

HERMES' PORTAL



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Issue n° 14

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HERMES' PORTAL

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Who's who

Christopher Gribbon

Christopher Gribbon got his PhD in biochemistry in 2002, and has since then been "working" in the Tissue Engineering group of The University of Dundee, Scotland. He spends far too much time reading, writing and playing roleplaying games, chiefly with the members of D.U.R.P.S. (Dundee University Role Playing Society). This is the first work he ever considered trying to get published, and writing it was a lot harder than he thought it would be...

Special thanks from Christopher to

My Ars Magica roleplaying group (Amy Brooks, Barbara Gribbon, John Forster, "Big" Mike Cugley, Jakob Pape, and Bradley Docherty) for play-testing much of the material herein. Also thanks to the "Insula Maledictus" group for suggesting that I try and get this published.

Most especially to my wife, Barbara (to whom this project is dedicated) for her enthusiasm, understanding, and contributions of Celtic trivia.

Publisher's corner

I was late for the previous issue and I have already wasted all the lame excuses I could use, so this time, I can just apologize.

In issue #13, I promised the release of an Ars Magica book but Atlas didn't give me the authorization and didn't answer when I asked about the conditions necessary to publish it, so you won't see this project in book format. Nonetheless, since all the illustrations were already done, we decided to release it in Hermes' Portal (with a few changes), the first part in this issue and the second part in roughly a month. I'm sure you'll find this project entertaining and really worth a whole Ars Magica saga. Also in this issue, you'll find the 9th instalment of the Grimoire, Terram, and again all those little spells which make all the difference in a hard fight.

Last (but appearing first in the zine), you'll find Erik Dahl's comments on the new release of The Broken Covenant of Calebais and all the illustrations done by Angela, those included in the official book and those left out, and all in their proper size.

I hope you'll enjoy this issue (and forgive us the delay).



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'Once in a great while you come across a novel that completely absorbs you, making it a physical effort to put the book down and mentally wrestle yourself back to reality. The Covenant of Truth is one of these books.'

Library Journal of Durenmar



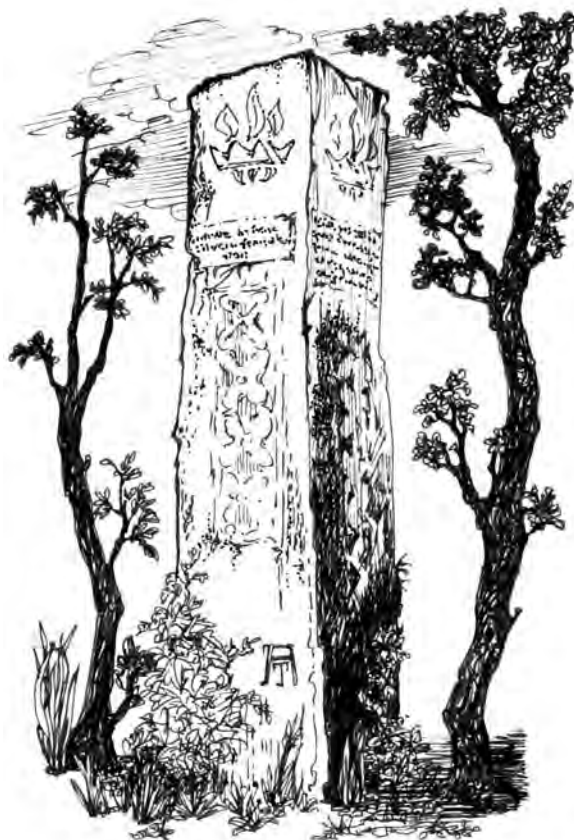
Deconstructing Calebais

by Erik Dahl



Calebais: *The Broken Covenant* is an adventure primarily designed to introduce players to the game of *Ars Magica* by taking concepts from other fantasy roleplaying games (i.e. a standard “dungeon crawl”) and improving upon them by adapting them to the world of Mythic Europe. Jonathan Tweet and Mark Rein*Hagen came up with a wonderful concept, and I felt quite privileged to have the opportunity to further develop their story and vision.

When I adapted the book to Fifth Edition, I included a lot of advice for the new storyguide that had to be cut, which I’ve included here below. Several of Angela Taylor’s illustrations also did not make it into the book, and so my thoughts are intended to act as a sort of structure to showcase her fine work — a Calebais gallery, if you will.



Storyguiding Calebais

In order to run *Calebais* for your group, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the characters and situations in the adventure. There will probably be a lot of personal interaction between the players and the figures they meet in the different chapters of the story.

Most importantly, I think, is getting to know the different ghosts in the broken covenant, especially David, Ferdina, and Pitsdim. The players will almost certainly encounter them, and the best experience

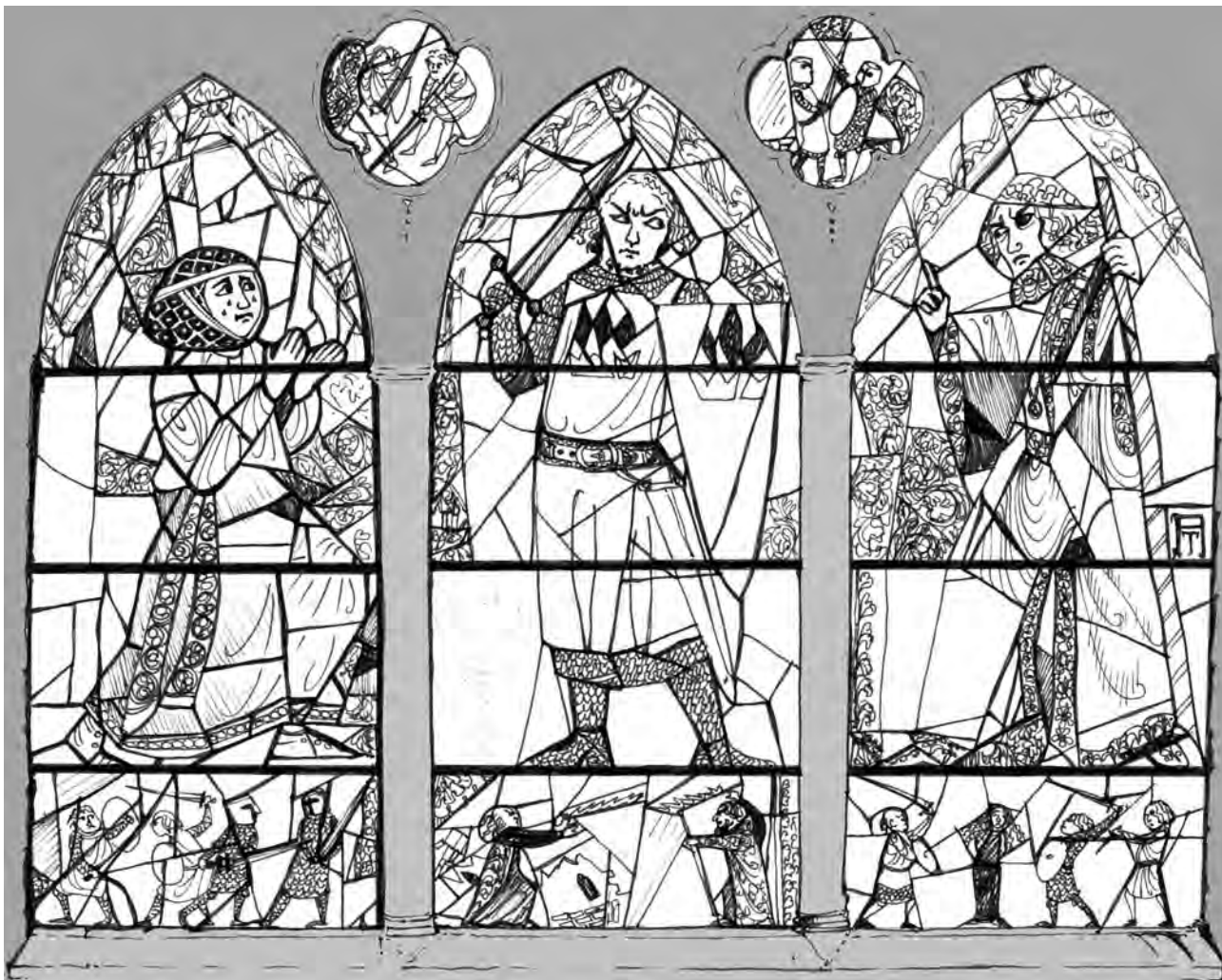


requires understanding how they will react to the characters. David and Ferdina could be very useful allies, and Pitsdim is excellent for instilling a sense of fear and danger as the characters explore the covenant.

Violence

Ars Magica adventures are unusual compared to other systems, because characters grow and develop based on their actions taken as a whole, rather than the strength of creatures that they defeat. Slaying monsters is simply less fulfilling in Mythic Europe,





because it's risky unless undertaken for specific reasons. You might caution your players with this, to help them fight what otherwise might be sound instincts in a fantasy roleplaying game.



The broken covenant provides several encounters which the players can solve through violence, but with clear heads and a cooperative storyguide, players could complete the adventure without bloodshed. It will partially depend on your choices, where you determine how many encounters will be “hack-and-slash” and how many will remain “talking encounters.” For example, the Hrools’ first reaction to the characters could be distrustful curiosity or unprovoked hostility. Violence is a welcome part of the stories of most troupes, but it is far from necessary.

The story does involve interaction with noncombatant characters, such as nuns and villagers. If you think your group might take advantage of the helpless and cause a bloodbath, you might want to alter those parts of the story, providing them with more physical or spiritual protection. Even then, the story can succeed, so long as the players are aware that there should be consequences for their actions. If they are a group of renegade warriors who are preparing to flee to a distant part of the world, they may not care, but this story could help to safely introduce the players to a different way of looking at these situations.



Unfortunately, there is no way for me to balance the story as written for your group, because only you will know the number of characters, their strength,



or their players' strategic abilities. Therefore, you as storyguide have great leeway in deciding the danger the characters will face. Use this decision-making power of yours to keep the story challenging, but not too threatening. You can adjust the number of opponents in a given battle and even tinker with their stats to make them more suitable for your group.



“Beta Storyguides”

You might want to try guiding the story with another player as “beta storyguide.” This is a player who has a little more idea of what is happening in the story, and takes the role of many of the characters not controlled by the players, to help lessen the burden of running the whole story on your own. Calabais offers many opportunities for roleplaying that are greatly improved if two story characters can interact with each other, and this dynamic interaction

lets those characters be seen as separate individuals rather than as variations of a single voice. Even if only one non-player character is to be encountered, a beta storyguide who has time to get into character might be able to play it better. Perhaps a character will wish to join the group, either temporarily or permanently; if this person is being run by someone else it will not distract you from the task of storyguiding, and will allow that character to contribute unbiased suggestions in difficult situations, without the players feeling like you are trying to give hints.

If you don't have a beta storyguide, you can still give some of the players additional characters to play. Whenever players running grogs are not actively playing them, have them run some of your characters, too. This can be a great way to bring everyone fully into the action and create a more exciting environment. When the characters start encountering ghosts and other persistent characters, don't feel you have to try to roleplay all of them. Pick out a few in particular that especially suit you — characters who you can play more thoroughly and dynamically than you normally would — and assign the rest to the other players, choosing those with personalities that best complement their strengths.

Theme

The overarching theme of this story concerns leadership. Much like the role of the central theme of a novel, this supplement ties together many of the disparate elements of its plot, setting, and characters





with a unifying focus. The true focus of the story is the lesson that strong leadership brings prosperity, while without it will come nothing but chaos and certain destruction.

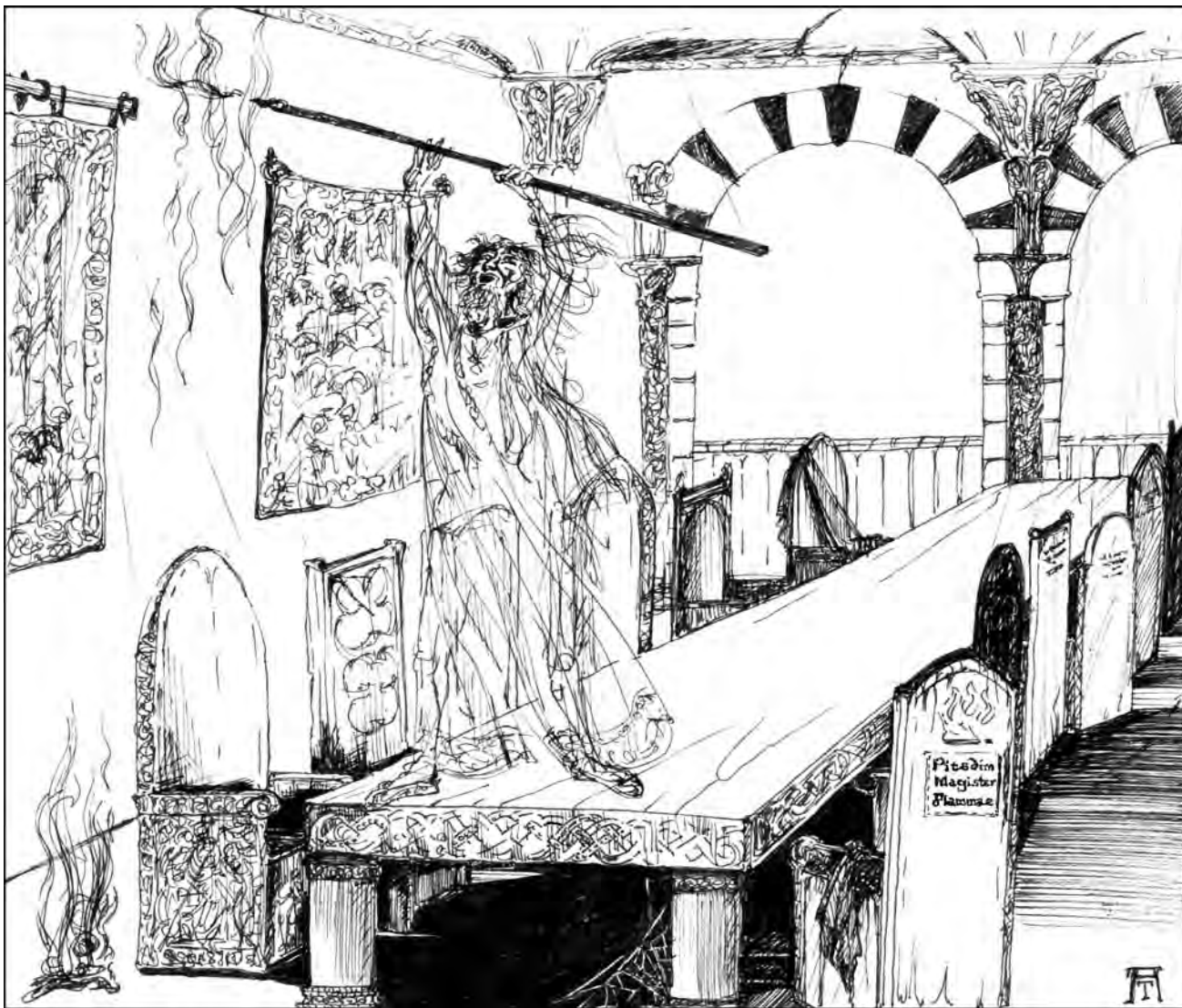
You can contrast the leadership of the characters' covenant with the easygoing freedom of the Redcap; the village has too much leadership between the Reeve and the abbot, but the faeries do what they please. Calebais fell partly because of its internal divisions, but the convent grows stronger because of the firm guidance of the abbess. These chapters fit together into a single tale because of their common



theme, and this combination will have a greater emotional impact than any one of them alone.

An even greater impact can be made if you subtly stress and comment upon leadership while you are storyguiding. You can make sly, off-hand comments or casually have the story characters ask questions, such as "Do you think these nuns obey the abbess because they like her?" or "So who is the Hrools' leader?" or "Of course the knight's men are loyal, he's their lord." Good leadership, which includes leaders taking into account the ideas of their followers, is essential for the survival of any group





— make it vital for the survival of the characters as well. If the magi abuse and degrade the grogs, find a way to show the players how such poor leadership can result in their own humiliation.

You can even make your storyguiding style more authoritative in situations where the characters are meeting authoritative characters. Throughout the story, find ways to direct the players' attention back to the leadership they have within their own group. Do the characters basically do what they wish when they feel like it, or is one of the characters a powerful leader? Are the magi effective at giving orders, or are they hard to follow and inspire little loyalty? If

things go too far, the grogs might rebel against the magi, or at least fearfully refuse to go on.

In short, the central purpose of the story should involve the exploration of this leadership theme. It will make a much better experience for everyone involved and could even add a new dimension to your roleplaying, making it more like traditional storytelling — an artistic, creative, thoughtful process.

Settling Calebais

One of the most interesting ways to use *Calebais*, I think, is to encourage the players to base a spring covenant on the site. To do this, you can begin with







them living at an older covenant, fresh out of apprenticeship. When Ash arrives with the message, the covenant elders send the player characters to investigate.

I believe this allows you to develop the adventure to the fullest, since if your players have a vested interest in the covenant, they are much more likely to come up with long-term solutions to its mysteries. They will take the time to really explore everything the ruins have to offer, returning to their parent covenant for study and when they are overmatched.



This scenario probably means that they are partly beholden to their covenant of origin, and thus they will probably not be allowed to keep the Bell of Ibyn when they uncover it. However, that is a small price to pay for what is otherwise an extremely defensible and well-protected site. It has many magical

resources, and while it has few books or covenfolk, these can easily be acquired over time.

In a well-established Tribunal, such as the Rhine or the Greater Alps, this scenario allows the magi to grow and develop in the shadow of their elders, and thus to develop the politics of the region more slowly. This gives them plenty of time to get settled before they start taking on Mythic Europe on a greater scale.

Changing Calebais



I made minor changes to the way the adventure was originally written, mostly to accommodate the Fifth Edition. Perhaps the biggest changes were the interaction between the satyrs and the dryad, and their overlapping regions, which I hoped would help explain why the satyrs attack periodically, as well as explain why the Veil has lasted for so long.



I encourage you, as a storyguide, to experiment with the setting and make your own changes. For example, when running the adventure, I often describe the trees that surround the entrance to the well as gray, hard and cold, as if they were made of stone, to emphasize the differences between the Magic aura and the Faerie aura. This also helps to convey the idea that the shape at the bottom of the well is dangerous.

When roleplaying the ghosts, I have found myself making up little “loops” of dialogue, which they play through for several minutes and then return to the beginning when interacting with players. This quickly communicates that they are stuck; only when the players begin to delve into the details of what has made them ghosts do the spirits begin to vary from their script. This creates a sense of accomplishment for the players that is very fulfilling, I find, and gives non-combatant characters something useful to do.

I have occasionally altered where the different sets of stairs come out, so that the north set skips

down to the fifth level, rather than opening onto the third. This is useful when the players want to quickly explore “the dungeon” and are not interested in it for the long-term.

Another storyguide suggested the idea that the demon which might have corrupted one of the wizards, when defeated, takes great delight in pointing out that it did nothing at Calebais. “They did this to themselves; I simply watched” it says. This ties in nicely to the idea that Calebais brought about its doom through fear and selfishness, not outside influences.

I hope that *Calebais: The Broken Covenant* is a rewarding roleplaying adventure for you and your troupe. If you have any questions about it, I am quite willing to help. I would also love to hear about your experiences running the adventure or suggestions you have for improving it. Please feel free to write to me at eriktdahl@yahoo.com.



Omnibus Grimoire

Scroll IX: Terram

by Andrew Gronosky

Esteemed colleagues,

Truly this is an exciting time to be a member of the Order! Shortly before last Winter Solstice, the Archmage Chartus of House Bonisagus presented to the Grand Tribunal his Fifth Edition of Bonisagus's immortal Theory of Magic. Chartus and dozens of scholars at Durenmar had worked for many seasons to clarify, regularize, and simplify the very guidelines of Hermetic magic. The results of this work seem to have been well-received and I, myself, found it quite easy to adapt this season's scroll of spells to the new guidelines. Some colleagues of mine report it seems as if they can no longer use vis to boost their formulaic spells, but this is a minor complaint compared to the patchy guidelines and inconsistent use of Range, Duration, and Target from which we suffered in the Fourth Edition of the theory. Magi will no longer struggle to explain to their apprentices such inconsistencies as *Hunt for the Wild Herb's* former Range of Touch. I am confident that Chartus' new guidelines will benefit generations of magi and inspire the creation of myriad new and ingenious spells.

Using these new guidelines for spell design, I present to you, honoured reader, the penultimate in my series of scrolls devoted to the ten Forms of magic. This scroll is devoted to the Art of Terram. Terram is an Art that first seems difficult to the beginning student, because spells that affect stone or metal are higher in magnitude than those that affect earth. But because stone and metal are so commonplace — our covenant halls are built of stone, and our laboratories are full of metal implements - a serious study of Terram magic brings the rewards of many useful spells. Often, in their pursuit of magical knowledge, members of our Order are drawn to explore ancient ruins and forgotten catacombs. I have made a point of including two spells that I hope will be of particular benefit to our adventuresome sodales, as well as a few other spells that may be useful for self-defense. May they reach you in good health and prove to be of benefit in your studies and explorations.

Your colleague and servant,

Jarius of House Mercere

Creo Terram

Sword from the Unseen Scabbard (CrTe 15)

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Ind

As you cast this spell, you reach into your sleeve, hat, or even your purse and pull out a steel long sword of fine quality. The sword lasts only two minutes, or about twenty combat rounds — long enough to defend yourself in one skirmish. Variants of this spell exist that create different weapons, such as

daggers, throwing knives, maces, or even greatswords. Another common variant is a Level 20 version with Duration: Sun.

This spell is well known within House Tylalus, where it was invented early in the career of the Archmage Baltro. Baltro found it so useful to always be able to conjure a sword that he taught the spell to all his apprentices, and that tradition continues within his line today.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter)

Levitation of the Stepping Stones (CrTe 25)

R: Voice, D: Diam, T: Group

Req: Rego

Creates a series of a dozen flat stepping stones, each the size of a serving platter, that magically float in mid-air. The first stone appears up to one foot above ground level one pace from your feet, and the rest are placed in a straight line away from you up to one pace apart. The stones therefore extend about twelve paces (or as far as your voice carries, whichever is less). You can walk across these stones to cross narrow streams, chasms, and the like. You can place the stones so they ascend like steps, in which case they need to be closer together and can reach about six paces high. Each stone can support the weight of two normal people. The spell is designed with a Duration of Diameter rather than Concentration so the caster can traverse the stones without the risk of losing concentration and falling.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Diam, +2 Group, +1 Requisite)

Likeness in Sculpted Stone (CrTe 25)

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

Creates a stone statue of a person or animal you designate, who must be within range when you cast the spell. The statue is a more or less accurate representation of the subject's equipment, posture, and facial expression at the time of the casting. A Per + Finesse roll indicates how crudely or finely the statue represents the target, with a 9+ representing a statue similar to that of an average human sculptor. Your Wizard's Sigil may manifest in the colour and texture of the stone, or in the details of the statue.

This spell was contributed by Alauda of House Verditius, who learned it from an unattributed tome in the library of Verdi.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +2 Sun, +2 very elaborate shape)

Intellego Terram

Scales of Archimedes (InTe 15)

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Touch

Determines the metals composing any object, including the approximate purity of those metals.

(Base 4, +1 Conc, +2 Touch)

Return from the Bowels of the Earth (InTe 20)

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Part

This spell only works underground. If you possess an Arcane Connection to a point on the surface of the earth, you determine the direction that leads





along the shortest route to the surface. Sometimes, the shortest route is impassible — it may be too narrow, or it may be totally underwater.

This spell was invented by Saxum of House Merinita, who spent many years exploring deep caverns in search of dwarves and other faeries of the earth.

(Base 2, +4 Arc, +1 Conc, +1 Part)

Revelation of the Buried Treasure (InTe 25)

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Part

You can sense the presence of buried objects through up to 5 paces of earth or rubble. You learn the location of the objects and an approximate idea of their size. This spell was invented by a forgotten necromancer and was first known by another name: *Seeking the Unmarked Grave*.

(Base 20, +1 Part)

Muto Terram

Passage Through the Treacherous Swamp (MuTe 20)

R: Special, D: Sun, T: Part

Makes soft ground firm within a 3 pace radius around you. The spell works as long as you are touching the ground or riding on something (such as a horse or wagon) that is in contact with the ground. You cannot cross open water, but any muddy or sandy ground becomes firm, dry earth.

This is an obscure but very ancient spell, thought to be based on magic practised in Gaul before the Roman conquest. It comes to us from the covenant of Three Elders, all of whose members belong to House Ex Miscellanea.

