Ars Magica
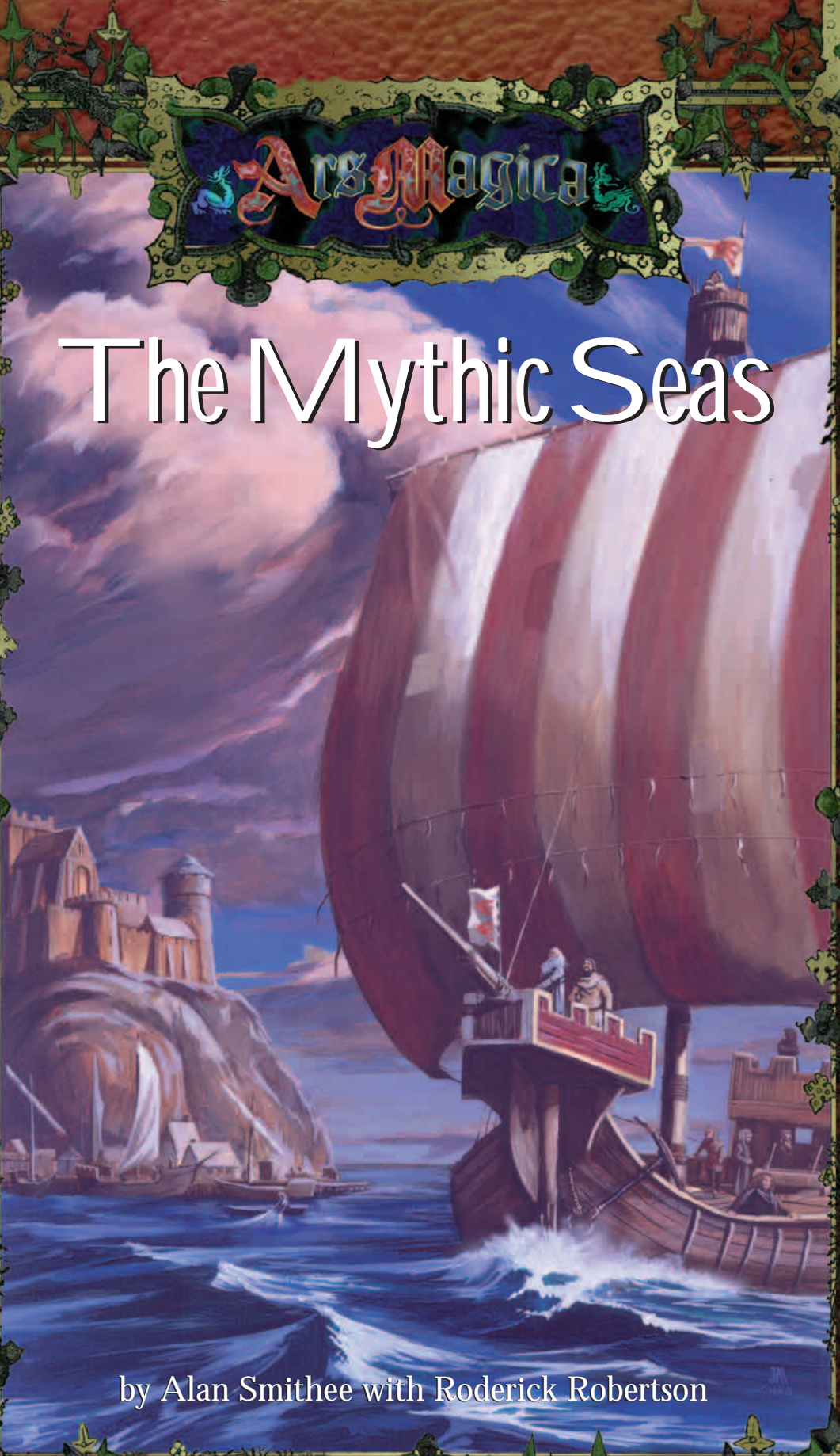
The Mythic Seas

by Alan Smithee with Roderick Robertson

The Mythic Seas

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Alan Smithee eschews recitations of his educational credentials in favor of inviting you to read his works and judge for yourself. But the players in his troupe seem happy.

Roderick Robertson lives in a modest home in Milpitas, a small town bravely defending itself from the ravages of Silicon Valley. He works at Intel, a small microchip manufacturer (sort of like Granny Goose: "Crash all you want, we'll make more") as a roustabout and clown. His real life begins outside the walls of The Corporation, however, and he spends his time painting figures, writing things, and playing with the wife and pets — Scaramouche and Lochinvar the dogs, Berengaria the rabbit, and Lucinda, Iolanthe, and Nepenthe the cats. His goal is to win the California Lottery and retire in luxury.

Author's Note

The Mythic Seas is offered not as a complete description of medieval ships, maritime trade, and naval warfare, but rather as a general treatment of those subjects for purposes of weaving interesting tales for **Ars Magica.** Players who hunger for more detail and realism are strongly encouraged to do their own research and develop systems as simple or complex as they like for the concepts presented here. Just remember: the point is to tell a good story.

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Introduction

The Seas of Mythic Europe

The lands of Mythic Europe are filled with all manner of strange places, peoples, and creatures, almost too numerous to describe. So too are the seas of Mythic Europe. More than just a vast, watery mirror of the medieval world, the mythic seas are in effect separate kingdoms where different laws apply — the laws of nature. In the thousands of years since people first ventured out onto the waves, many a mariner has paid with his life for attempting to violate those laws — or for simply not knowing them.

In an age when the ability to swim is not commonly learned, and even less commonly taught, any body of water holds a certain amount of dread. The sea, with its unforgiving depths and unknown reaches, is a place where mystery and terror go hand-in-hand. Yet for all its wonders and horrors, medieval man has hardly hesitated to explore and exploit the sea, at first in small one-man boats, later aboard large rafts and oar-propelled galleys and barges. Now, in the 13th century, maritime engineering has given men massive ships with which to sail to strange new lands, sometimes to trade, sometimes to make war. Still, though a man can build an empire that bows to his every whim, he can never quite conquer the sea.

Even the members of the Order of Hermes, more capable of plumbing the depths of the seas than most medieval folk, have done little so far to bend the waves to their will. Certainly some magi have tried, and a few have actually achieved remarkable results; their efforts are a monument to the ingenuity of man and magus alike. But for all their knowledge and power, the Order of Hermes rules the sea no more than any king or emperor. The bones of many a mortal lie in watery graves, with the bones of magi right alongside them.

Hermetic magi are driven by the same lusts for knowledge, treasure, and power as ordinary men, though they differ in how they seek it and how they make use of it. Where

The Journeys of Edward the White

Throughout *The Mythic Seas,* you'll come across excerpts from *The Journeys of Edward the White.* These describe how Edward the White, follower of Jerbiton, set forth in search of the lost relics of fabled Atlantis. In these excerpts Edward recounts his travels, telling of all he learns of sailing and ships, the natural and magical dangers he encounters, the ships and sailors he meets, the ports where he rests, the covenants he visits, and the amazing sights he sees during his quest.

most seafaring men pull food from the water, or travel upon it, seafaring magi dredge up all manner of fantastic riches and relics. Some even make their homes upon — and sometimes under — the waves. In some unusual cases men and magi work side-by-side to find and recover what each considers valuable, or to journey to places mystic or mundane. It's easy to see what both gain. What mariner has not wished for a way to quiet a raging storm, or to find fresh water while lying becalmed and adrift? And by the same token, what magus who has traveled on the water has not needed a strong, sure crew to pull the oars or trim the sails, or to plot a safe course to a spot on a map that only a magus could read?

Here then is what every storyguide needs to know to tell tales of adventure on the mythic seas. Of course, any storyguide may choose to underplay sea-voyages in the interests of brevity, but doing so overlooks hundreds of opportunities. The purpose of this book is to suggest a few of those and spark the

storyguide's imagination to create more, so that fewer journeys by sea are described in only a single sentence.

The Journeys of Edward the White

I am Edward, called "the White," filius James of Lincoln, follower of Jerbiton, and I count myself an explorer of mythic places. What follows is my journal, recording the search I have undertaken in the forty-third year of my life in the Order of Hermes. Should my search fail and I not return, perhaps what I have learned will serve to teach

others what is needed to complete my quest.

My tale begins with the arrival of Willem the Redcap, who brought with him a strange message from one Pandectus of Lion's Gate, a follower of Tremere dwelling alone in a wealthy covenant in the ruins of ancient Mycenae, in the Tribunal of Thebes. Pandectus knew of my reputation as a seeker after lost artifacts and made me an unique offer. He had, he said, located a volume translated from the ancient Greek, purporting to be a detailed guide for mariners on the location of sunken Atlantis! Of course I was most interested, but I was already planning to undertake for the Stonehenge Tribunal the thorough mapping of Faerie upon the back of the famed Horse of Uffington. Clearly these two would conflict, but after some meditation my choice became clear; the chance to find and explore the legendary Atlantis was far too enticing to put off. I sent word to Pandectus, agreeing to pursue this goal. Then

I proceeded to gather about me all the information I would need, largely on the history and methods of sea travel. But in no time at all I realized that my knowledge — and that of our covenant's library — was sorely lacking in references on the sea. I elected to pursue first-hand knowledge.

I found near Semitae's current camp a boatman of some reputation who agreed to bear me down river to the city of Exeter, where I hoped to interview some sea-faring men and learn what could be learned. A great many outright refused to speak with me, no doubt due to my Gift, but I was fortunate to encounter a Captain Hugh, Cornish by birth, who was at the time in his cups and unfazed by my odd nature and my questions. He must have considered himself quite helpful, though I had some difficulty following his reasoning.

"The moment you make your decision to put out upon the sea," he told me, "your life is in her hands. She becomes your mother, and your wife, and your mistress all in one. She'll suckle you at her bosom, then turn cold and cruel. And the moment you stop respecting her, she'll drag you down and tuck you away where no one will ever see you alive again."

"Surely there is some chance for men to make their way on the sea without fear," I countered, "or no man would ever set sail."

"If you've got yourself a good ship and a good crew, you'll live longer. But no man outlives the sea. You take my advice: if you must go to sea, don't mess about. Get back on dry land as soon as you're able."

I would have taken Captain Hugh as a broken man and a drunken fool were it not for several things, the first of which was that I, having traveled only briefly upon the sea once or twice, had not the first hint of how best to deal with the sea, or how to get from place to place without landmarks. I had also never learned to swim — a skill I would most certainly need if I thought to put my life at the mercy of the sea! Yes, Captain Hugh was a drunken man, but in many ways a far more courageous man than I. Returning to my laboratory, I determined that I would learn the skills I would need, while simultaneously sending out inquiries to my brethren in the

Order of Hermes, seeking those who had made multiple journeys upon the sea. While mundane men like Captain Hugh might have reason to fear the sea, the magics available to Hermetic magi were meant to surmount obstacles and overcome the environment. How foolish I was! For I soon learned that even arch-magi have an abiding fear for the sea!

By the time summer approached I had received a number of books and scrolls from magi far and wide, containing the sum knowledge of their covenants' libraries on the sea, Atlantis, and spells that might aid me. Each, of course, asked in return for his or her contribution a share in whatever spoils I might uncover. This was hardly surprising, as every expedition I have taken to date has involved external aid, for which the provider expected to be fully compensated. I politely responded with an initial outline of how I intended to share what I found and went on with my studies. Also during this time Pandectus' map arrived, and I pored greedily over it, memorizing it, copying it, and re-drawing it from memory alone, preparing for any eventuality. My confidence soared, and I began thinking that with all this knowledge, I could hardly fail in my quest.

Then I received word from one Milo of Schola Pythagoranis at Cambridge, a Bonisagus who claimed that at one time he had undertaken a similar quest, his for the Sunken Kingdom of Lyonesse. I knew of him by reputation only, as Milo was studying to prepare for the tests required of a magus who would become an arch-mage. He was willing to share his knowledge with me, and bade me come to visit him. I gathered up my maps and materials, fully expecting to receive his support and enthusiasm, but instead I found his outlook on my plan rather unsettling.

"I do not advise this quest, Edward," Milo told me. He was a large man, with a full, dark beard and thick black hair. He had an indefinable presence that made him seem even more imposing. "First, it is a fool's errand, proposed by one who may be at best a plotter and

Suggested Reading

The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea, edited by Peter Kemp, is a useful handbook of all things maritime. It covers subjects ranging from the historical to the fabulous, from the fanciful to the mechanical.

The Complete Sailor, by David Seidman, is an extremely accessible guide to how ships work. Though it is written from a modern perspective, the principles explained are as applicable in Mythic Europe as they are in the world today.

The Book of Old Ships, by Henry B. Culver, is useful in that it contains illustrations and brief descriptions of a variety of ships, starting with the earliest galleys.

Economic and Social History of Medieval Europe, by Henri Pirenne. Though published in 1936 it is still accessible and has some good, easy to read information. Paperback reprints are available, and inexpensive.

Phantom Islands of the Atlantic, by Donald S. Johnson. For a more mythic feel to your saga on the sea, this is a good source of flavor and examples. About half the book is devoted to places which have not yet been discovered, but do not let that stop your troupe from discovering Iceland or Newfoundland — or even America — well before history says they were discovered.

The Internet is also a good source of information, and the following sites have been useful to the author:
The Internet Medieval Sourcebook:
 http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html
The On-Line Reference Book for Medieval Studies:
 http://orb.rhodes.edu/
ARGOS (a list of medieval sites):
 http://argos.evansville.edu/

Roderick Robertson also suggests the following sources:

Hourani, George F.; *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Early Medieval Times;* Princeton University Press, 1995

Rodger, N.A.M.; *The Safeguard of the Sea, A Naval History of Britain* 660-1649; W.W. Norton & Company, 1998

Nicolle, David; *Medieval Warfare Sourcebook Vol. I: Warfare in Western Christendom;* Sterling Publishing Co., 1995

Nicolle, David; *Medieval Warfare Sourcebook Vol. II: Christian Europe and its Neighbors;* Sterling Publishing Co., 1996

manipulator and at worst a conniving demon. This Pandectus is by reputation an arch-mage and a political man in his own tribunal, and who knows what else? His aim may not be the furtherance of the Order of Hermes, but his own power. Second, how can we be certain that even if he is genuine, his 'map' is as well?

"Heed my words. There are two sorts of men who have gone searching for Atlantis: those who returned empty-handed and those who returned not at all. You have no skill at handling ships or even a small boat, you have no spells relating to water, you have never been out of sight of land, and by your own admission you can only barely swim. What makes you think that you will be any more successful than any other man?"

"I have what no other has assembled before," I responded, laying my trove of books and scrolls upon his table. "I have the collected experiences of those who have spells relating to water, of those who have traversed the sea. I have a season or more while I wait for Pandectus' response to improve my swimming skills. And what I cannot learn myself I can hire others to do for me! One need not be a sailor to ride in a boat. One need not learn to navigate to book passage on a ship."

Milo largely ignored me as he began examining the books I had brought. I waited patiently, though a great deal of time passed, until finally he looked up at me, pointing to an illustration. "Look here: a sea-serpent, such as you are likely to encounter. And here." He indicated another book, and another illustration. "The Maelstrom, from which not even the most experienced mariner escapes. And here! This! And this!" With each he stabbed a finger at a different book, a different illustration. "All these things were encountered and depicted by men who knew well the sea and its dangers! Not men like you! Again I ask: why do think you can undertake this journey and survive?"

I almost laughed then, but instead I leaned earnestly forward. "Because, sodalis, each of these dangers was catalogued and described by a man who faced them and by virtue of these descriptions lived to tell the tale! And — " here I seized one of the books and rapidly turned the pages to a passage that would prove my point, " — not only did they tell the tale of the encounter, but of how it was avoided as well!"

Milo was plainly not yet convinced, but I could see that my words had given him pause. I pressed my advantage. "As I said, I have read these books, and they tell me that the journey is possible. Perils can be avoided or diverted. The information is written here. The experience is available for a price. I have committed the map to memory. There is no way I can fail!"

He regarded me, still thinking, and was silent for a time. At last he shook his head, in the manner of one who knows that a plan is doomed to failure but cannot put into words why, and he said, "Edward, it is plain that I cannot change your mind. Personally, I believe that you are asking for a quick death. But if you are determined to die upon the sea, who am I to dissuade you? I wish you a safe and successful voyage." He then supplied me with a letter of introduction to a Verditius named Argus, who Milo claimed was the one magus in all the Order who could best improve my chances of surviving my quest. I thanked him heartily and reassured him that his advice had already doubled my odds, but as I left his chambers, I suddenly wondered if it was not Milo I had just convinced that this quest was possible, but myself. I set forth from Exeter the following spring, aboard the vessel of the very same Captain Hugh, though once in his sober mind he could not recall having ever met me. I explained to him that I was an explorer of sorts, and cited some of my more mundane previous adventures as proof. I need not have bothered, as Hugh was far more interested in the weight of my silver than in my background or motivations.

From the stern of the boat I watched the shore vanish behind me, and I laughed aloud in delight, knowing that yet again I would be exploring marvels such as no magus had ever gazed upon. But, as is my custom, I offered up a prayer that I would live to tell of them. And, with the words of Milo of Bonisagus still echoing in my ears, I made my prayer especially fervent.

Chapter 2
Ships and Sailing

Most of the ships of Mythic Europe are more accurately boats, from tiny stretched-hide coracles to even the largest cogs. As later mariners will say, "If it carries boats, it's a ship; if not, it's a boat." Very few medieval vessels carry other boats, even for making landfall. However, most common folk tend to think of nearly everything larger than a fifteen-foot skiff as a ship.

Shipbuilding has changed little for several centuries, and in fact, many of the earliest methods of building boats are still in use in 1220. The earliest vessels were no doubt simply pieces of wood large and sturdy enough to hold one or two people mostly out of the water. Lashing those pieces of wood together created the raft, which, with sufficient size, is quite a serviceable craft. Other inventions, depending on the climate, would have included hollowed-out logs, reed baskets, and even coracles (bowl-shaped, one-man boats made of hides stretched over frameworks of sturdy branches). In almost all cases, these would have been propelled by paddles of some kind — perhaps merely the passengers' hands — and crudely steered by varying the position of the paddle during the stroke.

> "The first few days on the sea tell you whether you will be able to bear any more. After that, you can begin the serious business of exploring the ship, hearing its history, learning the theory of its construction, and testing its effectiveness in the event you are attacked."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Lighter vessels, such as the coracle, would quite often rely on current: the flow would carry the coracle and its load downstream to a destination, the passenger would unload the craft, then carry it back upstream. Obviously, the coracle was light enough to allow this. In fact, the basic design of the coracle was expanded over many generations into the longer and more familiar standard boat shape, sometimes up to twenty feet long — which was still light enough that two men could carry it.

Sails advanced the science of boating. Larger, sturdier boats called skiffs began to appear, carrying a single sail attached to a mast. Later skiffs would employ a second, smaller sail, attached to the bow. This was most common in the Mediterranean.

Experimentation with oared ships included adding as many oars — and as many oarsmen — as space would allow. The basic design of the skiff was expanded to create space for as many as fifty oarsmen. This ship is the galley. Variations include oars manned by two or even three men, often in banks arranged one atop the other. The most common variety by 1220 is the bireme (two banks

of oars per side). Less common is the trireme (three banks of oars), and even less common, the quadrireme (four banks). Plans exist for quintiremes, but as operation of the quadrireme and even the trireme are somewhat problematic, more banks of oars remain only theoretical.

Whereas galleys employ sails as well as oars, barges rely nearly entirely on oars alone, employing sails only rarely. These ships are much, much larger, and consequently slower. Attempts at compensation include multiple banks of oars, but most such nautical aberrations are nearly never employed for their intended purpose, except as pleasure craft in bays or on lakes. Still, barges make excellent platforms for ship-mounted versions of siege engines such as catapults and ballistas, and though barely maneuverable, often serve as warships.

The galley is the more common warship, however. From ancient times, mariners recog-

nized the usefulness of the bow-mounted ram for punching holes in enemy ships, just below the waterline. This particular tactic was limited to oar-driven attacks. A ship ramming with a mast in place was sure to lose the mast — and probably a few crewmen. Further, the ramming ship had to be able to reverse direction before the other ship pulled it under as well, something a ship under sail cannot easily do. By the middle ages, the more common tactic was for a ship to mount heavy pieces of curved timber called catheads, which would shear off the enemy's oars as the ships passed.

On the Atlantic Ocean, meanwhile, the low-sided galley is considerably less useful, as it tends to founder in the higher waves. Necessity mothered invention yet again to create the cog, often referred to as a "round ship" because its height is almost equal to its width. Sheer size enables the cog to carry considerably more cargo than its cousin the galley, though oars are too impractical on the
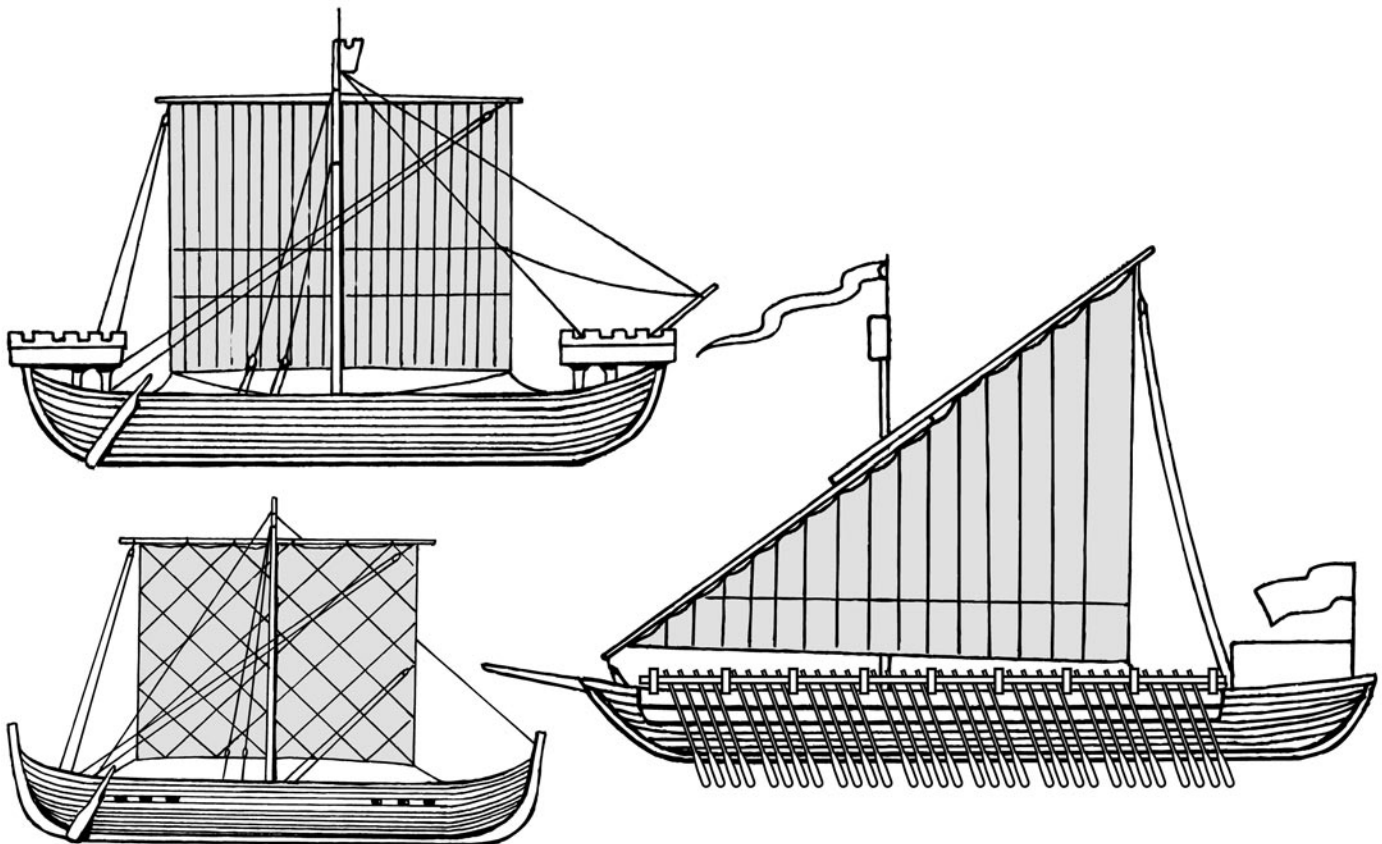
cog to make it as nimble as the smaller ships. Still, cogs carry them, because a good strong wind is not always available.

Cogs and galleys differ in two major ways. First, cogs are "clinker-built," meaning that the planking on the hull overlaps top to bottom. Galleys are "carvel-built," which means that the planking joins smoothly. The second major difference is that whereas cogs use one large square sail mounted amidships, galleys employ two and sometimes three triangular "lateen" sails amidships and on the bow, much like skiffs. The lateen sail, in conjunction with the oars, makes the galley far faster and more maneuverable than the cog, though the cog, with its forecastle and sterncastle, is capable of raining missile fire down onto the much lower decks of galleys.

The cog is actually a fairly new invention, having only appeared in the latter half of the 12th century. Another new invention now in wide use is the rudder. Previously, ships steered by means of a steering oar — essentially, a wider-than-normal oar played out behind the boat on one side or the other. Rudders are centrally located and operated by hand; wheels are still a long way off. Anchors are, of course, quite common. Larger ships tend to also have a platform mounted near the top of the mast for lookouts. They are only manned under special circumstances, though—a significant amount of chop in the waters could hurl an unwary lookout down into the sea. Still, the advantage of being able to rain missile fire down on an enemy ship often makes it worth the risk, and certainly a crewman assigned to man this "crow's nest" is going to take every precaution possible, including securing himself to the masthead.

A considerable body of laws and customs have built up around maritime trade. For example, the Roll of Oleron — derived from the earlier Rhodian Law of the Mediterranean — deals with the rights and
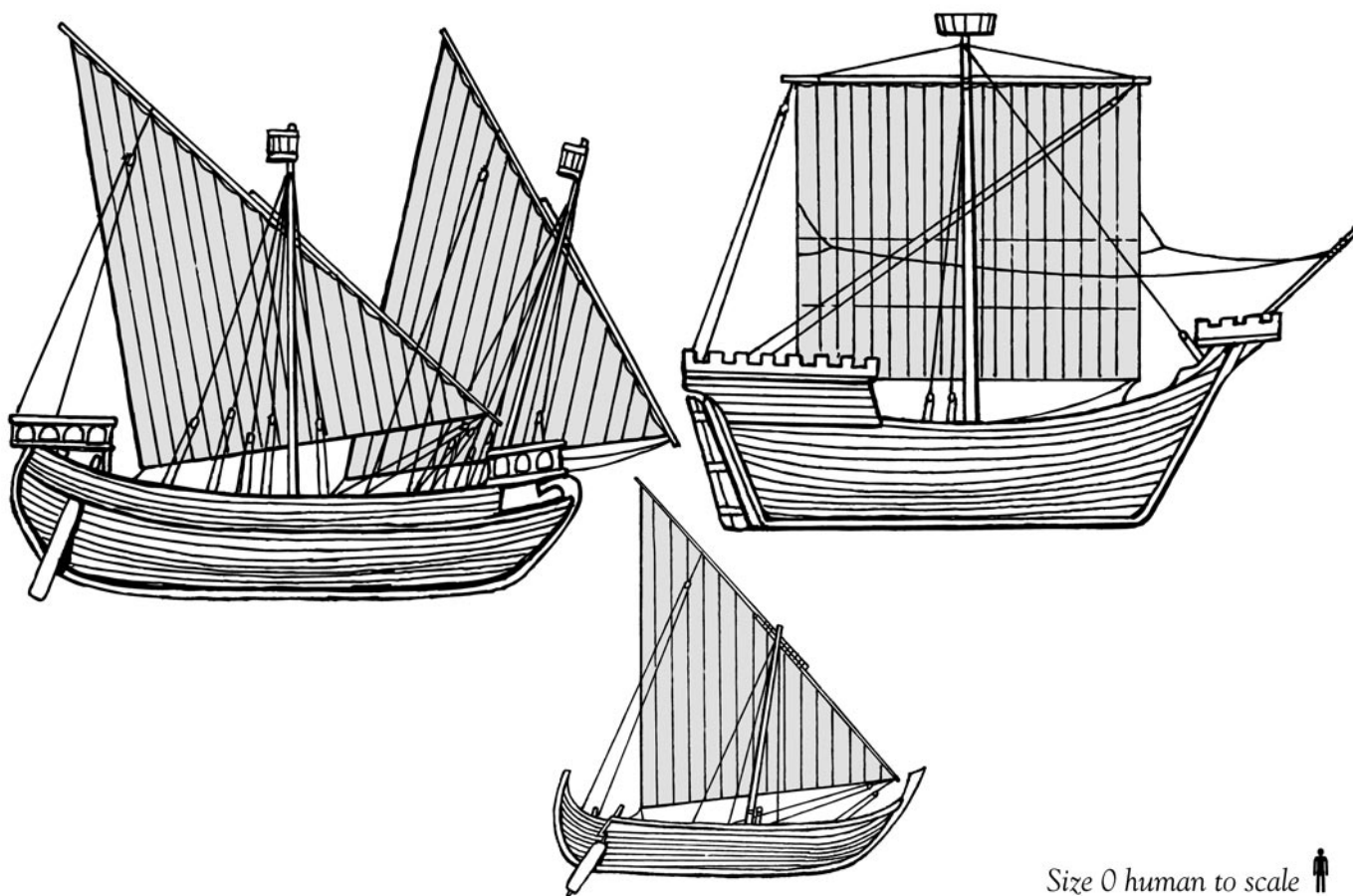
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responsibilities of a ship's captain, including discipline, mutiny, contraband, crew pay, and compensation for cargoes that must be thrown overboard for some reason.

Except in times of extreme conflict most medieval ships are working boats or merchant vessels. Their purposes are many, and in all cases, function dictates form. The precise details of length, width, crew, and cargo capacity are highly variable even among ships of the same sort.

Ships in Your Saga

Unless the members of a Hermetic covenant have gotten hopelessly embroiled in mundane matters, most of their contact with ships will be during peace-time, either as passengers, or more likely, as traders. Ships are an invaluable part of medieval commerce, carrying goods from the frozen north to the far east and back.

In **Ars Magica,** the most important thing is to use ships and the seas to make your stories exciting and epic. The rules that follow are detailed, and they provide a mechanical base for the creation and description of ships. But don't let statistics and rules get in the way of your fun if you'd prefer to keep things loose. Always remember that the important thing is to bring the oceans and the ships that travel on them to life for your troupe.

Creating A Ship

The sections that follow provide rules for creating ships from the ground up. Other options exist, though, if you're not interested in calculating such factors as tonnage and cost for yourself. An extensive set of sample ship statistics can be found on page 21. If all you need is a quick ship description, skip ahead to that section and return here when you're ready to have fun customizing a watercraft for your covenant's use.

Getting Ready

Ships are constructed by spending silver — specifically, by spending pounds (or hundreds of pounds) of silver. When "pounds" are referred to in this chapter, it means "pounds of silver." It is *not* a measure of a ship's weight.

Covenants that want to own ships will have to pay the cost from their coffers. Refer to the covenant creation rules in ArM4, specifically, the rules for Stores: supplies and Improvement: income. Characters who want to own ships should select an appropriate Virtue or Flaw from those described in this book on page 66.

Constructing a ship requires more than just money: skilled labor and resources such as wood, tar, linen, and nails will also be needed. These rules assume that appropriately skilled workers and the relevant components are available locally. If they are not, an adventure may be required on the part of the would-be ship owner.

In game terms, when creating a ship, you'll need to make decisions about varied factors such as hull size, hull material, propulsion, steering, cargo capacity, and so on. Each factor is addressed in turn in the following sections. You'll probably want to have a piece of scratch paper handy to make notes.

The Hull

The displacement of a ship, called its Tonnage, refers to the weight it can carry without sinking. The Tonnage of a ship being built is simply chosen. As you will see, a ship's Tonnage will affect almost all facets of its construction.

Once Tonnage is designated for a ship, its Hull Size can be determined by consulting the Displacement Table. Hull Size is simply a convenient yardstick by which vessels of varying configurations can be rated against one another.

