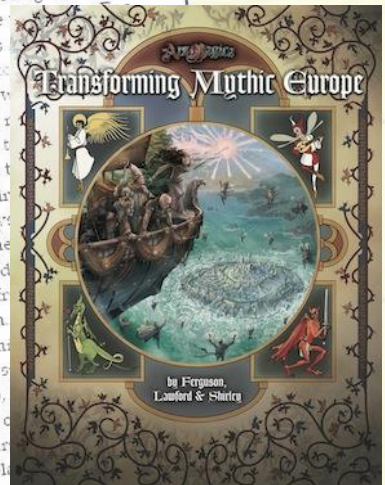
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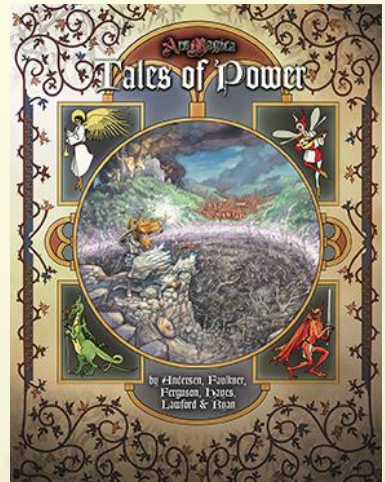


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Thanks again to all who made this issue possible.

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UNDER THE ROSE

Welcome to 2014. It doesn't seem that long ago that we were looking back on 2012 but we're already now bidding farewell to 2013 and looking ahead to a new year.

Last year was a great year for supplements. First we had *Antagonists*, then *Tales of Power*, followed by *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, and finally *Transforming Mythic Europe*. Four very different supplements offering four very different propositions.

Antagonists provided a number of well-conceived and fully detailed adversaries that you can drop into your new and existing sagas to provide instant story content.

Again, *Tales of Power* presented instant story opportunities through a number of self-contained scenarios that explored various corners of Mythic Europe and the supernatural realms.

The *Hibernian Tribunal* book, described by some as "**Ars Magica** turned up to eleven" gave a **Fifth Edition** twist to a Tribunal that we know a lot of **Ars Magica** fans have wanted to see for a very long time. This one gave those looking to start a new saga a great starting point and the Tribunal and its culture was built from the ground up with conflict and story in mind. This is not one to be missed.

Finally, we had *Transforming Mythic Europe*, just creeping in before the end of the year. This is one for any saga at any stage of its life and it is a phenomenal

resource of new effects but more importantly of grand ideas. Just like the *Hermetic Projects* book of a couple of years back, *Transforming* looks at what magi could do if they put their minds to it. While *Projects* focused on the work of a few or the individual, *Transforming* looks at what the Order could achieve, how they could transform the world in which they live.

Looking at the book production itself, Cam Banks seems to have made a very positive impact by bringing new artists on board. While we hope that we haven't seen the last of Grey Thornberry's work in the **Ars Magica** line, Christian St. Pierre has been a great find and it has been a privilege to work on some of the books he's contributed to and to have seen the cover art develop (christiannstpierre.com). And Gabriel Verdon's interior art makes for a very bold injection of quality (www.gabrielverdon.com).

Outside of the published line we had a number of fan enterprises.

CJ Romer started up the first (as far as we know) podcast for **Ars Magica** in the *Arcane Connection* series, and you can find the complete series over at arcaneconnection.podomatic.com.

Once again, we had very successful Grand Tribunal events in both the UK and the USA attended by authors and players alike. The UK event saw the usual and very welcome Scandinavian contingent trekking all the way

from Norway and Denmark to their second home in the increasingly charming Gas Green church hall in Cheltenham.

Sub Rosa pushed the boat out a little in 2013 and our monster thirteenth issue took countless views at the thirteenth House; House Diedne. It was a project long in the planning and we had no fewer than seven published line authors contributing content directly concerning House Diedne. It was certainly our largest issue to date and we're not sure we're fully recovered yet.

We also saw a great project kick off over in the Atlas Forum. Identifying a desire for a set of vanilla covenants, the forum regulars have started to build out their own supplement (with some impressive layout on display). If you haven't looked in on the thread yet, you can find it here: <http://forum.atlas-games.com/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=21778>. It's looking very good already and we hope it continues.

So what about 2014? Well, we know that the first book out this year is *Hooks*, and it sounds great; a book dedicated to leveraging the story potential in other published materials? A way to make the books you've invested in pay for themselves? Count me in.

Other than that, who can say? Will we get another Tribunal this year? Will we see distant areas of Mythic Europe and beyond explored? We don't know, but it should be another great year for **Ars Magica**.

FROM THE LINE EDITOR

The most recent book for **Ars Magica** was *Transforming Mythic Europe*. It includes details on three ways in which magi can completely change Mythic Europe, from the simple (add a new island nation) to the complex (start a magical industrial revolution). This book makes no changes to the official background, but nevertheless addresses one of the most important problems in the game's setting.

Fundamentally, Mythic Europe makes no sense. Hermetic magi have enough power at their fingertips to do almost anything, and so there is surely no way that a recognisably medieval society should have survived having the Order of Hermes present for almost 500 years. Why hasn't everything changed?

Transforming Mythic Europe recognises that creating a new island is a project within the reach of freshly-Gauntleted magi, and provides support if a troupe's players want to changed everything. In other words, *Transforming Mythic Europe* explicitly recognises that magi could change the world, and provides help and support if you want them to do it in your saga. It provides the official answer to the question "What stops magi changing everything?" The answer is: nothing. They can if they want to. Since the player magi are the main characters in

your saga, however, they should be the ones doing it, just as the projects in *Hermetic Projects* were designed on the assumption that the player magi would undertake them.

That raises the question of why no magi changed Europe before 1220. The real answer, of course, is that a large part of the point of **Ars Magica** is to enable you to play games set in something that looks a lot like medieval Europe, only with supernatural elements. However, that is a meta-game answer, and does not address the issue of why it hasn't happened in the game world. Now that *Transforming Mythic Europe* has been published, we know that there is nothing inherent to the setting preventing it. So, why?

My answer is that, before 1220, no magi had done so. The Order is small and thinly spread, so a big change to society is likely to require concerted effort by several magi. Small things could have changed history through the butterfly effect, but it is perfectly legitimate to decide that they didn't. A few magi may have tried to make big changes, but for whatever reason, they failed. Most concentrated on other projects, such as

By DAVID CHART

Mystery Initiations, uncovering Ancient Magic, or building the ideal covenant library. Most people do not try to radically change the world, and most who do, fail. People with the power of Hermetic magic are much more likely to both try and succeed, but it would still be a fairly small minority. I doubt that even most player magi will follow the paths laid out in *Transforming Mythic Europe*, after all. The Order is small enough that we can say, without stretching plausibility too far, that no magi did enough to change the world before 1220.

The future, however, is a completely different issue.



THE STORYGUIDE'S HANDBOOK: THE PATH LESS TRAVELLED

Writing stories for roleplaying games is a difficult thing. It doesn't matter whether your story is intended for your regular troupe, a one-off session, a convention setting, a fanzine, or even for the published line; it's just plain difficult. There are a lot of factors to juggle, from setting, to plot, to background, to enemies, and that's before we introduce the ultimate variables – the players.

This issue, the Storyguide's Handbook looks at one particular technique for planning your stories that should help you to provide your players with options in even the most linear of plots.

EASE FACTOR 21

Why are RPG scenarios so difficult? There are two principal factors:

- 1) The need to keep the players engaged
- 2) The unpredictability of the players

Aside from the logic of the story itself, the credibility of your antagonists, judging the correct level of threat, and injecting sufficient peril, you need to cater for and account for the players. You may think you have a great plot lined up, but how do you really know that you have enough content to keep the players

BY GERALD WYLIE

engaged until you play through it? One of the great pitfalls is misjudging the level of content that you need to provide. It is easy, as the one designing the story, to get swept up in the minutiae of the background, expecting the players to naturally want to discover all the detail you have written down in your gaming folder. It is equally easy to over-write things. Remember, action tends to stretch in play and there is a danger of writing in a run of necessary actions before the players progress past the first couple of scenes.



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Within those scenes, it is important to provide actions and/or opportunities for the assembled players and their characters. This is where knowing your troupe and their characters is important, but as you write up your notes for what's going to happen over here in the ruined priory or over there in the flooded region, what are you doing to make sure you are providing points of interest for each player?

For all your planning, it is quite possible for the players to decide upon what might seem to you in the moment to be an arbitrary course of action unrelated to the set of notes you have lovingly prepared. Seeing those branch points, points in the story where you haven't given sufficient guidance or too few obvious options is not always easy to see from a linear set of notes.

WHAT WE WANT FROM OUR STORIES

Ars Magica, more than some RPGs, inclines towards a generally free and open storytelling style. The broad freedoms we enjoy with the characters we play and the paths they follow wants to influence the way we design and run our stories. Partly as a result of that freedom, the characters each player brings to the troupe are often quite different, with differing power levels, abilities, and personal goals. **Ars Magica** also has a very rich and complex game world, which we'd all like to explore and get the most from. Finally, we also like to be surprised; we like new things, so anything we can do there helps to enhance the game.

So, we want a story that is as

open-ended as possible with regard to paths through it and ways to resolve the central challenges. We also want stories that play to the strengths and weaknesses of the characters we bring, giving us moments to heroically succeed or tragically fail; either way, we want those little spotlight moments. We want our stories to reflect the game world at least as far as our part of that wider setting is concerned. Finally, we want the next story to differ from the last, to pose new challenges and perhaps provide different spotlights for different characters.

That's quite a lot to keep in mind.

A SOLUTION: MIND MAPPING

A mind-map is a diagram consisting, typically, of words representing ideas, people, places, events, or other concepts joined together by lines to form islands of logically-related groups of information. You typically start with your central idea and put that somewhere central on the page. Then you start to add the next set of subordinate or secondary ideas and connect them to your starting point. These might represent aspects of that central idea, or ways of using that idea that you're going to explore. Then, for each of those secondary ideas, add in a further set of ideas, people, places, events, etc. that you want to explore or keep track of. You can keep doing that at any point within the diagram, exploring specific islands and removing others as you see fit.

As a technique, it is widely used across business and academia for its ability to springboard ideas, allowing them

to be recorded and explored in a very visual way. It's hardly a new concept in the storytelling or RPG worlds either, but we're going to look specifically at how we can use it to develop our stories in an **Ars Magica** context.

At a high level, you start with something you're comfortable with, perhaps the entry point to your story, the main protagonist, an event you want to happen, or a goal you want your players to reach. From there, you start adding the story events and/or locations that you want to include or at least you anticipate your players heading to. From there, you can add further events and locations, moving further away from your starting point.

For each of those nodes, as we'll call them, you can add in smaller offshoots that define what you expect your players to learn, find, or do at each point.

That's all a little abstract, so let's look at a worked example; a story outline built from scratch. We'll assume that you're using plain old paper and pencil, but we'll look at the options a little later.

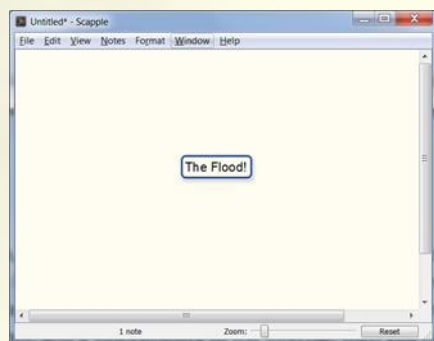
START POINT

Turn your paper so that it is landscape and then draw in your starting point somewhere in the middle. Let's assume that we have a coastal covenant and we want to tell the story of a flood. All we do is start by writing down "The Flood!" in the middle of the paper.

We might come back to that a little later, but for now that's a pretty stark statement of intent and certainly enough to get us going.

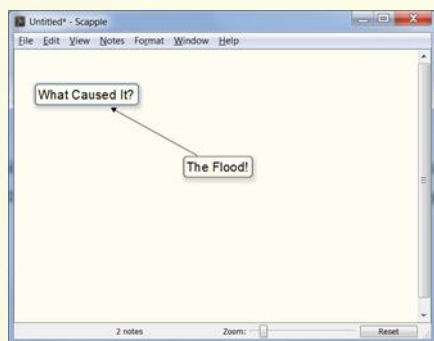
PLOT POINTS AND LOCATIONS

Once you know what your start point is, start to add the

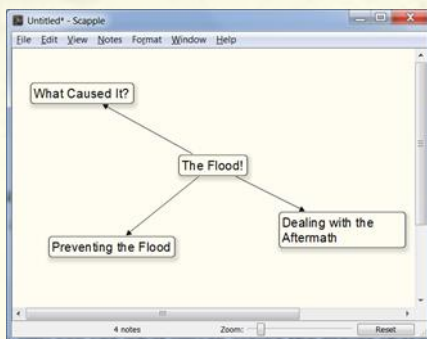


principal locations or events into your diagram. However, just looking at our paper, we don't even know what the cause is yet, so let's add a marker for that.

All we have in mind right now is that we want a story of a flood. We can either tell the story of trying to prevent it or in dealing with the aftermath, so let's add those options to the diagram.



We now have two solid paths for the story to take. To be fair to the covenant and the players, we will probably favour the story of how they prevented the flood and saved the village... Save the village! Actually, we should add that as another node. So, we've added a new path for Save the Village, as the players may just consider the flood unstoppable and take the defensive route.



They might build a wall or excavate a dyke to divert the waters. We also need to know how we're going to prevent the flood, so for that they will need to know what caused it, so we'll develop that path with a suitable node.

As storyguide, I don't even know the cause myself yet, so let's work that out. It could be something gone awry with Seline, the spirit of the moon, which is causing a powerful tide. Sounds interesting, but also hard to interact with in any meaningful way. So how about a war beneath the waves? It's an old idea, but still an interesting one; we'll pit the faerie realm against the magic realm.

Let's take a look at where we are.

We've coloured in the two distinct paths that we're planning to develop and while we can see

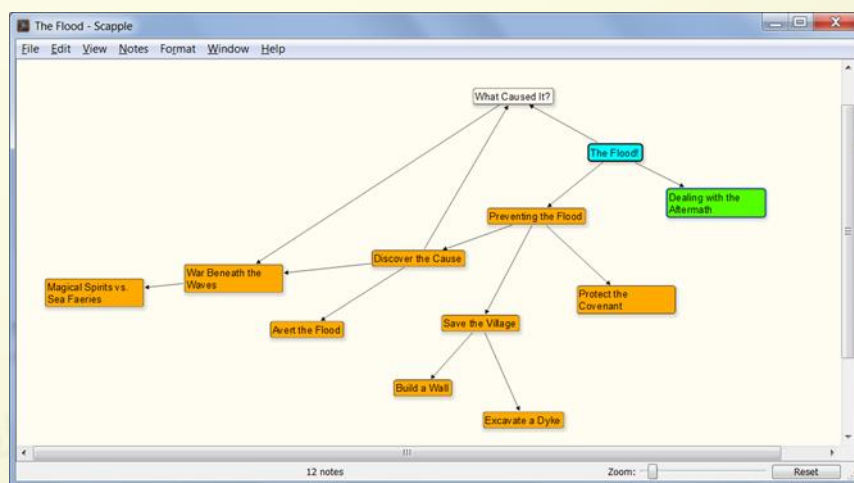
that we still need to develop the "dealing with the aftermath" side it is also obvious that we haven't really added any detail to the prevention side – we have a view on what the players need to do, but nothing specific as yet.

One other thing. We're probably done with that "What Caused It?" bubble now; we're working on that elsewhere, so we can scrub that.

PROVIDE PLAYER OPTIONS

By marking them on the story-map, you can see what you're asking the player characters to do at each node and make sure that you have included areas of interest for each of your main characters. For instance, if your story is likely to include a magus specialised in Vim, with an interest in spirits, an enchanted staff that lights up a room, and a susceptibility to the Infernal, then you have at least four things there you might hang an event or option on.

Developing that idea, if the story takes you to the ruins of an early church, you might make the crypt particularly dark, calling for the magus to light the room, or you might provide a suggestion of a regio to be discovered, or stories of ghosts that haunt the ruins. Another magus may be



fluent in multiple languages, have spells to calm the enraged or distraught, or have a fear of dogs. You can build one or more of those elements into the story somewhere along the way.

PROVIDE CLEAR DECISION POINTS

The players will decide how they want to tackle each event and option that you provide. You can try to guide them, of course, but rather than simply open the door they might choose to blow a hole in the wall. Ultimately, each node in the diagram is a stepping stone to the next part of the story. Provide one or more logical exit points onto one or more story nodes. Your players should not be left looking for the next part of the story; they should be able to see the options you've laid out for them. Accepting that it is difficult to account for things you don't anticipate, the diagram should help you to at least understand where you want to send your players and ensure that the routes are open and easy to see.

In my experience, players tend not to take the unexpected route if you put a choice between two

or more clear options before them. The difficult tangent is only really drawn either when the players are being expected to do all the work or they don't like the single road opening out before them.

If you do have a single road that you want your players to willingly go down then you'll need to provide an incentive. Want the players to go back to the village they were at previously? Then you might give them something to chase back in that direction, or find something that they feel duty-bound to return, or receive new information that casts their previous interactions in a different light. This kind of incentive to move from one node to another is a key part of this process, and should be applied to all exit points, but is made all the more important when trying to guide the players down a single path.

IS THIS A REAL DIAGRAM OR JUST IN YOUR HEAD?

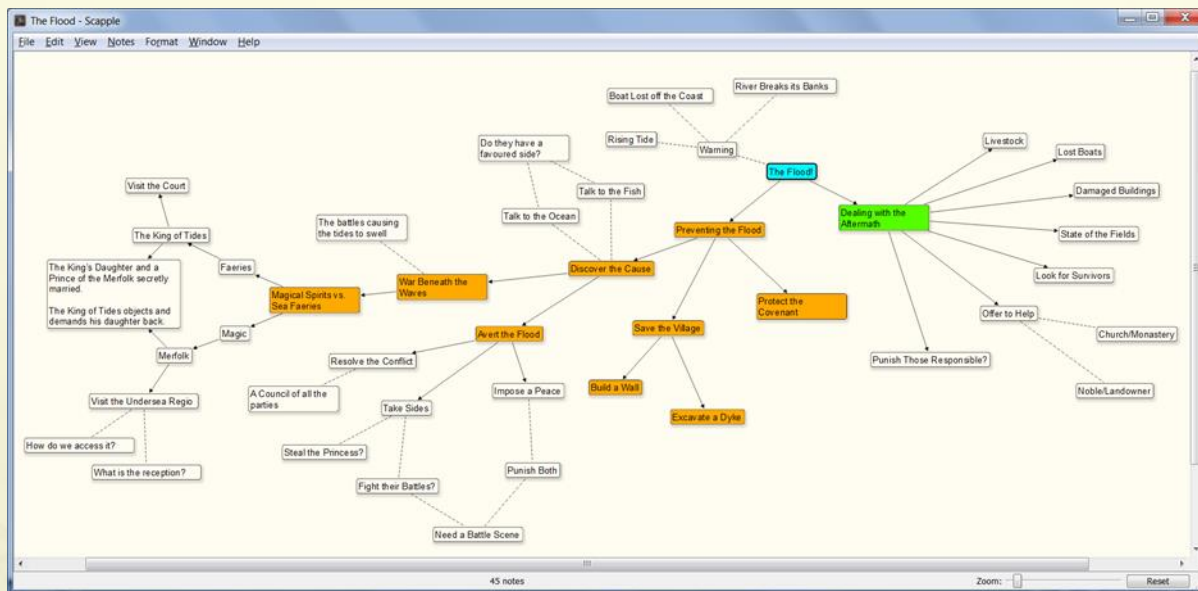
You could keep this all in your head if you have experience with the memory palace technique, but it is probably best to draw it out.

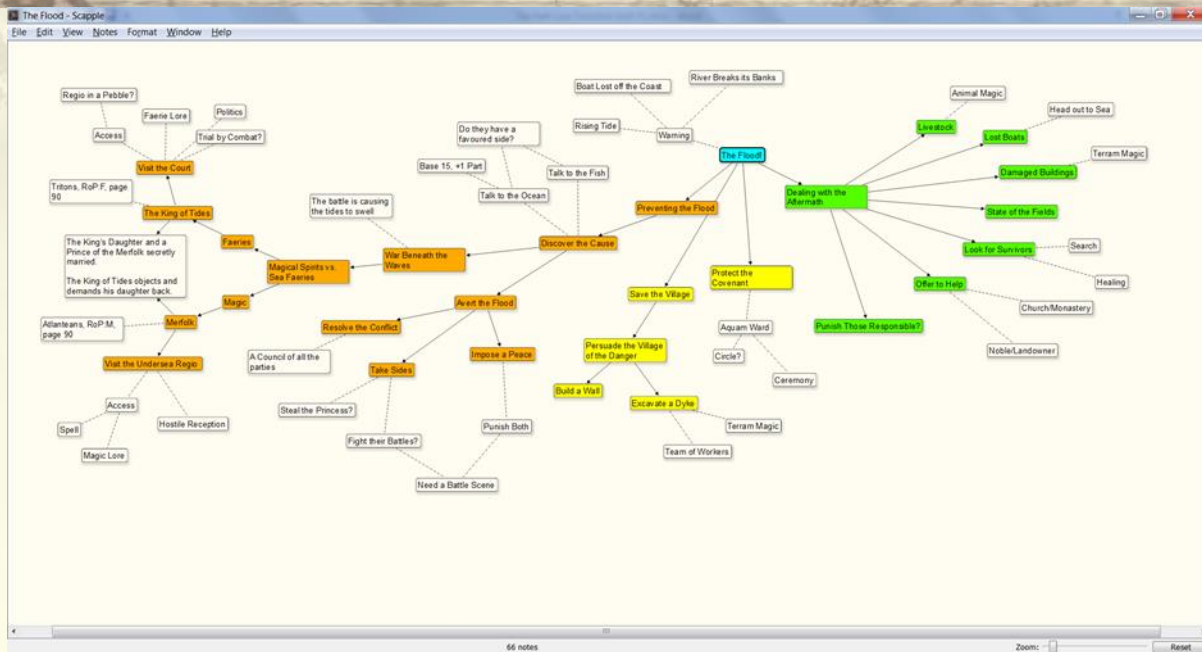
Firstly, it allows you to see the shape of your story (more on that later), but it also lets you see what areas of the story are a little thin, which areas need more options for player agency or lack points of interest.

It's easier to see than just plain text. A traditional write-up works well to record lots of procedural detail, such as background information, character stats, or more complex instructions that you need to refer to during play, but a diagram on a piece of paper allows you to keep a very clear track on where you are in the story and where you're going. That's harder to do with a few pages of typed notes.

You can modify it on the fly. Looking at our latest map, it doesn't make sense for the "protect the covenant" and "save the village" nodes to hang off the "Discover the cause" branch, so let's move those out. They now form perfectly valid responses to the warning signs heralding the flood.

But what if we are in play? What if the players decide to do something that you haven't accounted for? Perhaps they decide that the threat is larger than they can handle, perhaps





even to the wider Tribunal. As a result, they go looking for a specialist. As the process of mind-mapping promotes rapid plotting, you can simply draw a new line from “The Flood” to a new node called “Get Help”. You can assume they go to a “Covenant”, perhaps one they already know, but you might think that’s a little safe, so how about redirecting them to a hedge wizard, an “Elementalist”. The Elementalist may feel unable to

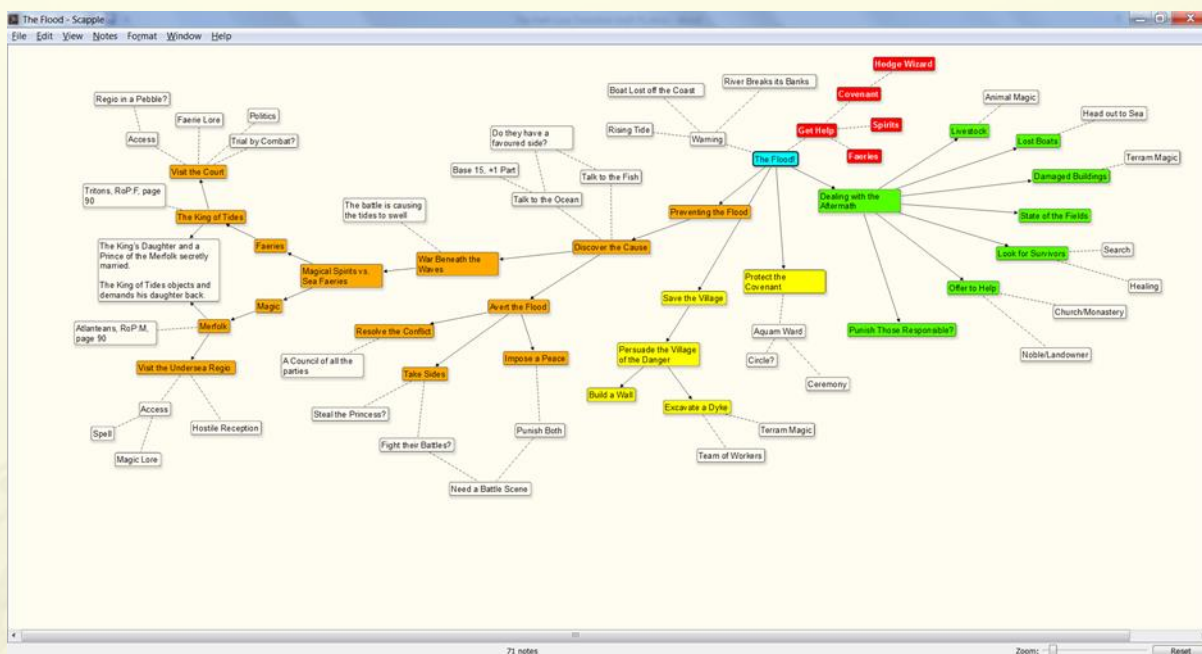
help, perhaps he is old, imprisoned, a drunkard, or any other challenge that the players need to overcome in order to get him on side. Of course, all that can just come naturally; you don’t need a diagram to do that, but by writing it down there and then, along with the connections, you let the paper do the remembering.

ADDING DETAIL

With the flow of the story

plotted out, you can go ahead and write out any notes you need to cover the specifics. For instance, you might need some stats for the faerie tritons or the magical merfolk. You may be inclined to write your own, or you could just add a note to the sketch pointing at the relevant pages in Realms of Power: Faerie and Magic.

How detailed you go is down to you. You might add Ease Factors, combat stats, reminders of appropriate spell guidelines,



even Damage Levels of doors or other obstacles that you might be asking the players to get past. It is quite possible to add all the detail you need to run a story into the one sketch; it's your sketch and you're going to be using it, so give yourself whatever you need.

If you are going to use the sketch as your main source of notes, you may consider defining the more detailed encounters in their own sketches. Once a sketch becomes quite large, you're fighting against the confines of space and/or usability and there's nothing wrong with flipping to the appropriate sketch on entering a new scene or branch of the story.

GIVING YOUR STORIES SHAPE

Putting the diagram on paper allows you to see the *shape* of your story. By *shape* we mean how the journey through the story is made up by the points of interest in your diagram. Shape is important to visualise as it tells you, as the storyguide, what you're in for. If you have a fairly linear structure, with one node leading to the next, then you know you need to make those transitions clear and obvious. If on the other hand you have a more distributed shape, then you know you need to ensure you have a good level of detail planned across the various options.

LINEAR

A linear story starts at one point and travels through a set of expected story nodes with few opportunities to branch out. There is nothing wrong with a linear story; it's all about how it is executed. Challenges may be posed in succession and the fun

of such stories is in trying to overcome each challenge as it is presented. Quite often in linear stories, the aim is to make the players work towards the ultimate goal, to present them with a series of tasks and have them work through each task in order to reach the next.

In planning events in a linear story you should consider making the route to the next stage fairly obvious, even foreshadowing later stages so that the players understand where they are supposed to go. Linear stories tend to work best when each node presents an interesting challenge, different to those already encountered. That's where all the preparation is in stories with this structure.

BRANCHING

A branching story is pretty typical and we've all run and played them. From a starting point, the players are presented with choices of what they might do and where they might go. At each node, the path splits into one, two, or more new branches, each of which provides an option for progressing the story. For instance, let's say that the players need to take 40 pounds of silver to a magus in a distant covenant in settlement of a debt and prevent a Wizard War.

The king's tax collectors have just arrived at the nearby castle, but then there are rumours that the bishop's palace is richly adorned with gold, silver, and gems bought from his own scourging taxes. Or there was a casting tablet for a ritual to create enough silver to settle the debt, if only the magi can find it.

From those quick ideas, it is clear that there are three different routes to take and once the players start down one route they

are unlikely to backtrack. Bearing that in mind, try not to create dead-ends. If you do create a dead-end, don't make the journey down that branch too long before the players hit it.

A branching story can be quite difficult to write effectively as you have to anticipate the major routes through the story that the players might take, so provide strong clues as to what the options are.

BUBBLE

The bubble story is an interesting and rewarding gaming experience. Early on, you present your players with a set of objectives, a checklist of sorts, each of which can be achieved in any order without dependency on the others. Each of these objectives can have their own structure, but they provide discrete islands of incident. Let's use another example. The covenant needs to cleanse the old catacombs of an evil that has been there for generations. They need to find the divinely enchanted knife, learn the secret of the old ritual, identify the living embodiment of the pestilence from among the catacomb rats, and clear out and re-consecrate the ritual site. Should be simple enough.

Each of those acts can be pursued in any order. The players may even decide to run them concurrently if they are given to splitting the party. Each of those acts provides their own set of challenges and possibly different tonal elements.

In some respects, the bubble approach is quite easy to write for; you have a set of story islands, each of which you defines some particular challenges for, and then you have a wrap up where it all comes back together

again. It is also quite suited to one-off games as the structure implies a defined set of paths to follow and a defined end-point. The challenge with these stories is that there may be less agency for antagonists and other NPCs; the world tends to wait for the players to complete their actions. You can overcome this by having actions in one area influence the activities of those concerned with another area. For instance, using the example above, choosing to learn the secrets of the old ritual first might alert the spirits inhabiting the old holy ritual site and thereby increase their preparedness. Alternatively, gaining the knife before attempting to re-consecrate the site might prove to be beneficial.

RAILROADING

Railroading is the removal or limiting of player choice and that is a danger no matter the shape of the story you're telling.

However, there is a difference between presenting a linear story and railroading. Parts of the Calebais scenario are really quite linear, but the players enjoy a degree of agency in how they confront the challenges placed in their way. And that's the key. You can guide your players from place to place as long as you don't take their options away. You might guide them to a hall of nervous and aggressive Hrools, but the players should have the option as to whether to attack outright or try to gain their trust and benefit from their knowledge of the old fallen covenant.

IMPORTANT NODES

Once you start joining the story nodes together, you'll start to see which nodes are most important. You are almost certain to have points in your story that

you expect the players to move through regardless of decisions made earlier in the story. Pay attention to these nodes and ensure that you plan enough detail into those encounters.

NOT ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME

A word to the wise; it may make structural and thematic sense to start a story during the journey through France, expecting the players to play out the natural conclusion on the way back through after they have gained world experience and had time to take on board the events of the first part, but you can be almost guaranteed that the return journey will actually occur by sea, or through the Rhine, or a faerie trod; anywhere except following the reverse route back through France.

Don't expect the route between nodes to be predetermined unless you, as the storyguide, take that element of control away from the players and cut from one place to another. That is a fair approach to take; treat the journey as a narrative under the storyguide control. But given that the players are within their rights to assert their own narrative, you are best-served by ensuring that there is an incentive of some kind to justify the route you have chosen for the players to follow.