(Base 2, +2 special Range equivalent to Voice, +2 Sun, +2 Part)

Hardness of Adamantine (MuTe 25)

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Makes a metal object you touch as hard as the mythical metal adamantine. Sharp metal weapons gain +4 to their normal Dam and metal armour gains +4 to its normal Prot score (see p. 176). Furthermore, the enchanted metal can only be broken by magic and it can cut any earthly substance. With an adamantine axe, one could cut down stone pillars as if they were trees.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 affect metal)

Window of Transparent Stone (MuTe 25)

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Part

Changes a portion of stone, cement, or brick wall to be as clear as air, creating a magical window one can see through (both ways). The window is about two feet wide by three feet high and can penetrate up to five feet of solid rock. The wall loses none of its hardness or strength. An Herbam casting requisite may be used to see through wooden beams or wood-and-plaster walls.

(Base 4, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 Part, +1 stone)

Perdo Terram

Breach the Mighty Wall (PeTe 15)

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part

Break a hole 1 pace wide and 2 paces high through up to 3 paces thickness of stone or earth. If the barrier is thicker than 3 paces, then a 3-pace-deep indentation is cut into it. Rubble and dust spill out of the new breach but objects on either side of the wall are not generally harmed. Some weak structures are permanently damaged by having such a hole cut through them and may even collapse due to the damage. Most sturdy structures, like castles, remain strong after being breached by this spell.

Besides its use as a crude means of forcing entry into a stone building, this spell can be used to dig tunnels and underground chambers. Magi are well advised to seek the advice of a skilled mining engineer, lest the tunnels they dig with this spell become unstable and collapse.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Part, +1 affect stone)

Hauberk of Sublime Lightness (PeTe 15)

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind.

Makes the metal in a suit of armour nearly weightless. Armour of metal-reinforced leather, metal scale, or chain mail is reduced to a Load of 1 for partial armour or 2 for full armour — the spell eliminates the weight of the metal but not the padding and other non-metallic parts. A warrior benefiting from this spell might even be able to swim while wearing armour, or at least stay afloat.

This spell comes from the “armoury” of Boris of House Tytalus, a former shield grog in the covenant of Crimson Brotherhood whose Gift was awakened by a magical botch. Even after joining the Order, Boris never stopped going about Mythic Europe fully armed and armoured as a warrior. He developed a number of spells to augment his fighting abilities and finally died in an attempt to slay Stellatus the Dragon.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +2 metal)

Collapse of the Precarious Tunnel (PeTe 30)

R: Voice, D: Momentary, T: Part

Cause a section of a cave or tunnel ceiling, up to 10 paces in diameter, to cave in. Anyone directly underneath the collapse takes damage as if inside a collapsing stone building (a stress die +21 damage). The spell does not work on above-ground structures.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Part, +1 affect stone, +3 size)

Rego Terram

Charm of Opening (ReTe 5)

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

This simple incantation opens any non-magical lock. Magi are advised to employ magical protections of some kind if they wish to guard their valuables from rival magi or overly-inquisitive apprentices.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 affect metal)

Blade of the Phantom Swordsman (ReTe 20)

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

A sword or other metal weapon flies into the air and whirls and dances, attacking opponents at your command. The weapon always hits if it penetrates

the target's magic resistance — no aiming roll is necessary. Since the weapon does not need to make an attack roll, it can't use the normal rules for weapon damage. Instead, it does a stress die + weapon damage modifier + 3. If an opponent attempts to grab or attack the weapon by non-magical means, use the special combat manoeuvre rules (p. 175) as if the caster were wielding the weapon by hand, but use the caster's Finesse score instead of his Weapon Ability to determine the animated weapon's Defence score.

Note that the caster must maintain concentration each round while the spell is in effect. The difficulty varies from 6 when using the weapon to fight a single opponent, to 12 or more when trying to manoeuvre it through a wild melee.

An Herbam casting requisite is required if the weapon has a wooden haft.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 affect metal)

The Walking Statue (ReTe 20)

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

Req: Muto

Animate a stone statue to move as you direct. A statue is very clumsy but also very strong. Its combat statistics are Initiative -2, Attack +5, and Damage +6. It is immune to most weapons but heavy, blunt weapons may be able to damage it at the storyguide's option (its suggested Defence is +1 and its Soak, +12).

Besides fighting, the statue can be a useful servant. It is tireless and very strong. It is immune to hazards like poison and fire, so some magi use animated statues to perform certain laboratory work.

When the spell ends, the statue freezes into its current position, which may be different from its original position.

(Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +1 affect stone, +1 precise control, +1 Muto)





Treasures of the Sea

by Christopher Gribbon

This extended article describes the setting of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles in Mythic Europe, for use with the roleplaying game *Ars Magica* 5th Edition. It is intended for use by Storyguides planning to run a saga set on Man or the Hebrides; there is information in here of use to players wishing to generate characters from the isles, but it is mixed in with Storyguide-specific setting information.

This first part of the article details The Isle of Man proper, providing its history, traditions, a gazetteer, and the Bibliography. The second part (in next month's *Hermes Portal*) provides the same information for the Out Isles (the other islands of the kingdom), and also contains the Appendices — giving guidelines for generating Manx characters, information for running the Manx civil wars, Timelines, a Glossary of Manx Gaelic, and NPCs.

Most of the information herein was taken directly from historical and mythological sources on the isles, but a fair proportion of it has been simplified, changed, or even fabricated whole-cloth (most particularly the details of the 2nd Manx Civil War). This was done for dramatic purposes, and if your own research reveals information that disagrees with the setting information provided here, then — naturally — feel free to use whichever you prefer. It's your game, after all! Also — please forgive the poor Gaelic; I don't "have the Gaelic", and many of the translations and pronunciations here are educated guesswork.

The name "Treasures of the Sea" comes from the legendary contents of King Mannannan's magical Crane Bag. This bag contained, among other things, the Beth-Luis-Nion, the lost alphabet and magical knowledge of the Druids.

In order to make full use of the material described in this article, it would be useful to possess some of the *Ars Magica* sourcebooks produced by Atlas Games and their predecessors. *Lion of the North* provides setting information for the Loch Leglean

Tribunal and mythic Scotland, and also gives the rules for Gruagachan magic; *Ultima Thule* is the sourcebook for the Norse peoples, including their own unique magical traditions (all of which are found on Man and the Isles); these two books are probably the most important to own. *The Fallen Angel* is an excellent scenario for introducing magi to the Isle of Man, and the second chapter of the older scenario *Deadly Legacy* (published by White Wolf) can easily be adapted from its original setting of mainland Scotland to the Hebrides, or even Man itself. Also potentially useful might be *Heirs to Merlin* (describing the Stonehenge Tribunal), *Houses of Hermes* (containing brief descriptions of the covenants of the Hibernian Tribunal), *Faeries, Revised Edition* (or 1st Ed.), *Mythic Seas*, and *Hedge Magic*. If you do not own *Lion of the North*, then *Fire and Ice*, the guide to Mythic Iceland, contains details of the Trollson magicians, whose magic is very similar to that of the Gruagachan.

About the Setting

In the 13th century, the Hebridean islands of Skye and Lewis, together with the Isle of Man are one kingdom, separate from the rest of England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. These islands have been ruled by the Norse for hundreds of years and, while still culturally and historically connected to the rest of the British Isles, are just as closely related to the Kingdom of Norway. The coming decades are tumultuous for this small kingdom, as it survives three civil wars, and is fought over by England and Scotland.

As a setting for *Ars Magica*, Man also has great potential for sagas dealing with Hermetic politics, as the three surrounding tribunals of Loch Leglean, Stonehenge and Hibernia have long contested for ownership of this small, but magically powerful island, and young magi settling there will be thrown into a hotbed of both mundane and Hermetic plotting and power-struggles. Additionally, the island itself is infested with numerous powerful faeries and dragons, and several varieties of native Norse wizards, making it an extremely interesting, if hazardous, place to establish a covenant.



The map of the Isle of Man is a detailed black and white illustration. It shows the island's irregular coastline with numerous inlets and bays. Major towns and villages are marked with dots and labeled, including Point of Ayre, Ramsey, Douglas, and Castle Town. The map also depicts several rivers, such as the River Andreas, River Sulby, and River Bann. Glens and mountains are indicated by hachured lines and labels like 'CURRAGH MALAU' and 'MOORAGH MOOR'. Religious sites, including churches and abbeys, are marked with crosses and labeled, such as 'Kirk St. Martin' and 'St. Maugholds Abbey'. The map includes a compass rose in the bottom right corner, pointing North. The title 'ISLE of MAN' is prominently displayed at the top right.







History of The Kingdom of Man and the Isles

Mythic History of the Island

Sion Mac Cuil

Legend has it that the mighty Irish giant, Fion Mac Cuil (Finn MacCoole; known in Scotland as Fingal) accidentally created the Isle of Man before the time of humanity. Thereafter the island was settled by the mighty Mannannan, Beg Mac-y-Lír (after whom the island is named), and his faerie people Yn Mannannaigh (“the Manxmen”).

Fion is also, in legend, supposed to have dwelt for some time in the Hebrides, and there are several sites around Skye and Lewis linked to him and his “Fian-na” warriors (or “Fingalian” in Scotland).

“Fion Mac Cuil having routed Albanach, a Scotch giant with red hair, was pursuing him eastwards, but the canny Scotch monster was rather more fleet of foot than his Irish rival, and was out-running him. Fion, fearing that he might reach the sea and swim across to Britain before he could overtake him, stopped, and thrusting his gigantic hands into the earth, tore up the rocks and clay, and heaved them after Albanach. As Fion miscalculated height and distance, the mighty mass which had fitted the whole bed of the present lake of Lough Neagh launched from his hands, flew past the giant at a considerable height above his head, and did not lose its impetus till it came over the mid sea. There dropping, it formed an island afterwards called Man, from its Danaan patron, Mannannan, son of Lir.”

– A Manx Notebook.

King Mannannan and the Tuatha de Danaan

According to the Lebor Gabala (“Book of Invasions”), the first inhabitants of the British Isles were the evil Fomhori. These Fomhori were an ancient people, led by the mighty Balor of the Evil Eye (and including Bres, Eriu and Tethra among their numbers), from whom modern Scottish/Irish Giants (the Famhair) are descended. The Fomhori held onto the lands for some time, successfully repelling invasions by little-known peoples called the Partholons and the Nemeds, but finally they failed to defeat the Firbolg. These Firbolg (“men of the belly” or “men of the bag”), took half the land from the Fomhori, and managed to live in peace with them, until the arrival of the faerie Tuatha de Danaan (“people of the godless Danu”).

These Tuatha de Danaan conquered all the lands from the Firbolg and the Fomhori, though they did not wipe them out, and reigned supreme until the arrival of humanity. Many of the Tuatha de Danaan

Lebor Gabala (“Book of Invasions”)

This large book is a recording of the ancient legends of the Fomhori, Fir Bolg, Tuatha de Danaan, Milesians, and all the peoples to sequentially settle Ireland.

Though the tales recorded in it are ancient, they were first written down in the early 1200s. It will almost certainly exist solely in Goidelic (though some Latin translations might exist, at the Storyguide’s discretion).

It is a Summa in Faerie Lore, with a Level of 4, and a Quality of 9.

were so powerful that they were worshipped as gods by the first human settlers on the isles. Mannannan Beg Mac-y-Lír was one of the most powerful, having almost total control over the water and sky of the Irish Sea. He ruled Man wisely and well for several hundred years, and there are many legends of his time as King:

At one time Mannannan noticed a fleet of invaders from England sailing towards his island, and he plucked some rushes of leagher glass (“green sedge”) and crafted them into miniature ships. These he placed on the sea and, with his magics, they seemed to be a mighty flotilla of ships to defend the island. Thus, dispirited at the apparent size of the defenses of Man, the invading fleet turned around, and returned home. From this time forth, Mannannan accepted tribute from his subjects in the form of rushes of green sedge, in remembrance of his saving the island from conquest.

Mannannan was ruler of Man, and the land was named after him. He reigned many years, and kept, by necromancy, the Land of Man under mists, and if he dreaded any enemies, he would make of one man to seem an hundred by his art magic, and he never had any form of the commons; but each one to bring a certain quantity of green rushes on Midsummer Eve to a place called Wardfell.

– A Manx Notebook.

Another time, while Mannannan was away, his consort Rhiannon Fand was attacked by a band of three Fomhori. She cried out for help, and the mighty hero CuChulainn heard her cries. After fighting off the demons, Rhiannon and CuChulainn fell in love, and he spirited her away to Ireland. When Mannannan returned and found what was happened, he was concerned: he was grateful to CuChulainn for saving his wife, but he did not wish their forbidden love to continue — so he used his magical Cloak of Forgetfulness to erase the memories from both their minds, and brought Rhiannon back to Man.

See pages 37-40 for more details of Mannannan and his court.

Aside from rescuing Rhiannon, CuChulainn had other adventures on Man. He fell in love with Bláthnat, daughter of Arawn, Lord of the Underworld, and wife of the evil sorcerer CuRoi of the Grey Mantle. CuRoi dwelt on Man in a magical castle, with

a rotating stone for a door that was impassable until it was stilled. Bláthnat secretly let CuChulainn into the castle, and immobilized her husband by tying his hair to the bedstead, allowing CuChulainn to best him. However, CuRoi's loyal poet Feirceirtne slew Bláthnat afterwards (so she now dwells with her father), and CuRoi's son Lugaid fought in the battle at Muirthemne, and helped to slay CuChulainn there.

Another Tuatha de Danaan, Culainn the Smith — most skilled of all the faerie crafters of weaponry in Ireland — had a secret smithy concealed somewhere on Man. He was persuaded by the intervention of Teeval, Princess of the Oceans (daughter of Man-nannan), to craft weapons for Conchobar Mac Nessa, an Irish noble and uncle of CuChulainn. With these weapons, Conchobar went on to become the King of Ulster at a very young age.

Story Seed

Culainn the Smith concealed his smithy somewhere on Man; it might be contained within a difficult-to-enter regio, explaining why it has never been found. What treasures might be contained within it? What powers and curses will be revealed? If the smithy is looted, might some of the faeries come looking for their lost treasures?

Human History

The First Humans: Broch Builders, Picts, and Celts

The first human settlers of Scotland were the mysterious Broch Builders, of which almost nothing is known; their only legacy are the many brochs (large stone-built towers of unknown function) to be found across Scotland and the Hebrides (though there are none to be found on Man). The Broch Builders were the first to worship the Tuatha de Danaan as gods, and to fear the few remaining Fomhori as demons.

After the Broch Builders came the Picts (who may be descended from Fomhori-human interbreeding), and finally the Celts, who hailed originally from Scythia, and who were also known as the Milesians or Cruithni. These Milesians were a nomadic people, with great skill with horses. Gaedhuil, the grandson of King Fenius of the Milesians was bitten by a deadly snake, and was only cured by the miraculous intervention of Moses of the Israelites (who cured him with his holy staff). Moses told the boy that his descendants would travel to a land that lay in the setting track of the sun (to the west). For three generations, Gaedhuil and his descendants endured great hardship while traveling westwards. Eventually, Milesius (great-grandson of Gaedhuil, and son of the sun god Apollo) arrived in Spain. There he married Scota ("the dark one"), the daughter of an Egyptian Pharaoh, and became king. Milesius had a brother named Ith, who was a far-ranging traveler, and it was Ith who discovered an island (Ireland) on one of his travels. In the course of investigating whether it was the legendary Innisfail ("Island of Destiny"), Ith was

wounded by the Tuatha de Danaan, and died on the journey home to Spain. Upon their arrival home, the remaining explorers found that King Milesius had died; his sons along with their mother Scota led a force that returned to punish the Tuatha de Danaan for killing Ith. After a large battle at Cailtan they conquered the Tuatha de Danaan and took control of the lands; these ancient Celts were obviously considerably mightier than modern humanity, as they were able to confront and defeat gods in combat!

The invading Celts divided into two main groups — the Britons and the Irish Celts. The Britons stayed in mainland Britain and in Brittany in France, and were subsequently conquered by the invading Angles and Saxons (in the time of King Arthur). The Britons were the first human settlers on the Isle of Man; their language evolved into the modern Brythonic languages ("P-line" Gaelic, or Cornish, Welsh, and Breton). The Irish Celts moved on to Ireland, and the Goidaelic languages ("Q-line" Gaelic — Scots, Irish, and Manx Gaelic) derive from their tongue; one tribe of them — the Scotti — re-invaded the land of Scotland from Ireland around the time of the Romans, and also conquered Man at this time.

The isles of Man and Anglesey were both strongholds of the Druids during this time; King Firman Ap Josuia, who ruled Man around 130 BC was a great friend of the Druids and established many strongholds for them on the island — most of which have yet to be re-discovered.

The Works of Saint Adamnan

St. Adamnan (or Eunan) was Abbot of Iona from 679 to 709 AD, and was a prolific and skilled writer; among his more famous books are his biography *Vita Sancti Columbae* ("Life of Saint Columba"), and the treatise *De Locis Sanctis* ("Of Holy Places"). His work was widely read and praised, and the Venerable Bede used much from Adamnan's work in his own writing.

The *Vita Sancti Columbae* has been described as "the most complete piece of biography that all Europe can boast of", and in *Ars Magica* terms is a *Tractatus on Dominion Lore* (St. Columba) with a Quality of 11; it is written in Latin.

De Locis Sanctis, a book in three parts, was originally presented as a gift to King Aldfrid of the Northumbrians, and is a gazetteer of the Holy Land. Book one describes the Holy City of Jerusalem, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the disposition of Christ's body and grave-clothes in his tomb, and the Mount of Olives; book two describes Palestine, Bethlehem, Jericho, the Dead Sea, the Jordan, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Alexandria, and Damascus; book three describes Constantinople, with tales of the miracles of St. George the Confessor. This compilation is a *Summa on Area Lore* (The Holy Land) with a Level of 4, and a Quality of 11, and is in Latin.





The Romans and the Celtic Saints

Unlike mainland Britain, the Roman legions never bothered to conquer the island of Man — though they knew of it, and visited it periodically (calling it “Monavia”). A Roman altar dedicated to Jupiter is found in Castletown, but the Priests of Hermes had no known presence there. The Romans also visited the Hebrides, which can be found on Pliny’s famous map of the world, but their presence there was but fleeting. During the time of the Romans, Man was ruled by the Britons of Wales — but in 330 AD it was conquered by the aggressive Irish Scotti, in whose hands it remained until the advent of the Vikings.

The actual recorded (written) history of the islands begins not with the Romans, but at the time of the Celtic saints (in the 5th century). Several of the more famous Celtic saints (St. Brigit, St. Patrick, St. Columba, St. Ninian) are credited as having visited Man; St. Patrick supposedly landing on the small islet off the west coast now known as “St. Patrick’s Isle”. St. Patrick stayed on Man for three years, converting the heathens; during this time he expelled all snakes, toads and noxious reptiles from the island (much as he did in Ireland) — and there are still none to be found on Man!

Man was essentially Celtic (Culdee) Christian until about 800 AD, when the Vikings conquered the isles.

Evidence of the work of the Celtic saints is to be seen on the island in the plentiful Celtic stone crosses, Ogham stones and keeills (small Culdee churches, often with a chibbyr, or holy well, for baptisms) across the island.

The Vikings and Great King Orrey

The Vikings began raiding the Irish Sea in the late 8th century. The period from 787 to 1079 AD is a chaotic time for the isles, as various Norwegian and Danish Viking warlords (like the Jarls of Orkney, King Sitric of Dublin and York, and others) raided, conquered, warred over, and re-conquered the islands, as well as conquering large areas of Ireland, Scotland and England. In the isles, the two kinds of Vikings were known as *fionn-gall* (“white foreigners” — from Norway) and *dubh-gall* (“black foreigners” — from Denmark), and they were both renowned for rape, pillage, and slave-taking.

In 1079 AD, one ambitious Norwegian warlord called Godred Crovan (“Godred white-gloves”) — later to be known as “Great King Orrey” by the Manx — conquered all the isles, and established Man as his capital. Godred (described as “a Prince, fortunate in war, prudent in peace, and merciful after victory”) had fought a losing battle under Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, against Harold Godwinsson of England at Stamford Bridge in 1066

From the *Chronica Regum Manniae et Insularum*

The *Chronica Regum Manniae et Insularum* (“Chronicles of the Kings of Man and the Isles”) is a book written by the monks of Rushen Abbey. The first version, just recently completed in 1220, has been presented as a gift to the current King Reginald, and is further detailed on page 49.

In the year 1066, died Edward, King of England, of pious memory, of whom it is said that he was the honour and glory of the English during his life, and their ruin at his death. He was succeeded by Harold the son of Godwin, whom Harold Harfager encountered at Stamford Bridge. The English prevailed, put all the Norwegians to flight, slaying many of them. From that defeat, a certain Godred, called Crouan, son of Harold the Black of Ysland, escaped to Godred, son of Sytric, then King of Man, by whom he was received with honour. In the same year William the Bastard conquered England, slew King Harold, and reigned in his stead, reducing the English to perpetual serfdom. He ruled over the English people twenty years and eleven months, and was succeeded by his son.

In the year 1070, Malcolm, King of Scotland, laid waste England as far as Cleveland, and married Margaret. In the same year died Godred, son of Sytric, King of Man, who was succeeded by his son Fingall.

In the year 1075, Godred Crouan collected a number of ships and came to Man; he gave battle to the natives but was defeated, and forced to fly. Again he assembled an army and a fleet, came to Man,

encountered the Manxmen, was defeated and put to fight. A third time he collected a numerous body of followers, came by night to the port called Ramsey, and concealed 300 men in a wood, on the sloping brow of a hill called Scacafel. At daylight the men of Man drew up in order of battle, and, with a mighty rush, encountered Godred. During the heat of the contest the 300 men, rising from the ambush in the rear, threw the Manxmen into disorder, and compelled them to fly. When the natives saw that they were overpowered, and had no means of escape (for the tide had filled the bed of the river Sulby, and on the other side the enemy was closely pursuing them), those who remained, with piteous cries, begged of Godred to spare their lives. Godred, yielding to feelings of mercy, and moved with compassion for their misfortune, for he had been brought up amongst them for some time, recalled his army, and forbade further pursuit. Next day Godred gave his army the option of having the country divided amongst them if they preferred to remain and inhabit it, or of taking everything it contained worth having, and returning to their homes. The soldiers preferred plundering the whole island, and returning home enriched by its wealth. Godred then granted to the few soldiers who had remained with him, the northern part of the island, and to the surviving Manxmen the southern portion, on condition that none of them should ever presume to claim any of the land by hereditary right. Hence it arises that up to the present day the whole island belongs to the king alone, and that all its revenues are his.

(though Harold of England himself was soon to loose against another Viking-descendent, William “the Bastard” of Normandy, at Hastings). This defeat seems to have just fuelled Godred’s need for conquest, however, as he went on to conquer all the islands for himself. The Kingdom of Man and the Isles, described as stretching “from the Calf of Man to the Butt of Lewis”, included all of the Sudrey islands of Scotland (the Hebrides and Man), but not including the Nordreys — the Shetlands and Orkneys (which, though also Norwegian, are ruled by the Jarls of Orkney).

Godred was in fact just a major Jarl under Norway, but he quickly began to see himself as entirely independent, styling himself as Konung (“King”), and refusing to pay tribute to Norway. This insubordination led to the major subsequent additions to the kingdom, when Magnus Barelegs, King of Norway traveled to Britain in 1095 AD to re-assert Norway’s authority over his wayward colonies (it was during this expedition that King Magnus adopted the wearing of the Scottish kilt — hence his moniker “Barelegs”). During this punitive expedition, where he ousted Godred Crovan and installed himself as king, he also raided Scotland, Ireland, England, and Wales. In treaty, Scotland granted him control of all the islands he could sail around “with rudder fixed in place”; at Tairheart (“tow-boat”) on the north of the Kintyre peninsula, he had his ship mounted on a

wagon, and had his men drag it across the narrow spit of land, and thereby claimed Kintyre as part of the Kingdom. During his expedition, Magnus sailed as far south as the island of Anglesey, off the north-west of Wales. There he routed the Norman forces that had just recently conquered it, and took it as his own (though the native Welshmen re-conquered it shortly thereafter). After his victories, Magnus settled in Man, where he built Peel Castle, and ruled both Man and Norway from there.

Magnus died in Ireland in 1103 AD, and there was a protracted battle for inheritance between the surviving sons of Godred Crovan. Eventually Olaf the Red, Godred’s youngest son, won this first Manx civil war, and he reigned for 40 years, before being treacherously slain by his nephews. Olaf was succeeded by his son, Godred II (the Black), who was also invited to be King of Dublin. Unfortunately, Godred II spent too much time concentrating on his Irish holdings, and he lost the Kingdom of Man and the Isles in 1158 to his brother-in-law, that canny warrior and politician Somerled, Thane of Argyll. Somerled (whose name Sommerlaidhi Höld translates from Norse as “Summer Sailor”, and who was described as “a well-tempered man, in body shapely, of a fair piercing eye, of middle stature, and of quick discernment”) reigned for 5 years, before being killed at Renfrew, while fighting a battle against King Malcolm V of Scotland. His kingdom then fell to his





From the Chronica Regum Manniae et Insularum

In the year 1187, Jerusalem was captured by the infidels, and the holy cross was carried away to Damascus.