A ship's Hull Size determines how much the hull costs. Ships of Hull Size 0 cost only a few pennies. Ships of Hull Size 1 cost between one and five pounds, depending on the specifics of the boat in question, adjudicated by the storyguide. Ships of Hull Size 2 or greater cost 5 pounds per ton. Hull price includes the basics: masts or oars (depending

Displacement Table

Displacement*	Hull Size	Seaworthiness
<1	0	OK/Swamped (−7)
1-3	1	OK/−5/Swamped (−7)
4-15	2	OK/−1/−5/Swamped (−7)
16-35	3	OK/−1/−3/−5/Swamped (−7)
36-75	4	OK/−1/−2/−3/−5/Swamped (−7)
76-175	5	OK/−1/−1/−2/−3/−5/Swamped (−7)
176-350	6	OK/−1/−1/−2/−3/−5/Swamped (−7)
350-800	7	OK/−1/−1/−3/−3/−5/Swamped (−7)
800-1500	8	OK/−1/−2/−3/−5/−5/Swamped (−7)
1500+	9	OK/−1/−2/−3/−5/−5/Swamped (−7)

* in tons

Hull Material Table

Material	Max. Hull Size	Soak
Bark	Size 1	1
Reeds	Size 2	5
Leather	Size 3	1
Logs (raft only)	Size 3	10
Wood Planks	All sizes	7

on the primary type of propulsion chosen), decks, and so forth.

Hull Size is not tied to any physical dimensions like length, breadth, and height. Such dimensions vary widely between different sorts of ships of the same displacement. If such descriptions are required, use common sense. Oar-driven ships are extremely long and narrow to have as many oars as possible, and have a relatively low freeboard to keep the length of the oars as short as possible. Sail driven ships tend to be wider and higher. Most sailing ships in the Atlantic and Baltic have only one mast, while ships in the Mediterranean might have one, two, or even three masts.

Tonnage also determines a vessel's Seaworthiness, which is an indication of how much damage a ship can take. Seaworthiness levels work much like a character's Body levels. A ship that is OK has no damage. As it sustains damage, it loses Seaworthiness levels and becomes harder to control and repair. For example, if a ship of Hull Size 2 sustains one Seaworthiness level of damage, it will be at a –1 on all attempts to control or repair it. If it sustains another, it will be at –5, and so on. A Swamped ship is sinking, and any further damage will surely sink it or break it beyond repair.

In addition to knowing how big a ship's hull is, it is important to know what it's made of. Allowable hull materials are determined by Hull Size, and are summarized on the Hull Material

Table. Hull material determines a ship's Soak, which is used like a character's Soak when the ship is resisting damage.

Using materials other than planks might make the hull cheaper, depending on whether the owner has access to appropriate materials. Any savings realized from building with material other than planks should be assigned by the storyguide taking local availability and other factors into consideration.

Propulsion

After the basic characteristics of the ship's hull are determined, propulsion can be addressed. Simply put, the creator must decide if the ship primarily uses sails or oars. Once this is determined (just choose one), consult the Propulsion Table to find the speed for a hull of a particular size.

You'll note that in addition to specifying a given speed, the Propulsion Table specifies

Propulsion Table

Hull Size	Oars Rowers	Speed	Sails Sailors	Speed
0	1	1	1	1
1	2-4	3	1-4	2
2	6-20	3	5-10	3
3	20-100	4	10-20	4
4	100-200	5	30-40	5
5	100-200	5	40-50	5
6	150-300	4	50-70	5
7	200-400	3	60-90	4
8	200-400	3	80+	4
9	200-400	3	100+	3

Secondary Propulsion Table

Speed Under Secondary Propulsion	Weight Per Point of Hull Size
1	0.25 tons
2	0.5 tons
3	1 ton
4	2 tons

the number of crewmen necessary to man the ship. This number includes officers as well as mundane crewmen. Each crewman and his attendant equipment and living space weigh about a fourth of a ton, which will reduce the final cargo capacity of the ship. A ship that is shorthanded will be penalized in almost all aspects of its operation (see page 25 for the specific penalties).

Most ships have both sails and oars, though not all do. Having a secondary method of propulsion allows rowers to rest on long cruises, or sailing ships to maneuver out of harbors or during periods of calm winds. Obviously, a secondary means of propulsion cannot be the same as the primary means — a ship cannot have primary sails and back-up sails. A ship's creator simply chooses whether the ship will have a secondary means of propulsion or not.

To determine how fast a ship is when using its secondary method of propulsion, refer to the following chart. You can choose any speed from the table (as long as it does not exceed the ship's speed under primary propulsion) as long as you are willing to set aside the corresponding tonnage for the requisite sails or oars. The cost of secondary propulsion is 1 pound per ton of secondary propulsion added.

Maneuvering

Maneuvering is perhaps the most important aspect of a ship's movement. Avoiding a danger is better than testing the ability of your ship's hull to withstand it! To maneuver, a ship must have some way of steering. The side-mounted steering paddle is the most common method, though the Arabs introduced the rear-mounted rudder in the 12th century. Small vessels may get by with no steering mechanism at all, relying on the rowers to change their stroke to maneuver.

Steering table

Hull Size	Steering Oars	Rudder	Oars only	Sails Only
0	—	—	+1	0
1	+1	+2	+1	−1
2	+2	+2	0	−1
3	+2	+2	0	−1
4	+2	+2	0	−2
5	+1	+2	0	−2
6	0	+1	−1	−3
7	0	0	−1	−3
8	−1	0	−2	−4
9	−2	−1	−3	−5

Exempli Gratia: Shipbuilding

At the beginning of a new saga, Marc's troupe decides their covenant will have regular access to a ship, the Crocodile, owned by their mundane benefactor and captained by a non-player character named Moses.

The troupe envisions the Crocodile as a medium-sized cargo galley with 120 tons displacement. This makes it Hull Size 5 and costs 600 pounds of silver. Its Seaworthiness is OK/−1/−1/−2/−3/−5/Swamped. Due to the Crocodile's size, only planks may be selected as hull material. This gives the Crocodile a Soak of 7.

The Crocodile is a galley, meaning that it will usually sail under the power of oars. Since its Hull Size is 5, it has a top speed of 5. It must have a crew of between 100-200. Since the troupe decides this will be a cargo ship, they choose the minimum crew of 100 in order to leave space for as much cargo as possible. 100 crewmen take up 25 tons of displacement. To ease the burden on the rowers, the troupe adds a mast and sails as a secondary method of propulsion. They figure that a speed of 3 under sail is adequate. The mast and sails require 5 tons of space and cost 5 silver pounds.

The Crocodile will be as up-to-date as possible, so the troupe chooses a stern rudder. This will add +2 to Captain Moses' Shiphandling rolls when making maneuvers. It costs 12 silver pounds to have it installed.

These choices having been made, the basic cost for the Crocodile is 617 pounds of silver. 30 tons of displacement have been used up, so 90 are available for hauling cargo or making further modifications.

Rudders cost (Tonnage ÷ 10) pounds. Steering oars are much less expensive. They cost (Tonnage ÷ 100). In both cases, fractions should be rounded up to the next full pound of expense. Ships of Hull Size 0-1 can maneuver without either.

A ship's Maneuver score is a positive or negative number which is added to the Shiphandling total when the captain is making rolls to maneuver. Determine a ship's Maneuver score be referring to the Steering Table. A ship using steering oars uses the first column; a ship using a rudder uses the second column. Ships which have no steering oars or rudder (through plan or accident) must use either the third or fourth column to determine their Maneuver score.

Basic Cost and Displacement

At this point, the basic ship design is complete. Extra modifications such as cabins or defensive works may be added later, but the basic cost of the ship should be calculated now by summing all costs incurred for the hull, propulsion, and maneuvering. Tonnage used for crew and secondary propulsion should also be summed at this point, as they count against the amount of cargo that the ship will eventually be able to carry.

Cargo

Any Tonnage that is not assigned to another use can be used for cargo. The actual weight of a cargo in tons applies directly against the tonnage a ship can carry. So, if a merchant wanted to transport 50 tons of quarried stone to a distant shore, it would take up 50 tons of displacement aboard his ship. See pages 54-58 for more detailed information on finding, transporting, and selling cargoes.

Passengers and Marines

Passengers can be hauled by any ship with the room to hold them. Each passenger taken on board counts as one fourth of a ton, including personal belongings and necessary provisions. The basic accommodations for passengers are no different from those of the crew: basic communal living in crowded, dirty, and smelly conditions. Marines who will defend the ship in hand to hand combat with weapons like crossbows and javelins count as passengers for weight purposes.

Cabins

If passengers or crew are to be accommodated with cabins, these must be purchased separately. Most ships had at least one cabin for the captain, but no ship in the middle ages had cabins for the entire crew.

A normal cabin has room for a bed, chest, and a little excess stowage. An ample cabin includes room for a table and chair, a clothespress, or just room to pace around. A luxurious cabin might have a separate chamber for sleeping, a conference table, or room for charts. Monetary costs include not only the walls of the cabin, but normal furnishings as well. Special items such as laboratory equipment cost extra.

The table below summarizes the weights and costs of cabins, per passenger. The weight listed is a multiple of the basic weight of a passenger and his baggage or equipment; the cost is in pounds of silver. Thus, for example, building normal cabins for five passengers weighs 2.5 tons and costs 5 pounds of silver.

Type of Cabin	Weight	Cost
Normal	x2	1
Ample	x3	2
Luxurious	x4	5

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Horses

A ship can be converted to carry horses rather easily. This is one of the primary roles of ships in warfare: as transports for knights and their steeds. A normal horse takes up 2 tons of cargo capacity, which includes tack and food. It costs 1 pound of silver to build the stalls and other structures required to carry 100 tons of horses and related equipment. It costs half as much to remove those structures.

Some horse transports, such as the Gallea Tarida, have large doors cut into the hull so that horses can be unloaded directly onto the beach, as opposed to being lifted out of the hold by block and tackle attached to the mast. Adding this capacity costs a number of pounds equal to the hull size of the vessel x 2.

Defensive Structures

Castles

Many ships carry raised wooden structures called castles to protect marines and crew. Only ships of Hull Size 3 or greater may have castles. Two castles (fore and aft) can be built on a ship of this size. A ship can never have a fore castle without an aft castle to balance it, though a ship may have an aft castle without a fore castle. Ships of Hull Size 6 or greater may build a third castle on the main deck in the center of the ship.

A castle weighs the ship's Hull Size squared and costs half that amount. It may hold a number of men equal to twice the ship's Hull Size. For example, an aft castle on a ship with a Hull Size of 6 weighs 36 tons, costs 18 pounds of silver, and can hold twelve men at once.

A castle gives a –5 modifier to all missile attacks against men in it. Men in the castle attack at an advantage (High Ground, +3) when fighting men on the main deck.

Crow's Nest

A crow's nest on the mast can hold marines who can fire down on the decks of opposing ships. Only masts on ships of Hull Size 3 or more may carry a crow's nest. Ships with more than one mast can have one crow's nest per mast. A crow's nest weighs one ton, costs one pound of silver, and can hold up to three (very friendly) men. All missile attacks against men in a Crow's Nest are at –10 for the upward angle and protection of the nest's walls.

Bulwark Walls

The sides of the ship may be protected by bulwark walls. The most famous bulwark walls are the shields along the sides of Viking longships, but other ships may have similar defensive works. Bulwark walls may be placed on any vessel of Hull Size 2 or more. They weigh an amount equal to the ship's Hull Size and cost a number of silver pounds equal to their weight divided by two. Bulwark Walls give a –4 penalty to missile attacks against men on the deck of the ship.

Cheaper and lighter bulwark walls, such as those comprised of Viking shields, may also be used. They cost and weigh half as much as the standard variety, but only offer a –2 modifier against missile fire.

Offensive Weaponry

Rams

Rams are not as common in the medieval period as they were in antiquity, but players may still wish to equip their ships with them. A ram and its bracing must be part of the fabric of the ship, so they are extremely expensive to add to ships if they were not part of the original plan.

Rams are generally only put on galleys, as the shock of impact has a good chance of demasting a rammer. Ships equipped with rams

that have sails as secondary means of propulsion usually remove their masts before combat. (If they don't, the mast topples on a simple die result of 3+ after a successful ram.)

Rams (and their attendant bracing) weigh 5 times a ship's Hull Size. They cost (5 + ram weight) pounds to install at the time of building, or (100 + ram weight) pounds as a retrofit.

Beaks

The spur (also called a cathead or beak) became more popular than the ram during the 10th century. Rather than trying to put a hole in the hull of the opposing ship, the beak projects from the side of the bow and is used to shear off the oars of opposing galleys. In addition to having their oars broken, the rowers in the sheared ship are hurt as the shattered oars fly about. The beak can also be used as a boarding ramp against smaller ships, allowing men to cross to the enemy ship in relative safety. Like rams, beaks are difficult to retrofit because of the bracing required.

Beaks (and their attendant bracing) weigh 2 times a ship's Hull Size. They cost (5 + beak weight) pounds at the time of building, or (50 + beak weight) pounds as a retrofit.

Siege Engines

Large ships may mount siege engines. These are lighter versions of their land-based brethren, and can come in two varieties: crossbow-style engines and catapult-style engines. The former are much more common than the latter due to the bracing needed for the shattering impact of a catapult releasing its stone.

Siege engines can be mounted on ships of Hull Size 2. The maximum number of engines that can be mounted is equal to (Hull Size – 1). Giant Crossbows weigh 0.25 tons, springals weigh 1 ton, and light catapults weigh 1 ton. Combat statistics of ship-mounted crossbows and catapults are given on the Shipboard Weapons table. Note that these are not the same as the considerably-heavier versions used from land in sieges.

Greek Fire

Greek fire is a mixture of petroleum, naphtha, and other secret ingredients. The resulting liquid is extremely flammable, as well as impossible to put out with water. While the Byzantine Emperors attempted to keep the exact ingredients secret, the Arabs and Franks made similar incendiary mixtures, though these were much less tenacious and slightly less effective. If a storyguide allows players to buy the secret of Greek fire, it

Shipboard Weapons

Engine	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Str	Load	Spc	Eff Rn	Cost
Giant Crossbow	–10	+3	n/a	+15	0	n/a	2	Engine	1 pound of silver
Springal	–10	+3	n/a	+18	0	n/a	2	Engine	5 pounds of silver
Light Catapult	–15	+5	n/a	+18	–1	n/a	4	Engine	5 pounds of silver
Greek Fire Siphon*	–5	+5	n/a	+10*	0	n/a	1	Near	**
Greek Fire Grenade*	+1	–1	n/a	+9*	0	–0.5	0	Near	***

*These weapons start fires. See pages 24-25 for further information.

**A siphon costs about 10 pounds, but availability is scarce. The ingredients to make enough Greek fire to last a single weapon for a single battle costs about 5 pounds, assuming the formula is known.

***A single grenade is an "expensive" piece of personal equipment. In order to make one, of course, the formula for Greek fire must be known.

should cost at least 500 silver pounds, if not more. Of course, magi might be able to come up with an Hermetic alternative by spending suitable time in research.

Greek fire can be used in two ways. First, it can be placed in pottery containers and thrown by hand or by springals, like early grenades. Second, it can be fired by means of a projector called a siphon, a simple pump and nozzle which is able to propel the flaming mixture as far as a man can throw a javelin. Greek fire projectors weigh 5 tons (including a reservoir of Greek fire), and are only used on naval vessels of the Byzantine navy. After the sack of Constantinople in the Fourth Crusade, a few projectors became available for purchase.

Greek fire grenades require a successful Thrown Weapon, Crossbow, or Shipboard Weapon roll (depending on the system of delivery) to deliver the grenade with enough force to shatter the pottery or glass container. A miss at sea usually means that the grenade falls harmlessly into the water without breaking.

A siphon can throw burning fuel to Near range. Doing so requires a Shipboard Weapons roll against a target number of (9 – Hull Size). A stream of Greek fire causes a quality die + 10 damage modifier. Greek fire will continue burning on the top of water, so it can cause a hazard to ships even if it misses. A botch is likely to cause the siphon to explode, causing a quality die +25 damage modifier to the ship it is mounted on.

Continuing Expenses

A character or troupe who owns a ship will have to take on the burden of finding money to maintain it, pay its crew, provide food and water, keep it supplied, and keep it sailing. The following expenses are not paid when a ship is constructed. Instead, they are assessed seasonally.

Maintenance

A ship requires a lot of expensive upkeep to keep it from deteriorating. This expense is equal to half the ship's Hull Size each season in pounds of silver.

If this maintenance requirement is not met, at the end of the unpaid season, the captain must roll a stress die to see if problems arise. On a roll of 6 or greater, there is no problem. The ship has gotten by. On a failure, the ship loses one level of Seaworthiness. On a botch, the ship loses an additional level of Seaworthiness for each botch. Damage sustained due to failure must eventually be repaired as per the Repair rules on pages 29-31, but normal repair will not be possible until the season's maintenance expense is paid in full.

If additional seasons pass and maintenance continues to be ignored, the stress die is modified by –1 for every previous season

that went unpaid, even if the roll for unpaid seasons indicated that there were no problems, and even if the previously unpaid seasons are not contiguous. The only way to clear this penalty is to retroactively pay maintenance expenses.

Exempli Gratia: It costs 2.5 pounds of silver per season to keep the Crocodile afloat. In the spring, Captain Moses manages to pay this with no problems. In the summer, however, the covenant falls on hard times and the maintenance funds go to pay other expenses. Captain Moses rolls a 7 on his stress die — no problem arise. The funding shortage continues into the fall, and this time Captain Moses must roll at a –1, since maintenance was unpaid in one previous season (summer). He rolls a 6, but with the penalty, the Crocodile loses one Seaworthiness level — an important piece of rigging has rotted through. At this point, he manages to pry some money out of the covenant's magi. He needs to pay 2.5 pounds of silver for the fall's maintenance in order to even begin repairs. Once that is done, he completes the repairs and restores the Crocodile to its full Seaworthiness. In the winter, he is again given no money to pay maintenance, and must roll at –1 again, because there is still one season in the boat's history (summer) where maintenance expenses went unmet. (The fall's expense was eventually met, so no penalty for that season is required.) Clearing this penalty will cost 2.5 pounds of silver, but since he doesn't have the money, there is little he can do but curse his masters. His roll in the winter is successful, even with the penalty, but if spring comes and he still has no money to pay for maintenance, he'll have to roll at –2, since by that time the previous summer and winter's expenses will have gone unmet.
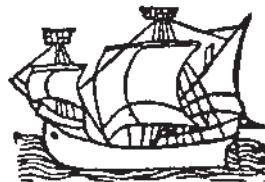
Salaries

Crews require payment for their work. Average sailors usually command a salary of around one silver penny per day. This amount does not include food, water, or personal equipment, so after expenses a sailor will take home between five and ten silver pennies each month. Different sorts of sailors get different wages depending on their skill, their ability to bargain, and the captain's confidence in them. Steersmen, navigators, officers, and other exceptionally skilled workers can expect to make many times the average sailor's base pay. On the other hand, the lowliest servants and cabin boys make some fraction of that amount.

From a ship owner's point of view, the average expense is two silver pennies per day per crewman (from the lowliest seaman to the captain) to pay his crew and keep them fed. This is a gross simplification of the actual wage structure, made so deliberately to speed the game along. Wages need only be paid for actual time spent afloat, plus one day's wages for every week spent in port (to keep the crew from seeking other employment). Unless players want to keep more accurate records, assume two weeks afloat and two weeks in port every month, and ten months sailing every year. This comes to 320 silver pennies per crewman per year (or 80 pennies per crewman per season). Assume that there are 240 silver pennies in a pound of silver for these purposes, even though the actual value of coinage varies wildly depending on where one is in Mythic Europe.

Sailors are normally paid before debarking the ship at the end of a voyage so they can spend their money ashore. A player character ship owner may decide to use any payment schedule he wishes. For ease in bookkeeping, it is suggested that characters simply pay one quarter of the ship's annual salary expense once at the beginning of each season.

The problems caused by failure to pay a ship's crew are many, and range from reduced morale to mutiny. The storyguide should determine, based on the situation, exactly what happens if a crew is not paid.

Sample Ships

The ships below have been created using the rules provided in this chapter. They are representative of the ships of the medieval era, though geographically they range from Baltic merchant ships to Byzantine war galleys.

Rowboat
Small rowboats can be carried on most ships and found in all ports riverfronts. They can carry one or two men with little equipment.
Hull Size: 0 (Seaworthiness: OK/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 1
Propulsion: Oars (Speed: 1)
Steering: Rower (Maneuver: +1)
Total Tonnage: 0.2
Cargo Capacity: 0.1

Curragh
A popular boat in Ireland and the Scottish highlands, the curragh is made of leather hides stretched over a light wooden frame. It was in a similar ship (of Hull Size 2) that St. Brendan and twenty followers sailed the Atlantic Ocean.
Hull Size: 1 (Seaworthiness: OK/–5/Swamped)
Material: Leather (Soak: 1)
Crew Size: 2
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 2)
Secondary: Oars (Speed: 2)
Steering: Steering oar (Maneuver: +1)
Total Tonnage: 2.25
Cargo Capacity: 0.25

Fishing Smack
The workhorse of most coastal communities, this small boat has a relatively large cargo capacity for its size. Most are dirty and smelly, but seaworthy. Small ships like these can also be used to haul cargo from ships to shore, or for many other similar tasks. A smack may be hired to take passenger a short distance along the coast, but most captains will refuse to leave local waters.

Hull Size: 2 (Seaworthiness: OK/–1/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 6
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 3)
Secondary: Oars (Speed: 1)
Steering: Steering Oar (Maneuver: +2)
Total Tonnage: 10
Cargo Capacity: 8

Scottish Galley
Based on the old Viking longship, highland galleys are open-decked. Some have a rudimentary stern castle. The Norman galley used in the conquest of England was similar. Some ships sacrifice rowers to add another castle at the bow.
Hull Size: 3 (Seaworthiness: OK/–1/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 70
Propulsion: Oars (Speed: 4)
Secondary: Sails (Speed: 3)
Steering: Steering Oar (Maneuver: +2)
Extras: aft castle
Total Tonnage: 30
Cargo Capacity: 9.5

Sagitta
The Sagitta is a small warship galley common in the Mediterranean. It is used for scouting and as a fast dispatch boat. The name means "arrow," a description based on the speed of the ship. The Sagitta carries 20-30 marines.
Hull Size: 4 (Seaworthiness: OK/–1/–2/–3/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 85
Propulsion: Oars (Speed: 5)
Secondary: Sails (Speed: 4)
Steering: Rudder (Maneuver: +2)
Extras: beak, aft castle, 30 marines
Total Tonnage: 62
Cargo Capacity: 1

Small Roundship/Cog
The mainstay of most merchant fleets and independent captains, the cog or roundship can be found throughout the seas of Europe under several names. In the Baltic and

Atlantic coast, they are often built with flat bottoms to rest on mudflats at low tide. The ship described by these statistics is a Cog modified for use as a warship with the addition of castles and a crow's nest.

Hull Size: 5 (Seaworthiness:
  OK/–1/–1/–2/–3/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 35
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 5)
Secondary: Oars (Speed: 1)
Steering: Steering Oar (Maneuver: +1)
Extras: fore castle, aft castle, crow's nest, 10
  normal cabins, 3 ample cabins
Total Tonnage: 150
Cargo Capacity: 98

Byzantine Dromon
The workhorse warship of the Byzantine navy, the Dromon is a pure weapon. It carries springals and usually has a Greek fire projector. It was widely copied by Egypt and other Moslem countries, making it ubiquitous in the eastern Mediterranean. Non-Byzantine ships don't have the Greek fire siphons, replacing them with yet more marines.

Hull Size: 6 (Seaworthiness:
  OK/–1/–1/–2/–3/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 240
Propulsion: Oars (Speed: 4)
Secondary: Sails (Speed: 3)
Steering: Steering Oars (Maneuver: 0)
Extras: fore castle, aft castle, 60 marines,
  ram, 2 Greek fire siphons, 2 springals
Total Tonnage: 180
Cargo Capacity: 18

Large Roundship/Cog
Larger cousins to the smaller cogs. While there are not as many large cogs as there are smaller ones, they are still extremely popular in the Baltic and north Atlantic.

Hull Size: 7 (Seaworthiness:
  OK/–1/–1/–3/–3/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 80
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 4)
Steering: Rudder (Maneuver: +1)

Extras: fore castle, aft castle, 10 normal cabins, 5 ample cabins, 2 luxurious cabins
Total Tonnage: 450
Cargo Capacity: 411

Italian Gallea Tarida
Venice and the other Italian cities are rivals not only with Constantinople and the Arabs, but with each other in the economic and military arenas. To protect their far-flung trading interests and merchant fleets, numerous Italian galleys can be found from the Black Sea to the Atlantic coast. In game terms, many are like the Byzantine Dromon listed above. The Gallea Tarida was a transport made specifically for amphibious landings, with a shallow draft, large cargo capacity, and doors in the hull allowing horses to be ridden onto the beach directly from the hold.

Hull Size: 8 (Seaworthiness:
  OK/–1/–2/–3/–5/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 200
Propulsion: Oars (Speed: 3)
Secondary: Sails (Speed: 3)
Steering: Steering oars (Maneuver: –1)
Extras: aft castle, 60 marines, spur, 4
  springals, horse embarkment door, 100
  horse stalls
Total Tonnage: 600
Cargo Capacity: 443

Great Cog
The largest ships in the northern waters, the great cogs are simply huge versions of the basic cog. In the Mediterranean, there are similarly-sized ships known as Usciers or Nefs, which can have up to 2000 tons of capacity.

Hull Size: 9 (Seaworthiness:
  OK/–1/–2/–3/–5/–5/Swamped)
Material: Wood (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 130
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 4)
Secondary: none (Speed: 0)
Steering: Steering Oars (Maneuver: –2)
Extras: fore castle, aft castle, 100 marines, 20
  normal cabins, 10 ample cabins, 5 luxurious cabins
Total tonnage: 1500
Cargo Capacity: 1241

Sailing

Sailing ships at sea is a task that requires skill, to be sure. Under normal circumstances, however, an appropriately trained and equipped crew can sail a ship from point to point with little danger. Thus, Ability rolls are not called for when a ship is operating in normal conditions.

Conditions are not always normal, though, and sometimes dice must be rolled to determine the fates of ships at sea. Rolls that affect an entire ship are made by the ship's captain. The captain's skill, the crew's skill, and the condition of the ship are all important.

The Shiphandling Total

The basic Shiphandling total is a die + captain's Leadership + captain's skill bonus + crew's skill bonus. The Skill Modifier Table summarizes the captain and crew skill bonuses, which are based on the captain's Sailing or Boating Ability and the crew's average Sailing or Boating Ability. Whenever a Shiphandling roll is called for, this is the total being referred to.

Certain other modifications are made to the Shiphandling total from time to time, depending on the specific situation. At least one of the vessel's characteristics (such as Speed or Maneuverability) usually comes into play. Any penalty associated with a vessel's current Seaworthiness always applies. Other bonuses or penalties may also apply, depending on the circumstances, but these will always be described in the appropriate rules section.

Hazards At Sea

The following sections discuss the various calamities that can befall ships sailing on the ocean waters, and how to resolve them.

Running on the Rocks

Underwater rocks can rip holes in even the stoutest ships. A ship may run into underwater rocks as the result of a botched Shiphandling roll during a voyage, or due to the specific actions of the captain or crew of a vessel. When a ship strikes underwater rocks, the storyguide rolls a quality die + (2 x Speed) + (2 x Hull Size) to determine the damage total. Particularly jagged rocks may do even more damage.

Skill Modifier Table

Skill	Modifier
0	−6
1	−3
2-3	−1
4-5	0
6-7	+1
8-9	+3
10+	+5
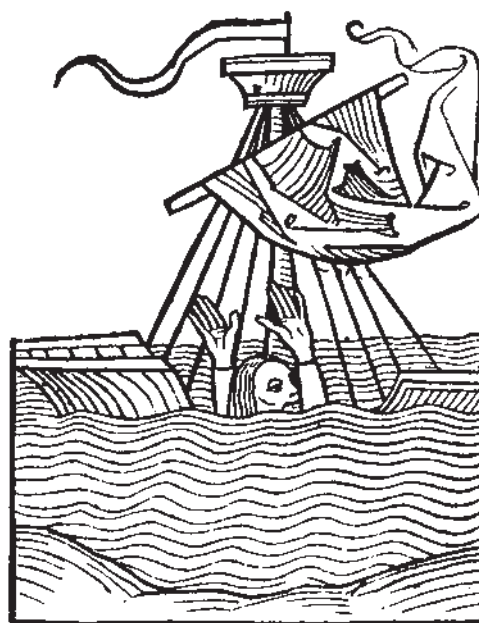
Collisions

Two ships may collide accidentally or through incompetence. Ships also occasionally collide with wharves and docks. Collisions of this nature are generally less damaging to a ship than a ram or running on submerged rocks.

First, assuming he's aware of the potential object of collision, a ship's captain can try to maneuver to avoid a collision. To do so, he must make a standard Shiphandling roll + Maneuver against an ease factor representing the situation as determined by the storyguide (usually 9).

Assuming the maneuver is unsuccessful, the damage total is determined with a simple die + Speed + Hull Size. Wharves and buildings sustain similar damage when involved in collisions. In addition to the damage to the hull, the ship's rigging may get tangled with the other ship or building. To avoid this, the captain rolls a simple die + Shiphandling + Maneuver against a ease factor of 15 if the other object is a ship, or 9 if the other object is relatively smooth. If the roll fails, then the ship has gotten its rigging tangled with the other object. If two ships are involved, then both captains need to succeed in their rolls to avoid this. It takes the crew at least an hour to clear the tangles. Meanwhile, the ships are adrift unless they put down anchors.

Fire

Fire is a constant danger aboard wooden ships. Smart captains minimize the amount of fire on board at any time by taking such measures as setting aside a single area for cooking and surrounding the cooking fire with a box of sand. However, even the most carefully kept firebox can be upset, and there are plenty of other unfriendly circumstances that might cause a fire to break out on a ship.

Fires do not cause damage to a ship's Seaworthiness immediately when they start, but if not extinguished quickly they will spread and do considerable damage. The rules here replace the rules for fire on ArM4, page 180, for the purposes of damage to ships by fire.

First, you must determine a fire's damage modifier based on its source. A small fire from a spilled firebox or fire arrow is +3, a torch +6, and a Greek fire grenade +9. A stream of Greek fire can range from +9 to +20, depending on how well it was directed. Dragon breath, Ignem magic, and fire from other supernatural sources have modifiers that are already defined (for example, a *Ball of Abysmal Flame's* modifier is +30).

Next, generate a damage total normally (see ArM 4, page 180) by rolling a simple die and adding the damage modifier. If no Seaworthiness levels would be lost, the fire goes out before really catching. Only insignif-

Damage to Ships

Ships sustain damage much like people do. Whenever a damage total is generated against a ship for any reason, the ship's Soak is subtracted from the damage total. The result is divided by (5 + Hull Size), rounded down, and the resulting number of Seaworthiness levels are subtracted from the ship's current status.

More dangerous than this general structural damage, however, is the chance that a ship will sprout holes and take on water. Any time a ship loses one or more levels of Seaworthiness, the storyguide should roll a stress die + Soak – the absolute value of the ship's new Seaworthiness modifier against an ease factor of 9. On a success, there's no problem. The ship is still watertight.

On a failure, a hole opens up. A hole has a damage rating based on its potential to continue to inflict damage on the ship. A hole's rating is equal to the amount by which the roll missed the ease factor of 9. A ship whose stress die + Soak – modifier was 6, for example, would have a +3 hole.

For each round a hole remains unplugged, the storyguide rolls a damage total using a simple die + damage modifier. This damage total is applied just like other damage, as described above. If water rushing through a hole inflicts more levels of Seaworthiness, these will require new rolls to see if more holes open up. For information on how sailors can plug holes, see Repairs at Sea on page 30.

icant scorching has taken place. If, on the other hand, at least one Seaworthiness level would be sustained, note the number of levels. Each of these levels sets one "point" worth of Hull Size ablaze. Damage to the ship's Seaworthiness will not actually be sustained until all of the ship's Hull Size points are burning.

