

Faces in the Smoke

Volume Two - Shadows and Steel



VICTORIANA



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Dedication: To Steve Crook, in memory of his friendship and the many games we played from 'Airwolf til 6:00'. You will be missed.

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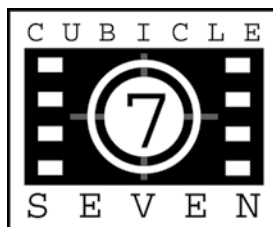
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FACES IN THE SMOKE

VOLUME TWO – SHADOWS AND STEEL

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INTRODUCTION

“These invaders have taken everything from us. We will take it back again, and make them pay in blood for their arrogance.”

- **The Black Mistress**



The fate of the world is not just decided in the parlours of the wealthy or the corridors of power. Out in the smog-covered streets, desperate villains clash with steel-eyed heroes to decide the fate of those without the power and wealth to protect them. This book is about those who are prepared to get their hands dirty to achieve their goals, whether those goals are malevolent or benign. On the streets, you have only yourself, and those you trust, to rely on. Pick your friends and your enemies carefully.

Welcome once more to Faces in the Smoke. In this second volume 'Shadows and Steel' we move away from the salons and parlours of the rich into a darker world on the streets of Victoriana. Here we detail those who strike out against injustice, even when it makes them villains rather than heroes.

If you already own Faces in the Smoke Volume 1: The Secret Masters you will already be familiar with the format and style of this book. However, you need not own Volume 1 to enjoy Volume 2. We have reprinted the detail on creating organisations, revised NPCs and the new traits we offered in Volume 1 for the convenience of those who do not have that book. Both volumes are designed to complement, rather than require, each other.

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

This book details some of the myriad organisations plotting and planning in the world of Victoriana. Each organisation detailed in this book comes with an array of secrets and adventure seeds that make them useful for the Gamemaster. However, Non-Player Characters do not inhabit a different world to the Player Characters; indeed, they would be pointless if they did. As much as these organisations might be the villains of any adventure, they might just as easily be an organisation that some of the characters are looking to join. Players might find that looking at these organisations suggests new characters they might want to play, characters with a built-in agenda and purpose in the world of Victoriana.

In creating this book, agenda has been the key. We have not presented a manual of NPCs that can serve as villains of the week. Each organisation might be an ally or an enemy of the Player Characters depending on how they approach it. Few of the organisations can be considered 'good' or 'evil'. Even the most ruthless villain might become an ally to a group of nefarious Player Characters. The most philanthropic gentleman might balk at dealing with the lower orders in person.

So, as with everything in Victoriana, we present you with a selection of agenda, secrets and mysteries to bring into your game. We have given you all you need to bring their schemes across the Player Characters' paths but what happens from there is up to you.

THE SECRETS TO BE FOUND IN THIS BOOK

We have divided the book into several chapters; each giving the organisations it describes a theme and style. However, many of the organisations detailed here do not fit neatly into specific groups; there are cultists among the Gentlemen and scientists among the soldiers. This is not an oversight, as few agendas fit conveniently into the expectations of others. So we have placed groups into the most appropriate category depending on the overall style of the group. In the end, each organisation is really in a category of its own. So, we begin with a brief guide to those categories, chapters and the organisations that can be found within them.

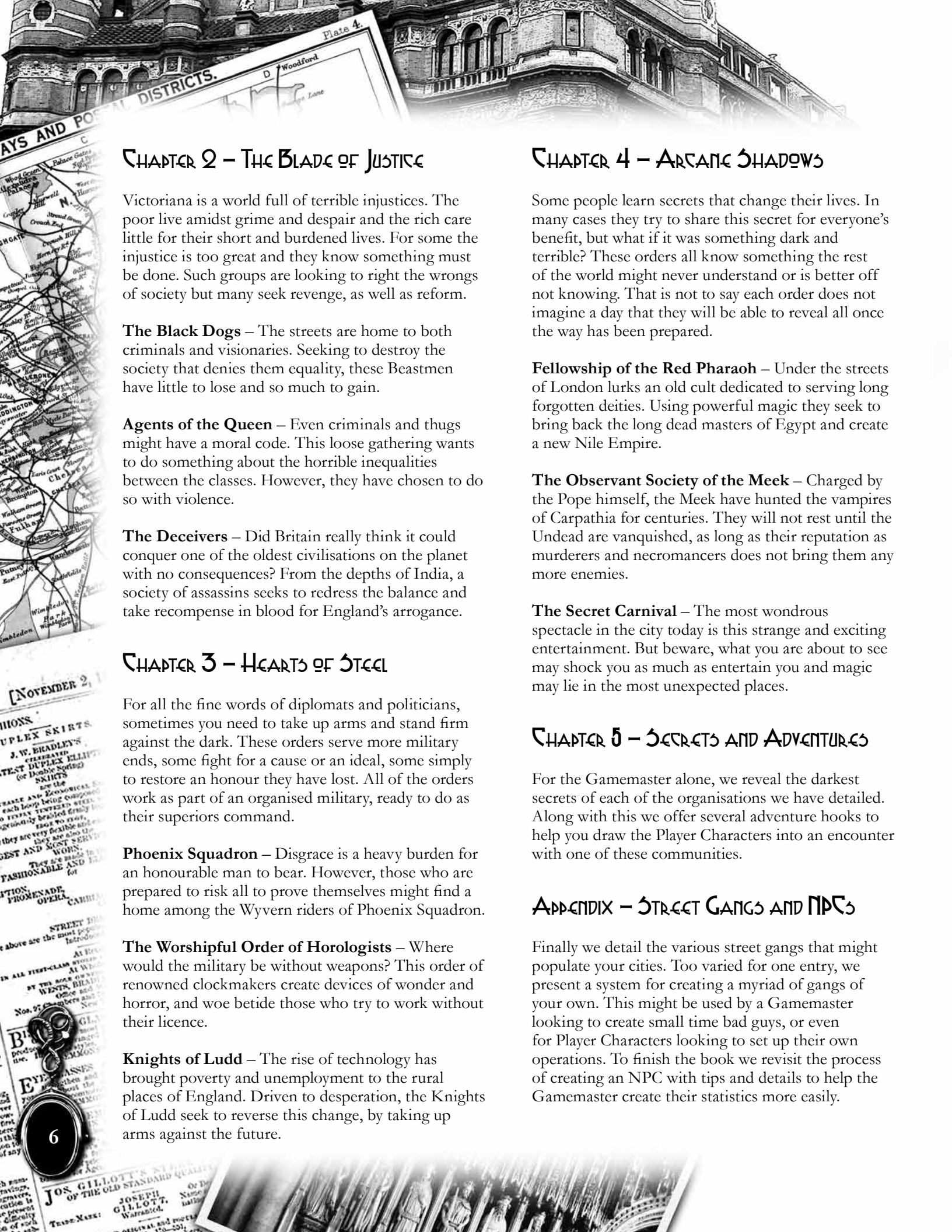
CHAPTER 1 – GENTLEMEN AND ADVENTURERS

Wealth and privilege are not enough for some people. In this new age a spirit of adventure grips many would-be heroes who set out to seek, not their fortune, but adventure. The lives of such adventurers are often as glamorous as they are dangerous but such is the price of leaving the safety of a wealthy home.

The Adventurers' Society – A club for explorers that does more than just talk of old adventures over a cigar.

Pan-Asiatic Spice Company – This world-wide airship carrier business battles thieves, pirates and anyone who tries to stop them getting the job done.

Briggs' Gang – Not every criminal comes from the gutters of the smoke. Mason Briggs loves the challenge and adventure of crime, even though he has all the money he needs.



CHAPTER 2 – THE BLADE OF JUSTICE

Victoriana is a world full of terrible injustices. The poor live amidst grime and despair and the rich care little for their short and burdened lives. For some the injustice is too great and they know something must be done. Such groups are looking to right the wrongs of society but many seek revenge, as well as reform.

The Black Dogs – The streets are home to both criminals and visionaries. Seeking to destroy the society that denies them equality, these Beastmen have little to lose and so much to gain.

Agents of the Queen – Even criminals and thugs might have a moral code. This loose gathering wants to do something about the horrible inequalities between the classes. However, they have chosen to do so with violence.

The Deceivers – Did Britain really think it could conquer one of the oldest civilisations on the planet with no consequences? From the depths of India, a society of assassins seeks to redress the balance and take recompense in blood for England's arrogance.

CHAPTER 3 – HEARTS OF STEEL

For all the fine words of diplomats and politicians, sometimes you need to take up arms and stand firm against the dark. These orders serve more military ends, some fight for a cause or an ideal, some simply to restore an honour they have lost. All of the orders work as part of an organised military, ready to do as their superiors command.

Phoenix Squadron – Disgrace is a heavy burden for an honourable man to bear. However, those who are prepared to risk all to prove themselves might find a home among the Wyvern riders of Phoenix Squadron.

The Worshipful Order of Horologists – Where would the military be without weapons? This order of renowned clockmakers create devices of wonder and horror, and woe betide those who try to work without their licence.

Knights of Ludd – The rise of technology has brought poverty and unemployment to the rural places of England. Driven to desperation, the Knights of Ludd seek to reverse this change, by taking up arms against the future.

CHAPTER 4 – ARCANIC SHADOWS

Some people learn secrets that change their lives. In many cases they try to share this secret for everyone's benefit, but what if it was something dark and terrible? These orders all know something the rest of the world might never understand or is better off not knowing. That is not to say each order does not imagine a day that they will be able to reveal all once the way has been prepared.

Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh – Under the streets of London lurks an old cult dedicated to serving long forgotten deities. Using powerful magic they seek to bring back the long dead masters of Egypt and create a new Nile Empire.

The Observant Society of the Meek – Charged by the Pope himself, the Meek have hunted the vampires of Carpathia for centuries. They will not rest until the Undead are vanquished, as long as their reputation as murderers and necromancers does not bring them any more enemies.

The Secret Carnival – The most wondrous spectacle in the city today is this strange and exciting entertainment. But beware, what you are about to see may shock you as much as entertain you and magic may lie in the most unexpected places.

CHAPTER 5 – SECRETS AND ADVENTURES

For the Gamemaster alone, we reveal the darkest secrets of each of the organisations we have detailed. Along with this we offer several adventure hooks to help you draw the Player Characters into an encounter with one of these communities.

APPENDIX – STREET GANGS AND NPCs

Finally we detail the various street gangs that might populate your cities. Too varied for one entry, we present a system for creating a myriad of gangs of your own. This might be used by a Gamemaster looking to create small time bad guys, or even for Player Characters looking to set up their own operations. To finish the book we revisit the process of creating an NPC with tips and details to help the Gamemaster create their statistics more easily.

[NOVEMBER 21]

PHIONS

UPLEX SKIRTS

J. W. BRADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS

TRADE AND ECONOMICAL
each loop being composed
of FINEST TWISTED STEEL
and ingeniously braced fittingly
to the body
they are very flexible and
they are also
EASY AND MOST
WORN.
They are made in
FASHIONABLE AND
FOR

STREET

above are the most popular
Introduct

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BY THE ROAD OF
WESTON, BLA
Office and
No. 27, G

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EMERSON

EYE
you
about the
of any

6

JOS. GILLOTT'S STAMPS
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

JOSEPH
GILLOTT,
WARRINGTON.

TRADE-MARK:
ORIGINAL and POWERFUL

CREATING YOUR OWN ORGANISATIONS

Each organisation in this book follows the same format. When creating your own organisations you may find it useful to follow this same format.

Introduction – A brief introduction, in the form of scene setting fiction.

History – How the order came into existence. Was it always what is it now? How has it developed from its original intentions?

Structure – Details on how the organisation is structured. Are there any ranks? How do members report to each other? Maybe there is no organisation beyond a leader. Maybe the organisation is far larger (or smaller) than it first appears.

Joining the Organisation – No order lasts long without members, so where do they come from and how do they prove themselves? Who decides and what do you need to do to prove yourself?

Resources – Each organisation can lay claim to a certain amount of resources. These need not be guns and machines but might be far more subtle. Contacts in the higher echelons of government can be vital, as can secret lore on magics both light and dark. Does the order claim any special alliances or powerful members? Where and what is its base of operations, and how well protected is it?

Agenda – What does the organisation want and what are its current activities and priorities? Without a purpose, it would never hold together and that purpose needs an agenda.

Personalities – Who is in charge and who is carrying out their orders? Personalities might not just be the most powerful members; they might also be those with special responsibilities or even those working secretly against the organisation.

While detailing the sections above should provide you with a good foundation for any organisation, there are a few more things you may wish to consider.

The first thing you should ask yourself is do you really need the organisation? It is easy to get caught up in creating something that interests you and lose sight

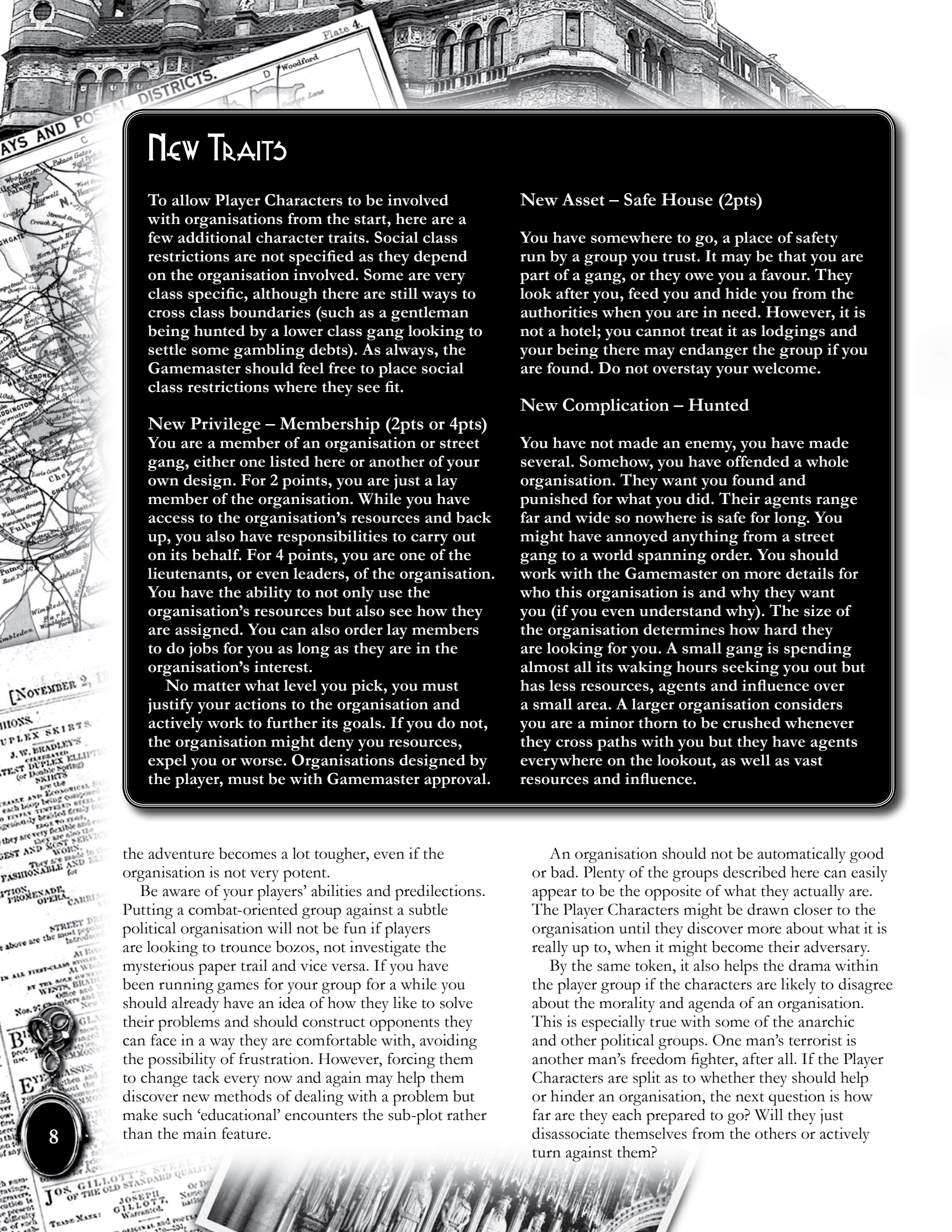
of what your adventure really needs. Keep in mind the reasons you decided to create the organisation. What purpose will it play in the adventure and how has it been built to fulfil that role? Having said that, you may not have created the organisation to work inside an adventure you already have. Often an organisation comes to mind and you decide to pitch the Player Characters against it to create new adventures. In this case, you need to consider how well the organisation lends itself to actual adventures. A super-secret order of ancient vampires might sound cool but it is likely to squash the Player Characters or remain so far in the background that they will never discover its existence. Design your idea with the needs of the adventures it will fit into, or generate.

While it is implicit in the organisations in this book, consider the size of your organisation. How many people claim membership and of those, how many understand the real secrets of the society. Size is vital as it implies greater assets and control. More people mean more contacts and muscle. However, a smaller and more select group can prove very well connected as well, although they may outsource a lot more of their dirty work.

Few, if any, groups of people have a membership entirely dedicated to the goals of the organisation. Some people join for power and money or their own agenda rather than due to a belief in the designs of the order. The more people involved in the order, the more chance dissenters may be present. Also, the larger the order the less time it can spend keeping an eye on its members. In larger groups, dissenters (and even agents from other groups attempting to infiltrate) may have an easier time working against the order and remaining unnoticed.

USING YOUR ORGANISATIONS

Consider how much of a challenge is the organisation designed to be. Take the skills and abilities of not only the characters but the players into account; the coolest organisation that proves to be no challenge, or unstoppable, is no fun for your players. Make sure the organisation works in a field the Player Characters have some skill with. If your character group are all soldiers and lower class thugs, an organisation that manipulates the soirees of the upper classes is just not going to fit. This might not make it completely unsuitable but it will prove a far greater challenge because the characters may not have the right abilities to face it. If the Player Characters have trouble getting to the upper class NPCs being manipulated,



NEW TRAITS

To allow Player Characters to be involved with organisations from the start, here are a few additional character traits. Social class restrictions are not specified as they depend on the organisation involved. Some are very class specific, although there are still ways to cross class boundaries (such as a gentleman being hunted by a lower class gang looking to settle some gambling debts). As always, the Gamemaster should feel free to place social class restrictions where they see fit.

New Privilege – Membership (2pts or 4pts)

You are a member of an organisation or street gang, either one listed here or another of your own design. For 2 points, you are just a lay member of the organisation. While you have access to the organisation's resources and back up, you also have responsibilities to carry out on its behalf. For 4 points, you are one of the lieutenants, or even leaders, of the organisation. You have the ability to not only use the organisation's resources but also see how they are assigned. You can also order lay members to do jobs for you as long as they are in the organisation's interest.

No matter what level you pick, you must justify your actions to the organisation and actively work to further its goals. If you do not, the organisation might deny you resources, expel you or worse. Organisations designed by the player, must be with Gamemaster approval.

New Asset – Safe House (2pts)

You have somewhere to go, a place of safety run by a group you trust. It may be that you are part of a gang, or they owe you a favour. They look after you, feed you and hide you from the authorities when you are in need. However, it is not a hotel; you cannot treat it as lodgings and your being there may endanger the group if you are found. Do not overstay your welcome.

New Complication – Hunted


You have not made an enemy, you have made several. Somehow, you have offended a whole organisation. They want you found and punished for what you did. Their agents range far and wide so nowhere is safe for long. You might have annoyed anything from a street gang to a world spanning order. You should work with the Gamemaster on more details for who this organisation is and why they want you (if you even understand why). The size of the organisation determines how hard they are looking for you. A small gang is spending almost all its waking hours seeking you out but has less resources, agents and influence over a small area. A larger organisation considers you are a minor thorn to be crushed whenever they cross paths with you but they have agents everywhere on the lookout, as well as vast resources and influence.

the adventure becomes a lot tougher, even if the organisation is not very potent.

Be aware of your players' abilities and predilections. Putting a combat-oriented group against a subtle political organisation will not be fun if players are looking to trounce bozos, not investigate the mysterious paper trail and vice versa. If you have been running games for your group for a while you should already have an idea of how they like to solve their problems and should construct opponents they can face in a way they are comfortable with, avoiding the possibility of frustration. However, forcing them to change tack every now and again may help them discover new methods of dealing with a problem but make such 'educational' encounters the sub-plot rather than the main feature.

An organisation should not be automatically good or bad. Plenty of the groups described here can easily appear to be the opposite of what they actually are. The Player Characters might be drawn closer to the organisation until they discover more about what it is really up to, when it might become their adversary.

By the same token, it also helps the drama within the player group if the characters are likely to disagree about the morality and agenda of an organisation. This is especially true with some of the anarchic and other political groups. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter, after all. If the Player Characters are split as to whether they should help or hinder an organisation, the next question is how far are they each prepared to go? Will they just disassociate themselves from the others or actively turn against them?



If the organisation brings a schism to the Player Characters' group, make sure you have a way out of it. The discovery of new secrets might band them back together again, with some of them ashamed at having helped or hindered the organisation. If you do not have a plan to bring them all together, you may end up forcing some players to create new characters, which is no fun. However, sometimes, even characters who disagree that facing the bad guys is a good idea might still join the fight just to help their friends.

Having designed the organisation for your Player Characters, consider how to introduce it to them. You need not start with a direct confrontation. The thugs they fought off might turn out to work for an underworld crime syndicate. To save face they say the characters started the fight, making their bosses think the Player Characters are somehow onto them.

It need not be the organisation's muscle that the Player Characters come across first, they might run across a high ranking member of an organisation and either offend or impress him. Behind the scenes, this NPC then sets about finding a way to either get revenge or look to recruiting the characters. It may be a very long time before the Player Characters even realise that he is part of the organisation. In this case, the NPC might use the resources of the organisation they are a part of to further a personal agenda. The characters might discover the organisation itself does not have a problem with them and may even join forces with them to deal with their member who has overstepped his boundaries.

However, the direct approach is just as viable. The Player Characters might come across a stronghold of the organisation and end up in a direct confrontation. They might foolishly think that winning that battle has been the end of it. Unfortunately, they did not attack the organisation's main headquarters and soon enough the larger part of the organisation comes looking for payback.

Secrecy is another factor in how the organisation might approach (or be approached by) the Player Characters. Organisations that prize their anonymity will be careful and subtle. It might be a long time before the Player Characters discover their opponent is an organisation rather than a series of random adversaries. Some might use their name to frighten potential adversaries, leaving some form of calling card at each encounter. Consider the motives of the organisation in putting it against the Player Characters. What does it want from the encounter and what is it prepared to risk?

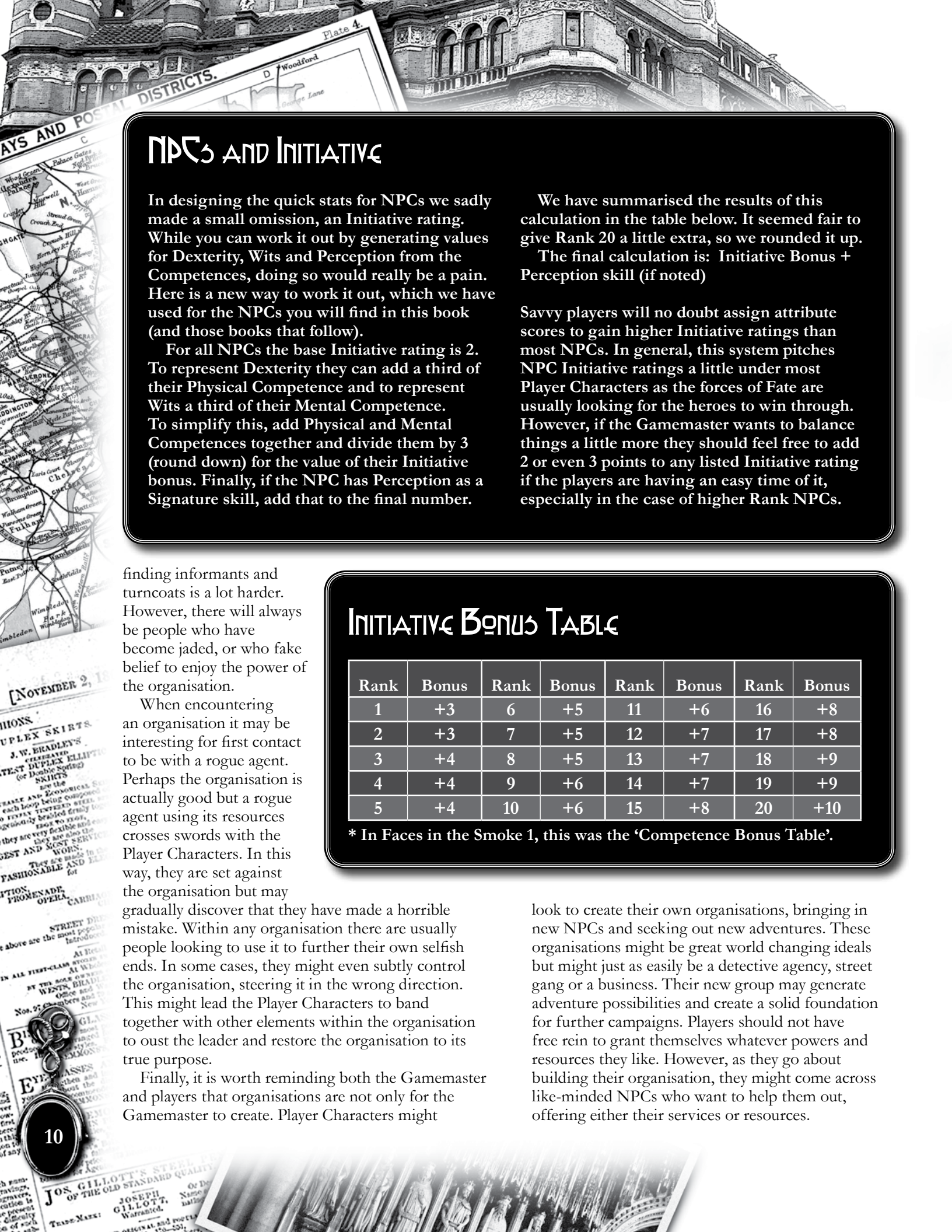
When deciding how powerful an organisation is going to be, it is important to give it a weakness of some form. If it is all-powerful it may be too hard to

defeat and may seem unrealistic. Weaknesses are a vital way of fleshing out both organisations and characters. They need not be crippling but should give the Player Characters a way to defeat the organisation, or for their enemies to do so. A few suggestions are:

- The organisation has overreached itself, meaning it is spread thin across its fields of interest.
- The leaders of the organisation have supernatural weaknesses that can be exploited. For instance, a group of Vampires run the organisation, so can only actively plan during the night.
- The organisation is in direct conflict with another organisation for control of a vital sphere of influence. Recent battles with other organisations are draining its resources (or even both organisations') making it weaker than usual and loosening its grip on the contested resource.
- Subordinates are treated badly in the organisation, making them prone to bribery and even to becoming double agents.
- There is a specific sphere of influence that the organisation has no control over. This might be a particular social class, an area of science or magic, an area of the criminal underworld, or a political affiliation.
- Ritual and dogma are so important to the organisation that it easily gets bogged down in trivial details. Maybe it is a group of magicians who only meet to make decisions during a full moon, or a branch of the civil service that is full of red tape (here is my receipt for your receipt), perhaps the leaders of the organisation consider themselves so holy they cannot touch any of their subordinates or anything not ritually purified.

Again, as with everything about the organisation, tailor its weaknesses to both the Player Characters and the style of the organisation itself. You will usually find its weaknesses are apparent as you create it. If you make the weakness something the Player Characters might be able to exploit especially well, then it just remains to leave a few clues and see if they can figure out its Achilles Heel.

It is worth remembering that few organisations command absolute loyalty from every single member. This becomes truer the larger the organisation is, not only because there are more people involved but also because it is less likely to be able to keep an eye on everyone. Totalitarian organisations often command more loyalty by fear but should the Player Characters find a way to protect their informants, they will find plenty of people willing to escape the clutches of the organisation. When an organisation has a central belief



NPCs AND INITIATIVE

In designing the quick stats for NPCs we sadly made a small omission, an Initiative rating. While you can work it out by generating values for Dexterity, Wits and Perception from the Competences, doing so would really be a pain. Here is a new way to work it out, which we have used for the NPCs you will find in this book (and those books that follow).

For all NPCs the base Initiative rating is 2. To represent Dexterity they can add a third of their Physical Competence and to represent Wits a third of their Mental Competence. To simplify this, add Physical and Mental Competences together and divide them by 3 (round down) for the value of their Initiative bonus. Finally, if the NPC has Perception as a Signature skill, add that to the final number.

We have summarised the results of this calculation in the table below. It seemed fair to give Rank 20 a little extra, so we rounded it up.

The final calculation is: Initiative Bonus + Perception skill (if noted)

Savvy players will no doubt assign attribute scores to gain higher Initiative ratings than most NPCs. In general, this system pitches NPC Initiative ratings a little under most Player Characters as the forces of Fate are usually looking for the heroes to win through. However, if the Gamemaster wants to balance things a little more they should feel free to add 2 or even 3 points to any listed Initiative rating if the players are having an easy time of it, especially in the case of higher Rank NPCs.

finding informants and turncoats is a lot harder. However, there will always be people who have become jaded, or who fake belief to enjoy the power of the organisation.

When encountering an organisation it may be interesting for first contact to be with a rogue agent. Perhaps the organisation is actually good but a rogue agent using its resources crosses swords with the Player Characters. In this way, they are set against the organisation but may gradually discover that they have made a horrible mistake. Within any organisation there are usually people looking to use it to further their own selfish ends. In some cases, they might even subtly control the organisation, steering it in the wrong direction. This might lead the Player Characters to band together with other elements within the organisation to oust the leader and restore the organisation to its true purpose.

Finally, it is worth reminding both the Gamemaster and players that organisations are not only for the Gamemaster to create. Player Characters might

INITIATIVE BONUS TABLE

Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus
1	+3	6	+5	11	+6	16	+8
2	+3	7	+5	12	+7	17	+8
3	+4	8	+5	13	+7	18	+9
4	+4	9	+6	14	+7	19	+9
5	+4	10	+6	15	+8	20	+10

* In Faces in the Smoke 1, this was the 'Competence Bonus Table'.

look to create their own organisations, bringing in new NPCs and seeking out new adventures. These organisations might be great world changing ideals but might just as easily be a detective agency, street gang or a business. Their new group may generate adventure possibilities and create a solid foundation for further campaigns. Players should not have free rein to grant themselves whatever powers and resources they like. However, as they go about building their organisation, they might come across like-minded NPCs who want to help them out, offering either their services or resources.



CHAPTER 1

GENTLEMEN AND ADVENTURERS

“If all evil needs is for good men to do nothing, it is surely the duty of a gentleman to make a stand.”

- Martin Warwick

THE ADVENTURERS' SOCIETY

Her shoes were too noisy, but she had to run. With each footfall, they clattered on the cobbles, cracking audibly in the darkness of the fog-ridden street. Were it not for her shoes they might not find her, but this was no time to tip-toe around. So, with her skirts gathered in one hand, she ran as fast as she could.

It wasn't enough though. "Going somewhere missy?" asked the growling voice of the wolfman, stepping out of the shadows ahead of her. Damn them, they weren't chasing her, they'd been herding her. She stopped, began to back away, but instantly realised there was nowhere to go. The remainder of the gang began creeping towards her down the alley, cackling with delight.

However, Evelyn wasn't quite the easy target they expected. As the first thug ran at her from behind, she neatly sidestepped and sent him sprawling to the ground with a well-placed kick to the shin. Before the others could react, she spoke a short incantation and the alley lit up with energy bolts streaking this way and that. Between the flashes rang the yelps of gang members as the thaumaturgical fury struck home.

Having dispatched the gang, Evelyn turned to the wolfman, the last of her mana energy crackling across her fingers and fading away. He seemed unimpressed, hefting a huge club as he stepped towards her.

"No more men?" she asked.

"No more magic?" he replied. "I can always get more men." He grinned at her, exposing his teeth as he did so.

The wolfman charged, but with a flick of her wrist Evelyn dropped a small derringer into her hand from her sleeve. Ducking under his blow, she fired the gun into his chest at point-blank range. With a look of shock, the wolfman crumpled to the floor.

"I don't need magic to deal with you," she told him as he passed out. "All I needed was to verify you were the leader."

"Not bad at all, my dear," said Carmichael, as he stepped out of the shadows further up the alley. His elegant walking cane tapped the cobbles as he walked. He took out a finely made pocket watch with a strange symbol engraved on the casing and checked the time. "Very fast, too. That is certainly one group of ruffians the locals won't be troubled by anymore."

Evelyn reached for her own watch, it was appropriately ladylike, but bore the same strange symbol that appeared on Carmichael's watch. She glared at the time for a moment before snapping it shut.

"And maybe next time we work together, you'll be on time," she chided.

HISTORY


The world of Victoriana is host to all manner of evil. There are terrors in the darkness and the smog that few people have the courage and skill to stand against. At times like these the police and the government cannot help. The worst evil, manmade or supernatural, obeys no law and cannot be revealed with procedures and police detectives. Luckily, there is one organisation that can help you when that darkness finds its way to your door. While it never publicises the fact, in the Adventurers' Society is an elite gathering of men and women of the finest mettle who are ready to stand between the innocent and the darkness.

The Adventurers' Society traces its origin back many years to the birth of British colonialism. While there have always been adventurers and explorers, the new age of Empire brought with it a new kind of explorer: the Gentleman. Travel took months and those who went deep into the wilderness had a very long way to go if they needed support and protection. However, as the Empire grew, and technology improved, the risks began to reduce. An explorer no

longer needs to return to his home shore to get help from his country, and as travel quickened, exploration no longer needs to take years. English adventurers can also count on the protection of Britain's reputation, given that few who are aware of the country's power are willing to cross it.

Behind the armies of the burgeoning empire came a small trail of idle rich explorers and adventurers, eager to experience the mysteries of the newly discovered world. Initially, only the rich had the time and inclination to travel abroad and wander far from civilisation. However, eager to establish themselves in society, many newly rich middle class entrepreneurs left England to search for new opportunities. With both forms of explorer, their servants valiantly followed, attempting against all odds to keep their masters in the manner they were accustomed to.

However, not all who embraced the spirit of the age were able to set off and travel the world. Such was the case with the Dwarven Industrialist, Nathaniel Farndale. Nathaniel profited from the riches that came to the middle classes as the East India Company took hold of most of India in the late 1700s. Those



same riches led to a rather gluttonous lifestyle that left him with serious gout in his right foot. While he was unable to become an adventurer, Nathaniel loved to hear the stories of those who were, inviting adventurers of all kinds to visit him at home to regale him with stories. He had no shortage of entertainers as those who told the best stories were the recipients of large grants for further travels and adventure.

Unfortunately, after a year of entertaining a house full of all manner of people, Nathaniel's wife Flora told Nathaniel in no uncertain terms that these gatherings had to stop, both for her sake and that of the neighbours. However, Nathaniel had no intention of abandoning his gatherings. He bought a property near the renowned Theatre Royal on the Haymarket in 1764, and fitted the building out as a clubhouse.

Given the area's reputation as a place for prostitutes and ne'er-do-wells the property at 15 Suffolk Street was quite a bargain. Nathaniel could not attend all the time due to his gout but he ensured that servants were on hand to see to his guests when he was not available. To avoid freeloaders taking advantage of his generosity, the club only admitted those who had left the country and had stories to tell - true adventurers, in other words. In this way 'The Adventurers' Society' was born.

Sadly, Nathaniel's illness got the better of him only a few years later. He died in 1778, but the club did not die with him. While she had loathed the place during his life, Nathaniel's widow, Flora, understood what it

had meant to her husband, and she could not bring herself to close it. She held firm on her vow, made when he was alive, to 'never set foot in the place', instead asking the assembled gentlemen to form a committee. She passed the deeds of the house to the committee with the legal condition that should the club fold or disband the property rights reverted to the Farndale estate. Flora granted no extra money to the society, claiming 'if, gentlemen, this club is so important to you, you shall no doubt find the coin to drink from your own pockets rather than mine'.

Faced with the thought of sober evenings alone with their wives the gentlemen of the club lost no time in doing as Flora had asked. They formed a committee and registered the society as a club and, after much grumbling, set membership fees and things carried on much as they did before, except for one thing. Flora had added one other clause to the club's ownership of its essential clubhouse: she insisted that as long as they met the requirement of being a 'true adventurer', as defined in the club's charter, the society was to allow women to join.

While the men were not pleased that a little decorum might have to enter their evenings with the presence of ladies, they had little option. They railed against the idea, but before her death in 1792, Flora did see the first women join the club. As time has passed, the gentlemen have come to enjoy having adventurous women as well as men at the club to listen to their stories, and found the ladies have plenty of interesting stories of their own.

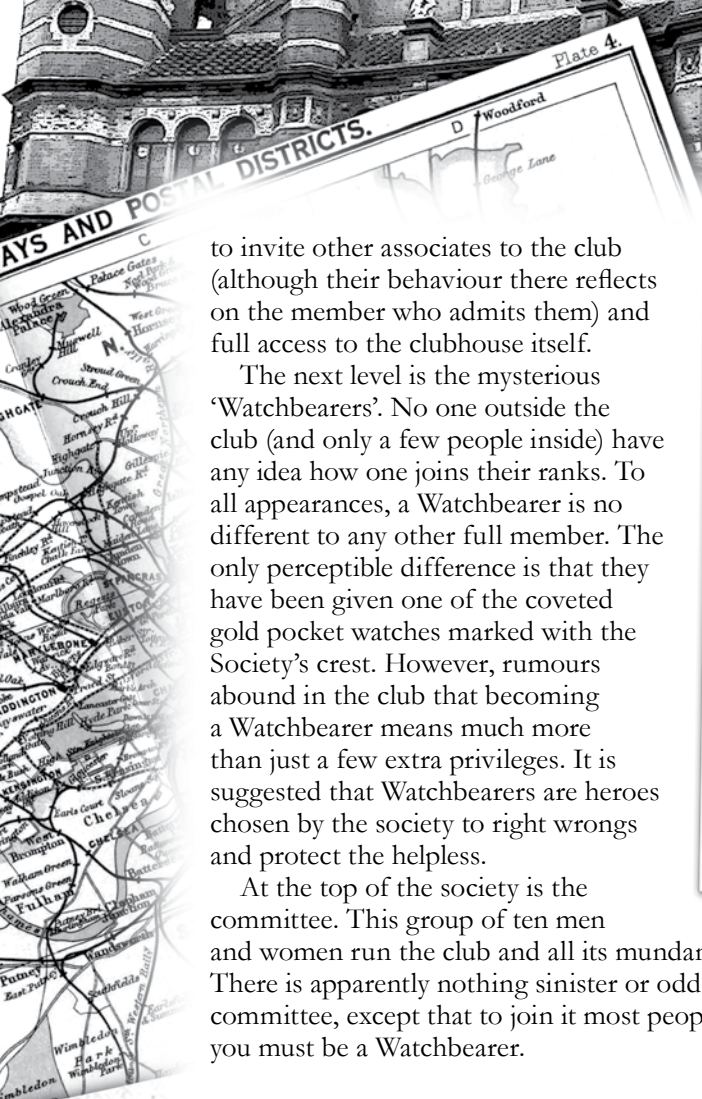
Today, the club is one of the oldest in London and its odd entry requirements make it very fashionable. The rise of Imperial England has created even more adventurers, of both genders, and its membership continues to thrive. Its only problem is that these days the Farnsdale family is not as wealthy as it was and the current head would love to see the club fail so that he might regain the lease to the clubhouse.

STRUCTURE

The Adventurers' Society has a structure much like any other gentleman's club. One joins as a member, and when they have earned the respect of their peers they might be allowed to offer membership to others or join the committee that runs the club.

The lowest 'ranks' of membership are referred to as 'Guests'. These people are allowed to enter the club unaccompanied by a full member but have few other privileges besides. After a few months (or sooner should they impress the committee) the Guest may be offered full membership. Full members have the right





to invite other associates to the club (although their behaviour there reflects on the member who admits them) and full access to the clubhouse itself.

The next level is the mysterious 'Watchbearers'. No one outside the club (and only a few people inside) have any idea how one joins their ranks. To all appearances, a Watchbearer is no different to any other full member. The only perceptible difference is that they have been given one of the coveted gold pocket watches marked with the Society's crest. However, rumours abound in the club that becoming a Watchbearer means much more than just a few extra privileges. It is suggested that Watchbearers are heroes chosen by the society to right wrongs and protect the helpless.

At the top of the society is the committee. This group of ten men and women run the club and all its mundane duties. There is apparently nothing sinister or odd about the committee, except that to join it most people believe you must be a Watchbearer.



whole club. The Guest is expected to tell a tale of their exploits to (effectively) the whole society.

The nature of the tale is up to them but must speak of travel and adventure. The committee members often help by prompting the conversation but always behave as if it is a private conversation. However, as the rest of the club members know the signs of an 'induction' it is quite obvious that the entire room is listening. If the story is a good one the Guest becomes a full member. It needs to be rather bad to fail, but a good story can grant great reputation and favour among the other members.

For most people, becoming a member is where their involvement in the society peaks. However, some look to join the 'Watchbearers'. To become one of these renowned heroes is difficult, to say the least. Not only does the society look for bravery and skill but they also seek discretion and good character. Most who become Watchbearers have been observed by the society for quite some time. In fact, it has been known to invite certain people to become Guests when their actions come to its attention. In this way they can observe these potential Watchbearers a little closer.

Watchbearers are chosen by a majority vote of the committee, but only after the potential Watchbearer has proven their talents by undertaking a service for the society. They are approached (either at the club or in their daily lives) by an agent of the society, who may be a council member or even a Watchbearer they do not yet know. The agent tells them that they need help to see if the recruit is ready to aid their cause. Often there is enough evil in the world for the

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

The life of an adventurer usually requires money and free time, so most of the membership comes from a class with both in abundance. If you want to be a member of the Adventurers' Society, you need to do more than just ask for an application form and pay a membership fee.

Becoming a Guest is quite simple: after visiting the club on at least five occasions, you can request to join as a Guest. As long as you are vouched for by a member you met at the club, rather than outside it, you will usually be accepted.

To become a full member you must already be a Guest, of course, and have a good standing in the society. You must also have left your country of origin at least once. Full membership is offered rather than asked for. Quite out of the blue, the Guest is asked to share a brandy with some of the committee members. They are taken to the club room where they join at least three of the standing committee and are, indeed, offered brandy and cigars. At some point, the conversation turns to the Guest's experiences abroad. This is done by a committee member in a noticeably loud manner, usually attracting the attention of the

[NOVEMBER 2, 19...]

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they are very flexible and
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They are made in the
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STREET DR...
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ALL FIRST-CLASS...
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14

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OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

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problem to be a real situation. If the recruit proves unable to do what needs to be done the agent can deal with the situation. However, the society has been known to create false situations using actors and society members to test the recruit.

If the recruit proves themselves they are offered the watch of the society. Proving themselves is not just a matter of overcoming the situation, they are judged on discretion, bravery and honour. The club is not looking for glory hounds who want to show off. Those who are offered the watch are reminded that taking the watch also carries responsibilities to both the club and society as a whole. They are offered the watch once and are allowed one week to consider taking it. There is no stigma to refusing but it is unlikely to be offered again. Despite this, the club keeps a list of those who refuse, hoping to call on them if dire need arises, and they may be offered the watch again, should the society prevail.

Watchbearers may one day sit on the committee. The committee has ten members, who are only replaced when a member dies or chooses to resign. A potential committee member must have a good reputation and have proved their bravery and honour on several occasions. However, they must also have done something that no one else has ever done. This achievement need not be world-shaking but the more impressive the better. They might have climbed a mountain no one else has climbed, or travelled to places no one else has visited. In some cases inventing a new device or magical power is also acceptable. The committee vote on the new applicants and take the relative worth of their achievements into account. They also consider the general achievements, both public and secret, of each applicant and their suitability for their duties as a council member. If the place is available through retirement rather than the demise of the former occupant, the recommendation of the retiring member is an important consideration.

RESOURCES

The society's main resource is the skills and experience of its members. Over the years it has assembled a selection of the greatest heroes in the world, each one tried and tested. Even the most average member has usually travelled to other countries and seen sights few others have witnessed or survived in hostile environments.

In addition to this, the society has a very impressive financial portfolio. Members provide support with their membership fees and many make bequests

or donations to the society as well. In addition the society often funds expeditions and claims a stake in artefacts and information discovered on the trip.

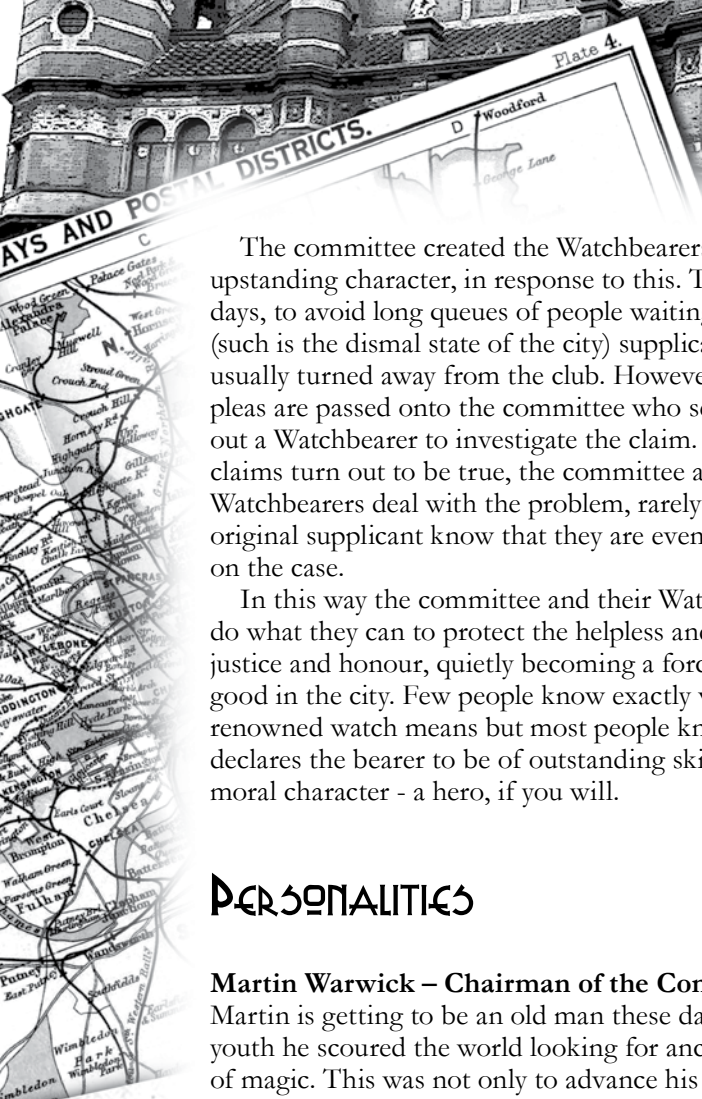
The clubhouse in the West End is also a substantial resource, although the society would have to be in dire straits to sell it. The house itself serves not only as a clubhouse and a meeting hall for the committee but also as a storehouse. In its secret basements reside the artefacts from several adventures. Some are dark powers that need to be kept safe and secure; others are riches the society has saved from the avarice of other men. While the monetary value of many of the items and files is quite low, they could be used to great effect should a powerful force challenge the society.

On a darker note, the society is not above blackmailing those it feels owe them something. In their operations against evil, they often uncover the dirty secrets of the rich and powerful. Those they feel need to be 'taxed' rather than extinguished are discreetly blackmailed. The society considers this a payment for keeping the secrets they learn. Many among the society find this pragmatic approach rather distasteful and it would harm the society's reputation if it came out. However, so far the society has demanded a fair price and never allowed a villain to buy his way out of retribution. Having said that, plenty worry that it is only a matter of time before the committee decides to cross the line 'for the greater good'.

AGENDA

For those who do not become Watchbearers, the club has no agenda. It simply exists as a place for adventurers to share a drink and weave a traveller's tale for an afternoon. However, for many of the club's members, after a life of adventure and excitement, sitting around talking is not enough.

In the early part of the 19th century the club's reputation began to draw people looking for help. The police were often unable or ill-equipped to deal with some of the worst villains of the city. A club full of people who had faced monsters and villains in harsh conditions with only their wit and skill to protect them was the obvious place to go looking for help. Initially, individual members began doing what they could and a quiet reputation began to grow that the Adventurers' Society was the place to go if you were in trouble. After a while the committee was forced to create some sort of policy, such was the demand. Especially as some more unscrupulous members demanded money or even joined some of the criminals.



The committee created the Watchbearers, all of upstanding character, in response to this. These days, to avoid long queues of people waiting outside (such is the dismal state of the city) supplicants are usually turned away from the club. However, their pleas are passed onto the committee who send out a Watchbearer to investigate the claim. If the claims turn out to be true, the committee and the Watchbearers deal with the problem, rarely letting the original supplicant know that they are even working on the case.

In this way the committee and their Watchbearers do what they can to protect the helpless and defend justice and honour, quietly becoming a force for good in the city. Few people know exactly what the renowned watch means but most people know it declares the bearer to be of outstanding skill and moral character - a hero, if you will.

PERSONALITIES

Martin Warwick – Chairman of the Committee

Martin is getting to be an old man these days. In his youth he scoured the world looking for ancient tomes of magic. This was not only to advance his studies, but also to discover the lost secrets of dark magic, and securely hide them from less scrupulous hands. He originally worked in the service of the Guild, believing them the best people to protect such lore. However, he gradually came to notice that the books of dark lore he brought them were not being treated as he expected, they were not being locked away

Martin Warwick Rank 17 Thaumaturgist (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5*
 Mental Competence: +10
 Initiative: 7*
 Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
 Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)
 Signature Skills: Concentration +2,
 Criminology +2, General Knowledge +4,
 Lore +4, Perception +4, Politics +3,
 Research +3, Streetwise +2, Thaumaturgy +4
 Traits: Well-read +3, Dedicated +2, Old +3
 Special Abilities: Thaumaturgy, knows any
 spell listed in the Corebook
 Combat Abilities: Prefers to negotiate but will
 fight with magic if forced
 Damage: Magic
 *reduced due to old age

safely but in some cases actually read by members 'so that we can know how to defeat these monsters'. Concerned at the Guild's attitude, he left their employ and tried to fund his own expeditions, but found the Guild blocked him where they could, in favour of their own agents.

Martin joined the Adventurers' Society while still quite young but was too frequently away to take part in it. While speaking of his disillusionment with the Guild to a friend, he was recommended to the committee for a position as a Watchbearer. Martin was easily accepted and, discovering what the Watchbearers really did, he happily joined their ranks. As far as the rest of the world (and especially the Guild) was concerned, he had retired. However, he spent many years working for the society and secretly fighting the darker elements of the Guild.

Martin eventually came to retire for real but still remained active, joining the committee in 1849 and becoming the Chairman in 1861. However, now aged 76, he is considering retiring.

THE COMMITTEE

Apart from Mr Warwick, there are nine other committee members that oversee the operations and organisation of the Adventurers' Society. As Watchbearers they know each other to be trustworthy and loyal to the tenets of the society. Most have worked together in the past on dangerous activities for the society and know they can rely on their compatriots in difficult situations. However, this does not make the committee quite the powerful force it might be. Although the committee have a substantial amount of skill and experience between them, they are all far past their prime. Some are rooted in the values and moralities of the last generation and others are simply going a little senile. But the support and loyalty of the members balances out much of the infirmities of age and the majority of the committee trust the other members so much that they accept the judgement of the others when their mental faculties might not be as good as they used to be.

Jonathan Defoe

Jonathan was once a renowned vampire hunter, tracking all manner of nocturnal predators across the world. He joined the committee when he realised that he was not physically up to the challenge of taking on such creatures anymore, fearing that his next encounter could be his last. He remains one of the world's foremost experts on vampirism.

Sanderson Pegwhistle

Being small is a good way to go unnoticed, which has been a significant bonus to the Halfing, Sanderson Pegwhistle, especially with a lifetime of sneaking into places that he should not, usually as a servant, learning all manner of secrets. Sanderson has travelled the world as an agent of the crown for many years. When Sanderson retired from the espionage trade he was already a Watchbearer but unable to settle into a quiet retirement he joined the committee.

Saul Mathias

Originally an Aluminat missionary, Saul travelled extensively across Africa and discovered many new tribes and wonders. While an ardent Aluminat, he showed respect for the tribal customs of the people he met. As such, he is considered a friend by many tribes in Africa, asked several times to help negotiate with the Orcish tribes by the British government. However, he has refused to do so until the British engage in a less bloody and oppressive campaign.

Margaret Harahan

In her youth, this flame-haired Irish lady was both passionate and adventurous - and not a little scandalous. She married young and travelled the world with her husband having one adventure after another. Both members of the society, they became Watchbearers together, working as one of the most successful partnerships in the society's history. However, Margaret's husband, Finn, was taken from her by an infection he picked up in South America and she retired from the adventuring life. She now serves the committee but has lost none of her passion or argumentative spirit.

