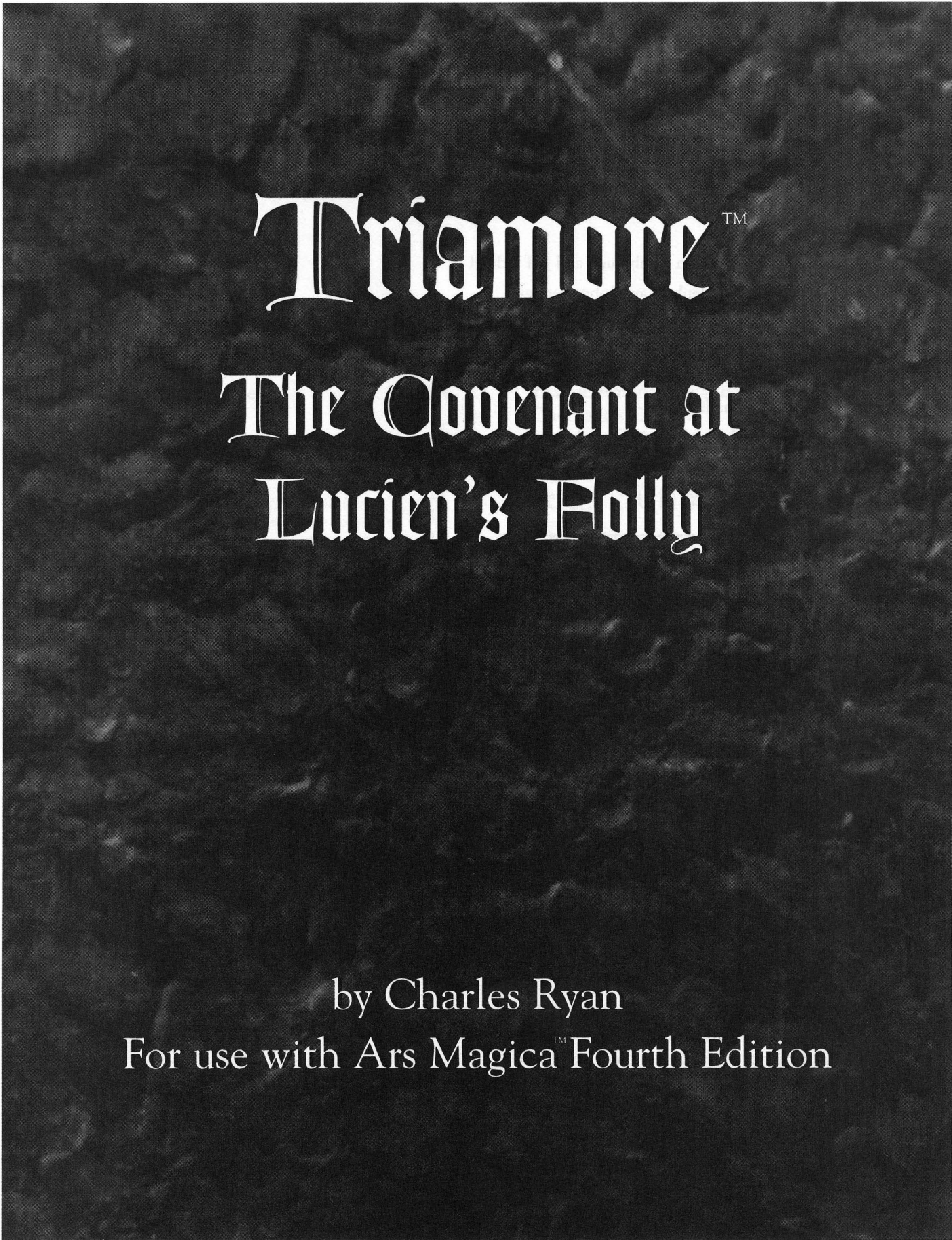


Ars Magica

Triamore

The
Covenant at
Lucien's Folly
BY CHARLES RYAN

The background of the entire page is a dark, mottled, and textured surface, resembling aged parchment or a dark, grainy fabric. The texture is uneven, with lighter and darker patches creating a sense of depth and age.

TriamoreTM

The Covenant at Lucien's Folly

by Charles Ryan
For use with Ars MagicaTM Fourth Edition

Triamore: The Covenant at Lucien's Folly

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Fans of **Ars Magica** discuss the game on an e-mail discussion list. To subscribe, send the command "subscribe ars-magica" (no quotes) in the body of an e-mail message to majordomo@soda.berkeley.edu. To subscribe to a digest version of the list, send the command "subscribe ars-magica-digest" (no quotes) to the same address.

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Errata for the first printing of the fourth edition of **Ars Magica** is available on request. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to PO Box 131233, Roseville, MN, 55113. Up-to-date errata is also posted on the Atlas Games World Wide Web site.

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Chapter 1

Welcome to Triamore

To Sicero of Tremere, magus of the Covenant of Blackthorn of the Tribunal of Stonehenge, from Goliard his mater, of Blackthorn of the Stonehenge Tribunal, in the Norman city of Verdun — my most sincere greetings,

I have for you news of great merit and consequence concerning your future. It has come to me in my correspondence with certain Magi of this and the Rhine Tribunal that at the covenant of Triamore, located not far from this place, there is a dearth of Magi to carry on that covenant's efforts and duties. As this covenant is commanded by a Maga of esteem within our house, and as I have corresponded with her concerning the situation Triamore faces (that is, that in recent years three of five Magi there have passed into their Twilight leaving no successors), and as we have discussed the lack of position for you at Blackthorn, I have therefore informed Daria of Triamore that you will set forth immediately, to join that covenant and bolster the continued existence of that gathering of Magi.

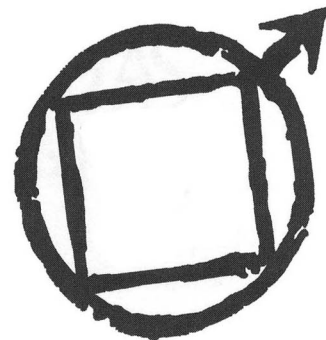
Of this covenant I can tell you this: That it is located within the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, on the skirts of that temporal power, and that it enjoys some standing with Frederick II. That it makes its home in a great castle, and holds a manor of land as might a temporal lord or abbot, with a village of peasants under its hand. That its Princeps is a Maga called Daria, who serves also as Lady over this landed holding, and that there is also there another magus

of the House of Jerbiton. That this covenant is regarded by its neighbors as peaceable, though its connections to the Empire and the mundane interactions with those lords and peasants about it have caused some concern in years past, and that it is known to contain a library of noteworthy content and breadth. That it enjoys little influence within its tribunal in its current state of weakness, but could one day become a center of great power within the Order.

Set forth at once, taking what supplies are rightfully yours, and your man with you. Travel to the port of Bruges in Flanders. From there make your way to Brussels in the Duchy of Brabant, and from there south. The covenant is in a place called Bois de Haillot.

I look forward to hearing of your successful journey and installment within this covenant. Prosper there for the benefit of your betters, your House and your Order. Until we meet again, perhaps in Tribunal, I remain your mater,

Goliard of Tremere



A Journey to Triamore

Thus was the young magus Sicero of Tremere introduced to the covenant of Triamore, an introduction that your player characters might also experience. Triamore is a covenant of magi in the Mythic Europe that is the basis of the **Ars Magica Fourth Edition** roleplaying game; as this book progresses Sicero will be further introduced to Triamore. Come along and learn of this place with him.

What is This Book?

It is 1220. The dark ages are over, and Europe is a thriving, growing society. Expanses of true wilderness are slowly shrinking, and the Norman adage, "No land without a Lord," has become law in all the great kingdoms and duchies of western Europe. In many regions, the days when a covenant of magi, engrossed as they chose to be in their arcane and mysterious studies, could rely on mere remoteness to shield them against the temporal interests of lords, merchants, and churchmen are passing if not well over. In the populated reaches of northwestern Europe, a covenant must be prepared to interact with — indeed to be a part of — the social fabric of mundane society.

Triamore is one such covenant, a landed manor in the duchy of Brabant. Bordering the French duchy of Blois but firmly within the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, Triamore holds thirty square miles of farmland and forest, rules over 600 peasants and the village of Bois de Haillot, and serves a French count in a German duchy, all less than fifty miles from the prosperous trade cities of Flanders. In a region where

isolation is virtually impossible, Triamore survives not by turning its back on — but rather by becoming a part of — the society that surrounds it.

Triamore — this book — is an **Ars Magica Fourth Edition** sourcebook covering this unique covenant, its manorial holdings, and the surrounding region. It's more than a narrow treatment of these topics, though. It's a treatise on the society, politics, and manorial life that surround every covenant, explaining how Triamore, Bois de Haillot, and Brabant are similar to, or differ from, every covenant, village, county, or duchy across Mythic Europe. More than that, *Triamore* presents a complete overview of a living, thriving covenant, ready for occupation as-is by a group of player characters, for use as a detailed non-player character covenant, or merely as an example of what a well-developed covenant can be in an **Ars Magica** campaign, filled with ideas that may be scavenged for your own saga. For any storyguide or player seeking a focused look at day-to-day life in a covenant and in rural medieval society, *Triamore* is a complete and detailed study.



The Importance of the Covenant

A covenant is a group of magi that have taken to living and working together for the advantages and safety that such cooperation affords. It is also a place: the building or locale that the magi make their home. The role of the covenant is central to an **Ars Magica** saga; in a sense the covenant is a character unto itself, an enduring character that precedes and outlives most others. The covenant is not just the building in which player characters pursue their studies, and from which they issue forth on their intrigues and adventures; it is their home. It is home to their best friends



and closest families and the sanctum in which they take refuge from the ravages of a troubled world. It is beloved to them, and if given the richness it deserves, can become as beloved to your players as well.

Triamore as Your Covenant

The covenant of Triamore has a problem, a problem that, should you choose to use it for your saga's home covenant, can make it easy to integrate your player characters into it. Specifically, Triamore has recently lost three of its five resident magi, and the two that remain are eager to bolster their ranks and prevent the covenant from sliding into a premature winter and death. As a result, magi characters wishing to join the covenant will be welcomed. The process of integrating new magi into the covenant (covered just below) in some ways mirrors the process of introducing new players to the game, in that new magi begin with limited responsibilities and authority, and are nursed into positions of trust, independence, and responsibility. As such, this may be an attractive way to ease new players of **Ars Magica** into the demands of playing powerful magi.

In addition to joining the covenant from the outside, players might also create characters who were apprentices at Triamore, and have recently been gauntleted. Players choosing that option have several choices, for they might be filii of the two remaining magi, or of those that have recently passed on (all of whom are discussed in detail in this book). The Houses Tremere, Jerbiton, Bonisagus, and Ex Miscellanea are so represented. This too may be an attractive opportunity for new players, as the descriptions of these senior magi may give them ideas for their own characters. Notes on the types of apprentices and filii the magi of Triamore might

spawn, and the relationships they might have with them, are included in Chapter 3.

Finally, players might adopt the characters — magi, companions, and grogs — outlined here, either literally, or by filling their roles with characters of their own creation. This last method is the trickiest, because it requires the storyguide to extricate the role of a given non-player character from current and past events in which he was involved. That may mean changing or removing some of the details in this book, or (if your players are experienced enough) helping them build some of those details into their characters' backstory. Beware, for many of the minor details in this book relate to the secrets that provide conflicts and story hooks for a Triamore-based saga, and you want to be careful about giving such secrets away. Nevertheless, this can be a rewarding way to connect your players to the setting, especially for non-magi characters.

Integrating Outside Magi into Triamore

As mentioned above, magi coming to Triamore to join the covenant are welcome, but that doesn't mean they'll be accepted immediately and without effort. Veteran and recently-gauntleted magi alike are subject to certain tests and assurances before they are granted full membership in the covenant, and all the power and responsibility that conveys. The specifics of such trials are up to you, and you might assume that they are already over by the opening of your saga. Making them a factor in the early stages of your campaign, however, can add depth and help new players work their way comfortably into their fictional surroundings before assuming the roles of fully-vested magi. Likely trials include a probationary period (perhaps a year during which the mage enjoys the benefits of covenant membership, but without a council vote or unfettered access to

covenant vis supplies), acts of servitude (perhaps several seasons spent producing vis or other efforts beneficial to the covenant), a specific task that proves diligence and loyalty (which might make for an adventure in itself), or any combination of these.

Running a Triamore-Based

Saga

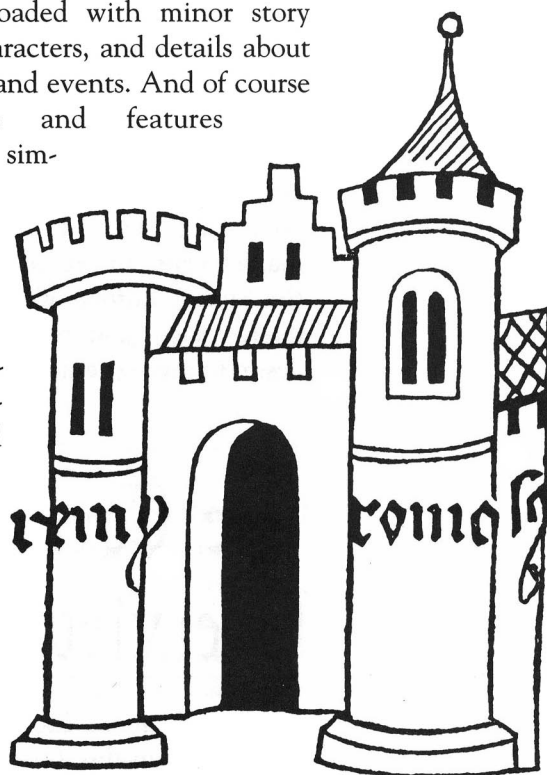
Triamore interacts constantly with the mundane world, through its village and the immediate surroundings, with the local lords that constantly bicker and view Bois de Haillot through envious eyes, and through inevitable involvement in the events that shape the Holy Roman Empire and the rest of Christendom. Integrating these events into your saga can lead to a rich and intriguing storyline, but they are something of a distraction from the sorts of pursuits that most magi consider their primary realm. Whether you choose to deeply embroil your campaign in the worldly events that lap up against Triamore's walls, or simply leave them in the background, is entirely up to you, but you should probably decide before you launch your saga. Your choice will affect the style of the campaign, and may affect how you play the game.

There are plenty of hooks and ideas in this book that have nothing to do with worldly events, and even if you ignore those Triamore is a well-defined launching point for whatever sorts of stories, adventures, or sagas you might come up with for any other covenant. In that case, the conventional *Ars Magica* system of moving time along through seasons and years between adventures is perfectly suited for use in a Triamore campaign. If, however, you choose to make worldly events important to your campaign, keep in mind that the outside world does not pause for seasons at a time while magi bury themselves in esoteric projects. Events may transpire

unexpectedly, and, as they say, a month is a long time in politics, even medieval politics. The appendix to this book contains alternate experience and study rules which allow characters to take advantage of downtime in small chunks — months or even weeks instead of seasons. This may be better suited to a campaign in which outside events might call for the attention of magi at any time.

Triamore as an NPC Covenant

This book can be of great value to you not just as a home covenant, but also as an organization of non-player magi, an outside force aligned with or opposed to your magi. Triamore is enmeshed in a number of ongoing situations, any of which might become the basis of a story or campaign for outside characters as well as its own denizens. Furthermore, the covenant and the region around it are loaded with minor story hooks, useful characters, and details about regional politics and events. And of course the characters and features described might simply play a passing role in your own stories, providing useful allies, dangerous opponents, and interesting places and situations for events of your own making.





Using This Book

How you employ this book depends on what you want to do with Triamore. If this is to be a player character covenant, there is a wealth of information here that should be shared with the players, so that they may come to know their home, and all of its many fascinating details, well. At the very least, the players should have access to the italicized fictional excerpts that describe Sicero's experience in coming to Triamore as his impressions will give the players a basis for their own. Other sections may also be of great value to the players, but be sure to restrict those sections containing secrets to the storyguide's eyes.

If you intend to use Triamore as a non-player character covenant, it's probably best not to let the other players read this book at all. Use your own impressions of the material to bring it into focus in their minds, as they visit and interact with the places and characters within. Triamore should be an unknown entity to them, to be explored rather than explained.

As a non-player character covenant or the base for your characters' saga, the details of Triamore and the lands about it are, of course, yours to alter as you see fit. As are the details of history: Though this book sticks to a fairly true treatment of the major events in our own Europe of 1220, the Mythic Europe of *Ars Magica* is a different place, and may be altered as you desire to serve the needs of your saga.

The Covenant in Overview

The Triamore discussed in this book is set in 1220, in the region that would in the modern world become southern Belgium and

Luxembourg. A number of languages are spoken in the general area, which straddles the border between French lands and those of the Germanic lords. Throughout the area within fifty miles of Triamore the French of the Normans is the day-to-day language. German is spoken further east, and Dutch to the north. The lands around Triamore are, for the most part, rolling forested hills, tumbling into low mountains in the Ardennes forest to the south. Most of this region is well-settled, and though many stretches are empty or sparse, only the Ardennes themselves are true, untamed wilderness.

Triamore and Bois de Haillot

The covenant of Triamore is located in the county of Namur, in the duchy of Brabant, at the western edge of the Holy Roman Empire. It sits on a manor (the smallest feudal subdivision, which does not give its lord a title as a county or duchy does) called Bois de Haillot. Bois de Haillot is at the southern edge of Namur, about forty miles southwest of Liège, which, as a semi-autonomous walled city of close to 10,000, is the most prominent town in the region. Brussels, a smaller and less prosperous city, is about fifty miles to the northwest. Beyond Brussels is prosperous Flanders, with the successful trading cities of Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres. To the south and west of Namur are the dense, empty forests and mountains of the Ardennes; these create something of a barrier to trade, forcing the majority of traffic between France and Germany to bypass Namur in favor of the Flemish trade cities. That's not to say that the Ardennes are impenetrable — a substantial amount of trade and travel does filter through Namur from the south and west.

The covenant's home is outside of the village of Bois de Haillot, which, along

with two outlying hamlets and the surrounding farmlands and forests, makes up Triamore's holdings. The covenant compound itself is a rambling nameless castle known locally as "Lucien's Folly," for it was originally built by an ambitious lord who saw Bois de Haillot's site at the junction of the Meuse and Saupont rivers, and the high grounds above them, as an excellent base to build a trade town and the military might to establish a duchy in a land that, at that time, was fragmented into independent holdings that warred almost constantly. Neither the trade town nor the army came to pass, for the construction drove Lucien into bankruptcy. The castle was never finished, and regional lords that later worried about its military threat had much of what was completed torn down.

Political Considerations

What remains of the castle is its keep (minus its top floors) and the completed gatehouse, surrounded by the foundations of a bailey wall. Triamore came into possession of it in 1158, through the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, in a complex political machination more fully explained in Chapter 2. A condition of Bois de Haillot's charter (the document that spells out the terms of its enfeoffment to Triamore) is that the fortifications not be rebuilt. The fact that they could be — not to mention the excellent site for defense — undoubtedly contributes to Count Étienne Gaumond of Namur's distrust of the covenant.

But that's not all. Although the current Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II is the most liberal of European monarchs and generally supports the Order of Hermes, he no longer has much direct effect on Triamore's fate. The covenant has far more regular dealings with Count Gaumond, on whose land Triamore is situated. Gaumond despises the works of magic, and would

eject the covenant from his lands on that basis alone if he could. He's also more French than German. In fact, he also has holdings in France, leaving him with divided fealty.

These three factors place Gaumond and Triamore at odds. Fortunately, the covenant's charter comes directly from the emperor, so Gaumond does not have the right to unland Triamore or to exact feudal service beyond agricultural taxation. That protects the covenant for the time being, though the emperor's distractions are great and his concern for such an inconsequential holding is limited. Furthermore, other political pitfalls constantly surround Triamore, from an ambitious archbishop in Liège, whose career might be furthered by a crusade against sorcery, to the animosities of the duchies and counties that surround Brabant, many of which claim sovereignty over Namur or Bois de Haillot.



A Mystical Past

Among the Order of Hermes, Triamore is not a major covenant for its magical power or studies, but is known for its substantial library (both Hermetic and mundane). Triamore's traditional focus has been the naturalistic and elemental sciences, with much study of how magic can be employed to aid in agriculture and development. Triamore, it is generally held, was a summer covenant before the recent passing of three of its magi, just coming into its own if it could overcome the political hostility that surrounds it. The recent deaths, though, have set the covenant back, or threatened to propel it towards a premature winter.

In addition to these temporal concerns, Triamore has its own skeletons in its proverbial closet, more closely related to its Hermetic history. Some of these may come back to haunt the covenant in the not-so-distant future. They're thoroughly explained in Chapter 2.



Chapter 2

Welcome to Bois de Haillot

From the Journal of Sicero of Tremere,

As instructed by my *mater*, the holder of my sigil, I have set out for this covenant called Triamore. I confess high hopes, for though it seems to me somehow — squalid — for wise men of our high Order to meddle as they do in the affairs of mundane fools, still, I have heard promising things of this place. That there is a great library there fills me with some small measure of hope, as does the rule of this Daria, a follower of Tremere. Surely these little benefices shall mitigate whatever inconveniences await me in this new home to which I have been consigned.

What does it mean, the political ties this covenant is said to have? I bear no desire to waste my precious seasons of study traveling from court to court, sniffing up to pretentious sots with their delusions of power in this world. Is that how these magi spend their time, abandoning their Arts and duties for temporal gains?

And what does it mean that these magi hold a manor, like some common knight who has returned from his impotent ventures against the Saracens? Do these magi dig and toil in the earth alongside their serfs? Do they revel with them in their pathetic masses and so-called festivals? It is my nightmare that I shall be called upon to wander the woods in seek of provision, or be made to gather sheep or whatever creatures the peasants consort with in that place. How could any magus pursue his Arts

with ardor when compelled to rub elbows with the riffraff of the mundane world?

I never thought to express any longing for the dark corridors and caverns that make up Blackthorn, but here, faced with this uncertain future at such a strange covenant, I find myself concerned for my fate. I cannot doubt the order of Goliard; her wisdom in this selection for me; nor my duty to obey. I can only hope that the future at this Triamore is not the mundane wretchedness that it seems it might be.

Sicero is not an optimistic traveler, though any young magus journeying alone to a strange covenant might reasonably feel a bit of apprehension. Who knows what to expect in the varied places that magi make their home? Yet Triamore is a special sort of oddity, a place that might seem as strange to a magus of the Order of Hermes as it would appear normal to an ordinary peasant or merchant. There are no lofty towers here, wrapped in giant carved dragons; no mysterious caverns lined with sparkling crystal; no faerie mounds or mythic fires — in short, nothing of the grandeur of magic that would set a Hermetic wizard at ease. Instead, Triamore is much of what Sicero fears: a temporal holding and agricultural manor surrounded by its lands and the toils of its peasants.

Hopefully he'll find it a more comforting environment once he arrives.

Coming to Bois de Haillot

It was three days from Brussels to this Bois de Haillot: one day to Nivelles, a second to Namur, with the final day taking us by the late afternoon to our destination. Jean had insisted before that it could be done in two, but apparently he felt that we should march like an army, as though my feet were made for such a vulgar pace. I must say that there was some merit to his rush, for in taking three days we were forced to spend two nights on the wretched pallets that pass for beds in the public houses of Nivelles and Namur.

This country is not as horrid as one might have imagined. The din and clamor of Brussels

would be familiar to anyone who had passed through the stinking cities of York, though that town itself is not as busy nor as prosperous in appearance as Bruges and Ghent. Nivelles and Namur were provincial towns both, the latter apparently the seat of the local count, as it was overlooked by a stone keep larger than a manor house, if hardly a palace. There was construction there of some sort, attracting a noisy horde of impudent itinerants. Between these towns, the land rolls with hills, becoming rougher the farther south one travels but never reaching the difficulty of the stony mountains of Wales. Much of the way is forested, with perhaps only one quarter of the land cleared and worked by the peons that live upon it.

The last day was spent along the bank of a river that they apparently call the Meuse, a stony waterway, wide but shallow enough, it would seem, to cross by ford at many places. There is a bridge at Namur, and another lead-





ing across to a town that we passed that last afternoon, not three leagues from Bois de Haillot. A peasant told Jean that it is Dinant, and that it lies not within Brabant but in another county, called Luxembourg. These savages apparently bicker and squabble with some regularity. It does not comfort me to think that my home shall be mere miles from the point at which aggressive and greedy berserkers regularly issue forth.

One comes to Bois de Haillot most frequently, as Sicro did, by the road from Namur, a journey of about eighteen miles. The road follows the Meuse the entire distance, until it turns at the Saupont to follow that smaller watercourse and ford it a mile or so upstream. From across the Saupont, Bois de Haillot is a rambling settlement of sixty or so buildings dominated by the stone mill and the church beyond. The village's three great fields — each nearly a mile across — sprawl up the rolling land that slopes gently towards a forested ridge. There, above, the truncated gray towers of Lucien's Folly barely peak through the trees that line the ridge overlooking the Meuse.

As Sicro's man Jean pointed out, one could make it to Brussels (a total distance of about fifty miles) in two solid days of travel, though the lack of sizable towns between Namur and Nivelles makes three days a more convenient itinerary for travelers in less of a hurry. One also goes through Namur on the way to Liège (a total distance of perhaps forty-five miles). That trip follows the Meuse river past Namur, entering the neighboring duchy of Limbourg about six miles downriver. The market town of Huy is a convenient stop for slow-moving travelers, as the trip between Namur and Liège is nearly thirty miles. A walled town, Liège is the biggest urban center in the region.

Some travelers might come from the south, through the Ardennes. A narrow track, suitable for foot and pack beasts but hard going for carts, leads south from Bois de Haillot up the Meuse towards Verdun, a

journey of perhaps eighty miles if one follows the river the entire way. For sixty miles there are no villages, just occasional poacher settlements in the thick forest; the last twenty miles breaks into the open fields and densely-cultivated lands of the duchy of Blois. One approaching Bois de Haillot from this direction will be seeing in its southern fields the first sign of civilization after two days of dense wilderness and difficult travel. An alternative is to turn east across the Meuse into Luxembourg just south of Bois de Haillot. This route adds another day and perhaps twenty miles to the trip, but keeps one in civilized country for all but perhaps thirty miles of forest.

Language and History

Like Triamore itself, Bois de Haillot is undeniably a product of its history. For the 200 or so years before the formation of the duchy of Brabant in the 1180s, the local counts and margraves struggled incessantly with one another over who owed vassalage to whom, and which of them might have the power to establish a true state in the region. And not just the local lords: At various times Normans, French, German, and Flemish leaders attempted to bring the region under their province, with only limited success even in the case of the Holy Roman Empire. As a result of all this turmoil, Bois de Haillot and all of Brabant sit at a sort of political and cultural crossroads, with a jumbled history of allegiances, languages, and culture.

The natives of southern Brabant speak the French of Blois, a Norman dialect easily understood but often heavily accented. Although ruled by the Germans, their culture and identity is more like that of the Normans.

Ironically, geography works against this cultural connection and in favor of German control of the region. Bois de Haillot sits against the Ardennes forest, a vast arc of

deep wilderness that stretches through northern Luxembourg, across the Meuse and Sambre rivers, and up towards Lille and Tournai. This wall of wood forms a dense barricade to trade and invasion — not impenetrable, but difficult under the best of circumstances — and it cuts the southern region of Brabant off from its French neighbors, pressing them against the German regions to the east and north. This geographical feature is the western limit of the Holy Roman Empire as well as the Rhine Tribunal.

The Village

What I saw when we reached the ford confirmed my worst fears. I suppose that I clung somehow to the hope that the place would differ from the villages that sprawl across Normandy and England, that under the hand of the covenant it would be a different sort of village. Of course it was no different, for how might a commoner differ from his fellows, even under the cautious tutelage of Magi? Our covenfolk and grogs have the fortune of our constant presence, but seem to benefit little from it.

The first structure to come into sight was the mill, a squat, square building of stone, typical of its kind. The wheel was fed from a pond set beside the settlement. Outside, worn millstones sat among weeds. The miller, a surly fellow with hairy arms, watched as we made our way across the ford. He might have given us some direction, but he only stared as Jean stumbled on the wet stones. Perhaps it amused him to see us struggle. When we approached he moved to demand from us a toll, but when Jean told him our business he let us pass.

Already the noise of this place was assailing us. The sound of gossip drifted down the lane. Somewhere a baby cried for its teat. Hogs snuffled, and a band of geese held the lane against us, hissing as they slowly gave ground. Ahead a man was having a noisy argument

with a mangy mule, and all the while the clang of hammer on anvil, some ways distant, filled the air with staccato clamor.

We made our way up a lane framed close by hedgerows so dense that it seemed we were at the bottom of a chasm, until we came at last to the green. Here was the church, and the barns, and behind them the festering piles of manure that peasants seem to delight so in collecting. The smith at last stopped his hammering, and we could see him here, debating some fine point of peasantry with the man whose tool he repaired with passion, spittle, and a dialect incomprehensible to educated ears.

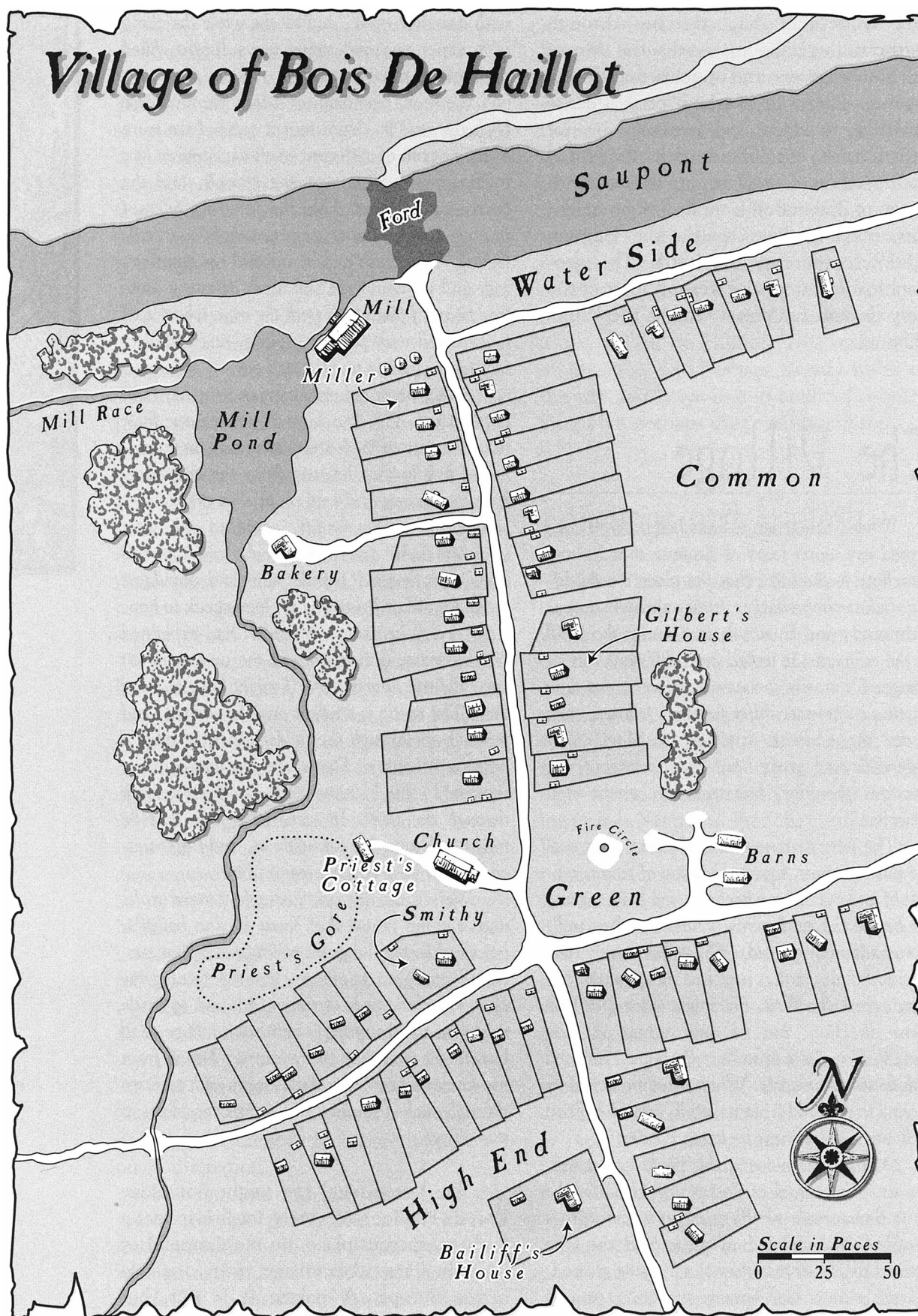
As we hesitated on the green, another man approached. This one wore a leather tunic finer than the rest, though still plain and common. I hoped briefly that he was from the covenant, here to greet us and lead us in, but no, he was simply the village bailiff, come to ask after strangers on his green. A typically germanic fellow, with bobbed blonde hair and shoulders made for toil or fighting. I let Jean speak to him.

"Aye," he said, when Jean had explained our business, and he looked me over with an eye I did not approve of. "I might have guessed that. The castle is straight on," he turned, and pointed up through the fields toward a ridge a mile or so away. There was no castle there, though I could make out some stonework through the trees. It occurred to me that he might be having his fun with us, and I instructed Jean to keep a wary eye on him.

We set out, passing just a few more crofts and a stone house that must be the bailiff's, before entering the great rolling fields that surround every such village. As the trees grew nearer, I could only wonder what sort of castle might await, squatting within such foliage, and lament the fact that every journey I took from my home henceforth would begin with passage through such a squalid and depressing place as this village.

The less cynical eye might not judge Bois de Haillot so severely, for it is in fact a fairly prosperous place, no more squalid or dirty than any other village, town, or castle across Europe. A palace it is not, but





certainly it would have a familiar comfort for any traveler less finicky than Sicro.

The village of Bois de Haillot is a settlement of sixty or so families, their homes and crofts sprawling a length of some 250 paces along the lane that leads from the ford into the southern fields, and then up to Lucien's Folly. Like so many other rural villages, it's rather unremarkable, a haphazard scattering of wattle-and-daub longhouses and cottages, each within a gardenized croft surrounded by stone walls or dense hedgerow. There are only three roads, if they could be called such — unpaved cart-tracks, they're muddy and rutted, pocked and bumped with stones. Two of these roads form something of a cross near the upper end of the village; there sits the green, the church, the smithy, and the communal barns. Beyond, at the top of the village, is the bailiff's house. At the opposite end, the mill sits near the ford over the Saupont, and a few homes have been built along the river's bank. Lacking street names or any other way to identify one part of the village from another, the lower end of the village has come to be referred to as "Waterside" and the area around and above the cross-roads "High End."

Bois de Haillot's lanes run between rows of homes set within their crofts — enclosed areas containing animal pens and home gardens, surrounded by hedgerows or unmortared walls of stone. Indeed, along the central lane running up from Waterside towards the green, the older hedgerows are so tall and overgrown that the houses behind them can hardly be seen save through the rickety gates by which the housewives keep their errant chickens from wandering the village. In the springtime, the lane seems a narrow passage almost grown over by the unruly brush. At High End, however, what hedgerows have been planted have hardly taken root, and most of the crofts are surrounded by low, tumbling walls.

There's little rhyme or reason to the placement of crofts and homes in Bois de

Haillot, as in any other such village. The wealthy homes butt up against those of the poor. The smith lives by the forge while the baker lives all the way across town from his bakery. Some crofts sit side-by-side, while gaps narrow or wide separate others. Only the convenient passage of a lane, or the meandering border of a creek, establishes any order at all in the village plan. At a glance, the same disorder seems to reign within the villagers' crofts, but they have something of an underlying logic. Though the home within may sit at one end or the other, in the middle or along the side, facing the lane or at a nonsensical angle, the front end of the croft (sometimes called the "toft") is reserved for the penning of animals and any outbuildings or sheds needed for fodder, while in the rear, behind the house, a garden is kept.

The house itself is generally a messy structure made of wattle-and-daub (woven wands and branches of wood, plastered over with a thick layer of clay), framed in timber, and roofed in thatch. The poorer or older homes are sunken, their earthen floors set half a pace or so into the ground to provide a bit more headroom under the low roofs; the newer or better-off homes are set at ground level with higher attics and perhaps even stone foundations. Many are simple cottages, single-room dwellings three or four paces deep and half that again in length. Most, though, are long houses: five paces across, perhaps ten or twelve in length, subdivided into several bays within. The middle of the long house is the living space, with a cookfire in the center, a trestle table and some light furnishings, a chest or pantry, and perhaps a few casks of ale brewing. Beyond the living area at one end is a bedroom, separated by a wattle partition, and in the more affluent homes maybe even a true "inner room," a bedroom separated by a real wall, with a solid door between it and the rest of the house. At the other end of the house, a partition closes off an animal pen into which livestock are herded in cold winter evenings.





Not all homes are surrounded by crofts. A few of the poorer homes, or those held by villagers with unique lifestyles (like the priest and the midwife) are standalone cottages. Few of Bois de Haillot's buildings are made of stone: Only the church, the mill, and the bailiff's house are made completely of such sound stuff.

Missing from both the home and the croft is anything resembling a privy. Personal business is taken care of in transient communal latrine ditches, generally dug somewhere behind the rows of crofts some fifty or so paces from the nearest home.

Aside from differences in size and state of repair, there's little that readily marks the home of an affluent peasant from that of the poorest cotter. Those with wealth invest it in other things: land, quality tools and possessions, a stockpile of grain, or food for security against an always-uncertain agricultural cycle.

The center of town is the green. It might as well be called the "brown," for with the passing of so many feet and hooves, it is usually floored with as much mud or dust as grass. Nevertheless, it is here that village meetings are held, celebrations and ceremonies conducted, and feasts and festivals enjoyed. The communal barns sit at the back of the green, adjacent to the common pasture, while the church overlooks it from across the lane.

The Manor

Surely it is order that makes one ruler over his domain; so it is no wonder that the serfs and peons are so firmly fixed in their lowly cosmic station. As I walked with Jean up the long sloping track toward this so-called castle, I could not but wonder at the disarray in which the peasants maintain the fields that are their livelihood. Surely it would be different here, with a house of Magi to impose some structure

upon the pale existence that is their life? But no — these open lands are broken, as are those of peasants everywhere it seems, into an incomprehensible patchwork of hedgerows and ditches, tiny patches of cultivation mished and mashed together in a giant vagabond's calico. It seems that no two plots contain the same crop — here there is corn, there beans, in another wedge melons, and then corn again. That this disarray breeds inefficiency is clear in the fact that one whole field — an entire third of the enterprise! — lies wasted in disuse. And yet the peasants toil in their confusion — we could see them everywhere in their fields, the plow teams at work here and there throughout. One team was even seen plowing an empty field, as if the weeds might benefit from their efforts! Is there ever a time when the peasant does not toil behind his plow?

I could not help but wonder how far the covenant's lands reach beyond what met our eye — the fields stretched for a mile about the village, and to the west it seemed that there were more fields beyond some copses and lines of trees. Beyond that, only forest — is this the dark and dangerous Ardennes I have heard so much about? If these are all the lands of Triamore, the holding seems to compare itself favorably with others I have imagined. Perhaps I will withhold my judgment on this place until I have met with my new sodales.

The disorder that Sicero comments on hides, in Bois de Haillot as it does in most rural communities, a finely-tuned agricultural system that supports the village and the covenant of Triamore. Sicero is right in suspecting that Triamore holds all of these fields. In fact, the cultivated land represents only about a fifth of the entire manor.

Bois de Haillot is a wedge of land, roughly a quarter-circle with a six mile radius, bordered to the east and north by the Meuse and Saupont Rivers, respectively. The village and the covenant sit near the apex of this wedge, in the manor's northeastern corner, with the village alongside the Saupont about a mile or so from the two rivers' joining, and Lucien's Folly not quite a mile beyond, on the ridge

above the Meuse. All told, the manor's lands total about 18,000 acres: 3,000, perhaps, under cultivation (almost half of that being the covenant's demesne); 5,000 or 6,000 left to pasture or waste; and 9,000 or 10,000 wooded. The village itself is the central settlement of the manor, the center for all communal services: the church, mill, bakery, green, and smithy. In addition, there are two outlying hamlets, called Ville de Haillot and Bar le Sud — peasant settlements with no village facilities, that rely on the village for central resources.

Crossing the Saupont by the ford takes one onto manor lands, and straight into the heart of the village. Beyond the last cotters' huts the road splits. Straight ahead, it runs between the East and South Fields up toward the forest-shrouded castle. To the right, a more well-traveled cart-track passes along the edge of the South Field toward a line of trees a mile and a half off. It leads to the hamlets, and, beyond, the trail through the Ardennes.

As just mentioned, the cultivated land around Bois de Haillot is divided into three large fields, each nearly a mile on a side and subdivided into a dense patchwork of crops by paths, ditches, hedgerows, and copses. Each of the hamlets likewise sits at the center of three fields, though theirs are somewhat smaller. What appeared to Sicero as sloth is in fact a deliberate agricultural schedule. Every year, one of the three large fields is planted with "winter" crops (those that are sewn in the autumn for harvest the following summer), another with spring crops (planted after the last frost for harvest in autumn), and the final left unplanted (but tilled) and used as pastureland. The next year the crops are rotated, so that the land never tires of growing the same crop year after year. This year, the East Field is planted with winter wheat and rye and the South with spring crops, while the West Field lies fallow.

The uneven network of hedges and ditches breaks each field into irregular furlongs: sections of field dedicated to a single

crop. Each furlong is further divided into long thin strips or selions, separated from the others by a pace-wide boundary of unplowed earth, or perhaps a tumbled row of stones pulled out of the ground (or by mere tradition, which can often lead to disputes over selion boundaries). Selions vary in size, but are typically around half an acre, a convenient work unit for a single plow team. Their long shape is also a plowing convenience: a team can cover the entire selion in a few long passes, with a minimal number of turns.

Each selion belongs to a single peasant (or to the covenant itself, if it's part of the demesne), but a given peasant's lands are rarely lumped together. Rather, each peasant holds a scattering of selions in each furlong of each field, so that he might grow some of each crop, and leave some selions fallow, each year. A half-virgater (a typical landholding peasant) might hold twenty or twenty-five selions scattered among the furlongs of all three fields, while a virgater (a more affluent peasant) might have forty-five or fifty, or even more. The demesne — that portion of the farmland belonging directly to Triamore — is made up of hundreds of selions scattered among the fields of the village and the hamlets. Of course, none of these plots are marked. Ownership is maintained through tradition, local memory, and the records of the steward.

The western and southern fringes of the manor are covered mainly in forest. Though untended, those woods and the copses and dells scattered among the fields hardly go to waste. They are in fact a crucial asset for the manor. Triamore's huntsmen draw boar and venison for the covenant pantries from these forests (only the lord may legally hunt for meat), and those woodsmen licensed by the covenant cut trees for firewood or timber. Furthermore, the woods are open to all who wish to forage for nuts and berries, to seek deadwood for firewood, or to let their swine roam free to feed.





The Peasants

As the dreadful hike up that unending slope drew the trees along the ridge inexorably closer, we came upon a gang of villeins returning, one would suppose, to their hovels from their toil in the fields. They were a gangly group, dirty and unkempt as are their ilk, and I found it necessary to divert my eyes. That did not stop one of them from molesting Jean with pestering questions, uttered in a French brogue so distorted that it would give any Norman pause. "Hoy, Bill," another of them demanded, "keep yourself away from those ones; their business at the Folly is none of yours." The others looked to this man as might an apprentice to his master. He wore neither fineries nor jewels; there was mud on his brow as there was on all their faces — in fact, he could not in any way be distinguished from his fellows. And yet he had, it seemed, some considerable stature among the peasants about him. I had seen no affluence in that village, no

sign of station beyond the bailiff's stone shack (and we had already met with that man). By what churlish fancy did this peon station himself above his peers?

A village is more than the sum of its places. In fact, it is not so much the physical layout of one village that distinguishes it from any other — it is the people. All told there are some sixty families in the village of Bois de Haillot (and nearly as many in the two outlying hamlets). It's easy to imagine that a village like Bois de Haillot is populated by a uniform strata of peasants, each equally impoverished and equally powerless beneath the lords of his land. The truth is that though the village might be a small place, it is as diverse and various a society as any. There are those that have relative wealth, and those that don't. Those that find opportunity, and those that never do. Those who have position and influence over their neighbors and those that who are scorned or looked down upon.

Land Ownership and Work Obligations

No peasant truly owns the land he works: he "holds" it, retaining the right to work it and treat it as his own. Indeed, even the manor lord does not own the land, for he holds it for the count, who holds it for the duke, who holds it for the king. (Though in the case of Bois de Haillot, Triamore holds it directly for the emperor.) Ironically, a peasant's hold on his land is probably more secure than that of a nobleman, for a lord can be ousted by his king for purely political reasons, while only the most draconian of lords can get away with evicting his peasants without inciting revolt.

A peasant can "buy" a few selions from another given the lord's approval. Such a purchase shifts the holding from the old "owner" to the new one. Land holdings are hereditary, so a peasant who buys land from another owns it for all intents and purposes, passing it on to his descendants like any other inheritance. In this way some enterprising and fortunate peasant families accumulate affluence and perhaps

even power, as a wealthy and successful peasant is an excellent candidate for a reeve's position, or possibly even a bailiff's.

Most manors have a small number of dedicated personnel that work the demesne full-time in service of the lord, but the bulk of the work is done by the land-holding peasants. That work, called "week work," is in essence the rent paid for the land held. The number of days owed varies from region to region, but at Bois de Haillot a virgater owes 110 days each year, a half-virgater fifty-five days, and a cotter (who holds no land) none. This service is not related to the peasant's status as a freeman or serf as both serfs and free men owe the same. It's also only indirectly tied to the actual amount of land held: One half-virgater might hold nine acres, another fifteen, but both are considered half-virgaters, and thus both owe fifty-five days of week work. Peasants can ask to pay a fee to get out of their week-work obligations, but if manpower is short the lord is not likely to accept such an offer.

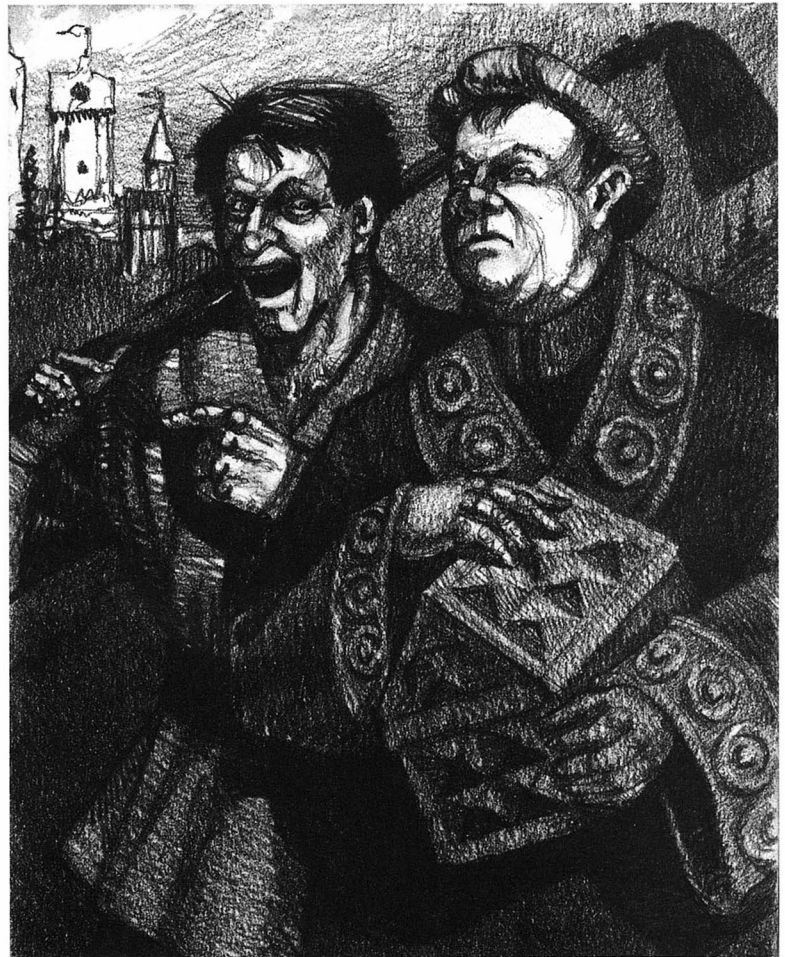
Speaking only of the commoners (not the lords), Bois de Haillot like any village might be said to have five “classes” of people. At the bottom of the scale are the cotters, those who hold no land but live in cottages within the village, eking out their livings as hands on others’ lands, or through whatever crafts they can work at in their homes. There are eight households of cotters at Bois de Haillot, with another five in the outlying hamlets, and they are among the manor’s poorest and least-regarded citizens.