GRANULARITY

As we know, stories can play out in a matter of hours, across multiple sessions, across game and real-world years, and even entire sagas. So what is the appropriate level of granularity for this approach? There really is no upper limit to how broad a sweep you give your diagram, but

the chances are that you are going to be best served by creating different story maps for different levels. For instance, if you start a saga wanting to tell the story of House Ex Miscellanea planning a new Schism War, then you're going to need quite a high level view on what major events you foresee your troupe engaging in. If you're telling the story of the rise and fall of a covenant from foundation, through the seasons to winter and its fall or rebirth, then at the very least you will want to map out the foundation years, the passing seasons and the events that describe them, and the key challenges that decide whether the covenant falls or survives.

So you can create very high level story maps with some very high level branches in there (for instance, does the covenant side with Ex Miscellanea or House Tremere?) and these provide the points to aim at as you develop your saga.

However, you can take a step down from that to plan out significant plots, perhaps plots relating to individual magi, or the development of the saga across each season of its life. Doing this at a magus level also has a very distinct use; it keeps things distinct. Assume you have four player magi to deal with. You can assume that at some point, each magus is going to look for a familiar. Even at the early stage of the saga, you can put an event on the story map for each magus for that familiar. You might not have a story in mind relating to each or to any, but you have a marker. As you learn more about each magus, you can revisit that story map and that familiar node and keep making notes around it. You can start to see the story elements that you might include for one magus and ensure that

the familiar nodes for the other three magi look different.

The lowest level you probably need to go to is at the individual story level, which is principally what we've been looking at across this article.

PLAYING FOR TIME

How long should you spend defining each scene or node in the path? There's no right answer to that other than as long as you need. The mind-map that you create is unlikely to be the end of the process as you will want to source stats for adversaries, design things such as books, vis sources, supernatural effects, etc., and provide guidance for yourself for when your players make their way through the paths that you've defined. The intention is that the mind-mapping up front should be light and fluid; a good way to get to the crux of the story you want to tell and to make sure that you've accommodated all the elements you wanted to.

How long should each node or branch in the mind-map take to play through? Again, that all depends. The branches in your mind-map sketches are unlikely to be correctly proportioned against time, although they might well be proportioned against importance. One branch may play out over seasons, while a longer and more involved branch may play out more quickly while involving more incident.

MIND-MAPPING TOOLS

You could use paper and pens to work out your structure but there are a number of dedicated software options beyond the basics such as MS Word or other word processor packages or even

MS Visio. Of course, many applications are also available for mobile platforms, such as IOS, Android, and Windows 8 and we recommend you to search through the relevant app stores. To get you started, we're picking out just three solid applications below, but there is much more information available at the Mind Mapping Software Blog (mindmappingsoftwareblog.com).

SCAPPLE

Scapple (available at www.literatureandlatte.com/scapple.php) is a light-weight mind-mapping application from Literature and Latte, the same company behind the well-received Scrivener authoring tool. Scapple is clean and simple and available for both Windows and Mac. The application doesn't try to impose any kind of structure or hierarchy, which just allows you to get on with the business of mapping out your saga or scenario.

Currently desktop-only, the maps are exportable to PDF, image, plain text, rich text, and a couple of others.

FREEMIND

Freemind (available at freemind.sourceforge.net) is a free Java application, with arguably more features than Scapple at this stage. It does tend to impose a little more structure than Scapple, which increases the learning curve slightly, but the price can't be beaten.

MIND MEISTER

For the online and mobile amongst you, there is Mind Meister (available at www.mindmeister.com), a cloud-based mind-mapping web application that is equally at

home on a desktop browser, on an iPad, or an Android tablet (or phone, come to that).

It is not a free service, however, but it is well supported. Ultimately though, the level of visual polish achievable through Mind Meister may be wasted on plain old story plotting.

GIVING IT A GO

Mind-mapping your way through a story design allows you to quickly see your story's shape with greater clarity than pages of text. It helps you to see which areas need more detail and because it is a freeform method, you can add any detail you like to the diagram, including ability checks, ease factors, rewards, page references, etc.; anything you need to run that part of an encounter you can conceivably add.

The diagram makes a great reference while actually running the story as you can mark it up as you go, keep track of where things are, see what's left, and even change things on the fly including adding or removing content as the story dictates.

You can also use it to describe the various levels of your saga. You might define the large sweep of where you want to take the covenant, the Tribunal, the Order, or even the cosmos in one high-level diagram, and then use others to map out the lives of individual characters, and then to individual scenarios and encounters themselves.

As a technique, give it a go for your next scenario and see how it works out for you.

VERDITIUS LONGEVITY DEVICES

Magi of House Verditius are seasoned craftsmen with a magical heritage steeped the enchantment of powerful devices often beyond the capability of their colleagues in other Houses. Their Minor Mysteries allow them to create tools far superior to mundane craftsmen, to enchant magical casting tools that enhance their own magic, and to bind the power of spirits and beasts into magical devices. Their deeper Mysteries cover malign magics, the reforging of broken devices, and the creation of automatons; beings of matter and magic that sit at the very edge of sentience. They are not, however, noted for any particular affinity with

magics designed to extend their lifespans. The Verditius Mysteries described below seek to redress this.

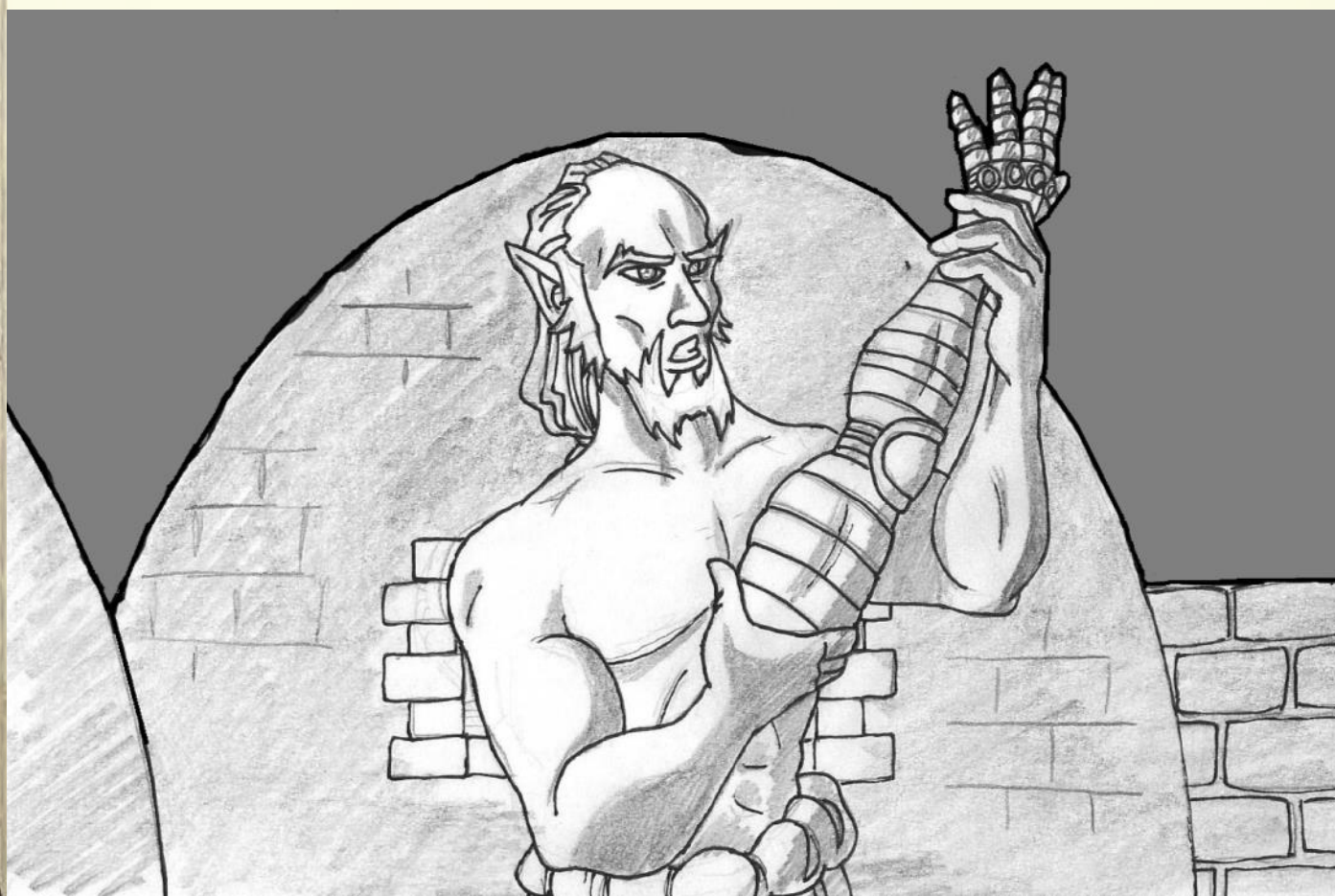
This article introduces two new Verditius Mysteries designed to give a particularly Verditius feel to the commonly-known Hermetic process of extending a character's natural lifespan. The intention is to make these new Mysteries immediately useful to characters who will not have been designed in advance of these rules seeing the light of day but for whom they are thematically appropriate. For this reason, there are practitioners of the first of these new Mysteries currently operating out of the Roman covenant of Verdi on the

BY MARK LAWFORD

island of Sardinia. They can be approached either for their services in creating a longevity focus or to act as mystagogues in initiating a magus into this Mystery.

The other is perhaps more difficult to find, but for reasons that we'll explore below, significant power may be opened up relatively quickly once the magus gains access to the hidden knowledge.

Finally, we present some story material to help players and storyguides wanting to introduce these new Mysteries to their sagas.



SUB ROSA

AN OVERVIEW OF LONGEVITY

The aging rules are detailed from **ArM5**, page 168 onwards and Longevity Rituals in the same book from page 101 onwards.

In short, once a character reaches 35, they start making Aging Rolls each winter.

AGING TOTAL:

**Stress die (no botch) + age/10
(round up)**

– Living Conditions modifier

– Longevity Ritual modifier

This roll is compared against the table on **ArM5**, page 170. In essence, a total of 3 or more results in the character's apparent age increasing by one, while a roll of 10 or more results in the rigors of aging applied to the character's characteristics as Aging Points, which also build a Decrepitude Score, just like experience points towards an Ability.

Once a Decrepitude Score reaches 5, mortal death is not far off and cannot be forestalled further by any known means.

Hermetic Longevity Rituals act as a negative modifier to the Aging Roll, as per the formula above, serving to reduce the possibility of looking and feeling older.

There are two factors involved in creating a Longevity Ritual:

- 1) A Creo Corpus Lab Total, providing a +1 bonus for each five levels of the Total
- 2) The expenditure of one pawn of vis for each five years of the character's age

These are clearly limited by a number of scores (Arts, aura, Magic Theory, Stamina, help in the laboratory, etc.) for the Lab Total and the character's Magic Theory Ability score specifically for the second item.

We are told that there is a great

deal of flexibility in the form a Longevity Ritual takes, from a traditional potion to a brief rite, to a device that might be carried. This item or practice is termed a focus.

The Longevity Ritual remains effective, providing its bonus to Aging rolls, until the character experiences a Crisis as described in **ArM5**, page 168. At this point, it is no longer effective and must be recreated and the number of pawns of vis expended increased in line with the character's new age.

SOME TERMINOLOGY

Throughout this article will use the term *longevity focus* to mean any item, rite, or practice that provides a longevity bonus. Typically, this is the longevity ritual itself, but in the case of the Verditius practices described below, this may be a little more diverse.

THE MYSTERY OF THE PHYLACTERY: ENCHANTED DEVICES AS LONGEVITY RITUALS

The Minor Hermetic Virtue of the Hermetic Phylactery is a mystery not widely known in House Verditius, but books that describe its use are available and any with a House Verditius Lore Score of 3 or more can likely recall if not the details of the phylactery then certainly where those details were written down.

In short, a Verditius magus initiated into this Mystery replaces the standard rules for Longevity Rituals with a single requirement: A device may be created and opened for enchantment as normal in a single season, and the crafter's Dexterity + Craft Ability Score becomes the bonus applied to the character's Aging Rolls in direct replacement for the Longevity Ritual bonus.

EXAMPLE:

After being initiated into the Mystery of the Hermetic Phylactery on the island of Sardinia, the magus Vico Murino sets about creating a belt. While the belt has a leather base, it is adorned with numerous silver panels. This gives it a capacity of (base 6 x 2 size) 12 pawns of vis. He has a Dexterity of +2 and Craft: Silversmith of 5, and so must expend a minimum of 7 pawns of vis to open the device for enchantment. At the end of the season, he has a silver belt that has both a capacity to receive 120 levels of enchantments and provides him with a +7 Longevity Ritual bonus.

In the next season, he enchants the belt with an effect designed to allow him to fly; ideal for reaching the top of the tower in which his laboratory is housed.

Longevity Bonus:

**Crafter's Dexterity + Craft
Ability Score**

As an additional option, you can allow additional bonuses to this based on the crafter's workshop and any assistants that they employ in crafting the device. *City & Guild*, page 67 provides details on what other factors you can consider including.

The device must be opened for enchantment with at least one pawn for every five years of the character's life, so a character who constructs a Hermetic Phylactery at the age of 40, must open the device for enchantment with at least 8 pawns of vis, while a magus of 150 years of age must have a device opened with 30 pawns of vis.

**Minimum Vis Capacity of the
Opened Device:**

Character's Age/5

All the usual rules apply for opening the device for enchantment, including the maximum number of pawns that can be used in a given season and its Magic Theory limitation. The discount that Verditius gain due to their score in the craft Ability used to create the device is

applied normally. In addition, if the magus has been initiated into the Mystery of the Elder Runes, as described in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, they can take advantage of the increased vis usage that Mystery allows.

At the end of the season, the device is a permanent Arcane Connection to its intended recipient and begins to operate as a Longevity Ritual with a bonus equal to the crafter's **Dexterity + Craft Ability Score** as described above.

While a phylactery is typically a small wooden box containing devotions scribed on parchment and worn strapped to the arm, this Hermetic Phylactery may be as small or large as required, made of any materials determined by its creator, and of any shape. It may even be a compound device consisting of multiple individual parts designed to increase its vis capacity or utility.

There is no requirement that the device's target remain in contact with the device or even have any regular contact with it. Once the initial season is past, the device and its recipient may remain at an arbitrary distance with no detriment to its Longevity bonus.

ENCHANTING THE PHYLACTERY

As a device opened for enchantment, the Phylactery may be enchanted with any standard device effect, including those dependent on any Mysteries known to the enchanter. Filling a device with enchantments has no detrimental effect on its use as a longevity focus.

A failure of the longevity focus also has no harmful effects upon any enchantments it carries. The only exception is that any effects that rely on the Arcane Connection to target its recipient start to fail unless that

STORY SEED: A POLITICAL STATEMENT

A Verditius magus known to the player Verditius enquires after books or other materials as touch upon the House Mystery of the Hermetic Phylactery. The player Verditius finds reference to it in some correspondence but it says nothing concerning the nature of the Mystery, only that some believe it is being used as a symbol of defiance against the House.

Is this Verditius magus wandering blindly into a political struggle? Or is the magus trying to find out where the player Verditius stands on the growing animosity between Verdi and Domus Magna.

Arcane Connection is subsequently fixed through spending a season and pawn of vis as usual.

LIMITATIONS

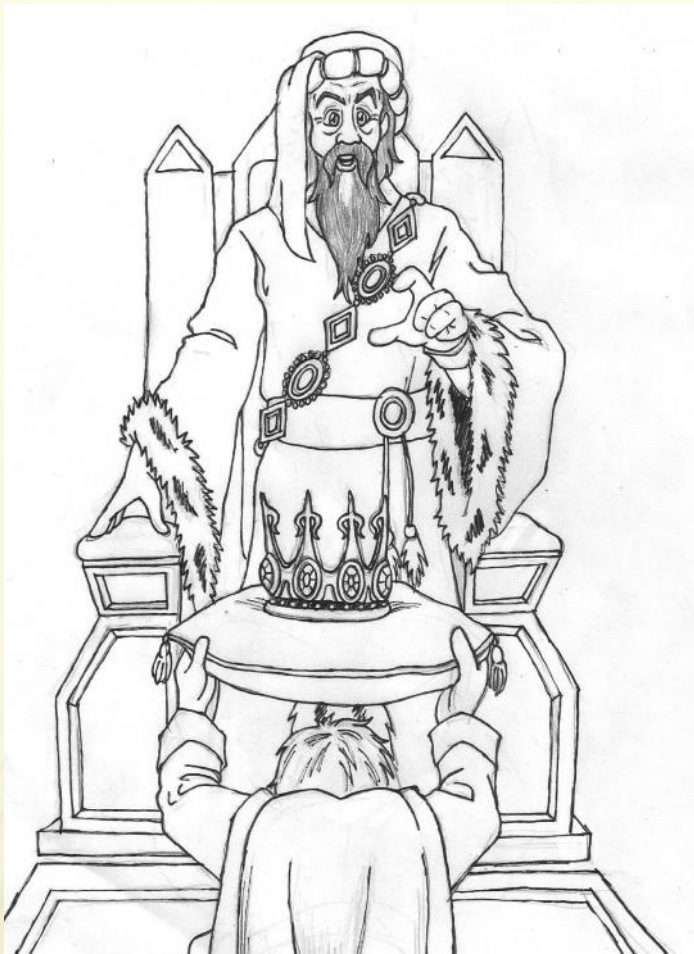
The device acts as a constant enchantment, in the same way that a regular Longevity Ritual does. This means that the recipient gains one Warping Point each year that he gains the benefit of such a device.

The opening for enchantment of such a device causes the failure of any pre-existing Longevity Ritual affecting the target recipient – the two effects cannot stack.

Any attempt to create a normal Hermetic Longevity Ritual for the recipient of one of these devices fails all the while the recipient continues to benefit from an Aging Bonus bestowed by the device.

If the device is investigated in the laboratory, an Intellego Vim Lab Total equal to or greater than the longevity bonus x 5 is needed to determine that it currently provides or has provided a longevity bonus.

A device that has already been opened for enchantment cannot then be made to provide a longevity



bonus. Similarly, a device that has been opened to provide a longevity bonus cannot subsequently be attuned as a talisman or otherwise have its vis capacity altered in any way.

A device loses its ability to provide a longevity bonus when it is broken, as described in *City & Guild*, page 79.

HERMETIC PHYLACTERY

(Minor House Mystery)

A magus initiated into this Mystery may make for himself or for another a longevity focus by simply opening a prepared device for enchantment. Until the magus suffers an Aging Crisis or the focus becomes broken, the recipient enjoys a longevity bonus equal to the vis capacity of the opened longevity focus. The focus operates as an Arcane Connection to the recipient and may be enchanted through any Hermetic means available to the magus.

INITIATION SCRIPT: MYSTERY OF THE PHYLACTERY

Ease Factor: 15

Script Bonus: +10

Script Details: The initiate first serves the mystagogue as a laboratory assistant for a full season (+1), after which the initiate must swear allegiance to the cause of Verdi over Ingasia, gaining the Vow Flaw in the process (+3). At the end of the season, the initiate must travel to Ingasia and there proclaim their allegiance at the usurper Domus Magna (+3), before returning for a season's tuition under the mystagogue (+3). Those undertaking the quest to Ingasia gain a reputation; Supporter of Verdi (House Verditius) 4.

The initiate must have a score of 3 or more in Verditius Cult Lore before undertaking the initiation.

This is not the original initiation script for this House Mystery. It was revised in the years following the

Primus' decision to snub the covenant of Verdi and instead make the covenant of Ingasia in the Thebes Tribunal the new Domus Magna of House Verditius. The new initiation script represents the growing animosity between those loyal to Verdi and the supporters of Ingasia.

THE MYSTAGOGUES

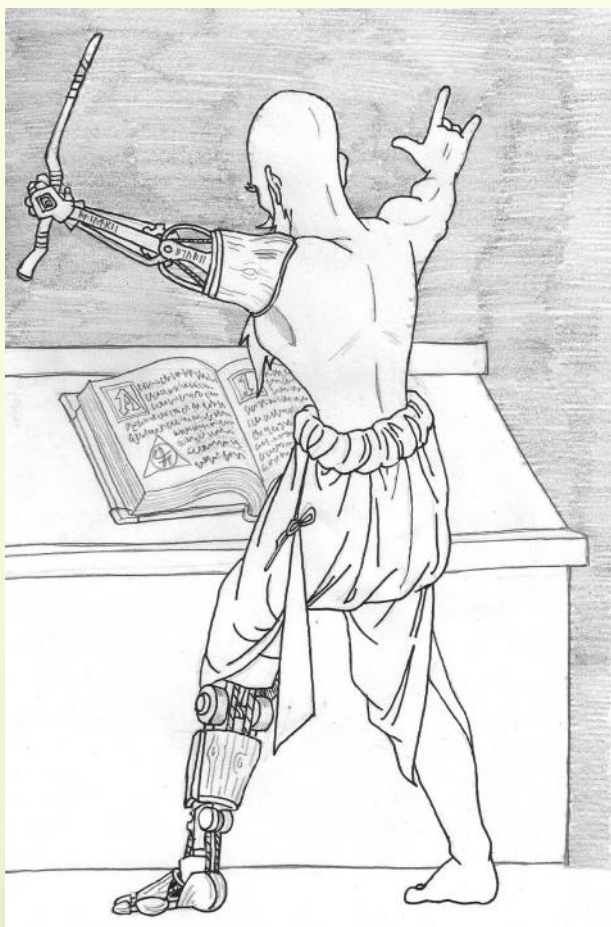
Like so much now in Verdi, the control of access to this Mystery lays in the hands of resentful and hubristic magi, angered at the continuing insult perpetrated upon them by the magi of Ingasia and the Primus.

It may be possible to find another mystagogue who knows the Mystery of the Hermetic Phylactery away from Verdi with access to the original initiation script. It is thought that one such individual took up residence in the Greater Alps over a century ago and if she no longer lives then perhaps her library may still contain the script.

THE MYSTERY OF CREDNE: PHYSICAL AUGMENTATION

While the Mystery of the Hermetic Phylactery is a House Mystery known to a few in House Verditius, The Mystery of Credne (pronounced CREY-nya) is peculiar to Hibernia and may in fact now be lost. While the Hermetic Phylactery acts as a longevity focus external to the body, this Mystery provides the power to replace parts of the magus' body with enchanted devices in order to act as longevity foci.

Some of this may sound familiar to those who have read the Inscription on the Soul Mystery, as described in *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 69. That particular path has a very different aim, however, and the two forms of magic are unrelated.



ORIGINS OF THE MYSTERY

Nearly two centuries ago, the magus Colla mac Morna, already advanced in years, suffered an aging crisis from which even Hermetic Magic seemed unable to protect him. Fearing the end, he called for members of the Coill Trí (*The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 112), who conferred with the Tuatha Dé Danann (*The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 124). One night, the ancient healer of the Tuatha, Dian Cécht, arrived to seek audience with mac Morna. While there, he discovered that mac Morna's arm, withered and infected through age, was the source of the crisis. He proposed the Fate of Nuada; the arm would be removed and replaced with one crafted by his own hands from silver. Colla mac Morna agreed.

Dian Cécht summoned the smith Credne, who called for as much silver as the covenant could muster and he worked until dawn in the forges of the Verditius magi. Finally, as the cock crowed, the arm was completed.

With much ceremony, Colla mac Morna's arm was severed and the silver arm created by Credne was magically attached. Within moments, Colla mac Morna's strength returned to him and he could use his new arm with as much dexterity as he had ever possessed.

In return for his trust in the old ways, Dian Cécht granted Colla mac Morna the knowledge to perform the same service to others. For his part,

NEW FLAW: MONSTROUS APPEARANCE

Major General Flaw

This Flaw repackages the Monstrous Appearance Major Magical Inferiority, as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 42, as a Flaw that characters unable to take Inferiorities can take.

Having become simultaneously both more and less than human, the character's appearance is considered

monstrous to others, resulting in a -6 penalty in all social situations, or to any rolls involving the trust or loyalty of others. This stacks with any penalty imposed by the Gift and the character is treated as having the Blatant Gift for the purposes of calculating prevailing covenant loyalty.

mac Morna counted himself an ally to the Tuatha Dé Danann from that day on.

CREATING AIRGETLÁMHA

The devices created through this Mystery are called Airgetlámha (areyd-LAHW-ah), literally meaning Silver Hands after the silver hands crafted both for King Nuada of the Tuatha De Danann and for mac Morna. The Verditius spends a season crafting the *Airgetlám* (areyd-LAHW) and opening it for enchantment, just as with the Mystery of the Hermetic Phylactery. The Airgetlám can be of any material, but it must act to directly replace a part of the human body and so must be of broadly appropriate shape and construction.

The restriction on the number of pawns with which the device also remains; i.e. it must be opened with a minimum of character's age/5 pawns of vis.

Similarly, the longevity bonus is also calculated in the same way as for the Hermetic Phylactery, i.e. the

creator's **Dexterity + Craft** Ability Score.

In practice, there are only four parts of the individual that cannot be replaced. These are the liver, the gallbladder, the spleen, and the brain, as these correspond to the natural humors, as described in *Art & Academe*, page 38.

The restrictions on the number of pawns that need to be used are exactly as for the Hermetic Phylactery.

The airgetlám is attached to the recipient through a Hermetic ritual, described below, during which the original body part is removed and the airgetlám joined with its host. It is then a natural extension of its bearer, enjoying all faculties of motion and sensation as did its predecessor.

ATTACHING THE AIRGETLÁM

Once the work of Credne has been done and the airgetlám created, the Rite of Dian Cécht can begin and the airgetlám can be attached. In Hermetic terms, this is a ritual spell reliant on knowledge of the Mystery to design.

The ritual itself is designed as a general level spell and is fully described in the [nearby box](#).

In the event of a Casting Tablet detailing this ritual being found, confident magi may attempt to follow its instructions without knowing the underlying Mystery.

SHAPE-CHANGERS AND AIRGETLÁMHA

Shapechanging magic is common across the Order, and in Hibernia in particular. Those bearing airgetlámha may still utilize shape-changing spells as normal, including the heartbeast power possessed by those of House Bjornaer, but while the airgetlámha change shape to accommodate the new form, they remain obviously objects of

artifice.

For instance, a magus bearing an airgetlám in the shape of a mechanical bronze leg turns himself into a stag to better explore the woodland. The resulting stag also has an obviously bronze mechanical leg, which gives it a Monstrous Appearance.

EFFECTS OF THE AIRGETLÁM

A bonded airgetlám functions in every way just like a natural extension of the recipient's body; a direct replacement for the natural organ or limb that it replaces.

The recipient of the airgetlám suffers from the effects of the Monstrous Appearance Major Magical Inferiority, as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 42.

Each airgetlám provides a +1 Form Bonus against Corpus effects.

A recipient of an airgetlám can no longer gain longevity bonuses from either the common longevity ritual practiced by the Order or from the Hermetic Phylactery known to House Verditius. Once an airgetlám has been bonded with the bearer, no other longevity magics will work for him.

Beyond this, the airgetlám has a number of effects over and above the Hermetic Phylactery described above.

AIRGETLÁMHA AND THE LONGEVITY BONUS

A magus gains a longevity bonus equal to the number of pawns used to open the airgetlám for enchantment. However, the magus may have more than one active airgetlám at any one

The Rite of Dian Cécht

MuCo General, ritual, Mystery

R: Touch, D: Special, T: Group

This ritual, cast with casting requisites as appropriate for the target airgetlám, binds the airgetlám to the host. During the rite, the limb or organ to be replaced is excised or severed and the replacement attached. The removed organ is burned, destroying its essence entirely, and the body and the new airgetlám become one.

The ritual's level must equal or exceed five times the longevity bonus

granted by the airgetlám, so a level 50 Rite is required to attach an airgetlám granting a longevity bonus of 10 to a recipient.

The new base effect for this is essentially:

Base Bind an airgetlám to a host where the level of the spell equals (five times the longevity bonus) + 30 levels.

It is not necessary to design a unique ritual per airgetlám or recipient.

(Base, +1 Touch, +4 Special Duration, +1 Part)

time, in which case the bonus is equal to the highest value focus, plus one for each other active airgetlám possessed by the magus. An active airgetlám is one that has not yet failed through Crisis, as described below.

AIRGETLÁMHA AND AGING POINTS

While the magus may still gain Aging Points, while bonded with an airgetlám functioning as a longevity focus, any Aging Points gained are not applied to the character's characteristics. They still contribute to the Decrepitude Score as normal, however. This results in further

protection against the ravages of time.

AIRGETLÁMHA AND CRISIS

An airgetlám cancels the effects of a Crisis incurred as a result of the next failed Aging Roll. The Aging Crisis still causes the longevity focus to fail, leaving the magus potentially unprotected against further aging, but any other deleterious effects of the Crisis are avoided.

As described above, a magus may benefit from multiple embedded and bonded airgetlámha. When subject to Crisis, the highest value active longevity focus is cancelled. This may not leave the magus unprotected, however. If there are more than one

FAERIE AIRGETLÁMHA

This article looks at the Mystery of Cedne as practiced by House Verditius, but the same service can be secured from the Tuatha Dé Danann. There are physicians and craftsmen still within that Tuath who can both craft and attach these airgetlámha, if they can be found and bargained with. The following powers represent these ancient gifts.

The Craft of Cedne

The faerie crafter creates an airgetlám for a specific recipient. The longevity bonus is based on the faerie's

Dexterity + Craft Pretence Score and it costs the faerie 1 Might Point per point of bonus. So, a silver arm providing a longevity bonus of 10 costs 10 Might Points (which is the maximum possible using this power).

Points spent in this way can only be regained by consuming faerie vis associated with the form of Vim, or in taking back and destroying the airgetlám.

This Ritual Power costs the faerie two Ritual Power Virtues to buy.

Costs 50 levels. Special, (R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual, Ritual)

The Faerie Rite of Dian Cécht

At the cost of 10 Might Points, the faerie with this power can attach a specially crafted airgetlám to a recipient. The maximum longevity bonus that the airgetlám can provide is 10. Anything beyond this is too potent for this power and the ritual fails. Points spent on this power can only be regained by consuming faerie vis associated with the form of Corpus.

This Ritual Power costs the faerie two Ritual Power Virtues to buy.

Costs 50 levels. Special, (R: Touch, D: Special, T: Group, Ritual)

active longevity foci, then the next lowest is then used to determine any longevity bonus for future years.

AIRGETLÁMHA AND WARPING

A magus may have multiple Airgetlámha, and while they act as an active longevity focus, they each act as a constant magical effect upon the host, each in turn providing 1 Warping Point per year. In the event of an Aging Crisis or damage causing an airgetlám to cease functioning as a longevity focus, the airgetlám no longer causes warping.

When a character bearing airgetlámha gains the scars of twilight or other warping effects, the airgetlámha are also directly affected. They may become enlarged, or discoloured, or even grow new detail that was not present before.

AIRGETLÁMHA AND DAMAGE

Airgetlámha have Damage Levels, as described in *City & Guild*, page 77.

APPROPRIATE AIRGETLÁMHA

There may be a temptation to create a multitude of airgetlámha as each active longevity focus at least provides a bonus of +1 to the final resulting longevity bonus. Eager players may seek to replace individual digits with airgetlámha, or even individual joints within those fingers, or perhaps individual teeth. However, these are not appropriate.

The magic of airgetlámha works on the principle of significance; a tooth is not significant, but a jaw is. A finger is not significant, but a hand or an arm is. Hair is not significant, but a skull is.

They do nothing to alter the number of body levels their bearer possesses, but they are themselves subject to damage in stressful situations.

Whenever the bearer of an airgetlám suffers a Medium Wound or greater, a Damage Check must be made to the airgetlám. If the roll fails, the airgetlám loses a Damage Level. As a rule of thumb, most airgetlámha have two Damage Levels (Standard Quality construction and size -1, as described in *City & Guild*, page 77). If

The troupe should be a sensible arbiter on these, but a decent rule of thumb is whether the loss of that body part might be the cause of a Flaw, such as Missing Hand, Missing Eye, Afflicted Tongue, or Lamé, for instance.

