

Chapter 7

The Covenant of Tarragon Vale



Physical Appearance

Perched upon a misty hilltop in Unterwalden, Tarragon Vale's main building is a long barn-like structure built of stone. Internally this building is three stories high, but much of the space is left open. A border of rooms rings the upper eaves of the building, and the covenant's magi and senior covenfolk used these. The building has many levels of basement, but these have been closed with magical wards by the Quaesitores. The lesser buildings of this covenant were wooden, and most have decayed into piles of compost.

Customs

The mages of Tarragon Vale were great metaphysical geographers and explorers, Hermetic pioneers in Arcadia and the Land of Spirits. Their great breakthrough was the Narrative Map, a device that displayed the underlying structures that support the variable topographies of mystical realms. This allowed them to deal with challenges on a structural level, instead of dealing with the

ephemeral representative presented by the Realm. The Tarragonese had many enemies within from House Merinita, because their ideology stated that faeries were simply ways of interacting with underlying forces, which should be ignored now that better tools were available.

How Do I Join?

If the player characters solve the puzzle of the Vanishing Away, then they have information of enormous value to a potentially-wealthy group of magi, and can bargain. One option is to have them request the right to settle here, perhaps paying a rent of vis to the heirs for a period of time. If they formally become the new members of Tarragon Vale, they inherit its legal position, including its debts and supernatural enemies, and these things are not clear even to the Quaesitores. Storyguides considering traditional dungeon delving might have the player characters pacify the things skulking in the many subterranean levels of the covenant while negotiating the defenses left by the original inhabitants.

If someone else discovers what happened to this covenant's inhabitants, then the Tarragon Vale vis is handed out, and ownership of the covenant's vis sources is divided up. Some of the heirs will want to move to the Alps. If the player characters are part of this group it gives them a reason to draw together and provides the vis for the covenant stores. Many of the heirs will not want to move to the Alps, and could be convinced to sell their new properties. A covenant or group of covenants could purchase some of these to set up a new chapter house and place their filii there.



Cymena the Redcap

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

Age: 48 (apparent late twenties)

Size: -1

Confidence: 3

Virtues and Flaws: Premonitions +1,
Well-traveled +1 Redcap (Free),
Indenture (Free), Whitlams (free, as
described below) Small frame -2,

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Cautious +2

Reputations: Level-headed 3, with magi of
Mercere

Wpn/Atk	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam	Fat
Brawling					
(fist)	+3	+2	+3	-1	+4
Alpenstock*	+9	+11	+6	+2	+5
Bow	+2	+2	n/a	+4	+4

*as quarterstaff

Soak: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, -1, -3, -5,
Unconscious

Body levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Animal handling 5 (equines),
Athletics 5 (hiking), Awareness 3
(dangers on the road), Bargain 3 (for
mundane supplies), Brawling 2 (with
animals), Boating 2 (rough rivers),
Bow 2 (wild animals), Carouse 3
(avoiding being drunk), Chirurgy 1
(self), Climb 2 (icy paths), Craft 2
(Leatherworking — repairs), Disguise
1 (fitting in), Etiquette 2 (covenfolk),
Faerie Lore 2 (avoidance), Finesse 2

(Seven League Stride), Folk Ken 5
(Unterwalden), Greater Alpine
Tribunal Lore 6 (safe traveling
between covenants), Guile 1 (pretend-
ing to be a pilgrim), Hermetic Law 1
(redcaps), Hermes Lore 2 (personali-
ties of magi), Hunt 2 (cattle stealing),
Legerdemain 2 (protecting self from),
Legend Lore 2 (dangerous places),
Occult Lore 2 (self defense),
Premonitions 5 (using Seven League
Stride), Ride 3 (mule), Scribe Latin 4
(concise letters), Great Weapon 3
(alpenstock), Speak Latin 5 (with
magi), Speak German 4 (peasants),
Speak Langue d'Oc 3 (peasants),
Speak Italian 3 (peasants), Speak
Romansch 2 (peasants), Stealth 3
(Alpine wilderness), Storytelling 1
(anecdotes), Survival 4 (Alpine envi-
ronment), Swim 1 (in very cold
water), Wagoneering 4 (repair).