In the same year, on the 10th of November, Godred, King of the Isles, died in the Island of St. Patrick, in Man. In the beginning of the following summer his body was removed to the island called Iona. He left three sons, Reginald, Olave, and Ivan. Reginald, then a full grown young man, was absent in the Isles. Olave, yet a very young boy, resided in Man.

Godred during his life had appointed Olave to succeed to the kingdom, for the inheritance belonged to him by right, because he was born of lawful wedlock; and had commanded all the people of Man to appoint Olave king after his own death, and preserve inviolate their oath of allegiance. However, after the death of Godred, the Manxmen sent their messengers to the Isles for Reginald, and made him king, because he was a man of energy and of riper age. For they dreaded the weakness of Olave, for he was but a boy ten years old, and they considered that a person, who on account of his tender age, knew not how to direct himself, would be wholly incapable of governing his subjects. This was the reason why the people of Man appointed Reginald king.



The Heimskringla Saga

The *Heimskringla* (or “Circle of the Worlds”) Saga is the chronicle of the Kings of Norway. An example of the savagery of the Norse raiding is given in this account of Magnus Barelegs’ punitive expedition, by Bjorn Cripplehand, the King’s Skald:

“In Lewis Isle with fearful blaze,
The house-destroying fire plays;
To hills and rocks the people fly,
Fearing all refuge but the sky.
In Uist the king deep crimson made
The lightning of his glancing blade;
The peasant lost his land and life,
Who dared to bide the Norseman’s strife.
The hungry battle-birds were filled
In Skye with blood of foeman killed,
And wolves on Tiree’s lonely shore
Dyed red their hairy jaws in gore.
The men of Mull were tired of flight;
The Scottish foeman would not fight,
And many an Island girl’s wail
Was heard as through the Isles we sail.”
On Tiree’s plain our shield they spy:
From Isla smoke rose heaven-high,
Whirling up from the flashing blaze
The king’s men o’er the island raise.
South of Cantire the people fled,
Scared by our swords in blood dyed red,
And our brave champion onward goes
To meet in Man the Norseman’s foes.”

three surviving sons — Dufgall, Rognvald, and Engull (from whom much of the nobility of the west of Scotland and the isles are descended: the Angus-es, Morrissons, MacRuaris, MacDhomhnuills, MacDougalls, and MacAlasdairs. See HP#15, Appendix III, for more details). Godred II returned to reclaim his kingdom from them, but was unable to re-take Kintyre, or the Islay and Mull island groups, which were therefore divided among the sons of Somerled. Unfortunately, the acquisitive streak runs true in Somerled’s family, and his sons and grandsons war over the isles for the next century, even going so far as to raid Skye in 1263, precipitating another punitive expedition from Norway (see “The Battle of Largs and the Fourth Manx Civil War”, HP#15, page 25).

Godred II’s eldest son Reginald, the current King of Man and the Isles, is the great-grandson of King Orrey, and has ruled since 1187 AD. Godred II actually designated his youngest son, Olaf the Black, as his heir, but the Manx parliament preferred the older Reginald (see “The Royal Family and the King’s Hirð”, pages 47-48, and “The Second Manx Civil War”, HP#15, pages 21-25).

Eillan Vannin

Eillan Vannin (“The Isle of Man”), despite the wealth of political and military interest in it, is not particularly large (being only 33 miles long, and 13 wide, with a total area of 150,400 acres, and a small islet called “The Calf” off the southern end) and it has a small population (around 7,000 in 1220 AD). It is, however, both unusually fertile (both agriculturally and magically), and militarily significant (being in a commanding position in the Irish Sea). Indeed Man is not more than 30 miles from any of the surrounding countries: 27 miles from Cumberland, England; 15 miles from Galloway, Scotland; 29 miles from the Irish coast; and 23 miles from Anglesey, Wales (for Hermetic magi, only Scotland is therefore within range of a *Seven-League Stride* spell — but the rules might be bent here for simplicity).

Geologically, the island is largely hard shale and slate, with only a few exceptions: red sandstone on the west coast around Peel, a granite outcropping in the southern uplands, and white limestone on the southeast around Castletown.

Physically, the island is composed of two mountainous highland regions of over 1,000 ft — one to the north, and one to the south — with a swampy region (curragh mooar — “the great bog”) between the two, straddling the parishes of German and Braddan. This misty bog, dotted with lichen-strewn and gnarled willows, is the haunt of Sgoagh, a malevolent wyrm (see page 42). Great King Orrey’s Road, the only real road on Man, marks the only known safe route through the bog, without detouring around it; this road was built by Godred Crovan (“Great King Orrey”) and stretches from Ramsay at the north to Castletown at the south.

Much of the agriculture on Man is sheep-grazing in the hills and fishing around the coast, but there are some flatter coastal regions suitable for arable farming and cattle. Most of the farmland on Man and the Isles is below 600 ft; the land above this and the inland wilderness areas are not owned by anyone, and is communal land. Like the Scots, Irish, and Norse, the Manx practice transhumance for sheep grazing (taking their flocks to elevated “summer pasture” in the summer, and back down to the valley floors in winter) — in Scotland and the Hebrides, the summer pastures are known as sheilings, but on Man they are earys.

Travel on and Around Man

Traveling on Man is fairly straightforward; one simply needs to decide whether one is traveling overland, or by sea around the coast.

Journeying from north to south overland is typically done on Great King Orrey’s road. King Orrey’s road is approximately 30 miles long, so by this route, a traveler can make almost the entire length of the island in less than two days by foot or horse (see “Travel” on page 181 of ArM5). Journeying from

east to west is slightly more problematic, as one either has to navigate through the central curragh mooar — a difficult proposition, even without the threat of Sgoagh, or take the more indirect routes over the mountainous regions (either of these routes might take over a day), or around the coast (likely taking two days).

Great King Orrey’s road (or Raad Mooar Ree Gorrey) begins in the South at Castletown, and follows the Silverburn up the glen of Silverdale; it crosses the Silverburn over the Monk’s Bridge at Rushen Abbey, where a toll is exacted from all travelers. The road continues north through the hills of the southern uplands, and one would turn west down Glen Helen if one were traveling towards Peel — otherwise one continues north between Slieau Whallan and Greeba Mountain, past the town of Marown. From there, the road traces the safe route through the curragh mooar, and then enters the northern uplands, passing between the mountains of Freoghane and Beinn-y-Phott. The road then proceeds north, following the western bank of the Sulby River, between Mooar and Bibaloe Glens, and past Slieau Curn and Lough Sulby. It passes Slieau Vollee and Rhaa Sumark before fording the river at the town of Sulby. From there, it continues to follow the river, this time on the eastern bank, until it reaches the town of Ramsay on the coast.

Traveling by sea is generally easier: barring mishap, the average ship can circumnavigate Man completely in three-to-four days (a distance of 75-80 miles; see “Travel Times” on page 43 of *Mythic Seas*). Unless one is manning one’s own boat, one will not become fatigued by the journey, and the sailing weather on the Irish Sea is usually good in summer and winter (but watch out if you have angered Man-nannan). See “Hebridean Ships” on page 7 of HP#15 for details on the types of sailing craft used by the Kingdom of Man and the Isles.

Administrative Organization

Parishes

As the Kingdom of the Isles consisted of 32 major islands, it was decided that there should be 32 representatives at the Tynwald parliament (see below), so the lands were divided into 32 Parishes (also known as Herads) — 16 from Man, and 16 from the other Isles. These other islands are known as “The Out Isles”, and consisted of the Lewis group (Lewis and Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, and Barra), the Skye group (Skye, Rona, Raasay, Scalpay, Canna, Rum, Eigg, Muck, and Soay), the Mull group (Coll, Tiree, Mull, Lismore, Seil, Luing, Scarba, Jura, and Iona), and the Islay group (Colonsay, Islay, Rathlin, Arran, Bute, Cumbræ, Gigha, and the Kintyre peninsula). Since the time of Somerled, however, the Mull and Islay islands have returned to Scottish rule, and no longer belong to the Kingdom of Man and the Isles. There are therefore now only 24 parishes represented at the Manx parliament (16 from Man, 5 from Lewis, and 3 from Skye), though





Iona remains the traditional burial-place for the Kings of the Isles. See HP#15, pages 5-19 for more details on The Out Isles.

Each of these parishes provides one royally-appointed Hersir representative to the Thing parliament, held at the Tynwald hill (“Tynwald” comes from Thing-völlr — “place of parliament”); collectively, these representatives are known as Yn Kiare-as-Feed (“the four-and-twenty”) or Taxiaksi. See *Ultima Thule* page 29 for more details on hersar. Another duty of the hersir is as the Warden of the Watch for his parish (though this duty could be, and often was delegated to one of his hirð); the warden was responsible for recruiting and organizing a watch of 4 men to guard against any danger coming from the sea.

Each parish has an administrative centre called the Bol, and the outlying lands are known as the parish Soettur. The bol is usually based around a church, and is often where the hersir lives.

Sheadings

On Man, the 16 parishes are collected into 6 Sheadings (from the Norse settungr, or “sixth part”): Rushen, Santan, Garff, Ayre, Michael, and Glenfaba. All but two sheadings on Man consist of 3 parishes; Glenfaba and Santan have 2 each. Legally, each sheading has its own sheading-court (or Folksthing) with a jury of 10 freemen. This folksthing meets twice a year, near the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, under the Mikill Hersir (chief hersir of the parishes in the sheading) to deal with local matters, such as feuds and the payment of wergild fines (see *Ultima Thule* page 35; wergild was known on Man and the Hebrides as eric). The mikill hersir would receive one-eleventh of any eric paid as compensation in the sheading court. The Lewis and Skye island groups each count as a sheading (though the land laws are slightly different there), and the mikill hersir is known as the Sheriff.

North/South of Man

At the highest level of subdivision, Man consists of two halves — North and South; the North consists of sheadings Ayre, Michael, and Glenfaba, the South of Rushen, Santan, and Garff. Historically, after King Orrey’s victory, the North of Man was granted to the conquering Norsemen, and the South to the “native” peoples — by then a mixture of Celts, and centuries-worth of Norse invaders. Each half of Man provides one Lagman (“lawman”) who is deputy to the King, and who makes the legal decisions for their portion of the island. The lagmen are required to know by heart at least 1/3 of all the Manx laws (known as “breast-laws”, as they are kept in the breasts of the lagmen; there are no written copies of these laws).

The Out Isles are not part of either the North or South of Man, and they do not have lagmen.

Treens and Quarterlands

Below the level of parishes are the land-areas known as Treens and Quarterlands (or Kerroo). Each parish contains several (5-17) treens, and each

treen consists of a number of quarterlands (almost always 4, but the number can vary from 1-5); the Lewis and Skye island groups have slightly different land laws, and do not have treens or quarterlands (see HP#15, page 8 for details of the Hebridean land laws). In size, a treen varies from 200 to 600 acres, and a quarterland is enough land to raise 80 cattle, or 360 sheep — usually evenly dividing the treen (so each will be 50-150 acres). The borders of a treen typically follow natural features, like hillsides, streams, or roads, and most treens and quarterlands are below 600ft; land over this, and areas like the heavily-forested Mooar Glen, and the curragh mooar are communal land unsettled by anyone. Similarly, town land is not normally part of a treen, being communal land (though people may and do own and rent houses within the town).

Larger farms will approximate an entire quarterland, while smaller farms will be described as being “of” a particular quarterland. All the farms in a treen are collectively known as a Grend, and pay an annual Skatt tax of 108d (or 9s). Each sheading also has a Moar tax-collector, whose responsibility it is to ensure that the skatt is paid from each grend to the hersir.

Vapna Stefna

At time of muster (vapna stefna or “weapon-calling”), each sheading is required to provide one fully-equipped warship, of at least Drakkar or Birlinn-size, for the king (see *Ultima Thule* pages 45-46 for details of Norse ships in *Ars Magica*; also see HP#15, page 7 for details of the ships used in the Irish Sea). Similarly, each quarterland is required to provide one fighting man for the king (with an axe, sword, spear and shield). Butescarl and Gallogladh (Norse and Scots mercenaries, respectively) are often hired by the families of a quarterland to avoid sending their own sons off to battle.

The muster itself is signified by the king sending a “war arrow” to each of his hersar; the war arrow is a ceremonial carved wooden arrowhead.

Odal Tenure on Man

When Godred Crovan conquered Man at the battle of Scacafell in 1079 AD, and granted the land jointly to his followers and to the Manx natives, he did so with the proviso that “none of them should presume to claim any of the land by hereditary right.” Therefore, though the richer landowners on Man are still bönder, they do not have the same inalienable odal-rights as the odalsbönder of other Norse countries — as they technically hold their land in fief to the king, and pay skatt rent to their hersar, through the moar. The right for the king to seize and re-distribute the land exists, but few kings have made much use of it, as the support and friendship of the hersar (all of whom are important bönder) is important to maintaining their kingship. Occasionally, however, kings have made use of this power to seize land from their political enemies, and redistribute it among their own supporters.

After Magnus Barelegs conquered the isles, the men of the South attempted a rebellion, and a pitched battle was fought in Parish Jurby. The South was winning, until the womenfolk of the North joined their men on the battlefield, and routed the southerners. As a result of this, the women of the North legally own fully half of their husbands' possessions, while the women of the South own only one-third.

The Church is an important landowner on Man. Rushen Abbey owns around an eighth of all the treens on the island (this land is collectively known as the Abbeylands or Abbey Demesne), while other important Church landowners include St. Runius' Convent in Onchan, St. Maughold's Monastery in Maughold, as well as St. Bee's Priory in Cumberland, Whithorn Abbey in Scotland, and Bangor Abbey and Sabhal Abbey in Ireland.

The Tynwald

Held on the midsummer blöt of June 21st, this is the great parliament, when all the hersar of yn kiare-as-feed, and all the other freemen of the islands meet and discuss legal disputes, and hear the king's new laws. While as many of the taxiaki as possible attempt to attend, the meeting is legally quorate as long as 13 of the 24 are actually present. The Tynwald was first held in 979 AD, during the reign of King Godred Haraldsson. This meeting currently occurs in the open air at the Tynwald hill, near the town of Peel, and is officiated over by the king (holding his sword, point-up before him), and the high priest of Odin, seated at the top of the hill under a white canopy. Below them are the two lagmen; below them the hersar; and all the other freemen arrange themselves at the foot of the hill. Rushes are strewn over the path from the nearby St. John's Chapel to the Tynwald hill, for the attendees to walk upon (this symbolizes the rent owed to Mannannan, though few understand this). See *Ultima Thule* pages 33-35 for more details of the Norse Thing.

This meeting is a combination Hus-thing ("domestic-parliament"), Lög-thing ("law-parliament"), and — when needed — Leidar-thing ("war-parliament"). When a new king is to be chosen, the Tynwald convenes in special session, and decides who to elect; often, the previous king's choice of heir would be selected — but occasionally, yn-kiare-as-feed would chose a different regent (such as when they chose King Reginald over his younger brother Olaf).

The festival of the midsummer blöt is also celebrated on this day, with sacrifices to Baldur, and feasting and merrymaking after the Tynwald itself is over; a fair and market are also common occurrences.

Story Seed

What is the importance of the strewing of rushes before the Tynwald? This probably symbolizes devotion to Mannannan, but it is certain that no-one realizes this nowadays. What would happen if future Tynwalds stopped this particular tradition?

Celtic Names on Man and the Isles

For Norse names, see *Ultima Thule* page 40, and for Scottish names (for the Hebrides) see page 101 of *Lion of the North*.

Male

Alistar, Alistryn, Andreays, Anghus, Asco, Bradan, Brian, Callan, Cane, Cathan, Carbry, Colum, Conan, Conchor, Connaghyn, Corcan, Cowan, Cowel, Cristall, Donal, Doncan, Doolish, Dugal, Eoin, Ferghus, Finlo, Finn, Garmon, Gilandrew, Gilbrid, Gilchrist, Gilcolm, Gilmartyn, Gilmore, Gilno, Hugh, Huchon, Hugen, Illiam, Jamys, Juan, Kerron, Laury, Lonan, Lugh, Machonna, Malew, Manus, Maruna, Mian, Michal, Mores, Murdach, Nele, Oran, Orry, Gorry, Patric, Paden, Paton, Payl, Peddyr, Rigard, Robart, Robyn, Sorley, Thomase, Thomlyn, Urmen, Wilmot.

Female

Affrica, Aimi, Bahee, Bahy, Blaaid, Bree Caly-brid, Calycrist, Calypatric, Calyvorra, Catreena, Dorrin, Ealisaid Ealish, Fenella, Ibot, Johnet, Jonee, Jony, Margaid, Mariot, Moirrey, Mally, Malane, Mona, More, Myghin, Roseen, Voirrey, Vorgell, Ysbal.

Surnames

The Surname conventions in the isles are interchangeably Norse or Scottish. In other words, Lulach, the son of Thorfinn would be perfectly at home being referred to as Lulach Thorfinnsson or Lulach MacThorfinn, and both conventions would be used. Similarly, Gyda, the daughter of Alan could be called Gyda NicAlan or Gyda Alansdottir.

Note that, on Man, it is common to abbreviate "Mac" or "Nic" to "Qu" or "C" where possible, so Sorley MacIntyre ("son of the carpenter") would be known as Sorley Quintyre or Cintyre.

Certain family names carry a particular significance in the isles, as they imply belonging to one of the powerful landowning families: see Appendix III (HP#15, pages 39-42) for details. These families, though not yet "Clans" in the conventional sense are still coherent power-structures in the politics of Scotland and the isles; and over the next century or so, will indeed become "Clans". Someone belonging to these families would describe themselves as being "of" that family — for example "Lulach MacThorfinn of the Skye MacNeacails".

The Heraldic Crest of Man

In 1220, the heraldic crest of Man — the trifoss or trefoil (a three-legged swastika of unknown provenance, but probably related to the tales of Mannannan) — has only just been adopted. Until recently, the crest of Man and the Isles was a more conventional Viking longship, surmounted by a crown. In heraldic terminology, the crest is described as: "Gules, three mailed legs embowed and conjoined at the thighs Argent, spurred Or" (three silver-armored legs with gold spurs, joined at the thigh, on a field of red). The motto of the island, going with





the crest, is “Quocunque Jeceris Stabit” (“Whichever way it is thrown, it will stand”).

Story Seed

What inspired Reginald to change the crest of Man? And why is the new design so evocative of Mannannan?

The Manx People

The Manx inhabitants are a mixture of Celtic and Norse people. Mostly, the Norse are the wealthier landowners, and the Celts are the peasants — but there are many exceptions to this rule, especially in the South, which was given to the Celts to rule by King Orrey.

In terms of appearance, both the Celts and the Norse are both “tall and fair”, with the Celts having a slight predisposition for red hair and green eyes. The Manx and the Hebrideans are therefore fairly mixed (being what is referred to by the Irish as gall-Gaels, or “foreigner-Gaels”), with a significant number of darker, shorter people, from the occasional English and Welsh settlers over the centuries.

For their clothes, the noblemen wear a long tunic called a leine, with an over-cloak called a brat. The leine is usually of linen, but the wealthy might own one of silk; it might be either white or dyed and is often embellished with embroidery. The brat is woolen, and usually brightly-dyed with a decorative fringe, and fastened at the breast with an ornate

brooch. Noble women wear a sleeved shift, or under-dress (usually of linen or wool), with a woolen over-dress. The shift is usually of linen or wool, and is often pleated, and high at the neck, secured by a brooch. The over-dress is brought up high under the arms, and two straps come over the shoulders, secured by two brooches or buckles at the front (from which small items like scissors or knives might be hung). A cloak might be worn over this if needed, or a tunic might be worn between the over- and under-dresses; all of these garments might be dyed and more or less ornately decorated, depending on the wealth of the woman's family. Jewelry of jet, amber or silver is common for both sexes: rings, pendants, crucifixes (for Christians), and stylized hammers (for followers of Thor).

The common men would wear tight woolen trews, a short jacket (often sleeveless), and a short over-cloak; an over-kilt might also be worn in colder weather. Common women would wear a plain leine, with a mantle or shawl worn over, and either braided hair (for unmarried maidens), or a head-scarf (for wives).

The Manx subsist by a mixture of fishing (mostly for herring) or farming (livestock or arable), and their pastimes include shinty and draughts or chess-like game called Fichell (also known as Gwyddbyll or "Wooden Wisdom"), in which one player is the defender, trying to get his king to safety, and the other is the attacker, trying to capture the opposing king.

The houses of Manxmen will vary substantially in quality depending on the wealth of their occupants, and most buildings are in the style of Norse long-houses. Poorer dwellings will be constructed of wattle-and-daub, while wealthier families might have homes with walls built entirely of stone. In either case, most will have but one floor and one room, and the roof will consist of thatched rushes or turf. Most families with livestock will have their animals living in the same building as them (except for sheep, which will range over the hillsides), especially over winter, when the extra source of warmth would be welcome. Windows would be practically unknown in such buildings, and there would be no chimney — so smoke would have to escape through the door.

Languages

Manx Gaelic, as spoken by the Celtic peoples on Man, is a mixture of heavily-accented Scots/Irish Gaelic (Goidaelic) with some Norwegian (western) Norse. In game terms, it is not a separate language in itself — and anyone speaking either Goidaelic or Norse will be able to get by on the island, as the landowners still speak Norse for political and legal matters, and almost everyone on the island is bilingual anyway.

Currency

The Norse kings of Man mint their own silver coins (from mines in Lonan and Patrick parishes), with their heraldic crest printed on them. These coins were used both by the nobility, and by peasants

Language Conventions

Throughout this work, I have used the modern terms and spelling for Manx Gaelic on Man, and Scots Gaelic for the Out Isles, though in 1220 there would be little or no difference in language between the islands. The distinctions, even today, are often little more than cosmetic (for example, *mór* is Scots Gaelic for "big" while the Manx is *mooar*; "well" in Manx is *chibbyr*, and in Scots Gaelic is *tiobart*).

The Language of the Fay

In *Ars Magica*, it is a perennial problem to decide what the language of the fay is. On Man, most faeries will speak Goidaelic, while the fay nobles will also speak the older Brythonic as a "court language". Low faeries, who most often interact with men, might also speak Norse, while all fay will have another, secret language of their own (that might be understood by those with the Faerie Lore Ability).

(who mostly used them for paying their taxes). This coinage is approximately equivalent to the English penny in value, and the Manx use the same system of 12 pennies to the shilling and 20 shillings to the pound (so £1 is 20s, or 240d); however they also use the Scottish/Norse value of a Mark — equivalent to 2/3 of a pound (or 13s 4d).

Religion on Man

Christianity

Legend tells that the first Christian on Man was King Mordains, who was converted by Joseph of Arimathea, when Joseph was bringing his staff and the Holy Grail to Britain. This notwithstanding, church records tell that Christianity first fully came to the island in 444 AD, when St. Patrick landed on Man at Peel (see page 59).

The Christians on Man still mostly follow the ways of the Celtic "Culdee" church (from the Goidaelic *cele De*, "servants of God") — though more and more of the parish priests are now being appointed from the mainland Latin Church. The English Church was charged with "reforming" the Irish Church by Pope Adrian IV in his *Laudabiliter* Papal Bull in 1155 AD, and this ruling has generally been extended to other areas of Celtic Christianity (Scotland and the Hebrides). Since the Celtic Church held the Synod of Cashel in 1172, the Celtic Church has been officially subsumed into the Latin Church, but this ruling has yet to "trickle down" completely to the level of individual parish churches and monasteries.

"For it is undeniable, and your majesty acknowledges it, that all islands on which Christ the sun of righteousness hath shined, and which have received the Christian faith, belong of right to St. Peter and the most holy Roman church."

— *Laudabiliter Bull, 1155.*

The current bishop of Man and the Isles, Reginald Ivarsson, is the king's nephew, and is mostly a





political appointee; he does not take much of an active role in Church matters. Due to the historical political dominance of Norway, the diocese of Man and the Isles (also known as the diocese of “Sodor and Man”) is actually part of the Archbishopric of Trondhjem in Norway, despite its closer proximity to the British Isles.

On Man, there are two basic kinds of church building — the ancient Celtic “keecills”, and the more modern Norse “kirks” (from *kirkja* — Norse for “church”); there are more than 200 such churches on Man in 1220, but these are unevenly spread across the island — with many treens having multiple keecills, and some having no church at all. The keecills are small, dry-stone buildings with low, turf roofs (some are as small as 10’ x 6’, with a roof as low as 6’); they have no nave or chancel, and the altar is always against the eastern wall. The kirks are larger wooden, or stone-and-mortar buildings with wooden roofs, and a more modern layout. Many of the older keecills have fallen into disrepair, and several kirks have been built on sites where keecills used to be — meaning that both types of church are associated with the “chibbyr” holy wells. Also, Norse Christians have often renovated keecills without rebuilding them entirely — meaning that many churches share features of both types of church building.