Above the cotters on the social ladder are the half-virgaters, and above them the virgaters. A virgate is the basic unit of land for a peasant holding. The term has no exact definition, but is usually taken to mean an area of twenty or thirty acres — in Brabant, the standard is about twenty-four. A half-virgater holds a half-virgate of land — about twelve acres, or just enough to feed a small-to-average-sized family. A virgater holds a full virgate or more. Although it is possible for a single peasant to hold several virgates — even dozens — the most prosperous are still known simply as virgaters. At the village of Bois de Haillot there are twenty-nine families of half-virgaters and eighteen virgaters (none of whom actually hold more than two full virgates). In addition, there are twenty-three half-virgaters and sixteen virgaters in the outlying hamlets. That puts roughly 1500 acres in the hands of Bois de Haillot’s peasants.

About equal in status to the virgaters are the village’s few craftsmen: the miller, the smith, and the baker. As in most manors, each of these craftsmen works under license from Bois de Haillot’s lord (the covenant), which owns the facilities and a legal “ban,” or monopoly, on each of those three industries. No one else may mill, work metals, or bake, even if he has the skills and capabilities to do so — a peasant may not even grind his own grain — for the lord owns the right to perform (or farm out) and profit from these services. There

are also a tanner and a carpenter at Bois de Haillot — these are not monopolized industries (and not all villages have tanners, just as Bois de Haillot has no stonecutters or carters). Both of these craftsmen happen to be enterprising half-virgaters, who operate these businesses as well as their fields.

The final non-noble “class” is the village priest. A village priest may hold land (as any other village member may) and work it or hire cotters to work it for him, but generally, little land is held by most priests. At Bois de Haillot, the priest only holds an acre or two, but is supported by tithes and fees for his services.





Lucien's Folly

We were finally reaching the line of trees, and I was finally going to have a look at my new home. I confess that I was somewhat apprehensive — much had been said about the castle that Triamore occupied, but I did not see how a very impressive structure might be so thoroughly hidden behind such a scant stand of oaks and hemlocks. When at last the trail turned into those trees and the gatehouse came into view, I was at once relieved and filled anew with despair.

Here was a true barbican, and to its right a tall white tower of some fineness. One could see immediately that this was a fortification of some

might, at least against the temporal threats of lords and their rabbleous armies: the gatehouse was framed by two stout half-round towers, between which penetrated the vaulted passage of the entryway. It was sturdy enough, with loops and murder holes, and a high slate roof — and yet the trees of the forest grew directly in front of it; vines covered one flank in unchecked foliage; the sturdy gate was rusted and frozen in place, and the walls that flanked it — those that confined the large bailey beyond — sat in broken ruin, insufficient to detain even the goats and poultry that wandered about its skirts. Just visible beyond this sight was the keep itself — quite a large structure, to be fair, but built up only to the height of two or three floors. Atop, ancient beams and scaffolds could be seen.

Free Men and Serfs

Some peasants are said to be free men. Others — serfs or villeins — are bondsmen to their lords. In Brabant, as in Normandy and England and most other civilized places, there is little day-to-day difference between the two states. Freedom is rarely related to prosperity or social status: Many serfs are well-to-do virgaters and influential members of their villages, while many poor cotters are free men. There is no difference in the bond-work a peasant owes to the lord. That is based on the amount of land held, not free or serf status.

The principal difference between free men and serfs lies in the right to move, change occupations, or marry at will. Technically, a serf's decision to do any of those requires his lord's approval. How tyrannical a manor lord chooses to be on these issues varies dramatically. In Bois de Haillot, marriage requests are rarely turned down, and requests to move or change jobs are simply rare. A more practical aspect of serfdom and these restrictions relates to taxation: A serf must pay Triamore a fee — merchet — for the right to marry, and also gersun to inherit his father's chattel (belongings) and holding. Triamore is also entitled to heriot, a share of the peasant's property, upon his death — typically his best ox, horse, or other animal (at Bois de Haillot, as in many manors, the priest gets the deceased's second-best animal).

And a villein who receives permission to move off the manor makes an annual payment of chevage to the covenant, to whom he still belongs. Free men do not pay these fees and taxes.

Serfdom, like freedom, is inherited. Although by many definitions serfdom seems similar to slavery, a lord generally does not see his serfs as property any more than he does his free peasants. Their lives are not closely managed nor their daily activities monitored. Indeed, no real records are kept on which peasants are free and which are serfs, and status sometimes comes into dispute. When that's the case, the manor records are referred to; a family history of paying merchet and heriot indicates serf status, while an absence of such payments confirms freedom.

Most villeins don't seem to feel a lot of pressure to escape serfdom, but some serfs attempt to anyway. Running away to a nearby manor rarely makes for a successful escape — even if the serf can find a livelihood, word of his flight will go out to neighboring lords, who will be on the lookout for him. However, if a serf makes it to a free town (such as Liège or Brussels) and lives there for a year and a day, he becomes legally a free man. Unfortunately, for the untrained peasant there's little work in a town. Many seeking such freedom end up as beggars or vagabonds.

How could this castle still be in the slow process of construction, when it had been the home of a great covenant, I had been told, for decades? It is a simple enough matter for an experienced magus to form up stone and shape it into a fortification of strength such as would slight even this massive construction — did they not have even those skills, here at this supposed covenant of Magi?

Triamore covenant makes its home in Lucien's Folly, a massive rambling fortification on a ridge above the Meuse. One most commonly approaches the castle as Sicero did — by the road from Bois de Haillot. Since the abandonment of the its construction roughly 100 years ago, the land immediately about the castle has not been kept cleared, and a copse of trees half-conceals the fortress' might until one approaches. The road ascends through the gentle sloping fields about the village towards these trees, turning as it enters their shade for the gatehouse.

Lucien's Folly was built by the Margrave Lucien de Namur in the middle of the past century. Lucien's attempt to create a power base in Bois de Haillot was one effort of many in a 200-year struggle by the local lords of this region to build an independent duchy powerful enough to make vassals of its neighbors. Lucien's ambition proved to far outstrip his resources, and he died bankrupt and defeated before completely raising either his army or his castle. But though he was never a contender for the ducal position that Henry I, father of the current duke of Brabant, eventually assembled, his legacy — in the form of Lucien's Folly — would come to be a thorn in the side of Brabant's political architects for decades to come. A potentially huge military asset, the unfinished castle was positioned inconveniently for Henry's use, but where it might easily be exploited by his enemies. It was too powerful a tool to leave in the hands of any vassal lord, but also too valuable, and costly, to destroy.

The court of Frederick Barbarossa, Holy Roman emperor at that time, was eager to remove the covenant of Triamore from a

position of imperial influence and happy to establish stability on this flank of his empire. He solved both problems by chartering Bois de Haillot directly to a vassal that would not answer to local politics: the covenant (for more on this, see the history outlined in the next chapter). Though the new tenants of the previously-unoccupied castle were viewed with suspicion by all of the competing local lords, the removal of the fortress from the ongoing political infighting may have been the catalyst that was needed to finally convene a duchy, for in 1190 the jurisdictions of Brabant were finally settled under Henry's ducal command.

Lucien's Folly sprawls along the end of a low ridge overlooking the junction of the Meuse and Saupont rivers. Its position is undeniably advantageous. With a commanding view of both rivers, the castle is virtually unapproachable from the north or east, where a steep, rocky face drops off toward the waters below. To the west the ground slopes away gently, but offers attackers only vast open fields for shelter. To the south, along the ridge, the ground is broken and lightly forested, but it's a narrow approach along the ridge edge.

The castle consists of three major structures, connected by an unfinished wall around a large bailey: a gatehouse; a large tower; and the keep itself, along with its attached great hall. The tower and gatehouse were both completed in Lucien's day and remain in good shape, but the keep, though massive, was finished only through the bottom two floors.

The Gatehouse and Bailey

For a moment I thought the castle deserted, and wondered if we might somehow have come to the wrong place. But as we entered the passage beneath the gatehouse, the din and clamor of activity assailed us. Beyond was a great bailey, perhaps some eighty paces before us and fifty in width. Here the full impact of the keep was made upon us: a massive build-

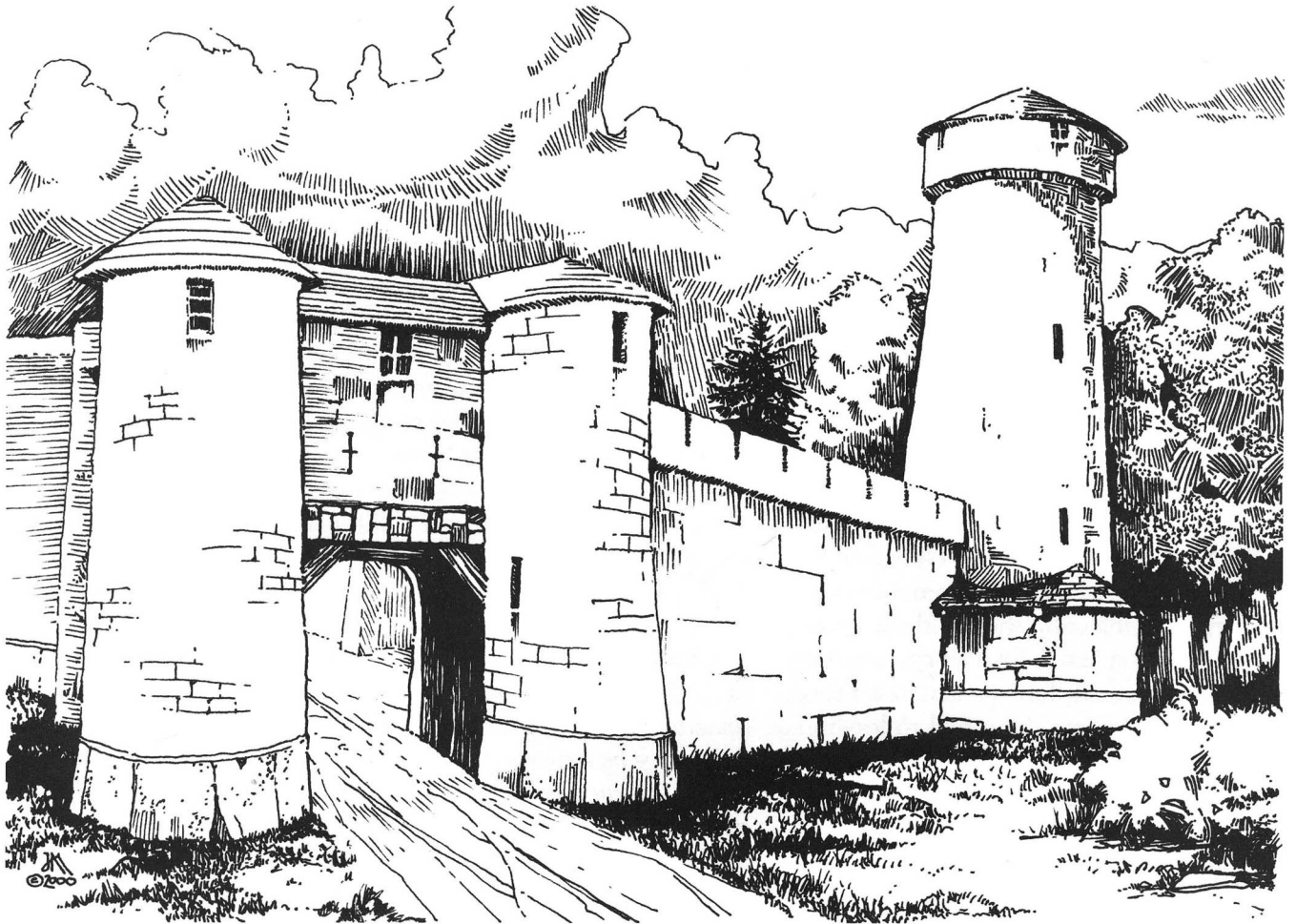




ing, should it ever be finished I confess that it would be quite impressive, especially to the mundanes who cringe before such displays of earthly might. Against it, jutting into this bailey, a high-roofed wing that must surely contain a great hall of some magnitude dominated the activities of the armsmen who practiced in its shadows. A stable was built against the ruined wall to the left side of the bailey, while opposite that a fine white tower rose to an impressive height, completed to its apex, it seemed, unlike the keep and its surrounding walls.

One of the turb — a captain, I would gather from the way he presided over the men's practice — eyed me as we entered the bailey, but only a stableboy approached. He went running toward a gate at the far end of the bailey when Jean told him our business, scattering chickens as he called out for some superior, and we followed.

Approaching Lucien's Folly by the front gate, one gains an easy sense of how impressive a castle it was destined to be. The gatehouse is a large and sturdy structure, flanked on both sides by the only stretches of complete, crenelated bailey wall and by its lofty companion, Ulisterius' Tower. Passing through the gate takes one through a short, dark, vaulted tunnel, between the massive overhanging portcullis (still functional, after a century of uselessness) at the front end and the thick gates (perpetually held open by their heavily-rusted hinges) at the back. The passage is overlooked by narrow loopholes on either side and murder holes above. At the far end the passage opens to the wide and level bailey, surrounded by its half-built and broken-down walls, with the gate to the inner bailey and the keep some seventy-five paces beyond.



The outer bailey is a large courtyard. Inside it's fairly level, the gently-sloping ground penetrated here and there by some boulder or stone. Lucien's masons never broke up. It would probably be a bustling place had the castle ever been completed. In addition to the functioning stables and bakery, the broken walls and groundworks of sheds, animal pens, and a ruined smithy line the walls.

Though the gatehouse and Ulisterius' Tower are complete and in good shape, the walls that surround the outer bailey were never fully completed. Those sections closest to the gatehouse, and backing the stable and the bakery, are most finished. Those nearest the great hall and the inner bailey are little more than foundations, varying from just a few feet tall to nearly their full height of five paces or so. The wall-walks along the top of the finished walls are interrupted by half-towers: rounded sections of wall, taller than the rest, which create a break in the wall-walk to deter attackers who gain one section. Normally, removable planks might be set across the gaps created by the half-towers to make movement along the walls more convenient to defenders, but of course no-one bothers with the broken-down walls of Lucien's Folly.

The Keep

We passed through the second gate into a smaller bailey, one so close that it was already drenched in the shadows of a setting sun. Here too the walls — and the tower that protected the gate between the courtyards — were mere ruins, thick and sturdy, but sprouting weeds and shot through with crevices, and in places no taller than my shoulder.

One could not help but feel, I must admit, the immense weight of the massive keep that crowded this little space. The stable boy had entered this keep by the front door, which now stood open under an arch framed by round towers and overlooked by loopholes and defenses.

Mundanes would cower before such earthly might, and even I could feel its power working upon me.

Inside was a great foyer — a lofty room of eight sides, its passages and alcoves lined with the finely-carved stonework that one sees in the mundanes' most cherished churches and palaces. The polish on the inlaid floor reflected the large iron chandelier above, making a great light of a few simple candles.

We were met by a hawkish man dressed in some finery — a commoner, to be sure, and no Magus, but neither a peasant or toiler. "My lord," he said with a bow, and not in the vulgar dialect of Norman we had suffered through over the past week's travel, but in the clear and well-spoken Latin of the Italian scholars. "I am the steward of Bois de Haillot; my name is Morris. I have sent a servant to Lady Daria; she will receive you in the great hall." His manners were remarkably acceptable — perhaps there was some hope for this dismal place after all.

As he led us from the foyer by one of the many great doors issuing therefrom, he inquired about our journey. I had regaled him with only the smallest portion of the indignities we had suffered, and not even reached our sickening passage of the Channel when he interrupted. "You have come from England," he said, as though I had not made that clear already. "I was born in Shrewsbury, in Shropshire. If you will be staying with us for any length, perhaps we will have the opportunity to discuss our common home."

I saw no such conversation in our future, but I thought the better of saying so. We entered a gallery of sorts, the wing of a large room divided by arched columns. The light here was less brilliant than in the foyer, and the stonework, though still trimmed, simpler. But tables lined every wall here, and upon them books by the score — by the hundred. This was the celebrated library of Triamore! I would have dallied, but Morris led us straight through into another large room.

Lucien was a man of great ambition, a fact that is well-illustrated by the massive keep of his castle. Were it ever finished, it would surely dwarf Frois Pont (Count





Gaumond's keep in Namur), and would compete even with the duke's castle for the awe of all viewers. Although it is not nearly so fine throughout, its portal, and the foyer beyond, succeed in their intent to impress.

The library, along with the solar (a more casual common room than the great hall) and the covenant's council chamber, dominate the keep's first floor. The library is a large room — so large, in fact, that it is divided by two lines of stone pillars in support of its vaulted ceiling. This creates a cloistered effect, almost as if the area is in fact three rooms, or a room with broad galleries to either side. It is in some ways the heart of the covenant, and though it is not as fine a chamber as the foyer or the great hall, it reflects its importance with fine carpets and tapestries, well-crafted tables, and large chairs and benches comfortably padded.

The Great Hall

This was the great hall we had seen from without. Here at last was a chamber befitting Magi — if this did not put to shame the palaces and castles of the lords of Brabant, then surely they lived in grandeur all out of proportion to their worth. We entered again by a side gallery, with arches supporting some sort of balcony overhead. But beyond this gallery, stone pillars reached toward a roof the height, perhaps, of six men. The waning light of the afternoon cast colored beams of light through narrow windows onto a floor of polished stone inlaid with marbles of many colors. At the head of the hall was a hearth larger than the room we had spent our last night in, with a great mantle resting on the heads of stone lions asnarl in anger.

There was only a single table here, alone in the center of this vastness. Morris motioned towards it, so we moved that way to await the Magi of Triamore, the wizards that would, if my master's wishes came to pass, become my sodales and compatriots, and, if only for some time, my superiors and the masters of my fate.

The great hall is another reflection of Lucien's ambition — a room more than befitting the palace of the duke he intended to become. It is broad and grand, with a floor of polished stone and tall pillars supporting the open rafters of the high roof. A gallery runs along the side a floor above, and a great fireplace the size of a peasant's hovel graces the northern end of the room.

The magi of Triamore, however, have found little use for such a hall. As a formal setting for mundane meetings (as opposed to wizards' councils, which are held in the more secure council chamber) it certainly reflects an austere power that is Daria's favored persona, but it is far larger than any such use calls for. Other lords might exploit such a chamber for diplomatic meetings, social events, and festivals, all of which would instill in their guests a suitable impression of the landlord, but the magi of Triamore have few such uses. So the hall sits as Sicro first experiences it: empty and echoing.

The Magi of Triamore

We waited for some time before the Lady of the covenant came forth, but when she did I could immediately perceive that my master's judgment had not failed me. Daria of Tremere — for there could be no mistaking the figure that emerged from the library door, accompanied by Morris, some scribe or other, and the captain I had seen in the bailey — was a tall lady, dressed in a long gown that was as austere as it was elegant. Her hair was drawn back in a long plait braided through with chains of silver, that fell almost to the hem of her dress, and though it was gray her countenance betrayed an age of perhaps only four decades — surely an illusion of her longevity efforts, for her to be as illustrious a maga as I had been

told. Her hands were decorated with rings studded with gems and jewels — no doubt she carried upon her a repository of vis that rivaled the holding of some entire covenants. Without a word she crossed to sit behind the large, ornate table. The servants stood behind her, all but the captain who perched impudently upon its edge. I opened my mouth to chastise the man, but as Daria hardly seemed to notice I thought better of it.

I laid the letter of recommendation Goliard wrote for me upon the table, but Daria did not even pick it up. Instead she gazed at me with gray eyes, past tensed fingers held to pursed lips. I could read nothing in her face, nor in the assessing stare of the armsman.

Finally I could take the silence no longer. "My sodalis," I said in my best Latin, with a deep and appropriately respectful bow, "I am"

"I know who you are, Sicero of Blackthorn," she said in a quiet voice that nonetheless brought my speech to an unplanned end. She was silent for a long moment, and I almost spoke again before she resumed. "What I wish to know is whether you are what your master has claimed of you," she said at last. "Only time will show us that, I am sure. Welcome to Triamore."

The man stood, and extended his hand as though we were lusty comrades at arms. I'm afraid I must have recoiled, but that did not break the smile from his face. "I'm Remi of Museau," he said. "Of House Jerbiton."

Following the departure of Daria's apprentice Versus in 1215, the passing into Twilight of Ulisterius in 1216, and the deaths of Aline and Cardrew in the past two years, there are now only two magi at Triamore: Daria of Tremere and Remi of Jerbiton. Before the past few years the covenant had never been home to fewer than four magi, and at its height it had six. The rapid depletion of the covenant's Hermetic complement is a grave crisis facing the two remaining magi — the reason that has drawn Sicero and perhaps the reason that draws your player character magi as well.

Remi and Daria are both filii of the covenant's founding members, Daria having been gauntleted in 1178 and Remi in 1202. In manner, as Sicero no doubt noted, they are dispositional opposites. Daria is distant and commanding, refined and elegant at all times, a dedicated and intellectual student of the Hermetic Arts. Remi is a more open character, casual, easy-going, and friendly, whose passions for woodcraft and travel rival his interest in magic. Both are powerful magi, however.

Sicero and other magi coming to join Triamore are likely to see little of Daria. Although she was once an active and vocal participant in the politics of the Rhine Tribunal, she has seemed content for the past several years to confine herself to her chambers and her studies, ruling her covenant and her manor with an unwavering yet distant hand. She does, of course,





emerge from her sanctum — and even the covenant itself — when duties require it, and even spends an hour or two each week in the solar, with the household staff, beating Morris at chess. But visitors or new residents seeking a more personal side to Daria are destined to be disappointed: She never appears in any but her most formal appointments, and gives few clues to what goes on behind her steady gray eyes. Perhaps Remi, over the years, has come to know her better, but if so he does not talk of it.

Remi is much more likely to interact with guests, or take new arrivals under his wing. An outgoing and active individual, Remi spends little time in his lab, preferring to wander the surrounding forests, hone his martial skills with the grogs, travel, or conduct his studies in fresh air and sunshine. Whereas Daria's past is strictly Hermetic, Remi is something of an oddity in the Order: He apprenticed as an adult and had lived a rather colorful life beforehand. He fought the Moors in Iberia, traveled most of France, and was even married at one point. If asked, he's happy to share stories of his experiences, or to show off a litany of scars and tattoos carried with him from those decades ago. Although born a commoner, the coarseness that one such as Sicero might see in Remi should not be taken for granted:

The Lord of Bois de Haillot

The manor of Bois de Haillot must, by charter, be held by a nobleman; the elected leader of the covenant serves this role. The current leader is Daria, who is known as Lady Daria LaGris of Bois de Haillot to the temporal world. This does not make Daria a titled noblewoman — rather, she enjoys a status equivalent to a knight: an unlanded gentle whose status is not hereditary. Bois de Haillot's unusual charter allows the holder to choose his or her successor "from among the Knights and Ladies abiding in that place, which owe fealty to no other Lord." In effect, this allows the covenant to choose its own leaders from among its magi, all of whom are considered to be knights in her service. For more details on this charter and the management of Bois de Haillot, see Chapter 4.

Remi is a shrewd and cultured man, and though he enjoys the company of the turb and gets on well with the villagers in Bois de Haillot, he is equally at home among nobles and kings.

Settling In

Our interview at an end, the steward drew himself forth from the fringes to lead Jean and myself from the hall. Again we passed through the library, where an odd, monkish-looking woman watched us pass with wary eyes. We walked through a different door, not into the foyer this time but to a lesser hall of some sort — not small by any means, but scented with the smoke of wood and human activity that betrayed a more casual purpose than the great chamber in which I met my new sodales. The walls were painted with broad murals that might, in some distant date past, have been somewhat impressive. A wide staircase took us to a similar room above, from which we entered a long, empty chamber.

"My lord," the steward addressed me. "This will be your chamber. The servants will be in shortly with linens and dressings."

The place was dark, but Jean soon opened the shutter of a single small window, a tiny arched thing hardly more than an arrow loop. The fresh air was welcome, as was the light: for I was seeing now, perhaps, that chamber which would be my abode for who knew how many years to come.

As a bed chamber the place was spacious enough, though I could not see how I might make a laboratory of it. I told the steward so.

"Lady Daria will assign you further accommodations, I am sure," the man replied. "There are empty rooms adjacent." Sure enough, there were doors leading off. Jean was already opening one, at the far corner. The door protested, stuck in its jamb, and when it suddenly swung free Jean uttered a cry as he tottered in its opening, grasping quickly at the frame about him.

The room beyond was round, the core of one of the keep's towers. There was no floor; or rather, the puddled, moss covered floor was some two stories beneath us — a fall six times the height of a man if Jean had been any slower. Above, the ragged stone lay open, revealing a broken circle of sky. The walls about, penetrated by sockets for the missing floor beams and the deep wells of arrow loops, were dark and streaked.

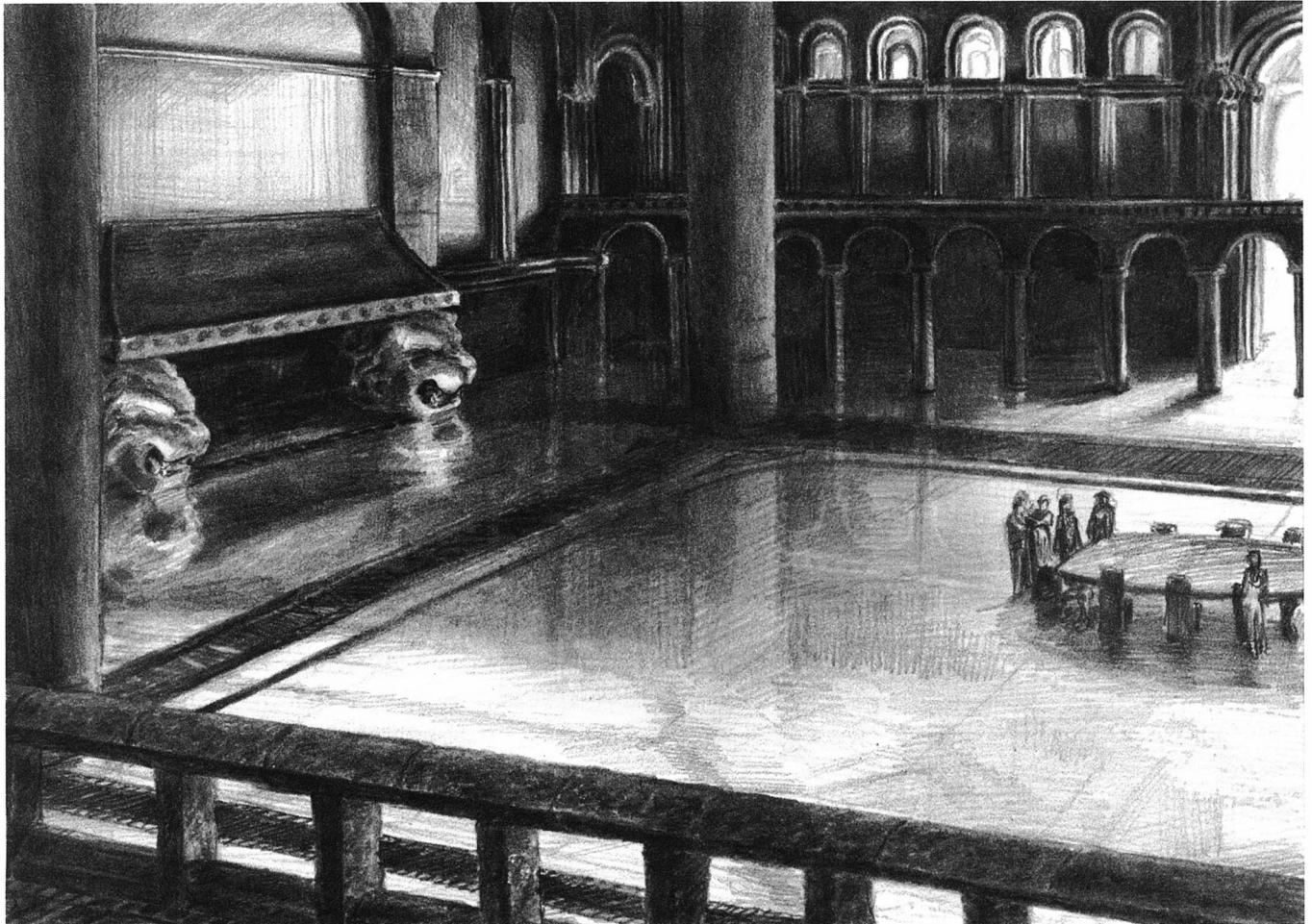
"Gutted in the fire, my lord," the steward stated from behind us.

The room apportioned to Sicero is typical of the many available for magi coming to join the covenant. The castle has an abundance of unused or half-used chambers. In addition to the upper-floor rooms, there are the underground chambers once occupied by Aline, and space might be made in Ulisterius' Tower or

even the gatehouse, should such accommodations appeal to a new magus. As Sicero's servant Jean discovered, the two northern towers were burned out in a fire some thirty years ago, and the chambers were never restored for lack of need.

Despite the grandeur of the castle's other quarters, the chambers on the second floor are not particularly luxurious. On the contrary, the roof above — actually the floor of the unfinished third story — barely suffices to keep out the weather, and leaks in a number of places when it rains (as it often does in Brabant). This is, for the most part, more an impediment to comfort than a serious problem, though it is growing worse over the years, and the gradual decay of this makeshift roof will demand serious repair in the future.

The rest of Lucien's Folly is described more thoroughly in Chapter 3.





The Council

It was not the next day when I saw Daria and Remi again, nor the day after, but the day after that. I spent my days in the library, where that monkish-looking woman, the librarian it turned out, introduced me to its fairly impressive collection. I had heard the library at Triamore compared by some to that in Doissetep, but if the tales of that place are true than this one surely pales beside it. Furthermore, I was disappointed to find that many — nearly half, in fact — of the covenant's volumes are on mundane topics, of only the most circumspect relevance to Hermetic study. Nevertheless, the Hermetic tomes number in the many hundreds — far more than at home in Blackthorn — and I will likely find something of value.

I had begun to wonder if the magi of this place had forgotten me when a servant came with a summons to the council chamber.

It is a mirror of the library, divided like that large room into three bays by lines of arches set upon pillars. Unlike the library, however, the council chamber is empty and dark, a single large table aglow with arcane light in the center of the large room. Daria was seated opposite, upright in a tall chair, while Remi lounged with unseemly comfort to her left. They indicated a third chair for me.

"You petition to join our covenant," Daria stated after the passage of a moment. At least I thought it was a statement. There was silence for a while, and then, for lack of anything else said, I confirmed that fact to her.

"A petitioner requires a sponsor, does he not?" she went on after another pause. "Have you a sponsor here at Triamore?"

There were only two of them — they surely knew that I did not. I had assumed that in their desperation for new magi they would waive such technicalities, but I could hardly say such a thing. So instead I merely shook my head. There was silence for some minutes again, and I found myself thinking of an insect under glass, enduring the scrutiny of great unseen eyes. At length I inquired as to whether they might provide me with a sponsor.

Daria only smiled — a subtle, knowing thing — when I pointed out that she was of my house. "I think not," was her reply to my request. "Remi shall be your sponsor. We will hear your petition now, so that we may get to making our decision."

And so began my entrance into Triamore.

A new magus arriving at Triamore, such as Sicero or perhaps your own player characters, are not automatically inducted into the covenant. Rather, they go through a process of introduction and interview to establish the newcomer's credentials and give each existing member (currently, only Remi and Daria) the chance to examine this potential sodalis in detail. A member of the covenant chooses to sponsor the applicant. During that period the sponsor helps introduce the newcomer to the covenant and acts as a sort of advocate in the interviewing process. A single applicant to Triamore, like Sicero, will almost certainly find Remi as his sponsor. It's a task Remi rather enjoys, and which Daria would rather have him attend to anyway. New applicants arriving shortly thereafter may find the newcomer acting as their sponsor (a decision that is a sort of test of the newcomer as well as the applicant). Only if several applicants arrive simultaneously will Daria consent to sponsor one of them.

The exact process of inducting an applicant varies from one to another, but the typical petitioner can expect a single interview of many hours, in which he is questioned closely about his apprenticeship, his experiences, his Hermetic strengths and weaknesses, his past covenants, the reasons he left his previous covenant, the reasons he wishes to join Triamore in particular, and what his membership will do to strengthen the covenant. All of the magi of the covenant, including any newcomers if some have recently been inducted, must be present for this interview and any formal discussion meetings that follow it. And they must reach a majority of at least three-fourths in any decision to admit the applicant.

In the interview, the questioners pursue the applicant with great scrutiny, seeking not

just to familiarize themselves with the petitioner but also to uncover every clue that might indicate that the applicant would bring trouble or disrepute with him, or may be a difficult sodalis — for the oath of covenant, once administered, is a two-way street. The newcomer will be entitled to the full benefits of membership and protection of the covenant and its other members, and cannot be ejected lightly. Daria and Remi are in fairly dire straights, and won't reject many applicants without good reason. But that doesn't mean that they won't look closely, to make sure such reason isn't there.

Even then, the council won't make a decision right away. Once the initial interview (or series of interviews, if deemed necessary) is over, it may be several weeks before they render a decision. As the newcomer waits, spending some portion of the time with the sponsor, being introduced to the facilities and personnel of the covenant, the magi have an opportunity to mull over the interview, discuss it together, perhaps gather a few opinions from members of the household (not just Remi, either — Daria, though she makes no great show of it, has a great respect for Morris' judgment of character), and enjoy a few casual conversations with the applicant. Magi being an esoteric and often anti-social lot, all of this input is taken in its appropriate context, but it is carefully considered nonetheless.

Once they are ready to finalize a decision, the council (again, just Daria and Remi unless some additional magi have already joined) gathers again for a final discussion. Then they summon the applicant with due solemnity into the council chamber and present him with their result: Either he has been accepted, and may immediately take the oath of covenant, or has been turned down and must immediately leave Lucien's Folly.

Assuming the decision has gone in the applicant's favor, at this time the charter of the covenant is read aloud (probably by Remi) for the benefit of the newcomer. Daria typically says a few words about the

covenant's history, ideals, and current state of affairs, and then the applicant swears the oath of covenant. The oath of covenant is as sacred to Hermetic magi as the Oath of Hermes (in fact, the very term "covenant" comes from this oath), and it is neither sworn to nor administered lightly. Once the oath is sworn to, a silver basin is brought forth and blood and a few strands of hair are taken from the newcomer, to be stored in the magical treasury. At that point, it's official: The newcomer is a member of the covenant. The magi in turn speak a few words of welcome to the newcomer (words which may be full of warmth or clipped and formal), and the council is brought to an end.

Established magi — full members of the covenant — enjoy membership without condition. But newcomers, especially those with no reputation by which the magi might know them (or even reputations that work against them), may be asked to join on a probationary basis for a few seasons. In such cases, the applicant swears to an abridged version of the oath of covenant, in which he attests that he will uphold all the usual duties, but acknowledges that he is not subject to any of the benefits. However, the newcomer is typically extended all of the benefits except the right to vote at council for the probationary period. Assuming the probation works out, he then swears the oath of covenant at another council meeting, thereby becoming a full-fledged covenant member.

At the conclusion of the entrance process a large feast is held — one of the few events that warrants the use of the great hall. The covenfolk — and perhaps a few of the more influential villagers, certainly including the bailiff — are officially introduced to the new magus, who instantly, of course, becomes their superior. It is a tradition in some Hermetic covenants that for this evening only, the covenfolk may treat the newcomer as an equal, and he may be subject to some joshing, have spirits poured down his throat, or end up in bed with one of the servants. Tradition demands that the magus not use magic

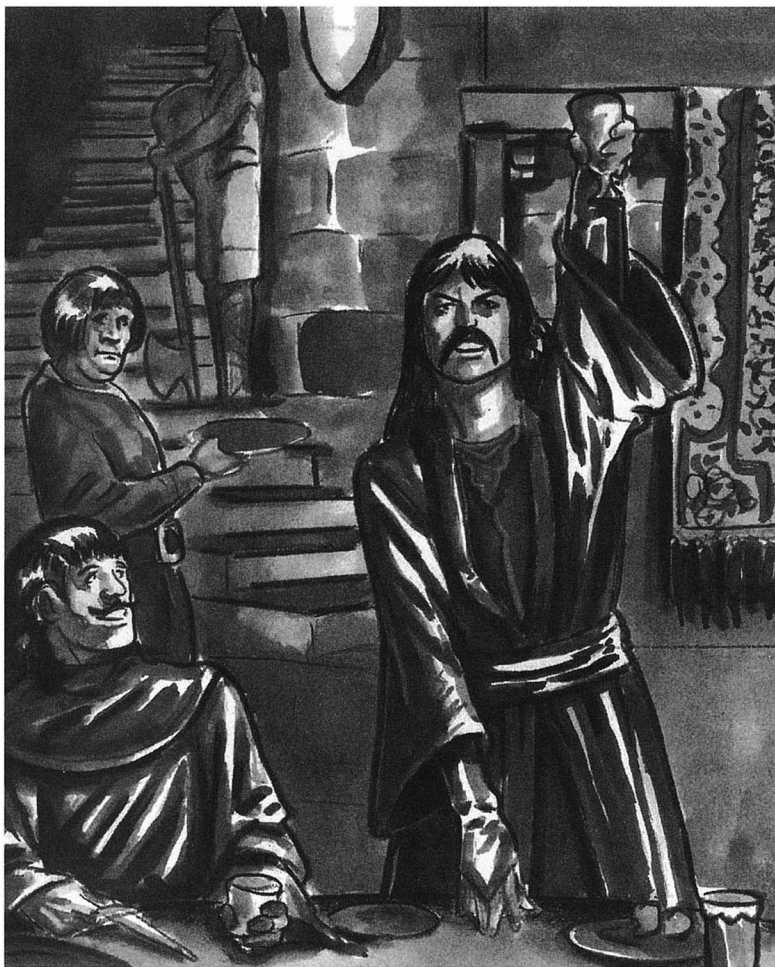




during this time, and that all that occurs is forgotten come dawn the following day.

Over the next few days, the new magus is moved into his quarters and laboratory, and his career at Triamore is underway. The detailed description of Lucien's Folly in the next chapter includes a sidebar on some likely locations for sancta of new magi within the covenant buildings.

These occurrences are a one-time event for most magi. You may want to gloss over them, or you may want to roleplay them in some detail when your player characters come to Triamore. It is a great way to introduce many of the major (and minor) characters in this book, and to give your players a more solemn sense of their membership in this covenant. The charter of Triamore, and the oath of covenant that each magus swears to, are included in Chapter 3 on page 34.



Life at Lucien's Folly

To Goliard of Tremere, of the Covenant of Blackthorn in the Stonehenge Tribunal, from her filius Sicero, at Triamore in the Tribunal of the Rhine, given this day the seventh of Leo, the thirteen hundred fifty-ninth year of Ares, my most humble greetings and hopes for your well-being,

As you commanded, I have arrived after a journey of some weeks at the Covenant of Triamore, in Brabant in the Rhine Tribunal, where I have petitioned to join the Magi here in their covenant. Immediately upon my arrival I did meet with Daria of Tremere and her sodalis Remi, who put to me many questions to satisfy themselves of my capacities and my honest desire to serve their house. Having completed their examinations with, I might say, success that honors my mater and my House, they have deemed that I shall join the covenant after a period of efforts and probation.

Being at this place is somewhat different than my time at Blackthorn. Here in this castle the magi are not so removed from the distractions that make our work difficult — to the contrary, there are common people going to and fro at all times; it is impossible to avoid them. And not only the covenant-folk — the peasants and serfs that work the covenant's land are always about, coming to the castle to pester their lords with some concern or other.

I am told that Triamore is a vassal to Frederick, the Emperor of Germany and Rome. How this is not a breach of the Code of Hermes is not entirely clear to me, but at the least it protects the covenant from the affairs of the lords of this area, who, I understand, squabble constantly over this or that bit of land. Apparently, though Triamore holds the castle and manor for the Emperor, no duties of fealty are required of the magi here, and for that reason the covenant avoids the prosecution of its Tribunal and the Quaesitoris.

The library here is as grand as has been said, with well over 2,000 tomes on subjects as numerous as can be imagined. I relish calling upon these books as I enter into my studies, but, unfortunately, many of these volumes treat subjects mundane as well as Hermetic, and as a result petty

scholars and churchmen often come to this place seeking access to the library. For some reason that has not yet been made clear to me, such rabble are permitted to view what they seek, and are even taken in as guests at the covenant — one fellow, a monk of some sort, has stayed for a fortnight. Apparently, this is not a rare occurrence. I can hardly imagine how such an impediment to true study can be permissible.

The castle in which this covenant resides is no fitting home for Magi, though it would be a great fortification among the defenses of the mundane if it were ever fully built. I am led to believe that this was the creation of some mad Count a century ago, who was bankrupted by its construction. The lords about this place fear and covet it, and as a result the Magi have been prevented from completing its construction. I have been given a chamber on the second floor of the keep — a large enough room, but having for its roof only what should have been the floor for the story above. When the rain falls, as it often does in this place, much of it makes its way down into my quarters.

But I find that this place offers me all that I could require to pursue my studies, and that my sodales here are worthy and learned members of our Order. With some considerable effort, as you have observed, this covenant might again be made to enjoy the high regard in which it was once held. I of course never doubted that all this would be so. I shall be a Magus of this covenant, and call it my home.

I remain your servant. I give this under my hand, Sicero of Tremere.

So your magi, like Sicero, have joined Triamore. What now?

Now you're ready to launch your saga, much as you would any other **Ars Magica** campaign. The remainder of this book, which describes Triamore, its inhabitants, and surroundings in detail, is filled with story hooks and ongoing issues which might draw your characters into their midsts. Or you could leave them in the background and deal with stories of your own devising. Either way is, of course, fine.

If you care to roleplay the events of the characters' early days in detail, there are a few issues that might affect new magi.

One of the first things that will happen — perhaps the very day that a magus is inducted into the covenant — is the presentation of an Aegis token. Possession of the token (which, in Triamore's case, is a small rounded stone with the covenant's symbol engraved upon it) allows the magus to pursue his magical studies unhindered by the *Aegis of the Hearth* spell that protects the covenant. The magus keeps the token until he can participate in the next Aegis ritual, held each year on midwinter's day.

In the weeks following induction, most magi will want to establish their laboratories. The recent decline in magi has left the covenant with a surplus of lab equipment, so any new magus — the first couple to arrive, at least — should be able to put together a decent lab. Finding this equipment might require some rummaging through storerooms or even Aline's extensive vaults, which might make for something of an adventure in and of itself.

The covenant has a number of regular chores, such as the gathering of vis from local supplies, that will likely be assigned to the junior-most magi of the covenant. Again, this might be something worth roleplaying, as many of the mystic sites from which vis is gathered have their own story hooks (see Chapter 4).

And of course there are the many ongoing mundane events that may involve the covenant, taking place in Bois de Haillot, Namur, and further afield. Daria no longer likes to travel, and though Remi is an avid traveler he has his own interests to attend to. New magi are likely candidates for any chores or duties outside of the covenant walls.

Triamore will continue to seek new members until the covenant's ranks reach at least four or five magi total. You may have that many — or more — after bringing in your player magi, but even so there will likely be applicants for months or seasons to come, as others pursue the diminishing rumors of Triamore's need. These applicants may well bring their own stories with them.

Whether you follow these leads or move directly into a more conventional saga, Triamore has plenty to keep new magi busy.





Chapter 3

The Covenant of Triamore

Here Sicero's observations come to an end, for in this chapter and beyond is much which may remain secret to him and to those player character magi who follow in his footsteps. This chapter covers the covenant and its inhabitants, detailing issues that were only touched upon in the previous chapter. The following chapters cover Bois de Haillot — the manor and village — and the surrounding lands.

A History of the Covenant

Triamore is, in 1220, a product of its past. Though it now struggles with a severe shortage of members, this was not always so — for most of its seven decades the covenant has been home to four or five magi, and just fifteen years ago there were six full-fledged members of the covenant as well as several apprentices. The rapid depletion of the household may be mere happenstance, or it may have more mysterious cause, rooted in the covenant's eventful past.

If Triamore's Hermetic circumstances are a simple trick of fate, the covenant's worldly position most certainly isn't. The

friction between the covenant and Gaumond, the count of Namur, is nothing new. In fact, Triamore was born into the political infighting endemic to its region, and has suffered through it — and been its target — since the covenant's founding.

Both conditions — Hermetic and mundane — have their roots in the same events, and the same ambitions of a particular magus some seven decades ago.

The Court of Conrad

It seems that turmoil has been a hallmark of Triamore's existence, and if that pattern is true its roots must go back to the covenant's very inception. Like so many of the covenant's doings, the circumstances of its birth seemed innocent enough on the surface — but quickly became embroiled in turmoil.

Following as they often try in the footsteps of Charlemagne, the Holy Roman emperors for generations have sought to surround themselves with culture and wisdom. So it was with Conrad III, when in 1149 he called for each scholarly institution within his realm to represent itself in his court, so that he might avail himself of their wisdom and fortify the culture of his people. The magi of the Rhine Tribunal were, for the most part, skeptical of this call, but as most of empire's covenants were known at least

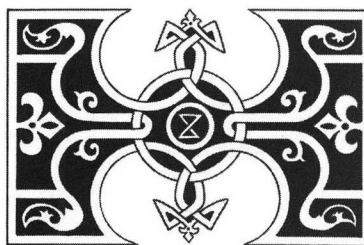
by rumor as houses of the learned, few could simply ignore it. Many of the magi that traveled to Conrad's court in Swabia that summer were jaded and cynical, eager to put this interruption of their works behind them, but a few saw in this calling an exciting opportunity to parley their superior learning into real, positive influence upon the centers of mundane power.

Three of these magi were Ulistorius, a young and somewhat naive follower of Jerbiton who reveled in the concept of serving the great courts of Europe; Anaxagoras of Tremere, an ambitious and only slightly more veteran magus eager to bring these same courts under the influence of the Hermetic Order; and Forba, a follower of Bonisagus with far greater experience in life and magic and who, it is thought, sought ways to make magic more useful — and accessible — to the lives of the non-Gifted. It was not long into their tenure at Schwäbisch-Hall that these three discovered the commonality of their interest — that among their colleagues, they alone actually saw benefit to service in Conrad's court.

It was almost certainly Anaxagoras who suggested the founding of a new covenant for just this purpose. Through careful politicking (at which he excelled) and wise counsel, Anaxagoras within a year gained a position of some influence with Conrad, and felt with some justification that he might stay and continue to be valued in the emperor's court. His two compatriots were quick to support the formation of a new covenant right there at Schwäbisch-Hall, and the emperor seemed inclined to support it. There was strong opposition within the Tribunal to a covenant intending such close association with the mundane, but a stipulation in the covenant's charter — mandating the sharing of wisdom without interference — was sufficient to allow the covenant's formation. By the autumn of 1151 Triamore was founded: a confederation of three magi, established as an entity but lacking a home.

Anaxagoras' vision was a large covenant of learned magi, based close to Schwäbisch-Hall but able to move with the continuous migration of the Imperial court — a covenant that could serve as a repository of wisdom as well as a house of magic, where diplomats and courtiers could visit freely and the service of the court could be extended. Failing to find a suitable lodging, and lacking the resources to construct one, he petitioned Conrad for a holding and the means to build the covenant of his dream. The emperor was sympathetic to Anaxagoras' ideas, and plans were soon drawn up.

Fate would come to stand between Anaxagoras and these plans for many years. Her first strike against them would be the death of Emperor Conrad the following spring, in 1152. The court was thrown into turmoil as the princes of Germany set about choosing a successor. Like all imperial families, the Stauffens of Swabia held the post by election, not right of succession, and with Conrad's passing many factions were quick to seize opportunity for change. There were challenges and political moves, attempts by lords and nobles to redefine their holdings and positions within the empire. By the end of the summer the Stauffen family had secured its hold on the imperial seat, but comparatively trivial matters such as Triamore's plans had long been forgotten. To the great relief of Anaxagoras and his comrades, the newly-ascended Frederick Barbarossa seemed inclined to maintain his court at Schwäbisch-Hall — but in the aftermath of his election and the subsequent reorganization of his court, the plans and resources to make Triamore a reality fell by the wayside.



The Charter of the Covenant of Triamore

Triamore, like all Hermetic covenants, is governed by a Charter: a constitution of sorts; a document that outlines the fundamental principles upon which the covenant operates. Don't confuse this with Bois de Haillot's manorial charter — that's a document made between a lord and his vassal (in this case the emperor and Triamore) stipulating the bounds and terms of a fief. Rather, this is an internal document, the agreement that all magi who join Triamore, either as newcomers or gauntleted apprentices raised there, sign onto. Below that is the oath of covenant, which is the actual oath sworn to at the induction ceremony. It's a traditional oath, and Triamore's version closely resembles those of other covenants.