But remember also that the more airgetlámha a character has operating as active longevity foci, the more warping that character gains each year. There is a definite balance to be had and characters could consider adding further airgetlámha only when the beneficial effects of a previous airgetlám cease.

you don't have *City & Guild* available, the nearby box gives you a quick guide on judging Damage Levels.

Where more than one airgetlámha are carried, then the Storyguide should decide which device is affected.

Once an airgetlám loses all its Damage Levels, it is broken. Any enchantments in the device cease working immediately and it no longer contributes a longevity bonus. It also ceases to function as a limb or organ.

THE MYSTERY OF CEDNE

(Major House Mystery)

While the magical knowledge behind this Mystery ultimately stems from the Tuatha Dé Danann, it is considered a Verditius House Mystery as none outside of that House have ever learned it.

A magus initiated into this Mystery gains the power to create airgetlámha and bind them to their recipients through the Rite of Dian Cécht using the rules above. They have knowledge enough to create their own versions of the Rite, allowing for different levels of effect. They may also act as mystagogue to others seeking this power.

INITIATION SCRIPT: MYSTERY OF CEDNE

Initiation into this mystery always involves the initiate becoming bonded with their first airgetlám.

Ease Factor: 21

Script Bonus: 21

Script Details: The initiate must first gain the blessing of the Tuatha Dé Danann by undertaking a quest at their behest (+3). Once the Tuatha Dé Danann grant their blessing, the mystagogue can proceed and he spends a season crafting and opening for enchantment an airgetlám for the initiate (+3), forged in the ashes of the initiate's talisman (+6). At the culmination of the season, the Rite of Dian Cécht is performed and the

initiate bonded with the airgetlám, going through the ordeal of gaining the new Monstrous Appearance Flaw (+9).

The initiate must have a score of 3 or more in Verditius Cult Lore before undertaking the initiation.

This initiation is unusual in that the mystagogue may be either a magus of House Verditius who knows the Mystery, or it could be one of the Tuatha Dé Danann who possess the requisite powers. If a member of the Tuatha Dé Danann acts as the mystagogue, the initiate must have a score of 3 or more in Area Lore: Hibernia before undertaking the initiation.

A shattered airgetlám eye no longer sees and a broken airgetlám becomes lame. The bearer gains an appropriate Flaw to model this damage.

REPAIRING AIRGETLÁMHA

Damaged airgetlámha may be

ASSESSING DAMAGE

An airgetlám loses a Damage Level if the bearer fails a **Dexterity + Finesse** Stress roll against Ease Factor 15. The roll gains a bonus equal to the magnitude of effects enchanted into the device.

On a botch, the airgetlám is struck from the bearer's body instead of losing a Damage Level.

repaired. A dedicated season spent by a craftsman repairing an airgetlám automatically restores any Damage Levels that have been lost. The season may be treated as a season of Practice, for book-keeping purposes.

A broken airgetlám may be repaired, but this requires a magus of House Verditius initiated into the Mystery of Reforging Enchanted Items (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 125). Reforging the device restores its intended function (a

repaired eye can see; a repaired hand can grasp) and the associated Flaw is removed. Its function as a longevity focus is not restored, however.

ENCHANTING AIRGETLÁMHA

As with any other opened device, airgetlámha may be enchanted using any standard or Mystery magics known to the enchanter.

They have one advantage over other devices, one shared by talismans; the enchantments may use the Personal range to affect the bearer to which the airgetlám has been bonded.

Constant effects, whether they are designed to affect the bearer or the airgetlám itself, are a source of warping as described in **ArM5**, page 168.

RESTRICTIONS

Airgetlámha may be created only for those with the Gift or with some form of Supernatural Might.

Once the airgetlám is bonded to the host, it becomes part of their essential nature and cannot be removed without injury or consequence. Any wound left through

CASTING TABLET: RITE OF DIAN CÉCHT

It is possible that a casting tablet detailing the Dian Cécht may be found. If it is, it may be written down in vernacular Gaelic instead of Latin to disguise its true purpose.

One way to introduce the Mystery of Cedne into your saga quickly is to have a pre-existing airgetlám found along with a casting tablet of the Rite at a level suitable to use. This gives players and characters the opportunity to explore this magic based on the deeds of ancient Tuatha Dé Danann heroes.

The tablet may purport to be an accurate description of the Rite actually carried out by the physician Dian Cécht himself. If true, that would make a potent trophy for any Hibernian covenant.

removing an airgetlám may be healed, but the removed limb or organ cannot be replaced through *Creo Corpus* magic; the essential nature is now such that it may only be replaced either by re-bonding the removed airgetlám or through some other magic to replace the missing limb with another of the same material as the removed airgetlám.

EXAMPLE: AIRGETLÁMHA AND AGING

Finn, a 35 year old magus, undergoes initiation into the Mystery of Cedne, gaining a mechanical bronze arm in the process. Created by a master craftsman, the bronze arm gives him a longevity bonus of 12 (Dexterity +3 and Craft: Smith +9). He also gains one point of Hubris.

At the end of his 35th year (which we'll call Year One), he makes an Aging Roll. His bronze arm provides such a longevity bonus that he suffers no ill effects from aging, but he does have the Monstrous Appearance Flaw

and he does begin to suffer a constant one warping point per year. He continues untouched by the ravages of years until the age of 58, at which point he has an apparent age of 38, but during a freak winter experiences a Crisis. He suffers no ill-effects from the crisis thanks to his airgetlám but it no longer provides a longevity bonus.

Now reliant on his own craftsmanship, he creates a new airgetlám, an iron leg. He opens it for enchantment with a capacity of 15 pawns of vis, which exceeds the required minimum of 12, and, with help, conducts the Rite of Dian Cécht. He now has an airgetlám providing a

longevity bonus of +8 (Dexterity +2 and Craft: Carpenter +6).

In order to provide a further longevity bonus, he sacrifices his other leg, creating a second iron airgetlám. After going through the ritual, he now has a total longevity bonus of +9 (8 for the first active airgetlám, +1 for the second).

By the time he reaches 100 years of age, he has suffered no further aging crises and has an apparent age of 71. He has gained fewer than 10 Aging Points, giving him a Decrepitude Score of 1.

A BONDED AIRGETLÁM FUNCTIONS IN EVERY WAY JUST LIKE A NATURAL EXTENSION OF THE RECIPIENT'S BODY; A DIRECT REPLACEMENT FOR THE NATURAL ORGAN OR LIMB THAT IT REPLACES

AIRGETLÁMHA AND HUBRIS

Replacing natural body parts with devices of artifice is a hubristic act. Unsurprisingly, Verditius magi who undertake this path gain Hubris, as described in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 118. The nearby table shows the number of experience points gained for various airgetlám-related activities. In addition, he can also add his Hubris score when enchanting an airgetlám.

INCREASING HUBRIS

These additional behaviours should be considered alongside the table on *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 120.

Behaviour	Experience Points
Gaining an airgetlám	1
Crafting an airgetlám for another	3
Enchanting an airgetlám	1

REUSING AIRGETLÁMHA

The ritual used to bond the airgetlám to the individual ensures that the airgetlám becomes part of that individual's essential nature. This means that the airgetlám does not need to have been built, opened for enchantment, or even enchanted for a particular individual. If a magus finds an existing airgetlám, it can be

removed from its host, living or dead, and bonded with another host. This bonding is performed through the ritual described above and all the same restrictions apply.

The new host treats the airgetlám as a longevity focus providing a bonus equal to the number of pawns of vis used to open it for enchantment. Additionally, existing effects enchanted into the airgetlám that use the Personal Target now affect the new host.

This means that for a magus initiated into the Mystery of Cedne, the finding of old and already

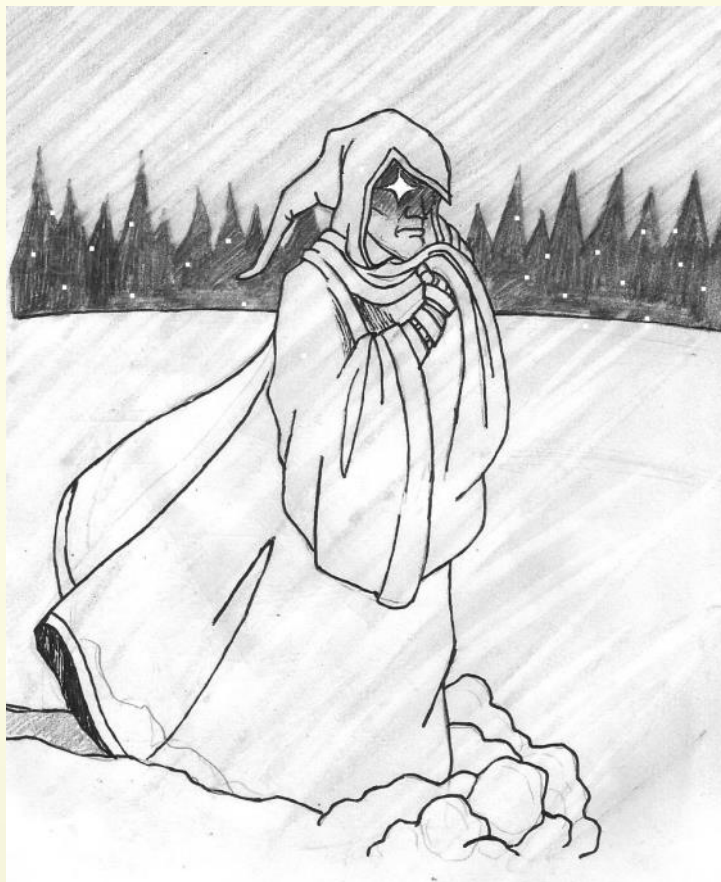
enchanted airgetlámha is a potentially potent means of not only gaining a significant longevity bonus, but also a number of additional enchantments.

As these unusual devices may be taken from the living or dead and reused for full effect, those who bear airgetlámha would do well to be suspicious of those who enquire after them.

CHARACTER SHEET

A supplementary character sheet would be useful to record the airgetlámha bonded to the character.

The included example indicates which body-parts have been replaced, the Aging Bonus that each airgetlám provides, the number of damage levels each has and their status, and of course any enchantments that they might contain.



LOCATION:
ARM/HAND
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
EYES
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
EARS
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
ARM/HAND
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
HEART/LUNGS
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
GUTS
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

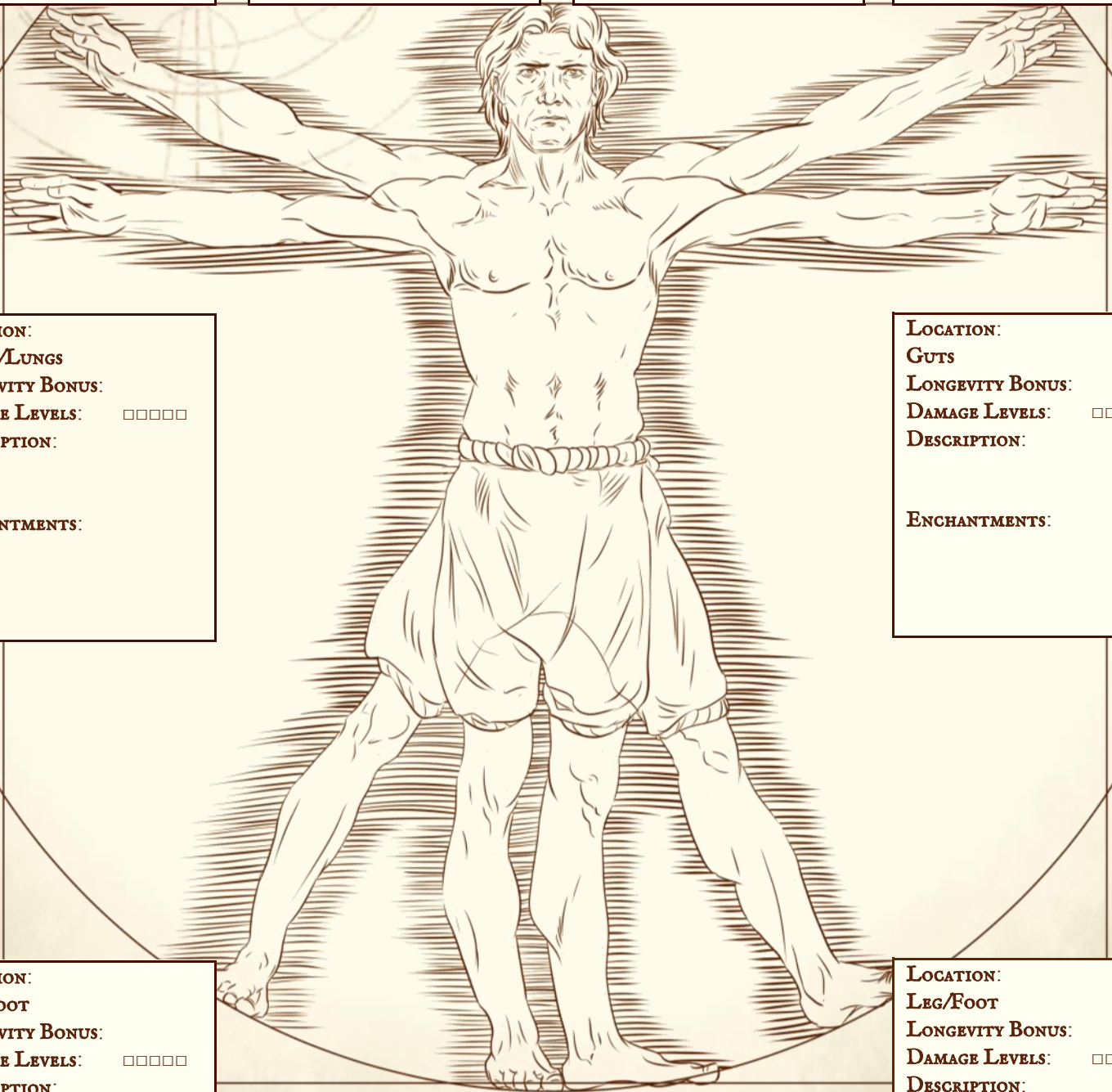
ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
LEG/FOOT
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:

LOCATION:
LEG/FOOT
LONGEVITY BONUS:
DAMAGE LEVELS: □□□□
DESCRIPTION:

ENCHANTMENTS:



AIRGETLÁMHA RECORD SHEET FOR:

DEMOGRAPHY OF THE ORDER OF HERMES

This article intends to draw together what is known about the size and demography of the Order of Hermes from **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** sources, and use this information to make predictions about the Order's past and its future. These predictions rely on mathematical principles that I employ in my day job, but I have tried to keep the main article algebra-free. All the details of the predictive models has been left to the end of the article, as a point of interest for anyone wanting to see the assumptions made.

CURRENT SIZE AND AGE PROFILE

In its 453rd year (1220 AD), the Order of Hermes numbers some

1240 magi. This number is obtained from the three *Houses of Hermes* books, which state (in two cases approximately) the size of each of the 12 extant houses (see the nearby box).

There is no need to treat the unGifted redcaps (who make up about 12% of the Order) as any different from a Gifted magus. They have a 15 year apprenticeship just like the rest of the Order, and thanks to longevity rituals supplied by their House, redcaps can expect a life as long as any other member of the Order.

We can also gain an idea as to the age distribution of the Order. Amongst the Tribunal books written for **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** there are 261 magi with their ages listed. I've divided these into five age categories. Spring magi are those

BY MARK SHIRLEY

fresh from apprenticeship. Summer magi are burgeoning powers. Autumn magi are at the zenith of their Arts. Winter magi are beginning to show their age, and Deep Winter magi are the venerable sages close to Final Twilight.

The third column of this table gives the distribution as listed in the Tribunal books. The first thing to note is that there is a notable lack of Spring magi. However, in most sagas, this role is assumed to be taken by player characters, so I've added a covenant of 5 Spring magi to each of the tribunals and recalculate the stage distribution. The result is shown in the rightmost column.

What is immediately noticeable is that the Order of Hermes is dominated by Summer magi, with Autumn magi being the second most numerous. Truly ancient magi in Deep Winter are scarce at less than half a percent: only 4 magi are anticipated to fall into this category in the whole Order.

HISTORICAL EVENTS AFFECTING DEMOGRAPHY

There are three events in the history of the Order of Hermes that would have influenced its speed of growth: the formation of House Ex Miscellanea, the corruption of House Tytalus, and the Schism War. First we should start with the initial conditions in 767 AD, when the Founders of the Order first met at Durenmar.

HOUSE POPULATION AT 1220

Bonisagus	81	Jerbiton	102
Bjornaer	79	Mercere	12 + c. 150
Criamon	94	Merinita	68
Ex Miscellanea	c. 180	Tremere	92
Flambeau	114	Tyталus	96
Guernicus	98	Verditius	74

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ORDER

STAGE	AGE RANGE	OBSERVED (PERCENT)	OBSERVED INCL. PCs (PERCENT)
Apprentice	0 – Gauntlet	–	–
Spring	Gauntlet – 35	14.20	23.00
Summer	36 – 70	42.50	38.10
Autumn	71 – 120	34.10	30.60
Winter	121 – 180	8.80	7.90
Deep Winter	181+	0.40	0.30

THE FOUNDING

The Order was founded by thirteen wizards: the twelve Founders and Trianoma. From the information in the three *Houses of Hermes* books, we can estimate the ages of the Founders.

Birna, Tremere, and Trianoma were probably Spring magi. Bonisagus, Criamon, and Merinita were probably Autumn magi, and the remaining seven magi (Diedne, Flambeau, Guernicus, Jerbiton, Mercere, Tytalus, Verditius) were likely to be Summer magi. Although Pralix (and perhaps other apprentices such as Notatus) were present from the start of the Order, they would have been included in the first batch of recruits as they could not have commenced Hermetic training prior to the Founding.

HOUSE EX MISCELLANEA

In 817 AD, House Ex Miscellanea was formed from Pralix's Ordo Miscellanea. This rival to the Order of Hermes consisted of the hedge wizards that Pralix had assembled in order to defeat Damhan-Allaidh, plus those wizards who fought with The Spider who Pralix was able to recruit after the battle. We know that when House Ex Miscellanea joined, this doubled the size of the Order at that time (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 101).

THE CORRUPTION OF HOUSE TYTALUS

In total, seventeen magi were Marched when the Corruption of House Tytalus was discovered in 967 AD (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 74). We can probably assume that some, if not all of their apprentices were killed as well.

THE SCHISM WAR

The Schism War was perhaps the most traumatic event in the Order's

history. The entirety of House Diedne was Renounced and exterminated, but they did not go quietly. We know that House Diedne was the largest house in the Order at that time (*Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 40), and so we can conservatively estimate that a full twelfth of the Order was a member of this house (leaving 11/12ths of the Order to be divided between the remaining twelve houses). Houses Flambeau and Tremere were heavily involved in the fighting, and perhaps lost a third of their members in the eight years of the war. We are told that four other houses strongly opposed House Diedne: Bonisagus, Ex Miscellanea, Guernicus, and Jerbiton. Maybe a quarter of each of these houses were killed. Finally, the remaining six houses would not have escaped unscathed, and perhaps lost a fifth of their numbers as well. Overall, this translates to just over 3 in every 10 magi perishing; a massive effect on the Order's numbers.

MUNDANE DEMOGRAPHY OF MYTHIC EUROPE

Trends in demography of the medieval period in Europe can be divided into five basic phases. Between 400 and 1000 AD the population was stable at a relatively low level of about 30 million. Between 1000 and 1250 AD there was a boom period of rapid expansion, followed by a hundred

years of stable population size at a relatively high level of around 80 million. The Great Mortality (nowadays called "The Black Death") caused a steep decline from 1350 AD onwards, killing an estimated quarter of all humans in Europe. Following 1420 AD there was a slow expansion as Europe repopulated; this growth gained momentum during the sixteenth century. See figure 1.

PREDICTING THE GROWTH RATE OF THE ORDER

A stage-structured mathematical model was created to predict the size of the Order of Hermes through time and to predict future trends. The details of this model are given later, but in essence it uses a standard technique from the ecological sciences to model the passage of individuals from Apprenticeship to the Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, and finally Deep Winter Stages. At each life stage, individuals will produce new apprentices, and either remain in the current stage, advance to the next stage, or die. The three events mentioned earlier – Formation of Ex Miscellanea, Corruption of Tytalus, and the Schism War – were simulated at the appropriate time points.

The advantage of this type of predictive model is that, since it models stages rather than ages, it doesn't rely on assumptions about

NUMBERS OF MAGI AT EACH LIFE STAGE

STAGE	PREDICTED (NUMBER)	PREDICTED (PERCENT)
Apprentice	360	—
Spring	309	24.4
Summer	509	40.2
Autumn	323	25.5
Winter	108	8.5
Deep Winter	16	1.3

longevity rituals and living conditions modifiers. These things can be highly tribunal- and saga-dependent. However, in this model, the age of each magus is not simulated, just his or her life stage. Each stage has a given duration and the last stage of Deep Winter holds all magi until they die.

The model started with the thirteen magi in 767 AD, and predicted population numbers every seven years. Sixty-five of these time steps brought the Order of Hermes to 1222 AD, and a final population size of 1267 magi. The breakdown of number of magi in each stage are shown in the nearby table.

Note that the 360 Apprentices were not included in the denominator for the calculation of the percent population in each stage, allowing direct comparison with the survey earlier. The predicted percentage of the Order at each life stage from the model matches pretty well with the observed percentages obtained from

the **Fifth Edition** tribunal books, after adjusting for presumed player characters. The Order is still dominated by Summer magi, with Autumn and Spring magi following behind with similar numbers. A greater proportion of Deep Winter magi is predicted than observed; but this may reflect the tribunals surveyed; for example, the Tribunal of the Greater Alps could have a greater proportion of ancient magi (it certainly did in the **Fourth Edition** book *Sanctuary of Ice*).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ORDER OF HERMES

Since the outputs match in both total population size and stage distribution, we can have confidence that the parameters and assumptions of the modelling produce a plausible representation of the Order's demography. On this basis, some inferences about the Order can be

drawn based on the results of the model. Some of these implications are detailed in this section.

POPULATION OF HOUSE

EX MISCELLANEA

According to the predictions of the model, when House Ex Miscellanea joined the Order, the Order consisted of 109 magi. The Ordo Miscellanea must have therefore consisted of at least 100 wizards, since the size of the Order was said to have doubled by the joining of the thirteenth house. Yet, despite a twelve-fold increase in the size of Order over the next four hundred years (109 magi in 816 AD to 1267 magi in 1222 AD), House Ex Miscellanea does not even double in size in this time (100 magi to approximately 180 magi). What's more, by the time the Schism War happened, a mere two hundred years after Pralix, rather than growing House Ex Miscellanea had shrunk to

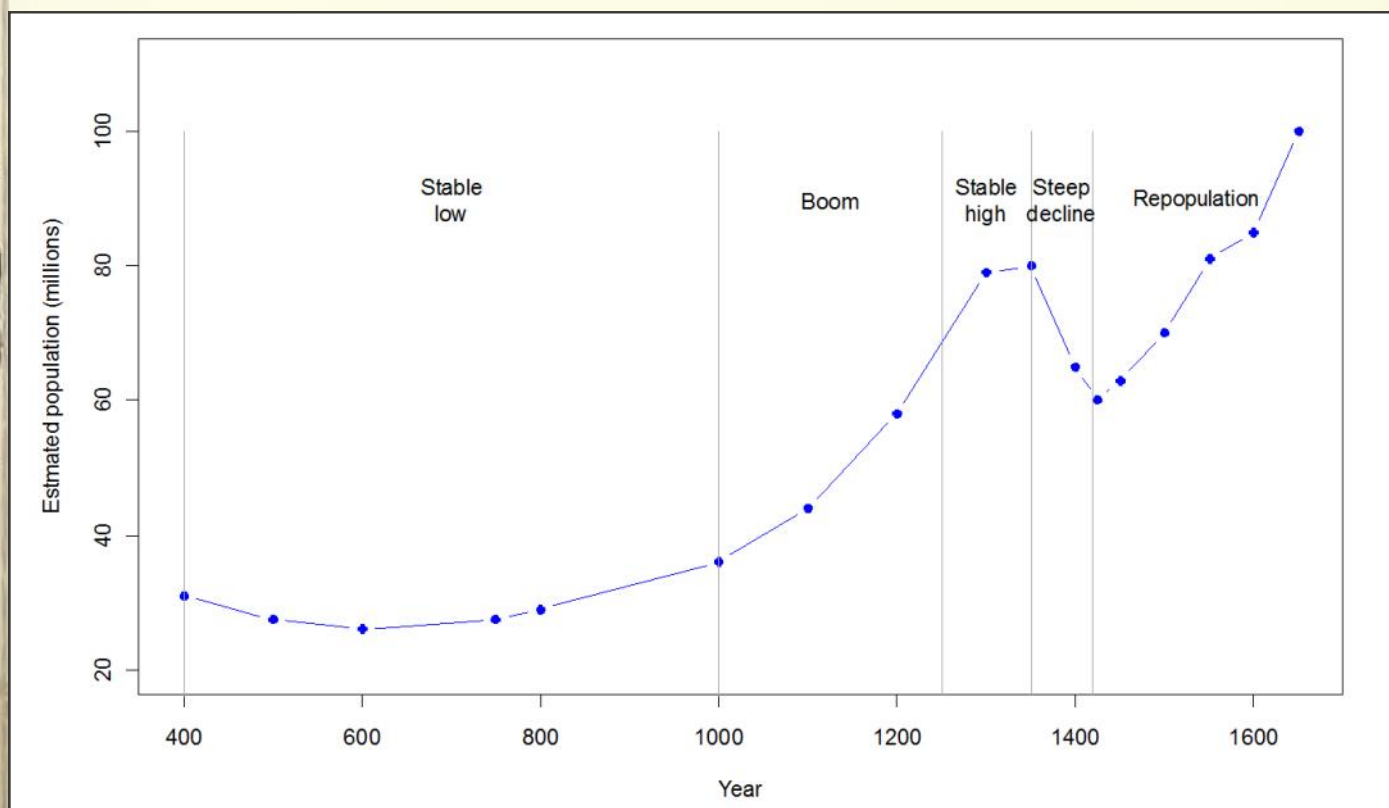


Figure 1: Total European population from the Dark Ages to the Renaissance. Data from McEvedy & Jones (1978)

the size of the other twelve houses — between 60 and 70 members. It is clear that House Ex Miscellanea did not thrive in its early days within the Order of Hermes.

One explanation for this is that the vast majority of the new House never adapted to Hermetic magic, and did not train Hermetic apprentices. This might be due to intractable magical traditions, but it is also quite likely that a fair proportion of Pralix's army of hedge wizards was unGifted, and therefore could not train Hermetic apprentices. Playing with the model shows that if only a third of the Ordo Miscellanea were Gifted wizards in the Summer stage, then these 33 new magi will have grown to 62 in the two centuries between the founding of House Ex Miscellanea and the Schism War.

CASUALTIES OF THE SCHISM WAR

At the eve of the Schism War there were 861 magi in the Order. Under the assumptions detailed above, 295 magi perished including all 72 members of House Diedne. For simplicity, it is assumed that any apprentices of slain magi (including those from House Diedne) were adopted by other members of the Order of Hermes; still, the Order's size was reduced to the numbers seen 70 years previously.

HETEROGENEITY OF THE ORDER ACROSS MYTHIC EUROPE

Not all the tribunals have an equal size or mundane population. From the data in McEvedy & Jones (1978) I determined the population of Mythic

Europe by approximate tribunal in 1220.

It is clear from the nearby table that there is a huge difference between population sizes in the 13 tribunals; but the assumption has tended to be that the Order is relatively evenly split, with just under 100 individuals per tribunal. There are a number of reasons why magi might seek to spread themselves out evenly amongst the tribunals. For a start, sparsely populated tribunals are likely to be rich in magical resources since the Dominion will not be so all-encompassing. If a tribunal is small in terms of magi, then the share of resources — magical, mundane, and political — per magus is large; this encourages settlement in that tribunal, which reduces the share per magus. In the absence of constraining factors (such as rules on establishing new covenants or joining pre-existing ones), this process would continue

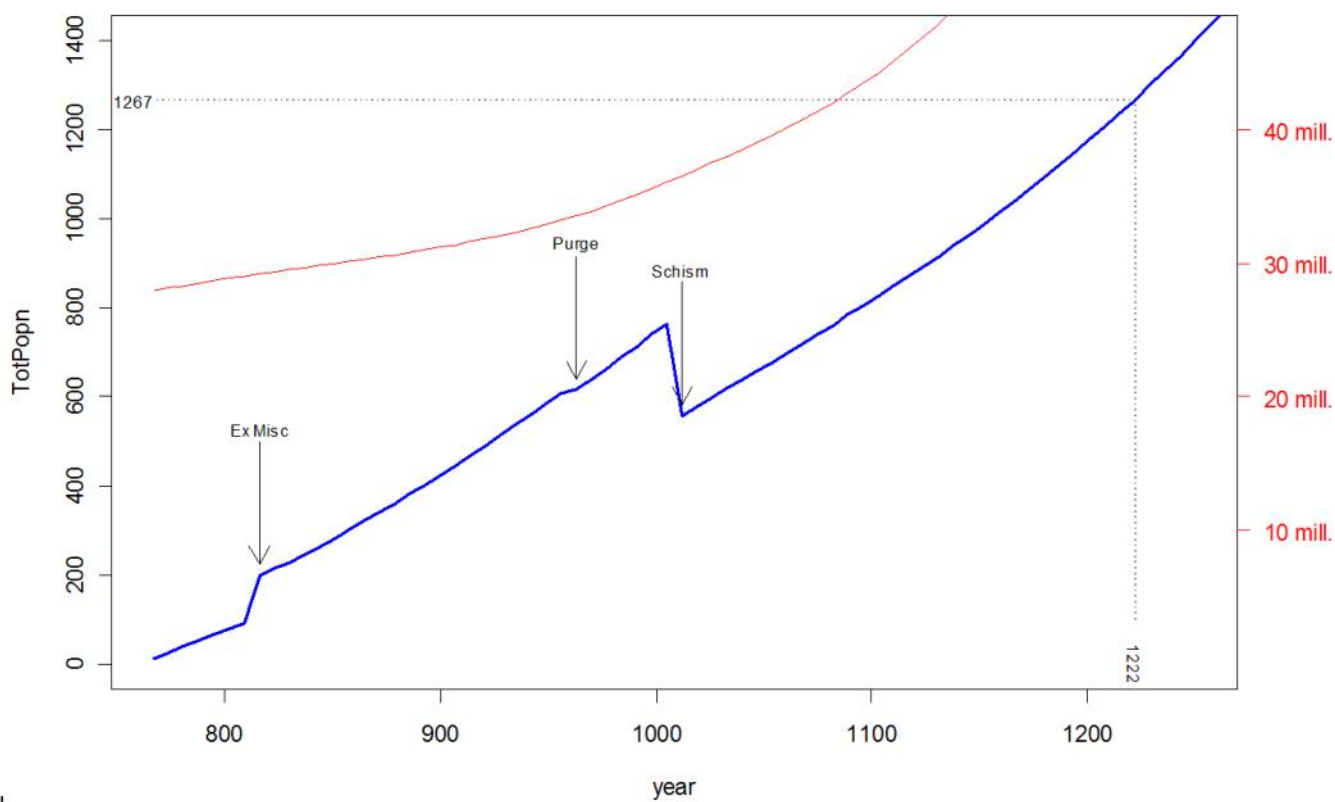


Figure 2: Growth of the Order of Hermes since its inception to the current day. The axis in red on the right and the red line on the chart indicate the mundane population during this time.