Jonathan Defoe

Rank 15 Vampire Hunter (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +6*
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 6*
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Firearms +4, History +2, Lore +3, Survival +3, Swordplay +4, Tactics +2, Tracking +4, Vampire Lore +4
Traits: Dedicated +3, Hunter +3, Nocturnal +2
Combat Abilities: Anything with a blade that comes to hand
Damage: Sword or maybe an axe (6 Dice)
*reduced due to old age

Sanderson Pegwhistle

Rank 16 Spy (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +6*
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 8*
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Appraisal +2, Bribery +3, Conceal +4, Conversation +3, Disguise +2, Hide and Sneak +4, Perception +3, Pick locks +3, Pick Pockets +3, Streetwise +2, Swordplay +2
Traits: Quiet +2, Unobtrusive +4, Eavesdropper +3
Combat Abilities: Will usually run, but knows how to knife fight if cornered
Damage: Knife (5 Dice)
*reduced due to old age

Margaret Harahan

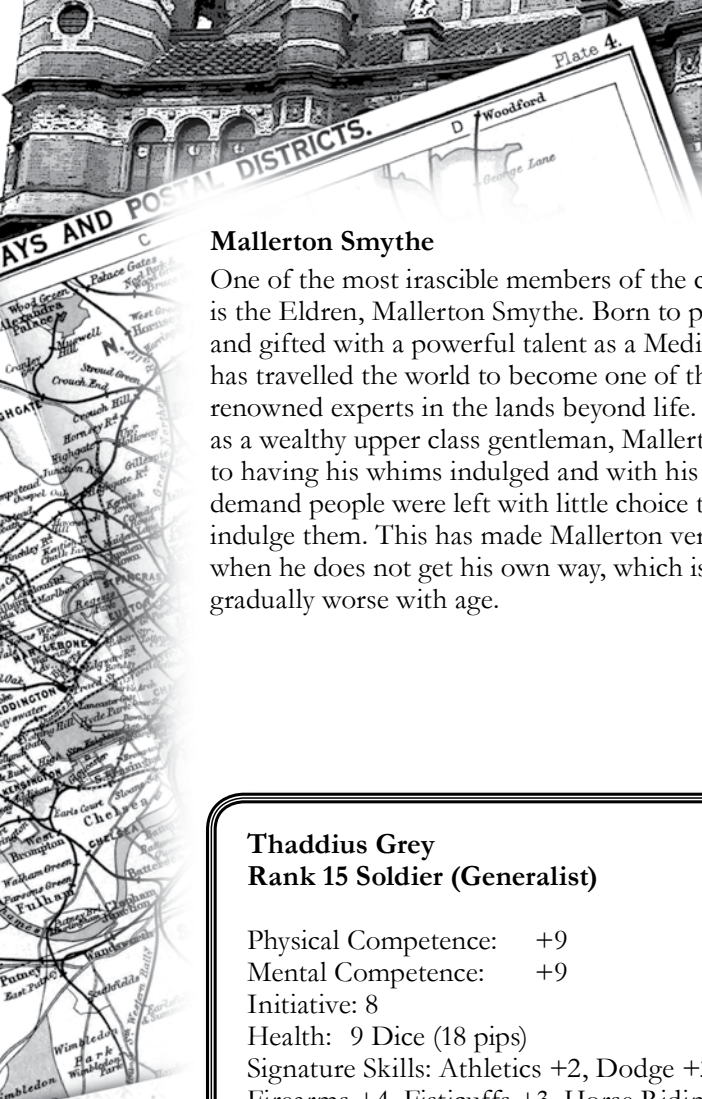
Rank 12 Adventurer (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5*
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 10
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Airborne Rider +2, Firearms +4, Fisticuffs +3, Hide and Sneak +3, Intimidate +2, Perception +3, Swordplay +2
Traits: Passionate +3, Argumentative +3
Combat Abilities: Prefers to use a firearm but is equally adept with a blade
Damage: Pistol (8 dice) or Sword (7 Dice)
*reduced due to old age

Saul Matthias

Rank 12 Missionary (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +8
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 7
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Conversation +2, Culture (Africa) +5, Empathy +3, Survival +2, Teaching +3, Theology (Aluminat) +3, Theology (African tribal religions) +3
Traits: Faithful +3, Empathic +3
Combat Abilities: Never fights unless cornered



Mallerton Smythe

One of the most irascible members of the committee is the Eldren, Mallerton Smythe. Born to privilege and gifted with a powerful talent as a Medium, he has travelled the world to become one of the most renowned experts in the lands beyond life. However, as a wealthy upper class gentleman, Mallerton is used to having his whims indulged and with his skills in demand people were left with little choice than to indulge them. This has made Mallerton very difficult when he does not get his own way, which is getting gradually worse with age.

Mallerton Smythe Rank 17 Eldren Medium (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5*
Mental Competence: +10
Initiative: 6*
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)
Signature Skills: Channelling Medium +4, Etiquette +3, High Society +3, Perception +2, Sensate Medium +4, Thaumaturgy +1
Traits: Cantankerous +3, Privileged +4
Special Abilities: Any Sensate or Channelling Medium ability and at least five Thaumaturgy spells of the Gamemaster's choice
Combat Abilities: Too old to fight, insists someone else does it for him
*reduced due to old age

Thaddius Grey Rank 15 Soldier (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +9
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 8
Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +2, Dodge +3, Firearms +4, Fisticuffs +3, Horse Riding +3, Swordplay +4, Tactics +3
Traits: Scarred +2, Loyal +2, Dedicated +2
Combat Abilities: Prefers to negotiate, but fights with signature skills
Damage: Sword-cane (5 Dice)

Thaddius Grey

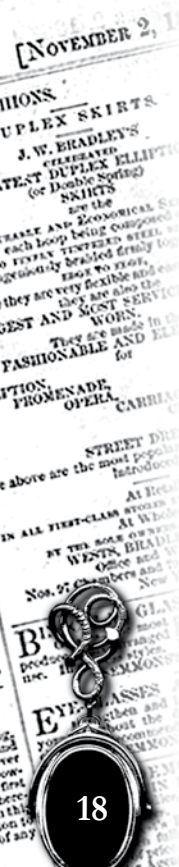
This greying wolf Beastman bears more than a few scars from his time abroad. He has served as a soldier in almost every corner of the Empire and saw his position in the army as one of defender rather than conqueror. While he was made an officer for his exemplary service in India, he knew his low birth would never grant him the rank he deserved. Instead, he dedicated his life to using the position he had to do his best for those under him, whether they were soldiers or the local inhabitants of a conquered land.

Eloise Trinity

Not every member of the committee has travelled for the sake of adventure, even though they have all had exploits of their own. Eloise set out to Africa to heal the sick and do her best for the poor and desperate of other lands, especially those who suffered from their contact with the Empire. As a noble Eldren lady, she could come and go as she pleased and did her best to bring succour to those that no one else could get to. She has set up missions and hospitals in some of the most inaccessible places and saved many lives caught between both colonial and tribal warfare. Ill health and old age saw her return to England but her spirit would not allow her to just settle into retirement.

Eloise Trinity Rank 12 Eldren Philanthropist (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5*
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 7
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Mana: 5 Dice (30 pips)
Signature Skills: Business +3, Conversation +2, Dancing +2, Etiquette +3, Language (several) +2, Medicine +3, Survival +2
Special Abilities: Magic Sense (Sensate Medium)
Traits: Kind +3, Philanthropic +3, Adventurous +2, Spirited +2
Combat Abilities: Does not fight, she is a healer not a warrior
*reduced due to old age



Dr Francis Stollen

The famous Joseph Faulkner has been a long-standing member of the Adventurers' Society but has refused a seat on the committee several times as he has not finished travelling yet! Rumours abound as to whether he is a Watchbearer. However, the last time Faulkner was asked he instead recommended his friend, Francis Stollen. Dr Stollen joined Faulkner on his travels after replying to an advertisement for a doctor to accompany the esteemed traveller to an especially dangerous part of Africa. They got on so well that they journeyed together for several years and had many adventures. The doctor proved useful not only for his medical skills but also due to his experience as a prize fighter in his younger college days. Sadly, being older than Faulkner, Stollen had to retire from their travels, after which Faulkner's recommendation secured him a seat on the committee.

Gervais Pinkerton

Pinkerton is known as the smallest creature to climb the highest mountains. It is a running joke that this Gnome only climbs mountains that no one else has conquered so that he might finally see over everyone's heads. Gervais has broken and set many records for mountaineering; however, he has also contacted several communities living at high altitude, such as the isolated monasteries of Tibet. In these distant places, he has learnt many secrets and made lasting friendships with old and venerable peoples. As with most of the committee, he has finally been forced to retire but he still works to protect the most isolated people from those who might steal their secrets.

General Watchbearer

All those who accept the responsibilities of becoming a Watchbearer are extraordinary individuals; indeed, your own heroes might one day join their ranks. Instead of trying to detail them all, you will find here some general statistics you can adapt for any Watchbearer (like Carmichael and Evelyn in the introductory story) for your own stories.

Dr Francis Stollen Rank 16 Dwarf Medic and Prizefighter (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +8*
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 6*
Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Culture (several) +3, Fisticuffs +3, Medicine +4, Perception +3
Traits: Hardy +3, Well-travelled +4
Combat Abilities: Still a boxer, Stollen can weigh in with his fists
Damage: Fists (5 Dice)
*reduced due to old age

Gervais Pinkerton - Rank 15 Mountaineer (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7*
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 6*
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +5, Culture (Tibet) +3, Lore +2, Survival +3, Tracking +2
Traits: Curious +2, Tough +4, Protective +3
Combat Abilities: Not a fighter, but uses whatever is to hand, if need be
Damage: Improvised weapon (5 Dice)
*reduced due to old age

Generic Watchbearer - Rank 10 Hero/ Heroine (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 9
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Mana: 4 Dice (24 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +2, Fisticuffs +2, Perception +3, Streetwise +2, Swordplay +4, Thaumaturgy +2
Traits: Dedicated +3, Adventurous +3
Combat Abilities: Uses any weapon and possibly magic
Damage: Pistol (8 dice), Sword-cane (5 Dice) or Magic



THE PAN-ASIATIC SPICE DELIVERY SERVICE

Although the cabin door was shut, the roar of pistols and smell of gunpowder flooded into the gondola from the catwalk.

The gunner swivelled in her chair. "Captain Haight, I have the pirate ship in my sights. Permission to fire?"

"NO!" he barked, struggling to keep the dirigible level as the pirates' grappling lines entangled it. "Do not fire, MacPherson! We're caught in their lines – if they go down, they'll take us with them."

Drawing his sabre, he turned the controls over to the navigator, Smythe. "We fight them. Here and now."

The cabin door crashed open. A crewmember landed in a heap on the floor, blood oozing from several bullet wounds. A wild-eyed, unshaven man in a tattered Russian cavalry uniform stepped over the body, followed by six brigands. He brandished a pistol at Haight. "The Lancer is ours!"

"Like Hell!" Haight bellowed as he rushed the larger pirate force. He parried a flurry of sword strikes from one of the brigands, forced his opponent out the gondola door, and then fired his pistol.

Haight didn't stop to watch the man plummet the several hundred feet to Venice. By the control console, MacPherson struggled against two pirates, keeping them away from Smythe. Near her, Coxswain Murphy stumbled blindly, fumbling for support, blood pouring from a gash on his head.

A roaring pirate leapt from Haight's right, slashing his cutlass at the captain's head. Haight deflected the blow with a quick upward swing and returned the attack with a swift lunge, driving his blade through the man's chest.

As he pulled his sabre from the pirate, a bullet struck Haight's shoulder, knocking him to the floor. He looked up to see the lead pirate charging the control console, sword poised to kill Smythe. Haight fought the pain in his shoulder, pulling himself to his feet with his sabre. He lurched across the deck. "Smythe!" he cried, but he was too late. The pirate drove his sword into Smythe's back. The navigator slumped over into the altitude control stick, pushing it forward.

The ship pitched down, sending Smythe's attacker tumbling, his sword still in the navigator's back. Haight staggered to the control console and levelled his pistol at the unarmed pirate. "Order your men to surrender or you die."

The pirate complied, raising his arms above his head while Airman Jones removed three hidden knives from the man's coat.

"MacPherson," Haight ordered, "fire the main cannon into the enemy ship. Bring her down!"

"Sir? We're still entangled."

"And boarded by more pirates every second! Jones, tie up the pirates. Parker and Jameson, cut those lines!"

Haight pulled Smythe off the control stick and eased it back to trim, fighting the grappling lines for every degree of pitch.

The cannon roared, shaking the entire ship. The pirate vessel exploded in a fireball of hydrogen, sending its gondola to the Adriatic. As it fell, it pulled the Lancer with it. Haight struggled against the dead weight and the pain in his arm to bring the dirigible's nose up and swing the wheel to starboard. Water droplets collected on the windscreen. The Adriatic was much too close. He grabbed the speaking tube. "Blast it, Parker, I need those lines cut now!"

With the water less than two hundred feet below and approaching rapidly, Haight pulled on the stick again. The nose rose slightly and the roar of the engines peaked at a shrill whine. Overtaxing the engines was a danger but at the moment Haight was more concerned about crashing. Haight yanked the stick. The port engine flamed out, wrenching the ship to starboard. Mustering every reserve of strength, Haight spun the wheel hard to port, the last grappling cable snapped, and the ship lurched upward at full speed.

HISTORY

The Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service was created when Indika Dumptrya, a Gnome adventuress, sold her late-father's shipping line and invested in three rag-tag dirigibles. Initially, the ships ran short trips between Calcutta and other cities in the eastern reaches of the Empire. As the company's reputation,

and coffers, expanded, Dumptrya added more pilots and more routes, ensuring that every port of call in the world recognised her dirigibles and relocating its headquarters from Calcutta to London for a more centralised base.

In the company's short history, the crews of the dirigibles have had more life-threatening scrapes than most professional soldiers. Mechanical failures



have topped the list of heart-stopping moments. As a result, pilots and crew have become adept at ad-hoc repairs, especially when they are necessary to get a ship airborne or to keep it from crashing miles away from any civilisation. These mechanical failures are often exacerbated by the efforts of the pilots, who often push the ships faster and faster. Pan-Asiatic Spice's star pilot, Anthony Haight, has proven an invaluable resource to engineers everywhere. If he cannot break it, the designers rightfully conclude they have solid equipment. Burst pipes, flapping propellers, torn rudders and shooting steam are common sights on each of Haight's flights, as are the on-board engineers rushing around attempting to patch things before the dirigible plummets to earth.

The Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service is cost conscious and prefers to recover crashed dirigibles whenever possible but, sometimes, as in the cases of the *Thistlewaite* and *Venger*, the airships were either too damaged or conditions around the crash site too treacherous, to make recovery feasible. The *Thistlewaite* was lost over China and the ship's carcass was dismantled by peasants before it could be recovered. The *Venger*, on the other hand, fell into the hands of the Czarina's forces when it went down in the Urals. In both cases, even though the ships

were lost, the company rescued all the surviving crew members.

When it is possible to recover a damaged dirigible, a second dirigible flies to the scene with a repair and flight crew to make the damaged ship airworthy enough to fly to the nearest aerodrome while it takes the cargo onwards to its destination. The customer should not have to wait just because the courier ran into a slight issue.

Even without these dangers, the business of an air courier is a precarious one. The two main advantages of an air courier over a shipping firm, speed and security, are already coming under threat. Generally, sailing ships like *Tea Clippers* and even the *Steamships* can travel faster than an airship, and can usually carry more cargo. What makes an airship faster is its ability to travel in a direct line to its destination and do so faster than any current land transport. However, the British Empire is using its wealth and power to literally cut across land to allow more direct shipping routes, such as the Suez Canal. The more direct the sea route, the faster ships can make the trade run. Many businesses prefer to use traditional shipping companies where they can and if the air-couriers lose their speed advantage by much, they lose their business as well.





Speed is not the only advantage the air couriers need to worry about losing. Another foe that has recently emerged is one that Dumptrya is very cognisant of and cannot suffer to exist: aerial pirates and raiders. Part of the reason the company has been so successful is not just its speed but, unlike a sea-going vessel, up in the clouds there was no one to prey on them and the client knew the cargo would be safe. Now, a new breed of pirate has discovered there are enough prizes in the sky to make running an airship worthwhile. If this growing trend for piracy continues, air courier services will lose their advantage entirely.

For the most part aerial pirates are little more than privateers, given Letters of Marque by the Russian government and sometimes even the use of Russian air cavalry wyverns. These pirates are usually simple to deal with. A display of force is often more than sufficient to drive off most pirates, especially as few have the same air experience as any Pan-Asiatic crew. Coupled with (since almost the beginning of the company) rifle, pistol and sabre-armed crews defending their ships, it was just not worth the risk to take them on. More recently, the company has begun working with the Worshipful Order of Horologists to outfit each ship with cannons and smaller guns. Even so, as the pirates get more experienced, or ruthless, their attacks become more dangerous and daring.

Another form of pirate has appeared to challenge Pan-Asiatic's supremacy as well. Other airborne shipping companies have emerged in the wake of Dumptrya's success but those companies' dirigibles cannot match the speed or audacity of the Pan-Asiatic Spice fleet. As a result, some have turned to piracy in an attempt to discredit the company and steal customers. They are harder to spot, often adopting the colours and uniform of the more usual pirates but with better weapons and employing professional fighters. Pan-Asiatic crews have learnt the hard way not to underestimate any airborne rival.

STRUCTURE

Indika Dumptrya is the sole head of the company, making every business decision. She decides which jobs are accepted, very rarely turning any jobs down. Her second-in-command, Anthony Haight, is also her best pilot. He oversees the training of new pilots, as well as the outfitting of the airships.

All pilots are ranked according to their ability and length of employment, with ability being a more important determining factor for promotions. Haight

oversees all promotions. All newly trained pilots serve as navigators or engineers on their first flights. Once someone has logged at least 100 hours of flight time as a navigator, or engineer, and proven adept at his job, he is promoted to co-pilot and tasked with overseeing the pre-launch and post-launch checkouts of the vessel. A co-pilot can remain in that position for years. To become a captain there is no set amount of flight time required; however, there must be no airship without a captain. Either the company has purchased a new ship that needs a captain or a current captain is no longer able to pilot his vessel. When there is an opening for captain, Haight reviews the service records of every co-pilot before making his recommendation, which he passes on to Dumptrya for her approval.


On the docks, Robert Cavill oversees the dockers. Like Haight he determines promotions but there are no set ranks for the employees to advance through. Term of service and quality of work determine pay raises and who becomes supervisors. The dockers are also responsible for handling the lines used to tether the ships when they take off and land.

In the maintenance hangars, Eleanor Fitzroy keeps a careful eye on the men and women who maintain the ships. Each maintenance worker and engineer is ranked from one to five, based on their level of skill. Rank one workers perform menial tasks such as washing down the ships and ensuring everything is tightened down. Rank one engineers assist in the design and installation of new equipment. Rank five workers perform the most difficult repairs and installations. Rank five engineers design new control and aeronautical systems. The men, who serve on every flight for the inevitable times something critical breaks, are chosen from the Rank five workers and engineers. However, Rank three and four engineers are sometimes allowed to join a crew to shadow a Rank five engineer and gain some air experience.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Anyone can join the organisation, if he has the skills. Pan-Asiatic Spice is always accepting applications for pilots, navigators, guards, dockers, and even administration. Dumptrya fiercely proclaims, however, that 'there can only be one Gnome in charge!'

Any pilot who wants to join must have basic experience with dirigibles. More in-depth training occurs at the company's Kensal Green facility, where new pilots learn the ins and outs of the company's dirigibles. Pan-Asiatic Spice offers competitive rates,



the chance to see the world and a tidy lump-sum payment to beneficiaries should disaster strike while on the job.

Haight especially values ‘the right stuff’ in his people, so lack of skills may not exclude an applicant. He takes the view that skills can be learnt but character and a cool head cannot be. Given the stresses of running a ship in flight (especially with Haight at the helm) it is important to employ a crew who works well as a team. They need to be able to trust each other and follow the chain of command but also use their initiative and be perceptive to a crisis.

As well as aircrew, the company employs office staff divided into two departments: those who book and deal with cargo and those who see to the logistical needs of the airships and their crews. These staff are always overworked as the company cannot quite afford (or fit in the small office space) enough people to deal with all the work involved, so they rarely get the chance to travel. Indika is always looking to give a chance to an intelligent woman, employing an almost exclusively female office staff, mostly middle class. While not as glamorous as air travel, Indika offers these women a career opportunity they might otherwise have never had.

As the office workers do not get the opportunity to fly as part of their work, Indika takes a large bulk of the hardest working staff on an annual trip to the Calcutta and Hong Kong offices to see what the business is really about outside of the paperwork. While it is useful to visit the offices in person, it is not essential to run the business; Indika just loves to get out of the office and fly now and again. Haight always pilots these trips on the way out and Indika pilots on the way back. One of the office workers, usually Indika’s favourite, is charged with timing the trip and there is a fierce but friendly rivalry between Haight and Indika as to who does the fastest trip.

RESOURCES

Headquartered in London with regional offices in Calcutta and Hong Kong, the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service dirigibles can cross the distance from Hong Kong to London in a fraction of the time it takes waterborne vessels. Led by the famous Gnomish pilot, Indika Dumptrya, the Pan-Asiatic fleet consists of the Intrepid, the Endeavour, the Lance, the Kush, the Calcutta, the Corsair and the Falcon, all of which have seen numerous hours of flight. Dumptrya believes in always being prepared for

any situation, so each dirigible is manned by several guards in addition to the flight crew in case it has to touch down in less than friendly conditions. Each dirigible is also equipped with at least one mounted gun, should combat ensue.

Because of the recent rise in piracy, as evidenced by the 1864 attack on the Lancer by a Devinchy ship, the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service has added 12 ornithopters to the fleet, each with forward-mounted Vickers which can fire in a 90-degree arc. Unfortunately, these ornithopters have very limited flight time, approximately 15 minutes before the steam-powered engines must be refilled. In the case of an attack, the ornithopters are launched from a special hold added to the Pan-Asiatic Spice dirigibles. Clockwork engineers from the Worshipful Order of Horologists have recently devised an ornithopter launching mechanism that they have fitted to three of the company’s airships. Currently only the Falcon, Corsair and Lancer have the special launching mechanisms and each dirigible has a compliment of three ornithopters. As soon as more materials arrive, the engineers will continue building more mechanisms for the remaining vessels.

The Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service maintains a training field at Kensal Green outside London where new pilots are trained and new airships are tested – always captained by Dumptrya herself – and existing ships repaired and upgraded in the machine shop.

While the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service does not make heavy use of magic, preferring to stay out from under the Guild’s prying eyes as much as possible; each local office staffs a petty magician who has a carrier pigeon as an animal companion. The link between magician and pigeon has proven a more reliable means of communication than a carrier pigeon alone. The dirigibles make use of these linked carrier pigeons to carry communications between the airships and ports.

In addition to official offices in cities such as London, Calcutta, Hong Kong and Vienna, the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service maintains secret warehouses in London, Hong Kong, Cordoba and Johannesburg. When the company needs to move goods off the record, it stores them in these warehouses. Crews move the goods from the warehouses, located in a seedier section of town far away from the aerodrome, under the cover of night and load them on to the dirigibles into secret compartments. All of these warehouses are rented under false names and a different crew member delivers the payments each month to ensure that no one is recognised.



AGENDA

Full-time delivery agency and part-time smugglers, no cargo is too dangerous or, in some cases, illicit, for Pan-Asiatic to sign on as its carrier. As long as the price is right, Dumptrya will guarantee that the cargo arrives 'as soon as it gets there, but sooner than those blasted boats!'

The Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service is a cargo-only delivery company. Although they currently move troops in support of the war effort, they are the first to tell you that their ships are not built with the comfort of passengers in mind. However, if a person does not mind uncomfortable conditions in the gondola, the risk of wyvern attacks, the ever-present terror of falling to his death and understands the need to pay cash up front, the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery pilots are willing to make an exception.

PERSONALITIES

Indika Dumptrya

The daughter of one of the very few Gnomish families in Calcutta, Indika lived a fairly well-to-do life; her father's shipping company earning the family wealth and a solid reputation in aristocratic circles. Servants provided for Indika daily and her parents bought her anything she desired. However, Indika found the lap of luxury boring and sought adventure wherever she could. On several occasions, she had to be rescued by the British garrisons when her tiger-hunting treks led to encounters with actual tigers.

In 1857, she and her parents were returning from a visit with their family in London when a surprise storm caused the ship to founder in the Indian Ocean. Indika was one of the few passengers to survive.

When she returned to Calcutta after the accident, Indika found herself head of the shipping company but fearing and loathing any waterborne vessel. Determined not to let her father's business fail, she sold the fleet and purchased three dirigibles. The Falcon serves as Indika's personal dirigible and she pilots it on its route between Calcutta and London. Sadly, she does not get the chance to pilot a ship very often, as running the business often means she cannot leave the office for very long. For the other two dirigibles in her initial fleet, Indika hired the best pilots she could find, the Scotsman Anthony Haight and a Dutch Beastman Leopold Groot. Over the years, Indika has survived numerous scrapes,

Indika Dumptrya

Rank 15 Gnome Airship Pilot (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +9

Mental Competence: +9

Initiative: 8

Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)

Signature Skills: Ad hoc Repair +4, Appraisal +5, Business +3, Navigation +6, Pilot Dirigible +8, Swordplay +6

Traits: Direction Sense +2, Hydrophobia +5

Combat Abilities: Fights with Signature Skills.

Damage: Sword (6 Dice)

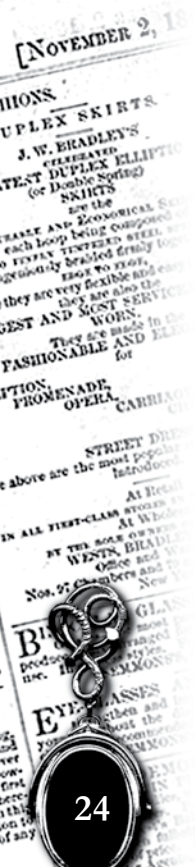
including crash landing in a domain held by a psychotic Chinese warlord, being hunted by Thuggee cult members over what they perceived to be a slight overcharging for her services and flying through an irritable clutch of wyverns.

Anthony Haight

Born and raised in Edinburgh, Haight joined the army at the earliest possible age. He served with distinction throughout the Empire, ending his career in India. One night, while returning home from one of the British clubs in Calcutta, Haight was ambushed by members of a Thuggee cult. He managed to escape three days later, albeit missing an ear, an eye and three fingers, and after running several miles he collapsed from exhaustion and pain when he was found by a Gnome and her Ogre servant, who took him to a British garrison to receive aid.

Unable to continue serving in the military, Haight planned to return to Scotland and subsist on his pension. However, Fate dealt him a strange hand before he could leave the sub-continent. As he was saying his farewells at the garrison, the Gnome and Ogre visited to see if he had recovered. Indebted, Haight told them his story, including his plans to head back to Scotland. The Gnome, Indika Dumptrya, informed him that he could not survive on his pension and that he would be working for her at her shipping company - besides, she said, he owed her. Taken aback, Haight refused. Dumptrya, nonplussed, increased her offer. Haight agreed but only planned to stay long enough to accumulate some savings and return to Scotland.

Eight years later, Haight has worked his way up through the company, currently piloting the Lancer,





the fastest dirigible in the air, if you let him tell the tale. Reckless almost to the point of being suicidal, Haight pushes his dirigible beyond its limits but has never suffered a crash. Despite his physical limitations, Haight is one of the best pilots in the air. Although he disagrees with some of Dumptyra's cargo on a moral level, Haight is absolutely loyal to her and the company, and has no plans to settle down in Scotland any time in the near future.

Absalom

Born into abject poverty in Calcutta, Absalom was sold into slavery by his parents. Being an Ogre, he was quickly purchased for his strength and ability to follow orders without question. Absalom was sold back into slavery not long after and this trend continued for about 15 years. It was not because he was weak, or had an unwillingness to follow orders; Absalom willingly did whatever he was told but strange things always occurred when he was around - things that his masters could not explain.

The last time Absalom was purchased, it was by Indika Dumptyra as labour for her shipping warehouse. Over the course of a year, Dumptyra realised that Absalom was consistently warning of

Anthony Haight Rank 17 Legendary Airship Pilot (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +12
Mental Competence: +8
Initiative: 10
Health: 11 Dice (22 pips)
Signature Skills: Ad hoc Repair +5,
Firearms +4, Navigation +4, Perception +2,
Pilot Dirigible +10, Swordplay +7, Tactics +6,
Traits: Code of Honour +5/-5, Missing Limb -3
Combat Abilities: Quick to enter a fight. Fights with Signature Skills.
Damage: Military Sword (8 Dice), Mariette 0.36 (8 Dice)

Absalom Rank 10 Ogre Sensate (Specialist)

Physical Competence: +10
Mental Competence: +3
Initiative: 6
Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)
Mana: 3 Dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +6, Dodge +5,
Fisticuffs +6, Improvised Weapon +6, Sensate Medium +8, Swordplay +3
Traits: Iron Constitution
Combat Abilities: Slow to anger, prefers not to fight but fights with whatever is available.
Damage: Large club (9 Dice)

dangers 10 or 20 minutes before they actually happened. Dumptyra relieved him of his warehouse duties and began carrying him aboard her dirigibles under the rationale that if Absalom had a connection to a higher power, he could help her better avoid the dangers inherent in this fledgling profession. On several occasions, Absalom's visions have allowed Dumptyra to avoid storms, pirates and even hijackers.

Absalom is a powerful Sensate Medium who has very little control over what he experiences and more often than not confuses his visions of the future with present reality.



General Pan-Asiatic Spice Pilot

Dirigibles are a fairly new method of transportation and those who know how to fly one can command a high salary. Through daring, luck and a little skill, the Pan-Asiatic Spice Pilot has earned a regular position on the staff, rotating flying shifts and routes with the other pilots.

General Pan-Asiatic Spice Deckhands

Load the cargo, unload the cargo, load the cargo, unload the cargo - the life of a dockhand is not very exciting. That is, of course, unless he works for the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service where select dockhands get to travel aboard the dirigibles to secure the cargo! Not only does he load and unload the cargo with aplomb but he has mastered covering his eyes and screaming in terror as the pilot zooms too close to a clock tower. He also has a fairly decent grasp of running from murderous tribesmen when the dirigible makes an 'unintended touchdown' somewhere deep in the jungles of India.

Pilot

Rank 6 Daredevil (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6

Mental Competence: +3

Initiative: 7

Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)

Signature Skills: Ad hoc Repair +2, Firearms +2, Navigation +3, Perception +2, Pilot Dirigible +3, Swordplay +2, Tactics +1

Traits: Loyal in a pinch +3

Combat Abilities: Fights with Signature Skills when necessary

Damage: Military Sword (8 Dice), Mariette 0.36 (8 Dice)

Deckhands

Rank 5 Humper (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +5

Mental Competence: +3

Initiative: 4

Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)

Signature Skills: Athletics +2, Bull +2, Dodge +3, Fisticuffs +4, Improvised Weapon +2, Might +3, Swordplay +3

Traits: Labourer +2, Crude +1

Combat Abilities: Ready to fight at the drop of a hat

Damage: Truncheon (7 Dice)

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BRIGGS' GANG

'Ten thousand pounds...' said McCormack. 'That's the take.'

Across the table, Mason Briggs did his best to look cool and collected. He succeeded admirably but underneath the handsome, composed exterior, his heart skipped a beat. Ten thousand pounds was a bell of a catch for any enterprise, legitimate or criminal, which was what he was of course...a criminal. Even before the little Scottish Dwarf could continue, Briggs knew he was in. Sipping at his pitch black lager, he asked, 'What's the job?'

The Dwarf looked pleased and gulped down his tankard. The little man could drink, the vessel was almost as large as he was, Briggs reckoned. 'Bearer bonds. Good just about anywhere. I've got the gov' already set to receive. He's offering 20% on the pound.'

Not a bad percentage for a caper. Most fences wouldn't go much higher, no matter the goods. 'And the catch..?'

'It's guarded and it'll be on a train,' replied McCormack. 'They're in Barings' vault until the transfer to their customer. He's up in Edinburgh. They'll be guards a'plenty on the ride up to the station, locked paddy wagon with an escort of peelers. Once on the train, the goods will be in a compartment, with just two guards. Two ways into the compartment - left or right door.'

'So either we need to stop the train, somehow, make the grab and run,' Briggs mused, 'Or we get into the compartment on the fly, catch the guards unaware-like, grab the goodies and exit via the doors without falling off the train, getting shot, or otherwise nicked.'

'Right.'

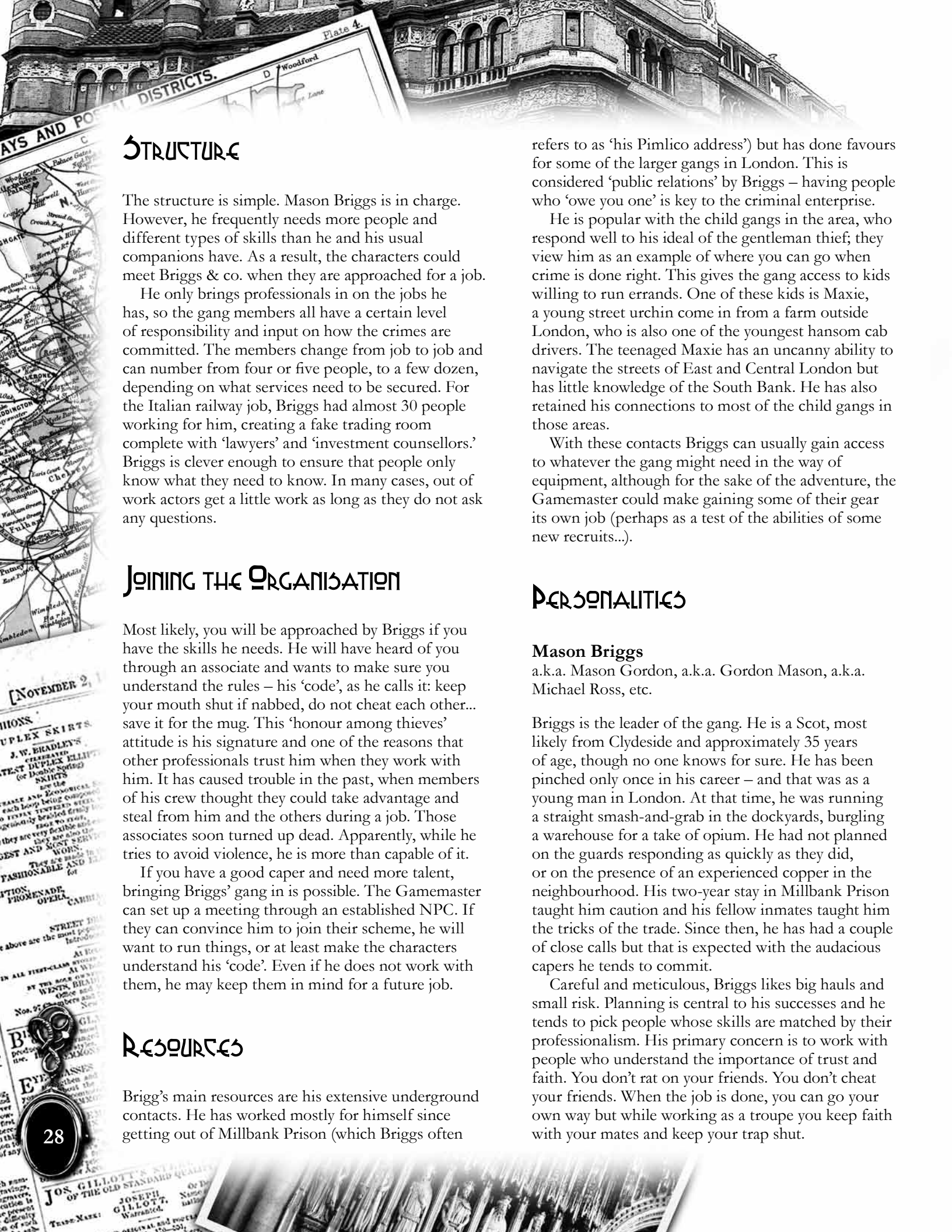
Briggs smiled, 'No problem.'

HISTORY

All of the members of Briggs' Gang have been in the life since as early as they can remember. They have worked with other groups, or on their own, but their talents drew them together to stage more brash and profitable crimes. Members of the group come and go, some working with the gang for a caper or two, some staying on until they are pinched. Some break Briggs' rules, in which case Briggs, himself, sees to it they are turned over to the authorities.

The gang's crimes mostly revolve around either bilking the unsuspecting wealthy or aristocratic mark with complex con games involving false investments, real estate scams, or other schemes playing on the greed or gullibility of their targets. They have staged burglaries of small banks and train cars; with their most audacious crime to date (Scotland Yard believes, but cannot prove) being the theft of almost 50,000 guineas worth of jewellery from a locked safe in a guarded coach onboard the Flying Scotsman. Also, possibly their work, was a stock scam that took several aristocrats and other investors for thousands on an Italian railway that was to connect all of Europe with the Suez Canal. (Funnily enough, an actual plan for the same is underway at this time.)





STRUCTURE

The structure is simple. Mason Briggs is in charge. However, he frequently needs more people and different types of skills than he and his usual companions have. As a result, the characters could meet Briggs & co. when they are approached for a job.

He only brings professionals in on the jobs he has, so the gang members all have a certain level of responsibility and input on how the crimes are committed. The members change from job to job and can number from four or five people, to a few dozen, depending on what services need to be secured. For the Italian railway job, Briggs had almost 30 people working for him, creating a fake trading room complete with 'lawyers' and 'investment counsellors.' Briggs is clever enough to ensure that people only know what they need to know. In many cases, out of work actors get a little work as long as they do not ask any questions.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Most likely, you will be approached by Briggs if you have the skills he needs. He will have heard of you through an associate and wants to make sure you understand the rules – his 'code', as he calls it: keep your mouth shut if nabbed, do not cheat each other... save it for the mug. This 'honour among thieves' attitude is his signature and one of the reasons that other professionals trust him when they work with him. It has caused trouble in the past, when members of his crew thought they could take advantage and steal from him and the others during a job. Those associates soon turned up dead. Apparently, while he tries to avoid violence, he is more than capable of it.

If you have a good caper and need more talent, bringing Briggs' gang in is possible. The Gamemaster can set up a meeting through an established NPC. If they can convince him to join their scheme, he will want to run things, or at least make the characters understand his 'code'. Even if he does not work with them, he may keep them in mind for a future job.

RESOURCES

Brigg's main resources are his extensive underground contacts. He has worked mostly for himself since getting out of Millbank Prison (which Briggs often

refers to as 'his Pimlico address') but has done favours for some of the larger gangs in London. This is considered 'public relations' by Briggs – having people who 'owe you one' is key to the criminal enterprise.

He is popular with the child gangs in the area, who respond well to his ideal of the gentleman thief; they view him as an example of where you can go when crime is done right. This gives the gang access to kids willing to run errands. One of these kids is Maxie, a young street urchin come in from a farm outside London, who is also one of the youngest hansom cab drivers. The teenaged Maxie has an uncanny ability to navigate the streets of East and Central London but has little knowledge of the South Bank. He has also retained his connections to most of the child gangs in those areas.

With these contacts Briggs can usually gain access to whatever the gang might need in the way of equipment, although for the sake of the adventure, the Gamemaster could make gaining some of their gear its own job (perhaps as a test of the abilities of some new recruits...).

PERSONALITIES

Mason Briggs

a.k.a. Mason Gordon, a.k.a. Gordon Mason, a.k.a. Michael Ross, etc.

Briggs is the leader of the gang. He is a Scot, most likely from Clydeside and approximately 35 years of age, though no one knows for sure. He has been pinched only once in his career – and that was as a young man in London. At that time, he was running a straight smash-and-grab in the dockyards, burgling a warehouse for a take of opium. He had not planned on the guards responding as quickly as they did, or on the presence of an experienced copper in the neighbourhood. His two-year stay in Millbank Prison taught him caution and his fellow inmates taught him the tricks of the trade. Since then, he has had a couple of close calls but that is expected with the audacious capers he tends to commit.

Careful and meticulous, Briggs likes big hauls and small risk. Planning is central to his successes and he tends to pick people whose skills are matched by their professionalism. His primary concern is to work with people who understand the importance of trust and faith. You don't rat on your friends. You don't cheat your friends. When the job is done, you can go your own way but while working as a troupe you keep faith with your mates and keep your trap shut.

Mason Briggs
Rank 14 Gentleman Thief (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +8
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 10
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +4, Appraisal +3, Charm +4, Disguise +4, Firearms +3, Fisticuffs +3, General Knowledge +2, Hide & Sneak +5, Perception +3, Pick Locks +4, Streetwise +3, Swordplay +2
Talents: Meticulous +4, Adventurous +2, Cocksure +2
Combat Abilities: Concealable knife (11 dice) or small Derringer (11 dice), but only when necessary
Damage: Knife (4 Dice) Derringer (4 Dice)

Briggs is a skilled locksmith and safe-cracker but his real talent is his charisma. He is the master of the con game and the prevarication; had he been an actor, he might have been the best of his time. Different accents, different postures, disguises - Briggs is the king. He is a middling shot with a handgun but prefers to avoid using firearms (they are noisy and tend to bring a murder rap when used...). Despite the care and meticulousness he shows in his work, Briggs is capable of thinking quickly when in a spot; he just prefers not to. When not on the job, Briggs loosens up a bit. He is fond of women, gambling, fine food and spirits. Despite the big takes from his crimes, his is a feast or famine life; he quickly blows through the money he makes and has to return to the life.

Briggs is tall at 6'3" with the slim, powerful build of a swimmer, his preferred method of exercise. He can frequently be found in the early morning, save in the winter, swimming the Thames (now it is a little cleaner!) back and forth just above Fulham. Darkly handsome, he keeps an impressive set of mutton chops and moustache (the ladies like the whiskers, he says). He dresses very well, even on the job; his apparel is of the finest quality. He stays in fine hotels, usually in the West End, but if he is a bit down on his luck, he deigns to reside in a hotel or flat in Holborn or Covent Garden. At night, he is out on the town, usually with a handsome woman on his arm. While those who know a little about him are aware, Briggs was born into an impoverished Scottish working class family; his lifestyle, however, makes many believe him fallen gentry. As these rumours add to his mystique and confuse his true background, Briggs is happy to encourage them.

Harry Sammons
Rank 12 Dwarven Working Criminal (Generalist)

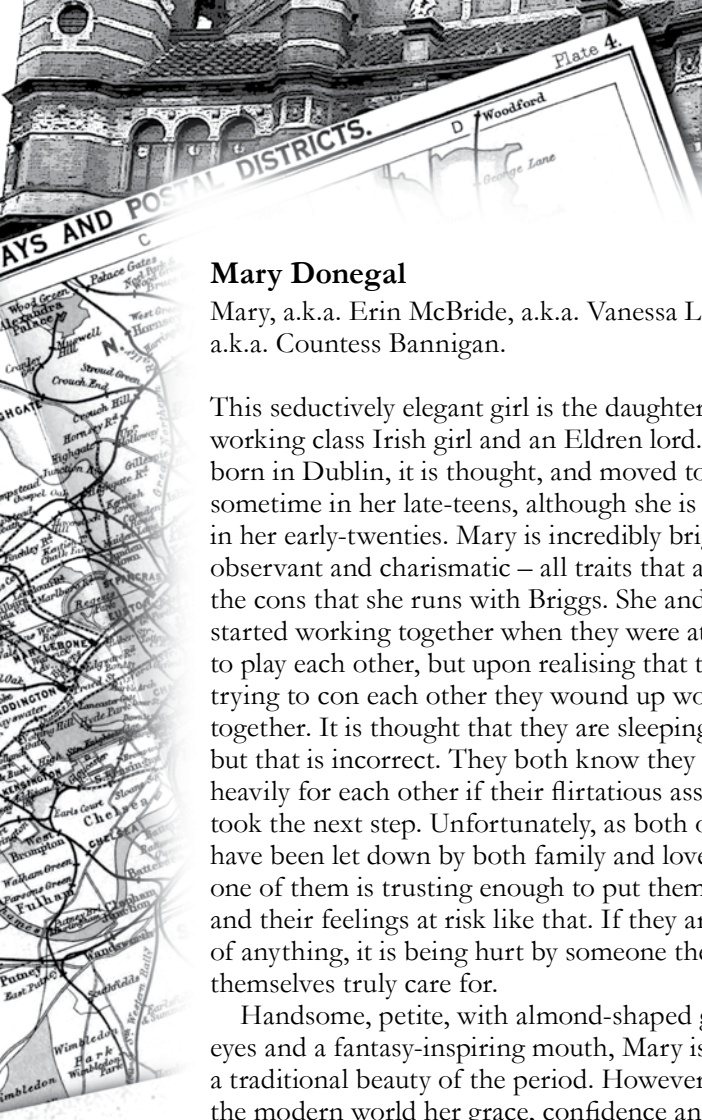
Physical Competence: +8
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 8
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Ad-hoc repair +5, Athletics +4, Bull +2, Dodge + 3, Fisticuffs +4, Firearms +3, Hide & Sneak +3, Perception +1, Pick Locks +5, Streetwise +3
Talents: Tinkerer +4, Shy +2, Speed freak +3
Combat Abilities: 'Angela' S&W Model 3 .44-40 revolver (11 dice)
Damage: 'Angela' S&W Model 3 .44-40 revolver (10 Dice)

While he does not like to use a gun, he often carries a double-shot .38 derringer. Only dangerous jobs spur him to carry anything heavier; he would prefer a few years in jail for theft than to hang for murder.

Harry Sammons

A Dwarf from the East End, Sammons grew up in the poverty of London. His parents are long dead, as is his brother (in the Crimea). Sammons started working in factories as a child and is a master machinist. Sometime in his late-teens, he turned to crime, by working (he claims) for one of the big gangs in Whitechapel doing safecracking. He is adept with locks and safes and loves to tinker with modern mechanics. He especially likes anything that goes fast - steam-powered automotives, velocipedes, trains and other contraptions. He is fascinated by clockworks and comes up with all manner of odd devices to use in his capers. Fortunately, Briggs usually stops him from utilising the oddest of the bunch. Unlike Briggs, Sammons carries the latest in firepower, the Smith and Wesson Model 3.44-40 cartridge handgun. He calls it Angela. Briggs speculates that Harry takes it to bed with him at night.

Stocky and powerfully built, Sammons is surprisingly dexterous. He and Briggs frequently find themselves working on top of moving trains, scaling buildings, or otherwise putting themselves in physically hazardous positions. He tends to go through a variety of women, mostly cheap East Enders like himself. He is uncomfortable with the rich and the fabulous, he thinks they can smell the poverty on him (and he'd be right). Despite this, he is frequently a character in Brigg's con games, and is learning to adapt.



Mary Donegal

Mary, a.k.a. Erin McBride, a.k.a. Vanessa LaTour, a.k.a. Countess Bannigan.

This seductively elegant girl is the daughter of a working class Irish girl and an Eldren lord. She was born in Dublin, it is thought, and moved to London sometime in her late-teens, although she is currently in her early-twenties. Mary is incredibly bright, observant and charismatic – all traits that aid her in the cons that she runs with Briggs. She and Briggs started working together when they were attempting to play each other, but upon realising that they were trying to con each other they wound up working together. It is thought that they are sleeping together but that is incorrect. They both know they could fall heavily for each other if their flirtatious association took the next step. Unfortunately, as both of them have been let down by both family and lovers, neither one of them is trusting enough to put themselves and their feelings at risk like that. If they are afraid of anything, it is being hurt by someone they let themselves truly care for.

Handsome, petite, with almond-shaped green eyes and a fantasy-inspiring mouth, Mary is not a traditional beauty of the period. However, in the modern world her grace, confidence and forthrightness would break many hearts. She is slim, athletic and almost boyish in her build but she moves well and speaks with a husky voice that carries a seductive Irish lilt. Her attitude is forceful and sensual, which makes it clear that she does not suffer fools gladly.



Mary Donegal Rank 12 Irish Honey Trap (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +5
Initiative: 10
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Appraisal +3, Charm +2, Conceal +5, Empathy +4, Fashion +2, Fisticuffs +3, Hide & Sneak +3, Perception +3, Streetwise +2
Talents: Sensual +3, Dangerously Attractive +3, Trickster +4
Combat Abilities: She keeps a Derringer for emergencies but if she is in a fight something has gone very wrong
Damage: Derringer (4 Dice)

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
PHONS
UPLEX SKIRTS
J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
TEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
NEW THE
TAKE AND ECONOMICAL
each loop being composed
to firmly stretched steel
and firmly braced firmly
they are very flexible and
They are also the
BEST AND MOST SERVICE
WORN.
They are made in the
FASHIONABLE AND ELEGANT
for
STREET DR...
above are the most popular
introduced
At Retail
At Wholesale
BY THE SOLE OWNERS
WENTIN, BLAIR
Office and
Nos. 27, 28, 29, and 30
New
GLASGOW
produced
the F. GILLOTT'S
EYE GLASSES
You should
about the
MEMORANDUM
ever
now
first
these
I think
on to
of any
JOSEPH GILLOTT'S STEEL
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
TRADE MARK:
JOSEPH GILLOTT, Name
Warranted.
ORIGINAL and PATENTED
1858-59



CHAPTER 2

THE BLADE OF JUSTICE

“They won’t give us nothing, not money, not standin’ and definitely not respect. So we’ll take it from ‘em, and damn ‘em all if they try to stop us!”

- William DeHavre



BLACK DOGS

The fog was as thick as a woollen blanket as he stepped out of the club, the doorman touching his cap with his gloved hand and stepping down with a lantern to shout for a cabby. While he waited in the light of the gas lamp, he adjusted his cloak, drawing it tighter about his shoulders though it was little protection from the cloying dampness of the London air. Still, soon enough he would be back home to his estate in the north and away from this ghastly, sprawling carbuncle of a city. Back to his factories, back to his mills, back to a place where he was master of all he surveyed and wasn't treated as something second class by the cream of high society. It was by the sweat of his brow and no small amount of elbow grease that he had got where he was, and what of them? Inheritance and privilege. He barrumphed to himself, spoiled rich children; they could go hang if he didn't require their patronage.

"Your cab, Sir," offered the doorman, gesturing to the black coach that had arrived at the side of the street. The horse was a little flighty, shaking at the blinkers and tossing his head. The driver was wrapped up tight in scarf and long coat, a bowler hat pulled low but his Beastman ears, long and floppy and covered with fur could be seen tumbling down next to his scarf.

"Evenin', Sir," mumbled the driver, his voice muffled by the scarf and his tone a little strange. His passenger attributed it to the Beastman's nature, so many of them had strange voices, a result of their animal nature.

"The Milton Hotel, please," he said as he climbed up with a grunt, taking off his hat as he slid into the coach and slamming the door shut as the horse's hooves began to clatter on the street when, with a lurch, the coach began to move.

He scowled to himself as the coach ran through the fog, its lamps turned up high. Occasionally, there would be a break in the fog and, through wisps of thinner mist, he would get a glance of the streets beyond. Lost in his own grumpy thoughts about the privileged aristocrats who treated him like dirt no matter how much money he had, it took him some time to notice that they were heading the wrong way, down to the docks, not towards the hotel. He rapped his cane on the roof and raised his voice.

"I say, driver, you're going the wrong way!"

There was no response, he hammered again and then, red-faced and flustered, tried the door. It was locked! Rapping his cane more urgently, he smashed the small glass window at the back, but even that failed to get the driver's attention. He tried to reach his arm out to find the lock or bolt that was trapping him, but even if he jumped out the coach was going too fast not to risk breaking his neck on the cobbles. Still he struggled, panicked and scared until the coach finally came to a halt. In the silence of the night, figures began coming out of the fog with pricked ears atop their heads. A shotgun thrust into his face, the door was unlocked and a white-furred Beastman, his face twisted into a sappy grin by his teeth, dragged him out.

"Harold Arkwright, yes?" he barked.

"Yes, yes, please, don't hurt me, I'm rich, I can pay you..." Harold cut off as the butt of the shotgun rammed into his face.

Grisha turned from the bleeding man on the ground as his companions grabbed him and began dragging him across the paving toward the warehouse.


"Do not forget, my friends, it is not this one we are sending a message to, it is his son, who will inherit the factories. We do what we do because the government will not protect the people, so we must act. We must scare that son so badly, we must make him realise that the people cannot be mistreated without reprisal. Things will improve."

The fog rolled in again, hiding them from view as surely as the warehouse door.

HISTORY

The Black Dogs are a group of anarchist revolutionaries hiding out in the London underworld and making their occasional strikes against the aristocracy, the military, the government and the wealthy – usually in revenge. The group's history is really that of their founder, Grisha Ogarev – it is held together by his charisma and oratory; despite their pretensions of egalitarianism and group decisions, in reality Grisha is the leader of the 'pack' in everything but name.

Grisha's parents were students in Moscow – something only possible because of Grisha's grandfather's long and sterling service in the Russian military – studying philosophy in the late 1830s where they fell in with many Russian radicals, including Maxim Bolshev. While others left to travel around Europe, Grisha's parents remained in Russia discussing their ideas and spreading them throughout the small Russian middle class. It was not long before such activity brought them to the attention of the Empress' agents and in the global upheaval of 1848 they fled Russia with their young son, barely



five years old at the time. Grisha's father was lost in the flight from Russia and is presumed dead by his family. His mother, Inna, was forced to raise him alone in a foreign country, a poor widow with none of the privilege that the family's former position had granted. When Grisha was 21, she died of exhaustion and a broken heart having spent what life she had left educating her son.

Grisha, full of anger over what had happened to his parents, his head filled with the political theories of anarchists, such as Proudhon and Bolshev, and raised with keen skill by his intelligent mother, as well as the rough schooling of the streets, began to look at ways he could strike back at a society that had treated him and his so poorly. Unable to hold down a job for more than a couple of months at a time – partially due to his Beastman status, partially due to his explosive temper and lack of patience for the edicts of the bosses – Grisha drifted from low paid job to low paid job all over the city, making friends and spreading his ideas as he went, finding particular affinity with London's working class Beastmen who, like himself, were the most marginalised of any group.

Grisha's treatment and that of the Beastmen he now saw as his surrogate family, made him even more radical until his resentment became violence with the savage beating of a factory foreman and the sinking of several barges in the Thames using an axe. A line had been crossed and Grisha went underground, taking several of his closest followers and admirers with him, forsaking the 'legitimate' world entirely to choose, instead, a life of thievery, social agitation and terrorism.

Increasingly insular, and extremely radical, the Black Dogs have formed a tight-knit, familial bond. Reinforcing their own ideas and preconceptions as they begin to lash out against society, frustrating the Police attempts to capture them and responsible for ever increasing acts of sabotage and murder that make them heroes to some and a devil to others.

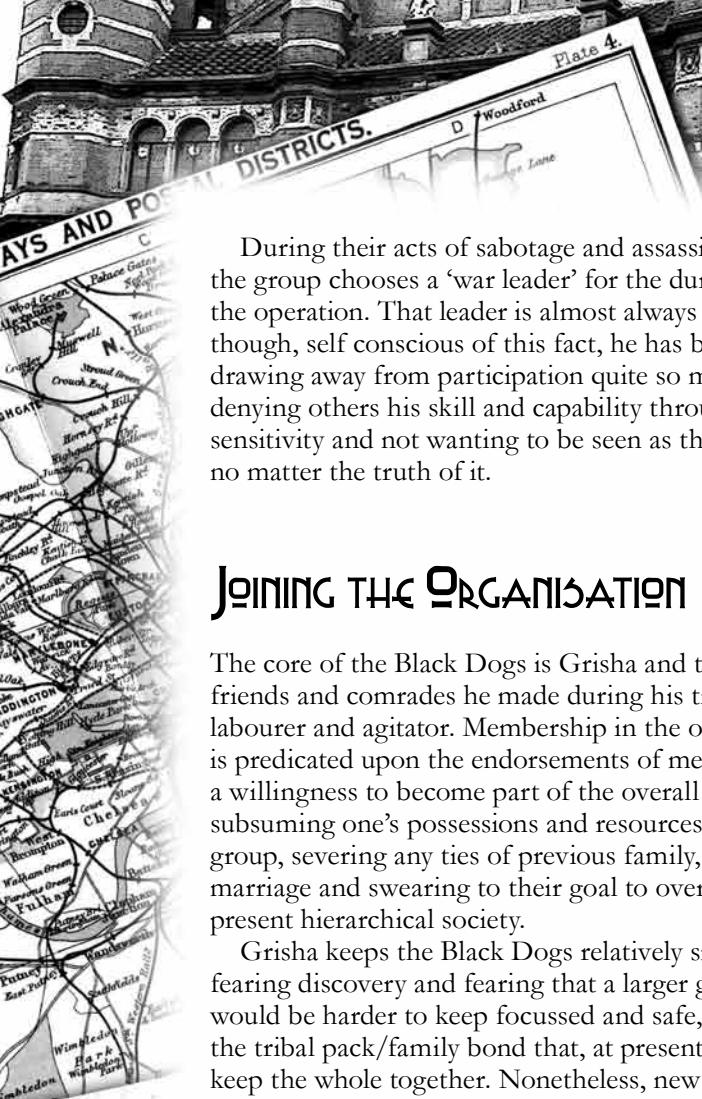
STRUCTURE

The Black Dogs like to think of themselves as an entirely egalitarian and completely democratic group, in accordance with their principles. Every member of the pack has the right to have a say in the plans of the group, regardless of gender or race. The Black Dogs strive to treat everyone as an equal and they take their political and social philosophy so far as to distrust and discard almost all social convention, embracing Free Love, discarding marriage and standard familial

structures, living as a commune, frequently changing romantic partners and sharing tasks regardless of their gender role. To an outsider this seems to be more like the actions of the beasts that so many of them appear to be, rather than the organisation of men, such as they should aspire to be.