Covenant of Triamore

We, the magi of Triamore, do make and adopt this Charter for the governance of our Covenant, which is established Anno Domini 1151, at the palace of Schwäbisch-Hall, in the Grand Duchy of Swabia, under the auspices of the Holy Roman emperor and the Tribunal of the Rhine, and amended this year 1158 at the manor of Bois de Haillot, in the Duchy of Brabant, at the castle which is to be our sanctum and defense.

This is a Covenant of magi, of the Tribunal of the Rhine of the Order of Hermes, and each member of this Covenant shall be a magus of the Tribunal and the Order in good standing, and shall honor and defend the Tribunal and the Order in all affairs and above all other matters. Should a magus be cast from the Order, he shall also and without delay be cast from this Covenant.

The magi of this Covenant do commit themselves to wisdom in service of the world. In full recognition of the Hermetic Oath, we do hereby reassert ours is not a course of interference, and that our knowledge imparted shall never bring ruin or condemnation upon the Order.

A magus desiring membership in this covenant shall present himself to the full Council of the Covenant, whereupon, should it be seen that he is a

magus in good standing of the Order of Hermes, and that he owes no allegiance nor fealty to any other Covenant or other body such as shall contravene his good oath to this Covenant, he shall be admitted upon the approval of three magi of the Covenant for every four. Upon such approval, the magus shall swear by the Oath of Covenant his membership and loyalty, and henceforth be a member in true standing. Should the Council place conditions or terms upon the applicant, all such conditions must be satisfied before the swearing of the Oath, so that upon such swearing no special bounds or duties are placed upon the member.

Should a magus ever come to desire release from the Covenant, he must renounce his Oath of Covenant in the presence of two magi of the Covenant, and shall thereby be relieved of all duties and rights, and may not call upon such rights furthermore. Any magus not so renouncing his Oath of Covenant shall remain bound by that oath, and shall be held accountable for violations of it even should he desire release from the Covenant.

Each magus shall have one vote in the Council of the Covenant, which he shall exercise dutifully and with due prudence, and each magus shall respect as equal the vote of all others in Council. Any magus of the Covenant shall have the right and duty to convene the Council for consideration of matters justly grave, and all magi shall be charged with attendance and diligence in the proceedings. Should the convenence of the full Council not be possible, due to the absence from the Covenant of certain magi, any quorum consisting of no fewer than one magus for every two members of the Covenant shall, thus convened, decide on behalf of the Council, else delay the discharge of the Council's duty until such time as the full Council may be convened. Twice per year, upon the eve of the solstice of summer and the solstice of winter, a Council shall be convened regardless of call from any magus, and all magi of the Covenant should endeavor to make themselves present. The right and duty to participate in Council shall not be abridged, except by decision of the Council under conditions of grave concern.

The Council of Triamore shall elect from among the magi of the Covenant a Princeps who shall represent the Council in matters of fealty and temporal con-

cern, and serve as the Lord of the Manor of Bois de Haillot in accordance with the Imperial Charter of the Manor of Bois de Haillot. The Princes of the Council shall be empowered to rule on matters of the Covenant not worthy of the attention of the Council, but shall be charged with bringing before the Council those matters which concern it.

Each magus of this Covenant is charged equally with the peace and defense of the Covenant. In such duties he shall defend the castle that is our sanctum and defense, and the lands and vassals and holdings of the manor that is our fief, as necessary and with the full application of his capacities. Further, he shall not bring within the boundaries of the castle that is our sanctum and defense, as set forth by the walls of the bailies and keeps and towers, and any and all places within and beneath them, any guest, familiar, or conjured spirit, faerie, or devil that will disturb said peace and defense. Should any such charge come to threaten the peace and defense of the Covenant, that magus which has brought it to the Covenant shall bear the weight of responsibility for the breach before his sodales.

Each magus of the Covenant shall extend service to the common good in the term of not less than one season of labors and efforts every five years, to tasks and charges set forth by the Council, the product of which shall contribute to the security and well-being of the Covenant.

Every magus of the Covenant shall be entitled without unreasonable hindrance full and unrestricted access to the library of Triamore, the benefits of room and board, and the services and skills of the servants and covenfolk. Further, within the boundaries of the Covenant each magus shall have the benefit of a sanctum which shall remain inviolate, and each magus shall be protected within the boundaries of the Covenant by all of the rights and benefits accorded by the Code of Hermes, the protection of which shall be extended to any upon whom the status of Protected Guest is conferred by a magus of the Covenant. These rights shall not be abridged except by decision of the Council under conditions of grave concern.

With approval of the council, each magus shall be entitled to any extraordinary provision and store necessary to conduct his studies, or the travel demanded by those studies, which approval will not be unreasonably withheld provided the burden upon the Covenant

is not severe. In exchange for which each magus shall surrender to the Covenant a part equal to one half of all vis, silver, and items of interest, value, or magical nature gained through travel or the use of such extraordinary provision and store. Also, each magus is charged to provide to the Covenant all those items and things that he cannot make use of, or which he may desire to sell, destroy, or otherwise dispose of, so that the Covenant may sell, destroy, or otherwise dispose of it as seen fit, to the benefit of all.

It is by these means that we do dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of wisdom and knowledge, and gain for ourselves the advantage of camaraderie and the strengths of our sodales. Any magus which does betray the faiths or duties of the Covenant shall subject himself to the judgment of the Council of the Covenant, and to that of the Order of Hermes and the Tribunal of the Rhine.

Given under our hand,

Anaxagoras of Tremere, 1151

Ulisterius of Jerbiton, 1151

Forba of Bonisagus, 1151

Anaxagorus of Tremere, 1158

Ulisterius of Jerbiton, 1158

Forba of Bonisagus, 1158

Aline of Bonisagus, filius of Forba, 1169

Daria of Tremere, filia of Anaxagorus, 1178

Cardrew Ex Miscellanea, 1196

Remi of Jerbiton, filius of Ulisterius, 1202

Versus of Tremere, filius of Daria, 1212

The Oath of Covenant

I, Sicero of House Tremere, hereby pledge lifelong loyalty to the Covenant of Triamore, and swear to uphold and protect this Covenant, my House, and the Order of Hermes to the full extent of my capacities without limit or regard to personal consequence. I will neither betray the Covenant or my sodales therein, nor give aid to its enemies. I will exercise the duties of Council with full diligence, and treat the decisions of Council as if they were my own. The blood of my covenmates is my own blood, nor will I betray it. This I so swear, upon the honor of my House and its founder.



The Fickle Tides of Worldly Politics

That's not to say that Barbarossa had no interest in matters of culture or the advice of the wise. Quite to the contrary — after touring Germany, personally visiting those provinces inclined towards secession or insurrection, and making a trip to Italy and Rome, Barbarossa seemed quite interested in following Conrad's example. Indeed, by the late 1150's Schwäbisch-Hall was again becoming a center of intellect, frequented by clergy and scholars from the full breadth of the empire. Once again Anaxagoras found himself bending the ear of a sympathetic emperor, and Triamore's plans spun back into motion.

But the landed lords of the Holy Roman Empire were less than enthusiastic about the influence of these outsiders, which Barbarossa, it seemed, had nearly made their courtly equals. By the late 1150s, the Stauffens found themselves working in rare concert with Welfs, as both families sought to strengthen their relative influence. Anaxagoras was by this time perhaps foremost among the emperor's advisors, and had in so positioning himself earned the ire of many a courtier.

In 1158 Barbarossa made a trip to Italy, taking the majority of his court (including Anaxagoras) with him. It so happened that at that time, Gottfried II of Brabant was engaged in contest with the counts of Hainault and Luxembourg over a seemingly inconsequential manor in the county of Namur, and their case was brought to Schwäbisch-Hall for resolution. In the absence of the emperor, his Stauffen stand-in offered a compromise: Each lord would receive a sizable addition to his lands in exchange for relinquishing all claim to the manor in question, which would become an imperial fief on which would be installed a neutral tenant. Such a solution would serve the emperor's interests as well as those of

the bickering lords, as the manor included a large castle — a major military asset that could as easily be used against the emperor by these fractious lords as in his service. Indeed, it was primarily this castle (and not the otherwise mediocre lands about it) that was the real source of the lords' contention over the land. Even more so, this solution served the Stauffens and Welfs, for the new tenant would be Triamore — a Triamore far removed from the court at Schwäbisch-Hall.

The formalities were settled before Barbarossa and Anaxagoras returned from Italy — before either (presumably) had even heard about the issue or its solution. In truth, it's unlikely the emperor was fooled by his lords' machinations — more likely, in fact, that he too sought a way to gently distance himself from the influence of the learned without closing the door on them for good. Bois de Haillot — this tiny manor on the very edge of the empire — served his goals as well as those of his landed lords: If the distance did not dilute Anaxagoras' influence, the constant distraction of local events most certainly would. Though this was clearly not what Triamore's founders had in mind, after seven years of seeking a holding of their own they could hardly refuse such a generous imperial gift.

An Unwelcome Spring

Despite the best efforts of its founding magi, the lords' plan did have the desired effect on Triamore. Anaxagoras, Ulisterius, and Forba each maintained lodgings in or around Schwäbisch-Hall, but over the next fifteen years their influence on the court waned to a negligible level as the more conventional interests of Hermetic studies — along with the constant pressures of local issues — took ever-greater hold on the magi. By the 1160s two of the three founders had taken on apprentices: Aline,

apprenticed to Forba in 1153, when the covenant was still in Schwäbisch-Hall; and Daria apprenticed to Anaxagoras several years later, in 1163. The covenant, formed so unconventionally, found itself a slave to the cycle of growth natural to Hermetic endeavors: Triamore had entered its spring-time, and with it came the trials and tribulations of a covenant establishing itself.

The outside world would not limit those tribulations to Hermetic issues. For over 100 years the counts and mardukes of Brabant and Limbourg had squabbled over which should rightfully be a vassal of the other; in the summers of 1167 and 1168 the two clashed. In the first of many contests over Triamore's feudal duties, the count of Brabant (Gottfried II, grandfather of the current duke) attempted to force Bois de Haillot to provide military forces — or failing that, cash — for his army. A petition to Schwäbisch-Hall clarified that Triamore had no feudal obligation to the count, but not until after several months of tension and a clear souring of the relationship between the covenant and the nobleman.

This acrimony came to roost again in 1172, when another ancestral dispute arose between Brabant and Hainault, which had long claimed (and continues to claim) ownership of the county of Namur. Count Phillip of Hainault sent an army into southern Namur in the late spring, and Gottfried replied by fortifying the manors throughout the county with his forces. Most of the manors, in any event — he sent no aid to Bois de Haillot. The manor was the victim of two foraging raids by Phillip's army in May and June of that year, and an occupying force arrived that summer. Triamore pleaded neutrality in the dispute, being an imperial fief, but that didn't stop Phillip's companies from looting the village and lands. Ulistorius and Anaxagoras had a talk with the captain who had brought his forces onto the manor, and within two days they were withdrawn — but not before the most of the year's agricultural output was stolen or destroyed.

Pietre

The hostilities between Brabant and Hainault ended much as had those with Limbourg a few years before: stalemated, with no real gains on either side. Though no decisive battle ever developed, Phillip eventually withdrew his forces and Namur remained a part of Brabant. It took several years before the peasants of Bois de Haillot recovered fully from the ravages they had suffered, but by 1180 the manor was once again healthy and prosperous, and had gone undisturbed by war or politics for almost a decade. That year in particular seemed a prosperous one for the covenant as well as its manor: A third generation of magi was spawned with the adoption of not one but two new apprentices, to Daria and Aline. There was some concern about Daria taking an apprentice at her relatively young age — a mere two years after her own gauntlet — but in the end Aline's choice proved much more fateful.

Aline's new apprentice was a boy by the name of Pietre. At first he seemed an exceptional discovery — an incredibly



Counties, Duchies, Kingdoms and Empires

The Holy Roman Empire, like all of the major nations of Europe in 1220, is a confusing jumble of quasi-sovereign states of varying size, influence, and independence — more a network of feudal obligations and alliances than a true, discrete nation. These semi-independent states vary in size and magnitude. Brabant, for example, is a duchy; Flanders, adjacent, is a county. Counties are generally smaller and less influential than duchies, and a duchy (such as Brabant) generally contains or is subdivided into a number of counties. But not all counties are ducal fiefs — Flanders, for example, is an independent county, a direct vassal of the Holy Roman emperor. (For more information about the kingdoms and nobility of Mythic Europe see *Ordo Nobilis*.)



intelligent and gifted young man, destined to be a great magus. By the sixth year of his apprenticeship Pietre had already developed skills comparable to many experienced magi. Had he the maturity to properly master those skills he would surely have been gauntleted in fewer than the conventional fifteen years — but his temper, his flamboyancy, and his general disregard for Hermetic tradition compelled the magi of Triamore to hold him back. Whether this was a wise move would come to be debated for some time.

In 1190, Daria brought an accusation to the council at Triamore: She had determined that Pietre had scryed upon her for some time and she suspected he maintained secret communication with other magi outside of the covenant. Her evidence was compelling, and no one — not even Aline, Pietre's master (and thus the one held responsible for his pupil's acts) — disputed the charges or cast doubt upon the concerns that all of the magi had been harboring for some time. The council decided unanimously to expel Pietre from the covenant and to make his actions and this expulsion known to all other covenants within the Tribunal. Before the council meeting ended, however, Pietre had already fled Triamore, taking with him a number of tomes and a rather substantial portion of the covenant's vis supply. His whereabouts, and the means of his departure, could not be determined. Although occasional rumor of his passing reached the covenant in the years that followed, even those traces of him died out over time. No credible report of Pietre or his activities has come back to Triamore for nearly thirty years.

Fire

Six months after Pietre's disappearance a fire swept through the northern portion of the castle. It apparently began in the council chamber, though that room

was securely locked and there is little within that might burn. The flames had spread dramatically, penetrating Forba's laboratory above the council chamber and bursting into the lower solar, before the fire was even detected. The effort to extinguish it focused on protecting the library, and was successful after some quick effort by the magi. Three of the covenfolk were overcome and slain by the flames, and after the fire was doused another victim was discovered: Forba.

Over the months that followed, the magi of the covenant, aided by several quaesitors, pursued an intense investigation of the fire. The results were as distressing as they were unsatisfactory. Although an initial theory suggested that Forba had suffered a Twilight episode while engaged in an experiment, which then went out of control, it was soon learned that she had been attacked and subdued in her lab before the fire even began. A look into the past showed that a hooded figure — possibly a magus, although some suspected an infernal creature of some sort — had materialized within her laboratory shortly before the conflagration, surprising and incapacitating Forba. It moved around her lab for some moments, perhaps looking for something, then descended through the floor to the council room below. There it created the fire, then disappeared. Further investigation showed that the figure appeared in Aline's vaults a while later, when Aline was above, helping fight the fire, but it spent little time there before disappearing again. If it visited any other area of the covenant, the investigators could find no evidence of it.

How the invader entered the castle and so easily overcame Triamore's *Aegis* (a level 20 spell at the time) could only be guessed at. What it sought, and whether it was satisfied with its foray, was also never determined. The potentially infernal nature of the visitor led the quaesitoris to briefly turn their investigation on the magi

of Triamore, but they were quickly satisfied that neither Forba nor the others had any infernal associations that might have invited such trouble. A connection to Pietre's disappearance was of course suspected, but no evidence was found, and his whereabouts were never discovered.

Concern for the covenant's security reigned for the next several seasons, and among other steps the magi secured and installed a substantially more powerful version of *Aegis of the Hearth*. Fortunately, the attacker never returned, and activity at Lucien's Folly eventually returned to normal. Considerable damage had been done to the northern half of the keep's first and second floors, and both of the northern towers were completely gutted. The keep would be repaired over the next year, but only with the near-depletion of the covenant's treasury. The round towers, which were never really used, remain unrepaired to this day.

An Army Marches on Lucien's Folly

The year 1190 was eventful not only at Triamore, but abroad as well. Shortly after Pietre's departure from the covenant, Frederick Barbarossa died, and the outside world once again came knocking on the covenant's door. Henry of Brabant, the recently-ascended duke, put forth the claim that with the emperor's passing the covenant's imperial charter had expired, and he attempted to install a new lord at Bois de Haillot. The magi of the covenant resisted, and, while awaiting the results of an appeal to the new emperor Henry IV (unrelated to Brabant's Duke Henry) found themselves facing a hostile army of over 200 mercenaries sent by the duke to take possession of the manor. Emperor Henry's response





— that the charter was still valid and would be honored by the duke — came in time to prevent open combat, but just barely.

As had happened eighteen years before, a hostile army occupied Bois de Haillot. For the first time in its existence, Lucien's Folly served the role for which it was built: The magi of Triamore, along with their turb and several score of the manor's peasants, maintained their defense from the unfinished parapets of the still-partially-scorched castle. Facing two dozen knights and nine-score mercenaries, Triamore's military force was no match for the duke's army — but for some reason Henry hesitated, and never assaulted the castle. Instead, a siege was maintained for six weeks, until broken by the emperor's command. But though the magi's sancta remained inviolate, two dozen of the manor's residents were killed over the course of the conflict, and the damage to the year's crop was at least as severe as that of the Hainault invasion.

As tragic as that was for the families that relied on their agricultural efforts for nourishment through the long Brabantine winters, there was a tragic result of even greater consequence. It came to pass that a number of peasants had supported the duke's men, allowing a generally baseless distrust of the magi of Triamore to displace their loyalty to their lords. Few landlords would stand for such treachery, the standard punishment for which is death. The magi of the covenant opted for leniency, and put only four of the manor's peasants (those deemed most complicitous to the enemy) to the sword. This response met with mixed reception: bitterness at the loss of family members and friends, relief for those who were not executed, resentment that some traitors were spared their lives, concern that such a lenient sentence would be seen as

weakness. Some of these sentiments still echo through Bois de Haillot, thirty years later.

Modern Membership

The years since 1190 have been relatively quiet at Triamore, with the covenant settling into a style of life that more closely resembles that of other Hermetic covenants. In 1195 a man by the name of Remi of Museau came to the covenant seeking an education in magic. Apprentices are usually sought out by their masters, and it's very rare that someone appears at a covenant's door asking to study, let alone be accepted. Furthermore, Remi was already in his mid-twenties, which probably accounted for his being turned down by the magi at four other covenants before he found his way to Triamore. But Ulistorius (who had not yet taken an apprentice in nearly five decades of magical practice), in a rather controversial decision, opted to take Remi on. His judgment was apparently sound, for Remi proved to have substantial natural talent and something of an education already. He would go on to complete his apprenticeship in just seven years.

That same year — 1195 — saw the joining of the first magus from outside the covenant. Cardrew Ex Miscellanea came from Wales, in the Stonehenge Tribunal, and was admitted into Triamore. He immediately became a figure of controversy, as he often disagreed radically and vehemently with the other magi of the covenant on all sorts of issues. Frequently, his acts or concerns led to substantial tensions: In 1199 he took to secretly "borrowing" villagers for a series of experiments. The other magi forced him to desist when he was discovered, and those peasants that could still be returned to their families were, gener-

ally in a state of ignorance as to what had befallen them. The others were disposed of quietly, so as not to turn village opinion too radically against the covenant.

In 1203 Ulisterius and Daria had a disagreement with Cardrew's familiar that eventually ended in its death, and in 1212 Cardrew disappeared for several months, presumably to aid Otto IV in his suppression of Frederick II (an intervention that Cardrew had been encouraging the covenant to make for several years). Fortunately, though he was an often a frustrating sodalis to the other magi of Triamore, none of Cardrew's activities ever resulted in serious trouble for the covenant.

Triamore Today

Cardrew slipped into Wizard's Twilight in 1218 and Aline died in his laboratory in 1219, bringing Triamore to its current population crisis.

About a year ago the current count of Namur, Étienne Gaumond, sent a message to Daria claiming that she owed him several hundred pounds worth of unpaid taxes, and implying that he had the power to unland the covenant if they were not paid immediately. That claim is almost certainly untrue, and even if the Holy Roman emperor permitted it it's doubtful that Gaumond could raise the army needed to force the covenant from Lucien's Folly — at least not now. But he probably can demand much more money than the covenant has traditionally paid, and he can make life difficult for the magi in many other ways. So far, communications to the emperor have not been answered, and unless Frederick steps in decisively on the issue (unlikely, given his own difficult political situation) it appears that Triamore's thirty years of respite from the politics of the region are drawing to an end.

Lucien's Folly

The castle in which Triamore makes its home is a large, rambling structure — or rather, a set of structures, connecting the unfinished keep to the more completed gatehouse and a variety of other buildings through a large bailey. The quick introduction in the first chapter hardly did the castle justice; this section covers it in greater detail.

The Gatehouse

The gatehouse is the primary entrance to the castle — a fortified outwork that secures the bailey. Unlike the keep, it was finished in Lucien's day, and remains in good repair. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the entrance passageway that runs beneath it could be closed off by a portcullis and a heavy gate; the portcullis functions, but the gate hinges are nearly rusted solid. No-one has bothered to close this main entrance in decades, as the unfinished walls of the bailey it guards have many holes and broken-down sections.

The gatehouse can't be entered from the ground floor — to get in, one must climb the steps leading up to the bailey wall to the left of the gatehouse; one then enters from the wall-walk. The entry floor — the level above the gate passageway — consists of three rooms, all well lived-in by the turb. The northern (entry) room has a small window overlooking the castle entrance from which the gatekeeper might converse with those seeking entrance (if the gate were ever actually closed). The central room features the mechanism for raising the portcullis, along with a larger window looking into the bailey; the southern room features a fireplace and privy, and connects via a spiral staircase which passes through to the wall-walk along the southern edge of the bailey. The upper





floor is nearly identical in layout (less the privy); the ground floor consists of one room accessed by the spiral staircase, and a second (under the northern tower of the gatehouse) by a trap door in the entrance room. The entire building is dedicated to housing grogs, with three or four quartered in each room.

The Outer Bailey

The outer bailey is an open area perhaps eighty paces long by forty wide, flanked on one side by the stable building, and the other by the bakery and the great hall adjacent to the keep. It's in frequent use as a training ground for the turb, as well as a household area for washing linens, feeding poultry, and carrying out those chores that require the light and open spaces unavailable within a castle.

The stable is a large stone-walled barn, two stories, divided into four bays (areas defined by the building's internal structural walls and vaulting). The ground floor is low-ceilinged and set down into the earth, so that one must pass down a couple of steps to enter. The floor is earthen, and generally strewn with straw and rushes, along with the dung of the animals. Low stone arches divide the bays (each of which can easily accommodate half a dozen or so horses, or a variety of other animals), in some cases accentuated by wattle dividers.

The second floor, entered by a stone stair along the southern end of the stable, serves primarily as a loft for the dry storage of straw and feed. The long dusty room is roofed over by a low, sloped thatch ceiling. The furthest bay is walled off, and serves as Cortini's (the stablemaster) chamber.

On the opposite side of the bailey is the bakery: a small high-ceilinged structure with five large ovens. Although fully-functional and in decent repair, it's rarely used as the ovens in the keep kitchen serve the castle's general requirements quite nicely. An adjacent shed stores a variety of tools and fodder.

Ulisterius' Tower

Set into the bailey wall just to the left of the gatehouse (as one looks at it from within the bailey) is a large, stout tower intended to anchor the castle's defensive ring where it meets the edge of the cliff. Ulisterius' Tower (as it's called now — no one is quite sure what Lucien had in mind for it) is thick and tall, square at the base but tapering to a round cross-section. Like the gatehouse, it was finished in Lucien's time, and remains in good repair. Oddly, it features some of the finest stonework of the entire castle: Its smooth white surface and the delicate detailing around its windows and undercrofting are not repeated with quite the same distinction anywhere else in the rambling fortress.

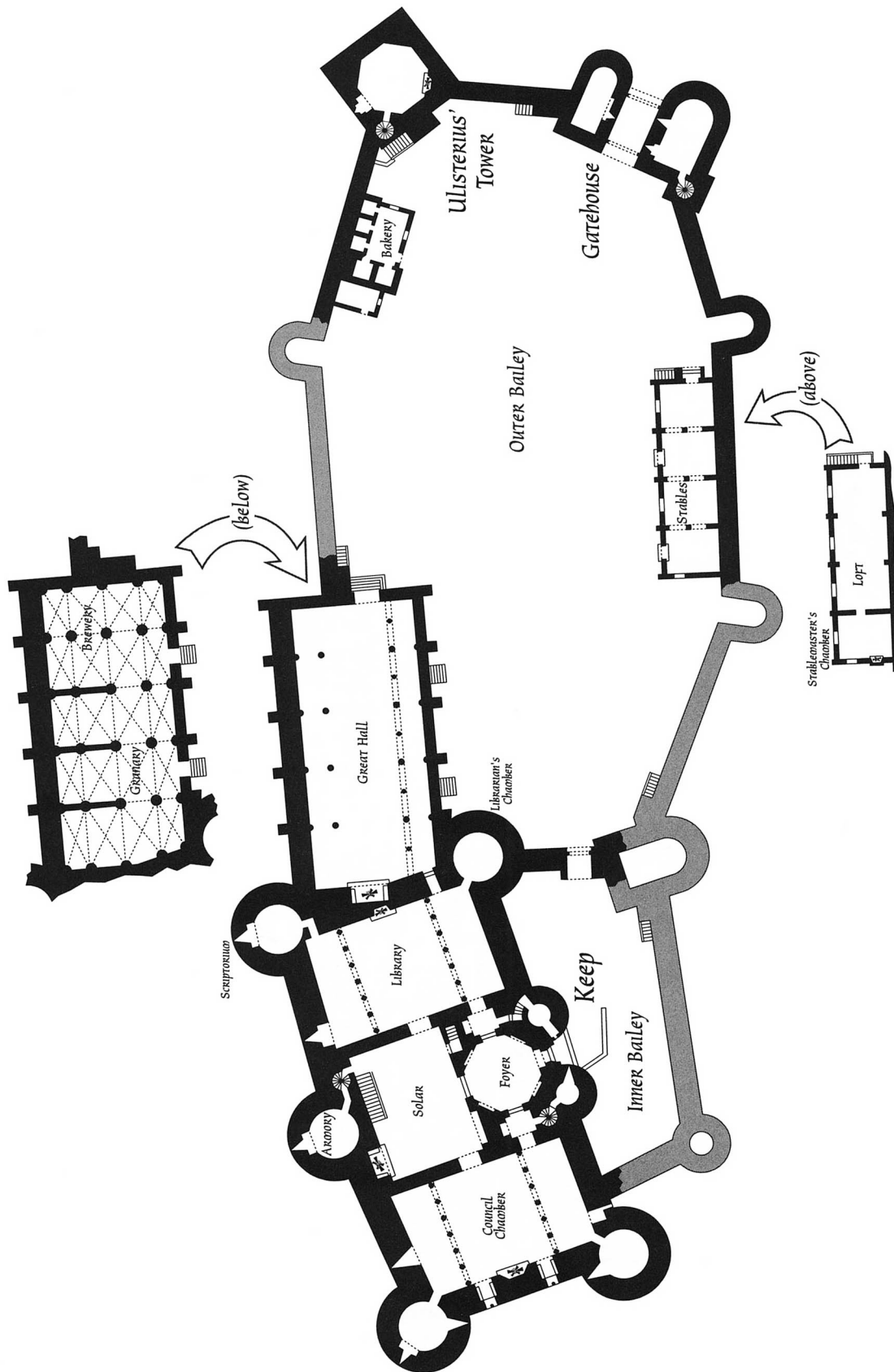
Like the gatehouse, the tower can't be entered from the ground floor — a tall staircase climbs its inner face from the bailey below to the second floor. Though the tower bisects the bailey wall, it can't be entered from the wall-walk on either side; in that regard it would have added to the defense of the castle by preventing attackers who gained one wall from readily moving to other sections.

The entrance floor of the tower is the only level that is subdivided into separate rooms: a semi-circular antechamber, and a second semi-circular room which serves as Johan's (the grog captain, covered below) living quarters. A connected spiral staircase leads up and down. Beneath is an octagonal room with a heavy vaulted ceiling — with a small window and a fireplace, it's no more dank than most castle rooms, but is currently unused and unfurnished.

The two rooms above the entrance are likewise unused, but the three uppermost levels make up Remi's sanctum: an antechamber where he receives guests, a bed chamber above that, and his lab on the upper floor. All three rooms are near-

Triamore

Lucien's Folly Main Floor
Scale: 1" = 20 paces (60 feet)





ly identical in layout, varying only in the placement of the windows and loopholes (there's also a small privy off of the antechamber). The upper floors are each a bit larger than those below, especially the topmost, which flares out beyond the diameter of the tower below. Remi's lab is also the brightest, most airy room in the tower (and perhaps anywhere within Lucien's Folly), with several windows (offering a fantastic view of the manor on one side and the rolling hills beyond the Meuse on the other) and the rafters of the high peaked roof above.

The Great Hall

Jutting out from the end of the keep along the eastern periphery of the bailey, the great hall is a large and impressive structure, tall and lofty with buttresses along both sides, and a pitched roof of black slate. One can enter the hall from the bailey, through a wide arched doorway at the structure's southern end. Within, the hall is broad and grand, with a floor of polished stone and tall pillars supporting the high roof. A gallery runs along the left-hand side a floor above, and a huge fireplace flanked by impressive carved lions dominates the northern end of the room.

Outside, two sets of stairs run down to wide doors, giving in to the granary beneath the hall. This low-ceilinged cellar has an earthen floor and is divided by thick, unornamented pillars that support the heavy cross-vaulting above. Several dividing walls create separate bays, the southernmost of which is used by Beatrice as her brewery. As the castle's complement is somewhat smaller than Lucien's original intent (and its prospects for siege somewhat reduced), the granary is rarely more than a quarter-full, even after the manor's harvest.

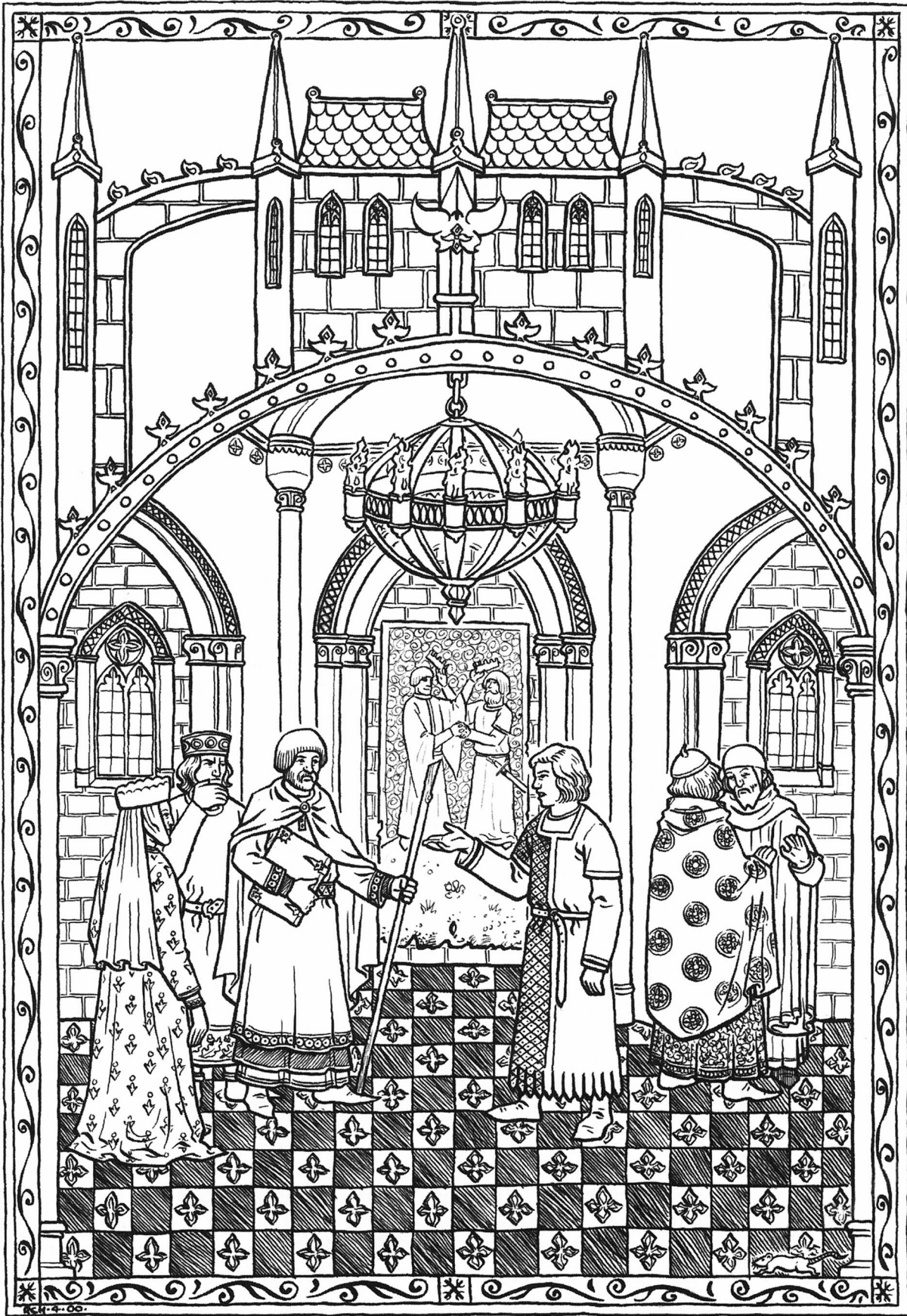
The Inner Bailey

At the opposite end of the bailey from the gatehouse looms the corner of the massive keep, its end wall concealed behind the abutting great hall, but with one heavy round tower commanding the northern end of the outer bailey. Jutting from this tower is a crenelated wall which joins it to another, a ruined half-round tower that would have defended the juncture of the courtyards. A gate passes through this wall into the inner bailey. The deep archway features a simple, heavy wooden door, which does function on the rare occasion that anyone bothers to close and bar it.

Within lies an inner courtyard, not nearly as spacious as the outer bailey, and apparently never intended to feature the types of outbuildings found without. The smaller space is dominated on the east by the towering wall of the keep, where a graveled ramp leads up to the entrance door. The ground was never leveled in the inner bailey, and it slopes away from the keep entrance with a number of coarse gray boulders piercing the earth.

The Keep

The entrance floor of the keep is divided into four great chambers, along with rooms in each of the keep's seven towers. First entered is the foyer, a room through which Lucien surely intended to secure the awe of all who might not have been sufficiently impressed with the castle's exterior. A heavy chandelier of wrought iron lights the chamber with eight candles that never burn down, bouncing reflections off the polished tile floor and fine stonework of the walls. Octagonal in shape, four of the room's sides are penetrated by broad arches of fine Romanesque trim, with the other four





featuring wide alcoves in which are hung great and colorful tapestries. Each depicts a scene: In one, the Roman priest Plentarch stands before his compatriots, a lens of crystal in one hand and a lodestone hanging from a string in the other. In the next tapestry, Bonisagus and Trianoma clasp hands as they embark upon the foundation of the Order. In the third, Tremere himself looks over a troubled landscape as fortresses and palaces burn in the background. In the last tapestry, a young magus is seen exchanging crowns with a high prince or emperor; this represents the gift of wisdom that the Order might some day share with the mundane world, and the power it could gain in return. Careful observation reveals that this last tapestry is somewhat singed around its periphery, and that the scent of ash and cinder still lingers about it.

On the right and left are short alcoved passageways leading to the library and council chamber. The passages also provide access to the tower chambers that flank the keep's entrance — small round rooms for sentries watching the door below. A spiral staircase adjacent to one of them leads both up to the floors above and down to the kitchens and cellars.

Beyond the foyer is the solar, the hall that serves as the heart of the castle for its many inhabitants — a less formal chamber than the great hall, suitable for everyday chores, visitation, and relaxation. As large as the great halls of many smaller keeps, the solar is lit and warmed by a hearth nearly as big as that in the castle's kitchen. From the solar a wide wooden staircase ascends to the upper floor, a stone stair descends a narrow passage down into the kitchen, and a second spiral staircase leads both up and down. Beyond the solar is the tower room that serves as the armory — weapons and ammunition are stored here behind a sturdy, iron-strapped door.

The library is larger even than the solar. It is divided by two lines of stone pillars that support a vaulted ceiling and cre-

ate the sense that the library is in fact three rooms, or one room flanked by deep galleries. Within these galleries, books by the hundreds are stored on tables along the walls, or in great chests beneath them. In the library's central area are a number of wide tables, finely crafted of polished and ornamented dark woods, for the convenience of those who would browse the many tomes kept here.

Adjacent to the library are two tower rooms: one maintained by Isabel (the librarian) as her personal chamber, the other used as a scriptorium. Isabel's room is crowded with chests — she keeps the covenant's most precious books in her own chamber, under her direct care. The scriptorium is more spartan, though it serves as both sleeping and working space for covenant's scribe and his apprentice. The sale of books (illuminated and plain) copied from the library is a major source of income for the covenant, so the scriptorium is generally busy.

The council chamber is another room much like the library, divided almost into three by two lines of arches supporting the vaulted stone ceiling above. It does not, however, share the library's bright illumination or sense of use and purpose. It is dominated by a single furnishing: a large round table, flanked by six wide and heavy chairs. Several other chairs and benches line the walls, but the room is otherwise empty. The two tower rooms that adjoin the council chamber were burned out in the fire, and have no floors at this level. The doors they share with the council chamber have been sealed physically and magically.

The Second Floor

The second floor of the keep is divided into nine chambers: three in the center, over the solar and foyer, and three each over the library and council chamber.

Immediately above the solar, and first encountered when one ascends the main





stair from that chamber, is an upper solar. Roughly half the size of the lower room, this chamber is furnished in much the same manner, though it is rarely used. Adjacent to it is the infirmary, which is fortunately equally rare in its use. A small privy off the upper solar sees more common visitation, as it is the only such accommodation in the keep. Behind the upper solar, in a round tower room, Richer the cellarer keeps his chamber. In addition to the main stair leading down to the lower solar, a spiral stair in the wall between the solar and Richer's tower room leads both down into the keep below and up to the unfinished floor above.

Forward of the solar is the chamber of Morris, the steward. A large room, it serves as his private office as well as living quarters (though he carries out official duties that require him to meet villagers or guests in the great hall). A small arched window overlooks the keep's entrance below, and the rooms within the towers that flank the door are adjacent (though they are too small for any practical use). As at the back of the keep, there is a spiral stair here that leads down several floors, and up to the unfinished level above.

The rooms above the library serve as Daria's sanctum, with some additional chambers used as guest quarters. Daria's antechamber flanks the upper solar — she occasionally accepts well-known guests (such as Remi) here, though she generally prefers to meet people in the more formal setting of the great hall. An adjoining tower room serves as her bed-chamber, while the large room over the center of the library is her laboratory. Although doors lead from her lab to the upper solar and one of the guest chambers, she has these doors sealed so that the lab can only be entered through her antechamber.

The chamber adjacent to Daria's laboratory and Morris' chamber, and the tower room beyond it, are both used to house guests. The larger of those rooms

features two large beds, and is capable of housing several people.

Opposite Daria's apartments, above the council chamber, are three sizable chambers, all unused. In the recent past, the three big rooms served as Cardrew's chambers and lab, but his items have all been packed into large chests, moved to the cellars, or absorbed into Daria's and Remi's belongings. The ceiling to these chambers — not a true roof, but rather the wooden floors of the unfinished level above — demands repair yearly at least, but since Cardrew's death this repair has not been carried out. As a result rainwater often makes its way into his chambers. Again, the tower rooms at this end of the castle were gutted by fire some decades ago, and they have no floors at this level, nor roofs above.

The Unfinished Floor

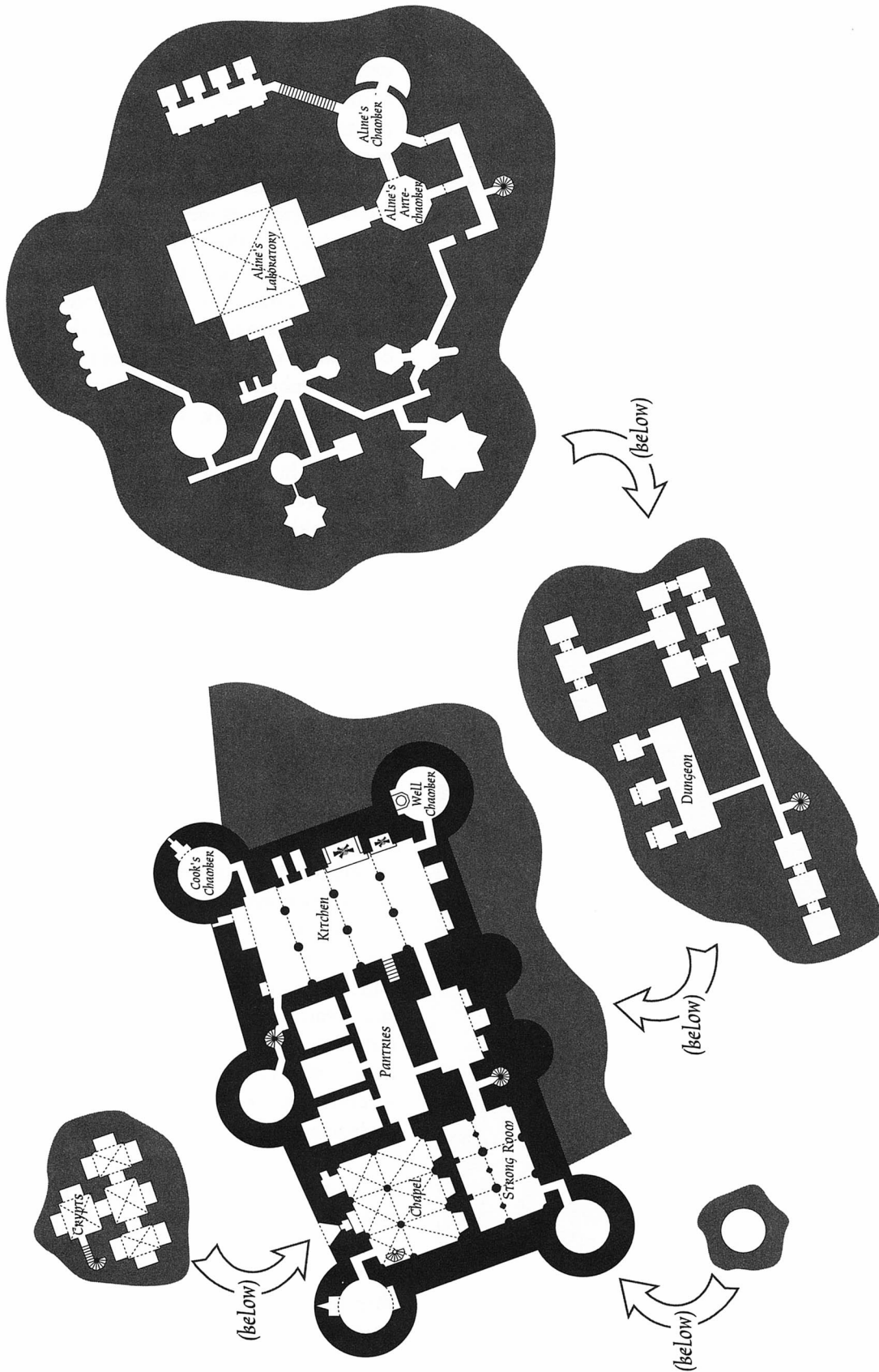
In its finished state, the keep at Lucien's Folly would probably have extended upwards at least another two floors, but it never reached that height. Above Daria and Cardrew's rooms the thick stone walls reach their rough, unfinished apex. The wooden floor to this abortive level serves — rather inadequately — as the roof for the floors below. There are no floors to the towers at the north end of the castle — those are the ones gutted by fire — leaving them open all the way down to the first cellar, some twelve or fifteen paces below. At the front and back of the keep, stone staircases spiral out of the heavy walls, but otherwise this level is unremarkable.

Downstairs

Lucien's Folly features several cellars and sub-cellar, some of which are original to the castle's design and others added by the magical efforts of its hermetic tenants. Because the castle sits on the crest of a steep-sided ridge, the first cellar, though

Triamore

Lucien's Folly Cellars
Scale: 1" = 20 paces (60 feet)





underground at the front of the keep, is somewhat above-ground at the rear, allowing for several windows and loopholes to overlook the slope on that side.

The first cellar consists of four main areas: the kitchen, the pantries, the chapel, and a strong room where valuables may be kept in security. All of the cellar rooms are low-ceilinged and heavily vaulted overhead, and are generally cool and musky.

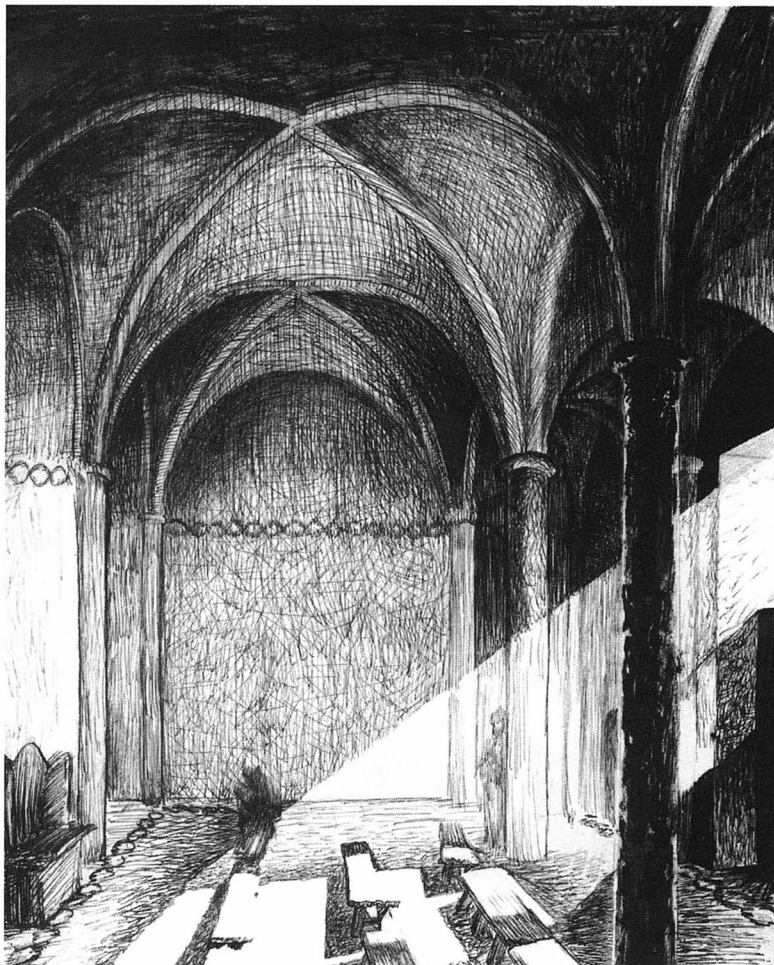
The biggest single room in the first cellar is the kitchen, which spans the entire space beneath the library. Heavy pillars, with thick arches between them, divide the kitchen into four bays, but all are used for the same purposes. Two hearths are present, the smallest of which is big by most standards, as are two ovens which tend to the everyday needs of the household without requiring the use of the bakery in the outer bailey. Alma, the cook, keeps her chamber in the tower foun-

dation adjoining the kitchen, while Beatrice the housekeeper occupies the center-rear tower room. A third tower room contains the castle's well. Most of the keep's lower servants sleep in the kitchen (although a few prefer the solar), keeping their few belongings in small chests within the many alcoves in the thick cellar walls.

The pantries are a series of storage rooms beneath the solar and the foyer. Cool and damp, they are used to store foodstuffs, rushes, cloth, and other consumables, though the space available far exceeds the covenant's requirements. The room closest to the kitchen is well-stocked, but the others are half-empty, filled primarily with unused junk.

The chapel is the brightest room in the cellars, and perhaps the entire keep. A single barred window of some size lets in a decent amount of light, especially on bright mornings. The vaults of its ceiling, while not ornate, are finished in a fine trim unlike that in any other part of the coarse cellar, and still bear the white paint and colored trim decor applied by Lucien's craftsmen a century ago. The floor is of unpolished marble with patterns matching the fluted vaulting above. Though it is rarely ever used, the chapel is furnished, with a wooden altar and several bench pews. The adjoining tower room, which was probably intended to serve as a chaplain's chamber, is currently unused. A stair set into the floor spirals down to the crypt below: four vaulted chambers lined with deep alcoves large enough for massive stone sarcophagi. It is hardly crowded — only four individuals have been interred here. Forba, Anaxagoras, Cardrew, and most recently Aline each lie in their heavy, densely-decorated sarcophagi.