HETEROGENEITY OF THE ORDER ACROSS MYTHIC EUROPE

TRIBUNAL	MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN 1220	TRIBUNAL	MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN 1220
Greater Alps	1.3	Provençal	5.8
Hibernia	0.6	Rhine	10.4
Iberia	6.9	Rome	7.8
Levant	3.5	Stonehenge	2.8
Loch Leglean	0.3	Thebes	4.3
Normandy	6.8	Transylvania	4.8
Novgorod	11		

until an equilibrium is reached; where the benefits of a new tribunal are rated equal to the benefits of a resident tribunal. At this point immigration matches emigration, and is independent of resource availability.

If there is an assumption that The Gift is homogeneously distributed in space and that it is present in a particular proportion of the population (see later), then the supply of apprentices is likely to be low in some tribunals in comparison to others because of the smaller population sizes. This might explain the social mobility of magi compared to the mundane population — Sicilian magi could easily be members of covenants in Scotland, since the Loch Leglean tribunal produces very small numbers of Gifted children every year compared to the Roman Tribunal. Magi in sparsely populated tribunals might source their apprentices away from home; and those tribunals where supply outstrips demand might exploit this resource by exporting Gifted children, perhaps in exchange for services or resources rare at home. For example, the Rhine tribunal is rich in people (and therefore presumably in Gifted children) but not in vis. The Hibernian Tribunal might be the reverse

SUPPLY OF APPRENTICES AND PREVALENCE OF THE GIFT

An assumption of the model is that there is an unlimited supply of Gifted children to become apprentices of Hermetic magi. Some interesting conclusions emerge from examining the required supply of apprentices to the Order.

To support its current rate of growth, the Order will require 186 Gifted children (approximately 14 per geographical tribunal) over the next seven years (this number can be obtained from the cross product of the current age profile of the Order and the production rate of new apprentices). With about 63.8 million inhabitants in Mythic Europe in 1220, the Order requires a density of The Gift of at least one individual per 343,000. However, The Gift must be more common than this if it is not a limited resource; furthermore, there are other traditions in Mythic Europe that have Gifted members. Let us assume that for every apprentice the Order takes, there are three Gifted children accepted into hedge traditions, and another three that remain untrained. This results in a prevalence of The Gift of one individual per 49,000 in every seven years, or one birth per 7000 per year.

A potential problem lurks on the horizon: the Order is growing faster

than the mundane population. In 850 AD there was one new Hermetic apprentice for every 768,000, by 950 AD this ratio had decreased to 1:395,000, and by 1150 AD it was 1:353,000. If the prevalence of The Gift remains constant, then there may come a time when there are insufficient Gifted children to fulfil the needs of those magi wishing to take an apprentice. Before this point is reached, the number of magi able to train an apprentice will decline as the difficulty of finding a Gifted child increases as they become more scarce. The Order of Hermes may come into conflict with hedge traditions over the availability of apprentices, and/or the average age at Opening the Hermetic Arts might increase as masters are more willing to take on Gifted individuals who were missed as children. As a result, the rate of growth of the Order of Hermes may gradually decrease over time to match the availability of resources, a phenomenon known as 'density dependent growth'.

FUTURE TRENDS

Assuming that this density dependent growth does not occur just yet, we can forecast the future growth of the Order of Hermes. After another 100 years (14 more time steps), the Order has 1787 members, a growth of about 40%. The growth of the Order of Hermes is only sustainable if it is able to found new covenants, develop the Arts required to train apprentices, and locate individuals with The Gift. Putting aside the looming problem of locating new apprentices mentioned above, without sufficient resources for the development of masters and the training of apprentices, the Order's growth will slow. The mundane population in Mythic Europe is expanding almost as rapidly as the Order, and is bound to be applying societal and population pressure to the Order. To support this level of mundane population growth, larger

and larger areas of Mythic Europe have to be placed under cultivation, and the fourteenth century is one of mass deforestation. This could affect the magical resources of covenants, as Magic auras become more scarce and vis harder to find. The Normandy Tribunal is already facing these issues in 1220 AD, and it may be only a few decades before other tribunals start feeling the pressure.

Assuming that your saga roughly follows real history, there is the spectre of the Great Mortality lurking in the future (no-one in the medieval period called it "The Black Death"). Major casualties begin around 1360 AD, and it ravages nearly all of Europe for fifty years. In affected areas, up to a third of the population is affected, and a quarter killed.

Assuming that the Great Mortality is a natural disease, magi are more likely to survive it thanks to their Corpus Form bonus, if nothing else.

However, recruitment to the Order will take a major hit since Gifted children die with the same frequency as the unGifted. The chart below shows the projected effect of the Great Mortality on the Order's growth. The default assumption is that magi were not immune to the effects of the pestilence, but all stages suffered increased mortality of an intensity proportional to that suffered by the mundane population (see later for more details on the modelling). That is, magi still died of the Great Mortality, but at lower rates than the mundane population. The dashed line shows the effect on the Order's population if magi are wholly protected from the increased mortality of the disease, and instead only suffer problems in finding Gifted children to train as apprentices for the duration of the Great Mortality.

The ability of the Order of Hermes to alter the course of the

plague as a whole is probably limited as things stand, although individual sagas may of course differ. The biggest problem is organisation; it would need a coordinated action of multiple tribunals to have any chance at halting the inexorable creep of the Great Mortality across Europe, and the Order is limited as to what resources it can use. A covenant might be able to save a few towns, but in the grand scheme of things their impact is likely to be minimal.

Historically, Europe recovered well following the Great Mortality. Once the disease had ran its course, a phase of repopulation followed. Population growth was slowed by further waves of less virulent disease, nevertheless it took only a century to restore the losses due to the pestilence.

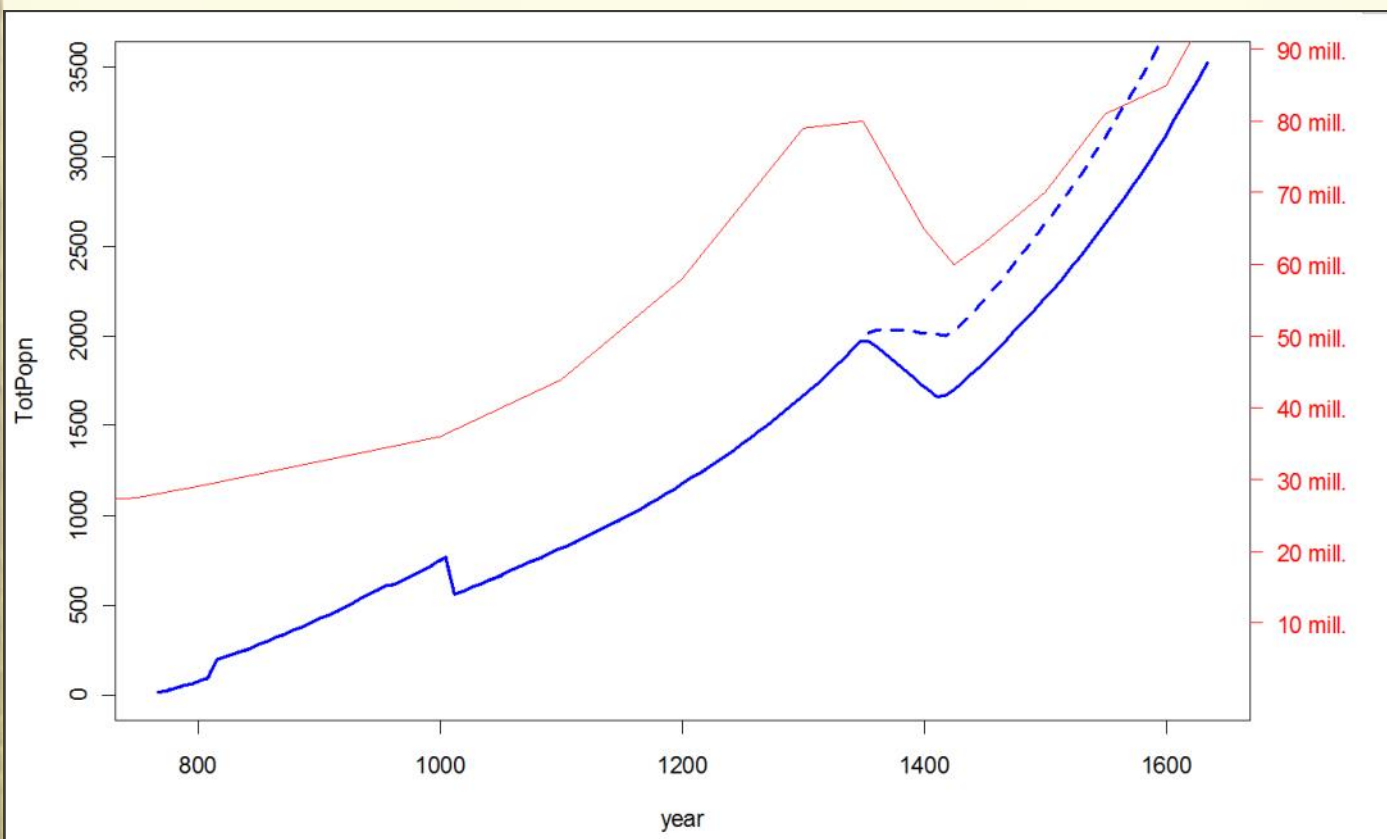


Figure 3: Future trends in the size of the Order of Hermes. As before, the red line and axis shows the mundane population during this time.

VARIABLES

STAGE	AGE RANGE	PRODUCTION RATE	SURVIVAL RATE	PROPORTION LEAVING STAGE	SURVIVAL WITHIN STAGE	ADVANCEMENT TO NEXT STAGE
Apprentice	5–20	0	0.93	Jul-15		
Spring	21–35	0	0.97	Jul-15	SURVIVAL RATE	SURVIVAL RATE
Summer	36–70	$0.33 \times 7/15$	0.94	Jul-35	×	×
Autumn	71–120	$0.66 \times 7/15$	0.85	Jul-50	(1 - PROPORTION LEAVING STAGE)	PROPORTION LEAVING STAGE
Winter	121–180	$0.20 \times 7/15$	0.76	Jul-60		
Deep Winter	181+	$0.10 \times 7/15$	0.45	0		

ABOUT THE MODEL

The model was a stage-structured population model called a Lefkovitch matrix model. This model is particularly appropriate in these circumstances because it is simple, with few parameter estimations needed. It also works particularly well for a population which is growing unconstrained by resources, and which has little spatial variation, neither of which assumptions is violated by the presumed demography of the Order of Hermes.

A stage-structured model keeps track of the number of individuals in each of several pre-defined stages; which in this case were Apprentices, and then the five stages of a magus's life detailed above: Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Deep Winter. Each stage lasted a variable amount of time; for simplicity's sake it was assumed that Apprentices were twenty years old when they complete their Gauntlet and become Spring magi. The model charted the changes in the numbers of individuals in each of these classes in each time step, based on three variables: the probability that an individual moves into the next stage in a time step, the probability that an individual dies in a time step, and the probability that an individual takes a new apprentice in a time step. The time step chosen was seven years; the time between tribunals. These variables are assembled into a transition matrix,

which is multiplied by the vector of populations in each stage to get the new population.

VARIABLES

Lefkovitch matrix models require three sets of variables to make predictions. The first is the production rate, which is the number of new individuals in the first stage in each time step. The second is the survival within stage, which is the proportion of individuals in each stage that remain within that stage in each time step. The third variable set is the advancement to next stage, which is the proportion of individuals that move to the next stage in each time step.

PRODUCTION RATE

The production rate is the proportion of magi in each stage who took a new apprentice in each seven years. Obviously, apprentices are incapable of training new apprentices, and the definition of the Spring stage was based on them having insufficiently high Arts and Teaching Ability to effectively train an apprentice. Magi had to be in the Summer stage or higher to have a non-zero production rate. It was assumed that one third of Summer and two thirds of Autumn magi were capable or willing to be train an apprentice. This proportion declined to one fifth and one tenth for the Winter and Deep Winter stages respectively.

These proportions include those who have apprentices as well as those who want them, so to convert these proportions to a production rate, one must restrict this proportion to only those who are able to take on a new apprentice in each seven year time step. Seven fifteenths of all fifteen year apprenticeships will end every seven years. Apprentices are assumed to be 'born' at the age of 5, and thus the duration of apprenticeship is 15 years.

The proportion of magi in each stage with an apprentice may appear to be quite low. Even the assumption that only two thirds of Autumn magi have or want an apprentice might cause some surprise. These proportions were derived heuristically — various proportions were tested until a set that produced an appropriate population size and age structure for the Order was obtained. The proportions in each stage is not vital, as long as the same proportion of apprentices per magus in the Order is produced in each time step (so there might be a few more Summer magi with apprentices at the expense of one of the other stages). For those who believe that the benefit of an apprentice is too great, and that any magus capable of training one should have one, should consider the following:

- A magus loses a season of study or laboratory activities every year to teaching;
- It may be several years before

the benefit to lab work shows; apprentices may start with penalties to Intelligence due to their age (ArM5, page 29) and will have mediocre Magic Theory for much of the fifteen years;

- Many magi, particularly older ones, won't be willing to put up with successions of childish behaviour, pre-pubescent mood swings, and adolescent infatuation.

SURVIVAL WITHIN STAGE

To obtain survival rates it is necessary to examine mortality rates in medieval Europe.

APPRENTICE MORTALITY

Pre-adult mortality was high in medieval Europe. Ascadi & Nemeskeri (1970). report that 20% of children who had survived the first year of their life (which itself had a 25% mortality) died before age 20. This corresponds to an average of 50 deaths per thousand in a five year period, or 69 deaths per thousand in a seven year period. While it is true that magi can lessen the risk of death by disease and starvation for their apprentices, the status of a Hermetic apprentice is inherently more dangerous than that of other children in Mythic Europe. It is therefore assumed that this mortality rate is applicable to apprentices.

MAGUS MORTALITY

To get an idea about survival rates for magi, the survival for the nobility in the Medieval period was examined as a start point. Hollingsworth (1985) published a life table for English peers in 5 year intervals:

The survival rates of a magus should demonstrate a similar pattern to nobility, except magic extends life beyond a mortal span. In deference to the Hermetic longevity ritual (where every point of a longevity ritual

negates one decade of one's age) it was assumed that these five-year mortality rates corresponded to an entire stage. A Spring magus has the mortality rate of a 30-year old peer, a Summer magus is the same as a 35-year old peer, an Autumn magus equivalent to a 40-year old peer, a Winter magus to a 50-year old peer, and a Deep Winter magus to a 60-year old peer.

SURVIVAL RATES

These raw mortality rates, for apprentices and magi, are expressed as deaths per 5 years. Since the time step of the model is 7 years, the mortality rates must be inflated by a power of 7/5ths to account for the difference, and converted into a survival rate (rather than a mortality rate) by subtracting from 1. Finally, the survival rates must be multiplied by the proportion of magi remaining in the stage in each seven years to obtain the survival within stage.

ADVANCEMENT TO NEXT STAGE

The final set of variables needed for the Lefkovitch matrix model is the proportion advancing to the next stage in each 7 year time step. The proportion moving to each stage is equal to 7 divided by the stage duration. However, this proportion includes those magi who will die in the stage rather than remain in the stage, so this needs to be multiplied

by the survival rate calculated above.

EVENTS

The model simulated the effects of historical events of the Order of Hermes. These events were not part of the standard algorithm, but were interjected at the appropriate points in the simulation.

INITIAL CONDITIONS

The initial condition of the model has already been stated: 3 Spring magi (Birna, Tremere, Trianoma), 7 Summer magi (Diedne, Flambeau, Guernicus, Jerbiton, Mercere, Tytalus, Verditius), and 3 Autumn magi (Bonisagus, Criamon, Merinita)

IMMIGRATION

As well as internal recruitment (i.e. the training of apprentices), there is also recruitment from outside as the Order adopts wizards trained in a different tradition. In the early years of the Order recruitment was assumed to be high, since the "Join or Die" indictment was rigidly followed. An estimate of 14 new recruits per seven year time step was used (an average of 2 per year). In modern times, recruitment was assumed to be a much rarer event, about 1 Order-wide per seven years. Between these two extremes, a sigmoidal decline was assumed centred about the troubled times of the eleventh century. All immigrants were presumed to be 70% Spring and 30% Summer, on the

MAGUS MORTALITY

AGE OF PEER	DEATHS PER 1000	DEATHS PER 1000 (7 YEAR)	EQUIVALENT MAGUS AGE
30	23	32	Spring
35	45	62	Summer
40	111	152	Autumn
45	176	237	
50	179	241	Winter
55	304	398	
60	437	553	Deep Winter

understanding that younger wizards will more readily adapt to Hermetic magic; whereas old wizards, as well as being less common, were less likely to adapt to new ways. Immigrating magi were added to the new population in each time step, after which time they are assumed to have assimilated into the Order and are treated as any other Hermetic magus.

HOUSE EX MISCELLANEA

In time step 7 (corresponding to 816 AD), the size of the Order was doubled.

THE PURGE OF HOUSE TYTALUS

In time step 28 (963 AD), the Order lost 7 Apprentices, 6 Spring magi, 7 Summer magi, 4 Autumn magi, and 1 Winter maga (Tasgillia herself). These numbers have no basis other than what seems reasonable; the seven apprentices are those assumed to be in training from the other magi.

THE SCHISM WAR

In time step 35 (1012 AD), each stage was reduced by 30.2%. This corresponds to the loss of all of House Diedne (one twelfth of the Order), plus the loss of a third of two houses (Tremere, Flambeau), a quarter of four houses (Bonisagus, Ex Miscellanea, Guernicus, Jerbiton), and a fifth of the remaining six houses. Each of the non-Diedne houses was assumed to constitute an equal proportion of the remaining eleven-twelfths of the Order (once Diedne had been removed).

THE GREAT MORTALITY

Between time steps 84 and 92 (1355 — 1411 AD), the production rate was reduced to 75% of its previous value to represent a 25% mortality in the general population (and thus fewer apprentices available for training). Mortality rates for each stage were recalculated based on an increase of 25% in all deaths per thousand.

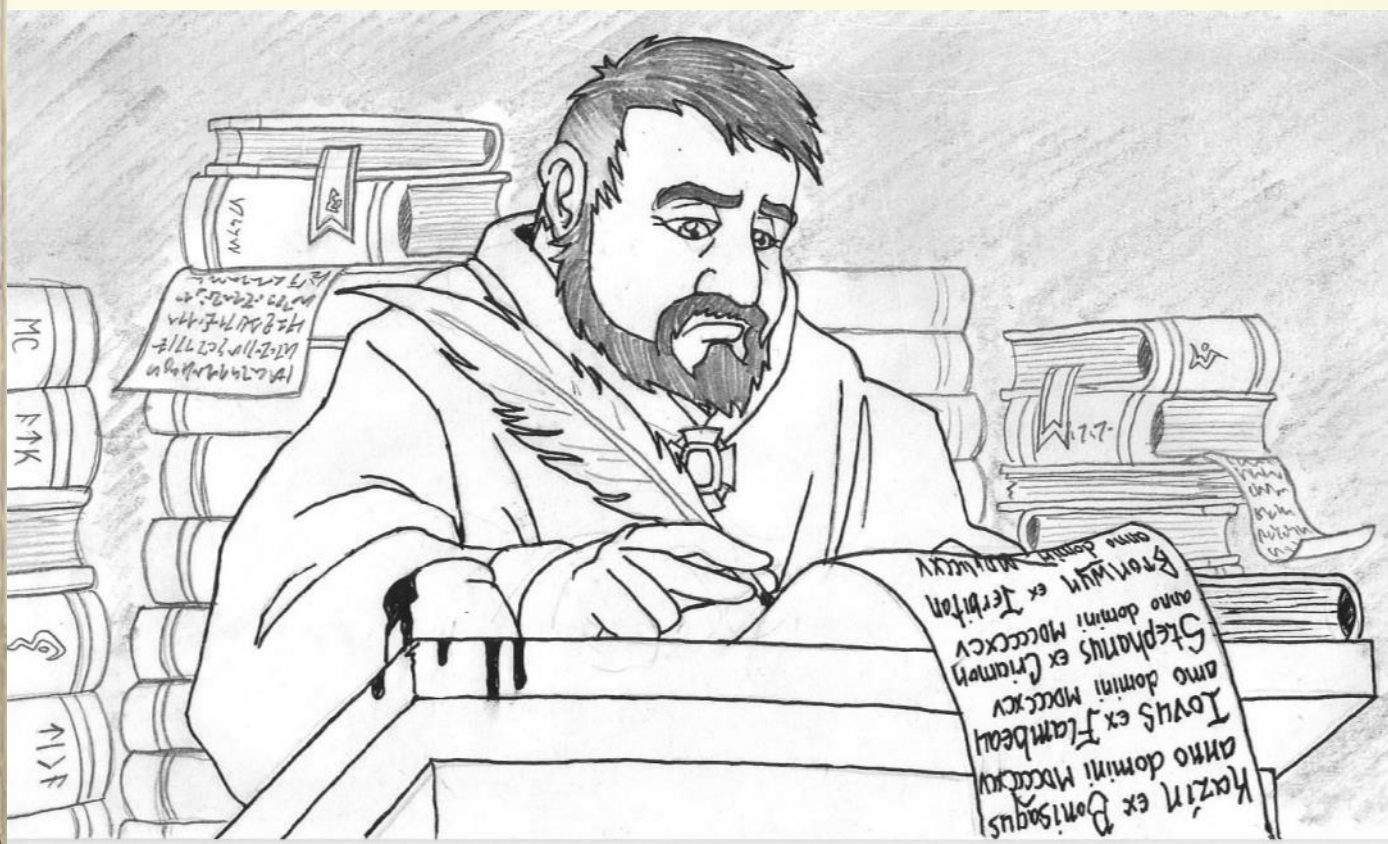
This is an oversimplification of the mechanism of the Great Mortality, which did not affect all of Mythic Europe at the same time, nor did it affect it equally. However, it represents a worst-case scenario with respect to the impact of the Black Death.

SOURCES OF DATA

Ascadi, G & Nemeskeri, J. (1970) History of Human Life Span and Mortality. Akademiai Kiado, Budapest.

Hollingsworth, T.H. (1985) A note on the medieval longevity of the secular peerage 1350 — 1500. Population Studies 29 (1) 155 — 159

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SUB ROSA

APPENDIX: POPULATION SIZE OF THE ORDER OF HERMES OVER TIME

YEAR	SIZE	YEAR	SIZE	YEAR	SIZE	YEAR	SIZE
767	13	998	740	1229	1300	1460	1923
774	26	1005	764	1236	1332	1467	1967
781	40	1012	558	1243	1365	1474	2016
788	53	1019	579	1250	1399	1481	2065
795	65	1026	599	1257	1433	1488	2115
802	78	1033	619	1264	1470	1495	2168
809	92	1040	640	1271	1506	1502	2221
816	200	1047	660	1278	1544	1509	2275
823	214	1054	678	1285	1581	1516	2331
830	229	1061	700	1292	1622	1523	2389
837	247	1068	720	1299	1661	1530	2448
844	264	1075	741	1306	1703	1537	2509
851	282	1082	761	1313	1744	1544	2569
858	303	1089	784	1320	1787	1551	2633
865	322	1096	804	1327	1833	1558	2699
872	341	1103	825	1334	1876	1565	2765
879	362	1110	848	1341	1924	1572	2832
886	383	1117	870	1348	1971	1579	2901
893	403	1124	892	1355	1967	1586	2972
900	424	1131	916	1362	1940	1593	3046
907	446	1138	940	1369	1901	1600	3121
914	468	1145	964	1376	1860	1607	3197
921	491	1152	989	1383	1819	1614	3276
928	515	1159	1013	1390	1778	1621	3355
935	538	1166	1038	1397	1737	1628	3437
942	561	1173	1066	1404	1700	1635	3523
949	585	1180	1093	1411	1663		
956	609	1187	1120	1418	1671		
963	616	1194	1148	1425	1701		
970	639	1201	1177	1432	1741		
977	663	1208	1207	1439	1785		
984	689	1215	1238	1446	1831		
991	713	1222	1267	1453	1876		

FROM THE JOURNAL OF VULCANIS ARGENS

Being the journal of Vulcanis Argens of House Verditius, discovered during the Vernal Inquisition after the fall of Donum Chanuti. Let its secrets inform the Order:

Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

I have experienced an epiphany. Golias of Tytalus, magus of Blackthorn, player of chess, healed me of my wounds. Though I could do little to help him in his ritual, we did pick up a discussion started, as I reminded him, seven years ago at the last tribunal.

Golias has trouble finding chess opponents as those in his covenant seem to take little interest in the game. Those few opponents he does know live some way distant, too far for a regular game. He has been reduced to playing against visiting Redcaps, the few mundanes of rank who visit Blackthorn, and even an erratic familiar with pretensions above its station.

I consider that I can solve his problem, given a little time and the required resources. However, while I now have a plan to work to, I did take the wrong path at first.

I had initially proposed a device that would allow him to play against a given opponent many leagues distant. But the only way I could imagine the device working was through sympathetic connections. In essence the boards or some part of the device would be linked to another identical item. As the chess pieces were moved, so the movement would be replicated on the other board. It was a sound prospect and the device would

have been a wonder to behold and a joy to enchant.

There are a number of ways in which this could be done, of course, from physically moving the pieces, to enchanting a mundane seated at the table, to creating the illusion of the chessboard and all the pieces in its entirety.

But the cost of any of these options would be too high. The time to enchant such a device would be long and with little future benefit to myself beyond the possible gratitude of one magus in one covenant. There would still be difficulties in using the device with a player sitting some way distant. Either the players would need some means of communication cast alongside their game, or the device

itself must allow the same. Then there is the matter of operating through not just one but potentially two Aegis of the Hearth rituals. The thought of my device being seen as so weak that it must be granted a casting token in each of the two rituals cannot be countenanced. I confess to a moment of despondency.

Then the thought occurred. What if I could make a device that could learn? The device could, and almost naturally would, start with no prior knowledge of the game, its pieces, rules, objectives, or strategies, but would learn through exposure to the games of a master. As it learned, it would pose an increasing challenge to that master.

Enchanting a device to move



SUB ROSA

pieces around a board is child's play; an apprentice could do it within a season. But for the device to hold and use tactics, a strategy even? How could it be done?

Unfortunately, I know of no secrets held by my House that would allow such a thing, indeed, all my knowledge suggests that many have tried and failed such a thing. The automata, one of our most valued secrets, are limited constructions more suited to the expression of hubris than to the creation of a reasoning entity.

But what if I could succeed where others have failed?

There are some within Verditius and beyond that could bind spirits into devices. I could learn from them and bind a spirit into a form made to look human but moved by magic under the spirit's guide. The device would have some capacity to learn, though not much as I understand, and would be able to respond instantly to its opponent's moves as required.

I am not comfortable with that on both moral and professional grounds as well as for self-preservation reasons. Such a course seems cruel to the spirit, entirely at odds with my craft, and likely to bring heavy retributions when whatever tortured spirit I bind into the device eventually works its way free. I cannot guarantee that the spirit will turn its attentions to the game and not to escape or vengeance. I should not like to read of Goliath being murdered in his sleep by his own chess set. Such news would surely be detrimental to my reputation and to the prospect of future commission.

No! I have to find a way to give a device its own cognition. The device must, in itself, have awareness of itself, its boundaries and its function. It must possess the power of thought so that it can conceive strategies and see them through, and it must have, at its core, the ability to learn. It must have the capacity for improvement. How else will it pose the unexpected challenge that Goliath so desires? And how else will I create a device to

confound my house and secure my reputation?

My mind whirls with the prospect, but I find myself with so many things to attend to that I must fight now to remain focussed.

There is first the commission I need to enchant, that great burrowing beast able to dig lengthy tunnels underground. My success in that will fund my future work. For this I need some knowledge of carpentry as the device is to be made of wood and while I can shape iron and make steel, the last time I took chisel to plank I near skinned my thumb.

I have also promised a suit of armour of some kind to Benedic in return for his support. It was for support already given, but I secured that with the promise of the armour. I intend to secure his vote and support again when I actually deliver it. I have not yet told him that I first need to learn both the art of making armour and the Verditius art of bringing out its inner quality.

This I feel I must do before learning carpentry. I must set my plans and keep to them. So, I must first study with Junius. He will teach me the last I need to know of the House secrets and then teach me how to bring out the inner natural quality of items. That, I think is the next two seasons fully described. Then it is to armoury and then it is to the armour itself, and then it is to bringing out its quality.

This time next year I shall seek out the covenant's master carpenter. I shall study under him for a season. Then I shall construct the Beast that Dwells Within the Firmament.

But after that, plans must be put in place. What knowledge has been lost and what is yet to be found? More importantly, where might I find it?



Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

The tribunal has concluded. Few were upset that Cad Gadu had not attended and most seemed satisfied at our explanation, though I think there were raised eyebrows at the mention of the heirs to Gwrthyr having claimed the island.

I detected a murmur of respect when my efforts were described. Though I seek renown within my House, as a master of my art, I do not think I am comfortable with so many others knowing my name, at least not when it comes to adventurous matters. However, I hope at least that it might aid my efforts to be commissioned in future.

Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

I have returned at last from studying under Master Junius. It has been some months since I last saw my journal and I greet it now as a changed man.

I mean that literally. My magic has been recommitted to the mysteries of House Verditius and it is only now that I appreciate just how limiting Bonisagus' grand theory of magic has been. There is so much more beyond mere Technique and Form, wonders and knowledge that the Order has lost. Simple spells now feel so limiting and if the knowledge I have gained through just this first initiation into the mysteries of my House may be used as a marker then what power and capabilities lie beyond?

The power to bring out the inherent quality of a tool, as all things are, from weapon to hammer to plough to cloak to crown, to make the wielder of that tool more proficient in their tasks, is a wondrous thing indeed. With just a season of effort, I can make a shield grog excel in his duties, take a craftsman from journeyman to master, or turn a prince into a king.

However, these lofty ambitions have been hard-won. I have spent many weeks learning lore about the founding of my House and master

Verditius' powers from before the Order. There is no doubt that what Junius told me is true and while I cannot commit his words to this journal it is enough to say that I have gained further respect and love for my House and its founder.

I spent a further season in creating a minor enchantment. It was a small silver balance, similar in form to one I use for most projects within my laboratory. It was enchanted with a simple effect to allow the user to sense all the mundane properties of an object placed upon one plate and then counterbalanced by a set of lead weights. I created a mundane partner to this balance, casting both from the same batch of silver.

Junius oversaw, though did not participate in the enchantment process.

I had not expected it, but we then journeyed to Verdi where we were apparently expected. While the ritual there, which resulted in the loss of both the balances I had created, will not be described here, I will say that it was a day of great solemnity. The next day however was given over to a celebration and I even had the opportunity to become reacquainted with old friends I had met during my years away from Donum Chanuti.

House Verditius wrongly has a reputation for in-fighting, petty squabbles, jealousy, and unrestrained pride. I saw none of these things during my time at Verdi. My ascension was rightly welcomed as a blessing to the House and not a threat. No doubt word of my heroism at Cad Gadu had reached them.

I did however detect some consternation among the elders of the House, though I was not privy to the nature of the discussions.

On my return to Donum Chanuti, I have found that Halbert has maintained my forge and laboratory well enough in my absence. I have had to give him correction on only four items.



Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

The talk around the covenant is that Valeria is intent on finding an apprentice. My feelings on this are conflicted. I find myself unexpectedly jealous of her in that neither my Arts nor my attention is currently suitable for the raising of an apprentice. It is my duty to do so and I shall learn and gain much from the experience, but my work keeps me occupied to the point that I cannot yet conceive of taking a child into my confidences and my forge.

