

Ars Magica

The Lion and the Lily

The Normandy Tribunal



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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Chapter One

Introduction

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

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

France

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

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

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



A Note on History and Myth

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

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

The Normandy Tribunal

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



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

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

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

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

How to Use this Book

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

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

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

And now, onward to France!