The final room in the first cellar is the strong room, a storage vault for riches and valuables. Like the chapel, it was apparently important to Lucien, though it is not used to anything near capacity by the covenant. A very sturdy door crossed with heavy iron straps seals the strong room with a well-built lock; within, three alcoves are separated by



iron bars. Another strong door should have further protected the adjoining tower room (which in turn has a cellar beneath it reached by a trap door) though it now protects the strong room from incursion from the tower, which, gutted by fires, is now an empty shell open to the sky some twelve or fifteen paces above. Currently, the only items stored in the strong room are the covenant's communal vis supply and a collection of items taken from Aline's cellars after his death, suspected to be magical but as yet untested. These items are kept separately, in the barred alcoves. Daria and Remi each have keys to the strong room and its cells.

Aline's Vaults

Beneath the castle — beneath even the cellars and subcellars installed by Lucien's masons and architects — lies a series of chambers and vaults created originally by Forba and then expanded by Aline. Their sheer volume far outstrips the space required by any of the other laboratories and living areas. As the research that Aline performed here could often be spectacular and unpredictable, the remoteness of the chambers served to protect Triamore from potentially dangerous results.

The chambers vary dramatically in shape and form. All are smooth-sided, as they were formed magically rather than by the mason's art, and most are devoid of decoration. The magics by which Aline and Forba brought light and fresh air to these chambers in some places persist, while other chambers are dark, dank, and musty. Most of the rooms are empty, though Aline's central laboratory and his chambers still contain some furnishings and supplies. Of particular note are the round room (which features a perfect circular domed ceiling) and the star-shaped room with its seven alcoves. It has an incredible magical aura of +9 (it was at one time even higher), but is nearly useless for casting or lab work, as the flaws Warped Magic, Clumsy Magic, Chaotic

Magic, and Short-Lived Magic affect all casters while operating within the aura. The star-shaped room, in the center of which a golden flame burns continuously in midair, is a somewhat more useful: The room has a magical aura of +4, which applies only to Ignem magics. It has none of the ill effects of the round room, but is unfortunately losing power — the aura drops by one point with each passing year.

Sacred Geometry and the Pillar of Hiram

Geometric shapes possess their own magic power. Ancient Egyptians believed the science of geometry and the art of architecture were gifts from the god Osiris. Stone circles in Britain, the barrows of Scandinavia, the tombs of Egypt, the temples of Rome, and even the castles and cathedrals of the 13th century were built to harness the power of sacred geometry. Many mythic places of magical and faerie auras were created by giants, wizards, and priests now long lost to time.

The practice of sacred geometry lives on in the Order of Hermes. Secret societies of magi research and teach the magic of geometry and how to manipulate auras and regiones with works of architecture and masonry. The most infamous society of sacred architects in the Order is known as the Pillar of Hiram. The Pillar claims its secrets descend from the wizard-priests who helped King Solomon build the great Temple of Jerusalem. Many of the oldest covenants were built by members of the Pillar in exchange for strange and arcane favors. The Pillar of Hiram, and its ability to shape auras with sacred geometry are fully explored in the forthcoming *Ars Magica* supplement, *The Mysteries*.





The Magi of Triamore

Triamore is currently home to only two vested magi: Daria LaGris and Remi of Museau. Just a few years back the covenant had a healthy complement — six full magi at one point — but departures and deaths have reduced the covenant's numbers to the dangerously low level now present.

Neither Daria nor Remi currently have non-player apprentices, nor did Aline or Cardrew (the magi who most recently died) at the times of their deaths. However, possible apprentices and filii for all of these characters are discussed below, so allowing a player character to enter the Triamore saga through apprenticeship to one of these magi is a natural and easily-exercised option.

Daria LaGris, Follower of Tremere

Though she could easily pass for a woman of forty, Daria is in fact around sixty-five years old. A tall lady of slender build, she could never be mistaken for a commoner — her presence is at once commanding and austere, noble and elegant, and authoritative. Her features are fine, her wits sharp and dry, and her gaze piercing and powerful. Her manners are temperate if somewhat stern, and her tastes refined; when seen about Lucien's Folly she is invariably dressed in breathtaking splendor, her dresses long and grand, her silver hair braided with fine chains of silver or strands of pearls in one long, neat plait down her back almost to the floor. Daria has been the undisputed princeps of Triamore for almost twenty years —

though her arcane skills almost certainly exceed Remi's, she was not necessarily the most powerful wizard before Aline's death; nevertheless, none ever sought to challenge an authority to which Daria seemed so naturally suited.

This authority comes with its effects: Daria is close to no one at Triamore, and spends little time with any of the covenant's companions or other magi. She speaks with Morris the steward as needed for the management of the manor — several times a week, usually — and plays a weekly game of chess with him in the solar as well. She meets with Remi in council as events and covenant business require, but rarely seeks him for any other purpose. She patiently receives all who call upon her with legitimate cause, or who come to Lucien's Folly with business that concerns the lady of the manor — but such instances are rare, and most of the castle's inhabitants lay eyes on her infrequently.

Daria entered the covenant of Triamore in 1163, under somewhat mysterious circumstances. At that time many of the magi of Triamore maintained lodging in Schwäbisch-Hall, and Anaxagoras, one of the founding members of the covenant, in particular kept an elaborate compound nearby. In 1163 a street urchin — a beggar child of perhaps nine or ten years of age — was caught having stolen into the kitchen of Anaxagoras' townhouse. Much to the surprise of the household, who were in the process of rather harshly disciplining the child, Anaxagoras immediately expressed an acute interest in the kitchen raider. That the child was not from city's native stock was clear from the color of her grimy hair and the unusual bent of her accent, but little else could be learned, for the girl professed no memory of her family, background, or any event of her life more distant than the past two or three years. Whatever else Anaxagoras suspected or learned about her — whatever compelled him to take the child on as a ward and apprentice — can only be guessed, for the

senior magus did not discuss his decision. But Daria quickly took to her education and to the social graces which Anaxagoras demanded of her. She went on to develop quickly, and spent much of her later apprenticeship and the early decades of her career in Schwäbisch-Hall, representing Anaxagoras and Triamore quite ably.

Unlike Remi, Daria is a studious maga, and she rarely ventures out of her laboratory on the trips she once regularly made to Liège, Bruges, Frankfurt, and Paris. Also unlike Remi, Daria has had in years past an interest in the politics of the Tribunal, but since the deaths of Aline and Cardrew that interest seems to have waned completely.

Daria's magical strengths center around Terram, Auram, and, to a lesser extent, Vim. She is a precise and careful caster. Her sigil is a crown with a bright jewel set in the center; the crown-like shape, or the bright glinting of the jewel, appear in her magics.

Daria has already produced two filii: Aguilon and Versus. Aguilon left Triamore shortly after his gauntlet, some twenty-five years ago, and is now a magus of some standing in the covenant of Valerius in the Rhine Tribunal. Versus remained at Triamore for three or four years after his gauntlet, but eventually left about five years ago. His current whereabouts are unknown — he was last heard from in Iberia.



Daria LaGrís, Follower of Tremere

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

Age: 67

Size: 0

Confidence: 4

Virtues and Flaws: Method Caster +4, Piercing Gaze +2, Book Learner +1, Clear Thinker +1, Hermetic Prestige +1, Second Sight +1, Secret Vis Source +1, Strong Willed +1, Susceptible to Infernal Power -4, Noncombatant -2, Lost Love -1, Oversensitive (disrespect/bad manners) -1, Reclusive -1, Weakness (orphans) -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) -1 -3 -2 -1 -3

Soak: 0

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (social), Certámen 7 (auram), Civil Law 2 (Holy Roman Empire), Concentration 4 (spells), Disputatio 3 (teaching), Etiquette 3 (nobility), Finesse 4 (precision), Gaming, Chess 4 (opening moves), Hermes Lore 2 (politics), Hermetic Law 2 (tribunal procedures), Intrigue 2 (negotiation), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Magic Theory 5 (inventing spells), Occult Lore 2 (demons), Parma Magica 5 (mentem), Penetration 4 (auram), Philosophiae 2 (natural), Ride 1 (grace), Scribe Latin 4 (copying), Speak Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Speak Norman

French 4 (expansive), Speak German 3 (expansive), Triamore Library Lore 3 (Hermetic research)

Magical Arts:

Cr 17	In 8	Mu 12	Pe 12	Re 23
An 8	Aq 5	Au 15	Co 7	He 10
Ig 5	Im 10	Me 5	Te 19	Vi 12

Spells Known:

Charge of the Angry Winds (CrAu 15/+32)
Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo 25/+24)
Circle of the Faerie Stone (CrTe 30/+36)
Circling Winds of Protection (ReAu 15/+38)
Circular Ward Against Demons (ReVi 30/+35)
The Cloudless Sky Returned (PeAu 35/+27)
Clouds of Rain and Thunder (CrAu 25/+32)
Creeping Chasm (ReTe 35/+42)
Guardian of Stone (MuTe 35/+31), see page 129
Incantation of Lightning (CrAu 35/+32)
The Invisible Eye Revealed (InVi 25/+18)
Invisible Hand of the Thief (ReTe 15/+42)
Obliteration of the Metallic Barrier (PeTe 15/+31)
Opening the Earth's Pore (CrTe 40/+36)
Pull of the Skybound Winds (ReAu 30/+38)
Stone Tell of the Mind that Sits (InTe 30/+25)
Thief of the Stolen Breath (PeAu 10/+27)
True Sight of Air (InAu 15/+21)

Sigil: a crown with a bright jewel.

Longevity Potion Total: 28



Daria does not hold her own sigil; it, and those of both of her filii, are held by Anaxagoras' pater, a very old and powerful wizard of the Transylvanian Tribunal by the name of Perius.

So What's In a Name — Or Title — Anyway?

The leader of a Hermetic house is called a *primus*, the head of a tribunal a *praeco*. What about the head of a covenant? As covenants can be led by individuals or councils and enspouse a wide variety of political philosophies, the name game gets a bit more complicated and there is no standard across the Order. The leader of Triamore is known as the *princeps*, which means "first". The covenant of Doissetep uses *pontifex maximus* as its ultimate title. Possibilities for other covenants might include *primicerius*, *preacanter*, *prefect*, *provost*, *imperator*, *rector*, *archimimus*, *aedile*, *dictator*, or any other title the storyguide or troupe might choose to adopt.

Daria's Apprentice

Daria is a persistent and tireless teacher — a demanding taskmaster whose standards seem unreasonably high, but who can be surprisingly patient with the inevitable mistakes made by beginners. The stresses placed on her apprentice come not only from the unending toil and study, but also from the isolation she imposes on her student — a lifestyle that allows for little leisure time or interaction with other apprentices or members of the household. And she herself is distant and cool — a difficult woman to come to know, let alone to really like. Yet despite this distance, on occasion, perhaps in moments of crisis or danger to the apprentice, she lets slip some

small expression of true concern — or even tenderness — for her student.

Though she rarely speaks directly of it, Daria sees her apprentice as a future leader, of Triamore and Bois de Haillot, perhaps, or even of the tribunal, House Tremere, or the Order as a whole. As such she demands that her apprentice constantly exhibit a temperament, bearing, and poise appropriate to such a station. Though she spends little time in their direct instruction, an adequate education in social graces is inevitably developed through their constant practice.

Daria's Filius

Daria's relationships with her filii vary dramatically with their temperaments. Though she is a rigid adherent to the values of House Tremere, her education tends to emphasize the importance of rule and power over the patience that one must have with a lower position in the early years of one's career. Hence her filii have been capable, but ambitious and impatient with servitude. Her relationship with Aguilon was temperamental towards the end of his apprenticeship, and he left Triamore shortly after his gauntlet. Versus too seemed dissatisfied with a career at Daria's covenant, and left after a few years. A filius more comfortable with several years of subordination might get along better with her.

Daria expects unquestioned obedience from her filius, but that's not really much different from what she expects from every magus of Triamore, especially the junior magi. On the other hand, however, Daria is likely to entrust leadership of any party that ventures forth from Triamore to her filius (unless Remi is also along) — and to hold her filius ruthlessly accountable for the results. Given that Remi's filii might also be well-prepared for leadership (probably of a rather different style), there could be conflicts.

If a player chooses to create a character who is a filius of Daria, it's probably best to remove Versus from her history. Versus completed his apprenticeship just seven or eight years ago, and although it's not out of the question, Daria is unlikely to have trained two apprentices simultaneously.

Remi of Museau, Follower of Jerbiton

Remi is forty-eight years old, with reddish brown hair cut fairly short, tanned skin, and blue eyes. His countenance is framed by a strong brow and jawline, and fine lines about his eyes that have a quality that can change quickly from stern to jovial and back again. His figure is sturdy, broad and athletic, and he carries it with a bearing of veteran authority. With a fair face, light heart, well-spoken manner, and no discernible taint of his Gift, Remi is an easy man to like at first experience; his composure and worldliness make him easy to follow in crisis or difficult times. His capacities are not limited to magic — he is a skilled woodsman and warrior, proficient with sword, bow, and various manners of hand-to-hand combat. He is also well-spoken and diplomatic, capable of applying a considered measure of charm or coercion as called for, knowledgeable in the workings of the leaders of nations and armies, but equally at home among commoners and their affairs.

Remi is an unusual mage in his close attention to worldly matters, and unusual among the followers of Jerbiton in his preference not for fine arts and culture, but for the common people and open lands of his roots. He's even more unusual in his Hermetic history: He was a grown man before he even entered his apprenticeship, and had already lived in many lands, fought in wars, and even been married before he came to Triamore. Remi was

born in a small town in Blois to a tradesman of some status. Though educated and the heir to his father's business, Remi's desire to see the world led him abroad at a young age. He traveled for some years as a boy and then a young man, working as a woodsman and a soldier in a number of places before ending up in the service of a Spanish lord in the fight against the Moors. He lived in Aragon for several years, where his military career was fairly successful. Eventually, however, his magical abilities made themselves known — Remi experienced a vision when touching the pelt of a lion; the vision led to the downfall of the owner of the pelt, an Aragonian lord of some standing.

Though he escaped retribution for his inadvertent augury, Remi set out to find some guidance for his abilities, eventually ending up at Triamore. He was twenty-three at the time — far older than most new apprentices — and Ulisterius' decision to accept him into the covenant was controversial. The strength of his Gift and his existing education proved him a meritorious choice, though he always preferred practical application of his skills in the forests about the manor to the more theoretical and tedious lessons of the laboratory. Indeed, time would come to prove that while Remi is a mage of great capability, his natural talent will always outstrip his commitment to study and the lab.

Remi is hardly secretive compared to most magi, but his complex past has some hidden threads that wind their way into his current life. Few people — Remi's closest companions, and perhaps those who sometimes train at arms with him — are aware of the stylized hawk (a symbol from the heraldry of his Aragonian lord, to whom he still owes fealty) tattooed on his left bicep. Fewer still — in fact, only Johan, now that Aline is dead — know of his wife. That he was once married is no secret, though few remark upon it; that his wife still lives in Aragon, and that he still corresponds to her on occasion, is known not even to Daria.





Abroad, Remi rarely takes on the trappings of the arcane, and he often travels in the simple clothing of a commoner. At Lucien's Folly Remi spends much of his time with the household and the turb, where he is generally well-liked. He lives apart from the main keep, in Ulisterius' Tower, the lower floor of which he shares with Johan.

Remi's wizardry centers around the Forms of Animál and Herbam, with some skill in Ignem as well; he practices most proficiently in the Techniques of Intéllego, Creo, and to a lesser extent Rego. He seems to enjoy studying in the

presence of his subjects; perhaps this is why he spends so much time outdoors, away from the lab. As the magi at Triamore well know, his abilities are strongly tied to the solar cycle. In the weeks about the solstices and equinoxes Remi's Arts are at their heights, so much so that he can master the basic magnitudes of any Technique or Form. In the periods between these peaks are nadirs equally low, at which times his abilities are greatly hobbled and he can be effective only with his strongest Arts. Remi is blessed with a gentle Gift, and he is somewhat sensitive to magical auras and activities.

Remi of Museau, Follower of Terbiton

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

Age: 46

Size: 0

Confidence: 4

Virtues and Flaws: Cyclic Magic (+6, the six weeks surrounding each solstice and equinox) +4, Magic Sensitivity +3, Quiet Magic +2, Fast Caster +1, Gentle Gift +1, Veteran +1, Well-Traveled +1, Cyclic Magic (-6, the six weeks between each equinox and solstice) -4, Poor Formulaic Magic -4, Study Requirement -3, Creative Block -1

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+4	+2	+3	+1	+3
Longsword & Rnd Shield	+5	+4	+11	+5	+4
Longsword	+7	+4	+9	+5	+5
Longbow	+2	+6	—	+10	—
Thrown Rocks	+7	+5	—	+2	—

Soak: 0

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (logic), Athletics 3 (grace), Awareness 3 (alertness), Bow 2 (longbow), Brawling 2 (fist), Carouse 2 (staying sober), Charm 3 (first impressions), Chirurgy 3 (bind wounds), Concentration 3 (spells), Etiquette 2 (military), Faerie Lore 2 (fey forests), Finesse 4 (precision), Folk Ken 2 (merchants), Hermes Lore 2 (sigils), Hunt 2 (tracking), Leadership 3 (command), Magic Theory 5 (inventing spells), Parma Magica 4 (ignem), Penetration 2 (creo), Play

Pipes 2 (solo), Ride 2 (speed), Scribe Latin 3 (copying), Shield and Weapon 3 (sword), Single Weapon 4 (longsword), Speak Latin 3 (Hermetic usage), Speak Flemish 2 (common usage), Speak Norman French 4 (common usage), Speak Spanish 3 (common usage), Stealth 2 (natural areas), Thrown Weapon 2 (rocks), Triamore Library Lore 2 (Hermetic research)

Magical Arts:

Cr 19	In 15	Mu 6	Pe 4	Re 16
An 15	Aq 3	Au 5	Co 4	He 16
Ig 12	Im 4	Me 5	Te 3	Vi 2

Spells Known:

Converse with Plant and Tree (InHe 25/+31)
Cripple the Howling Wolf (PeAn 20/+20)
Eyes of the Flame (InIg 35/+27)
Hunter's Sense (InAn 30/+30)
Lord of the Trees (ReHe 25/+32)
Mage's Mount (ReAn 15/+31), see page 128
Mastering the Unruly Beast (ReAn 25/+31)
Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind (InAn 25/+30)
Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20/+31)
Wall of Thorns (CrHe 20/+35)
Warmth of the Hearth (MuAu 25/+11), see page 129
The Bountiful Feast (CrHe 35/+35)

Sigil: the head of a lion.

Longevity Potion Total: 26

Remi's sigil is the head of a lion, the form of which can be discerned in his creations of fire and the bearing of which can be found in the creatures he brings under his control. The lion has clear ties to Remi's first experience with his abilities, but it is also a martial symbol, and one of regal bearing, and exemplifies his ties to animalia and the natural world.

Remi's Apprentice

Remi is likely to take as an apprentice only a student with a gentle Gift, and perhaps some strong affinities or other natural talents towards the arcane.

Remi sees his education of an apprentice as a solemn duty — but magic, indeed all formal study — is just one aspect of that education. As seriously as he takes the training of an apprentice, Remi's diligence in the lab is no greater as an instructor than that it is in his own studies, and much training takes place in the field or on lengthy trips abroad. Remi has no great concern for particular Arts, and allows any specialization for which the apprentice shows an aptitude or interest. Likewise, Remi encourages any mundane study that interests the apprentice, including arms.

Remi's apprentice accompanies him on his many trips and activities, and likely sees much of the world both common and gentle. To many observers (including, perhaps, other somewhat jealous apprentices) Remi is a lax master, but an inquisitive and motivated student learns much from him.

Remi's Filius

Remi's filius is worldly and well-spoken, able to carry himself through a variety of physical and social situations.

Given the breadth of his apprenticeship, Remi's filius may not have the strongest magical skills (see the Flaw Stingy Master), though this would be more an

effect of his varied educational focus than of any real stinginess in training. This certainly isn't necessary though, and one could have a complete magical education under Remi.

Remi maintains a close personal relationship with his filius, whether he stays at Triamore or moves on to a different covenant.

Aline of Bonisagus

Although he died in 1219, Aline's legacy at Triamore can still be acutely felt. A member of the covenant for over five decades, Aline was well-liked and is still oft-remembered by virtually everyone at Lucien's Folly.

Aline was the consummate laboratory experimenter, and seemed always attracted to the more spectacular studies. He adopted for his laboratory the rather extensive network of chambers crafted by Forba in the bedrock beneath Lucien's Folly, which he expanded himself during his tenure. Although some magi enjoy the closeness of such underground lairs, Aline craved neither the dank mustiness of underground passages nor the extreme isolation of such dark and secret places. Rather, he set his laboratory where his experiments would not disturb the household or draw the attention of outsiders, and where only the most disastrous results could threaten the other magi of the covenant. In fact, he installed a number of magics in the upper chambers to make them bright and comfortable, many of which are still in place.

Aline's was a member of the Pillar of Hiram (see page 51). As such, most of his experimentation involved magical auras, especially those affecting specific forms. His experimentation yielded some noteworthy results, and many of his chambers have specific auras that linger still.

Aline is remembered by the household as a jovial if somewhat scatterbrained





magus, always friendly and generous with the servants and grogs on the rare occasion that he ventured from his laboratories. Though many years his senior, he got on well with Remi. His relationship with Daria was somewhat strained, however, for on the occasion when an issue of the management of the household, manor, or mundane politics was worthy of his attention they generally disagreed.

Aline apparently died during one of his experiments; he had been dead for several weeks before anyone ventured into his inner sanctum to discover the fact. That was just a year or so ago; he was seventy-six years old.

Aline's Filius

An education under Aline was an always-interesting experience. Aline's studies were many and varied, and his experiments often as glorious in their failures as they could be in their successes. Much of what Aline studied was cryptic beyond the comprehension of even a senior apprentice, and when he died he left the bulk of his notes in a number of dense and difficult ciphers the keys to which he never shared.

Loathe to travel, Aline relied on his apprentice (and later filius) to carry out various errands around the covenant and beyond its walls. As a result of this, and the fact that Aline was often too wrapped up in his own work to adequately explain it to his student, his filius may have a surprisingly broad set of skills and magical capabilities. Indeed, Aline was so lax as a teacher that his filius may have been largely self-taught, or may have picked up a number of skills through study with the other magi or apprentices of the covenant. Either way, Aline definitely instilled one quality in his filius: a fascination with discovery and an intense wonderment at the apparently unending capacities of magic.

Cardrew Ex Miscellanea

Another recent departure from Triamore's rank is Cardrew Ex Miscellanea. Although he was only fifty-three years old, Cardrew slipped into Wizard's Twilight in 1218.

Unlike Aline, Cardrew's overt influence on the covenant was not pronounced, and his memory has little effect on the covenant today. He was a solitary and generally unfriendly magus, and few of the covenant miss his presence.

Cardrew came to Triamore in 1195, three years after becoming a Hermetic magus in the Stonehenge Tribunal. From the very beginning he and Daria disagreed on nearly every issue relating to the covenant — in fact, she would have voted against his induction into the covenant if her pater, Anaxagoras, had not instructed her to vote otherwise.

Although quiet, withdrawn and unassuming in most contexts, Cardrew was in fact an ambitious magus with aspirations to both mundane and magical power. He probably came to Triamore because he assumed the covenant's temporal connections might develop into worldly power. During his tenure, he often advocated direct political involvement in ongoing events. Other members of the covenant were not so inclined, and the council chamber frequently reverberated with heated debates. During Frederick II's ascension struggles, Cardrew voyaged abroad for several seasons, and it was suspected that he offered direct aid to Frederick's rival, Otto IV. Somehow, he and Triamore avoided the scrutiny of the quaesitors throughout the years of his career.

Cardrew's Hermetic interests could be as questionable as his mundane ones. In 1199, he was found to be conducting experiments on kidnapped villagers, with several gruesome results. He defended his behavior with the claim that the covenant's charter gave him every right to

use the mundanes in their service as he saw fit. He was overruled, and his experimentation brought to a halt. This same Hermetic ambition probably led to his early Twilight.

Cardrew's interest in power could have led Triamore into even deeper troubles. Even before he came to Triamore, Cardrew associated with a magus by the name of Latebrosius, an Ex Miscellanea spirit master and member of the Shadow Covenant (discussed later in this book, see page 74). The latter contacted Cardrew on several occasions, visiting the covenant twice, in his effort to locate the Fraction of Belthasius and recruit Cardrew into assisting the Shadow Covenant's efforts. Surprisingly, perhaps, given the rewards offered and Cardrew's often questionable Hermetic efforts, he never agreed to aid Latebrosius or the Shadow Covenant.

Cardrew is remembered by the covenant folk as a strange and somehow distasteful man, awkward and reclusive. He rarely socialized with anyone in the covenant, and was not well-known. His disagreements with Daria and other magi were frequent, but the mundanes of the household would likely be surprised to hear of them, for around them the odd magus generally remained quiet and withdrawn.

Cardrew's Filius

An apprentice studying under Cardrew likely developed a unique outlook on magic as a tool towards one's ambitions — a unique and powerful tool, but a tool nonetheless. Its study serves one's advancement towards other goals, be they magical or mundane. Cardrew's principal interests were in control of the minds and bodies of others, so Rego, Corpus, and Mentem are the Arts he was most likely to have encouraged his student to study.

Cardrew was an odd and uncommunicative man, and is most likely to have taken similar types under his wing — handsome, articulate young fellows with gentle Gifts need not apply. His filius likely enjoys

a worldview somewhat at odds with the values of others, and finds that pursuing that vision is more important than communicating it to others.

Ironically, Cardrew was not without his values, though they might be far removed from those of the mundanes and even many other magi. He never felt that his frequent disagreements with the other magi diminished his membership in the covenant (he was used to being in the minority — even since childhood, his opinions had rarely been in concert with those around him), and throughout all his difficulties he remained fiercely loyal to Triamore and its other magi, including Daria. His filius might share that loyalty, or might be more willing than Cardrew was to entertain the offers of the Shadow Covenant.

The Covenfolk

Aside from the magi, there are presently over two score persons working in or inhabiting Lucien's Folly, almost evenly divided, it so happens, between the fighting men who provide for the manor's security and the household staff that keep the castle and its inhabitants functioning. As in any such organization, there are layers of responsibility and management — some among the covenfolk are entrusted with positions of particular skill and responsibility. The cellarer, the stablemaster, and the housekeeper, for example, are three of the seniormost positions within the general household of any castle or keep the stature of Lucien's Folly. In addition, there is the captain of the guard and the steward of the manor, both positions of such rank that they might justly be held by a nobleman, an unlanded knight low in the hierarchy of the nobility but gentle nonetheless. At Triamore, unlike elsewhere, the steward is not a noble, but the covenant's captain is. Finally, Triamore





has yet another position not commonly found in keeps and castles: a librarian.

These are the positions of responsibility among the common folk of Lucien's Folly, positions of honor and trust, and all among the covenant's household and turb answer to these individuals.

Morris the Steward

The steward is perhaps more a figure of the manor than of the covenant household, but because Morris lives at Lucien's Folly rather than in the village, he and his staff are covered here

rather than in the next chapter. In serving any lord, the steward's job is to act as the lord's deputy, to oversee the operation of all manors in the lord's holdings, to ensure that his law is followed and that his bondsmen carry out their tasks, and to generally endeavor to ensure that the manorial estates prosper and profit. Many lords, of course, hold multiple manors, and the steward is charged with the oversight of all of them, generally visiting each at least once per year to ensure that all is as it should be. Even though Triamore holds only one manor, the steward is not its day-to-day manager — that is the task of the bailiff (see page 86). Stewards are often unlanded knights, especially in the case of greater lords who hold many manors. At Triamore, however, Morris is a commoner.

Morris is an educated man of close to forty. Thin and hawk-nosed and forever concerned with his accounts, he might easily be mistaken for a boorish and unimaginative bureaucrat — but in fact he is extremely insightful and a very sharp judge of character. The peasants of Bois de Haillot view the manor's steward as a harsh and unfeeling master — but that's a reputation built more on a poorly-understood personality than on deeds, which doesn't extend to the castle staff. He is also well-traveled, having been born in England and studied in Venice and Stuttgart. He is one of the few covenfolk that Daria socializes with at all — every Saturday evening she descends to the solar to engage him in a game of chess.

In addition to himself, Morris has in his service two individuals: Elias Clericus, a clerk and scribe who assists him in the maintenance of accounts and records of court issues; and Froese, his sergeant-at-arms. Although Froese is an armsman, he is not part of the turb — rather, he is the muscle behind the law in Bois de Haillot, assisting Morris and Hugh (the bailiff) in keeping order when necessary.

Morris, Steward of Bois de Haillot

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

Age: 38

Size: 0

Confidence: 4

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Petty Merchant +1, Fast Learner +3, Clear Thinker +1, Educated +1, Further Educated +1, Read Lips +1, Well-Traveled +1, Non-Combatant -3, Clumsy -2, Bad Reputation (harsh, among Bois de Haillot's peasants) -1, Deep Sleeper -1, Reclusive -1, Uncommon Fear (wolves) -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) -6 -8 -7 -7 -4

Soak: -1

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (arithmetic), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 2 (manor supplies), Civil/Canon Law 2 (Brabant), Disputatio 3 (debate), Etiquette 4 (nobility), Folk Ken 3 (peasants), Forgery 2 (seals), Gaming: Chess 3 (stalemate), Guile 1 (fast talk), Philosophiae 3 (natural), Read Lips 2 (Norman French), Ride 1 (speed), Scribe English 3 (copying), Scribe Latin 5 (copying), Scribe Norman French 4 (copying), Speak English 5 (expansive vocabulary), Speak Latin 5 (expansive vocabulary), Speak Norman French 4 (expansive vocabulary)

Richer the Cellarer

The cellarer's charge is the castle's supply of food, drink, and other consumables. Were Lucien's Folly a castle at its full might, this would be a task of great responsibility — not only would the cellarer be faced with provisioning a household of perhaps one-hundred servants and armsmen, but he would also have to be constantly prepared for siege, drought, and other catastrophes. As it is, Richer's job is hardly simple: Keeping the larders properly stocked, especially in the months approaching winter, requires the oversight of dozens of tasks from the preservation of meats and the brewing of ale, to the care and feeding of the castle's fowl and livestock, to the churning of butter and stockpiling of grain, vegetables, firewood, rushes, and many other consumables. There is no local market for these items — what is not grown or harvested locally must be procured from Namur, Liège, or even further abroad. In a typical noble household, the cellarer would answer to the Lady of the house; in a convent or abbey to the abbot. At Lucien's Folly, Richer's boss is Morris the steward. As in a typical noble keep or abbey, however, the position of cellarer at Lucien's Folly is one of high responsibility in its own right, and Morris' direct oversight of Richer is not common.

Richer is a man well-acquainted with his wares — a fact that shows in his rotund physique and jowly face. Perhaps forty-five or fifty, Richer is a no-nonsense individual who tolerates little impropriety in his domain. He makes up for his scant education and difficulty with numbers by force of will, rather than talent, but keeps his rather complex accounts virtually error-free. Although he seems stern and frequently foul-tempered, he is in fact a rather warm individual when his duties don't aggravate him.

Working under Richer are four additional servants: Alma the cook, who assists

Richer in keeping the pantries properly stocked as well as keeping the household's bellies full and palettes satisfied; and three scullery maids: Edith, Joan, and Little Matilde (so named because of her young age — twelve — and the fact that she entered the household at the even younger age of seven after her father was killed by fever). Also technically under Richer is Edwin, the boy who tends the household's small herd of sheep and goats.

Beatrice the Housekeeper

Whereas the cellarer's responsibilities cover the provisioning of the household, the housekeeper's job is to ensure that it remains orderly, clean, and sanitary. Although a castle such as Lucien's Folly will always be somewhat dank and musty compared to the airy palaces of the Holy Roman emperor, and has few of the fineries found in the castles of the great lords of Europe, there is much to do in keeping the many rooms cleaned, linens and clothing washed and aired, and noble members of the household attended to. The housekeeper is on a rough par of responsibility and position with the cellarer; Beatrice, like Richer, answers to Morris, but is generally relied upon to run her own shop with little interference from above.

Beatrice is a woman of about thirty, a clear blonde-haired beauty just beginning to fade with age. She had been married to the village's previous miller, a free man who came to Bois de Haillot ten years ago, but he fled the village when rumors circulated that he had another wife in Ghent. She had the marriage annulled, but the sense of betrayal is not so easily dismissed.

Beatrice has a staff of seven servants working for her. Three — Margery, Alice, and Goscelyna — are housemaids, charged with assisting Beatrice in the general maintenance of the castle and all but the private sancta of magi. The other four are the





personal lady's maids and manservants of the covenant's noble lords. Athelina is Daria's lady's maid, while Geoffrey is Remi's manservant — Sophie and Gerard de Chateau (so named to avoid confusion with Gerard atte Gate, a grog who lives in the gatehouse) served Aline and Cardrew respectively, and are currently without masters. They have been kept on in the household's service, generally aiding Beatrice and Richer as needed, in hopes that they might serve any new magi attracted to Triamore. Unfortunately, they will probably be released soon if no new magi take residence at the castle.

Cortini the Stablemaster

A castle the size of Lucien's Folly, fully staffed with a complement of knights, fighting men, and the lord and his family and retainers, might easily stable two score or more horses — not mere animals of labor, but fine palfreys and horses bred for war. The health and day-to-day care of such valuable beasts is hardly a small responsibility. The stablemaster is no mere mucker of stalls, but is rather tasked with care of the castle's animals through all seasons, ensuring that they are properly provisioned, seeing to the acquisition of new horses as needed and to the breeding of those in the household's possession, and maintaining the animals' health when illness or injury strikes. It is the stablemaster who breaks new horses to the saddle, who tends to the birthing of foals, and who ensures that tack and gear are acquired and maintained. The stable and its lofts are his domain.

Cortini is a coarse man, white-haired and gruff. Though loyal and trustworthy, he has never been fully comfortable with his masters at Lucien's Folly, and that is probably compounding the thoughts, driven by the aches and pains of many winters and a life of rough work, that are increas-

ingly compelling him towards retirement. The joy he once took in his domain and responsibilities has left him, but though the love for his career may be waning, the same cannot be said for his love of his animals, and none can find fault with his service past or present.

Serving Cortini are two other men: Thuroid the huntsman and Brendan the stableman. Thuroid, a master of his craft and the individual charged with maintaining the household's hounds as well as provisioning the tables and cellars with game and patrolling for poachers, is only nominally under Cortini's oversight and generally operates with a free hand. Brendan, on the other hand, works directly for Cortini, feeding the animals and mucking the stables, putting up fodder and feed, and generally fetching and carrying as needed.

Isabel of Bruges the Librarian

Few castles have libraries, but librarians are not so rare in the abbeys that dot the countryside throughout Europe, nor in the universities found occasionally within the cities. The librarian's task is not just to oversee the maintenance and keeping of Triamore's many books, nor simply to know them and what they contain. No, in addition the librarian must be seeking always to acquire more through purchase or trade, to make copies both plain and illuminated, to scribe new tomes as the material presents itself, and to purchase parchment and binding materials for the products of these efforts.

Isabel is a large heavysset woman of middle age. If her fanatical devotion to the care and security of her leather-bound charges is characteristic of her breed, her gaudy tastes in clothing, jewelry, and tattoos — and her loud and gregarious manner — certainly isn't. Isabel's history is as eye-

opening as her appearance: As a poor peasant child she entertained ridiculous dreams of education, which she pursued by entering an abbey posing as a boy. She was found out, of course, but not for several years, during which she learned much. She later went on a lengthy and circuitous pilgrimage, during which she visited numerous monasteries, abbeys, universities, and even covenants, under a variety of guises. She came to Triamore after being expelled from the university in Paris, where she had found work among the servant staff so that she might borrow from their vaults of knowledge.

Working for Isabel is a scribe, Martin, and Thomas his apprentice. Martin is more the expected personality for his line of work: a small bookish man, somewhat timid and perhaps cowed a bit by Isabel. He selected Thomas from among the village children three years ago, and at first it seemed a fine choice — Thomas took well to the education and the skills of writing and illumination — but recently his interests have strayed towards the more exciting doings of the castle's illustrious armsmen. On occasion, Martin's work is enhanced by the illumination of Richildis, a lady who has taken up residence in the covenant and whose illustrations are as striking as they are beautiful.

Johan, Captain of Bois de Haillot

The captain of the guard is a position that needs little explanation: It is he who commands the military complement at a castle such as Lucien's Folly, the permanent garrison that mans the fortification. In most rural keeps, this garrison is small indeed — perhaps only a handful of men, most if not all of them mercenaries rather than true vassals of the local lord. But in times of trouble these numbers swell, as the

lord calls upon the martial duties owed him by the yeomen and peasants among his vassals. It is the captain's duty not only to command whatever force he has at hand, but also to ensure that the lord has sufficient resources to call upon, and that his yeomen, if not all able-bodied men on his holdings, are sufficiently trained, prepared, and equipped for the day duty calls.

The captain at Lucien's Folly is Johan, a German knight who retired from service in the east to more comfortable duty. Though a veteran, Johan is still a fairly young man, and he may some day come to find Triamore more confining than he might desire — there are few prospects for suitable marriage on the manor, and little chance to distinguish himself and ensure that his noble status carries forth through his progeny. Nevertheless, Johan has found Triamore to be a surprisingly comfortable





home, and has developed an intense loyalty to the covenant. Any decisions about his future here will be difficult at best.

Johan has in his service two sergeants: Gigot, sergeant of the gate, and Muriel, sergeant of the keep. Each have ten grogs under their supervision. Muriel is a rugged and experienced grog who has been with the covenant for many years. Gigot is a younger man who recently came into the covenant's service after displaying impressive courage and skill when rescued from involuntary service to a rogue maga encountered by Remi in the Ardennes; he has since displayed equally impressive loyalty. In addition to seeing to the castle's general security (a task to which four or five are set at any given time), the grogs train in the broad outer bailey, and assist Thurold and sometimes Froese at hunting, patrolling the manor's wilderness, and enforcing the law as needed.

In times of trouble Johan can also call upon five yeomen: peasants of Bois de Haillot who own arms and maintain their training, so that they may be quickly called to service. Such yeomen would be used should the castle require additional men-at-arms, and if the entire manor were called up they would serve as sergeants over the armed peasants. They are Jacquelin le Reeve, Robert by Water, Guy a Ville, Herald Longhanded, and Marcus of Vierset. Marcus is discussed in a bit more detail in the next chapter.

Others

In addition to the household and the turb, Lucien's Folly supports a handful of other characters who have come to the covenant seeking aid or offering their unique skills or abilities. Some of these have come to be true members of the covenant's household, but some, like Brother Chrétien, are outsiders who spend a great deal of time at Lucien's Folly.

Nasir, a Moor

Nasir is an Iberian Moor, an unusual sort of man to find in northern Europe, even in a covenant of magi. He came to Triamore some four years ago, ostensibly bearing a message from his Muslim prince to Remi, and he's been here ever since. Whether his business with Remi was of immediate import is not clear, for neither Remi nor Nasir have shared it with the other members of the covenant.

Nasir was a courtier, a Moorish noble of some moderate standing in the court at Granada.

Brother Chrétien, a Visiting Scholar

Brother Chrétien is a monk from the Abbey of Saint Gottschalk, which is located about two leagues north of Namur. Brother Chrétien has been a frequent visitor to the covenant over the past year or so, coming to access a number of rare philosophical texts. He interacts with Daria only rarely, but has developed something of a rapport with Remi and Isabel, the librarian.

Open and inquisitive by nature, Brother Chrétien has on more than one occasion taken the opportunity to explore Lucien's Folly beyond the license that his status as a guest of the library affords. Ironically, this has arrested what suspicions that he might otherwise expect to have about the magi: He's become well aware that the lords of Lucien's Folly study the arcane arts, but (though he harbors some small doubt about Daria) he's concluded that they do not meddle with demons or carry on with any of the other heresies that the archbishop of Liège would like to press against the covenant. That's fortunate, for Archbishop Radolfus has been putting great pressure on Brother Chrétiens' abbot to incriminate the covenant (see *Secrets and Plots*, below; for more on Brother Chrétien, see page 77).

Sophie

Sophie is a household servant at the covenant. A mute from birth, Sophie is nevertheless an outgoing, cheerful young woman, pretty and bright. As a mute, she is easy to underestimate, but is in fact quite capable. Sophie was sent to Triamore from the nearby village of Vierset, where her exceptional way with animals, combined with her independent spirit and muteness, engendered the distrust of the villagers. Her parents hoped that she would find a more forgiving environment in a household rumored to contain wizards and other odd characters, and they were right.

Gerard atte Gate

A quiet, well-mannered young man, Gerard is a competent man-at-arms, capable but not flashy. He bears the scars (including a loss of hearing in one ear, the result of a head wound) of three years in the Levant, where he defended the remnants of the Kingdom of Jerusalem and fought the Saracens. Gerard is as quiet and unassuming off duty as he is on, and doesn't easily get close to others, but he is generally pleasant and likable. Among the women of the covenant and Bois de Hailot, Gerard is seen as quite the potential catch, but he has shown no more interest in close relationships with the local women than he has with his compatriots at arms. Gerard came to Triamore two years ago, with a recommendation from his previous commander, seeking quieter military service than he had seen in the Holy Land in an environment less rigorous than that of a large noble household. Gerard is called "atte Gate" because he lives in the gatehouse with the other armsmen; the name distinguishes him from Gerard de Chateau, Cardrew's manservant.

Richildis

Richildis is a strikingly-handsome woman of middle age who came to Triamore some fifteen years ago. Although well-liked about the castle, and entirely without guile or pretense, she is somewhat detached from the rest of Triamore's community, having few close friends. A lady of noble birth, she eloped at a young age with her lover when her family attempted to marry her to another. Her father was a cruel and ambitious lord in Blois, and when his men caught up with the fleeing couple they killed Richildis' betrothed. She escaped them, turning her back on her noble heritage rather than returning to her father's house.

She arrived at Triamore impoverished, hungry, and looking for work. She



Richildis

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

Age: 42

Size: -1

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Lesser Noble +2, Fast Learner +3, Educated +1, Free Expression +1, Strong Willed +1, Non-Combatant -3, Small Frame -2, Black Sheep -1, Lost Love -1, Soft-Hearted -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) -3 -6 -3 -3 -3

Soak: 0

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (grammar), Charm 2 (witty), Chirurgy 2 (binding wounds), Disputatio 2 (debate), Etiquette 3 (nobility), Folk Ken 2 (nobility), Forgery 2 (legal documents), Philosophiae 6 (moral), Ride 2 (speed), Scribe Latin 7 (illumination), Scribe Norman French 6 (illumination), Speak Latin 3 (academic usage), Speak Norman French 5 (normal usage), Sing 2 (solo), Storytelling 3 (poems), Swim 2 (diving)

Gerard atte Gate, Armsman of Triamore

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

Age: 23

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Tough +1, Variable Sleeper +1, Veteran +1, Dark Secret (homosexual) -1, Dutybound (won't kill injured or captured foes) -1, Poor Hearing -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) +4 +3 +3 +1 +4

Long Spear +7 +8 +3 +7 +3

Long Sword +6 +4 +7 +5 +4

Longsword & Kite Shield +3 +3 +9 +5 +2

Soak: +7 (Steel Scale Mail Hauberk)

Abilities: Area Lore 1 (Namur), Athletics 2 (jumping), Awareness 4 (movement), Brawling 2 (fist), Folk Ken 1 (peasantry), Hunt 1 (tracking), Longshaft Weapon 2 (spear), Ride 2 (speed), Speak French 4 (Blois), Speak Saracen 2 (Levant), Single Weapon 3 (longsword), Shield and Weapon 3 (longsword), Stealth 1 (sneak)

was taken on as a servant, but Daria, recognizing her gentility, would not allow her to continue as a laborer. Instead, she took advantage of Richildis' education and set her to tasks more in keeping with her station, such as assisting her and Isabel as a scribe. There was only so much such work for her, though, so in her idle time Richildis dabbled in manuscript illumination and in composing poetry and works of philosophy. She has become quite accomplished as both an illustrator and a writer. Her illuminated tomes bring the highest prices, and are often requested by the library's patrons. Further, she has produced six books of philosophy under the pen name Effugio, of which several have come to the excited attention of the universities of northern Europe. No-one outside of the covenant — including such regular guests as Brother Chrétien — are at all aware that Richildis is Effugio, or indeed that Effugio's works originate at Triamore.

Gigot

Gigot came to Triamore with Remi, after a recent trip through the Ardennes to Verdun. He is a skilled armsman despite his relative youth, and has demonstrated a slavish loyalty to Remi and the covenant. He is, however, an unusual young man that others have found hard to get close to; despite his physique and sharply-honed skills, he is humble, shy, oddly naive, and strangely sensitive.

The root of this lies in his extremely odd past and upbringing. At the time Remi found him, Gigot served the rogue maga Jenise DuCraïnde (see the section on Pietre's Legacy, above) — he was in fact the captain of her contingent of robbers and armsmen. All of her servants were animals transformed

into people (see the spell *Pietre's Servant*, page 128), except for Gigot himself, who is (unbeknownst to any living soul) DuCraindre's son by Pietre. DuCraindre deliberately hid that fact from Gigot, nursing in him the belief that he was a transformed wolf, a suspicion he continues to harbor despite Remi's assurances that he is in fact a real human being. Gigot feared and hated DuCraindre; when he experienced kindness and compassion from Remi (the first such experience in his life) he eventually overcame his fear of his mistress and aided Remi in defeating her.

Gigot was raised with only what education and manners DuCraindre chose to give him, and prior to her move to Verdun (shortly before Remi met and destroyed her) had never known any human society beyond life at her isolated Ardennes keep. DuCraindre allowed her servants to select their own leaders and social structure, and the results mirrored the tooth-and-claw lifestyles of the wolves, bears, and wild boars from which she drew her army. Gigot's life experiences were entirely tactical, and his instinct is to constantly see the actions of people and the lay of terrain in terms of the tactical threat they pose. That makes him jumpy and suspicious in circumstances that others would find entirely benign (a town's market crowd, for example), and yet strangely naive concerning the motives of others and the true dangers of human society and urban life.

Gigot's role as sergeant has not yet been deeply tested; in combat he is well-suited to leadership, but the deeply-set inferiority complex resulting from his belief that he is less than human (and the deep fear that this secret will be discovered) makes him an uncertain leader in more mundane circumstances.

Sophie, Servant of Triamore

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

Age: 19

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Animal Ken +1, Direction Sense +1, Carefree +1, Mute -3

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) +3 +2 +2 -2 +0

Brawling (knife) +4 +3 +4 +0 +1

Soak: -1

Abilities: Animal Ken 3 (forest animals), Area Lore: Bois de Haillot 3 (people), Brawling 1 (knife), Charm 1 (first impressions), Chirurgy 2 (bind wounds), Etiquette 1 (peasantry), Folk Ken 2 (peasantry), Play 2 (pipes), Ride 1 (speed), Scribe French 1 (Blois), Speak French 4 (Blois), Stealth 1 (hide)

Gigot, Sergeant of Triamore

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

Age: 17

Size: 0

Confidence: 2

Virtues and Flaws: Mercenary (Captain of DuCraindre's guard) +2, Lightning Reflexes +2, Enduring Constitution +1, Light Sleeper +1, Sharp Ears +1, Tough +1, Outlaw Leader (Ardennes robber-baron lieutenant) -2, Sheltered Upbringing -2, Common Fear (crowds) -2, Dark Secret (believes he is actually a transformed wolf) -1, Low Self Esteem -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) +5 +5 +4 +1 +3

Longbow +1 +2 — +10 —

Longsword +6 +5 +7 +5 +2

Soak: +5 (Steel Scale Mail Hauberk)

Abilities: Area Lore: Ardennes 2 (geography), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bow 1 (longbow), Brawl 4 (fist fighting), Chirurgy 1 (binding wounds), Hunt 2 (tracking), Leadership 2 (cowering), Ride 1 (speed), Single Weapon 3 (longsword), Speak French 3 (Blois), Stealth 2 (natural areas), Survival 2 (forests)

Triamore Statistics

Symbol: A book with a leafy branch above it.

Season: Summer

Founded: 1151 AD

Members:

Daria LaGris: Tremere

Remi of Museau: Jerbiton

Site: +4

Access Quality: Landed Nobility (+15)

Access Distances: 20/40/40 (+0)

Seclusion: Visitors a couple of times a week. (-1)

Environment: Normal (+0)

Buildings: +3

Size: 6 magi (+0), 20 specialists (+0), and 50 grogs (+0)

Impressive Structures: council chamber (+0), solar (+1), foyer (+1), library (+1), great hall (+1), Ulisterius' Tower (+1), and gatehouse (+1).