Also unexpectedly, I find that I wish her well in her search. For Donum Chanuti to survive it must embrace the future. For all their power and insight, neither Charonicus nor Legalitus are forward-thinking. Their bitter dispute serves only to undermine the covenant, something I shall avoid when I am Princeps. A new apprentice in the covenant would, I think, be a cause for celebration. Now, if I could convince a Bonisagus to take the apprentice before gauntlet we can avoid swelling the ranks of House Guernicus further.

We had a visit from the redcap this last week, which prompted Halbert to recall events that had happened during the seasons of my absence. My forge is well-placed that a man taking a well-earned break from the working of metal may sit outside and observe southwards to the tower and northwards to the end of the village and to the jetty upon which the ferryman hitches his punt. Halbert innocently observed Bellatorius handing the redcap a number of sealed letters, apparently in a secret and furtive manner.

Bellatorius has not disclosed being in communication with any other magi beyond the covenant. Indeed despite my observing the same phenomenon this last week he made no attempt to explain his actions.

With Benedic there seems little



change. He spends far too much time alone in the woodland upon our island, alone with nobody but his dog and whatever spirits he can conjure forth from those woods.

It seems a little insular to me and I do wonder upon what topics he and his spirits converse.

Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

I have spent the season since last attending to my journal working in a series of mundane workshops in both Rye and Winchelsea under two master craftsmen. The first was to gain an understanding of leatherworking, but the body of learning was from a Winchelsea armourer who taught me enough to create a competent leather cuirass for Benedic.

Though I am more used to working with iron and steel, I should not like the job of making mail by hand. I think I should rather create a spell to achieve the same in future.

Extract from the journal of Vulcanis Argens:

Benedic's armour is finished at last and I am pleased with the outcome. It is of a stout leather construction, but that leather is scored with a pattern of leaves, trees, and vines, and the pattern filled with silver which shines brightly in the presence of light.

By the Mysteries of my House, the armour is as strong as steel and will give Benedic the protection he craves.

I have convinced Benedic that our former deal still stands and that his support is mine when the time comes, and I think that time draws very close indeed.

I also took the time to make myself a new chisel in preparation for the carpentry that I have in front of me. Perhaps, in making and sharpening my own it will be less inclined to turn against its master and attempt the removal of my thumb.

AN ETERNAL LOVE

This scenario is not a typical **Ars Magica** story, a game that reaches its full potential when campaigning. It has indeed been specifically designed for a one-shot game, in convention and/or for initiation. Initially published in the French fanzine **Ars Mag** sometime last millennium, when the current edition of **Ars Magica** was the third, it is available for the first time in English, and for **ArM5**!

INTRODUCTION

The theme of this story is revenge. Characters are confronted with the way revenge obsesses men to their demise, never allowing them any rest, even when that revenge has been satisfied.

Carel of Miglos is burning with hatred for his brother the baron, who sent him to crusade more than fifteen years ago. He only dreams on taking revenge from him and usurping his title in retaliation. Herios, the hedge magician, bears a grudge against the

magi of Hermes who formerly mocked him, humiliated him, doubted of his sorcerous skills before refusing to admit him into their Order. Évrard d'Ange himself might succumb to wrath and seek to avenge the death of his beloved, while other characters retaliate on the mercenaries who mistreated them...

ACT I: TARASCON'S FAIR

Tarascon's fair, if not the most important in the area, still attracts a lot of traders from the whole county and beyond. Quinault, the covenant's autocrat, can find here anything the Covenant needs: food, cattle, drapery and even glassware that can be used in a maga's lab. During this first day, let the characters explore merchant stalls, muse in the motley crowd (barkers, beggars, acrobats...) throughout the city. If you wish so, roleplay Quinault's shopping, keen negotiations, etc.

PRESENTATION

(to read to the players)

"You are all members of the Covenant of Bentalone, located in the Provencal Tribunal. On this beautiful spring day in the year of our Lord 1215, you have been traveling for three days through the County of Foix, heading to Tarascon-sur-Ariège's fair, which is held again this year, despite much agitation in the area (the Albigensian crusade rages and Raymond-Roger, Earl of Foix, fights it fervently). Your mission is to provide the Covenant with food and various supplies, whose stores are dangerously low. The fair

is also an opportunity for easing off, especially for Évrard d'Ange, who has been singing the beauty of his beloved Diane of Miglos ever since you left Bentalone.

"You reached Tarascon-sur-Ariège late last night. There, a whole room was booked for you at the Three Ducks Inn. At dawn, the small city is already humming with activity. You can bet it will become quiet again only when the fair ends, in three days from now on."

By JÉRÔME DARMONT

DIANE'S MESSAGE

Évrard, my love. We have been apart for too long. I am burning with the desire to meet you again. My father will be away from Miglos tonight. Some pressing matter calls him at the earl's and he will only be back tomorrow. Come and meet me in my bedroom in the keep after dusk. I am yours for eternity.

Diane.

In the early afternoon, the Baron of Miglos shows up at the fair. He is a barrel-chested man with a reputation for being hot-headed. He generally displays a fierce air and his disheveled beard does not make him more agreeable. In this occasion, the baron is accompanied by all his family, including his daughter Diane and his brother Carel. This is a great opportunity for the Storyguide to describe all the protagonists of this story, and for Évrard to approach Diane of Miglos at last! However, skill and subtlety are required not to alert her irascible father. Moreover, Diane is surrounded by her mother's companions. A simple diversion can nonetheless help the young lady give Évrard a message...

Note: Characters are very free during this first day. The Storyguide will have a difficult task not to favor anybody by focusing, for instance, only on the most important characters, i.e., magi. So that everybody has fun, other characters, and particularly grogs, must have their share of exposure. Good roleplaying opportunities include, for instance, a minor dispute with young, drunk

people on the fair field, or Éthaine the apprentice witnessing a beggar kid being bullied by two bigger boys, etc.

ACT II: ROMANTIC RENDEZVOUS

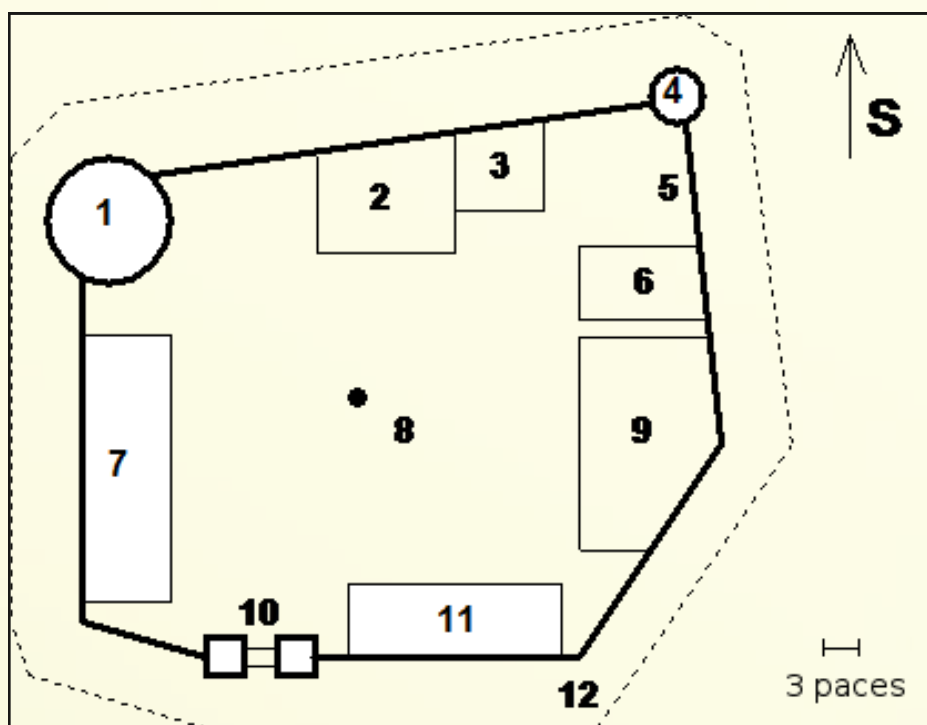
In the evening, Évrard d'Ange must go to Miglos to meet his belle. He probably takes with him a couple of companions, who can undoubtedly be of great help. It is indeed not so easy, even for a magus, to sneak into a well-guarded fortress. Any help (magical, diversion...) is welcome.

The Storyguide must nonetheless ensure that Évrard can eventually meet Diane. Miglos castle is about three miles south of Tarascon-sur-Ariège, ideally located at the top of a hill dominating the surrounding valley.

While Évrard d'Ange sneaks into Diane of Miglos' bedroom and lovers savor their reunion, the characters who came along may notice (Perception + Awareness roll of 6+) that the soldiers defending the castle are quite few. Visiting the stables helps confirm that a fair number of steeds are missing. By cleverly spying

on the remaining guards, the characters may realize that all the baron's knights, as well as most of the foot soldiers, are on duty at the Earl of Foix's. Some are worried about the castle's security, for bands of mercenaries from all over Mythic Europe have recently arrived in the area to give the crusaders a hand. The characters also probably notice Carel of Miglos and his friend Herios coming and going. More particularly, they can be seen walking on the northern rampart twice this night.

Two hours after midnight, stupor! The baron is back earlier than



MAP KEY:

- 1) **Keep.** On the first floor, an entrance hall can become an arms room in case of siege. Food supplies are piled up in the cellar below. The castle's great hall lies on the second floor. The baron's knights usually sleep here. The third floor is used exclusively by the baron's family. It is subdivided into a half-dozen bedrooms (Diane's is on the east side, fortunately for Évrard). At the crenellated

top of the tower sits a wooden hut where guards shelter when the weather is bad. There are always two guards here, scrutinizing the surrounding valley.

Press.

Oven and mill.

North turret. This small round tower, crenellated and thickly walled, is actually a wheat silo.

Ramparts. They are equipped all along with crenels and a covered way. Rounds occur every hour.

6) **Chapel.**

7) **Commons** (kitchen, servants' quarters, etc.)

8) **Courtyard.** In clay (i.e., a mud field when the weather is wet), it bears a well in its center.

9) **Stables.**

10) **Postern.** Two square towers frame the drawbridge and portcullis.

11) **Guards' quarters.**

12) **Moat.** It is ten feet deep and partly filled with water when it rains.

expected! He and his entourage look exhausted and get in the fortress without a din, so that Évrard and Diane cannot hear them (remember that Diane's windows open to the outside of the castle, to the east). Their friends may attempt to warn the lovers, but it is already too late... A couple of minutes after entering the keep, the baron erupts into Diane's bedroom. Mad with rage, he brutally catches Évrard d'Ange and throws him out *manu militari*. The baron being a strong fellow, we can bet that Évrard cannot resist much. To reassure the young magus, the Storyguide should mention that the baron does not draw his sword. Évrard ends up wearing only his shirt, and is ruthlessly thrown into the moat from the drawbridge (damage +3). The baron, who had not spoken at all until then, leaves him with a laconic warning: "Don't you ever lay your hands on my daughter, bastard!"

Note: If Évrard wonders how the baron could come upon him, although he was quite discreet, let him wonder. In fact, Herios, Carel of Miglos' advisor, felt his presence with his magic (Intellego Mentem) and, by sheer wickedness (Diane of Miglos does not like him very much), "incited" the baron to check whether his daughter was sleeping alone. The tired baron easily succumbed to the hedge magician's spell.

Meanwhile, at the Three Ducks

Inn (let us not forget the other characters who might have stayed here), a party goes on. The atmosphere is friendly and drinking rounds succeed to one another, while a troubadour pleases his audience with songs and tales. Then, around ten o'clock, a whole troop of German mercenaries (half a dozen overall) comes into the inn. They are apparently already quite drunk, and very vindictive. They verbally attack anyone coming too close to the bar, before provoking the bard, who sings sissy songs to their taste. They are so unbearable that a fight soon breaks off in the inn (maybe caused by the characters). Damages should only be material (at the innkeeper's great distress; he desperately tries to save his endangered furniture), or benign for the characters, unless one of them draws a weapon, in which case the mercenaries do the same. In all cases, the party is spoiled and everybody goes back home, more or less sickened, while the mercenaries leave the place laughing out loud, delighted by this "good fight".

ACT III: A ROUGH AWAKENING

Late at night, all characters probably join together at the Three Ducks for a few hours of sleep. At about half-past four in the morning, Évrard d'Ange has a disturbing

dream. The Storyguide may describe it only to Évrard's player. Diane of Miglos, or rather her image, for she looks translucent, appears to Évrard. She bends over his bed and speaks. Her voice is strange, toneless. She tells Évrard she loves him, always will, and never wanted to leave him. Her gaze is full of sadness. Évrard wakes up sweating at this point, and realizes Diane still stands in his room. As soon as he tries to talk to her or come closer, her image vanishes, leaving the young magus distraught and unable to fall asleep again.

The other characters only rest for a couple of hours too, for they are also waken up at dawn by dull noises and shouts (long-term fatigue, if any, is not recovered). If they have a glance by the window, they realize that the inn is literally assaulted by a troop of a dozen men (yesterday's German mercenaries, with reinforcement!). If the characters can hear their conversation with the terrified innkeeper (Perception + Awareness roll of 9+; words are stifled), they realize they are searched for. And certainly not for good deeds!

The characters must react swiftly to be able to run away, but a little magic should help. Then, the mercenaries chase them mercilessly; they have been paid very generously to catch Évrard d'Ange. The characters may also decide to surprise the assailants and confront them on

GERMAN MERCENARY

Characteristics: Int -1, Per +1, Prs 0, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +1

Size: 0

Age: about 20

Personality Traits: Bold +1, Greedy +3, Rude +2

Reputation: Lawless (Local, Tarascon-sur-Ariège) 2

Combat:

Fist: Init -2, Atk +5, Def +4, Dam+1

Long Spear: Init +1, Atk +9, Def +6, Dam +8

Short Bow: Init -3, Atk +8, Def +4, Dam +7

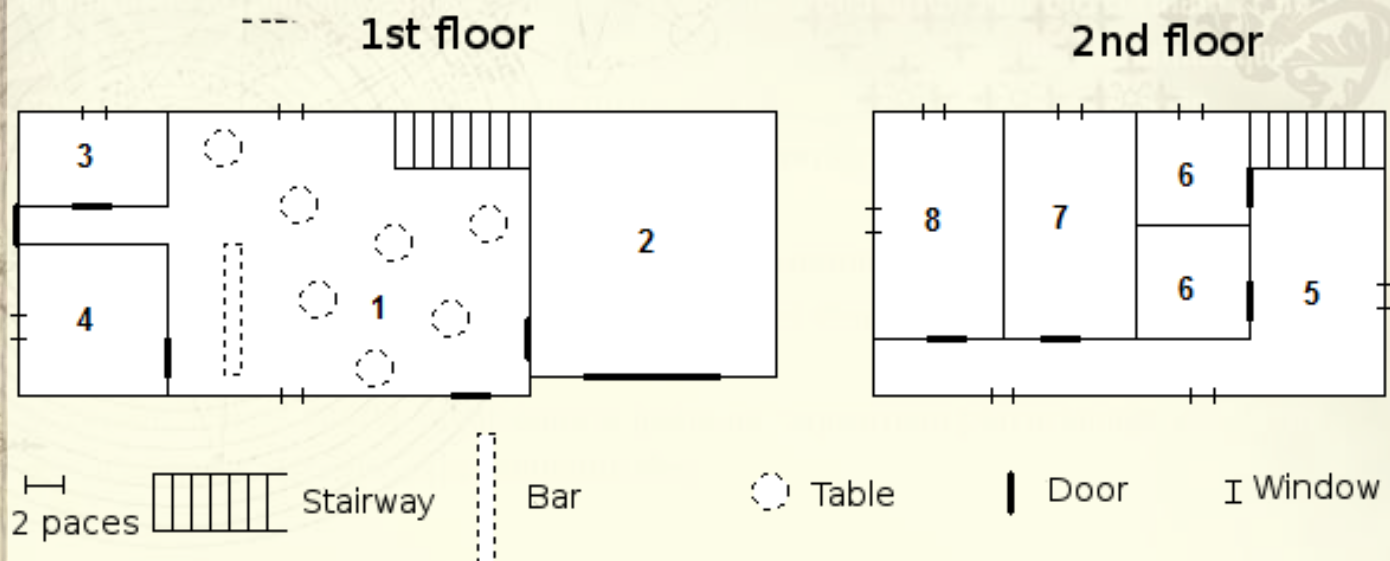
Soak: +5 (Partial Leather Scale)

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

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

Core Abilities: German 4, Langue d'Oc 2, Brawl 3, Great Weapon 4, Bows 3, Carouse (Drinking) 1

Encumbrance: 3 (7)

**MAP KEY:**

- 1) Dining Room
- 2) Stable
- 3) Innkeeper and wife's bedroom
- 4) Kitchen
- 5) Hall (where poor customers sleep)
- 6) Individual Bedrooms
- 7) Dorm
- 8) Characters' Dorm

forbidden by the Code of Hermes anyway). The brawl may also end up with Évrard's capture if the characters do not manage very well. Other characters but Évrard, whom the mercenaries are not interested in, must then free him, for instance when he is transferred to Miglos.

If the characters can run away from the inn and the town, they must still find a way to get rid of the tough mercenaries. They have several solutions, including the following (non-exhaustive list):

- Ambush them on favorable terrain;
- Penetrate into a forest and try to lose the Germans (a mean of taking a panicked Éthaine in

the woods must be found);

- Seek shelter in a church (a solution that would greatly displease Martin, and that would be temporary anyway for the mercenaries would simply "besiege" the holy building – unless the characters find a way to leave under disguise);
- Run back to Bentalone to request the protection of the Grand Council, which dispatches grogs to take care of the mercenaries, but orders the characters to sort this all out, and without attracting outside attention to the Covenant, this time!

the spot. With luck, they might well get rid of them, but this fight might also make them unwanted in Tarascon (especially if they make use of blatant magic, which is formally

HORST, MERCENARY CAPTAIN

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

Size: +1

Age: 30

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Personality Traits: Brave +2, Ambitious +1, Greedy +2, Harsh +1

Reputation: Cruel (Local, Tarascon-sur-Ariège) 2

Combat:

Fist: Init -4, Atk +5, Def +1, Dam +2

Pole Axe: Init -3, Atk +14, Def +5, Dam +13

Soak: +10 (Full Metal Scale)

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

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

Core Abilities: German 4, Langue d'Oc 3, Fist 3, Great Weapon 7, Hunt 3, Ride 3, Leadership 3

Encumbrance: 2 (9)

If the characters manage to capture a mercenary, they can learn some pieces of information. The Germans have been hired by the Baron of Miglos to bring Évrard d'Ange back to the castle. The baron indeed holds him responsible for the death of his daughter Diane, who threw herself down from a tower. That's all the mercenaries know.

SOME EXPLANATIONS FOR THE STORYGUIDE

Diane of Miglos is really dead. Her ghost actually paid a visit to Évrard this morning. After her father threw her lover out of Miglos, the young lady was furious. Locked in her room, her door watched by two guards, she was steaming against so much injustice. She decided to talk to her father to convince him to accept her love for Évrard. Knowing he was busy by the stable despite the late hour, she fooled her guardians and took the north covered way. That is where she interrupted her uncle Carel discussing with Horst, the mercenary captain, who was down the walls. She quickly understood they were plotting an attack against the castle, taking advantage of the small number of defenders available. Horrified, she was about to walk back when Herios stood in the way. She had just been the witness of a very embarrassing transaction. Thus, Carel and Herios coldly decided to throw her down the north turret... This was meant to look like a suicide. It was half-past four in the morning.

Carel of Miglos and his brother the baron have quite different ideas about politics. Although both agree on preserving their domain from the crusade, their opinions about how to do it vary widely. The baron, as his overlord the Earl of Foix, considers Cathars benevolently and considers crusaders as invaders, while Carel would prefer to compound with the

stronger party (the crusaders) to save his fief. Yes, his fief! He never forgave his brother for sending him on crusade (in the Orient, this time) fifteen years ago. He came back wounded, both in his flesh and soul, with the firm will to take revenge and usurp his brother's title (he thinks he deserves it more than him, anyway). On the way back from the Orient, in Greece, he met his henchman Herios. Herios, considered as a hedge magician, was chased by members of the Order of Hermes from the Theban Tribunal. He took the opportunity to fly away with Carel, seduced by his promises of power in the distant land of Languedoc...

For now, Carel of Miglos' plans are gravely jeopardized. The baron indeed entered a mad rage when he learnt of his daughter's demise (Herios did not even need to "help" him with his sorcery). The problem is that, dismissing his principles, the baron hired Horst and his mercenaries at a high price to bring Évrard d'Ange back to Miglos (he

needs his own soldiers to defend the place). Since the bounty offered by the baron was much bigger than anything the moneyless Carel of Miglos could pay, Horst opted for short-term profit, especially since it looked a priori much easier to capture Évrard d'Ange than seizing the fortress of Miglos!

ACT IV: RETURN TO MIGLOS

At this stage, the characters must go back to Miglos and investigate. Some of them are probably not willing to. If necessary, push Évrard's player to convince them. If Évrard himself is discouraged, have Diane's ghost intervene to beg him to come to Miglos. Then, the characters must imagine a cover to enter the castle. For instance, they may stand as entertainers, who are generally welcome everywhere, even (especially?) in these troubled times. Évrard must nonetheless shift his





appearance not to be recognized.

Once inside the fortress, the characters must uncover the circumstances of Diane of Miglos' death. Here are a couple of possible leads.

By questioning castle guards or servants, the characters may learn that Diane of Miglos threw herself from the north turret. Carel of Miglos, the baron's brother, heard her shout and arrived first on the spot. Something

should make the characters think twice. Why did Diane of Miglos throw herself from the north turret instead of her room's window? What was her uncle doing in the area right in the middle of the night?

Diane of Miglos' body lies in the chapel. Since she committed suicide, Father Valeray, by order of the bishop, refuses to give her Christian sacraments (thence, her ghost still wanders this earth). This put the baron into rage, but he could not deal with the issue, being summoned to Foix again for an emergency. It is probably the sole opportunity for Évrard to use his Whispers Through the Black Gate spell and discover how his beloved died. It should also strengthen Évrard's will to unmask Diane's murderers so as she rests in peace.

Quinault the autocrat may have a vision of the murder if he walks on the north rampart. Then, he falls into a trance and "witnesses" the terrible end of Diane of Miglos.

All these clues should lead the characters to take interest in Carel of Miglos and Herios. Skilfully spying their conversations or a possible new meeting with Horst shall eventually confirm the characters' suspicion. But beware! Herios might detect spies magically (Intellego Mentem). If he has the slightest suspicion, Carel of Miglos and he will first try to

CAREL OF MIGLOS

Characteristics: Int +1, Per -1, Prs -1, Com +1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik 0

Size: 0

Age: 35

Confidence Score: 1 (2)

Personality Traits: Bitter +5, Vengeful +6, Treacherous +4, Scornful +2

Reputation: Bitter (Local, Miglos) 1

Combat:

Long Sword & Shield: Init -1, Atk +13, Def +11, Dam +7

Short Bow: Init -4, Atk +9, Def +4, Dam +7

Soak: +8 (Partial Chain Mail)

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

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

Core Abilities: Langue d'Oc 4, Arabic 3, Single Weapon 7, Bows 4, Ride 4, Intrigue 4

Encumbrance: 3 (7)

incriminate the characters in the murder, and then, if they fail, try to eliminate them, and eventually, run away.

When the baron is back two days later, a good way to bring the light on the whole story and convict Carel is to find Horst and convince him to tell what he knows. Paying him well will definitely work, but threatening him might also do the job. However, accusing the baron's brother without proof is a very bad idea...

If the characters are really lost and cannot understand what happened, have Diane of Miglos' ghost guide them. For instance, she can push them toward her uncle or Herios. If Herios realizes what the characters are doing at this stage, he will probably decide to use Diane's ghost against the characters. He can indeed control her with the help of the Incantation of Summoning the Dead and Coerce the Spirits of the Night spells, and make her decoy the characters toward the German mercenaries.

characters should have restored the truth regarding Diane of Miglos' death when the baron returns. Even if Carel of Miglos escaped, he is now in disgrace, while Évrard d'Ange, by allowing Diane's Christian burying, instates in the baron a new esteem for him. The whole troupe is invited by the baron to stay a couple of days in Miglos.

There is still an issue remaining, though. Even after Diane of Miglos' burying, her ghost keeps haunting Évrard every night at half-past four in the morning. The lady's soul cannot depart for Diane cannot bear leaving her great love. Only Évrard can appease her and allow her to rest in peace, at last. He knows a spell for this sake (Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit) and it should be easy (the Spirit Might of Diane's ghost is 10). As the Storyguide, try to bring a lot of emotion into this end scene and make it as moving as possible.

though) in a convention context. They are enumerated in order of importance.

- 1) The circumstances of Diane of Miglos have been uncovered.
- 2) Carel of Miglos has been delivered to his brother.
- 3) Herios the hedge magician has been put out of harm's way.
- 4) Diane of Miglos' soul has been appeased.
- 5) Magi did not infringe the Code of Hermes and, notably, did not make flagrant usage of magic among mortals.
- 6) The covenant of Bentalone has been, despite all these events, correctly resupplied.
- 7) The German mercenary troop headed by Horst has been disbanded.

ASSESSING PLAYER

SUCCESS

The following points help evaluate the degree of player accomplishment in this story (but not roleplaying feats,

ACT V: UNTYING

If everything goes well, the

HERIOS THE HEDGE MAGICIAN

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

Size: -1

Age: apparently 40

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Personality Traits: Deceitful +3, Brave -3, Unctuous +2, Mischievous +2

Reputations: Weird (Local, Miglos) 1, Hedge magus (Hermetic, Tribunal of Thebes) 3

Combat:

Fist: Init +2, Atk +7, Def +7, Dam -1

Dagger: Init +2, Atk +9, Def +7, Dam +2*

Soak: +3 (Partial Fur)

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapaci-

tated (13-16)

Core Abilities: Greek 4, Arabic 4, Langue d'Oc 3, Folk Ken 2, Brawl (Defense) 6, Entrancement 5, Philosophiae 3, Magic Lore 3, Order of Hermes Lore 1, Penetration (Entrancement) 5

Powers: Magic Resistance 20, Equivalent of the 5 Techniques 0, Equivalent of Mentem 20, Mentem spells up to Level 25 (inevitably casted by chanting a heady recitative**)

* The blade is covered with poison. Any wounded character must roll a 9+ Stamina stress die every round. In case of failure, the victim loses one fatigue level. When all fatigue levels are lost, more and more serious wounds are suffered. One single successful Stamina roll stops the effects of poison. A botch directly renders the victim incapacitated.

** Which lowers Évrard d'Ange's Parma Magica.

Encumbrance: 2 (2)

ÉVRARD D'ANGE, MAGUS OF HOUSE JERBITON

Characteristics: Intelligence (Quick-witted) +3, Perception (Carefree) -2, Presence (Handsome) +2, Communication (Beautiful voice) +1, Strength (Frail) -1, Stamina (Alert) +1, Dexterity (Legerdemain) +1, Quickness (Nonchalant) -1

Size: 0

Age: 26

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Hermetic Magus, The Gift, Gentle Gift, Quiet Magic, Subtle Magic, True Love (Diane of Miglos), Deficient Technique (Perdo), Flawed Parma Magica (when the spell caster chants), Weak Enchanter

Personality Traits: Passionate +3, Frivolous +2, Proud +1, Brave +1

Reputation: Penniless (Local, Nobility of the County of Foix) 2

Combat:

Short Sword: Init -1, Atk +8, Def +5, Dam +4

Soak: +1

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

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

Core Abilities: Langued'Oc (Poetry) 4, Latin 5, Artes Liberales 3, Magic Theory 4, Order of Hermes Lore 1, Parma Magica (Rego) 2, Music (Love songs) 4, Folk Ken (Nobility) 1, Stealth (Moving silently) 2, Single Weapon (Defense) 4, Ride (Parade) 3, Etiquette (Nobility) 1, County of Foix Lore (Nobility) 1, Code of Hermes (Interactions with mundanes) 1, Charm (Courteous love) 1

Arts: Creo 3, Intellego 4, Muto 8, Perdo 0, Rego 5, Animal 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 10, Herbam 0, Ignem 0, Imaginem 0, Mentem 10, Terram 0, Vim 0

Spells:

The Call to Slumber (ReMe 10) +16: makes the target fall asleep (p. 151)

Arm of the Infant (MuCo 20) +19: shrinks the target's arm (p. 131)

Confusion of the Numbed Will (ReMe 15) +16: confuses the target (p. 151)

Rise of the Feathery Body (ReCo 10) +16: makes the target levitate (p. 134)

The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo 20, ritual) +17: heals wounds (p. 129)

Whispers Through the Black Gate (InCo/Me 15) +15: allows speaking with the dead (p. 130)

Disguise of the New Visage (MuCo 15) +19: modifies the target's appearance (p. 131)

Lay to Rest the Haunting Spirit (PeMe 20) +11: appeases a spirit, a ghost (p. 150)

Thoughts Within Babble (InMe 25) +15: allows understanding foreign languages (p. 149)

Aura of Ennobled Presence (MuIm 10) +9: makes the target look more credible, stronger (p. 145)

Wizard Sigil: A couple of melodious music notes

Vis: 3 pawns of Corpus

Encumbrance: 1 (1)

Description: In one word, you look great! The way you carry your head and your costly, fashionable clothes leaves no doubt about your noble origin. You are said nice, warm and easy going. Moreover, you have no disdain for socializing with commoners, which fuels your popularity. Your elders of the Grand Council view you as carefree and frivolous, but you can be serious when it turns necessary.

Background: You have been a member of the Covenant of Bentalone for almost one year now. After passing your gauntlet and becoming a full magus at the 1214 Provençal Tribunal, you scrupulously selected the Covenant closest to Miglos and managed to be accepted. Your only goal was to live close to your beloved, your life's true love, Diane, daughter of the Baron of Miglos... You met her while travelling with your master Tancrede le Bel, minstrel and, of course, Jerbiton magus. Although Diane and you were both very young at that time, you deeply fell in love with each other. Until you could at last choose your own destiny, you could only meet Diane when Tancrede's travels brought you to Miglos, but the strength of your love never waned.

Motivation: When the Grand Council declared that the covenant needed supplies and that someone should go with Quinault the autocrat to Tarascon's fair, you immediately volunteered. Not that the company of Quinault is particularly fun or that you like bargaining for cattle or other supplies, but Tarascon-sur-Ariège is only half a league north of Miglos! Here is an unexpected occasion to meet Diane, who will certainly be at the fair too. The other members of the expedition perfectly know why you accepted this chore. It is indeed difficult to hide when you look so happy and keep singing Diane's beauty along the road!

(Continued on page 46)

(Continued from page 45)

Relationships with the Other Characters:

- **Carélia:** She has been your shield grog, your personal bodyguard, ever since you joined Bentalone. She was imposed by the Great Council, which judged that your expeditions among mundanes could be dangerous for you. You were quite offended, but there was no way to disobey. Eventually, Carélia proved discreet, devoted, and in more than one occasion useful to help you out of trouble. You ended up esteeming her and granted her your friendship.
- **Éthaine:** What a naughty kid! If she was not Martin's apprentice, you would have beaten her up long ago! You wonder why Martin keeps praising her magical skills and her intelligence; you cannot stand her. She always bothers you with her silly jokes and inept babbling.
- **Gailhard:** He is a Turb (Covenant guards) sergeant. He is a little crude, but he is a competent soldier.
- **Martin:** He is the only magus in the Covenant you can call a friend, presumably because he is younger than the members of the Grand Council. Of course, he spends all his time in magical studies, while you prefer living among mundanes, but you both got along right from the start. You often chat for hours about your respective views of magic but you had a really hard time convincing this incorrigible lab rat to come with you to Tarascon's fair to take some fresh hair.
- **Quinault:** He is the Covenant's autocrat (steward). A too serious man who does not appreciate that you sing for the grogs... Avoid him, or boredom will catch upon you!