The reality, as is almost always the case, is somewhat different. While the group has the definite appearance of upholding the values that they espouse there is no escaping from the fact that Grisha is their leader, head of the pack. His views and his oratory carry a great deal more weight than any other member of the group, he gets more attention, more deference and rarely finds himself performing the more onerous chores for the group, unless he, himself, deliberately does so in order to make a point. Without Grisha, the 'pack' would most likely fall apart or take to infighting. Grisha has lieutenants of a sort, trusted comrades who leverage their friendship with Grisha for their own measure of power over the group. Similarly, the women in the group are sometimes a little sidelined due to the male tendency of seeking to protect them, or due to the sheer necessities of pregnancy – of which there have been many since its inception. The resulting babes are cared for by the whole group but predominantly by the women despite the group's protestations that gender is irrelevant.





During their acts of sabotage and assassination the group chooses a 'war leader' for the duration of the operation. That leader is almost always Grisha; though, self conscious of this fact, he has been drawing away from participation quite so much, denying others his skill and capability through social sensitivity and not wanting to be seen as the leader, no matter the truth of it.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

The core of the Black Dogs is Grisha and the trusted friends and comrades he made during his time as a labourer and agitator. Membership in the organisation is predicated upon the endorsements of members and a willingness to become part of the overall family, subsuming one's possessions and resources to the group, severing any ties of previous family, money or marriage and swearing to their goal to overthrow the present hierarchical society.

Grisha keeps the Black Dogs relatively small, fearing discovery and fearing that a larger group would be harder to keep focussed and safe, weakening the tribal pack/family bond that, at present, helps keep the whole together. Nonetheless, new members

are brought in, when vouchsafed by current members, replacing the slow attrition that comes from deaths or imprisonment. A woman might have more luck joining the group on more lax conditions since they are desperate to equalise the numbers of men and women within their number to reduce pressures within the group and to better represent the sort of egalitarian society that they are hoping to achieve.

In order to be able to join the Black Dogs, a prospective member, or an infiltrator, would have to be known in working class districts and known to be dissatisfied and outspoken against the current status quo of society. They must secure the trust and recommendation of as many members of the group as they can and, finally, must prove themselves by taking some form of action against the oppressive forces at work in society. This action is typically vandalism or sabotage but murder is not unheard of; a way to 'blood' the new member of the pack and an opportunity for them to show just how committed they are to the cause.

The vast majority of the membership is Beastmen of the working class, particularly those whose heritage conforms to that of the dog or the wolf, who seem to be more trustworthy, loyal, friendly and devoted to the 'pack'. Those of other races are largely limited to sympathisers and radical members of the middle class who are up on the political theory but who shy away from the dirty work of actually striking back or fomenting revolt.

RESOURCES


The group does not have a great deal of resources. They are currently occupying the rooms of a sympathetic, and otherwise bankrupt, pub ("The King's Head") paying in what they can steal, and slowly converting the landlord over to their way of thinking. The place stays 'shut', open only to the family but, so long as the landlord gets his dues there doesn't seem to be too much suspicion from him. What they need they steal but they do put aside a number of things for future use.

The group has laid aside a great deal of armaments in secret caches around London and the other major cities of the country intended either for their own use, or use during a country-wide revolution, should it ever come. These caches include rifles, pistols, shotguns and explosives, carefully stored and sealed for future use. Quantities of money are also stashed, as well as alcohol and provisions – mostly stolen from the navy – that should keep long enough to be considered



[NOVEMBER 21]
 THIONS
 DUPLEX SKIRTS
 J. W. BRADLEY'S
 CELEBRATED
 BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
 (or Double Spring)
 SKIRTS
 TAKE AND ECONOMICAL
 each loop being composed
 of FINEST STABLED STEEL
 ingeniously braced fitting
 close to the body
 they are very flexible and
 they are also the
 BEST AND MOST EASY
 TO WEAR.
 They are made in
 FASHIONABLE AND
 FOR
 OPERATION.
 PROMENADE,
 OPERA
 CAMBRIE
 STREET
 above are the most popular
 Introduction
 ALL FIRST-CLASS
 BY THE ROYAL WARRANT
 WESTON, BRADLEY &
 Office and
 No. 97, Cornhill and
 New
 B
 produced
 the
 EYE
 them and
 about the
 of any





useful. More personal arms and explosives are kept closer to their base in The King's Head, ready for use as protection and to be put to purpose in their escapades against the establishment.

The greatest resource that the Black Dogs have is their loyalty to one another and the pack strength that comes from that. The group is bound together as family, as lovers and most members would willingly die for other members, subsuming their own existence to the persistence and survival of the group. This loyalty and comradeship makes members of the Black Dogs capable of extreme acts of heroism and self-sacrifice for the sake of the pack and also renders them extremely hard to crack under interrogation.

The Black Dogs do ally themselves, occasionally, with other anarchist, socialist and nihilist groups but only when it suits them to do so and in a limited and safe fashion, refusing to allow access to information about their intentions. This often marginalises them from the greater revolutionary movement by, ironically, making them seem suspicious and untrustworthy. This, combined with their militant and violent action, limits their alliances but they can depend on sympathisers within the other groups for places to stay and the occasional bit of help, especially in dealing with, or hiding from, the authorities.

AGENDA

The Black Dogs seek nothing less than the complete overthrow of the current hierarchy of society around the globe. They reject monarchism, Parliament, church and marriage and all social convention as they seek some new ideal. Before change can truly come they believe the old way must be violently overthrown. Through sabotage, assassination and disruption they hope to show that the great edifices of the Victorian world are as weak, fallible and human as anyone or anything else, seeking to bring awareness to the masses that they can bring about great change, if only they want it and if only they will act.

Grisha's plan is threefold: to demonstrate the inherent weakness of the current structures of the world by taking direct action against it; to turn the forces of the current order against each other so they will be destroyed; and to provide an example of a better way of living through the Black Dogs. He hopes that their example might inspire others to throw off the shackles of convention and slavery and to live as they do, successfully, in ways that all 'right thinking' men and women would consider, at best, indecent and unnatural.

PERSONALITIES

Grisha is the leader of the whole group and the most distinct personality to be found within it. A dog-like Beastman, Grisha resembles a Samoyed – a breed of Siberian sled-dog also used for herding reindeer and keeping their owners warm in the cold Siberian nights. In the British climate and due to the need to wear clothing Grisha has to frequently trim away his fur. A quirk in the nature of his breed is a permanent smile which, while it makes him seem charming and affable, can become rather terrifying and maniacal during his rants against the world or his violent actions against his perceived oppressors.

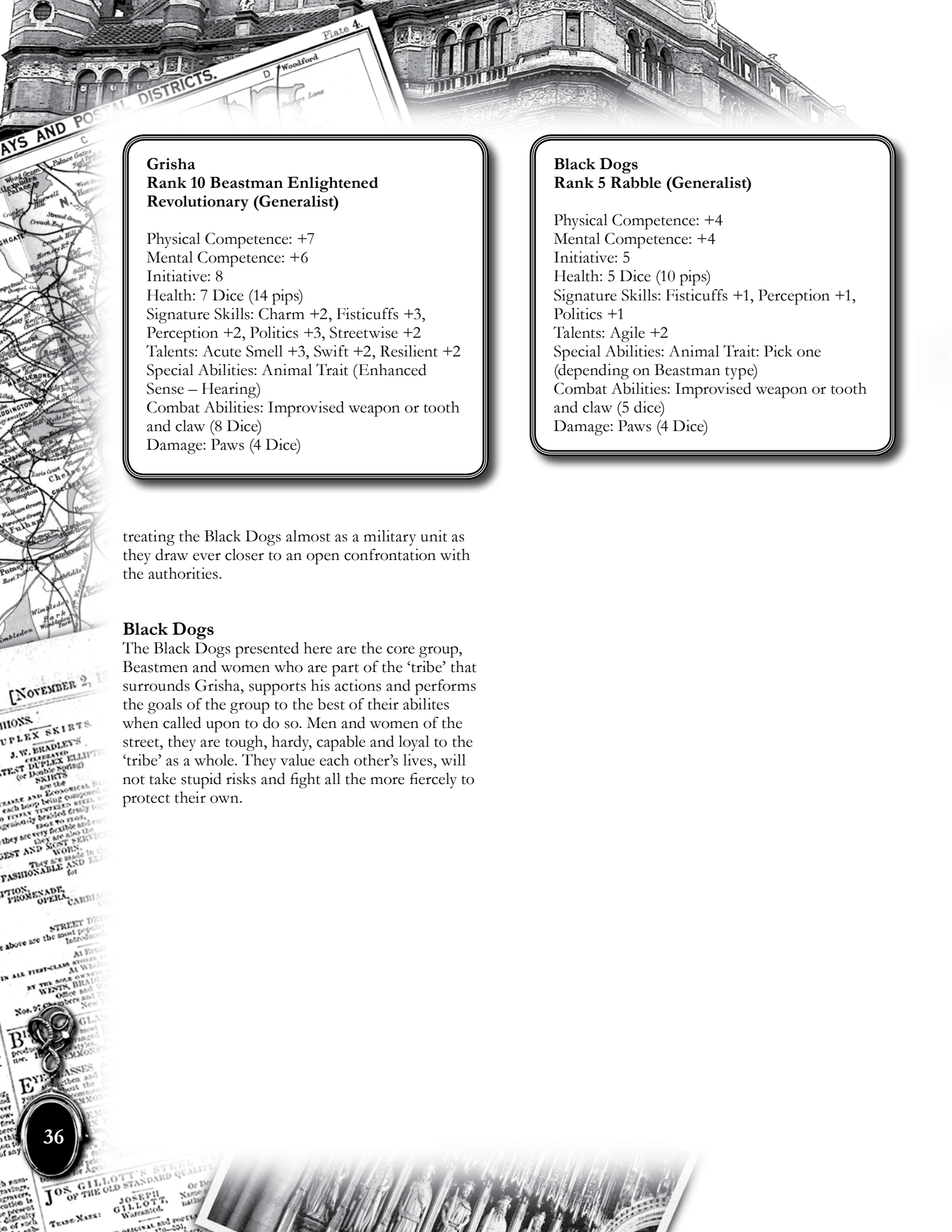
Grisha is committed 100 percent to his cause and is fuelled by the deaths of his parents and the daily injustices he saw as both a Beastman and a member of the working class. His anger stems from pain and hurt as well as from the indoctrination his parents gave him. He is extremely lonely, which is, perhaps, his weakness – an educated member of the working class it is hard for him to find someone he can relate to on an intellectual basis that is not part of the very thing he is fighting against.

The other members of the Black Dogs are a mixed bunch, both men and women, mostly raised on the streets and in the factories and mills of the inner cities. They are tough, hardy, intelligent, but without education and afflicted with hero worship of Grisha; none of them older than 30 years of age. Fit and capable, some of them do have greater specific knowledge, such as explosives, either through military service or working in blasting and building, that they put to the greater use of the group.

Grisha

Grisha is a revenge-driven young Beastman, who has subsumed his personal rage and hurt into his involvement in radical politics, turning a very specific hatred and desire for personal restitution into a modern, general rage against the current way the world works. He has surrounded himself with near-sycophantic followers, who hang on his every word, constantly reinforcing his own opinions and spiral him – and his followers – deeper and deeper into violent radicalism.

Grisha has lost almost all empathy and identity with society at large and to any outside of his radical 'tribe' he can come across as somewhat sociopathic, psychopathic and yet still possessing a peculiar charm and a commanding voice. Now that the Black Dogs are engaging in murder and assassination, Grisha is seeking to find some way to push things even further,



Grisha
Rank 10 Beastman Enlightened
Revolutionary (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 8
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Charm +2, Fisticuffs +3,
Perception +2, Politics +3, Streetwise +2
Talents: Acute Smell +3, Swift +2, Resilient +2
Special Abilities: Animal Trait (Enhanced
Sense – Hearing)
Combat Abilities: Improvised weapon or tooth
and claw (8 Dice)
Damage: Paws (4 Dice)

Black Dogs
Rank 5 Rabble (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +4
Mental Competence: +4
Initiative: 5
Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)
Signature Skills: Fisticuffs +1, Perception +1,
Politics +1
Talents: Agile +2
Special Abilities: Animal Trait: Pick one
(depending on Beastman type)
Combat Abilities: Improvised weapon or tooth
and claw (5 dice)
Damage: Paws (4 Dice)

treating the Black Dogs almost as a military unit as they draw ever closer to an open confrontation with the authorities.

Black Dogs

The Black Dogs presented here are the core group, Beastmen and women who are part of the ‘tribe’ that surrounds Grisha, supports his actions and performs the goals of the group to the best of their abilities when called upon to do so. Men and women of the street, they are tough, hardy, capable and loyal to the ‘tribe’ as a whole. They value each other’s lives, will not take stupid risks and fight all the more fiercely to protect their own.

AGENTS OF THE QUEEN

Andrew Farrington pushed his hands further in the pockets of his greatcoat as he stared at the broadsides covering the alley wall with promises of "Revolution!" or "New Social Order!"

He turned to the man trudging beside him. "Don't the poor realise there's no need for any of this revolutionary nonsense? We have the poor houses and other programs to help them."

James Gregory shrugged, kicking at a pile of soot-covered snow. "Why are we in Southwark again, Andrew?"

Before Andrew could answer, three men stepped into the alleyway. "So, you're going to take care of us, are you, old man?"

Andrew balled his hands into fists and dropped into a fighting stance. He shrugged James' hand off his shoulder, ignoring the man's cries that there were more men behind them, one of them a donkey-bearded Beastman. "What do you men want?"

The Beastman stepped forward. "We want to teach you about the plight of the worker. We're going to show you how the workers are treated."

Andrew backed up against the wall as the men closed in. He watched as his companion took a few hesitant steps toward the street. "James, you fool, don't run. We need to fight these ruffians. Teach them who is boss and send them slinking back to the gutter where they were born!"

Andrew flushed as James reluctantly sidled up to the wall and raised his trembling fists. He almost hit the younger man himself when James whimpered, "Have at you?"

The Beastman laughed as he and the four others advanced on the two men. Andrew threw several punches at the Beastman. The old man growled as each blow glanced off the Beastman's chest.

In between his punches, Andrew watched his younger companion tremble as two of the brigands pulled him away from the wall. The Beastman turned his back on Andrew and faced James. Andrew raised his fist to strike the creature but two of the Beastman's compatriots caught his wrist and wrestled him to the ground.

The Beastman raised a hairy fist above his head and smashed it into James' face. After five hits, James stopped spitting out the blood and just let it dribble from his cracked lips. The man raised an arm to push the Beastman away when the Beastman glued propaganda posters to James' chest and back but couldn't.

Prone, blood running down his forehead and one eye swollen shut, each of Andrew's wild swings was weaker than the one before as the gang kicked him. Gasping for air through torn, battered lips, he struggled to his knees only to be knocked down by a blow to his back. He could only watch with his one good eye as the gang pasted sheets proclaiming "I exploit the workers!" over his face.

HISTORY

Deep within the bowels of London's seamy underworld, a group of thieves clings to the banner of Communism. Their goal: to overthrow the Queen and establish a proletariat paradise.

A surly group comprised of Bolsheviks, Communists and street thugs, the Agents of the Queen run several criminal activities in Southwark. They relish pouncing on any member of the aristocracy or bourgeoisie who stray into their rapidly expanding territory. Led by William DeHavre, they rob and maim anyone who crosses their path and then cover their victim in propaganda, truss him up and drop his body in more 'respectable' parts of the city for the wealthy to see.

DeHavre chose the name 'Agents of the Queen' because he held the Crown in general and the Queen in particular to blame for the squalid conditions of the poor. He believes that acting in Her Majesty's name is one more way he can exact revenge on those who wronged him. They are carrying out the





commands that the Queen should be giving them and as such are her only true agents and authority.

In its earliest days, the Agents were a revolutionary organisation created when the army raided a dockworkers' union meeting, killing 10 attendees. William DeHavre, at the time a disillusioned docker, attended the meeting to see if Bolshevism could help him get by. What the agitators promised sounded like a dream come true: everyone would get what they needed to survive, the daily struggle would be over. It needed only for the workers to rise up and cast down the government. DeHavre was not too sure about that, though; he was a good subject of the Empire and loved his Queen.

In the struggle that ensued when the army invaded the meeting, DeHavre was knocked unconscious. The last thing he heard before he blacked out was, 'Surrender in the name of the Queen!'

When he came to, he learned that 10 of his friends and co-workers had been killed, all by the Queen's orders. From that moment on, all he wanted was to bring down the government and create a world where the workers are the true masters of society.

If there was a Communist or Bolshevik gathering in London, DeHavre was there, recruiting for his organisation. He and his men robbed government facilities and the houses of wealthy government members, bringing the spoils back to their rookery. He promised that the wealth they accumulated would be divided equally among the workers.

As the years passed, DeHavre saw how the wealthy lived and wanted their lifestyle. He realised that while he liked power, he did not like the idea of having to share it with all the idiotic workers who were clamouring to his banner.

He began testing the boundaries of what his men would and would not do for him and began exploiting them, sending them on jobs that had no political rationale and only served to secure more money for DeHavre. He stopped attracting followers with political rallies and instead began recruiting from other criminal organisations. He searched for men and women who were professional thugs, people to protect him and earn him more money, people who did not need to be convinced of the political necessity of attacking a target.

Not every member of the Agents is a diehard Communist. Some still follow DeHavre because they believe in the cause but most act out of fear or greed. Even DeHavre, himself, has strayed from his earlier Bolshevik convictions and is now content to get rich off the backs of his fellow criminals. He has become a ruthless, murdering criminal who no longer believes in the revolution. Instead, he is trying

to amass a large enough gang and enough wealth to become a major player in the London underworld and has demonstrated his willingness to kill those who disobey his orders.

DeHavre's second-in-command, a Lion Beastman named Giuseppe Arbonne, rankles at what he sees as DeHavre's abandonment of the cause of revolution and crass desire to amass a fortune. The Beastman has been with DeHavre since the founding of the Agents and despises what the group has become. Arbonne and other politically-minded Agents watch DeHavre carefully, waiting for a chance to strike and remove him from the gang.

In addition to the common street thugs who comprise the rank and file of the group, the Agents have also recruited butlers and other house servants. When a servant is recruited, the Agents ensure that he or she is loyal to the Bolshevik cause. The more pecuniary-minded Agents believe that household staff loyal to the ideology will not demand a share of the stolen goods, seeing the opportunity to sow the seeds of the revolution as ample reward in itself.

The household staffs working with the Agents act as the group's eyes and ears in upper-class society. The Agents rely on their allies in the estates and townhouses to provide information about when the wealthy are out of the house and to ensure that the doors are unlocked.

The Agents, primarily through Giuseppe Arbonne, maintain close ties to the Prussian revolutionary and anarchist circles. These connections allow the Agents to smuggle weapons and propaganda into the country with the assistance of supporters in the dockyards. The Prussian connection also enables the group to smuggle Agents who have attracted too much police attention out of the country.

The Queen has heard about the Agents operating in her name and is greatly displeased. She views it as an affront to the monarchy, which it is, and has tasked the Metropolitan Police with bringing the criminals to justice. The police pursue this group vigorously but so far have been unable to capture more than a few low-ranking criminals.

STRUCTURE

Comprised primarily of Humans and Beastmen, the Agents also count Ogres, Halflings and a few Dwarves among their membership. The majority of the Agents of the Queen are either common street thugs or political agitators. Many of them have no dealings with either DeHavre or Arbonne.

The Agents consider themselves to be 'an army of the new revolution' and as such are assigned military rank by DeHavre or Arbonne based on their prestige and seniority. The lowest full members are simply called 'brother' or 'sister', a term that is used with rank for all members, be they 'brother sergeant' or 'sister corporal'. The highest title of 'Brother General' is reserved for DeHavre with Arbonne ranked as 'Brother Captain'. These are currently the only two ranks assigned above 'Brother/Sister Lieutenant'. Given the size of the organisation, most members have no rank or are sergeant or corporal, at best. After all, DeHavre does not want anyone rising too high. The ranks are designed to encourage members to prove themselves in the hope of promotion, rather than to create a structured chain of command. They are little more than a carrot on a string. DeHavre also awards several medals of honour, another trinket to make the members feel special and valued that costs him very little. As this system has developed, more medals are given out for acts of criminal vandalism than for advancing the cause of the revolution, something of great concern to Arbonne.

The link between the rank-and-file and the leadership is formed by the Queen's Lieutenants (or 'Brother Lieutenants'). These are particularly loyal and successful members of the Agents who have earned the trust of either DeHavre or Arbonne. The Lieutenants usually get orders from DeHavre or Arbonne and pass them along to the Agents (usually through the 'Brother Sergeants'). A few of the more skilled or motivated Lieutenants cultivate their own targets and task the Agents as they see fit. As long as DeHavre receives his share of the robbery, he is content to let the Lieutenants act independently. Arbonne, however, keeps a careful eye on those who do so. If the Lieutenants act as proper Bolsheviks and spread the word of revolution, Arbonne allows them leeway. If they are acting out of greed, however, Arbonne berates them and encourages them to set aside their greed and embrace Communism. If the Lieutenant continues to act in his own interest instead of the self interest of the proletariat, Arbonne or one of his men beats up the offender and promises more retribution if he does not toe the line.

A cadre of particularly violent criminals hang on DeHavre's every word, acting as his personal

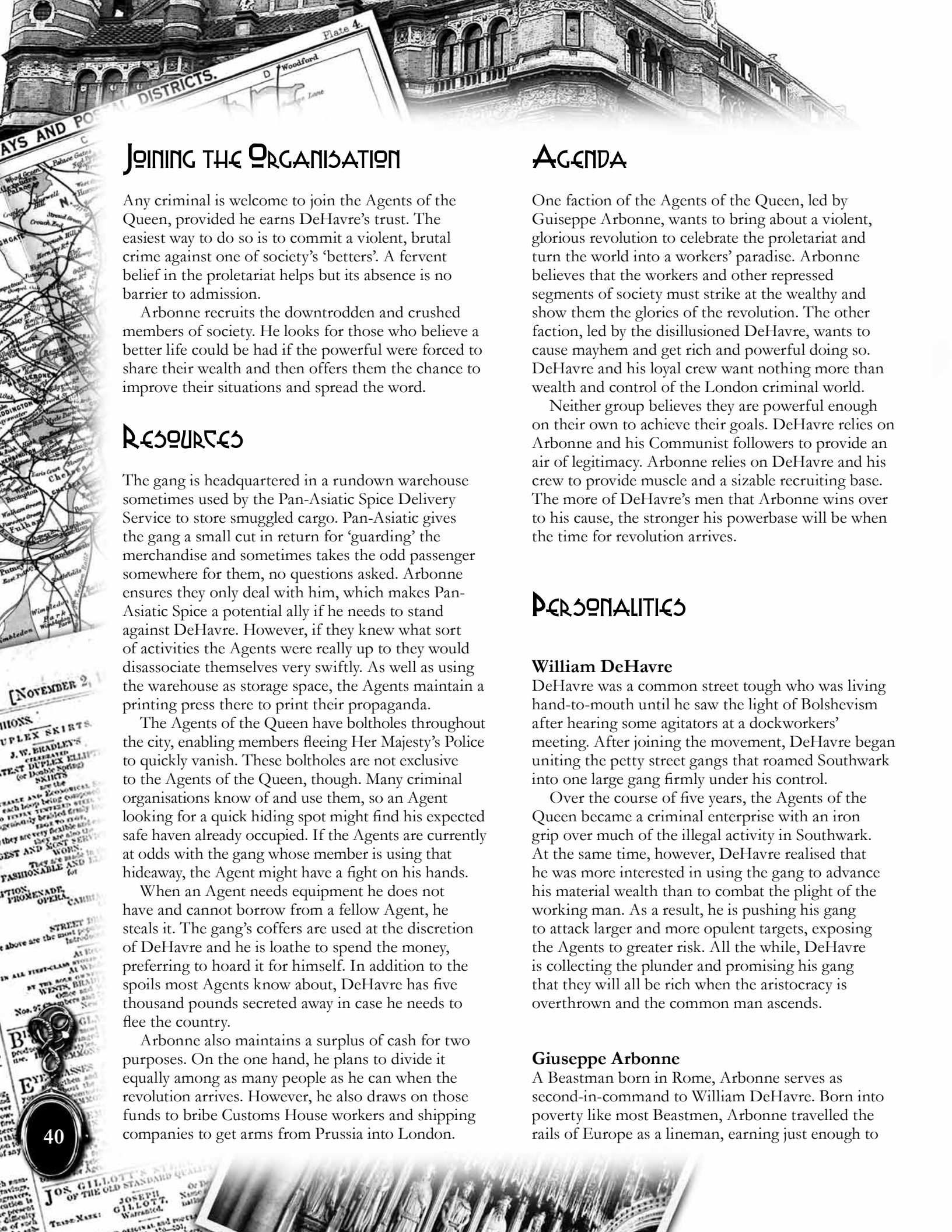


bodyguards and enforcers. This group is simply called the 'Brother Elite'. If an Agent questions DeHavre or does not provide him with a large enough share of the latest robbery, these enforcers pounce, usually killing the offender. When it is necessary for a statement to be made regarding DeHavre's leadership of the group, this cadre beats up the offender but DeHavre renders the killing blow in front of an audience.

The Agents of the Queen are led by DeHavre but a schism is forming between the criminally-minded faction loyal to him and other members of the gang who truly believe in Bolshevism. Although they profess to be loyal revolutionaries, the common criminals and thugs are only interested in causing mayhem and getting rich. Many of them, operating under the protection of DeHavre, openly mock the diehard Bolsheviks.

Those who ardently believe in revolution are led by Arbonne but are the smaller faction within the organisation. At present, the revolutionaries are outnumbered three-to-one by the criminals. To build a better support base, Arbonne has formed a relationship with the anarchist and revolutionary groups in Prussia. He hopes that the Prussians will assist him in removing his wayward leader.

Although the Agents of the Queen have 80 members, most Agents prefer to work alone or in small groups comprised of people they know and trust. Most of their crimes do not require large scale operations or extensive support.



JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Any criminal is welcome to join the Agents of the Queen, provided he earns DeHavre's trust. The easiest way to do so is to commit a violent, brutal crime against one of society's 'betters'. A fervent belief in the proletariat helps but its absence is no barrier to admission.

Arbonne recruits the downtrodden and crushed members of society. He looks for those who believe a better life could be had if the powerful were forced to share their wealth and then offers them the chance to improve their situations and spread the word.

RESOURCES

The gang is headquartered in a rundown warehouse sometimes used by the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service to store smuggled cargo. Pan-Asiatic gives the gang a small cut in return for 'guarding' the merchandise and sometimes takes the odd passenger somewhere for them, no questions asked. Arbonne ensures they only deal with him, which makes Pan-Asiatic Spice a potential ally if he needs to stand against DeHavre. However, if they knew what sort of activities the Agents were really up to they would disassociate themselves very swiftly. As well as using the warehouse as storage space, the Agents maintain a printing press there to print their propaganda.

The Agents of the Queen have boltholes throughout the city, enabling members fleeing Her Majesty's Police to quickly vanish. These boltholes are not exclusive to the Agents of the Queen, though. Many criminal organisations know of and use them, so an Agent looking for a quick hiding spot might find his expected safe haven already occupied. If the Agents are currently at odds with the gang whose member is using that hideaway, the Agent might have a fight on his hands.

When an Agent needs equipment he does not have and cannot borrow from a fellow Agent, he steals it. The gang's coffers are used at the discretion of DeHavre and he is loathe to spend the money, preferring to hoard it for himself. In addition to the spoils most Agents know about, DeHavre has five thousand pounds secreted away in case he needs to flee the country.

Arbonne also maintains a surplus of cash for two purposes. On the one hand, he plans to divide it equally among as many people as he can when the revolution arrives. However, he also draws on those funds to bribe Customs House workers and shipping companies to get arms from Prussia into London.

AGENDA

One faction of the Agents of the Queen, led by Guiseppe Arbonne, wants to bring about a violent, glorious revolution to celebrate the proletariat and turn the world into a workers' paradise. Arbonne believes that the workers and other repressed segments of society must strike at the wealthy and show them the glories of the revolution. The other faction, led by the disillusioned DeHavre, wants to cause mayhem and get rich and powerful doing so. DeHavre and his loyal crew want nothing more than wealth and control of the London criminal world.

Neither group believes they are powerful enough on their own to achieve their goals. DeHavre relies on Arbonne and his Communist followers to provide an air of legitimacy. Arbonne relies on DeHavre and his crew to provide muscle and a sizable recruiting base. The more of DeHavre's men that Arbonne wins over to his cause, the stronger his powerbase will be when the time for revolution arrives.

PERSONALITIES

William DeHavre

DeHavre was a common street tough who was living hand-to-mouth until he saw the light of Bolshevism after hearing some agitators at a dockworkers' meeting. After joining the movement, DeHavre began uniting the petty street gangs that roamed Southwark into one large gang firmly under his control.

Over the course of five years, the Agents of the Queen became a criminal enterprise with an iron grip over much of the illegal activity in Southwark. At the same time, however, DeHavre realised that he was more interested in using the gang to advance his material wealth than to combat the plight of the working man. As a result, he is pushing his gang to attack larger and more opulent targets, exposing the Agents to greater risk. All the while, DeHavre is collecting the plunder and promising his gang that they will all be rich when the aristocracy is overthrown and the common man ascends.

Giuseppe Arbonne

A Beastman born in Rome, Arbonne serves as second-in-command to William DeHavre. Born into poverty like most Beastmen, Arbonne travelled the rails of Europe as a lineman, earning just enough to

William DeHavre
Rank 15 Manipulative Criminal (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +9
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 8
Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Dodge +6, Hide & Sneak +4, Improvised Weapon +4, Intimidate +6, Oratory +6, Streetwise +6
Traits: Flagging Communist -3
Combat Abilities: Willing to attack anyone who seems less powerful; tries to talk his way out of fights with more skilled opponents
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)

Guiseppe Arbonne
Rank 12 Lion Beastman Communist (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +9
Initiative: 11
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Fisticuffs +4, Hide & Sneak +6, Improvised Weapon +4, Languages (Italian - Fluent, German +2, English +2), Pick Pockets +4, Perception +4, Streetwise +4
Traits: Communist +5, Police Harassment -5
Special Abilities: Animal trait - Claws
Combat Abilities: Fights whenever necessary.
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)

eat on a fairly regular basis. In Bavaria, Arbonne fell in with a group of Bolsheviks who were trying to unionise the railway workers. He quickly became one of their most ardent supporters. When the Bavarian government cracked down on the unionists, Arbonne fled to London, settling in among the warehouses of Southwark. When he met DeHavre, he thought he had met a fellow Bolshevik who would help organise the poor workers of Britain into an effective army to combat capitalism.

At first, Arbonne was thrilled to be working with DeHavre and the other Agents of the Queen. The group was regularly striking at the government oppressors, recruiting new members and spreading the word about the glory of the revolution. He willingly went along with every plan DeHavre concocted, convincing others that DeHavre would lead them to a workers' paradise.

As DeHavre's greed grew, Arbonne noticed a shift in the group's targets. If someone had money, they were a viable target regardless of ideological leaning. When Arbonne asked DeHavre why the Agents were now attacking anyone wealthy instead of just political targets, DeHavre replied that all the money should belong to the workers. Arbonne could not argue with that but he did raise the point that indiscriminately attacking anyone and everyone ran the risk of alienating some of their supporters who were themselves wealthy but fancied themselves men of the people.

DeHavre's choice of targets continued to expand but Arbonne noticed a more disturbing trend. The man was hoarding more and more of the money for himself and his inner circle of cutthroats. Arbonne

raised another question and this time was beaten by two of DeHavre's closest associates. It was at that moment that he realised that DeHavre had no interests other than enriching himself from the exploitation of the men, women and children he claimed to be fighting for.

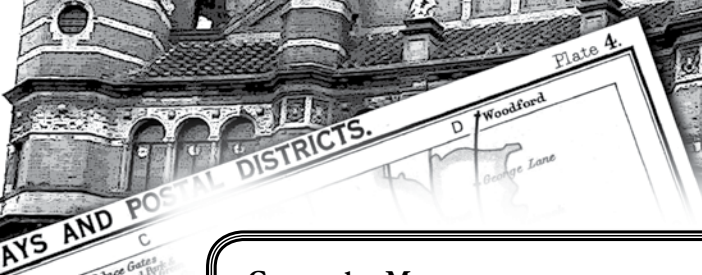
Although highly intelligent, Arbonne carefully cultivates the image of a madman, dressing in rags and wearing his hair long and unkempt.

Cassandra Murray

Cassandra's mother was a prostitute and as a result she is unsure who her father was. She assumes he was one of the many men who helped keep a little food on the table. As a child learning to beg and steal on the streets, Cassandra vowed to do better for herself. She promised herself that she would become a respectable lady and find a good husband to lift her out of the squalid existence into which she had been born. Life, however, had other plans.

By the age of 12, Cassandra was an accomplished pickpocket and burglar. Her slight frame enabled her to slip into the smallest openings in houses. Once inside, she lifted as much as she could carry, made her escape and took what she stole to her mother who would fence the goods.

Within six years, the young thief had also become a skilled prostitute, following in her mother's footsteps. Cassandra soon learned a more effective way to part her customers from their money: the knife she used for cutting open pockets was just as effective at slitting throats. She would then steal her clients'



Cassandra Murray
Rank 10 Assassin (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 12
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Charm +6, Hide & Sneak +6,
Pick Pockets +5, Perception +6, Streetwise +4,
Swordplay +5
Traits: Murderer +5, Police Harassment -2
Combat Abilities: Cassandra prefers to use
surprise and subterfuge to her advantage. She
avoids a stand-up fight whenever possible
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)

Dmitri Maximov
Rank 8 Agitator (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 8
Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)
Signature Skills: Craft (Printing) +4, Forgery
+3, Hide & Sneak +3, Perception +3,
Streetwise +4, Swordplay +3
Traits: Communist +5, One-armed -5
Combat Abilities: Quick to anger
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)

money and run. Soon realising that she enjoyed killing more than she enjoyed taking the money, she sometimes murdered people for no reason.

It was not long before the police investigated the dead bodies turning up in St. Giles and concluded that a prostitute was to blame. Cassandra realised her freedom was threatened and decided to flee the district. Lacking many other options, she found herself in Southwark.

After arriving, she resumed her pick-pocketing and small-time thievery. DeHavre soon noticed that a new thief was in his territory. His offer to Cassandra was a simple one: she could sign on with his crew or he would kill her. Cassandra quickly agreed to join the Agents of the Queen and worked her way up the ranks. Her skill with a knife and bloodthirsty demeanour earned her the respect and fear of many of her fellow agents. Her charm and skill earned her even more attention from DeHavre. Within a year, she'd joined DeHavre's inner circle and now serves as one of his 'Sister Elite' bodyguards and confidantes.

Dmitri Maximov

Dmitri is a Dwarf loyal to Arbonne. He arrived in England with his parents when he was six. His parents, farmers, left Russia to find better employment in the factories of London. Unfortunately, there was little work to be had. The mills in the north only wanted English speakers and the foundries in the Midlands did not have any openings. After two years of wandering England looking for work Dmitri and his parents found themselves homeless in London. Desperate to feed his family, Dmitri's father voluntarily entered his entire family into a workhouse, not realising the fate that awaited them.

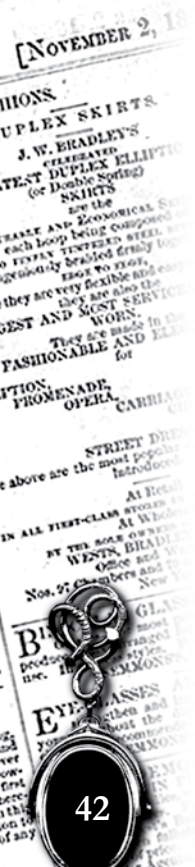
Within two years, Dmitri's mother was dead and his father crippled from the hard labour and unsanitary conditions. By then, Dmitri had seen enough to know that capitalism did nothing but crush the poor and reward the already wealthy. He talked about their fate with his father, who encouraged Dmitri to save himself by escaping to a better life. The boy, hesitant to leave his father to the machinations of the workhouse protested and stayed another year. By the end of that year, Dmitri had lost a hand to a malfunctioning press and his father had succumbed to an outbreak of influenza that decimated the workhouse population, without seeming to affect the overseers.

Dmitri knew he had to escape if he did not want to end up in the workhouse's public cemetery, so he strangled the guard posted at one of the side exits and fled into the night. He never knew if anyone came looking for him, or even if they noticed he was gone.

An infection in his injured arm coupled with a lack of food caused the boy to black out. When he came to, he found himself staring into the face of a lion-headed Beastman who introduced himself as Giuseppe Arbonne. He offered to take Dmitri to see a doctor and was even willing to pay.

On the way, Arbonne explained how if he had his way, the people who did this to Dmitri and his parents would be forced to pay and everyone would be equals. Dmitri listened attentively while Arbonne told him of his master plan.

The doctor ended up being a gutter quack but whatever was in the vials he gave Dmitri knocked the infection out of the boy's arm. Dmitri stayed with Arbonne, learning everything he could about the coming revolution and how he could help.



Now 16, Dmitri fervently supports Arbonne and his fellow Agents of the Queen. He sees DeHavre as little better than the poorhouse masters who killed his parents and stole his hand. Handicapped by his missing hand, Dmitri lacks the finesse to undertake many of the criminal jobs. Instead, Dmitri designs many of the propaganda posters used by the Agents and operates the printing press. Arbonne modified the press to enable Dmitri to operate it one-handed. His time with the printing press has also taught him some basic forgery skills and when the Agents need a document forged, Dmitri is the first one they contact. His anger at his previous experiences has made him a violent, short-tempered individual despite Arbonne's best attempts at teaching him to control his impulses. In a fight, he is also very handy with a knife.

Agent of the Queen

One day they are minding their own business beating up gents and taking their money. The next they are approached by a respectable-looking fellow who promises that they will be one of the leaders of London, if not the world, if they sign on with him and his crew. They do and nothing changes, except they now have to do what he tells them and stick revolutionary pamphlets that they cannot even read all over town and all over the people they truss up. However, it is not all bad. They sometimes get medals and hope to get a promotion that means they can do some bossing about.

Queen's Lieutenant

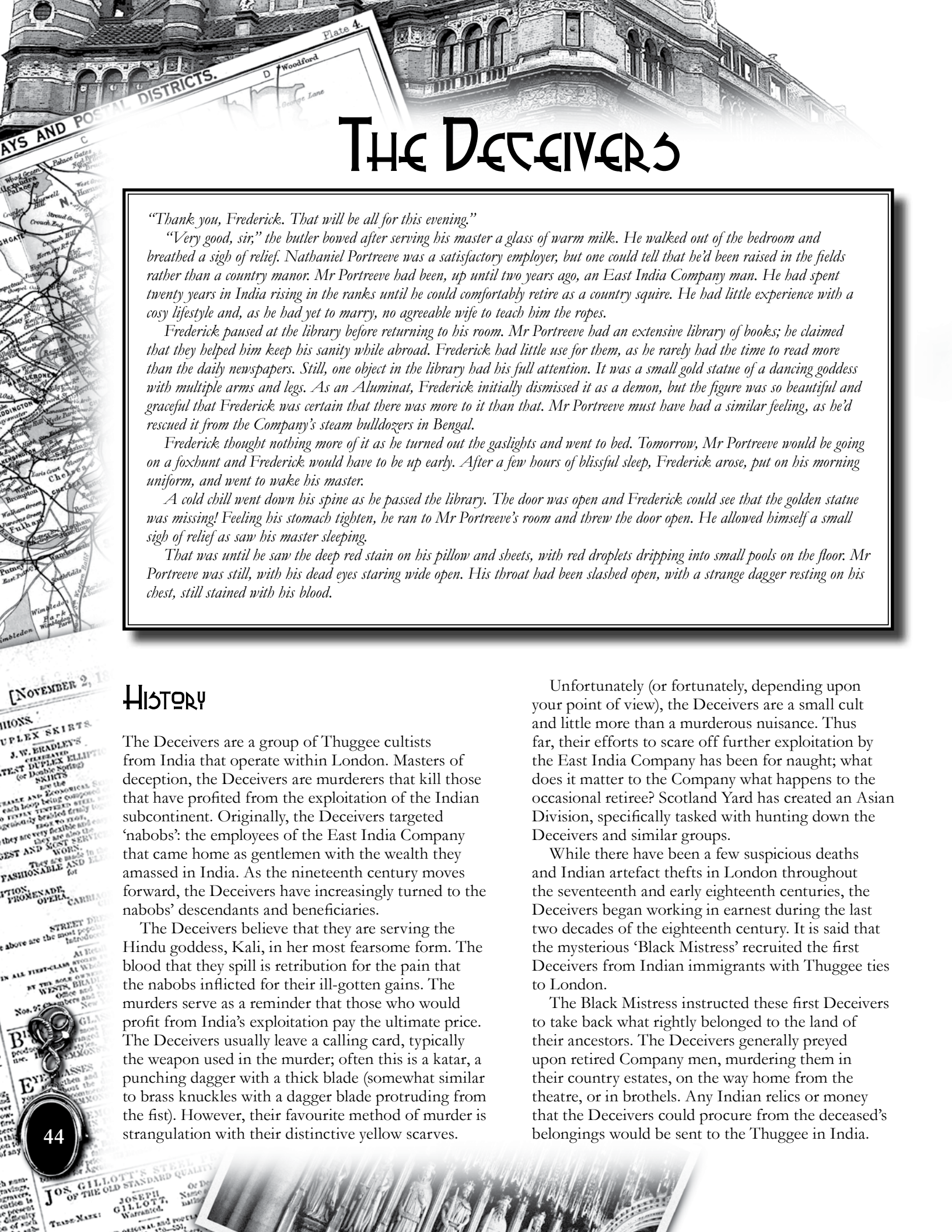
They were revolutionaries living on the streets of London, dodging the Bobbies and preaching their message from whatever soapbox or front stoop they could stand on for five minutes. Then they ran into either William DeHavre or Giuseppe Arbonne, who taught them the value of organisation. Now they lead gangs of fellow revolutionaries, some of them little better than street thugs with literature but they are serving the greater good that is the workers' cause.

Agent of the Queen Rank 6 Criminal (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +3
Initiative: 5
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Fisticuffs +1, Hide & Sneak +2, Improvised Weapon +2, Pick Pockets +2, Streetwise +2
Traits: Police Harassment -5
Combat Abilities: Eager for a fight
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)

Queen's Lieutenant Rank 8 Criminal (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +4
Initiative: 7
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Fisticuffs +2, Hide & Sneak +2, Improvised Weapon +4, Perception +2, Streetwise +4
Traits: Police Harassment -5
Combat Abilities: Prefers to have others do the fighting
Damage: Knife (4 Dice)



THE DECEIVERS

"Thank you, Frederick. That will be all for this evening."

"Very good, sir," the butler bowed after serving his master a glass of warm milk. He walked out of the bedroom and breathed a sigh of relief. Nathaniel Portreeve was a satisfactory employer, but one could tell that he'd been raised in the fields rather than a country manor. Mr Portreeve had been, up until two years ago, an East India Company man. He had spent twenty years in India rising in the ranks until he could comfortably retire as a country squire. He had little experience with a cosy lifestyle and, as he had yet to marry, no agreeable wife to teach him the ropes.

Frederick paused at the library before returning to his room. Mr Portreeve had an extensive library of books; he claimed that they helped him keep his sanity while abroad. Frederick had little use for them, as he rarely had the time to read more than the daily newspapers. Still, one object in the library had his full attention. It was a small gold statue of a dancing goddess with multiple arms and legs. As an Aluminat, Frederick initially dismissed it as a demon, but the figure was so beautiful and graceful that Frederick was certain that there was more to it than that. Mr Portreeve must have had a similar feeling, as he'd rescued it from the Company's steam bulldozers in Bengal.

Frederick thought nothing more of it as he turned out the gaslights and went to bed. Tomorrow, Mr Portreeve would be going on a foxhunt and Frederick would have to be up early. After a few hours of blissful sleep, Frederick arose, put on his morning uniform, and went to wake his master.

A cold chill went down his spine as he passed the library. The door was open and Frederick could see that the golden statue was missing! Feeling his stomach tighten, he ran to Mr Portreeve's room and threw the door open. He allowed himself a small sigh of relief as saw his master sleeping.

That was until he saw the deep red stain on his pillow and sheets, with red droplets dripping into small pools on the floor. Mr Portreeve was still, with his dead eyes staring wide open. His throat had been slashed open, with a strange dagger resting on his chest, still stained with his blood.

HISTORY

The Deceivers are a group of Thuggee cultists from India that operate within London. Masters of deception, the Deceivers are murderers that kill those that have profited from the exploitation of the Indian subcontinent. Originally, the Deceivers targeted 'nabobs': the employees of the East India Company that came home as gentlemen with the wealth they amassed in India. As the nineteenth century moves forward, the Deceivers have increasingly turned to the nabobs' descendants and beneficiaries.

The Deceivers believe that they are serving the Hindu goddess, Kali, in her most fearsome form. The blood that they spill is retribution for the pain that the nabobs inflicted for their ill-gotten gains. The murders serve as a reminder that those who would profit from India's exploitation pay the ultimate price. The Deceivers usually leave a calling card, typically the weapon used in the murder; often this is a katar, a punching dagger with a thick blade (somewhat similar to brass knuckles with a dagger blade protruding from the fist). However, their favourite method of murder is strangulation with their distinctive yellow scarves.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending upon your point of view), the Deceivers are a small cult and little more than a murderous nuisance. Thus far, their efforts to scare off further exploitation by the East India Company has been for naught; what does it matter to the Company what happens to the occasional retiree? Scotland Yard has created an Asian Division, specifically tasked with hunting down the Deceivers and similar groups.

While there have been a few suspicious deaths and Indian artefact thefts in London throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Deceivers began working in earnest during the last two decades of the eighteenth century. It is said that the mysterious 'Black Mistress' recruited the first Deceivers from Indian immigrants with Thuggee ties to London.

The Black Mistress instructed these first Deceivers to take back what rightly belonged to the land of their ancestors. The Deceivers generally preyed upon retired Company men, murdering them in their country estates, on the way home from the theatre, or in brothels. Any Indian relics or money that the Deceivers could procure from the deceased's belongings would be sent to the Thuggee in India.

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
DUPLICATIONS
COMPLEX SKIRTS
J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
...
FASHIONABLE AND ELEGANT
...
STREET DRIFT
...
ALL FIRST-CLASS
...
JOSEPH GILLOTT'S STEEL
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
Warranted.
TRADE-MARK:
ORIGINAL AND PURELY
...
44



Little was made of these murders at first, for it was not uncommon for careless men to meet a violent end and the newly rich often forgot to take the appropriate security measures to which aristocrats were accustomed. For many fledgling police detectives, the murders made sense. That these rich men had been both killed and robbed made the Deceivers seem to be nothing but violent thieves. That changed when the Deceivers murdered Lord Roger Chapel.

Roger Chapel was a Gnome from a middle class family (Roger would inherit a baronetcy) that took advantage of the East India Company's recruitment policy (native Gnomes are practically non-existent in the Indian subcontinent, placing them outside the Hindu caste system) to seek his fortune.

Sir Roger's exploits in India, including holding the fort during the Siege of Arcot, the retaking of Calcutta and the crushing of a Bengali revolt, allowed him to retire a rich man and leave Bengal firmly in the hands of the Company.

After serving as Governor of Bengal and Commander in Chief of the Company forces, Major-General Roger Chapel returned to London and was created a baron by George III in 1768. Having made a fortune in India, Lord Roger started to use his influence to increase sympathy for the Company in Parliament. Over the next two years, he would help

stack the House of Commons with Company retirees, now middle class men enriched from India. Lord Roger himself sat in the House of Lords along with a few other 'Company Lords'.

While strolling back to Parliament after lunch one afternoon, a well-dressed stranger approached Lord Roger and plunged a katar into his chest, leaving it buried within him. The stranger attempted to run away but a detective managed to shoot him. As the stranger died, his disguise enchantment faded to reveal a lower class Indian. It mattered little to Lord Roger, who was dead before the shot was fired.

In response, Her Majesty created the Oriental Taskforce, a specialised group drawn from local constables and officials. The London Guild also provided support. The Oriental Taskforce was instrumental in capturing many Deceivers and driving them further underground. In 1829, the Oriental Taskforce became the Oriental Division of Scotland Yard, still tasked with ferreting out 'Thuggee and other Indian malcontents'.

Still, the murders continue. The Black Mistress chooses her targets well and, through careful organisation, she ensures that Oriental Division detectives score only momentary victories, ferreting out only a handful of Deceivers in any one investigation. These have hardly slowed her efforts, as more Thuggee flock to London and quickly replace those lost.

STRUCTURE

The Deceivers ultimately derive their direction from the Black Mistress, whom the Deceivers believe to be an avatar of Kali. The Black Mistress usually appears as a beautiful Eldren woman in fashionable black dress (leading some to believe that the Black Mistress is actually Paline or another demon lord). The Deceivers fervently believe that the word of the Black Mistress is the word of Kali and they follow her orders with utmost devotion and without question.

The Deceivers operate in a sort of cell structure. The Black Mistress chooses a target and assigns one or more Deceivers to achieve that goal. Usually, the Black Mistress designates a leader and allows him to recruit from the available pool, although the Black Mistress often advises or even selects mission members. This mission group operates independently until the goal is achieved, avoiding other Deceivers. This structure ensures that if the mission is compromised then the rest of the group will not be uncovered by an investigation.



Currently, there are only about 20 Deceivers, but their numbers are starting to swell. The Black Mistress sees an opportunity with the unrest in India and wants her Deceivers prepared in London. In addition to the 20 actual Deceivers, there is a support network of over 100. These supporters offer aid or protection for the Deceivers, believing that it is their duty to help those that champion Indian causes, even if it means supporting murder.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Many Deceivers are Thuggee immigrants that continue to operate in London. Such Thuggee are immediately brought to the Temple of Kali in Belgravia. The Black Mistress soon makes an assessment and offers them a glass of wine. If the recruit is found worthy, then the drink is the sweetest that he has ever tasted. If the recruit is found lacking, then the drink is a most deadly and immediate poison.

Current Deceivers may also recruit new blood, usually from London's Indian population. The recruiter puts the recruit through a series of tests to determine his ability, discretion and devotion. The recruit is usually ignorant of the true nature of his sponsor. Once the recruiter feels his protégé is ready, the recruit is taken to the temple and undergoes the same wine test. Occasionally, the Black Mistress personally recruits a Deceiver. Such recruits forego the wine test, as doing so would imply that the Black Mistress chose poorly.

RESOURCES

The Deceivers do not need great funding for their operations; their skill is often enough. What money they do have comes from donations within the membership and sympathisers. Deceivers also acquire wealth from their assassinations (by looting the nabob's mansion or taking his wallet after killing him). The recruitment of Harold Wyndham has also swelled their coffers recently, providing the group with bases of operation within rich circles.

Currently, the main base of operations is the Temple of Kali. Mr. Wyndham built the temple beneath his home in Belgravia (his Indian servants are members of the Temple, although not Deceivers themselves). The Temple has a secret exit into the sewers and can only be accessed through a secret entrance in the basement.



Dr. Khan uses his position to find potential recruits, keep an eye on the descendants of nabobs and access university resources. He also has a long list of contacts to ascertain the location of lost artefacts, their worth and ways to return them to India without being caught. Dr. Khan often uses Mr. Cork's connections for fencing and smuggling needs.

However, possibly the most powerful resource the cult has is the Black Mistress herself. She appears to her followers in the Temple but vanishes as she pleases. Sometimes she has been known to kill particular nabobs herself. Her power is such that she seems to enchant her victim and murder them with a single kiss. They die in agony and the devout cultists who have witnessed this, claim it is as if the victim kissed death herself. Whether she is an avatar of Kali, a demon or simply a powerful sorceress, there is no doubt that the Black Mistress is not to be trifled with.

AGENDA

The Deceivers' agenda is simple: to serve the Black Mistress. They do this through exacting revenge on nabobs and their descendants while reclaiming 'stolen' artefacts. The Deceivers use money or valuables taken from their victims to fund Thuggee activities in India.

[NOVEMBER 2]

PHIONS

UPLEX SKIRTS

J. W. BRADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS

TAKE AND ECONOMICAL
each loop being composed
of FINELY TWISTED STEEL
and is usually made of
they are very flexible and
they are also the
BEST AND MOST
WOOL.

FASHIONABLE AND
FOR

OPERATION
PROXIMATE
OPERA
CAMBRI

STREET
above are the most popular
Introductions

IN ALL FIRST-CLASS
AT W
BY THE ROAD OWN
WEST, BLA
Office and
Nos. 97
New

B
prod
the
EYE
ver
now
first
I
on
of any

46

JOS. GILLOTT'S STAMPS
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

JOSEPH
GILLOTT,
WARRICK.

TRADE-MARK:
ORIGINAL and
No. 551



Due to these needs, the Deceivers often plan their assassinations in order to maximise the acquisition of valuables. They will not, for example, shoot a target walking out of church on a Sunday morning if they are able to attack him in his study at night, as this provides an opportunity to take Indian artefacts or other valuables lying about.

While the Deceivers support the Thuggee and Indian independence movements, success or failure in India has little impact on their operations. So long as the Black Mistress continues to direct them, the Deceivers follow her every word.

PERSONALITIES

Harold Wyndham

Lord Harold Wyndham, Baron of Branford is, by any measure, insane. The second son of an upper class family, Harold was pegged as 'different' at an early age. His mind seemed to be elsewhere and he had an unhealthy fascination with death. He also had a knack for creating a false persona for everyone he met, always referring to each by his false name and bringing up past events in which he participated.

At first, Harold's father thought that his son was afflicted with a rather severe form of Eldren 'artistic eccentricity'. When this turned out not to be the case, Harold sent his son to a monastery in the hopes that the Aluminat Church could sort him out.

While Harold proved to be a good student, he found the Aluminat teachings to be hollow. He believed that there was more to the universe. One night, while Harold meditated in the monastery chapel, the Black

Mistress appeared to him. She told him that he was, in fact, an avatar of Yama. The East India Company was destroying his ancestral land and now was the time to judge it.

The next morning, when Harold learned that his whole family had died in a country house fire, he found that he did not care. Although he was now a baron, in his heart he was Yama. Through the Black Mistress' guidance, Baron Branford uses his wealth to advance the Deceivers' goals. He is also not above committing the occasional murder; he is, after all, the lord of the dead.

Harold Wyndham is a handsome Eldren who prefers 'oriental dress' within his home. He employs only Indian servants and serves Indian cuisine at dinner parties; practices considered to be his 'artistic eccentricity' in Wyndham's social circles.

Baron Branford is unmarried and as such is a popular guest in upper and middle class households with unmarried daughters. More than a few of these families owe their status and wealth to India, literally allowing Baron Branford to open doors for the Deceivers to exact revenge.