Quality: Great Hall (excellent +1); council chamber, foyer, library, underground chambers, Ulisterius' Tower, and gatehouse (good +3); 2nd floor of the Lucien's Folly (poor -1); Sections of the wall (dreadful -2)

Repair: Ulisterius' Tower and gatehouse (good +1); roof of 2nd floor of Lucien's Folly (average, but rated as poor because it requires constant attention to maintain -1)

Defenses: +3

Site: Unapproachable from the north or east, slopes gently away to west, and ground is broken and lightly forested to the south (+11)

Elaborate defensive structures: Gatehouse (+0)

Extent: Gatehouse (+1), Missing or crumbling walls (-3)

Repair: Gatehouse and Ulisterius' Tower (+1), missing or crumbling sections of wall (-2)

Stores: +2

Vis: 50 assorted pawns (-1)

Supplies: Normal (+0)

Reputations: +3, among members of the Order of Hermes and certain mundane scholars Triamore is known to have an excellent library. (+6)

Relations: -4

Allies: None (0)

Enemies: Shadow Covenant 1 month per year (-7), Count Ettiene Gaumond 1 month per year (-5), archbishop of Liege 2 weeks per year (-10)

Contacts: Various contacts through Remi and Daria (+10), Spy placed in covenant by archbishop of Liege (-1)

Improvement: -3

Income: Normal, but in danger of becoming a deficit as taxes increase (+0)

Vis Supply: Painted Cave 10-15 pawns, Pool of the Stone Horse 8 pawns, Library Income 8-10 pawns (+0)

Inhabitants: Currently only 2 magi, 25 grogs, and 10 specialists (-6)

Library: +7

Spells: 3900 levels. (+8)

Hermetic Books: 1530 points (+12)

Mundane Books: 900 points (+10)

See Appendix I (page 126) for more details about the Library of Triamore.

Mystical Attributes: +3

Aura: +2 (-1)

Magical Items: None (+0)

Laboratories: Daria's +3, Remi's +2, covenant possesses enough extra equipment to set up two additional +1 laboratories*. (+7)

* The covenant write up allows for a variation in this detail, the listed point cost is only representative of the shown example.

Total Scores: +92, -41

Nota bene: Triamore is a summer covenant, yet it presents the positive characteristics of a strong autumn covenant and is approaching the realm of winter in its negative aspects. How is this possible? Quite simply, Triamore is a covenant in transition. In the coming years it could find itself firmly in its autumn or experiencing its death throes. The material described in this book provide the stage for both of those possibilities, and it is up to the storyguide and troupe that undertake this story to write those chapters.

Assets

The covenant of Triamore has access to a wide range of supplies, arcane and mundane, common and rare. What follows is an overview of the covenant's noteworthy assets — many other items, of course, may be available, as determined by the storyguide. Individual magi probably need not call upon these sorts of items in their day-to-day activities, but might need them when traveling, or in stories that bring extraordinary events to Triamore's doors.

Mundane Assets

As a landed covenant, Triamore has access, in one degree or another, to the resources of a large, nearly self-sufficient agricultural operation, and most of the minor day-to-day needs of any of its members can be met out of hand. However, the covenant is also somewhat isolated, with the nearest towns of any size at least a day's journey away, and there are no convenience stores in the medieval economy. For that reason, it's a good idea to have a look at some of the specific items the covenant does or does not have on hand.

Arms and Armor

Triamore's collection of arms and armor for its turb is impressive by the standards of most minor nobles, but it hardly does justice to a castle such as Lucien's Folly. The stockpile of weapons includes twenty-seven longswords, sixty pikes, thirty bows, hundreds of arrows and bolts, six heavy crossbows, eleven axes, and nine kite shields. Armor includes fifteen heavy leather hauberks, nine leather hauberks augmented with metal rings and studs, four such hauberks further augmented to half armor,

and four chain mail hauberks. All of this is owned by the covenant, but the majority of it is kept in the possession of the grogs to whom it is supplied, so that only the excess is kept in the castle armory. In addition to all of this, Johan, the captain of the guard, has his own set of half-armor chain mail.

Cash

The covenant has less than forty pounds in silver (or forty Mythic Pounds for record keeping purposes using the new rules for the Mythic Penny in *Ordo Nobilis* page 24), and very little else (aside from jewelry belonging to Daria — perhaps thirty pounds' worth) that might easily serve as cash equivalents. Some tenants pay rent in lieu of week-work, but that's usually in kind (livestock, grain, or other foodstuffs) rather than cash. The covenant does have some income through fees paid by other covenants and mundane scholars for access to the Triamore library, and through the sale of copies of its books; this amounts to perhaps fifty pounds of silver a year (along with some vis, as mentioned below). Also, sales at market of the manor's surplus generate another fifty pounds on a good year, above and beyond the goods traded for items needed to run the manor but not available locally (salt, cloth, horses, iron, and construction materials, for example). However, Lucien's Folly requires the regular attention of masons, carpenters, and other craftsmen, and repairs sometimes eat up the majority of a year's income. Furthermore, Gaumond's taxes on the covenant have been escalating in recent years, threatening to overwhelm the manor's income.

Equipment for Travel and Work

Triamore has, within the covenant walls or somewhere on the manor, access to a fair supply of virtually every type of common tool or agricultural implement: spades, hoes, forks, sickles, scythes, flails, knives, whet-





stones, rope, casks, mallets, weeding hooks, sieves, querns, mortars and pestles, bill-hooks, buckets, augers, saws, hammers, chisels, ladders, wheelbarrows, sheers, carts, and cauldrons, to name a few. Of course, the majority of these implements have uses — few of them are just lying around — but a character in need of any such mundane item should have little trouble procuring it.

The covenant also has a stock of more specialized goods for travel. Two large tents provide shelter against the elements — they each set up to about three paces by five, weigh in at about fifty pounds, and require several people to set up. There is also a fair supply of chests and casks, sacks, and saddlebags. The pantry contains enough dried meats and preserved foods to outfit a medium-sized party (ten or fifteen people) for several weeks on the road.

Food, Drink, and Consumables

Triamore is currently well-stocked with the items necessary to maintain the household — food and grain, rushes and candles, ale and wine, fodder, and so on. On a healthy year (and, fortunately, the past several have been prosperous) the manor provides sufficient goods to feed the entire household throughout the year. Stocks of many items deplete in the leanest months of winter, but that's a natural part of the annual cycle. Aside from that, the covenant is fairly well-off for the foreseeable future, and should only come to suffer if it faces two or more poor harvests (or perhaps one truly disastrous year). There is little excess, though, and the household could not be expanded dramatically without some additional income to support it.

Livestock

Triamore maintains seven riding horses, with Hugh and Froese having another two down in Bois de Haillot. In addition, there

are perhaps another eight or ten horses on the manor, serving as plow animals, which belong to their various peasant owners but might be commandeered in times of emergency. The covenant has sufficient saddle and tack to field twelve mounts.

In addition to horses, there are three mules kept at the covenant, which typically toil in the demesne but can be used to transport goods or might even be ridden.

The household maintains a handful of goats for milk, as well as chickens, ducks, geese, and swine for the table. The total at Lucien's Folly perhaps reaches thirty such animals, though another several score animals are kept for the covenant on the manor, maintained by the bailiff and those whom he assigns to their management.

Finally, Thuroid keeps four hounds for hunting and the discouragement of wolves, and there are perhaps six or eight cats doing duty as mousers about the castle.

Triamore's Library

Triamore's library is one of the largest in northern Europe, addressing both mundane and arcane topics. Though it is no match for the great library at Doissetep, the Hermetic segment of Triamore's library is probably one of the top seven or so in existence. The mundane library is also quite extensive, and is certainly the largest and most authoritative in the region. Unlike Doissetep, Triamore openly shares its knowledge with other covenants and even mundane scholars — much of the library's contents were obtained under grants from Conrad III and Frederick Barbarossa for just that purpose. Typically, outsiders wishing access to the library pay a small fee, and stay as guests at the covenant while they pursue their research. Triamore has on average two or three such guests per month (with more in the summer months and fewer in winter), with a typical stay being a week or two. Guests are

not permitted to make copies of the manuscripts, though they may commission copies by Triamore's scribes or, in the occasional special case, be allowed to borrow them to be copied elsewhere. Obviously, Triamore profits from such transactions, with the library providing a substantial portion of the covenant's annual income.

The library is the heart of Triamore, as it often is in Hermetic covenants, and is its most treasured possession. It's also a great asset for young magi joining the covenant, who will rarely want for the tomes necessary to study and advance their Arts.

covenant property, their harvest is limited to what the covenant takes for its general use — individual magi are prohibited from unauthorized harvesting for their own use. In addition to those sources, other covenants often pay in vis to copy manuscripts from Triamore's library, generating an average income of eight or ten pawns a year. This gives the covenant a total income of twenty-five to thirty pawns a year.

Other Arcane Assets

Over the past seventy years the magi of Triamore have accumulated something of a stockpile of miscellaneous arcane items, spells, and defenses. The specific possessions of the existing magi, and the contents of their chambers, are touched on in their descriptions — a few minor items more likely to affect the player characters or the covenant in general are listed here.



Vis

The magi of Triamore collect ten or fifteen pawns of Corpus, Animál, and Herbam vis from the Painted Cave (see page 93) each year, along with another eight pawns of Aquam from the Pool of the Stone Horse. Neither of these sources is disputed by any other covenant. As

A Sanctum for your Characters

Magi coming to Triamore will need sancta; fortunately, Lucien's Folly currently has a great deal of space to offer. New magi can choose from a variety of environments, depending on their tastes.

The most obvious space is that which was, until recently, occupied by Cardrew: the set of unused chambers on the second floor. There are three large rooms there (not including the tower rooms never reconstructed after the fire, which could be made habitable with floors and roofs); the total space is far more than even Daria occupies, and could be made to serve a magus with an apprentice, or even two magi. The chapel consists of three rooms (if one includes the rambling crypt), though they may not be conveniently laid out for a magus' use. There are also cellars beneath the kitchen, and below them, the sprawling set of chambers that had been Aline's sanctum. These latter rooms provide a variety of spaces, and again might easily serve to house more than one magus. However, many of them

are tainted by Aline's experimentation — a taint which might color their laboratory work, or even make their occupants uncomfortable. Finally, there is an unused chamber in Ulisterius' Tower, which Remi might be willing to share. It offers little space for a private lab, though if Remi takes a liking to the magus in question he might be willing to share his own little-used laboratory.

If not, that tower room might be better suited for a companion character. Other companions might take abode in any of the many chambers currently set aside for guests, or left unused.

The existing magi of Triamore may have some preferences for the placement of new magi. Those coming from outside the covenant may be viewed with a modicum of — well, not distrust, but perhaps unease. It may be preferable to house such magi in Cardrew's unused chambers or Remi's tower — less hidden, and perhaps less dangerous environments than Aline's cellars.



Laboratories

The labs held by the covenant's existing magi are very well-appointed; indeed, Triamore at one time had sufficient laboratory equipment to serve five magi quite well. Much of the best of it, not surprisingly, has found its way into Daria's and Remi's labs; the rest has largely been crated up and scattered through empty rooms and storage spaces. Daria's lab is +3, Remi's +2. New magi setting up shop at Triamore could easily gather enough equipment to assemble two additional labs at +1, or three at -1, with no additional purchases of equipment. The covenant's financial circumstances being what they are (in particular Gaumond's growing taxation demands), it is unlikely that Daria or Remi will support any large expenditures for lab equipment.

Aegis of the Hearth

Triamore is protected by an *Aegis of the Hearth* spell of level 30, which is cast every winter at the solstice. Only Remi and Daria, of course, participated in the most recent casting, but they made at that time seven tokens which can be given to arcane guests so that

they are not affected by the *Aegis*' wards against their magic. Obviously, if player characters are invited to join Triamore, they will each be given the necessary tokens until they can participate in the next *Aegis* ritual.

Magical Aura

The magical aura about Lucien's Folly is 2; presumably it is relatively weak (for a well-established covenant) due to the mundane nature and past of Triamore's home, and the proximity of the mundane population in Bois de Haillot and the outlying hamlets.

There are some unusual localized auras in the underground chambers that made up Aline's sanctum; these are discussed on page 51.

Defenses

Anaxagoras used his *Guardian of Stone* spell to create several defenses for the covenant. The most obvious example is the large stone lions that flank the hearth in the great hall. These creatures (there are two of them) come life when a specific command word is spoken. They attack upon command. All of Triamore's magi — and a few trusted covenfolk, including Morris — know the command to activate the lions.

A less obvious implementation of Anaxagoras' spell surrounds the door leading from the foyer to the council chamber. The stonework around the doorframe includes an intricate weave; within this weave one can pick out the forms of fourteen adders: three on either side and eight above. These were created with the *Guardian of Stone* spell, and become real (poison and all) if the command word to activate them is spoken. Trespassers may find these dangerous snakes falling from the archway if they attempt to enter the council chamber unbidden — there is a *Watching Ward* spell in the capstone of the arched doorway that speaks the command word if anyone attempts to open

Lion

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per +4, Str +4, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

Size: 0

Traits: Vigilant +3, Regal +2

Ferocity: +3 (defending)

Abilities: Hunt 2

Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
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Bite	+15	+15	+12	+9
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Soak: +6

Fatigue: +2

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

Body Levels: OK, 0, 0, -1, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

the door *without* saying a password known only to the magi of the covenant.

Remi and Daria have a number of spells cast upon their chambers. Other than some spells affecting the lighting and passage of air within Aline's vaults, there are no spells known to linger within the labs of the recently-deceased magi.

Secrets and Plots

Triamore's colorful past — mundane and Hermetic — has left the covenant with a legacy of ongoing events. Some of these are known to the magi, while the covenant is completely ignorant of others, such as the Shadow Covenant's interest in Triamore. Any or all of these might become central to your saga, or they could be left in the background or ignored completely.

Pietre's Legacy

The fate of Aline's apprentice Pietre is a mystery that has, for the most part, been forgotten by the magi of Triamore in the two decades since his disappearance. Over the course of that time Pietre has long since ceased to be a direct threat to the covenant or the Order of Hermes — he died seventeen years ago — but he left behind a legacy that might well come to concern Triamore again.

Pietre's story goes well back into his apprenticeship. In his seventh year, still a junior apprentice and yet having developed many of the powers of a full-fledged magus, Pietre was sent by the travel-shy Aline on an errand to visit two covenants in the Normandy Tribunal. It was on this trip that Pietre first encountered Durus and the Shadow Covenant (see that sidebar) and was recruited into the ranks of that organization. Some time later, another Shadow Covenant member, pursued by quaesitors, left with

Pietre one of several artifacts the covenant had gathered in its nefarious pursuits: an infernal relic called the Fraction of Belthasius. This was a stressful period for the Shadow Covenant, and Pietre was in frequent communication with many of its members. Although he had successfully hidden this outside contact from Aline, he suspected that Daria was onto him. It was his effort to determine what she knew that in fact gave him away to her and led to his expulsion from Triamore. Before that expulsion could be enacted, however, he raided the covenant's most valued stores and fled Bois de Haillot, relying on his recently-advanced skills and the considerable power of the Fraction to conceal the means of his escape.

This event, and the activities of the quaesitors, succeeded in disrupting the Shadow Covenant's activities for some time, and Pietre was unable to contact other Shadow magi. Six months after his disappearance Durus came in secret to Triamore, looking for him or the Fraction. He found neither, but was discovered and confronted by Forba. Her death, and the fire that swept through half of the keep, was the result of the encounter. Durus escaped unharmed and undetected by the other magi; the infernal aid that he called upon during his visit made magical means of investigation nearly useless in identifying him.

In the meantime, Pietre fended for himself as he awaited contact from the other Shadow magi. He endured a series of incognito employments, and in 1192 found himself working as a tutor for the temperamental daughter of a nobleman in Argonne, in the duchy of Blois. His relationship with this student was improper in many senses, the most germane of which is the Hermetic: for his own amusement, he taught her something of the magical Arts. She was a receptive and gifted student, though he could give her nothing but a patchwork education in the year or so that he taught her. Eventually the discovery of their tryst led the volatile young woman to murder her own mother, and her lover.





Pietre's incredible magical talents did not save him from a surprise blade slipped between his ribs.

The young woman — Jenise DuCraindre — fled into the Ardennes forest, where she settled in an abandoned keep, used her limited skills to create a small army of followers from forest creatures, and over twenty years or so came to be known as a legendary (but never identified) robber-baron. She possessed the Fraction of Belthasius, but had no idea of its power or importance to the Shadow Covenant. For their part, the Shadow Covenant sought the artifact for years, but never stumbled upon her role in its disappearance.

In 1219 DuCraindre returned to Argonne, posing as a distant relative and lost heir to her father's lands. There she happened to come to odds with Remi, who, determining something of her nature and goals, exposed and defeated her. Neither Remi nor anyone else ever connected her with Pietre or the robber-baron of the Ardennes, however, or sought out the store of arcane tomes, vis, and artifacts — mostly inherited from Pietre — that she left hidden in her abandoned keep. That, in fact, is where the Fraction of Belthasius now lies. And it is in the Ardennes — on the very border of Triamore's holdings — that the Shadow Covenant now seeks what it lost with Pietre's death.

The Shadow Covenant

The Shadow Covenant is a secret cabal of magi who work together outside of normal Hermetic channels. Membership in the Shadow Covenant — even the covenant's very existence — is a closely-held secret, and each member retains his membership in a recognized covenant, tribunal, and Hermetic house. But those bonds are shams. The members of the Shadow Covenant have in secret renounced their Hermetic oaths and oaths of covenant, and now merely pose as the trusted sodales of their companions and covenmates.

The objectives of the Shadow Covenant are myriad, but their fundamental goal is simple: power — Hermetic, and, eventually, mundane. In pursuing this goal the Shadow Covenant sought artifacts of power, the knowledge of arcane traditions other than the Hermetic, and even the aid of demons. They have made several breakthroughs in magical studies that have not been shared with the rest of the Order — for example, one spell created by Shadow Covenant member Saturninus allows the magus to drain the very energy of life from another to bolster one's own, thus giving a magus the fortitude to cast additional spells and magics. Magi of the Shadow Covenant often keep a servant or grog close by their sides when traveling, for quick access to that energy if attacked.

In addition to magical breakthroughs, the covenant has accumulated a number of artifacts and

powerful enchanted devices over the years. The Fraction of Belthasius, recovered from the Levant, was a crowning achievement for them. It is believed to be one of three actual bodily remnants of a devil of the third echelon — an unimaginably powerful demon. Control of just one of these Fractions might give a magus incredible powers; control of two or all three of them could multiply that power a hundred-fold. The Shadow Covenant believes that it knows the location of a second Fraction, and is eager to recover the one that it once held. Should it ever bring those two together — let alone recover the third — it would surely have the power to dominate the Order of Hermes and perhaps the entire mundane world.

The Shadow Covenant was formed some forty or so years ago, and has since grown to include over a dozen magi. All are powerful or at least very promising in their talent. All are also ruthless in their means. Durus of Flambeau, who first drew Pietre into the covenant, is still a senior member.

From time to time the actions of the Shadow Covenant have come to the notice of the quaesitors, but the actual existence of the organization has hardly been guessed at. Two Shadow magi have been caught and punished for their individual crimes, but neither revealed the existence of their conspiracy.

Mundane Politics

As Triamore's history suggests, Brabantine politics have always been complex and intense. Recent times have been no different, especially in the wake of a long and stormy struggle for control of the Holy Roman Empire, in which current emperor Frederick II only recently won out against rival Otto IV. It's hardly surprising that Duke Henry of Brabant and Count Gaumond of Namur both sought advantage in this struggle — a struggle that, in Brabant anyway, is still not quite over.

The Days of Ascension

In the rivalry between Frederick II and Otto IV for the Imperial throne, Henry supported Otto while Gaumond supported Frederick. Henry was in fact Otto's father-in-law; his daughter Maria was married to Otto (she survived him and now lives in Brunswick). Gaumond, Norman by ancestry and always preferring to align himself with the French over the Germans, went with the French king's decision to support Frederick in the hope that he'd mount a campaign against the English (who were allies of Otto).

Ironically, it was Henry who profited from Frederick's ascension, while Gaumond was left with nothing to show for it. Henry switched allegiances under military pressure late in Frederick's campaign. It's widely believed that in so doing, he cut something of a sweetheart deal with Frederick for future political concessions; in any event, he's now reasonably loyal, and in fact provides Frederick with a substantial force of mercenaries. He also arranged a marriage between his niece and a relative of Frederick's.

Gaumond, on the other hand, received nothing for his support of Frederick throughout the ascension struggle. Indeed, he was to have married the same niece of

Henry's that was, at the last minute, instead given to a Stauffen. Furthermore, Gaumond had entertained hopes that through his support of Frederick, the emperor might look kindly on his ancestral claims to the duchy of Brabant. When Frederick ascended, he petitioned the new emperor, and even went so far as to have his brother murdered to clarify his claim to the duchy. But Frederick paid him little attention. The murder was for naught; Henry retained control of the duchy.

Bitterness and Intrigue

For all his support of Frederick against his own liege lord, Gaumond was left with no gain from the new emperor's ascension. Indeed, the entire experience had left the already bitter lord even more embittered. He further maintained a lingering (and perhaps reasonable) suspicion that Henry's late change of heart might not have been entirely sincere — that Henry has his own agenda that might include treachery against Frederick and the Stauffens. If he could uncover a plot against the emperor or his interests, perhaps Gaumond's claim on the duchy would be reconsidered.

Enter Limbourg

Such evidence has not been forthcoming, however, leaving Gaumond with little recourse to pursue his ambitions. So instead he has involved himself with another plot. The duke of Limbourg (the duchy to the east of Brabant) has, for many years, claimed ownership of most of Brabant, and recent jockeying between the two dukes has led to rumors of upcoming warfare. Although he has his own intense rivalry with Limbourg, Gaumond has informed Duke Baldwin that should Limbourg move against central Brabant (and leave Namur untouched), Namur would not support Henry and would in fact





protect Limbourg's southern flank and perhaps even secretly allow Limbourg's troops passage into Brabant.

Frederick II, the Holy Roman Emperor

The Holy Roman emperor in 1220 is Frederick II. A mere twenty-six years old and having only held his post for a few years, Frederick has already experienced a fiery and tumultuous political career. His five-year struggle for ascension against rival Otto IV — much of which was spent on the run from Otto's forces as he gathered the political and popular support for his bid — became a somewhat legendary adventure, endearing him with the public. Although Norman by ancestry, he was raised in Palermo, where he is also King of Sicily (which is separate from the Holy Roman Empire), and this has colored his interests towards the Italian end of the Empire, somewhat at the expense of the German lands.

As tumultuous as Frederick's political affairs is his always close — but often stormy — relationship with the Church. He was a ward of Pope Innocent III for several years prior to his majority and the assumption of his duties as King of Sicily. In 1220, in fact, he's journeying from Schwäbisch-Hall to Rome for his third coronation and the final seal on his seat as Holy Roman emperor. Despite Innocent's support, however, the new Pope Honorius III has clear doubts about the power Frederick has managed to amass. If it weren't for the fact that Frederick's lands completely encircle Rome — and that these lands are the most secure in his Empire — Honorius might consider refusing to recognize Frederick. Fortunately for him, he has another weapon he can call upon to weaken this temporal rival.

It was Frederick II who called for the Fifth Crusade, as something of a political ploy during his ascension struggle. He promised to lead the crusade personally, but things got underway without him, and the effort to secure his still-tenuous hold on the Empire has prevented him from joining it. He's eager to keep his promise, and Honorius is eager to see him head abroad, where he cannot directly lead any threats against the church's temporal power. It's likely that Frederick will head to Damietta following his coronation. Honorius has gone so far as to threaten excommunication if he doesn't.

In the meantime, Germany is left in the hands of stewards, and those local lords opposed to Frederick's rule are fairly free to do as they please. Fortunately, Frederick's rival Otto IV recently died (of natural causes), and there is no well-organized power to directly threaten Frederick's hold on the Empire as a whole.

Of course, Limbourg is as much a rival to Gaumond's ambitions as Henry is, so a Limbourg victory would no more serve his ends than a secure Henry. No, if such conflict occurs, Gaumond intends to wait until both parties are sufficiently weakened, then come to the aid of his duke. In the meantime, he's preparing for the opportunity in several ways, some of which directly affect the covenant of Triamore.

Triamore in All of This

Gaumond's plans hinge on the ownership and completion of two castles: one just outside of Namur, and the other at Bois de Haillot. The first is Frois Pont, his own castle. It is currently little more than a keep tower, but Gaumond is upgrading it (at considerable expense) to a castle nearly the size of Lucien's Folly. He has raised the money for the construction from a number of sources, the most noteworthy of which is a loan from the Knights Templar in Huy.

Triamore is going to pay this loan in one of two ways. Although he cannot extract feudal service from the covenant due to its unusual Imperial charter, he can claim "reasonable" agricultural taxes, and he's the sole arbiter of what's deemed "reasonable." Gaumond has recently levied a huge claim against the covenant — over 500 pounds — and he plans on hitting the covenant with even larger tax bills in the future, as his accountants find ways to instill new taxes and backdate them into the past century. If Triamore pays them, he'll have nearly enough to pay for the castle construction.

A better eventuality is that Triamore cannot pay. That would give Gaumond (barring Imperial interference, which Gaumond figures is unlikely at this point) ample excuse to seize the castle and evict the covenant. He could then bestow the castle upon any number of potential vassals, who would pay large fees for the manor and its stronghold.

Failing all of that, Gaumond could simply occupy Bois de Haillot in the event of a Limbourg invasion of Brabant, on the pretense of protecting the manor and Namur from any southern invasion by Limbourg or neighboring Luxembourg.

Were Gaumond working in isolation, none of these actions would pose too much of a threat to Triamore — it would be a simple matter to persuade him, with a little magical aid, to leave Triamore and Lucien's Folly out of his plans. But Gaumond's plans have drawn in other mundane powers — the Knights Templar and the archbishop of Liège, among others — and a sudden change of heart on his part would not necessarily remove Triamore from mundane politics.

The Archbishop of Liège

As if Gaumond's machinations were not enough, Triamore is threatened by the goals of another mundane power: Archbishop Radolfus of Liège.

Radolfus is a narrow and ambitious man, the son of a Champagne nobleman who found a clerical career a more expedient path to power than a noble one. At only thirty-four years old, he may be one of the youngest Archbishops in northern Europe, and a casual observer might credit that to his piety, dedication, and charm. But while he has plenty of each, his greatest endowment is his drive.

Radolfus' success has become self-restricting: He is the envy of his peers and the fear of his superiors, and neither will contribute to any further promotion of the young archbishop. To advance his career, Radolfus will need the attention of Rome. He's found a way to get it.

Two years ago he discovered an enclave of expatriate Cathars living in Liège. After rooting out several dozen of

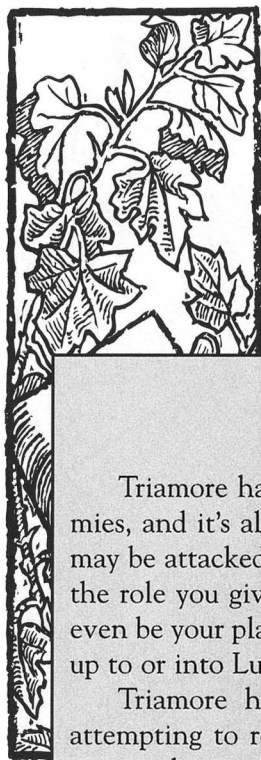
them, he converted those he could and had the remaining six burned at the stake. His success at combating this heresy, which has spread like a hidden cancer since the church took action against it in Provence over the past two decades, brought Radolfus great praise from Rome. Additional such successes would surely hasten his path toward a Cardinal's red robes.

Radolfus has heard about Triamore, and the rumors that magic is practiced there. He has consulted with Gaumond and Henry of Brabant. He's put pressure on Abbot Godrick (of St. Gottschalk's Abbey, about thirty miles from Bois de Haillot) to gather information about the covenant, and to incite hostility against the sorcerers among the local population and nobility. He's sent an emissary to Pere Hugo, the priest in Bois de Haillot, demanding his cooperation. He's also had his priests make the evils of diablerie a recurring topic in their sermons over recent months.

But his biggest step has been to place a spy within the walls of Lucien's Folly. Goscelyna, a house maid who came to work at the castle six or eight months ago, secretly serves Archbishop Radolfus. She makes regular reports to Pere Hugo, generally during weekly confession at the church in the village. She's an imaginative woman whose dedication to her task outstrips her actual ability to learn anything of the secretive ways of the magi, so her stories are colorfully embellished and often outright made up. Pere Hugo compiles these reports and sends them to Radolfus via Pere Jean, the priest at Arbois.

When the time is right, Radolfus will reveal his collection of evidence against the covenant, then rally his allies among the nobility and the Knights Templar to move against Triamore. The trials and burnings of several powerful wizards will be a bright feather in his career cap.





The Robber-Baron

The robber-baron of the Ardennes is dead — but nobody knows that, not even Remi, the baron's killer. For years the lords of Brabant and Blois (on the other side of the forest) have talked about hunting down the robber-baron and his large band, and

recently the Knights Templar have become quite serious about mounting a campaign. Bois de Haillot is the southern-most manor in Brabant, and would be a likely headquarters for forces searching the forest. What might result from a military presence on Triamore's doorstep depends in part on how the magi react. In any event, the robber-baron will not be found. But the keep

Approaching Triamore in Stealth

Triamore has, like all covenants and magi, enemies, and it's always conceivable that the covenant may be attacked openly or by stealth. Depending on the role you give the covenant in your saga, it may even be your player characters who attempt to sneak up to or into Lucien's Folly.

Triamore has two advantages against anyone attempting to reach it by stealth: its physical position, and its neighbors in Bois de Haillot. Its position along the edge of a ridge makes approaches from several directions difficult or impossible; the presence of the village and hamlets and all the activity that goes along with them provides something of a protection against approach from those directions.

Characters approaching from the cliff side of the ridge face a difficult climb. From the bank of the Meuse the slope rises steeply, covered in rock and scrubby vegetation. It is not a constant sheer cliff, but finding a path up the steep rise is a trick, especially in darkness, and especially when attempting silence. Require at least three stress rolls of Dexterity + Climb + Encumbrance, needing a result of 6+ (a 9+ if the climber is attempting to remain silent). Failure indicates that the character falls five or ten paces, for a simple die of damage; a character making a Dexterity or Strength stress roll of 6+ may halve the damage by grabbing a root or rock and thus halting the fall.

The rolls needed for characters approaching from the direction of the Bois de Haillot depend entirely on the course they choose and the circumstances of their approach. There are almost always peasants in the fields during the day and, in some seasons, well into the evening, and they are a suspicious lot when strangers are about. Any stranger seen

in the area, especially off the roads, will be reported to Hugh the bailiff, and perhaps also to the castle. However, the fields are broad and rolling, and crisscrossed with ditches, hedgerows, and stands of trees, so determined characters might stand a fair chance of remaining unseen even in broad daylight.

The most clever of infiltrators will avoid the cliffs and the open fields, giving both a wide berth to approach from the south, in the forest on the ridgetop or along the skirts of the village's South Field. This is probably the best angle for reaching the castle unseen, but it takes one directly to the gatehouse, which cannot be easily circumvented.

However one approaches Lucien's Folly, once there one must deal with the fact that it is a castle, and though unfinished it was well-built to discourage infiltration. One could easily breach either of the baileys, as the walls around both are broken down to, in some places, heights of only a pace or two. There are also guards: two at the gatehouse, usually patrolling the gate passage to keep tabs on both the outer bailey and the approach to the gate; and two in the keep foyer or the adjacent tower room that overlooks the front door. A fifth guard watches the great hall. During daylight hours this watch may be reduced to a single grog at the gate and another in the foyer. Finally, in both the keep and Ulisterius' Tower, all of the windows are either far too small to fit through, barred over, or placed high-up in the castle's sheer walls.

Magical infiltrators might attempt to make their own breach in the castle's walls, doors, or windows, but in so doing would have to overcome the covenant's substantial *Aegis of the Hearth* (detailed on page 72).

in which this shadowy figure made its home — replete with magical tomes, vis, and the Fraction of Belthasius — might well be.

The Lives of the Magi

The magi of Triamore have their own pasts, which might come to affect the covenant in the future.

Remi is still married, to a Spanish woman named Lise living in Aragon. They have not seen each other for twenty-five years, though they still communicate regularly (at least once a year) by letter. Lise is a commoner, the educated daughter of a tradesman who now serves in the household of the same lord under whom Remi once fought. Their marriage was tumultuous over the few short years that they lived together, and it was probably a secret relief to both of them when Remi's Gift surfaced, compelling him to seek guidance for it that he could not get in Aragon. Though she has never sought to have their marriage annulled and has remained faithful, Lise does not expect that Remi will ever return to Spain.

It's not likely that Lise would ever come to Triamore, at least not without dramatic cause. If something were to threaten her, however, Remi would almost certainly depart for Iberia. Few people know of this marriage, but it is a vulnerability for the senior magus — Lise would make a compelling hostage or victim for someone seeking advantage over Remi or the covenant.

Daria too has a past, some of it also shrouded in mystery. Her present nobility and grace hide a much more common root: She was once a street urchin, a beggar child who was caught stealing from the kitchen of a magus' house. She had not, at that time, any recollection of her past — the first few years of her life were, and remain, a mystery to her. Anaxagoras seemed to see in her some special aspect right off the bat, though if he had any specific suspicions, he never shared them. Daria's origin remains

unknown — perhaps it will be revealed in the future.

As if these issues were not sufficient, Daria and Remi have between them nearly seventy-five years of magical career. Remi remains outgoing, but even Daria was not always the hermit that she has now become. Enemies, allies, or events from the colorful past of either could reappear to affect the covenant in the future.

Who's Who at Triamore

Alice, housemaid
 Aline, magus (recently deceased)
 Alma, cook
 Athelina, Daria's lady's maid
 Beatrice, housekeeper
 Brendan, stableman
 Brother Chrétien, a visiting scholar
 Cardrew, magus (recently deceased)
 Cortini, stablemaster
 Daria LaGris, maga, princeps
 Edith, scullery maid
 Edwin, goatherd
 Elias Clericus, Morris' scribe
 Froese, sergeant-at-arms
 Geoffrey, Remi's manservant
 Gerard atte Gate, armsman
 Gerard de Chateau, idle manservant
 Gigot, sergeant of the gate
 Goscelyna, housemaid
 Isabel of Bruges, librarian
 Joan, scullery maid
 Johan, turb captain of Bois de Haillot
 Little Matilde, scullery maid
 Margery, housemaid
 Martin, scribe
 Morris, steward
 Muriel, sergeant of the keep
 Nasire, a Moor
 Remi of Museau, magus
 Richer, cellarer
 Richildis, a noblewoman
 Sophie, idle servant
 Thomas, scribe's apprentice
 Thuroid, huntsman





Chapter 4

Triamore's Holdings

Triamore is more than just a covenant and a castle: It's a landed manor, lord over some 500 or more peasants who know or care little of mundane politics or Hermetic magic. This chapter covers the people and places of that holding, along with some of the covenant's Hermetic "fiefs" — vis sources and mystic places important to the covenant but unseen by or unimportant to the mundane world.

The Manor

The manor of Bois de Haillot is much like the hundreds of others scattered across Brabant, or indeed the tens of thousands throughout western Europe. To most of the magi that live or lived at Triamore, it's important only because it is a source of sustenance for the covenant, and an unfortunate link to the mundane world. It's covered in some detail here nonetheless, because the events surrounding Triamore might one day focus attention on the village and its people, and because it's an excellent model for the thousands of similar manors and villages spread throughout western Europe.

The Village of Bois de Haillot

The village of Bois de Haillot is primarily a residential cluster, providing basic semi-communal services necessary for the self-sustained existence of its citizens. There are none of the shops or inns that one might find in a city or market town, and little to interest or aid a traveler through the area. Some of the notable landmarks are listed below.

The Ford

The road from Arbois, Namur, and the rest of Brabant crosses the Sauptont river at the foot of the village, where a stony ford serves as a gateway into the village and the manor. The water generally runs knee-deep, perhaps a little deeper in rainy springtime, and the crossing is some thirty or forty paces wide. Seldom does the weather vary enough to flood the river or shrink it much below its banks, but both have occurred at least once within the past few decades.

The rocky floor of the ford is often slick, and crossing can be a challenge on foot or horseback. Bringing a cart across is a major effort. Were there more trade through Bois de Haillot, it might be worth building a bridge, but the current trickle hardly warrants it.

Because his mill sits aside the ford, Torold the miller is tasked with keeping an eye on it, collecting tolls, and also sending word up to the bailiff if noteworthy travelers approach. Tolls collected from those crossing the ford go (in theory, anyway) to the covenant. Individuals on foot need not pay, but those bearing goods pay in rough proportion to what they bring into or through the manor: One penny per pack animal or cart is typical. Those who live on the manor need not pay. Like toll-takers everywhere, Torold frequently demands what he thinks he can get, pocketing the extra, and his reports to Hugh the bailiff are not always spot-on accurate.

The Mill and Bakery

Sitting next to the ford, where the main road runs up into the village, is the mill. It's the single largest building on the manor aside from Lucien's Folly itself, and is quite a bit sturdier than even the church and the bailiff's house, the only other stone structures in the village. It's the property of the manor, and Torold Miller leases it from the covenant along with the right to carry out his trade. The water mill is fed by a pond, which in turn is filled by a run that draws water from an upper pond (formed by a dam where a creek meets the Saupont) a mile or so up the river. The mill pond is stocked with fish, for the benefit of the covenant's table.

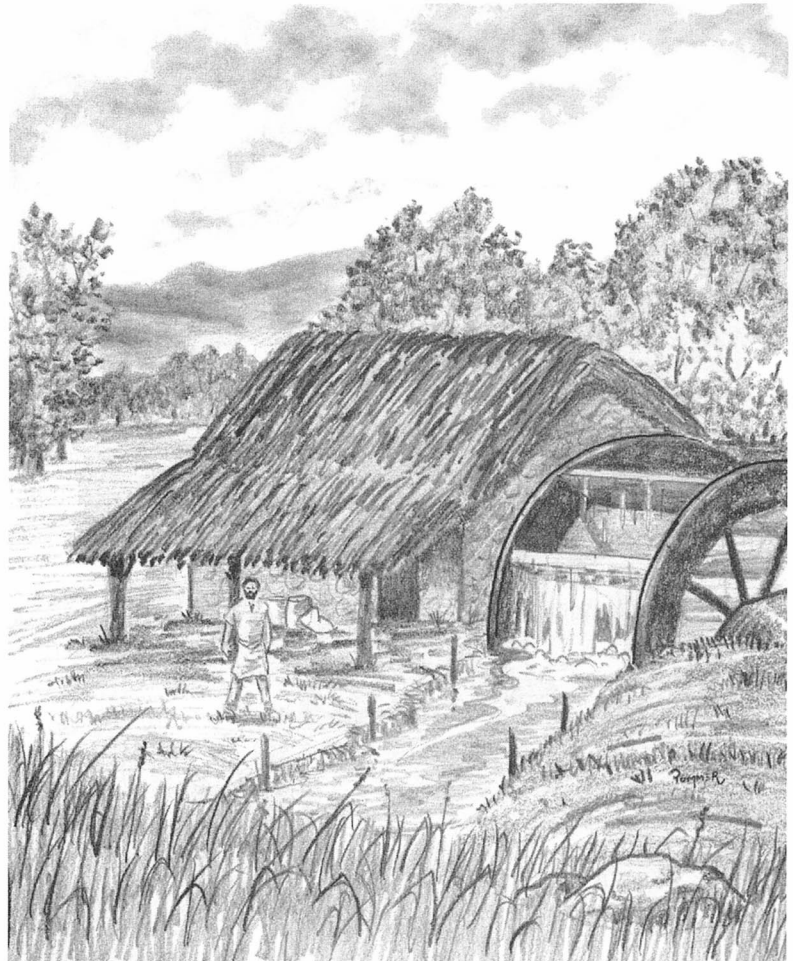
Backing upon the pond, and accessible from the main road by a trail between the villager's crofts, is the bakery. Like the mill, this structure and the right to operate it belong to the lords of the land. The bakery is currently leased to a baker named Rogier.

The Green and Barns

As described in Chapter 2, one passes up into the village from the ford and mill by a narrow, rutted dirt road flanked by high

and dense hedgerows. The village green is 150 paces up this road. This is the village's central public area, the place where all festivals, marriages, and other public events are held. It's bounded about by the smithy, the church, and the village barns (which back upon the common pasture).

The green is about fifty paces on a side, with a main road running up the center to a crossroad at the top. It's fairly flat, with a gentle slope towards the river, and covered in short grass except for a circle near the center where bonfires are sometimes built. On a typical day the green is nearly empty, save for a few geese and chickens, perhaps some young children at play, and a peasant or two on business with the smith. If there's a breeze from the north or west, as there usually is, the green is spared the odor of the manure piles behind the barns but the smell of burning charcoal drifts over from





the smithy. Festivals or feasts draw the entire population of the village and the hamlets — 400 or 500 people — with scores of trestle tables and benches from their homes, enough to densely crowd the entire green.

The barns, just to the east of the green, are timber-framed wattle-and-daub buildings with stone foundations. They are each some six or so paces wide and nearly twenty long. The villagers' animals are penned here in the winter, when the weather is too

severe to keep them outside and there is no pasture to feed them, along with fodder put up in the autumn. The barns belong to the covenant, and the "rent" paid by the villagers is the dung of their animals, which goes to fertilize the demesne fields.

The Smithy

The smithy is an open-sided building situated in a large, irregular croft with Thuri the smith's home behind it. Within are the customary forge, bellows, and anvil set upon an oak stump, along with a quenching cask, an assortment of hammers and tools, and a bin of bog iron imported from Liège. There are few ready-made implements — Thuri spends more of his time fixing items than making new ones, and like most tradesmen, generally only makes new items to order. Behind the smithy a low-roofed stone oven is set into the ground, for rendering firewood into charcoal, the fuel of the forge. Thuri can be found in his shop throughout the day, as he only keeps a small plot of land tended by his wife and children.

Inns and Taverns

There are no shops or stores *per se* in Bois de Haillot, as in most rural villages. Nor are there inns or taverns where the locals gather to relax and converse, or where travelers can rest or slake their thirsts. But that doesn't mean that there is no social or night life in a village such as this one, or that there's no place for visitors to stay. Such services exist, but like most village commerce, are handled a bit more communally than they might be in a city or town.

Many, perhaps most, households in the village brew ale — it's one of the few industries not monopolized, or even participated in, by the lord. When a family has a batch ready, it simply puts out the word, sometimes marking the house with a crude sign set out at the front of the croft, and for the next few evenings or weeks the villagers gather at that house for after-hours drinks and relaxation. The enterprising landlord might make a few pennies to add to his slim cash income, and the village benefits from a place to gather, throw dice, play checkers and backgammon, tell tales, court, quarrel, and converse. When the ale supply runs low (for no household could brew enough to keep it in stock continuously), someone else in the village taps a keg. Typically, a penny buys three quarts of homebrew ale, enough to slake one's thirst for a solid evening.

Those looking for lodging find similarly communal arrangements. A visitor to the village typically inquires with the bailiff for a place to stay. A traveler of quality might be directed to the castle; a well-to-do or respected merchant might be given lodgings in Hugh's house, or might go with the bailiff's recommendation to the home of one of the village's more prosperous virgaters. Whereas noble guests at the castle expect hospitality without charge, those staying in villagers' homes typically pay a small token to the landlord in gratitude — perhaps a penny or two for the lodging of an individual for a night.

Hugh's House

The bailiff's house is without a doubt the most impressive within the village, being made entirely of stone and roofed in slate, and set within a wide and well-tended croft. In many villages, the lord or bailiff's home is a small fortification — not a true castle or keep, but a strong point of defense for the manor. It also serves as the storage point for the manor's entire surplus, with granaries in its cellars or adjacent sheds.

Bois de Haillot has a castle to serve those functions, however, so the bailiff's house is a bit more modest. It's a single story in height, with a hall and separate chamber within, and an attic room above. It's warmed by an actual fireplace set into

the back wall. Hugh keeps all valuables, such as rents or duties paid but not yet delivered to the castle, in an iron-banded strong box in his chamber. When it is not full (as it usually is not) he loads it with large stones so that it might not easily be carried off.

The Church

The pride of the village, Bois de Haillot's church is a nicely-appointed, if typical, provincial affair: a single-roomed structure perhaps six paces wide by twelve long, made of stone with a stone floor and roof of slate. The doorway, set beneath the bell tower, is framed by a broad Romanesque archway, the stonework of which is nicely carved, and the three arched windows on either side are likewise decorated. Within is an altar, behind which is a small private chamber where Hugo, the priest, keeps his vestments and a strong box containing the church's brass and silver Eucharist set, silver candlesticks, bible, wax candles, and a relic: a shin-bone of St. Bertin.

Like churches everywhere, from the grand cathedrals to those in the poorest rural hamlets, this one has no pews or benches within — celebrants stand, kneel, or sometimes sit on the rush-strewn floor. The interior is used primarily for mass; other celebrations, like weddings, are usually held on the church steps out front.

Gilbert's House

The home of Gilbert le Long, the Reeve, is not a particularly noteworthy landmark within the village — indeed, despite the owner's prosperity it could hardly be picked out from among its neighbors. It's located along the main street, four doors down from the green on the east side.

The house sits within a croft ten paces wide by perhaps twenty-five long, enclosed

by a low, unmortared stone wall with a hedgerow along its front face. The toft, or front end of the croft, is a small dirty space where Gilbert's wife, Sarah, pens their goats, chickens, and geese. A shed/hen-house flanks this space.

The house itself neatly bisects the croft. Behind, Sarah keeps a vegetable garden in the larger rear space of the croft. There she grows cabbage, carrots, turnips, onion, garlic, spinach, leeks, strawberries, and parsley. She also has a cherry tree at the back of the croft. This proves almost as much a curse as a blessing, for the fruit often draws rabbits and other scavengers into the croft at night, that might otherwise raid other people's gardens.

The house itself is of wattle and daub, framed in heavy timber and roofed over in thatch. There are two doors in the front — one from the central bay, and another from the animal bay — and another two from the same bays in the back. Within, the space is divided into three bays by partitions of woven branches (wattle, minus the daub): a central living area, an animal pen at the right end, and a private chamber to the left. The attic is open above, except over the chamber, where a ladder leads up to create a rather cramped fourth room. The floor throughout is made of packed earth, covered over in a layer of rushes that is changed periodically. The inside is lit by a few windows, unglazed and covered with shutters at night or in cold or stormy weather. The house is warmed by a fire on a stone hearth in the center of the main room, which also serves as the cooking facility. Smoke rises to a hole in the roof, but some of it always seems to linger, blackening the rafters and lending a dusky scent to the household.

There is little in the way of furnishings. Several coarse benches and stools line the walls. The family eats at a trestle table, which is disassembled when not in use. A hutch contains a number of household goods, including the Sarah's prize pewter dishes and cups. Linens are stored in a chest, with a variety of tools and implements





stacked along the wall beside it. In the chamber is a bed, with two pallets for the older children (there are three total) in the loft above. The baby sleeps in a cradle by the fire. There's a large iron kettle at the fire, and several smaller earthenware ones set along the wall, along with a large tub for washing laundry and taking baths. From the rafters hang hams and sausages, and bags and baskets of fruits and herbs, out of reach of all but the most enterprising mice and vermin.

Sarah and her eldest daughter, Agnes, keep the house well, but they constantly battle the forces of chaos, led by a mischievous dog and the chickens that love to scratch and peck at the floor and always seem to find an open window or door no matter how often they are chased away. When the harvest or other duties call the entire family out, the difficulties of house-keeping multiply: Once last autumn Sarah came home to discover that the goat had gotten in, to eat all of the cakes she had prepared the day before.

The Village Fields

Beyond the green and the tumbled walls of the last crofts are the fields, stretching some three-quarters of a mile or more to the east, west, and south. There are three of them, each divided into a dense patchwork of crops, further split into hundreds of long strips. These divisions are separated in some cases by walls, hedgerows, ditches and creeks, or even stands of trees, and in other cases by nothing more than a pace-wide strip of unplanted land. Crops are rotated between the fields: This year, the North Field is planted with "spring" crops — barley, oats, peas, beans, vetch, and some vegetables — while the South Field is dedicated to winter wheat, so called because it is actually sown the previous autumn, shooting up in the early spring when the other crops are just being planted. The west field lies fallow.