SUB ROSA

CARÉLIA, ÉVRARD'S SHIELD GROG

Characteristics: Intelligence (Slow) -2, Perception (On her toes) +1, Presence (Masculine) -2, Communication (Taciturn) -1, Strength (Strong shoulders) +2, Stamina (Iron constitution) +3, Dexterity (Sure-footed) +2, Quickness (Good reflexes) +1

Size: 0

Age: 23

Confidence Score: 2 (5)

Virtues and Flaws: Custos, Self-Confident, Puissant Ability (Single Weapon), Covenant Upbringing, Dutybound, Oversensitive (Disagreeable remarks to women)

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Devoted +3, Spiteful +1, Quiet +2

Reputation: Not to be trifled with (Among grogs) 1

Combat:

Fist: Init -1, Atk +4, Def +5, Dam +2

Spear & Round Shield: Init +1, Atk +13, Def +12, Dam +7

Soak: +10 (Full Metal Scale)

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Core Abilities: Langue d'Oc 4, Brawl (Immobilize) 2, Awareness (Ambushes) 3, Athletics (Climb walls) 3, Single Weapon (Close protection) 7+2, Swim 2, Leadership (Intimidation) 1

Encumbrance: 2 (10)

Description: You certainly cannot be described as the incarnation of womanhood. When you are fully equipped, armor and helmet included, many even mistake you for a man. You generally do nothing to disabuse them. You do not care what others think.

Background: Your father was already part of Bentalone's Turbula (guards). He had brought you to this place so that you had a roof over your head and regular meals. He died during a far-away expedition with magi. You were only five years old. You never knew your mother who, you think, died when you were born. Thus, you have been raised at the Covenant. You were probably meant to become a maid, but you were more attracted by martial training than menial chores. The Turb captain noticed you and encouraged your inclination. After being a simple soldier, you now occupy, thanks to your courage, the envied position of Custos (favorites among the grogs) and shield grog (magi personal bodyguard).

Motivation: You are part of the expedition to Tarascon-sur-Ariège to protect the magi (Évrard d'Ange and Martin) and, but not as much, their apprentices (actually Éthaine). You must ensure that nothing bad happens to them. However, since this is no dangerous expedition, you should be able to enjoy the fair and have a little fun. Such occasions are so rare!

Relationships with the Other Characters:

- **Éthaine:** She is Martin's apprentice. You do not always understand her jokes, but she is a nice girl, overall. She is sometimes cruel to you, but when she realizes, she soon asks for forgiveness. Maybe she is a little jealous of you being so close to Évrard?
- **Évrard:** You are his regular shield grog. Ever since the first day, you have been loving him. You were imposed to him, and he did not like it, but you were able to become indispensable at his side. Now, he has accepted you. You know that your love is impossible, for Évrard loves the beautiful Diane of Miglos. Anyway, you suffer in silence and do everything to make him happy.
- **Gailhard:** He is a Turb sergeant, and your immediate superior. He does not like a woman to be a Custos like he and regularly lets you know. But as long as the Turb captain backs you up, you have nothing to dread from him.
- **Martin:** He is a magus and as such, you must protect him. However, if you had to choose who to save between him and Évrard, you would not hesitate for a single second. Actually, you do not know Martin very well, because he practically never steps out of his laboratory.
- **Quinault:** He is the Covenant's autocrat (steward). You do not deal with him any more since you joined the Turbula. In the Covenant, he is reputed to be extremely strict.

MARTIN, MAGUS OF HOUSE BONISAGUS

Characteristics: Intelligence (Brilliant) +4, Perception (Attentive) +1, Presence (Retiring) -1, Communication (Stammers often) -1, Strength (Weak arms) -1, Stamina (Wilful) +1, Dexterity (Clumsy) -1, Quickness (Alert) +2

Size: 0

Age: 33

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Hermetic Magus, The Gift, Life-Linked Spontaneous Magic, Hermetic Prestige, Personal Vis Source (Vim Vis all over the body), Inventive Genius, Fast Caster, Great Characteristic, Learn Magic Theory from Mistakes, Necessary Condition (Gestures), Dark secret (took his master in Final Twilight), Noncombatant, Susceptibility to Divine Power

Personality Traits: Curious +3, Obstinate +2, Faithful +2, Ambitious +1

Reputation: Inventive (Hermetic) 3

Soak: +1

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Core Abilities: German 4, Latin 5, Artes Liberales 3, Magic Theory (Spell invention) 7, Order of Hermes Lore (Heroes) 4, Parma Magica (Perdo) 3, Langue d'Oc 4, Finesse (Precision) 2, Penetration (Rego) 2, Philosophiae (Magic) 2, Concentration (Long periods) 3, Certamen (Rego) 2

Arts: Creo 7, Intellego 7, Muto 6, Perdo 5, Rego 13, Animal 5, Aquam 5, Auram 5, Corpus 5, Herbam 5, Ignem 5, Imaginem 5, Mentem 5, Terram 5, Vim 12

Spells:

The Ear for Distant Voices (InIm 20) +13: distance listening (p. 145)

Gather the Essence of the Beast (ReVi 15) +26: distillates the raw Vis contained in a dead creature (p. 162)

Freeing the Striding Tree (ReHe 30) +19: animates a tree (p. 139)

Sense of the Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +20: detects magical residues (p. 158)

Weaver's Trap of Webs (CrAn 35) +13: projects a giant spider web (p. 117)

The Unseen Porter (ReTe 10) +19: helps move heavy objects, such as a chest (p. 156)

Wall of Protecting Stone (CrTe 25) +13: creates a stone wall (p. 153)

Suppressing the Wizard's Handiwork (ReVi 35) +26: suspends a spell (p. 162)

Lamp without Flame (CrIg 10) +13: creates light (p. 140)

Wizard Sigil: Geometric perfection

Vis: 3 pawns of Creo, 3 pawns of Intellego, 3 pawns of Rego, 5 pawns of Vim

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Description: You are average-sized, quite emaciate and a little clumsy. Your robes are frequently stained with the sometimes explosive results of your magical experiments. But anyway! Appearance is of little importance. Gossipers will soon shut up when your experiments allow you to have Bonisagus' magic theory make a huge leap forward (which should come soon with your last experiments going so well).

Background: Your apprenticeship took place in the Rhine Tribunal, under supervision of Archmagus Ecilius. After you passed your gauntlet in 1207, you came to Languedoc with your master, who thought he could find in the rich local libraries capital information to pursue his research. As he was about to reach his goal, you made a tiny manipulation mistake that sent you both in Twilight. You came back enlightened on some aspects of magic theory that eluded you up to now, but Ecilius succumbed to final twilight... Quaesitores did not even think you could be held responsible, you, a disciple of Bonisagus. You surely did not delude them. Rather than coming back to the Rhine Tribunal, where you would have had to provide embarrassing explanations, you remained at the Covenant of Bentalone, which you have been a member of since 1210.

Motivation: You are not used to going to Tarascon-sur-Ariège for resupplying the Covenant. Évrard d'Ange considerably insisted that you "get out, breathe a little fresh air and forsake your dear laboratory for a couple of days". You finally agreed. You suspect he wants you to help him meet his beloved, Diane of Miglos. Moreover, it is true that your apprentice Éthaine has never left the Covenant since she entered apprenticeship three years ago. At that age, one cannot constantly remain inside a lab.

Relationships with the Other Characters:

- **Carélia:** She is Évrard's shield grog (bodyguard). She was imposed to him by the Grand Council, which was a fortunate decision, for she helped him out of several critical situations.
- **Éthaine:** She is your first apprentice and reveals very promising. You feel a great potential in her. Évrard often complains about her behavior, while she is always quiet and focused with you. She probably unwinds out of your laboratory. So much the better!
- **Évrard:** He is your only true friend in the Covenant. Members of the Grand Council are much older than you and certainly do not share the same preoccupations. Évrard and you have very different views regarding magic, but it is fascinating to hear him dissert about the "magic" of art and other mundane things.
- **Gailhard:** He is a Turb (Covenant guards) sergeant. You know him by sight, but it is the first time you really deal with him. He is certainly a skilled fighter.
- **Quinault:** He is the Covenant's autocrat (steward), a serious man who can be counted on. When you need a rare or costly ingredient, he always manages to deliver it to you in reasonable time. A precious man!

ÉTHAINE, MARTIN'S APPRENTICE

Characteristics: Intelligence (Studious) +3, Perception (Curious) +1, Presence (Cute) +2, Communication 0, Strength (Thin) -3, Stamina (Determined) +2, Dexterity 0, Quickness (Restless) +2

Size: -1

Age: 13

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Apprentice, Gentle Gift, Puissant Art (Rego), Animal Ken, Apt Student, Gossip, Necessary Condition (Gestures), Animal Companion (Zorg the dog), Delusion (Évrard d'Ange loves her), Compulsion (Jokes)

Personality Traits: Merry +1, Practical joker +3, Serious +1, Jealous +3

Combat:

Fist: Init +2, Atk +2, Def +5, Dam -3

Soak: +2

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)

Core Abilities: Langue d'Oc 4, Latin 2, Artes Liberales 1, Magic Theory 2, Order of Hermes Lore (History) 1, Parma Magica 1, Brawl (Defense) 2, Stealth (Hide) 1, Legerdemain (Food) 2, Athletics (Climb trees) 1

Arts: Rego 4/6, Animal 3, Corpus 2

Spells:

Eyes of the Cat (MuCo/An 5) +4: helps see at night (p. 131)

The Gentle Beast (ReAn 25) +13: calms an animal (p. 120)

Wizard Sigil: Small ephemeral stars

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Description: You are a pretty young woman, now. And if anybody, relying on your freckles, your black plait and your small size, came to treat you like a girl, he'd better take care, for you are now almost a maga and you would soon turn him (inevitably him) into a pig!

Background: You have never been happy at your peasant parents'. They preferred your brothers and sisters and used to have you do the most repellent chores. Without reason, they often threatened you to lose you in the forest and get rid of you, the good-for-nothing. Your brothers and sisters were even worse, always pulling your hair, throwing stones at you and stealing your food. Your only true friend was your dog Zorg, a balding bastard nobody wanted. You finally understood, when you were 8, that you actually frightened them. Thence, you immediately put these vexations to an end, but your family became even more mistrustful. Your tenth birthday was meant to be as sad as the others, when you met in the fields a curious man who was staring at you. That evening, when you came back home, he was talking to your father. The mysterious stranger gave your old man a rather big purse, then stood up and took your hand. During the scene, your mother's gaze never left the purse... The man was called Martin and, while taking you far away, introduced himself as a magus. He hard perceived in you what he called the

Gift and wanted to make you his apprentice. You have been studying the art of magic for three years under his guidance now, within the Covenant of Bentalone. You quickly came to like it, even more so you are much better treated here than you ever were at your parents'.

Motivation: You have never left the Covenant since your arrival, three years ago. You are very excited about going to Tarascon's fair. Of course, Martin will be here to watch over you, but the gorgeous Évrard d'Ange will be there too... And there will be tons of exciting things to do!

Relationships with the other characters:

- **Carélia:** This big girl is Évrard's shield grog (bodyguard). Fortunately for you, she is not a serious rival: she is both ugly and dumb! You sometimes play the worst jokes on her, but she always forgives you, so that you envy her a little less for being so close to Évrard.
- **Évrard:** The first time you saw him, you immediately knew you would love only him! He is gorgeous, intelligent, sensitive... in one word, marvelous! You quickly did anything to be noticed by him, but without much success. Évrard still seems to consider you as a little girl, rather than as the young lady and apprentice maga you became! But he will realize, sometimes...
- **Gailhard:** He is a Turb (Covenant guards) sergeant, a big guy with a moustache, and not the kind of accommodating guy. Fortunately, you never deal with him.
- **Martin:** He is your savior and your master of magic. He revealed your own Gift to you and taught you how to use it. He is an awesome teacher and each of his lessons is a new occasion to marvel at. He told you once that he would made you the greatest maga of her generation... You will be eternally grateful to him for all that.
- **Quinault:** He is the Covenant's autocrat (steward). All grogs, as well as other apprentices, fear him. But not you. You indeed caught him in the cellar one day, emptying a bottle of wine from the magi's reserve. He saw you and turned all red. Since then, he takes great care of not annoying you.

ZORG THE DOG

Characteristics: Cunning 0, Perception +2, Presence -4, Communication 0, Strength 0, Stamina +2, Dexterity +1, Quickness +2

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Loyal (to Éthaine) +6, Brave +2

Combat:

Bite: Init +2, Atk +8, Def +7, Dam +1

Soak: +2

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (8-12)

Core Abilities: Athletics (Endurance) 3, Awareness (On guard) 3, Brawl (Bite) 3, Hunt (Tracking) 4

QUINAULT, THE COVENANT'S AUTOCRAT

Characteristics: Intelligence (Pragmatic) +2, Perception (Finicky) +1, Presence (Severe look) -1, Communication (Strong voice) +2, Strength 0, Stamina (Tireless) +2, Dexterity (Rusty) -1, Quickness (Phlegmatic) -2

Size: 0

Age: 37

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Covenfolk, Educated, Common Sense, Piercing Gaze, Visions, Compulsion (Drinking), Obsessed (Serving magi well)

Personality Traits: Severe +3, Melancholy +2, Faithful +3

Reputation: Severe (Local, Bentalone Covenant) 2

Combat:

Short Sword: Init +5, Atk +8, Def +6, Dam +1

Soak: +4 (Partial Heavy Leather)

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Core Abilities: Langue d'Oc 5, Latin 3, Artes Liberales (Arithmetic) 4, Philosophiae 3, Folk Ken (Grog) 2, Single Weapon (Defense) 6, Carouse (Drinking) 3, Leadership (Grog) 4, Etiquette (Magi) 2, Bargain (Lab supplies) 5, Ride (Harnessing) 1, Common Law (Local laws) 1

Encumbrance: 3 (4)

Description: You are rather tall, slim but not meager. Your austere face and your piercing gaze make people uneasy, which you do not dislike. Your temples start turning gray, as does your beard, which is always neatly trimmed.

Background: You come from a family of traders. Your father accidentally died when you were very young. The family business was then held by your uncle Victor, who sheltered you and your mother, and raised you as his own son. Your destiny was straightforward: you would work for your uncle, and then for your cousin Gaspard when time came. But one day, as you were traveling along a Pyrenean road (the very same road where your father died, you discovered later), you had your first vision... It was your father! Leading a cart convoy, he was descending toward the valley. Suddenly, your father nodded and fell on the cart's bench. A man had subdued him from inside the cart! As the man whipped the mules to panic them, you recognized him immediately... Victor! He had always told the mules had been scared by falling rocks. He had always claimed to have jumped off the cart right in time, while your father wanted to save the shipment at all price. Deeply disturbed,

you talked to your mother, but she would not listen, and then to your uncle, who got mad and drove you out. But you knew. His gaze betrayed him. Then you got to drink. You were nothing but a bloodless wreck when a magus from the Grand Council of the Bentalone Covenant approached you and asked you to become the autocrat. It is a position you are now proud of, and you are forever grateful to the magi. You still sometimes drink, usually hiding, but you always take care that it does not jeopardize your position.

Motivation: Your duty is to supply the Covenant with various furnishing, as well as food. It is natural for you to go to Tarascon's fair. However, you wonder why the Grand Council sent the two youngest magi in the Covenant with you. You would have managed everything fine without them. Their elders presumably wish to train them at leading grogs. Anyway, this fair will allow you drinking without anybody being upset, once your job is done. Some kind of tradition...

Relationships with the Other Characters:

- **Carélia:** She is Évrard d'Ange's shield grog. She interposed more than once between he and you, whereas this young whippersnapper distracted grogs from their tasks with his futile poetry.
- **Éthaine:** She is Martin's young apprentice, a naughty kid who spends her free time playing stupid jokes to grogs and stealing food from the kitchens. Martin should better watch over her.
- **Évrard:** He is the youngest of the magi. He seems to spend most of his time writing poems and sing them. The problem is that he believes everybody should enjoy his poetry, and he keeps on distracting grogs from working with such frivolities.
- **Gailhard:** He is a Turb (Covenant guards) sergeant, a skillful and serious veteran.
- **Martin:** Unlike Évrard d'Ange, Martin is a young but serious magus. He only appeals to you when it is strictly necessary, and for reasons that are always approved by the Grand Council. You know for sure that he is about to become a member of this noble assembly.

GAILHARD, TURB SERGEANT

Characteristics: Intelligence (Stubborn) -1, Perception 0, Presence (Scars) -1, Communication (Gruff) -3, Strength (Strong arms) +3, Stamina (Barrel chested) +3, Dexterity (Precise) +2, Quickness (Massive) -2

Size: 0

Age: 34

Confidence Score: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Custos, Warrior, Lost love, Dependent

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Cruel +1, Loyal +0, Violent +3

Reputation: Skilled warrior (Local, Among grogs) 1

Combat:

Fist: Init -3, Atk +8, Def +4, Dam +3

Great Sword: Init -1, Atk +15, Def +8, Dam +12

Long Bow: Init -5, Atk +10, Def +2, Dam +11

Soak: +12 (Full Chain Mail)

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

Would Penalties: -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

Core Abilities: Langue d'Oc 4, Brawl (Head-butts) 6, Awareness (Stand guard) 2, Folk Ken (Soldiers) 2, Great Weapon (Body guarding) 8, Bows (Still targets) 4, Ride (In battle) 2, Chirurgy (Cuts) 4, Leadership (Group Combat) 3

Encumbrance: 1 (10)

Description: You are tall and muscular, and always wear your impeccable chainmail armor. Your face has been made little agreeable because of multiple scars, and your bushy mustache does not make you less frightening. You do not care. It impresses adversaries and prevents you from being bothered by pedlars when you walk in town.

Background: You were born at the Covenant of Bentalone, where your parents were grogs. Since you were very young, your father has been training you in martial arts. You were destined to a great future within the Turbula (Covenant guards). Everything was running fine. At 18, you even married a distant cousin from a nearby village. She gave you two gorgeous daughters. Unfortunately, your duties at the Covenant left you little time to enjoy family life. While you were on a mission with some magi, something terrible happened at the village. A band of thugs brutally attacked the village, plundered all its food supplies and slayed many inhabitants... including your wife and eldest daughter. When you came back, an immense wrath prevented any sorrow in you. You did not speak to anyone before having put to the sword the last of the bloody brigands. Then you had to care for your youngest daughter,

who had stayed alone all this time. You did not want her to live at the Covenant, with soldiers always all around the place. You could not have her stay at the village without protection any more. Thus, you decided to trade your service to the Covenant. The Turb captain, knowing your situation, accepted to hire you as a mercenary. However, this arrangement certainly affects your advancement. While you could probably have ended Turb captain, you are still a sergeant, with little hope for a promotion.

Motivation: You must ensure that the expedition to Tarascon's fair goes well. You are in charge of protecting everybody, in particular magi (Évrard d'Ange and Martin). From your point of view, the soonest it is over, the soonest you can go back home and take care of your daughter. You wonder what kind of gift from the fair would please her...

Relationships with the Other Characters:

- **Carélia:** She is Évrard d'Ange's shield grog (bodyguard). She is quite young to already be a Custos (favorite grog) like you (sigh)...
- **Éthaine:** Martin's apprentice. She is just a kid. You still must protect her as if she was already a maga, and probably even more, given her minx reputation.
- **Évrard:** He is a magus of House Jerbiton, as he says. He spends a lot of time with normal people, and gets along very well with commoners. Despite his "too much" side, you like him.
- **Martin:** This one is a true lab rat! He never leaves on an expedition. You hardly know him.
- **Quinault:** He is the Covenant's autocrat (steward). A skilled man who often speaks in your favor at the Grand Council. Grogs find him severe. This is probably true. So what?

MYTHIC BLOODLINES: MORE THAN THE FOUNDERS

For magi, the Mythic Blood Virtue offers a fantastic benefit. As a Major Virtue, it grants the character fatigue benefits when casting formulaic spells, a magical power with no limitation on use and a maximum total level of 30, a Minor Magical Focus, and a minor Personality Flaw. Additionally, this establishes a birth legacy for the character, opening the door to the possibility of blood-siblings who share their heritage and may serve as potential allies, rivals, or enemies. Such a background gives easy hooks for Storyguides to tie in the lost projects of powerful sorcerers, enemies who simply wish to eliminate a wizard's lineage, or grudges born by unaging creatures and transferred to the player magus. However, for those

seeking a source for their character's Mythic Blood, hunting down suitable ancestors can prove challenging. To ease the search, we offer this series.

The summaries provided below are very brief, and are not meant to substitute for a full understanding of the referenced figures. Players and Storyguides are encouraged to further research individuals who pique their interest.

NOVGOROD TRIBUNAL AND SCANDINAVIA

Stretching from the wide steppes of the Rus to icy shores of Scandinavia, there are many wizards appropriate for the Mythic Blood

BY BEN MCFARLAND

Virtue. Some might still linger in the landscape or the Magic Realm, like Baba Yaga or Snaer. Others are long-gone, like Thorbjorg or Louhi.

BABA YAGA

Called "Old Grandmother," Baba Yaga lives deep in the woods, occupying an enchanted hut which walks around on great chicken legs. Surrounded by an iron picket fence, with a skull mounted on every spindle but one, a special rhyme is necessary to find the hut's entrance. Baba Yaga's teeth and fingernails are sharp iron, she can speak with animals; control the spirits of the dead, sometimes forcing them to animate or occupy objects; and she flies about on an enormous mortar and pestle. She has many beautiful daughters, some of whom may have escaped with various suitors, and her bloodline might exist in the world through these girls. Tales claim she eats children and she has threatened more than one story's hero with the stew pot. Baba Yaga knows many secrets, and may be able to exist in more than one place and time simultaneously.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from Baltic, Slavic, or Russian cultures or regions.

Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: ReMe 25
Command the Errant Spirit (R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind) This effect has 5 Penetration. The magus may control a disembodied spirit he can sense. (Base 5 + 2 Voice + 2 Sun)

Speak: InAn 25 Gift of Feral



Speech (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind)
The caster may speak with a specific animal within voice range. (Base 10 + 2 Voice + 1 Concentration)

Gesture: InMe 20 *Posing the Silent Question* (R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 149.

Neither Speak nor Gesture: ReTe 15 Ghostly Grasp (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per the spell, Unseen Arm, but able to affect Herbam and Animal objects, too. (Base 2 + 2 Voice + 1 Concentration + 2 Animal & Herbam requisites; **ArM5** page 155)

Possible Minor Magical Foci: Animating objects, controlling the spirits of the dead, discovering secrets, speaking with animals.

Possible Personality Flaws: Busybody, Meddler, Proud, Wrathful.

SNAER THE OLD

Snaer is the son of Frost and the son of Kári, a lord of wind. His grandfather was a giant, and Snaer is considered a personification of snow. Snaer lived amongst men 300 years and then disappeared. Once a king of Finland, Gotland, and Kvenland, Snaer could fly and had three magically adept daughters, Fön (Fönn 'Snowdrift'), Drífa 'snowfall', and Mjöl (Mjöll, 'powdered snow'), and a son, Thorri ('frozen-snow'). Thorri's children ruled Norway from the Jotunheim mountains in the north to Alfheim in the south.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from a Scandinavian culture, including Iceland, the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, or the Isle of Man.

Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: CrAu 30 Bluster of Summer Snow (R: Sight, D: Sun, T: Ind) As per the spell, *Clouds of Summer Snow*, **ArM5** page 126, but with Sun duration.

Speak: PeIg 25 *Conjuration of the Indubitable Cold* (R: Voice, D: Mom, T:



Part) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 142.

Gesture: ReMe 20 *Aura of Rightful Authority* (R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 151.

Neither Speak nor Gesture: PeIg 10 *Winter's Icy Touch* (R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 142, but this effect has 5 Penetration.

Possible Minor Magical Foci: Ice and snow, rulership, storms, winter.

Possible Personality Flaws: Ambitious, Driven, Overconfident, Proud.

THORBJORG

This pagan viking sorceress is mentioned in the sagas of Erik the Red as a practitioner of Seidr, a wizard who "spins charms" utilizing cord or thread. Seidr helped with divination, controlling spirits and the dead, summoning storms or sinking ships, protect one from harm, and even cursing one's enemies so they

lost memories, found their swords blunt or armor weak, or drove their victims mad. Odin and Frejya both knew Seidr.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from a Scandinavian culture, including Iceland, the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, or the Isle of Man.

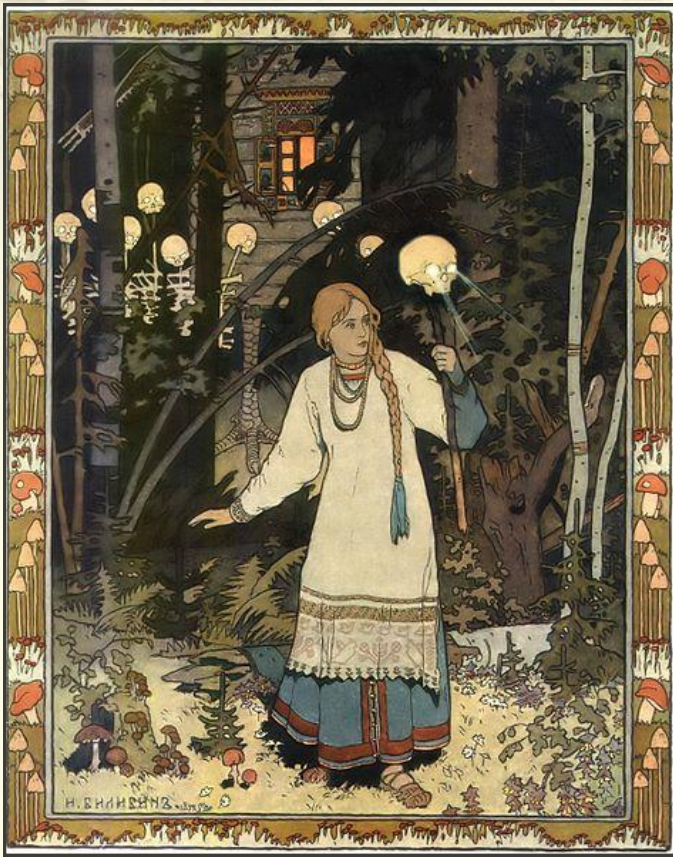
Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: ReAu *Pull of the Skybound Winds* (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per **ArM5**, page 126.

Speak: ReCo 25 *Awaken the Slumbering Corpse* (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per **ArM5**, page 134.

Gesture: ReMe 20 Madness of the Snare-bound Beast (R: Eye, D: Conc, T: Ind) While the magus concentrates, the target completes all actions as if consumed by madness. (Base 10, +1 Eye, +1 Concentration)

Neither Speak nor Gesture: PeTe 15 Crumbling Panoply (R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind) As per *Rusted Decay of Ten-Score Years*, but at Sight range; see **ArM5**, page 155.



Possible Minor Magical Foci:

Controlling corpses, controlling spirits, cursing enemy targets so they suffer, learning secrets, protecting from one type of physical harm (fire, weapons, drowning).

Possible Personality Flaws:

Ambitious, Lecherous, Proud, Weakness (Attracted Gender).

VÄINÄMÖINEN

In some Finnish tales, Väinämöinen is a powerful wizard or god, born of Ilmater and the seas of creation. Other stories claim he is the son of the hero-king Kalev, and brother of Ilmarinen and Hiisi. He could shape the land, crafted magical instruments, command the wind, fought and defeated many magical foes; he was a very capable warrior. Väinämöinen cast his spells by singing or reciting poetry and searched far and wide for a bride. He departed the land after a mystical newborn chastised him for his sins and failures. Väinämöinen sang himself a copper boat and sailed over the horizon,

swearing to return one day. Although he never found a bride, it's very possible he had a dalliance, or that a wizard has his bloodline through one of Väinämöinen's brothers.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from a Scandinavian culture, including Iceland, the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, or the Isle of Man.

Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: ReCo 30 *Seven-league Stride* (R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 135.

Speak: ReMe 25 Call for the Grateful Audience (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Room) The occupants of a room believe the caster's voice, either singing or storytelling, to be wonderfully pleasant and beautiful. This effect has 5 Penetration. (Base 3 + 2 Voice + 1 Concentration + 2 Room)

Gesture: ReTe 20 Summon the Ready Earthworks (R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part) Shift the earth into a berm, to 25 paces wide, 2 paces high,

and 2 paces thick. This berm may take any shape desired by the caster; with a Finesse roll of 12+, the caster may adjust the dimensions. However, the total may not exceed 100 cubic paces, and the height may not exceed the thickness. (Base 3 + 2 Voice + 1 Part + 2 Size)

Neither Speak nor Gesture:

ReCo 15 *Endurance of the Berserkers* (R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per the spell, **ArM5** page 134.

Minor Magical Focus: Battle, building ships, music, shaping the land, travel.

Possible Personality Flaws:

Ambitious, Lecherous, Overconfident, Proud.

LOUHI

Known as the Mistress of the North, Louhi was the matriarch of the Pohjola people in ancient Scandinavia, a tribe which rivaled Väinämöinen's people. While Väinämöinen searched for a wife, Louhi saved his life. She had many daughters, some of whom were seduced by Ilmarinen and Väinämöinen's companions. A powerful witch, she could change shape, banish disease, cast mighty enchantments, and throw lightning bolts. She demanded Väinämöinen's brother, Ilmarinen, craft the Sampo to win the hand of one of her daughters, and then stole it from him after her daughter spurned him. The Sampo itself was destroyed in the battle between Väinämöinen and Louhi, and its pieces scattered across creation.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from a Scandinavian culture, including Iceland, the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, or the Isle of Man.

Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: CrAu Call the Lightning (R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind) The caster summons down a lightning bolt out of the sky to strike a target,

doing +30 damage as per *Incantation of Lightning* (ArM5, page 126) but the spell only functions outdoors. No clouds need to be in the sky, but the target may not be indoors. (Base 5 + 3 Sight + 2 created phenomenon in a very unnatural fashion)

Speak: CrCo 25 Cleanse the Pustulent Wounds (R: Touch, D: Moon, T: Ind) As per *Purification of the Festering Wounds*, but the target gains a +15 to recover from wounds and injuries, see ArM5 page 129.

Gesture: ReIm 20 Wizard's Deception (R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind) The wizard appears and sounds as if he is up to 100 paces from his current location. This spell is similar to *Wizard's Sidestep*, except the wizard's image and sounds may be shifted in location. The wizard must be able to see or vocally reach the area where his image and sound will emanate. (Base 5 + 2 Sun + 1 additional sense)

Neither Speak nor Gesture: MuCo 15 *Disguise of the New Visage* (R: Per, D: Sun, T: Part) As per the spell, ArM5 page 131.

Possible Minor Magical Foci: Changing shape, disease, storms, trickery, winds.

Possible Personality Flaws: Avaricious, Driven, Overconfident, Vow (Care for family).

ILMARINEN

The brother of Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen was a master craftsman and possibly studied the same tradition as Weyland or Verditius. Unlucky in love, he could make anything and forged the mythical Sampo to win the hand of one of Louhi's daughters. In the process of creating the Sampo, he crafted and destroyed a magical crossbow, a magical ship, a magical bull, and a magical plow. But Ilmarinen could speak to the spirit of each of these items, and found them flawed and bloodthirsty, so he destroyed them and continued working on the Sampo. Finally,

infusing the Sampo with the power of the four winds, he presented it to Louhi. Louhi's daughter refused to leave the lands of Pohjola, and Ilmarinen returned home, dejected. There, he crafted a woman of gold and silver, and animated her to be his wife. The metal bride was cold and hard, and so he melted her back to ingots. Undaunted, he finally married one of his half-brother Hiisi's daughters, after proving his worth by ploughing a field of vipers, capturing the bear of the God of the Underworld, Tuoni, and catching the greatest pike of Underworld's river.