Dr. Pavak Khan

Pavak Khan is a professor of Oriental Studies at University College in Bloomsbury. A Bengali, Dr. Khan watched his father and older brothers get murdered by East India Company mercenaries when they refused to evacuate their village. Pavak swore revenge but knew that he had to learn more about his enemies first. He attended Hindu College in Calcutta in 1854. While in Calcutta, Pavak met the Black Mistress. She offered him an opportunity to do more damage to the Company than he ever thought would be possible.

With the Black Mistress' aid, Dr. Khan came to London in 1857 and acquired a teaching position. While a devout Deceiver, Dr. Khan is also a follower of Ismal and is currently attempting to get funding and approval for a mosque to be built in London. Such a mosque would, of course, include another secret gathering place for the Deceivers.

Dr. Khan's interest is in oriental antiquities and he has many contacts in antiquarian circles. Considered an expert in the field, Dr. Khan is also called upon to verify the authenticity of Indian artefacts. This has enabled him to specifically target nabobs that have Indian treasures and return them to their places of origin. While a dedicated Thuggee, Dr. Khan is more interested in rescuing artefacts than in killing his victims, although he does so without hesitation.

Harold Wyndham

Rank 12 Eldren Noble (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7

Mental Competence: +8

Initiative: 7

Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)

Mana: 4 Dice (24 pips)

Signature Skills: Etiquette +3, High Society +4,

Sensate Medium +2, Swordplay +3, Theology

(Aluminat) +2, Theology (Hinduism) +4

Traits: Eligible bachelor +4, Handsome +2

Special Abilities: Glimpse (Sensate Medium)

Combat Abilities: Swordplay (10 dice)

Damage: Knife (Sheath) (6 Dice), Sword Cane (6 Dice)



Dr. Pavak Khan
Rank 10 Dwarf Academic (Specialist)

Physical Competence: +5
Mental Competence: +8
Initiative: 6
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: History +3, Research +4,
Swordplay +5, Teaching +2
Traits: Chess player +2, Orientalist +4
Combat Abilities: Knife-fighter (11 dice)
Damage: Knife (Sheath) (6 dice)

Pavak Khan is a beardless Dwarf whose white eyebrows and moustache contrast with his dark complexion. As a result, he is sometimes mistaken for a Gnome or Halfling. Dr. Khan enjoys philosophical debates and is an avid chess player.

Rollo Cork

Rollo Cork is small in stature but has a big chip on his shoulder. The bastard son of an Irish seamstress, Rollo grew up fatherless on the streets of South London. He never knew his real father, a Gnome clerk, who left for India after impregnating his mother, leaving her with only a silver locket to remember him by. Rollo's Halfling mother turned to prostitution to make ends meet while Rollo was sent to work as soon as he was able. Rollo soon fell in with a local gang and found himself frequently in trouble with the law.

Rollo's mother passed away when he was only 14. He did not know his father but kept the locket that the man had given his mother. By now, Rollo saw his gang as his family and he worked his way up the ranks. Rollo's gang was primarily involved in fencing and smuggling and Rollo learned a lot plying the docks of Southwark. He planned to purchase his own barge some day but his hard drinking and carousing lifestyle drained any savings he had. All of this would change on his 26th birthday.

That evening, while Rollo was stumbling drunk out of a public house, the Black Mistress arrived. She insisted on giving Rollo a ride home in her carriage and offered him a birthday present. She told him that his father was named Godfrey Matthews and that he had just retired from the East India Company. He now lived on an estate just outside of London.

Ecstatic and seeing an opportunity to become respectable, Rollo paid a visit to his father. Unfortunately, flush with riches from his time in

Rollo Cork
Rank 11 Halfling Smuggler (Generalist)

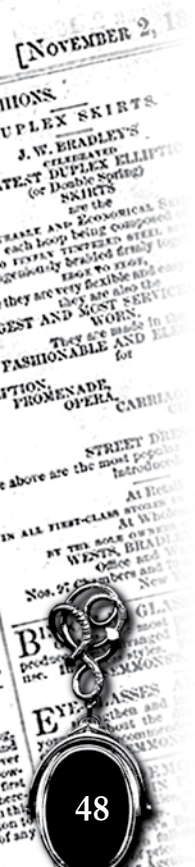
Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 9
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Appraisal +4, Boating +4,
Drive Carriage +2, Fisticuffs +3, Perception
+3, Streetwise +4, Swordplay +5
Traits: Dock knowledge +4, Nose for trouble
+2
Combat Abilities: Fisticuffs (10 dice),
Swordplay (12 dice)
Damage: Brass Knuckles (3 dice) Large Knife
(7 dice)

India and with a wife and legitimate children of his own, Mr. Matthews did not want to acknowledge a bastard child without more proof. He told Rollo that anyone could have taken the locket and, at 26, what could Rollo possibly want but his money? After an intense argument, Mr. Matthews had his servants throw Rollo, bodily, off his estate and threatened harm should he return.

Angry and hurt, Rollo returned to London. Once again, the Black Mistress approached him. She offered him an opportunity to get back at his father and others like him. She could also help him achieve his goals. Rollo was dubious at first but soon his enemies and rivals started meeting unfortunate ends. Impressed, Rollo gave himself to the Black Mistress. His first kill was his own father.

Currently, Rollo controls a large smuggling operation on the London docks. He also controls a small fleet of merchant ships. Rollo utilises fences throughout the city to 'clean' stolen artefacts for their return to India, smuggling them out on his ships. Rollo has also been known to transport Thuggee and kidnap victims on occasion. He is a crucial link in the Deceivers' operations.

Rollo is a rugged Halfling with a crooked nose (broken several times in his life) and a mop of curly hair. Two jagged knife scars mar his cherubic face, one over his right cheek and another across his chin. In conversation, Rollo is all business, although he is quite the carouser in the pubs. It is rare to catch him without a cigar in his mouth; Rollo is fascinated with cigars and often keeps an eclectic assortment from different parts of the world with him at all times.



The Dervish

The Dervish is fast becoming a legend amongst the rookeries. She is a prostitute and often described as a dark-haired woman of exotic and pleasing appearance. Those that have met her say that she is a sharp woman that can capture a man's heart with a few well-chosen words. Some prostitutes claim that she is an excellent fighter and had protected them from more disagreeable clients. In spite of all the rumours, there is one thing that the Metropolitan police know with certainty; wherever the Dervish is sighted, it is not long before a wealthy gentleman is knifed to death.

'The Dervish' is a name created by a sensationalist journalist; her real name is Sheela. Sheela is an orphan of Persian descent and was given to a temple in Rajputana. At the temple, Sheela was raised as a devadasi (temple prostitute) devoted to Yellamma. Some of her Rajput lovers were Thugee and Sheela was soon indoctrinated into the female Thugee amongst the devadasi. Soon Sheela was given assignments to kill those that aided the Colonials.

Unfortunately, for Sheela, her group's activities did not go unnoticed for long and a Brahmin, sympathetic to the Colonial government, tipped off the Governor of Bombay. As Colonial forces stormed the temple, Sheela paid the Brahmin for his betrayal by putting out his eyes while whispering in his ear that, if he could not see what the Colonials were doing to India, then he might as well be blind. She then fled the temple before she could get caught.

The Black Mistress met Sheela in Bombay and offered her a new opportunity to serve in the heart of India's corruption. Believing the Black Mistress to be an avatar of Kali, Sheela readily agreed.

The Black Mistress paid for her journey to London and, once there, Sheela joined the notorious Deceivers. Understanding that many nabobs with coin to spend may seek a pleasant night's diversion, Sheela decided to make herself an object of their affections. Thanks to her upbringing, Sheela had no problem mingling within prostitute circles. Her Persian features enable her to pose as a variety of Mediterranean or Arabian women, making it difficult for police officers to find her.

Perhaps due to her past, Sheela has a soft spot for prostitutes and hates seeing them exploited or assaulted. She does not hesitate to use her abilities to 'persuade' an abusive client to leave the scene unless it would compromise her ability to lay a trap for a nabob. Sheela rarely kills the offenders in such cases; else, it would bring unhealthy attention from the police. Sheela has also taken to teaching her techniques to other prostitutes; more than one rude client has been the victim of a surprise kick or elbow

from his prey. She has even begun training a select group of prostitutes as her own devadasi, aiding her in her missions.

While often working the streets, Sheela has acted as an escort on occasion. She realises that this is a dangerous situation, as genteel circles tend to overlap each other and she could be easily recognised. Once the Deceivers have identified a target, Sheela moves in by either ensuring that she crosses the target's path in the street or working her way into his home or club. When in combat, Sheela prefers to use a katar in each hand but she is never without her yellow silk scarf.

The Dervish is a beautiful young Human woman with dark hair and olive skin. She has a slim, athletic figure and she is light and graceful on her feet. The Dervish has a hint of an accent and is a pleasant conversationalist when the mood strikes her. Otherwise, she says little, allowing her eyes and body language to convey her meaning.

The Dervish

Rank 16 Human Assassin (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +10

Mental Competence: +9

Initiative: 12

Health: 10 Dice (20 pips)

Signature Skills: Athletics +4, Charm +5, Disguise +3, Fisticuffs +6, Perception +4, Swordplay +4

Traits: Stunning +4, Seductive +4, Professional +4

Combat Abilities: Fisticuffs (16 dice), Swordplay (14 dice)

Damage: Unarmed (2 dice), Large Knife (katar) (8 dice)



CHAPTER 3

HEARTS OF STEEL

“No one is just going to give us our honour back. It is up to us to take it, with true steel and our heart’s blood.”

- **Captain Rowan Chapman**

PHOENIX SQUADRON

“Daft Idiot!” said the Queen.

Lord Palmerston said nothing. There was little that the Prime Minister could say that would console the Queen in this time of crisis. Her son, the Crown Prince, was being held hostage at the royal residence on the Isle of Wight with his family. While this unfortunate circumstance was unlikely his fault, the Queen insisted on blaming her son anyway.

The Queen shrugged. “Fenians, I presume?”

“A splinter group more likely, Your Majesty,” the Prime Minister answered. “I believe they have foreign support, possibly American.”

The Queen shifted uncomfortably. America was on the brink of war and both it and France threatened British Canada. Now, this splinter group demanded Irish independence or it would spill royal blood. With much of Britain’s home forces in the Crimea, she could risk a bloody war at home.

“We cannot allow this to succeed,” she said, resolutely. “Otherwise, there will be more abductions and who knows what else.”

Lord Palmerston nodded. “So we send in the Navy?”

The Queen shot him a disapproving scowl. “Heaven, no! That would ensure the Prince’s death, or at the very least one of his family. I’ll not tolerate losing one hair of a grandchild’s head. Discretion and efficiency is called for here. Summon Lord Worthington.”

Lord Palmerston understood. If the Queen wished to see the General of the Aerial Cavalry, that could mean only one thing. Her Majesty wanted Phoenix Squadron.

HISTORY

While most of Her Majesty’s wyvern riders are fighting in the Crimea, the 1st Wing of the Queen’s Aerial Lancers remains at home, protecting Britain from foreign threats. The wing is divided into four squadrons, each with several wyvern riders and support staff. The most colourful of these is the 4th Squadron, better known as the Phoenix Squadron.

As its nickname implies, the Phoenix Squadron consists of upper class wyvern riders with damaged reputations who pray that their service to the Queen will restore them (ironically, these damaged reputations make them more popular amongst the lower classes). Often given the most difficult missions, the Phoenix Squadron have an excellent record. Their determination is stated in their motto: ‘We have nothing to lose and our honour to regain’.

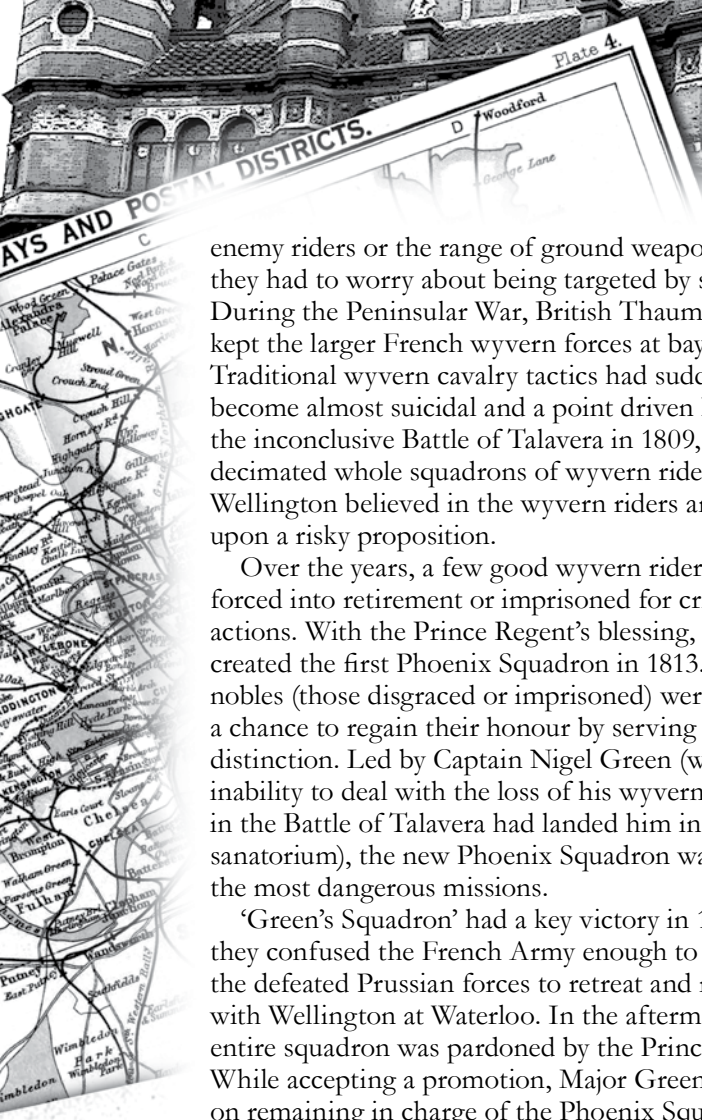
While the wyvern is an ancient creature, it has only been domesticated (to use the term loosely) a little over a century ago. The first recorded use of wyvern as aerial cavalry was in 1756, when a French aerial squadron aided in the conquest of Minorca, the opening sea battle of the Seven Years’ War. While the French did not have enough wyvern riders to seriously affect the outcome of large battles, the appeal of an aerial cavalry was obvious. Their use was especially noted by the Russian Czarina, who was blessed with a significant wyvern population in the Urals (the French

had to compete with other nations for wyverns in the Alps but were aided by their early start).

The wyverns intrigued King George II but it was his son, George III, that created the King’s Wyvern Regiment in 1770, although difficulties in wyvern capture and domestication led to the private deriding of the regiment as ‘George’s Folly’. The needed spark struck in 1789, when the French Revolution caused French wyvern riders (almost all of them noble) to cross the Channel. King George welcomed them with open arms and granted them lands and English titles in return for joining the King’s Wyvern Regiment.

The now larger King’s Wyvern Regiment was used against France for the rest of the 18th century, most notably to repel a French invasion of Ireland during the Irish Uprising in 1798. Most notably, Captain Guillaume Lambert flew his wyvern straight into the French Navy and plucked Irish rebel leader, Wolfe Tone, off a ship. Colonel Thaddeus Horsham described the incident in his journal as ‘if wings from Heaven descended on the fleet and plucked the Devil off the deck’. In the aftermath of the battle, the King’s Wyvern Regiment had become large enough to fill two regiments. Col. Horsham’s description led to the term ‘wings’ for these regiments.

By the dawn of the 19th century, most European nations had at least one wyvern regiment. More importantly, military Thaumaturgists had become more effective at countering wyvern attacks. No longer did wyvern riders only have to worry about



enemy riders or the range of ground weapons; now they had to worry about being targeted by spells. During the Peninsular War, British Thaumaturgists kept the larger French wyvern forces at bay. Traditional wyvern cavalry tactics had suddenly become almost suicidal and a point driven home in the inconclusive Battle of Talavera in 1809, which decimated whole squadrons of wyvern riders. Still, Wellington believed in the wyvern riders and struck upon a risky proposition.

Over the years, a few good wyvern riders had been forced into retirement or imprisoned for criminal actions. With the Prince Regent's blessing, Wellington created the first Phoenix Squadron in 1813. 'Troubled' nobles (those disgraced or imprisoned) were offered a chance to regain their honour by serving with distinction. Led by Captain Nigel Green (whose inability to deal with the loss of his wyvern squadron in the Battle of Talavera had landed him in a sanatorium), the new Phoenix Squadron was used for the most dangerous missions.

'Green's Squadron' had a key victory in 1815 when they confused the French Army enough to allow the defeated Prussian forces to retreat and regroup with Wellington at Waterloo. In the aftermath, the entire squadron was pardoned by the Prince Regent. While accepting a promotion, Major Green insisted on remaining in charge of the Phoenix Squadron. He served admirably until his death in 1829. Wellington, now Prime Minister, insisted on a state funeral.

Captain Nathaniel Lambert, an Eldren whose lecherous ways embarrassed his famous grandfather, now led the Phoenix Squadron. Captain Lambert proved an able commander, putting together an elite team of troubled wyvern riders. It was he who volunteered the squadron for duty in Afghanistan with the outbreak of the Afghan War.

The Phoenix Squadron supported the British Army's invasion of Kandahar in May, 1839. Thanks to the wyverns' menacing presence, the city was taken without a shot. Unfortunately, Captain Lambert's lecherousness resurfaced when one of his affairs left him too intoxicated to lead the squadron against the Fortress of Ghazni in July. His second-in-command, Lieutenant Raymond Duncan was forced to lead the mission as the Phoenix Squadron carried and protected British engineers to blow the gate. Two wyvern riders were lost but the mission was a success.

The Phoenix Squadron flew with the British Army to Kabul. After the city was occupied and the fighting over, Captain Lambert began an affair with the beautiful (and married) Eldren daughter of Sir Reginald Sadler, brigade leader of the Bengal Army. Having served under Wellington, Sir Reginald had

great respect for the Phoenix Squadron and, upon learning of the affair, suggested that the Squadron return to Jalalabad with him.

Captain Lambert, haunted by both incidents, was determined to make up for it. In November, intelligence informed Sir Reginald that Prince Akbar Khan had besieged Kabul. Further intelligence indicated that Major-General William Elphinstone accepted a guarantee of safe passage for the British soldiers and civilians (more than 16,000 in total) through the mountains to Jalalabad. Unfortunately, intelligence in the second week of January telling of attacks on the evacuees demonstrated the guarantee false. Captain Lambert volunteered to lead the Phoenix Squadron along with other wyvern squadrons and Thaumaturgists to clear the passes. A British ground force marched from Jalalabad to meet the evacuees.

Fighting in the mountains was fierce. The Phoenix Squadron took heavy losses but was able to rescue 10,000 of the British soldiers and civilians that left Kabul. After seeing the Afghan leader, Akbar Khan, Captain Lambert flew into his camp and, leaping from his mount, ran the prince through with his sword before the Khan's men slew him while their leader lay dying before them. The following year, the British re-entered Kabul and reinstated Khan's father, Dost Mohammed, as Amir.

BUT THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAPPENED!

If you're familiar with the history of the Afghan War (now more commonly known as the First Anglo-Afghan War) then you're probably scratching your head at the outcome of the British evacuation from Kabul to Jalalabad. In our history, Akbar Khan slaughtered 14,000 people (only one man made it to Jalalabad) and in retaliation the British levelled Kabul the following autumn. Akbar Khan survived this incident and died, possibly of poisoning, three years after his father had retaken the throne.

The divergence is intentional. As stated in the introduction of the Victoriana Core Rulebook, Victoriana's history is similar to but not exactly our own.

(Continued overleaf)

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
PHIONS
DUPEX SKIRTS
J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
FOR THE
FASHIONABLE AND ELEGANT
GENT AND MOST SERVICE
WORN.
They are made in the
FINEST AND MOST SERVICE
WORN.
They are made in the
FINEST AND MOST SERVICE
WORN.
STREET DRUG
above are the most popular
introduced
IN ALL FIRST-CLASS HOTELS
BY THE SOLE OWNERS
WESTON, BHA...
Office and
No. 27, G...
GLA...
EYE GLASSES
ver
first
this
on to
of any

JOS. GILLOTT'S STEEL
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
JOSEPH
GILLOTT,
Warranted.
TRADE MARK:
ORIGINAL and PURELY
No. 551



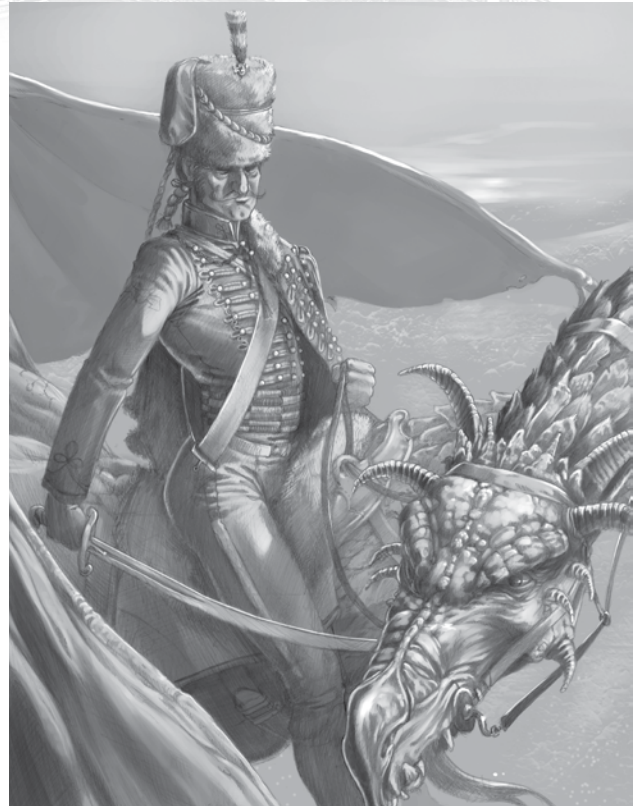


BUT THAT'S NOT HOW IT HAPPENED!

(Continued from page 52)

In Victoriana, many British lives were saved in 1842 and the loss of Kabul was not as humiliating a defeat. This change of events reinforces the reputation of the Phoenix Squadron.

However, fear not, history buffs. Now, with his son's death to blame on the British, Dost Mohammed still has a policy of hostility towards the British, a hostility that is only tempered a decade later when he needs an ally against Persia. As the Indian Mutiny has yet to occur in Victoriana, Dost Mohammed's decision to sit it out keeps the parallel timelines in sync. Whether Afghanistan, with a new Amir, plays a role in the upcoming Indian Mutiny remains to be seen.



STRUCTURE

Wyvern riders are part of the Army and organised into 'wings', the equivalent of an army regiment. They are generally treated as specialised cavalry (although the introduction of the ornithopter has stirred conversation whether ornithopters and wyvern riders should form a separate branch of the military).

The Phoenix Squadron is organised like a cavalry squadron, although it is much smaller. While a regular cavalry squadron consists of around 50 riders, a typical wyvern squadron only contains 6-10 wyvern riders. The Phoenix Squadron currently contains eight wyvern riders.


A major leads the Phoenix Squadron, although it is primarily an administrative role. The captain leads the squadron on actual missions. All members of the Phoenix Squadron enter as a 2nd lieutenant and must work their way up to captain.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Technically, a commission with the Phoenix Squadron is open to any member of the upper class that can afford it and have a recommendation from a Peer or Royal. In practice, only 'troubled' nobles and

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
DUPLIX SKIRTS
J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLIX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
TRADE AND ECONOMICAL
each loop being composed
of FEWLY STRETCHED STEEL,
and is strongly braced by
EDGE TO EDGE
they are very flexible and
they are also
BEST AND MOST SERVICE
WOVEN.
They are made in
FASHIONABLE AND
PROMENADE
OPERA
CARRIAGE
STREET DR
above are the most popular
introduced
IN ALL FIRST-CLASS
BY THE SOLE OWNERS
WESTON, BLAIR
Office and
Nos. 27 Chambers and
New
GLAS
EYE GLASSES
JOSEPH GILLOTT'S
Warranted.
ORIGINAL and
50-551





gentlemen apply. A commission is accepted at the discretion of the current major. This may seem absurd at times (why would a major turn down a Duke's recommendation?) but the Queen has full confidence in the major's ability to select appropriate candidates.

A high-ranking officer can be assigned to the Phoenix Squadron as long as the requirements are met. The joining officer must take a reduction in rank to 2nd lieutenant and work his way back up. While this can be difficult to accept, most officers agree that it is better to regain one's honour as a lieutenant than be dismissed in disgrace, losing one's rank anyway.

Occasionally, a non-troubled officer is assigned to Phoenix Squadron, either due to necessity (battlefield readiness) or specialty for a particular mission. This causes tension within the squadron, as theirs is a brotherhood not comfortably shared. Any such officer can expect teasing, bullying, or worse but they can also rely on the captain to keep things from getting too out of hand.

RESOURCES

As members of the upper class, each wyvern rider is an officer and responsible for the maintenance of his mount and staff, although in practice some financial support, including the squadron's base, is provided by Her Majesty's Government.

Technically, the Phoenix Squadron is part of the Household Cavalry, originally housed at the Combermere Barracks, one mile from Windsor Castle. However, as the Household Cavalry did not like the idea of sharing their renowned home with a group of disgraced ruffians, this was not to last. They initially insisted that the wyverns were too smelly and badly trained for housing so near the horses of the cavalry. While everyone knew the real objections of the cavalry, the point became moot after one of the wyverns ate the prized horse of the commander of the Household Cavalry. After that incident it was clear the squadron needed to be moved.

The new barracks of the squadron are in Lambeth (almost on the border with Southwark) near the Thames. While the area is so poor it is almost a slap in the face to the squadron, their position does give them a commanding view of the heart of the city. They can sweep into any area by air quicker than any other force and be at Buckingham Palace in moments. The presence of a group of wyvern riders has had an effect on the crime in the area, although most criminals simply avoid the area near the high stone building that has become known as "The Nest".

As a renowned aerial cavalry unit, Phoenix Squadron garners a great deal of respect within the armed forces. Unfortunately, its reputation for employing hard cases tempers this somewhat. Paradoxically, this makes the squadron popular among the lower class, where communists and other revolutionary groups see the upper class officers as bucking the system. This popularity is fleeting, however, as Phoenix Squadron is often deployed against such groups.

AGENDA

Each member of Phoenix Squadron has the personal agenda of restoring their honour through service. With nothing to lose, each is willing to take on the most dangerous (and most controversial) missions. If a mission has little chance of success, Phoenix Squadron is assigned to it.

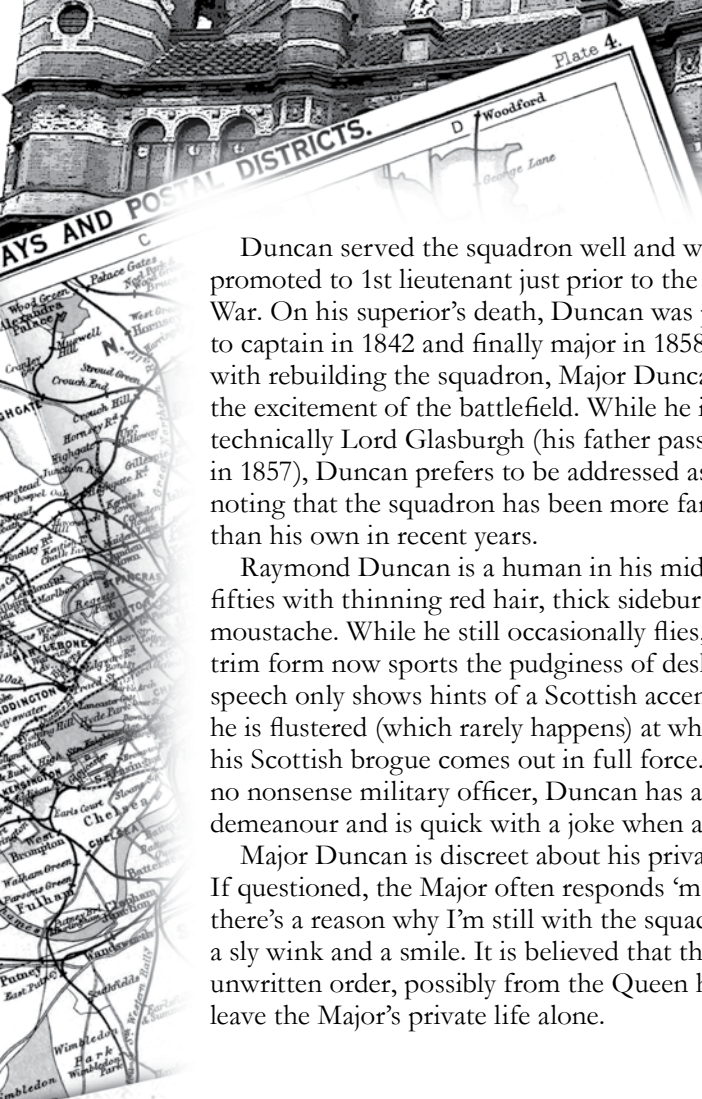
Phoenix Squadron often gets sent to quell riots and revolts; they are the perfect mobile shock troops, able to get to the trouble faster than anyone else. Often, just a few low swoops over the heads of any crowd are enough to disperse the worst of it. The Phoenix Squadron has often been deployed against the unrest in Ireland. Unfortunately, these missions, carried out with characteristic ruthlessness, only stir up the Fenians and anarchists to retaliate in kind.

PERSONALITIES

Major Raymond Duncan

Major Raymond Duncan is a model military officer. The scion of a noble Scottish family with a strong tradition of military service (his ancestor was one of King James I's personal guards, instrumental in discovering the Gunpowder Plot), the son of the Earl of Glasburgh was well-positioned for a bright future. His father had purchased a captain's commission for him in the Aerial Cavalry and Duncan served for three years. A marriage was arranged for him to the daughter of his father's close friend, another Scottish Earl.

Unfortunately, Captain Duncan's world collapsed two weeks before his wedding, when discovered in the company of another man and charged with sodomy. Prior to Duncan's court-martial, however, Captain Lambert intervened. A deal was struck that Duncan would be allowed to join Phoenix Squadron with a demotion to 2nd lieutenant. Unfortunately, Duncan's personal life was not so lucky; his father, while stopping short of disowning him, never spoke to his son again.



Duncan served the squadron well and was promoted to 1st lieutenant just prior to the Afghan War. On his superior's death, Duncan was promoted to captain in 1842 and finally major in 1858. Tasked with rebuilding the squadron, Major Duncan misses the excitement of the battlefield. While he is now technically Lord Glasburgh (his father passed away in 1857), Duncan prefers to be addressed as 'Major,' noting that the squadron has been more family to him than his own in recent years.

Raymond Duncan is a human in his mid-fifties with thinning red hair, thick sideburns and moustache. While he still occasionally flies, his oncer-trim form now sports the pudginess of deskwork. His speech only shows hints of a Scottish accent unless he is flustered (which rarely happens) at which point his Scottish brogue comes out in full force. While a no nonsense military officer, Duncan has a friendly demeanour and is quick with a joke when appropriate.

Major Duncan is discreet about his private affairs. If questioned, the Major often responds 'maybe there's a reason why I'm still with the squadron' with a sly wink and a smile. It is believed that there is an unwritten order, possibly from the Queen herself, to leave the Major's private life alone.

Captain Rowan Chapman

Captain Chapman was one of Major Duncan's first recruits after the Second Opium War. The third son of Baron Penbridge in Cornwall, Chapman had the misfortune of being born a (fox) Beastman. His mere birth made his family the subject of gossip and ridicule, as he was living proof of 'lower class' stock in the family. This is to say nothing of the accusations that his mother or father had committed some indiscretion. However, neither parent would admit to Rowan which of them it might have been, so they might protect each other at least a little. Despite the damage to the family reputation, they chose to accept him fully as their son, something almost unheard of in upper class society.

As a result of his breeding, Chapman found himself defending his own honour from his peers while growing up. His only solace came from his wyvern, a gift from his father, who bred wyverns (a difficult, but not impossible, task). Chapman had difficulty in boarding school and bounced from school to school. His father finally gave up on him and sent him to a middle class school. While still considered 'lower class stock,' Chapman was considered an exotic curiosity and rather charming at times. Unfortunately, due to his being a fox Beastman, he was also blamed for school pranks and minor criminal acts.

Major Raymond Duncan Rank 15 Administrator (Focussed)

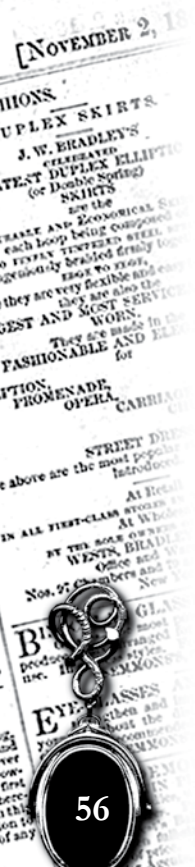
Physical Competence: +7
 Mental Competence: +11
 Initiative: 8
 Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
 Signature Skills: Airborne Rider +4, Conversation +2, Interrogation +2, Tactics +2
 Traits: Negotiator +4, Stealthy +4
 Combat Abilities: All at 6 dice (he is out of practice)
 Damage: Military Sword (Heavy) (8 Dice), Adams 0.36 Revolver (8 Dice)


Captain Rowan Chapman Rank 12 Fox Beastman Officer (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7
 Mental Competence: +8
 Initiative: 10
 Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
 Signature Skills: Airborne Rider +4, Enchanting +2, Interrogation +2, Perception +3, Streetwise +2, Tactics +2
 Traits: Black Market +4, Leader +4
 Special Abilities: Animal traits – Enhanced Hearing and Smell
 Combat Abilities: Cavalry Sabre (7 dice), Revolver (7 dice). Rowan always has a number of enchantments up his sleeve.
 Damage: Military Sword (Heavy) (9 Dice), Adams 0.36 Revolver (8 Dice)

Perhaps it was due to what was expected of him, perhaps it was because he was able to blend in with the lower class. Whatever the reason, Chapman soon became an actual criminal, mainly in smuggling, fencing and petty theft. For the most part, Chapman was able to cover his tracks; after all, he had been falsely accused of crimes so many times while growing up that he knew where the authorities would look. He also discovered some small talent in Petty Magic that assisted in his crimes.

With little prospect of an upper class lifestyle at home, Chapman asked his father to purchase him a commission. Thankful to get his son out of his hair, the Baron purchased a first lieutenant's commission





for him in a unit headed to India.

While in India, Chapman discovered that the British there were more egalitarian, at least relatively speaking. Many officers and businessmen in the subcontinent tended to be of the same social class (middle/lower upper) and within the same generation. In addition, most saw their life in India as a temporary position. It was a pleasant change from the stratified society that Chapman had grown up in.

Unfortunately, Chapman continued his criminal habits in Calcutta. So long as he was discreet, most local authorities, both civil and military, willingly turned a blind eye, as Chapman was an excellent aerial cavalry officer and scout deemed invaluable by his superiors and garnered a number of medals.

Chapman soon made a mistake that they could no longer ignore. He fell in love with a native Indian woman. Her family disapproved, as Chapman was not of the appropriate caste. With this cold reminder of his upbringing, Chapman grew outraged, threatening to marry his beloved without their approval. A heated argument turned violent and by the time the smoke had cleared Chapman had killed his beloved's father and two brothers. Unfortunately, one of the brothers happened to be serving in the Bengal Army.

In building a case against him, the military prosecutor drafted a laundry list of Chapman's criminal affiliations and acts in addition to his violent crime. Since Chapman was a wyvern rider of some repute, his case came to the attention of the Phoenix Squadron. Major Duncan intervened and offered Chapman the chance to wipe the slate clean. Chapman accepted and within a few short years has worked his way up to Captain of the rebuilding Phoenix Squadron.

Rowan Chapman is a charismatic fox Beastman and excellent leader. He keeps cool during combat and uses humour to keep his men's spirits up, even in the direst circumstances. In spite of his history, Chapman has not quite shaken his old smuggling life and can usually acquire any items he needs. Major Duncan quietly allows this, as Chapman's resourcefulness has aided the Squadron on a few occasions.

Lieutenant Hayden Rutherford

With the exception of battlefield nurses and the occasional Thaumaturgist, Her Majesty's Army does not employ women. Certainly, no woman has ever served as an aerial cavalry officer, let alone on Phoenix Squadron. Such employment would generate enormous scandal for everyone involved. This is why Sir Hayden Rutherford serves on Phoenix Squadron, in spite of the fact that he does not know how to fly

a wyvern. And yet, in the short time that the 2nd Lieutenant has been on Phoenix Squadron, he has shown great promise.

In truth, Rutherford's commission is a complete fabrication. He returned from the Crimea badly injured and he is currently recuperating at his country manor. Until a few months ago, he had never owned a wyvern, much less ridden one. There is, however, someone flying with the Phoenix Squadron under his name with his, and the government's, secret approval. That wyvern rider is Malina Kowlewski, a female wyvern rider formerly of the Russian aerial cavalry.

Sir Hayden Rutherford was a brash youth that was used to getting everything without working for anything. His ancestor had purchased a baronetcy, while his father was a successful barrister. Sent to the best schools, young Rutherford found himself a baronet at the age of 19 when his father passed away.

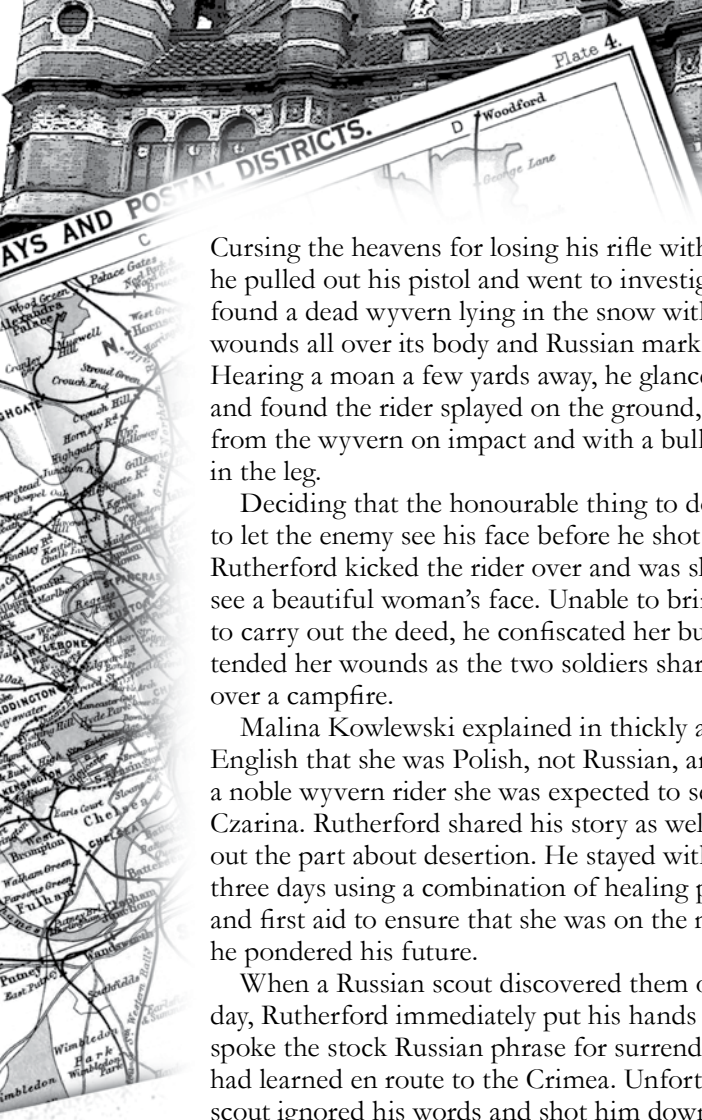
Determined to prove himself to his peers, Rutherford purchased an army commission when war broke out in the Crimea. With only romantic notions of war, Rutherford naïvely expected that he would lead a few troops and the backwards Russians would be crushed by the might of the combined British, French, and Ottoman armies. Besides, he had bragged to friends, 'the lower classes will do all the heavy lifting. All I need do is command them'.

Rutherford got his wish, for a few months at least. The armies did indeed push back the Russian forces and Rutherford, now a captain, believed that it would all be over soon and he could go home and impress his peers with war stories. Unfortunately, the elite Russian forces arrived and changed the tide of battle almost overnight.

Captain Rutherford watched in horror as Russian Thaumaturgists tore holes through the British lines and Russian infantry peppered the enemy with well-aimed bullets. He wanted to retreat but his commanding officer ordered him to hold the line. When the Russian aerial cavalry arrived, their wyverns swooping down and plucking soldiers off the ground in their claws and jaws, Rutherford was overcome by terror. He deserted the army and rode away as fast as his horse would take him.

Rutherford was not the only deserter. As the lines broke, many soldiers fled to whatever safety they could find, regardless of orders. Russian wyverns bore down on them, determined to wipe out all of the invaders. Rutherford thought he had escaped when a wyvern rider came for him. Luckily, the wyvern's maw had clamped onto his horse rather than him and Rutherford was able to leap to safety.

Rutherford dusted himself off and deciding his next move, he heard something crashing nearby.



Cursing the heavens for losing his rifle with his horse, he pulled out his pistol and went to investigate. He found a dead wyvern lying in the snow with bullet wounds all over its body and Russian markings. Hearing a moan a few yards away, he glanced round and found the rider splayed on the ground, thrown from the wyvern on impact and with a bullet wound in the leg.

Deciding that the honourable thing to do was to let the enemy see his face before he shot him, Rutherford kicked the rider over and was shocked to see a beautiful woman's face. Unable to bring himself to carry out the deed, he confiscated her bullets and tended her wounds as the two soldiers shared stories over a campfire.

Malina Kowlewski explained in thickly accented English that she was Polish, not Russian, and that as a noble wyvern rider she was expected to serve the Czarina. Rutherford shared his story as well, leaving out the part about desertion. He stayed with her for three days using a combination of healing poultices and first aid to ensure that she was on the mend while he pondered his future.

When a Russian scout discovered them on the third day, Rutherford immediately put his hands up and spoke the stock Russian phrase for surrender that he had learned en route to the Crimea. Unfortunately, the scout ignored his words and shot him down. Angered, Kowlewski, whom Rutherford had been standing over, pulled Rutherford's pistol out of its holster and shot the scout dead.

It would have been easy for Kowlewski to ride back to the Russian line with the scout's horse, claiming that the British officer had shot the scout but instead she patched Rutherford up as best she could and rode him to the British line. Thankfully, the Ottoman troops she encountered first accepted her surrender and their Thaumaturgist was able to stabilise Rutherford's wound.

Her debt repaid, Kowlewski was so shocked to learn that he might be executed for desertion that she offered her life in exchange for his. Her request found its way to Major Duncan's desk and he arranged for them both to be brought to England.

A female aerial cavalry officer was out of the question, even though Kowlewski had invaluable information regarding Russian tactics. With Kowlewski's willingness to sacrifice herself hotly debated in both military and governmental circles, Duncan soon found himself invited to Windsor Castle to meet with the Queen, who offered the solution.

Kowlewski could join Phoenix Squadron if, publicly, in the guise of Rutherford, himself, who would be responsible for outfitting her and

maintaining her wyvern. Her conduct, good or bad, would reflect on Rutherford and if she succeeded in her assignment, then with Rutherford's honour restored she would win her freedom. If she did not, then both would be executed.

Both agreed to the Queen's solution. Rutherford retired to his country estate to fully recover from his wounds while Kowlewski joined Phoenix Squadron as Second Lieutenant Hayden Rutherford. Major Duncan expects great things from 'him'.

Malina Kowlewski is a beautiful woman with an aristocratic air. Slight of build, she can easily pass for male while in uniform, although a glance at her face leaves little doubt as to her true gender. Although Human, she has the porcelain skin and black hair of an Eldren. Comfortable in trousers, Kowlewski has reinforced her commitment to the masquerade by cutting her hair short. She has a cool demeanour and dry sense of humour.

'Lieutenant Hayden Rutherford'
Rank 10 Officer (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 8
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Airborne Rider +4,
Etiquette -2, Firearms +2, Perception +2,
Swordplay +2
Traits: Beautiful +4, Foreign +4
Combat Abilities: Russian scimitar (9 dice),
Revolver (9 dice)
Damage: Military Sword (Heavy) (8 Dice),
Adams 0.36 Revolver (8 Dice)

[NOVEMBER 2, 1914]

PHONS

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Lieutenant Percival Morgrave

Percival 'Percy' Morgrave is an Eldren 'baron' (a courtesy title) with an unfortunate complication. When he falls in love with a woman he becomes jealously obsessive, even if that woman is already in a relationship. In school, he would often get into fistfights with the paramours of his obsessions if he felt that they were not treating them correctly. Unfortunately, Lord Percy's behaviour did not endear him to the fairer sex and he never cultivated a relationship of his own.

As Lord Percy grew older, fistfights turned into duels, both with sword and pistol. If not for the presence of an attending Thaumaturgist, some of these duels would have had lethal consequences. As it was, Lord Percy's father, Viscount Morgrave of Avalon, grew tired of paying off injured duellists and strongly suggested that his son join the army. Lord Percy reluctantly agreed and, soon after his registration, an army Medium suggested that he transfer to the aerial cavalry.

The new position was Lord Percy's dream. The aerial cavalry was highly prestigious and Lord Percy immediately bonded with a wyvern, soon on his way to making major. He still had a problem with his obsession but as that was limited to the occasional evening (Lord Percy's unit was constantly on the move), it was easily dismissed.

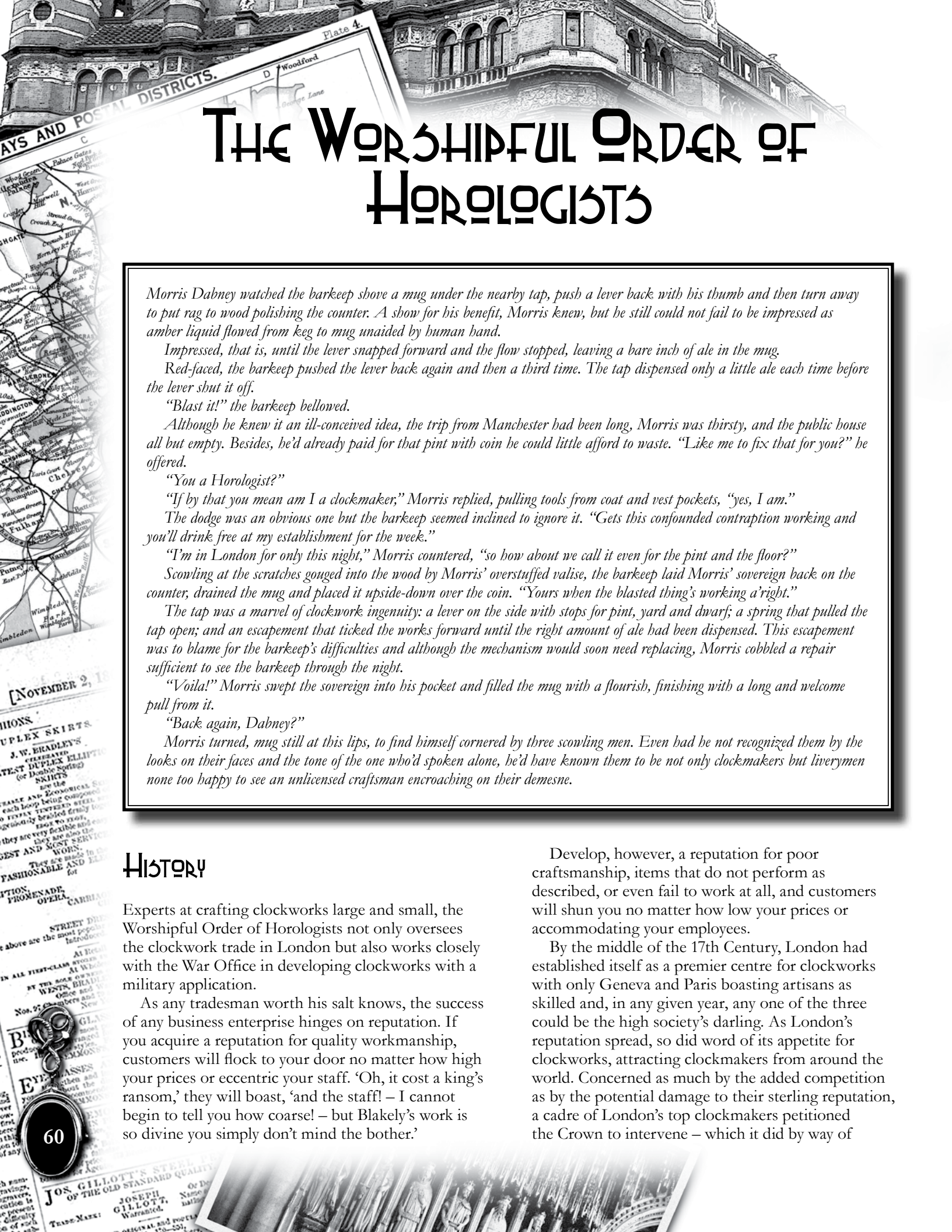
While serving in Africa, Lord Percy began to correspond with an eligible young Eldren lady. Without ever meeting, the two became engaged and Lord Percy planned to get married on his next leave. Unfortunately, the lady in question had a bad opium habit, often sneaking out to indulge; a behaviour that aroused Lord Percy's suspicions on his return home, triggering his jealous obsession. When a friend of Lord Percy's family, a physician, discovered his fiancée and brought her home, Lord Percy immediately accused him of having an affair and demanded satisfaction on the spot. Lord Percy, now a crack shot, with a single bullet to the head ended the physician's life as well as any chance for a marriage; immediately arrested and court-martialled, only Major Duncan's intervention saved him.

Now a first lieutenant in the Phoenix Squadron, Lord Percy's future is in doubt. While a very competent wyvern rider, he is also the most unstable member of the squadron. He is nursing an attraction to 'Hayden,' which both Captain Chapman and Major Duncan fear could cause trouble if 'Lt. Rutherford' ever decides to take a lover.

Percival Morgrave is a tall Eldren male with piercing ice-blue eyes. He has a calm, easy-going attitude that turns obsessively dangerous when he falls in love with someone.

Lieutenant Percival Morgrave Rank 8 Eldren Officer (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +4
Initiative: 7
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Airborne Rider +4,
Charm -2, Firearms +2, Fisticuffs +2,
Perception +2, Sensate Medium +1
Traits: Duellist +4, Obsession +4
Special Abilities: See the Supernatural (Sensate Medium)
Combat Abilities: Cavalry Sabre (6 dice),
Revolver (8 dice)
Damage: Military Sword (Heavy) (8 Dice),
Adams 0.36 Revolver (8 Dice)



THE WORSHIPFUL ORDER OF HOROLOGISTS

Morris Dabney watched the barkeep shove a mug under the nearby tap, push a lever back with his thumb and then turn away to put rag to wood polishing the counter. A show for his benefit, Morris knew, but he still could not fail to be impressed as amber liquid flowed from keg to mug unaided by human hand.

Impressed, that is, until the lever snapped forward and the flow stopped, leaving a bare inch of ale in the mug.

Red-faced, the barkeep pushed the lever back again and then a third time. The tap dispensed only a little ale each time before the lever shut it off.

"Blast it!" the barkeep bellowed.

Although he knew it an ill-conceived idea, the trip from Manchester had been long, Morris was thirsty, and the public house all but empty. Besides, he'd already paid for that pint with coin he could little afford to waste. "Like me to fix that for you?" he offered.

"You a Horologist?"

"If by that you mean am I a clockmaker," Morris replied, pulling tools from coat and vest pockets, "yes, I am."

The dodge was an obvious one but the barkeep seemed inclined to ignore it. "Gets this confounded contraption working and you'll drink free at my establishment for the week."

"I'm in London for only this night," Morris countered, "so how about we call it even for the pint and the floor?"

Scowling at the scratches gouged into the wood by Morris' overstuffed valise, the barkeep laid Morris' sovereign back on the counter, drained the mug and placed it upside-down over the coin. "Yours when the blasted thing's working a'right."

The tap was a marvel of clockwork ingenuity: a lever on the side with stops for pint, yard and dwarf; a spring that pulled the tap open; and an escapement that ticked the works forward until the right amount of ale had been dispensed. This escapement was to blame for the barkeep's difficulties and although the mechanism would soon need replacing, Morris cobbled a repair sufficient to see the barkeep through the night.

"Voilà!" Morris swept the sovereign into his pocket and filled the mug with a flourish, finishing with a long and welcome pull from it.

"Back again, Dabney?"

Morris turned, mug still at this lips, to find himself cornered by three scowling men. Even had he not recognized them by the looks on their faces and the tone of the one who'd spoken alone, he'd have known them to be not only clockmakers but liverymen none too happy to see an unlicensed craftsman encroaching on their demesne.


HISTORY

Experts at crafting clockworks large and small, the Worshipful Order of Horologists not only oversees the clockwork trade in London but also works closely with the War Office in developing clockworks with a military application.

As any tradesman worth his salt knows, the success of any business enterprise hinges on reputation. If you acquire a reputation for quality workmanship, customers will flock to your door no matter how high your prices or eccentric your staff. 'Oh, it cost a king's ransom,' they will boast, 'and the staff! – I cannot begin to tell you how coarse! – but Blakely's work is so divine you simply don't mind the bother.'

Develop, however, a reputation for poor craftsmanship, items that do not perform as described, or even fail to work at all, and customers will shun you no matter how low your prices or accommodating your employees.

By the middle of the 17th Century, London had established itself as a premier centre for clockworks with only Geneva and Paris boasting artisans as skilled and, in any given year, any one of the three could be the high society's darling. As London's reputation spread, so did word of its appetite for clockworks, attracting clockmakers from around the world. Concerned as much by the added competition as by the potential damage to their sterling reputation, a cadre of London's top clockmakers petitioned the Crown to intervene – which it did by way of



granting the clockmakers a royal charter to oversee the clockwork trade in London. The resulting livery company, called the Worshipful Order of Horologists, had the right and responsibility to train and regulate clockmakers within the city proper and for a ten-mile radius around it. In other words, anyone wishing to perform even the simplest watch repair in London had to be a member of the clock-makers' company to do so.