These fields are not the only spots where crops are grown. In addition to their staple crops, the villagers also like to supplement their larders and their incomes with whatever vegetables they can cultivate, and spare patches of land — whatever odd-shaped little spots fall between the fields or along the skirts of the village proper — are rented out by the peasants for these supplemental endeavors.

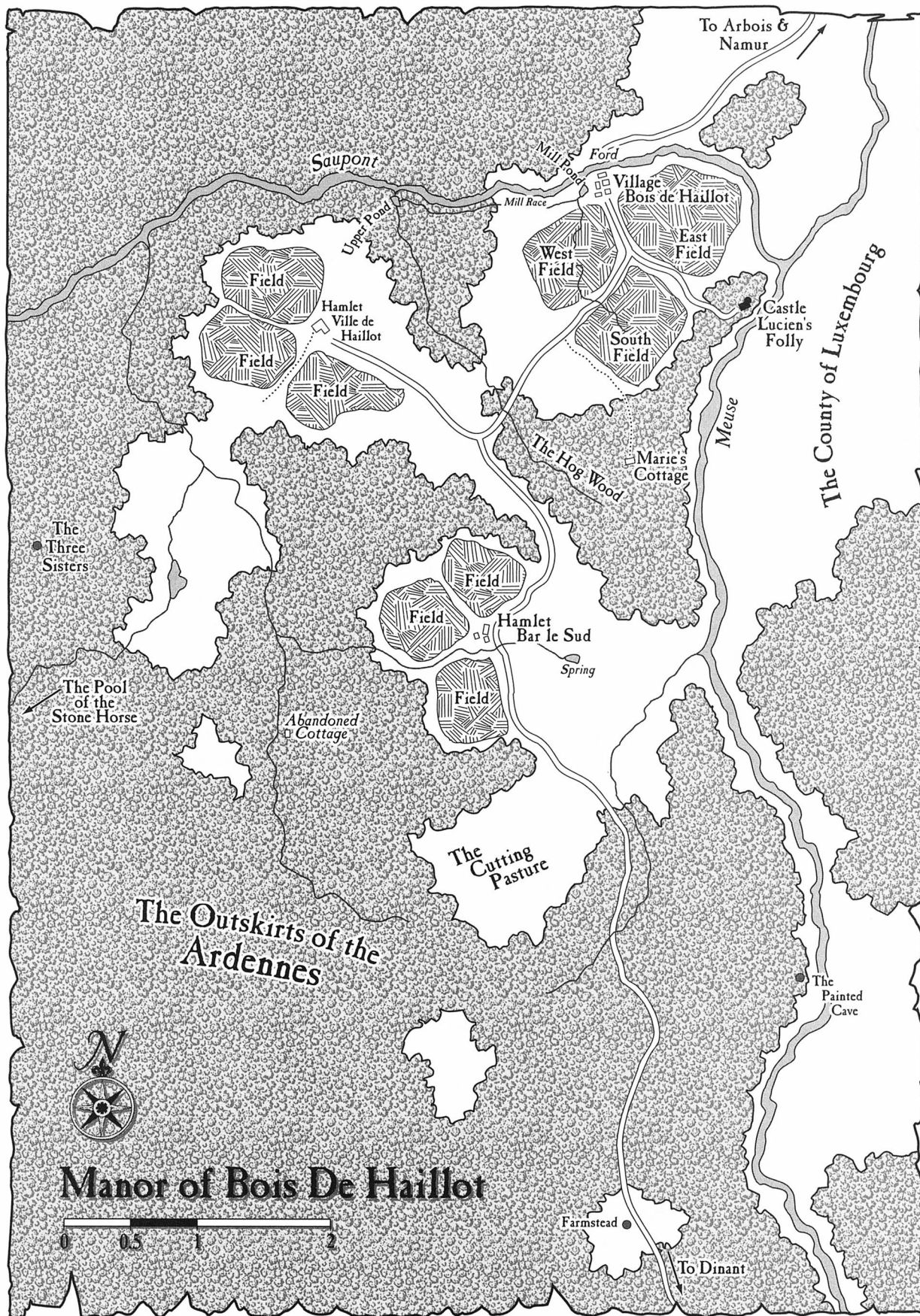
The Hamlets

The manor's two hamlets — Bar le Sud and Ville de Haillot — are much like the main village, less the central services such as the church, the mill, and the smithy. Each is a cluster of homes, set within their crofts, surrounded by three fields. Bar le Sud is the larger of the two — with about thirty-five families of peasants, it's nearly two-thirds the size of Bois de Haillot. Ville de Haillot is roughly half that size, with about twenty families.

Wastes and Forests

Beyond the settlements and fields, the manor stretches through several miles of forest and open land. Though called "waste," these lands are not misused — rather, the undeveloped land is a critical part of the manor. The open fields provide for the pasture of cattle and sheep, while the woods provide the villagers with nuts, berries, firewood, and forage for their pigs, along with timber and meat for the covenant.

Firewood comes from deadwood — despite the intense demand, which often sends peasants miles into the forest, live trees are never cut down for firewood. They're used sparingly for timber, as well — when license is given by the steward to cut for timber, it's always small quantities of





select trees. For the past decade or so, all cutting has been done in the forest about the southern-most open field on the manor, lending it to be called the "Cutting Pasture."

Hunting is an activity restricted to the noble class and their representatives. Thuroid the huntsman hunts boar and venison for the covenant's larder, bringing in one or two beasts a week. The stag is a more common quarry in the warmer months, the boar in the winter. Throughout, Thuroid sets snares and traps for squirrel and rabbit as well.

The Hog Wood

The stretch of forest bounded by the village and its hamlets, and occupied at its northern tip by Lucien's Folly, is generally called the Hog Wood by the manor's inhabitants. It's here that the most of the peasants' pigs are set to forage, for the open spaces that surround it on all sides tend to limit their wanderings. In the autumn, this square mile or so of forest is home to as many as 600 pigs.

The Peasants of Bois de Haillot

The only nobles at Bois de Haillot are the magi of Triamore, and like most noblemen they have better things to do with their time than manage a large and complex agricultural concern such as Bois de Haillot. Like most manors, Bois de Haillot operates under an administrative hierarchy that just touches the noble classes at its top; the day-to-day management of the manor is carried out by commoners, some dedicated to their positions, others operating part-time while they manage their own holdings.

There are four important offices at a manor such as Bois de Haillot: steward, bailiff, reeve, and hayward. In addition, there are two other official positions, each held by several persons: jurist and ale taster.

The Steward

The steward manages the manor, acting as the direct representative of the lord. In many counties (including Namur), some lords hold many manors; in such cases the steward oversees all of them, traveling among them once or twice a year to personally look over the books and the operations of each. As Triamore holds only a single manor, a steward isn't strictly necessary, and many lords might choose to do without under similar circumstances (passing authority directly from themselves to their bailiffs). But due to their studies Daria and other magi of the covenant don't care to give the operations of the manor much of their personal attention, and so have chosen to keep a steward (Morris, who is detailed a bit more in Chapter 3). Often a steward is an unlanded knight (or a senior monk, the "cellarer," if the manor is held by an abbey), but at Bois de Haillot the job has been given to a trusted commoner.

Hugh, the Bailiff

Next down the administrative ladder is the bailiff. The bailiff is the individual who runs the manor on a day-to-day basis, acting as both the business manager and the chief law officer. His primary job is the management of the demesne — the cultivated manor lands held directly by the lord. He protects the stocks from theft, ensures that the village is well-supplied with items that aren't produced locally (iron, salt, cloth, slate, and parchment, for example), and enforces the rules of the manor. On a

day-to-day basis the bailiff is the man in charge of the village and the manor lands, and the man who represents the lord to any strangers who come into town. In most manors, the bailiff lives in the manor house; at Bois de Haillot Lucien's Folly is technically the manor house, so the bailiff has a separate house in the village (see page 16).

Hugh is the bailiff at Bois de Haillot. He's a big fellow, physically suited to a job that must be exercised with authority, with short blond hair and a typically grim expression that more reflects the stresses of his job than his actual demeanor. His grandfather was an unlanded knight, but his father frittered away his noble status and what little fortune the family had, leaving Hugh a commoner with neither a legacy nor a trade, only a sword and a little martial training. He came to Bois de Haillot in 1115, after the previous bailiff left the manor to take over a relative's shop in Bruges. What Hugh lacks in age (he's only a few years past twenty) and agricultural know-how, he makes up in thoughtfulness and a pragmatic outlook. He's generally well-respected on the manor, but has earned his share of enemies among those inclined to trouble. When his duties call for it, he is often assisted by Froese, Morris' sergeant at arms. He lives alone in the small bailiff's house with neither wife nor servant, and on the rare evenings when he socializes with the villagers, he tends to overdo the gambling and carousing.

Gilbert Le Long, the Reeve

The second most authoritative individual on the manor is the reeve. The reeve's principal job is the oversight of the week-work — making sure that those who owe labor on the lord's land do it. The reeve is always a villein (a serf); generally one of the most prosperous in the village. At Bois de Haillot, as in most villages, the reeve is

appointed annually by election of the villagers and approval of the bailiff. The office runs from Michaelmas (late September) for a year.

Gilbert is well-suited to the task. A virgater who holds some forty acres, he's one of the most prosperous peasants on the manor. Tall, lanky, and dark-haired, he tends to be a bit snide, and his neighbors think of him as one quick to forget a favor but slow to forget a debt. He may not be widely liked, but he is seen as efficient, especially at bullying the lazy into their work — and though week-work is much like taxes (hardly popular), the savvier peasants recognize that the prosperity of the manor depends on careful management of the lords' interests as well as their own. Gilbert has held his office for three years running.



Hugh, Bailiff of Bois de Haillot

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

Age: 24

Size: +1

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Prosperous Peasant +1, Clear Thinker +1, Inspirational +1, Large +1, Veteran +1, Compulsion (gambling) -1, Enemies (Robert le Franceis) -1, Favor (past lord) -1, Magic Susceptibility -1

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+5	+6	+4	+2	+5
Longbow	+2	+4	—	+10	—
Longsword & Kite Shield	+6	+7	+11	+6	+4
Longsword	+6	+5	+6	+6	+3

Soak: +6 (Leather Scale Hauberk)

Abilities: Animal Handling 2 (falcons), Bow 2 (longbow), Brawling 4 (fists), Carouse 2 (games of chance), Chirurgy 1 (bind wounds), Etiquette 1 (peasants), Folk Ken 2 (peasants), Hunt 2 (tracking), Leadership 3 (peasants), Ride 2 (speed), Scribe Norman French 2 (original composition), Shield and Weapon 4 (longsword), Single Weapon 2 (longsword), Speak Norman French 5 (normal usage), Stealth 2 (sneak), Survival 1 (Ardennes)



Alaric the Hayward

Assisting the reeve is the hayward, whose principal job is to ensure that sufficient grain is set aside each autumn for

planting the following spring, and to maintain stocks of certain other agricultural goods. In addition, the hayward acts as the reeve's deputy, assisting with his tasks. Like the reeve, the hayward is elected by his fellow peasants, with the approval of the bailiff.

Festivals and Feasts

Life is hard — but it isn't all work. The peasants of Bois de Hailot — like those everywhere — know how to relax as well as toil. Their calendar, which runs from harvest to harvest, beginning and ending on Michaelmas (September 29th), is marked by festivals and feasts. During these times work is suspended (sometimes for an afternoon; sometimes for a week or longer), sports and games are enjoyed, and fine foods and drinks are served. Some of the village's festivals are participated in by the lords at Lucien's Folly, and some are enjoyed by the peasants alone. Like all activities, not everyone participates to the same degree. Some people aren't as sociable as others, some like to use the extra time to catch up on work they've fallen behind in, and some use the time off to visit friends, relatives, or lovers in neighboring villages. Either way, everyone looks forward to the next festival, marking the days as they pass by how far away it is or how recently the last one passed.

The first major feast of the year is All Saints, falling on the first of November. It's a simple feast, held in the village green if weather permits. Good foods are eaten, and the peasants take a day off from sewing the winter wheat. It's followed a week or two later by Martinmas, on November 11th. Good meats are plentiful at both of these feasts, as the period of fall slaughter runs through November.

Christmas is the biggest festival of the year, running from Christmas eve (December 24th) through Epiphany (January 6th). The peasants pay some small additional fees to the lord during this time, but are exempt from week-work (and have little work of their own). There's also a big feast at the castle, traditionally held at Triamore on the first day of Christmas. The afternoon's festivities are held in the bailey, and are crowned with a game of "King of the Bean." A black bean is baked into a cake, and the person who finds it is crowned King of the Feast. He

supps in the great hall aside Daria, along with the more influential peasants and guests. The remainder of the commoners enjoy their generous supper in the bailey, with the majority of the covenfolk. The Christmas season is concluded the first Monday after Epiphany, on which day plow races are held.

Candlemas is a minor feast held in early February. It's followed by Shrove Tuesday, the last day before Lent, on which a slightly larger feast is held.

At the end of Lent begins Easter week, kicked off by Easter itself. This is the second biggest festival of the year, and the peasants take a full week off to enjoy it. At the end of Easter week is the two-day holiday Hocktide. On the first day, the women of village take men prisoner, forcing them to pay some small token for their release. On the second day, the men do the same to the women.

May Day celebrates the advent of spring. It's a minor feast, noteworthy only because of the sexual promiscuity that would not be so overlooked on any normal day.

Rogation Day is the Saturday before Whitsunday. On it, the peasants walk the periphery of the manor lands, a hike of nearly twenty miles. Their effort is rewarded with a feast on Whitsunday itself, followed by a week of relaxation.

Midsummer Day (June 24) is the Nativity of St. John, another minor feast that marks the last of the "easy" days of summer and the beginning of the hay mowing. The mowing runs for a month, ending at Lammas, the start of the harvest. Lammas itself is not a major feast, but it's followed by the lord's feast the following day. That's the start of the boon work, when all able-bodied peasants must pitch in to harvest the lord's demesne. The lord must provide a meal each day, and the first day's is traditionally a generous feast, served out in the field in the middle of the afternoon.

Alaric is a heavy-set fellow with thinning blonde hair. He's somewhat simple and inarticulate at first measure; not a moron, but neither clever nor ambitious. His success (as he and most of the village is aware) is due to his wife Herleve. A native of neighboring Arbois, Herleve is a shrewd planner and capable manager, and it's her management of her husband's affairs that have led to their present prosperity (they hold over thirty acres) and his position. If tradition allowed a woman to assume the duty of hayward, Herleve would probably have the job. Instead, the village — and Alaric — are happy to have her manage the task in her husband's name.

On many manors there is only the single village, but some, like Bois de Haillot, have outlying clusters of peasant homes. These hamlets lack the facilities of the central village, and aren't vested with their own bailiffs or other authorities. Alaric is assisted by two additional haywards, one at each hamlet. Though they technically answer to Gilbert the reeve and serve primarily to ensure that week-work is carried out without the reeve having to travel out to the hamlets every day, they are seen as Alaric's subordinates.

Other Villagers of Note

Trevor le Wyse, a Jurist

The position of jurist is another official duty. In Bois de Haillot, as on most manors, jurists assist in deciding legal disputes when they are brought to manor court — not so much to ensure the modern sense of justice, but rather because several heads are better than one when it comes to recalling obscure bits of village tradition or ancient precedent. Jurists are also responsible for reporting illegalities to the bailiff — they form a sort of network of official informants. There are twelve jurists in Bois de

Haillot, including half-virgater Trevor le Wyse, each elected annually with the approval of the bailiff.

Trevor is an older man, approaching fifty but still fit and able-bodied. He's one of the most respected men in the village, not just for his wisdom but also his history — he was a yeoman in 1190, and manned the walls of Lucien's Folly when the duke of Brabant sent his army to take it. His only real fault, perhaps, is that he's well aware of his position, and never hesitates to express his opinion, and why that opinion is superior to all others. The moniker his fellow villagers have appended to his name — “le Wyse” — has both a sincere and an ironic connotation.

Allotta, an Ale Taster

Virtually all ale sold in Bois de Haillot is brewed in someone's home, and there are few guards against the health risks of bad brewing. Ale tasters are officially-elected individuals — usually women — who approve ale for sale. At Bois de Haillot there are currently seven ale tasters; three of them are needed together to approve any home-brew ale for sale. Given that many of the tasters are brewers themselves, and that the ale tasters can put limits on the price that may be charged for ale based on their assessment of its quality, the position is often highly politicized.



Setting Memory

Pain is a great aid to memory. Boys are often given a solid clout on the head when they are witness to something they should remember, on the theory that that'll keep the memory in their heads until old age. During the gang-days of spring, boys are dunked in the chilly brooks and have their heads banged against the tree trunks and boulders that mark the boundaries of the manor, so that the experience — and those boundaries — will forever be kept in memory.



Allotta is the widow of a Bar le Sud half-virgater who now lives with her son in Bois de Haillot. She's been a dedicated gossip her entire life, and though she'd never approve ale which is truly foul, her pricing decisions are often based more on her assessment of a brewer's worth than that of her ale. She has a dedicated cadre of supporters who ensure her reelection year after year, as well as a corps of detractors who have complained numerous times to Hugh about her unfair practices. Unfortunately, the young bailiff has not been able to make the issue a priority.

Marie, the Midwife

An unofficial but important position in any village is the midwife, often the only person with any medical skills to speak of on the entire manor. Many midwives are folk healers and charm makers (or are at least rumored to be so) and true to form Bois de Haillot's midwife is a cunning woman whose reputation draws visitors not just from Bois de Haillot, but also from Arbois and sometimes further afield.

Marie is a middle-aged woman with long, fading blonde hair and eyes milky with cataracts. She lives alone in a cottage in the Hog Wood, where she grows herbs in a small clearing garden. She's generally regarded as an odd and potentially dangerous person, very useful when needed but risky to associate with too closely — an image cultivated by Marie's caustic personality. That suits Marie just fine. She prefers her solitude.

Marie's charm-making has recently drawn Remi's attention, and he's visited the cunning woman repeatedly over the past few seasons in an attempt to understand how what she does is (or is not) related to Hermetic magic. She's accommodated him, but not without her price: She's a skilled cutpurse, and on more than one occasion Remi has unknowingly left her cottage with fewer possessions than he entered it with.

Pere Hugo, the Priest

The priest is the spiritual leader of every village — at least, every village that has a priest in residence. As tithing makes control of parishes a valuable commodity, many village positions are bought and sold to prelates — or even secular lords — who collect tithes from their parishes without fulfilling any spiritual duties. Fortunately, that practice is rare in Namur, and Bois de Haillot is blessed with a dutiful priest.

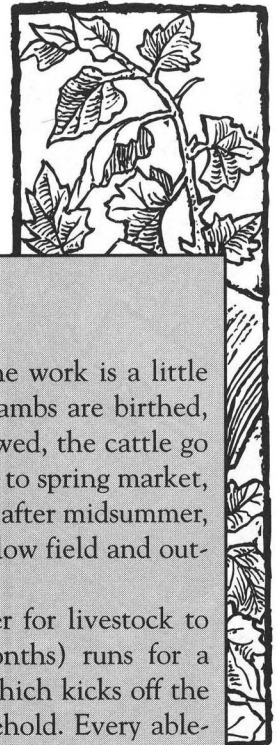
Fortunately for the souls of the villagers, that is — not necessarily for the magi of Triamore. Pere Hugo has been ordered to be the link between the archbishop of Liège and his spy, the maid Goscelyna, at Lucien's Folly. It's a task he takes on with reluctance, for though he has no deep loyalty to his lords, he does question the cause of this investigation, and worries that his involvement — an act of treason, technically — compromises his position and his duties toward his parishioners. He believes, rightly, that much of what Goscelyna reports to him in their weekly confessional meetings is more the work of an excited imagination than reality, and so trims his reports considerably before passing them on to Pere Jean in Arbois (where they are picked up by a servant of the archbishop). Unfortunately, he can only guess at what to remove, and often what gets passed on is more damning in its implications than all of Goscelyna's vivid stories.

Pere Hugo is a mature man with hair just going towards gray. He is thoughtful and truly concerned with the well-being of his parishioners, including the lords of Lucien's Folly. His mastery of Latin is not great, but aside from that he performs his duty beyond the standards of many rural priests. He has only met Daria on a handful of occasions, but thinks well of Remi, who attends mass every so often. He subsists on his tithes (a third of which go to the archbishopric) and the cultivation of a gore adjacent to his cottage behind the church.

Torold Miller

The classic joke runs: "What's the bravest thing in the world? A miller's shirt, for it grasps a thief by the throat every day." It seems that millers everywhere are

despised as cheats who keep their thumbs on the scales and always manage to take their share and then some of the grain they grind. Perhaps that reputation holds true throughout Europe; it's certainly true at Bois de Haillot.



The Yearly Cycle

To the casual observer the peasant's life might seem one of monotonous toil. Toil it is, certainly, but it's anything but monotonous. As the seasons pass, the peasants' labor revolves through a series of distinct activities, and one can almost name the day of the year by the activities of the peasants in their fields.

The year begins in the autumn, after Michaelmas, with the plowing of the field that had been fallow. Concurrently, the cattle are let into the other two fields to graze upon the stubble of the recent harvest, and benefit the fields with their manure. As the plowing and harrowing of the fallow field draws to an end, next year's winter wheat is sewn. Animals are slaughtered or driven to market (especially pigs, which preserve well and do not provide wool, labor, or any other use). This work carries the peasants through to their fortnight off at Christmas.

Miscellaneous work is carried out through January — the repair of buildings, walls, and hedgerows. After Candlemas the initial plowing of the field which will be planted with spring crops begins. Plowing is a perennial activity, and the most laborious task the peasant faces. The spring fields are plowed twice before planting, and the fallow field is plowed several times during the year. Plowing is semi-communal, with animals shared to make up teams of two to eight handled by two or three peasants. Pairs of horses are often hitched with oxen, to add the benefit of their endurance and intelligence to the superior strength of the ox. The lord cannot demand that the peasants work at plowing the demesne past vespers, or even past nones unless he provides a meal, so industrious peasants seen working past dusk (as they often do late in the season, or if the weather threatens to turn against them) are always finishing their own fields.

Spring crops are sewn in mid-spring, after which come the "easy" days of summer: A period when crops

are in the non-fallow fields, and the work is a little less frenetic than at other times. Lambs are birthed, the fallow field is manured and plowed, the cattle go out to pasture, excess livestock goes to spring market, and wool is shorn. This period ends after midsummer, when hay mowing begins in the fallow field and out-lying pastures.

Mowing (which provides fodder for livestock to eat during the coming winter months) runs for a month, and ends at the Lammas, which kicks off the harvest. Harvest is something to behold. Every able-bodied adult on the manor (saving the lords, of course) goes to work — serfs and free men, craftsmen, the priest, even the servants from Lucien's Folly. Even those virgaters wealthy enough to hire workers in their stead attend, though they're usually given the supervisory tasks rather than set to manual labor. The first priority is the "boon" — the harvest of the demesne, those crops on the covenant's fields. Working in teams of four or five — three or four cutters, with a binder following behind to tie the cut grain stalks into upright bundles to dry — the army of reapers cuts its way across the demesne fields. Following these teams are the gleaners: The children too small and elderly to infirm to aid in the reaping, whose job it is to gather by hand the grain which has been spilt and scattered along the ground. It takes perhaps a week to complete the boon work, during which the manor provides meals and copious refreshment. Then the peasants set to their own fields, usually working in semi-communal groups, reaping for perhaps another intense and wearying week or two.

That first harvest of grain is the most intense and communal, but it isn't the whole story. While many of the peasants remain at their homes threshing and winnowing the grain crop, the remainder return to the fields to pull peas and beans, and harvest the remaining non-grain crop.



Torold Miller is a brawny individual with large hairy arms and leering grin. He's a crafty businessman who never passes up an opportunity for profit — his willingness to lend money, and the diligence with which he gets it back, have not made him any more popular in the village than his milling or toll-taking. Nor has his drinking, or the fact that he's made a cuckold of more than one of the manor's husbands.

Torold is not a native of Bois de Haillot, but came to lease the mill after the previous miller fled to avoid charges of bigamy (abandoning his local wife, Beatrice, the housekeeper of Lucien's Folly). Having heard his share of complaints against the man, Morris would happily replace him if another qualified miller could be found.



Robert le Franceis

Robert le Franceis is noteworthy not because of any position he holds — he's simply a half-virgater, a peasant with no other position — but because of his notoriety on the manor: He's the village bully. His reputation is well-earned: Robert's name comes up in virtually every mote (the semi-annual manorial court, where complaints made by the villagers against one another, as well as petty crimes, are tried by the steward), and he once had the hue and cry called upon him by his own wife, Valery. Thurold and Hugh suspect him of frequent poaching. He has more than once been fined for petty acts of vandalism, assault, and theft. In a case last year, he was forced to turn over six selions of land to Bran atte Water, whom he had beaten severely in a drunken rampage. He has made no secret of his intention to "get back his due."

Robert is a thin but powerful man of about thirty. Surprisingly, animosity towards him is not universal: He has a band of friends and admirers with whom he regularly drinks and gambles. He has never expressed any remorse for his actions or desire to change his ways, and so he continues to be watched carefully by Hugh and the village jurists.

Magnus the Carpenter, a Yeoman

Yeomen are commoners selected by the lord for military service beyond the typical feudal obligation. They are typically better-trained than the peasantry at large, are called to duty sooner than their comrades, and serve as sergeants when a general call to arms goes out. In exchange for this increased responsibility, yeomen enjoy an exemption from some week-work, and a bit of prestige in their position.

There are four yeomen in Bois de Haillot; Magnus the Carpenter is one of them. He's a sandy-haired fellow of about thirty-five, whose attraction to arms (and the trade which he carries on part-time) belies an ambivalence toward the farming

life. He'd happily join Triamore's grogs if it paid well (it doesn't) and family duties didn't prevent it. As it is, he hopes for an opportunity to demonstrate his skills and perhaps gain a sergeant's position in the turb. With Triamore about to be swept into the plans of Gaumond, the archbishop of Liège, and the duke of Limbourg, he may well get his chance.

Mystic Places

There are several sites of mystery on or near the manor lands, some of which (like the Painted Cave) which are well-known to the covenant, and others (like the regio at the crossroads) completely unknown to them. Neither of the two vis sources (the Painted Cave and the Pool of the Stone Horse) are contested by other covenants.

The Painted Cave

About three miles south of Lucien's Folly, set in the rocky slopes leading up to the ridge above the river, a large cave overlooks the Meuse. It's well known to the locals, almost every one of whom, at some point in his life, has come to wonder at its contents. But it also has a reputation as being haunted, and few return often or venture far within.

The cave is broad-mouthed, easily visible through the trees from the river or the slope below. Within its entrance, several large chambers succeed one another as the cave descends into the hillside. Though smaller passages and chambers continue further in, it is these large rooms that draw the most wonder. For along their walls are painted an unending series of fantastic scenes: great herds of cattle, of horses, and of fantastical animals never seen by man. There are also pictures of men, often hunt-

ing or slaying these animals, as well as symbols and signs that are as awe-inspiring as they are incomprehensible. (If the symbols are writing of any kind, no magic has yet revealed their meanings). Many of these paintings overlap one another or sprawl high overhead on the chamber walls, as if the artists' images could simply not be contained in the limited space of the cavern's surfaces.

And that's not all. Those that dare venture further within can find the ancient inhabitants of this cave — or what's left of them, anyway. Strange pagan graves line the smaller chambers some hundreds of paces within. Obviously ancient beyond reckoning, these gravesites contain only fragments of bones, along with the occasional bone, horn, or antler of the beasts depicted in the paintings, and scores — sometimes hundreds — of odd stones, many chipped into the shapes of arrow and lance heads.

The source of these images and items is unknown, but everyone agrees that they're older than the pagans or Romans that once held this region. Some claim that they're faerie in origin, and that the fantastical creatures they depict are denizens of the realm of the fey — a theory only strengthened by the arrowheads and similar artifacts sometimes found even in the outer chambers. But there's never been any evidence of a faerie aura or presence detected by the covenant.

But that doesn't mean that there's nothing in the cave of interest to magi. To the contrary, the Painted Cave is one of Triamore's most valuable resources. There is a faint magical aura (1) to the place, but more importantly, the contents of the graves are sources of vis: Corpus vis can be extracted from many of the human bones, Animál from the odd tusks and antler, and sometimes even Herbam from the scrapings of soil and bits of near-fossilized sticks and debris. The fancier graves — those marked with more elaborate symbols, and surrounded by more stones and antlers — seem to





yield the best results, but even then the harvest is quite variable: Sometimes a single fragment of bone will yield two or three pawns, while other times only one or two can be derived from an entire night's work. On average, though, a handful of scavengers can collect several sackfuls of takings in a single evening, from which a half-dozen pawns might be extracted. The covenant sends such teams to the Painted Cave two or three times a year.

Due to the somewhat morbid nature of the work, and the Cave's reputation among the peasantry, such trips are always carried out in secret. Because of its labyrinthine plan, and the fact that the common reputation of a supernatural presence may not be without merit, the covenant rarely collects more than can be easily handled by a small group, and no-one ventures further within than they must. The full extent of the cavern has never been explored, and though the magi of Triamore suspect that the vis supply in the cave is finite, no-one knows how many graves remain or how much longer they can be harvested. Because Bois de Haillot's peasants will not travel far into the cave, and rarely visit more than once or twice in their lifetimes, the plundering of the graves has not been noticed by Bois de Haillot's commoners.

The general belief that the cave is haunted is not without merit. Currently, there is no supernatural presence in the cave, but twelve years ago Remi and Cardrew destroyed a troll that had taken up residence in its depths. Some forty years before that Anaxagoras defeated a great serpent that had been living in the cavern since, apparently, before the covenant arrived in Lucien's Folly. It seems that the magical aura of the place makes it an attractive residence for magical creatures. Who knows what shall next make it a home?

Nota bene: The magi of Triamore have never made any effort to examine the symbols in the cave. If examined by *Greeting the Maker*, it would be revealed that the draw-

ings were created by shaggy, half-naked men — clearly pagan barbarians of some sort — who used ground up pigments with stone tools and drew the shapes on the walls with sticks and their fingers.

The Crossroads of the Clapperless Bell

About four miles southeast of Triamore, in the county of Luxembourg, is a small shrine at a forest crossroad along the road leading south from Dinant. It's not remarkable on first examination — a coarse stone stands cockeyed beside the road, with flowers and candles placed by the locals at its base. What makes it noteworthy are two things. First, the flowers and bracken immediately surrounding the shrine remain green and in bloom throughout the year. Second, the faithful that pass through the crossroad sometimes hear the single faint chime of a bell as they approach the shrine. No one remembers where the shrine came from or how long it has been in place, but locals say that it is dedicated to Saint Bartis, a monk who helped bring Christianity to this region centuries ago, and who ascended to heaven on this very spot. The church has never canonized a Saint Bartis, though the system of official canonization by the Pope in Rome is only a couple hundred years old, and in many regions local saints, who have never been officially recognized, are revered by peasant and priest alike.

The history attributed to the shrine and Saint Bartis is fairly accurate, except the part about his ascension. Some 400 years ago, Father Bartis was wandering this region preaching to the barely-christian locals. He carried a bell which he would ring as he walked, to announce his arrival to the local farmsteads and villages. The ringing of the bell caught the attention of a local faerie, Elewyn. Annoyed in general by

the encroachment of Dominion, and in particular by this ringing bell, Elewyn confronted Father Bartis at the crossroad and stole from him the clapper from the bell, declaring that without it he would be without voice to speak his religion or legs to spread it. Sure enough, Father Bartis found himself struck mute and unable to walk. He remained at the crossroads — a lonely and forsaken place in those days — for some time, and eventually faded into the divine regio that formed about him.

The Divine Regio (5)

Characters entering the divine regio at the crossroads see little that is different, save that the area is more brightly lit, and that an aged man sits where the stone cross is normally sited. The man is Father Bartis, and though he does not suffer in his timeless regio, he looks every one of his 400 or so years. He is dressed in a simple robe of dark homespun wool, and carries only a silver bell without a clapper.

Father Bartis has the unique capacity to bestow his curse upon another. He can only speak when so doing, and he can only do so when asked why he does not speak. Thus, to the first sinner or atheist (at the discretion of the storyguide) who enters his regio and asks why he will not speak, Father Bartis says, "My voice has been taken from me by the lady of this wood, as the lord has taken yours from you. Return my voice to me, and God shall return yours." At that point he holds forth the bell, showing that it is clapperless, and says no more. The questioner is instantly struck dumb, and his voice cannot be restored by any means.

The victim can live out his days as a mute (rather a handicap if he is a magus) or can seek out the clapper. It is in the hands of Elewyn, who now resides in a deep regio some miles from the crossroads. Should the clapper be obtained from Elewyn, either by theft, persuasion, or combat, and returned to Father Bartis, he completes his destiny

and ascends soul and body to heaven, leaving behind only the silver bell. The mute regains his voice, and the regio ceases to exist.

The Pool of the Stone Horse

This is an idyllic pool fed by a clear spring, located about ten miles or so southwest of Lucien's Folly (about five miles outside of Bois de Haillot's manor lands, into the unsettled forests that are the outskirts of the Ardennes). A number of mossy boulders ring the pool, which is perhaps ten paces across and three or four deep. One of these stones, when viewed from the right angle, looks much like the shoulders and head of a horse pulling itself from the water — hence the pool's name. The stream that runs from the pool eventually leads to the pond on the western edge of Bois de Haillot, and some decades ago the magi of the covenant discovered a faint magical taint to the water. It was subsequently discovered that *Aquam vis* can be extracted from the waters of the pool, but only at intervals of at least one season, and then only if one first tosses three silver coins into the pond. Forba speculated that there is a faerie presence at the pool, although she was never able to demonstrate that or discover a regio in the area.

She was, however, correct in her assumption. The pool, or rather a regio above it, is home to the faerie *Uisghe*, a creature that shares many of the characteristics of both kelpie and nymph. Among her powers, *Uisghe* can make the waters of her pool a great refreshment to those who drink or bathe in them: Drinkers are healed of poison, fatigue, or illness; bathers of wounds, afflictions of the limbs, or other long-term debilitations. For the most part, these properties of the waters were overlooked by Forba and Ulisterius — they made greater note of the fact that such water could be distilled into *vis*.





Forba's discovery — that three silver coins would incite the magic within the water — was only partly complete. The truth is that Uisghe can work her magic upon the water any time she wants to, and one way to entice her to do so is to offer her a gift. She likes shiny things, and in truth anything comparable to the traditional silver pennies (bits of colored glass or even polished stones, for example) will do the trick. However, as Forba noted, offerings more frequent than once per season or so are ignored.

Like a more conventional kelpie, Uisghe can leave her regio and the pool in any of several forms. Prior to the discovery of her pond and the regular gifts of the covenant, she used to occasionally wander the region in the form of a great black horse, enticing peasants to ride upon her. Those that did would be taken back to her pond in a matter of moments, drowned, and devoured. She also, in times more distant, would appear in the form of a beautiful and seductive woman, though in that guise she rarely traveled far from her pool. In the last few years, fortunately, she has been satisfied with the gifts that have been showered regularly into her pond, and has not ventured forth on an errand of predation for two decades at least.

Despite its potential healing qualities, the peasants of Bois de Haillot shun the pool of the stone horse, perhaps through some dim connection to the disappearances of local people in decades past. The magi of Triamore harvest two pawns of Aquam vis from its water every season.

The Faerie Regio (3)

The faerie regio in which Uisghe resides covers only the area very close to the pool — it does not extend more than a few dozen paces into the forest beyond. It does not at first glance appear to differ substantially from the mundane level. The waters have perhaps a bit more crystalline

clarity, and there is something of a peaceful and tranquil air about the place. On the mossy boulders and stones about the pool is the most immediate evidence of the regio — Uisghe has arranged upon them her collection of pretty items: stones, gems, bits of glass, several hundred silver coins, and a few score human bones and skulls, all gleaming a polished white. Uisghe lives in the crevices and holes among the rounded boulders at the bottom of the pool; when seen in her most natural form she appears as nothing more than a darting shadow in the water — a quick movement, like a school of unseen fish. She takes the form of a woman to converse with those who have entered her regio, and will only take on her



Uisghe, a Water Faerie

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

Faerie Might: 35

Size: 0 (woman form), +3 (horse form)

Confidence: 4

Personality Traits: Capricious +3

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam

Hooves +7 +6 +3 +8

Bite +6 +6 +3 +6

Soak: +5

Fatigue: +4

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

Body Levels: OK, 0, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Powers:

Healing, 12 points: Uisghe can permanently heal those who drink or bathe in the waters of her pool, should she choose to give the pool those healing effects. The use of this power will heal several people of one Body level each, and can have a reversing effect on even permanent wounds.

Infatuation, 11 points: Any person who voluntarily (even under the influence of Uisghe's Infatuation Power) climbs on Uisghe's back (in horse form) or enters her embrace (in woman form) fails to notice the passage of time or distance as he is dragged to the pool of the stone horse. The only thing that is noticed is the bliss of the experience.

Shapechange to Animal, 5 points



horse form to leave the regio and travel the mundane world. She is not malicious (aside from a slight taste for human flesh), but mildly resents intrusion into her realm, and considers any who enter the water within her regio fair game for dinner.

Bois de Haillot's Charter

Frederick Barbarossa, emperor of the Germans and of Rome, to Anaxagorus of Triamore and his knights, and Gottfried of Brabant, and Baldwin of Hainault, and Phillip Magnus of Luxembourg and certain of their knights and followers, greeting. Know that I concede to Anaxagorus, Princes of Triamore, that land which is in the County of Namur called Bois de Haillot, and with it his tolls and fees and the profit of his lands, in the town and outside, and all his customs, which have before been held by Lucien of Namur. And I make Anaxagorus of Triamore and his knights free of vassalage to Namur and Brabant and Hainault and Luxembourg, owing service only to the Holy Roman Empire, except that Namur shall have those tolls and fees and customs which his antecessors had in the time of the Emperor Conrad II. I further charge Anaxagorus and his heirs and assigns the duty to promote his successor from among the knights and ladies abiding in that place, which owe fealty to no other lord. Witnesses: Duke of Brunswick, per Thuri Prudhomme.

The Three Sisters

The three sisters are a set of standing stones lying in a dell just beyond the western border of Bois de Haillot manor. Nobody is certain of their origin. Some

claim that they are dolmens, like the many pagan stones that dot the region in a seemingly random pattern. But these stones are unique in form, rising out of the earth more like stalagmites in caves than the coarse boulders set on end by the builders of the dolmens. It's been suggested that the Romans left them, but they hardly look Roman, and there are no other Roman structures nearby to support that theory. Still others believe that they are the remains of three goblins pursued by the ancient hero Beowulf, turned to stone when he forced them out of their hiding place and into the sunlight. It is this tale that gives the stones their name.

If any of these stories are true, there's no evidence to be found to support them. The sisters are weathered gray rock, rising out of the forested earth as if pinched out of clay. Each stands just higher than a man, roughly conical in shape with a rounded top that tapers down into the earth. No form can be perceived in their shapes, and no markings adorn their surfaces. There is no boundary or clearing about the stones; they simply stand among the trees in the forest, each about six paces from the others.

An attempt to speak with the stones yields no information: They are not natural, and will not speak. Nor can the local trees offer any information — the stones were here before they were born. Anyone successfully detecting very weak magics may determine that the stones were magically created and possibly pick up a weak residue of magic within the earth in the space between the stones. The spell *Greeting the Maker* reveals the stone columns were raised out of the earth by three cloaked figures — apparently Hermetic magi — using magic. A character attempting to see within the stone will find symbols there: The sign of House Tremere in the northern stone, the number 1128 in the southwestern stone (that's a date: 1128 in the

Hermetic reckoning of Aries is equivalent to the year 989 A.D.), and the word "VRAAGEN" in the southeastern stone. These symbols are made of veins of silver within the stones — the silver is mundane, and can be extracted by magical or conventional means. It amounts to three pounds.

The stones are simply markers; what makes this site important is not them but what lies between them, in the earth below. In 989, a magus of House Tremere and the Transylvanian Tribunal — Vraagen — confronted and was defeated by a powerful vampire. The vampire did not kill Vraagen, but rather made him one of its own kind. Vraagen returned to his covenant in the Transylvanian Tribunal, but his affliction was soon discovered by his sodales, and quickly became a problem of great concern as rumors of a powerful and bloodthirsty vampire circulated among the peasantry and then nobility of the surrounding region. Although his fellow magi were divided on an appropriate course of action, conflict with Vraagen was becoming increasingly inevitable, and after some time his sodales confronted and defeated him.

The vampiric magus was not slain, however, but was incapacitated magically. Hoping that his vampiric transformation might somehow be reversed, the magi of his covenant sought a secure place to confine his body — a place that would not be disturbed and from which Vraagen would not escape. Fearing also a quaesitor investigation of Vraagen and their covenant, the magi wished to find a place where their sodalis would not be found by any seeking him. They settled on the Ardennes forest, a suitably-remote and seemingly random site some several hundred leagues from their covenant.

The quaesitores did indeed come to investigate Vraagen's doings, and were eventually satisfied with his covenant's

claim that they had utterly destroyed the vampire. Vraagen's sodales, however, continued to search for a means to cure him, an investigation which was carried on by tradition within his covenant for nearly two centuries. Some 200 years later that effort, and the contact it brought with the ancient and powerful vampires of that region, led a cadre of misguided Tremere to voluntarily undertake the unlife that was thrust upon Vraagen. In 1211 the Order became aware of these vampiric magi, and by 1212 they were all destroyed. It is unlikely that any living magus now remembers Vraagen's true fate or location, or that any records of them exist.

Vraagen is buried in a seamless sarcophagus of solid stone, seven paces beneath the surface in the center of the stones. The coffin is warded against vampires of Magical Might of 30 or less. Within, Vraagen has lain entombed for two and a quarter centuries. Sealed within warded stone, there is no possibility that he will arise on his own. But should his coffin be discovered and broken, he would again be free — a powerful, bloodthirsty, and very angry creature.



Who's Who at Bois de Haillet

Alaric, hayward
 Allotta, an ale-taster
 Gilbert le Long, reeve
 Herleve, Alaric's wife
 Hugh, bailiff
 Magnus the Carpenter, a yeoman
 Marie, midwife
 Morris, steward
 Pere Hugo, priest
 Robert le Franceis, a bully
 Torold Miller, miller
 Trevor le Wyse, a jurist



Chapter 5

The Lands About Triamore

Triamore hardly exists in a vacuum. In fact, Brabant and the region around it is surprisingly complex in its political and economic activities, and Triamore is inextricably tied to both. This chapter covers some of the people and places most important to the covenant and its magi.

The Region

As mentioned in previous chapters, Triamore and Bois de Haillot are located within the county of Namur (ruled by Count Étienne Gaumond), which is part of the duchy of Brabant (ruled by Duke Henry II). Brabant sits at the western extreme of the Holy Roman Empire, between the prosperous county of Flanders to the west, the Norman county of Hainault to the south, and the German duchies of Luxembourg, Limbourg, and Guelders to the east. It is a primarily land-locked region, touching on the Flemish bays of the North Sea only at its northeast extreme.

Namur, like all counties and duchies, is divided into manors, each held by a lord varying in stature from petty knights such as Oswin of Arbois, who holds a single inconsequential manor, to Gaston Le Mange, an influential knight who holds five of Namur's nineteen manors.

Bordering Namur within Brabant are the counties of Louvain (to the north) and Nivelles (to the northwest).

Political Hierarchies

The social structure in the region of Triamore, as in most of mythic Europe, is feudal. Local lords are vassals of higher lords, who may or may not be vassals of even higher kings or emperors. In Brabant, the lords of local manors serve the lords of the counties, who serve the duke of Brabant. The duke, in turn, owes fealty to the Holy Roman emperor, though his bonds are not nearly as tight as those that bind counts to him, or the ones that bind the local manor-holding knights and lords to those counts. Brabant, though part of the empire, is practically an independent nation; Duke Henry runs his affairs with a minimum of interaction with the emperor. Namur is not so independent — Gaumond's policies are subject to Henry's oversight. The manors are the most dependent. Most manor-holding lords serve entirely at the count's pleasure, and can be countermanded or even unlanded on Gaumond's command.

As if that isn't complex enough, there's another aspect to the politics of southern Brabant. The duchy was only formed some sixty or eighty years ago — prior to that,

the region had been ruled by lesser independent lords who constantly warred among themselves. Many had established claims of lordship over their neighbors, based upon the complex lines of inheritance, marriage, conquest, or ancient alliance that bound so many of these rival families together. Many still harbor these claims, decades after the Holy Roman emperor settled the matter through a protracted military and political campaign and formed the duchy of Brabant as it now stands. Gaumond is one of those lords: Though he has sworn fealty to Henry, he still clings to the belief that he is the rightful lord not just of Namur, but of sizable portions of Luxembourg, Limbourg, and Louvain. If he actually held the lands that he believes his family is entitled to, his power would more than rival that of Henry; by extension the duchy would have been formed around his holdings, and it should be he, not Henry, who goes by the title "Duke" and sits in Frederick's court.

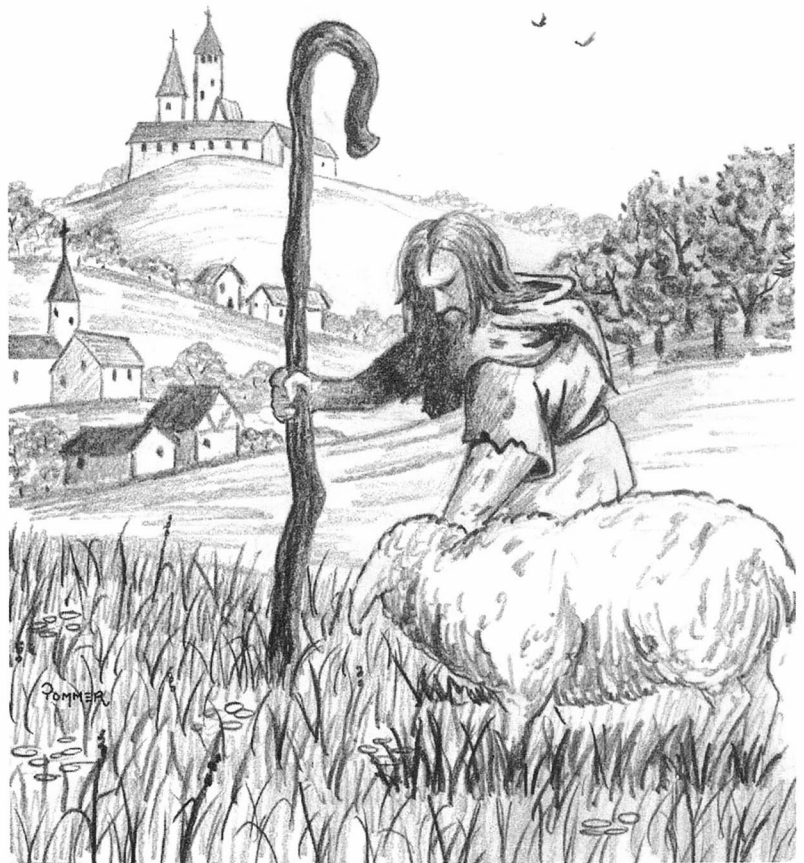
Gaumond isn't the only one who thinks this way. Setting aside Henry, the actual duke of Brabant, Gaumond's chief rival is Baldwin of Limbourg. Gaumond and Baldwin share what is perhaps the most active rivalry in the region — they've taken arms against one another three times in the past two decades, and their predecessors innumerable times before that (some of which directly embroiled Triamore, such as the invasion in 1172). Their objectives in these disputes are complex: Each has a series of complaints against the other that vary in age, validity, and priority, from two or three manors that were taken in such-and-such battle so many years ago, to ancestral claims that one's entire county should be the vassal of the other.

Geography

The region of Namur is one of rolling hills covered with sporadic forests of pine

and hardwood. It is neither the open champagne country of Normandy or southern England, densely dotted with grain fields and prosperous villages, nor is it quite the forest country of so much of Germany, with isolated hamlets and farmsteads carved out of the woodlands.

The weather is reasonably mild: Summers are not too hot, nor are winters generally bitter. Droughts are not unheard of, nor are long, frigid winters, but such occurrences are rare. Rain falls frequently, more often in slow soaking drizzles than in violent storms, and clouds are often in the skies even when rain is not. It's fine weather for farming, making up somewhat for a mediocre soil. Winter nights are long — much longer than in Europe's south, but summer evenings remain light well past vespers.





The People of the Region

Brabant sits at the western edge of the Holy Roman Empire, in a region where French and German peoples have intermixed for centuries. Its northern reaches have been trading centers since the time of the Romans, and are currently a hub for the prospering pan-European wool trade. The language spoken is predominantly Norman French, though German is not uncommon, especially in the north (and among the nobility throughout the duchy). This heritage and activity has given Brabant a notable diversity — but the duchy's social structure of peasants, noblemen, and the church remains the same as that throughout the rest of western Europe.