A wizard with this bloodline might have a pagan background, or be from a Scandinavian culture, including Iceland, the Orkney Islands, the Shetlands, or the Isle of Man.

Possible Powers:

Speak & Gesture: ReAu 30 *Wings of Soaring Wind* (R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per ArM5, page 126.

Speak: CrIg 25 Stoke the Master's Forge (R: Voice, D: Diam, T: Ind)

Create a fire hot enough to melt lead, doing +15 damage anyone caught in it. This fire needs no fuel, but will go out after the duration if no fuel exists. If combustible materials are fed into it, it will remain as long as it is sustained. (Base 10 + 2 Voice + 1 Diameter)

Gesture: ReAn 20 Claim the Hunter's Prize (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind) As per *Viper's Gaze*, but at Voice range. (ArM5, page 120)

Neither Speak nor Gesture: ReTe 15 Backbiter's Revenge (R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind) The metal weapon wielded by an individual bends back to strike the owner for +5 damage. (Base 4 + 2 Voice + 1 Concentration)

Possible Minor Magical Foci: Animating objects, capturing creatures and spirits, creating hot fires, creating objects with metal, harnessing the wind.

Possible Personality Flaws: Driven, Judged Unfairly, Lecherous, Obsessed.



COMPANION PIECE:

THE THREE GOOD MEN OF BRÉIFNE

The Companion Piece series provides detailed characters ideal for use either as companions to individual magi or as associates to entire covenants. The last article in this series, back in issue 9, looked at William of Ayelsbury, a pious knight destined to join one of the military orders.

This time around, in support of the new *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal* supplement, we detail a band of three companions ideal for strengthening your

Hibernian covenant either against the advances of foreign magi, or to use their local knowledge against the recalcitrant Hibernians who stand in your way.

The three good men of Bréifne are rogues, primarily interested in their own wealth, standing, and security, but they are an effective band and well-suited to Hibernia's distinctly antagonistic culture. Importantly for any covenant in Hibernia, the three good men of Bréifne are not barred from entering the province of

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Connacht, something that magi of the Order are forbidden to do under the centuries-old Treaty of Cnoc Maol Réidh (see *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 12).

Mercenary they may be, even ruthless at times, but there is a spark of conscience within the three good men of Bréifne and they will not let your covenant down.



SUB ROSA

CUCKOLD

Though younger than Sinead, Liam carries a torch for her and is often angered by Eóin's prolonged absences, seeing this as abandoning his wife.

Each time that Eóin remains away from Carrick for two seasons or more, there is a chance that Liam makes his feelings known to Sinead and there is also a chance that she reciprocates.

If this happens, then rumours may start to spread, first through the local streets and then to the clothiers' guild.

THE THREE GOOD MEN

The three good men of Bréifne are Eóin (OH-n) the clothier, Risteard (RISH-taird) the butcher, and Somhairle (SO-uhr-lyeh) the weaver. They have no great love for the English, but they each have as much antipathy again for their own Irish enemies.



Friends first and mercenary colleagues second, the three are a common sight in the drinking houses of Carrick and beyond.

EÓIN, A CLOTHIER BY TRADE

Eóin is the leader of the three and the others are loyal to him above any loyalty to a covenant or individual magus. He is a clothier by trade and nominal member of a small clothier's guild in the town of Carrick where he maintains a workshop.

He is currently responsible for an apprentice, Shay, who is twelve years old and has another five years to go before he completes his apprenticeship.

His also employs another journeyman clothier, Liam, who is twenty-three years old and a competent craftsman.

He has two free seasons per year in which to pursue stories. The other two seasons are spent in tending his business, including teaching Shay.

While he is away, his wife Sinead oversees the business, although she delegates much of this to Liam.

Eóin, Sinead, and Shay all live in Eóin's house, which also serves as his workshop and stores. Liam pays for a room in lodgings in the next street over.

As a clothier, Eóin is not content with his lot. He does not see his fortune in years of shearing, snipping, and sewing, but in using his other abilities. Neither cruel nor ruthless, he is at least prepared to do things that others would be too timid or afraid to do. He is also a gambler and luck is more often on his side than against him.

RISTEARD, A BUTCHER BY TRADE

Risteard claims his profession as butcher and that may be accurate on more than one level. Lacking the character to run his own affairs of business, he works, when in Carrick, for a butcher there. His work consists of slaughtering, skinning, gutting, and chopping carcasses.

Outside of the slaughterhouse and the butcher's shop, he provides the muscle behind Eóin's smarts.

Risteard is afflicted with the battle transformations, as described in *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 120. He has inherited these from a long-distant Fir Bolg ancestor and he is the first in his family to suffer them in generations. Despite his village speaking in awed terms about the feats carried out by his "uncle" Finn, Risteard's own transformations have caused him to be feared more than lauded.

Though Risteard does not yet know it, he has an enemy. Far to the west and many years ago, a Fir Bolg warrior was cursed and stripped of his fighting prowess. He lost the power of his battle transformations and they were given instead to a baby born on that very moment. Risteard was that

COVENANT CRAFTSMEN

The three craftsmen might be brought into the covenant proper, in which case Eóin and Somhairle save a combined six pounds of expenditure against Consumables and Ristead saves three pounds of expenditure against Provisions, both as per *Covenants*, page 66 and subject to the limits described there.

child. The Fir Bolg, called Keogh (Kee-OH), has been looking for the child ever since, determined to find a way to reclaim what is his. If the death of this imposter is what it takes, then that is what Keogh will do.

SOMHAIRLE, A WEAVER BY TRADE

Somhairle is a weaver resident in Carrick and belonging to the same small guild as Eóin. He is, however, one of the Uí Ruairc of West Bréifne, something that certain Uí Raghallaigh families hold against him.

He is also a giant-blooded unGifted Gruagach (Hedge Magic: Revised Edition, page 55) with the power to grant blessings and curses. It is this touch of magic that is at the heart of the feud he finds himself in.

Fergal mac Artan of the Uí Raghallaigh believes that Somhairle cursed his daughter with a sudden falling sickness that left her blind. While it is true that Somhairle has the ability to curse, he was not responsible, believing instead the cause to be infernal.

He maintains his workshop at the edge of town alongside the main road that runs from the gate to the marketplace. While this is a little out of the way for daily trade, it is within an area of heightened magical power. There is a level three magical aura that pushes through the relatively low level two Dominion that covers Carrick. He has built his Gruagachan laboratory into the back room of his home and workshop.

Like Eóin, Somhairle has an apprentice, Finn, who is just ten years old. Being unmarried, when out on the road with his friends, he leaves his affairs in the hands of his housekeeper, Fiona, who is a weaver of journeyman quality in her own merit. Fiona knows that Somhairle is a druid of some kind, but all Finn knows is that there is a door that remains locked and that he is not allowed past.

Fergal mac Artan is a wealthy and influential man around Carrick. As such, he takes a somewhat lax attitude

THE TOWN OF CARRICK

The three good men all live in the small town of Carrick in East Bréifne. This is inside the province of Connacht, but their reputations as adventurers goes beyond and characters wishing to engage their services can easily make contact them through a number of social contacts outside of Connacht.

Carrick itself is under the control of the Uí Raghallaigh but the nearby lands are frequently raided by the O'Raghnaills families of North Roscommon.

to the payment of his debts to those of lower standing. One of these was Somhairle the weaver. A year ago, after refusing to pay Somhairle for several rolls of cloth, his daughter was struck blind. Fergal associated the two events and declaimed Somhairle as a sorcerer. The cry has not yet gathered momentum, though Somhairle has heard of the accusation. He knows he did not do it, but he believes it is the infernal attempting to stir up discontent between the Uí Raghallaigh and the Uí Ruairc.

THE KINGDOM OF

EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

The three good men have few resources of note. They have no great wealth between them, are owed no particular favors, and have few friends of influence. They all carry simple weapons and generally have light and inexpensive armor, unless they are provisioned with anything heavier by their associated covenant or employers.

As craftsmen, they start play each with a standard workshop, which they can improve over time using the rules found in *City & Guild*, page 65.

Somhairle also starts play with a Gruagachan Laboratory, which is housed in a locked room in his home.

THE SAIL ÉILLE

The three good men each carry a club called a sail éille (shi-LAY-lee). These stout sticks, each carved from a

knotted blackthorn branch, have a large heavy knob at the end, which can inflict a frightening blow upon an enemy.

Like the traditional Irish ax, the sparra, the sail éille is peculiar to Ireland and sees more use in fighting than do knives, daggers, and swords, largely down to its ubiquity. They can be of varying sizes and a smaller sail éille is treated as a bludgeon or club and a larger sail éille as a cudgel, as per the table in *ArM5*, page 176, and each according to the appropriate weapon Ability.

A character with a specialty of sail éille for their weapon Ability may use the sail éille in a scuffle without the standard -3 Attack penalty described in *ArM5*, page 174 under Non-Lethal Combat.

BRÉIFNE

Though subject to the Kingdom of Connacht, Bréifne is a kingdom in its own right ruled from Dromahaire, to the east of Sligo with Lough Gill sitting between the two, by the Uí Ruairc, the same tuath from which Somhairle hails. The kingdom stretches from the west coast across to Meath and is bordered along the north by Ulster. However, just like Ireland and the Hibernian Tribunal itself, Bréifne is a conflicted place.

The Uí Ruairc are active rivals to the Uí Raghallaigh and dissent and violence between the factions is common. These conflicts manifest in many ways, from small-scale factionalism across Bréifne's towns and villages to outright battle for control of lucrative roads and valley passes. The raiding of farms and even churches is common, with each side stealing cattle and silver from the other wherever it can.

The individual families that form part of these clans are frequently drawn into these squabbles and blood—feuds can exist between families for generations without resolution, lying dormant for years before flaring up in a sudden explosion of violence.

Ultimately, the kingdom divides around the middle of the thirteenth century but until then the rulers of the great clans turn their violent attention to each other, almost as though the forces of the infernal have guided them towards a self-destructive end.

You can find more detail on Bréifne in *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 36.

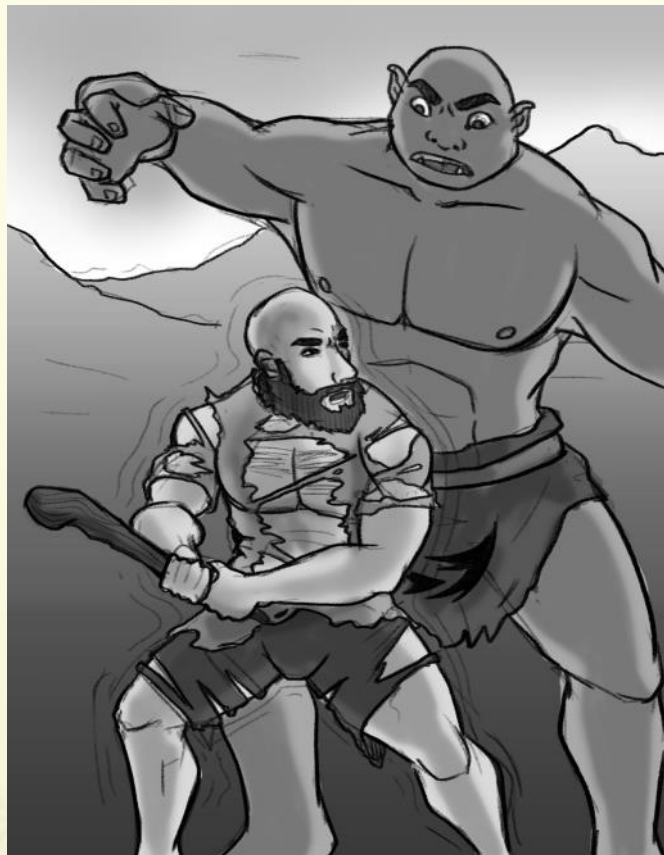
the loose association of Irish hedge wizards and druids. In conceding Connacht, magi of the Order are forbidden from spending more than three nights under a Connacht sky. If they have any business in that province, either mundane or magical, they must act through proxies and agents instead of going themselves.

The three good men present good proxies for entering Connacht and carrying out instructions and activities at the request of covenants or individual magi. Between them, they can read and write, handle themselves in combat, and have some small magical abilities. They are also blessed with few ambitions beyond self-preservation and the accumulation of sufficient wealth to provide a comfortable retirement.

While not thieves and murderers themselves, at least not by trade, they are rogues and as such they occupy a certain level within society. They have contacts through which they can gain information and leverage, especially within Connacht, that covenants may not have access to. They are

comfortable dealing with a side of life that covenants may want to remain separate from and while Somhairle cannot condone the taking of innocent life, they are prepared to inflict harm where needed.

They also provide decent cover for various acts of mundane interference and though they are low tradesmen their connections with the fledgling guilds may provide opportunities for contact with the authorities. The butcher, Ristead, may supply merchants and nobles alike with meat and also act as slaughterman for their livestock. Eóin might find himself commissioned to make new clothes for men and women of standing. It is a fine distinction, but Somhairle might provide another route into society. While Eóin has access to individual through various sessions to take measurements and to undertake fittings, Somhairle might gain access to their households, working with stewards, ladies of the house, and the like to determine what linens and fabrics the house requires. This access



COMPANION MATERIAL

The Hibernian Tribunal offers a particular challenge for magi of the Order in the shape of Connacht. Under the centuries-old treaty of Cnoc Maol Réidh, the Order concedes Connacht to the Coill Trí,

across the three strata of a household (Ristead in the kitchens, Somhairle to the stewards and the ladies, and Eóin to the great men and women of the house) could be useful to a covenant.

Finally, their understanding of the Order of Hermes and of magic in general makes them suited to spying upon rival covenants and even the defenses in place around important resources, such as vis sources, cattle, and even a covenant's Cathach.

ADVANCING THE THREE GOOD MEN

Each of the three good men must work two seasons, gaining exposure experience in their primary Craft Ability. This is true even for Ristead who despite being essentially a day labourer must still work to earn a living. The other two seasons are available for either story & adventure or for practice & study.

Eóin is perhaps the easiest to advance. When not engaged in a story, his two free seasons are likely to be spent in practice; one for a physical Ability and one for a mental Ability.

Like Eóin, Ristead is likely to spend his two seasons in advancing his Abilities. He is a little more focused in the physical side than Eóin so he may be best-placed advancing his combat Abilities. He is also a good candidate for learning the Clesrada (see *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 101). This would involve finding a sponsor to ensure that Úathach takes him as a student and he must then undergo the initiation.

Somhairle is most likely to advance his Gruagachan Arts and unless he can find a willing teacher he needs access to vis or use them on a story, gaining exposure or story experience, as explained in *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*, page 56. He may gain further Arts, such as Take,

Shape, and Vision, but these may only be gained through initiation. Furthermore, Somhairle can neither read nor write, let alone read the arcane Ogham used by Gruagachan. He will need to find a teacher prepared to teach him Artes Liberales and Ogham in order to then take advantage of the few written Gruagachan laboratory texts that may be found in Hibernia.

As each are craftsmen in their own right, they may also want to build Labor Points (*City & Guild*, page 38) with the aim of improving their financial standing, resolving stories concerning their businesses and taking the Labor Points reward. Each requires a surplus of 360 Labor Points to gain the Wealthy Virtue, so this is likely to be a long-term goal.

The alternative to using Labor Points to improve their wealth and social standing is investing them in their workshops and the materials that they use. Eóin may invest in mannequins, sheers, measures, etc. and buy only the strongest thread, the finest fabrics, and the most expensive fastenings and buckles. Ristead may buy a new set of knives and improve his slaughterhouse and find a farmer selling the best quality sheep and goats. Somhairle might commission a larger loom, buy better and rarer dyes, and even use the wool from sheep and goats of virtue to make his cloth. These allow the three craftsmen to make items of increasing quality.

None of the three have yet been on pilgrimage (*The Church*, page 15), although given Somhairle's pagan sympathies he is unlikely to benefit.

INTRODUCING THE THREE GOOD MEN

If you are bringing in the Three Good Men after the start of your saga, here are a few ideas to help introduce them.

- An apprentice undertaking her

THE HUNT

A vicious and vindictive young apprentice in his macnímartha has kidnapped the three good men and dropped them in the Darty Mountains, just over the Bréifne border in Ulster. He gives the men a three hour head start and then he and his men start to hunt them down.

Their run takes them through magical and faerie auras, places rich in vis and stones and herbs of virtue. Can the three good men find the resources they need to defend their ground or even turn the tables and take the fight to the magus?

macnímartha may come across them and form an alliance to help her learn more about Connacht and potentially help her find allies and resources that she can use in later years.

- The covenant may need information on people, places, or events within Connacht and may go looking for agents or proxies.
- Having come across something of value, the three good men approach the magi with the aim of turning their discovery to a profit. They are able to lead the magi to where they found the item or offer themselves up for future service.

STORIES FOR THE THREE GOOD MEN

Stories specifically for the three good men of Bréifne surround family matters, social advancement, and the general political upheaval of conflict between the great Bréifne families and even the native Irish against the Anglo-Normans.

FAMILY MATTERS

Each of the three good men have their own enemies, some across country and others closer to home.

- When a merchant returns to Carrick, beaten and bloodied, he tells the story of a lone bandit who tore into his guards and overturned his cart. The description he gives, of a man who grew to a huge size and seemed to shrug off the blows of those trying to defend the merchant. It sounds a lot like Ristead. However, Ristead is not the only one of his family to carry the battle transformations. Has his wayward brother returned?
- It started with furtive glances in his direction and developed into whispered conversations as Eóin walked past. It seems that the rumours about his wife and his employee are starting to spread.

SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT

As craftsmen and members of their respective guilds, they may want to advance their standing in society and within those guilds. In doing so, they may become embroiled in town politics, escalating squabbles between local enemies, and the occasional brush with Church and state.

Somhairle's pagan ways, though carefully guarded, may become known by others beyond his circle of friends.

- When a young lad apprenticed to one of the three friends is accused of theft the friends must discover the truth in the face of damning evidence or face the stigma of having raised a thief.
- The daughter of a prominent Carrick gentleman is to be married to the son of an Englishman. The making of the cloth and the clothes for

those attending the ceremony would be a feather in the cap for any chosen to do so. However, it seems the steward is looking for consideration in return for awarding the contract. Are Eóin and Somhairle happy to pay the price or do they take matters into their own hands?

- Fergal mac Artan has been seen in the company of Carrick's most senior priest a fair few times of late and then one afternoon a meeting is held in the market square. The priest has learned of a pagan tinker working the roads near the town and he has been using his ungodly ways for ill. The priest asks for men willing to fetch him back to town to face justice. Can Somhairle risk finding the man first and warning him? Or will this only implicate him too?

UPHEAVAL

The Anglo-Norman lords continue to spread their influence across Ireland and both the English and the various Irish factions will want to profit from the conflict and protect their interests. As independent agents, the three good men may be employed by both sides.

- The Uí Ruairc summon the three good men to Dromahaire; they have a job for them. A nearby robber knight has stolen a golden cross from a Uí Ruairc church and they want it back. Once they eventually have it, however, the cross is not what it seems and the Uí Ruairc claims of ownership seem unreliable at best. The three good men find themselves in possession of twice-stolen property.
- The baron's son has been captured trying to fend off



EÓIN THE CLOTHIER

Leader of the small band of adventurers, and unaffected by the Gift of either Hermetic or Hedge wizard, Eóin usually does the talking until matters of magic arise, and then he concedes to Somhairle. He is a gambler by nature, however, and he often agrees to deals on just the sliver of a chance of success or profit.

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

Size: 0

Age: 34 (34)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Craftsman; Clear Thinker, Luck, Unaffected by the Gift*, Vernacular Education**, Well-Traveled; Enemies (His Wife and her Lover); Susceptible to Warping***, Weakness (Gambling)

Personality Traits: Gambler +3, Self-Confident +2, Practical +1

Reputations: Clothier of Carrick (Carrick and the surrounding area) 1, Knowledgeable on Connacht (Connacht Borders) 1

Combat:

Dodge: Init -2, Attack n/a, Defense +3, Damage n/a

Fist: Init -2, Attack +5, Defense +3, Damage -1

Kick: Init -3, Attack +5, Defense +2, Damage +2

Sail éille (bludgeon): Init -2, Attack +8, Defense +4, Damage +1

Knife: Init -2, Attack +6, Defense +3, Damage +1

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: Area Lore: Connacht 3 (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (arithmetic), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 3 (alertness), Bargain 3 (hard sell), Brawl 3 (sail éille), Carouse 3 (games of chance), Charm 3 (first impressions), Chirurgy 3 (binding wounds), Climb 1 (trees), Clothiery 5 (woolen cloth), English 4 (slang), Folk Ken 3 (townsfolk), Guile 3 (lying to authority), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Gaelic 5 (slang), Latin 3 (academic usage), Leadership 3 (inspiration), Music 1 (sing), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Organization Lore: Carrick Clothier's Guild 2 (personalities), Swim 1 (underwater maneuvering), Teaching 3 (Clothiery)

Equipment: Heavy Leather Armor (Protection: 2); sail éille, knife, good quality clothes; workman's Clothes; survival kit; wax tablet; pack

Encumbrance: 2 (2)

Appearance: A good-looking man with a broad smile and a well-trimmed beard. With a little wash here and there and a change of clothes, he would easily pass in most walks of life.

* *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 47

** *City & Guild*, page 109

*** *Grogs*, page 84

raiders. The baron himself tasks the three good men with negotiating his return. To ensure their efforts, he instructs one of his advisors to accompany them. The raiders, however, are men with their own motives and are not willing to observe political courtesies. They intend to kill the young knight. If the three good men cannot negotiate his

release, they may need to find another way to rescue him.

- Cathal Uí Raghallaigh gathers his men and levies from Carrick for a campaign against Walter de Lacy. The three good men are charged as scouts to go ahead of the raiding force and report back on the targets. It seems though that the lands under de Lacy's control are suffering a sickness

and the people and their protectors are weak and ill-prepared for conflict. Is this the opportunity Cathal Uí Raghallaigh has been waiting for or is this an Infernal lure, tempting him and his soldiers into murder and damnation?

Of course, the great families of Bréifne need no outside enemy when

(Continued on page 65)

RISTEARD THE BUTCHER

The Riastradh Virtue that grants Risteard his battle transformations necessitates two sets of some statistics, such as characteristics, combat statistics, and wound penalties. These have been calculated and provided below.

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

Characteristics (Transformed): Int -1, Per -1, Pre 0, Com -1, Str +9, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik -3

Size: 0 **Size (Transformed):** +3

Age: 31 (31)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Craftsman; Riastradh*; Puissant Great Weapon, Warrior; Enemies (Keogh the Fir Bolg); Ability Block (Logic), Simple Minded

Personality Traits: Quick Tempered +3, Honest +2, Friendly +1

Reputations: Ferocious Beast of a Man (Rumormongers of Carrick) 1

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +4, Damage n/a

Fist: Init +0, Attack +6, Defense +5, Damage +3

Bludgeon: Init +0, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +5

Knife: Init +0, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +5

Sail éille (Cudgel): Init +1, Attack +12, Defense +8, Damage +10

Combat (Transformed):

Dodge: Init -3, Attack n/a, Defense -2, Damage n/a

Fist: Init -3, Attack +6, Defense -1, Damage +9

Bludgeon: Init -3, Attack +7, Defense -2, Damage +11

Knife: Init -3, Attack +6, Defense -2, Damage +11

Sail éille (Cudgel): Init +1, Attack +12, Defense +2, Damage +16

Soak: +4 **Soak (Transformed):** +10

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

Fatigue Levels (Transformed): OK, 0, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, -5, Unconscious

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

Wound Penalties (Transformed): -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (24-32), Dead (33+)

Abilities: Animal Handling 2 (cattle), Area Lore: Carrick 2 (geography), Area Lore: Connacht 3 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (bodyguarding), Brawl 4

(Fist), Butcher 5 (cattle), Carouse 4 (power drinking), English 2 (slang), Folk Ken 2 (peasants), Great Weapon 4+2 (Cudgel), Hunt 3 (tracking), Gaelic 5 (slang), Leadership 2 (intimidation), Music 3 (sing), Survival 3 (marshlands), Swim 1 (narrow waterways)

Equipment: Heavy Leather Armor (Protection: 2); sail éille, knife, peasant clothes; workman's clothes, butcher's apron

Encumbrance: 0 (3)

Appearance: Clearly a strong man with well-defined forearms and heavy-set shoulders. He meticulously shaves his head but has heavy brows and a thick brown beard. Despite the leather apron he wears in his work, his clothes are inevitably stained with the blood of the animals he slaughters and butchers.

Appearance (Transformed): The bones down Risteard's back burst through his skin in a line of boney spikes. His muscles bulge and swell and the veins engorge with blood, flushing him with a bright red color. Here and there, the pressure inside him bursts, exposing those veins. His frame grows large and broad and he takes on a hunched stance, as though the sheer weight of his body is pulling him down. His jaws grow deep and wide and filled with blocky and broad teeth.

As a result of his Riastradh Virtue, he has the following Fomóir Qualities and Inferiorities:

Huge

Large

Improved Soak x2

Reduced Defense

This provides the following bonuses and penalties:

+3 to size

+6 to Strength

-3 to Quickness

+6 to Soak

-3 to Defense

These have been factored into his statistics above. It is important to note that the -3 to Defense is in addition to the -3 to Quickness. This means that his transformed combat statistics show a -6 penalty to Defense totals.

SOMHAIRLE THE WEAVER

Somhairle has been created as a standard unGifted Companion character who has been initiated into Gruagach magic later in life. He is presented essentially straight out of his Gruagachan apprenticeship.

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

Size: +2

Age: 34 (34)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Craftsman, Gruagach*; Give; Giant Blood; Arcane Lore, Blessing**, Curse**; Pagan; Dutybound, Restriction (Cannot cast magic while bald), Vow (Fight Injustice), Weird Magic

Personality Traits: Generous +3, Just +2, Secretive +1

Reputations: Dedicated (Gruagachan) 1

Combat:

Dodge: Init -1, Attack n/a, Defense +1, Damage n/a

Bludgeon: Init -2, Attack +7, Defense +2, Damage +2

Knife: Init -1, Attack +5, Defense +1, Damage +2

Fist: Init -1, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage +0

Soak: 0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

Abilities: Area Lore: Connacht 3 (legends), Bargain 2 (hedge wizards), Brawl 2 (Bludgeon), Coill Tri Lore 2 (personalities), Concentration 1 (lab work), Dominion Lore 1 (saints), English 3 (slang), Faerie Lore 3 (faerie roads), Gruagach Lore 3 (personalities), Guile 3 (lying about pagan beliefs), Infernal Lore 2 (curses), Gaelic 5 (slang), Leadership 2 (bandits), Magic Lore 4 (enriching objects of virtue), Penetration 3 (Curse), Pictish Language 3 (inscriptions), Survival 2 (hills and mountains), Weaver 5 (fine cloth)

Arts: Give 2, Blessing 9, Curse 9

Equipment: sail éille, knife, workman's clothes, peasant clothes, pack and bag for the collecting of herbs and stones

Encumbrance: 1 (1)

Spells:

The Craftsman's Gift: GvBl 15, +14

The Mighty Sail Éille: GvBl 10, +14

Geas upon the Wayward Steward: GvCu 15, +14

Appearance: Somhairle is a huge man. He stands nearly seven feet tall and has a pronounced brow and heavy-set features. His hands are similarly large and people marvel that a man so ill-proportioned for the job can be so fine a weaver. His height does not carry over to his width and he is particularly lanky. He is often called, somewhat unkindly, the last stick of straw in the field. His blonde hair is a little long and untidy but he tries his best to look presentable.

* *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*, page 56

** *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*, page 57

As with other Gruagachan, his knowledge of his Arts gives him a degree of magical defense:

Magical Fortitude: Defense against Corpus effects

Confounding Magics: Defense against Corpus or Mentem effects

Immovable Object: Defense against Mentem or Corpus effects

These are described in *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*, page 10. In effect, Somhairle gains a +1 Soak bonus against spells and effects that cause physical damage. Concentration duration effects that include Somhairle in their target have the Ease Factor of the Concentration Check increased by 2. Finally, Somhairle has a chance of resisting effects that control or compel Somhairle in some way. Each round that he is under magical compulsion, he makes a (Strength +2 - the magnitude of the effect) simple roll against Ease Factor 9.

As his Arts improve, so do his magical defenses.

Somhairle venerates Brigid, one of the Tuatha Dé Danann, wife of Bres, and the triple manifestation of Ireland.

Somhairle's spells are described below:

The Craftsman's Gift

GvBl 15

R: Conversation, D: Limit

This spell grants a +1 bonus to the target's craft Ability.

Example: Knowing how hard his neighbour works, Somhairle casts a spell that improves his craft ability until he charges more for a product than would be proper.

(Base 5, +2 Limit (general))

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The Mighty Sail Éille

GvBl 10

R: Conversation, D: Diameter, T: Individual

This spell grants a +1 bonus to the target's Great Weapon Ability for Diameter duration.

(Base 5, +1 Diameter)

Geas upon the Wayward Steward

GvCu 15

R: Conversation, D: Geas, T: Ind

This spell inflicts Palsied Hands, as per the Minor Flaw

in **ArM5**, page 57.

Example: To punish a bully for an act of violence, Somhairle casts a geas that commands him to act kindly towards his victims instead. The curse makes the target's hands shake uncontrollably until the bully makes a heartfelt apology to his victims. The nature of the curse is perfectly suited to redress the ill so the target gets a -6 penalty to their Stamina roll to resist the geas.

(Base 5, +2 Geas (specific, Limit (general)))

(Continued from page 62)

they have each other to face.

- Eóin and Risteard are called upon to lend their mettle to a raid on the Druim Leatan priory, currently held by the Uí Ruairc. There is no profit in it and the fight will no doubt be bloody. What's more, Somhairle cannot be by their side. Do they attempt to escape service without being marked as cowards? Or do they try to avert the fight altogether?
- A harsh winter grips Carrick. The winds bite and the very air freezes causing damage to buildings and killing the livestock. Not far away, the Uí Ruairc seem to enjoy a sheltered winter as the winds roll sharply south. Their livestock survive still so as a matter of survival, the men of Carrick must go raiding.

MAGIC

As an unGifted Gruagach, Somhairle must find a means of advancing his Arts and Abilities. Finding others of his tradition will lead to stories; perhaps rivalry with others, competition for resources, or payments needed in return for training. He must also tread a careful

line between the hedge wizards and druids of Ireland and the Order of Hermes in case his magical power is overestimated and he makes himself an unwitting target for their attentions.

- A young gruagach seeks out Somhairle for teaching in the Art of cursing. It seems however that the young man has revenge on his mind. Does Somhairle help him achieve his revenge or steer him down another route? Either way, it seems an injustice has been done and Somhairle is dutybound to address it.
- Having found a source of vis, apparently unclaimed, Somhairle harvests what he needs across the course of a year. Then a letter arrives. It is from a magus of the Order who claims the source as his own and demands recompense for the vis taken. The source is in Bréifne, lands forbidden to the magus, but to send no response would be an insult. Somhairle may need an ally to intercede on his behalf.

Should Risteard go down the route of learning the Clesrada then stories should naturally arise; one arc will certainly be that of petitioning for and undergoing the necessary training. His ancient Fomórach blood

might bring out those looking to challenge themselves against one of these beasts. Given that the blood is countless generations removed, these threats are likely to be fairly minor in scale but no less deadly in consequence. Young magi undergoing their macgnímartha, those months and years between apprenticeship and the granting of the Parma Magica, might seek him out intending to make a name for themselves in tackling an enemy afflicted with battle transformations.