Roll for damage from round to round until the fire is put out, adding +5 to the fire's damage modifier for each level of Hull Size that is ablaze, and reducing the ship's effective Soak against the fire by one each round. When the entire ship is on fire, the damage actually begins to affect the Ship's Seaworthiness. Continue to generate a damage total each round and apply the damage directly, subtracting Seaworthiness levels from the ship's current total each round.

Determine damage to men on board the ship based on their actions and location. Damage should be figured according to the rules in ArM4, page 180, using a fire modifier equal to the number of Hull Size points that are currently burning x 3. The location and path of spread for a burning fire on the ship should be adjudicated by the storyguide, using common sense and knowledge of the situation that caused the fire.

Water is the primary way of both preventing and extinguishing fires. Fortunately, it is an easy commodity to acquire on a ship! Wetting the deck and sails provides extra Soak to prevent a fire from starting. If the crew spends a round doing this before a fire starts, it gives a Soak bonus of +5. If the crew spends two rounds, wetting them heavily, the modifier is +8.

Standing by with buckets of water or sand will allow the crew to fight existing fires. Each bucket applied reduces a fire's damage modifier by a simple die + 5. Sand can only be used on fires on deck, while water can be used against fires on the deck or the rigging. A pump and hose allows the crew to send a steady stream of water against a fire, reducing the fire's modifier by a quality die + 10. When a fire's damage modifier is reduced to zero, it goes out and there is no further danger. Multiple fires must be fought individually

until half of a ship's Hull Size points are affected. At that point, the fires can be fought as one — the ship is burning from stem to stern.

Greek fire is unique in that it cannot be extinguished with water. The three traditional methods to extinguish Greek fire are sand, vinegar, and urine. Magic can also be used to extinguish it, though due to its nature it has 10 points of magic resistance to such spells.

Under-crewed Ships

Ships require a minimum crew size to sail or row effectively and safely. This number is the minimum number listed on the Propulsion Table on page 14. If the number of crew members falls below this number, speed and safety suffer. For every 10% (or fraction of 10%) of the minimum crew that is missing, the captain's Shiphandling rolls are made at –1 and Speed is reduced by one. Ships that have lost enough crew to reduce their speed to 0 are adrift, with no means of propulsion or maneuvering.

Storms

Most weather conditions are easily handled, and the storyguide should not require any rolls to avoid or cope with anything so mild as rain or choppy waters. But when the winds rise and the seas turn rough, everyone aboard a ship is in for a life-or-death struggle.

Whenever any ship is caught on open waters during severe weather, the storyguide should assign an ease factor representing the strength and duration of the storm. A brief storm would have an ease factor of 3, while an ease factor of 18 is reserved for protracted, violent weather. Most storms have an ease factor of 6.

Three parts of the ship are at risk in a storm, and each must be rolled for separately.

First, the ship itself is in danger from the storm. The captain must roll a stress die +

Shiphandling + Hull Size against the storm's ease factor. If the roll fails, the ship takes on water: for each five full points by which the roll was failed, the ship loses one Seaworthiness level. This loss of Seaworthiness is only temporary, however, and the crew can bail out the ship, restoring lost levels at a rate of one every ten minutes. If the captain botches his roll, however, the ship has struck something and damaged the hull, had a mast carried over the side, or fallen victim to a similar disaster. In this case, the loss is permanent until repairs can be made.

The second roll in a storm is for the crew on deck or in the rigging. As waves wash over the deck and the ship bobs violently on the water, crew members risk being hurled overboard. Each exposed crewman must roll a stress die + Str + Sailing against the storm's ease factor. Failure results in the crewman being thrown overboard. On a botch the character also suffers +10 damage — the trip over the rail is not a smooth one. Crewmen can lash themselves to the ship or string safety lines along the deck to give them bonuses to this roll. Such measures can give a +3 to +9 bonus at the storyguide's discretion, depending on what exactly is done.

A character in the water during a storm can try to rescue himself by rolling a stress die + Str + Swim against the storm's ease factor. Failure means the character is drowning (see pages 38-39). Success brings him back to the ship, where he can either be hauled up to the deck by his fellows (who need not roll to so) or try to climb up, matching his Climb Ability against an ease factor equal to the ship's Hull Size.

A character in the water can also be rescued by crewmates, if they successfully notice his plight by making a simple Per + Awareness roll against half the storm's ease factor. Such efforts should be adjudicated by the storyguide depending on exactly what

actions are taken — mundane or magical — to bring the victim to safety.

The third roll in a storm is for passengers or anyone else below decks. Passengers have it easiest, since they're not exposed to the weather, but they are still in some small danger from the violent movement of the ship. People below decks in a storm roll a stress die + Str + Athletics against half the storm's ease factor, rounded down. Failure indicates the character has been thrown against something — or had it thrown against him — and he suffers +5 damage. If the roll botches, the character suffers an additional +5 damage for each botch.

Fragile items below decks can also be thrown about. If a character has fragile objects on board, roll a stress die for each. If the item is secured in the crew quarters, hold, or a normal cabin, it breaks on a 9 or more. In an ample cabin, the roll is 12 or more, while in a luxurious cabin the roll is 15 or more. Of course, this assumes that the occupant remembered to put his equipment away! If the item is rolling around loose, it will break on a 6 or more, and may even harm someone in the same area.

Cargo can also be damaged during a storm, if any is being carried. Refer to page 58 for information and consequences.

Becalmed

Weather can also work against a ship by being completely still. A ship becalmed by a lack of winds or current is going to have to deploy oars, but if for some reason it has none, it may find itself stranded, perhaps far, far from land.

The storyguide should probably only consider becalming a ship as a story hook, a plot complication, or as a result of a captain's botched Shiphandling roll. In either event, unless the ship has another means of propulsion — including the spells of a wizard — the ship's captain should make a Shiphandling roll against a target number of 9 each day to determine if he is resourceful enough to find

another way to get the ship moving again, or if he is merely lucky enough to catch a breeze or current. If the roll succeeds, the captain has devised some clever strategy (roleplay this out) such as fashioning crude oars from the decking or putting crewmen in the water who can push or pull the ship while swimming. However, the method is almost certainly going to be strenuous, and each member of the crew (or any non-crewmen participating) must roll a stress die + Stm against an ease factor of 9 or lose two Fatigue levels by the end of the day.

Obviously, while a ship is becalmed, its crew is still consuming supplies, so a ship that remains still for too long is going to eventually face issues of thirst and starvation as well.

A becalmed ship with alternate means of propulsion merely loses a day of travel while it finds its way back to more cooperative waters.

Tidal Waves

Every so often undersea activity produces a wave of amazing proportions, at least a mile long. In most cases, these happen out at sea and are hardly noticeable — appearing only as particularly high swells in the water. They rarely reach higher than half a man's height on the open sea.

When waves of this size reach shore, however, the tremendous displacement of water becomes devastating, often even greater than the level 60 Rego Aquam ritual *Neptune's Wrath.* The wave, upon reaching the shallows off shore, encounters land features which force the entire quantity of water to rise up to 100 feet above standard sea level in a line sometimes miles across. When this wall of water smashes against the shore, the devastation is perhaps some of the most astonishing encountered by mankind. Structures are crushed, ships are disintegrated, trees are uprooted or destroyed, and living beings are pulverized and drowned. Almost nothing escapes the force of the wave.

Tidal waves — or more accurately, "seismic waves" — are an event which the storyguide should use sparingly, at best, if only because they effectively spell the end for all but the sturdiest buildings and the luckiest creatures. (History will later record instances of people in skiff-sized boats being carried along by the wave high over treetops, across the far shores of islands, to be eventually deposited more or less safely back out at sea.) The appearance of such a huge wave might be an excellent way to return a covenant to its Spring days.

Uncharted Waters

The expression "uncharted waters" means exactly what it says. These are places where no one has been, or those who have been there have not taken — or had — the time to plot out how the currents ran, or where rocks might be. As a result, anyone sailing these waters for the first time is effectively picking his way through an extremely dangerous place.

Travel in uncharted waters is necessarily slow, as crewmen lower weighted ropes to gauge the depth of the water, and lookouts both on the bow and on the mast watch for rocks. Since at best the captain is working off educated guesses about the depth of the water and the presence of submerged objects, the ship's speed is reduced to an agonizing crawl.

When moving through uncharted waters, the captain should roll a stress die + Int + Sailing (this is not a Shiphandling roll), with an ease factor determined by the storyguide based on how dangerous he has decided these particular waters are. An average ease factor would be 12. The storyguide should obviously lower this number if the water is exceptionally clear, or if the captain is employing crewmen to test the depth and watch for obstacles. Conversely, if the captain is hurrying or taking no precautions — or both — the ease factor should be raised. On a successful roll, the captain steers the ship safely through the water, and now can (and should) map out the route he has taken.

On an unsuccessful roll, the ship has encountered some hidden problem, such as shallow water or rocks ahead, but has not run aground or otherwise suffered damage — yet. These will delay the journey and require a Shiphandling roll + Maneuver against an ease factor set by the storyguide based on the danger of the waters. If the roll was botched the ship automatically collides with an unseen object. If the captain was not being cautious, additional botch dice are in order, and multiple botches make the situation that much worse. The storyguide should be prepared to adjust the number of botch dice based on how dangerous he has already decided the waters are.

Running Aground

Running aground is not nearly so catastrophic an event as it sounds. Indeed, shallow-hulled ships regularly beach in order to put men ashore, then use the raw muscle-power of the crew to put back out to sea. The difference between this and a less fortunate landfall is that this sort is planned, and tries to make the landing as gentle as possible.

Ships run aground by accident for all sorts of reasons. Rough weather, low visibility, negligence, and incompetency are some examples. And despite the expression, they do not always strike land; sailors in northern waters frequently strike the hidden edges of icebergs, and so have learned to steer clear when possible.

If the storyguide determines that there is a chance for a ship to run aground, the captain should make a Shiphandling roll against an ease factor of 6 (for ordinary circumstances) or higher (for rough weather or other unusual circumstances).

A successful roll means that the captain has managed to come aground without damaging the ship, though not necessarily in a safe place, depending on the situation. A failed roll means that the ship has suffered

some hull damage (see Running on the Rocks on page 23).

A botch, or multiple botches, means that the ship is not only damaged from running on the rocks, but is in danger of suffering further damage or capsizing due to a precarious position. The captain must immediately make a Shiphandling roll against the same ease factor, plus three. If this roll succeeds, the ship is still stuck where it is, but is no longer likely to suffer further damage. If the roll fails, the ship slips back into the water, taking damage again from running on the rocks. If this roll botches, the ship suffers more damage and must repeat this process again the following round.

Capsizing

On a particularly impressive Shiphandling or Sailing botch, the storyguide may rule that a ship has capsized. On smaller vessels such as rafts and coracles this is not much of a problem. Assuming the crew and passengers can swim (or stand, in shallow water), they can retrieve and right the craft in a short time. In the case of a raft, righting it may not be necessary at all. At the least, though, cargo may be lost, and those people aboard the ship may suffer some damage or find themselves drowning.

With skiffs and larger ships, capsizing becomes a bit more problematic. The larger a ship the less easy it is to right, and the weight of cargo will certainly increase the difficulty. To make matters worse, crew may be trapped in compartments with little air, diminishing air (as the compartment fills with water), or in compartments completely filled with water. The rules for drowning (see pages 38-39) and the storyguide's knowledge of the situation at hand are best used to adjudicate these situations.

When the time comes to right the ship, the ease factor for doing so is equal to the Hull Size + absolute value of the current Seaworthiness modifier + current cargo in tons. This ease factor must be exceeded by the Strength scores of everyone participating in turning the ship over. For a coracle, this is obviously a one-man job (unless he's a particularly weak man). For a barge loaded with cargo and suffering from tremendous amounts of damage, it may be impossible without mechanical — or magical — assistance. Even magic, though, will be severely pressed to set a large ship right again (a Rego Herbam level 30 effect should be required, at least), and it should quickly become apparent that a wizard's assistance is probably better offered in merely reducing the work required of those trying to physically turn the ship over.

Obviously, it is much easier to right a ship after the rigging has been unfouled, the water has been bailed out, and the cargo unloaded. And of course, if the crew wants the ship to ever sail again, they will want to repair any hull damage — otherwise it might simply sink.

Repairs

Repairs to a ship can be carried out at sea, on the beach, or in a harbor with a full shipyard. These rules do not concern routine repairs and upkeep; such tasks are completed by sailors as part of their normal duties. Rather, these rules deal with repairs to a ship that has sustained damage to its Seaworthiness.

The basic roll to repair damage to a ship (used unless another roll is specified) is a die + the Intelligence of the repair supervisor + the average Ability level of all men working on repairs. Appropriate Abilities are usually Craft skills like Craft: Carpentry, Craft: Rigging, or Craft: Sailmaking, but this may vary depending on the nature of the damage done. The number of crewmen working is assumed to be at least equal to the Hull Size of the ship. If fewer men are available, a –1 modifier applies for each man the crew is short. Repair rolls are always modified by any current negative modifier based on Seaworthiness.

Repairs at Sea

Repairs carried out at sea are usually intended to allow a ship to limp to a place where more comprehensive repairs can take place. There are two kinds of repairs that can be made at sea: repairs that plug holes in a ship, and repairs that temporarily restore a single Seaworthiness level to a damaged boat.

Plugging leaking holes requires that one crewman who is appropriately located at the site of the hole roll a stress die + Int + (an appropriate Craft Ability, Boating at –3, or Sailing at –3). The ease factor to plug the hole is equal to the damage being done by the hole (see the Damage to Ships insert on page 24). On a success, the hole is plugged. On a failure it is not, and another attempt may be made next round.

For more complex repairs to a vessel's Seaworthiness, a standard repair roll is made. The ease factor is 3 + the absolute value of the ship's current Seaworthiness penalty, and the roll is made on a stress die. For a Swamped (–7) ship, for example, the ease factor is 10. Success temporarily improves the Seaworthiness of the ship by one level. This temporary improvement will undo itself in one week's time, at which point more repairs must be made simply to maintain the status quo. This weekly unraveling continues until a beach or dock is reached. No more than one level of Seaworthiness can be repaired until a beach or dock is reached; the best repairs that are possible at sea are this single level of temporary repair. Repairs made at sea take one hour per negative point of the ship's current Seaworthiness modifier + one hour per repairer the crew is short, if it is short (so, for example, jury-rigging a Swamped (–7) ship with a full repair crew takes seven hours). If the repairs are not successful the first time the crew may continue to try to fix their craft — the normal repair time is expended for each effort.

Repairs While Beached

Ships can be beached (that is, hauled up on shore) to repair damage to the hull.

The target number for repairs while beached is 1 + the absolute value of the ship's current Seaworthiness penalty, rolled on a simple die. (If a ship was temporarily repaired at sea, that temporary repair does not count for the purposes of this roll.) Seaworthiness levels can be permanently repaired while a ship is beached. If the roll is successful, a level is permanently regained. To repair further levels, further rolls are required, each at the next lower Seaworthiness penalty. Repairs while beached take a number of days equal to 1+ the ship's Seaworthiness penalty + 1 day per man the crew is short. For example, repairing a Swamped (–7) ship of Hull Size 5 with a repair crew of three men takes ten days.

Repairs in Port

Repairs in port are similar to repairs on the beach, but take less time and more money, as the captain hires the repair work out to professionals. A port crew can repair lost Seaworthiness levels at three times (rounded down) the normal rate for beached ships, are assumed to have enough men available to repair a ship of any size, and have an average Ability level of 5. Repairs in port cost an average of 25 pounds of silver per Seaworthiness level repaired, modified by the captain's skill at bargaining, the Ability of the repair crew, and the storyguide's discretion.

Note that a captain may elect to use the rules for repair while beached while his ship is actually physically located in a port, if he chooses. The decision is really more between hiring a professionally repair crew and making the crew do it than a question of the physical location of the ship.

Incomplete Repairs

A captain with a ship that is beached or tied up in port may decide that time or money is more important than safety, and stop repairs at any point in the proceedings. The ship is repaired only to the last full Seaworthiness level, but the hull is plugged, a mast jury rigged, or a wobbly steering oar set in place. The ship will sail with the Shiphandling penalty associated with its current condition, but at least it won't be getting worse.

Combat At Sea

In the sections that follow, combat at sea is addressed. The aim of these rules is not to simulate enormous naval battles, but to address single ships being attacked by pirates, smugglers being chased by the authorities, and other limited naval engagements in which player characters might become entangled.

Chases

Most chases occur near shore (since most ships spend most of their within sight of land), and so chases are more a matter of knowledge of the sea coast than the absolute speed of the ships involved. Because of this, a canny captain can take advantage of shoals, rocks, and currents to try and out-distance his pursuers.

Unless a would-be attacker is lucky enough to come upon an anchored or beached ship, it will have to chase its target. Like hand to hand combat, distances in a chase are measured in broad ranges, defined below. Most of these ranges are familiar, thought two new ranges are used in ship-based chases: engine and caught.

Sight: No missile weapons can reach this far, though a magician could cast a Sight range spell. Such a spell cannot target individual crewmen on the target ship, but could affect the hull or sails.

Engine: Ship mounted siege engines can reach this far (through at a +9 penalty to their target numbers). Magicians are still limited to Sight range, by may now make out individual crewmen on board the target ship.

Far: As the standard range for spells and weapons.

Near: As the standard range for spells and weapons. Grappling hooks may be thrown to try and bind the two ships together.

Caught: The two ships have grappled, caught their rigging, or one has rammed the other. Men can board by climbing the side, jumping, or swinging across on ropes. Magic is still at Near range, unless the magician can physically touch the other ship or some target aboard it.

To begin a chase, the storyguide determines at what range the two ships begin. This is normally Sight, unless the pursuer was able to set an ambush.

Every five combat rounds constitute a chase round. At the beginning of every chase round, both pursuing and pursued captains make Shiphandling rolls. Stress dice are used, and the ships' Speeds are added to their respective rolls. For every full five points by which the winner surpasses the loser's score
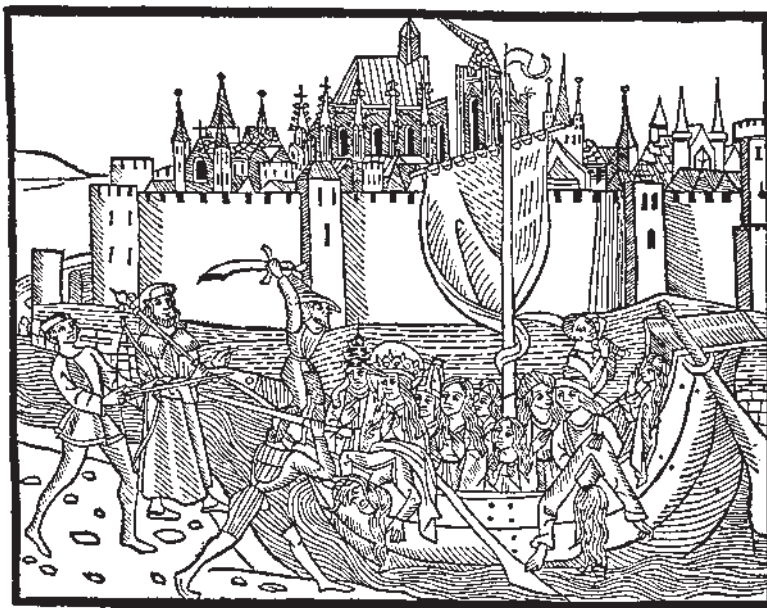
the chase range increases or decreases by one level. The chaser will presumably move closer to his prey while the target will be moving away. After the Shiphandling roll is finished and the new relative positions of the ships established, five more combat rounds pass before a new chase round begins and new Shiphandling rolls are made.

Ramming

If ships involved in a chase close to Near range, the pursuer may attempt to ram his opponent in the next chase round. Both captains make Shiphandling rolls on stress dice and add their ships' respective Maneuver characteristics. If the rammer's roll is higher, he generates a damage total as described below. If the target's roll is higher, the range opens up to Far.

A ramming ship has a damage modifier equal to the difference in the maneuver rolls + the rammer's Speed. This damage modifier is further modified by Hull Size x 5 if the ship has a ram, by Hull Size x 3 if the ship has a spur, or Hull Size if the ship has neither. Once this damage modifier is determined, damage is applied normally.

Grappling

Grappling hooks may be thrown between ships at Near range. Sailors roll Dex + Athletics or Dex + Thrown Weapon against a target number of 6. A successful roll indicates that the grappling hook has caught the other ship. It requires a number of grappling hooks equal to the Hull Size of the smaller ship to successfully tie two ships together, bringing them to the chase range of Caught.

A grappling line can be cut with an axe or other edged weapon, though some lines are spliced to a chain attached to the hook to prevent this. Normal rope has one Body level and +1 Soak for these purposes, while a Chain has three Body levels and +6 Soak.

Only one man may attempt to cut a single grappling line per combat round.

Boarding

Once two ships are grappled or entangled, men can cross from one to the other by jumping, climbing, or crossing on planks laid from ship to ship. The relative heights of the two ships are important, as men on the taller ship are at an advantage against men trying to climb their hull.

Simply compare the Hull Sizes of the two ships to determine if either side has a High Ground advantage. Because of the relatively low sides of galleys (that is, ships whose primary propulsion method is oars) compared to sailing ships, a galley's effective Hull Size for this purpose is two less than its actual value. Men standing on castles may add one to the effective Hull Size of their ship for these purposes.

Monstrous Combat

The seas of Mythic Europe are home to fabulous creatures from sea serpents to mermen. Most human-sized monsters are unable to affect a ship directly in combat. Huge monsters, though, have the strength and mass to attack a ship, and may not even recognize the crew as a problem! As a general guideline, a creature of Size 4 or more may launch an attack directly against the structure of a ship.

A huge monster using a purely physical attack like a club, constricting tentacle, or bite rolls a stress die + its normal attack bonus + (target's Hull Size x 2), trying to beat the vessel's stress die + Shiphandling + Maneuver (assuming the ship is aware of the attack and trying to avoid it — if not, the target number is 6). If this roll is successful, it does damage equal to (attack roll – target number) + (normal melee damage modifier ÷ 3, rounded up).

Chapter 3
Life on the Sea

Life Aboard Ship

Life aboard a ship is more or less the same as life on land: you work, you eat, you sleep. Most days are uneventful, though occasionally you can expect to work exceptionally hard, or eat and sleep exceptionally little. The only major differences are that you usually work in an extremely confined area, and if you ever get tired of what you are doing, you cannot simply walk away.

A ship usually moves only during daylight hours, with few exceptions. Since ships tend to remain within sight of land if possible, they are often in danger of striking submerged rocks or running aground, and the chance of doing so increases tremendously at night. Further, though a ship can set its course by the stars, on a cloudy night, a ship risks getting lost. So the ship tends to anchor offshore — preferably in a quiet cove — until first light, leaving only a crewman or two to keep watch while the others sleep or perform lesser duties, such as cooking or repairs.

From dawn until dusk, most of the crew is working, above or below decks. Tasks are usually not specialized: a crewman has to be good at every job aboard ship (though some are obviously better than others). The few tasks that do require specialists — usually navigation, cooking, or repair work of some kind — are often performed by ordinary crewmen with a little extra training.

The captain of the ship may be such a person, or he may be an experienced veteran. He may only be captain by sheer force of personality. In any case, he enjoys somewhat larger crew quarters, though "large" can be a misleading term. He quite often has to stoop when moving around his cabin lest he knock his head. The crew are generally only slightly worse off than their captain, though, with communal living quarters almost always below decks. Meals are generally prepared on deck or in the crew's quarters, though "preparation" can merely involve handing out pieces of bread or salted meat.

Food and water are valuable commodities aboard ship, especially on long voyages, and fresh food and water even more so. In this regard, sailing within sight of land is a benefit, as the crew can put ashore for provisions whenever necessary.

> "What a newfound respect I have for these sailors. Though uncouth, uneducated, and often unfriendly, they know their trade sometimes better than I know my own."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Crewmen

Sailors come from a variety of backgrounds, though they all have the sea in common, either as a familiar reality or perhaps a lifelong dream. A few began as fisherman, or perhaps captives of pirates. Whatever their background, sailors belong to an uncommon fraternity of men faced daily with their own insignificance — and often with their own mortality.

Motivations of crews are many, and as varied as the men themselves. For most, it amounts to working hard enough to earn good pay, and surviving long enough to spend it. What constitutes "work" may be rowing, fighting, or performing repairs, and "hard enough" is bound to differ from captain to captain. But the average sailor is willing to do whatever it takes to avoid being thrown overboard by an incensed captain or crewmates!

A common misconception is that oarsmen on medieval ships are slaves or convicts. This is almost never the case; rowers are usually well-paid freemen. Using slaves or convicts as rowers is a dangerous proposition, since they would certainly outnumber the regular crew. Such an ill-considered course of action is no doubt the origin of a fair number of pirate ships.

Passengers

Ships generally carry two kinds of goods: passengers and cargo. Passengers are (usually) treated better than non-living cargo, but in the cramped confines of a medieval ship, that may not be saying much. Private cabins are uncommon, and unless a particularly good berth has been negotiated, passengers may in fact sleep with the crew. Passengers either bring along their own provisions or pay slightly more for their passage and eat what the crew eats. Aside from not having to work, they are really no better or worse off than the crew.

Provisions

An average ship carries two weeks worth of food and water for its crew and passengers, and stores are topped off whenever the ship is in port. This amount is figured into the base weight of each crewman when ships are constructed. It is paid for out of crew salaries (see page 20). A ship can certainly carry more than two weeks worth of provisions, but doing so eats into the tonnage available for other purposes. Assume that one extra week's worth of food and water for ten crewmen or passengers weights .25 tons. This formula doesn't consider spoilage — if a ship intends to remain at sea for an extremely long period, the storyguide should take such factors into consideration. Will the food last for three months and still be edible?

In rare circumstances, ships are equipped for the comfort of passengers, but every captain is fully aware of the effect on his income of making room for a human being when he could be stuffing that same space with cargo. Even so, a "comfortable" cabin may be only just large enough for a bed and a place to stow belongings, with no porthole looking out and no particular security. Only the most extravagant ships have designated passenger cabins anywhere near as comfortable as rooms on dry land. Still, privacy aboard ship is the commodity here, and that is a large part of what determines the price.

The cost of taking passage on a ship depends on various factors such as the type of ship, the quality of the passenger's berth, and the coin of the realm. For passage from one port to another, the ship's captain will most likely charge a specific amount — payable before the passenger comes aboard — which reflects how difficult the passage is expected to be in terms of weather, tides, hazards, and political conditions. In addition, if the voyage is expected to cross into the territorial waters of another sovereign power, it would not be out of the question for the ship's captain to levy an additional charge. It is also modified by how sumptuous the passenger's quarters are. The price does not include meals or stowage of additional cargo, so magi planning to transport their labs from place to place should expect to pay a bit more. And, obviously, the use of Bargain skill can cut the price. The storyguide should set the final price based on the anticipated travel time, the monetary or barter system of the area, the nature of the passengers, and their skill at Bargaining. There is no price list for traveling to and from specific ports — passengers are at the whim of captains and ship owners unless they can afford to buy their own ships.

Even once the passengers board the ship, keep in mind that it is not uncommon for a ship to find itself waiting weeks for the proper tide or favorable wind — even for a few day's actual journey.

In Mythic Europe, characters may occasionally want to travel to places where the ship's captain and crew have never been. In such cases, calculate a reasonable price for the expected duration of the voyage, then double or triple it. Ships' crews are, after all, superstitious folk, and will not take kindly to bearing strange people to strange places. Magi with the Blatant Gift may even cause the price to be quadrupled! Again, bargaining can help lower this figure — as can the use of magic with an appropriate duration.

Cargo

Those who have never had to load a large and unstable vessel tend to think of a ship's

Standard Sailor

Characteristics: Int –1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com –1, Str 0, Stm +1, Dex +1, Qik 0
Size: 0
Personality Traits: Brave +1, Loyal +1

Attacks	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+3	+3	+2	+0	+3
Axe	+5	+3	+4	+6	+3
Club	+4	+4	+4	+4	+3
Dagger	+4	+4	+4	+3	+3
Shortsword	+6	+5	+5	+3	+3
Javelin*	+2	+5	—	+3	+3
Light Crossbow**	–4	+5	—	+10	+3

* Rarely used except by Moorish marines.
** Generally used only by European marines.

Soak: +1
Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Unconscious
Body levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Incapacitated
Abilities: Area Lore (sea) 1, Athletics 1, Awareness 1, Boating 3, Brawling 2, Carouse 1, Climb 1, Crossbows 2, Fish 1, Folk Ken (sailors) 1, Organization Lore (ship) 1, Sailing 3, Shipboard Weapons 2, Single Weapon 2, Stealth 1, Swim 1, Thrown Weapons 2
Equipment: axe, club, dagger, shortsword, javelin, or light crossbow
Encumbrance: 0

cargo being piled in a somewhat orderly — or disorderly — fashion in a storage compartment somewhere below the ship's deck. To an extent this is true, but there are usually several such storage compartments, and balancing the weight so that the ship does not list to one side is an important consideration.

Cargo aboard a ship tends to be packed into any available space, though only the most foolish would do so to the detriment of the operation of the vessel. Heavier cargo goes on the bottom, waterproof cargo is sometimes secured to the deck, and some items are actually stacked up in the crew's quarters.

The exact nature of cargo varies, as what is valuable in any given place at any given time can also vary. If it is important for players to know exactly what kind of goods a given ship is carrying, the players and storyguide should work together to determine the cargo based on the last port visited by the ship.

Activities Aboard Ship

The time will come when a player wants his character to undertake some protracted activity while traveling by ship. This is per-fectly acceptable — within reason — and the storyguide should allow any character who is not otherwise engaged with shipboard duties to do so. Below are the activities that a character could logically be expected to perform while on a sea voyage. Note that these rules assume a voyage of at least one season.

Training

A character aboard a ship can be trained by a trainer in any Skill or Knowledge as explained in ArM4, page 187. However, before the character gains any experience points through training, both he and his trainer must roll a simple die + Stamina. If either roll 3 or less, one fewer experience point is gained — one of them finds the rolling sea and the bustle of sailors around him too distracting. Similarly, if a character is attempting to learn a spell through training, make the same roll. If the roll fails, subtract five from the number of spell levels that can be taught.

Practice

Being able to practice a Skill or Talent is obviously dependent on the Skill or Talent. Plainly, a character cannot practice his Animal Handling if there are no animals aboard! When the character rolls his stress die at the end of the season, subtract three from his roll if he fails a simple roll + Stamina against an ease factor of 3.

Exposure

Exposure experience is actually quite easy to collect aboard a ship. A character can pick up Area Lore for the appropriate sea or coastline, Organization Lore for a merchant's guild (if applicable), Legend Lore about fantastic sea-creatures, and so forth. A character can also learn the language most commonly spoken by the crew — even Latin or Hebrew, if that happens to be the language spoken.

Lectio and Disputatio

Like training, Lectio and Disputatio require that all participants roll a simple die + Stamina versus an ease factor of 3. If the roll fails, the Study Total for the failing character is reduced by 5.

Lab Activities and Books

If a character with the Gift has actually managed to create a laboratory aboard a ship and can work in it more or less uninterrupted, he can perform any lab activity he normally could on dry land. However, the character must roll a stress die + Stm before determining the result of the season's study, against an ease factor of 3. If the roll fails, the character suffers a –5 on his Lab Total. If the roll botches, the character has had a mishap of some sort, and should roll on the Extraordinary Results Chart on page 93 of the rulebook, subtracting 5 from the roll.

Obviously, some of the results will not logically apply to writing summae, or studying vis, so the storyguide should be prepared to interpret the results of the Extraordinary Results roll. If the storyguide cannot decide on an appropriate explanation for the die roll, he should either roll again for the player or describe a minor catastrophe of some kind which should be treated as a result of "No Extraordinary Effects."

Mundane Hazards

Every man who puts to sea in a ship knows there is a chance he will never see his home again. Forgetting for a moment such fantastic dangers as monstrous krakens and magical maelstroms, there are a host of mundane dangers which regularly prove the doom of unwise mariners.

Thirst

Many men who have never traveled by sea find it hard to believe that sailors occasionally die of thirst. But they do, which is why ships either carry large amounts of fresh water in the ship's stores, or make frequent stops for more. Unfortunately, water casks leak, rot, or simply run dry on long voyages. And with so much water around them, thirsty sailors sometimes take leave of their senses.