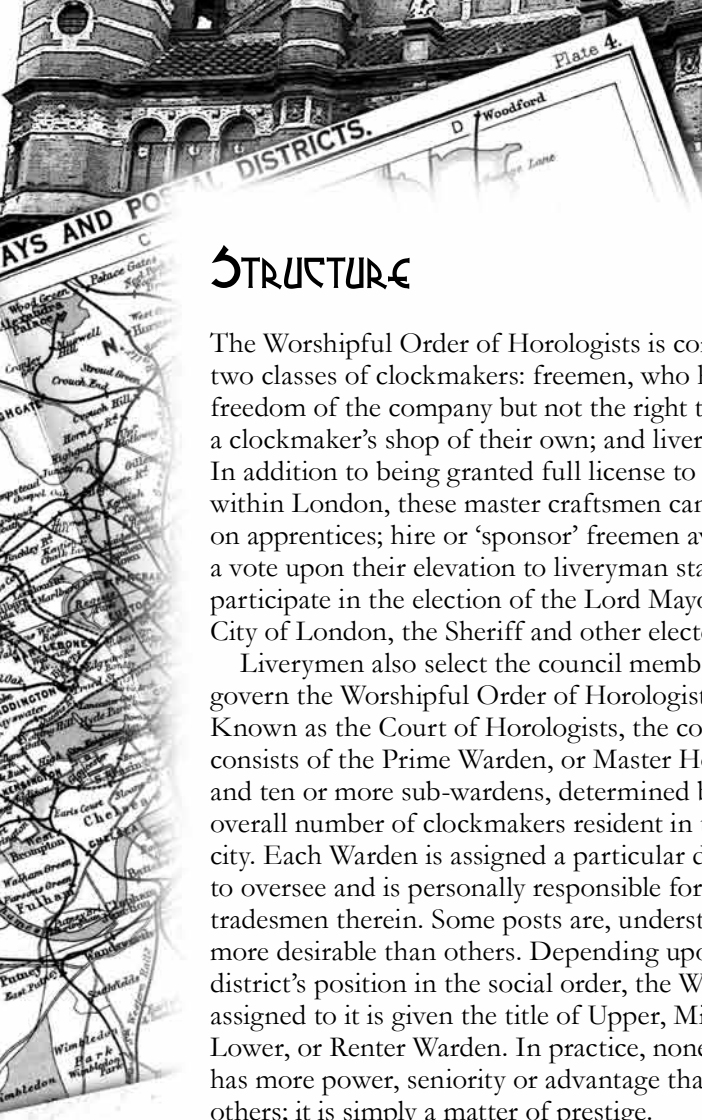
While some livery companies have accusations of thuggishly enforcing their charters, the Horologists view themselves as more refined. When word reaches them of an unlicensed clockmaker working in their demesne, they first encourage the interloper to take the necessary steps to become a liveryman. If said craftsman refuses – or his skills don't meet the Horologists' exacting standards – the Order is more than happy to help him make arrangements to relocate his trade elsewhere – no matter how vociferous his protests that it isn't necessary.

Although the Horologists cannot turn a blind eye to non-liveried clockmakers working in London – doing so would set a precedent certain to be exploited by the worst hedgerow hacks – the Order has, on occasion, made special arrangements for certain highly skilled craftsmen, who for one reason or another cannot or do not wish to join them. This exemption includes foreign specialists visiting with wealthy and well-connected patrons, for example, or master craftsmen relocating to the area who cannot afford to buy a livery and for whom it would be an insult to serve an apprenticeship. These are individuals so skilled in the craft that their mere presence in London enhances the Horologists' reputation. People like John Harrison, who was granted status as an honorary liveryman after he crafted his legendary fifth marine timekeeper – albeit, rumours tell, over Mr. Harrison's strident and repeated protests.

Well-crafted clockworks can be quite costly. As a result, established members of the Worshipful Order of Horologists often have patrons who are both well-off and well-connected – as well as suppliers who are well-connected in their own right. For this reason, the Horologists have associations even to the highest levels of the Royal Court. In fact, in 1764, John Arnold, then the Prime Warden of the Horologists, crafted what was, at the time, considered the world's smallest repeating watch, set in a ring and presented it to King George III as a gift. His Majesty was so impressed by Mr. Arnold's craftsmanship and ingenuity – and the Empire in such dire need of an advantage over the American colonists involved in the Regulator Movement – that He requested the

Worshipful Order of Horologists begin working with the army and navy on a series of military clockworks. The collaboration proved such a success that the Horologists continue to work with the War Office to this day developing advanced clockwork weapons, armour and devices of espionage. In fact, the Horologists' clockmakers have found their skills so enhanced by their work with the War Office – not to mention their balance sheets, for on occasion the War Office allow certain highly regarded members of society to buy otherwise military-only clockworks under the table, as it were – that they have modified their entrance apprenticeship to include an optional stint working for that service.





STRUCTURE

The Worshipful Order of Horologists is composed of two classes of clockmakers: freemen, who have the freedom of the company but not the right to operate a clockmaker's shop of their own; and liverymen. In addition to being granted full license to work within London, these master craftsmen can take on apprentices; hire or 'sponsor' freemen awaiting a vote upon their elevation to liveryman status; and participate in the election of the Lord Mayor of the City of London, the Sheriff and other elected officials.

Liverymen also select the council members who govern the Worshipful Order of Horologists itself. Known as the Court of Horologists, the council consists of the Prime Warden, or Master Horologist, and ten or more sub-wardens, determined by the overall number of clockmakers resident in the city. Each Warden is assigned a particular district to oversee and is personally responsible for the tradesmen therein. Some posts are, understandably, more desirable than others. Depending upon a district's position in the social order, the Warden assigned to it is given the title of Upper, Middle, Lower, or Renter Warden. In practice, none of these has more power, seniority or advantage than the others; it is simply a matter of prestige.

One Warden, the War Office Warden, is not selected by the liverymen or, in fact, anyone within the Worshipful Order of Horologists. Even more sought after than the post of Prime Warden, this position is appointed by the Crown itself and is considered a mark not only of royal favour but also of the high esteem in which the Crown holds that particular clockmaker's craftsmanship.

The last member of the Court of Horologists is the Clerk, who handles the day-to-day business of the livery company, such as bills, petitions, smoothing over disputes – things of that nature. Although often referred to as the Prime Warden's right-hand, the two are on a par with one another. In fact, they work so closely that many a lifelong friendship has developed as a result.

Although the Horologists meet once a month to vote on outstanding livery petitions, discuss charitable endeavours and address other ongoing business, the selection of the Wardens is done on a very haphazard schedule – namely, whenever a current Warden tires of the added responsibility, can no longer afford to ignore his own business interests in favour of the Order's, or dies. Such appointments can happen as often as once a month or as infrequently as every four to five years. In fact, the Horologists maintain such a

surprising lack of regularity in selecting their Wardens that the phrase 'as regular as a Horologists' election' has come to refer to anything that lacks precision – a somewhat embarrassing legacy for a profession so obsessed with precision itself.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

The easiest way to become a full member of the Worshipful Order of Horologists is to have a parent who was a liveryman. Those not fortunate enough to be blessed with such a fortuitous lineage, however, traditionally have only two options: serve a lengthy apprenticeship, or pay a sizable fee. Since the latter is typically out of reach for those just starting a tradesman's path, most members of the Horologists earn their livery by apprenticeship.

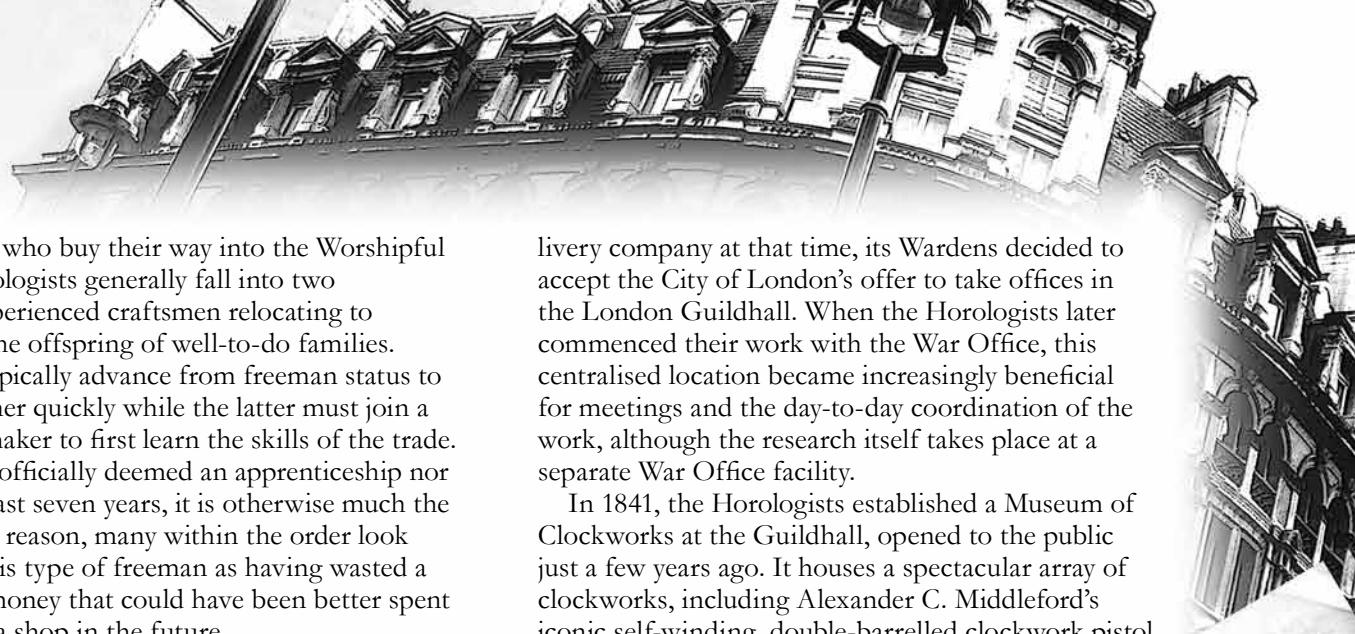
The standard apprenticeship lasts seven years, during which time the freeman works for a master clockmaker, who teaches him all aspects of the trade. The freeman works wage-free but is typically granted room and board to discourage 'moonlighting'. Any extras or pocket money are the apprentice's responsibility, a situation which leads those freemen without a stipend from a family member to take on side jobs under the table. This practice is highly frowned upon and, if the jobs in question entail clockwork, can lead to a freeman being drummed out of the Order – and even forced out of London, itself.

Since entering into service for the War Office, the Horologists have offered freemen the option of a modified apprenticeship. After completing the first year of an apprenticeship, freemen can sign on for three years service with the War Office in lieu of the remaining six years under their current master. They do not, however, serve as foot soldiers or deck hands; rather, they work with some of the Horologists' most skilled clockmakers researching, testing and crafting highly advanced and specialised clockworks for the Empire's fighting forces.

Freemen completing this program develop such a high level of skill and make such enviable connections, both at the higher levels of the Horologists and throughout the Royal Court, that even those with lineage or enough income to buy their way into the Order will often choose this route. In fact, the recent popularity of this program has forced the Horologists to decline the requests of several freemen for War Office apprenticeships, with the promise that if an opening becomes available, they shall be first in line for it. This, in a structured organisation such as this, is not always true.

[NOVEMBER 2]... DUPLEX SKIRTS... J. W. BRADLEY'S... TEST DUPLEX MILLING... FASHIONABLE AND...
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Individuals who buy their way into the Worshipful Order of Horologists generally fall into two categories: experienced craftsmen relocating to London and the offspring of well-to-do families. The former typically advance from freeman status to liveryman rather quickly while the latter must join a master clockmaker to first learn the skills of the trade. Although not officially deemed an apprenticeship nor mandated to last seven years, it is otherwise much the same. For this reason, many within the order look down upon this type of freeman as having wasted a great deal of money that could have been better spent on setting up a shop in the future.

Acceptance into the Horologists as a freeman and even completion of an apprenticeship do not guarantee liveryman status. The master clockmakers must vote to grant a freeman his livery and those found lacking in the necessary skills are universally declined. Although a freeman can still work for a master clockmaker, he cannot open his own shop or take on apprentices of his own – a craftsman’s most economical labour force – therefore, few remain in London if denied their livery. Still, with the sterling reputation of London’s clockmakers, such freemen rarely have difficulty setting up a successful enterprise elsewhere in the Empire.

On certain rare occasions, a freeman who was denied livery can petition for a second vote. However, it would take an exceptional accomplishment to overcome such a failure – or a service to the Empire profound enough to get the Queen herself to press for his inclusion.

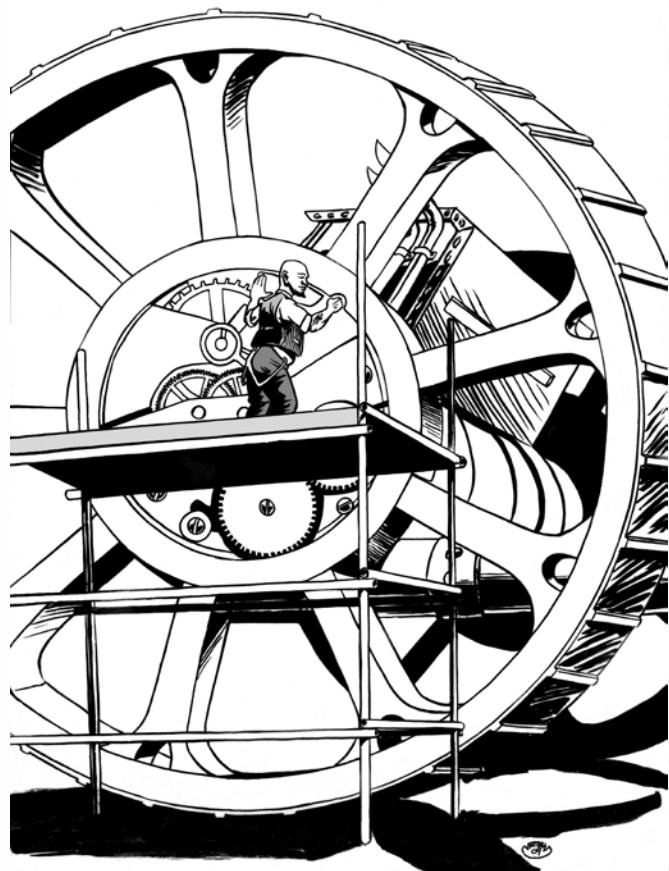
Upon attaining the status of liveryman, each member is presented with his official livery – an expertly tailored suit, lined with silk and boasting buttons shaped like gears. This uniform is worn only at official Horologist functions; although liverymen can purchase additional sets of livery at their own cost but few have any need to do so.

On very rare occasions, the Horologists grant honorary liveryman status to a celebrated clockmaker without requiring a legacy, fee or apprenticeship – or, in some cases, even the artisan’s presence in the city. Such reputation should be gained by their inclusion, that the craftsman in question might not actually be in residence in London is often viewed as a minor detail.

livery company at that time, its Wardens decided to accept the City of London’s offer to take offices in the London Guildhall. When the Horologists later commenced their work with the War Office, this centralised location became increasingly beneficial for meetings and the day-to-day coordination of the work, although the research itself takes place at a separate War Office facility.

In 1841, the Horologists established a Museum of Clockworks at the Guildhall, opened to the public just a few years ago. It houses a spectacular array of clockworks, including Alexander C. Middleford’s iconic self-winding, double-barrelled clockwork pistol, one of the first fruits of the collaboration between the Worshipful Order of Horologists and the War Office.

Although the order has no materials or tools with which to supply new members, either freemen or those who have recently been granted livery, it has excellent relationships with suppliers throughout the city, who offer preferred rates to recommended clockmakers.



RESOURCES

Although the Horologists originally had a livery house of their own, it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. Since the Order was but a fledgling





AGENDA

Under the Royal Charter granted to the Worshipful Order of Horologists, the Order regulates the clockwork trade in London proper and for a ten-mile radius around the city. London has a reputation for producing some of the finest clockworks in the world and it is important for the city's economy that this reputation not be tarnished. To this end, the Order trains any and all who wish to operate a clockwork shop in London, and ensures that those inducted as liverymen maintain the Order's high standards. Still, it's a poorly kept secret that certain unlicensed individuals perform the occasional clockwork repair or fill clockwork orders that legitimate tradesmen are too busy or too loyal to the Empire to accept. These hedgerow clockmakers are a source of continual embarrassment for the Horologists. The Wardens task members with flushing them out whenever they can and convincing them either to fulfil the necessary steps to become liverymen or set up shop outside the Order's sphere of influence.

In addition to the Horologists' normal duties overseeing London's clockwork trade, as previously mentioned they work closely with the War Office to craft new and advanced clockworks to aid the defence of the Empire.

Carter clockwork shop, Daniel toiled over simple clockwork repairs, replacing mainsprings in pocket watches and cleaning clockwork poodles. His fellows consoled him about the unfairness of it all but Daniel did not mind. He liked working in the shop and without the responsibilities of training apprentices or balancing books or all the million other details involved in running a successful business he was free to do what he loved most – tinker with clockworks. His natural aptitude for the craft coupled with a keen eye that enabled him to ferret out the smallest flaw keeping a piece of clockwork from working properly and an understanding of engineering that led him to retool even functioning items to run more efficiently.

Ten years passed before Daniel's father would allow him to petition for liveryman status but when he did he won the vote unanimously. His reputation preceded him and his stature as a master clockmaker only grew until, four years ago, his peers selected him to serve as Prime Warden. The honour fills him with pride to this day.

Still, it pales in comparison to the request his father's executor relayed upon the senior Carter's passing: that, per his will, his father 'would be honoured to have my son Daniel craft a clockwork to adorn my cairn'.

Roycroft Hamilton

When Roycroft Hamilton was selected as Warden of London's West End district, he was delighted. It was a prestigious post, and one certain to enhance his trade in Bayswater, but with the ever-increasing demands of regulating the fast-growing district, Roycroft found his responsibilities at his own shop falling more and more by the wayside. Repairs were late being completed, bills began piling up and – worst of all – he heard talk of commissions that would normally be his going to other clockmakers. Finally, Roycroft found himself forced to either resign his commission or close his shop. Since his position as Upper Warden came with but a small stipend, in the end he had no choice at all.

After seeing a new Warden installed for the district, Roycroft turned his attention to his own trade. With long hours and a few well-placed clockwork gifts to boost his flagging reputation, business at the Gnome's shop rebounded to its earlier robustness. Unfortunately, Roycroft's success only saw him returned to a bureaucratic position. One of his earlier gifts had earned him a regular customer in the person of one of the Queen's cousins; a man both fascinated by intricate clockworks depicting long forgotten battles and rich enough to hire a master clockmaker

PERSONALITIES

Daniel Carter

As a young Dwarf, Daniel Carter could be found in his father's clockwork shop, issuing a non-stop stream of questions as he followed the older Dwarf from workbench to counter to storeroom or perched on a stool as he watched him disassemble a fusee watch. Clockwork came naturally to Daniel in a way it did not for his father, a stocky Dwarf whose strong arms and back made it easier to handle the springs used in large clockworks but whose fingers lacked the dexterity generally deemed essential to more intricate gear work. Never one to let anything stop him, the senior Carter worked hard to improve his skills, even developing new tools to manipulate what his fingers could not. As time passed and word spread, the well-to-do of London came to respect Daniel's father as a true master of the clockwork craft.

Daniel's father prized his reputation, enough that he would not risk it even to speed his own son's way to the rank of liveryman within the Horologists. While regular apprentices came and went from the

Daniel Carter
Rank 17 Dwarf Prime Warden (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +8
Mental Competence: +12
Initiative: 12
Health: 9 dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Concentration +5,
Ad Hoc Repair +6, Craft (Clockwork) +6,
Engineering +4, Perception +4,
Science (Horology) +5
Traits: Pacifist +4, Focussed +3, Tinkerer +3
Combat Abilities: Daniel does everything
he can to avoid a fight. If pressed, however,
he fights with whatever is at hand, using
his knowledge of engineering and his keen
observation of an opponent's weaknesses
to turn the most innocuous objects into
formidable weapons.
Damage: Improvised weapon (2 dice)

Roycroft Hamilton
Rank 16 Gnome War Office Warden
(Focussed)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +12
Initiative: 8
Health: 8 dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Craft (Clockwork) +6,
Engineering +5, Firearms +3, Research +6,
Science (Horology) +6, Teaching +4
Traits: Inventive +3, Lucky +2
Combat Abilities: Although Roycroft is not
one to look for a fight, his time spent working
with the War Office has given him a better
perspective on defending himself and the
Empire, which he does with either fists or
firearms, if the situation calls for it.
Damage: Clockwork pistol (8 dice), Fists (1
dice)

to construct them. This same cousin presented the Queen with one of Roycroft's clockworks for her birthday, a re-enactment of the Battle of Waterloo that filled Roycroft's entire shop for the six months it took to craft it. The Queen was so impressed that she sent a courtier to invite the Gnomish clockmaker to show other examples of his work to the Court. Not until the last clockwork had wound down and the Queen had offered Roycroft the position of War Office Warden did he realise that Her Majesty's invitation had been less of a command performance than an interview for employment.

Still, one could hardly say no to the Queen...

Jasper Perkins

Those who have dealt with Jasper Perkins are fond of chuckling that the Halfing's tongue is as quick and nimble as his fingers. They are just as fond, however, of declaring that they would gladly work with Jasper again any time the opportunity presented itself. Although a clerk's duty is often a tedious lot filled with accounting, meetings and enough paperwork to fill a London warehouse, Jasper enjoys his job – and it shows. Visitors to the Horologists' office are greeted with a smile and an offer of tea; many spend far longer than their business strictly requires, relaxing in one of the overstuffed chairs and trading stories with the garrulous Halfing. It is an investment in time well made for both sides. Those seeking a special

dispensation to have a clockmaker from abroad come to London to service an item they picked up during their travels find the way smoothed and the necessary paperwork completed quickly by the Horologists' Clerk. Others who have a mind to invest in a personal copy of the latest War Office clockwork, about which rumours flourish (often at the hand of the Clerk himself), are given the names and addresses of the necessary benefactors to make the transaction happen. In return, Jasper has a ledger of contacts for the Horologists to call upon whenever the need arises – and, in most cases, a sizable increase in the livery company's accounts to boot.

Although Jasper's responsibilities as Clerk are focused on the day-to-day running of the order, he is still a skilled clockmaker in his own right, knowledge he finds advantageous in his dealings with both those part of, and those merely partnered with, the Horologists. His skills, however, extend beyond the traditional clockwork craft to include an unmatched knowledge of the history of clock making and of the current tradesmen operating throughout the civilised world. The Prime Warden has found this specialty of Jasper's invaluable when determining whether to grant freeman status to a clockmaker relocating to London or when arbitrating a patent dispute for which supporting documentation is unavailable. The Prime Warden might be the visible head of the order but, as he knows more than anyone else does, the Clerk is equally responsible for its smooth operation.



Penelope Lambourne
Rank 12 Trailblazing Liveryman
(Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6
 Mental Competence: +9
 Initiative: 7
 Health: 7 dice (14 pips)
 Signature Skills: Business +2, Craft (Clockwork) +5, Concentration +5, Intimidate +2, Science (Horology) +4
 Swordplay +3
 Traits: Dedicated +2, Emancipated +4, Hard Worker +4
 Combat Abilities: If Penelope learned one thing during her apprenticeship – other than how to craft clockworks, that is – it was to stand up for herself. Anyone threatening this lady finds themselves facing the business end of a very sharp sword (9 dice) and would be well advised to back off before she puts it to use.
 Damage: Sabre (7 dice)

Jasper Perkins
Rank 15 Halfling Horologists' Clerk
(Specialist)

Physical Competence: +4
 Mental Competence: +14
 Initiative: 8
 Health: 7 dice (14 pips)
 Signature Skills: Business +4, Craft (Clockwork) +4, Charm +5, History +2, Politics +4, Science (Horology) +3
 Traits: Paper-worker +3, Talkative +4, Organised +4
 Combat Abilities: Jasper does not fight, even if pressed. With contacts like his, he needs only to duck and survive the encounter. Then he can call upon friends to eliminate the aggressor for him.
 Damage: Fist (1 dice)

Penelope Lambourne

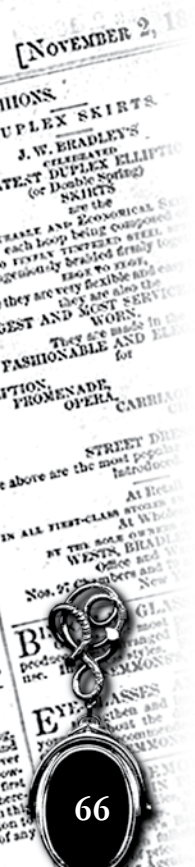
Penelope Lambourne remembers well her induction as a liveryman into the Worshipful Order of Horologists. The master clockmakers, in their livery, filing past the clockwork mechanism at the front of the chamber, some pausing to place a gear in the works (their vote in favour of Penelope graduating from freeman to liveryman), others pointedly stuffing their fists in their trouser pockets and continuing past. There were enough of the latter to worry her, her acceptance by no means guaranteed not because of the quality of her work, which was universally well-regarded but because she was a woman. Times were changing slowly, and some masters still chafed at the idea of women in the Order. There had been some before Penelope but few enough that throughout her apprenticeship she had had to work harder and produce higher quality work than her male counterparts. When the voting was completed and the time came for Penelope to turn the crank that wound the machine, she held her breath – and breathed a sigh of relief when she saw that enough gears had been placed, enough votes cast in her favour, for the clockwork to pull aside the ornate brass doors and reveal her livery, resplendent with its silk lining, long coattails and buttons made of copper gears.

It had been a hard-won battle but if anyone were to ask her now, as she sat at a workbench in her own shop repairing an heirloom clock whose owner trusted only her to work on, Penelope would answer without hesitation that, yes, it was worth every minute.

Gerhard Fehrmann

Originally from Switzerland, Gerhard Fehrmann operated a clockwork shop in Bern for several years before moving to London. Considered one of the best young craftsmen in the Swiss capital, Gerhard was enjoying great success when the daughter of a wealthy banker commissioned him to craft a custom pendant watch for her. Making the watch posed no difficulty for Gerhard; saying goodbye to the charming – and charmed – young woman, however, did.

After a brief and ill-advised romance that ended with said young lady tossing a crystal vase at Gerhard's head, he felt a change of scenery was in order. Not least of all because the lady's banker father froze Gerhard's accounts, maligned him to his customers and suppliers and sent one city official after another around to inspect his place of business. As a result, Gerhard's trade did not so much suffer as it ceased to exist. Fortunately, he always kept a



little money on hand, enough to make good his escape. What little was left over after travelling to London and securing lodgings, however, was barely enough to buy his way into the Worshipful Order of Horologists as a freeman. Still, if he could not work in Switzerland, London was a lucrative alternative and if he was to open his own shop he would have to earn his place as a liveryman.

For the present, that meant working for another master clockmaker performing the most mind-numbing repairs to prove that his skill met the Horologists' high standards – something that would never have been in doubt in his native Switzerland.

It could be worse, however. Unlike those forced to earn their livery through an apprenticeship, Gerhard earns a wage, paltry though it is, and should likely be elevated to full liveryman in a matter of months rather than years.

Gerhard Fehrmann
Rank 12 Womanising Freeman

Physical Competence: +8

Mental Competence: +7

Initiative: 7

Health: 8 dice (12 pips)

Signature Skills: Business +2, Charm +4, Craft (Clockwork) +3, High Society +3, Language (English) -1, Science (Horology) +4

Traits: Unlucky in Love +4, Ambitious +3

Combat Abilities: Gerhard not only defends himself in a fight, but also defends the honour of those whom he feels have been attacked without justification.

Damage: Adams, 0.36 Pistol (8 dice), Sabre (8 dice), Fists (1 dice)

THE KNIGHTS OF LUDD

The mass was pushing and shoving, to and fro, as angry strikers met the industrialists' hired goons.

The strike had been going on for several days, with a group of sixty or more workers setting up a camp and barricade in front of their workplace demanding to have their claims heard. It started with a small inconsequential accident, followed by another, and another - the workers muttered their displeasure, the machinery was faulty and dangerous, it needed replacing. They were overheard. Finally, after several injuries, a finger or two severed, a fatal injury occurred, killing two. The owner still wouldn't listen, nor would the manager, or the clerks, and the muttered complaints became a shout, a roar and a rumble. 'Strike!' The factory shut down by workers no longer willing to risk lives and limbs for their low wages. Roused by stirring speeches made by co-workers and agitators arriving from all over town, they resisted any attempt at coercion while their opponents refused any debate. When the strike came to a climax, with hired thugs rushing in to attack the strikers, a scream from the rear cried, 'Fire!' The factory was ablaze.

Sneaking away from the crowd, they could now hear the alarmed cries behind them - their handiwork had been noticed. It had all proceeded according to their plans. Their foot soldiers in the crowd had provided sufficient distraction for them to slip into the factory unnoticed. Once there, they made their way to one of the storage lockers in the back, where another foot soldier had left two cans of kerosene inside two empty crates. They got to business quickly and with precision, dispersing the flammable liquid in the prearranged spots believed best for a fire to spread quickly. It didn't fail. They had made their way out of the factory through the same window they entered and were half-way through the crowd when the cries behind them drew their attention to the success of their mission. The entire crowd ground to a halt, as they all turned their eyes towards the dusty old brick building already engulfed in flames. The Luddites could not suppress their smiles as they quietly made their way through the mass and spread out into the streets of London, only to meet up again at their preordained meeting place - the Ten Bell's Pub. Here, they shared a toast and a laugh, and winked discretely at the gentleman sitting at their farthestmost table, chatting up a blonde-haired trollop. The gentleman nodded slightly, he had, of course, heard that his squires had performed well once more, and he would reward them soon enough.


For now, they could all be satisfied that they had once again struck true at the heart of the monstrous industrialisation that threatened their traditions and livelihood. One less factory to enslave the bodies of men, one less factory to steal the work of rural workers and, most importantly, a signal to the capitalists and industrialists of England - that the army of Ned Ludd would never die.

HISTORY

The rise of industrialism brought change, unwanted change. Machines that could do the work of several men and women replaced more and more workers at the factories. While it promised increased profits to the industrialists, the workers dreaded redundancy and unemployment. To them, the machines were a threat to their very existence and in November 1811 they began to strike back. The first signs of Luddism sprang up in Nottinghamshire, with growing bands of armed workers attacking the factories and leaving warning notes penned by a General Ned Ludd, also known as King Ludd or Captain Ludd. They warned the industrialists that Ludd's patience was at an end and that his army would seek retribution against anyone who did not submit to their demands. As Ludd's army grew, the government - urged strongly by the wealthy capitalists - sought new legal ways of suppressing the gathering Luddites in the north. The act of destroying machines became a capital

offence in March of 1812, with few dissenting voices in Parliament, except most notably the poet Lord Byron, who defended the Luddites staunchly. The new law had to be enforced - a task that was eventually left up to the army, who marched northwards to suppress the revolt. Spies and agent provocateurs, however, had infiltrated the army. The Army of Ludd put up a decent fight against the government army, arming themselves through theft and other schemes, but in the end they faced a greater army than the one Napoleon himself was handling and they had to change strategy. Slowly, the army dissolved as government-troops secured area after area. The factories and mills had been destroyed and the Luddites saw no need to defend the ruins. It was as the army dispersed that the most devoted members went underground and the foundations formed for the Knights of Ludd, under the direction of General Ned Ludd himself.

Ludd proposed forming a secret society to strike at the heart of the industrial society, an order partly



inspired by romantic tales of knightly adventures and partly by existing (secret) societies such as the Freemasons and even the Guild. He appointed the first Vice-General and outlined the structure of his knightly order the way he saw it, using as a base the masses of foot soldiers recruited during their recent struggles. This would be his legacy, a smaller, secret army that could bring down the tyranny of machines and avoid a direct, fatal confrontation with the army. The Vice-General functioned as the representative of the General, speaking and acting on his behalf, served by Knights, Squires and foot soldiers in this secret struggle. To finance the organisation the Vice-General and his gathered Knights received a secret stipend from the General and while the Knights now have several financial backers, the true origin of this stipend is still a closely guarded secret. Only the Vice-General has full knowledge about it and is allowed to manage the original stipend.

The first Vice-General, John, the Paladin of Yorkshire, governed the Knights successfully through its first formative years, forming a base in Manchester and establishing a fief in Nottinghamshire and Greater London.

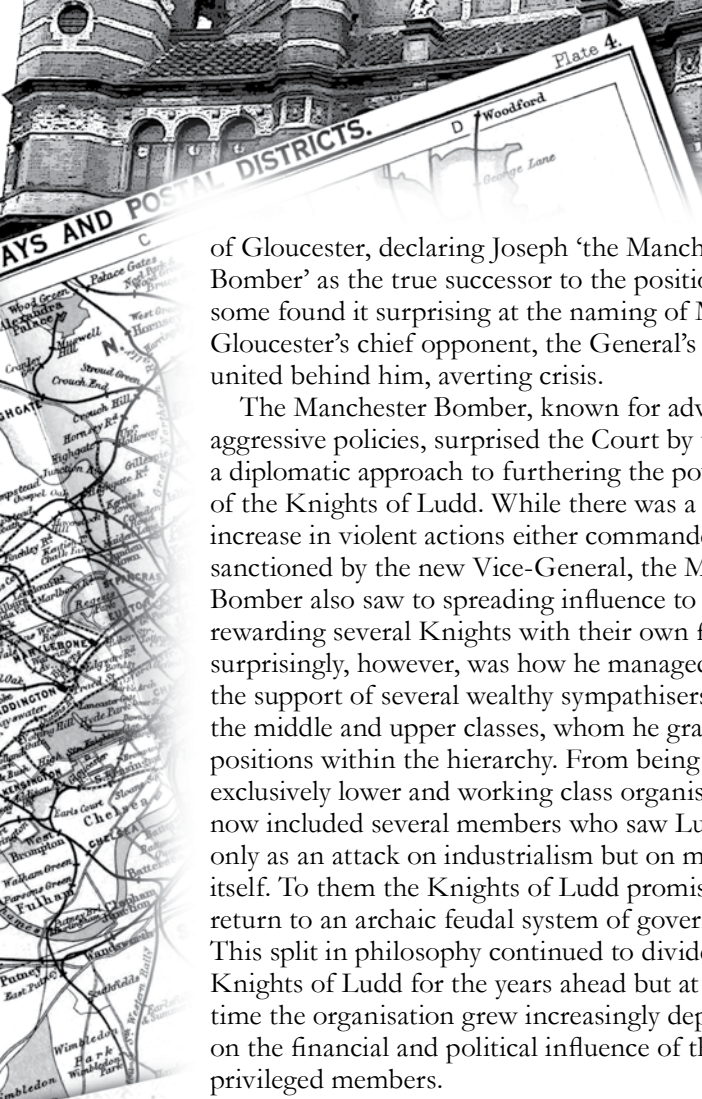
Unfortunately, he was under pressure from the General's Court to speed up the progress as those apart of the original core of Luddite rebels were more accustomed to swift action than slowly fermented plans. The Paladin of Yorkshire assured them that this was all in accordance with General Ludd's own plans but not all were assuaged. In spite of the Vice-General's protests a small group of Knights set out to kill a wealthy industrialist and up-and-coming political figure in Manchester. Even though they succeeded, the capture of all the assassins drew the authorities' attentions towards well-known Luddites in the area. The General's Court felt their secret was in danger of being revealed and fled the city. Some felt that there were those in the organisation who intended the action to draw attention to them, to announce their existence to the world. Wanting to set an example, they decided to kill the ringleader responsible, murdering him in his sleep while hiding in an inn near Nottinghamshire. The conflict threatened to break the Court apart, but when, shortly afterwards, the Paladin of Yorkshire died in his sleep, the Court rallied behind his appointed heir, fearing a power vacuum that might destroy the order. In a letter, signed by both Ned Ludd and the Paladin of Yorkshire, the new leader, Mark 'the Blade of the North', was named their choice for the next Vice-General and the grief stricken Court voted unanimously to respect their original leaders' wishes.

LUDDISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE

Luddism is in fact reactionary, not revolutionary. When the army of Ludd dispersed and Luddism officially died out, many of those who fought for liberty under its banner joined the slightly more accepted nascent workers' unions; though still illegal, they had the potential to grow in strength and better the lives of the working men. True Luddites, however, see this as nothing but treacherous, as the unions never confront the true enemy, the industrial machinery, and would rather just see the ownership of the source of their misery to change hands. Contrary to this Luddites argue that it is industry itself that is harmful to the natural way of things and that the machinery must be broken, not just collectively owned.

The Blade of the North took the reins in November 1815 and governed until his death in 1839; he continued the slow expansion of the organisation and established several new fiefs. He also altered the original Luddite oath to include an oath of fealty to strengthen the feudal flair of the organisational structure. Right up until his death the majority of his edicts and instructions were signed by Ned Ludd himself and carried his seal. This included his political testament that suggested that the position of Vice-General should go to his trusted advisor, Matthew of Gloucester, a well respected self-taught scholar and strategist. He announced what most had already guessed, that General Ludd had passed away several years ago, that the Vice-General was the de facto leader of the Knights of Ludd and that the General would sign no more orders.

Matthew of Gloucester held the position for only a short while and died under mysterious circumstances in January of 1842, found dead in his chambers by his personal servants. The General's Court scrambled to determine who among them would replace him, the apparent lack of a testament and the need for a leader overshadowed any concerns they had about how Matthew of Gloucester had actually died. In the absence of a declared successor, the Court bickered, divided on who the most fitting successor was. In the end, misplaced papers were found, signed by Matthew



of Gloucester, declaring Joseph ‘the Manchester Bomber’ as the true successor to the position. Though some found it surprising at the naming of Mark of Gloucester’s chief opponent, the General’s Court united behind him, averting crisis.

The Manchester Bomber, known for advocating aggressive policies, surprised the Court by taking a diplomatic approach to furthering the power of the Knights of Ludd. While there was a slight increase in violent actions either commanded or just sanctioned by the new Vice-General, the Manchester Bomber also saw to spreading influence to new areas, rewarding several Knights with their own fiefs. Most surprisingly, however, was how he managed to gain the support of several wealthy sympathisers from the middle and upper classes, whom he granted positions within the hierarchy. From being an almost exclusively lower and working class organisation, it now included several members who saw Luddism not only as an attack on industrialism but on modernity itself. To them the Knights of Ludd promised a return to an archaic feudal system of government. This split in philosophy continued to divide the Knights of Ludd for the years ahead but at the same time the organisation grew increasingly dependent on the financial and political influence of their more privileged members.

After fifteen years as Vice-General, the Manchester Bomber succumbed to illness and died in the spring of 1857. His successor, Matthew the Frank, is an elderly man from Nottinghamshire who joined the Luddite revolts as a young weaver and is well respected by all camps in the organisation. Over the course of the next ten years, the Vice-General sought to strengthen the position of the Knights of Ludd in their areas of activities, while slowly expanding their range and increasing their resources. He has also been active in planning and organising discrete actions, such as strikes and several instances of sabotage. While he claims to abhor tools like assassination, several of these have been sanctioned as well. Most significantly, the Vice-General has been able to balance out the diverging interests of the wealthy feudal romantics and the more pragmatic workers and craftsmen, and keeping the innate conflict between these two from becoming a full blown conflict. The latter is a task that has been growing ever more difficult as the wealthy members are positioning themselves in influential positions in the organisation.

In 1862, the Knights of Ludd suffered a major setback in the London fief. A series of unfortunate events crippled the entire organisation over the course of four years. It started innocently enough with a few actions going awry, such as faulty bombs and the

authorities showing up at the wrong moment. After a while things got serious, several agents were arrested, even a few Knights and Errant Knights, and the Lord Knight felt himself threatened by the authorities. He suspected a traitor was close to his inner circle and betraying them, targeting him for a fall. However, the Lord Knight could not prove this and he started lashing out at his subordinates in fits of panic and mistrust. Some of the most talented members left the organisation because of this and there are rumours that some were even murdered. In early 1866, the paranoid Lord Knight hid himself away, avoiding all contact with the rest of the organisation and the Vice-General ordered that he be replaced by a new Lord Knight. When agents arrived to inform the Lord Knight of his replacement, they found him dead, a mystery that remains unsolved, due mainly

CLASS IN THE KNIGHTS OF LUDD

The Knights of Ludd is a strangely egalitarian organisation but this is changing rapidly as it is growing in numbers. Given that they struggle to restore the old order of things, the support of workers and craftsmen is a bit confusing but it is in fact among the working class and lower-middle class that the organisation and the ideals of Ned Ludd have been the strongest since inception. Only in later years has the organisation acquired members from the upper classes in any number but they seem to rise through the ranks a lot quicker than their lower class comrades do. At this time, the General’s Court is split 50/50 between the workers and craftsmen on one side and upper class gentlemen on the other. There are many reasons for this, not least of which the ability to bring financial, social and intellectual resources to the organisation means that the lower class members become little more than raw muscle. So far, this has caused only minor discontent in the group but this may well change if the upper class members decide to make a grab for power. Many fear that William the Blue-blooded represents just such a thing and believe Travis Miller is the only way to avoid this.

[NOVEMBER 2, 1857]

PHIONS

DUPLEX SKIRTS

J. W. ERADLEY'S

CHELSEA

BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC

(or Double Spring)

SKIRTS

FOR THE

TRADE AND ECONOMICAL

each loop being composed

of two pieces of steel, and

being so constructed as to

be easily stretched and

contracted, and so that

they are very flexible and

strong, and also that

they are made in the

BEST AND MOST SERVICE

ABLE MANNER.

They are made in the

FASHIONABLE AND

FOR

OPERATION.

PROMENADE,

OPERA,

CARRIAGE

STREET DRIVING

above are the most popular

introductions

At Royal

At West

BY THE SOLE OWNERS

WEST, BATH,

Office and

No. 27, Cornhill and

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GLA

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GLASS

EYE GLASSES

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JOS. GILLOTT'S STEEL

OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

JOSEPH

GILLOTT,

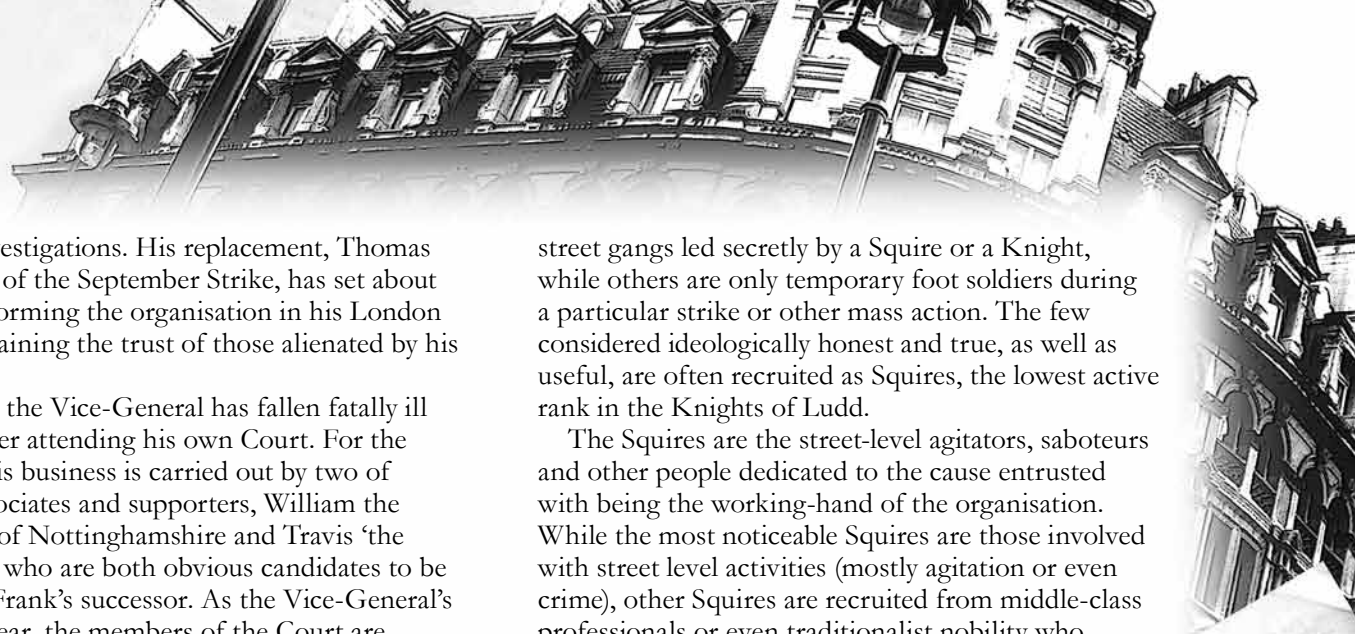
Warranted.

TRADE MARK:

ORIGINAL and

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to few real investigations. His replacement, Thomas Malone, Hero of the September Strike, has set about the task of reforming the organisation in his London fief and of regaining the trust of those alienated by his predecessor.

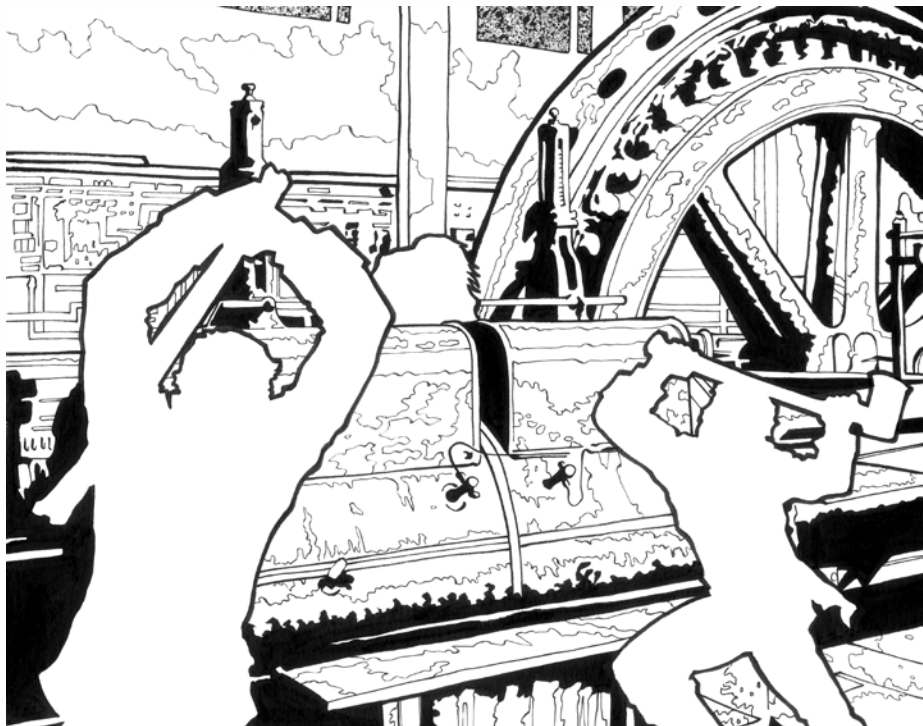
Meanwhile, the Vice-General has fallen fatally ill and is no longer attending his own Court. For the moment, all his business is carried out by two of his closest associates and supporters, William the Blue-blooded of Nottinghamshire and Travis 'the Miller' Miller, who are both obvious candidates to be Matthew the Frank's successor. As the Vice-General's death draws near, the members of the Court are positioning themselves for what they expect the new political situation to be. The workers and craftsmen are particularly anxious, as they fear that William the Blue-blooded will live up to his moniker and grant more powers to his fellow men of noble stature.

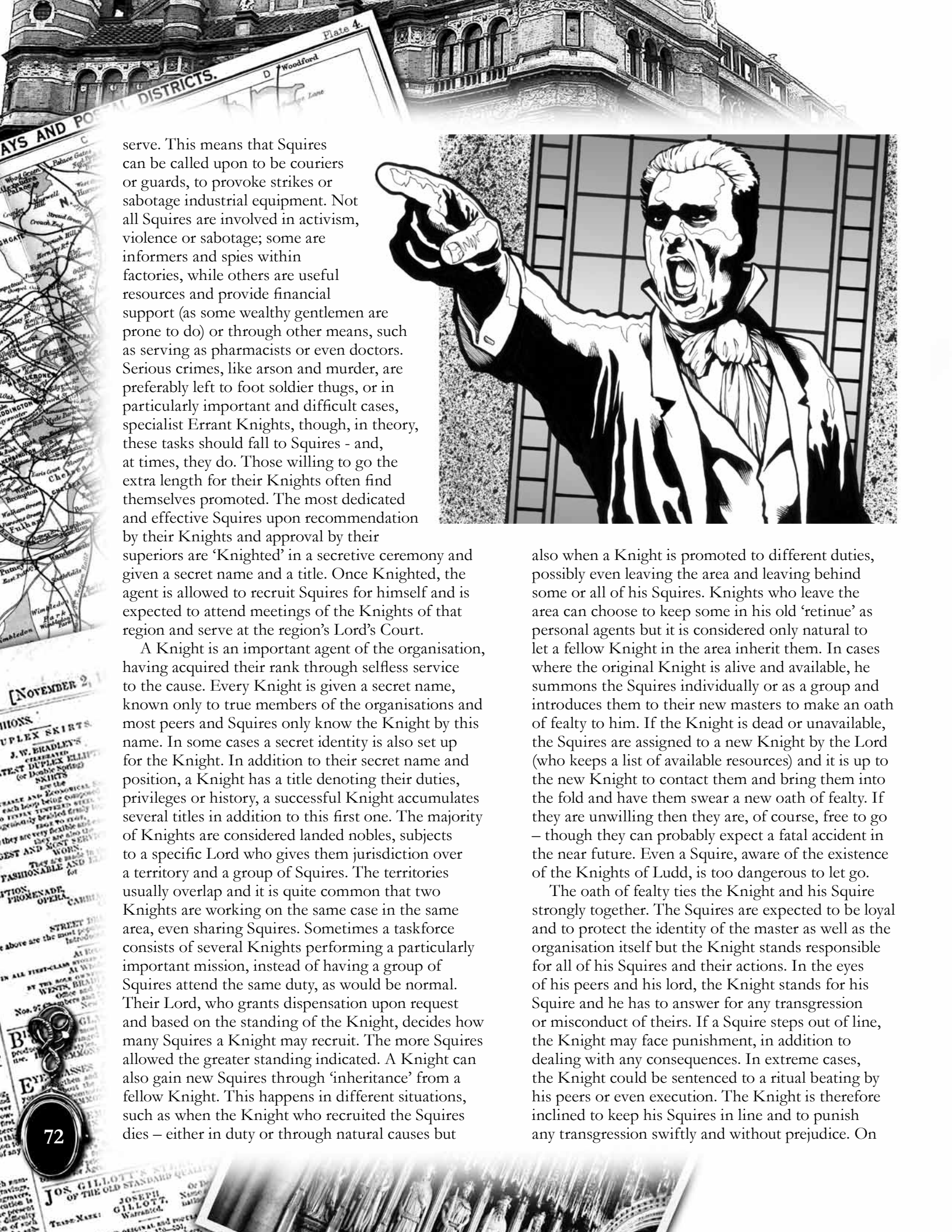
STRUCTURE

The Knights of Ludd's hierarchy draws inspiration from mediaeval knights' tales and armies, with foot soldiers at the bottom and the General at the top. In practice, this means that the organisation is led by the Vice-General, substituting for their spiritual leader, General Ned Ludd. Any order from the Vice-General is, in principle, considered a direct command from General Ludd himself. The foot soldiers make up the largest part of the organisation, though many of the foot soldiers are unaware that there is any organisation at all. Recruited from the pools of dissatisfied men and women in the industrial cities and the countryside, the foot soldiers are the most visible part of the organisation. Found whenever the order starts, or participates, in mass actions such as strikes and protests, foot soldiers are organised as a small group of thugs, used on a few occasions to commit violent actions. As mentioned, most foot soldiers are unaware of the larger organisation as such and the rank is mostly a designation given to them by active members of the Knights of Ludd, who consider them sympathetic to their cause. Some foot soldiers make up consistent

street gangs led secretly by a Squire or a Knight, while others are only temporary foot soldiers during a particular strike or other mass action. The few considered ideologically honest and true, as well as useful, are often recruited as Squires, the lowest active rank in the Knights of Ludd.

The Squires are the street-level agitators, saboteurs and other people dedicated to the cause entrusted with being the working-hand of the organisation. While the most noticeable Squires are those involved with street level activities (mostly agitation or even crime), other Squires are recruited from middle-class professionals or even traditionalist nobility who believe the order of things are being threatened by the new order of industrialism. Squires, thus, like most of the order, come from all walks of life, serving to the best of their ability and according to their station in life. Those who become Squires are expected to swear an oath of fealty to the Knight they are assigned to serve. They also swear fealty to their lord, the Vice-General and General Ludd himself but the oath focuses on the ties between the Knight and his Squire and stresses the bond between them. Squires are often encouraged to take up an alias but they have no official titles or secret names in the organisation. Squires receive specific missions and tasks from their superiors, which they carry out either by themselves or in a group of several Squires, allowed to recruit, or rather designate, foot soldiers if needed. The tasks carried out by the Squires are extremely varied and limited only by the needs of the Knight they






serve. This means that Squires can be called upon to be couriers or guards, to provoke strikes or sabotage industrial equipment. Not all Squires are involved in activism, violence or sabotage; some are informers and spies within factories, while others are useful resources and provide financial support (as some wealthy gentlemen are prone to do) or through other means, such as serving as pharmacists or even doctors. Serious crimes, like arson and murder, are preferably left to foot soldier thugs, or in particularly important and difficult cases, specialist Errant Knights, though, in theory, these tasks should fall to Squires - and, at times, they do. Those willing to go the extra length for their Knights often find themselves promoted. The most dedicated and effective Squires upon recommendation by their Knights and approval by their superiors are 'Knighted' in a secretive ceremony and given a secret name and a title. Once Knighted, the agent is allowed to recruit Squires for himself and is expected to attend meetings of the Knights of that region and serve at the region's Lord's Court.

A Knight is an important agent of the organisation, having acquired their rank through selfless service to the cause. Every Knight is given a secret name, known only to true members of the organisations and most peers and Squires only know the Knight by this name. In some cases a secret identity is also set up for the Knight. In addition to their secret name and position, a Knight has a title denoting their duties, privileges or history, a successful Knight accumulates several titles in addition to this first one. The majority of Knights are considered landed nobles, subjects to a specific Lord who gives them jurisdiction over a territory and a group of Squires. The territories usually overlap and it is quite common that two Knights are working on the same case in the same area, even sharing Squires. Sometimes a taskforce consists of several Knights performing a particularly important mission, instead of having a group of Squires attend the same duty, as would be normal. Their Lord, who grants dispensation upon request and based on the standing of the Knight, decides how many Squires a Knight may recruit. The more Squires allowed the greater standing indicated. A Knight can also gain new Squires through 'inheritance' from a fellow Knight. This happens in different situations, such as when the Knight who recruited the Squires dies - either in duty or through natural causes but



also when a Knight is promoted to different duties, possibly even leaving the area and leaving behind some or all of his Squires. Knights who leave the area can choose to keep some in his old 'retinue' as personal agents but it is considered only natural to let a fellow Knight in the area inherit them. In cases where the original Knight is alive and available, he summons the Squires individually or as a group and introduces them to their new masters to make an oath of fealty to him. If the Knight is dead or unavailable, the Squires are assigned to a new Knight by the Lord (who keeps a list of available resources) and it is up to the new Knight to contact them and bring them into the fold and have them swear a new oath of fealty. If they are unwilling then they are, of course, free to go - though they can probably expect a fatal accident in the near future. Even a Squire, aware of the existence of the Knights of Ludd, is too dangerous to let go.

The oath of fealty ties the Knight and his Squire strongly together. The Squires are expected to be loyal and to protect the identity of the master as well as the organisation itself but the Knight stands responsible for all of his Squires and their actions. In the eyes of his peers and his lord, the Knight stands for his Squire and he has to answer for any transgression or misconduct of theirs. If a Squire steps out of line, the Knight may face punishment, in addition to dealing with any consequences. In extreme cases, the Knight could be sentenced to a ritual beating by his peers or even execution. The Knight is therefore inclined to keep his Squires in line and to punish any transgression swiftly and without prejudice. On



the other hand, any great success or accomplishment by his Squires is considered a direct result of the Knight's actions and he is rewarded accordingly. Only the rarest and most esteemed Knights are considered for promotion to the position of Lord. Instead of promotion, most Knights accumulate honour and titles within the organisation, granting them greater freedom and respect from their fellow Knights.