Man has three major ecclesiastical organizations other than the bishop himself. The convent of St. Runius near the town of Douglas (see page 51) is the oldest establishment on the island, being founded in 493 AD; until recently it was run by Culdee nuns of the Brighidian order, but has recently adopted the Cistercian rule. St. Maughold’s monastery (page 53) was founded in 498 AD by St. Maughold, an Irish pirate redeemed by St. Patrick; this monastery used to be the seat of the bishopric until the completion of Bishops court (see page 58) by Bishop Nicholas de Meaux. Finally, Rushen Abbey, or St. Lua’s monastery (see page 47), in Rushen parish is the youngest, being established in 1134 as a Savingian monastery, though it converted to the Cistercian rule in 1147 AD.

Parish priests on Man are often referred to as Vicars of Thirds, as they receive only one-third of the church tithes paid from their parish. The remaining two thirds are divided equally between the Bishop and Rushen Abbey — and this uneven distribution is a source of not inconsiderable friction within the Manx Church.

Many of the churches on Man have a divine aura of the “Scottish” flavor (See *Lion of the North*, pages 43-44), which has a calming effect on the emotions of those within it, and which is less likely to interfere with the activities of magi. However, several churches have received “replacement” priests from the mainland Latin Church, and have begun to develop the more common type of divine aura (though, ironically, this has often initially resulted in a weakened aura).

Æsir-Worship

Most of the island’s population — both Celtic and Norse — is Christian, but there is still a substantial minority of the Norse inhabitants who follow their traditional pagan ways; in some parishes, there will be a small Hof, a building entirely dedicated as a shrine to the Æsir and Æsinjor gods (and often with a slight magical or faerie aura). Many Norse households will also contain small shrines to Æsir such as Thor and Freyja (for plentiful crops), and to Njörd (for safety at sea); see *Ultima Thule* pages 51-54 for more information on the Æsir. The Norse religion is still the official state religion for Man, so Thorbrand Finnsson (see page 60), the resident high priest of Odin, blesses most important public occasions (like the Tynwald). Manifestations of some of the more powerful fay on Man (see *The Fay of Man*, pages 35-40) will typically be interpreted as being from the Æsir: Mannannan is taken as Thor or Njörd, Arawn as Odin, and Rhiannon as Freyja.

Vitki on Man

There are a small number (perhaps a dozen) of vitki present on the islands; mostly in the retinues of the more powerful hersar, though King Reginald himself is a moderately-powerful vitki. In 1220, the chief vitki, and the sole Hrafn Odin on Man is Thorbrand Finnsson, the high priest of Odin. Hrafn Odin means “Raven of Odin”, and is an honorary title denoting great status among vitki, approximately equivalent to the Hermetic quæsitores (see *Ultima Thule* page 74 for more details). Thorbrand is 100 years old, and is a powerful vitki; he was tutor to many of the other vitki on Man, including King Reginald.

The other vitki on the isles are significantly less powerful (both magically and politically) than Thorbrand and King Reginald — but they do wield some political influence through Thorbrand (who is one of King Reginald’s main advisors), or through the hersir whose hirð they are in. Additionally, though there is no “Order of Odin” as such, the vitki on Man, along with several of the older seithkonna and wind-wizards do meet every Yule in a Hof-thing (“religious parliament”). This meeting occurs at Saurssgrove near Peel (see page 60), and the attendees discuss the events of the year and sacrifice to the Æsir; systematic magical threats to the island would be discussed at this time, and — under the guidance of the venerable Thorbrand — a unified strategy might be decided on...

The Isle of Man and the Order of Hermes

The Partitio Monaviae

As the Isle of Man is so magically rich, the mages of the Hibernian, Loch Leglean and Stonehenge Tribunals warred violently over it for some time, with no-one being able to achieve a definitive stronghold (at least partly because of the vigorous defenses of

the Manx fay, dragons, and resident Norse wizards). Finally, in 1145 AD, an agreement called the Partitio Monaviae was brokered by an emergency tribunal, featuring representatives of all three tribunals, and convened by the covenant of Vigil in Hibernia. This document stated that the three tribunals would cease their warring, and that the ownership of the Isle of Man was to be determined in the following manner. When a covenant was successfully established on Man for the period of one Grand Tribunal (33 years), this covenant would be able to declare which of the three tribunals it wished to belong to. At that point, Man — and its magical resources — would be the sole property of that covenant and tribunal.

As of yet, no covenant has successfully been established on Man for the requisite amount of time — though not for lack of trying. The last attempt was Servus Maris, in 1160; this covenant, established

from the Stonehenge Tribunal, was destroyed within six months by the dragon Tharmaneagh (who left one survivor with the message “Don’t come back!”)

The Schism War

The Schism War of 1003-1014 AD, did not have an enormous impact on the Isle of Man. There was one minor spring covenant of Diedne, Caarjyn Arawn (“Friends of Arawn”), situated at Burroo Ned in parish Rushen. This covenant had only been in existence for a few years; it was razed as the opening attack of the war by the Stonehenge covenant of Ungulus, and its magical resources thoroughly plundered by the magi who destroyed it. On the Isle of Skye, there is also the unexplored Diedne covenant of An Cuidreach, which is hidden within a regio, and which has yet to be re-discovered (see HP#15, page 16).



The Manx and Hebridean Calendars

New Year's Day

On New Year's day, or Laa Nolick beg, (“Little Christmas Day,”) it was the custom to “first foot” one's neighbors, as in Scotland. On Man, the first person one met on January 1st was called qualtagh, and it was considered good fortune to meet a man, especially one with dark hair and complexion. If the qualtagh were a fair-haired man, this was considered bad luck, and it was especially unfortunate to meet someone who was spaagagh (“splay-footed”). It was important that the qualtagh bring a gift as well, as an empty-handed qualtagh was very bad luck.

It was supposed to be necessary to exercise great care to sweep the floor of the house on New Year's morning from the door towards the hearth, so that the dust should go towards the hearth. If this were not done, the good fortune of the family would be swept from the house for that year.

There is on Man a malevolent siren/faerie called Tehi-Tegi, who bewitches men to drown, and who can transform into a wren to escape. She has, however, been placed under an enchantment such that, every New Years Day, she must assume the shape of a wren. On this day, therefore, all the folk of Man will kill any wrens they see in “The Great Wren Hunt”.

Fishing families would often sacrifice an ox or sheep to the sea on this day. The animal was brought down to the shore, where the fish were normally landed, and its throat slit by the eldest fisherman present. The blood would be poured into the sea, and the meat portioned out among the poor of the community. Afterwards, the fishermen would collect a cup of salt water and some seaweed: the water would be sprinkled over their house, and the seaweed hung over the door and hearth.

St. Brigit's Day/Candlemas

February 1st was Laa'l Breeshey (“Bridget's Feast-day”), when the festival of this Irish saint was celebrated (this was formerly a celebration of the

Celtic goddess Bride, and has been transformed in the modern church into the festival of the Purification of the Virgin Mary). Many of the keells and kirks on Man are named for this saint. On the eve of this day, the mistress of the household invited Brigit into the house, and made a bed of rushes or straw for her. The next day, these rushes would be burned, and the impression of Brigit's footprint in the ashes would be looked for, as it brought good fortune to the family.

In the Hebrides, Brigit's holy animal was the oystercatcher (as she always traveled with one on each wrist, like a pair of hawks), and it was considered good luck to see one on this day.

Periwinkle Fair

On February 6th a fair, called Periwinkle Fair, was held. It took place on the shore at Castletown, where cattle, horses, and sheep were traded, and bouquets of flowers made and sold — among them periwinkles.

St. Patrick's Day

Fairs were held on Laa'l Pharick (“Patrick's Feast-day”), on March 17th — also known as Patermas (“Patrick's Mass”). In both the parishes of Patrick and Maughold, the saint's staff (from the church of the parish) was carried in procession around the parish.

Good Friday

Jy-heiney chaist, or Easter Friday, was a day on which several superstitious customs were observed. No iron of any kind was to be put into the fire, and even the tongs were laid aside, lest any person should unfortunately stir the fire with them — a stick of mountain-ash or rowan (cuirn) being used as a substitute. To avoid placing the iron griddle on the fire, — a large thick cake, called a soddag, which is triangular in shape, was baked on the hearth. It was also a custom for people to go to the shore on this day to gather shellfish.



St. Maughold's Day

This feast was held on April 25th (elsewhere, this was St. Mark the Evangelist's day). A Fair would be held in parish Maughold to celebrate this day.

May Day Eve

May 11th was Oie Voaldyn, or May Day Eve. On this evening the faeries were supposed to be peculiarly active. To propitiate them, and to ward off the influence of evil spirits and witches, who were also active at this time, green leaves or boughs and sumark, or primrose flowers, were strewn on the threshold. Branches of cuirn, or rowan, were made into small crosses without the aid of a knife, which was on no account to be used, and stuck over the doors of the dwelling-houses and cow-houses. Cows were further protected from the same influences by having the bollan-feall-Eoin (John's-feast wort, or St. John's wort) placed in their houses. This was also one of the occasions on which no one would give fire, and on which fires were lit on the hills to drive away the fairies, witches, etcetera, and also to purify the fields, cattle, and horses by the smoke passing over them; a handful of gorse was lit in each field to purify it.

May Day/Beltane

May 12th was celebrated as May Day (formerly the pagan festival of Beltane). Maidens would wash their faces in the early-morning dew on this day, to give a good complexion, and also to ward against the magic of witches. The most beautiful maiden in each parish is chosen to be the "Queen of the May", and she is dressed in the finest the parish can afford, and accompanied by around twenty other handmaidens, and a Captain — one of the young men of the parish — clothed in green boughs. In opposition to her is the "Winter Queen", a man dressed as a woman, and accompanied by his/her own handmaidens and Captain. Both companies process to a green near the town, and there engage in a mock battle, after which there would be a feast.

It was also a common occurrence to "decorate the wells" on this day: garlands of spring flowers and blossom would be placed around the chibbyr.

Beating the Boundaries

On the day before Ascension Day, it was the custom for villagers to "beat the boundaries" of their farms and homesteads, with banners, bells, and singing. Accompanied by a priest, who would bless each of the fields, this was believed to prevent malign faeries from blighting the crops, and to ensure a good harvest.

St. German's Day

This saint's day was celebrated by the Manx church on July 13th, and a great Mass would be held in St. German's Cathedral on this day.

Midsummer

Midsummer (June 21st, though subsequently moved to June 24th) was the day the annual Tynwald parliament would be held at the Tynwald hill. During

the dedication of this event (which was a major blót for the Norsemen of Man), animals sacred to the Æsir Baldur would be sacrificed, and a bonfire lit, and kept burning for the entirety of the ceremony.

In future centuries, the date of the Tynwald would be moved to July 5th, St. John's Day (a less "pagan" date).

St. Peter's Day

The 29th of June was St. Peter's Day and, in the Hebrides, it was guaranteed to be a safe time to fish — particularly for haddock, which are St. Peter's fish. The stormy petrel, being St. Peter's bird (as it walked on the water to encourage him as he was losing faith and sinking) is considered a particularly auspicious bird to observe on this day.

Lughnasa

August 1st was the festival of Lughnasa. This was an especially good day to ask the chibbyr wells for blessings by sacrificing pennies or flowers to them.

A fair was held in the parish of Santan — and in Lonan, the young men and women would walk to the top of Mount Snaefell and participate in orgiastic revels there (much to the disgust of their priests).

Harvest Festival

This festival is called yn mheillea, ("the harvest home") — and this is also the name of a garland made of the last handful of corn, decorated with ribbons and wild flowers, and carried by yn moidyn ("the maiden"). Yn Moidyn was the youngest of the female workers, and she processed to the highest part of the field, where the garland was placed.

As well as this specific garland, straw dollies were made from harvested corn, called baban ny mheillea ("the doll of the harvest"), and placed on the hearth of the house, and not removed till the following harvest, when its place was taken by a similar successor.

In Elfin Glen, in Lezayre Parish, King Mannan and his court would hold wild revels called Ree-hollys mooar-un-ouyr at this time.

Halloween/Samhain

Halloween was called Ole houiney in Manx, and it was celebrated on Man much as it was elsewhere. Many superstitions about communicating with, or preventing the predations of the dead or the faeries were adhered to on this day. Leftovers from the evening meal were left out overnight for the spirits. A special "dumb cake" (soddag valloo) was also baked in some households (including ingredients like soot, fish meal, and ground eggshells), and — after this cake was eaten — the household would retire, and not speak a word until the next morning.

The dead of South Uist are not buried on that island, but are transported to a churchyard on one of the neighboring islands, as it is well known that the dead do not lie down on that island on Halloween — but will rise and walk around.





Rent-Day

The 12th of November was the traditional day to collect the skatt rent or tax (of 9 shillings per treen).

Catherine's Feast Day

December 6th was the feast-day of St. Catherine, and a fair was held in Arbory parish on this day. If anyone got drunk at the fair he was said to have "plucked a feather of the hen."

Yule

Yule — or midwinter (December 21st) was the traditional day for the other major blöt of the Norse year. This day was not marked with a Tynwald gathering, but was often celebrated as a day for exchanging gifts among the pagan Norse on Man (in imitation of the gifts Odin gives at this time of year).

This was also the time that the Hof-thing council of vitki and seithkonna would meet at Saurssgrove to discuss the magical events of the year.

Christmas Eve

Known on Man as oie feaill Voirrey ("eve of Mary's Feast"), this evening was an occasion for carol-singing at the church. Everyone would bring a candle with them to light the church, and everyone

would take it in turn to sing the carol of their choice. After the carol-singing, the parishioners would retire home to drink mulled ale.

Of any day in the year, this was the one when one could be completely unafraid of faeries, as — in respect to the birth of the Savior — they would not bother travelers, no matter how haunted the glen or forest he or she would be traveling through.

Christmas Day

Known as Laa Nolluck on Man, this festival is observed much as it is elsewhere in the British Isles. Every family that could afford it had a special ale brewing called — Jough-y-Nollick ("drink of Christmas") and one brewing kettle generally contained enough to serve a whole neighborhood.

On the Isles of Lewis, a fleet of fishermen composed entirely of young men set out on Christmas Day; they would row 707 strokes out from the shore, and all the fish they caught were donated to the poor. The man who caught the most fish was "King of Fishers" for the next year. This tradition arose, it is said, because Christ caused St. Peter to row 707 strokes out into the Sea of Galilee before catching his miraculous load of fish.

Isle of Magic

The Fay of Man

Man is ruled by two separate, powerful faerie courts: one Seelie, and one Unseelie. The court of Arawn Midir is the Unseelie court, and Arawn is The Hunter who rides over the island with the Wild Hunt at various times through the year. The Seelie court, which is the dominant one, is ruled by Mannannan Mac-y-Lír, Faerie King of Man and the Irish Sea.

The Court of Arawn

The Land of Niurin

The realm of Annwyn (“The Bottomless Place”), the Celtic underworld, is known as Niurin to the Manx. This realm is an enormous regio that can be entered at the mound of Cair Arawn in the Mooar Glen woods of Michael parish, as well as several other sites across the British Isles (particularly Brí Léith, near Ardah, in Longford, Ireland, and several secluded valleys and caves in Wales).

The mundane level of the regio is in the woods in Mooar Glen and Bibaloe Glen; as one walks deeper into the woods, one might enter the first level of the regio (level 3, and with a faerie aura of 3), at night there is a +3 modifier to the roll to enter, with an additional +3 at certain times of year (the dark of the moon, midwinter, etcetera). This first level superficially resembles the mundane woods, except that the woods are darker, and the trees and animals more sinister in appearance. When one reaches the mound of Cair Arawn, it becomes possible to enter the next level of the regio (level 6, aura 6) by ascending the hill; again there is a +3 modifier at night (and for the time of year). In this second level, the stars and moon of the night sky seem much closer, and the temperature drops by several degrees at all times of year. In this level of the regio, there are three magical Cranes at the top of the hill, guarding the gateway and warning all those approaching to turn back. At the top of the hill is the entrance to Niurin itself — the top level of the regio (level 9, aura 10). The hill-top has a “Troytown” — a form of spiral maze cut into the turf of the mound; if this maze is walked, you receive a +9 modifier (in addition to the bonuses for time of day or year) to enter Niurin, which is completely different to the mundane level.

Niurin is a vast plane, where it is always night, and Celtic heroes of old can be encountered carousing and hunting. This realm, which has a faerie aura of 10, also links to Barathrum (Land of the Dead) in Arcadia (see *Faeries* 1st Ed., page 34), and by wandering, visitors might find themselves there. At the center of Niurin is Falga, a vast black fortress — dwelling place of Arawn Midir, along with his consort, Étaín, and the cloan-ny-moyrn (“children of pride”). These Unseelie cloan-ny-moyrn are the fay of Arawn’s court, and there is a wide variety of different types: human-like, animal in appearance, and a

mixture of the two. They generally dress in black and silver clothing or armor (or have silver/white or black fur, plumage, or markings), and are usually the hunters or the hunted in Arawn’s Wild Hunt. All the inhabitants of Niurin are at all times solemn and quiet; the sole cause of excitement being the Hunt itself — at which time they become terrifyingly savage and uncontrolled.

Cythrawl

Another hazard that might be encountered in Niurin is the cosmological principle of Cythrawl (“chaos”), representing destruction and disorder. The very land, air, and water of Niurin is infused with this unpredictable and dangerous energy; at the very least, magical botches here will tend to be much worse than normal (possibly involving rolling 1 to 3 extra botch dice), and it is possible that even “mundane” botches will attract the attentions of this force — resulting in much more unusual effects (unpredictable transformation, ageing, inflicted terrors or hallucinations, possession, death, curses, etcetera).

Arawn Midir, Chairn nan Niurin

Arawn Midir, Chairn nan Niurin (“Lord of the Underworld”) is the immortal Lord of Niurin, and is a mighty Tuatha de Danaan. He has a great deal of power on the Isle of Man — second only to that of King Mannannan himself. Arawn is tall and slender, with black hair, white horns, pale skin and colorless eyes. Renowned for his courage and savagery, he





leads the Wild Hunt across the island on certain nights (May Eve, All Hallows Eve), with a pack of his spectral hounds — white with red ears — and a train of other hunters. Arawn is the archetypal Unseelie, arrogant and unforgiving (he is also known as Arawn the Proud), but he is honourable, and does enjoy intelligent conversation; he also enjoys playing fichell (a chess-like board game), and is an exceptionally gifted harper.

He possesses a magical healing cauldron (Grui nan Niurin — the “spoils of Annwyn”), which will cure the wounds of the courageous, and is even rumored to be capable of restoring the dead to life. He dresses in black armor, and rides a massive black horse, with red eyes, or rides a magnificent silver-and-gold chariot, drawn by two of his black horses.



There is only one thing of which Arawn is in any way afraid — his mortal enemy Hafgan (meaning “summer song”; Hafgan is a Welsh faerie lord of summer and the sun, though he is also Unseelie).

Étaín de Aogas-Dara

Étaín de Aogas-Dara, or “Étaín of the Second Sight” is Arawn’s consort, but she is a Seelie spirit of poetry, song, and prophecy. She is golden-haired and blue-eyed, and dresses in flowing robes, and is very beautiful. Despite her Seelie nature, Étaín is still a solemn creature, and is more given to sorrow than laughter. She rides a white horse with blue eyes, and dwells below the castle of Falga in her own realm of crystal caverns and blossom.

This realm can also be reached from a valley on Dauby Mountain called Sheean-ny-Feaynid (“the sounds of infinity”), where only starlight has ever fallen, and where you can hear the stars sing at night (see Sheean-ny-Feaynid, page 61). If one enters this realm, it is possible to petition Étaín for visions of

Tochmarc Étaín (“The Wooing of Étaín”)

... he saw a maiden on the brink of a spring. She held in her hand a comb of silver decorated with gold. Beside her as for washing, was a basin of silver where on were chased four golden birds, and there were little bright gems of carbuncle set in the rim of the basin. A cloak of pure purple was hanging in folds about her, and beneath it a mantle with silver borders, and a brooch of gold in the garment over her bosom. A tunic with a long hood around her and it was smooth and glossy. It was made of greenish silk beneath red-gold embroidery, and marvelous bow-pins of silver and gold upon her breasts in the tunic, so that the redness of the gold against the sun in the green silk was clearly visible to the men. Two tresses of golden hair upon her head and a plaiting of four strands in each tress, and a ball of gold upon the end of each plait.

The maiden was there loosening her hair to wash it, and her two arms out through the armholes of her dress. As white as the snow of one night was each of her two arms, and as red as the foxglove of the mountain her two cheeks. As blue as the hyacinth was each of her two eyes; delicately red her lips; very high, soft and white her two shoulders. Tender, smooth, and white were her two wrists; her fingers long and very white; her nails pink and beautiful. As white as snow or as the foam of the wave was her side, slender, long, and as soft as silk. Soft, smooth, and white were her thighs; round and small, firm and white were her two knees; as straight as a rule were her two ankles; slim and foam-white were her two feet. Fair and very beautiful were her two eyes; her eyebrows blackish-blue like the shell of a beetle. It was she the maiden who was the fairest and the most beautiful that the eyes of men had ever seen ...

— Leabhar Buidhe Lecain (“The Yellow Book of Lecan”)

the future, though she will certainly demand something in return.

Other members of Arawn Midir's court

Fuamnach nic Beothach, the sorceress, was the first wife of Arawn Midir. When Arawn fell in love with Étaín, and spurned Fuamnach, she cast many spells to transform and conceal Étaín — changing her into a lake, a worm, and then a purple dragonfly. It was all to naught, however, as Arawn eventually tracked her down, and claimed her as his own (though she had married another by this point) by winning her in a game of fichell. Fuamnach was sent away from Niurin, and has not since returned.

Bláthnat nic Arawn (whose name means “flower”) is Arawn Midir and Étaín's daughter, and she lives with them in Niurin. Like her mother, Bláthnat is exceptionally beautiful — and she wed the sorcerer CuRoi of the Grey Mantle, enemy of CuChulainn. She secretly fell in love with the hero CuChulainn, and she helped him slay CuRoi by tying her husband's hair to the bedstead. However, CuRoi's loyal poet Feirceirtne slew Bláthnat afterwards by flinging both her and himself from a high cliff, so she now dwells in Niurin with her father.

Arawn and Étaín have also had a son — the Irish hero Donn MacMidir. Donn rules the castle of Tech Duin, on an isle off the coast of Munster in Ireland, which was used as a gathering-place for the Celtic dead before their journey to Annwyn.

The hero Aengus Og, son of the father-god Dagda and the river-goddess Boand, was fostered to

Arawn for nine years, and can sometimes be found visiting Niurin.

The mortal Pwyll, Prince of Dyfedd, once took Arawn's place as lord of Niurin for a year. After his death, Pwyll returned to Niurin, and holds an honored position among the dead souls of the court.

The Court of Mannannan

Mannannan is a powerful Tuatha de Danaan, with the ability to control the seas and weather — especially that of the Irish Sea. Man is his island, and he is its king — outranking Arawn everywhere except within Niurin.

Inish nan Mag Mel

Mannannan rules the land of Inish nan Mag Mel (“Isle of the Plain of Joy”) from his castle of Emhain of the Apple Trees. This castle is a bright, sunlit palace, surrounded by stands of fabulous orchards, where Mannannan keeps his herds of magical swine and cows. If a fresh branch from these trees is carried, the bearer cannot be fooled by faerie illusions (unless magically preserved, a branch will remain fresh for a day or less). Mannannan's pigs provide eternal youth if eaten regularly (the eater does not age the day he/she eats the pig-flesh), and are magically restored to full health the next day, ready for eating again (inclusion of the pig flesh in a longevity ritual might provide a bonus to the Lab Total, at the Storyguide's option, though certain faerie-related traits might also be gained). His cows can produce unlimited amounts of milk.



Gruí nan Niurin

This massive black cauldron, carved with many ornate images, is rumored to have a number of miraculous abilities, chief among which is the ability to restore the courageous dead to life (an ability not yet available to Hermetic magic, but which can be approximated by CrCo/Me 70). All that is required to invoke this power is to place the corpse of the deceased within the cauldron overnight. Many strange lights and noises will issue from the cauldron during the resurrection process, but it is inadvisable to look into the cauldron (as the resultant failure of the resurrection will be the least of your problems: death, madness, twilight, being struck blind, and other similar consequences are appropriate). A Stress roll with the “Brave” personality trait (or any other appropriate traits) is made on the part of the resurrectee, with a target number of 9+ and at least 3 Botch dice: a success indicates that the deceased is restored to full life and health the following sunrise. There might be bonuses if the resurrectee is a pagan (especially if he or she particularly revered Arawn), or for doing the resurrection at a particular time (the dark of the moon, midwinter, etcetera). If the roll is botched, then some catastrophe occurs: perhaps a malign spirit possesses the subject's body, or the subject is resurrected but continues to decay — dying agonizingly slowly — unless he or she drinks the

blood of the living each day. This power will not work for those who have already received a Christian burial, or who have been dead for more than a year-and-a-day, and whether it is truly the same person who is reanimated is up to the Storyguide (perhaps Flaws such as “Magical Air”, “Susceptibility to Divine Power”, or similar will be gained)...