Whenever a character is deprived of water for more than six hours, give the character a temporary Personality Trait of Thirsty at +0. The character should then roll against this trait twice per day. If the character rolls an 11 or less, he perseveres, but his Thirsty score increases by one. If the character rolls a 12 or higher, he immediately drinks whatever liquid is at hand, such as cooking oil, dishwater, or even blood. (Note that a character must botch this roll to drink anything which he almost certainly knows to be dangerous, as is the case with sea-water.) In addition, thirst begins to take its toll on his body. The character must roll Stm + Survival – Enc against an ease factor of 9. If the roll fails, the character loses one Fatigue level, which cannot be recovered until he gets some water. For each botch, the character loses one additional Fatigue level. When a character has lost all of his Fatigue levels, he begins losing Body levels instead. The number of botch dice for both of these rolls increases as time passes: roll one additional botch die for each day the character has gone without fresh water. Finally, the character's Thirsty Personality Trait increases by 3.

If at any point the character receives fresh water, the character can begin to recover lost Fatigue and Body levels. He also loses

> "Lest you become convinced that life on the sea is exciting at best and tolerable at worst, allow me to relate some harsh realities."
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

the Thirsty Personality Trait altogether, until such time as he is again deprived of water for more than six hours.

Sea-water is as deadly to men as poison: those who drink it only become thirstier as the high salt content dehydrates their bodies. If a character drinks sea-water, his Thirsty score immediately increases by 3, and he accumulates an additional botch die to further Thirsty rolls. To make matters worse, the character must now roll twice as often: four times each day.

Exempli Gratia: Arturo the sailor has become lost on the seas and has no water. After six hours, he gains Thirsty at +0 and must roll an 11 or less on a stress die to avoid drinking whatever he can find. Fortunately, he rolls a 5, but his Thirsty Personality Trait rises to +1. Later that day he still has no water. Arturo does not do so well: he rolls a 1 followed by a 6 on his Thirsty Personality Trait, for a total of 13. He drinks whatever he can find, but since he didn't botch, he stops short of drinking sea-water. Now Arturo must roll Stm + Survival – Enc against an ease factor of 12. His luck is still bad, though, and he fails the roll, losing one Fatigue level. His Thirst score rises to a +4, and if he rolls a zero from this point on, he must roll two botch dice. The next day Arturo rolls again. True to form, he gets a zero. He must now roll two botch dice, and one of those comes up a zero as well. Deciding that he only needs to hold out until he is rescued, Arturo drinks some sea-water. When he makes his next Thirsty roll, in three hours this time, his Thirst score will be +8 (+1 for failing his roll, and +3 for drinking sea-water), and he will have to roll three botch dice if he rolls a zero. He

is now down two Fatigue levels, and his chances are looking grim.

Hunger

Hunger is almost as bad as thirst, though people can survive longer without food than they can without water, and they are less likely to eat anything patently bad for them. However, a poorly-stocked ship could spell disaster for the crew.

Just as a character without water gains Thirsty as a temporary Personality Trait, characters without food gain Hungry at +0. If a character has gone without food for more than 12 hours, he must roll a stress die and add his Hungry score: if the result is 12 or more, his Hungry Personality Trait increases by +1, and he rolls an additional botch die until he gets food.

In addition, a character who fails a Hungry roll loses one Fatigue level (which he cannot regain through normal means) unless he can make a Stm + Survival – Enc stress roll. If the roll botches, he loses two levels. As with Thirst, when the character runs out of Fatigue levels, he loses Body levels instead. Also similarly, the character cannot begin to recover until he has had a decent meal. One he has, his Hungry score drops back to +0.

In addition to this fatigue loss, a starving character should roll against his Hungry Personality Trait once every twelve hours. If he ever botches the Hungry roll, he immediately loses a Body level — he has eaten something he shouldn't have.

In the case of both thirst and hunger, the storyguide can require a roll ahead of schedule if the character exerts himself or is exposed to an appropriate temptation. Certainly engaging in combat would require an additional roll.
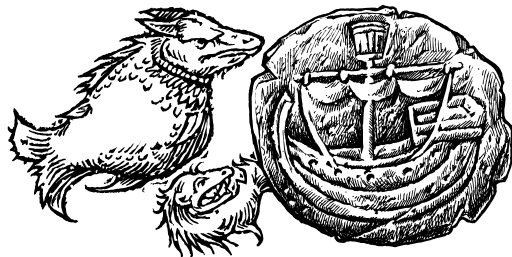
Drowning

Rough weather is not the only way a character can find himself in the water and sinking fast. Sailors occasionally botch spectacularly and fall over the side, and shipboard battles can certainly see characters thrown into the water. When this happens, the character is in danger of drowning. Note that the following rules are meant to replace the simplified rules found in *Return of the Stormrider*.

Under ordinary circumstances, a character can stay afloat and move in the water by rolling a simple die + Stm + Swim – Load against an ease factor of 6. But if the character does not have the Swim skill, or the situation is dire, a stress die is rolled. Remember, if a character does not know an appropriate skill, he gets a –3 on his roll and must roll three additional botch dice. If this roll fails, the character goes under and has to hold his breath. The character can try to reach the surface in later rounds by rolling a stress die + Stm + Swimming – Load, with an ease factor of 9. The storyguide may want to make this roll more difficult based on how far it is to the surface.

Ordinarily, a character can hold his breath for a number of combat rounds equal to a simple die + Stamina. Once that time is up — or if the character botched his Swim roll — he begins to inhale water. Each round this continues the character loses one Fatigue level, and when these run out, one Body level. If the character can make it back to the surface, either under his own power or with help, he can immediately begin breathing normally again, though any penalties incurred from drowning continue to apply until he recovers.

As Load applies a negative modifier to the Swim roll, a common tactic for a drowning man is to divest himself of his armor and similar encumbrances. Assume that a character doing nothing other than holding his breath can drop a number of points of Load equal to a simple die ÷ 2 each round.

Pirates

No sound chills medieval mariners more than the cry of "Pirates!" For more than storms, starvation, or even horrible creatures of the deep, pirates are an unpredictable factor — they can practice cruelty, something other dangers cannot.

The term "pirate" actually refers to any sort of brigand who takes possessions away from their rightful owners, even on dry land, though most are encountered at sea. The tactics of pirates vary widely, the most common being for the pirates' smaller, faster ships and determined crews to overtake larger, more heavily-laden vessels. The pirates then swarm aboard, attempt to overcome the crew and any passengers, then either carry off any valuables, or simply seize the entire ship. Slaughtering the entire complement of the captured ship is not uncommon, but occasionally pirates prefer to sell everything aboard the ship — passengers included.

Less common is for a pirate ship to attack with shipboard weapons — which tend to be rare among such ill-equipped sailors — and least common of all is for pirates to come on board posing as passengers, then to produce weapons and subdue the crew once the ship is far out to sea. Battles from ship to ship using springals and similar weapons can be con-

Performing Actions While Swimming

Characters who insist on fighting or spellcasting while swimming run the risk of sinking. Whenever a character who is already immersed wishes to engage in combat or cast a spell using gestures he must first roll a stress die + Dex + Swim – Load against an ease factor of 6. If the roll succeeds, the character can fight or cast as planned. If the roll fails, however, the character has temporarily stopped treading water and sinks a few feet. In most cases, the character's head is suddenly be underwater, and he will be forced to hold his breath. Needless to say, this disrupts the action the character intended to take. If the roll botches, the character has accidentally sucked in a gulp of water and immediately loses one Fatigue level, as per the drowning rules.

ducted using the normal **Ars Magica** combat rules, as can any hand-to-hand battles that occur between pirates and the crews of the ships they attack. For further information, see Chases on page 31.

Wreckers

Wreckers are a particular variety of pirates who prefer to let a ship's crew defeat themselves, then loot the helpless ship afterward. Most often, they do this by somehow luring the ship into shallow or rock-filled waters at night or in rough weather, usually by use of a false beacon. The ship runs aground, usually sustaining hull damage in the process. The wreckers then overcome any unhurt crew remaining and strip the ship of valuables. The ship itself is then either sunk or chopped up for firewood — probably to create a false beacon for the next ship! Use the standard pirate template for wreckers, though they are not likely to use javelins or crossbows in their work.

A wily captain can sometimes notice that something is amiss, as wreckers count on a ship's crew being unfamiliar with the waters. Whenever a ship is faced with wreckers, allow the captain to roll a stress die + Int + Area Lore against an ease factor of 6. If the roll succeeds, the captain realizes that he is being misled, and can avoid the trap set for him. If the roll fails, the ship falls afoul of the wreckers. On a botch, the ship is badly damaged in the process.

Player Characters Pirates

Troupes who wish to set their saga on the seas may want to play pirates, making their mundane living by preying on others. This is completely acceptable, and the troupe may want to look over the entry for Insula Magna (see page 63), a sample covenant that includes pirates.

Both the storyguide and his players should be aware that piracy in the middle ages was not the romantic swashbuckling portrayed in films about the 18th-century Caribbean. Pirates are despised individuals, both feared and hated by those they victimize, and are hunted by every agency that can put soldiers in ships. Character deaths are likely to be quite common, and ship-to-ship battles even more so.

If the players are set on their decision, they should consider giving their entire turb of grogs the Grog Status Flaw "Pirate," as described on page 66. Also, most of the companions are probably going to have bad reputations in the area, and magi will almost certainly have poor reputations in the Order of

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Standard Pirate

Characteristics: Int –1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com –1, Str +1, Stm +1, Dex 0, Qik 0

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Cruel +2, Brave +1, Greedy +1, Loyal –1

Reputations: Pirate +1, in local area

Weapons/Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling (fist)	+3	+2	+2	+1	+3
Axe	+5	+2	+4	+7	+3
Club	+4	+3	+4	+5	+3
Dagger	+4	+3	+4	+4	+3
Shortsword	+6	+4	+5	+4	+3
Javelin*	+2	+4	n/a	+4	+3
Light Crossbow**	–4	+4	n/a	+10	+3

* Rarely used except by Moorish marines.

** Generally used only by European marines.

Soak: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Area Lore (sea) 1, Athletics 1, Awareness 1, Boating 3, Brawling 2, Carouse 1, Climb 1, Crossbows 2, Fish 1, Folk Ken (pirates) 1, Organization Lore (pirates) 1, Sailing 3, Shipboard Weapons 1, Single Weapon 2, Stealth 1, Swim 1, Thrown Weapons 2

Equipment: axe, club, dagger, shortsword, javelin, or light crossbow

Encumbrance: 0

Hermes, which after all frowns on activities that attract negative attention from mundanes. Further, the covenant itself is likely to have a bad reputation, as explained on page 208 of ArM4. Along those same lines, a covenant which has a reputation for piracy should seriously consider choosing a secluded site, with good defenses (see ArM4, pages 205-208).

Playing a pirate covenant will most likely involve a lot of chasing of cargo ships and occasional flights from the authorities. The covenant's friends and contacts are likely to be outlaws themselves, and the covenant may find itself every so often betrayed by its erstwhile "allies." Still, the rewards of occasionally overcoming ships laden with silver and gold — or more likely, silks and spices — should provide the troupe with a constant and enticing goal.

Mythic Hazards

Though the sea holds many dangers, seamen often have generations of experience to draw upon in order to cope with most situations. But dangers of a magical nature are always something new, something for which they are not trained. Where experience or even brute strength fail, skill, courage, and occasionally magic must prevail.

Waterspouts

Certain combinations of Aquam and Auram phenomena occasionally combine to form awesome towers of wildly-whirling water that reach high into the air. One theory in the Order of Hermes is that these are signs of warring elemental powers, or perhaps mystical guardians set to ward off intruders. Whatever the case, waterspouts are frequently sources of massive amounts of both Aquam and Auram vis, and as such, highly attractive to magi.

They are also dangerous. A waterspout can snatch up a ship which ventures too close, damaging it in much the same fashion as a storm would (see Storms on page 25). The storyguide should rate a waterspout using the same scale, though no waterspout of significant duration should have an ease factor less than an 18. They are, after all, magical. This number also represents the amount of vis present, though, so the storyguide should be judicious. The vis can be collected if a magus can cast an appropriate Rego Vim spell. Usually this is a spontaneous spell, but enterprising magi who make a habit of collecting waterspout vis might well have developed a formulaic spell.

The magus begins by approaching the waterspout — aboard a ship, or by use of magic — and casting his Rego Vim spell. If the spell is successful, he then rolls a stress die + the level of the spell and subtracts five. For every point by which this total exceeds the

ease factor of the waterspout, the magus can harvest one pawn of vis, in equal portions of Aquam and Auram. (In the event of an odd number, the additional pawn is Aquam.) The waterspout's ease factor is also reduced by this number.

If this roll falls under the ease factor of the waterspout, the tower of water suddenly veers toward the magus. If the magus is aboard a ship, the ship's captain must immediately make a stress Shiphandling roll using the ship's Maneuver against the waterspout's ease factor. If the roll fails, the waterspout plows into the ship, causing everyone aboard to roll as per the storm rules. If the magus has approached the waterspout in some other fashion, he must roll a stress die + Qik + an Ability determined by the storyguide against this same ease factor to avoid being sucked into the waterspout and possibly drowning.

If the magus's roll to gather the vis results in a botch, the waterspout slams down on him, inflicting an amount of damage equal to its ease factor. If the magus was aboard a ship, the ship and its crew are similarly damaged. The waterspout then vanishes, leaving nothing behind.

Maelstroms

Apparently the inverse of the same conditions that create waterspouts, maelstroms are vast whirlpools that suck ships down to the bottom of the ocean, where the crew drowns and the vessel itself is crushed to bits. The smaller variety, ordinary whirlpools, are entirely non-magical, though magi have been known to study them in order to learn more about Aquam. Like waterspouts, maelstroms are bountiful sources of Aquam vis, but the vis is much more dangerous to gather. The storyguide sets the maximum ease factor, which is based on the strength of the maelstrom at the center. The ease factor gradually falls to zero the further one is away from the center. The ease factor also describes how much Aquam vis can be gathered at that

point in the maelstrom. The more vis a magus wishes to gather, the farther in he must go.

Ships can approach the outskirts of the maelstrom in relative safety. The ship's captain must make a stress Shiphandling roll + the ship's Maneuver to reach an area where any Aquam vis at all can be gathered, with the ease factor equaling the amount of vis the magus wishes to attempt to collect. (So if a magus desires to try to collect ten pawns of Aquam vis from a maelstrom, the captain of his ship must roll against an ease factor of 10 to prevent a mishap with the vessel.) The ship and crew must make rolls as described in the section on storms (see page 25) to see how they fare against the maelstrom.

The magus can then gather the vis as described for waterspouts, though a botch merely results in the vis being inaccessible. However, once the magus has made his roll, the captain must roll again to see if his ship slips even further into the maelstrom. Now, however, the ease factor for the roll increases by the amount of vis the magus gathered! A success on this roll means the captain has managed to guide the ship back out to calm waters. A failure means the ship has slipped further down into the whirlpool, and the ease factor for the next roll increases by 5.

If a botch is indicated, the captain rolls one additional botch die for each five full points of the current ease factor. For each botch, the ship loses one level of Seaworthiness as it breaks apart under the massive stresses of the maelstrom. Potentially, a ship and its entire crew can be slowly sucked down into the depths in this way, where the ship will eventually be smashed to flinders.

Note that the ease factor which determines the amount of vis at that point in the whirlpool only indicates how much vis can be gathered *in total.* A magus cannot remain on the outskirts of the maelstrom, gathering pawn after pawn one at a time. For reasons no Hermetic magus has yet been able to completely investigate, the vis in one of these gigantic whirlpools is constantly being sucked downward, and once all of the available vis

from a given area is gone, the only way to get more is to go deeper.

Obviously, not many magi feel the risk is worth the reward, and tend to collect only small amounts of vis from maelstroms. Still, safe means of gathering more vis from maelstroms is a lively topic of discussion and debate whenever seafaring wizards gather together, and many experiments have been conducted — though nothing so conclusive as to make gathering vis from maelstroms a commonplace occurrence.

Travel Times

As with travel on dry land, the bulk of time spent voyaging between one place and another should be played through quickly. However, as the actual distance covered in a given amount of time can determine how much of a season is spent at sea — instead of in the laboratory, for example — the numbers may become important.

Unfortunately, medieval sea travel is subject to many unpredictable factors, such as wind speed and wave height, as well as some predictable ones, such as ship size and the number of rowers. The Travel Chart is an attempt to calculate rough distances traveled in a day by rowing, drifting, and sailing, based on the difficulty of the conditions.

The storyguide should allow the ship's captain to modify the distances given by rolling a stress die + Shiphandling against an ease factor defined in the descriptions of the conditions below. Success adds the ship's Speed characteristic in distance, while failure subtracts a simple die. A botch causes some sort of calamity devised by the storyguide. Note that the ease factor noted is only for increasing speed, not for simple travel at the rates listed on the Travel Chart.

Easy: An easy day at sea involves a moderate wind blowing in the right direction and favorable tides. This is a good day on the Mediterranean. (Ease Factor 3)

Light: The wind is not quite so strong, or perhaps a bit too strong, or not blowing in the best direction. The tides are neither working for nor against the ship. This is an average day on the Mediterranean, or a good day elsewhere. (Ease Factor 6)

Medium: Neither the wind nor the tides are particularly cooperating. This is a poor day on the Mediterranean, or an average day elsewhere. (Ease Factor 9)

Hard: The wind or the tide is working against the ship, or there could be no wind at all. This is a bad day on the Mediterranean, or a poor day elsewhere. (Ease Factor 12)

Very Hard: Both the wind and the tide are working against the ship. This is an
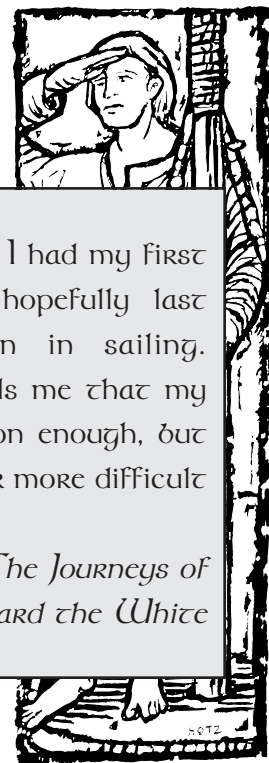
"Today I had my first and hopefully last lesson in sailing. Captain Hugh tells me that my hands will heal soon enough, but making notes is far more difficult in the meantime."
—from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Travel Chart

Difficulty	Drifting	Rowing	Sailing
Easy (3)	quality die	(Speed x 10)/1	(Speed x 10)+10/0
Light (6)	quality die + 2	(Speed x 8)/1	(Speed x 8)+5/0
Medium (9)	quality die + 4	(Speed x 6)/2	(Speed x 6)/1
Hard (12)	stress die	(Speed x 4)/2	(Speed x 4)/1
Very Hard (15)	stress die	(Speed x 2)/3	(Speed x 4)/2
Terrible (18)	stress die	(Speed)/3	(Speed)/2

The die roll for drifting determines how many miles the vessel travels while at the mercy of the currents. These figures are *not* expressed in nautical miles to avoid confusion with conversion rates. In conditions where a stress die is rolled, a botch indicates the vessels has suffered damage. Apply one Seaworthiness level of damage.

For rowing and sailing, the number before the slash is the number of regular miles traveled in an average day. The number after the slash is the number of Fatigue levels each working member of the ship's crew loses. Generally, only rest will allow recovery of these losses.

extremely bad day on the Mediterranean, or merely a bad day elsewhere. (Ease Factor 15)

Terrible: Conditions are next to impossible; the ship is better off seeking shelter, or at least dropping anchor while the crew prays. This is an extremely bad day outside the Mediterranean. (Ease Factor 18)

Notable Ships

In the course of your **Ars Magica** saga, you may find a need for a particularly impressive specimen or two of shipbuilding. The Helios and the Astra are meant to give you examples of how the rules for ships can be used to strike awe — or perhaps fear — in your players.

"In my time upon the seas I have seen nearly three-score ships, yet two stand fast in my mind. First is the Helios, the great warship that nearly ended my quest. Second is the Astra, built by Argus of House Verditius, from the deck of which I now write these words, and about which I discover a new wonder every day ..."

—from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

The Helios

Captained by Helio Baptista, a Portuguese nobleman, the Helios is an improbably-massive cog almost 200 feet long, with great fore and stern castles heavily armed with ballistas. Built as an experimental prototype for more ships of its type, Baptista named the ship after himself and immediately took it out to sea, ostensibly to test its effectiveness. Baptista, however, has spent more time using it to entertain his friends and family, and so far has no intention of commissioning any more. The cost to operate the vessel for even a single voyage is immense — but Baptista is having fun demonstrating the ship's weapons by sinking small fishing craft. Consequently, the local fishermen can hardly wait until the novelty wears off and the Helios is finally left to rot in port and eventually sink under its own weight. (Edward the White encountered this monstrous scourge while on board the ship of Captain Hugh, and predictably, the Helios used the smaller vessel for target practice. Only Edward's magical intervention saved the ship, though it prompted Captain Hugh to unceremoniously dump the magus at the next port.)

Not only are fisherman and merchants unhappy with the Helios, but the crew are themselves on the verge of mutiny. The cadre of shipwrights who have remained aboard to deal with unexpected design flaws frequently make unreasonable and contradictory demands of the sailors, provoking numerous arguments and brawls. In each case, the sailors were blamed, and the sailors were punished. Further, the captain's "sport" of attacking fishing vessels gnaws at the crew, many of whom began their sailing careers as fishermen, and feel they are betraying their origins.

It is unlikely that the Helios will long endure, but while it is at sea, it is a menace. Still, as Edward wrote after his encounter with the ship: "One day this ship will be left to drift out to sea and sink beneath the waves. Between those two events, enterprising magi with some skill at seamanship would be well advised to take possession of the Helios, for with its great size and amazing defenses, it would make an excellent mobile covenant."

The Helios
Hull Size: 9 (Seaworthiness: Ok/–1/–2/–3/–5/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 7)
Crew Size: 150
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 3)
Secondary: Oars (Speed: 2)
Steering: Rudder (Maneuver: –1)
Extras: 100 marines, 20 horses, 20 normal cabins, 20 ample cabins, 10 luxurious

cabins, fore castle, aft castle, central castle, 3 crow's nests, bulwark walls, ram, spur, 6 giant crossbows, 2 light catapults

Total Tonnage: 1700
Cargo Capacity: 1236

The Astra

The captain and sole crew of the Astra is Argus of House Verditius, a Hermetic renegade and visionary who built this small galley as an experiment and found that he preferred life aboard to life on shore. Designed to be operated by one man — or rather, magus — the small galley is loaded with many wonders of Verditius magic and other magical items, either invented by Argus or discovered by him in his wanderings. Most surprising to Edward the White when he spent several seasons aboard the Astra was that Argus had quite a serviceable Hermetic laboratory in his cabin, and a library rivaling those of most Spring covenants and even some Summer covenants.

Despite a lack of weaponry, the Astra occasionally comes to the rescue of ships under attack by pirates, and a number of said pirates have sworn to sink the magical ship. Those who have been saved by Argus speak well of him, but find his ship a bit disturbing, and are in no hurry to board it again. Still, they do not actually fear it; rather, they think of it as something of an oddity, something that upends their sense of possibility.

The magics of the Astra are far too numerous (and in some cases, trivial) to list in their entirety. The most important — The Sails of the Astra, The True Chart, The Experienced Hand, and The Astra's Tireless Watch — are described in Chapter Five (see pages 80-81). These are the devices that let a crew of one man so large a ship. The storyguide is encouraged to develop any additional items he feels are necessary for the ship, or to describe for his players items that

help evoke the nature of the magical ship. Examples might include cookware that cleans itself, a spherical map that revolves to show the ship's position, and watertight bookcases that open only on spoken command.

The Astra

Hull Size: 3 (Seaworthiness: Ok/–1/–3/–5/Swamped)
Material: Planks (Soak: 9*)
Crew Size: 1*
Propulsion: Sails (Speed: 6*)
Steering: Rudder (Maneuver: +2)
Extras: 1 extra-luxurious cabin which includes Argus' laboratory, library, and hermetic belongings; crow's nest; magical accessories too numerous to mention
Total Tonnage: 30
Cargo Capacity: 25
* These statistics are magically augmented, which is why they exceed the normal statistics for a ship of this size and outfit.

> "Ah, the shores I have visited. What a terrible shame that I have directed my life toward investigating lost civilizations and unknown places. I feel I could make a life-long study of foreign cultures and their cities and never have to look at a pack-animal or ravening undead monster again. Instead, I would dine on fine food proffered to me by beautiful servant-girls in opulent surroundings.
>
> "How did I miss this in my early studies?"
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Ports and Places

The story of *The Mythic Seas* would not be complete without a description of some of the places that exist upon the sea, or derive their existence from it. New ports and harbors appear in increasing numbers each year. Below are some notable examples.

Magical Ports

Many mundane ports include covenants or sources of vis, or even magical auras, but none of them are truly magical. Just as there are mythic places scattered throughout Europe, so too there are mythic ports on the seas, where all manner of strange items are available and amazing things occur.

Portus Herculis

The Tribunal of Thebes is probably home to more evidence of the existence of the Old Ones than any other area of Mythic Europe. Worshiped as gods by the ancient Greeks, the Old Ones departed from the eyes of men, though not necessarily from the world itself. They left behind a great many reminders of their former power. One of these is a grove of trees dedicated to the legendary hero Herakles.

Located on the isle of Lefkada near the site of ancient Ithica, Portus Herculis is a small fishing village of mostly ordinary folk. However, not far away is a popular meeting place for the young men of the community, a grove where the Greek youths come to exercise and compete in feats of athletics and feats of strength.

Nearly every young man who spends his summers at this site develops superhuman strength which lasts into his adulthood. Most develop the Virtue Great Strength, and some actually possess Mythic Strength. All also have exceptional stamina, though usually not to such a great degree as their strength. Those

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magi who have visited the grove and studied it have not only learned that the grove has a +5 magical aura, but have also themselves gained temporary bonuses to their Stamina.

These phenomena have been thoroughly debated in Tribunal, and the current conclusion is that though a covenant established on the site would benefit immensely, the Order in general would lose a steady supply of powerful grogs, since the young men would no longer have a place to exercise.

Alienum

Some magical ports are mystical because they do not truly exist in the mundane world. One such port is Alienum, a mysterious harbor that appears and disappears seemingly at random in various parts of Mythic Europe. Many have anchored their ships there, gone ashore, and spent the night in a strange city full of fantastic people and sights, only to discover in the morning that they are anchored by a barren section of coast. Still others tie up to the docks of Alienum, and not having returned to their ship by first light, are never seen again.

The secret behind Alienum is that it is a Faerie town, a safe harbor for their ships, and it exists in a Faerie regio that occasionally brushes a bit too closely to this world. Ruled by the towering, rail-thin Simpix, the town and its inhabitants always seem to belong to the culture closest to which they are seen, though something is not quite right. The garb of the inhabitants is always a bit out-of-date, or the buildings seem completely foreign at first glance, then afterward appear to fit in quite naturally. And whatever the culture Alienum pretends to belong to at any given time, there is always a festival in progress.

Alienum appears to use the festival as a lure to bring weary sailors into its clutches,

tempting them to remain there forever. Some of those who have managed to return tell stories of fantastic feasts, of performing heroic deeds, and of finding themselves in the arms of lovers of the sort usually only dreamed. Even if they do make it out of Alienum safely, they always leave behind a bit of their hearts.

Of the Order of Hermes, so far only Merinita magi have visited the place in safety and returned to tell of it. Still, for all the warnings they give to not partake of the feasts and not to make promises to the inhabitants and above all to return to their ships by morning, almost a dozen Hermetic magi have ventured into Alienum and not ventured out again. Some Merinita who have visited later say they have glimpsed figures in the distance who might have once been those other Hermetic magi, but who are now firmly denizens of the realm of faeries.

Alienum tends to appear only to ships in need of safe harbor — never to anyone actively looking for it. Those Merinita who have been persuaded to undertake rescue missions to bring back their Hermetic brethren have been disappointed, completely unable to so much as hear of the Faerie port.

The Bay of Mercury

Representatives of a Theban covenant recently visited the isle of Crete in search of artifacts of the ancient palace of King Minos. Though unsuccessful, they did uncover evidence of another treasure of far more interest to the Order of Hermes: the ruins of a Temple of Mercury.

News of the discovery quickly spread, and representatives of all eleven of the remaining original houses made their way to an isolated bay on the northern coast of Crete. There they discovered not only the ruins of one temple, but that another, larger temple was to be found at the bottom of the bay, and that it was considerably more intact than the first.

Investigation began immediately, and the representatives sent word to their respective houses that they would join together to form a sort of "temporary covenant." Their purpose was to recover as many artifacts as possible from the ruins, which would hopefully lead to a much greater understanding of the origins of the Order of Hermes.

They got more than they bargained for. After two seasons of sealing off the bay, traveling beneath the surface, and finally draining out all of the water, they have discovered evidence that the temple was in fact still in use fifty years after the Order was founded, by practitioners of the ancient rituals. The Cult of Mercury had been still alive and well in the early ninth century.

As exciting as this was, the story soon became horrifying. Delving into the reasons why the temple was destroyed, a Tytalus researcher pieced together evidence that suggested it had been attacked and demolished — by Hermetic magi. In effect, they had learned that the earliest members of the Order of Hermes had stamped out the last remnants of their forerunners.

This was obviously of staggering implication to the Order, and the assembled magi took an oath that news of their discovery would go no further until they finished their investigations. Unfortunately, theoretical discussion of the significance of the finds turned into relentless bickering. Some claimed that the evidence was inconclusive. The Tytalus and Bonisagus magi contested the authenticity of the site, asserting that it was all an elaborate hoax — perhaps even one perpetrated by one of the magi present. The sole Quaesitor at the site theorized that it could easily be a ruse by Infernal forces seeking to create strife in the Order. But the Flambeau, Jerbiton, and Tremere firmly believed that the site was authentic, should be given back to the sea, and all the research destroyed. The representative of House Jerbiton even went so far as to suggest that the Order should immediately vote to disband!

Whether the site is authentic or not, the temporary covenant on the Bay of Mercury is but the leading edge of a storm that could sweep through all of Mythic Europe, creating worldwide strife unseen since the time of

chaos before the founding of the Order. Though only a single message has gone out to the Order of Hermes, asking them to stay clear of the site until the investigation is complete, the Bay of Mercury cannot stay silent long, lest the Order send more envoys to learn what has happened to the magi there.

The future of the Order may hinge on what happens next at the Bay of Mercury.

Insula Fabula

History also reports the existence of a number of places that appear to come and go with the passing of years: now here, now not. Though they are almost certainly the product of poor navigation and the misidentification of known places for unknown places, the "phantom islands" are customarily included on charts and maps, along with brief summaries of their discoveries, resources, descriptions, and dangers.

Navigatio Sancti Brendani

Perhaps the most famous account of several such mysterious islands is "The Voyage of Saint Brendan." Brendan, a 7th-century Irish monk, is said to have received a visit from an aged holy man, Saint Barrind, who convinced the 70-year-old Brendan to set forth in search of the Promised Land of the Saints.

Along with seventeen other monks, Brendan set forth westward in a curragh of their own construction, encountering strange and wonderful places and being alternately visited by heavenly messengers and tempted by Satan. They visited an abandoned island where food and drink had been laid out for them; an island with sheep as large as cattle; a "living island" that nearly drowned them; an island with a tree covered top to bottom with birds; an island devoid of trees but covered in fruit; an island of smiths; an island where demons reigned; and finally, the Promised Land of the Saints itself. They sailed through a "sea of coagulated water"; were attacked by a demon which in turn was devoured by a beast sent by God; they sailed completely around a gigantic pillar of white crystal; they discovered a 140-year-old monk named Paul, sustained by fish brought to him by an otter and water that trickles from a barren rock once each Sunday; and they encountered Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Christ, who has been condemned to torment on a barren rock in the middle of the sea. Finally, Brendan and those of his monks who did not succumb to the temptations of the devil returned to Ireland where the venerable Brendan eventually passed on.