The Commoners

Most people in Brabant, Namur, and even Bois de Haillot, are commoners. Like the peasants at Bois de Haillot, some are free and others villeins, though the distinction to most of them is fairly unimportant. Peasants are ruled by the customary laws of their manors and counties; they can be abused by their lords but generally are not, as the customs that define their service also clearly define what can be demanded of them, and most local lords do not have the military might to extract anything beyond that. Serfs work the lands of their lords and pay varying taxes in exchange for the land they are given for their own benefit — throughout most of Brabant, the arrangements are similar to those specified for Bois de Haillot in Chapter 4.

In addition to their temporal dues, peasants generally pay one-tenth of their produce in tithes. That payment is not a voluntary donation — tithes are customary and enforced by law (an inducement that generally pales beside the need to protect one's immortal soul).

As in Bois de Haillot, there is throughout Brabant a broad social hierarchy among peasants. Some are wealthy, others impoverished; some influential, others powerless. Few — even those in positions of responsibility, such as Bois de Haillot's reeves and haywards — are educated. All are, of course, looked down upon by most of their superiors as narrow-minded and petty, but the truth is that most are industrious, efficient, and good at what they do.

Free or villeins, prosperous or poor, the peasants of Brabant are all subject to the whims of their often-harsh world: disease, bad weather, and the rotation of the seasons that requires back-breaking work one month and leaves men idle the next.

Incidentally, the term "peasant" does not have the derogatory connotation ascribed to it today. It simply refers to one who works the land; it has no implications regarding literacy or wealth. Many wealthy and influential commoners are quite aptly called peasants. On the other hand, it's entirely incorrect to call a miller a peasant — regardless of how coarse or common he is — since he does not till the soil for a living. The modern equivalent to the term is probably "farmer," but that has a specific meaning in medieval times: A farmer is one who rents land that is not granted to him; i.e., the land is "farmed" out to him.

The Nobility

The nobility in Brabant, as in most of Europe, are a military aristocracy. They might live longer, more comfortable lives than commoners on average, but just as one can falsely stereotype peasants as uniformly poor and stupid, it is just as wrong to assume that all people of quality are rich and literate. Quite the opposite is true: Only the upper strata of Europe's nobility enjoy what might be considered a luxurious lifestyle; beneath them are many layers of less influential, often quite poor, noblemen and ladies.

At the lowest level are those knights who are neither landed nor titled. These “gentle” men (and women, though for the most part noblewomen are defined by their fathers or husbands) serve other nobles as armsmen or retainers. Many are knights elevated from common status for prowess on the battlefield or other exemplary service; such positions are often hereditary for one additional generation only, so unless the knight’s son’s position is reaffirmed, his grandson will be a commoner again. Some of these low-level knights live up to the ideal of a nobleman being educated and wise, but many are just as illiterate, and nearly as coarse, as the peasants in the fields about them. Aside from a few high-value possessions — like the armor, swords, and horses that they need to fulfill their feudal duties — many of these knights are considerably poorer than prosperous peasants and tradesmen.

A step above are the landed knights, those who have been granted fiefs by their lords. Some, like Oswin (see page 104) hold just one tiny manor, while others might hold several — or even dozens — occasionally spread across the lands of several higher lords. Such positions are usually hereditary, and since they require the exercise of a bit of responsibility and judgment to render the lord the most profit, they are generally — but by no means always — granted to knights of a somewhat higher caliber. Nevertheless, such noblemen are not frequently educated, nor are they always wise or mannered.

At the top of the scale are the titled nobles — the counts, barons, earls, and dukes. These are who we normally think of when we speak of noblemen: powerful, wealthy (usually), educated, well-dressed, and sometimes even luxuriant. Of the nobility as a whole, only about one in ten is landed, and only one in ten of those are titled. While it’s easy for a peasant to assume that, were one a knight, one would spend the rest of one’s life hob-nobbing with the rich and powerful, the truth is

that most nobles no more rub elbows with dukes and kings than any peasant.

High or low, the landed nobility have similar responsibilities: administer justice, collect taxes, maintain bridges, keep roads safe, ensure that their lands are profitably run, and be ready to fulfill their military obligations (usually forty days’ service per year) to their higher lords.

The Clergy

The third leg of Brabantine society is the church. The church is a big part of everyone’s life; there are churches in every village, town, and castle. In addition, monasteries, convents, and abbeys frequently hold land, independently or for higher lords, making them part of the feudal system. Bishops and high clergymen are generally drawn from the nobility, and are considered of noble stature. Churchmen are supposed to be celibate, of course, but many are not. Some even rent out their responsibilities or simply ignore them, collecting their tithes while rarely — or perhaps even never — visiting the congregations they supposedly serve. Fortunately for the souls that rely upon the church for deliverance to the next world, such scoundrels are still the minority.

Local churchmen are usually drawn from prosperous peasantry and tradesmen, and most of them are only barely literate, learning what they do from their local parish priests before taking the cloth themselves. In most village parishes, the churchman holds some small parcel of land which he works himself, providing a more regular source of sustenance than his tithes, which may be slim in poorer regions, and much of which he must pass on to his bishop.

Most churches have but a single Bible (that being, of course, in Latin); only the more prosperous have communion sets or other accouterments of silver or other fine materials. A few possess rare relics or other items of particular reverence.





In addition to the priests which administer the temporal flock, Brabant is also dotted with religious communities: abbeys, monasteries, and convents. These are closed communities of men or women who have dedicated their lives to prayer, labor, and (sometimes, depending on the order) study. Most of the communities are Benedictine or Cistercian, although there are several that follow St. Augustine's Rule, or belong to no broader order than their own particular practices. The new Dominican order has recently established one or two communities in northern Brabant, but has not yet spread to Namur.

Bois de Haillot's Neighbors

Namur — not to mention Brabant and all of the surrounding counties and duchies — is sprinkled densely with manors, villages, towns, and abbeys. A few of the more noteworthy within twenty or thirty miles of Bois de Haillot are covered here.

Arbois

Arbois is the manor and village just to the north of Bois de Haillot. As the latter is sandwiched between the Meuse (with the duchy of Luxembourg on the opposite bank) and the Ardennes to the east, south, and west, Arbois is Triamore's only close neighbor.

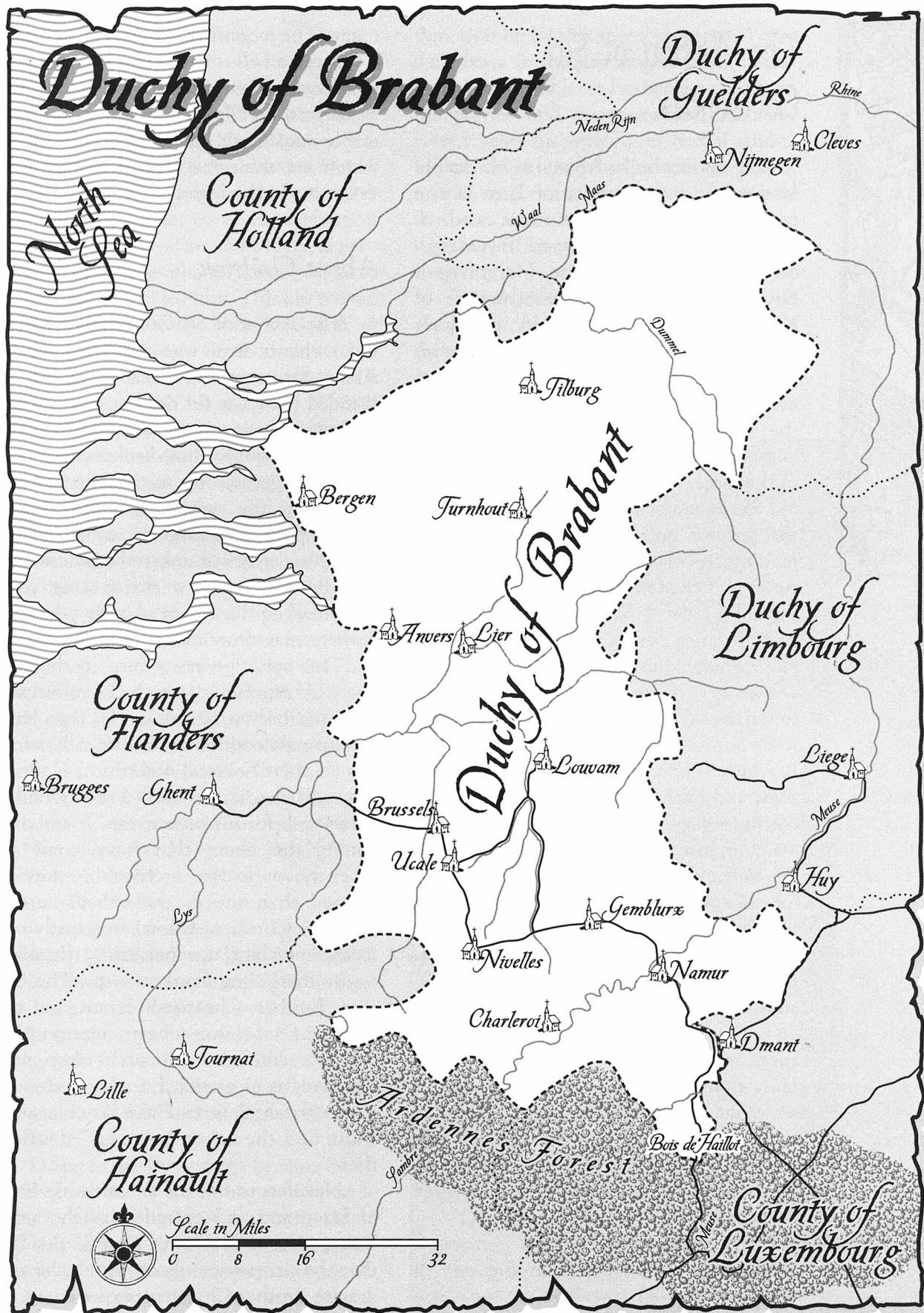
The manor is not particularly noteworthy: It consists of a village about the size of Bois de Haillot proper, the same three large fields, and wild pastures and forests extending three or four miles about. It lacks any outlying hamlets like those at Bois de Haillot, and of course there is no castle

beyond the strong stone house of the lord, a young knight named Oswin. All in all, it is a somewhat smaller operation than Bois de Haillot, and much more typical of the manors of Namur.

The village sits roughly a mile and a half off the Meuse, its church tower clearly visible to travelers along the road that skirts the river. The village crofts and buildings are strung out along a bumpy, muddy road that first passes between two of the village fields. The church and the village green, which is dominated by a huge and ancient oak, sit at the top of the road. Oswin's house is at the village's lower end, set off a bit from the road leading into the village.

There's a fair amount of interaction between the peasants of Arbois and those of Bois de Haillot. The former village features a few craftsmen lacking on Triamore's manor — most notably a carter — while Arbois does not have a tanner, unlike Bois de Haillot. Many people from Arbois (and sometimes even farther afield) visit Marie, the cunning woman in Bois de Haillot. Furthermore, there has been a great deal of intermarriage between the two villages over the decades, and many people visit friends and relatives in the adjoining villages for holidays or festivals.

The closeness between the peasants is not shared by their lords. Oswin, the lord of Arbois, is a young unmarried knight who was recently given the manor by Gaumond. Oswin has heard a number of unpleasant things about Daria and the collection of knights and ladies who serve her, most of which was fed to him by Gaumond. To a certain degree, the count misjudged his vassal's reaction, however. The rumors have filled the young knight with more curiosity than loathing, and he could conceivably be an ally of the covenant's if friendly relations were developed and maintained. Unfortunately, Gaumond made it clear to Daria that he intended to install a hostile tenant in Arbois, so the covenant has never bothered to communicate with Oswin.





The Abbey of St. Gottschalk

St. Gottschalk Abbey is a sizable monastery, a community of Benedictine monks. Located about six miles north of Namur, it was founded some 130 years ago on land donated by the Margrave of Nivelles, years before the counties of Namur and Nivelles, or the duchy of Brabant, were formed. The land it sits on is now inside Namur's borders. Additional donations over the years have increased the Abbey's holdings to three complete manors within the county, making it one of the largest landholders in Namur.

St. Benedict's Rule, which establishes the purpose and lifestyle of Benedictine monasteries, dates back almost seven centuries and created a precedent followed by virtually all other monastic orders. Benedictines value celibacy, poverty, labor, and separation from the temptations of society — in essence, a lifestyle lived in imitation of Christ's. Over the centuries, some monasteries have lost touch with the Benedictine Rule, becoming wealthy, corrupt, and even decadent, and in reaction to this a surge of new, stricter orders has arisen in just the past decade or two — the Dominicans and the wandering Franciscans, for example.

St. Gottschalk's, however, has remained true to the spirit of St. Benedict's Rule, despite prosperity and substantial holdings that have been donated to the abbey over the past decades. The three manors under the Abbey's control more than adequately support the fifty or so monks (and another half-dozen lay help) that live at the monastery. The abbey has several lay knights in service — one serving as lord over each of the three manors.

The abbey is a rambling compound situated atop a large hill, at the base of which is nestled a village of the same

name. The monastery consists of a chapel, a cloister, a bell tower, and a series of outbuildings, all within a walled compound. Without the walls is an broad array of vegetable and herb gardens, the latter of which are somewhat famed as the most extensive in the region.

Abbot Godrick

The Abbot of St. Gottschalk's Abbey is an elderly man who has lived at the Abbey for some five decades, and commanded the place for the last two. He is a devout and sincere man, proud of the Abbey's prosperity but displeased at how much that prosperity forces him to contend with the world of temporal and church politics beyond its walls. Indeed, those few senior monks who know him well have noted how the passing years have masked the Abbot's kindly personality behind a sometimes cranky exterior.

This agitation has grown in the past few years especially, as both Gaumond and the Archbishop Radolfus of Liège have increasingly courted St. Gottschalk's as an ally in their political ambitions. Godrick has resisted, and this has led the archbishop to push for his retirement. Triamore is among the issues that have come up recently, with the archbishop, having learned that one of the abbey's monks (Brother Chrétien, below) frequently visits the covenant, now pressuring the abbot to use this young monk as a spy. The fact that Brother Chrétien's reports of the covenant have always been quite positive are of no concern to the archbishop, who has made it clear that he wants information with which he can take action against Daria and the other "sorcerers" dwelling there.

Needless to say, the abbot thinks little of Gaumond and even less of the archbishop, but that doesn't change the fact that he is suspicious of the covenant, despite Brother Chrétien's experiences.

Brother Ansfel

Brother Ansfel is one of the monks at St. Gottschalk's Abbey. He occupies a rather unique position: He maintains the herb gardens for which the abbey is famed, and is known to be a very skilled concocter of potions and similar wares. His reputation as a healer has spread far and wide, and people from all over southern Brabant travel to St. Gottschalk's to see him. This has proved rather disruptive to the abbey's routine, so for the past ten years Brother Ansfel has been permitted to take up residence in a cottage adjacent to his gardens. He still attends his devotions as regularly as possible, of course, but minor lapses are excused due to the beneficial nature of his work.

Brother Ansfel first developed his renown some fifteen years ago. For some time the local peasants had been consulting him, but at that time a wave of pox swept through the region, killing hundreds. Brother Ansfel's poultices, however, were highly successful at curing those who had been afflicted, especially children. The pox had run its course through southern Brabant, and cases were dwindling, when the count of Nivelles' son fell ill with the sickness. Word of Brother Ansfel's success with the disease reached the count's ears, and he called for the monk. By the time Brother Ansfel arrived from St. Gottschalk's Abbey, some twenty-five miles away, however, it seemed the boy had succumbed. Nevertheless, Brother Ansfel's radical treatment, which included dunking the body in chilled water drawn from a local spring, revived the lad. This story, along with one or two other amazing feats of medicine, have led some to talk of seeking sainthood for Brother Ansfel, after his death.

Despite that (or perhaps because of it), Brother Ansfel is not what most people expect. Though at heart a compassionate and helpful man, he is on the surface rather irascible. He responds to every interruption as an unwelcome and unexpected distrac-

tion, as if he had not been interrupted on a daily basis for the past twenty years. In distant times, he objected to being pulled from his prayers and devotions, but in more recent years his interest in herbal studies has nearly eclipsed his passion for prayer, and he sometimes exaggerates his medical duties to extend the time he can spend working in his garden and cottage workshop.

The abbot might have something to say about that, but in truth that is hardly the darkest of Brother Ansfel's secrets.

Brother Ansfel is not a Benedictine monk. He's not technically a monk at all —



Brother Ansfel, Benedictine Monk and Healer

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

Age: 49

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Faith: 2

Virtues and Flaws: True Faith +3, Famous +2, Alchemy +1, Educated +1, Healer +1, Magic Sensitivity +1, Mendicant +1, Wise One +1, Arthritis -3, Decrepit -2, Lycanthrope -2, Dark Secret (not a monk) -1, Dark Secret (werewolf) -1, Obligation -1, Poor Eyesight -1, Reclusive -1, Social Handicap (irascible) -1, Vow -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) +2 -2 -2 +0 +1

Long Spear +6 +4 -1 +6 +1

Soak: 0

Abilities: Alchemy 4 (transformations), Animal Handling 1 (horses), Area Lore: Namur 3 (geography), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 2 (herbs), Brawling 1 (dodge), Chirurgy 2 (binding wounds), Concentration 2 (lab work), Craft: Tanning 2 (suede making), Craft: gardening 4 (herbs), Folk Ken 4 (peasants), Healer 5 (illness), Hunt 2 (tracking), Legend Lore 3 (beasts), Longshaft Weapon 1 (spear), Medicine 3 (physician), Ride 2 (speed), Scribe Latin 1 (original composition), Speak Latin 3 (church usage), Stealth 2 (natural areas), Survival 4 (Namur)



he's a tanner, from Lille. He joined the abbey, posing as a Benedictine from a monastery in Brest, in hopes that a life of prayer and devotion would rid him of another dark secret: lycanthropy. It hasn't.

Brother Ansfel has been a werewolf since childhood. The source of the curse is unknown to him, as are the number of people he has slain over his lifetime. When he was a young man, a cunning woman from a nearby village taught him to make a poultice that caused him to sleep through his periods of transformation, so that he would not roam and attack people. But Ansfel's lifelong desire is to rid himself of the curse entirely. Seeking a pious lifestyle, but knowing that he could never make his way through an adept's training without his curse being exposed, Ansfel posed as a fully-vested monk and sought residency at St. Gottschalks — a community he chose

because of its distance from his home and its well-known gardens. Ansfel's efforts to discover an herbal or alchemical cure to his own affliction combined with a previously-unknown talent for healing to give him the reputation he now enjoys.

Ansfel's devotion and piety are entirely real, but that doesn't change the fact that he is an impostor. As if that discovery weren't enough to fear, in recent years he's had to increase the dosage of his drugs to near-lethal levels to maintain effectiveness — and twice in the past year they haven't done the trick at all. Increasing his dosages further risks his death every time he puts himself to sleep (a death uncomfortably close to the mortal sin of suicide) — but if he doesn't, the lives of others may be at stake. Brother Ansfel is desperate to find a solution — long-term or short — to his curse.



Brother Chrétien

Brother Chrétien is a younger monk at the abbey, a scholar who has taken an intense interest in the library at Triamore. In fact, he is one of the most frequent visitors to the covenant, coming to visit the library, usually for a week or more at a time, several times a year. He was somewhat trepidatious during his first visit, some three years ago, for he had like so many others heard rumors of arcane pursuits at Lucien's Folly. But he has come to get along well with Remi and Isabelle, the librarian, and is now a strong defender of the covenant.

The Templar Commanderie at Huy

Located just east of the village of Huy, about two miles off the Meuse and the road to Liège, is a small Templar commanderie. The commanderie serves as a station for

recruitment and fund-raising, an outpost of the Templars' rather considerable banking operation, and a place of retirement for those monk-warriors too old (or too disabled) to further the goals of Christendom in the middle east, or Outremer (French for "overseas") as the Levant is often called. It was founded about thirty years ago, the land having been donated to the Templars by Gaumond's father during the height of support for Richard Coeur de Lion's crusade against Saladin.

The commanderie at Huy is not big by Templar standards — although the order has holdings as far away as Scotland, Namur is nevertheless fairly remote for this Levant/Mediterranean/France-centered organization. The commanderie is home to roughly thirty-five people: A dozen or so

veteran knights, retired from service in Outremer, a couple sergeants, the commander and his small staff, a household of ten or so, and, at any given time, perhaps half a dozen acolytes in training or awaiting transit to overseas duties.

The commanderie is a rugged building, not a true keep but well fortified nonetheless. It consists of a chapel, a barracks, a stable, a guest house, and a sturdy headquarters building, all within a stout stone wall. The chapel is a medium-sized stone building, cross-shaped, large enough for much larger masses than those observed by the three-dozen or so occupants of the commanderie. Attached directly to its southern flank is the barracks, another stone building. The Templars — even the commander and his staff — reside in two



The Templars

The Order of Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and the Temple of Solomon, or Templars as they are more commonly known, was founded about 100 years ago in Jerusalem, with the express purpose of protecting the byways and pilgrim routes in and leading to the holy land. It was originally headquartered in Jerusalem, though since that city fell to Saladin thirty years ago the order has headquartered itself in the many strong fortresses it maintains in the Levant.

The knights of the order are truly both warriors and monks. Templars take lifelong vows of chastity, poverty, and service. Their daily routines are much like those of other monastic orders — a regimen of prayer, meals eaten in silence, and so on, except that time that might be spent in contemplation or agricultural duties is instead spent in training or on military duty. Templar outposts in Europe resemble conventional abbeys but for their military bent, and even their powerful castles in the holy land are laid out much like monasteries. The majority of its members are knights, drawn from the noble classes — the Templars do have sergeants, squires, and servants who are commoners, but the majority are noblemen turned churchmen.

Some knights join the Templars on a temporary basis. These "lay knights" bolster the ranks of the Templars in times of crisis. Like all crusading duties, an oath to serve the Templars absolves much sin, but cannot be renounced without risk to one's immortal soul.

The Templars maintain a half dozen nearly-impregnable fortresses in the Levant, with perhaps 500 knights in Outremer, and nearly as many in their preceptories and commandaries spread throughout the Mediterranean and western Europe. In addition to fighting the Saracens and defending the roads of the holy land, they maintain a sizable fleet which ferries pilgrims and goods safely to the Levant. They also act as bankers, operating the world's first checking system (patrons can deposit cash at one Templar outpost in exchange for a cheque, then present the cheque at another outpost to withdraw the same sum, thus avoiding the need to carry around dangerously large sums of money) and financing the crusading (and even temporal) efforts of lords and church leaders throughout Europe. These activities, along with huge donations over the past century and control over lucrative ports in the middle east, have made the Templars one of the most economically powerful organizations in Europe.



large rooms here, each to a narrow cot much like soldiers on campaign, in considerably less comfort and privacy than even conventional monks. Adjacent to those rooms is a dining hall, with a kitchen behind. Opposite the barracks is the two-storied headquarters building, about the size of a village bailiff's hall but much sturdier, with an armory below and

Thierry le Bachelier, Templar Preceptor

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

Age: 53

Size: 0

Confidence: 5

Faith: 1

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Landed Knight +5, True Faith +3, Famous +2, Clear Thinker +1, Long-Winded +1, Social Contacts +1, Strong-Willed +1, Versatile Sleeper +1, Veteran +1, Vow (poverty) -3, Lame -2, Dark Secret (act of cowardice) -1, Disfigured -1, Dutybound -1, Vow (protect Christian travelers) -1

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+1	+0	-2	+0	+4
Longbow	-3	+1	—	+10	—
Morningstar	+0	+4	-2	+8	+3
Light Crossbow	-8	+2	—	+10	—
Greatsword	+3	+1	-1	+8	+1
Lance (mounted)	+10	+11	+4	+6	+9
Longsword & Kite Shield	+3	+3	+7	+4	+5
Longsword	+3	+1	+2	+4	+4

Soak: +14 (Full Chain Mail)

Abilities: Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 4 (keeping watch), Bargain 3 (loans), Bow 3 (longbow), Brawling 4 (fists), Chain Weapon 3 (morningstar), Chirurgy 2 (setting bones), Civil/Canon Law 2 (papal), Climb 2 (cliffs), Concentration 2 (reading), Crossbow 2 (light crossbow), Etiquette 2 (nobility), Folk Ken 2 (clergy), Great Weapon 2 (greatsword), Hunt 2 (tracking), Leadership 4 (armies), Longshaft Weapon 4 (lance), Ride 4 (battle), Scribe Latin 4 (original composition), Scribe Norman French 4 (original composition), Shield and Weapon 6 (longsword), Siege Equipment 1 (trebuchet), Single Weapon 4 (longsword), Speak Latin 3 (church usage), Stealth 3 (sneak), Storytelling 2 (improvisation), Survival 2 (Levant), Thrown Weapon 2 (axe)

the commander's office and bank above. On the fourth flank of the compound, opposite the chapel, the small, three-roomed guest quarters is situated next to the stable.

Guests travel to the commanderie to call upon their banking services, or (more rarely) to enter into service as Templars, sergeants (the only military role open to commoners), or lay knights (knights who join the order on a temporary basis). Those with legitimate business are welcome to the commanderie's simple hospitality, though the order does not regularly house travelers outside of the pilgrim routes. Templars from elsewhere visit on occasion, bearing messages or updates on the secret codes the Templars use to ensure the security of their cheques and banking documents, or escorting the movement of cash or goods.

The commanderie probably represents the greatest concentration of cash in the county of Namur, with 100 to 300 pounds of silver being routinely kept on hand for the payment of drafts or the tendering of moderate loans. Larger sums can be called in from the larger commanderie at Ghent with a few days' notice.

In addition to their commanderie, the Templars have recently taken possession of a manor donated to their order by Gaumond. The do not maintain a presence on the manor, however, allowing it to be managed by Guy de Vessois, the knight who held it for Gaumond, for the time being.

The Templars and Gaumond

The Templars at Huy are somewhat active in the political and economic world of Namur, and in particular in Gaumond's affairs. The count has called upon the Templars for assistance in financing his new castle, in the form of a series of loans currently totaling several thousand pounds. In appreciation, he has given to the order the manor of Bouillon at the western edge of the county (no Christian organization would demand or accept interest on a loan, of course, but carefully negotiated "gifts," such as this manor, are acceptable).

In addition to the financial aid they've provided him, Gaumond hopes to make an ally of the Templars in his efforts to win independence from Brabant, and in ousting Triamore from Bois de Haillot and Lucien's Folly. He's unlikely to develop much support for the former, for the Templars have little interest in temporal squabbles, at least in such petty affairs as Namur's. The case of Triamore is somewhat different. The Templars have heard (largely through Gaumond) the rumors of Triamore's arcane pursuits, and might well be persuaded to aid him and the bishop of Liège in destroying the covenant. What the Templars don't know is that Gaumond is counting on his dubious tax claims against Triamore to pay the early installments of his loans, and upon taking possession of Bois de Haillot to fulfill his full obligation.

There's been some discussion among the Templars about the mysterious robber-baron who haunts the Ardennes south and east of Namur. This menace, with his band of perhaps thirty of forty thugs, has been "taxing" — and often killing — merchants and travelers who make the arduous passage through the forest from France for nearly twenty years. He has succeeded for so long because neither the lords of Blois nor of Brabant consider him "their" problem. But the Templars have a tradition of keeping roads free of such threats, and even though the byways of the Ardennes are not common pilgrim routes, such a threat so close to the commanderie is an affront to the Templars' mandate. So go the debates within the commanderie, at least. For the time being the preceptor of the commanderie, Thierry le Bachelier, has made no decision to hunt the robber baron. But, unaware that the robber-baron was in fact a rogue maga, who was recently destroyed by Remi (see Chapter 3), he may do so soon. If he does, his knights will almost certainly be active in and around the lands of Bois de Haillot, and may stumble upon Jenise DuCraindre's keep. What they find there may affect their outlook towards Triamore.

The Preceptor

The preceptor of the commanderie is Thierry le Bachelier, a man whose attachments run not just to Namur but also, surprisingly, to Triamore. Thierry was born and raised in Gembloux, just north of Namur — it was because he is a native of Brabant that he was assigned to the commanderie at Huy. It was not until he arrived at this posting in 1217 that he learned that Remi — an old comrade at arms — lived at Triamore.

Although he's over fifty years old, Thierry retains an athletic physique and rugged appearance. Indeed, he might pass for a man of fifteen fewer years were it not for the lines etched deeply in his face. His hair is a rusty brown just going to gray, and it frames a squarish countenance marred not just by those weathered lines but also from a deep scar running across his left cheek from temple to jawline. He walks with a pronounced limp due to a right leg which healed poorly after being badly set; it was this injury that ended his military career. Nevertheless, Thierry remains active, and is a tireless recruiter and fund-raiser for the Templar cause.

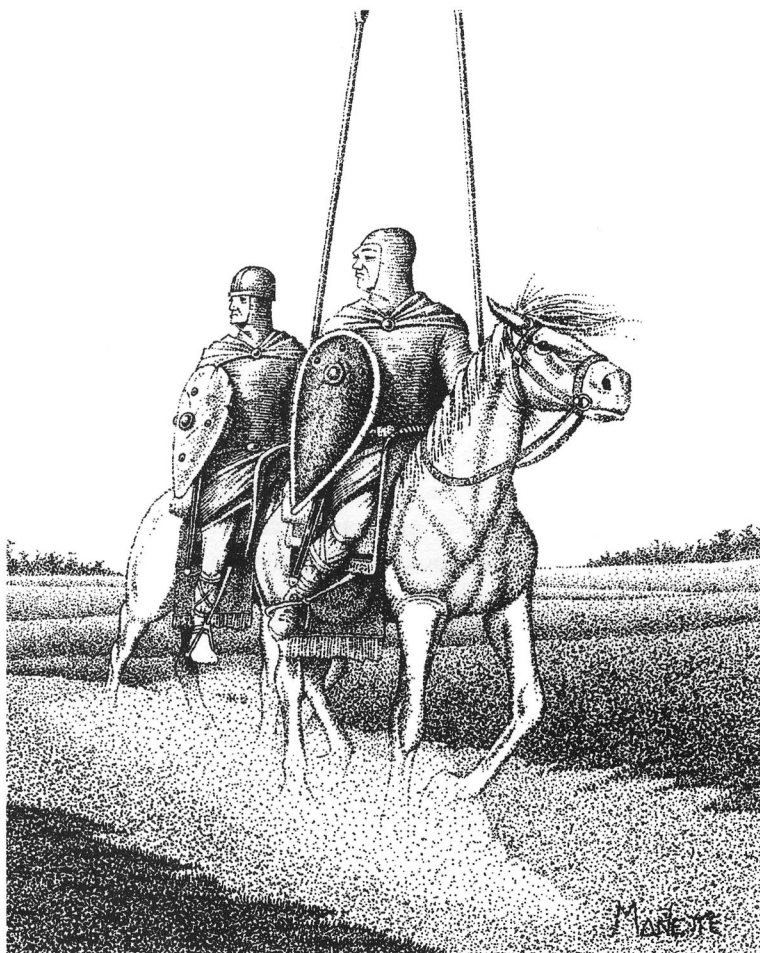
A hardened veteran with over thirty years' service in the Levant, Thierry's strict monastic devotion is tempered by a certain worldliness. Like most natives or long-term veterans of the Levant, Thierry is considerably more tolerant of the infidels and their alien ways than are the millions of Europeans who have never had to live side-by-side with them. Although a strong proponent of any reasonable plan for retaking Jerusalem, he is nevertheless realistic enough to realize how futile are hopes of completely destroying or subjugating the Saracens — the high ideal of a surprising lot of European lords and churchmen. Likewise, Thierry casts a skeptical eye on any talk of sorcery, diablerie, or the need to wipe out those sus-





pected of practicing the dark arts. Fortunately, that means that he's withholding judgment on Triamore until he can learn more about what really goes on there.

Two years ago, Thierry ran into Remi in Liège. Although they had not been close friends, the two had known one another some twenty-five years before in Iberia (well before Remi became a magus). Thierry knew Remi to be a forthright and trustworthy comrade, and was quite surprised to learn that he now resided at the ill-rumored Bois de Haillot. He has had some correspondence with Remi since, and intends to visit or send a representative to the covenant soon to investigate the claims. What is learned there will influence his stance on the covenant and Gaumond's desire to destroy it.



The Administrator

Thierry le Bachelor's second in command is Frederich the Hospitaller, a younger though still veteran knight with a somewhat fiery disposition. Frederich is a "reformed" Jew who joined the order some twenty years ago. Though he has served impeccably, he harbors a burdensome suspicion: That he has never been fully trusted by his Christian-by-birth comrades; that he is posted to administrative rather than martial tasks (and to such dreary sites as Huy) because of his Jewish heritage. He may or may not be correct, but it cannot be denied that his administrative skills outstrip his martial ones. And although rumors of his background follow him everywhere and no doubt color the attitudes of his comrades towards him, Thierry for one pays the issue no mind.

Perhaps it is this chip on Frederich's shoulder that makes him so militant in his opinions. Despite his years of service in the Levant, Frederich does not share Thierry's moderate view towards the infidels, nor does he have any reservation about Templar involvement in actions against Triamore. Fortunately, for the time being there is nothing he can do except advocate a more active role to Thierry.

Frederich has a second interest in Triamore's downfall. He has become increasingly aware that Gaumond's ability to repay his Templar loans is based at least in part upon his repossession of Bois de Haillot. The order's policy holds that the Administrator who issues a loan is responsible for its repayment, and there are grave punishments for failure, regardless of circumstance.

Frederich's surname might cause some confusion. He is a knight Templar, not a Hospitaller (another order of warrior-monks originating and operating in Outremer). His name comes from the fact that for several years he served as the physician and surgeon at Bagras, a Templar castle along the Antioch frontier.

The Town of Namur

About a day's travel north of Triamore, where the Meuse turns eastward and the road to Brussels splits from that to Liège, lies the town of Namur and Gaumond's castle, Frois Pont. A market town of perhaps 500 souls, Namur is not big enough to warrant walls and defenses, but it is the largest town in the County of Namur, and the seat of trade for the County.

The town sits on the narrow wedge of land at the fork of the Meuse and Sambre rivers, stretched out along the bank of the latter in the shadow of a stony ridge. It is overlooked by Frois Pont, a narrow, primitive keep set along the rocky ridgetop. Namur would be, under normal circumstances, little more than a glorified village most of the time — it features a large stone church, two smithies, a tanner, a wool-dyer, carters, hoopers, and a handful of other craftsmen, along with two inns and several guest houses, but is otherwise devoid of cosmopolitan features. The past year has not been normal, however. The construction at Frois Pont (see below) has brought scores of masons, laborers, and craftsmen to the town, and that in turn has attracted merchants, traders, entertainers, and all sorts of other activity to the little town.

Furthermore, Namur is a fair town. Even in normal times, the town comes alive on fair days (usually the first Saturday of each month), as peasants and people of quality alike travel from miles around for goods and entertainment they never see in their home villages. The large transient population at Frois Pont only further swells the activity.

Frois Pont

Gaumond's castle, and the seat of the county of Namur, is Frois Pont. Situated on the ridge above the town of Namur, Frois

Pont is an aging keep of rather primitive design, not nearly as large nor luxurious as Lucien's Folly. Gaumond is working on that, however: He is currently undertaking a considerable enlargement to the castle, including a barbican, an extension to the keep, and a solid bailey.

The existing keep consists of a single rectangular tower with a smaller round tower affixed to one corner. It sits on the gentle knob that crests the ridge, with an assortment of outbuildings, including a stable, a smithy, and two sheds, set a few score paces away. Work has begun on the new barbican and the bailey wall — the lower level of the barbican is in place, while the foundations of the bailey walls are just being excavated. An encampment of sheds, shops, and workers' quarters has been established just in front of the barbican, along the road towards the town of Namur.



Gaumond's Court

Between Gaumond, the landlords of nineteen manors, and their stewards and lieutenants, there are perhaps two dozen nobles in Namur, all of whom (including Daria) are occasionally called to court at Frois Pont. Routine errands — or trouble stemming from local politics and Gaumond's unending interest in unseating Triamore from Bois de Haillot — might easily bring the player magi into contact with Gaumond or the influential members of his court. Some of the more noteworthy local lords are outlined here.

Count Étienne Gaumond

The count of Namur is a man whose life has been defined by frustration. His family originally hailed from Louvain, and took possession of Namur four generations ago, after Lucien's downfall. Between existing



grievances brought with them from Louvain, and those inherited from Lucien, Gaumond has an entire litany of centuries-old claims on parts of Limbourg, Luxembourg, Hainault, Nivelles, and Louvain, all of which can easily be assembled into a rational argument for a ducal position. Unfortunately, he's hardly alone — after several hundred years of struggle between the local lords, virtually every noble family in the region has grievances and can authoritatively prove its claim to lordship over its neighbors.

That, of course, is no matter to Gaumond — he's struggled his entire life to expand his holdings to the extent that he truly believes he is rightfully entitled. And he has nothing to show for it. His every effort, military and diplomatic, has met with failure, not through grand mis-

takes or even true incompetence, but due mostly to poor luck, a measure of finesse just short of that which is needed, and the occasional premature move. During Frederick's struggle for ascension, Gaumond supported him even when his own duke, Henry of Brabant, supported his rival. He received nothing for his loyalty, but instead saw Henry's power consolidated when the duke realigned himself into Frederick's camp. Efforts to build the military might necessary to take lands by force have been undermined by ill-timed attacks from Limbourg or Luxembourg, or have met with rebuke from the duke or even the emperor just as Gaumond was nearly ready to act.

Gaumond is not married, though he was once engaged. His fiancée, a niece of Duke Henry's, was instead married to a

Court at Frois Pont

Gaumond holds court at least once a year, and the lord of Bois de Haillot is expected to be present. Daria resists attending such affairs, and if not needed specifically would much prefer to send another magus as her representative. Player character magi might well find themselves in such a position.

Frois Pont in its current state is not half the castle Lucien's Folly is, and even the latter would be hard-pressed to accommodate the score or so lords and ladies (and four times that number of retainers) that attend Gaumond's court. As a result, Picard rations space within and around the castle, with those most senior lords and important guests getting private or shared rooms, while those lower on the pecking order sleep in the great hall or (if they planned ahead) in camps outside of the castle. Generally, Abbot Godrick, the Archbishop Rodolfus, the duke's representative, and Picard are housed in the better quarters. Magi from Triamore are likely to be offered the least flattering accommodations, or none at all.

The rules of hospitality demand that Gaumond feed his guests in a manner appropriate to the occasion, and Gaumond fulfills his duty. His dinners are

hardly mean, though they are not particularly noteworthy. Any entertainment provided is pedestrian at best. It's not that Gaumond is cheap in this regard; he's just not very imaginative about such celebrations. In the four-table hierarchy of guest seniority (the host and exalted guests at the first table, prominent guests at the second, and lesser guests and their retainers at the third and forth, which might extend to rooms outside the great hall), the magi of Triamore rate the third table at best.

Court is carried out for nearly two weeks, and not everyone is present the entire time. Some issues among the lords are settled in open session, but most are dealt with in private meetings. The latter days are open to petitions from commoners — mostly townspeople from Namur, as most peasants have recourse only through their manorial courts. Covenant business is likely to be put off until late in the process — to be handled at Gaumond's convenience, not that of the magi that come to see him.

Needless to say, overt acts of magic, or any insubordination, will not improve the reception and may well get magi arrested.

relative of Frederick's in the aftermath of the emperor's ascension.

Gaumond is a bear of a man, powerfully built and almost terrifyingly intense. He has faded red hair, a thick mustache, and a fuming temper which is almost always contained — but just barely — and which tends to send the veins in his forehead throbbing. He is a man of action with little time for the finer things in life; he tends to wear simple clothing (though not too simple for his station) with little ornamentation, and often rushes through pleasantries and formalities. He's also a man with few scruples — he had his own brother murdered to remove one potential rival in his claim to a ducal position.

He has no particular animosity towards the arcane arts, but as he has long felt that the magi at Lucien's Folly have been given an undeserved prize at his expense — just one of many injustices perpetrated by the emperor and the duke against his family — he's not shy about denouncing the covenant on any pretense. If it serves him to support Archbishop Radolfus' claims that the covenant is engaged in heresies or diablerie, so be it.

Gaumond's stronghold and the place at which he holds court is the castle of Frois Pont, about three miles outside of Namur. The castle is old and small in comparison to Lucien's Folly, but Gaumond is in the process of dramatically enlarging it. So far work has been restricted to the foundations of the bailey walls, and the current expansion will probably take two or three years to complete.

In addition to the county of Namur, Gaumond also holds several manors in Blois, outside of Brabant and the Holy Roman Empire.

Picard, Gaumond's Steward

Picard is Gaumond's steward — it's his duty to manage Gaumond's business affairs, including the logistics of court and the seven

manors he holds directly. Unlike Triamore's steward, Morris, Picard is a nobleman in his own right, a minor knight who has served Gaumond for over a decade. He was knighted by Gaumond's father after one of the latter's many skirmishes with Limbourg; prior to that he had been a commoner. At nearly fifty, he's about ten years older than Gaumond.

Picard is a down-to-earth figure, a mature and fairly reasonable man. Though not as ambitious as his lord, he does instinctively adopt Gaumond's suspicions and sympathies, and as a result will likely have an adversarial outlook on any of Triamore's magi from their first meeting, regardless of cause.



Étienne Gaumond, Count of Namur

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

Age: 41

Size: +1

Confidence: 4

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Titled Noble +6, Ambidextrous +1, Enduring Constitution +1, Large +1, Reckless +1, Self-Confident +1, Veteran +1, Enemies (Limbourg) -3, Fury -3, Overconfident -2, Driving Goal (duchy) -1, Hatred (Henry of Brabant) -1, Oversensitive (disrespect) -1

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+3	+2	+1	+4	+2
Lance (mounted)	+9	+10	+4	+10	+4
Longsword & Kite Shield	+5	+5	+10	+8	+3
Longsword	+5	+3	+5	+8	+3

Soak: +13 (Full Chain Mail)

Abilities: Area Lore: Brabant 3 (history), Athletics 4 (jumping), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bow 3 (longbow), Brawling 3 (fists), Carouse 2 (stay sober), Civil/Canon Law 2 (Holy Roman Empire), Etiquette 2 (nobility), Guile 2 (elaborate lies), Hunt 4 (boar), Intrigue 2 (alliances), Leadership 3 (mercenaries), Longshaft Weapon 2 (lance), Ride 2 (battle), Scribe Norman French 1 (original composition), Shield and Weapon 5 (longsword), Single Weapon 3 (longsword), Speak Latin 2 (church usage), Stealth 1 (sneak), Survival 1 (Ardenne)



Unlike Gaumond, Picard is married. His wife, Lady Cynthia, lives in Frois Pont and, in the absence of a Lady Gaumond, has assumed the role of lady of the house. She is a difficult and opinionated woman, small of frame but not of presence. She's entirely satisfied with the lack of marriage prospects for the count, and with his effort to elevate his (and consequently her) political status. Picard takes little note of his wife's ambitions, and for the most part they are of little consequence, as she's not really in the decision-making loop. At some point, however, she might well decide to take a more direct role in moving the count's fortunes forward.

Lady Juliana

Lady Juliana is a distant niece of Gaumond's who has recently been made his ward. Her appearance at Frois Pont was somewhat unexpected, as she had rarely been heard from before. At perhaps eighteen years old, she's something of Gaumond's opposite — graceful, charming, and cultured, a woman with a sharp eye, quick wit, and gentle cunning. She's extremely attractive and almost always surrounded by a retinue of admirers, to whom she is appropriately polite but pays little real attention. Characters with the ability to sense unholiness might detect it in her.

Though her appearance was unheralded and her future is uncertain, Juliana has been accepted into Gaumond's household for the time being. Oddly, despite his lack of use for civility, Gaumond seems to have taken an unusual, almost paternalistic liking to his niece, and for all his coarseness she seems unexpectedly tolerant of him. Perhaps Gaumond sees in her a certain political savvy that he's never fully mastered, which he might put to use in pursuit of his ambitions. Or perhaps she's just an asset, a desirable partner that he might marry off advantageously in lieu of the daughters he's never produced.

Unfortunately for him (or perhaps not), Juliana's real interest is not in Gaumond. It's in Triamore, or, rather, the Shadow Covenant (see page 74). Juliana is in fact none other than the devil Sainela, Negotiator of the Middle Echelons, and she's intent on preventing the transfer of the Fraction of Belthasius to the Shadow Covenant. She knows that the Shadow Covenant once had, and then lost, the Fraction, and she suspects that it ended up in Pietre's hands. Like the Shadow Covenant, she has no idea where it went from there. She's come to Namur in an attempt to determine whether Triamore is hiding it — or even knows about it. She has taken up residence in Gaumond's household because it gives her a relatively safe place from which to surveil the covenant with little chance of detection. Through her subtle powers of mind control, she has convinced the household and Gaumond that she is a long-lost relative, and they have welcomed her into Frois Pont with few questions.

Juliana doesn't share Gaumond's hostility towards the covenant, and in fact has an interest in it that may stay any plans he might put into motion against Triamore. At least until her questions are answered.

Juliana is a devil, and will not pass up any easy opportunity to corrupt Gaumond's household or any magi she comes into contact with. But she's also here with a reason, and she won't jeopardize her mission for the mere opportunity to dabble with mortals who probably need little help in damning their souls.

Pere Stephan, the Chaplain

The count's chaplain is Pere Stephan. Stephan is a man aging before his time: Though still only about thirty years old, he could easily pass for ten years older. He is a fastidious man who despises disorder — physical or spiritual — and all that bring it into the world. He is harsh at confession

and at court, but his ire seems to arise more from the bother caused by others' inability to live their lives and run their affairs with the concern for precision that marks his life, rather than the actual sins or errors committed.

Pere Stephan's role at Frois Pont is administrative as well as religious; he assists Gaumond and Picard in maintaining the records of the county and castle. In the past year he has been specifically tasked with overseeing the castle construction. The constant frustrations of this job further sour his already bitter personality.

Brabant and Beyond

The places and politics within Namur most closely touch upon Triamore's affairs, but the covenant has ties to (and can be affected by) people, places, and events beyond the boundaries of Namur.

As a duchy, Brabant is much like a larger version of Namur: A place where French and German languages and cultures mingle, dominated by rolling hills and a patchwork of pine forests with mild weather and frequent rain. The northern reaches are more densely populated, with more and larger markets towns including Brussels, Anvers, Tilburg, and Bergen. Though none of those are as prosperous as the Flemish towns of Ghent and Brugges, they are all free cities, sites of large markets, surrounded by heavy walls and fortifications. The land around these northern towns tends to be flatter than the hilly south, and dialects of German are more commonly spoken by the commoners.

The duke of Brabant is Henry II. A political animal with skills and connections Gaumond can only aspire to, Henry descends in part from the ruling family of

Limbourg. His wife, Marie, is the daughter of King Phillip of France. She was once married to Gaumond's father, but their marriage was annulled several years before she married Henry. Henry supported Otto in the recent struggle for ascension over the Holy Roman Empire, and he received several political concessions when he switched allegiance over to Frederick (Gaumond, loyal to Frederick from the beginning, received little recognition for his loyalty).

Henry maintains a network of ducal castles and palaces, with his principal residence at Tilburg. Most of his holdings are large and impressive, and several of them dwarf even Lucien's Folly. His courts are month-long affairs, often luxurious and entertaining. Petty noblemen such as the lady of Bois de Haillot are not expected to attend unless they have specific business that cannot be settled through the courts of their local lords.

Although, as just mentioned, there are several major trade towns in northern Brabant, a closer and larger city lies just over the border in the neighboring duchy of Limbourg: Liège. Triamore often has business in Anvers, Brussels, or even Ghent — but much more frequently, covenant business takes the magi to this closer center of commerce.

Liège

Liège is a fairly large city in the duchy of Limbourg, about forty miles or so from Bois de Haillot. With some 10,000 inhabitants, Liège is half again the size of Brussels and over twice as big as Verdun (the two other cities closest to Bois de Haillot), and comparable in size to Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres, the wealthy trade cities of Flanders. Within its stout city walls Liège is a cramped and messy place, like most cities, with tall, narrow buildings that frequently hang over the haphazard, irregular streets. Many of the streets are paved with small





cobbles, sloping to a gentle vee in the center that serves as a gutter for horse dung and household waste. Others are not paved at all. Wise pedestrians avoid the centers of the streets, keeping to the less-messy edges, where overhanging buildings offer some protection from the emptying of chamber pots from upstairs windows.