The cauldron can also be used to heal lesser wounds (similar to the CrCo 40 effect *Incantation of the Body Made Whole*). The subject is again placed within the cauldron overnight, and the cauldron covered. The subject then makes a Stress roll with Stamina + the “Brave” personality trait, with a target number of 6+. If this roll is successful, the subject recovers from all wounds; a botch will indicate some malign effect, such as additional damage, or the gaining of some appropriate Flaw.

Finally, the cauldron can also be used to communicate with the spirits of the dead who dwell in Barathrum. This power is equivalent to the spell *Whispers Through the Black Gate* (InCo/Me 15), except that the body of the deceased is not required, and there is no limit to the amount of time he/she can have been dead. This power does not permit communication with those who have received Christian burial, or have succumbed to Final Twilight (or, at the Storyguide's option, may only allow communication with Celtic Pagans).



Inish nan Mag Mel is a regio (level 9, and with a faerie aura of 10) that can be entered from several sites around the island, such as the Cave of the Carpenters on the west coast, and The Chasms on Calf Head (see “Parish German” page 59, and “Parish Rushen” page 44 for details). It is an island, about the same size as Man, in a seemingly endless sea full of fish and strange sea-creatures; if one were to sail this sea, one would enter the realm of Atlantium in Arcadia (see *Faeries* 1st Ed., page 33). The isle is inhabited by Mannannan and his court, in addition to a wide variety of other fay. The ground of the isle is littered with seashells, and seaweed is to be found growing among the bushes and trees. Fish, as well as birds, fill the air, and many of Mannannan’s court swim through the sky (indeed, visitors to the realm will find themselves also capable of “swimming” through the air if they push off from the ground). Most of the inhabitants of Inish nan Mag Mel are usually cheerful and welcoming, but there are some wild people and animals that should be avoided by visitors. Mannannan’s court are yn Mannannaigh (“the Manxmen”), and many have three legs — being yn dooinney troor cassagh (“the three-legged people”).

Inish nan Mag Mel

“There is a distant isle
Around which sea-horses glisten,
A fair course against the white-swelling surge,
Four feet uphold it.
Feet of white bronze under it,
Glittering through beautiful ages.
Lovely land throughout the world’s age
On which the many blossoms drop.
An ancient tree there is with blossoms,
On which birds call to the Hours;
‘Tis in harmony, it is their wont
To call together every hour.”
“Unknown is wailing or treachery
In the familiar cultivated land,
There is nothing rough or harsh
But sweet music striking on the ear.
Wealth, treasures of every hue,
Are in the gentle land, a beauty of freshness,
Listening to sweet music,
Drinking the best of wine.
Golden chariots on the sea plain,
Rising with the tide to the sun,
Chariots of silver in the plain of sports
And of unblemished bronze.
There will come happiness with health
To the land against which laughter peals.
Into Imchiuin[‡] at every season
Will come everlasting joy.
It is a day of lasting weather
That showers (down) silver on the land;
A pure-white cliff in the verge of the sea,
Which from the sun receives its heat.”

— **The Voyage of Bran**

[‡] the very calm place

The weather of the isle is often clement and pleasant (though not always sunny, as Mannannan is no sun god), but if Mannannan is angered then storm clouds quickly gather, and things become less hospitable.

Ree Mannannan, Beg Mac-y-Lir

“King Mannannan, little son of the Sea” is a mighty Tuatha de Danaan. He usually appears as a golden-haired, flowing-bearded giant, dressed in a deep green cloak, and a gold circlet — but he is a gifted shape-shifter, and an inveterate trickster. He is usually jovial and friendly but, like the ocean he embodies, his mood-changes can be sudden and terrible. Once provoked, his wrath is swift and implacable, and it is important to remember that his good will is required to enter or leave his realm, and even the Isle of Man itself.

In addition to his personal powers, which are formidable, Mannannan possesses many magical artifacts. The greatest of these is possibly Poagey Coar (“the Crane Bag”), which can produce unlimited food and drink at high tide, and which contains the magical Tashtey Marrey (“Treasures of the Sea”) — the secret language, lore, and magic of the Druids. He owns a Jarroo Cloagey (“Cloak of Forgetfulness”), which can allow its wearer to become invisible, or can cloud men’s memories. He also possesses two magical spears: “Yellow Shaft” (Saighhead Buidhe), and “Red Javelin” (Gath Dearg). Also in his arsenal are his swords — “The Answerer” (Fragarach)

The Beth-Luis-Nion

The dead language of Beth-Luis-Nion (B-L-N), most important of the Tashtey Marrey (“treasures of the sea”) contained within Mannannan’s Crane Bag, is the “Alphabet of the Trees”. This language, most often written in the Ogham alphabet, is deeply symbolic in use, as each letter is not only a sound, but also symbolizes a tree, a month of the Celtic calendar, a god, a number, a constellation, and other meanings; the mythological significance of these can be overlaid on the basic meaning of the texts, providing deeper layers of metaphor (up to seven layers of meaning in any one piece of text). These deeper layers of meaning are usually used to reinforce or elaborate on the basic message, but can be used to hide other information within the basic text — usually in the form of riddles.

Knowledge of this language can be granted by Mannannan from this bag — providing a number of experience points in the Ability (Dead Language) “Ogham” or “B-L-N” equal to the recipient’s Intelligence, plus a stress die, times five (minimum of 5). Anyone reading text (or hearing poetry) in B-L-N will discern a number of layers of meaning equal to their rating in the relevant ability; this often means that re-reading a text after improving one’s “Ogham” can provide entirely different information. Most important Diedne texts were written in this language, but modern Hermetic magi will find little use for it.

that leaves no mark behind, “Great Fury” (Cuthach Mooar), and “Little Fury” (Cuthach Beg). He also has his impenetrable golden armor, and helmet of flame that shines like the sun on the sea, blinding his foes, and a shield carved from the wood of the Dripping Ancient Hazel (which bears the head of Balor of the Evil Eye, after it was removed by Lugh Lamfada), which sprays his foes with venom. For traveling, he has his copper boat “Wave Sweeper” (Tonn Sguabach), which can fly, and his horse “Embarr of the Splendid Mane” (Embarr Muing Greadhnuach) that can ride across the sea as easily as across land.

Mannannan does not ask much of his subjects — but he does accept tribute or rent, in the form of bundles of green sedge (leagher glass), in remembrance of the time he drove off an invading army with an illusory armada of boats made from that plant.

In addition to his actual family, Mannannan fostered many of the other Celtic heroes and gods, such as Eogabail (who married Aine, one of Mannannan’s daughters), and Lugh Lamfada (“Lugh of the Long Arm”, who wielded a sling to slay Balor of the Evil Eye, king of the Fomhori). He also cared for and trained his illegitimate son Mongan, one of the mightiest kings of Ireland.

Rhiannon Fand, Pearsa Beibheal

Rhiannon Fand, a spirit of owls, horses, and fertility, is known as Pearsa Beibheal (“Pearl of Beauty”) and is Mannannan’s consort. She was previously married to a mortal prince of Wales called Pwyll, and she bore him a son — Pryderi, from whom the Welsh royal lineage traces its descent. After Pwyll died, and went to dwell with Arawn, Rhiannon married Mannannan. In some tales, she is described as being the twin sister of Merlin, and in others she is identified with Arianrhod (another Tuatha de Danaan goddess,



and a patron of House Díedne). She is brown-haired and brown-eyed, and exceptionally beautiful — normally dressed in gold-brocade and silk. Like her husband, she is Seelie, but she is more approachable than her unpredictable mate, as well as being more solemn.

Mannannan’s Magical Possessions

(All of the magical abilities of these items will work an unlimited number of times per day)

- The Crane Bag, which can produce unlimited food and drink when the tide is high (CrHe/An/Aq 25), and which contains the Beth-Luis-Nion, the secret language, lore, and magic of the Druids (see adjacent insert).
- Cloak of Forgetfulness, which can allow its wearer to become invisible (PeIm 15), and can cloud men’s memories (PeMe 20).
- The spears Yellow Shaft — which always finds its target (ReHe 25, gives +5 to Atk total; already calculated in combat totals) and Red Javelin — which returns to the hand the round after being thrown (ReHe 10).
- His sword The Answerer that passes straight through armor (MuTe 15 — ignores the Protection value of any armor worn by the target),
- His sword Little Fury, which can shrink to the size of a pin (MuTe 15)

- His sword Great Fury — an enormous Claymore (+8 to Damage total, on top of standard +9 for Greatsword; minimum Strength of +4 to wield)
- His impenetrable golden armor (Protection 20), and helmet of flame that shines like the sun on the sea, blinding his foes (CrIg 5, adds +5 to difficulty to hit in combat)
- His magical shield — made from wood from the Dripping Ancient Hazel (the tree that bears the decapitated head of Balor of the Evil Eye), which sprays his foes with milky poison (PeCo 20; opponent can attempt to dodge with a Quickness + Brawling Stress roll of 9+, otherwise he is covered in venom, and must make a Stamina stress roll of 6+ or take a Medium Wound).
- His copper boat Wave Sweeper, which can fly (ReTe 25).
- His horse Embarr of the Splendid Mane that can ride across the sea as easily as across land.



Rhiannon is responsible for the unusual magical (and mundane) fertility of the Isle of Man, and she has a small realm of her own on Inish nan Mag Mel. Rhiannon's realm can be reached from Lhiondaig ny Rhiannon ("the glade of Rhiannon"), at Saurssgrove — the grove maintained by Thorbrand Finnsson, High Priest of Odin (who sees her as Freyja, Æsinjor goddess of fertility). See page 60 for more information on Saurssgrove and Lhiondaig ny Rhiannon.

Other Members of Mannannan's family

Teeval, Princess of the Oceans, is a mermaid (Ben-Varrey in Manx), and is one of the daughters of Mannannan and Rhiannon. She is a playful, mischievous spirit, and is often seen dancing in the wave-spray around the Calf of Man.

Aine, Nic-y-Mannannan, a spirit of love and fertility, is another of Mannannan and Rhiannon's daughters. She married the hero Eogabail, and is the faerie Queen of Limerick in Ireland.

Fionnuala and Aodh Nic-y-Lír, and Fiachra and Conn Mac-y-Lír are the half-sisters and brothers of Mannannan, being children of Lír with his first wife, Eva. They are Swan Children (see Swan Maidens, in *Ultima Thule*, page 117), but they were cursed by their jealous stepmother Aoife to remain as swans until

Gwyn ap Nudd

Gwyn ap Nudd is the faerie lord of Glastonbury (described in the *Ars Magica/D20* supplement *The Black Monks of Glastonbury*, published by Atlas Games in their Coriolis line). He is the son of Nuada (also known as Lugh Lamfada), who slew the evil king of the Fomhori, Balor of the Evil Eye, and his mother was Arianrhod, fae moon-goddess (and patron of House Díedne). In certain tales, he is described as the husband of Fionnuala nic-y-Lír, half-sister of Mannannan, and — if you intend running the Glastonbury scenarios — it might be interesting to link him to the fae of Man through this.

It is also possible that Gwyn is Hafgan, the faerie enemy of Arawn, as Gwyn is also a leader of a wild hunt, but is the summer/sun equivalent to Arawn's winter/night.

Christianity reached the island (until they "heard the bell of a new God"). They remained as swans — the most beautiful ever seen — for almost a thousand years, but now that they are restored, they live with their half-brother in his realm.

In some legends, the goddess Brighid (also known as Brigit or Bride), wife of the god Dagda, is the sister of Mannannan, and she sometimes searches the seas for her brother, creating storms with her cloak as she does so. Brighid is known as Banmorair-na-Mara, "White Lady of the Seas": mother of Song and Storm, and inventor of the funeral dirge. Though she might be associated with Man, she is more strongly linked with the Isle of Skye, and with Kildare in Ireland (see HP#15, page 14, for details of Brighid on Skye).

Other Fay

As well as the two powerful courts of Mannannan and Arawn, there are many other fay on Man, unaffiliated with either. In particular, legends mention Tehi-Tegi, a malevolent shapechanging siren, and the Tarroo-Ushtey and Galashtin, a faerie bull and pony respectively.

Tehi-Tegi

Tehi-Tegi is a malevolent siren/faerie who bewitches men to drown, and who can transform into a wren to escape. Tehi-Tegi has been placed under an enchantment such that, every New Years Day, she must assume the shape of a wren. On this day, therefore, all the folk of Man will kill any wrens they find.

Tarroo-Ushtey

The Tarroo-Ushtey ("water bull") is a relatively benevolent black faerie bull (or bulls?) that will breed with cows herded on Man — greatly improving their blood-lines. It can be encountered just about anywhere on the island, and is occasionally known to lure particularly attractive cows away to the sea to live with it.

The Galashtin

The Galashtin is similar to the Tarroo-Ushtey, in that it is a faerie pony that will breed with Manx ponies (but only pure-bred Manx ponies — other breeds it will kill), and this is considered an auspicious event. But it is also exhibits some of the anti-social habits of a kelpie, trying to drown people who attempt to ride it.

The Mabinogion

The Mabinogion is an ancient series of twelve bardic tales from Wales, set down in four books: “Pwyll”, “Branwen”, “Manawydan”, and “Math”. They describe many Celtic legends, and contain magical riddles. “Mabinog” means “graduate”, and this poem was the absolute minimum one had to memorize and understand in order to call oneself a “Bard” in ancient times.

These tales have just recently been set down in writing in 1220 (though it is likely that earlier copies, written in the Ogham/B-L-N alphabet, did exist). Each book of the Mabinogion is a Tractatus in Faerie Lore (Welsh Legends), with a Quality of 6, and will be written in Brythonic. If earlier copies in Oghams are found, they can be read either as above, or (if one has a rating of at least 4 in Ogham or B-L-N) as Tractatus in Magic Lore (Celtic Legends) with a Quality of 3 (due to the obscurity of the riddles).

The Tale of Pwyll, Prince of Dyfedd

The courts of Arawn and Mannannan are connected in legend by the tale of Pwyll, Prince of Dyfedd, first tale of the Mabinogion, paraphrased below:

Prince Pwyll of Dyfedd is hunting a stag, when his hunt is interrupted by a strange, gray-clad man. This man has a pack of hunting dogs that kill the stag Pwyll was hunting. Pwyll is angered, so the stranger apologizes, and introduces himself as Arawn Pen Annwyn. Arawn explains that he is beset by his enemy Hafgan, and he and Pwyll strike a bargain: they will swap appearances and positions for one year, so Pwyll will rule the underworld, while Arawn will rule Dyfedd. At the end of this year, Pwyll will fight in a duel against Hafgan, in Arawn's place — but he is cautioned to only strike a single blow, no matter how much Hafgan might beg for a second!

After swapping places with Arawn, Pwyll lives in Arawn's castle with the queen of Annwyn. They have affectionate conversation, and they sleep in the same bed, but Pwyll will not make love with her, and this puzzles her (as she supposes him to be Arawn). At the end of the year, Pwyll fights Hafgan: after the first blow, which sorely wounded him, Hafgan begs to be dispatched, but Pwyll refuses and Hafgan's retainers bear their lord away.

Pwyll returns to the spot where he met Arawn, and finds him there again also. Each returns to his own shape, and re-takes his own position. When Arawn returns to his wife, he makes love with her, to her great joy; in this manner, Arawn learns that Pwyll resisted the urge to violate another man's wife. Similarly, when Pwyll returns home, he finds that his kingdom has been prosperous and fruitful for the last year, proving that Arawn is an honorable and capable leader. Pwyll and Arawn remain friends for the remainder of his days, exchanging gifts on several occasions, and after his death, Pwyll takes a prominent position in Arawn's court.

Some time later, while out riding, Pwyll spies a mysterious maiden, the most beautiful anyone has ever seen, riding a white mare, and clad in a brocaded silk gown. Though her horse appears to be only walking, no matter how hard Pwyll tries to catch her on his own charger, she is always out of reach. After several attempts at full gallop to catch her, Pwyll eventually calls out to her, confessing his love, and she finally stops and speaks to him. She introduces herself as Rhiannon, daughter of King Hefeydd, and explains that she is betrothed against her will. They arrange a tryst for Pwyll to attend a banquet at her father's hall in a year's time.

At the appointed time, Pwyll arrives at the court of King Hefeydd, and he is greeted warmly. However, during the feast, another guest uses the rules of Celtic hospitality to trick Pwyll into promising him one boon of whatever that guest wants. The other guest turns out to be Gwawl, son of Clud, the suitor whom Rhiannon had been avoiding, and Rhiannon berates Pwyll for acting without thought, and giving her to Gwawl. Rhiannon concocts another plan, however, and on the wedding day, Pwyll turns up disguised as a beggar, with one hundred men concealed nearby. Gwawl is prepared to give alms, but it seems like the bag the beggar bears cannot be filled, no matter how much grain is placed in it. Rhiannon explains that the bag will only stop filling if a lord of the land stamps down the grain in it, so Gwawl climbs into the bag to do so. Pwyll ties the bag shut, and he and his men then thoroughly beat it, only releasing Gwawl once he has promised to forswear Rhiannon, and not to attempt to extract revenge for the beating. With Hefeydd's blessing, Pwyll and Rhiannon are wed, and return to his castle.

After three years of marriage, Rhiannon has still not produced an heir, however, and concerns grow in the kingdom; the elders beg Pwyll to take another wife, but he refuses. Within a year, Rhiannon gives birth to a son, but the son mysteriously disappears one night. Afraid they will be blamed, Rhiannon's handmaidens spatter the sleeping Rhiannon in blood, framing her for the murder of the prince. Rhiannon's punishment is a seven-year penance of being treated as a horse by the court: saddled and bridled, and required to offer a ride on her back to all passers.

In the meantime, a nearby lord called Ternon Twyrf Liant has a marvelous mare that always delivers a foal on Beltane Eve, but the colt always mysteriously vanishes. This year, however, the lord keeps watch, and witnesses a great, scaly arm reach in to grab the foal. He hacks at the arm, and gives chase to the monster, which disappears. On returning to the stables, he finds that the foal is gone, but left behind is a beautiful, golden-haired child. He and his wife raise the child — calling him Gwalchmei Gwyn — for some time, before Ternon notices the resemblance to Pwyll. Hearing of Rhiannon's penance, Ternon returns the boy to court. When they arrive, Rhiannon offers to carry him on her back, but Ternon refuses. The prince is returned, and Rhiannon's punishment ends. Rhiannon gives the prince his true name, Pryderi.





Manx Dragons

In addition to the plentiful fay, the Isle of Man has often been described as “infested” with dragons. This is somewhat of an exaggeration, but there are three dragons living on Man currently, called Chenney-Mooar, Tharmaneagh, and Sgoagh, which is a larger than normal number for such a small island.

Chenney-Mooar

Chenney-Mooar is a muscular, thickset, black-scaled dragon, around 30 feet long, which lives on the mountain of Slieau Dhoo. It is curious about humans, and it hates Tharmaneagh, the dragon living on Slieau Curn, as they are currently “warring” over the hunting rights for the Mooar Glen. Chenney-Mooar enjoys stimulating debate and storytelling, and will often engage humans he encounters in conversation before deciding whether or not to eat them. It is capable of shapeshifting to human form, and in this shape Chenney-Mooar is a tall, burly, dark-haired man with dark eyes and a booming laugh. He usually wears untanned hide clothes, and he seems to radiate heat.

Chenney-Mooar occasionally attends the Yule Hof-thing at Saurssgrove in his human form; making the other attendees rather nervous. He does not pledge to help defend the island, but he does enjoy hearing about the magical events of the last year. In exchange for this information, he often provides tidbits from his vast store of lore about Man and its environs. If he encounters Hermetic magi, Chenney-Mooar might warn them about Tharmaneagh.

Tharmaneagh

Tharmaneagh is a long, sinuous, green-scaled dragon. He is over 40 feet long, with the lithe build of a greyhound. He hates humans, particularly Hermetic magi, and was responsible for destroying the last covenant established on Man (Servus Maris, established and destroyed in 1160). His cave on Slieau Curn is packed with magical and mundane treasure, and it contains the eggs laid by Tharmaneagh’s former mate, the dragon of Mount Snæfell.

Sgoagh

Sgoagh is an evil-minded Wyrms that dwells in a putrid, slimy pool in the Curragh Mooar, across the center of the island. It enjoys preying on humans, and is the major navigation hazard to those who attempt to cross the bog without following Great King Orrey’s Road. Sgoagh appears as a serpent-like creature with a sickly, iridescent gray-green coloration. It is about 40 feet long, is as thick around as a man’s torso, and can generate magically alluring Ignis Fatuus (will-o-the-wisps, or marshlights).

Sgoagh’s normal tactics are to lure victims off the track with its Ignis Fatuus (preferably into the bog itself), and then to throw its coils over them and constrict, in order to prevent them calling for help. It will then either just suffocate or drown them, or bite and sting them to death.

Magical Resources and Creatures on Man

Auras on Man

Except where otherwise stated, the auras on man are:

In towns dominion (Scottish) 2.
In fields dominion (Scottish) 1.
and cultivated areas
In wildlands faerie 1.
(forests, swamps, mountains, etcetera)

There are plentiful vis sources on Man (which is why Hermetic magi have warred over it for so long). In addition to the specific sources detailed throughout this work, sites like standing-stones, stone circles, cairns, faerie mounds and burial mounds are likely to provide vis of a variety of Arts. Additionally, plants in faerie woods, water from streams, stones from quarries, remains of magical creatures, and other sources will be common.

“Rumpy” Manx Wildcats

Manx wildcats are unusual in that they have very long hind legs, and either have very short tails, or no



tails at all. Those that have no tails are called rumpy (as opposed to the stumpy cats, who have short tails). Many of the rumpy cats are magical, and can talk with humans — as well as having the ability to become invisible. It is said that these cats are actually born with tails, and that the mother docks the tails of their kittens — if so, then these tails might contain Animal or Imaginem vis.

Loaghtan sheep

The native sheep of Man are called Loaghtan (“mouse-brown”), and all have brown fleeces, and either four or six large and dangerous-looking horns. Sheep with six horns are natural leaders of their flocks, and their horns contain Animal or Rego vis. At lambing, the placentas of lambs born with six horns will contain Creo vis.

The Saerie Lamb

Every year, the Eayn Jiarg (a magical red lamb) is seen in the flocks of one (apparently random) family on the island — heralding great fortune and fertility for that family. This mysterious creature is always seen from afar, and can never be approached, and will only appear for the first few weeks of lambing before disappearing. Rhiannon can be petitioned at Lhondaig ny Rhiannon to send this lamb to a particular family, as she is the one who controls it.

Ben-Varrey

Ben-Varrey (“Water-Maidens”) are Manx mermaids, and are found in great numbers in the seas around Man — especially around The Calf. They behave as mermaids always do — playful, and alternately hostile or friendly. Use the Mermaid statistics on page 91 of *Mythic Seas* for ben-varrey.

Merrow

Merrow are a different kind of merfolk from the ben-varrey. They are more humanoid in appearance — possessing legs, but often have webbed hands and feet. They “herd” some of the shoals of fish, and often need to be warded against by having a horse-shoe on one’s boat. The golden treasure of the merrows washes up on certain shores after storms, changing the sand to gold (and back again, after the sea reclaims the treasure), but none of the locals would ever take any of this, lest they incur the merrows’ wrath.

Bollan Fish

Bollan Fish is a kind of magical wrasse that can be caught around the Isle of Man. In their mouths is a bone that is shaped like a cross (though it can be taken to be a hammer, if one follows Thor). These bones will prevent you from ever getting lost on or around Man (providing a +5 to all relevant Navigation or Area Lore rolls), and they also contain Intellego vis (though the Navigation bonus is lost if the vis is used).

Ospreys

Ospreys make their nests on several of the crags and islets dotted around Man. Ospreys are a species



of bird of prey that catches fish, and many of them are, like the Manx wildcats, capable of human speech. Their feathers often provide Auram vis, and their keen eyes might contain Intellego vis.

Holy Wells

The Isle of Man is dotted with hundreds of keeills (old Celtic churches) — many established by Celtic saints during their time on the island. These keeills are small, low-roofed, round buildings — usually built from piled stone, with a turf roof; many are untended, and have fallen into disrepair, or have been rebuilt as more modern, wooden churches by the communities around them.

Almost uniformly, the keeills have a chibbyr (holy well) associated with the church (probably originally used for baptisms). Many of these chibbyr have a variety of miraculous powers attributed to them: they might cure rheumatism or cataracts, assist in conception and childbirth, ensure luck in farming or fishing endeavors, or a variety of other abilities. The method for invoking these healing powers also varies from well to well — you might have to throw money in, pray to a specific saint, walk clockwise around the well, tie a piece of cloth to a nearby bush or tree, or simply bathe in or drink the water.