The various places encountered by Saint Brendan are still dutifully recorded by cartographers, even centuries after his death. Over the years the locations of the islands have been scattered here and there, based on accounts of other mariners who have also chanced upon the places described by the Navigatio. But no one has ever quite been able to pin down the location of the Promised Land of the Saints, which may, after all, prove to be deep within a Divine regio.

Hy-Brazil

Surrounded by a bank of dense fog, the ancient island of Hy-Brazil lies off the southwestern coast of Ireland. It is renowned for its verdant meadows, gleaming cities, and — of special interest to magi — Faerie courts, magicians, and enchantments. One magic of the place in particular, however, is what prevents anyone from examining the island more closely: when approached too closely, the entire island vanishes as though it had sunk beneath the waves.

Hy-Brazil — or O'Brasil, or Breasail — is unusual also in that it is perfectly circular, though bisected by a wide river. Theologians attempting to reconcile tales of Hy-Brazil with the stories of Saint Brendan have proclaimed it the sought-after Promised Land of the Saints, which has increased interest in determining its location. (No doubt this is largely due to the story's account of precious gems littering the ground.)

Hermetic magi interested in the legend of Hy-Brazil have attached a slightly different

interpretation to the tales, and there are those who believe the island's ability to appear and disappear under cover of fog is due to the tremendous amount of vis, specifically Herbam and Terram, the island holds. The legend further states that the island can be made to remain in one place by the application of fire, to which these magi have responded by attempting to recruit Flambeau magi to their search. Whether they find it or not, it seems certain from descriptions of those few who have seen it that Hy-Brazil lies inside a magical regio, which only the very pious — or very lucky — can easily penetrate.

Extraordinary Mundane Ports

As wondrous as magical ports are, they often pale in comparison to more mundane places. The mundane variety are also far more accessible and widely known. Sailors from faraway kingdoms often gather and tell tales of the fascinating and frightening cities they have seen, and magic is never once mentioned. Still, their audiences sometimes include magi in disguise, who recognize subtle hints of magical influence even where mundanes do not.

Marseille

Once a thriving merchant port, Marseille's reputation was blackened by the participation of a number of its ships and traders in the wholesale enslavement of the children led by Stephen the Shepherd in the "Children's Crusade." Though those responsible were excommunicated by the Pope and hanged by Frederick II of Germany, the port still has a reputation for vile dealings and immoral character, even after eight years. Unable to make an honest living, a large number of the formerly decent merchants have turned to piracy, and in some cases, slav-ery — in effect, living up to their own reputation.

Thus the oldest city in France is also the most dangerous. The Order of Hermes avoids the place as a matter of course, and many Jerbiton from nearby areas are beginning to petition their Tribunals to rid the city its human vermin — ostensibly not for revenge, but to recover lost Athenian treasures dating back to the city's founding. Unfortunately, no single covenant in the Provençal Tribunal is strong enough to openly oppose the unified mundane might of Marseille, and House Jerbiton has not yet been able to convince enough magi to violate the Code of Hermes by ridding the city of its substantial criminal element. Iberia and Rome are no help, since they feel Marseille is not their problem, though they are just as plagued by Marseille's pirates.

The situation seems unlikely to be resolved soon, and in the meantime, pirates continue to plunder and slavers continue to traffic with Saracens, then return safely and with impunity to Marseille to spend their fortunes. To make matters worse, one covenant, Insula Magna (see page 63), sends ships to Marseille periodically for unknown but probably nefarious purposes. The quaesitors of Magvillus have not visited Insula Magna since the covenant was reported destroyed, and so all manner of piracy, slavery, and even diabolism could be occurring with the active assistance of Marseille. Were the covenant's piratical bent ever confirmed by the Order of Hermes — or for that matter, the +2 Infernal aura of Marseille's dock district detected — House Jerbiton's case would certainly be made.

Ribe

Nominally a Christian city (with a Dominion aura of 3), Ribe has strong roots in its Danish heritage, and some of the pagan rituals still practiced with a Christian veneer. These stop short of anything too radical, such as human sacrifice, though at times — such as the attempted blockade by Hamburg in 1205

— they come perilously close to even that. Still, their sailors are remarkably adept on the rough and stormy Baltic Sea, and if they occasionally become unmanageably violent, they can usually be forgiven.

Ribe's main claim to fame is that there appears to be a hidden bastion of the Order of Odin nearby. This has for decades prevented Hermetic magi from establishing covenants in or around the city. Attempts at negotiation have met with stony silence, but the Order of Odin has made it clear the land belongs to them. Hermetic magi who move into the area are brutally attacked, or their homes and laboratories burned. Some simply feel an irresistible compulsion to move on. Though nothing can be directly attributed to the Order of Odin, their involvement is clear.

The appeal of Ribe for the Order of Hermes is that a large percentage of the population has the Berserk Virtue, making them excellent grogs. This situation creates an interesting dilemma for seafaring wizards in the area, since they eagerly recruit any of Ribe's sailors they can find. These sailors are nearly fearless, and their berserker rages can often be put to good use, either in repelling marauders — or serving as them.

But the Order of Odin has some sort of influence over them as well, since these men deny any knowledge of the non-Hermetic magi, and magics undetectable by Hermetic methods have been used to erase all memories of the Order of Odin from their minds. While some skeptics point to this as sure evidence that the Order of Odin is actually a myth, those who have visited Ribe know better. Storyguides who wish to learn more about the Order of Odin will find some interesting information in *Lion of the North* on page 31.

Damietta

Damietta is a city in turmoil. In 1218, the Fifth Crusade arrived and sacked the city with such violence that Francis of Assisi, accompanying Christian troops, decided that the Crusaders were less virtuous than covetous, and returned to Italy. The city now lies in Christian hands. Saracen forces, their peace terms — including the return of the True Cross — having been rejected, are steadily working their way back to the city they once held.

Meanwhile, the garrison at Damietta is enjoying itself and Christian settlers are establishing communities, all at the expense of the Muslim natives. The Muslims are more philosophical than their Christian counterparts have been under similar circumstances, however, and firmly believe all will work out for the best. Even they fear the return of the Saracen forces, however, because another lengthy siege might not be bearable so soon after the last.

Just as Christian settlers have moved into Damietta, so have Hermetic settlers. Two Levant Tribunal magi — David of House Tremere and Xydas of House Bonisagus — have optimistically established the Covenant of the True Cross here. Along with a small turb of grogs and the support of some influential contacts in the Crusader garrison, they have begun recovering and investigating the magical artifacts of a Muslim sorcerer's estate. Xydas is carefully recording all the details of their findings, and is planning to present a full report at the next meeting of the Tribunal of the Levant.

David, on the other hand, is providing for the covenant's future welfare, making contacts in the city's government, recruiting grogs from the garrison, and establishing good relations with the city's merchants. But even those who suspect all Tremere activity as political and self-serving have to recognize the good sense of David's work, under the circumstances. One of the first things David undertook was to make the port safe for Hermetic activity again, in that ships bearing magi may now approach without falling under attack from Muslim sorcery. Considering the vast quantity of mysterious treasures from the East that pass through Damietta, the young Tremere is to be commended, and regardless of the success or failure of his covenant, this accomplishment will prove a feather in his cap.

Working in the favor of the Covenant of the True Cross is the fact that the Dominion aura here is extremely low (+1), and in fact vanishes altogether at night. Both David and Xydas fear that the violence of the city's sack will cause the Dominion aura to gradually commute to an Infernal one, but so far have more important things to do than fret about matters beyond their control.

They have, however, sent out an Order-wide request for adventurous magi to come to Damietta to join their new covenant and assist in the efforts to examine the Muslim magical items. So far, no one has accepted, and until the struggle between the Crusaders and the approaching Saracens is resolved, it is likely that no one will.

> "Lest my readers think I spent almost no time at all on land during this journey, I have included my notes on some of the fascinating places where I made port, or which I heard discussed among sailors in dockside taverns, or on late, lonely watches when I found myself too enthralled to sleep."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Other Ports of Interest

Not all ports must be magical or of special importance to the Order of Hermes in order to be interesting. Many are intriguing because of their history, especially their maritime history, while some are exciting because of current events. Below are some examples of places where a storyguide might set adventures, or from which news might reach even the most far-flung covenants.

Alexandria

Named after its founder, Alexander the Great, Alexandria in AD 1220 has lost the prominence it once had in Egyptian culture, being currently overshadowed by larger Cairo to the south. Still, it is a world-class center of trade, rivaling the Italian cities. A famous lighthouse once stood here, on Pharos Island, where ships now dock, and tales of the destruction of Alexandria's great library still fill Hermetic magi with a sense of sadness at the loss of so much knowledge. Now Alexandria offers goods from the interior of Egypt, carried by barges up the Nile from Cairo. Its shipyards once supplied the Arab navies with enough power to conquer Cyprus. Alexandria exports spices, sugar, and cotton, while it imports olive oil, dyes, precious gems, arms, and other goods from the Orient.

Almeriya

Called Portus Magnus by the Romans, Almeriya is situated on the southern coast of Spain, southeast of Granada. It is dominated by a massive fortress, built by Abdurrahman III in the 10th century, and it is largely due to this fortress that in 1220, it is still part of the Almohad Empire. In addition to goods from the interior of Spain and all along the Mediterranean coast, Almeriya deals in gold, silk, textiles, olives, wine, and fruit.

Amalfi

Located just south of Naples and protected from cool northern winds by the Lattari Mountain range, Amalfi does a thriving import trade. Amalfi is a common destination for foreign visitors to the shores of Italy, and they bring with them almonds, olives, grapes, silver, gold, and silk to trade.

Barcelona

Like many established ports, Barcelona was originally a Roman city. Despite an ubiquitous criminal presence in the district, its famous docks operate twenty-four hours a day, loading and unloading ships even in the early hours. The merchants of Barcelona regularly discuss how to best implement — and profit from — maritime law, but they have not formed into guilds as of yet. The city imports pepper, incense, cinnamon, ginger, and alum,

and exports dried fruit, wine, olive oil, coral, tin, iron, cloth, wool, sheepskins, leather goods, saffron, and armaments.

Constantinople

Despite over fifteen years of European rule, Constantinople remains the crossroads for trade routes to the Orient. What few industries Constantinople employs are largely for the support of the city, and it primarily functions as a clearing-house for goods headed to Europe from the Orient, and vice-versa. Nearly any commodity imaginable passes through Constantinople at one point or another, though most common are alum, spices, carpets, and silk from the Orient, and fish, grain, and other foodstuffs from Europe — which generally go to feed the citizens of Constantinople.

Genoa

Once a Roman seaport, Genoa is now a city-republic, or "commune." Formerly, Genoa allied with Pisa against Saracens occupying Sardinia. Now Genoa and Pisa are involved in a "rivalry" — which is to say, they are effectively at war. At stake is control of shipping and the territories captured from the Saracens. With its impressive shipyards, Genoa stands a good chance of winning. Genoa's major commodities include textiles, animal feedstuffs, sugar, silk, and alum, although goods from all over the Mediterranean pass through the port.

Hamburg

Along with Lübeck, Hamburg is a founding member of the Hanseatic League, and is instrumental in the politics of that organization. Hamburg is governed by its merchant guilds, by virtue of their ownership of the land and buildings where commerce takes place — including its harbor. Hamburg exports beer and grain, and imports wool and herring from the Baltic Sea. The herring trade is beginning to prove problematic for Hamburg, however, as its sources of salt (used to preserve the fish) are running dry, and Hamburg has been forced to consider looking further afield for a new supply.

La Rochelle

Built on a high hill overlooking a good harbor, La Rochelle is in an excellent position to take advantage of the Champagne Fairs of France. Aside from its fishing industry, La Rochelle exports salt, wood, and Bordeaux wine. Many merchants from La Rochelle secretly engage in wine-smuggling to England. It also imports carpets, perfumes, spices, and furs, bound for the fairs.

Lisbon

Reputedly founded by the legendary Odysseus, Lisbon was recaptured from the Moors only seventy years ago. It is the largest city of Portugal, but despite its excellent sailors its commerce is hindered by the proximity of Genoa and Pisa (as well as Venice) to the east, and the frustrating unity of the Hanseatic League cities to the north. Its fishing trade is supplemented by its ability to preserve the fish with salt readily available from nearby towns, but it also exports olives and olive oil, wax, textiles, wine, and fruit.

London

Originally named Londinium, London is another Roman city, built where the Thames was still wide and deep enough for sea-going vessels, but where it was narrow enough that it could be bridged. London does a brisk trade in wheat and other grains, woolen goods, honey, coal, tin, and copper from western England. Salt from near the Welsh border passes through London as well.

Palermo

Palermo is the foremost Sicilian port. Past visitors have been amazed to find Normans, Sicilians, Byzantines, and Moslems not only conducting business together, but interacting together in the royal court! In fact, Palermo is such a multi-cultural city that it has three official languages: Latin, Greek, and Arabic. On the trade route from Tunis to mainland Italy, it traffics in fruit, wine, olive oil, grain, and sugar.

Tunis

Occupying a strategic position on the northern coast of Africa near the former site of Carthage, Tunis is an Arab city, founded by pirates. To a large degree, piracy is still its major activity, and it regularly conducts slave-raids on the coast of Mediterranean France. But not even a pirate city can survive on slavery alone, and so Tunis also trades in spices, fruit, and gold dust from the African interior. It also imports silk from Palermo.

Venice

Arguably the predominant power on the Mediterranean in the early 13th century, Venice has parlayed its necessity to trade for survival into its major strength. Since the Fourth Crusade, Venice has taken control of its relationship with the former Byzantine Empire, now setting its own prices for goods exported from the Orient through Constantinople. In addition, Venice's willingness to trade with Muslims as well as Christians has given it access to a market most other European cities are loathe to explore. Further, Venice has been instrumental in curtailing the activities of pirates in the Adriatic Sea, which only increases its ability to do business unmolested. Venice trades primarily in fish and salt — of which it has an abundance — but also in grain, meat, pepper, alum, silk, cotton, sugar, glass, and (to the horror of the Church) armaments, which it sells to the Moslems.

Ypres

Like La Rochelle in France, the Flemish city of Ypres (pronounced EEPr) is heavily involved in the Champagne Fairs. In fact, Ypres is so heavily involved in the fairs that despite its great reputation as a center of cloth-manufacture, it has agreements with several other cities to sell only its fine cloths at the fairs. Ypres is hardly idle trade-wise, though, doing a good business in other local commodities, including wool, coal, and woad (an herb used to create blue dye).

The Mechanics of Trade

Trade is the means by which merchants make money carrying goods from point to point. For the purposes of this book, it means buying cargo in one port, carrying it to another, selling it there, and hoping the selling price is, at the very least, enough to cover the initial investment in the cargo and the cost of the journey.

The mechanics for trade outlined in the following sections are simple. They aim to allow characters who want to trade by sea to do so, but not at the cost of an intricate rule system that eats up game time. The process starts with the merchant looking for cargo. He will roll his bargaining skill to locate the type and amount of cargo he wants. Once he has purchased it, it's loaded on his vessel, sometimes after a wait. After a voyage, which can be played out in as much or as little detail as the troupe likes, the merchant will try to sell his cargo for the best price he can. Once all that's done, the overall profit is calculated.

Cargo

Cargo takes as many forms as there are goods to be bought and sold. For the purposes of simplicity, the exact makeup and packaging of a cargo are not addressed here. What is important is the general sort of cargo in question (wood? grains? metals? fruits? weapons?) and its quality compared to other goods of the same type (Is this sort of wood rare or strong? Are these weapons well-manufactured?). If other factors become important (Is there a halberd among the weapons in the hold? Any grapes in this cargo of fruit?) the troupe should use common sense to resolve the question.

Lots

Cargo is measured in lots. A lot is not a fixed number of tons of cargo. Instead, one lot is 10% of the cargo capacity of a ship. Therefore, the number of tons in a lot depends on the size of the ship doing the transporting. Obviously, a ship can carry ten lots of cargo.

The Lots Table lists three important statistics for lots of varying sizes. Buying modifier reflects the ease with which a merchant can purchase a lot of a given size — it is relatively easy to find lots of medium size, and correspondingly harder to find very small or very large lots. Lot Size modifier helps determine the number of lots that can be purchased once they are found, since it's easier to fill the hold of a small ship than a large one. Profit modifier reflects the fact that a ship carrying more cargo can make more money than a ship carrying less cargo. The uses of these statistics will be discussed later.

Cargo Value

The cargo value for a given lot of cargo is described by a number from –3 to +3. This number indicates the quality of the goods relative to other goods of the same type. Thus, a sword that is part of a –1 cargo might have more absolute value than a single fruit that is part of a +1 lot of fruit, but is markedly less valuable than a sword from a +2 lot of swords. This sort of value structure may sound strange, but since we're only worried about the overall profitability of an entire voyage, differing actual values of different sorts of cargoes balance each other out.

Most cargoes have a cargo value of 0, indicating medium quality. Cargoes with a negative value were shoddy to begin with or have been damaged somehow. Cargoes with a positive value are well-crafted or of superior intrinsic character.

Imports and Exports

Any major city can provide goods of almost any type. However, some cities are known as importers or exporters of specific sorts of goods. "Notable exporters" of a given sort of cargo can provide that type more easi-

Lots Table

Lot Weight	Buying Mod.	Lot Size Mod.	Profit Mod.
<1 ton	–2	+3	x .25
1-5 tons	–1	+1	x .5
6-15 tons	0	0	x 1
16-25 tons	0	–1	x 1.5
25+ tons	–2	–3	x 2

ly, at a better price, and at a higher level of quality. This is usually because the product is manufactured or grown locally or the city has special access because of its location on a major overland trade route. Likewise, some cities perpetually need more of a given sort of cargo than they can get. Cities that are "notable importers" of a given good will always buy as much of it as they can get, usually at a higher price than it would fetch elsewhere.

It bears repeated emphasis that most goods can be bought and sold at most major cities. Notable exporters and notable

importers are simply cities where either supply of or demand for a given sort of commodity is always high.

Some major trading cities and their notable imports and exports are listed on the Import/Export Table on page 58. This table, however, by no means exhaustively catalogs the trade routes of Mythic Europe. The storyguide should feel free to make up his own trade routes, import and export cities, and types of cargo to suit his campaign.

Notable imports or exports are listed with a rating that varies from 0 to +3. For example, Constantinople imports grain at +1. This means that grain is very much sought after by the merchants of Constantinople, and that they will pay a very high price for it. Salt is imported in Constantinople at no modifier. It is still a notable import, there is just no modifier associated with it (or, if you prefer, the modifier is +0). If a merchant were so foolish as to try to sell an exporter the sort of cargo it usually exports or buy goods from a notable importer of those goods, the rating is used as a penalty. Thus, Constantinople exports grain at a –1, should any merchant be stupid enough to try it. The uses of these modifiers will be explained later.

Temporary Import Values

Sometimes a city will be in desperate need of a specific cargo, for example, weapons or food. The storyguide may declare temporary import values for any type of cargo. The rumor that a specific type of material will be needed in several weeks time in Constantinople can make the merchant who heeds it rich with little effort (or ruin him, if the rumor proves false!). Temporary import values can disappear in a heartbeat if a nef or great cog unloads a thousand tons of the needed material, or may last several seasons. The storyguide should use temporary imports to reward astute trading or punish greedy manipulations.

Extremely High Value Cargo

Extremely high value cargo such as magical equipment, Hermetic texts, most mundane books, laboratory equipment, and top secret messages between nobles obviously doesn't quite fit into the scheme of ports and lots presented here. No merchant measures such commodities in tons. The purchase, transport, and disposal of such cargoes falls only in the realm of roleplaying. The storyguide will have to consider each individual cargo on its own. The transport of such unique or worthy items should be a matter of adventure, not a matter of dice rolling

Buying a Cargo

When he's ready to purchase a cargo, a merchant visits other merchants in the city to find one. It takes about a week to make the

rounds of the merchants, though if the trader is part of a trading house or has contacts in the city he might be able to cut the time down considerably. First, the merchant should specify what type(s) of cargo he is seeking: general cargo, notable export cargo, or some specific type of non-export cargo. Next, the merchant rolls a simple die + Int + Bargain + Buying modifier (from the Lots Table) for each type of cargo he is trying to locate. Consult the Cargo Purchase Table to determine the choice of quality that the merchant has.

We do not worry about how many pounds of silver it costs to purchase a given cargo. We'll assume that merchants can always scrape together the money somehow, even if they have to go to a moneylender.

If the merchant has located export cargo he may load as much as he wants. To determine how much cargo is available for other types, the merchant must roll a simple die + Lot Size modifier (from the Lots Table) – cargo value. A positive result is the number of lots available. A negative result is the number of weeks it will take the seller to acquire at least one lot. Roll again at the end of that time and treat all results of less than one as one.

Selling a Cargo

The other side of trade is disposing of goods, hopefully at a higher price than was paid for them. A merchant may roll once a week to find buyers for a given type of merchandise. In order to dispose of cargo, a merchant rolls a simple die + Int + Bargain + the city's import value for that sort of cargo – cargo value + lot size modifier. The ease factor for the roll depends on the type and quality of the cargo. Consult the Cargo Sale Table. A merchant may voluntarily drop his price (by moving his cargo's cargo value downward) to improve his chances.

If the merchant is selling a notable import, the buyer will take as many lots as the merchant has. Otherwise, the merchant must determine just how many lots the buyer he has located is willing to take. This is determined by rolling a simple die + Lot Size modifier – cargo quality. The result is the number of lots that can be sold. If the number is negative, it is the number of weeks before a guaranteed sale of one lot. The merchant may reduce his price in order to encourage the buyer he has located to buy more lots. For every –1 modifier he is willing to take on his profit roll, he may add two to the number of lots (or subtract two weeks, if the result was negative).

A merchant can only roll once per week for one specific type and value of cargo, but may roll for as many cargoes as he has per week. If he has two different values of the same cargo (grain 0 and grain +1, for example) he must sell them as two different cargoes. He may also try to buy cargo while he is selling. A perfect week would see the merchant sell and buy, and merely wait for the cargo to be loaded before sailing on to his next destination.

Cargo Purchase Table

Type of Cargo	Cargo Value						
	–3	–2	–1	0	+1	+2	+3
General	—	—	—	3	6	12	15
Notable Export	—	—	—	3	6	9	12
Non-Export Specific	—	—	3	6	9	15	21

Find the type of cargo, then move across columns in that row. The merchant may select any quality of cargo whose ease factor is equal to or lower than the number he rolled when trying to locate the cargo. If, for example, a merchant looking for general cargo rolls an 11, he may select general cargo of a value ranging from –3 to +1.

Cargo Sale Table

Type of Cargo	Cargo Quality	Ease Factor
Notable Import	any	3
General or specific non-import	–3, –2, –1	6
General or specific non-import	0, +1	3
General or specific non-import	+2	9
General or specific non-import	+3	12

Profit

Once the merchant has sold his cargo, the storyguide or player must determine how much money the merchant made. This is done by rolling (stress die + Int + Bargain + cargo value + import value) x Profit multiplier (from the Lots Table) x number of lots. The result is the number of pounds of silver realized as the total profit for the voyage, after the initial investment is taken into account. It does not include salaries and ship maintenance (see pages 19-20).

On a botch, the entire batch is sold at a net loss. Roll a (simple die + cargo value) x Profit modifier x number of lots. This is the number of pounds of silver lost on this cargo. The storyguide should determine exactly what happens next. If the merchant has cash reserves, these are depleted by this loss. If money is owed to him, he may have to call in those debts. If he has no source of ready funds, he will wind up owing money to the person who originally loaned him the money he used to purchase the cargo. He may gain a bad reputation in the process.

Ruined Cargo

Most cargoes can become spoiled by a sea voyage. Foodstuffs might rot due to the length of a journey, improperly stored weapons could get rusty, or termites might find a load of wood. Spoilage can occur when botches are rolled during a voyage, as a result of a particular scenario event, or at the whim of fate (or the storyguide). An entire cargo might be ruined, or only a few lots.

Damaged cargo loses value. If the value drops below –3, the merchant may as well dump it over the side; no one will buy it. Exactly what circumstances will cause a given

Import/Export Table

Only cargo traded by sea is listed here. Textual descriptions of these ports can be found on pages 50-54.

Alexandria
Exports: Grain, Paper, Ivory +1, Slaves, Spices
Imports: Metals

Almeriya
Exports: Textiles, Wine
Imports: Gold, Silk, Fruit

Amalfi
Exports: None
Imports: Almonds, Olives, Fruit, Silver, Silk

Barcelona
Exports: Wine, Fruit, Worked goods
Imports: Raw goods (Timber, metals, etc.)

Constantinople
Exports: Metalwork, Weapons, Silk +1, Spices +1, Jewelry +1
Imports: Grain +1, Salt, Raw Metals, Timber

Genoa
Exports: None
Imports: Grain

Hamburg
Exports: Beer, Metals (Iron, Copper, Lead), Furs
Imports: Worked Goods

La Rochelle
Exports: Wine, Grain, Fish
Imports: Metalwork, Dispossessed nobles

Lisbon
Exports: Wine, Fruit
Imports: Worked goods

London
Exports: Wool, Grain, Tin, Beef
Imports: Wine

Palermo
Exports: None
Imports: Books, Scholars

Tunis
Exports: Ivory, African Slaves
Imports: European Slaves

Venice
Exports: Glass, Weapons
Imports: Foodstuffs

Ypres
Exports: Cloth +1, Beer
Imports: Wool +1

Chapter 4
Of the Hermetic Seas

Covenants

Magi of the Order have spent centuries traveling the seas. In that time a few covenants have struck upon the idea of living on it as well. They live much as land-bound covenants do. Obvious exceptions are the increased use of ships, sailors, and sea-related magics. Less obvious are attitudes and sensibilities that only the sea can create in a mortal's heart.

Troupes interested in putting *The Mythic Seas* to use in their sagas may want to tie their covenants closely to the sea. The next sections present three such covenant models, each describing the outlook and purpose of the magi who would dwell and study in them. Each describes a sample covenant of the appropriate type. The archetypes and examples provided here focus, appropriately, on the sea, but enterprising troupes could easily adapt them for more general use.

Scholars

"I am beginning to despair that Milo may have been right; this may be a fool's errand. I have taken to investigating the smallest of clues to determine my next step. The records of various covenants mention accounts or items they suspect to be connected to lost Atlantis. It seems I must backtrack a considerable distance to conduct interviews. At my earliest opportunity I will notify my covenant not to expect me for another two seasons."

–from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Suggested Season: Summer
Suggested Houses: Bonisagus, Criamon, Jerbiton, Verditius
Hibernia: The Merinita are flocking to us, eager to exploit our Faerie aura. We have yet to point out that it is strongest underwater.
Loch Leglean: Dav'nalleous is not dead, only sleeping. If we are not prepared to fight when he awakens, we must flee — perhaps across the sea.
Stonehenge: Staying separate from one another worked for a while, but trades of books and spells became so common that it made more sense to gather everything in one place.
Iberia: The Moors brought with them a wealth of knowledge and tradition. In places, their sorcerers left entire laborato-

ries behind. Some of those places can only be reached by water.

Normandy: As the Church grows stronger and stronger here, magic grows weaker and weaker. Though we could survive on land, we can prosper under the sea.

Provençal: House Jerbiton is quite happy to sponsor this covenant as long as we devote ourselves to studying quietly in our laboratories. We haven't told them that our laboratory is all of the Golfe du Lion!

The Rhine: Dwelling in the shadow of Durenmar, we are ... fortunate ... to receive the scrolls and tomes they no longer need.

The Greater Alps: It was all we could do to obtain permission to found this covenant, and Valnastium never lets us forget the debt we owe them for allowing us. Still, they can't be around forever.

Rome: The vis here has become so scarce that we have no choice except to turn to the sea for our power.

Thebes: Constantinople is gone, and in its place this new city of the same name. Ships from all over the world stop here daily — and what treasures they bring!

Transylvania: The Order is strong; the Church is weak. This may be one of the few places left in the world where magic can truly be studied, without corrupting influence. But some of what we have learned is ... disturbing.

The Levant: Some said it was madness to start a covenant in a Dominion aura, but here we are, midway between the oldest libraries in the world and the treasures of countless merchant ships!

Novgorod: You get used to the Golden Horde warriors, after a time. They have no use for books and we have no use for spoils. Every so often they bring us huge piles of books. We do not ask about the bloodstains.

Aquae Desilientes

Season: Summer
Magi: House Bonisagus: Enoch, Meloria; House Criamon: Agrax; House Flambeau: Concursator; House Jerbiton: Divus, Venduri; House Merinita: Euhan; House Verditius: Senex Leonex

Notable Covenfolk: Hugh Gudhwaen (turb captain); Lorcan Fitzmorgan (cog captain)

Founded in 1120 by Irish magi who had helped oust a Danish outpost from a small island off the southern tip of Ireland, Aquae Desilientes is now in its Summer season. Of its founding three magi, only one remains — Enoch of House Bonisagus — and it is largely due to his influence that the covenant has remained steadfastly passive. He is quite old, however, and talk in the Hibernian Tribunal suggests that should he die or enter Final Twilight the demeanor of the covenant could change dramatically. With the accumulated knowledge of a hundred years available to magi who in most cases are just out of apprenticeship, this could be a dangerous thing.

Aquae Desilientes — "the cascades" — is named for a series of waterfalls originating at various points on the island's central hill. These are the sources of the covenant's supply of Corpus, Herbam, Ignem, and Terram vis, each producing about twenty pawns each year. There are also other sources out to sea: an intermittent waterspout (see Waterspouts, page 41) and a great whale whose blubber yields Animál vis. This amazing surplus of vis has attracted many magi to join the covenant over the decades, and though each has been made to swear a vow to use the vis only for the furtherance of knowledge, the definition of "furtherance of knowledge" has been stretched to the limit of late. Many take this as a sign that Enoch's power in his own covenant is waning.

The covenant keeps contact with the rest of the Tribunal, as well as Stonehenge and occasionally Normandy, by means of a small cog which docks in a sheltered cove on the eastern side of the island. Though the crew of the ship are technically members of the grog turb they tend to work, eat, and sleep apart from the other grogs. Periodically there are incidents of violence as a covenant-guard pummels an "elitist cog-grog" or a crewman clubs a "back-biting turber." But because Hugh and Lorcan — the grog captain and the

ship captain — are old friends, and penalties for disturbing the magi are quite severe, such incidents are rare, and never turn into open feuding.

Once each year, Lorcan sails the ship westward, with Enoch aboard, and returns one month later. Enoch never speaks of where he goes during this time, but over time the other magi have pieced together the story from overheard comments, references in some of the covenant's books, and the occasional loose-lipped sailor. As the ship sails out of sight of the island, it enters a faerie regio and lands on the "Isle of Laughter," where Enoch meets with a powerful faerie named Lord Mananann, to whom he offers tribute. The nature of this tribute is Enoch's most closely-guarded secret, but Lorcan once let slip that "without this yearly journey, we would all be food for the fish." The younger magi speculate that the island's very existence is due to a bargain with Lord Mananann, and fear what would happen if Enoch died or entered Final Twilight before revealing the nature of that bargain. The pessimists among them occasionally wonder if the bargain will simply die with Enoch.

Isolationists

Suggested Season: Spring
Suggested Houses: Bjornaer, Ex Miscellanea, Flambeau
Hibernia: We have an agreement with the Good Folk: we do not raid them for vis and they let us live in a watery castle that only appears in the mortal realm once every year.
Loch Leglean: While the mundane rulers fight over the land we quietly build our covenant on the waves of the North Sea.

Stonehenge: For many of us, old habits die hard. As far from civilization as we are here, many of our magi still feel the need to stay apart. That is why there are but four of us: one aboard each of the round ships.
Iberia: If the Crusaders conquer the Moors and turn their attentions to us, we will do as we did with the Moors — weather their arrival in our secret enclaves on the sea.
Normandy: Our intent was to coexist with the inhabitants of a small village — neither taking nor giving. Who could guess that village would become a city ... with a mighty shipyard? Fortune truly smiles upon us.
Provençal: Why does everyone look to us for guidance? Provence has plenty of other covenants with more experience, but we built on the ashes of an old covenant and there appears to be some confusion over which is which.

The Rhine: A confrontation between Crintera and the quaesitors is inevitable at this point. We intend to quietly wait it out, then seize the day when the smoke clears.

The Greater Alps: We have come into these mountains to leave the politics of the Order behind.

Rome: On an island in the Adriatic is an abundant source of vis. We will not say where, of course — you never know when Harco or Magvillus is listening.