The streets leading in from each gate are paved in the middle with a track of larger flagstones, creating a trail that can easily be followed to the Grand Place — the downtown market square overlooked by the cathedral. Along these wider streets many tradesmen set up tables or stalls in front of their shops to sell their wares; in other areas tradesmen open horizontal shutters to wide windows in front of their shops, the upper shutter forming an awning over the counter created by the lower shutter. Most of the buildings in Liège are built of timber-framed wattle-and-daub roofed in thatch, two or three stories tall with an additional attic, painted red or blue or faced in tile, and often decorated with moldings, paneling, or sawtooth. Shops are marked with colorful signboards indicating their trades: tack-maker indicated by a horse's head; barber indicated by a white arm wrapped in red bands, and apothecary indicated by three gilded pills for example. The town homes of the most prosperous merchants, tradesmen and noblemen, along with the guild-houses on the Grand Place and of course the castle and cathedral, are made of stone. Stone construction is not simply ostentation, as it might be in a rural village: Fire is not an infrequent occurrence in city life, and stone buildings are less endangered by spreading fires than timber or wattle-and-daub construction.

Nor is disease uncommon: When plague or illness is borne into a city like Liège it spreads much faster among the populace than it does across the countryside. Fortunately, the city has not faced a major fire or pestilence for over a decade.

There are nine churches in addition to the cathedral in Liège, as well as seven abbeys and priories. Bells ring from each of these institutions to mark the holy offices (prime, terce, sext, nones, vespers, compline, and matins) and the passage of the day. There's a strict hierarchy: The cathedral bells are rung first, followed by those of the convent of Saint Madeleine and on down, each church allowed to ring after its betters and before those of lesser influence. There is a castle in the city, but it is not much compared to those of the noblemen in the surrounding counties, and is not used as a residence by the city's rulers. The mayor and the archbishop each live in palaces in the Old City (the oldest part of town, the streets of which are still based upon the layout of an ancient Roman garrison).

Though situated in Limbourg, Liège is a free city, ruled by its own council and mayor instead of any of the surrounding titled nobles. The heart of this arrangement is the commune, a charter made by the duke and signed onto by all of the city's tradesmen and merchants (but not knights or churchmen, who are specifically prohibited from joining the commune and therefore continue to owe normal feudal service to the duke). Members of the commune are free from all the feudal duties and taxes paid by peasants, instead paying a tax to the city (which in turn pays a fee to the duke for the right to maintain the commune) amounting to six pennies for every pound's worth of property, up to a maximum tax of twenty pounds. Although commune members are exempt from their individual feudal duties, the town as a whole must produce 220 foot soldiers and four wagons for forty days' service per year, or pay the duke a fee of 250 pounds.

The most influential commune members — about 400 or so — make up the Grand Council. The Grand Council elects the town council (with the approval of the duke), which then selects the mayor, who serves until he dies or abdicates. Often the

mayor passes the job on to a successor of his choosing; unless there is strong objection the election is simply waived. Beneath the mayor is a fairly sizable bureaucracy.

Not every citizen of the town is a member of the commune. Only those of the "Third Estate" — merchants and craftsmen — may join. All others are normal subjects of the duke, and owe all the usual taxes and feudal duties. A free city like Liège draws many itinerant workers and runaway serfs, for any bonded man who resides in a free city for a year and a day becomes free himself. Unfortunately, there is little for a man with no trade skills to do in such a place, and so many join the hundreds of lepers, cripples, and blind who beg on the streets and in the Grand Place.

Liège is home to true capitalists as well as simple craftsmen and merchants. Although usury remains a sin, virtually any person or institution which has money eventually gets into the business of lending it. As recently as a century ago, the practice was generally limited to Jews, but Jewish moneylenders have now been largely pushed out of the market by wealthy merchants, moneychangers, and even the Knights Templar.

Magi or their representatives shopping for lab equipment and supplies will find Liège an excellent source. Virtually any commercially-available item can be found in the city at one time or another, if not constantly. Glasswares, rare metals, gems, tools, measuring devices — even the occasional exotic animal — can be obtained from the merchants and craftsmen of the city, or those who constantly flow through its markets.

The City Gates

Liège is protected by a stout wall of stone, some eight paces high and reinforced by six gatehouses and another dozen stone towers. The city has not been

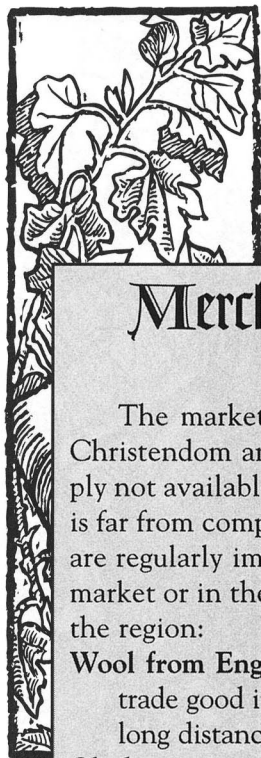
besieged for several decades, but should it come to be, it is fairly well-protected. In addition to the city guard — a garrison of some 120 footsoldiers, called "mercenaries" (not because of any questionable loyalty, but simply because they work for pay instead of feudal service) — every member of the commune must join in the defense of the city when needed, or pay someone in his stead.

The guards live in the gatehouses, the castle, and a barracks in the western quarter. They man the gates and make occasional patrols of the walls and main streets during the day, and make rounds of the city's labyrinthine byways at night. In addition to deterring thieves, they also keep an eye out for fire, and ensure that citizens are not burning lights after matins (town law says that all flames must be reduced by that hour, again for the prevention of fire). Should they spy a criminal in his act, they give chase and call out the hue and cry, which compels all who hear it to join in the chase. It is a criminal act to hear a hue and cry and not join in the pursuit of the guilty; it is equally criminal to call out the hue and cry falsely.

Those coming to Liège must enter the city through one of six gates, and there pass under the scrutiny of the guards on duty. Those not recognized by the town guard (in a town of 10,000 the guards do recognize most of the citizens) are asked their business and the length of their stay. If the answers do not satisfy the guards, they are not permitted to enter. The guards demand a tax on the value of goods brought into the city: one penny per pound's worth of merchandise. They are likely to overvalue goods brought in by complete strangers (or even overstate the tax, pocketing the extra), but allow familiar merchants who frequent the city to state the value of their own merchandise.

The gates close after vespers, and open in the morning a little before prime. Anyone needing to enter or exit the city





between those hours must convince the guard on duty to wake the gatekeeper, who may or may not be willing to open the doors. A few pence will usually do the trick, but that depends entirely upon the guards' disposition.

Merchants and Their Goods

The market at Liège is a source of goods from all over Christendom and beyond: items rare and wonderful, or simply not available in Brabant and Limbourg. Although this list is far from comprehensive, here are some of the things which are regularly imported into Liège, and might be found at the market or in the caravans of merchants traveling the roads of the region:

Wool from England: Wool is far and away the most common trade good in northern Europe; perhaps three-fourths of all long distance trade is in wool.

Cloth: expensive silk, linen, and cotton from southern Europe and the East, as well as woolen cloth of varying value from England and Flanders.

Spices from the East: ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, and saffron (worth well over its weight in gold); less valuable spices from other parts of Europe: cloves, mace, cumin, black pepper, and mustard.

Pearls and other precious and semi-precious stones.

Olives and fruits (especially citrus from the Mediterranean).

Wines and cheeses from other regions, each with a unique character that cannot be duplicated locally.

Furs: squirrels, foxes, stoat, and so on.

Fine luxury items, such as olive oil soap from Spain.

Parchment.

Bog iron (raw chunks of iron for smiths) from the countryside east and south of Liège.

Charcoal, fuel for the furnaces of smiths and potters.

Dried and salted fish.

Relics of the saints.

Those items which can be produced in sufficient quantities within a region — anything from beeswax to leather to crafted goods of iron, silver or gold — are generally not traded internationally. That doesn't mean that they're necessarily easy to find in a small village or even a local market town like Namur. Only a large market town such as Liège regularly features a complete selection of everything a household or business needs to thrive.

The Marketplace

Liège is a market town; the market is the center of its existence. The market is held every day except Sundays, though Wednesday and Saturday are considered the true market days. On those days the Grand Place becomes a maze of stalls and stands, packed with the wares of traveling merchants and the produce and goods of the peasantry from the lands surrounding the city.

Shoppers must always beware: Although guild rules and city law seek to protect the consumer and the reputation of the city and its craftsmen from scams and shoddy merchandise (bakers, for instance, are required to mark their loaves, so that they may be identified if selling substandard bread), ultimately one is on one's own. There's an old joke about a sausage-maker: A man asks for a discount, as he's been a loyal customer for seven years. "Seven years!" the merchant exclaims. "And you're still alive?" If this need for care is important when dealing with those who maintain reputable shops, it's even more critical in dealing with the transient operators of market stalls and street carts.

Poor quality is not, of course, the only danger of the market. Cutpurses, petty thieves, and con artists abound. The town guard does not regularly patrol the market or streets during the daylight hours, but if a victim calls out for help, all who hear the hue and cry must endeavor to impede and arrest the thief.

The stalls and street activity are only for the sale of household goods: Most trading in bulk materials, such as cloth and grain, goes on in large halls scattered about the market district. There is a grain market and a horse market in addition to the Grand Place, but these generally only bustle on fair days.

At the outskirts of every market, and in many shops within the market quarter, the moneychangers ply their trade.

Virtually every duke and king, and many counts and even towns, mint their own coin. Though all coinage follows the same scale — the base unit is the penny or denier, twelve of which make up a shilling or sous, with twenty of those to the pound or livre — the coin of one realm is not compatible with that of another. Nevertheless, silver from all over Europe ends up in market towns such as Liège, so the services of money-changers are always needed. It's worth mentioning that only pennies and their subdivisions (farthings and half-pennies) are actual coins — with the exception of the newly-circulated Italian groats (still rare in a place like Liège), there is no actual coin representing the shilling or pound. Those are simply units by which money and value is measured, not actual currency.

Francis Lapidary

One of the many hundreds of merchants in Liège is Francis Lapidary, a man who specializes in the trade of precious stones, rare earths, and other uncommon materials used by apothecaries, physicians, dyers, and alchemists. Lapidary's trade has led to many visits from the magi of Triamore over the years, and he's become something of an ally to the covenant, a reliable point for news, messages, and business in the city. Lapidary is not particularly wealthy or influential, but he is capable and resourceful.

Francis Lapidary is a man of modest build and character, with a cheerful if otherwise unremarkable face. He is an unrepentant gossip, with friends and connections among the petty merchants all along Chandler Street and throughout Liège — few things happen in his city without him hearing about it. Despite this (or perhaps in part because of it), Lapidary is generally

well-liked by his peers, neighbors, and family.

Lapidary's home and shop are on Chandler Street, where he lives and works with his wife Trina, his two children, Blanca (aged thirteen) and Michel (nine), Lisa, a maid, and an assistant named Barlow who comes in to work the shop during the day but does not live there. He had an apprentice until recently, but he graduated and took his trade to Köln; he also has another daughter, Francisca, who is married to a wool merchant and lives in the southern quarter of town.

Lapidary's home is typical of a moderately-prosperous city-dweller: a narrow structure of four stories. At the ground floor, his small shop faces out into the street, onto which he opens his front



Francis Lapidary, Merchant of Liège

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

Age: 36

Size: 0

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Social Class: Petty Merchant +1, Gossip +2, Alchemy +1, Arcane Lore +1, Close Family Ties +1, Educated +1, Arthritis -3, Dependents (children) -2, Favors (various merchants) -1, Poor Eyesight -1

Weapon/Attack Init Atk Dfn Dam Fat

Brawling (fist) +3 +1 -1 +2 +2

Brawling (knife) +4 +3 +2 +2 +3

Short Bow +2 +0 — +4 —

Axe +5 +2 +1 +8 +2

Soak: 0

Abilities: Alchemy 1 (antidotes), Area Lore: Liège 4 (personalities), Bargain 4 (rare earths), Bow 1 (short bow), Brawling 2 (knife), Concentration 4 (shop work), Craft: Lapidary 5 (rare earths), Disguise 2 (townsfolk), Etiquette 2 (townsfolk), Folk Ken 3 (townsfolk), Magic Theory 2 (potions), Occult Lore 1 (curses), Ride 1 (speed), Scribe Latin 1 (original composition), Single Weapon 1 (axe), Speak Latin 3 (church usage), Speak Norman French 5 (everyday usage), Speak German 3 (everyday usage)

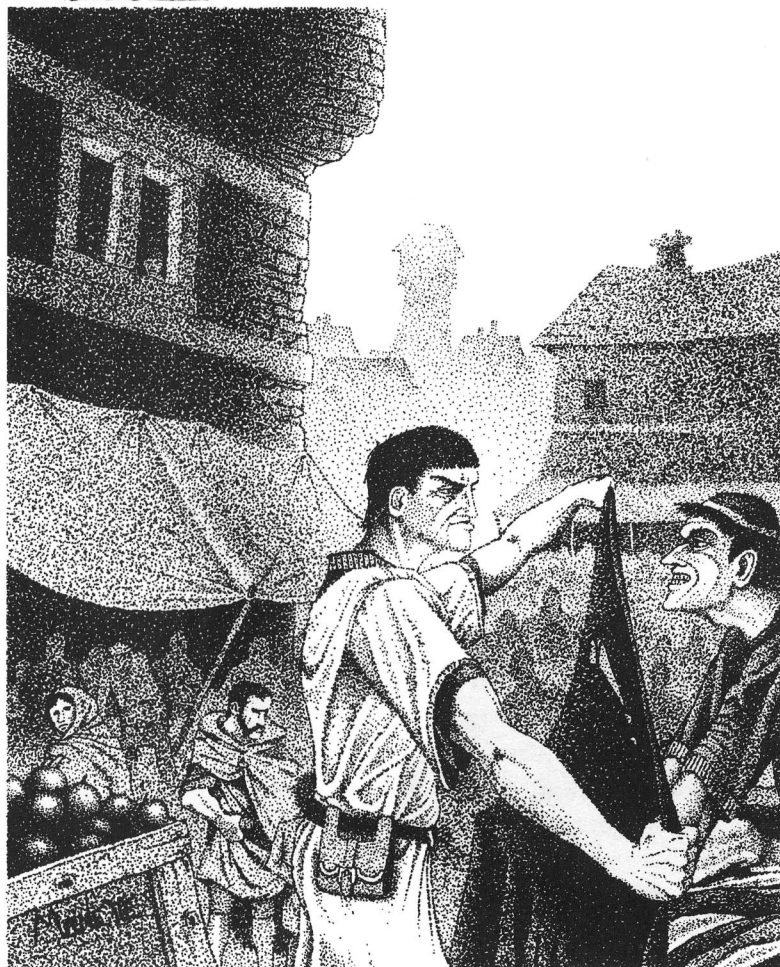


window and door every morning except Sunday. The shop is crowded with jars of earthenware and glass, as well as casks and various small boxes. Behind the shop a steep staircase leads upstairs, while a second room in the back is kept for maintaining accounts and storing more valuable merchandise (as well as Lapidary's strong box, where the business' cash is kept). A door from there leads to a small back yard with a tiny garden and a shed which can serve as a stable for one or two animals.

The next floor up contains a solar and the household kitchen, heated by stone fireplaces that sit back-to-back, forming the bulk of the wall between the rooms. The solar is the house's common room, the combination living and dining room. It features several benches and a large trestle table that is disassembled

between meals, as well as a hutch containing the household's quality plates and silver (day-to-day utensils are kept in an adjacent chest). It's a dim room even in the daytime, as the windows are glazed not with glass but with oiled parchment. The kitchen is an active room lined with utensils and casks, and hung about with bunches of herbs, onions, strings of garlic, and sausages and cheeses. All cooking is done on the open hearth — private homes almost never feature ovens — and recipes are surprisingly complex.

The third floor contains two bed-chambers, one belonging to Lapidary and his wife, and another to their children. Although they rarely takes guests, the family can squeeze into one room to make the other available, while the visitors' servants lodge in the fourth-floor attic with Lisa.



The Pike and Boar

The Pike and Boar is a public house favored by traveling merchants and others with business in Liège; it is the inn at which Remi most frequently stays when he comes to the city. He is known to the innkeeper — Georges le Chaperon — and can vouch for other magi from Triamore who might travel to Liège. That can be of great value, for visitors planning to stay in Liège for any length of time face some difficulty in finding lodging.

With so many serfs and peasants attracted to city life — and so many of them unfit for it — Liège, like many cities, has an ordinance against needless visitors. No man may stay within the city walls for more than two nights unless he has legitimate business with a member of the commune, a knight, or a churchman. Of course, that law is largely unenforceable, but an extension of it has more direct bearing on any visitor:

The man who hosts a visitor for more than two nights becomes responsible for that non-citizen's behavior. That rule extends not just to private citizens but to the keepers of inns and public houses as well, so most innkeepers will not accommodate strangers for more than one or two nights running. Fortunately, George will maintain any guests who come with Remi's recommendation for as long as they need to stay (assuming, of course, that they cause no trouble and pay their bills).

The Pike and Boar is located a few score paces from the city's western gate, in the craftsmen's quarter. It's run by the friendly but somewhat nosy George le Chaperon, who is aided by his wife Marci and three servants. It is a three-story building with a lower floor of stone and the uppers of timber-framed wattle and daub, with a large public room, and several rooms which may be rented privately or semi-privately above. Travelers of quality, such as magi from Triamore, typically sleep one or two guests (and all of their servants) per room. Lesser guests sleep as many as six or eight to a room, or simply sack out in the common room. Although the Pike and Boar is a reputable establishment, the rooms, as in all inns, are not particularly secure — the doors can be barred at night, but they have no locks. George is happy to store valuable items in his strong box for travelers who have business in town during the day, and don't wish to carry all of their belongings about with them.

Rent is two pence per night for a room, one penny per person in a bed that may be shared with up to six or seven strangers, or a half-penny to sleep in the common room. The price includes supper, which is usually small and often a cold dish; dinner (the lunchtime meal, traditionally the biggest of the day) goes for an extra half-penny. The food at the Pike and Boar is adequate and occasionally better — given a day's notice (and

assuming that at least some of the guests are worth the effort) Marci and her servants throw down a rather respectable menu. Wine or ale are part of the meal; outside of meal times drinks generally go for a farthing to a half-penny each, depending on quality.

Evening entertainments vary. George keeps a backgammon set and many guests have dice, so gaming and gambling are common activities. Several minstrels and jongleurs regularly check in on the Pike and Boar, setting into their acts if the size of the crowd warrants and sticking around for as long as the tips make it worth their while.

The Archbishop of Liège

Radolfus, archbishop of Liège, is Gaumond's strongest ally in his distaste towards Triamore and the duke of Brabant. He's a surprisingly young-looking man, moderately handsome and clearly both athletically capable, diplomatically able, and intelligent and perceptive. Although he exhibits a few signs of ostentation probably not out of line with his position, it's not easy to find fault with his outward behavior and piety.

The third son of a Champagne nobleman, Radolfus determined at an early age that a clerical career would be a much more expedient path to power than a life in the shadows of his equally-ambitious brothers. His entrance into the church during his teenage years had little to do with vocation, and everything to do with drive. In only fifteen years, he's plied a winning combination of dedication, ruthlessness, charm, honest hard work, and something that looks very much like piety, to ascend to the rank of archbishop at a very early age.

But that combination will advance him no further, at least without a little something else to draw Rome's attention





his way. Two years ago, Radolfus found just that. He discovered, exposed, and destroyed an enclave of expatriate Cathars living in Liège, and found that combating heresy is an excellent way to draw honors and the attention of one's superiors. He was fortunate in stumbling upon the Cathar heresy, but Radolfus is one who believes in making his own luck, and he isn't waiting on fortune to put another feather in his cap. He's determined that Triamore will serve quite well as his next anti-heretical victory (for more on his plans, see page 77).

Radolfus is a man of moderate build; fit and handsome with a charming if slightly smug countenance. He is articulate and quick-witted, able to draw upon an education that is as broad as it is deep. Though deeply vain and egotistical, he is equally disciplined and willing to make any sacrifice — any act of humility, piety, or penance — to advance the aura he has created about him. Many of his retainers and attendants practically worship him, and even the Cathars he sent to the stake saw more devotion than ambition in his acts.

The Ardennes

To the east and south of Bois de Haillot stretches the deep and dreary arc of the Ardennes, a true wilderness fifty or so miles wide and perhaps 120 long. The fringes along all edges are dotted with occasional farm steadings or poacher settlements, but the interior is virtually uninhabited. Although it's hardly impenetrable, the forest and its stony but gentle mountains are something of a barrier to travel, so most trade circumvents it to the north, through Flanders.

Little is known about the Ardennes, other than that it is a source of mild danger and agitation to the communities the adjoin it. A robber-baron has

plagued the central Ardennes for almost two decades, demanding from passers-through a fifth portion of their goods (actually, the robber-baron was recently killed by Remi, though that fact is unknown even to him). Travelers are sometimes plagued by supernatural or faerie threats, and at one time it was rumored that a dragon was making its home in the deepest reaches. A more commonly-encountered danger is wolves: The Ardennes is famous for its wolf population, which is large and sometimes, especially towards the ends of long, hard winters, aggressive. Those who live on the outskirts of the forest know its wolves well, and can often identify different packs by their markings and colorations. Local lords sometimes pay bounties on wolf hides, especially when long winters or shortages of game drive the wolves to attack livestock or even people.

Many things more dangerous and mysterious than wolves prowl the Ardennes at times; the story of Elewyn and Saint Bartis, and the Pool of the Stone Horse (see Chapter 4) are just two examples within a few leagues of Bois de Haillot.

The Lands About

Beyond the Ardennes and the borders of Brabant lie the counties and duchies that adjoin it: Limbourg, Luxembourg, Hainault, Flanders, Holland, and Guelders.

The duchy of Limbourg adjoins Brabant to the east, running along much of the eastern border of both the duchy and the county of Namur. It's a land much like Brabant in culture, language, terrain, and weather. Liège is sited just a few leagues into Limbourg, and is the nexus of much trade to and from Namur. Limbourg is ruled by Duke Baldwin, a

bitter enemy of Gaumond's who has at least as many counterclaims as Gaumond has claims against him. Despite their enmity, however, they have recently carried on a clandestine dialog concerning a mutual enemy, Duke Henry of Brabant. If this discussion ever leads to action, Gaumond intends to double-cross Baldwin — no doubt Baldwin has similar plans.

South of Limbourg, and directly across the Meuse from Lucien's Folly, lies the duchy of Luxembourg. Luxembourg is a bit more mountainous than Brabant, with the dense Ardennes cutting deeply into the western half of the duchy. Dinant, a small town only slightly larger than Namur, lies on the eastern bank of the Meuse not too far from Arbois — the closest town to Bois de Haillot. As with Limbourg, the rulers of Luxembourg maintain ancestral claims to parts of Namur and Brabant (including Bois de Haillot), but they've been far less militant in pursuing them.

On the other side of the Ardennes, in the French duchy of Blois to the west of Namur, lies Hainault. This is a very different place than Brabant: A landscape of gently rolling fields and pastures, broken only occasionally by copses and relatively small runs of woods. No German is spoken in Blois; it's an entirely Norman region. Another rival in the fighting over Brabant, Hainault actually invaded Namur fifty years ago, and even raided Bois de Haillot. Recently it has not directly threatened Brabant out of respect for Frederick (who was supported diplomatically and militarily by the leaders of Hainault and Blois), though it has not relinquished its claims to the region.

North of Hainault is the prosperous County of Flanders — the trading hub of northern Europe and site of the free cities of Ghent, Brugges, and Ypres, to name a few. Prosperous, traditionally independent, and trade-oriented, Flanders is an

economic ally of Brabant with no military claims against its neighbors. A coastal lowland, Flanders is much more densely populated than southern Brabant, but shares its cultural and linguistic mix.

Who's Who in Namur and Liège

Abbot Godrick, Abbot of St. Gottschalk's Abbey

Barlow, Francis' assistant

Blanca, Francis' daughter

Brother Ansel, monk, famed healer

Brother Chrétien, monk, scholar, visits Triamore

Cynthia, Picard's wife

Étienne Gaumond, count of Namur

Francisca, Francis' eldest daughter, married

Francis Lapidary, merchant in Liège, friend of Triamore

Frederich the Hospitaller, Templar administrator (banker)

Gaston Le Mange, influential landed knight, holds five manors

George le Chaperon, innkeeper, Pike and Boar

Henry II, duke of Brabant

Juliana, Gaumond's "niece," actually a devil

Lisa, Francis' maid

Marci, George's wife

Michel, Francis' son

Oswin, landed knight, lord of Arbois

Pere Stephan, Gaumond's chaplain

Pere Jean, priest at Arbois

Picard, Gaumond's steward

Radolfus, archbishop of Liège

Thierry le Bachelor, preceptor of Templar

Commandarie, friend of Remi

Trina, Francis' wife





Appendix I

Triamore's Library

The library of Triamore encompasses over 2700 texts, about half of which are mundane. Few of these are small. Many, in fact, cover entire tables and can barely be hefted by a single person. The entire contents of the library are far too extensive to outline here, but what follows is a system for determining if desired information can be found. As you use this system, it's probably a good idea to keep track of what can be found in the library in your saga, and what proves not to be available, so that over time you establish a strong sense of what your Triamore library contains.

Library Research

Triamore's library features no cataloging system. Isabel and her scribes have a system based upon their long exposure to it. Visitors must ask for assistance to find the tomes they seek. That in itself can be something of a trial, especially when seeking references to obscure topics or subjects that might be buried within other volumes.

When simply seeking information on a particular topic, make a stress die roll on the provided table to see if the information is available. A botch indicates that an answer is held within the library's tomes, but that it is incorrect.

Text Frequency

	Mundane	Esoteric*
Common	3+	6+
Uncommon	6+	9+
Obscure	9+	12+

* Or Hermetic topics if appropriate.

Once you've determined that the information exists, to find it make another stress die roll against the Casual Knowledge Triamore Library Lore. Most visitors, of course, don't have this skill, but the librarians have it in spades: Isabel has a 6; Martin a 3; and Thomas a 2. Remi and Daria also have extensive experience with the library, though not as much as Isabel. Failure at this roll generally indicates that the information search takes a great deal longer than expected, but that it will eventually be found by diligent researchers.

Of course, even if the book a character wants exists and can be found, there remains the possibility that it is in use by another scholar. That is frequently the case with the more noteworthy Hermetic tomes. Library policy says that covenant members have seniority over guests (they can always demand books, even those in use by others) and that magi have similar priority over apprentices. Among magi, it's first come first served, but anyone studying a text must make it available to other magi after one season (three months) of exclusive use.

Hermetic Texts for Study

The library's Hermetic tomes represent some of the finest and most varied treatises available anywhere. Several of Triamore's standout texts are listed below — for others, make a roll just like the one above to see if the desired arcane text is available, and another on the Text Statistics table on this page to see what level or Quality it is. Set your ease factor for the roll based on the desired Quality and level of the text (these ease factors can also be used for texts on mundane Knowledges). The flavor of the saga should be used to dictate what constitutes low, medium, and high levels for texts.

Text Statistics

level/Quality	ease factor
Low	6+
Medium	9+
High	12+

Unique Texts

Authorities: Creo, Muto, Rego, Animál, Aquam, Herbam, Ignem, Mentem, Terram, and Vim.

Summae: Creo (level 24, Quality 8), Terram (level 21, Quality 6), Intéllego (level 27, Quality 7), and Vim (level 19, Quality 6).

Liber Quaestionum: Rego (target 14, Quality 11), and Herbam (target 16, Quality 9).

Tractatii: *Lance of Solar Fury* (Ignem, Quality 9), *Mists of Change* (Corpus, Quality 10), *Cloak of Mist* (Muto, Quality 8), *Suppressing the Wizard's Handiwork* (Rego, Quality 9), and *Fog of Confusion* (Auram, Quality 9).

Spells

Triamore's texts also contain hundreds of spells, including scores of spells known in few (or no) other places.

To determine whether any specific spell is contained within Triamore's library, make a stress die roll with a +5 modifier, giving any spell listed within the ArM4 rulebook an ease factor of 6+, and any spell from the *Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition* or other supplements a ease factor 9+. For specific versions of general-level spells, once you have rolled to determine that the library contains some version of the spell, roll again against a ease factor equal to the desired magnitude of the spell — this roll can be made multiple times for multiple versions of the spell, but once it is failed no other versions can be found.

Triamore's library contains scores of rare spells (some the product of the covenant's members), many of which cannot be found anywhere else. A few of the more notable spells are described here.



Animál

The Wholesome Foal (CrAn 20)

R: Touch, D: Sun/Inst, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Hair from each parent animal, knotted together (+3)

This spell ensures the health and strength of an unborn animal or litter, ensuring that it is the best possible representative of its stock. It does not instill any magical nature or supernatural effect in the creatures that are born. It simply ensures that the progeny bear the best possible traits of their parents, and that the animal or litter is born healthy and remains so in the early stages of its youth. The spell must be cast within one week of the mating to have full effect.



Descent of Stinging Agony (CrAn 35)

R: Near, D: Diam, T: Ind

Spell Focus: The husk of a dead wasp (+2)

This spell creates a swarm of wasps and other stinging, biting insects that descends upon the target individual in a fury. They attack him for the duration of the spell, crawling inside clothes, armor, and hair as well as stinging all exposed flesh. On the second round, and until the spell effect ends, the target must make a Stamina roll at 12+ in order to do anything other than flee and/or swat at the cloud of insects, and must also succeed in a Concentration roll of 12+ in order to cast spells. On the third round (or perhaps fourth or fifth, if the target is heavily clothed or armored), and every round thereafter, the insects cause damage equal to a simple roll + 4, which the victim may attempt to Soak. Armor bonuses do not add to the target's Soak roll, however, and the insects cannot do more than two Body levels of total damage over the course of the spell. The swarm cannot be outrun on foot, though a horse's full gallop will keep ahead of it. The insects will not pursue the target into water and can be dispersed by a strong gust of wind, a heavy downpour, thick smoke, or the target running through a great deal of dense brush or foliage. If any of these methods succeed in keeping the swarm off their target for more than a few rounds, the insects disperse. Otherwise, they disappear at the end of the spell effect leaving nothing but the welts and injury dealt to the target.

Pietre's Servant (MuAn 40)

R: Reach/Far, D: Sun/Perm, T: Ind/Group

Spell Focus: The dried, shriveled heart of a man (+5)

Requisites: Corpus, Mentem

This spell gives one beast of the land or the air the form of a human being, along with the power of speech and a moderate degree of intelligence (though no education or knowledge of social graces). The general frame and nature of the animal is retained — large, powerfully-built breeds become

burly men; birds become light and fragile people, perhaps with a penchant for music. Predators have a violent or at least aggressive disposition; prey animals become timid, often nervous people. The transformation is painful, and the beast is disoriented for a while before it becomes used to its new body. (The same is true upon transformation back to its original form). The creature retains no memories of its animal life when made human, and no vestige of its human memories or intellect when it reverts to its natural form. Although the target may be indistinguishable from a real person when thus transformed (even, possibly, to itself) its true nature is not changed, and it is affected by *Animál*, not *Corpus*, magics.

This spell was invented by Pietre — an extraordinary apprentice on his way to becoming a brilliant magus despite his youth and incomplete education — before he was expelled from the Order and disappeared. When Pietre cast this spell, the person was invariably formed with a dagger-shaped tattoo upon his forehead. This sigil remained on the beast even after it reverted to its natural form, though it could rarely be seen beneath fur or feathers.

Mage's Mount (ReAn 10)

R: Touch/Near, D: Conc/Perm, T: Ind

Spell Focus: An apple (+1)

Removes from an animal its inherent fear of magical forces. In particular the animal behaves towards all magi as if they have the Virtue Gentle Gift. This spell does not counteract other natural fears in the creature, however, and a horse may shy away from a strange magus just as it would from another strange person, and would almost certainly be terrified by a dragon, even though the dragon's magical nature isn't contributing to that fear. The spell focus, an apple, is consumed by the target creature (who will eat it even if not a natural herbivore).

When Remi of Museau casts this spell, the creature takes on a regal and aloof (though not uncooperative) bearing.

Corpus

Surgeon's Sight (InCo 3)

R: Touch/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A weapon or object like the one that created the wound (+2)

Reveals to the caster the details of any one wound (including internal damage) and how it affects the wounded individual. Following the casting of this spell, the magus gains +3 to Chirurgy attempts to bind or heal the wound, or can give a +1 to another character attempting Chirurgy by describing what he sees. Having a weapon or object like that which caused the wound aids the magus in seeing its effects.

The Mask of Youth (MuCo 15)

R: Per./Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: The blood of a youth (+3)

This spell changes the apparent age of the recipient, making him appear to be a youthful, hale version of himself at an apparent age of twenty or twenty-five. It does not actually affect aging or the effects of aging in any way, nor does it change the target's size or carriage. Thus an old woman would lose all wrinkles and age spots, but might continue to walk with a stoop; a child's face would mature, but the child would not grow to the size of an adult.

Ignem

True Light (CrIg 5)

R: Touch, D: Sun/Perm, T: Small

Spell Focus: The burned stub of a tallow candle (+4)

This spell brings light to a darkened place by igniting a candle or lamp with a flame that neither dies nor consumes its fuel. It is frequently cast by magi within their sancta or covenant, where, if boosted with vis, it casts light forever without

recharging. It was invented by Ulisterius of Jerbiton, who cast it upon eight candles in a chandelier at the covenant's entry, illuminating the stone room as bright as day.

Warmth of the Hearth (CrIg 25)

R: Reach, D: Season, T: Room

Spell Focus: A cinder from a home hearth (+1)

Requisite: Auram

This spell maintains the air within a room at a comfortably warm temperature. The room must be reasonably protected against cold weather: The spell will keep the room warm if a window is opened but the air is still, but won't prevent a cold breeze from blowing through. Heat created by the spell is not cumulative with that from other sources — the room won't become uncomfortably hot because a fire burns in the fireplace, for instance, nor will it become unnaturally stifling if the weather outside warms up.

Terram

Guardian of Stone (MuTe 35)

R: Reach, D: Sun/Perm, T: Ind, Ritual

Enchants a statue of any real or mythical animal up to Size +1. The animal created will be of the same size as the statue from which it was enchanted. Later, anytime someone gives the command word (identified during the ritual) the statue turns into the appropriate animal. The animal follows the orders of the person who activated it, obeying commands with understanding but with no other abilities beyond those typical of that breed of animal. Mythical animals have no magical powers or Might. The animal cannot travel further than thirty paces from the location at which the statue sat. The animal returns to its original location and reverts to statue form when commanded to revert. If the animal is killed, it reverts to a statue where it falls and the statue is no longer magical.





Appendix II

An Alternate Experience System

Ars Magica's system of advancement through seasons of downtime really builds on the game's sense of magic as a scholarly pursuit, and perfectly complements the troupe-style play around which it is built. However, the requirement that characters take months away from the action can be limiting in some sorts of sagas — especially sagas with rapidly-moving external events, like those in this book, or epic sagas created and driven by a single storyguide, in which close-knit events don't often allow for breaks lasting seasons or more. In such campaigns, a season away from the action might only be arranged through awkward and artificial rationalization on the parts of the players and storyguide. Characters central to ongoing events sometimes just can't disappear into a lab for three months or longer at a time — but without such commitments, characters can't advance their Arts or prepare for the coming conflicts that the events around them are building up to.

This section presents an alternative system — one that still relies on lots of lab time, but allows characters to break that time down into smaller chunks. Only got two weeks to spare? No problem. This system allows that time to be put to use. Don't know how much time you've got? That's okay, too — you can come back to unfinished projects later, or even work on two or more projects concurrently.

Furthermore, this alternative system allows magi to advance their Arts through use in adventuring, just as characters advance mundane Abilities. Arts don't increase as fast this way as they do through study in the lab, but for fast-moving, adventure-heavy sagas this system frees up lab time for other projects. Storyguides worried that these rules will erode the scholarly emphasis on magic around which the game is based can ignore them. The rest of the material in this article works just fine without in-game advancement of the magical Arts.

Please note: The alternate experience system detailed here is just that, an alternate system. Not a replacement system, not an alteration of **Ars Magica** canon, just an alternative for those who find it useful to their style of play. When you use this system standard rules apply except where noted.

Art Advancement Through Play

In this adventure-oriented system, magi can advance not only Abilities but also magical Arts through adventuring experience. To do so, award 3 to 5 experi-

ence points per game session based on magnitude (instead of the 0 to 3 recommended in the game book), along with an additional 1 or 2 points for solid roleplaying.

Players may assign these points to Abilities or the mastery of spells used during the game session, as usual, or to magical Arts so used, according to these guidelines:

No more than 3 points may be placed in a single Art. If the Art in question is at level 0, no more than 1 point may be placed in it. As a consequence, no Art may be raised by more than one level per session, and it will generally take several sessions to raise a high-level Art a single additional level.

Character Advancement and Activities in Down Time

Between adventures, when at home or with access to the resources of study and experimentation elsewhere, characters may undertake laboratory projects. There are many types of lab projects, including the study of Arts, the writing of books, the invention of spells, the enchantment of items, the bonding of familiars, and so on. Lab projects are undertaken over long periods of time, and many projects include multiple steps, each of which is a separate, long-term project of its own.

Time dedicated to projects is measured in weeks. Any time a wizard is at home and not otherwise engaged in adventuring or other attention-stealing activities, he may commence a lab project or work on one or more ongoing projects. Any given week can

only be dedicated to a single project, and partial weeks don't count. Thus, if a character were home for only five days, no project could be worked on. If he were home for three and a half weeks, he could spend one week working on one project and two weeks working on another — the extra few days don't count towards any project.

There is no limit to the number of lab projects that a wizard can have ongoing at any one time; however, if an ongoing project is ignored for more than three months, one week must be spent on "catching up" with the project before it can be further advanced. This catch-up week doesn't count towards the completion of the project, but simply represents the time spent picking up the threads of previous efforts.

These rules work well when game play is interrupted by down time periods of a few weeks or so. They may allow too much advancement during longer breaks. For breaks of greater than two months, multiply the total down time by .75 (so that a fifteen week break, for example, only actually yields eleven or twelve weeks of useful down time). For breaks of a year or more, cut the time in half.

Projects that can be undertaken in down time include:

Learning Spells: A spell can be learned if the wizard has a readable copy and his Lab total (including bonuses for similar spells) equals or exceeds the spell level. Learning a spell requires eight weeks.

Inventing Spells: A spell can be invented if the wizard's Lab total (plus aura and +1 for every five levels of similar or variant spells known) equals or exceeds the level of the spell to be invented. Inventing a spell requires $(10 / [(Lab\ total / Spell\ Level) - 1])$ weeks.

Copying Spells: A magus can copy (Scribe Latin x 2) levels of other wizards' spells per week (assuming the original texts can be understood), or make clean, legible copies of his own spells at a rate of (Scribe Latin x 6) levels per week. Thus, a wizard with a Scribe Latin skill level of 5 would





need two weeks to copy a level 20 spell from another wizard's grimoire, but could copy one of his own level 20 spells in a single week, with enough time left over to copy a level 10 spell. Many spells can be copied over a single stretch of time (one to several weeks); however, if leftover time in a given week is not spent copying other spells, it cannot be applied to other projects.

Translating Spells: A wizard can decipher the unknown shorthand or codes of other wizards' spells. To do so, he must "break the code" of the other wizard's writings. Two weeks must be spent on the effort, after which the player makes a skill roll (generally Intelligence + Scribe Latin of 6+, unless the material was intentionally obscured by the author — see page 82 of the ArM4 rulebook). If the roll is failed, another may be made at the end of another week's efforts, and so on, until it is finally successful. From that point forward, the time required to copy or learn the spell is the same as for uncoded spells. Each individual spell must be decoded in this manner, but if the wizard has previously decoded other writings by the same author, he gains a +3 bonus to the attempt.

Extracting Vis: A magus may spend down time extracting raw vis from a magical environment. To determine the time required, divide 100 by [Creo + Vim + Magic Theory + (Aura x 3)] — the result, rounded up, is the number of weeks needed to extract a single pawn.

Preparing to Enchant an Item: Before a wizard can create an enchanted item (talisman or invested item), he must first prepare the item for the enchantment process. Doing so requires ten weeks of time, along with the quantity of vis specified on the Material and Size Table (ArM4, page 83).

Creating a Talisman: A wizard may create a talisman out of an item that has been prepared for enchantment (see above). Doing so requires ten weeks of time.

Attuning a Talisman: A wizard may add a power to a talisman by attuning it to a par-

ticular type of magical action. Ten weeks spent in so attuning a talisman gives it one power, of a type and bonus level listed as appropriate for the material and shape of the talisman on the Form and Effect Bonuses Table (ArM4, page 84).

Investing a Device: A magus may bestow magical powers on an item that has been prepared for enchantment (see above). Doing so requires ten weeks of down time per power. Recharging an invested device also requires ten weeks.

Creating a Lesser Enchanted Device: A lesser enchantment takes twelve weeks of down time, but does not require that the item being enchanted be prepared beforehand.

Creating a Charm: A wizard can spend lab time in creating a charm to protect against magic. Doing so takes ten weeks.

Creating a Potion: Creating a batch of potion takes ten weeks; however, the number of doses a magus can create in a single batch varies, equaling [Technique + Form + Intelligence + Magic Theory + Aura – (level of the potion's effect)]/5 (rounded up).

Investigating an Enchanted Item: A wizard may investigate an item known or believed to be enchanted. Each segment of investigation requires three weeks of down time, for which the player makes an Intéllego Vim Lab total stress roll. If the roll is successful, the wizard discovers the item's least powerful unknown effect. If it is failed, the wizard uncovers no knowledge about any undiscovered powers. Regardless of success or failure, the wizard may make another attempt after another three weeks of investigation.

Enchanting a Familiar: Enchanting a familiar is a very lengthy process, with several distinct steps. The first is finding the animal. This may be handled in play or down time — if the latter, the time required is variable and up to the storyguide. The second step is attunement. This requires a number of pawns of Vim vis equal to (12 + the creature's Size), requires that the wiz-

ard's Animal score be 10 or higher, and takes ten weeks of down time (though that time can be shortened to a minimum of five weeks by one week for every month of game time that wizard and animal spend together). The third step is the creation of the bond, which takes ten weeks. The fourth step is the tempering of the bond, which takes another ten weeks. Finally, the enchantment is closed, which requires three pawns of Vim vis and five weeks of down time.

Experimenting: Experimentation in enchantment or spell invention efforts can hasten the process, but often has unpredictable side effects. When experimenting on any of the above projects, roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart (ArM4, page 93) once for every ten weeks — or fraction thereof — spent on the project.

Academic Study of Arts or Knowledges

Wizards and other scholars often increase their understanding of their studies through various forms of academic discourse. Such efforts can be undertaken during down time periods. Academic study yields experience points, which work just like those gained from play but are not restricted in the number that may be placed in a single Knowledge or Art — in fact, all experience points gained through academic discourse must be applied to the one Knowledge or Art studied. Although the following formulae are listed in points per week, most academic studies follow a structured program. As such, the storyguide can specify a length of time over which the study must be undertaken (nine to twelve weeks is typical). If such a period is specified, no experience points are gained until the course of study is completed, at which time the total of experience for the entire period is awarded.

The varying types of academic discourse commonly used in the study of magical Arts include the following:

Disputatio: For every week spent studying a magical Art through a course of disputatio, the student gains [(teacher's Intelligence + Disputatio) + the student's Intelligence + 6]/10.

Summae: For every week spent studying a magical Art from a summae through a course of disputatio, the student gains (Intelligence + Concentration + Quality)/10.

Libri Quaestionum: For every week spent studying a magical Art from a libri quaestionum through a course of disputatio, the student gains [Intelligence + Concentration + Quality - (5 x the difference between the student's current score and the target level)]/10.

Tractatus: For every week spent studying a magical Art from a tractatus through a course of disputatio, the student gains (Intelligence + Concentration + Quality)/10.

The varying types of academic discourse commonly used in the study of Knowledges include the following:

Lectio: For every week spent studying a Knowledge through a course of lectio, the student gains [(teacher's Communication + Lectio) + (one-half the text's Quality)]/50.

Disputatio: For every week in a course of disputatio, the student gains [(teacher's Intelligence + Disputatio) + student's Intelligence + 6]/50.

Summae: For every week spent studying a Knowledge through a course of disputatio, the student gains (Intelligence + Concentration + Quality)/50.

Libri Quaestionum: For every week spent studying a Knowledge through a course of disputatio, the student gains [Intelligence + Concentration + Quality - (5 x the difference between the student's current score and the target level)]/50.

Tractatus: For every week spent studying a Knowledge through a course of disputatio, the student gains (Intelligence + Concentration + Quality)/50.





Studying Raw Vis

A wizard can study raw vis in an effort to expand his mastery of an Art. Any unbroken length of down time spent studying raw vis counts as a single course of study. Thus, if a mage spends two weeks of down time studying raw vis, leaves his covenant for a few weeks, then returns and studies again (even if studying the same Arts) for another four weeks, his efforts amount to two courses of study, of two weeks and four weeks — not one course of six weeks. A mage may study from one, two, or three pawns of vis over a given course of study.

The mage may study for any length of time, and need not decide beforehand how long he will study the vis. At the end of the course of study, roll a number of stress dice equal to the number of pawns of vis studied. The experience gained is equal to [the total of the dice + aura]/10 for every week spent in the course of study. No matter how many experience points are thus gained, the Art in question cannot be raised more than three levels through a single course of study — any excess experience points beyond those needed to raise the Art to the third level are discarded.

Training and Practice in Abilities and Arts

A character who has only a little down time coming, or who is lacking in a particular, important Ability, may spend down time in practice or training. Practice and training are the only ways in which down time can be spent to master spells or improve most Abilities, and are one way (though not the most efficient one) to increase magical Arts.

To train, the character must work with a trainer who has a score of at least 3 in the Ability or Art being studied, and whose score exceeds the student's. The fruits of training are experience points, which work just like those gained from play but are not restricted in the

number that may be placed in a single skill or Art — in fact, all experience points gained through training must be applied to the one Ability, Art, or spell studied.

To determine the number of weeks necessary to gain a single experience point, divide 30 by (7 + student's Intelligence + trainer's Communication). If you'd rather determine the number of experience points gained over a given time period, multiply the number of weeks by (7 + student's Intelligence + trainer's Communication) and divide the total by 30.

If no trainer is available, a character may practice on his own. To determine the number weeks necessary to gain a single experience point through practice, divide 30 by [(7 – the Ability level) + Intelligence + a stress die]. To determine the number of experience points gained in a given time period, multiply the number of weeks by [(7 – Ability level) + Intelligence + a stress die] and divide the total by 30.

Exposure

Casual Abilities can be increased through exposure, at the rate of (Intelligence + 5)/20 experience points for every week of down time. More than one Ability can be increased through exposure at the same time, and Ability levels can be gained while the character is involved in other activities — even when active and adventuring — without interfering with time spent on those activities. Thus, a character who spends down time training his Bow skill while staying at an estate in a foreign land might gain a few experience points in the local language, local area lore, and local etiquette, all simultaneously and without interfering with his archery practice efforts. The application of such points, however, is highly subjective and entirely up to the storyguide. Exposure can never bring a character's level above 4.

Exposure applies to Magic Theory whenever a character spends down time inventing spells, enchanting items, or making potions.

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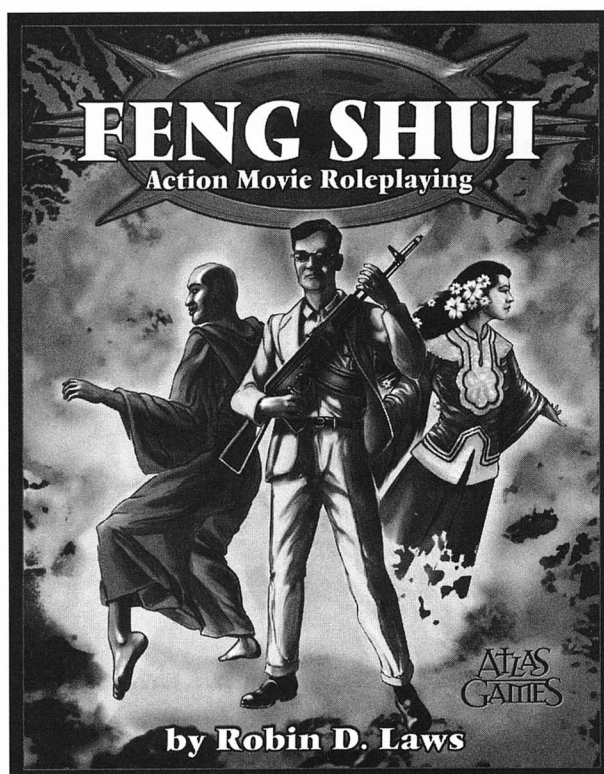


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