For a Knight of Ludd, receiving a title is the most common form of reward and promotion. The titles mirror those of nobility and they denote either a privilege or duty, for instance, the Duke of Holborn has a special responsibility for the area of Holborn in London. In a few cases, a Knight gains a title indicating an important accomplishment, such as Hero of the September Strike. Upon attaining the rank, a fresh Knight gains a simple title and every title after that is a great honour for the Knight. The finest Knights, who gain the respect of his Lord and his peers and whose name is spoken in the circles closest to the Vice-General, may be appointed to a Lordship. Lords are accomplished Knights governing a region or city and who answer to the Vice-General and his Court and directs the Knights of his area. Knights and agents who prove themselves invaluable resources to the order and have some special talents, however, can become Errant Knights; not tied to a specific territory and having no Squires of their own they are the lone agents of the organisation.

In theory, Errant Knights are equal to ordinary Knights and serve under a regional lord but their unique positions usually grant them far more clout and many are able to sway the will and minds of lords. Some of these Errant Knights serve only the Vice-General and themselves, and have enough power to order lords around. The deeds of many Errant Knights are the stuff of legends among Luddites, both inside and outside the Knights of Ludd.

Lord Knights appointed by the Vice-General and the General's Court govern regional areas, or fiefs. An appointment to this rank is made primarily when a Knight or an Errant Knight has gained enough respect and political power in the organisation to be recognised in this manner by the Vice-General and his Court. In theory, a Lord Knight can only be appointed when a fief is available but in practice new fiefs are often created for those Knights who excel themselves and they are given the task of creating a cell structure in that area. The General's Court can also decide to divide a fief in two, giving two Lord Knights control over a larger area. This is usually avoided though, as the Lord Knight governing the region is sure to protest such a move. Each Lord Knight keeps a court of Knights and Errant Knights,

who serve as his enforcers and advisors and who have sworn an oath of fealty to him. From this point on, most Lord Knights rely on the performance of their servants for advancement, though some are valued for their abilities as planners and advisors. Lord Knights join the General's Court, the assembly that acts as advisors to the Vice-General and the de facto ruling body of the organisation.

For all this talk of Knights and Lords, the organisation is not especially large. In 1867, there are seven Lord Knights attending the General's Court, along with six Errant Knights serving the Vice-General. There could be as few as three or as many as ten Knights serving any one Lord Knight, including Errant Knights. Any Knight, in turn, can have as many as ten Squires in his cell. The number of foot soldiers available is theoretically endless, assuming that there are sympathetic or easily manipulated members of society available. In general, though, the numbers tend to be rather low and, in many cases, actions require two or more cells working together. This is particularly the case in London, where, until recently, accidents and incompetent leadership crippled the organisation. The fiefs represented are Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham, Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and, of course, Greater London. The latter gaining a new Lord Knight after his rather unsuccessful predecessor met with an unfortunate and fatal accident. The Court meets regularly in or around the industrial city of Manchester, the stronghold of the order. The Vice-General rotates between different locations both inside and outside the city, along with his closest advisors and any attending Lord Knights. At least once a month, the entire Court gathers to debate important issues and meetings might last for several days when plans are in the making.

In addition to the responsibility of their fiefs, Lord Knights often acquire advisory positions to the Vice-General, entrusted to oversee specific operations or formalities of the order. Additionally, the Vice-General raises talented agents to the rank of Errant Knight who serve only him, at times considered superior to the Lord Knights upon whose territories they often intrude. These Errant Knights are mostly just trusted advisors but some, like the dreaded executioner, are the hands of the Vice-General within the order. They deal with matters that he is unwilling to trust to the other members of his court. Though it has only happened twice in the history of the organisation, the General's Court is entrusted with the task of appointing one of their own to the position of Vice-General when the former passes away. In practice, however, the General's Court usually appoints the one named in the late Vice-General's last will and testament.



MAGIC AND THE KNIGHTS OF LUDD

The majority of members of the Knights of Ludd consider magic-users a boon and would like the organisation to recruit more of them. While Petty Magicians are welcomed as keepers of the traditional way of life, the working class members of the organisation often view Thaumaturgists with suspicion. This is mostly a class distinction and they are still a welcomed addition. Unofficially, Demonologists and Necromancers can also find sanctuary in the Knights of Ludd, as a terrorist organisation they have a rather loose sense of morality when it comes to what means they use in their struggle. The forbidden arts tend to inspire the much needed terror, although the Knights consider such people an expendable resource. Demonologists and Necromancers also tend to be loose cannons, following their own selfish agendas. For that reason, they are usually hired on a short-term basis, not initiated.

The Vice-General is the unquestioned leader of the Knights of Ludd and he serves as the voice of the organisation's true leader, the legendary General Ned Ludd. According to the organisation's beliefs, they were themselves founded by Ludd, who entrusted the Vice-General to be his representative. A position granted only to those who devote their entire life to the cause, sacrificing their civilian identity and any family ties for the Knights of Ludd.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

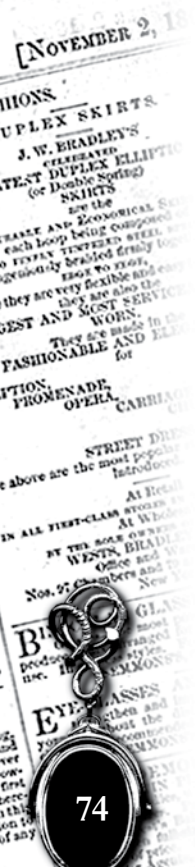
To join the Knights of Ludd one has to be invited, and few ever are, due to the secrecy involved. The organisation prefers to rely on foot soldiers recruited temporarily to perform their tasks and a few Squires. However, those who draw attention to themselves and their Luddite sympathies might find themselves approached by a Squire or a Knight about joining a (secret) society of like-minded individuals. The expectation is that they perform a service or two before being let in on the 'secret'. Recently recruited

Squires may only know about their own cell and a little about the organisation as a whole. They may only suspect that there are similar cells working with them in tandem. Upon receiving a full 'Knighthood', however, this changes.

Those offered membership in the organisation are usually people who, aside from being sympathetic to the cause, can offer a special position, resource or skill to the cell they are joining. Talented pugilists and other thugs are always welcome to any cell, as are well-connected underworld figures and even clever engineers for making bombs and figuring out how to best sabotage equipment. As the organisation is growing, wealth is becoming an attractive asset in new members and many sympathisers are granted a Knighthood in the order in exchange for a lucrative stipend or even property.

WOMEN AND THE KNIGHTS OF LUDD

Officially, women did not play that much of a part in the original Luddite revolts, even if it did start in the textile industries. The Luddites were predominantly male weavers to begin with and many Luddites believe, like most people of Victorian Britain, that women should stay out of politics, and especially violence. In spite of this, several women have proven themselves useful to the Knights of Ludd, serving as informants and even distractions. Many now work in the mechanised mills where they act as the eyes and ears of the organisation. Plenty of women have lost fingers to the unforgiving steam looms and have every reason to feel the same as any male Luddite. Even those who do not work with machines have suffered when their husbands and family have been hurt or made redundant by mechanisation. Sadly, the male hierarchy of the order has failed to recognise this and while a few women have been permitted to join the ranks as Squires, so far none of these have been elevated to Knighthood. The day when women choose to make their voice heard may create a worse internal problem than the age-old troubles between class that the Knights and Lords are so concerned about, so when a women's revolt begins they are unlikely to see it coming.



RESOURCES

As an underground organisation, the most important resources available to the Knights of Ludd are its members and their individual talents. They have several safe houses all over Britain and even a large house in a secluded spot on the French Riviera for when things get too out of hand. Financially, the organisation relied originally on a large stipend, this has been added to over the years through donations from new members and through wealth acquired through other means, such as robbery. The Knights of Ludd include professional thieves, murderers, engineers and others that are all important resources and who are made available to agents who request them. Also, some Lord Knights use the financial resources of the organisation to buy up useful properties and assets in their fief.

Due to the strict recruitment policies of the Knights of Ludd, members are few and far between but those who are recruited are usually very talented and useful. Currently, there are only four Knights and three Errant Knights active in London and only 15-20 active Squires. The current Lord Knight, Thomas Malone, is eager to recruit new agents but he is careful not to rush it.

AGENDA

The long-term goal of the Knights of Ludd is to reverse the industrial revolution and restore the working economic conditions and ways of production of the mid-to-late 18th century. They can only do this if they manage to create a viable mass movement and gain political influence, which is difficult to combine with their direct action policies. The General's Court is aiming towards dividing their interests between gaining legitimate political influence through upper-class sympathisers and members, and continuing to sabotage the industries and cause unrest and strikes. To this, secrecy is the key. They are looking into gaining sympathisers among the House of Lords and getting sympathisers or even agents elected to Parliament. If Luddism is to have any hope of succeeding politically, they need to foster a political climate that is more accepting of their view. As it is now, Luddism is practically banned from public political life.

Their short-term goals include increased recruitment, sabotage, strikes and even assassinations. The particulars are left to the particular Knights,

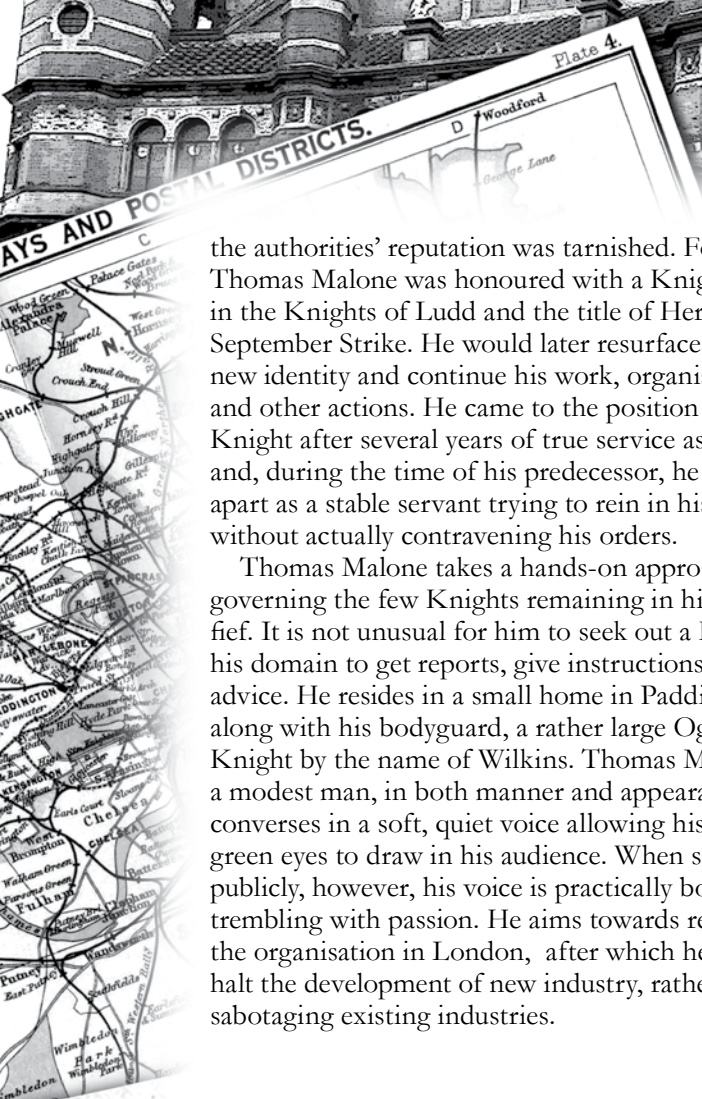
Errant Knights and Lord Knights. Many Luddite cells have a list of targets, both persons and locations that they target for actions.

PERSONALITIES

Thomas Malone, Hero of the September Strike, the Lord Knight of London

The new Lord Knight of London is somewhere in his early thirties but like most illiterates he does not know his exact age. He was born in a small town outside of London but his family moved to the city when he was young, seeking better employment in the industries there. Like many others, they found only misery and hardship. Thomas grew up listening to his father's tales of how it used to be, back home, before the blasted machinery took over. These tales stayed with him and increased in potency after his father died in a work-related accident.

Thomas Malone distinguished himself as a troublemaker at a very young age, instigating fights and dissension at any opportunity. He was soon recognised as a useful foot soldier and shortly afterwards was recruited to the Knights of Ludd as a Squire. It was as a Squire, fermenting a strike in the outskirts of London, he gained his best-known title. Along with the rest of his cell, he had managed to stir up enough resentment at several workshops to cause them to declare a mutual strike. The strike lasted for several weeks in September of 1856 and neither side would budge, much due to the fact that the Knights of Ludd were successful in manipulating the strikers and several acts of sabotage were carried out. The authorities called in troops to disperse the strikers, and knowing that defeat was inevitable, the strikers were ready to give up. At this point, the charismatic young Thomas Malone addressed the crowd of strikers and the troops that were lining up to surround them. His passionate speech strengthened the strikers' resolve to keep on resisting, furthermore his call for passion and humanity stirred the enclosing troops and shook their morale. Several of the troops openly defied their orders, insisting that they would not attack unarmed civilians and fellow Englishmen at that. Unwilling to press their soldiers and risk mutiny their officers retreated and requested fresh replacement troops. This prolonged the strike and though the strike was finally crushed, violently, by more seasoned troops, the situation had attracted some attention and the strikers had gained some sympathy among the public. When they were scattered there was a righteous uproar and



the authorities' reputation was tarnished. For this Thomas Malone was honoured with a Knighthood in the Knights of Ludd and the title of Hero of the September Strike. He would later resurface under a new identity and continue his work, organising strikes and other actions. He came to the position of Lord Knight after several years of true service as a Knight, and, during the time of his predecessor, he set himself apart as a stable servant trying to rein in his Lord – without actually contravening his orders.

Thomas Malone takes a hands-on approach to governing the few Knights remaining in his London fief. It is not unusual for him to seek out a Knight in his domain to get reports, give instructions or ask for advice. He resides in a small home in Paddington, along with his bodyguard, a rather large Ogre Errant Knight by the name of Wilkins. Thomas Malone is a modest man, in both manner and appearance, who converses in a soft, quiet voice allowing his dark-green eyes to draw in his audience. When speaking publicly, however, his voice is practically booming and trembling with passion. He aims towards rebuilding the organisation in London, after which he aims to halt the development of new industry, rather than sabotaging existing industries.

John, the Duke of Holborn

A tall and friendly man often found drinking and carousing in the many pubs of London, the Duke of Holborn secretly uses his Squires to gather information and prepare and carry out actions. As the Duke of Holborn, he is responsible for actions against several factories as well as the Grand Lodge of Freemasons. The latter he is seeking to infiltrate in some way. He believes that a man, a Squire or an Errant Knight, on the inside of the lodge would be an invaluable asset to him and the Knights of Ludd. Unfortunately, though charming and affable, the Duke of Holborn is a working man and his whole appearance betrays this fact. From the soot under his fingernails to his chiselled muscles and rough skin, he stands out among the more affluent and respected members of society. This makes it hard for him to get into any position to recruit a member, or a potential member, of the lodge. He is on the lookout for any opportunity though.

John has been working since he was a young boy, helping to feed his large family, and has mostly always stayed away from trouble. However, he is an adventurer at heart and was never one to shy away from a fight. He was picked out from a large brawl by members of the Knights of Ludd, and recruited as a Squire. To him, the cloak and dagger style of the

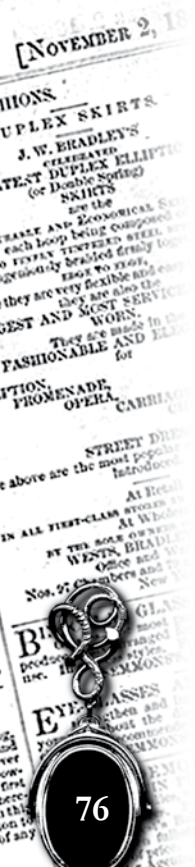
Thomas Malone
Rank 14 Charismatic Mob Leader
(Generalist)

Physical Competence: +9
Mental Competence: +8
Initiative: 10
Health: 8 dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Blunt Weapons +3, Bull +4, Charm +5, Fisticuffs +3, Intimidate +2, Perception +3, Politics +4, Streetwise +4
Traits: Incensed +3, Manipulative +3, Courageous +3
Combat Abilities: Malone never resorts to weapons, but doesn't consider a piece of timber (12 dice) or his fists (12 dice) to truly be weapons.
Damage: Bit of two-by-four (6 Dice) or a smack to the jaw (4 Dice)

John, the Duke of Holborn
Rank 12 Working Man's Revolutionary
(Focussed)

Physical Competence: +9
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 7
Health: 8 dice (16 pips)
Signature Skills: Bull +2, Charm +3, Fisticuffs +4, High Society +1, Streetwise +2
Traits: Working Class +3, Crude +1, Brawler +2, Drinker +2, Family Man +3
Combat Abilities: His good, honest, working man's fists (13 dice) should do the job
Damage: Punch (4 dice)

terrorist organisation was one big adventure and at first he was recruited to be used as muscle, or even cannon fodder, but his friendly and social nature earned him the friendship of his Knight – Thomas Malone. When Malone was raised to the position of Lord Knight, John was immediately raised to the position of Duke of Holborn and he has for the last year served as one of the most loyal members of the London fief. John has decided not to change his identity; he still works at a factory in Holborn and lives with his wife Edna, and their three children.



Marcus Beck, a Squire

A portly and curly-haired Gnome trained as an engineer, Marcus runs a small repair shop on the outskirts of London whilst serving the Knights of Ludd. As an elderly widower he finds this gives his life new meaning. He frequently provides schematics and instructions on how to sabotage or demolish buildings and machinery efficiently to agents of the organisation. While not opposed to technical innovation and progress, Mr. Beck believes Luddism to be the only solution to the problems associated with industrialism and the only hope of returning to a more traditional world.

Mr. Beck's shop is a cluttered shed, filled with pipes, metal plates and several workbenches filled with tools. He greets any visitor with a friendly smile and engages in patient banter before enquiring after their purpose. Most visitors are looking for a particular gadget or design they want custom-made and he is usually quite pleased to take their orders. He trusts only the few people he recognises as members of the Knights of Ludd and is very careful about not revealing his affiliation. He will not discuss Luddite affairs during business hours, under any circumstances, and whenever contacted he asks them to return after hours.

Marcus' current pet project is a rifle that can fire explosive projectiles a good distance, preferably into the air in order to bring down airships, wyverns or ornithopters. So far, the design is slightly unstable but when it is complete (which he believes to be soon), it should be a useful tool in the hands of Luddite saboteurs. He aims for simplicity of construction that allows the weapon to be easily produced, as well as assembled and disassembled. His Lord Knight believes the project to be promising and is supporting it financially.

Bernard Wilkins, the Green Wizard of Pimlico a.k.a. The Arbiter

An Errant Knight of some repute, Bernard Wilkins resides in a gentleman's studio apartment in Pimlico near Vincent Square, where he appears to be living the relaxed life of a dilettante and disinterested Thaumaturgic scholar. When not out cavorting, drinking or otherwise engaged in social pleasures, he can be found reading a book from his modest library and drinking a decent port. There is nothing in his behaviour that indicates he is in any way involved in revolutionary and terrorist activities – which, of course, he is.

Behind his charming and devil-may-care facade, Bernard Wilkins is an ambitious and dangerous

Marcus Beck

Rank 9 Gnome Innovator (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6

Mental Competence: +6

Initiative: 6

Health: 6 dice (12 pips)

Signature Skills: Business +2,
Concentration +3, Demolition +4,
Engineer (All) +4, Research +4

Traits: Mechanic +3, Guarded +3

Combat Abilities: None to speak of but if defending his workshop he is surrounded by dangerous and explosive chemicals, which he might use on attackers.

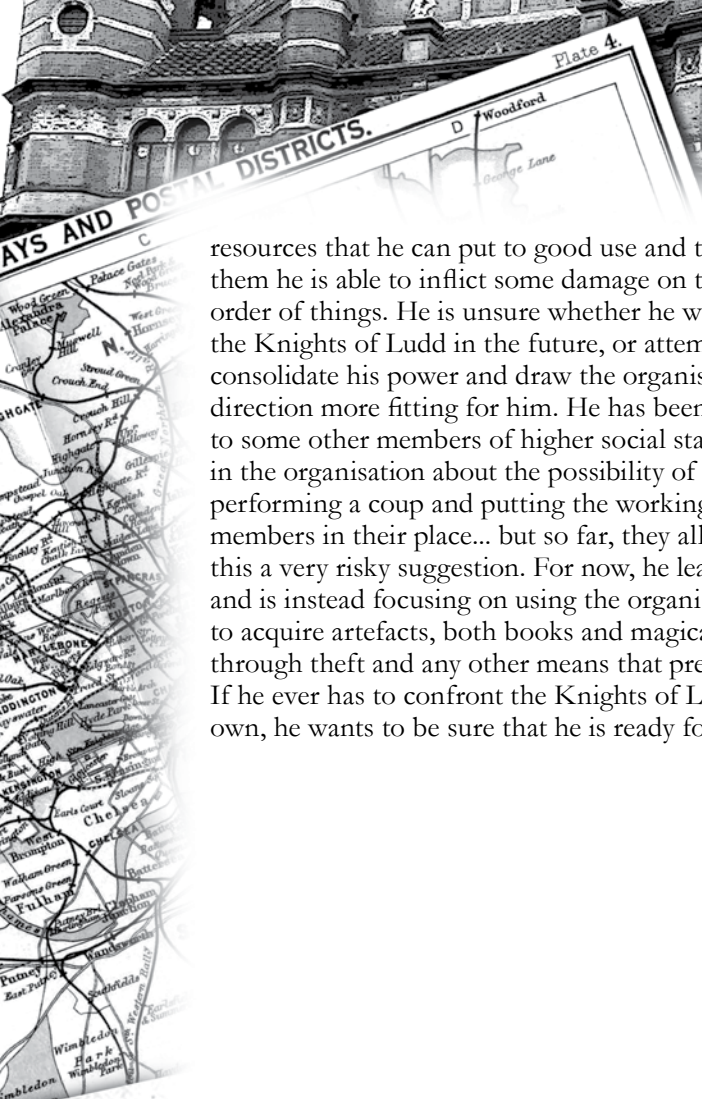
Damage: Depends how lucky he is

man, serving the Knights of Ludd for as long as it may profit him. While growing up in his aristocratic home, he learned to foster a seething distaste for the modern world, with its noisy factories and cities and petty bourgeois politics. His father taught him about 'the old days', when peasants knew their place and nobility was not just a word but a way of life. From his father, he inherited a deep-rooted yearning for a more traditional and natural order of things and a way of life. Also from his father, he inherited a talent for Thaumaturgy and, when he was old enough, he joined the college.

He was recruited to the Knights of Ludd during his time at the Thaumaturgical college, after having been overheard during a heated debate at a local pub. He was monitored for a while before being offered a few tasks to carry out and after having done so successfully he was asked to join the Knights as a Squire. He was in the perfect position to spy on the other students and the faculty at the college.

On graduation as Doctor of Thaumaturgy, he was also elevated to the rank of Errant Knight, recognised, amongst other things, for his skills as a mediator and his knowledge of the law. He serves as an expert advisor and arbiter to the Lord Knights of London and the other fiefs and can also offer his assistance as a magician. He is particularly adept at healing and shows a special affinity for different plants, hence his moniker.

Bernard is fully aware of the fact that the Knights of Ludd would hardly be able to bring about a return to their old ways and the organisation's egalitarian streaks actually sicken him. For now, however, he is willing to put up with it. The Knights of Ludd have



resources that he can put to good use and through them he is able to inflict some damage on the modern order of things. He is unsure whether he will abandon the Knights of Ludd in the future, or attempt to consolidate his power and draw the organisation in a direction more fitting for him. He has been talking to some other members of higher social standing in the organisation about the possibility of actually performing a coup and putting the working class members in their place... but so far, they all consider this a very risky suggestion. For now, he leaves it be, and is instead focusing on using the organisation to acquire artefacts, both books and magical tools, through theft and any other means that presents itself. If he ever has to confront the Knights of Ludd on his own, he wants to be sure that he is ready for it.

Bernard Wilkins
Rank 12 Socialite Terrorist (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6
 Mental Competence: +9
 Initiative: 7
 Health: 7 dice (14 pips)
 Signature Skills: Bribery +3, Conceal +2, Etiquette +3, Firearms +2, High Society +4, Lore +3, Research +1, Swordplay +3, Thaumaturgy +3
 Traits: Class Bigot +4, Ambitious +4, Selfish +5, Duplicitous +4
 Special Abilities: Any spell with 'Ethereic' in the title, Heal, Groom (Thaumaturgy)
 Combat Abilities: He will never fight if he can get someone to do it for him, if he has to he uses magic, a concealed Derringer (8 Dice) or at worst, a blade (9 Dice).
 Damage: Magic spells, Derringer (4 dice), Sword-cane (6 Dice)





CHAPTER 4

ARCANE SHADOWS

“We are alone against the tide of darkness that is sweeping our world. If they knew what we faced there would be panic and despair, so we must stand in silence. For if we fall, so does everything.”

- **Burgess Rasmussen**

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RED PHARAOH

The crowd hunched around the table represented a cross-section of Egyptians transplanted to London: dog-faced dockworkers from the London Docks; Gnomish pickpockets and confidence tricksters from Stepney; students from Cambridge in Town between terms; grimy shop owners, beady eyed opium dealers and petty thieves from Limehouse; even domestic servants out on their night off all the way from well-to-do homes in Chelsea. To the uninformed observer they might have seemed a disparate band but they gathered weekly in the poorly lit room above the nondescript Whitechapel pub for a common purpose: to voice their resentment about European abuses both here and at home.

"Word from ships in from Alexandria is that they're beating the men into working on the canal," one of the dockworkers added. "They say the Khedive's in so much debt that England and France will own Egypt before it's finished."

"I'm sick of just sitting here complaining," said Samir Mansour, a bookshop clerk. "It's time we took some kind of action to tell Parliament and the other governments to stop meddling in Egypt's affairs."

"Perhaps I might offer some assistance." The low, snarling voice came from a shadowy figure that mysteriously appeared in the doorway. Everyone gasped, first fearing a spy intent on betraying them to the police, then frightened at his menacing appearance: a tall, gaunt body with a beak-like nose peeking out from beneath a wide-brimmed hat. He held a walking stick in one hand, but his other remained concealed within the voluminous folds of his coat.

The assembled conspirators murmured amongst themselves before Mansour stood up. "And who are you, stranger, to offer us aid?"

"You may call me Mr. Thoth," the tall shadow replied. "I am willing to offer you my considerable assistance in return for your help running several important errands. I have considerable resources at my command that might prove useful in your efforts to...."

"We're not your errand boys," Mansour countered, vehemently. "We're sons of Egypt, descendants of those who built the pyramids and other enduring monuments you people seek to plunder until nothing's left...." He stopped abruptly and gasped for air, his fingers clutching at his throat as he struggled for breath.

Everyone looked to Mr. Thoth; his free hand outstretched now, fingers closing in on an imaginary throat – Mansour's throat, it seemed. He choked, whispered a few incoherent words and stared bug-eyed at Mr. Thoth. He seemed ready to pass out when Mr. Thoth released his imaginary grip.

Mansour collapsed into his chair, gulping down air. He remained silent, recovering, while the others debated the mysterious stranger's offer. They seemed more open to Mr. Thoth's offered alliance than before his demonstration. Mansour smiled; his performance had conveyed the desired effect and Mr. Thoth would pay him a small bonus for his assistance. The strange man paid well for inside information into the group of Egyptian dissidents – no doubt, he would continue paying for news about their activities and a few well-placed reminders to follow Mr. Thoth's future instructions.

The group finally agreed to join forces, helping Mr. Thoth on his shadowy errands in exchange for support in their own endeavours. "Accepted," the tall figure snarled. "Now for your first favour. A ship is arriving at the London Docks next week. I require that you obtain a crate marked for delivery to the Aegyptus Society. Bring it here and I shall collect it in exchange for a reward." He tossed a heavy leather pouch on the table that clanked with the sound of coins. "A taste of what I intend to pay for your services."


By the time the crowd finished scrambling for the pouch and grabbing at its contents, Mr. Thoth had disappeared.

HISTORY

A secret society dedicated to the god Set lurks in dark catacombs delved beneath London's premier collections of Ancient Egyptian art. The Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh functions as a branch of the Servitors of Set, a vile cult promoting Egyptian independence and empire through chaos, terror and unnatural means. Through its activities in London as the Fellowship and elsewhere throughout the

world in various guises, the Servitors of Set seek to hoard powerful artefacts, practice ancient magic and manipulate those who influence politics affecting Egypt today.

Led by Professor Kassam el-Kheir, the Fellowship in London seeks to subvert men with influence or access to sensitive information, so it might quietly steal potent antiquities from museums and private collections throughout England and use these resources to carry out gruesome experiments into the darker magical arts of Ancient Egypt.



The Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh and the Servitors of Set descend from the priests of that dread god who passed the dark magic traditions of their cult in secret from one generation to the next. Throughout much of history this sect has remained hidden from view, operating behind the scenes or outcast from society, pursuing its own agenda, quietly influencing those in power and only occasionally openly supporting Egypt.

The Servitors reached their prime in the times of Ramses the Great and the pharaohs of the Twentieth Dynasty, including two who took Set as one of their royal names. They openly advised the pharaoh, protected the land with their magic and controlled the vast bureaucracies that strengthened Egypt and made it a conquering empire. With the decline of the New Empire and a host of invasions from Persians to Greeks and Romans, the Servitors faded into the background to survive. At times the order only maintained a handful of faithful members. In prosperous periods, its following grew to include agents, priests and informers in every town in the Middle East and many in the great capitals of Europe.

European intervention in Egyptian affairs spawned the most recent resurgence of Servitor activities. At the beginning of the century, the cult's agents began infiltrating the new government of Mohammed Ali Pasha al-Mas'ud ibn Agha, a faithful servant of the Sultan in Istanbul, who restored order in Egypt after the French expedition of 1799 and the English foray to evict them. At the urging of Servitors within the government, Mohammed Ali Pasha mustered an army on the pretence of restoring order in Egypt, eliminating the last of the rebellious Mamluks and returning Greece and Syria to the Sultan's immediate dominion. Many, including Europeans, saw this aggressive move as a plot to overthrow the Ottoman Empire itself. Several countries, primarily England, intervened to force Mohammed Ali Pasha's surrender. He was relegated to the position of Viceroy of Egypt and the Servitors' immediate plans for domination were crushed.

The Servitors secretly established the Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh in London in the 1830s, shortly after the Sultan put Mohammed Ali Pasha back in his place. The Servitors of Set saw a resurgence in membership, funding and overall interest by those seeking to free Egypt from Turkish and European dominion in the wake of Egyptian defeat, particularly at the hands of the meddling government of England. Recently, additional support has come from those appalled at the thousands of Egyptian serfs (called fellaheen) impressed into service digging the Suez Canal and from Russian quarters seeking to

undermine stability in a land where Turkish, English and French interests are at stake.

STRUCTURE

The Fellowship consists of several levels, each more knowledgeable about the overall organisation than the one directly below to protect the group's existence and subversive agenda.

For most of its dirty work the organisation relies on gangs of toughs, thieves, counterfeiters and other scoundrels who don't mind looking the other way and keeping questions to themselves when they are paid enough. These insulated cells consist of individuals or small gangs operating independently of each other yet under the watchful eye of a shadowy master who represents (or misrepresents) the Fellowship's interests.

These overseers have a working knowledge of the Fellowship's agenda and access to some of its subterranean warrens beneath the London streets relevant to their function in the organisation. Some run secret workshops, temples or other underground facilities, where minions labour at particular tasks to pursue the Fellowship's objectives but most supervise specific operations to support the group's mission.

Only the highest echelon has access to the Fellowship's most powerful resources: cult objects, forbidden libraries, magical artefacts and religious sanctuaries. These leaders supposedly take their orders directly from the dread god, Set, himself, through dreams, visions, omens and other mystical methods.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

One does not really 'join' the Fellowship as much as one is 'recruited'. The Fellowship relies on third parties specialising in criminal activities useful toward achieving the group's goals. Illicit favours, payoffs, blackmail, bribes, or intimidation persuade those who typically deal in such unsavoury currency to carry out mysterious orders from shadowy masters. The Fellowship uses these thugs as tools; they belong to the group only inasmuch as they unknowingly support its secret agenda. Few work their way up the Fellowship ranks from these origins; only the most talented, whose success stands out, receive promotion to more serious and secretive duties.

Those with more refined skills are courted rather than crudely recruited. Their contributions require a greater knowledge of the Fellowship's existence and



objectives; blackmail, vice and bribery often secure their secrecy and cooperation. Those who truly manipulate the Fellowship's operation keep members or working groups as isolated as possible from others with different or deeper knowledge of the full agenda.

Outsiders who discover clues about the Fellowship's existence often meet unpleasant ends when they decide to infiltrate the organisation. The small, independent groups communicate with their superiors through carefully guarded meeting places, dead drops for rendezvous notes and special signs hidden in plain sight. Their criminal disposition naturally inspires a healthy dose of distrust in outsiders. At best, inquisitive infiltrators manage to join one of the bands of thugs carrying out orders for strange missions. The most unfortunate find ways of penetrating the society's deeper levels and wandering into its subterranean labyrinth where they meet particularly gruesome fates.

RESOURCES

The basements and catacombs beneath the Professor's Bloomsbury townhouse and the Egyptian Hall provide a base for the Fellowship's more nefarious activities. Here, master craftsmen create brilliant copies of ancient trinkets that el-Kheir later sells to unsuspecting antiquities dealers throughout London, further expanding the funds in his coffers. They also copy larger, more significant works to take the place of authentic treasures that his minions steal from museums and private collections. Most of the forger-artisans come from London's Arabian population, though a few from Egypt and a handful of ambitious European artists also labour below ground. They come and go from the Egyptian Hall and el-Kheir's townhouse disguised as labourers, curators, delivery men, museum guards and staff. The more accomplished craftsmen pose as researchers and gentlemen pursuing scholarship in Egyptology. The Fellowship rewards them according to their ability, housing the lower labourers in flats in low-class neighbourhoods, while the expert craftsmen receive their own humble townhouses scattered throughout London's better districts.


Deep beneath the Egyptian Hall stands a subterranean temple complex, the ultimate focus of the Fellowship's activities. Here, el-Kheir and his most trusted lieutenants conduct experiments into the nature of Ancient Egyptian magic and the artefacts they have collected. The main sanctuary incorporates architectural elements from Egyptian structures,

including tall columns carved with hieroglyphics and topped by lotus- and papyrus-shaped capitals, a ceremonial stone sarcophagus and an immense granite statue of Set presiding over a sacrificial altar.

In this inner sanctum, the Fellowship pursues its most depraved agenda. To further its goals of raising Egypt from thralldom and into the centre stage of world domination, el-Kheir and his minions seek to test the powerful spells in an ancient Book of the Dead recently acquired from a now-deceased collector in England. Acting as a high priest of Set, the Professor conducts experiments to examine the effects of these primordial enchantments on carefully prepared corpses collected from the teeming, anonymous masses of London's destitute. He is not simply concerned with raising undead mummies and re-animates but with fully resurrecting persons of great influence, restoring them to full life to aid the Fellowship in its struggle to elevate Egypt to the status of a magical superpower among the nations.

Ancillary chambers built in a similar style support activities in the main temple. A row of cells holds unwilling participants in upcoming rituals. An embalmer's workshop enables artisans to mummify bodies for various experiments to raise the dead using arcane Egyptian hieroglyphic texts. Secure vaults contain the authentic antiquities that el-





Kheir's minions steal. They await export back to Egypt or use in arcane magical rituals in the temple. Two vast caverns connected to the main temple by iron gates hold animals sacred to Set: hippopotami and crocodiles secretly removed from London's Zoological Gardens and bred in subterranean depths.

The various tunnels leading into this inner sanctum – and indeed many of the subterranean passageways used by the Fellowship – contain deadly traps and magical wards. Only those authorised to pass along certain routes know how to disarm such diabolical mechanisms. Guardians watch over crucial junctures, including living creatures lurking in the depths, enchanted constructs and intelligent sentries who misdirect or waylay intruders.

AGENDA

The Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh pursues its goals in secret behind apparently legitimate façades. Most of its activities centre on the Bloomsbury home of its leader, Professor el-Kheir, and the establishment he runs through intermediaries, the famous Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly. A labyrinth of passages and chambers delved beneath each site – with several subterranean sewer routes connecting the two— provides a base from which Fellowship minions advance their depraved agenda.

The Fellowship's most public activities occur every Thursday night in a private meeting room within the Egyptian Hall. The central gallery has always showcased a variety of travelling exhibitions – from exotic carvings from South Sea Islanders and taxidermy animals from darkest Africa to relics from the Napoleonic wars – but a few secluded salons in the back offer a more intimate setting to display the Egyptian antiquities that give the hall its name and notoriety. Here, Professor el-Kheir meets with influential gentlemen who have bought their way into his circle with generous donations to the Professor's own alleged archaeological expeditions in Egypt. In return for regular dues, el-Kheir hosts a salon on Thursday nights where they believe they engage in gentlemanly research, discussions and exploration of all things Egypt. In fact, the Professor uses his powers of mesmerism to cement his control over them, implanting false memories of engaging debates about Ancient Egyptian history and culture, viewings of fantastic treasures from his excavations, séances with long-dead personalities and overall impressions of scholarly satisfaction.

While under the influence of hypnosis, the

men respond to el-Kheir's questions regarding their activities, knowledge and plans pertaining to Egypt. The quality of material varies, though the membership of this salon includes clerks and minor functionaries at the Foreign Office, British Museum, prominent shipping companies and the military.

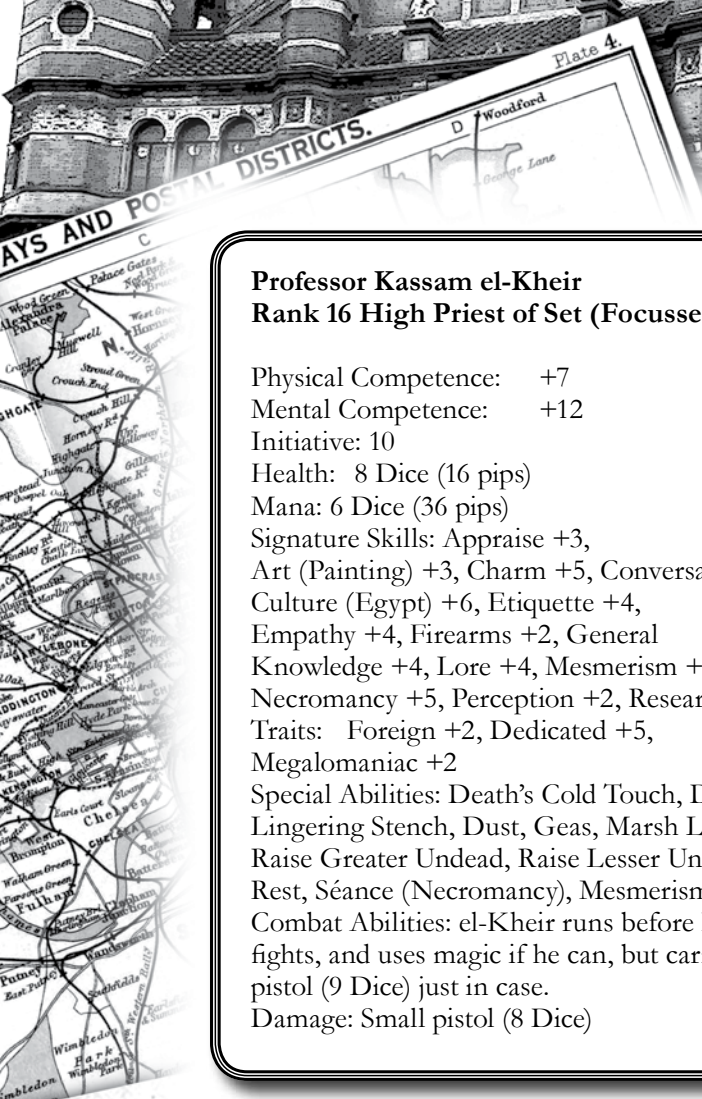
PERSONALITIES

Professor el-Kheir

The Servitors of Set entrust the administration and overall success of the Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh to Professor Kassam el-Kheir. Although famous among his own people for his archaeological knowledge and careful excavations, the misadventures of his more prominent European counterparts eclipse his fame. As a youth, he watched Europeans pillage his country's ancient heritage and haul its riches back to museums in Paris, London and Berlin. He learned that he could better uncover the secrets to Egypt's powerful past by studying artefacts, tomb paintings, temple inscriptions and papyrus scrolls.

As el-Kheir quickly rose to prominence among the Egyptian excavating community, the Servitors secretly aided him, nurturing him to become one of their most influential leaders. Once fully initiated into the sect's hidden ways and indoctrinated with their political views (which he already shared), el-Kheir attended university in England to broaden his knowledge, access that country's vast libraries and make contacts within Britain's archaeological and scholarly circles. During this time, he also covertly continued the work of his Servitor predecessors in London, establishing the Servitors of Set and its various activities.

By 1867, el-Kheir has become the supreme leader of the Fellowship's web of activities in Britain and one of the chief priests among the Servitors of Set. He serves as the driving personality behind the séances and meetings of dues-paying gentlemen 'members' in the Egyptian Hall and the focal point of experimentation in ancient rituals in the temple sanctuary deep below. He relies on his chief lieutenant, Mr. Thoth, to undertake the less savoury, more risky activities representing the Fellowship, commands a vast following of minions eager to do his bidding and cultivates a number of other servants deceived into thinking their activities and hard work are benefiting some higher, more benevolent cause. He, himself, reports to Sheik Abu KhamaI in Cairo, supreme high priest of the Servitors of Set and master architect of its current plan for world domination.



Professor Kassam el-Kheir
Rank 16 High Priest of Set (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +7
Mental Competence: +12
Initiative: 10
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)
Signature Skills: Appraise +3,
Art (Painting) +3, Charm +5, Conversation +7,
Culture (Egypt) +6, Etiquette +4,
Empathy +4, Firearms +2, General
Knowledge +4, Lore +4, Mesmerism +3,
Necromancy +5, Perception +2, Research +5
Traits: Foreign +2, Dedicated +5,
Megalomaniac +2
Special Abilities: Death's Cold Touch, Death's
Lingering Stench, Dust, Geas, Marsh Lights,
Raise Greater Undead, Raise Lesser Undead,
Rest, Séance (Necromancy), Mesmerism
Combat Abilities: el-Kheir runs before he
fights, and uses magic if he can, but carries a
pistol (9 Dice) just in case.
Damage: Small pistol (8 Dice)

Mr. Thoht
**Rank 12 Eldren Messenger of the Red
Pharaoh (Generalist)**

Physical Competence: +8
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 10
Health: 8 Dice (16 pips)
Mana: 4 Dice (24 pips)
Signature Skills: Charm +4, Concentration +3,
Conversation +3, Dodge +3, Empathy +4,
Firearms +3, Hide & Sneak +6,
Intimidate +5, Lore +3, Perception +3,
Swordplay +5, Thaumaturgy +3
Traits: Shadowed +4, Lecherous +3,
Unsettling +4, Foreign +2
Special Abilities: Botheration, Darkness of
Ages, Firespark, Second Sight, Spyglass Eyes,
The Emperor's New Spell (Thaumaturgy)
Combat Abilities: Thoht carries a selection
of weapons, any will do if magic won't do
the trick: Mariette 0.36 pepperbox (11 dice),
Arabian dagger (13 Dice), sword cane (13 Dice),
Damage: Pepperbox Pistol (8 Dice), Arabian
dagger (6 Dice), sword cane (5 Dice),

In his older years, el-Kheir has basked in his success publicly as an archaeologist and secretly as the Fellowship's leader, as evidenced by the paunch around his waist that gives him a genial, professorial appearance. His attire reflects his position in the upper middle class, though he does not pursue pretensions to rise higher in society. He wears spectacles that mask the true intentions in his eyes, though he also requires them to read clearly. The Professor conceals his balding, greying pate beneath a variety of hats: bowlers in the street, top hats at formal affairs and a burgundy fez among intimates. An unassuming walking stick provides a prop when giving lectures, pointing to museum exhibits and fending off street-Arabs.

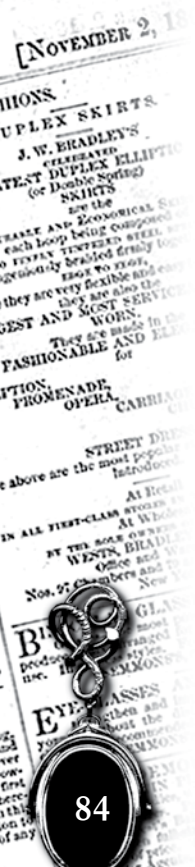
Although proud of his Egyptian heritage and his role in returning his country to prominence, el-Kheir does not hesitate to kowtow to Europeans and members of the upper class if it can influence them in his favour or perpetuate the appearance that he is simply a servile foreigner.

Mr. Thoht

If Professor el-Kheir seems like the Fellowship's most public face among London's middle and upper classes, the shadowy Mr. Thoht represents its most mysterious form that deals with underworld elements, distasteful errands and unsavoury activities.

A survivor from the earliest days when the Servitors sought to establish a presence in England, Mr. Thoht presents a menacing figure. He possesses a large, beak-like nose and tall, willowy physique, leading some to suspect that he is descended from some ancient crossbreed between a Human and some avian Beastman. Mr. Thoht seemingly wafts through the streets, blending into crowds and emerging when one least expects it to deliver messages, threats or enigmatic orders. His heavy greatcoat and flowing cloak enhance his eerie appearance. His broad-brimmed hat conceals all his features in shadow (particularly his Eldren ears); his nose, however, protrudes like the beak of some sinister bird.

Mr. Thoht creeps around in shadows, discreetly gathering intelligence on the Fellowship's allies and adversaries, culling information on shipments from Egypt from lazy dockworkers, delivering messages among various remote Fellowship members and



Professor el-Kheir and generally serving as the senior man in the field. For tasks that require heavy-handedness, he brings a small horde of fellahin thugs, who cower behind his shadowy form until ordered to enforce his edicts. The wiry Mr. Thoht does not venture into London's foggy alleyways without his own means of protection. His greatcoat conceals a Mariette 0.36 pepperbox and a curved Arabian dagger (perhaps his only visible connection to any sinister Oriental cult). Mr. Thoht always carries a walking stick (really a concealed sword cane) that he methodically raps against the nearest surface when vexed or seeking to cause apprehension in others. In his expert hands, the sword cane becomes a deadly weapon, often flashing in a sudden attack to confuse opponents and better enable his escape.

Few know his true age, though many among the Fellowship purport that he possesses an ancient or unnatural immortality and a host of dark powers granted directly from the archaic gods themselves.

Fellahin Brutes

The Fellowship employs a great number of the Arabians living in London. Many live in poverty in the East End, forcing them into a life of crime and forming the backbone of the sect's manpower. These petty criminals fulfil a variety of roles within the Fellowship: street couriers, spies, sentries, draymen, smugglers, thieves and swarthy roughneck enforcers. They form the eyes and ears of the Fellowship throughout London.

A choice few serve below stairs in the posh households of those who made their fortune in the Orient and brought back servants from the Middle East. These Fellowship members act as low-level spies on those whose past and current activities still influence the course of events in Egypt.

All these 'brutes' come from Middle-Eastern backgrounds (particularly the servile fellahin or serf class) but their ranks consist of many different races. Many are Beastmen from the lowest echelons of society, primarily from canine and rodent stock. Some join the Fellowship to rebel against cruel masters; others hope to learn more of their ancient past through faithful service to el-Kheir and Mr. Thoht. Most simply find the Fellowship a haven for those with a criminal past seeking an organisation and territory in which they can put their talents to good use.

Although they receive adequate pay from Mr. Thoht for their work, the fellahin have greater loyalty than simple hired-thugs. Few know the true nature of their work or the mission of the Fellowship that

Fellah Brute Rank 5 Foot Soldier of the Fellowship (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +5
Mental Competence: +3
Initiative: 4
Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +4,
Blunt Weapons +1, Fisticuffs +3,
Hide & Sneak +3, Streetwise +3
Traits: Loyal +3, Poor +5, Desperate +1
Combat Abilities: Fists (8 Dice), or whatever comes to hand.
Damage: Fists (4 Dice) Medium Club (4 dice)

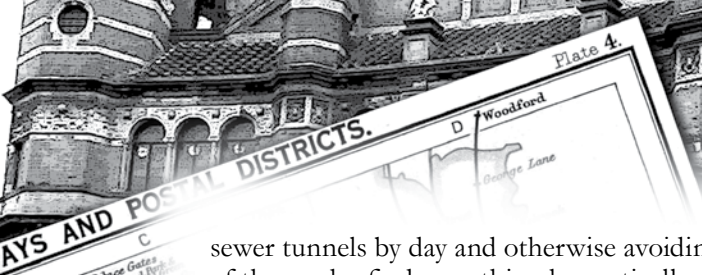
employs them. At the most basic level, they figure their criminal activities undermine the foreign government holding sway over Egypt and might possibly bring their homeland some degree of freedom. Those who understand the Fellowship's more sinister nature and ambitious goals allow these aims to fuel their devotion to the cult with the knowledge that their sacrifices can resurrect their people from misery into a new age of world domination.

Al-Gareeb

The shadowy ruffian leader known as Al-Gareeb would normally represent a typical strongman among the fellahin brutes, if not for his true nature. As an Apophid, an ancient race of snake-stock Beastmen from the Middle East, he possesses a snake head, long scaly arms and a long serpentine trunk and tail, the tip of which darts back and forth menacingly from beneath a great hooded-cloak.

Al-Gareeb is a dedicated student of magic. He learnt much of Ancient Egyptian Necromancy and Enchantment before coming to London. Now, he ardently studies Thaumaturgy from stolen texts and deepens his Necromantic power under el-Kheir's tutelage. Al-Gareeb has not learnt his magical power in the standard European way and draws on mostly Necromantic energy for all his spells.

Like most of the mysterious Fellowship members, he prefers to direct his men from the rear, guarding against anyone sneaking up on their flanks and in position to order retreat and swiftly flee, if necessary. He takes great pains to conceal his true appearance, slinking through the streets at night, traversing the



sewer tunnels by day and otherwise avoiding the gaze of those who find something hypnotically strange about the way he moves.

Al-Gareeb joined the Fellowship as an envoy from a secret Apophid enclave in Egypt seeking to incite the populace there to rise up against its European and Turkish overlords. Although he does not have as much authority or influence as el-Kheir or Mr. Thoth, he commands the respect of his men and awe from his adversaries.



Al-Gareeb

Rank 6 Apophid Cultist (Focussed)

(updated from "The Marylebone Mummy")

Physical Competence: +3

Mental Competence: +6

Initiative: 9

Health: 5 dice (10 pips)

Mana: 3 Dice (18 pips)

Signature skills: Athletics +4, Conceal +4,

Disguise +4, Dodge +4, Enchanting +1,

Firearms +2, Hide & Sneak +5,

History: Egypt +8, Intimidate +4, Lore +6,

Perception +4, Streetwise +5,

Thaumaturgy +2, Theology (Egyptian/

Apophis) +5, Swordplay +5

Traits: Slithering +4, Not being noticed +4

Special Abilities: Botheration, Darkness of

Ages, Etheric Bolt, Etheric Bludgeon, Steely

Skin (Thaumaturgy), Death's Cold Touch,

Dust, Raise Lesser Undead (Necromancy)

Combat Abilities: Dagger* (9 dice) Tranter,

0.44 cal. (pistol) (6 dice), Magic (Al-Gareeb

also has a few aggressive spells in his arsenal,

but mostly he relies on the standard Etheric

Bolt).

Damage: Dagger* (6 dice), Tranter, 0.44 cal.

(10 dice)

*Al-Gareeb has enchanted his dagger with a Befuddle spell.

Should any hero close on him and receive a hit from this weapon, he must roll his Resolve + Concentration higher than the Apophid's Mental Competence + Enchanting or become confused and suffer a -3 dice penalty to all action rolls for a number of rounds equal to the total of the character's successes.

For more details on Apophids, see "The Marylebone Mummy" adventure.

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
 DUPLEX SKIRTS
 J. W. ERADLEY'S
 CELEBRATED
 TEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
 (or Double Spring)
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 IN ALL FIRST-CLASS...
 BY THE SOLE OWNERS
 WENTON, BLAIR &...
 Office and...
 Nos. 27 Chambers and...
 No. 10...
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 86



THE OBSERVANT SOCIETY OF THE MEEK

Jackson ran pell-mell down the old sewer tunnel. His carbide lamp swung crazily in his left hand. His breathing came in laboured gasps. The stink of wastewater and forgotten things clung to him, spiked through with fear sweat. Turning a corner, he came up short, pressing against the rough stones of the wall.

“I know I lost them. They cannot be that fast.”

Jackson took hold of the fear writhing in his gut and chanced a look round the corner. For a moment, he saw nothing in the gloom. His heart slowed its trip hammer pace in his chest. A few seconds passed and there, at the far end of the tunnel, dead quicksilver lights moving in pairs. The zombies were no more than a score of yards behind him. A preternatural chill ran through his body as he counted almost a dozen of the blighted things.

“More than before. There’s a crypt we haven’t found yet.”

He knew what he had to do. There were too many of them now for subtlety. Working quickly, he pulled the phosphoric naphthalene device out of his oilskin satchel. He could just hear the first of them moan as he slid the sodium detonator into place.

With a practiced throw that was the envy of the Bloomsbury cricket team, he heaved the weapon down the hallway and into their midst.

As he turned to run from the imminent blast and fire, Jackson screamed in terror. Two of the things had gotten ahead of him, carried along like driftwood by the movement of the water. One of them wrapped a filthy claw around his ankle. The other surged onto the curb to grapple with him. He crashed against the stones as they struggled. Their mouths gaped, showing broken black teeth.

The chemicals in the weapon detonated with great force, hurling several zombies bodily through the air and strewing flammables over the remainder. One of the things collided with the creature bearing Jackson to the floor like a runaway steam engine. For a moment, Jackson was sure he was dead as the stinking mess flopped and wriggled over him. He suffered another series of bruising as they thrashed uncontrollably.

A sharp pain in his ankle brought him around. The last of the things was worrying his ankle with its rotten teeth. He screamed and kicked away at it. The other bodies, even though they were dead again, pressed him flat to the curb. In spite of delivering a solid blow to the thing’s face, it was tenacious. Agony lanced up his leg as its teeth sunk into his flesh.

“And the Meek Shall Inherit the Earth!” a voice roared from the direction Jackson had fled toward. As he kicked away at the zombie, he could hear heavy footfalls but could not see who it was through the mass of bodies. The creature’s head was struck away and a moment later the rest of the bodies were lifted from him. Cosmo, the hugely muscled Scotsman, stood over him with his grim lion’s face and a gore-spattered claymore.

“Och, lad,” Cosmo said, “yer peg there looks a sight.”

“Just get me out of here. The Doctor will have a choice to make later.”