Equipment: Has taken a longevity potion
(-5). In addition to her magic items,
described below, Cymena has any item
which an Alpine recap can be reason-
ably expected to have. She has an
excellent set of boots made out of the
skin of an Alpine dragonette, which
she killed herself, of which she is
extremely proud.

Encumbrance: 0

Magi

Tarragon Vale had four magi when they were last seen, twenty-two years ago. No explanation for their absence has been found, despite extensive effort by the Quaesitores, and by those magi who claim descent from the four. Since the Tarragon Vale charter makes no provision for its dissolution, the Quaesitores are reluctant to declare the covenant dissolved in the

absence of bodies. They are aware that the Tarragon Vale magi might emerge from Arcadia at some later time, claiming retrospective payment of their covenant's vis income. The Quaesitores have been collecting and storing the covenant's vis income for the last twenty years, spending only enough to maintain the covenant's Aegis of the Hearth, and to cast the Shrouded Glen about the site.

The descendants of the Tarragon Vale magi want access to the huge stockpile of vis that the Quaesitores are holding. The

Cymena's Items

Pin

An enchanted triangle of copper.

Heat object until warm (CrIg 6: Touch/Momentary/Individual — Constant)

Eyes of the Cat (MuCo(An) 10: Touch/Sun/Individual — 1 use per day)

Lickstone

A small metal plate that attaches to the palette. In this case, it's golden.

Lickstone spell: A tiny spell that intertwines two effects: *Adhere* (ReTe 1 — Constant — Device alone) and *Hide* (MuM 1 — Constant — Device alone).

Seven-League Stride (ReCo 35: Personal/Momentary/Individual — 24 uses per day)

Since Cymena lives at her home the usual spell crafted into lickstones, *Leap of Homesoming*, would not be useful to her and the magi at Rorschach have allowed her to trade lickstones.

Leaves

Carries a copper leaf in each boot. Each leaf contains a pawn of *Rego vis*, but has the secondary property of reducing blistering and ankle injuries. The leaves allow a single reroll of any die that would result in blisters or ankle injuries, and are not used up in the process.



Quaesitores know this, and have passed on the work of finding out what happened to the original magi, by stating that until proof of death is produced, no estates may be finalized. This matter has been discussed at Tribunal, but the Quaesitoreal position has been upheld, pending further evidence. Most Alpine magi want the pool of descendants to grow sufficiently large that any individual magus gets only a rook or so of vis from the disbursement. They suspect that when the Tarragon Vale vis is finally distributed, the suddenly rich are going to cause their neighbors no end of trouble.

Covenfolk

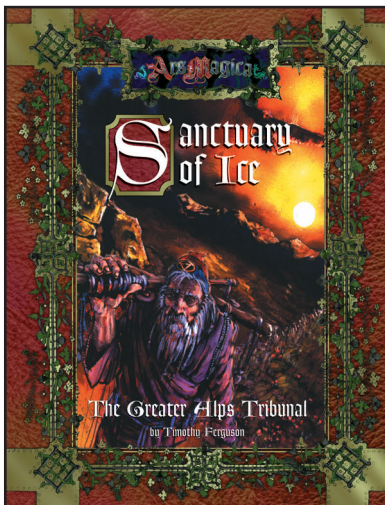
The covenfolk of Tarragon Vale disappeared with their masters. Currently a non-magical redcap, whose grandparents were from Tarragon Vale, lives at the site. This arrangement is informal, and she has no particular right to the building or lands. About 25% of those born here had Second Sight. The Sighted were prized as grogs, and the export of skilled soldiers was one of the covenant's key sources of revenue. This effect has waned since the *Vanishing Away*. Other covenants have tried transporting pregnant covenwomen to Tarragon Vale, but none of the children have developed the Sight.



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