From a Hermetic point of view, several of these wells also produce vis (usually Aquam, but sometimes of other Arts) — but it is inevitably difficult to work with, being “tainted” with the Divine.



A Gazetteer of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles: The South of Man

Historically, the South half of Man was granted to the native Celtic people to rule after King Orrey conquered the island, and a substantial proportion of the bōnder and hersar here are of Celtic descent. It contains the sheadings of Rushen, Santan and Garff, and the Lagman for the South is Arnlang Hareksson.

Sheading Rushen

Rushen sheading is the southernmost on Man, and is ruled by the mikill hersir Arnlang Hareksson (also the Lagman for the South). The land here is mostly arable land, and is correspondingly rather wealthy. It contains the parishes of Rushen, Arbory and Malew.

Parish Rushen

Rushen parish is the westernmost in the sheading, at the southwestern corner of the island. Its soettur consists mostly of flat, sandy arable land, becoming hillier to the north, with pasture-land being the primary form of agriculture there. A peninsula at the southern end of the parish, called Calf Head, stretches out towards the Calf of Man. This parish consists of 15 treens: Bradhawe, Croknesse, Edremony, Fishgarth, Gleton, Kentragh, Kirk Patrick, Kirkesansan, The Calf, Garre, Renmolyn, Saureby, Scaleby, Scard, and Shanball.

Balley Rushen ("Town of Rushen") is the bol of Rushen parish, and is the site of Kirk Christ, Rushen; this church is one of two on Man that are named "Kirk Christ", the other being in Lezayre parish. The other settlements in Rushen parish are Port Erin, a small fishing village and trading port to the south of Balley Rushen, and Amulty, a small settlement on the Calf of Man. The parish also contains a small keeill — that of "Keeill Woirrey" (dedicated to St. Mary).

Burroo Ned is an ancient Celtic "fort" in Rushen parish that is actually the site of a former Díedne covenant, that of Caarjyn Arawn ("Friends of Arawn"). This Spring covenant was destroyed by the Stonehenge covenant of Ungulus as the opening attack of the Schism War, and has long since been looted of anything interesting (though it retains a level 2 magical aura).

The Meayl Circle, near Port Erin, is an arrangement of T-shaped megaliths that is a popular haunt of the fay on Man; phantasmal armies have been glimpsed near this site.

The Chasms

There is a series of caves on Calf Head called "The Chasms"; tales told by those who have tried to

plumb the depths of these caves relate that they lead to a faerie realm of some sort. In fact, they connect to caves on Inish nan Mag Mel, the realm of Man-nannan (see page 37). The aura here is faerie 2 at the entrance, increasing to 9 as you go deeper, with several levels of regio to pass through; if one explores the caves in darkness, without the aid of a torch or other illumination, there is a +5 modifier to passing through each level of the regio (though it is worryingly easy to become completely lost). The mundane level is a series of interconnected caves; the first level (level 5) contains more caves; caves that are not present in the mundane level. If you explore these extra caves, it becomes possible to enter the next level of the regio (level 7), where a strange, sourceless light begins to illuminate the caves dimly, and odd cave-paintings begin to appear on the cave walls. Further exploration might allow one to pass into the highest level of the regio (level 9), where one is now actually in caves on Inish nan Mag Mel; the illumination is as bright as torchlight here, and mysterious, disembodied voices often appear, sounding as if a wild revel or celebration is occurring. Leaving the caves from this level, without returning to the lower levels of the regio, will ensure that one enters Inish nan Mag Mel proper.

Ghaw Kione Dhoo

Ghaw Kione-Dhoo, or “The Black Head Inlet” is a cave on Calf Head haunted by a sea kelpie called Kione-Dhoo (“Black Head”). Kione Dhoo is an enormous, wild-looking and seaweed-strewn horse, with baleful yellow eyes and steam snorting from its nostrils. It often tries to upset boats sailing past his cave at night, in order to drown and devour their inhabitants, so it is inadvisable to attempt to sail past this point after sunset.

The Calf of Man

The Calf of Man is a small (600 acre) island off Calf Head, on the southwest point of Man. The name “Calf” derives from *kâlfr* — a Norse word for a small island off a larger one. The Calf has a sizeable population of red-beaked choughs (the “King of Crows”), as well as a few deer and larger wildlife. The Calf is a treen in and of itself, and has a small population of fishermen and crofters in a hamlet called Amulty, as well as The Burroo, a small standing-stone on its southern coast. The seas around The Calf are unusually abundant in Ben-Varrey (Manx mermaids), reputedly dwelling in a marvelous, underwater city.

Parish Arbory

Arbory parish is central in the sheading, and like Rushen has a soettur of largely arable land on the coast, with hilly pasture-land inland. There are 8 treens in Arbory: Ardaery, Aresteyn, Arystynnok, Ballacarmyk, Ballafaden, Bymacan, Colby, and Tes-trawe.

The bol of Arbory parish is Balley Arbory, which contains the church Kirk St. Cairbre. Arbory and the River Cobber both derive their names from this saint.



Arbory parish has one other settlement — Port St. Mary, a small fishing port on the south coast, and one other church — Ballagawne Keill (an untended and derelict church).

The River Cobber in Arbory parish is the lair of an evil white faerie boar — possibly a variant form of kelpie — called Jimmy Squarefoot, who can transform into a giant, ugly fish. On the east side of the river is The Giant’s Quoiting Stone, a large menhir that, supposedly, a giant threw here from across the River Cobber. This stone contains a rook of Terram vis, but the vis resists being extracted on-site (requiring a season of laboratory work, and a ReVi lab total of 25 to extract into useable fractions); it also weighs several tons, and will be difficult to move. Yn Boayrd Rhunt (“The Round Table”) is a large, round, flat stone in the hillside east of the River Cobber, used to mark the boundary between the parishes of Arbory and Malew.

The Devil’s Den

Near Wardfell mountain (also known as “South Barrule”) is a deep pit in the ground than none have ever explored. Local legend describes it as being haunted by evil spirits, and in fact it is the lair of a band of infernal spirits, who delight in mischief-making and evil-doing across the island. The pit has



an infernal aura of 4, rising to 6 at night, and there is a regio that it is possible (if inadvisable) to enter.

The mundane level of the regio is a foul-smelling, sulfurous cave; the regio has a level of 4, and exploring the cave might allow one to enter it (there is a +3 modifier at night, with an additional +2 at certain times of year, like Halloween, Walpurgisnacht, etcetera).

Cashtal Mannannan

“Mannannan’s Castle” is an apple tree-covered mound at the foot of Wardfell mountain. It is the mundane analogue of the site on Inish nan Mag Mel where Mannannan has his castle of Emhain of the Apple Trees. This site has a faerie aura of 4, and the apples here can provide He vis.

Parish Malew

Malew parish, at the southeast corner of Man has a soettur of mostly arable land, but to the north this gives way to hilly, forested land. Malew has 9 treens: Avernán, Balladoole, Conessary, Grenby, Kirk Michael, Logh, Scarclowte, Totnamby, and Wardfell.

Arnlang Hareksson

Arnlang Hareksson is the hersir for Malew parish, and the Lagman for the South of Man. Despite his supposed loyalty to King Reginald, he is actually a secret supporter of Olaf the Black, the king’s brother and contestant for the throne. He is also recently a convert to Christianity, having been baptized by Abbot Lawrence Martins, abbot of St. Lua’s Monastery (Rushen Abbey).

Arnlang was a loyal follower of King Godred, the previous king of Man, and fought with him against Somerled, while still a youth. He was lamed in one of the battles of the war, and still walks with a pronounced limp. Arnlang’s youngest son, Ofeig, is King Reginald’s seneschal, and has been spying on the king and his family for Arnlang for some time now; Arnlang therefore knows of Queen Katla’s infidelity, and is planning to use this blackmail material to gain leverage over the royal family.

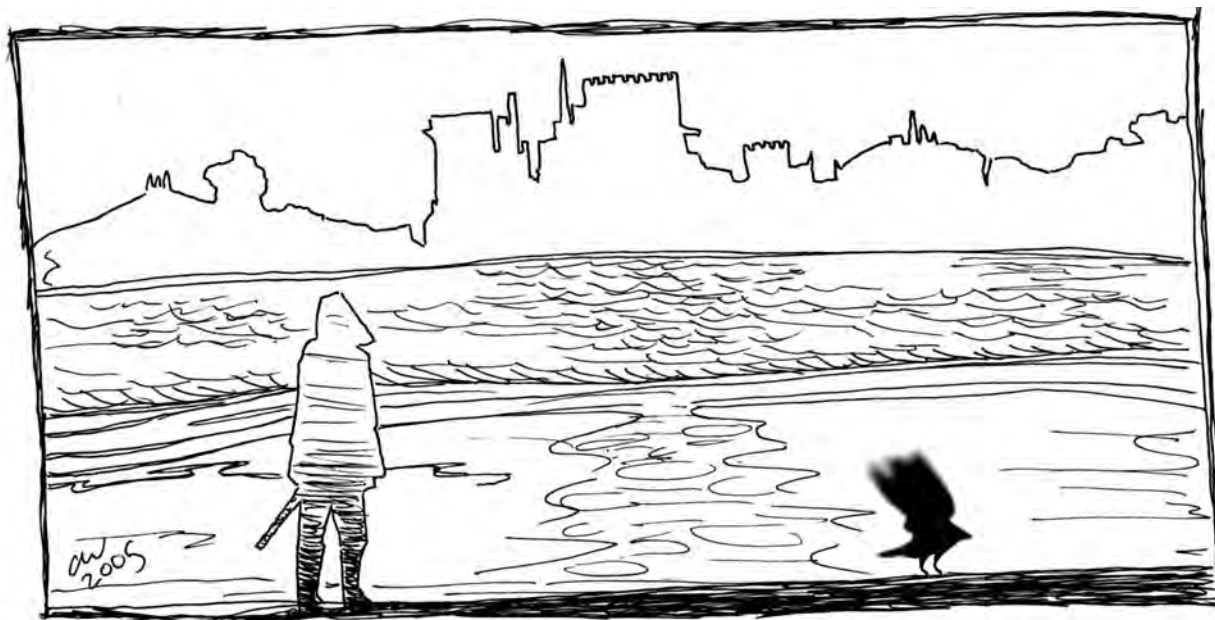
Story Seed

The magi have sent a delegation to Niurin, in order to request that Arawn grant them permission to harvest vis from the plentiful sources in the forests of the Mooar and/or Bibaloe Glen. Arawn makes a bargain with them: if they can find and retrieve his stolen chalice, he will grant them permission. Arawn has been unable to find the chalice, as it is kept on holy ground at all times.

How will the magi find out that the chalice in Keill Bòidheach is the one they are after, and even then, how will they obtain it? Br. Colm is passionately dedicated to his church, and will not lightly give the chalice up. On the other hand, he is particularly disturbed by the occasional insanity of his parishioners, induced by the faerie goblet.

Balley Malew, though small, is the bol of Malew parish (and Rushen sheading). It is where Arnlang Hareksson, the hersir of Malew (and Lagman for the South) lives, and it contains Kirk St. Lua, the church for Malew.

The other town in Malew is Castletown — the southern starting point of Great King Orrey’s Road. Castletown is the largest town on Man, and is the capital of the Islands, being where King Reginald’s court is situated (in Rushen Castle). The land around Castletown is very fertile, and the area is therefore agriculturally important, but the bay at the town is partially blocked by limestone reefs, so it is not an important port. Ships bearing goods for Castletown land at the Ronaldsway coast, in Santan Parish, and are transported overland to the capital (via a well-traveled road, protected by a fort at Hango Hill). Until recently, Peel was the capital, but with the completion of Rushen Castle, the king and his court moved there. In addition to Kirk St. Lua, Castletown contains Keill Bòidheach — a small church maintained by Br. Colm Quine, a Culdee priest. This keill contains a beautiful crystal chalice, etched with a holy-leaf design, which is reputed to be the chalice that



St. Maughold used to celebrate the first Mass he held on Man (in fact, the chalice is a faerie artifact, stolen from Arawn Midir many years ago, and it has the unfortunate side-effect of occasionally driving drinkers mad).

On the coast of Malew is the Langness peninsula, and St. Michael's Isle. This is a small, largely uninhabited island named for Keill St. Michael, an untended and dilapidated chapel. The isle is connected to Langness at low tide by a narrow causeway.

Malew also contains the Fairy Hill, which is the site of faerie revels at irregular periods throughout the year.

On the coast at the south of Malew is the mound of Balladoole, the burial mound of one of the Viking heroes of the initial raids on the British Isles (under Sitric, first Viking king of Dublin and York, in the 10th Century). It has several interesting runic artifacts, but also has a Hagbui bound into the stones (see *Ultima Thule* pages 120 & 121 for details on Hagbui).

The Royal Family, and the King's Hird

King Reginald Godredsson

Reginald was King Godred Olafsson's eldest son and was very warlike. In his younger years, he spent three years going a-viking ("never for a single hour beneath the roof of a house"), and he is still a pagan — indeed he is a moderately powerful Vitki, having been tutored by Thorbrand Finnsson, High Priest of Odin. When King Godred died, his youngest son, Olaf, was the legal heir, but yn kiare-as-feed (the Manx parliament) preferred Reginald as king, and he was crowned in 1187 AD, despite being illegitimate. Reginald plays a delicate balancing-act between Norway (to whom he technically owes fealty), Scotland (with whom he maintains a close friendship) and England (who have titled him their "Admiral of the Seas"). Since 1219 AD, when the Pope granted assistance to the Manx in fighting English marauders, King Reginald swore an oath of fealty to Rome, and now technically holds the land as a fief under the Pope — but it appears that he does not take that oath of fealty any more seriously than his technical fealty to Norway (which is to say, not at all).

The ageing Reginald is no longer the mighty warrior he once was, but he is still a formidable man — barrel-chested, and strong. He rules Man with a firm but fair hand, and is well-liked by most of the her-sar. He lives in Castletown with his family, Queen Katla and Princess Gyda.

Macabuinn

One of Reginald's most important possessions is his sword Macabuinn, which was forged by Loan MacIbhuin, the dark smith of Trondhjem, and his one-legged hammerman Hiallans-nan-Urd — actual-

Rushen Castle

Rushen Castle is a modern castle (a Norman-style square keep), and is constructed of striking white limestone. The main keep and outer walls were built by Godred II, and the south and west towers have been added by King Reginald. It is the home of King Reginald Godredsson and his family (Queen Katla MacDougall, and Princess Gyda Reginaldsdottir).

The land around the castle is known as the Castle Demesne, and is owned directly by the king, though he does let it to a few farming families. Legend has it that there are several giants buried in catacombs under the castle.

Rushen Abbey

Rushen Abbey, or St. Lua's Abbey, is a Cistercian monastery found a few miles up the Silverburn from Castletown. It was founded in 1134 as a Savigian monastery, but converted to the Cistercian rule in 1147.

Headed by Abbot Lawrence Martins (a gifted Natural Magician; see *Hedge Magic* pages 40-44 for details), this monastery is exceptionally wealthy, as

ly both Norse dverge ("dwarves"). This sword is highly magical, said to be capable of cutting through any armor, and dealing a fatal blow to the mightiest of warriors; Hiallans-nan-Urd is one-legged due to an accident with Macabuinn during its forging.

This magical, Dverge-crafted longsword gives its bearer the "Inspirational" Virtue, it provides a Magic Resistance of +20, and adds +5 Dam and +5 Skill. It also contains 5 pawns of Rego vis — though its powers will fade if the vis is extracted. This might also attract the ire of Loan MacIbhuin.

Queen Katla MacDougall

Queen Katla MacDougall hails from Kintyre and, though younger than her husband, is definitely an "older woman" — but she is still strikingly attractive, and a highly sensuous woman, as well as being fiery-tempered. Reginald is now "getting on", and is no longer capable of satisfying her, so she has begun to conduct an affair with Cnut Haraldsson, the king's lithsmathr. She is the great-granddaughter of Somerled, and the cousin of Joan MacAlasdair, Olaf the Black's second wife; when Olaf divorced her in 1219, Queen Katla was enraged — she wrote to her son Godred Dunn on Lewis, and asked him to have Olaf killed. King Reginald is unaware of this.

Princess Gyda Reginaldsdottir

Princess Gyda, twelve years old, is blonde-haired and blue-eyed, and is a gorgeous child — and she knows it! Not only is she spoiled rotten by her father, she is also extremely precocious, and has inherited her father's magical abilities (though no-one knows this as yet), currently manifesting as the ability Second Sight.

She is currently betrothed to Alan McDubh, Lord of Galloway, and they will marry in 1222 (when she will be 14.)





Prince Godred Reginaldsson

Known as Godred Dunn (“the Brown”), or the Dragon of the Isles, Prince Godred is the heir to the throne of Man, and he is as warlike as his father was in his youth. He is married to Helga MacNeacail, a noblewoman from Lewis, and it is on that island that he lives most of the time. In 1219, Queen Katla asked Godred to have Olaf killed, but Olaf managed to flee before the order could be carried out.

In 1223, in retaliation, Olaf and Paul MacBhaic will capture Godred in a battle at Loch Chailum Chille, on Skye, and will have him blinded and castrated — but, remarkably, Godred will survive.

In the aftermath of the second Manx civil war, Godred will be exiled to Lewis by the newly-crowned King Olaf II, along with his wife, and their sons Harald and Ivar. In 1230, King Haakon of Norway will divide the kingdom, and will grant all the Isles except Man itself to Godred to rule. Later, in 1236, Olaf will have Godred assassinated, and will re-unite his kingdom.

Seneschal Ofeig Arnlangsson

Ofeig Arnlangsson is the king’s seneschal, and therefore looks after the day-to-day running of Rushen Castle. He is the son of Arnlang Hareksson, Lagman for the South, and is spying on the king for his father. He has learned of Queen Katla’s affair with Cnut Haraldsson, the king’s lithsmathr, and at the climax of the forthcoming civil war — when Olaf is trying to seize power — Ofeig and Arnlang will blackmail Queen Katla into helping them steal the sword Macabuinn, which they will give to Olaf, ensuring his victory over King Reginald.

Lithsmathr Cnut Haraldsson

Cnut Haraldsson is a renowned warrior — he has never lost a bout of glima wrestling. He is the son of Harald Grimsson, mikill hersir for Ayre sheading, and is highly loyal to the king. Despite this loyalty, he has recently begun an affair with Queen Katla and, unbeknownst to him, this has become known to the king’s enemies, who will use it to blackmail the Queen.

Cnut leads a lith (bodyguard) of another nine experienced warriors, who go with the king wherever he goes.

King’s Skald Arfinn Olvirsson

Arfinn Olvirsson, the king’s Skald is a gifted musician. One of his favorite tales is one he tells from his youth, when he traveled through the woods of the Bibaloe Glen and ran with Odin’s Wild Hunt (this was actually Arawn’s wild hunt, but Arfinn saw what he wanted to).

Other favorite tales include the Hamnaval (of course), and the recently-composed Orkneyinga saga (suitably modified to praise King Reginald).

Olaf Godredsson

Olaf Godredsson, known as Olaf the Black, was the youngest son of the former king of Man and the Isles — King Godred Olafsson. King Godred had

three sons: two by a concubine — Reginald and Ivar (current Lagman for the North), and one by his wife Fingla MacLaughlen (daughter of Murtaugh MacLaughlen, King of Ireland) — Olaf. Despite the fact that Olaf was the only one born in wedlock, and was nominated by King Godred as his heir, the nobles at the time of King Godred’s death favored the warlike Reginald for king, and he was crowned in 1187. Olaf was only 10 years old when this happened, but as he grew older he began to increasingly resent Reginald for “stealing” what he saw as rightfully his.

When he came of age, Olaf was granted the Lewis island group to rule as sheriff, but he found those lands too poor to allow him to live in the manner he felt he deserved. Olaf married Margaret MacFhionghuin a noblewoman of Mull in 1195. She gave birth to two sons — Leod (progenitor of the MacLeod clan), and Gunnr (progenitor of clan Gunnr) — but she died in 1204, giving birth to Gunnr.

In 1207, after many letters of complaint to Reginald that were ignored, Olaf tried to mount a coup to claim “his” throne, but was unsuccessful, and was imprisoned for ten years under the custody of the King of Scotland. His sons were fostered to other families: Leod, then only 7 years old, was fostered to Paul MacBhaic — sheriff of Skye, and a close friend of Olaf’s, while the 3-year old Gunnr was fostered to Ferchar MacIntsaggart, hereditary abbat of the monastery of Apurcrossan, or Applecross. In 1215, Ferchar helped King William defeat some rebels from Ireland and the isles, and he was created Earl of Ross.

In 1217, after King Alexander II of Scotland ascended to the throne, he freed many of the prisoners under his care as an amnesty. Olaf was freed along with the others, and his first act was to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostella. He then returned to Lewis where, in 1219, he married Joan MacAlasdair, cousin of Queen Katla. Unfortunately, Olaf could not control his strong-minded new wife, and he rapidly had the marriage annulled, (fortunately, the marriage was illegal by canon law, as Joan was the cousin of a former concubine of Olaf’s). Olaf then immediately married Christine Ross, daughter of Ferchar MacIntsaggart. This act enraged Queen Katla, and she secretly wrote to her son Godred Dunn and asked him to have Olaf killed. Olaf was warned by his friend Paul MacBhaic, and managed to flee before he could be killed — both he and Paul currently live in Ross with Ferchar MacIntsaggart, and Olaf’s son, Gunnr. Along with these allies, Olaf is currently plotting a second coup — see “Running the Second Manx Civil War” (HP#15, pages 21-25) for details.

Olaf will win the second Manx civil war in 1226, and King Reginald will be killed in a battle at the Tynwald hill. Much of the future of any covenants on Man will depend on their actions during, and in the aftermath of this war...



Story Seed

Abbot Lawrence hears of the establishment of a covenant of Hermetic magi on Man, and seeks them out. He offers access to his extensive library in return for supplies of the vis and components he requires to craft his protective charms, or possibly (depending on how desperate he is) for help in combating the demons plaguing him.

Abbot Lawrence Martins

Lawrence Martins is abbot of St. Lua's Monastery (Rushen Abbey). Lawrence was an acquaintance of Richard de Marsh's in seminary (see *Heirs to Merlin* for details of the diabolical Richard de Marsh, Bishop of Durham), and the two of them read many of the same books and debated morality for many hours. When Richard plunged deeper into the diabolic, Lawrence managed to draw himself back from the brink. He reneged on a demonic bargain, and made a full confession — saving his soul, but deeply angering the diabolical forces as he did so.

On being assigned to Rushen Abbey, Lawrence hoped to leave all of that behind, but Richard, at the behest of his demonic masters, has seen to it that Lawrence has been gradually promoted to become abbot. They believe that they will be able to corrupt Lawrence again, and have been sending the Imps from Devil's Den (see page 45) to torment him with greed. They have also ensured that he is a wealthy man, as the Abbey is the largest landowner on Man, further compounding the temptation.

Lawrence has become a recluse, rarely setting foot outside the grounds of the monastery, for fear of harassment by demons. He has also begun to obsessively craft protective charms to ward demons off, but he is limited in his abilities to do so, as he has to send some of the younger monks out for vis and components (and they have begun to ask questions about why their abbot wants these strange rocks and plants).

they control passage over the Monk's Bridge — the point where Great King Orrey's Road crosses the Silverburn — and they charge a small toll to all travelers. Compounding this, Rushen Abbey gets a third of all church tithes paid on Man! Finally, the Abbey itself owns 25 treens across the island (making it the largest single landowner on the island).

The monks of St. Lua's have recently completed the first version of their *Chronicon Insulae Manniae*, a history of Man and the Isles from the time of Godred Crovan (AD 1065) to the present, as a gift to King Reginald.

Rushen Abbey has a dominion aura of 6.

Rushen Abbey Library

The books of Rushen Abbey, together with Abbot Lawrence's personal collection, comprise an extensive library. Almost all of these are in Latin, and the majority is on church matters (Church Lore, Civil and Canon Law, Theology, Dominion Lore), but several of Abbot Lawrence's personal books are also on the Artes Liberales, Alchemy, Philosophiae, and Infernal Lore.

The *Chronicon Insulae Manniae* is a summa on Area Lore (Man and the Hebrides), with a Level of 5 and a Quality of 9. The original is in a well-bound book of uterine vellum; it is in Latin, and is well-illustrated (giving it a Physical Quality of +3; see *WGRE* pages 130-132).





Sheading Santan

Santan sheading is situated towards the southern end of the east coast of the island. It contains the parishes of Santan and Braddan.

Parish Santan

Santan parish has some arable/pasture land on the coast, but consists mostly of forested and hilly land inland from this. There are 12 treens in Santan parish: Ardrgan, Ballaterssyn, Bendoill, Cnock Loghan, Cnock Slemyn, Corbrek, Glenlogh, Grenwick, Hawe, Meary, Sanrebrek, and Trolby.