HISTORY

***‘And He shall judge the quick and the dead.’
‘And the Meek shall inherit the Earth.’***

The Observant Society of the Meek was founded four decades ago at the direction of Cardinal Anselmo and his Order of the Crooked Staff. The Cardinal needed a group of lay folk capable of infiltrating the holds of the Carpathian vampire clans. A subtle approach was necessary in order to destroy the monsters that held tens of thousands of Aluminats under their sway. The

commoners of the area regularly took up arms against the vampires, only to suffer horrible reprisals and scores of deaths. Local priests and even a handful of bishops had sent missives to Rome for intercession. The Church could not act openly against the local governments, nor could they send their traditional forces. The Carpathians had long proven capable of destroying any overt attack.

Jameson Bridwell was a known quantity at the time – a storied traveller and expert in the occult. His romance and surprise marriage to Countess Roxanne T’chervoya provided an excellent cover for Anselmo to funnel large sums of money and manpower to the



Europe. The focus on the Carpathian vampires left the rest of Europe without proper defences. Cannibal ghouls, ancient mummies, forgotten wights and worse things preyed upon the living. It seemed that the plague of the undead would never be brought under control. They would persist, as dangerous as wildfires in flax.

However, Anselmo and his supporters saw things differently. Their focus had been on breaking the Carpathians' hold on the people of the area. The Cardinal was not concerned with the faithful of any of the growing sub-sects within the Aluminat church. Worse still, the Cardinal did not want to hear that there were larger problems closer to home that faith and arms alone would have difficulty stopping. He decided the work of the Society had been done and took steps to ensure it disbanded without a chance to spread 'wild stories'.

Roxanne, herself, went to plead the case for further involvement to combat the threats that were their sacred charge. Anselmo knew that Roxanne believed in the Earth Goddess and had her imprisoned as a witch. For 'consorting with her', he declared Jameson excommunicated and ordered all members of the Society to disband. Clergy members were to return to their churches with all documentation and records placed under Holy Seal.

couple. Few knew that she was secretly an agent of Galatia's ruling family at the time. In secret meetings, charged with the duty of searching out the undead and bringing the purifying light of Heaven down upon them, the group they formed became the Observant Society of the Meek.

Over the course of five years, the Meek were instrumental in destroying many of the creatures, setting up situations that exposed undead to Aluminat strike teams, but the constant cat and mouse intrigues cost them dearly. Perhaps two in three members of the Society were killed or turned into undead servants. In the aftermath of the campaign, the Society sent their agents far and wide to track down survivors. Jameson and Roxanne personally hunted down those of their Society who had been converted into the living dead or their slaves. What they discovered was shocking and demoralising.

While the Meek had fought the Carpathians to a standstill, other cabals of the dead spread throughout

All but a quarter of the Society obeyed the Cardinal's orders. The core members had grown together over the years of fighting. Their loyalty to Jameson and Roxanne proved stronger than oaths or sacraments of piety. They planned and carried out a rescue attempt for their imprisoned leaders by assaulting Anselmo's Macerata stronghold. The fight was unexpectedly brutal; the Society's fighters launched a series of Dwarf-made rockets into the Cardinal's personal apartments while simultaneously demolishing the main doors with explosives. In the resulting chaos and fire, Jameson and a select group were able to rescue Roxanne from her imprisonment.

Such public and violent resistance could not go unpunished. Cardinal Anselmo called upon the Guild to hunt down the Society as rogue magicians. He charged agents from his own Order of the Crooked Staff to find them as well. Wanted posters and rewards offered for their arrests or deaths, forced the Society to run. They separated into small groups of



investigators that they referred to as lodges and ran to ground in cities all across Europe.

Alone against the dark, the Meek were forced to work in utmost secrecy, seeking and investigating unnatural occurrences, dragging the undead into the light for the good of the world. If the threat was small enough, they would deal with it themselves but many of the undead were too well entrenched, or too strong for a handful of fighters and investigators. In those cases, the Society left clues for the local constabulary, or set up situations to expose the undead to the inhabitants of the city or even the agents of the Church.

For decades, the Society persisted in secret, even after Jameson and Roxanne died fighting Guild agents in Corsica in a spectacular display of Thaumaturgy. Humanity was their charge, even if mounting propaganda from the Church claimed otherwise. Pressure from the Guild and members of the Order of the Rod and Staff kept the Society from regaining anything resembling power or influence. Some lodges were found and put to death as heretics, while others relocated to Britain or simply disbanded.

Just six years ago, the Society was almost completely wiped out. Drodowycz, a vampire with exceptional mental powers, captured the scholar of the Sevastopol lodge. Drodowycz was one of the survivors of the battles in the Carpathians and remembered the losses his family suffered at the hands of the Observant Society. His captive, Randolph Slattery, was one of the oldest members of the Society and knew most of the other key members.

Realising what a find he had in the scholar, the vampire plotted a grand revenge. The vampire used Randolph to reveal and destroy every lodge he knew of. Dozens of members were killed or converted into slaves of the living dead. Thousands of records wound up in the hands of the very creatures they fought. A small handful of lodges in Britain were saved by virtue of never being in contact with any lodges on the Continent. They now use the Isle of Skye as their central base, with their next strongest base of operations in London, so they can keep an eye on the Guild, the Church and the Empire.

The loss of so many members has forced the Society of the Meek to take on a more active role. Combined with a large number of stout Scottish lads willing to act as muscle, they investigate and eliminate undead threats in Britain.

They are also actively recruiting new members to replace those lost. Only when they have the strength of numbers to strike out against Drodowycz and his vampires or deal with Guild interference will they risk moving back to the Continent.

STRUCTURE

The Society must keep their operations clandestine for many reasons. First, many other secretive organisations believe the entire Society of the Meek to be in the thrall of the undead. The Society also depends on magic outlawed by the Aluminat Church, including a number of Necromantic spells, which puts them at odds with the Guild. Finally, the Society's remaining records contain many conspiracies and scandals that the Church has long kept hidden, most of which would prove damaging to the Church if ever brought to light.

The Society is comprised of lodges. Like the Freemasons or Orangemen, each group has a stable of oath-sworn members. Traditionally, there have been two branches of each lodge: the Library and the Coursers. After the addition of the Scottish clansmen, a third branch, the 'Stalwarts' has been added. This influx of new members has led to some spirited debates, most notably when there is a call to engage the undead menace.

Scholars, who collate all the information and records on the undead, staff the Library; those scholars capable of magic also have the charge of instructing qualified members in the ways of enchanting and Thaumaturgy. They are also responsible for protecting the grimoires and other magical resources. Loyal scholars are the only members of the Society who have the privilege of using Necromantic magic. With the losses the Meek have suffered over the recent years, there are many lodges that lack anyone capable of any form of magic. The longest serving member of any lodge still holds the rank of Scholar in any case.

The Coursers are the investigators and runners for the lodge, principally involved in fieldwork. To this end, these members spend many hours tracking down leads and investigating unexplained or questionable phenomena. Many of them are unrepentant snoopers; taking days to dog the steps of Londoners they think may be involved with the undead. The Coursers are also the contacts and face men of the Meek, and through their work, they have obtained a number of the unique weapons in the Order's arsenal from inventors that others disregard.

The Stalwarts take the fight directly to the undead, often packing foci along with their claymores. The original Stalwarts were all from clans around Skye, including the MacKinnions, well rewarded by the Church and Order of the Crooked Staff in the beginning, and many thousands of pounds flowed into the local economy from banks all over the



Continent. In addition to the lads willing to fight up close and personal, the Meek have offered support and compensation to the clans' enchanters.

Ranking members of each lodge come from the Scholars. They have the longest history with the Society and are the most knowledgeable on how to combat the living dead. However, the Meek are egalitarian and believe that talent grows from talent. Promising members of the Coursers may be introduced to the ranks of the Scholars with the sole intent of having them lead new lodges. Direction and leadership are also loose affairs. During lodge meetings, Coursers always bring up new business, discussed and voted on by all members before the Scholars of the Library hand down a final decision.

Regular reports are brought to the lodge house by Coursers and Stalwarts where they are archived and used to plan strategy. During a mission, a Courser or Scholar acts as a coordinator and provides support to the rest of the members. Of course, the lodges of the past were much larger; most lodges now only have half a dozen or so agents, so it is more than likely for all of them to be involved in an active mission. Leadership is strongly based on performance, experience and individual drive as it is on tenure, so many lodges are effectively led by the Coursers. Today, there are fewer than 15 lodges scattered across Britain and Ireland, with the largest of them in London and on Skye.

If they offer help during one of their missions, the Society might approach lower class prospective members. An exchange of names and places to meet later would lead to a similar set of interviews. Given the need for strong arms and courage in the face of danger, members coming from the lower classes are in demand as well. Scotsmen, especially those with clan ties to the MacKinnons, may be contacted through familiar connections to join the Society.

After the vetting process, a prospective member is brought before the whole lodge during a meeting. Special new business must be called for in order to grant them membership as an Aspirant; inducted fully into the ranks of the Meek after their first encounter with either the undead or Necromantic magic. This encounter is not set up as a test; it will simply be the first mission they take on for the Society. After that mission (should they survive and prove able to stand firm against the darkness), the Aspirant must swear to defend the living from the dead and to keep secret the knowledge of the Society; they then become a member. It is not necessary for an Aspirant to fight the creature or resist the effects of the magic, only that they display the courage and fortitude to face these forces. However, the rest of the lodge quietly judges many members on how they react and deal with their first mission.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

Due to the Society's clandestine nature, it is more likely that a Player Character is contacted for membership than seek it themselves. Contact with a middle or upper class character may come through the usual means in polite society, a Courser making contact at a club or similar social setting. Through a series of meetings, discussing the character's views on things unnatural, including magic and the undead, the Coursers would come to understand a prospective member's stance and readiness to act. A vetting process of the character's background would also be undertaken. The Society has information on a wide census of the 'important people' of London and would have some idea of the prospective member's background, the prospective member recruited only when the Courser is sure the prospective member has the right skills and attitude. Women are welcomed to the Society as well, especially if they have proven to have the ability to stand on their own in society.

RESOURCES

Knowledge has always been the greatest weapon the Meek have in their fight against the undead. For decades, they have worked to uncover and catalogue the predations of the dead upon the living. Their Coursers often uncover the work of the Aluminat Church or the Guild; both of those organisations have a stake in seeing to it that those records never come to light. More than once, a Scholar has had to use that information to keep them at bay.

Many Scholars of the Meek have a wide and exacting knowledge of magic. They have managed over the years to develop their own means of teaching away from Guild influence. After all, when you are already being targeted by the Guild, what is a little illegal magic tuition? Roxanne T'chervoya had been a Sensate Medium and devotee of the Earth Goddess before helping to found the Society. In addition to enchanting and Thaumaturgy, there are a number of Necromantic rituals archived that have proven to be useful over the years. The Society is very cautious about who uses magical forces in the field, to protect their members from discovery and possible corruption.

SECRET SPELLS OF THE MECK

The following are some of the sorceries the society has unearthed to fight the darkness. Dark sorcerers and the Guild would love to get their hands on such secrets, so the Meek take any means necessary to protect them.

Agony of Life (Necromancy)

Difficulty:	3
Cost:	3+Normal
Action cost:	2
Range:	One Spirit
Duration:	Rounds

This spell wracks the targeted spirit with incredible pain, that which they would feel if their body was actually alive in its current state. This pain inflicts four Black Dice on the target for all actions if they fail their Resistance roll. The caster may increase the number of Black Dice by increasing the difficulty of the spell by 2 for each additional Black Die.

Chain Spirit (Necromancy)

Difficulty:	5
Cost:	4+Normal
Action cost:	2
Range:	See Notes
Duration:	Instant

A wave of energy radiates out from the Necromancer to a range of 5 yards per point of Resolve of the caster. Any undead spirits in the area are momentarily frozen in place. The spirit may try to resist the spell on each of its actions until it is freed. This requires them to achieve at least four successes on a Mental Competence roll. Once it resists the magic, the spirit need make no further attempts to escape its power.

Courage (Enchantment)

Difficulty:	2
Ritual Cost:	4+Normal
Ritual length:	2 hrs
Activation range:	Self
Activation cost:	1
Duration:	Minutes

The enchanter sings or chants to the piece of amber they intend to enchant in a lightless cave or tomb during the night. Once activated, the amber becomes a focus, which provides two additional points of Resolve when facing the powers of any undead or spirit. The focus must remain in contact with the user's skin or the effect is lost.

When it comes to Necromancy, these are the only forms the Society approves of in their own ranks: Dust, Geas, Marsh Lights, Rest, Séance and Seize Undead. They have also researched their own secret spells, which are listed above. Given that secrecy is one of the few defences the Society has, any breach of this trust is most serious. While their use of Necromancy closely copies that of the Guild, the Meek maintain their independence from that group. The chance that these spells might open the door to a scholar's downfall and the loss of an entire lodge is always on the minds of the members.

The Observant Society lodge in London secretly resides in the Paddington area as the 'McKinnon

Funeral Service', a mortuary and funeral parlour. The three-storey structure has a secret double basement and access to the sewers of the city. There is a blacked out funeral coach at the site, ideal for transporting a team of Stalwarts. In order to provide them with the necessities so that they can continue the fight, well-to-do members regularly provide money, new clothes and food to their poorer counterparts. In a pinch, the rooms on the third floor make for a crude dormitory and infirmary.

At any given time, there are half a dozen members in the lodge house. Some of them work for the mortuary proper. Scholars would likely be in the basement library, furthering research or preparing for



these creatures have on the lives of mortals. It is not enough to destroy the creatures in their lairs, lives spent in suffering lead almost unerringly to unlife. The Meek are looking to show this correlation as well, hoping to raise the standard of life around the world.

Today, after the disaster with Drodowyc and his vampires, the Society follows a far more aggressive strategy. The Meek hunt the undead in all of their forms in Britain, seeking to eliminate them and their influence. Their goal is to form a strong base from which to strike against the Continent. Hunting down known Necromancers is of high priority as well and when they confirm a Necromancer's identity, they are relentless in destroying his stable of creatures and locking away his personal stores of magical knowledge.

Guild agents are always a threat to the Meek. The Guild would like nothing more than to obtain all of their magical formulae and ritual materials for their own. Often, Guild agents who have fought Society Scholars often come up the worse for the exchange, due to the Guild agents' arrogance and over confidence. However, for all the Guild agents' power, the Society's acceptance of enchantments as well as Thaumaturgy grants their members a lot of magical versatility. Mindful of

the power the Guild represents and that the clansmen Stalwarts have yet to test themselves against the Guild, the Society keeps secrecy paramount; any engagement between the Guild and the Society is likely to result in startling violence.

Due to their creed to remain a clandestine organisation, the Meek still have difficulties in alerting the world at large to threats they cannot contain. That being said, they have provided crucial information to Scotland Yard on several occasions. There are those in the Society who believe in revealing themselves to the world, in order to spread the word of the undead menace. This point of contention has been made repeatedly in lodge meetings and may present a significant change to the Society.

a mission. A Courser or Stalwart is likely to be 'under arms' at all times, especially after nightfall. During a meeting of the lodge, several Stalwarts take up stations to guard the entrances and watch the streets. So long as their enchanters have the time, these men wield claymores enchanted with Edge Sharp and foci for Power of Decay along with pistols.

AGENDA

Strategically, the Society of the Meek has always worked to remove the threat of the undead from the world. The founders knew that this would be impossible, given the very nature of life, death and spirits. However, they work to minimise the impact

[NOVEMBER 2]
DUPLIX SKIRTS
J. W. BRADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLIX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
TRADE AND ECONOMICAL
each loop being composed
of FINEST STIFFEST STEEL
and is very flexible and
they are also the most
BEST AND MOST
WOVEN.
They are made in
FASHIONABLE AND
OPERATION.
PROXIMATE
CAMBRIE
STREET
above are the most popular
introduction
ALL THE
BY THE ROAD OF
WEST, BLA
Office and
No. 97
GL
B
EYE
EYE
JOSEPH GILLOTT'S STAMPS
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
JOSEPH GILLOTT
WARRICK
TRADE MARK
ORIGINAL AND PROTECTOR



PERSONALITIES

Pleasant Thurber

Mr Thurber is the ranking Scholar of the London Lodge and his history with the Meek goes back almost 20 years. He has been the head of lodges in Scotland and Ireland, and was instrumental in rebuilding the strength of the Society after the losses to Drodowyc. Pleasant sees the undead as an indication of the decline of modern life due to unrelenting exposure to suffering and drudgery. In addition to coordinating reports and planning strategy, he devotes much of his time and income to helping those in need. He has also taken to leaking some of the intelligence he has gathered to newspaper reporters in an attempt to bring to light the poor conditions so many live in.

His ties to the public and to the poor have him at odds with other members of the local lodge; especially those of the upper class who feel they should be directing all their energies at expelling the undead from London proper. Others feel that with advancing age, Pleasant has started to lose the urge to fight. There may come a time when he is challenged for leadership of the lodge. Few of the newer members understand the kind of magical power the man has at his disposal.

Pleasant Thurber

Rank 14 Scholastic Sorcerer (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6

Mental Competence: +11

Initiative: 10

Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)

Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)

Signature Skills: Athletics -2, Bull -1,

Firearms -1, General Knowledge +3,

History +3, Necromancy +4,

Perception +3, Politics +3, Tactics +3,

Teaching +2, Thaumaturgy +4,

Traits: Dedicated to the Order +3,

Unflappable +4, Well Connected +3, Caring +4

Special Abilities: Etheric Bludgeon and

Hailstorm and other non-lethal spells as

appropriate, including several anti-undead

Necromancy spells

Combat Abilities: Magic as his skills with a

Firearm and Fisticuffs are lost with his younger days

Damage: By spell

Burgess Rasmussen

Rank 12 Necromancer (Specialist)

Physical Competence: +3

Mental Competence: +12

Initiative: 7

Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)

Mana: 5 Dice (30 pips)

Signature Skills: Empathy -2, Fisticuffs -1,

High Society +2, History +3, Interrogation +3,

Legal Matters +3, Necromancy +4,

Research +3, Streetwise -2

Traits: Calculating +2, Menacing +2,

Secretive +3, Corrupt with Forbidden Lore +2

Special Abilities: Just about every Necromancy spell available

Combat Abilities: Magic, as his physical skills are sadly lacking

Damage: By spell

Burgess Rasmussen

As a noted Scholar, Rasmussen is an expert on Necromancy. Where Mr. Thurber's interests are wide ranging, Burgess focuses on the powers of magic and their utility for the Society. He has spent many hours in careful study and dissection of reanimated corpses and more poring over the journals and tomes of Necromancers that the Meek have been able to defeat. It is through his work that the lodge has managed so many successes as of late.

However, Burgess believes that the Society must remain clandestine and, to that end, he believes that each lodge must stand apart. This has caused a number of heated debates, given that this was part of what led to the fall of so many of their compatriots on the Continent. Furthermore, Burgess has made overtures to take leadership of the London lodge from Pleasant. Few find him as knowledgeable, courageous or capable of leading. A few worry that his Necromantic studies have corrupted him.

Doctor Edwin Hadley

This Courser and physician is a recent addition to the lodge and has only been part of a handful of missions so far. His primary focus is to reduce the suffering of those around him, through his medical skills or through the attention that he can bring to those the world has overlooked.

Discharged from military service, Doctor Hadley spent a few years travelling the world before joining the Society where his medical skills have proven irreplaceable on a number of occasions, saving fellow members from death or disfigurement.

Edwin Hadley
Rank 10 Fighting Physician (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 6
Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Signature Skills: Bull -1, Bribery -2,
Firearms +3, General Knowledge +3,
Medicine +4, Politics +2
Traits: Bedside Manner +3,
Tough Old Bird +3, World-Traveller +2
Combat Abilities: The Doctor is unlikely to
start a fight but he will finish one with his
Apache 9mm revolver (9 dice)
Damage: Pistol (9 dice)

His views on the undead and the threat they pose are very similar to those of the founders. In that way, he acts as a voice of reason when tempers fray. The Doctor sides with Pleasant Thurber on many issues and is not afraid to speak his mind. This often sets the lodge at odds between direct action against the undead and helping society overall.

Cosmo McAllister

This gigantic Lionman, and recent addition to the Stalwarts, is undoubtedly the most fearsome swordsman in the Society. Courageous beyond reason, he has no compunctions about charging headlong into the undead. His two-handed Highland claymore only makes his attacks that much more devastating. His fellow working class members treat him as some kind of hero as he has managed to win through more than a dozen situations where he was badly outnumbered or out-manoeuvred.

In spite of his amazing abilities as a fighter and leader among the Stalwarts, he worries the leadership of the lodge. He is a destabilising influence, as he is the loudest rowdy among them. Cautioned repeatedly to keep his mouth shut about the secrets he has learned, he chafes against the leadership of older, cooler heads. Cosmo wants to take the fight to the streets and then directly into whatever lairs the Necromancers and other fell beings hold. There are many, however, who feel he is the heart of the London lodge.

Generic Agents of the Society

Coursers start in different walks of life but eventually being an agent for a secret society teaches them a similar group of skills. Coursers are at home in almost any setting, from working the guttersnipes for information to trading toasts at an upper-class party.

The original Stalwarts were all Scottish clansmen, who tended to be a roughshod bunch. While they are

Cosmo McAllister
Rank 10 Swordsman (Specialist)

Physical Competence: +10
Mental Competence: +3
Initiative: 9
Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)
Signature Skills: Charm -2, Etiquette -2, Hide & Sneak +3, Intimidation +3, Perception +3,
Sewer Lore +2, Swordplay +4
Traits: Bigger Than You +3, Lion's Heart +4,
Swears Vehemently +2, Mighty +4
Combat Abilities: Fisticuffs (13 dice) or
Claymore (14 dice)
Damage: Claws (6 dice), Claymore (15 Dice)

Order Stalwart - Rank 5 Tough (Specialist)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +2
Initiative: 6
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +2, Conversation -2,
Hide & Sneak +2, Might +3, Perception +2,
Swordplay +3
Traits: Rough and Tumble +3, Stubborn +3,
Quick Temper +1
Combat Abilities: Fisticuffs (8 dice) or
Claymore (9 dice); if they are under arms, they
carry a revolver or a cut-down shotgun.
Damage: Ham Fists (4 dice), Claymore (12
dice).

Order Courser - Rank 7 Agent (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +4
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 8
Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)
Signature Skills: Charm +3, Hide & Sneak +3,
Interrogate +2, Perception +3, Streetwise +3
Traits: Dapper +2, Social Chameleon +3,
Unrepentant Snoop +2
Combat Abilities: Sword Cane (4 dice) or
Derringer (4 dice). He might also pack some
untested technological 'backup' if things look
grim.
Damage: Cane (6 dice), Derringer (7 dice).

thick-headed and quick to brawl each other, they are loyal as soldiers to the Order.

THE SECRET CARNIVAL

They were going to kiss. Their eyes never leaving the other's they moved together slowly and gracefully. Annabelle couldn't help but stare; it was a little shocking after all, for this to be happening in public. But here, was it wrong? She was in the audience after all, she was meant to be watching as the two performers glided above her, tied into the ropes of the chaotic and insecure looking trapeze.

However, despite her misgivings about the propriety, she couldn't take her eyes off the silent ballet above her.

As she watched, the two performers dressed in faded rags that barely qualified even as underwear passed each other, their lips almost brushing each other as they swung past. There was no kiss, but even so, the moment their lips almost touched seemed an age, not a moment.

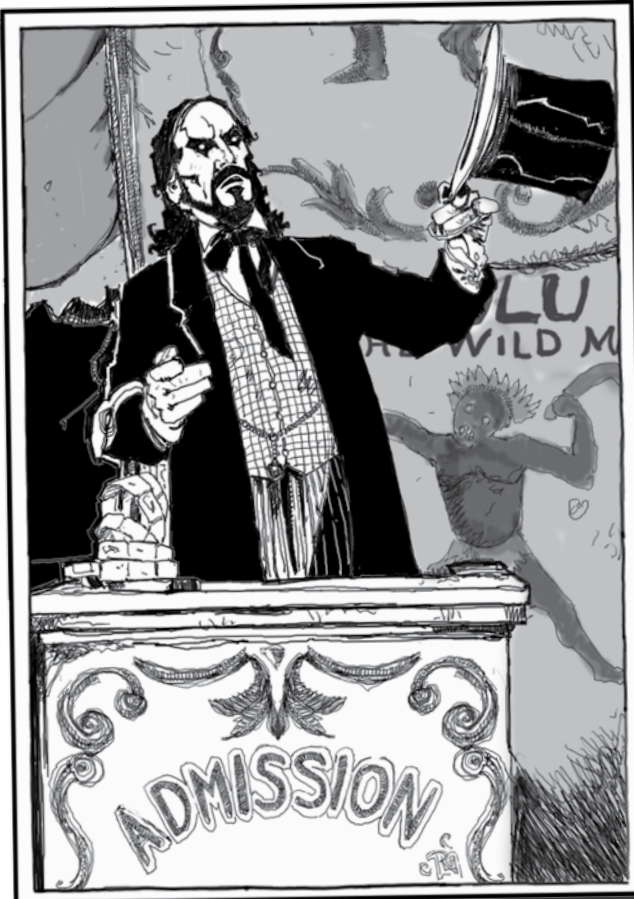
The spectacle would have been romantic and beautiful, but for the music coming from the ring below. There were just two musicians; both dressed the same although they were completely unlike. One, who played the tuba, was tall and thin, his partner on the accordion was a tub of a man. They stood below, whining a discordant thump of a tune between them. Their clothes were the same, tweed waistcoats, brown trousers and a bowler hat, but they had both painted their faces as clowns. It was the face-paint that was the most unsettling, their sweat making it run and crack. Coupled with the normal clothes it was as if these were their real faces, their expressions static and false.

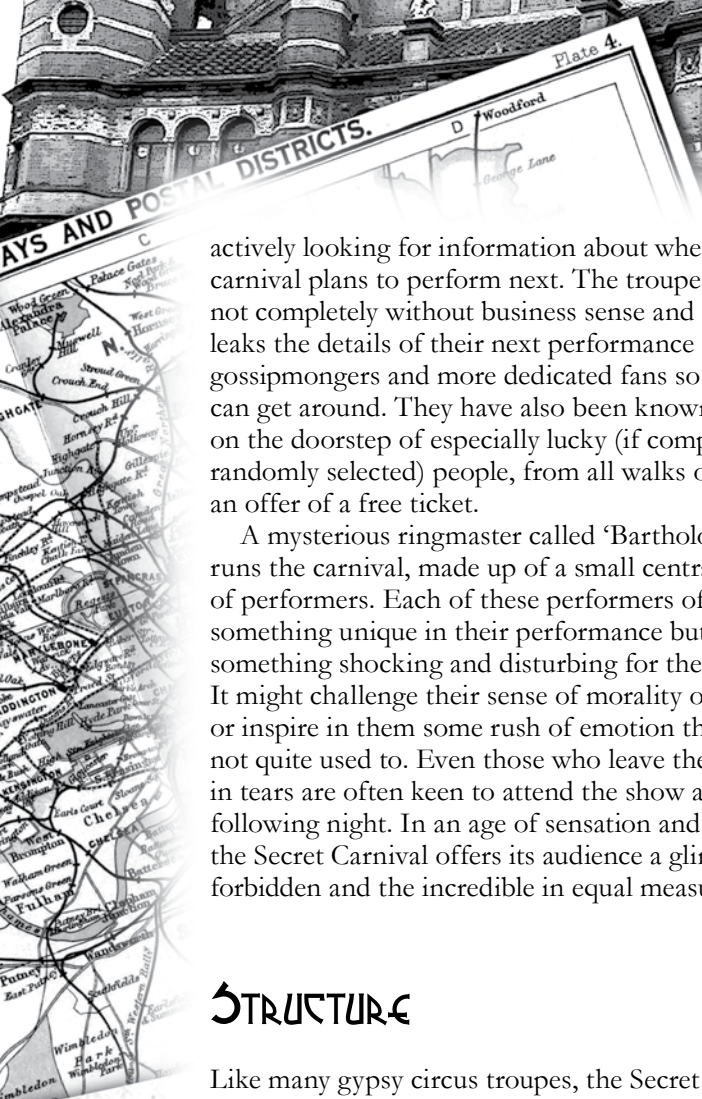
Annabelle took hold of George's hand, feeling the need for protection amidst this strange spectacle. He was enraptured by the trapeze above, where the two performers had swung together now. The man's powerful hands clamped onto the rope the woman hung from. It was as if she was tied to him, and although she held him back with a single arm on his chest there was a strange look of yielding and lascivious pleasure in her eyes. Annabelle began to feel flushed with a mixture of feelings she couldn't quite recognise. She tugged on George's hand hoping he was equally shocked and that they might leave this place. However, at her touch he turned to her, tearing his eyes from the show and stared at her. There was something she didn't recognise in those eyes, and when he smiled at her it was not reassuring, but the sharp grin of a wolf.

HISTORY

The Secret Carnival appeared somewhere in London during 1865. No one seems to know quite when or where it appeared first but plenty claim to have witnessed their first performance. Most people assume they were performing in the city or even in Europe for some time before they got noticed by the general public. Since their appearance, the line up of performers has changed but the style of their act has remained much the same.

Known as the Secret Carnival because they play a different venue in the city each time they perform, they never set a schedule and might perform twice a month or even twice a day. For any other performing troupe this would be business suicide, it is, after all, pretty essential for your audience to know how to find you if you are to make any money in the travelling performance business. However, the carnival's act is so strange and different that it has caught the notice of a wide range of people from all levels of society and become an extremely fashionable (if slightly scandalous and notorious) show to watch. This means there is a dedicated following of people





actively looking for information about where the carnival plans to perform next. The troupe itself is not completely without business sense and carefully leaks the details of their next performance to the local gossipmongers and more dedicated fans so that word can get around. They have also been known to appear on the doorstep of especially lucky (if completely randomly selected) people, from all walks of life, with an offer of a free ticket.

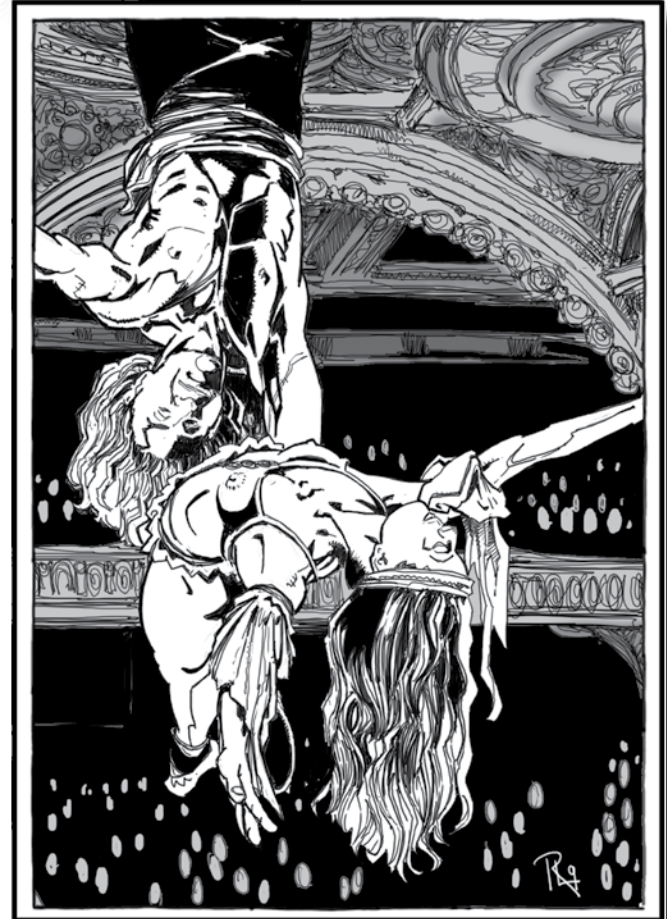
A mysterious ringmaster called 'Bartholomew' runs the carnival, made up of a small central core of performers. Each of these performers offers something unique in their performance but equally something shocking and disturbing for the audience. It might challenge their sense of morality or propriety, or inspire in them some rush of emotion they are not quite used to. Even those who leave the carnival in tears are often keen to attend the show again the following night. In an age of sensation and wonder, the Secret Carnival offers its audience a glimpse of the forbidden and the incredible in equal measure.

STRUCTURE

Like many gypsy circus troupes, the Secret Carnival has very little hard and fast organisation. Bartholomew is in charge, that much is certain, and he fixes the dates of the next performance and where it will be, as well as who performs. Other than that, everyone else is simply his employee.

There are two levels of employee in the troupe. Those brought in to join for a night or two are performers who work the circuit with any kind of act or talent, paid a set fee each night for their services, payable each time they finish their act. Those who are part of the troupe itself travel wherever the Carnival goes, performing or not at Bartholomew's demand. Instead of a nightly fee, they get a share of the night's takings depending on their status or longevity with the group. In this way, the troupe works like a pirate ship, with two shares for the captain and a share for each of the crew.

There is a third kind of involvement with the troupe but they pay to be part of it. As the notoriety and popularity of the show has increased, so has a small collection of tricksters, showmen, hawkers and carny folk. They set up their games stalls, bunko booths, fortune-tellers and freak shows around the venue, laying siege to the place with another layer of twisted spectacle to penetrate before seeing the show. For the privilege of attaching themselves to the carnival troupe, each of the hawkers pays a percentage (usually




20%) of their takings each night to Bartholomew. This money usually pays for the additional acts in the show but the remainder is added to the takings and is divided among the troupe's members. Most of the carny folk are happy with the arrangement and are doing quite well out of it. However, some get greedy or indulge certain excesses that bring the show disrepute (of the kind Bartholomew does not want, such as stealing from the audience) and they are asked not to come back. Those who do not accept a polite rejection understand they have to take on the whole carnival troupe to force the issue but usually none question Bartholomew's decisions.

JOINING THE ORGANISATION

In principle, it is an easy matter to join the Secret Carnival. They are always in need of new performers and artists and are especially keen to employ someone who can do something new, something extreme and avant-garde. If someone has an act, they are welcome to bring it to Bartholomew's attention. If he likes what he sees, Bartholomew allows the new act to perform

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
 DUPLEX SKIRTS
 J. W. BRADLEY'S
 CELEBRATED
 DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
 (or Double Spring)
 SKIRTS
 AND LINGERIE
 EACH LOOP BEING CONSTRUCTED
 TO FEELY STRETCH TO SEVEN
 INCHES AND BEING STRONGLY
 ELASTICALLY BRIDGED TO
 EDGE OF FOOT.
 THEY ARE VERY FLEXIBLE AND
 THEY ARE ALSO THE MOST
 COMFORTABLE AND MOST
 FASHIONABLE AND EASY
 TO WEAR.
 THEY ARE MADE IN
 GREAT QUANTITIES FOR
 THE PROMENADE
 OPERA
 CARRIAGE
 STREET DRIFT
 ABOVE ARE THE MOST POPULAR
 INTRODUCED
 ALL REGIONS
 AT WINDSOR
 BY THE SOLE OWNERS
 WESTON, BIALY
 Office and
 Nos. 27, 28, 29, and 30, New
 BUCKINGHAM
 GILLOTTS
 EYE GLASSES
 96





for a show, as a form of live audition, for which they also get a nominal fee, to at least cover expenses. If it works in front of an audience he considers making the arrangement more formal, arranging a contract for a specific number of shows at a particular rate. The salary the performer gets depends entirely on their haggling skills and on how much Bartholomew thinks they are worth. It is rare for two performers to be on exactly the same deal.

A simpler task is to become part of the carnival entourage. Bartholomew does vet the people he allows to set up shop outside his show but not with anything like the same care he takes when considering what to include in the carnival. As with the show, he is especially keen on acts that are different, or that might shock or unnerve the audience. The more unsettled his patrons are before seeing the show, the better. However, while it is easier to become part of the entourage, being a part of that does not get you into the carnival. The performers in the show do not mix with the carny folk outside and the carny folk may not join in the show or even enter the place where the performance is going on. Still, as long as you do not cross Bartholomew, once you are in the entourage you can stay as long as you like, as long as you pay the 20% fee regularly.

Getting into the inner circle of the troupe takes a little more time and dedication. Very few performers are actually part of the carnival full time. They all know each other very well and are very much a family, they do not let just anyone become a part of that. They are very wary of people who ask to join the carnival troupe itself and so usually only invite those who do not ask. The performer in question must also be very good at what they do and have a truly unique act. A clever trick is not enough; it must be something an audience wants to see repeatedly, even if they find it slightly disturbing. If someone comes along who fits this criterion, they must also be the right sort of person. Bartholomew and the rest of the troupe quietly sound them out on their thoughts and morals to ascertain if they fit in with the ethos and agenda of the group. If so, they are invited to join and only then can they learn the real secrets of the carnival.

RESOURCES

As a travelling gypsy troupe, the carnival has very little of any worth. Generally, it makes sure it does not own anything it cannot carry, as a matter of principle. Most of the performers just walk to the next venue but the troupe does own a few caravans that they use

either as transport or as storage. Some of the acts, such as the trapeze, require specialist equipment, which needs to be stored properly. Other acts have an array of personal props such as stage magic equipment or musical instruments. A performer's equipment is their own concern and few trapeze artists have nothing to do with setting up the ropes their life might depend upon. Musicians have a very particular setting for their instruments and magicians rarely allow others to see the secrets of their trade.

While this means the carnival has very little in terms of real wealth, it does have access to a selection of strange and obscure items. There are few things outside a clockwork engineer's lab as odd as theatrical equipment. Player Characters searching for something odd and rare may well come across it at the carnival, although it will likely be an important part of someone's act. However, this is not always the case. Like any travelling show, the performers tend to pick up interesting things they believe might be useful later on. They might lend them out for a better idea of what such an object actually is and how to use it for a performance.

As a fashionable entertainment, one resource the carnival has built up is that of contacts. While they do not play for private engagements, they are very happy to offer VIP treatment to the upper classes that come and visit discreetly. Bartholomew is the perfect host to the more well-to-do patrons, who do not want to be seen taking part and he is appreciated for his respect and circumspection. While few would admit (publicly, at least) that they have attended the carnival, plenty of rich patrons would be happy to put in a word for Bartholomew as he has proven himself to have a gentleman's understanding of society.

Other than that, the carnival itself owns nothing, not even a place to sleep. The performers usually sleep in lodgings nearby or cram into one of the caravans. A few sleep in the venue, although it is rare for the show to play in the same place for two nights running. Bartholomew owns his own caravan, which only the full troupe members may enter without his express permission. Bartholomew lives in the caravan and interviews prospective performers there as well. Inside the small and cramped gypsy caravan is Bartholomew's office, which also contains a large selection of strange books on various esoteric subjects. There are rumours that Bartholomew is a Thaumaturgist of some form (or even worse, according to some rumours), so he may own a few other items of occult practice. The Guild (which takes a very dim view of magic as entertainment) has sent agents to attend the show and have been satisfied that the performance contains no real sorcery. However,



if they are so sure, it is odd that they continue to send agents to observe the carnival every now and again.

AGENDA

At its simplest level, the carnival is merely an entertainment. The performers who play for it just want to earn a decent wage and ride the gravy train for as long as it runs. Most people believe the carnival is little more than this season's fashionable amusement, vanished by the next season. The same applies for the entourage of hangers-on plying their trade outside the show. The carnival is a good place to earn a few coins, even though Bartholomew's cut is very high. Plenty of the nastier carnies intend to force some sort of rebate from Bartholomew when the carnival's star begins to fade.

However, for the inner circle the carnival has a definite agenda beyond survival. They want to shock the complacent Victorians from their Imperial sleep. They are doing their best to disturb, unnerve and outright upset the façade of morality and propriety. The effects are subtle so as not to have the show closed in an instant, dismissed as malicious sedition. There are no political music hall songs, no explicit sex shows or communist manifesto; instead, the performers want to engage the audience and show them what they really are on the inside, each act designed to arouse the sort of feeling most polite members of society try to keep hidden. People leave shocked; not by what they have seen but by how it made them feel. Their shame and confusion stops them denouncing the show, as they would have to admit what they felt there. However, beneath the mask of respectability lies an animal, an animal that is intoxicating to free for even a few moments. So the audience returns, eager to feed that animal but at the same time hoping they can keep it under control.

PERSONALITIES

Bartholomew

The leader of the carnival is as mysterious and secretive as the show he produces. He seems to have no past but his manner implies an upper class education and origin. Despite his English accent, his tanned skin belies a possible mixed race decent, or perhaps just long years spent in a foreign land.

Bartholomew dresses as a faded circus ringmaster in a worn red tailcoat and a tattered black top hat,

Bartholomew

Rank 15 Carnival Master (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +9

Mental Competence: +9

Initiative: 12

Health: 9 Dice (18 pips)

Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)

Signature Skills: Business +3, Chaos Magic +3, Culture (India) +3, Empathy +5, High Society +3, Perception +4, Streetwise +3, Thaumaturgy +4

Traits: Insane +3, Unsettling +3,

Dedicated +4

Special Abilities: Botheration, Darkness

of Ages, The Emperor's New Spell

(Thaumaturgy) as well as his own chaos magic

Combat Abilities: Able to fight if need be, but prefers not to

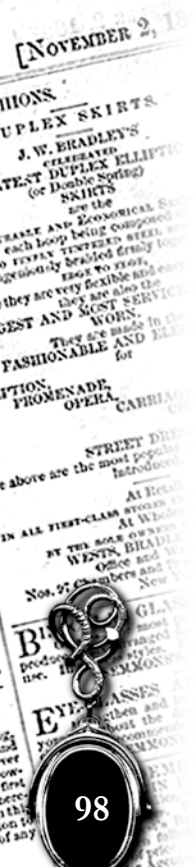
Damage: Improvised Weapon (5 Dice) or Magic

not only in the show but outside it as well. His wide moustache completes the stereotype but the slightly wild look in his eyes makes his appearance frightening rather than comical.

Eloise Boleyn

The coquette of the high wire, Eloise's act is far more shocking than anyone expects. Instead of feats of daring, she performs an aerial ballet where she twists and turns to both seduce and refuse her partner who always wears a mask. The high wire becomes a metaphor not of danger but of freedom as she spins wherever she chooses above the audience. Her costume is that of a ragged ballerina, tattered skirts and lace with ribbons in her hair.

Eloise has been with the carnival for many years. Bartholomew found her in a mental asylum, placed there by her husband. She had been married to a good middle class family but her husband proved to be a puritan to a terrible degree. Her enjoyment and enthusiasm for the more intimate parts of their marriage shocked him to the core. He believed that a woman who enjoyed such things must be insane and had her committed. She was surprised and horrified by how easily he achieved this and how little anyone stood in his way.



Eloise Boleyn
Rank 7 Trapeze Artist (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +4
Initiative: 5
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +4,
Charm +2, Dance +4, Empathy +1,
Fashion +2, Streetwise +2
Traits: Graceful +2, Sexual +3
Combat Abilities: She is not a fighter, but
defends herself if cornered
Damage: Fists (4 Dice)

When Bartholomew found her, he saw in her a talent she had no idea she possessed. He helped her escape the asylum and taught her she was not mad at all and then he trained her with the skills she needed to perform in the show. She proved just as talented as Bartholomew had suspected and her unashamed embrace of her nature allows her to carry a dangerous sexuality into her act that confuses, arouses and even frightens her audience.

Victor Shadderung

While Victor is not the best juggler in the world, he is certainly the most exciting to watch. He juggles and performs with a variety of very dangerous objects, from knives, to flaming brands to live poisonous animals, on occasion. He wears faded clown make-up like many of the performers, although it appears more like a skull's bleached face than that of a smiling children's entertainer. He performs wearing a mourner's costume, with a long frock coat and a top hat tied with a black silk scarf.

In truth, his act is far more dangerous than it might appear; Victor is not just dicing with death, he hopes to lose. A dangerous act excites the crowd but mainly in the belief that the performer will somehow survive. Victor's act is so extreme it makes them wonder if they really will see him die in front of them, their excitement giving way to a morbid curiosity as he performs more and more dangerous feats of skill. Few can turn away, no matter how much they might want to, they know they might miss seeing something unbelievable, or they might miss seeing him prove his skill and allow them to believe it was all just a clever trick.

Victor Shadderung
Rank 8 Juggler (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +6
Mental Competence: +5
Initiative: 5
Health: 6 Dice (12 pips)
Signature Skills: Athletics +4, Empathy +1,
Juggling +4, Streetwise +1, Throwing +4
Traits: Suicidal +3, Faithful +3, Daredevil +4
Combat Abilities: Will not defend himself if he
can avoid it
Damage: Only to himself

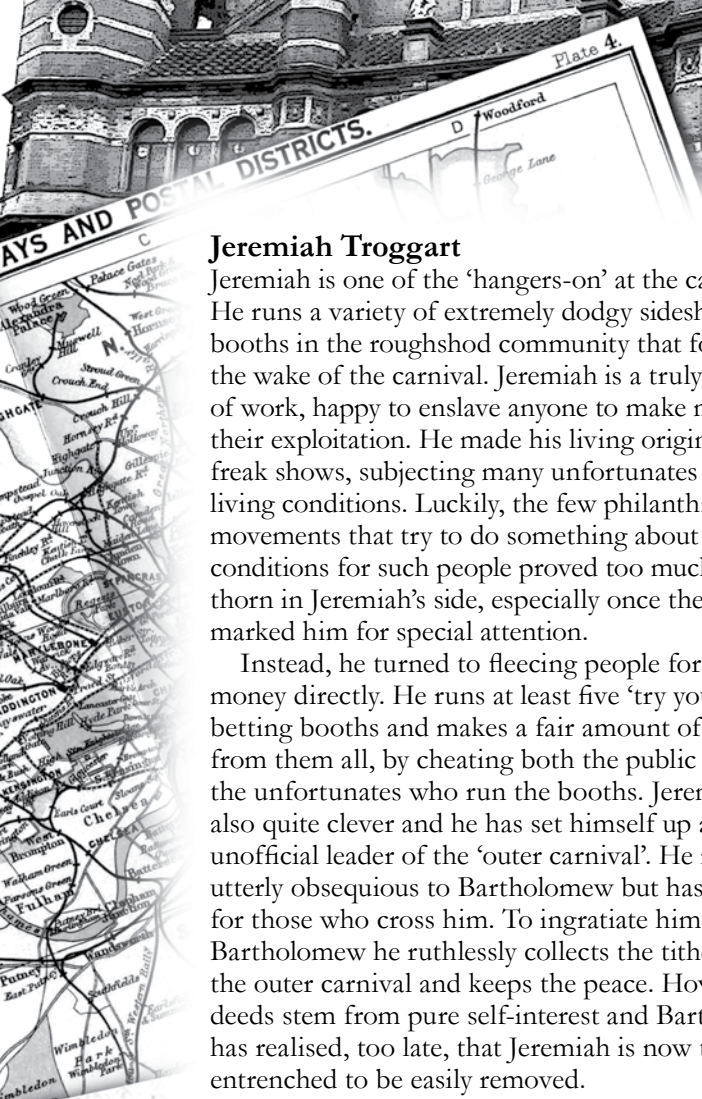
However, it is not a clever trick. Victor is suffering from a suicidal mania that came upon him after street thugs horribly murdered his wife and child in front of him. His escape left him with terrible survivor's guilt and he wishes only to end his life.

However, he is fervently Aluminat, believing that his wife and child are in heaven. If he kills himself, as a suicide, he will never see them again. However, if he just has an accident...

Mr Long and Mr Stout

These two mute, faded clowns provide the music for the performances. Neither Mr Stout nor Mr Long speaks, although their eyes betray souls that have seen true horror. Mr Long is a tall man, over six feet tall, but appears so much taller as his partner, Mr Stout, fails to quite reach five feet. Mr Stout is the larger of the two, though, and it is as if the two men are twins but where one has been stretched the other has been compressed. Each has an instrument: for Mr Long it is the tuba and for Mr Stout it is the accordion.

The truth of the two men is quite horrible; Bartholomew rescued them from a demonic cult many years ago. The horrors they witnessed left them almost insensible to the rest of the world. Over the years, Bartholomew introduced them to music as a means of communication. Each learnt to play an instrument by using its sound to express the terrors they experienced that confound mere words. As time passed, they learnt to play the more usual tunes, but under their music remains the screams of their souls trying to articulate something they cannot hope to exorcise.



Jeremiah Troggart

Jeremiah is one of the 'hangers-on' at the carnival. He runs a variety of extremely dodgy sideshow bunko booths in the roughshod community that follows in the wake of the carnival. Jeremiah is a truly nasty piece of work, happy to enslave anyone to make money from their exploitation. He made his living originally in freak shows, subjecting many unfortunates to horrific living conditions. Luckily, the few philanthropic movements that try to do something about the living conditions for such people proved too much of a thorn in Jeremiah's side, especially once they had marked him for special attention.

Instead, he turned to fleecing people for their money directly. He runs at least five 'try your luck' betting booths and makes a fair amount of change from them all, by cheating both the public and the unfortunates who run the booths. Jeremiah is also quite clever and he has set himself up as the unofficial leader of the 'outer carnival'. He remains utterly obsequious to Bartholomew but has no mercy for those who cross him. To ingratiate himself with Bartholomew he ruthlessly collects the tithes from the outer carnival and keeps the peace. However, his deeds stem from pure self-interest and Bartholomew has realised, too late, that Jeremiah is now too deeply entrenched to be easily removed.

Mr Long and Mr Stout Rank 4 Musicians (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5
Mental Competence: +6
Initiative: 4
Health: 4 Dice (8 pips)
Signature Skills: Instrument (Tuba or Accordion) +3, Fisticuffs +3, Swordplay +3
Traits: Empty shell +4, Loyal +3, Broken +3
Combat Abilities: Both carry knives and defend the Carnival to the death
Damage: Knife (5 Dice)

Jeremiah Troggart Rank 8 Con-merchant (Focussed)

Physical Competence: +4
Mental Competence: +7
Initiative: 8
Health: 5 Dice (10 pips)
Signature Skills: Appraisal +3, Bribery +2, Business +2, Conceal +4, Intimidate +3, Perception +3, Streetwise +2, Swordplay +1
Traits: Weasel +4, Coward +2, Devious +3
Combat Abilities: If he cannot run like a weasel, he cuts his way out
Damage: Rusty serrated knife (6 Dice)

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
DUPLICATIONS
COMPLEX SKIRTS
J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
NEW THE
ELEGANT AND ECONOMICAL SKIRT
each loop being composed of
to firmly stretched steel and
continuously braided finely
they are very flexible and easy
they are also the
BEST AND MOST SERVICE
WORN.
They are made in the
FASHIONABLE AND ELEGANT
for
STREET DRESS
above are the most popular
introduced
At Retail
At Wholesale
BY THE SOLE OWNERS
WENTIN, BLAIR & CO.
Office and
Nos. 27 Chambers and
New
GLASS
most
ranging
any
the
EYE GLASSES
then and
about the
EMERALD
ver
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cavaliers
to
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of each
of any
JOS. GILLOTT'S STEEL P
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
JOSEPH
GILLOTT,
Warranted.
TRADE MARK:
ORIGINAL and
No. 551.



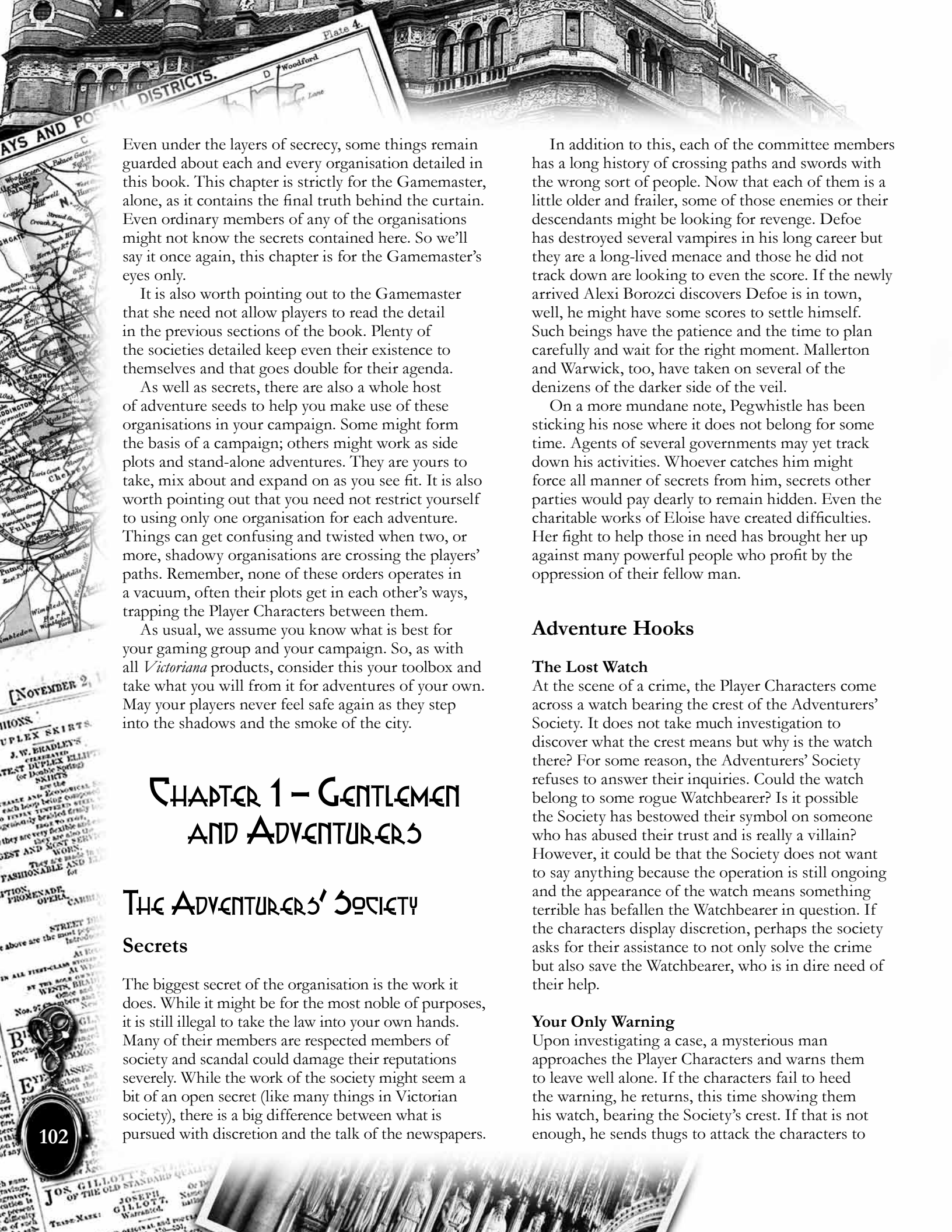


CHAPTER 5

SECRETS AND ADVENTURES

“Of course I have secrets, so do you sir, so does your charming wife, if this lady is indeed your charming wife. No need to get upset sir, we all keep secrets, the difference is that for the small charge of two shillings I’ll show them all to you.”

- **Bartholomew**



Even under the layers of secrecy, some things remain guarded about each and every organisation detailed in this book. This chapter is strictly for the Gamemaster, alone, as it contains the final truth behind the curtain. Even ordinary members of any of the organisations might not know the secrets contained here. So we'll say it once again, this chapter is for the Gamemaster's eyes only.

It is also worth pointing out to the Gamemaster that she need not allow players to read the detail in the previous sections of the book. Plenty of the societies detailed keep even their existence to themselves and that goes double for their agenda.