USING THE THREE GOOD MEN AS NPCs

The three good men of Bréifne are relatively easy to drop into a saga or story as non-player characters. Firstly, each has a particular craft that the covenant might need, providing a reason for visiting their workshops. As craftsmen alone, providing service and materials to the covenant, the characters detailed in this article make for useful characters.

Once contact has been made, they might be called upon to act as agents on the covenant's behalf, undertaking tasks off to the side of the main story action and in support of the covenant's aims.

THE FIRST LINEAGE: THE INVENTORS

By MARK BAKER

This is the first stage of my collection of Bonisagus lineages. Each of the following wizards are a collection of old and new Bonisagus magi who can be placed as NPC's in your campaign, and involve a basic story seed for each, or at least an amusing role-playing opportunity that will take up a little time. The magi start at the oldest and graduate down to the youngest, but the exact age and power is left to you to decide for your campaign. Note that while some virtues and flaws are entailed, this does not mean these are the entirety of virtues or flaws of the magi below.

This lineage follows on from one of the apprentices of Bonisagus, the unlabeled Hypatia, known to all Bonisagi (And most magi) as unrecognized in her time and her early death in Wizard War, as well as the

fact that a Tytlean magus stole her magical breakthroughs and made a mint on them after killing her. After her death, however, Hypatia was gradually found to be the originator of lowering many of the base levels to their current state, though she never did complete her magical theory of making all spells effectively at a base level of 1.

This line of researchers does not tend to associate with Tytleans no matter how they view their ancestor. Some rumours state that this lineage of Bonisagus have such facility with magic that they have kept some of these lowered base levels to themselves, but the lineage often respond with the fact that they are good at magic because they spend their time studying, not making up silly rumours.

BELLIA BONISAGUS

Age: 320 (292)

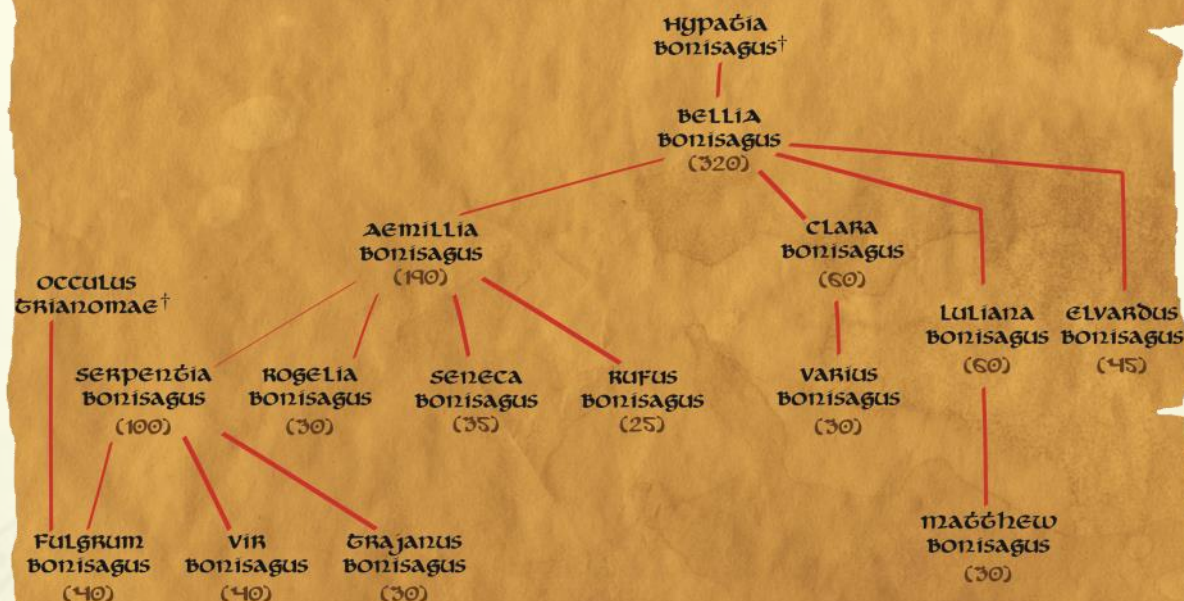
Quote: "It is such a minor change, really. But one that could have many, many repercussions. On first glance it would seem like nothing but a benefit. But I wonder if by releasing my discovery I won't change the fabric of the order itself and thereby bring the Order to destroy itself."

Theme: Puissant Magical Researcher concerned about the impact of her life's work

Master: Hypatia Bonisagus

Description: One of the oldest, if not the oldest member of the Order. Bellia was around at the end of the schism war and spends most of her

Descendants of Hypatia Bonisagus as described in 1220



Sub Rosa

time pottering around with the last points of her major Hermetic Discovery – that of completely integrating the Gentle Gift. Now she is nearing completion, Bellia has begun to consider all of the possibilities of her research – and has slowed her research until she reaches a conclusion. She is very much a shut in, however, so few people know about her research.

Bellia looks as old as she feels, which is her only twilight scar of note, so she usually appears as a late thirties to early forties matron. She could last another hundred years if Twilight does not catch her first; she has forced herself to use a little less magic, and her research has slowed drastically since realising her relative nearness to Final Twilight.

Personality Traits: The Tortoise Beats the Hare +2, Driven + 3 (Magical theory integration to bring peace to the Order), Curious +2

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Driven, (Minor Magical Focus: Longevity Potions), Cautious Sorcerer, Reclusive

Story Seed: Bellia is removed from the Order and so wishes to find out what the latest generation of magi are like, and how close they are to the mundane world; her fear is that if every magus has the Gentle Gift, magi will be far more tempted to join in with mundane causes and become little more than court wizards. She begins correspondence with the magi to begin with to find out their views on such. Over time, if they convince her that the Gentle Gift will not change the fabric of the order, she may reveal her research to them. But if the magi are of the opinion that integration with the mundane world is going to happen eventually, she may burn her research. If they seem suitable, Bellia may ask them to carry on her legacy, specifically if there is an appropriate Bonisagus in the group. If not, and no-one else is suitable, she will have her notes copied and passed on to Durenmar.

Interesting Item: 1034 Discoveries (Magic Theory Tractatus quality 8. Involved are 3 research points for the breakthrough of The Gentle Gift)

AEMILLIA BONISAGUS

Age: 190 (175)

Theme: Oblivious Weapons Engineer

Quote: “Oh, that extra heat was unexpected. Do you think the peasants will be angry I burned down their ships? It was an accident, really. I wasn’t even aiming at them. I mean, they were miles away. What’s that odd colour on the horizon? Think it’s a side effect of creating a small sun? Write that down, apprentice number twenty-three.”

Master: Bellia Bonisagus

Description: Aemillia is a creator of magical spells and weapons of destruction. She is uniquely gifted in the creation of such and regularly creates spells of such incredible intensity that several houses request knowledge of her research actions every season.

She usually appears to be a middle aged woman with fire red hair, accompanied by the snaps, crackles and pops of anything breakable nearby. She wears a leather apron over sensible clothes and rarely has eyebrows. She almost always has a slightly charred apprentice or two and a dozen lab assistants in fireproof clothing.

Aemillia is almost shocked at the idea that anyone would ever use her research – because that would kill people, things, property, land and nearby clouds.

Aemilla is old, and continues her dangerous research despite final twilight rapidly approaching. People assume that she’ll shortly explode into final twilight, much like she spent most of her life. As such, her

apprentices spend a great deal of time copying her notes and sealing them away in places other than her covenant or five miles in the vicinity. Most of Aemilla’s apprentices have long since mourned their eyebrows.

Personality Traits: Absent Minded +3, Oh, I just had an idea..+2, Whoops! +2

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Magical Focus (Spells that Cause Mass Destruction), Inventive Genius, Side Effect (Randomised Destruction), Short Attention Span (Defined as Absent Minded Professor rather than the actual Short Attention Span.)

Item of Note:

Staff of Covenant Destruction

Aemilla’s staff is currently sitting against a wall on the outside of her sanctum, not far from where the toddlers are kept by the various nannies of the covenant. It is made entirely with onyx, glows with fiery runes, is studded with diamonds and carved with images of broken shields, dying people, and burning buildings. It is activated by pressing the various interesting glowing gems that look like candies about halfway up the shaft. It is not completely filled with enchantments, but Aemilla forgot where it was and started a new project instead.

PeVi The Invincible Shield Destroyed

This effect will destroy any Aegis of the 8th magnitude or lower. It has a side effect of breaking or destroying a random amount of aegis tokens that are linked to it and a 1 in 10 chance of destroying anyone’s Parma Magica who was within the Aegis. It has enough penetration to be able to do so from inside an Aegis of the 8th magnitude.

Lvl: 40 +2 Voice, Pen +82 1/day

CrIg Touching the Sphere of Fire

This magical fire simply sets things in sight on fire for Sun duration. It

has a side effect of a secondary fireblast setting things on fire that weren't targeted. The base fire does +10 damage in a perfect sphere for sun duration. The sphere is the size of 100 campfires. The secondary attack will also target one random thing in sight and do +5 damage at 10 campfires, and the fire changes shape randomly from squares, rectangles, flaming horses or otherwise.

Lvl: Base 10 +3 Sight +1 Ind +2 Sun +2 Size +70 Pen Unlimited/day

Story Seed: Aemilla is an excellent source of items and spells, though she is not specifically interested in making them to trade. Being absent minded, Aemilla might travel to the covenant to look into a tractatus she hasn't already read on some form of magic, afterwards absently leaving behind an unstable and highly volatile magic item, such as the Staff of Covenant Destruction. Merely being in the vicinity or hearing of her approach may be cause for concern for the majority of covenants.

SEPENTIA BONISAGUS

Age: 100 (80)

Theme: Heartless scientist who will achieve her goals no matter the cost.

Quote: "Silence, child. How do you expect me to write my correspondences when you keep calling for your mother? She died yesterday regardless. You can have some comfort in knowing she helped me prove a minor point on the nature of Muto magic and pain receptors, which I am anxious to hear how my friend Aemillia will reply.

Master: Aemillia Bonisagus

Description: Snakelike and cold, Sepentia has cold, slitted eyes and moves with a sinuous grace. Sepentia has no compunctions about using whatever means necessary to conduct her experiments, so many a hapless

peasant is now wandering the land with a snake head or serpent body or are not wandering at all.

Sepentia seeks a discovery that will integrate a major virtue as Hermetic, and then a second to be integrated into Hermetic Magic perfectly; when opening the gift that the Shapechanger virtue also be granted along with Hermetic magic.

Personality Traits: Snake +3, Obsession (Change Hermetic Magic) +3, Cruel +2

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Obsession, Major Magical Focus (Shapechanging)

Story Seed: A collection of maddened snake people and animals appear to be attacking the covenant. Sepentia created these unfortunate specimens as an army, and they work in unison with each other. While she

swears she never sent them to attack the PC's covenant, why are they attacking? And what will the PC's do, especially when they find that they were once harmless peasants who harmed no-one? Is Sepentia's research worth the cost?

Vice versa, if her research is found out, Sepentia may ask for aid; why is she the sudden target of all of House Bjornaer?

FULGRIM BONISAGUS

Age: 40 (15)

Theme: Head of a Spring Covenant

Quote: Well, once we have the vis coming in, then perhaps we can look into a better deal with our



neighbouring covenants. First thing's first, though - we'll probably need to clear out the magical bats from the cave as they keep biting the grogs and turning them into more bats...

Master: Sepentia of Bonisagus

Description: Fulgrim was originally taken as a Trianomae under a now deceased wizard (Oculus of Bonisagus), and had his apprenticeship finished by Sepentia of Bonisagus, which he barely survived. He has moved away from her and since used his general level-headedness, friendliness and organisation to quickly organise a group of young wizards to head into the wilderness and found a covenant. Fulgrim appears relaxed, but is very cautious of giving offence as he has suffered at the hands of someone who tolerated efficiency and punished anything else. Sepentia failed his gauntlet on a technicality, though it was deemed suitable by a group of other Bonisagi, causing her to grow annoyed with him and involve him in her business periodically, including regularly invading his sanctum or demanding use of his skills. Fulgrim is very willing to deal with other wizards in such a way that can benefit his new covenant.

One day Fulgrim would love to begin to integrate the Life Boost virtue into Hermetic Magic, and talks about doing such with a wistful expression. Unfortunately, real life keeps getting in the way of him doing anything other than a season here or there of such research.

Personality Traits: Friendly +1, Cautious +2, Organised +2

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Tormenting Master

Story Seed: Fulgrim needs help. His covenant is beset by faeries, snake monsters, and every other thing that could possibly go wrong. The few magi in his covenant are not strong enough to deal with it... and why are so many things going wrong all the time? Could another covenant be

involved? And why won't the normally friendly Fulgrim treat with their representative, Sepentia?

CLARA BONISAGUS

Age: 60 (30)

Theme: Science Nerd

Quote: Oooh! Bonisagus Fourth Principle overturned by a simple falling stone? Objects fall toward the earth at the same speed regardless of weight!? Why, the Rego Technique will need to be completely updated... no, not updated... replaced!

Master: Bellia Bonisagus

Description: Clara is a true academic rather than a research based magus. She is a university trained Magister (With appropriate spell to disguise gender), and often writes on entirely mundane topics. Clara is fascinated with natural philosophy and science as well as how it can be applied to magical thought. Her unusual thoughts give her something of a reputation for being a fruit loop in House Bonisagus, as she has been heard to discuss how the very philosophical underpinnings of magic as written by Bonisagus are incorrect to their very core and lacking in true knowledge. These things are obviously untrue, reason the rest of the order, otherwise Hermetic theory wouldn't work - so she is obviously insane.

Personality Traits: Focused +3, Driven (Change Hermetic Theory to understand new, no longer outdated thought patterns.)

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Gentle Gift, Black Sheep

Story Seed: Someone has grown truly annoyed with Clara and has challenged her to Certamen over whether she can speak about her theories at the next tribunal. Will the PC's care enough to interfere, or will they let a potential revolutionary genius be stopped by force?

VIR BONISAGUS

Age: 40 (15)

Theme: Unstable Researcher

Quote: Damn him! Damn Aurulentis! I've studied this for fifteen years, fifteen years of my life! Wasted! I'll get what's mine. He'll see. He'll see!

Master: Sepentia Bonisagus

Description: Vir of Bonisagus has been researching a way to maintain virility after taking a longevity potion and been focused on it for so long that he can barely remember what life was like beforehand.

And then someone beat him to it. And the already slightly unstable Vir went... odd. He doesn't know what he wants to do. He doesn't know what he can do. He doesn't know if he wants to shake Aurulentis' hand for a job well done or plunge a knife into his heart. All he can think is that his entire life has been thrown into turmoil and he needs to do... something.

Personality Traits: Unstable Genius +5

Virtues/Flaws of Note: Obsession (Longevity Potions)

Item of Note: Notes on enough longevity rituals and related effects to total 49 Breakthrough points.

Story Seeds: The half crazed Vir may approach a warlike PC with as much vis as it takes to hire the PC to destroy Aurulentis. Casual discussion will reveal that Vir has never even met the man, and could be slightly unhinged. Do they take the money and do the deed, or try for a more moral solution?

ELVARDUS BONISAGUS

Age: 45 (20)

Theme: Joe Average Magus

Quote: *yawns* Perhaps I'll look

into that Tractatus today. Whats that dear, you need some milk? I'll just pop down to the grogs, will I? Yes. Whiskers, stop clawing up my tomes or I'll use my Perdo Animal to shave you! Now git!

Master: Bellia Bonisagus

Description: Elvardus does not stand out too much. Next to his housemates, his intelligence is not quite as high, his virtues are not related to magical research, and his flaws not particularly exciting. His views are general on many topics, and his favourite topics of conversation tend to be around amusing pet antics or whatever is happening down the local tavern.

Elvardus is married and puts effort into his marriage, which isn't a particularly torrid affair. The two love each other casually and Elvardus dotes upon his sons. He secretly wants them to be gifted, but he also secretly wants a girl, and the wishes are no more than idle daydreams.

What is unusual about Elvardus is that he only 'works', that is studies or

creates items for two seasons per year. The other two he spends with his family. All of his children are secretly horribly ashamed at their dad who always seems to be about, embarrassing them with dad jokes that no-one laughs at.

Elvardus has acquaintances over House Bonisagus, and has a coveted contract with House Mercere to create items and thereby supply himself with extra vis. He often dresses in blue robes with stars and moons on them.

While relatively magically weak for his age, there is no-one who hates Elvardus enough who would bother to declare Wizard War on him. His vis collection is average but protected by his covenant.

Elvardus has the fear that the growing politics of his tribunal will soon involve him and his family, and will use any political power he has to keep the status quo.

Very occasionally, when the mood strikes him and his wife and children are visiting family, he works on his

pet project; a minor breakthrough for a new duration - Song. He does so because his wife and children can't stand his singing.

Personality Traits: Harried Husband +1, Loving Husband +2, I'm a Wizard +1

Virtues/ Flaws of Note: Dependant (Wife and Children), Temperate

Story Seed: Elvardus could visit the covenant on 'holiday' with his family. He can show an interesting dichotomy between the wizards who barely notice the passing of seasons and a strong, healthy family. Elvardus often talks of how he'd love to spend his seasons like the PC magi, learning more and greater levels of power; perhaps after his sons are grown. He hasn't taken a longevity potion mainly because he doesn't want his sons to look older than him, and is concerned his wife will die earlier than he will.

Item of Note:

The Father's Blessing

This small ring allows a working father to temporarily gain the Unaffected by Crying and Fighting +3 personality trait. Elvardus was annoyed that he was losing so much of his time to such matters that he created this ring. He takes it off when not in his laboratory, unless the children are particularly bad.

IULIANA BONISAGUS

Age: 60 (40)

Theme: Medical researcher

Quote: Hermetic healing is easy, but requires too much investment. There must be a way for everyone to act in concordance with God to lessen disease.

Master: Bellia Bonisagus

Description: Iuliana grew up the child of a whore who took on religious vows and lived as a type of



nun. With a rather broad view of society from this position, Iuliana learned to tend to the sick from a very young age as well as love God. Being picked up as a teenager as an apprentice, Iuliana was given tutoring in many different areas and given opportunities she had never had before - though she never lost sight of her and her mothers and sisters work in the slums.

After she completed her apprenticeship, Iuliana returned to her family and regularly worked with them, her magical abilities bringing enough wealth to them that sister convents have formed, and Iuliana is treated as something of a holy woman - though she always protests at such.

Iuliana knows that many diseases are from infernal spirits, and so does research on how the normal person could prevent such diseases from affecting them. Some of this research has some very dubious requirements.

Personality Traits: Compassionate + 3, Generous +2, Pious +3, Proud (Obsession) +2

Virtues/Flaws of note: Close Family Ties, Pious, Plagued by Supernatural Entity

Story Seed: Iuliana captured a demon spirit of illness some years ago to study it, and has not yet realised it has been replaced with a far more powerful and cunning demon which has gradually been trying to change her. It has had some limited success, but it has yet to overcome Iuliana's basic love of God and it is growing impatient. In a fit of boredom it organises Iuliana to be found out as having captured another, lesser demon and studying it for years. How do the PC's proceed against this apparently innocent and good woman? And when the truth is revealed, what do they do?

ROGELIA BONISAGUS

Age: 30 (25)

Theme: Magus caught between her gifts and desires

Quote: Please. Please let me go.

Master: Aemilla Bonisagus

Description: Rogelia is a maga with a good reputation for her limited years, seen as a bright up-and-comer. But few know that Rogelia does not actually have the true gift - her Gift was given from a demon at the cost of service.

Rogelia was born into abject poverty, her parents died of starvation at an early age. She survived through her wits until one day she stumbled across a small group of grogs from a covenant and Aemilla, who was absently casting magics. Rogelia was hurt in the incident and the grogs brought her to the covenant to be healed; a brief check for the gift later and Rogelia was about to be sent on her way. Seeing the power of Aemilla, a potent demon approached her in the guise of a magical entity and asked her if she wanted power 'Just like the mage you saw.' Not realising that it was a demon, Rogelia agreed.

Rogelia approached the covenant and waited for a week before a magus would check her for the gift again. Amazed that the gift could now be detected, Rogelia was made an apprentice.

Rogelia did not realise the demon's requirements, and has done everything in her power to avoid dealing with it; she fears for her eternal soul, but can't imagine life without the Gift. She has spent almost all of her time attempting to find a way to retain the gift and still destroy the demon.

Personality Traits: Frightened + 1, Desperate + 1, Good + 1

Virtues/Flaws of note: False Gift, Major Magical Focus (Damaging magics), Plagued by Supernatural

Entity

Story Seed: Rogelia is desperate. When a foreign magus promises her an end to the demon and to retain her power, she will do almost anything to make it happen. If the PC's find out she has traded the secret of the Parma, how will they treat the desperate young maga?

VARIUS BONISAGUS

Age: 30 (25)

Theme: The Focused Generalist

Quote: A little bit of everything is much more fun!

Master: Clara Bonisagus

Description: Varius is not particularly focused on anything; he is usually dishevelled as if he began to prepare himself for the day and left his ablutions halfway through. His laboratory is filled with half completed notes and letters and his whole life is a study in procrastination. Varius is difficult to pin down to any project, but occasionally has moments where he completes what appears to be amazing amounts of genius work in short periods. Varius often invents spells with odd ranges and durations simply for the amusement of the process.

Originally Varius was a house Verditius apprentice before being taken by Clara of Bonisagus. His Verditius master was glad to be rid of the layabout. Clara was impressed by the boy's natural intelligence but practically forgot about him when taken by some new academic theory, suiting both master and apprentice well.

Personality Traits: Dabbler +3, Mercurial +2

Virtues/Flaws of note: Waster of Vis, Secondary Insight

Story Seed: While visiting the covenant, Varius plans for use of a

library because he is suddenly overcome with ideas for new inventions. He talks easily about how he is going to spend at least seven seasons experimenting in the lab. Do the PC's object to having their own covenant exposed to risk?

TRAJANUS BONISAGUS

Age: 20 (20)

Theme: Two men in one body

Quote: My ancestors cry for vengeance. First I will learn about them. Then I will destroy them. No! No, they are innocent of any crime!

Master: Septentia Bonisagus

Description: Trajanus Bonisagus was struck with a warping effect as a young apprentice that sent him deep into the realms of twilight. Searching through the endless worlds, Trajanus found himself in an ancient forest, watching an ancient warrior Diedne protect his people against some warlike Flambeau. Before being killed, watching his family burn before him, Cathasach ex Diedne tore out his own heart, promising to be reborn and destroy their descendants.

Trajanus was then struck by the knowledge and memory of Cathasach, granting him the Diedne Magic virtue - and the idea he is Cathasach reborn - which he may well be. Cathasach seeks to study destructive and protective magics, as well as his own cult practices enough that he can tear a gaping hole in the Order so that he may watch it die. He has a particular hatred for any members of House Flambeau.

Trajanus also has elements of himself, the apprentice that wishes to learn magic and be a good Catholic. It comes out occasionally, but the stronger, domineering Cathasach usually controls him easily.

Personality Traits: Driven +3 (Destroy Order of Hermes), Peaceful +1, Hatred (Flambeau) +3

Virtues/Flaws of note: Dark Secret (Diedne)

Story Seed: A Flambeau PC finds Trajanus becoming offensive to him and making his life difficult, and the Flambeau may even suffer an unprovoked wizard war. Why does this Bonisagus hate him so? And how is he so powerful for someone so young?

MATTHEW BONISAGUS

Age: 30 (5)

Theme: Christian magus with ties to the church

Quote: Let us hope God is with us! Get the eye of newt, I have a plan for how to help these people!

Master: Iuliana Bonisagus

Description: Matthew Bonisagus is a good magus. He dresses simply and humbly, speaks without arrogance, and is kind to his servants. Unfortunately his Mater, Iuliana, was not properly prepared for an apprentice, leaving him somewhat weak compared to other magi around him. Matthew has great respect for the work she does, and so does not blame her; she was after all healing the sick, not wasting time.

Matthew was introduced to friendly clergy at a young age and has cultivated respectful relationships with many in the church. He knows that some wizards eye him askance for hosting visiting clergy, and some stricter members of House Guernicus eye him for the magical works he



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does for the church for free.

Matthew, perhaps due to his humble beginnings, rarely attempts to solve problems through the brute force application of magic, instead hoping to solve issues cleanly and with diplomacy. He is a strong believer but is never overbearing; he knows such action will not work with proud magi. He hopes that acting as a good example of a magus as much as possible will show other magi that being Christian isn't a negative thing.

When not directly helping others, Matthew looks to invent spells of different types to help people, through growing crops, healing wounds or diseases or similar.

Personality Traits: Pious +3, Humble +2, Friendly +1

Virtues/Flaws of note: Pious (Minor), Social Contacts (Church), Weak Parens

Story Seed: Matthew Bonisagus wandered through a village near to a Pagan magus, and Matthew's good works and proper demeanour have convinced many of the pagan villagers to consider Catholicism. The magical spirits and fairy spirits have grown angry at the mage for not ensuring their sacrifices and have taken resources in their stead from the pagan magus. The mage is furious and demands compensation; Matthew cannot afford what was taken, and definitely cannot defend himself against the powerful magus. He asks the covenant (if any christian magi are there) to assist him to negotiate with the mage.

SENECA BONISAGUS

Age: 55 (28)

Theme: Cloudcuckoolander

Quote: Mmmm, Valerius and Blandus? I can ship that!

Master: Aemilla Bonisagus

Description: Seneca is known to

be eccentric. A powerful maga, she appears to have a strange and yet oddly insightful knowledge about the future - which is also sometimes incredibly wrong, and also have very, very strange ideas about normal life.

Seneca claims to be a time traveller from the year 2013, where strange magical communciation devices are common and the world is both at peace and in the most horrifying period of all time. She makes many odd jokes and finds some normal medieval life issues horrifying. She regularly flouts normal societal conventions, which has had her run out of more than one city on charges of indecency.

What is known is that Seneca was rescued from an odd faerie realm by her mistress at the age of 10 before being raised as an apprentice.

Personality Traits: Pop Culture Fangirl +3 Modern Person +3

Virtues/Flaws of note: Faerie Raised, Delusion (A time traveller from the future)

Story Seed: Seneca may contact any PC with a vague reputation for healing, telling them that a great disease will come over the land in the 1300's. She wants to be able to cure it if it comes into being, but all she remembers is that "They called it the Black Death, the Plague. I'm not too sure about more than that, other than there was something about rats."

Item of Note: Seneca carries a strange glass-fronted pad that normally shows darkness, but is enchanted with very complex imaginem effects that she controls through touching the images. She complains that it runs out of 'battery', and has to cast Auram spells on it to recharge it.

RUFUS BONISAGUS

Age: 25 (0)

Theme: Dangerous to self and others

Quote: With my incredible skills of deduction and awesome inventing skills, I have invented a personal ignem effect that will explode with such intensity that the hot air coming from it will propel me to the moon...

Master: Aemilla Bonisagus

Description: Rufus is dressed in a threadbare robe with voluminous pockets, which are usually filled with unusual bits and pieces he has stolen from around the place. Rufus rarely focuses on anything from day to day and instead spends most of his time either escaping work or trying to escape his situation, which he blames on everyone else but him. Intelligent, but his lack of reason and limited empathy causes hurt to those around him, as well as regularly injuring himself. He is not generally liked, though it is a matter of some conjecture in the order how he is still alive after the time he fell off Mont Blanc, propelled himself to the lunar sphere through a self-targeting Ignem spell or declaring Wizard War on the entirety of House Tremere.

Personality Traits: Thoughtless +3, Careless +3, Uncaring +2

Virtues/Flaws of note: Clumsy, Poor Attention Span, Death Prophecy (When he gets a clue), Black Sheep

Story Seed: Rufus may come to the covenant, and decide that setting fire to the tablecloth that women are washing all of the clothing for the covenant is useful so that people will be frustrated and hence easier to deal with when he asks if he can take their best tomes for a while.

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MAPPA MUNDI

We're not done with Hibernia just yet. *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal* gives you everything you need to start a saga in one of the most conflicted of Tribunals, but page-counts being what they are it has only scratched the surface of the story potential in the old myths and legends of that ancient isle. In this issue, Mappa Mundi searches out a few more resources to add depth to your new Hibernian saga.

There are a number of great resources available through your local library and bookstore so let's take a look at a few.

MYTH AND LEGEND

One of the most important and useful books for the mythological side of Ireland is going to be *The Lore of Ireland: An Encyclopaedia of Myth, Legend and Romance*, by Dáithí Ó hOgáin. It contains details of countless mythical and actual kings and high-kings of Ireland, heroes, monsters, and saints, and their deeds. Each of these brief descriptions is ripe with story potential; wrongs to right, birth-rights to claim, and treasures to find.

The index is also very useful, grouping entries under terms such as *Folk Custom and Belief* and *Peoples and Traditions*.

However, we can go further into the mythical history of Ireland by picking up a copy of the *Lebor Gabála Érenn*. This purports to be the history of the legendary peoples of Ireland and it explains in detail how race after race vied for control of the small island and how eventually they are accommodated. It is not an easy text

to read, however, but it does provide the basis for much of Ireland's mythology in one place.

The *Lebor Feasa Runda* does a similar job in a much more straightforward manner; what you lose in detail and flavour you gain in brevity. It also has the benefit of looking at Ireland's magical traditions. We can learn about the days and times most suitable to magic, about the secret languages and scripts of Ireland, and even the various instruments, circles, and rituals used in Irish magic. It's a great resource for those wanting to bring some real ancient Irish colour to their saga.

HISTORY AND SOCIETY

For a solid exploration of early Ireland, the multi-volume *New History of Ireland* series, edited by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín and others, is about as good as it gets. Volume one runs from pre-history up to about 1169 and covers topics as diverse as Iron-Age settlements, Latin literature to 1169, and the development and usage of coins, the High-Kings of Ireland, and even Ireland's music of the period. Volume two takes the story through to the early 1500s, which provides a vast scope for your saga, and covers economics, architecture, trade and relations, and the further development of literature and culture.

A more convenient, though less detailed, view of Ireland through to about 1200 can be gained by reading *Early Medieval Ireland 400-1200*, by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín. This book contains chapters covering *Law, Family and Community, The Viking Age*, and specifically the history of Ireland 1014-1200 during the tumultuous

time of upheaval. There is enough information to as a very competent companion to *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal* and bring more depth to the table.

FIRST-HAND SOURCES

If you want the authentic period view, then you can do no better than going straight to Gerald of Wales and his *History and Topography of Ireland*. Often deeply opinionated, his recounting of his journeys through Ireland influenced the Norman-English who followed in the wake of the initial wave of Strongbow, King Henry, and then King John.

Gerald characterises the land as fruitful, rich, and fertile and makes mention of the many deep lakes that are stocked with plentiful fish. Its people, however, he is not so generous with. He reports that many are not baptised, that the clergy are lax in their offices, and just how many seem to be born lame or blind or with some other deformity. His meaning, we think, is clear; the land is ripe and full but its people unworthy. This attitude is one that clearly colours much of *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*.

We can read of the cow that was partly a stag, how the mud of Ireland does not contain the seed necessary to spawn frogs, a cross in Dublin that can speak and can only bear truthful witness, and how the saints of Ireland are more vindictive there than their counterparts elsewhere.

If you were to invest in just one additional book to give your Hibernian saga additional colour, it would be this one without doubt.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

RATS MAGICA

Hidden in plain sight, a band of rats have learned the Hermetic Arts.
by Jason Tondro

DESIGNING THE INTANGIBLE ASSASSIN

Hermetic Projects introduced the *Intangible Assassin*. This article explores ways to optimize such a character build, featuring sample characters and exploring different themes and (perhaps) some surprising House choices.

By Pelle Kofod and Christian Rosenkjaer Andersen

COVENANT FINANCES

An alternative system for managing covenant income and expenditure.
By Mark Shirley

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