The bol of Santan parish (and Santan sheading) is Balley Santan; the parish church is Kirk St. Sanctan.

Also found in Santan is the faerie mound of Mannannan's Chair.

The coastline of Santan parish is known as "Ronaldsway", and is particularly suitable for landing/beaching ships on. Goods intended for Castletown are most commonly taken in here, and there is a wooden fort at Hango Hill, moderately garrisoned, halfway along the well-traveled road to Castletown.

Parish Braddan

Braddan parish is a large, L-shaped parish. It is hilly and forested right to the coast, and swampy inland and to the north (the "Curragh Mooar"). Braddan parish has 14 treens within it: Alia Gresby, Baldale Brew, Baldale Cryste, Baldale Reynylt, Balanicholas, Ballayeman, Camlorge, Cardall, Cashtal Newade, Gert ny Gelghy, Gresby, Medall, Testro, and Ulyst.

The bol is Balley Braddan, named for St. Brandon (twelfth bishop of Man and the Isles), and it contains Kirk St. Brandan. The other major settlements in Braddan are Port Soderick and Balley Marown. Port Soderick is a fishing port on the east coast, while Marown is a small inland village on King Orrey's Road, at the southern edge of the Curragh Mooar. It is named for St. Marown, seventh bishop of Man and the Isles, and just outside the town is Cair Pharrick (St. Patrick's Chair) — an upright stone slab with a Celtic cross engraved on it, marking where St. Patrick first preached on coming to Man. The area around the slab has a dominion (Scottish) aura of 4.

Also in Braddan is the small keill of Ballakelly, which is near the Ballakelly Circle — a horseshoe-shaped stone "circle" and cairn; Braddan also contains The Braaid, a large stone circle.

The Sunken Isle

Off the coast at Port Soderick, there is a submerged island that rises once every seven years, at the end of September, for the space of 30 minutes. Legend has it that if someone were to place a Bible on the island during this time, the enchantment on it would be broken, and the island would sink no more. It is likely that this island contains vis sources (likely for the Arts Aquam and Rego).



Sheading Garff

Garff sheading stretches north up the east coast of Man, and around the northeast corner of the island. It is ruled by the mikill hersir Br. Aengus McPherson, abbat of St. Maughold's Monastery, and it contains the parishes of Onchan, Lonan and Maughold.

Parish Onchan

Onchan parish has a soettur consisting of pasture-land and low hills to the south, but becoming progressively more mountainous and forested as you move north. Onchan parish has 9 treens: Alia Begod, Begod, Bibaloe, Douglas, Hawstrake, Horaldre, Sleky, Tremott, and Tremsare.

The bol is Balley Onchan, containing Kirk St. Conchan, which it is named after. The parish also contains the town of Douglas, and the small fishing village of Port Groudle. Douglas, named for the convergence of the Dhoo ("black") and Glass ("green") rivers, is a fairly important port for trading with England (especially Bristol, and the ports on Anglesey, and on the Mersey river), and is the third largest town on Man after Castletown and Peel.

Just outside Douglas is the Giant's Field, a large formation of stones known to move under the light of the full moon, and King Orrey's Grave, a large, vaguely man-shaped burial chamber and megalith arrangement (some legends dictate that this is where King Orrey was buried). Onchan also contains the Spiral Stone, an upright stone with an odd spiral pattern; the stone is supposed to induce prophetic dreams if slept under on the night of a full moon.

St. Runius' Convent

Built just south of Douglas, at the bay of Port-y-Chee ("Haven of Love"), this is the only convent on Man, and has recently (in 1219 AD) adopted the Cistercian rule with the arrival of the new Mother Superior — Sister Mary-Paul. Sister Mary-Paul is the only Latin nun here, as all the others are "Cailleach", or Culdee nuns, of the Brighidian Order. Unused to the somewhat stricter life of the Cistercian rule, the Culdee nuns are having difficulty adjusting (especially to the requirement to wake and pray every three hours through the night). Sister Mary-Paul's first action was to remove the bell and staff from the chapel, and this has weakened the divine aura, and allowed an infernal spirit called The Buggane to escape at night. This bell and staff were artifacts left by St. Runius (third bishop of Man and the Isles) when he and St. Brigit founded this convent in 493 AD, and they are not only holy relics (with one Faith point each), but were also responsible for maintaining the aura of the convent (see *Lion of the North* pages 42-44 for details of the unique properties of Celtic monasteries).

The Buggane is a minor imp, but it is particularly effective at causing fear and distrust. It can enter people's dreams and whisper to their subconscious. At night, it appears as a clot of shadow with pale, radiant eyes, which whispers just on the edge of

hearing. If somehow brought into the light, The Buggane becomes visible as a hideous, floating, lamprey-like creature, with a hooked sucker-mouth that it uses to feed. The Buggane dwells in a small infernal regio under the convent, which can be entered through the deepest shadows of night. The regio has one layer, of 3, and there is a +6 modifier to the entry-roll if one does so through deep shadows. The regio is a small cave network, filled with the darkness of The Buggane's Cloak of Shadows (see HP#15, page 34), and littered with the bones of small creatures that have inadvertently wandered into it.

The library of the convent has some older books (in Manx Gaelic) describing the legends of the founding of the convent by St. Runius and St. Brigit: how they defeated The Buggane (a "creeping shadow" that was "blighting the local peoples"), and how they converted many as a result. It also describes how St. Runius left his staff and bell here as a reminder to be always vigilant against the forces of the pit.

During the day, the convent currently has no aura in its grounds, and an aura of dominion 1 inside the chapel. At night, the entire place has an aura of infernal 2. If the bell and staff are returned, the aura is restored to divine (Scottish) 6, and The Buggane will become trapped within its regio again.

Sister Mary-Paul

Sister Mary-Paul is a middle-aged Cistercian nun, who was recently appointed Abbess of St. Runius' Convent, in Douglas. She was appointed as yet another concession to the mainland English Church, and she is having some difficulty with the Culdee traditions of the local nuns — not least because her Goidaelic is poor, and her Norse nonexistent. On her appointment, she brought the Cistercian rule with her, and got rid of the Bell and Staff of the nunnery — much to the disgust of the local, Culdee nuns. Unbeknownst to her, the removal of these artifacts has all but destroyed the divine aura of the convent, and allowed The Buggane, a minor infernal imp, to escape. The Buggane is now haunting the convent, inducing nightmares and bad trust between the inhabitants. Sister Mary-Paul has therefore come to believe that Man is an evil island, inhabited by infernal spirits, while the nuns of St. Runius believe that she brought The Buggane with her, and must be a demon-worshipper of some kind (compounding their worst fears about the Latin Church).

St. Runius' Convent Library

The convent has a modest library of books on Irish, Scottish, Manx and Hebridean History (Area Lore abilities), as well as on a variety of Church matters (Organization Lore (Celtic Church), Civil and Canon Law, Theology, Dominion Lore). The books will be almost entirely in Goidaelic, though Sister Mary-Paul might have brought one or two Latin texts with her.





Story Seed

While traveling across the island, some of the characters impose on the hospitality of St. Runius' convent for the night. Any magi present (or anyone with "Sense Holy and Unholy", "Susceptible to Divine", "Susceptible to Infernal", or similar Virtues) might notice the strange state of the aura in the convent grounds.

During the night, they each experience a hideous nightmare, courtesy of The Buggane (and possibly several arguments, induced by its Psychomachia). They subsequently discover that, not only did each of them experience disturbed sleep, but so did several of the nuns. Research in the convent library reveals the tale of the defeat of The Buggane by Saints Runius and Brigit, and questioning the nuns reveals that Sister Mary-Paul removed the staff and bell, and that they believe her to be a diabolist. How do the characters deal with the problem? Sister Mary-Paul will be unreceptive to the idea of restoring the staff and bell (as she regards that tradition of the Celtic Church as "a primitive superstition"), but she is unaware of the tales that they were left behind by the founding Saint, and it might be possible to convince her to return the holy relics to their rightful place.

Fortunately, the staff and bell are being kept by the parish priest in Kirk St. Conchan. However, the local parishioners in Balley Onchan have begun to come more regularly to mass in order to touch these relics and ask for blessings. Will the priest be willing to give them back?

Bibaloe Glen

This glen in Onchan, along with Mooar Glen in Michael parish, is used on various nights as the staging-ground for Arawn Midir's Wild Hunt (often misinterpreted on Man as being Odin). The woods are protected by Arawn, and have a faerie aura of 1-3 during the day (depending how deep you go), and 2-4 (or higher) at night.



Parish Lonan

Parish Lonan's soettur has a narrow strip of useable pasture/arable land on the coast, but the majority is very mountainous and forested inland, towards Great King Orrey's Road. Lonan contains Mount Snaefell: this mountain, as well as being the lair of the former mate of the dragon Tharmaneagh, is the highest point on the island, and the coasts of Scotland, England, and Ireland can all be seen from here on a clear day. For a more detailed description of Mount Snaefell, see *The Fallen Angel*.

Lonan has 13 treens: Alia Colby, Alia Raby, Amogarry, Brandall, Colby, Grauff, Gretttest, Hegnes, Morest, Raby, Rauff, Rig, and Swarthawe.

The bol of Lonan parish is Balley Lonan, built around Kirk St. Lonan (dedicated to St. Lomanus, fifth bishop of Man and the Isles, and nephew of St. Patrick), and it also contains the town of Laxey — a large fishing and trading post on the east coast, named for the plentiful salmon in the Grey River that runs through the town. This river, as well as containing salmon, is the lair of The Nyker, an evil river-goblin with the antisocial habit of drowning passers-by (see *Ultima Thule* page 117 for more details on Nykr). Further upstream, the Laxey river runs past an important lead and silver mine.

Inland from Balley Lonan is the Lerghey Veg, an alignment of white quartz stones that moss never grows on, and that catch the light of the rising sun in a dazzling display of white.

Rhaa Sumark ("Fort of Primroses"), in the west of the parish, on Great King Orrey's Road, is an old, wooden motte-and-bailey castle that is currently ungarrisoned, and is somewhat falling into disrepair.

Parish Maughold

Maughold parish is on the northeast corner of the island, and consists of a soettur of rolling hills and pasture-land, with some good arable land around the immediate coast. There is not much forest, except to the extreme southwest of the parish. 11 treens are found in parish Maughold: Ballafayle, Ballaskebag, Ballacill, Ballatersyn, Ballawre, Cardall, Christen's Barony, Cornay Beg, Cornay Mooar, Lewaige, and Rencullyn. It contains the most keeills of any parish on Man.

Balley Maughold is the bol of Maughold parish and the chief bol of Garff sheading. The hersir is Br. Aengus McPherson (abbat of St. Maughold's monastery).

Story Seed

The magi hear the tales of Finn yn Droiadh, and of his mighty deeds. Their research leads them to the archives of St. Maughold's Monastery, where they find references to Finn's lair — somewhere near the monastery. Eventually the magi locate the mound of Cashtal yn Ard; what treasures and dangers might be located within it? Does the dragon Tharmaneagh continue to watch the mound, for signs of the return of the hated magi?

Cashtal yn Ard (“Castle of the Heights”) is a mound in the south of the parish with a magical aura of 3. It was once the home of Finn yn Droiadh (“Finn the Wizard”), a powerful solitary sorcerer (possibly a magus from the Order of Hermes?). Very little is known about this mysterious figure, even within the Order, but he was responsible for slaying the Snaefell dragon, mate of Tharmaneagh, the dragon of Slieau Curn.

St. Maughold’s Abbey

St. Maughold (or St. Mochaoi) was originally an Irish pirate who was cast into the sea by some of his erstwhile victims; he converted while adrift, and washed up on the Isle of Man on the headland now known as Kirk Maughold Point. This is the site of the monastery he founded in 498 AD before he went on to become the forth bishop of Man and the Isles. This monastery is still part of the Celtic Church, containing entirely Culdee brothers. The monastery is based around three ancient keells, and has over forty ornately-carved Celtic crosses, and an impressive library, with histories and legends of the island stretching back to well before the viking conquests. Most of the books, however, are in Manx Gaelic.

Story Seed

In return for some favor from the monks of St. Maughold’s (access to their library, perhaps?), the magi agree to try and solve the problem of the Trow. How do they tackle this? Unless magic is used, it will be practically impossible to persuade anyone to marry the Kunal Trow, and attempting to wipe the entire band of Trow out would be a difficult proposition.

The abbat is Br. Aengus McPherson (a lay brother, and also hersir of Maughold and mikill hersir for Garff sheading), and his cousin Br. Diarmid McPherson (an ordained Culdee) is the comarb. Br. Diarmid is married (to Siobhan) and has two young children; marriage is not unusual for Culdee priests. St. Maughold’s was the seat of the bishopric until Bishops court was completed in 1217 AD, by Bishop Nicholas de Meaux (Reginald’s immediate predecessor), and the monastery has lost much of its political power as a result of this relocation.

The monastery has long been adopted by a clan of Trow, who live under the cairn of Ballafoyle, to the south of the monastery. The Trow have previously driven off hostile forces (such as during the war with Somerled), however, they are now demanding payment in the form of a spouse for their king (a Kunal Trow), and this is causing the monks no small consternation.

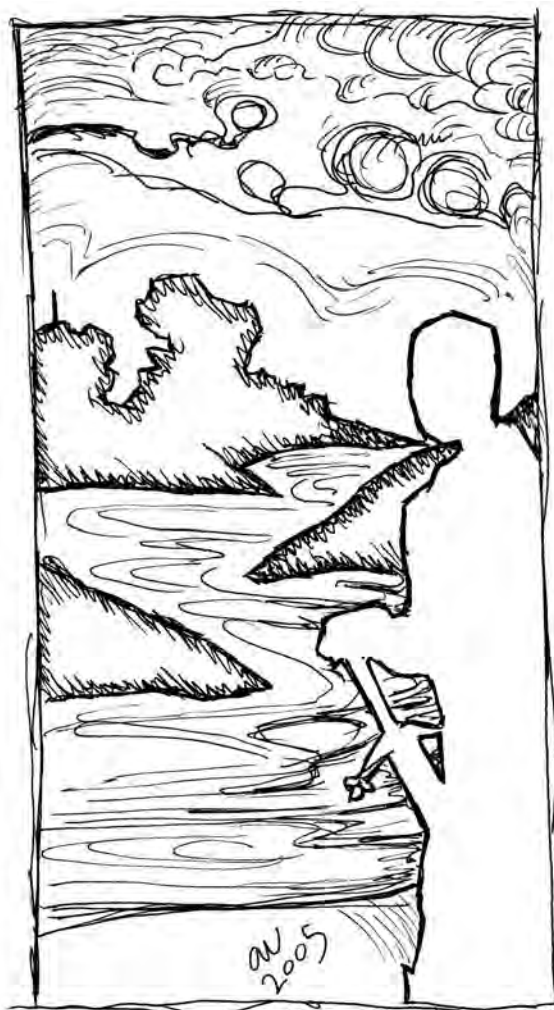
The aura of the monastery is dominion (Scottish) 5 — increasing to 7 in the three keells. If one can climb the headland, one can also encounter St. Maughold’s well — a chibbry with waters that ensure wealth for the drinker.

Br. Aengus McPherson

Br. Aengus McPherson is the abbat of St. Maughold’s monastery (his cousin, Br. Diarmid McPherson is the comarb), and he is also the hersir for Maughold parish. He is a lay Culdee brother, and is married with two small children. Recently, Br. Aengus’ life has been complicated by the band of Trow who live nearby (in the mound of Ballafoyle); these Trow have previously been a great help to the monastery, but they are now demanding payment in the form of a spouse for their king, and Br. Aengus is at a loss as to what to do.

St. Maughold’s Monastery Library

The monastery has a fairly extensive library of books. The books are almost entirely in Goidaelic, and will be on a variety of subjects: Manx and Hebridean History (Area Lore — Isle of Man, or Hebrides), Organization Lore (Celtic Church, Latin Church, the Tynwald, etcetera), Norse Law, Civil and Canon Law, Artes Liberales, Medicine, Philosophiae, Theology, Faerie Lore, and Dominion Lore are all possibilities.





The Tale of St. Maughold

Maughold was an Irish pirate, famed for his savagery and greed. Whenever his barque hove into view, flying its distinctive black flag, there was little that villagers could do save gather what portable valuables they had, and flee to the hills.

One year however, after a particularly vicious raid, in which the sweetheart of one Carrick O'Clure was violated by the lustful Maughold himself, Maughold's ship was followed by a massed force of the local lords (who had set aside their differences to deal with their common enemy), led by that selfsame Carrick O'Clure.

Maughold beached his ship for repairs at Lough Strangford, ignorant of the force that awaited him. That night, Carrick's men crept into Maughold's camp and set fire to his boat. Seeing this signal, the remainder of the force charged into the sleeping pirate camp. With nowhere to retreat to, the pirates fought savagely, but to no avail; they were slaughtered to a man, and Maughold was captured and bound hand-and-foot.

As the armies debated the best method to kill Maughold, the pirate laughed and spoke up, addressing the crowd. He advised the multitude that he possessed a charmed life, such that "not one creature, man, woman, or child — aye, or beast of the field — that is within sound of a cow-horn's blast when death strikes me, but will die before the next full moon."

Afraid, the crowd were uncertain how to punish him, when one old woman advised that they set him

adrift in a coracle, far out to sea, such that he would die of hunger and thirst, but while no-one was within sound of him. And so it was done; he was gagged, and bound into a coracle, which was towed out to sea.

He drifted for days, assaulted and tormented by gulls and sea-faeries, and he despaired of surviving — such that he eventually repented his evil ways, and swore to never again do ill. Upon that instant, there appeared to him a miraculous vision of a cross and a dove. Being a heathen, he knew not what this vision meant, but was nevertheless grateful, as they frightened the faeries away, and the dove loosened his bonds. His coracle beached on a coast unknown to him, and he followed the dove and cross up the headland to a spring, where he drank his fill — giving thanks to whatever provenance had saved him. There he met two men, robed in simple cloth; they introduced themselves as priests of Christ from the church of St. German, and told of how they had received a vision that they should travel across to the other side of Man — for such was the land Maughold now found himself on — and meet with a wretch there who needed confession.

Maughold threw himself down and confessed to all the sins he had committed. He lived with the priests for some time, but eventually he left and founded a monastery on the spot where he had beached and drunk from the spring. This spring is now St. Maughold's well, reachable by those that can climb the headland, and it has the virtue that none that drink from its waters shall die in debt!



The Miracle of St. Maughold

During the time of the conquest of Man by Somerled, it was rumored that St. Maughold's monastery contained great riches, and one of Somerled's chiefs, called Gilcolum, decided to plunder it, against Somerled's advice. Receiving a forewarning of the forthcoming raid, the monks of St. Maughold's, along with the refugees sheltering within its walls, prayed for St. Maughold's intercession, and St. Maughold appeared to save them:

St. Maughold delivered them from the imminent danger, and condemned their enemy to a terrible death. For when the aforesaid Gilcolum had fallen asleep in his tent, St. Maughold appeared to him clothed in a white garment, and carrying the pastoral staff in his hand; and standing before his bed, addressed him in the following words: "What is there between thee and me, Gilcolum? In what have I injured thee or thine, that thou art now about to plunder my place?" To this appeal Gilcolum replied: "Who art thou?" The saint answered: "I am the servant of Christ, Maughold, whose church thou seekest to profane, but thou shalt not succeed." Having spoken thus, he raised on high the staff that was in his hand, and drove the point through Gilcolum's heart. The unfortunate man uttered a fearful shriek, which awoke all who were sleeping in the surrounding tents. Again the saint transfixed him, again he shrieked. A third time the saint repeated the blow; a third time the man shrieked. His sons and followers, alarmed by the screams, hastened to him, inquiring what had happened. Scarcely able to move his tongue, he answered with a groan: "St. Maughold has been here, and, thrice transfixing me with his staff, has killed me. But go quickly to his church, and bring the staff with the priests and clerks, that they may intercede for me with St. Maughold, that he may perchance forgive what I was preparing to do against him." Quickly, in execution of his orders, they begged the clerks to bring the staff of St. Maughold, and come to their lord, who appeared to be lying in the last extremity. They narrated, also, all that had happened to him. The priests, clerks, and people, hearing this account, rejoiced with a great joy, and sent back with the messengers some of the clerks, who bore the staff. When they stood in his presence and saw him almost expiring, for he had just before lost the use of his voice, one of the clerks pronounced the following imprecation: — "May St. Maughold, who has begun thy punishment, cease not till he has brought thee to death, that others, seeing and hearing, may learn to show greater reverence to holy places." Having thus spoken, the clerks returned home; and after their departure such a number of large black flies swarmed about his face and mouth, that neither he nor his attendants could keep them away. Thus did he expire in great torture and agony about the sixth hour of the day.





The North of Man

The North side of man was traditionally given to the Norsemen following King Orrey, and the majority of the hersar here are of Norse extraction. It contains the sheadings of Glenfaba, Michael and Ayre.

The Lagman for the North is Ivar Godredsson, the king's brother.

Sheading Ayre

This sheading is the northernmost on the island, and — except for Lezayre parish — is relatively wealthy, having a lot of the useable arable land on the island. It contains the parishes of Lezayre, Bride and Andreas.

Parish Lezayre

Lezayre parish has little useable farming soettur-land, being swampy to the west — near the Sulby River, and hilly and forested inland and to the east. Lezayre has 8 treens: Alia Sulby, Alkest, Altadale, Aust, Brerrik, Corrak, Grest, and Sulby. The hersir of Lezayre parish, and mikill hersir for Ayre sheading is Harald Grimsson, father of Cnut Haraldsson, the king's Lithsmathr.

Inland in the parish is Balley Lezayre — the bol (and the chief bol of Ayre sheading), containing Kirk Christ, Lezayre (one of two churches named "Kirk Christ" on Man — the other being in Rushen parish). Just to the south of Lezayre is Elfin Glen, where every year, at harvest-time, Mannannan and his court hold wild revels, called Ree-hollys mooar-un-ouyr ("the yellow king, great and bright"); at that time, the aura increases to faerie 2, and it may develop regiones/entrances to Inish nan Mag Mel.

The other town in Lezayre is Sulby, a town that grew up at the site of the ford across the River Sulby: Great King Orrey's Road passes across the ford here — and travelers usually stop here overnight, rather than risk traveling through Mooar Glen at night when heading south.

A few miles west of Balley Lezayre, near Great King Orrey's Road is Cleigh yn Arragh. This mound, whose name means "spring hedge", is locally well-known as a source of healing plants.

Parish Bride

Bride parish is the northernmost on the island (encompassing the Point of Ayre), and consists entirely of good-quality arable soettur-land. At the extreme north is the Point of Ayre, a headland pointing at the Scottish coast, where the magical Barnacle Tree grows from sea-spume (see insert). There are 10 treens in Bride parish: Ballalamyn, Ballawarranagh, Cransdale, Crosby Beg, Crosby Mooar, Glen Downe, Grenby, Kirk Bride, and Renesse.

Balley Bride is the bol of Bride parish, and the parish church is Kirk St. Brigit. The other important town is Ramsay, a large fishing and trading town at the mouth of the Sulby River. This town, built on the border between Parish Bride and Parish Lezayre, is

also the northern terminus of Great King Orrey's Road (the northern end of this impressive thoroughfare is here, with the other end at Castletown in Parish Malew). Ramsay is also an important port for trading with Scotland, with ships putting in from the Hebrides, and from the ports of the Clyde estuary, and is the fourth largest town on Man (after Castletown, Peel, and Douglas).

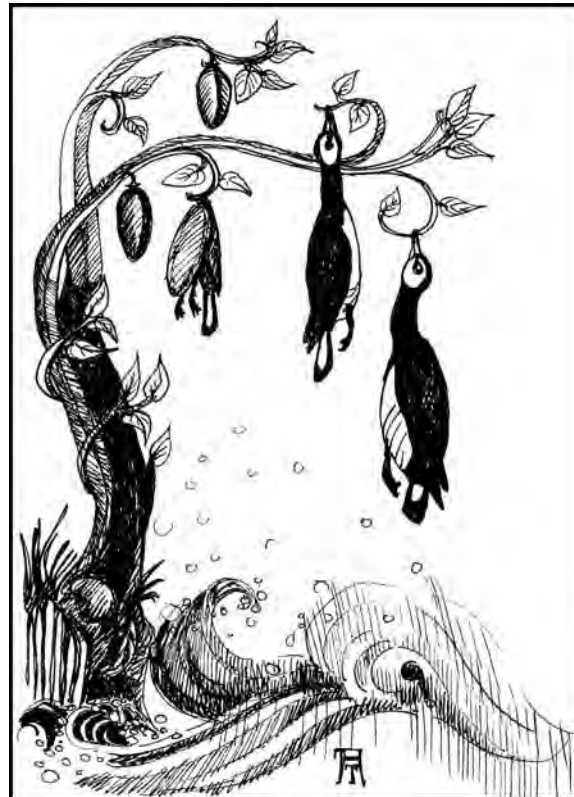
The Barnacle Tree

On the coast at the Point of Ayre there is a magical tree called The Barnacle Tree, which sprouts from sea-spume. This tree has seeds that look like large mussel shells; as these fruits mature, they open to reveal first the legs of a bird, and then eventually an entire gosling, hanging onto the stem by its beak. When fully mature, this bird falls out of the tree into the sea, where it grows into a Barnacle Goose.