Thebes: Assume for a moment that something from Greek legend survived . . . hidden beneath the waves.

Transylvania: We built our covenant in the depths of a dark and quiet forest. Unfortunately, we are only now discovering why it is so quiet — and so dark.

The Levant: Now that the Holy Land is in Christian hands, we Muslim magi must sit here quietly and hope for the best. Still, they seem not to harass ships, so there may be a way.

Novgorod: Only one among us is a Hermetic wizard — the rest belong to traditions far older. Fortunately, the Order never lands here, so we are in no immediate danger of discovery.

Sinus Wodinis

Season: Spring
Magi: House Bjornaer: Bjornvig, Bos, Corwin the Tall, Erling, Kjerulf, Lala, Pia, Wim, Willem; House Ex Miscellanea: Irmgard of Brunn
Notable Covenfolk: Sigvard (turb captain); Grottumsdotter (a heroine famous in Norway); Waerhaug (a non-magus skin-changer)

The precise date of the founding of Sinus Wodinis is unknown. For that matter, the covenant itself would have gone unnoticed, lying quietly on a perpetually frozen bay on the southern coast of Norway, had not a small number of Bjornaer mentioned it during a recent Gathering of Twelve Years. Ships were sent to establish contact with the "lost"

covenant, only to be attacked in the bay by mighty sea-beasts then repelled on shore by a large force of blood-mad warriors. Among the attackers in both cases were Bjornaer magi previously unknown to House Bjornaer, whose heart-beasts appeared to include bears, wolves, a kraken, and a killer whale. The envoy sustained considerable losses to their force of grogs, but managed to escape through use of magic.

House Bjornaer was thrown into such confusion over this that they considered bringing the matter to Tribunal, fearing that their lost brethren were hiding some diabolical secret — or perhaps a secret alliance with the dreaded Order of Odin. But then a redcap arrived who was not only aware of the secluded covenant, but brought a message from them.

"Sodales," the letter read, "now that our bloodlust has passed, we apologize for our reaction to your visit. The magical aura of this place — once a Viking village — creates in us a certain berserker fury that causes us to fiercely defend our shores. Please accept our apology while we work to discover a cure for our affliction and rejoin the Order in safety and brotherhood. And for all our sakes, please do not venture to land here again." The names of nine Bjornaer magi followed.

The redcap was interviewed, and he confirmed the authenticity of the signatures and the letter. Though debate was fierce, it was decided that it was the prerogative of the members of Sinus Wodinis to dwell in peace however they saw fit. In the two years since the letter was received, though, ships passing through the region have been set upon by blood-crazed raiders in ships resembling the old Viking longships. The assailants are aided by mysterious figures wielding magical powers — and in some cases a tame kraken and trained killer whale. Travel on the sea has become risky within a day's sail of the covenant's bay. A few ships have actually disappeared.

House Bjornaer is beginning to wonder if Sinus Wodinis isn't enforcing its isolation a bit too enthusiastically. Many magi have already noted that the mundanes have taken

serious notice of these attacks, and it is only a matter of time before they draw a connection to the Order of Hermes. Before this happens, House Bjornaer may have to approach Sinus Wodinis again — this time, with full force of arms.

Expansionists

Suggested Season: Autumn

Suggested Houses: Flambeau, Tremere, Tytalus

Hibernia: This is a small island; there is only so much vis to go around. And we will have every ... last ... pawn.

Loch Leglean: Many of us were born into the same clan before we became magi. Now our clan is at war. It is merely coincidence that the enemy includes a covenant with a bulging library.

Stonehenge: Several of us visit a lone magus, offer to trade — then take what we want when he declines. We prefer to think of ourselves as "aggressive collectors."

Iberia: We will sweep southward with the Crusade! The enemies of Christendom are our enemies, and the Church will reward us for grinding them to dust.

Normandy: Every last one of us trained at Fudarus. It is only natural that we should want to conquer it.

Provençal: Doissetep is too powerful. We shall take away its resources until we are on equal terms — no, better than equal!

The Rhine: We are not engaged in expansionist policies. We merely know some powerful mundanes. They owe us favors. There is no connection.

The Greater Alps: You would think that with so many Criamon magi here, this Tribunal would understand the concept of change. Well, that's what we're here to teach them.

Rome: We used to feel guilty about dueling over vis, squabbling over money, and fighting over magical artifacts. Now we understand.

Thebes: There are a lot of islands in this area, and they tend to go unnoticed. That means

that the Order doesn't know who controls them — until they try to pass between them.

Transylvania: It is any coincidence that the great Domination board at Coeris is carved to look like these mountains?

The Levant: The political climate is in turmoil. Thus we remain mobile, moving from one small keep to a larger one, then a larger one, then a still larger one. The Dominion aura is constant; only the inhabitants are not.

Novgorod: We have learned a valuable lesson from our Mongol grogs: a heap of skulls outside each new conquest is a strong deterrent to resistance.

Insula Magna

Season: Autumn

Magi: House Bjornaer: Pistrix; House Flambeau: Evastor, Ferrus the Corsican; House Tremere: Ductor Quinquennor; House Tytalus: Martigenus, Tiziano of Palermo

Notable Covenfolk: Aretino (turb captain, Ductor Quinquennor's grogs); Despreaux (turb captain, Martigenus' and Tiziano's grogs); Gimondi (ship captain, Pistrix's ship); Victor (turb captain, Evastor's grogs)

Insula Magna — "the Great Island" — once occupied the highest point on a rocky island in the Tyrrhenian Sea near Sicily. Ten years ago, though, subsidence of the sea floor and poor judgment on the part of the magi sank the island and destroyed the covenant. Most of the covenant's supplies and magical items were lost as building after building slipped beneath the waves. Some of the magi took one of the covenant's ships and fled to Sardinia, where they sent word to the Order that "the Great Island" was no more, its treasures lost, and its magi scattered.

This was only a partial truth. Six magi remained at Insula Magna, occupying a handful of ships anchored over the submerged site of their former covenant. The magi spend their days studying, searching the ruins of their covenant, and fighting amongst them-

selves over every discovery. A single rocky area, about twenty feet long, remains above the waves. The magi use it as an arena for certámen — an all-too-frequent occurrence.

The bickering over ownership of recovered magic items has evolved over the years into a seething hostility, and though the ships are joined by gangplanks and sturdy ropes, each ship is effectively a covenant unto itself, with separate grog turbs and separate libraries. Some even go so far as to post sentries at their ends of the gangplanks. Council meetings are rare — and always conducted under the watchful eyes of small contingents of "honor guards."

Insula Magna attempts to continue as before, though many adjustments have been made. Foremost among these is the covenant's embrace of piracy, led by a particularly violent Bjornaer named Pistrix whose heart-beast is a huge, bloodthirsty shark. Left without a normal means of obtaining supplies, Insula Magna relies on Pistrix's depredations to secure food and equipment. Fortunately for the covenant, but unfortunately for mariners, a number of trade routes pass within a mere twenty miles of the covenant, and Pistrix is able to raid a ship every few weeks.

The other magi have seized upon this idea as a wonderful way to restore and expand their libraries, and have begun making plans to attack other covenants, starting with a few small, isolated ones. This will obviously put the magi in a hazardous position, since they will be forced to contend with the inevitable Hermetic investigation — and the inevitable Hermetic retribution. But they are confident that they can avoid confrontation with the Order until they have stolen enough to

Seafaring Abilities

New Abilities

Shipboard Weapons (Combat Skill)
The use and maintenance of the shipboard varieties of long-range and heavy-load siege equipment. *Specialties: giant crossbow, springal, Greek fire siphon, ship-board catapult.* (Dexterity, Perception)

Sailing (Craft Skill)
The ability to handle large sail-driven and oared ships of all types. This is the actual work of hauling lines, taking soundings, maintaining equipment, and staying on board ships in severe storms. *Specialties: repairs, storms, combat.* (Intelligence, Dexterity)

Fish (Craft Skill)
Casting nets, setting traps, and using hook and line to catch fish, shellfish, and crustaceans. This ability also allows the user to repair his equipment when necessary. *Specialties: sea-fishing, net-fishing, hook and line, shellfish, crustaceans.* (Perception)

Navigation (Craft Skill)
The ability to plot a course through both mapped and unknown waters. Also, the capacity to determine general position, recognize landmarks from maps, and make educated guesses about the distance and direction of known points, or charted but previously-unknown destinations. Navigation includes the ability to use and maintain navigational equipment such as astrolabes, compasses, and charts. This skill differs from (Area) Lore, which supposes advanced knowledge of a specific area. *Specialties: directions, reading charts, reading stars, a particular ocean or coast.* (Intelligence)

New Specialties

In addition to the new Abilities listed above, the sea calls for some new twists on old Abilities. Although, as always, characters are free to designate any specialty they can imagine for any Ability, the list below offers some suggestions for seafaring characters.

Athletics: boarding
Climb: rigging
Folk Ken: sailors, pirates
Stealth: while swimming, rowing silently
Survival: at sea
Swim: treading water, in surf, during storms
Boating: rafts, skiffs, coracles, cargo stowage
Faerie Lore: sea faeries
(Area) Lore: specific seas, specific rivers, specific lakes
**Legend Lore:** water phenomena, sea beasts

ensure they will emerge victorious. Pistrix, however, feels the time has already come. He may force the issue before the other magi are prepared. In any case, it will not be long before a small covenant in the Roman Tribunal, or perhaps Provence, awakens to find itself under attack.

Seafaring Archetypes

Covenants that operate on or near the sea are able to do so because the people that populate them possess a certain mentality that draws them to the water. Some exploit it, or explore it, or travel upon it. Some merely enjoy it. In the following pages you will find archetypes and vocations for characters in your **Ars Magica** saga: magi, companions, and grogs.

> "Trading information with magi is much like dueling over vis: you argue and struggle over minor points and hope that whatever you have gotten was worth the trouble."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*
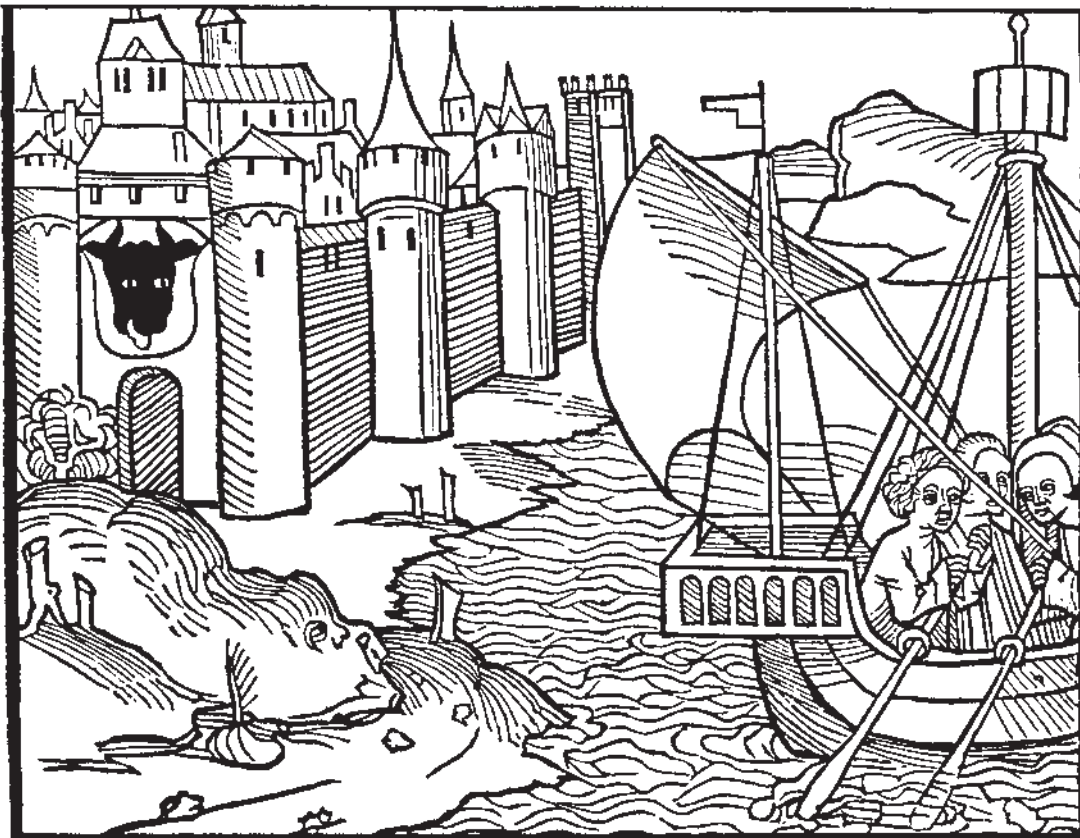
New Virtues and Flaws

New Variable Virtue: Trading Contacts

Trading contacts are agents, factors, or "men in the know." Most can get you deals on specific types of cargo, but some have their fingers in many pies. Agents are restricted to single cities, so to get the benefit of their expertise you have to be on their turf. The exact effect of this Virtue depends on its value. For 1 point, you have one agent in one city who gives you a +1 on all rolls related to one particular kind of cargo (wool, grain, or silk, for example). For 2 points, you have agents worth a total of +3 on your bargaining rolls. This can be one agent in one city worth +3 in one type of cargo, three agents in three cities worth +1 each, or any other combination that adds up to +3. Alternatively, you may have one agent that gives you +1 on every type of cargo in a given city. For 3 points, you have agents worth a total of +6, divided in any way you like. As with the +2 Virtue, it takes 3 points to have an agent worth +1 for every type of cargo.

New Grog Status Flaw: Pirate –1

You are an outlaw, making your fortune on the sea by preying on ships and villages. Now you serve wizards, earning your pay and getting the occasional opportunity to pillage. You cannot begin with a positive score in any Personality Trait relating to loyalty; you would loot your employers as well, given the chance. You begin with the Reputation Pirate at level 2; choose where you are known.

Modified Companion Status Virtue: Petty Merchant +1

You own a ship of Hull Size 2 or a share (one third) of a Hull Size 3 ship. This is probably a fishing smack (see page 21) or similar ship. You are probably the captain as well as the owner, or you may be an officer on a shared ship. The crew is composed of family and friends. You can occasionally call on some of them as hired muscle. You see around 400 silver pennies profit per year after all repairs and expenses for the ship are figured in (unless you use the rules for trading found on pages 54-58, in which case your actual profit can be determined more accurately through play). This Virtue is equivalent to the Petty Merchant Virtue in ArM4, page 38 — it simply focuses that Virtue to the sea.

New Companion Status Virtue: Merchant +2

You own a medium-sized merchant ship of up to Hull Size 4, or are part of a consortium of ship owners who collectively own around 10 Hull Sizes of ships. You might have seafaring skills (which you must buy separately), or realize the wealth without your own direct involvement. You can rely on around 1000 silver pennies a year after expenses (unless you use the rules for trading found on pages 54-58, in which case your actual profit can be determined more accurately through play).

New Companion Status Virtue: Naval Captain +2

You are in command of a warship of Hull Size 4-6, and are expected to keep the ship in readiness for battle. Your command may stem from status as a noble (which must be purchased separately) or because of your proven skill or veteran status. While you have the crew to call upon as resources, you are obligated to follow the dictates of your superior officers. You may have a standard patrol area, or be allowed to cruise as you like (within reason). Besides enemy nations, you are expected to chase pirates, escort merchantmen, and act as a coastguard. You probably have the right to seize pirate vessels, and may even get paid for bringing pirates in.

New Companion Status Virtue: Ship Captain +2

You are the master of your domain: everything from the stem of your ship to its stern. While at sea, your word is law, and you have the power of life-and-death over your crew. You lead a crew of at least 20 men, though none of you are particularly well-equipped, and you have little control over them when they are not aboard your ship. Your vessel is relatively small (Hull Size 4 or less), and is owned by someone else. You may be paid a salary, or simply keep a portion of the ship's profit for yourself. Whichever method you chose, you probably earn around 240 silver pennies a year above your living expenses. Finally, though you are as God aboard your ship, you must account for your actions to the ship owner. You may want to purchase appropriate reputations or the +1 Virtue Well-Traveled.

Modified Companion Status Virtue: Wealthy Merchant +3

You own a large ship of up to Hull Size 7, or are part owner of a fleet of several ships whose Hull Sizes total about 20. You have factors in several ports, warehouses, and dockside contacts. You may have sailed in your earlier years, and may still enjoy the salt air — when you can leave the counting houses and offices, that is. You can expect a return of around 2000 silver pennies per year from your trading ventures (unless you use the rules for trading found on pages 54-58, in which case your actual profit can be determined more accurately through play). This Virtue is equivalent to the Wealthy Merchant Virtue in ArM4, page 38 — it simply focuses that Virtue to the sea.

The Explorer

Covenants form where there are magi. Magi gather where there is power. Power grows from the presence of magic. Whereas mundanes seek out new places to spread the word of God, the explorer magus sets out in search of sites with magical power. Some quest for lost places where magic once flourished, while others hunt new sources of vis. But all Hermetic explorers share one common characteristic — a burning need to discover what lies on the far shore or over the next hill. While most pursue their explorations in the service of a covenant, a select few work for the glory of the entire Order.

Suggested Virtues: Hermetic Prestige, Secret Vis Source, Magical Affinity (seas), Immunity (to drowning), Well-Traveled, Ways of the Waters

Suggested Flaws: Creative Block, Personal Magic, Outsider, Delusion, Expenses, Obsessed, Sense of Doom

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (seas), Legend Lore, Navigation, Sailing, Speak Additional Language, Swim

Suggested Arts: Intéllego, Aquam, Terram

Suggested Spells: *Voice of the Lake* (InAq 20), *Sight of the Pharos* (InAq 20)

Bjornaer: Beneath and beyond the waves we have brothers and sisters of whom we have never dreamed. If our house would remain strong, we must seek them out and bring them into the fold.

Bonisagus: The magic of the Founders may have been only the merest sample of a greater whole. Who can say what Bonisagus missed merely because it had not yet been discovered? As his followers, we must continue his quest.

Criamon: The sea is a vital factor in the Enigma. We touch it, we fall into it, we are inevitably consumed by it. It would not be there were we meant to ignore it.

Ex Miscellanea: The sea is a powerful source of magic — one which Hermetic magi have yet to try to comprehend. Like so many myster-ies before, we explore what they ignore. Let us begin by determining its limits.

Flambeau: There are places where the mundanes have never set foot — places we can use to practice our Arts. The time will soon come when we will need to be able to light fires the size of cities, and the Order will not let us practice that here.

Guernicus: Come with us to Magvillus and read the names of those who have escaped us. They are not here, so it follows that they have traveled elsewhere. We will find their enclaves and bring them back to justice.

Jerbiton: Perhaps the world would be better served if the Order of Hermes vanished for a time. Mankind must be given a chance to seek its own destiny without our various and inscrutable agendas interfering. Since Man cannot depart, magi must. We must seek a place where Man will not find us until he is ready.

Mercere: Do you suppose that as soon as you build your covenant a trumpet sounds at Harco and tells us where you are? No! We have to find out the hard way.

Merinita: Occasionally we stumble out of Arcadia into the mortal realm far, far from where we went in. When that happens, we are forced to get our bearings before we can return home.

Tremere: The Order has found its reasons to venture beyond this world in search of some new one. Very well. But if so much as a single sigil is cast in vote on that foreign shore, that sigil will be in the hand of a Tremere.

Tytalus: Think of it! Giant men a mile tall! Women with hair of fire! Fields of grass that cuts like knives! What a challenge this could be! Let us make haste, before the good intentions of our Hermetic brethren ruin it for us!

Verditius: We could show you a thousand books each with a thousand names of lost cities, lost treasures, and lost civilizations. Surely something is left of even the oldest!

The Architect

Castles do not build themselves. Neither do ships. Architects turn their natural talents for invention to creating structures and devices that ease their lives and the lives of others — often incorporating magic into the design. In some cases, magic is the tool that works the raw material, but every so often, it is the raw material itself. The architect strives to improve upon the simple processes developed by generations of mundane craftsmen and to provide innovations that no mere mortal can apply or even imagine. A few find their services eagerly sought when new covenants are being formed and keeps and fortresses are needed — particularly when magical defenses are vital.

Suggested Virtues: Magical Affinity (construction), Inventive Genius, Magic Item, Free Expression, Temporal Influence

Suggested Flaws: Incomprehensible, Non-Spontaneity, Obligation, Poor or Pathetic Characteristic

Suggested Abilities: Finesse, Concentration, Crafts

Suggested Arts: Creo, Herbam, Terram

Suggested Spells: *Bridge of Wood* (CrHe 30), *Crafting The Sailor's Last Hope* (CrHe 30), *Crafting The Splendid Ship* (CrHe 45), *Wall of Protecting Stone* (CrTe 25)

Bjornaer: The rest of the Order views us with suspicion; soon they will fall upon us as they fell upon House Díedne, and we will vanish just as completely. But if we can complete our Hermetic Ark, we can take our animal brethren and escape before it is too late.

Bonisagus: By studying the designs of yesterday and today, we will understand the inner workings of magic.

Criamon: It is our hope that by building models, we can better explain the Enigma to the Order. Sadly, some will fear to pull the lever that sets their minds free.

Ex Miscellanea: If we had but a single florin for every time one of us used magic to construct a building to better Man, or Beast, or Nature, our house would be full of rich wizards.

Flambeau: We build great works of cunning complexity with which to test our fire. We employ cunningly complex fire to test the integrity of our great works.

Guernicus: Year after year, the hedge wizards and the diabolists and even the Hermetic magi who commit crimes against the Order grow more adept at escaping the traps we set for them. Thus, we must become more adept and construct better traps.

Jerbiton: When we must set aside our spells and our vis in order to live alongside the common man, it will be the strength of our minds, as displayed in our writing and in our feats of engineering, that will serve us.

Mercere: Visualize ships riddled with secret compartments in which messages and packages and even a Redcap himself could be hidden. Now visualize them bringing you word of the outside world.

Merinita: Men and magi would have us build with iron nails and iron bars. Why must we drive off the faeries in this way? A ship could just as easily be built from wooden pegs and spars, without risking the ire of the Good Folk.

Tremere: I see a castle with a dozen towers, each with dozens of places for magi. In the center, I see a great hall where those magi could meet, hold Tribunal, wage certámen, cast votes, and decide a thousand fates.

Tytalus: If you are so confident your "vis-powered galley" can be propelled without rowers, prove it! My five-sailed cog will leave you in its wake!

Verditius: Out of a hundred different designs for a hundred different inventions, I have constructed just this one. Look at it! It carries a dozen magi and their grogs in comfort, above and below the waves, and mimics the form of the ordinary whale. This is the future of sailing!

The Plunderer

The entire history of man and magus shows that the only real acquisitions come not from sharing knowledge, but from wresting it from the cold, dead fingers of the weak. The plunderer casts aside the conventions of Hermetic society and takes what he wants, apologizing to no one, offering only defiance and derision when called upon to conform. Though he may join a covenant, he is at heart a true anarchist, a wolf among sheep. Though the prey have been known to occasionally mass together against a single predator, the odds favor the predator.

Suggested Virtues: Fast Caster, Elementalist, Good Armaments, Veteran, Well-Traveled, Large

Suggested Flaws: Blatant Gift, Infamous Master, Weak Writer, Enemies, Infamous, Overconfident, Fury

Suggested Abilities: Penetration, Athletics, Shield & Weapon, Shipboard Weapons, Swim, (Area) Lore, Speak Additional Language

Suggested Arts: Perdo, Herbam, Mentem

Suggested Spells: *Winds of Good Sailing* (CrAu 5), *The Wolf Denied* (PeAu 30), *Neptune's Ire* (PeHe 15), *Defiance of the Prey* (ReHe 40)

Bjornaer: The strong devour the weak. That is the way of Nature. Man is not above Nature. Let this experience serve to teach you that.

Bonisagus: There are a great many treasures that will advance the study of magic by decades, but they are well-guarded by those who jealously hoard their knowledge. No matter. We have an obligation to the Order.

Criamon: Each struggle is but a line in a tale told by the Gods, a story of the valiant struggle against mortal frailty and the overwhelming brutality of the cosmos. Each and every man plays his part in that story. Yours is "Mortal Frailty."

Ex Miscellanea: Membership in the Order has its advantages. Were we merely hedge wizards, other hedge wizards would go out of their way to punish us. But the Order will discuss, reprimand, and reconcile. Meanwhile, we grow rich.

Flambeau: This is what we were meant to do!

Guernicus: The Order requires order. The quaesitors provide order. The quaesitors require funds. The Order cannot provide. Merchants can. Pirates prey upon merchants — quaesitors do not. To prey upon merchants is to promote disorder. To prey upon pirates, however …

Jerbiton: To understand the Order's place in society, we must experience all of society's components. Nature has its predators, and so does civilization. We can emulate the predators for a time to learn more about how they affect civilization. We never dreamed it could be so exhilarating!

Mercere: Sometimes, to get from place to place in a timely fashion, one must take passage on any ship one can. Surprisingly often, that ship makes a living by attacking other ships. If you don't want to stand out, you pick up a sword and join in.

Merinita: Arcadian seas are an excellent place to hide — both from the mundanes and the Order.

Tremere: Domination is a game of subtle strategy, careful planning, and occasional exercises of brute force. This piece, the Ship, represents total control over the sea. The player who does not use all the available pieces is a poor player indeed.

Tytalus: It is not important who wins and who loses, who wins and who dies. What matters is that the sea makes us equals, and he who adapts best prevails. The other has merely chosen a convenient place to expire.

Verditius: The world is full of artifacts of bygone times. We will have them!

The Obsessed Individualist

From the moment an apprentice passes his gauntlet and takes the Hermetic Oath, his life is given over to regimentation and discipline. Not so with the individualist, who sets his own goals, makes his own vows, and keeps his own counsel. Few survive extended isolation before foregoing their personal quests, but those that persevere often become legends to inspire future generations of like-minded and idealistic magi. Though his convictions often cross over into obsession, the individualist in the end answers to, and is responsible for, no one but himself. The freedom this brings is a powerful incentive to go on.

Suggested Virtues: Free Study, Special Circumstances, Higher Purpose, Self-Confident, Piercing Gaze, True Faith

Suggested Flaws: Blatant Gift, Hedge Wizard, Discredited Lineage, Vow, Delusion, Obsessed, Reclusive, Poor

Suggested Abilities: Awareness, Concentration, Survival, Enigmatic Wisdom

Suggested Arts: Intéllego, Corpus, Herbam

Suggested Spells: Eyes of the Fish (MuCo 5), *Earthen Sea* (ReCo 10), *Salvation of the Sinking Ship* (CrHe 5), *Intuition of the Forest* (InHe 10)

Bjornaer: My heart-beast calls out to me: "Leave the earth … come to the sea." What Bjornaer would not obey?

Bonisagus: I cannot concentrate with all of the chaos in this covenant! If I must travel a thousand leagues over seven seas to find peace and quiet, so be it!

Criamon: I have walked to this place in the middle of the sea to meditate. My food is gone, my vis is spent, my mind is clear. I searched for years for the Enigma. Now let it find me.

Ex Miscellanea: We still observe our ancient tradition of journeying away from other men to forge a stronger bond between ourselves and our magic.

Flambeau: My foe has eluded me. Though I brought his keep down in flames and blood, he has escaped. I feel it. I will not rest until I have choked the life out of him.

Guernicus: Word has come to me that a cell of the accursed Tytalus diabolists survives to this day, in a secret keep across the sea. Though it is certainly a trap, I vowed to pursue Oath-breakers regardless of my own safety, and so I shall.

Jerbiton: For years I worked with the Order of Hermes, trying to convince them to make themselves more presentable to the mundanes. And I worked with the mundanes, trying to make them more tolerant of magic. I might as well have trained a cow to fly! I will no longer waste my time with either of them.

Mercere: The infernal curse visited on me is far too strong for magic to overcome. If I stay in one place too long, my demonic pursuers will overtake me. So as long as I live, I must stay on the move.

Merinita: How can I explain to you the beauty and the grace of Kinleah? Though we met only once before we were torn apart, our love can never die. I will search the rest of my days for the gateway to her father's castle, if only to see her smile once again.

Tremere: I carry this notice of summons with me wherever I go, to remind me that I can never go back. "Unscrupulous ambition" — hah! In a hundred years they will proclaim me a visionary.

Tytalus: I am now in the fifth year of my Test of Solitude. Certainly I have already passed, but I intend to set a mark in Hermetic history. I will return when I have spent as many years alone as I spent in apprenticeship.

Verditius: Ah, well, you see … I never expected that it would work so well. Imagine my surprise when it hurtled into the sea, following the setting sun. But the mistake was mine, and only I can correct it: only I know how to shut it off!

The Trader

What is the point of traveling thousands of miles if not for commerce? The trader crosses land and sea to bring goods from one city to another, or from strange, far-flung places to covenants nestled in hidden grottoes or on remote islands. Magi are particularly well-suited to trading in items of power, since they alone are equipped to judge their true value, and to do business with men who quite often have the power to cloud men's thoughts — a true asset while bargaining! Many even conduct trades of magical artifacts with mundanes, either on behalf of covenants or merely for a profit — though they are acutely aware of the ever-watchful eye of House Guernicus.

Suggested Virtues: Gentle Gift, Quiet Magic, Knack, Magic Item, Self-Confident, Social Contacts, Strong-Willed, Well-Known

Suggested Flaws: Common Fear, Vis Obligation, Old, Expenses, Noncombatant

Suggested Abilities: Charm, Folk Ken, Scribe, Bargain, Sailing, (Area) Lore, (Organization) Lore, Speak (Language)

Suggested Arts: Muto, Imáginem, Mentem

Suggested Spells: *Taste of the Spices and Herbs* (MuIm 4), *Aura of Ennobled Presence* (MuIm 10), *Subtle Shift of Heart* (MuMe 10)

Bjornaer: Of all the species in the world, only Man engages in commerce. This is a phenomenon worth investigating.

Bonisagus: Though we swore to share all that we find in our search for knowledge, the Peripheral Code grants us the right to bargain for a certain amount of compensation for our trouble.

Criamon: Who could not look on the flow of men, their ships, their goods, and their money, and not see a pattern? When that pattern resembles the principles of the Enigma, we are intrigued.

Ex Miscellanea: Even before the Ordo Miscellanea, much of the business of a wizard was in trading his skills for more mundane treasures. Why should it be any different now?

Flambeau: Of all the merchants in this port, only I can be certain I will receive a fair bargain.

Guernicus: Trade is only a disguise. What a covenant hides from the Order is often openly known to the merchants who deal with it.

Jerbiton: This is what we were meant to do.

Mercere: One cannot rely on ships crossing the sea when one needs them. House Mercere must put its own ships out to sea.

Merinita: Trade is a common practice among the Good Folk. The Order could learn from their example.

Tremere: Another piece in Domination is the Market, which represents mastery of commerce.

Tytalus: One school of thought in our house feels that mercantilism is not true struggle. Obviously they have never set sail with nothing and returned laden with goods.

Verditius: We make things, we sell them, we use the profit to make more things. Was there a question about this?

Companions and Grogs

Magi are not alone in their relationship with the sea. Long before the Order of Hermes was born, mortal men were finding innovative ways to make their living upon the sea. From the fisherman who never leaves the sight of land to the navigator who always knows exactly where it is anyway, it takes a brave man to trust the sea with his life.

Presented here are several sample vocations for companions and grogs in a saga set on the mythic seas. Like those presented in the **Ars Magica** rulebook, they are much less rigid than those given for magi, and both storyguides and players are invited to lift out what they need to create engaging characters, or to use them wholesale. Virtues, Flaws, and Abilities are merely suggestions.

> "My Hermetic resources exhausted, I begged Argus to allow me time to interview every mundane we encountered. Even coupled with earlier interviews, still my search proved fruitless."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Fisherman

You catch fish. Mostly, your catch goes to feed your family, or to the market to barter for what you can't make yourself. Now you have begun working for the covenant. When you are not providing food for the covenfolk or selling your catch to provide for their needs, you are helping them track down some strange aquatic monster, or leading them to places where the sea ... just doesn't feel right. Note that to gain Weather Sense, you must take the +1 Virtue of the same name.

Suggested Virtues: Animal Ken (fish), Direction Sense, Knack (with fishing), Well-Known, Gossip

Suggested Flaws: Dependent, Offensive to Animals, Social Handicap, Missing Hand, Poor

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (sea), Athletics, Awareness, Boating, Brawling, Concentration, Craft (net-making or boat-building), Fish, Folk Ken (sailors), Single Weapon, Survival, Swim, Weather Sense

Sailor

You are a sailor on a cog or an oarsman on a galley. You are paid well for your skills, and since you know no other way to make a living, you are content to let others pay you to do it. Since the wizards pay you pretty much the same way anyone else would, and they expect nothing more of you than anyone else would, you have no complaints. Occasionally you face some pretty incredible dangers, but you are philosophical: at least your death will be something people will remember.

Suggested Virtues: Knack (with sailing), Enduring Constitution, Keen Vision, Perfect Balance, Well-Traveled, Training

Suggested Flaws: Compulsion, Obligation, Poor Armaments, Decrepit (old wounds)

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (sea), Athletics, Awareness, Boating, Brawling, Carouse, Climb, Fish, Folk Ken (sailors), Sailing, Shipboard Weapons, Single Weapon, Swim

Pirate

You are a sailor — and when circumstances demand it, a plunderer. You have attacked ships, towns, and perhaps even a city, all with the intent of making away with as much as your ship would carry. The covenant pays you to use your sailing talents for them, but the unspoken agreement is that you may occasionally be called upon to use your more anti-social talents either to defend the wizards or to make away with as much as

they can carry. Wizards are not so different from ordinary people, it seems.

Suggested Virtues: Knack (with sailing), Enduring Constitution, Keen Vision, Perfect Balance, Well-Traveled

Suggested Flaws: Bad Reputation, Compulsion, Missing Eye/Ear, Poor Armaments, Decrepit (old wounds)

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (sea), Athletics, Awareness, Boating, Brawling, Carouse, Climb, Fish, Folk Ken (sailors), Organization Lore (pirates), Sailing, Shipboard Weapons, Single Weapon, Stealth, Swim

Ship Captain

You are at home on the sea, probably since birth, and others respect or even admire your abilities. You are in absolute command aboard your ship, and if someone wants to give you orders without first paying quite a lot for the privilege ... well, they had better know how to swim. You work with the covenant because they do not question how you do your job, and you do not question how they do theirs. They bring back their magical treasures — and you get some of the mundane kind.

Suggested Virtues: Clear Thinker, Direction Sense, Good Armaments, Inspirational, Knack (with sailing), Well-Traveled, Patron

Suggested Flaws: Compulsion, Enemies (rivals), Expenses, Favors, Oversensitive, Overconfident

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (sea), Awareness, Boating, Carouse, Climb, Folk Ken (sailors), Leadership, Navigation, Sailing, Shipboard Weapons, Single Weapon, Speak Additional Language, Swim

Navigator

You are the most valuable man on the ship — even more so than the captain — because you are the only one who can get the ship to its destination without relying on luck. You know the stars, the seas, the islands, and the coasts, and how to use any or all of them to plot a safe course. Even the wizards with their mysterious ways respect your abilities, making you a valuable asset. And since some of the places they ask you to find are not on any chart, you feel a sense of accomplishment every time you add a new map to your collection. Note that to gain Direction Sense, you must take the +1 Virtue of the same name.

Suggested Virtues: Direction Sense, Educated, Keen Vision, Well-Traveled, Intuition
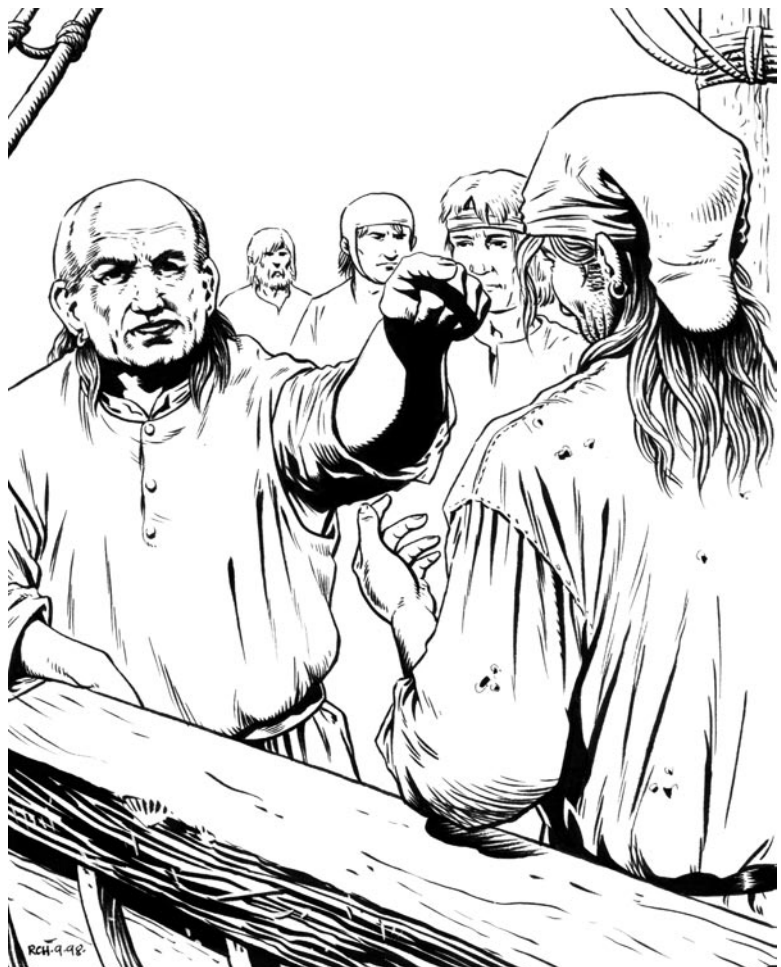
Suggested Flaws: Dark Secret (past failure), Judged Unfairly, Meddler, Poor Armaments, Poor Physical Characteristic

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (multiple seas), Awareness, Brawling, Climb, Direction Sense, Folk Ken (sailors), Navigation, Sailing, Scribe (at least one language), Speak Additional Language, Swim

Shipwright

Like your father, you have a certain gift for building boats and ships that sailors can trust not to sink beneath them. Ordinarily, you would never reveal these secrets to another soul, but without your expertise, those people at the covenant will buy a floating coffin — or build one. Working for wizards is odd; they have all manner of strange suggestions and requests. But sometimes finding a way to meet their needs is a thrilling challenge.

Suggested Virtues: Knack (with craft), Cautious (with craft), Close Family Ties, Heir, Prestigious Family, Social Contacts, Mentor

Suggested Flaws: Enemies, Black Sheep, Expenses, Low Self-Esteem, Weak-Willed, Arthritis

Suggested Abilities: Area Lore (sea), Boating, Craft (boat-building or shipwright), Folk Ken (craftsmen), Organization Lore (appropriate guild), Sailing, Swim

Chapter 5
Magic of the Sea

Animál Spells

Fisherman's Instinct (InAn5)
R: Per/Touch, D: Conc/Sun, T: Group
Spell Focus: A Bit of Fish-Bait (+1)

Allows the caster to sense the location of the nearest variety of edible natural fish within a body of water. The caster need not be able to see into the water; seeing the surface of the water will suffice. Use of this spell adds a bonus of +3 to all rolls to fish as long as the spell is in effect. (Base Effect Level 5; Range –5; Target +5)

Ward Against the Denizens of the Deep (ReAnGen)
R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Group
Spell Focus: A Conch (+3)

No magical sea-creature whose Magic Might is equal to or less than the level of this spell can affect the targeted Group. When the magus is making this and other wards, a common gesture employed is the Fig Sign. The magus balls his or her right hand into a fist, placing the thumb between the index and middle fingers. A magus traveling to Italy should be warned that this sign is a deadly insult in that country. The conch represents the traditional instrument used by Poseidon to control his subjects. This spell was developed by magi of Insula Magna, in the Tyrrhenian Sea, who found that the original *Ward Against the Beasts of Legend* would not work where one could not draw a ring. (Base Effect Level General)

> "With the map to Atlantis looking more and more inaccurate, I resolved not to let my voyages be wasted. I began spending every spare moment in the laboratory cabin of the Astra, copying in painstaking detail every book I could lay my hands on."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

The Immaculate Ship (ReAn20)
R: Touch,
D: Sun/Moon,
T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Torch (+1)

Causes all of the vermin inhabiting a ship to leave by any means possible, and keeps the ship free of such pests for the duration of the spell. Animals restrained somehow from leaving work themselves into a frenzy in their attempts to escape. This spell only affects the creatures that are normally a problem aboard ships: mice, rats, and certain insects. Pets are completely unaffected.

This spell was originally developed by Cadmus of Tyre, a Jerbiton who used a similar spell to clear vermin out of his laboratory. In the version developed by his apprentice, Marius, the vermin would actually invade and infest a different ship nearby. (Base Effect Level 5; Duration +5; Target +10)

Rego Animál

Seas of Bounty (ReAn25)
R: Sight, D: Conc/Sun, T: Group
Spell Focus: A Fish's Full Skeleton (+2)

Draws all the edible natural fish within a body of water as far as the caster's vision extends to his current location. The fish affected feel a compulsion to travel to the spot from wherever they are, but once they arrive are free to leave again. The drawback of the spell is that their natural enemies will also be attracted to the location by the proliferation of food, and will either devour large quantities of the affected fish, or in some cases, attack the caster or other beings in the area. The spell focus must be a whole fish skeleton, otherwise only sickly or wounded fish will answer the call. (Base Effect Level 5; Range +20; Target +5; –5 imperfect duration)

Waves of Warding (ReAn20)
R: Reach, D: Sun, T: Special
Spell Focus: A Handful of Shark's Teeth (+3)

The caster swims or otherwise travels through a body of water, tracing a circular path. All normal sea-beasts then avoid the defined area. The area also extends downward five paces, preventing sea-creatures approaching from below. The shark's teeth are dropped into the water at intervals along the circle. (Base Effect Level 5; Range +5; Duration +5; Target +5)

Seagoing Spell Targets

The following clarifications are necessary when considering spells at sea:
- The spell target Boundary does not affect the entire ocean — it's just too large. The storyguide should use common sense when determining what constitutes a boundary at sea. A harbor or cove might be affected, or the area between two ships. In the absence of any meaningful boundary, a spell with the target Boundary can't be cast!
- For purposes of casting spells at or aboard a vessel, spells with the target Structure can target an entire ship.

Aquam Spells

Eye of the Shallow Seas (InAq20)
R: Per, D: Mom/Conc, T: Sight
Spell Focus: A Whale's Eye (+3)

The caster can intuitively tell if a body of water within sight of the caster is too shallow or too narrow for the ship the caster is aboard. In the version devised by Aquaticus of House Guernicus, the caster actually sees the water in varying colors representing various depths. (Base Effect Level 5; Range –5; Duration –5; Target +25)

Sight of the Pharos (InAq20)
R: Per, D: Conc, T: Spec
Spell Focus: An Astrolabe (+4)
Requisites: Terram

The caster concentrates for a few moments and immediately becomes aware of the direction and distance to a known point on the same body of water. Though an astrolabe is used as the spell's focus, the caster does not need stars to navigate — he does not even need to know how to use the astrolabe!

The spell is named for one of the Wonders of the Ancient World, the Pharos of Alexandria, a lighthouse which guided ships safely to the city for centuries. In AD 1220, the lighthouse has been converted to a mosque by the Moors. Apparently the spell was originally created and used by someone who traveled in the Eastern Mediterranean when the Pharos was still being used for its intended purpose. (Base Effect Level 25 [an extremely reliable means of never getting lost at sea]; Range: –5)

Incantation of the Scalding Seas (MuAq15)
R: Near, D: Conc/Sun, T: Spec
Spell Focus: Boiling Water (+2)
Requisites: Ignem

Causes water in a circle ten paces across to boil with extreme heat. Any living thing caught in the area takes +12 damage every round and suffers a –3 modifier and an extra botch check to Swim rolls in the affected area. The area extends five paces downward so creatures caught in the scalding water cannot merely duck underneath to escape the pain. If a spell focus is used, it must be poured into the water where the spell is cast. (Base Effect Level 10; Range +10; Duration –5)

Raft of Ice (MuAq35)
R: Near, D: Sun, T: Circ
Spell Focus: A Piece of Ice (+2)
Requisites: Terram

Creates a roughly circular ice floe up to 15 paces across, sturdy enough to bear the weight of up to ten creatures of Size 0 or less. Each point of Size above 0 counts as one additional creature, and each point of Size below 0 counts as one less creature. If more than fifteen creatures of any size occupy the ice floe at any given time, the raft begins breaking apart, and completely disintegrates within 1 to 10 rounds (the storyguide should secretly roll a simple die). The ice floe created has no means of propulsion, and will melt at a rate appropriate to its surroundings until the spell's duration ends. (Base Effect Level 10 [compare with *Bridge of Frost*]; Range +10; Target +15)

Shroud of the Ducks' Feathers (ReAq15)
R: Reach, D: Sun, T: Group/Structure
Spell Focus: A Handful of Ducks' Feathers (+3)

Makes water run off several objects or creatures, protecting the targets and their apparel from dampness. The spell ceases to affect a given target if the target is submerged in water. (Base Effect *Cloak of the Duck's Feathers;* Range +5; Target +5)

Neptune's Supplicant (ReAq35)
R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Treasure Consecrated to Neptune (+5)
Requisites: Herbam

Enables a ship to pass through storms and otherwise impassable seas as though the sea were completely calm. Though the storm or other condition is not abated outside the spell's area of effect, the ship travels on a circle of placid water at a safe, steady rate, regardless of the use of sail or oars. In a combat situation, treat this as the ship's normal Speed – 2, minimum 1. Obviously, this spell is difficult to cast while the ship is caught in the grip of a storm, and the description of the spell given in Carmina Tristeriam (see Spell Books, page 84) suggests that the wizard prepare and cast the spell well in advance of anticipated rough seas. The spell's focus must be some form of valuable treasure, which is thrown overboard at the completion of the spell.

The origin of the spell is a mystery: until slightly less than a hundred years ago, it was only recorded in Carmina Tristeriam. (Base Effect Level 30 [compare with *Waves of Drowning and Smashing*]; Range –10; Target +15)

Auram Spells

Winds of Good Sailing (CrAu5)
R: Near/Sight, D: Conc/Sun, T: Structure
Spell Focus: An Agate (+1)

Creates a wind strong enough to move a sailing ship and directs it at the sails of that ship. The wind's strength does not vary from casting to casting, so a small ship will be propelled faster than a large one — though a ship with two or more sails will still move quite rapidly. The wind does not knock over people or objects. (Base Effect Level 15; Range –10; Duration +5; Target –5)

The Wolf Denied (PeAu30)
R: Far/Sight, D: Mom, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Branch of Ash (+1)

The reverse of *Winds of Good Sailing,* this spell stills an existing wind. Its creator, Nivalis of Bonisagus, originally intended it to deter pursuers, but subsequent magi have reported that it is quite useful for avoiding winds generated by malign forces. (Base Effect *Quiet the Raging Winds*; +10 precision control)

Corpus Spells

The Sailor's Salvation (InCo10)
R: Near/Far, D: Conc, T: Ind
Requisites: Aquam

Locates one person in the water within the range of the spell, whether the person is alive or dead. (Base Effect Level 15; Range –10; Duration +5)

Eyes of the Fish (MuCo5)
R: Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind
Spell Focus: The Eyes of a Deep-Sea Creature (+2)

Allows the target to see as well under water as he does on dry land. The version developed by Pistrix of Bjornaer causes the target's eyes to resemble those used as a spell focus until the spell ends. (Base Effect as per *Eyes of the Cat*)

Muto Corpus

Mind of Man, Form of Fish (MuCo35)
R: Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind
Spell Focus: Scales of a Mermaid (+8)
Requisites: Aquam

While *Lungs of the Fish* can give someone the ability to breathe water as easily as air, it does not provide for effective locomotion. With this spell, the target takes on the form of a merman (or mermaid), with a large, piscine tail taking the place of his lower body. The upper body remains the same, except for webbing between the fingers and a set of gills that grow from the target's neck.

While this spell is in effect, the target can not only breathe water, but can also swim better than a human. If the target of the spell can already swim, this spell confers a bonus of +3 to all Swim rolls until the spell wears off. If the target of the spell does not already have the skill, he can use it by rolling a stress die, only subtracting one from the roll, and only rolling one additional botch die in the event of a botch.

The target may change back at will, ending the spell, at which point he can breathe air again. (Base Effect *Cloak of Black Feathers*; +5 for ability to breathe water)

Stance of the Calm Sea (ReCo15)
R: Touch, D: Spec., T: Ind
Spell Focus: A Goat's Hoof (+2)

The target can stand easily upon the deck of even a wildly-pitching ship, provided the ship does not keel completely over. If the target becomes separated from the ship — such as by leaping, even for a moment — the spell is broken. While the spell is active, all appropriate rolls gain a +2 bonus, and one less botch die is rolled (to a minimum of one). Though nominally useful to sailors, the spell is of incalculable value to seafaring magi as an obvious aid to spellcasting, and so most of them have learned it. (Base Effect Level 15)

Herbam Spells

Salvation of the Sinking Ship (CrHe 5)
R: Near, D: Sun/Season, T: Small/Ship
Spell Focus: Two Pieces of Wood Joined with Pitch (+3)

Seals any known leak in a water-borne vessel. This spell is often used in conjunction with *The Shipwright's Masterful Eye* (InHe15). (Base Effect Level 10; Target –5)

Crafting The Sailor's Last Hope (CrHe30)
R: Near, D: Sun/Moon, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Piece of Flotsam (+3)

A sturdily-built square raft appears in the designated spot. The raft can be up to 15 paces across, and is sturdy enough to bear the weight of up to 20 creatures of Size 0 or less. Each point of Size above 0 counts as one additional creature, and each point of Size below 0 counts as one less creature. Should more than 30 creatures of any size be piled upon it, the raft founders. The raft created does not include a means of propulsion. (Base Effect *Crafting the Splendid Ship*)

The Shipwright's Masterful Eye (InHe15)
R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Dry Sponge (+2)
Requisites: Aquam

Every leak in a water-borne vessel, no matter how small the aperture, is instantly known to the caster. If the caster uses a dry sponge while casting the spell, the sponge grows wet along its surface in the areas corresponding to where the ship is leaking. (Base Effect Level 5; Target +10)

Neptune's Ire (PeHe 15)
R: Far/Sight, D: Inst, T: Small
Aimed: +0
Spell Focus: A Jagged Rock (+3)

The caster points at a ship within the spell's range and makes a stabbing motion toward it. A hole the size of two large fists appears just below the waterline of the target ship, causing that ship to sustain one level of Seaworthiness and an automatic +3 hole (see the Damage to Ships insert on page 24). If the targeting roll fails, the hole appears above the waterline (damaging Seaworthiness but not causing an automatic hole), or misses the vessel altogether on a botch. At least two botches are required for the spell to accidentally affect a ship the caster is aboard. (Base Effect Level 5; Range +10)

Freeing the Entangled Sail (ReHe15)
R: Reach, D: Mom, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Piece of Clean Sail-Cloth (+2)

All of the canvas and rigging of a ship instantly reorders itself to its proper configuration regardless of obstructions and conditions. Actual damage to the ship is not be repaired, though appropriate repairs may be rendered easier (the storyguide should assign an appropriate bonus based on the sort of damage that was originally sustained). The sail-cloth used as a spell focus must not only be clean, it can never have been dirtied.

The spells of Effrenatus of Bonisagus are all marked by a total organization of small items around him, as per his casting sigil. Accordingly, his version of this spell not only reorders the rigging of a ship, but carefully bundles up any damaged portion so that it may be easily replaced. (Base Effect Level 5; Duration –5; Target +15)

Aegis of Neptune's Grace (ReHe25)
R: Reach, D: Conc/Sun, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Shield (+3)
Requisites: Ignem, Terram

Deflects a single missile fired from a Shipboard Weapon (see page 18) and aimed at a ship. The caster can deflect a different attack each round. The attack automatically misses, but the attacker still rolls to see if he botches. Less powerful variants of this spell omit the Ignem requisite, on the grounds that fire-throwing weapons mounted on ships are not as common as they once were. (Base Effect Level 10; Target +15)

Poseidon's Grip (ReHe30)
R: Reach, D: Spec, T: Structure
Spell Focus: A Set of Four Lodestones (+2) or A
    Miniature Anchor (+4)
Requisites: Aquam, Auram

Holds a ship completely stationary within a body of water, despite prevailing currents. The ship resists all but the strongest impetus until such time as the sail is raised or the oars are dipped into the water. If lodestones are used as the spell's focus, they must be attached to the vessel at each of the cardinal directions. If a miniature anchor is used, it must be lowered on a string over the side of the ship until it is completely submersed. (Base Effect Level 15; Target +15)

Defiance of the Prey (ReHe40)
R: Near, D: Conc, T: Structure
Aimed: +0
Spell Focus: A Rattle (+2)

The caster can cause a ship to violently jerk back and forth, damaging the vessel and hurling its crew about. Each exposed crew member must make a Dexterity + Athletics stress roll of 12+ every combat round or be hurled over the side. Even those who succeed suffer +5 damage every round as they are buffeted helplessly. Those below decks are not thrown overboard, but suffer +10 damage each round as they are slammed repeatedly into bulkheads, cargo, chests, and each other.

Ostensibly created for use against pirates, this spell is more often used by rogue magi acting as pirates. The spell being so devastating — and magical resistance bypassed by the indirect nature of the attack — many magi who recognize it being used against them immediately surrender to their attackers. (Base Effect Level 20; Range +5; Target +15)

Rego Mentem

Mentem Spells

Phantom at the Helm (ReMe25)
R: Reach, D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind
Spell Focus: Blood of a Ship's Pilot (+3)
Requisites: Herbam

Causes a ghostly figure to appear at the rudder of the caster's ship and take control, piloting the ship according to the spoken instructions of the caster. The phantom pilot avoids dangers such as collisions or running aground, but unless given specific headings does not change course. Instructions to sail into a solid object or waters too shallow for the ship result in the pilot steering in circles, as the spirit helmsman cannot actually bring the ship to a halt. (Obviously, *Phantom at the Helm* is useless for ramming attempts.) The caster must have an arcane connection to a deceased ship's pilot, and if that connection is also the spell focus, the blood must be smeared on the ship's rudder. This spell is considered quite useful when the ship's actual pilot has been slain —

though it can be quite demoralizing to the surviving crew. (Base Effect Level 20; Range +5)

The Necroreme (ReMe30)
R: Reach, D: Sun/Moon, T: Group
Spell Focus: The Blood of Several Oarsmen (+3)
Requisites: Herbam

The rowers' benches of an oared ship fill with ghostly oarsmen, who immediately begin rowing to the beat of an unseen drum. The rowers obey the orders of the drum, and the drum responds to instructions from the caster. The phantom oarsmen can be made to row quickly or slowly, to slow the ship to a halt, to ship oars and even to turn in a crude fashion (assuming no helmsman is available). The caster must have an arcane connection to the deceased rowers of a ship, and if that connection is also the spell focus, the blood must be smeared on the ship's oars. Like *Phantom at the Helm,* this spell can be quite useful when the ship's actual rowers have been slain.

Two variants of this spell are known to exist. One of a lower magnitude omits the drum in favor of the caster calling the stroke, but most wizards grow too hoarse to keep the rowers active for very long. The other version, *Spirits of the Sea,* summons ghostly crew to man the sails of a ship without oars, and has an Auram requisite. The spell focus for that version is blood from the crew of a sailing ship. The blood is smeared on the sails. (Base Effect Level 20; Range +5; Target +5)

Terram Spells

Sense of Dry Land (InTe15)
R: Spec, D: Mom, T: Spec
Spell Focus: A Handful of Completely Dry Earth (+2)

The caster determines the direction and distance of the nearest body of land. (Base Effect Level 2; Range +20; Duration –5; Target +10)

Intéllego Terram

Eyes of the Argo (InTe30)
R: Reach, D: Moon, T: Structure, Ritual
Requisites: Rego, Herbam

The caster paints a pair of large, human-like eyes on the prow of a ship, and the ship becomes less susceptible to collisions and running aground. Whenever the ship is in danger of a collision with a solid object, the entire vessel vibrates along its length, warning the crew, until the hazard is past. In some variants of this spell using Imáginem as a requisite (in place of Rego), the ship emits a loud noise — such as a shriek or whistle — to alert the crew. (Base Effect Level 5; Duration +10; Target +15)

Artifacts of the Sea

Magical Artifacts

Sails of the Astra

When Argus of Verditius set out to crew his ship alone, he knew that he would require the aid of magic to accomplish some things which one man could not do alone on such a large vessel. One of his first projects was to create these leather-reinforced lateen sails which respond to his commands.

Sewn of sturdy canvas with criss-crossing leather straps for support, the Sails of the Astra have two magical powers. Most importantly, they follow Argus' commands to furl or unfurl, and secure themselves tightly in either position. Anyone Argus designates as a member of the crew can likewise command the sails. Also, they are enchanted with the spell *Winds of Good Sailing,* which activates whenever the sails are unfurled.

Control sails (ReAn 20; R: Near; D: Inst; T: Structure), *Winds of Good Sailing* (CrAu 5; R: Near/Sight; D: Sun; T: Structure)

The True Chart

Not being a mariner in the true sense of the word, Argus set out to do with magic what he did not naturally know how to do. One skill which he lacked was that of navigation, which made becoming lost a distinct possibility. After a near-disastrous voyage through the Ionian Sea, Argus created a chart which would always orient

itself to the true cardinal directions, so that while the ship changed direction, the chart would not. Though he is able to alter the map by hand to account for more detail, he cannot increase the scale of the map without re-inventing the device. Thus, over the years, certain areas of the map have become crowded with his tiny notations, while others remain relatively clear. It requires an Int + Scribe Latin roll to understand the portions of the map covering the Adriatic and Aegean Seas, while an Int + Navigation roll is necessary to accurately interpret the portions of the map relating to the Alboran Sea and the seas surrounding the Pillars of Hercules.

Sight of the Pharos (InAq 20; R: Per, D: Perm, T: Spec)

The Experienced Hand

The single largest problem that Argus faced was an inability to man the ship at all times. Though the majority of the ship's functions are automated, they respond to verbal commands — which obviously Argus cannot give while he is sleeping or otherwise indisposed.

To that end, Argus imbued portions of the ship with magical "crew" that could operate effectively without supervision. One of these is the rudder, which steers the ship as though an experienced pilot were at the helm. This operates similarly to the Rego Mentem spell *Phantom at the Helm,* except that in circumstances requiring a decision — such as bringing the ship to a halt, or approaching danger — a bell rings, alerting Argus that he is needed on deck.

Sail ship (ReHe 25; R: Reach; D: Sun; T: Structure)

The Astra's Tireless Watch

Another device similar to The Experienced Hand is a large, intricately-worked silver bell attached to the top of the main mast. The bell resembles a human face, and slowly rotates as though watching out on all sides. When danger approaches from any side, the bell rings, warning Argus. The tone of the bell, and the rhythm of its chimes, lets him know what to look for, and in what direction. The bell is enchanted to detect four different kinds of dangers: rocks, ships, rough water, and large sea-beasts.

Detect rocks (InTe 20; R: Far; D: Inst; T: Small), *Detect ships* (InHe 30; R: Sight; D: Inst; T: Small), *Detect rough weather* (InAu 30; R: Sight; D: Inst; T: Small), *Detect sea-monsters* (InAn 30; R: Sight; D: Inst; T: Small)

Captain's Authority

This golden diadem bears a small amethyst in the brow, and is rumored to have been worn by the Greek hero Odysseus, which would obviously make it of non-Hermetic origin. Lost once beneath the waves, it was recovered in recent years by a Merinita magus. Unwilling to chance its powers (see below), the Merinita sold it to a coastal covenant during a Tribunal, and it is presumably in use somewhere on the seas.

The diadem has only one function, though it is a powerful one. The enchantment upon it simulates *Aura of Ennobled Presence* (MuIm 10), increasing the wearer's Presence by +1 (or to 0, whichever is higher), while also conferring a bonus of +3 on rolls to influence, lead, or convince sailors. In addition, any sailor who remains aboard the wearer's ship for an entire season while the diadem is worn gains a Personality Trait of Loyal +1 (to the wearer of Captain's Authority). This score is cumulative, so that a sailor who serves aboard the wearer's ship for three seasons gains the Personality Trait Loyal +3. Note that only

> "Of course, once aboard the Astra, I could not resist exploring the function and form of every last device — all the while under Argus' tolerant but watchful eye."
>
> —from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

characters with the Virtue Strong Personality can exceed +3 or –3.

However, each season spent away from the influence of the Captain's Authority reduces this score by one — even into negative numbers. The diadem is decidedly a two-edged sword, since even the closest of friends can become bitter enemies as a result of a casual parting — or the accidental loss of Captain's Authority.

Instill loyalty (ReMe 25)

Song of the Sailors

The Song of the Sailors is a musical pan-flute apparently of Faerie origin. The flute is made of silver, worked with designs of beautiful, unearthly women rising from the sea while playing similar instruments.

The flute cannot be played by ordinary persons; only a character with the Virtue Enchanting Music can bring forth song using the Song of the Sailors. While such a character plays, however, all sea-related rolls made by sailors receive a bonus, based on the musician's Enchanting Music roll. A roll of 12+ will add +1, a roll of 15+ will add +2, and a roll of 18+ will add +3. If the sailors need to accomplish some extraordinary feat, they can do so provided the musician makes a roll of 24+, but the musician permanently loses one point of Stamina afterward. Perhaps a water-faerie, such as a siren, could restore the character's endurance, but would certainly require a song of extraordinary beauty (Enchanting Music roll of 18+).

Inspire sailors (CrMe 15)

Life-Line

This simple device was created by a magus of Insula Magna after he lost a favorite custos to a violent storm. Realizing that a rope thrown to the hapless woman would have saved her, the magus developed the "Life-Line." It is enchanted with a Rego Herbam effect (investigate at level 15) which causes it to seek out a specific target in the water while holding fast to its source (a person, a ship, or dry land). A small number of these items exist at Insula Magna, though thanks to an opportune certámen with the magus, a copy of his lab text is now in circulation outside that covenant.

Rescue drowning person (ReHe 15; R: Near; D: Spec; T: Ind)

Items of Beauty and Quality

Poseidon's Grasp

A statuette of Poseidon made of gold, this item is as potent a curse as can be imagined. No magus has been able to investigate it long enough to learn anything without falling prey to its dread effects. Whoever possesses

this little treasure inevitably meets a watery end. Ships transporting it tend to sink within a few months, mortals carrying it usually drown. Even on dry land, within a year it causes terrible floods or tidal waves potent enough to drown small towns. And despite falling to the bottom of the ocean time and again, the statuette always mysteriously returns to the surface to find a new victim.

Certainly this item is cursed, but because of its nature very little is known of it, and it certainly isn't easily recognized by those who come to possess it — at least, not until it is too late. However, a search of a large enough library (such as one found at a house's domus magna) might produce a description of the statuette with a simple die + Per + Order of Hermes Lore of 16+. Ominously, any book which actually contains the description will no doubt be written on water-damaged pages, and end abruptly.

The Far-Seeing Eye

Actually a fairly common — and mundane — device created by magi throughout the Order, it sees the most use on the water, where there is considerably less terrain to foil line of sight. Use of the Far-Seeing Eye mimics the Virtue Keen Vision, granting a bonus of +3 to all rolls involving sight, excepting attacks with missile weapons. Some magi have created versions which allow them the free use of their hands for purposes of casting spells, but using the Eye in this fashion requires a Concentration roll with an ease factor equal to the magnitude of the spell being cast. If the caster uses vigorous gestures, there is a –2 penalty to this roll.

Creation of an Eye requires carefully polishing glass disks, and though several have tried, no magus has been able to create a better Eye. Though some have succeeded in making distant objects appear larger, the image is so distorted that it is useless for any purpose.

Books

Hermetic Texts

The Breath of Jove
by Mechanopius of Verditius
Auram (liber quaestionum, target 6, quality 10), 16 points
The Breath of Jove describes in detail several experiments with trapped and forced air, and gives several useful hints on how the sails of a ship can be made to harness even the smallest breeze.