The tree will produce anywhere between 3 and 12 fruits every year, starting in the spring and maturing fully in the autumn. The immature fruits of the Barnacle Tree (found in spring) contain 1 pawn of Herbam vis; the partially-mature "opened" fruits (in summer) are worth 1 Herbam and 1 Animal vis; the mature Barnacle Geese (in autumn) contain 1 pawn of Herbam and 2 pawns of Animal vis.

Parish Andreas

Like Bride, the parish of Andreas consists largely of sandy arable soettur-land, though there is a small forested area on the north side of Logh Andreas. Andreas has 17 treens — the most of any parish: Alia Leodest, Balladorghan, Ballahamig, Ballahestín, Ballalanmore, Ballanessar, Ballaquarres, Ballatyrn,





Brausta, Cregby, Gilcagh, Kirk Asston, Leodest, Moly Lawne, Rigby, Smeall, and Smeall Beg.

The bol of Andreas parish is Balley Andreas, containing the church of Kirk St. Martin.

Andreas also contains the mound of Cashtal Ree Gorrey (“King Orrey’s castle”) — site of the first Thing on Man, after King Orrey conquered it.

Sheading Michael

Michael sheading is not the wealthiest on the island, as much of the land here is swampy, or mountainous and heavily forested. The mikill hersir is Karlsefni Vagnsson, and it contains the parishes of Jurby, Ballaugh, and Michael.

Parish Jurby

Northernmost in the sheading, Jurby’s soettur has some useable hilly pastureland around its north, west and south edges, but inland it is mostly swamp (the Curragh Malau bogland). The bol is Balley Jurby, containing Kirk St. Patrick, the parish church.

Jurby only has 5 treens (Dalyott, Cnocksewell, Low Sulby, Vollee, and Sleky), but it does contain Creg Foalley (“Rock of Blood”), a former site for pagan sacrifice.

Parish Ballaugh

On the coast, Ballaugh has some useable arable/pasture soettur-land, but inland (around Logh Malau) it is too hilly. The parish bol is Balley Ballaugh, containing the parish church — Kirk St. Lupus.

Ballaugh has 9 treens: Ballacurryn, Ballacaine, Ballamony, Ballaskebag, Ballaterson, Ballavalll, Broctarge, Carnedall, and Scronedall. There is also the Ballaugh Stone, a standing-stone not far from Bishopscourt.

Bishopscourt

Bishopscourt, constructed exactly on the border between the parishes of Michael and Ballaugh, is the home of the bishop of Man and the Isles — cur-

Bishop Reginald Ivarsson

Bishop Reginald is the current Bishop of the Diocese of Man and the Isles, and is the son of Ivar Godredsson (Lagman of the North), and nephew to King Reginald. He is tolerant of the remaining Culdee priests, and of the pagan practices of many of the Norse inhabitants of the island. The appointment of Reginald as bishop was mostly a political move, and Reginald is not actually a very religious man.

His diocese is part of the Archbishopric of Trondhjem, in Norway, but it is coming increasingly under the sway of those of mainland Britain — especially the Archdiocese of York. The bishop on Man is one of the more wealthy individuals on the island, as fully one third of the church tithes paid are given to him.

While on Man, Bishop Reginald lives in Bishopscourt; while visiting the Out-Isles, Bishop Reginald lives in Skeabost on Skye.

rently Reginald Ivarsson (the king’s nephew, and son of Ivar Godredsson, the Lagman for the North of Man). The aura here is dominion 4.

The surrounding 6 treens belong to Bishopscourt — 3 in Michael (Rencullyn, Leyre and Ballafadyn), and 3 in Parish Ballaugh (Broctarge, Ballamony and Carnedall); these lands are collectively known as the Bishop’s Demesne.

Parish Michael

Michael parish, which is southernmost in the sheading, has a soettur of rolling hills and pastureland to the north, hilly and forested inland, and mountainous to the south.

Michael parish has 12 treens in it: Ballacrynan, Ballafadyn, Ballanemade, Ballascere, Barryk Mooar, Camall, Dromrewagh, Leyre, Nerloch, Oresdale, Rencullyn, and Shalghag.

The town of Balley Michael is the bol of Parish Michael, and the chief bol of Michael sheading. The mikill hersir is Karlsefni Vagnsson (a vitki), and it contains Kirk St. Columba, the main church of the parish. This church was formerly tended by the Culdee Br. Callum Frazer, but an English priest — Fr. Robert de Hautville — was recently appointed to replace him, as a conciliatory gesture to the mainland church. Fr. Robert speaks very little Gaelic or Norse — preferring to converse in Latin or English — and he is a pompous, overbearing snob; it is much to his disgust that he notes the Christian population of Michael’s continued devotion to their old priest.

The coastal plateau of Beal Eayn ny Geayee (“the wide mouth of the wind”) in Michael is exposed to the wild winds blowing from the west, off the Irish Sea, and Auram vis can sometimes be gathered here.

Michael has several stone circles and arrangements, such as Druid’s Circle, (a stone circle, and a haunt of faeries), The Carnane (a menhir with hollowed cups in the bedrock at the foot, in which sea water collects after a storm, providing a source of Aquam vis), and the mound of Cashtal Lajer (“Castle of Strength”), on Slieau Vollee.

Br. Callum Frazer

Former priest of Michael parish, Br. Callum has been replaced by the appointment of an English Latin priest — Fr. Robert de Hautville. Since then, Br. Callum has moved inland to his hermitage of Bwaagaght Frazer, on the northern slopes of Slieau Dhoo. Br. Callum is a gifted Aescetic (see *Hedge Magic*, pages 50-54 for details of this magical path), and the parishioners of Michael still travel to seek his advice and blessings. Except for an occasional desire for educated debate, Br. Callum has gladly left St. Columba’s behind (and truthfully would quite like to be able to live in seclusion and contemplation), but he is constantly interrupted by visiting parishioners, and it would in fact be quite difficult to persuade him to return.

Karlsefni Vagnsson

Karlsefni Vagnsson is the hersir for Michael parish, and the mikill hersir of Michael sheading. He is therefore one of the senior members of Yn Kiare-as-Feed. He is a vitki (though not a very powerful one), having been trained by Thorbrand Finnsson, the High Priest of Odin. He is not Christian, of course, but does have a good friendship with Bishop Reginald (who lives in his parish, at Bishops court) — but he does not get on with Fr. Robert de Hautville, the newly-assigned parish priest of Michael. He is a clear thinker, and a good statesman, but, living so near to the Mooar Glen, he is terribly afraid of Arawn and his Wild Hunt.

Bwaagaght Frazer

This is an isolated cell, where Br. Callum Frazer has taken himself to dwell in isolation. It is a small cave, cut into the north face of Slieau Dhoo, and it has developed a divine (Scottish) aura of 3.

Mooar Glen

This heavily-forested glen, along with Bibaloe Glen in Braddan parish, is used on various nights (such as All Hallow's Eve) as the staging-ground for Arawn Midir's Wild Hunt (often misinterpreted as being Odin on Man). Great King Orrey's Road runs along the western and southern outskirts of this glen. The woods are protected by Arawn, and have a faerie aura of 1-3 during the day (depending how deep you go), and 2-4 (or higher) at night.

In the deeps of the woods of Mooar and Bibaloe Glen, near the head of the Sulby River at the mountain of Beinn-y-Phott, is the valley of Druidale. This valley contains a grove of yew trees (the trees of death) around a faerie mound called Cair Arawn ("Arawn's chair"). At the top of this hill is the entrance to the regio Niurin, realm of Arawn Midir (see page 35).

Slieau Dhoo

This mountain is the lair of Cheney-Mooar, a thickset, muscular, black-scaled dragon that is indifferent to humans, but that hates the dragon on Slieau Curn (they are currently warring over the hunting rights for Mooar Glen). The dragon's lair, on top of the mountain, has a magical aura of 3, and has a wealth of treasure, gathered over the centuries (some of it magical). See page 42 for more details on Cheney-Mooar.

In the north foothills of this mountain are both Bwaagaght Frazer and Yn Quarral ("the quarry"), a quarry that produces stone for Balley Michael and other towns on the west coast.

Slieau Curn

Tharmaneagh, a long, sinuous, green-scaled dragon has made this mountain his dwelling. He hates humans, particularly Hermetic magi, and was responsible for destroying the last covenant established on Man. His mate (formerly of Mount Snaefell) was killed long ago by Finn yn Droiadh, a Hermetic

magus who lived somewhere near Maughold. Tharmaneagh's cave on Slieau Curn is packed with magical and mundane treasure, and has a magical aura of 3. It also contains several dragon eggs (laid by Tharmaneagh's former mate). Tharmaneagh also hates Cheney-Mooar, the dragon on Slieau Dhoo, as they are warring over the fighting rights for Mooar Glen. See page 42 for further information on Tharmaneagh.

Sheading Glenfaba

Glenfaba sheading is the furthest south of the sheadings in the North of Man. It is ruled by Ivar Godredsson, brother to King Reginald, and Lagman for the North, and it contains the parishes of German and Patrick. Ivar is married to Eustach Sutherlarach, daughter of Hugh, Lord of Sutherland, and his son Reginald Ivarsson is the Bishop of Man and the Isles.

Parish German

The northernmost of the two parishes in Glenfaba sheading, German parish is hilly at the coast, and swampy inland (the Curragh Mooar), and the bol for the parish is Peel. German parish has 9 treens: Alia Gnebe, Balladoyne, Ballakebag, Balladorgan, Ballatersyn, Gnebe, Lambefell, Sargedale, and Scaresdale.

Peel (a contraction of "Patrick's Isle") is the second largest town on Man. It is the major administrative centre of the North of Man — and, as it contains a cathedral, is technically the only city on the islands. Just off the coast is St. Patrick's Isle. At low tide, this island is connected to the mainland by a narrow causeway, overlooked on the island by a watch-tower. Built on this island are both Peel Castle and St. German's Cathedral, and there is a stone curtain wall around the island perimeter. Peel is a relatively important trading town, as ships put in here from Belfast and Dublin.

Peel is where Lagman Ivar Godredsson lives, as well as Thorbrand Finnsson, High Priest of Odin for Man and a powerful vitki (Thorbrand was tutor of other Manx vitki, such as Karlsefni Vagnsson, hersir of Michael, King Reginald, and others).

Peel Castle ("Magnus' Castle")

Peel castle (also known as "Magnus' Castle" after King Magnus, who built the majority of the structure in 1100 AD) is a wooden fort erected around an ancient Celtic round-tower built of impressive red sandstone (local to Peel). It is the dwelling-place of Ivar Godredsson, brother to King Reginald and Lagman for the North of Man. Ivar is also the hersir for German parish and Glenfaba sheading, as well as being the father of Bishop Reginald Ivarsson.

Peel Castle is haunted by the Moddhey Dhoo, a spectral black dog that can drive people mad with its stare. It is considered an exceptionally bad omen to see it before a battle.

St. German's Cathedral

The other structure on St. Patrick's Isle, St. German's Cathedral is an older church, being build large-





Ivar Godredsson

Ivar Godredsson is the hersir for German parish, mikill hersir for Glenfaba sheading, and the Lagman for the North of Man. He is the younger brother of King Reginald, and is very close to his older brother. He is also the father of Bishop Reginald Ivarsson, though he is not himself a Christian. Ivar is a close friend of Thorbrand Finnsson, High Priest of Odin, and is politically a very powerful man. However, he suffers from a short fuse, especially where insults (real or imagined) to his family are concerned.

ly of wood. St. Germanus was the first bishop of Sodor and Man, appointed by St. Patrick himself, and the cathedral also contains the Shrine of St. Dachonna. St. Dachonna, bishop of Condere Connor, was an early Irish saint and a contemporary of St. Columba. His remains (a relic with 1 Faith Point) are enshrined in a small keeill attached to St. German's Cathedral.

The shrine has a dominion (Scottish) aura of 8, while the cathedral has an aura of 7.

Br. Seamus Flannagan

Though St. German's Cathedral "belongs" to Bishop Reginald in theory, the bishop spends most of his time at Bishops court (in Michael parish), and most of the day-to-day operations are performed by Br. Seamus Flannagan, a Culdee priest. He looks after the cathedral, and tends the Shrine of St. Dachonna.

Br. Seamus is an elderly, kindly man with a deep personal faith (True Faith 2). He always makes an effort to talk to anyone new visiting the shrine.

Tynwald Hill

About three miles up the River Neb from Peel is the Tynwald Hill. This hill is artificial — being constructed from earth from each of the 32 original parishes of Man and the Isles (it might be possible to use the mound as an arcane connection to each of those original parishes, as the yearly use, symbolically binding the kingdom together, might have perpetuated the arcane link). This hill is the location for the Tynwald (the "Thing" parliament of Man and the Isles), during which it develops a faerie aura of 2.

At the southern foot of the hill is the Chapel of St. John, a small, untended church, and just east of the hill is a burial cyst called The Giant's Grave, which contains the remains of a giant.

Saurssgrove and Lhiondaig ny Rhiannon

A few miles east of the Tynwald hill, and right next to the Giant's Fingers stone circle, is Saurssgrove ("Grove of Fertility"), maintained by Thorbrand Finnsson, High Priest of Odin. This is an ancient site, formerly known as Lhiondaig ny Rhiannon ("glade of Rhiannon"), marked by a circle of white quartz boulders called Mair ny Foarw ("the giant's fingers").

The grove is a clearing in a thicket of ash trees, with one large ash tree in the middle — from which sacrifices are hung (and from which Thorbrand has twice hung himself for nine days to gain understanding of the runes!). At the Yule Blöt, there will be a bonfire burning smokelessly near the central ash (ash-wood fires burn with very little smoke), around which all attendees cluster and on which the sacrifices are cooked before being eaten. The trees, though mature, have smooth gray bark and (at Yule) no leaves — though there are plenty of dark red, needle-like flower buds. The ground is strewn with a generous carpet of spearhead-shaped autumn leaves and propeller-bladed seeds (called "Ash Keys"). In Norse mythology, the ash tree is the tree Yggdrasill, the world tree on which Odin hung in order to gain understanding of the runes; to the Celts, the ash was a tree of growth and regeneration. At the rear of the grove, through the trees, is the Mair ny Faorw and Lhiondaig ny Rhiannon, while at the entrance to the grove, there is a burial How (which contains a Hagbui, placed there centuries ago to protect the grove).

The grove and the Giant's Fingers, have a faerie aura of 3 — though this increases to 6 at Yule and other major Blöt. At theses times, the Giant's Fingers are the entrance to the regio of Rhiannon, consort of Mannannan. Rhiannon, with her regular visits to the grove, keeps Man fertile and magical (see page 40). On the Blöt, there is a +6 modifier to entering Rhiannon's regio on stepping into the stone-circle. Rhiannon's regio has a level of 3, and is a bright, sunlit glade; even in the deeps of winter, the trees here have lush leaves, and a sweet smell fills the air. Rhiannon has a small pool in the middle of the glade, and she occasionally bathes here (water from this pool contains Creo vis). The woods surrounding the glade are thick and all but impassable, but if one were to somehow force one's way through, one would automatically find oneself on Inish nan Mag Mel (the regio of Mannannan).

Thorbrand Finnsson, Hrafn Odin

Thorbrand Finnsson is the one-eyed High Priest of Odin for Man (he sacrificed his left eye to gain power in the runes several years ago), and is a powerful vitki — tutor to both Karlsefni Vagnsson and King Reginald. He knows little of the Order of Hermes, but is distrustful of what he does know. He is the only Hrafn Odin ("Raven of Odin") for the entirety of the kingdom of Man and the Isles, and is often called upon for advice by the king, having served not only King Reginald, but also his father before him (King Godred II).

Aware of his advancing years, Thorbrand is currently much concerned with finding an "heir" to replace him as High Priest of Odin for Man and the Isles. His favorite pupil is King Reginald, but the laws of the isles dictate that the king cannot also be the High Priest. Thorbrand is currently considering another of his pupils, Karlsefni Vagnsson, the hersir of Michael.



Ooig-ny-Seyir

This cave (“Cave of the Carpenters”) is at the rear of a small, cliff-lined bay near the very north of Parish German, and is normally unremarkable. However, when fog rolls in off the Irish Sea, and you can hear the tapping of faerie coopers in the cave, it can be used as the entrance to Inish nan Mag Mel (the “Isle of the Plane of Joy”, regio of Mannannan; see page 37). This cave, even at “mundane” times, contains sources of coral, which can be harvested for Aquam vis. Normally, this cave has a faerie aura of 2, but during a sea-fog, this increases to 8, and a +10 modifier for entering the regio of Inish nan Mag Mel is applied. If the regio is entered, a series of tunnels at the rear of the cave can be found, leading up through the cliffs to Inish nan Mag Mel.

Parish Patrick

Patrick parish, on the boundary of North/South on the island, has a soettur that is hilly at the coast and heavily forested and mountainous inland. The bol is Balley Patrick, containing Kirk St. Patrick. The valley of Foxdale contains a lead and silver mine, used by the king as an important source of revenue, and the source of the silver for the coinage of the realm.

Patrick parish contains 9 treens: Alia Dalby, Arny-carnygan, Ballahig, Ballamore, Cnock Allowe, Dalby, Glen Rushen, Gorrdun, and Raby.

Slieau Whallan

Slieau Whallan, south of the Tynwald hill, is haunted by the ghost of a witch named Ada (or Yn Caillagh-ny-Groamagh — “old woman of gloominess”). Ada is well-known locally, and is blamed with causing bad weather and drowning fishermen at sea. Ada was wronged in life by Thomas Carran, a fisherman she loved, and she especially hates fishermen and their wives. Thomas’ descendants still live in Peel, and they are often plagued by unexplained storms when their husbands and sons go out to sea.

Ada is ethereal, and difficult to see clearly, but when glimpsed, she resembles a wizened crone, dressed in tattered rags, and soaked to the skin by the perpetual rain that accompanies her; her sunken eyes are filled with malice, and her skin is bleached white.

Story Seed

Characters from the magi’s covenant are sailing past Peel, when a sudden and un-seasonal storm materializes. Auram or Aquam magics reveal it to be a magical storm, and the magi see a mysterious, dripping-wet figure standing on top of the heaving water, and watching them from some distance away. If they give chase, the figure flees towards the coast, and then disappears through curtains of lashing rain.

Questioning locals in Peel, they learn the tales of the Carran family and Yn Caillagh-ny-Groamagh, and they travel to Slieau Whallan to confront and destroy the menace.



Sheean ny Seaynid

This steep-sided valley (“sounds of infinity”) near the top of Mt Dauby is naturally aligned such that the direct light of the sun or moon will not touch its floor. Legend has it that at night, you can hear the stars sing here; at such times, it can be used as the entrance to the regio of Étaín de Aogas-Dara, consort of Arawn Midir (see page 36). The regio has a level of 3, and clear starry nights provide a +5 modifier for entering the regio (with an additional +3 if one sings a song to or about Étaín).

Étaín’s regio appears superficially identical to the original valley, save that the stars appear much closer — being large, shining shapes in the clear night sky. Indeed, faces can be discerned in some of the brighter and closer stars, and they do all seem to be singing an unearthly chorus, just at the threshold of human hearing, though the words cannot be made out. Additionally, a crystal-lined cave appears in the hillside of the valley, connecting one directly to Étaín’s chambers of crystal and blossom below Arawn’s Castle of Falga in Niurin.

The delicate, white flowers that grow on the floor of the valley in the regio yield Imaginem vis. Both the mundane valley and the regio have a faerie aura of 3.

Yn Cheance Rhunt

This large circle of white stone (“the round meadow”) in the Foxdale is the farm of The Phynn-odderee, a giant who was cursed by Mannannan for the attempted ravishing of a faerie of his court. Though it appears to be merely a stone circle a few meters across, it is in fact a magically-shrunk regio, and is over a mile across once entered! The entire site has a magical aura of 2, and the regio has a single layer, with a level of 2.



The Phynnoddere

The Phynnoddere is the only Giant remaining on Man. He is not actually much of a “giant” — being only 8 ft tall — but this is as a result of a curse, inflicted by Mannannan for the attempted ravishing of a faerie of his court. Despite, or perhaps because of this curse, The Phynnoddere is a helpful soul, often known to assist in plowing, and in finding lost sheep. The Phynnoddere is similar in appearance to a satyr — with horns, and hairy goat-legs. He does still possess some Gruagach powers, and has an external soul he has secreted somewhere on the island. He also has the power to become invisible, and usually performs the helpful odd jobs while unseen.

Story Seed

The magi are approached by The Phynnoddere. He offers to help them tend their farmlands in perpetuity, in return for them successfully petitioning Mannannan to remove the curse he placed on him. He can advise the magi of how to best reach Mannannan’s realm (through the cave of Ooig-ny-Seyir, when it is foggy), but the rest is up to them.



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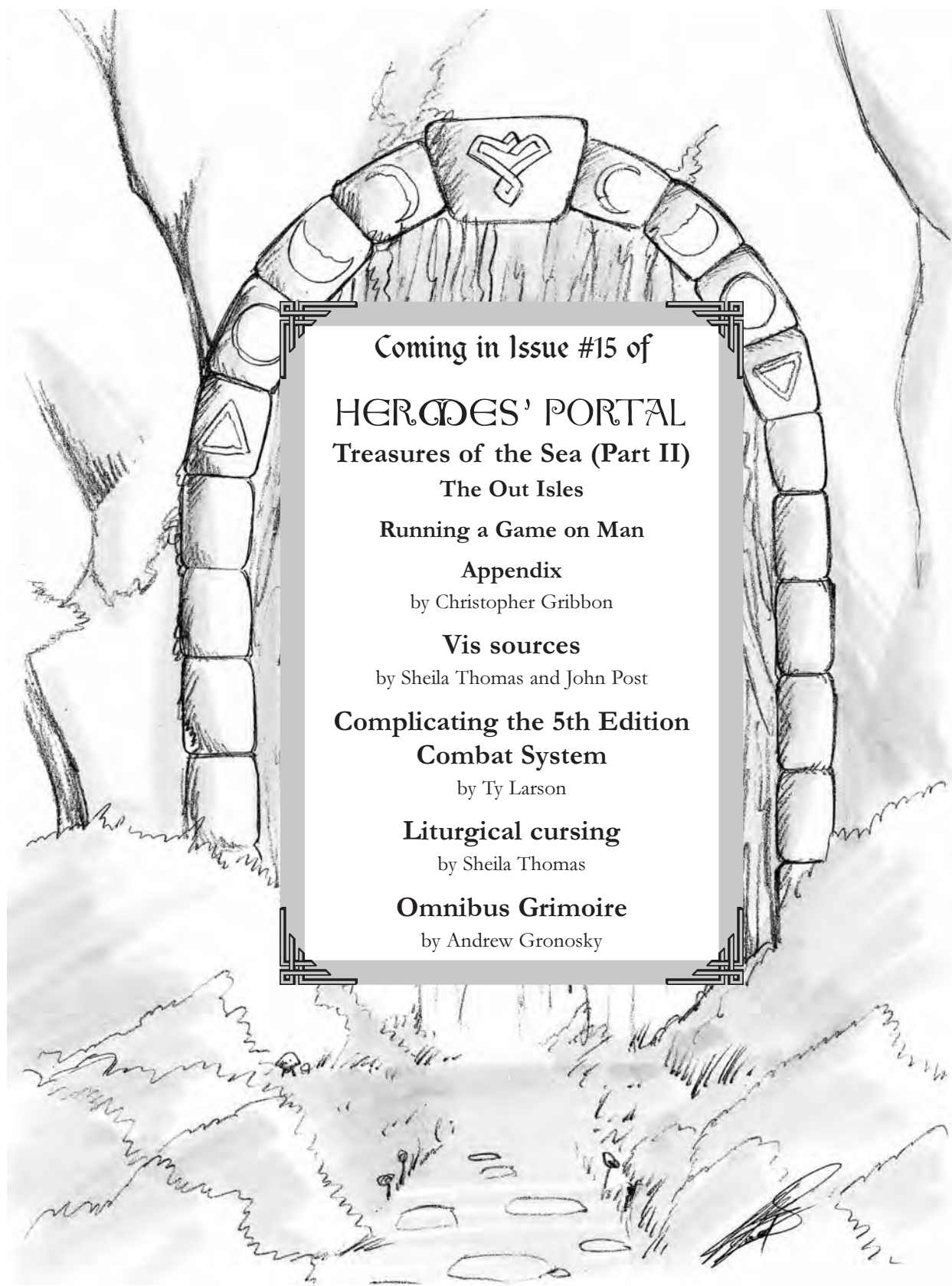
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