Wolves of the Waves
by Nivalis of House Bonisagus
Aquam (tractatus, quality 5), *Chaos of the Angry Waves,* 15 points
This volume relates how the magi of Nivalis' covenant were regularly attacked by pirates while they were en route to the isle of Scyros to gather vis, and how Nivalis eventually perfected the spell he used to deter them. Ironically, the book ends in the lamentation that in mastering this spell, he ensured that he would spend one season each year journeying to Scyros, as he was "the most capable to avoid the dangers of the journey."

> "After a few weeks, Argus finally trusted me aboard his ship, and gave me the command to unlock the cabinet in which rested his library. Oh, the wonder of it! His scheme for a Mediterranean Tribunal has my endorsement, if he will but allow me time to copy all of these texts!"
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Mundane Texts

Navigatio Sancti Brendani
Area Lore—Northern Atlantic (summa, level 3, quality 1), 20 points
Found in a great many western European cathedrals and monasteries, this book relates

the story of Saint Brendan the Voyager. Note that due to certain embellishments, later translations should instead be considered summae on Theology, with a level of 3 and a quality of 2, for a cost of 22 points.

Secrets of the Deep

by Amintore de Milan

Legend Lore (summa, level 3, quality 2), 22 points

Though this bestiary goes into quite a bit of detail on the fantastic creatures to be found in the depths of the sea, it seems that the monk Amintore spent more time recording stories than verifying them. Most copies of Secrets of the Deep have standardized notations in the margins indicating which beasts are real and which are fanciful imaginings.

De Tempestatibus

by Aristodimos the Younger

Philosophiae (tractatus, quality 7) 21 points

An oft-times rambling description of various weather phenomenon observed during storms and how they affect the land, structures, and sea-going vessels.

Spell Books

Carmina Tristeriam

by Tristeria of House Bonisagus

Touch of the Pearls
Voice of the Lake
Lungs of the Fish
Cloak of the Duck's Feathers
Chaos of the Angry Waves
Neptune's Supplicant

This leather-bound book mentions in the introduction that the book is most useful at sea, and the owner is thus cautioned to make liberal use of *Cloak of the Duck's Feathers* to protect it from dampness.
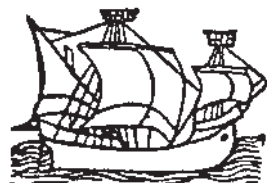
Special Tomes

Journals of the Astra

by Argus of House Verditius

The 47 volumes of the Journals of the Astra are useful in several regards, especially in that they painstakingly describe how to construct a sailing-vessel, since Argus himself — having no knowledge of the subject beforehand — had to learn as he went. Consequently, anyone who reads the first dozen volumes (which requires four seasons of study) gains the Craft Shipwright at level 3, assuming he did not have the skill already. Those who do have the skill will probably be more confused at the oblique approaches Argus took in the construction of his ship, but will find occasional gems of ingenuity. These readers may apply what they have read to a season's practice, adding one-half their level in Shipwright to their stress die, but they may only do this once ever. Copies of this section of the Journals would cost 14 points.

The Journals of the Astra are less useful in learning the skill of Sailing, since Argus built his ship to automate most of the tasks so that a single man could crew his vessel. Nevertheless, readers of volumes fourteen through twenty-two (a task which only requires two seasons) can learn Sailing at level 2 if they do not already know the skill, and may add two to their stress die roll if they practice Sailing for a season, using Argus' innovations. Again, readers can do this only once ever. Copies of this section of the Journals would cost 8 points.

The remainder of the Journals describe Argus' adventures aboard his remarkable ship, including several temporary passengers, attacks by pirates and fantastic beasts, and certainly not least, new inventions to improve his living conditions. Because these are scattered throughout the volumes, however, learning some of them requires reading only select volumes. Most daunting to the student of the Journals is the fact that only one complete copy exists: Argus's. Copies of specific volumes abound, especially in coastal

covenants, but most members of the Order find the daily log entries, the endless soul-searching, the accounts of his dreams, and the sometimes outright rantings of a man too long alone to be more than a little dull — and so hardly worth the time spent copying them. Add to that the difficulty of obtaining access to Argus's complete copy, and it is hardly surprising that there is only one.

Below are descriptions of individual volumes. Note that the volumes must be read for a specific purpose. For example, someone who reads volumes fourteen through twenty-two in order to learn Sailing does not at the same time acquire or improve a score in Adriatic Sea Lore, Hermetic Law, and Enigmatic Wisdom!

Volumes 18-19: Adriatic Sea Lore (summa, level 2, quality 7) 18 points — A description of the ports and peoples of the area where Argus first sailed the Astra.

Volumes 19-21: Hermetic Law (summa, level 1, quality 7) 16 points— Argus's account of how his decision to secede from the covenant where he built the Astra was adjudicated by two quaesitors. Their superior attitude and derisive remarks toward his undertaking help explain both Argus' lifelong dislike of quaesitors, and his decision to spend the rest of his life aboard his ship.

Volumes 15 and 21: Enigmatic Wisdom (liber quaestionum, target 1, quality 10) 11 points — These two volumes relate the conversations Argus had with two different magi of House Criamon, the first of whom had predicted accurately Argus' difficulties with departing his covenant, and the second of whom seemed to remember the first conversation, though she claimed never to have heard of the previous Criamon. Ominously, the maga predicted that Argus would spend two years of his life as a prisoner of Mediterranean pirates.

Volumes 22-23: Speak Italian (summa, level 2, quality 7) 18 points

Volumes 24-29: The Immaculate Ship (ReAn 20), *The Sailor's Salvation* (InCo 10), *Eye of the Shallow Seas* (InAq 20)

These volumes represent the first and only times that Argus experimented with writing spells in his journals. As he realizes in volume 30, doing so made choosing between journal entries and laboratory notes problematic, as can be seen by the incomplete nature of his journal entries over these volumes.

Volumes 32-33: Aegean Sea Lore (summa, level 1, quality 7) 16 points

Volumes 33-39: True to the prediction made by the female Criamon early in his voyages, Argus was taken prisoner when the Astra was captured by pirates. After convincing their leader of his usefulness — both as a wizard, and as the only man living who knew all of the secrets of the Astra, Argus spent two years among them as just another hand aboard his own ship. Though Argus had several previous encounters with pirates, he had never actually spoken to any of them, and so resourcefully took this opportunity to catalogue their behavior, motivations, and lifestyle. Volume 39 ends with the death of the pirate captain at the hands of his own crew after a disastrous defeat by a Crusader fleet, and tells how Argus narrowly escaped his own death, though the Astra was badly damaged.

Anyone who reads these volumes gains the Ability Folk Ken — with a specialty of pirates — at level 4, if they do not already have the Folk Ken ability. If the reader already has Folk Ken, he or she may change the specialty to pirates, with the storyguide's permission. These volumes together are worth 25 points.

Volume 40: Speak Arabic (summa, level 1, quality 7) 16 points — Little more than a primer on Arabic, learned with considerable difficulty from a pirate who had escaped the Crusaders with Argus. Apparently, neither man spoke the other's language. Eventually, Argus returns the man, Kahf, to his homeland.

Volumes 40-41: Legend Lore (liber quaestionum, target 2, quality 10) 12 points — While returning from the Holy Land, the Astra is caught in a supernatural storm and washed up on the shore of a magical island in the Aegean. There Argus meets a trio of djinn, who though childlike and often violent, tell him about the history and society of djinn and ifrit.

Volume 43: Order of Hermes Lore (liber quaestionum, target 2, quality 10) 12 points — Argus uses this entire volume to describe his conversations with his latest passenger, a man who refused to give his name, but who claimed to have been alive when the Order of Hermes was formed, and to have refused membership. Though an unlikely tale, some of the details of the early days of the Order have been confirmed by Hermetic historians. Frustratingly, Argus deliberately avoided questions on the man's apparent and astounding longevity — perhaps by mutual agreement.

Volumes 45-47: Faerie Lore (summa, quality 1, level 7) 16 points — Argus relates a tale of entering a Faerie regio in the Ionian Sea, and of sailing through seemingly endless Faerie waters. The writing is rife with Argus' fears that he will become trapped in Faerie, or that he will escape only to learn that hundreds of years had passed. In fact, when part way through volume 47 he reappears in the mortal realm near the Pillars of Hercules, he learns that he has been missing for five years and five days. He spends the rest of the volume detailing his conclusions about Faerie seas.

The Journeys of Edward the White
by Edward of House Jerbiton

The author wrote a series of books on his explorations and quests, covering a wide variety of subjects. Unfortunately for the reader, Edward uses a mnemonic system of remembering which volume is which, and neither numbers them nor names them individually.

The author has completed several such volumes, but three stand out as useful. In the descriptions of the books used by Hermetic wizards, these are known as The Northern Chronicle, The Underground Chronicle, and The Marine Chronicle.

The Northern Chronicle recounts Edward's search for Ultima Thule in the frozen wastes north of Scandinavia. Ill-equipped and at best unprepared for the conditions, Edward was forced to turn back after only twenty-two days. The Northern Chronicle is, however, a useful summa on Area Lore (Ultima Thule), with a level of 4 and a quality of 4. This book costs 16 points.

In The Underground Chronicle, Edward describes entering a vast tomb complex in Gascony which he claims had become infested with a large number of undead creatures and fantastic beasts. Encountering stiff opposition, Edward returns to the surface and seals the entrance behind him. At the end of the book, Edward advises magi who wish to pick up where he left off to be well-equipped with Corpus and Mentem spells and vis. The Underground Chronicle is a summa on Occult Lore, with a level of 3 and a quality of 5. This book is worth 16 points.

Finally, The Marine Chronicle tells Edward's tale of his adventures upon and under the sea in search of ancient Atlantis. Though it covers a wide range of subjects, it is perhaps best applied as a summa on Legend Lore, with a level of 5 and a quality of 5, worth 20 points.

Chapter 6
Maritime Bestiary

Mundane Sea-Beasts

The majority of creatures found in the sea are the same sorts we know today. Some examples of the most common sea-beasts are found below, and the storyguide should use these as a guideline for creating any others for which he finds a need in his saga. Players might also want to review this section, as any of these could make an interesting familiar or heart-beast.

Crab/Lobster
Crabs and lobsters are found on seashores or coral reefs.
Characteristics: Cun –3, Per –3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –3, Stm –4, Dex 0, Qik +1
Size: –4

Attack	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Pincer	+2	+3	+3	+3

Soak: –2
Fatigue levels: OK, –5, Unconscious
Body levels: OK, –5, Incapacitated

> "Having decided to cut my losses and return home, I felt a duty to catalog the strange creatures I saw and was told of on my expedition. Yes – At times I was terrified, at times enthralled. But at all times, I was mindful that – should I survive the encounter – I would have to recall every last detail."
>
> –from *The Journeys of Edward the White*

Dolphin/Porpoise
Found in most seas.
Characteristics: Cun +2, Per +3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +2, Stm +3, Dex +1, Qik +6
Size: 0
Personality Traits: Brave +4, Inquisitive +3

Attacks	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Bite*	+3	+4	+3	+4
Ram	+8	+6	+5	+3

* Rarely used in combat.
Soak: +6
Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Unconscious
Body levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Eel
Found in coral reefs.
Characteristics: Cun –1, Per –1, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –2, Stm +1, Dex +2, Qik +2
Size: –3
Personality Traits: Vicious +4
Attack (Init/Atk/Def/Dam)
Bite +3/+4/+3/+6
Soak: +1
Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –1, –5, Unconscious
Body levels: OK, 0, –1, –5, Incapacitated
Powers
Slippery: An eel is nearly impossible to grasp, due to its slippery body. Those attempting to grasp an eel must make a successful Brawl attack to immobilize, but the first
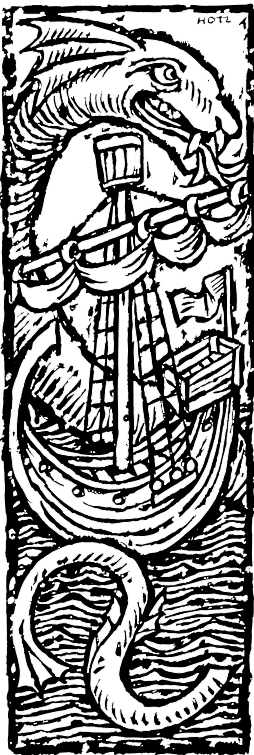
three Body levels are ignored, rather than replaced as normal. See the Brawling Maneuvers Table on page 169 of ArM4 for an explanation of immobilizing in combat.

Fish

This section describes generic fish which do not fall into any of the other categories.

Characteristics: Cun –3, Per –3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –3, Stm –4, Dex 0, Qik +1

Size: –4

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
None	—	—	—	—

Soak: –4

Fatigue levels: OK, –5, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, –5, Incapacitated

Powers

Slippery: Most fish are difficult to grasp, though not quite to the same degree as eels. Those attempting to hold a fish bare-handed must make a successful Brawl attack to immobilize, but the first Body level is ignored, rather than replaced as normal. See the Brawling Maneuvers Table on page 169 of ArM4 for an explanation of immobilizing in combat.

Grouper

Found in coastal waters.

Characteristics: Cun –1, Per +2, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –2, Stm –1, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: –2

Personality Traits: Aggressive +4

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Bite	+3	+4	+3	+6

Soak: –2

Fatigue levels: OK, –1, –3, Unconscious

Body levels: OK, –1, –3, Incapacitated

Man-o'-War/Jellyfish

Found in tropical waters.

Characteristics: Cun –4, Per –4, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –3, Stm 0, Dex –2, Qik –4

Size: –3

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Tentacles	+4	+6	–2	see below

Soak: +0

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –3, Incapacitated

Body levels: OK, 0, –3, Incapacitated

Powers

Paralysis: When a man-o'-war or jellyfish successfully strikes a living creature in combat, the creature must roll a stress die + Stm of 9+, or it will immediately be stricken with excruciating physical pain, causing it the loss of two Fatigue levels. Smaller creatures affected in this way are then slowly devoured. Larger creatures will most likely escape, but will discover that the pain and Fatigue loss persists for days. Change the recovery time to hours, instead of minutes.

Octopus

Found in coral reefs.

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per +2, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +2, Stm +2, Dex +3, Qik +4

Size: –1

Personality Traits: Patient +3

Attacks	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Tentacle	+4	+3	+4	+1
Beak	–4	+0	—	+2

Soak: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Body levels: OK, 0, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Powers

Camouflage: Ocotopi possess the ability to consciously alter their skin color to avoid detection. Perception rolls to detect octopi suffer a –3 penalty.

Ink: When surprised, an octopus expels a cloud of black, inky fluid, simultaneously swimming away. Attacking sea-creatures are generally fooled into going after the cloud of ink. Any creature that wishes to attack the
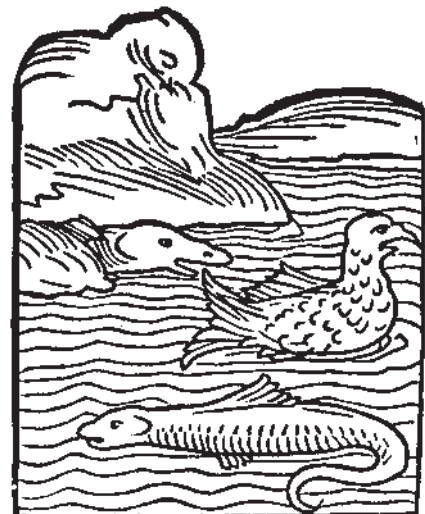
octopus must roll a stress die + Per + Awareness of 9+ to locate the octopus.

Escape: In conjunction with the cloud of ink, an octopus can also move at rapid speeds by taking water in through an opening in its head, and expelling it from a separate opening. An octopus using this ability gains an additional four points of Quickness, though it loses one Fatigue level for each two rounds it does so. Usually it is well out of sight of its predator by the time it becomes fatigued, however.

Shark

Found in every sea. Sizes vary greatly, but this version should suffice for most purposes.

Characteristics: Cun –1, Per +3, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +3, Stm +4, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: +3

Personality Traits: Bloodthirsty +6, Aggressive +3

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Bite	+5	+8	+4	+10

Soak: +6

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1, –3, –5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1, –3, –5, Inc.

Powers

Blood-frenzy: Sharks can "smell" blood in the water, and viciously attack the source of the blood. If a creature in the water is bleeding — or in an area where there is a lot of fresh blood — any sharks in the vicinity will, on a Bloodthirsty roll of 8+, immediately attack the creature, gaining Init +3 and Atk +4.

Squid

Found in cooler waters. Squid differ from octopi in that they possess ten tentacles, instead of eight, and have heads resembling arrowheads.

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per +2, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +2, Stm +2, Dex +3, Qik +4

Size: –1

Personality Traits: Patient +3

Attacks	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Tentacle	+4	+3	+4	+1
Beak	–4	+0	—	+2

Soak: Head +2, Tentacles +1

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Body levels: OK, 0, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Powers

Camouflage: Squid share with octopi the ability to consciously alter their skin color to avoid detection. Perception rolls to detect squid suffer a –3 penalty.

Ink: Like octopi, squid employ an unusual defensive mechanisms to escape predators. When surprised, a squid expels a cloud of black, inky fluid, in a shape similar to its own. The squid then swims away while its attacker blindly assaults the ink cloud. Any creature that wishes to attack the squid must roll a stress die + Per + Awareness of 9+ to locate the squid.

Stingray

Found in muddy and rocky reefs.

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +1, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str –2, Stm –1, Dex +1, Qik +2

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Aggressive +3

Attacks	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Bite	+4	+6	+3	+8
Tail	+6	+8	+4	+12

Soak: +5

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0, –1, –3, –5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0/0, –1, –3, –5, Inc.

Powers

Sting: When a ray strikes a creature with its tail, it injects a powerful poison that can quickly incapacitate a full-grown man. The victim must roll a stress die + Stm of 12+ or lose two Body levels. If the roll botches, the victim loses an additional two Body levels.

Walrus

Found in cold-water areas. Note that since walruses are an unknown — and fantastic — creature to so many people, they are frequently mistaken for demons.

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per 0, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +4, Stm +5, Dex –1, Qik –1

Size: +2

Personality Traits: Territorial +3

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Gouge	+4	+6	+2	+8

Soak: +8

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0, –1/–1, –3, –5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0/0, –1/–1, –3, –5, Inc.
Powers
Bellow: The bellowing of a walrus is unnerving, sounding like the roaring of some Infernal beast. Mortals who hear it must make a Brave roll of 6+ or flee the immediate area.

Whale

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per +2, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +7, Stm +8, Dex 0, Qik +1
Size: +5
Personality Traits: Violent +4 (when harpooned)

Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Tail-Smash	+6	+8	+5	+12

Soak: +15
Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3, –5, Unconscious
Body levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3, –5, Incapacitated
Powers

Ram: Though whales generally have little reason to interact with men or ships, when a whale is attacked by someone aboard a ship, the whale strikes back. It does so by ramming the vessel with an attack bonus of +8 and a damage bonus of +12 (see page 32).
Swallow: Though most whales eat only plankton, larger varieties have been known to swallow larger objects, such as people. The Bible tells the well-known tale of Jonah, who was swallowed by a whale. This is an unlikely event, but if the storyguide wishes to include such an occurrence, he should bear in mind that the stomach of a whale is not designed to digest anything much larger than shrimp, and that the unlucky soul will most likely be regurgitated, often alive and largely unharmed (aside from some decidedly unsettling memories). Of course, the storyguide might decide to set an entire adventure in the belly of a titanic whale — which would have considerably greater statistics than those provided here.

Magical Sea-Beasts

The seas of Mythic Europe are also the home of hundreds of interesting magical creatures — perhaps thousands. A few are described here to spark the storyguide's imagination, though this is by no means an exhaustive list. Refer to the suggested reading for sources of more ideas.

Mermaid

Though the variety of sea-dwelling faeries is almost too great to catalogue, some bear special mention. Mermaids have long fascinated mortals, particularly because they are so elusive and shy. Many sailors have

glimpsed one in the distance — or very occasionally, even close by — only to turn back for a better look and find the mysterious creature gone without a trace. Were it not for repeated sightings of them by more than one person, their existence would be discounted as legend.

The motivations of mermaids are unclear. They seem to seek the notice of mortals, but rarely long enough to be observed clearly. Those who have seen them tell of slender, graceful young maidens with lower bodies blending smoothly into long, elegant piscine tails. As enticing as they appear, experienced sailors regard them with a certain amount of trepidation, since mortal men who have been lucky enough to catch mermaids to steal a kiss have slipped beneath the waves, never to be seen again.

If a mermaid's heart is removed, it is worth 6 pawns of Aquam vis. Performing the procedure requires a Callous (or similar) Personality Trait roll with an ease factor of 8.

Siren

Though not sea-dwelling faeries, Sirens are encountered only by mariners, the most famous of whom was Odysseus, who escaped their clutches by ordering his men to fill their ears with wax as they rowed by the Sirens' island — though he himself listened to their song (albeit while securely fastened to the mast where he could not interfere with his crew).

Dwelling on isolated islands usually within a slight (+2) Faerie regio, Sirens are a variety of faerie that emulate the elemental spirit of the same name. But while the elemental pursues no particular goal, Sirens use their gift of enchanting song to lure men — and occasionally women — into their realm, where they bask in the attentions lavished upon them by the hapless mortals. Few are able to resist the allure of the Sirens long enough to escape, and even those who do resist generally find themselves trapped in the Faerie regio.

Mermaid

Characteristics: Int 0, Per +1, Pre +3, Com −1, Str 0, Stm 0, Dex +2, Qik +2

Faerie Might: 12

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Shy +2, Gentle +2, Sad +1

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam	Fat
Brawling (dodge)	+3	+0	+4*	+1	+1

* +10 in open water

Soak: +1

Body levels: OK, 0/0, −1, −3, −5, Incapacitated

Powers

Infatuation 8: If a mermaid finds a mortal man pleasing, she can catch his eye and compel him to come to her, against all sense.

Deep Embrace: Once a mortal is within her reach, a mermaid can wrap her arms about the hapless soul and draw him underwater. Those of pure heart (and without such Virtues as True Faith) can accompany the mermaid to a Faerie regio where they can breathe the water as easily as air. Mortals who have entered the Faerie regio can leave whenever they so desire, provided they are escorted out by a mermaid. Doing so is a rejection of the one who brought the mortal there originally, though, and she literally dies of a broken heart. Those not of pure heart who manage to take the a mermaid's embrace find themselves several fathoms underwater, suddenly rejected by their erstwhile lover — and drowning.

Siren

Characteristics: Int 0, Per 0, Pre +4, Com +5, Str 0, Stm 0, Dex +1, Qik +1

Faerie Might: 18

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Vain +2, Jealous +2, Covetous (of mortals) +2

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Brawling (dodge)	+2	+3	+4	+1

Soak: +2

Body levels: OK, 0, −1, −3, −5, Incapacitated

Powers:

Enchanting Music 15: Faerie Sirens can sing wordless songs that draw mortals in as surely as moths to flame. While a mortal can hear such a song, he or she must make a Stm roll of 12+ or become hopelessly infatuated with the singer. Women receive a +9 bonus to this roll. At the storyguide's discretion, certain Personality Traits can add or subtract to this roll. A Personality Trait of Chaste, for example, would certainly apply a bonus, but Loyal would not—unless the character were loyal to a mate.

Shipworm

Characteristics: Cun –3, Per –2, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +1, Stm +1, Dex 0, Qik +1

Size: –1 to 0

Personality Traits: n/a

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam	Fat
Bite	+2	+5	+1	+4	+1

Soak: 0

Body levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Incapacitated

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, –1, –3, –5, Unconscious

Sea Serpent

Characteristics: Cun –2, Per –1, Pre +5, Com n/a, Str +15, Stm +10, Dex +2, Qik +2

Magic Might: 30

Size: +6

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam
Bite	+5	+7	–1	+15

Soak: +23

Body levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3, –5/–5, Incapacitated

Powers

Coil: Like some land serpents, a sea serpent will often coil its form around a ship in an attempt to crush it. The sea serpent will typically forego its bite attack for one round while it establishes a "grip" on the vessel, then spend the next two rounds wrapping its entire length about the ship, while once again employing its vicious bite. Each round thereafter, the ship loses one level of Seaworthiness until it either sinks or the sea serpent relents.

Thrash: When a sea serpent is killed, its body flails about for several seconds. In most cases, this occurs beneath the surface of the water, but sea serpents which have attacked boats have been known to completely crush them in their death throes. Anything within Near range of a slain sea serpent suffers +10 damage the first round and +5 damage the second round. The thrashing inflicts +2 damage the third round, after which the serpent finally lies still.

Living Island

Magic Might: 80

Size: +25

There is about as much point in assigning statistics to the Living Island as there is to assigning them to a mundane island. However, if a character insists on doing "battle" with it, assume that the Living Island has a Soak of +50. For each Body level of damage a character manages to deal, add +2 to its Perception roll, and if it rolls a 20 or higher, it plunges into the depths of the sea.

A wide range of theories suggest various parentages for Sirens, but numerous researches have attempted to show that they are in fact minor faeries whose true appearance as rather plain and unattractive fay, rather than as the beautiful maidens they appear. Of course since the only real test of this is to subject oneself to their power long enough to try to "unmask" one of them, this theory remains unproved.

The tongue of a Faerie Siren is worth 4 pawns of Rego vis.

Shipworm

Shipworms are a common variety of oceanic life that feeds on vegetable material — particularly the wood of ships' hulls. They appear as pale, grayish worms with fluked tails and a mouthful of tiny, sharp teeth. Most are virtually undetectable — except for the insidious holes they burrow in vessels — though some varieties are known to reach lengths of up to eight feet! Speculation among sea-going wizards is that these monsters have grown so large from a diet of Herbam vis, or perhaps wooden matter exposed to particularly strong magical auras.

Whatever their nature, the large variety described on this page is nearly as dangerous to men as their smaller cousins are to ships. In their blind search for vegetable matter, shipworms will occasionally bite sailors who venture too close. In sufficient numbers, they could prove deadly, and even a single shipworm can rapidly chew its way through the hull of even the stoutest ship.

Sea Serpent

Sea serpents are a frequent danger to mariners, though they rarely attack ships. Rather, they prey on other aquatic animals, and the occasional sailor who has fallen overboard or foolishly gone swimming. They seem to favor the warmer climes, though an "arc-

tic" variety is known to exist. The cold-water sea serpent seems much more willing to attack vessels, and at one time, the Vikings considered it a heroic feat to slay one. Some non–Hermetic wizards have reputedly tamed sea serpents, and use them to guard their secret meeting places.

Kraken

More fearsome still than sea serpents are krakens, gigantic squids which often attack even the largest ships and crush them to pulp before pulling them down into the depths of the sea. Ferocious predators, krakens do not hesitate to attack anything in the water which looks as though it might provide a meal. Krakens dwell in cold-water areas, unable to survive in warmer seas. They are nearly always encountered singly.

The human-like eye of a kraken is worth 8 pawns of Animál vis.

Monstrous Fish

The mythic seas are vast and mysterious places, full of wonders and horrors. In places, nature is turned upside-down, and gargantuan versions of ordinary creatures lurk in the deep. The most mundane of these are various sorts of fish, which, either because of exposure to magical auras or the whims of God, have grown to monstrous size.

A great many are relatively harmless curiosities, but some are aggressive and violent and perceive anything within reach as food. Presented here are statistics for a wide variety of such creatures.

Occasionally a monstrous fish will bear vis. Roll a simple die and add the fish's Size. If the result is 8+, the fish's scales produce one pawn of Animál or Aquam vis for each two points by which the roll exceeded the ease factor.

Kraken

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per –1, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +10, Stm +9, Dex +2, Qik –2

Magic Might: 48

Size: +10

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam	Fat
Tentacle	+6	+5	+4	+15	+4
Beak	–2	+2	—	+18	+4

Soak: Head +6, Tentacles +3

Body levels: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1/–1, –3/–3/–3/–3, –5/–5/–5, Inc.

Powers

Camouflage: Kraken, like their smaller cousins, possess the ability to consciously alter their skin color to avoid detection. Perception rolls to detect krakens suffer a –3 penalty.

Ink: Krakens employ a defensive mechanism to escape their own predators (whatever such mighty creatures might be). When faced with a particularly tough opponent, the kraken expels a great jet of black, inky fluid, simultaneously swimming away. Large sea-creatures are generally fooled into attacking the squid-shaped jet of ink, but smaller creatures are actually blinded until they leave the area.

Crush: Krakens attack large foes — such as whales, or ships — with their ten sinuous tentacles, using their beaks to devour their victims. When a kraken attacks a vessel, its gnashing beak will quickly tear holes in the ship's hull, but the kraken's tentacles generally cause more damage as the beast tenaciously constricts the vessel. For every four of a kraken's tentacles gripping a ship — not fighting with the crew — the ship loses one point of Seaworthiness every five rounds.

Monstrous Fish

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per –1, Pre n/a, Com n/a, Str +(3 + Size), Stm +(2 + Size), Dex +(0 – Size), Qik +(2 – Size)

Size: +2 to +8

Personality Traits: Aggressive +3 or none

Weapon/Attack	Init	Atk	Def	Dam	Fat
Bite	–2*	2+Size	2–Size	5+Size	+4*

* –(Size/2)

Soak: +(1 + Size)

Body levels:

Size +2: OK, 0/0/0, –1, –3, –5, Incapacitated
Size +3: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1, –3, –5, Incapacitated
Size +4: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1, –3/–3, –5, Incapacitated
Size +5: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3, –5, Incapacitated
Size +6: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3, –5/–5, Incapacitated
Size +7: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3/–3, –5/–5, Incapacitated
Size +8: OK, 0/0/0, –1/–1/–1, –3/–3/–3, –5/–5/–5, Incapacitated

Living Island

The Voyage of Saint Brendan tells of this behemoth, a sea-beast so huge that at rest it appears to be a small island. For reasons of its own it periodically rises to the surface for a time, where the aquatic plants clinging to its back appear to be grass or weeds. If undisturbed, this "living island" will remain in place sometimes for decades, while it gradually becomes more and more land-like in appearance. The legends say that sailors seeking fresh water sometimes anchor their ships to the beast, which then plunges underwater, drowning them all.

Whatever the legends, a book in the possession of House Bjornaer proves the existence of at least one Living Island — possibly the same one encountered by Saint Brendan and his monks — and claims that the beast subsists on a diet of whales. The book goes on to say that before the monster finally returned to the depths, a Bjornaer magus managed to harvest half a dozen rooks of vis, making the Living Island perhaps the most sought-after beast in Hermetic history.

The curious nature of the Living Island allows wizards to collect large amounts of Animál vis from its exposed portions — provided they do not disturb it. A magus who spends a season on the beast's back may extract vis in much the same fashion as Vim vis is harvested from magical auras. The magus adds his or her Creo + Vim + Magic Theory + 18, and for every full ten points in the result, gathers one pawn of Animál vis.

However, each season, the Living Island rolls a quality die, adding its Perception of –2 and the number of pawns of vis that are currently being extracted. If the roll exceeds 20, the monster becomes aware of the troublesome intruders drawing off its essence and plunges mid-season into the deep, almost certainly drowning any living things on its back at the time.

The Journeys of Edward the White, Final Entry

"So my quest has come to an end, fruitlessly. I begin to doubt that Atlantis ever existed, and with each passing day I become more firmly convinced that I was some pawn in the machinations of this Pandectus. Perhaps in defiance of the Code, he spied upon me as I undertook the arduous task of following his map, which I now feel is only a copy of an original – and most likely the arcane connection he used. I should bring this up at the next tribunal, though I suspect Pandectus is counting on there being no resolution until the next Grand Tribunal!

"I am disillusioned now, with both exploration and the Order. The time I have spent so far seems hardly worth the pitiful reward of knowledge and experience. Perhaps I shall undertake one last voyage, this time beyond the reach of the Order entirely, where I can explore to my heart's content without answering to anyone else, man or magus.

"Yes, I believe I shall. I leave you, readers, with this last word of warning. Heed not the words of these so-called scholars when they tell you something cannot be done, or that there is no such place. The delays of your youth will only prove the regrets of your dotage. What you can imagine most likely exists somewhere beyond the seas, waiting only for you to find it.

"Godspeed."

Edward the White, Filius James of Lincoln, follower of Jerbiton

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Map: The Seas of Mythic Europe