As well as secrets, there are also a whole host of adventure seeds to help you make use of these organisations in your campaign. Some might form the basis of a campaign; others might work as side plots and stand-alone adventures. They are yours to take, mix about and expand on as you see fit. It is also worth pointing out that you need not restrict yourself to using only one organisation for each adventure. Things can get confusing and twisted when two, or more, shadowy organisations are crossing the players' paths. Remember, none of these orders operates in a vacuum, often their plots get in each other's ways, trapping the Player Characters between them.

As usual, we assume you know what is best for your gaming group and your campaign. So, as with all *Victoriana* products, consider this your toolbox and take what you will from it for adventures of your own. May your players never feel safe again as they step into the shadows and the smoke of the city.

CHAPTER 1 – GENTLEMEN AND ADVENTURERS

THE ADVENTURERS' SOCIETY

Secrets

The biggest secret of the organisation is the work it does. While it might be for the most noble of purposes, it is still illegal to take the law into your own hands. Many of their members are respected members of society and scandal could damage their reputations severely. While the work of the society might seem a bit of an open secret (like many things in Victorian society), there is a big difference between what is pursued with discretion and the talk of the newspapers.

In addition to this, each of the committee members has a long history of crossing paths and swords with the wrong sort of people. Now that each of them is a little older and frailer, some of those enemies or their descendants might be looking for revenge. Defoe has destroyed several vampires in his long career but they are a long-lived menace and those he did not track down are looking to even the score. If the newly arrived Alexi Borozci discovers Defoe is in town, well, he might have some scores to settle himself. Such beings have the patience and the time to plan carefully and wait for the right moment. Mallerton and Warwick, too, have taken on several of the denizens of the darker side of the veil.

On a more mundane note, Pegwhistle has been sticking his nose where it does not belong for some time. Agents of several governments may yet track down his activities. Whoever catches him might force all manner of secrets from him, secrets other parties would pay dearly to remain hidden. Even the charitable works of Eloise have created difficulties. Her fight to help those in need has brought her up against many powerful people who profit by the oppression of their fellow man.


Adventure Hooks

The Lost Watch

At the scene of a crime, the Player Characters come across a watch bearing the crest of the Adventurers' Society. It does not take much investigation to discover what the crest means but why is the watch there? For some reason, the Adventurers' Society refuses to answer their inquiries. Could the watch belong to some rogue Watchbearer? Is it possible the Society has bestowed their symbol on someone who has abused their trust and is really a villain? However, it could be that the Society does not want to say anything because the operation is still ongoing and the appearance of the watch means something terrible has befallen the Watchbearer in question. If the characters display discretion, perhaps the society asks for their assistance to not only solve the crime but also save the Watchbearer, who is in dire need of their help.

Your Only Warning

Upon investigating a case, a mysterious man approaches the Player Characters and warns them to leave well alone. If the characters fail to heed the warning, he returns, this time showing them his watch, bearing the Society's crest. If that is not enough, he sends thugs to attack the characters to



make his point even clearer. How can such behaviour be the work of the noble Adventurers' Society? Is the Society really looking into the case, or is the mysterious man using the Society's reputation to keep the characters away? If they bring this to the Society's attention, do they admit someone is damaging their reputation if he is not one of their operatives?

The Right Story

One, or even all, of the characters are looking to join the Adventurers' Society. While they are not Watchbearers, their previous adventures have impressed the Society enough to ask them to do a simple task for them. They are to make contact with a low-life in Whitechapel called Davey Mitchell and find out what he knows about a smuggling operation he is involved in. However, the characters know that the Society prizes stories. They need to ensure this simple operation produces something worthy of a story that might get them full membership, which means they might have to make a few intentional mistakes for the sake of drama...

THE PAN-ASIATIC SPICE DELIVERY SERVICE

Secrets

The only secret the Pan-Asiatic Spice crew is guilty of is occasionally smuggling. They might move weapons for rebels in the Congo or an arcane artefact for a secret sect in the Guild, but always for a price. However, while they deal with illegal cargos they never deal with immoral ones.

As well as illicit cargos, some of the crews have taken to making 'unscheduled stops' on their journeys. Sometimes this might mean using the relative quiet and advantages of an airship to gain access to certain grounds, or rescue people from high windows. In fact, several times Pan-Asiatic has worked with the Watchbearers of the Adventurers' Society on some delicate and dangerous mission.

Adventure Hooks

Most of these adventure hooks involve the Player Characters working for the Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service. However, this does not mean they must be full employees. In many cases they might be hired to

provide additional muscle for a particular mission. In others, they may have special skills the company requires for this more unusual task. This means these adventures can be used as part of a Pan-Asiatic campaign, as one-offs, or as a way for characters to prove themselves to the company and eventually join it.

Dirigible Down!

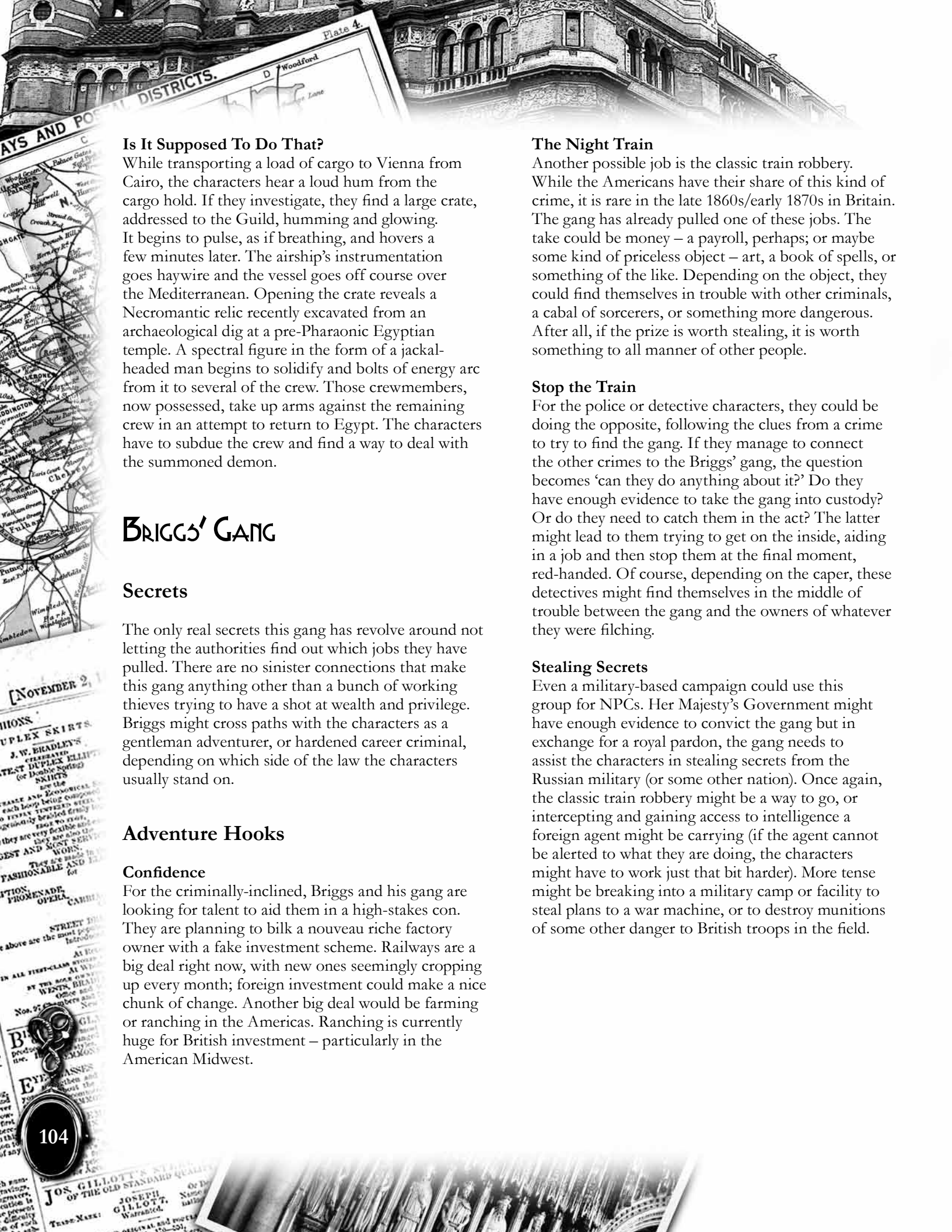
The Corsair has crashed in the Ural Mountains. The task of locating the crew and getting the Corsair airworthy again has fallen to the characters. There are rumours that foul sorcery brought the ship down and that a maniacal boyar with an army of clockwork beasts at his disposal has captured the ship and its crew. To make matters worse, several of the Czarina's elite Pyetra saw both the magical explosion and the airship go down and are now heading to the region to investigate. The heroes need to retrieve the downed crew and cargo, deal with the boyar and his clockwork beasts and either confront or avoid the Pyetra. If the Pyetra reach the boyar's fortress while the characters are there, who will they side with, the foreigners with the lucrative cargo or the boyar building an army to oppose the Czarina?

Competition is a Killer

The characters are serving on what should be a routine flight from London to Johannesburg. However, Absalom had a bad feeling about the trip so Indika has hired extra protection. Absalom's fears prove founded when the dirigible is fired upon while over the African jungle. The competition has decided to step up their offensive and capture some of the market share. The heroes engage in a daring battle hundreds of feet above the African canopy to fend off the attackers and still have to deliver the goods. If they fail, they crash into the jungle, forced to survive by their wits and what remains of their weapons and supplies until help arrives.

No Questions Asked

The characters are in port, relaxing after a particularly stressful delivery, when a young Eldren woman runs up to them asking for a flight out of the country. Hot on her heels is a large crowd of very angry, heavily armed men calling for her head. She claims that she did not commit the crime for which she is wanted. Once airborne, which should be no easy task given the attackers, the heroes learn that the woman might be more than she seems. Is she really a princess of Ruritania seeking to escape a loveless marriage and accidental regicide, or is she, in fact, an insane sorceress, who actually committed the crimes?



Is It Supposed To Do That?

While transporting a load of cargo to Vienna from Cairo, the characters hear a loud hum from the cargo hold. If they investigate, they find a large crate, addressed to the Guild, humming and glowing. It begins to pulse, as if breathing, and hovers a few minutes later. The airship's instrumentation goes haywire and the vessel goes off course over the Mediterranean. Opening the crate reveals a Necromantic relic recently excavated from an archaeological dig at a pre-Pharaonic Egyptian temple. A spectral figure in the form of a jackal-headed man begins to solidify and bolts of energy arc from it to several of the crew. Those crewmembers, now possessed, take up arms against the remaining crew in an attempt to return to Egypt. The characters have to subdue the crew and find a way to deal with the summoned demon.

BRIGGS' GANG

Secrets

The only real secrets this gang has revolve around not letting the authorities find out which jobs they have pulled. There are no sinister connections that make this gang anything other than a bunch of working thieves trying to have a shot at wealth and privilege. Briggs might cross paths with the characters as a gentleman adventurer, or hardened career criminal, depending on which side of the law the characters usually stand on.

Adventure Hooks

Confidence

For the criminally-inclined, Briggs and his gang are looking for talent to aid them in a high-stakes con. They are planning to bilk a nouveau riche factory owner with a fake investment scheme. Railways are a big deal right now, with new ones seemingly cropping up every month; foreign investment could make a nice chunk of change. Another big deal would be farming or ranching in the Americas. Ranching is currently huge for British investment – particularly in the American Midwest.

The Night Train


Another possible job is the classic train robbery. While the Americans have their share of this kind of crime, it is rare in the late 1860s/early 1870s in Britain. The gang has already pulled one of these jobs. The take could be money – a payroll, perhaps; or maybe some kind of priceless object – art, a book of spells, or something of the like. Depending on the object, they could find themselves in trouble with other criminals, a cabal of sorcerers, or something more dangerous. After all, if the prize is worth stealing, it is worth something to all manner of other people.

Stop the Train

For the police or detective characters, they could be doing the opposite, following the clues from a crime to try to find the gang. If they manage to connect the other crimes to the Briggs' gang, the question becomes 'can they do anything about it?' Do they have enough evidence to take the gang into custody? Or do they need to catch them in the act? The latter might lead to them trying to get on the inside, aiding in a job and then stop them at the final moment, red-handed. Of course, depending on the caper, these detectives might find themselves in the middle of trouble between the gang and the owners of whatever they were filching.

Stealing Secrets

Even a military-based campaign could use this group for NPCs. Her Majesty's Government might have enough evidence to convict the gang but in exchange for a royal pardon, the gang needs to assist the characters in stealing secrets from the Russian military (or some other nation). Once again, the classic train robbery might be a way to go, or intercepting and gaining access to intelligence a foreign agent might be carrying (if the agent cannot be alerted to what they are doing, the characters might have to work just that bit harder). More tense might be breaking into a military camp or facility to steal plans to a war machine, or to destroy munitions of some other danger to British troops in the field.



CHAPTER 2 – THE BLADE OF JUSTICE

THE BLACK DOGS

Secrets

Grisha's cell of Black Dogs is actually part of a much broader anarchist conspiracy, distributed and spread throughout the world either watching and waiting for some signal that their revolt is about to begin, or actively engaged in trying to start one. They are all in contact with agents from across the globe who seek to provoke more and bloodier wars between the great powers, believing that such efforts are the most efficient way to bring down the old order. At the same time they are seeking new technologies, ancient artefacts and other methods by which they might bring about their global revolution, or at least remove the ruling classes from their much vaunted positions. To this end, their interest focuses on progress in flying machines, wonder weapons and archaeological expeditions seeking to unravel the mysteries of old. Eventually, a member of this conspiracy of conspiracies will stumble across something that could, unopposed, alter the state of the world forever.

The Black Dogs have been infiltrated, though not by the forces of law and order seeking to preserve the status quo but instead by a member of a more moderate socialist group that advocates slower change by legal means, by education, democracy and parliamentary pressure. As the group gets further and further out of control, the agent and their group seek to counter the actions of the Black Dogs before they get too far out of hand and begin to alienate the public to the politics of radicalism and the Left. This agent is in extremely deep and is very close to Grisha though they are finding it harder and harder to maintain their façade and to go along with their violent schemes.

As a final option, Grisha could be an agent of the Russian Empire, mind-altered and then protected through magic and secret techniques. As the anarchists are one of the Russian Empire's key rivals, he has been programmed to disrupt and damage their society as much as possible. Should Grisha's genuine personality ever reassert itself the loyal soldier may well find that loyalty stretched and tested to the limit,

despite having volunteered for this duty, retaining some memory of all that he has seen and done in Britain. Should that happen then he may become a greater enemy to Russia than he ever was to the British ruling class.

Adventure Hooks

Blood in the North

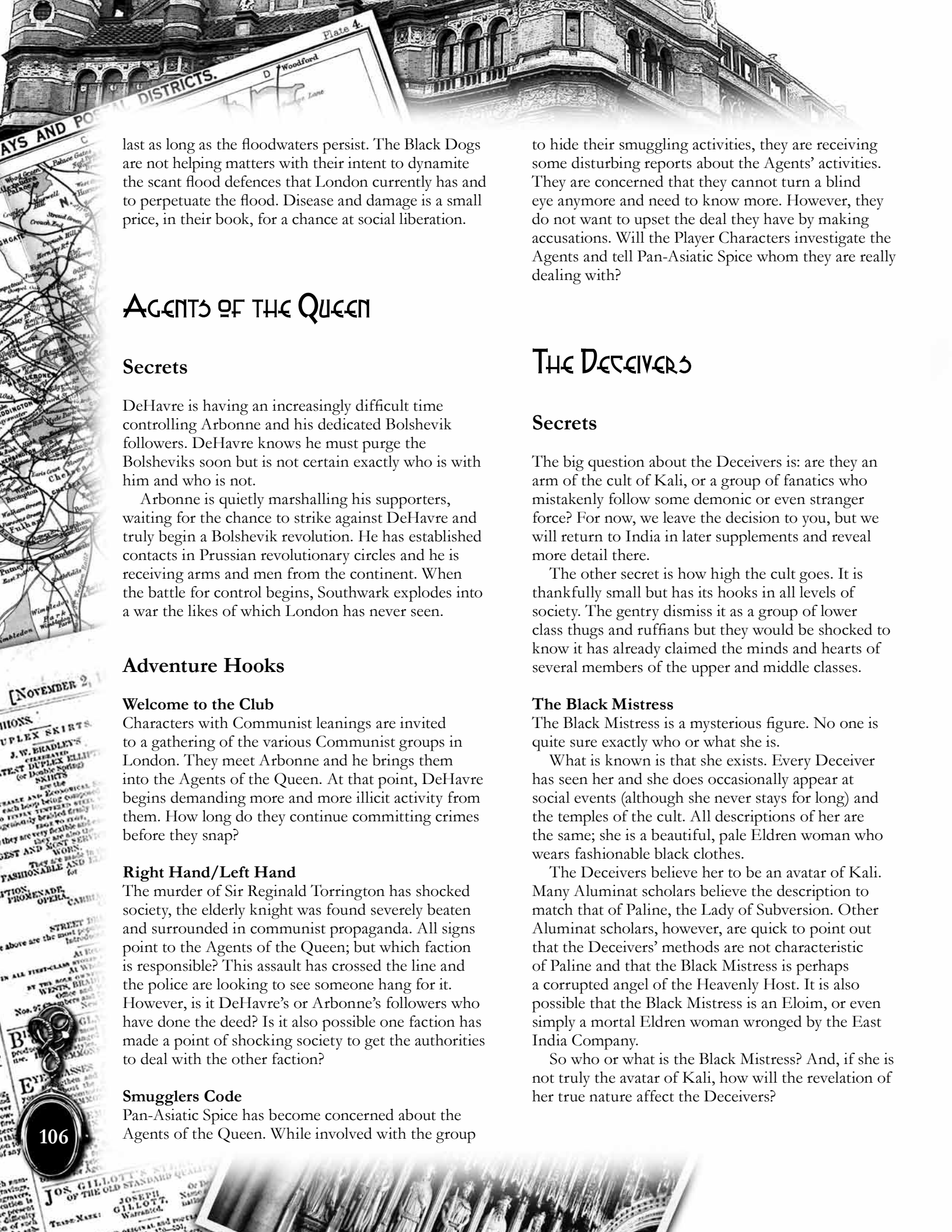
The Black Dogs have assassinated a rich industrialist from the north. The industrialist's children are not satisfied with the investigation currently underway by the proper authorities and are prepared to spend a considerable sum to have private agents pursue the matter in a manner to which the police cannot 'stoop'. Meanwhile, the Black Dogs have only just started on their latest program of assassinations, which are specifically targeting the wealthy rather than the nobility; Grisha's ire raised by accidents in several factories in the north that have maimed workers and left them without any way of earning a living.

A Grand Gesture

Assassination, sabotage, these things are not enough to cause real societal change or outrage amongst the lower classes. Increasingly frustrated by their inability to make a real impact on the class-consciousness of the workers of Britain, Grisha has determined that some manner of grand gesture is necessary to really wake people up and a shortlist of targets has been made for this 'event' to take place at: St. Paul's Cathedral, Parliament, the London Docks, the Palace. Numerous raids and thefts are producing explosives and weapons in order to supply the material needed for this great attack. One of his 'pack', shocked at the wholesale slaughter any of these plans would cause, has turned traitor but does not wish to go so far as to go to the army or the police. Private agents, acclaimed heroes, may be trusted to be more sympathetic and talking to them is not so much of a betrayal – or so they can ease their conscience by thinking.

Dark Tides

In a heavy winter storm, the Thames floods badly, rising to engulf central London in floodwaters and cutting off portions of the city from each other. Several anarchist and socialist groups use the opportunity to strike, attacking the troops and police that try to maintain order, liberating money and material from vaults, banks and other secure locations and 'redistributing' it, even declaring sections of the city independent of the Empire. The characters are caught up in this sudden conflagration of chaos that



last as long as the floodwaters persist. The Black Dogs are not helping matters with their intent to dynamite the scant flood defences that London currently has and to perpetuate the flood. Disease and damage is a small price, in their book, for a chance at social liberation.

AGENTS OF THE QUEEN

Secrets

DeHavre is having an increasingly difficult time controlling Arbonne and his dedicated Bolshevik followers. DeHavre knows he must purge the Bolsheviks soon but is not certain exactly who is with him and who is not.

Arbonne is quietly marshalling his supporters, waiting for the chance to strike against DeHavre and truly begin a Bolshevik revolution. He has established contacts in Prussian revolutionary circles and he is receiving arms and men from the continent. When the battle for control begins, Southwark explodes into a war the likes of which London has never seen.

Adventure Hooks

Welcome to the Club

Characters with Communist leanings are invited to a gathering of the various Communist groups in London. They meet Arbonne and he brings them into the Agents of the Queen. At that point, DeHavre begins demanding more and more illicit activity from them. How long do they continue committing crimes before they snap?

Right Hand/Left Hand

The murder of Sir Reginald Torrington has shocked society, the elderly knight was found severely beaten and surrounded in communist propaganda. All signs point to the Agents of the Queen; but which faction is responsible? This assault has crossed the line and the police are looking to see someone hang for it. However, is it DeHavre's or Arbonne's followers who have done the deed? Is it also possible one faction has made a point of shocking society to get the authorities to deal with the other faction?

Smugglers Code

Pan-Asiatic Spice has become concerned about the Agents of the Queen. While involved with the group

to hide their smuggling activities, they are receiving some disturbing reports about the Agents' activities. They are concerned that they cannot turn a blind eye anymore and need to know more. However, they do not want to upset the deal they have by making accusations. Will the Player Characters investigate the Agents and tell Pan-Asiatic Spice whom they are really dealing with?

THE DECEIVERS

Secrets

The big question about the Deceivers is: are they an arm of the cult of Kali, or a group of fanatics who mistakenly follow some demonic or even stranger force? For now, we leave the decision to you, but we will return to India in later supplements and reveal more detail there.

The other secret is how high the cult goes. It is thankfully small but has its hooks in all levels of society. The gentry dismiss it as a group of lower class thugs and ruffians but they would be shocked to know it has already claimed the minds and hearts of several members of the upper and middle classes.

The Black Mistress

The Black Mistress is a mysterious figure. No one is quite sure exactly who or what she is.

What is known is that she exists. Every Deceiver has seen her and she does occasionally appear at social events (although she never stays for long) and the temples of the cult. All descriptions of her are the same; she is a beautiful, pale Eldren woman who wears fashionable black clothes.

The Deceivers believe her to be an avatar of Kali. Many Aluminat scholars believe the description to match that of Paline, the Lady of Subversion. Other Aluminat scholars, however, are quick to point out that the Deceivers' methods are not characteristic of Paline and that the Black Mistress is perhaps a corrupted angel of the Heavenly Host. It is also possible that the Black Mistress is an Eloim, or even simply a mortal Eldren woman wronged by the East India Company.

So who or what is the Black Mistress? And, if she is not truly the avatar of Kali, how will the revelation of her true nature affect the Deceivers?



The Mistress' Handmaiden

The Dervish is a true believer; the Black Mistress is Kali. She also has a secret mission that she keeps from the other Deceivers; she performs Kali's retribution if a Deceiver has gotten sloppy or gone astray. A Deceiver that gets caught is almost certain to receive a visit from the Dervish who does what is necessary to ensure that he remains silent. She also tracks down any Deceiver deciding to leave the organisation without Kali's approval.

A former Deceiver may come to the Player Characters for aid (assuming that they are of a suitable profession), offering information on a Kali cult in exchange for protection. This almost certainly brings the Dervish to the fore, using her devadasi or other resources to silence him. Woe to the player character who stands between the Dervish and the informant if she decides to do the job personally.

Adventure Hooks

A Pound of Flesh

The Deceivers have learned to extract money from their victims before they kill them, thereby increasing their take. Usually, this involves blackmail; the Deceivers would get the victim in a compromising position or threaten to reveal scandalous information. The victim would pay to keep the information quiet and, after a few such transactions, the Deceivers would kill the victim anyway.

Lately, however, a group of Deceivers have become more ambitious. They are actually kidnapping loved ones and threatening bodily harm or worse if the victim does not pay. Sometimes, these victims are innocent parties as far as Indian blood money is concerned, as their families did not make their fortunes in India. The Black Mistress generally considers such parties off limits.

Recently, the group actually executed an 'innocent betrothed' when the suitor refused to pay. Now, not only are the police and the victim's family looking for justice but the group is also considered rogue by the rest of the Deceivers who refuse to aid them. Can the Player Characters ferret out this group before more innocent blood is spilled? Perhaps they find an ally in the Black Mistress for this task?

Family Connection

The Deceivers do not limit themselves to current nabobs; they also go after their descendants. It is quite possible that one of the Player Characters qualifies as a descendant (perhaps distantly) of a nabob. In this case, the player character is marked for death unless

he and his allies can prevent the assassination and drive home the point that it is better for the Deceivers to let them live than face the kind of retribution that only Player Characters can exact.

The Standard Routine

While the specifics may differ, the Deceivers use particular methods when conducting an assassination. First, a Deceiver finds a prospective target. While the Black Mistress chooses many targets, the Deceivers have their own sources as well. In addition, previous targets may have descendants still benefiting from the crime. Some targets may still be alive after a failed or aborted assassination attempt (likely due to the work of the Oriental Division).

Upon choosing a target, the Deceiver selects a small group of fellow Deceivers to work with him. This group then becomes an exclusive cell with little contact with other Deceivers. In many cases, the same cell continues to work together until circumstances force them apart.

The Deceiver cell starts observing the target. They want to establish routines, such as regular routes, how a target spends his time and so on. The Deceivers work themselves into these routines. One Deceiver may become a cab driver that always takes the target from his Mayfair home to the Gentleman's Club, while another may become a servant in that club. In some cases, a Deceiver may become an employee of the target. Most nabobs prefer the comfort of Indian servants to English ones.

Once inside, the Deceiver looks for opportunities and treasure. The Deceiver attempts to identify and locate stolen Indian artefacts (and any other easily removed valuables) as well as the best times to kill the target and steal valuables.

Finally, the Deceivers put their plan into action. The entire cell usually participates, although only a single member performs the assassination. The assassin leaves the weapon (a katar or yellow scarf) as a calling card before joining his fellow Deceivers in looting pre-targeted artefacts and valuables. The head Deceiver afterwards sends a message to Rollo Cork's network to dispose of the property.

You can use this routine to flesh out an assassination (or attempt) that the Player Characters are investigating. Alternatively, Player Characters working undercover may be brought into a cell (although this is dangerous, as the Black Mistress is not easily fooled).

CHAPTER 3 - HEARTS OF STEEL

PHOENIX SQUADRON

Secrets

The Phoenix squadron itself does not have many secrets at all. After all, its greatest shame is out in the open as a regiment of disgraced officers. The secrets lie not in the squadron itself but in its members. When creating new scions of the squadron, consider why they are there. Some suggestions for the shame and infamy that might have stained their honour are listed below:

- The officer has had an affair with the wrong person. It might be the wife of a higher-ranking officer or even a homosexual relationship. It might even be both. Does the spouse still nurse a grudge and does the lover still carry a candle?
- Criminals come from all levels of society but those who come from a higher station have further to fall. Petty crime is often excused in the upper classes but when they can no longer remain in denial the penalties can be harsh. Did the character actually commit crime though, or were they framed by the person who did?
- Cowardice is the most unacceptable behaviour in war. To run from the battlefield or disobey orders is often punishable by death. Was the character a coward, or were they running to save their wife and child or a good friend?
- The crime of murder haunts anyone connected to it. There are murderers even in wartime and this character might be one of them. Did the character kill an officer who was bullying them, or who was about to order their men to a pointless death? Was it a drunken mistake or some other accident?
- Innocent people have been known to suffer for the crimes of others. Perhaps this character is not who people think he is. He may be looking to restore someone else's honour by pretending to be them and suffer their shame for as long as it takes. Often this is to protect a family member but good friends might also bear each other's burdens.

Adventure Hooks

Thanks for the Help, But...

While the Phoenix Squadron is brutally efficient, its members are often criminals. When an opportunity to re-indulge in appropriate criminal activity presents itself, some members of the squadron (especially new members) cannot help themselves.

Usually, this hook is a complication added to an adventure. Phoenix Squadron may be called in to quell a riot, only to have a member that is a convicted rapist find a rioter particularly appealing. Lord Percy may become obsessed with a female Player Character. A sadistic officer may step over the line when interrogating prisoners. A murderous officer may take no prisoners, even when they are unarmed or surrender.

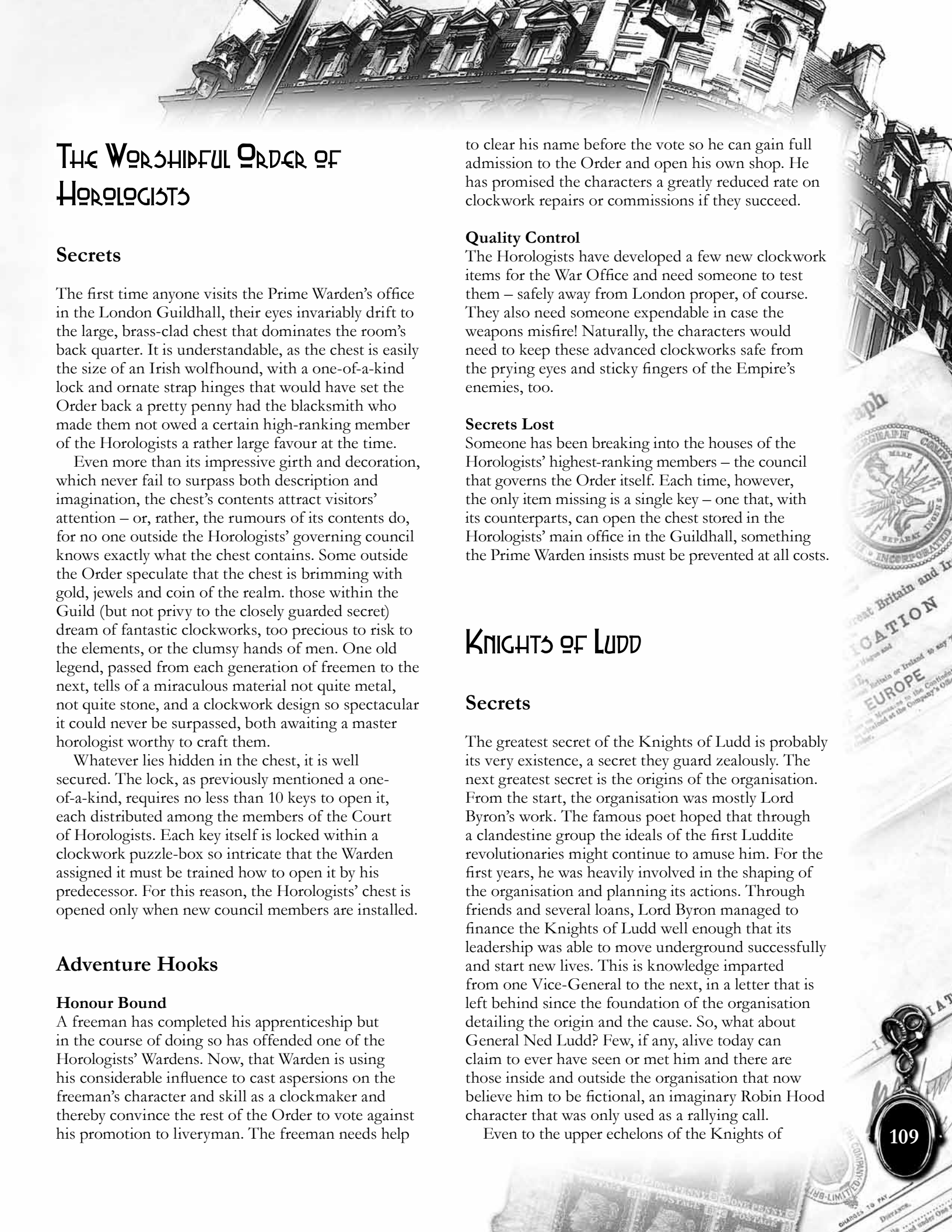
The Motherland is Calling Home

Currently, Phoenix Squadron has not been called to the Crimea. While that may change, it is unlikely that Lt. Hayden Rutherford would be called to duty there. Still, Rutherford's true identity is a convenient fiction and there are already rumours that Phoenix Squadron has a Russian woman on their team. It will not be long until this information reaches the Czarina's ears, if it has not already.

The Czarina may send someone to bring Kowlewski back or, failing that, assassinate her. The Player Characters may find themselves caught up in this intrigue. Agents of Her Majesty may hire them if they are not already agents themselves.

Taking Sides

If the Player Characters are on the side of revolutionaries then they may find themselves attacked by the Phoenix Squadron. Often, the Phoenix Squadron is only called in when things turn ugly and such actions are usually started by the rioters themselves. Whose side will the Player Characters join when both sides are perpetrating brutal acts?



THE WORSHIPFUL ORDER OF HOROLOGISTS

Secrets

The first time anyone visits the Prime Warden's office in the London Guildhall, their eyes invariably drift to the large, brass-clad chest that dominates the room's back quarter. It is understandable, as the chest is easily the size of an Irish wolfhound, with a one-of-a-kind lock and ornate strap hinges that would have set the Order back a pretty penny had the blacksmith who made them not owed a certain high-ranking member of the Horologists a rather large favour at the time.

Even more than its impressive girth and decoration, which never fail to surpass both description and imagination, the chest's contents attract visitors' attention – or, rather, the rumours of its contents do, for no one outside the Horologists' governing council knows exactly what the chest contains. Some outside the Order speculate that the chest is brimming with gold, jewels and coin of the realm. Those within the Guild (but not privy to the closely guarded secret) dream of fantastic clockworks, too precious to risk to the elements, or the clumsy hands of men. One old legend, passed from each generation of freemen to the next, tells of a miraculous material not quite metal, not quite stone, and a clockwork design so spectacular it could never be surpassed, both awaiting a master horologist worthy to craft them.

Whatever lies hidden in the chest, it is well secured. The lock, as previously mentioned a one-of-a-kind, requires no less than 10 keys to open it, each distributed among the members of the Court of Horologists. Each key itself is locked within a clockwork puzzle-box so intricate that the Warden assigned it must be trained how to open it by his predecessor. For this reason, the Horologists' chest is opened only when new council members are installed.

Adventure Hooks

Honour Bound

A freeman has completed his apprenticeship but in the course of doing so has offended one of the Horologists' Wardens. Now, that Warden is using his considerable influence to cast aspersions on the freeman's character and skill as a clockmaker and thereby convince the rest of the Order to vote against his promotion to liveryman. The freeman needs help

to clear his name before the vote so he can gain full admission to the Order and open his own shop. He has promised the characters a greatly reduced rate on clockwork repairs or commissions if they succeed.

Quality Control

The Horologists have developed a few new clockwork items for the War Office and need someone to test them – safely away from London proper, of course. They also need someone expendable in case the weapons misfire! Naturally, the characters would need to keep these advanced clockworks safe from the prying eyes and sticky fingers of the Empire's enemies, too.

Secrets Lost

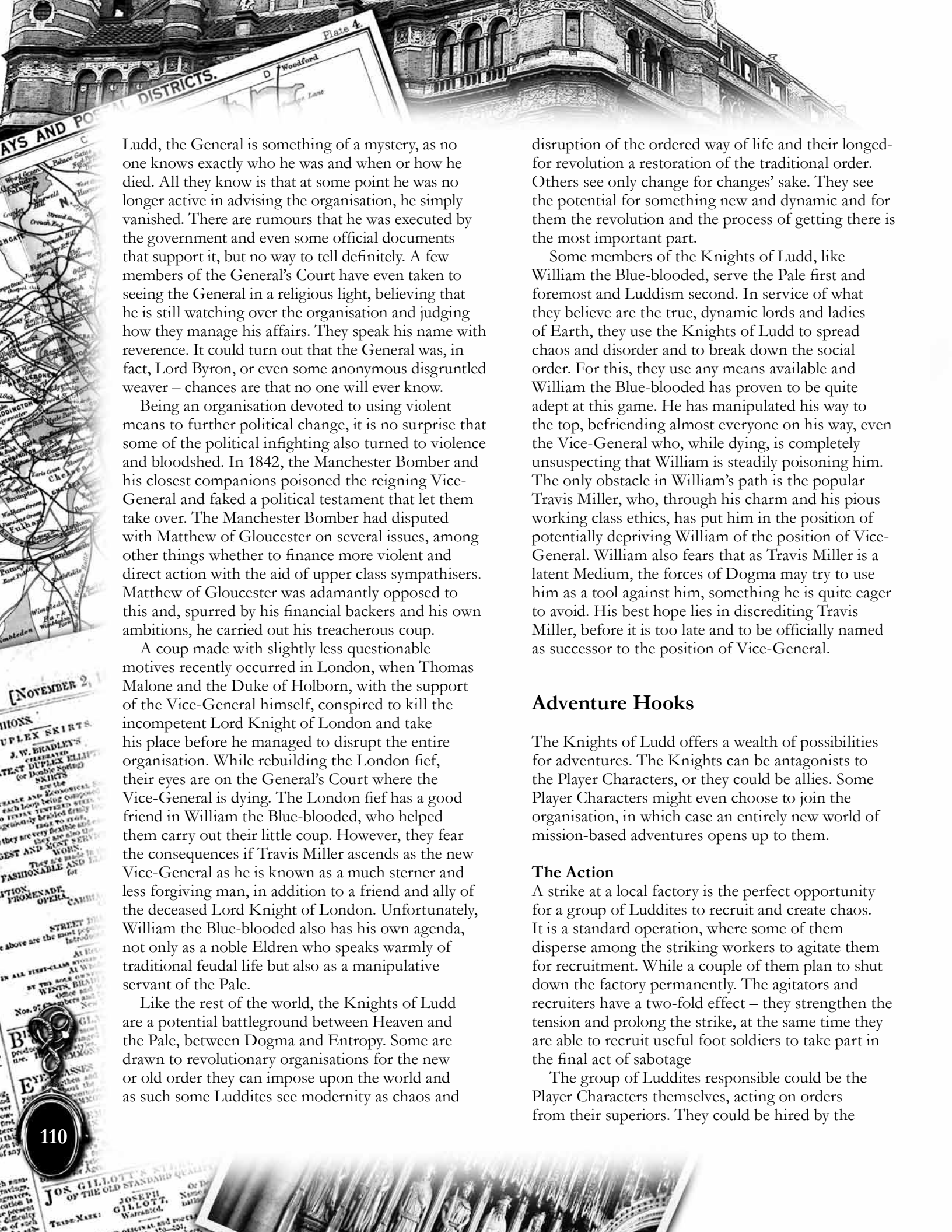
Someone has been breaking into the houses of the Horologists' highest-ranking members – the council that governs the Order itself. Each time, however, the only item missing is a single key – one that, with its counterparts, can open the chest stored in the Horologists' main office in the Guildhall, something the Prime Warden insists must be prevented at all costs.

KNIGHTS OF LUDD

Secrets

The greatest secret of the Knights of Ludd is probably its very existence, a secret they guard zealously. The next greatest secret is the origins of the organisation. From the start, the organisation was mostly Lord Byron's work. The famous poet hoped that through a clandestine group the ideals of the first Luddite revolutionaries might continue to amuse him. For the first years, he was heavily involved in the shaping of the organisation and planning its actions. Through friends and several loans, Lord Byron managed to finance the Knights of Ludd well enough that its leadership was able to move underground successfully and start new lives. This is knowledge imparted from one Vice-General to the next, in a letter that is left behind since the foundation of the organisation detailing the origin and the cause. So, what about General Ned Ludd? Few, if any, alive today can claim to ever have seen or met him and there are those inside and outside the organisation that now believe him to be fictional, an imaginary Robin Hood character that was only used as a rallying call.

Even to the upper echelons of the Knights of



Ludd, the General is something of a mystery, as no one knows exactly who he was and when or how he died. All they know is that at some point he was no longer active in advising the organisation, he simply vanished. There are rumours that he was executed by the government and even some official documents that support it, but no way to tell definitely. A few members of the General's Court have even taken to seeing the General in a religious light, believing that he is still watching over the organisation and judging how they manage his affairs. They speak his name with reverence. It could turn out that the General was, in fact, Lord Byron, or even some anonymous disgruntled weaver – chances are that no one will ever know.

Being an organisation devoted to using violent means to further political change, it is no surprise that some of the political infighting also turned to violence and bloodshed. In 1842, the Manchester Bomber and his closest companions poisoned the reigning Vice-General and faked a political testament that let them take over. The Manchester Bomber had disputed with Matthew of Gloucester on several issues, among other things whether to finance more violent and direct action with the aid of upper class sympathisers. Matthew of Gloucester was adamantly opposed to this and, spurred by his financial backers and his own ambitions, he carried out his treacherous coup.

A coup made with slightly less questionable motives recently occurred in London, when Thomas Malone and the Duke of Holborn, with the support of the Vice-General himself, conspired to kill the incompetent Lord Knight of London and take his place before he managed to disrupt the entire organisation. While rebuilding the London fief, their eyes are on the General's Court where the Vice-General is dying. The London fief has a good friend in William the Blue-blooded, who helped them carry out their little coup. However, they fear the consequences if Travis Miller ascends as the new Vice-General as he is known as a much sterner and less forgiving man, in addition to a friend and ally of the deceased Lord Knight of London. Unfortunately, William the Blue-blooded also has his own agenda, not only as a noble Eldren who speaks warmly of traditional feudal life but also as a manipulative servant of the Pale.

Like the rest of the world, the Knights of Ludd are a potential battleground between Heaven and the Pale, between Dogma and Entropy. Some are drawn to revolutionary organisations for the new or old order they can impose upon the world and as such some Luddites see modernity as chaos and

disruption of the ordered way of life and their longed-for revolution a restoration of the traditional order. Others see only change for changes' sake. They see the potential for something new and dynamic and for them the revolution and the process of getting there is the most important part.

Some members of the Knights of Ludd, like William the Blue-blooded, serve the Pale first and foremost and Luddism second. In service of what they believe are the true, dynamic lords and ladies of Earth, they use the Knights of Ludd to spread chaos and disorder and to break down the social order. For this, they use any means available and William the Blue-blooded has proven to be quite adept at this game. He has manipulated his way to the top, befriend almost everyone on his way, even the Vice-General who, while dying, is completely unsuspecting that William is steadily poisoning him. The only obstacle in William's path is the popular Travis Miller, who, through his charm and his pious working class ethics, has put him in the position of potentially depriving William of the position of Vice-General. William also fears that as Travis Miller is a latent Medium, the forces of Dogma may try to use him as a tool against him, something he is quite eager to avoid. His best hope lies in discrediting Travis Miller, before it is too late and to be officially named as successor to the position of Vice-General.


Adventure Hooks

The Knights of Ludd offers a wealth of possibilities for adventures. The Knights can be antagonists to the Player Characters, or they could be allies. Some Player Characters might even choose to join the organisation, in which case an entirely new world of mission-based adventures opens up to them.

The Action

A strike at a local factory is the perfect opportunity for a group of Luddites to recruit and create chaos. It is a standard operation, where some of them disperse among the striking workers to agitate them for recruitment. While a couple of them plan to shut down the factory permanently. The agitators and recruiters have a two-fold effect – they strengthen the tension and prolong the strike, at the same time they are able to recruit useful foot soldiers to take part in the final act of sabotage

The group of Luddites responsible could be the Player Characters themselves, acting on orders from their superiors. They could be hired by the



factory owners to break up the strike and in the process realise that something is being planned behind the scenes. Another option is to have the Player Characters stumble into it; perhaps they are sympathetic to the striking workers and want to help negotiate. In which case, the Luddites might try to recruit them for the sabotage or to instigate a full-scale revolt – the characters would have to decide where their loyalties lie and just how far they are willing to go on behalf of the striking workers.

That Other Action

Same as above but with some complications. One of the main reasons the workers are striking is that the boiler running the factory machines is overloading. When the workers' warnings went unheard they decided to go on strike, since they fear that the factory is nothing but a death trap. The Knights of Ludd, sympathetic to the workers' plight, are planning to sabotage the boiler in a way that prevents it from blowing up, before it is too late. This is why they are so anxious to be well prepared for the action. They might have an engineer of their own, or they might seek out a trained one. If the characters are guarding the factory, or are in some other way involved in stopping the Luddites, they fight them as necessary but they try to draw attention to the boiler and the severity of the situation in the hope that the Player Characters join them.

When shutting down the boiler the Luddites and/or the Player Characters find it somewhat more difficult than they had thought. The boiler is not just faulty, it has been sabotaged and booby-trapped to keep anyone from tampering with it. Rigged to slowly build up more and more pressure, with several of the valves having been melted shut, tampering with it could cause the boiler to break open and pour out the extremely hot steam trapped within, killing anyone in the immediate area. The situation is, of course, aggravated by the strikers outside fighting with guards or strike-breakers and the threat that at any time someone might burst in to the boiler room. The original saboteurs could even be lurking around the factory and decide to break in again to intervene.

The original saboteurs can be agents of a rival factory owner seeking to discredit his competition, perhaps driven by some personal conflict between the two, or it could be a band of ruthless revolutionary anarchists, who believe workers killed by capitalist inhuman negligence would serve their political cause. They would not be too friendly inclined towards anyone getting in the way of their plans and whoever realises that the boiler has been sabotaged might be

interested in hunting down whoever was responsible, depending on how sympathetic they are towards the would-be victims.

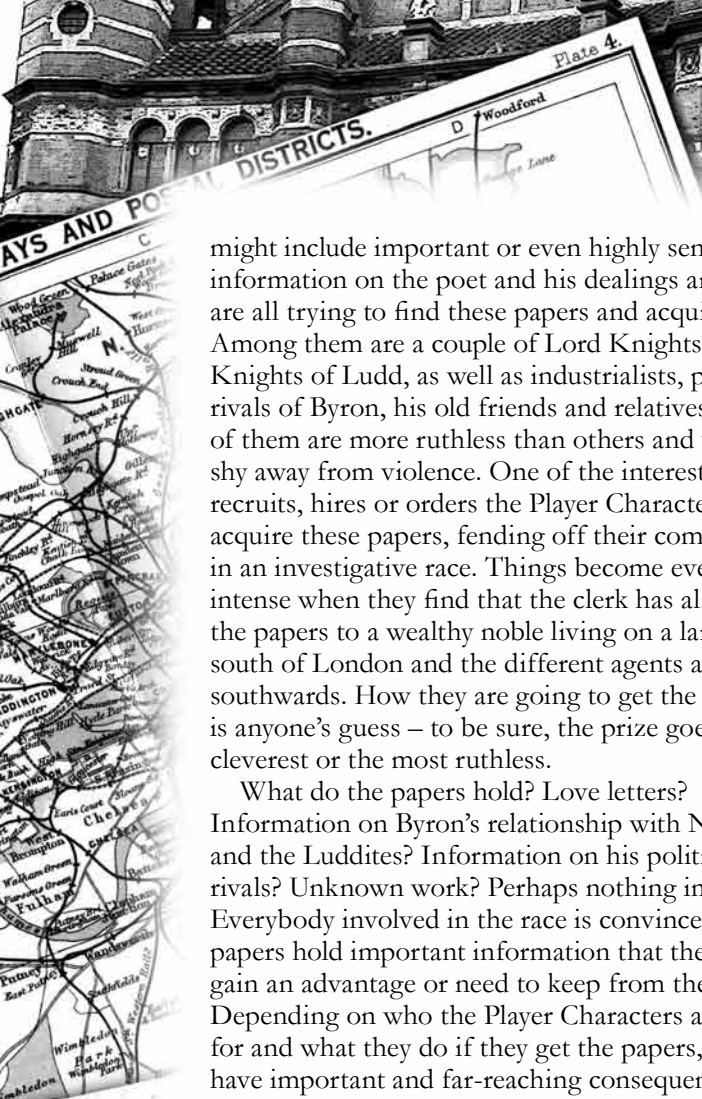
The Industrialist

A Dwarven industrialist fears that he is being targeted by revolutionary workers and hires some muscle to protect him. In fact, the Knights of Ludd are planning to kill him, very soon. Many years ago, when Luddism was in its infancy, the Dwarven industrialist was a young and ambitious entrepreneur in the North, who went to great lengths to secure his fortune, including having disgruntled workers die in rigged accidents and blackmailing his competitors. When General Ned Ludd's men came to town, he manipulated the circumstances so that his rivals felt the brunt of their attacks. Through bribery and trickery, he managed to have the Luddites attack a factory owned by one of these rivals and as they stormed the building he had his henchmen close the gates behind them and set fire to the building. Only a few escaped and his name lived on in infamy among Luddites and now they believe the time has come to for payback. The Luddites are probably particularly keen on setting his London home on fire.

To make things slightly more complicated; in the years since the Luddite revolts and the industrialist making his fortune, he has had a change of heart. Much of this is due to his marriage to the love of his life. His much younger wife is a lower middle-class Dwarven woman, with strong socialist sympathies and she, along with their two children, has softened her husband's ways significantly. Using his significant wealth, he is able to fund soup kitchens for the poor and improve the working conditions of his employees. Over the last few years, he has thus gained a significant reputation as something of a philanthropist. Of course, the upper echelons of the Knights of Ludd are sure that beneath the friendly exterior still rests a ruthless murderer and have ordered him killed – but are they correct? The Player Characters can get involved, either as his hired muscles or as agents of the Knights of Ludd. If they are hired muscle, they should be aware that he is a philanthropist but during the course of the adventure they should learn about his dark past and start to doubt their employer.

Byron's Secret

Rumours that a clerk has come in possession of a stack of papers belonging to the late Lord Byron have people all over London scrambling for position. Several parties have reasons to believe that the papers



might include important or even highly sensational information on the poet and his dealings and they are all trying to find these papers and acquire them. Among them are a couple of Lord Knights of the Knights of Ludd, as well as industrialists, political rivals of Byron, his old friends and relatives. Some of them are more ruthless than others and will not shy away from violence. One of the interested parties recruits, hires or orders the Player Characters to acquire these papers, fending off their competitors in an investigative race. Things become even more intense when they find that the clerk has already sold the papers to a wealthy noble living on a large estate south of London and the different agents all flock southwards. How they are going to get the papers is anyone's guess – to be sure, the prize goes to the cleverest or the most ruthless.

What do the papers hold? Love letters? Information on Byron's relationship with Ned Ludd and the Luddites? Information on his political rivals? Unknown work? Perhaps nothing important. Everybody involved in the race is convinced that the papers hold important information that they need to gain an advantage or need to keep from the public. Depending on who the Player Characters are working for and what they do if they get the papers, it might have important and far-reaching consequences.

CHAPTER 4 – ARCANE SHADOWS

FELLOWSHIP OF THE RED PHARAOH

Secrets

An arcane association like the Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh thrives on secrets: the mysterious identities of those overseeing the bands of thugs kept at the outermost fringes of the organisation's operations; the hidden powers of those truly manipulating the lesser minions; the closely guarded magical artefacts and unfathomable experiments intended to empower the group to world dominance. Those ruthless individuals in contact with the triumvirate controlling the Fellowship's operations in England often ponder the true origins of Professor el-Kheir, Mr. Thoth, and Al-Gareeb, as well as their secretive connections back in Egypt.


The ultimate goal of the god Set who manipulates his followers through ambitions of 'liberating' Egypt, remains one of complete world apocalypse. Though resurrecting an Egyptian Empire remains a key step in the process, Set ultimately seeks to plunge civilisation into chaos and transform the entire earth into a vast, scorched desert. The malevolent god communicates his often cryptic commands through visions, dreams, omens and prophecies, subtly manipulating his followers along carefully devised plans with unforeseen, cataclysmic consequences. The Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh and Servitors of Set believe they are working toward world domination but they cannot comprehend that their efforts may ultimately lead to world annihilation.

el-Kheir's Book of the Dead

The Fellowship's current magical experimentation focuses on an Ancient Egyptian papyrus el-Kheir and his minions recently acquired from a now-deceased collector in the English countryside. The previous owner thought he had bought a typical scroll from the Cairo bazaar, a souvenir of his holiday in Egypt, but in fact, he obtained an intact Book of the Dead inscribed specifically for a powerful individual: Maatseti (literally 'Justice of Set'), high priest of Set



[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]
DUPLICATIONS
J. W. BRADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS
FOR THE
ECONOMICAL
each loop being con-
siderably strengthened
by the use of the
double spring, and
they are very flexible and
they are also the
BEST AND MOST DURABLE
WOOL.
They are made in
FASHIONABLE AND
FOR
STREET DRIVING
above are the most popular
introduced
ALL THE
BY THE SOLE OWNERS
WESTON, BLAIR &
Office and
No. 97, Chancery Lane, New
BIRMINGHAM
EYE GLASSES
JOSEPH GILLOTT'S STAMPS
OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY
TRADE MARK: JOSEPH GILLOTT, Waterbury.
ORIGINAL and PURELY
No. 501.



during the reign of his illustrious master, Ramses the Great. The 4,000-year-old papyrus holds the key to successfully reviving a properly prepared corpse.

Professor el-Kheir knows the location of Maatseti's mummified body. Before he retrieves it, he intends to explore all the scroll's ancient mysteries, testing spells and incantations on unwilling victims and their carefully mummified corpses. If successful, he intends to steal Maatseti's body and resurrect the high priest to serve as an influential ally who can bring the full power of his ancient knowledge to bear against Egypt's enemies.

The papyrus never leaves the Fellowship's deepest sanctuary. It rests in a locked vault hidden behind the great statue of Set presiding over the temple. Those who fail to engage the safety latch, however, risk triggering two traps meant to kill thieves: a basket full of cobras spills onto their heads from a hidden compartment above the vault; and the gates to the hippopotamus and crocodile pens adjacent to the temple open, allowing the beasts to roam the sanctuary and attack intruders.

The Professor copied the entire text along with his notes into a book he keeps locked in the safe of his Bloomsbury townhouse. He consults this copy when conducting research at home and refers to the original during his infrequent visits to the hidden temple. Those foolish enough to waylay him on the street find his briefcase contains only odd phrases in hieroglyphics and cryptic notes written in code.

More detail on el-Kheir's plans can be found in *Streets of Shadow*, an adventure book for *Victoriana* that includes an updated version of the adventure Rise of the Red God.

Adventure Hooks

The Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh labours to keep its existence as secret as possible while still pursuing its goals within London. Evidence of its activities surfaces in subtle, indirect plots gutter runners might discover and expose:

Alligators in the Sewers

Following rumours of strange disappearances near the docks, sewers and banks of the Thames, the characters discover and must deal with a giant crocodile that has somehow escaped from the zoo and taken residence in the sewers beneath the city.

The Full Set

The British Museum hires the heroes to retrieve several crates stolen from the dockyards by what seemed like common ruffians. The cargo contained artefacts shipped back from a recent expedition to Egypt. Upon recovering them, they discover two identical sets of items, one forged and one real, and both the object of a vengeful collector bent on retrieving them.

Crimes of the Ancients

The characters investigate the murder of a prominent antiquities dealer with shadowy ties to a mysterious criminal syndicate trafficking in both fake and authentic Egyptian treasures. Clues lead to several prominent officials at the British Museum, Foreign Office, Scotland Yard and the shipping companies, all involved in an artefact-smuggling ring.

Indecent Behaviour

Those with ties to the Foreign Office might receive a request to investigate the comings and goings of a high-level clerk suspected of leaking sensitive information. The clerk belongs to el-Kheir's circle of enthusiasts seeking to contact ancient spirits through séances who instead fell under the Professor's influence. The heroes must determine the extent of the clerk's involvement and gather evidence of el-Kheir's treachery.

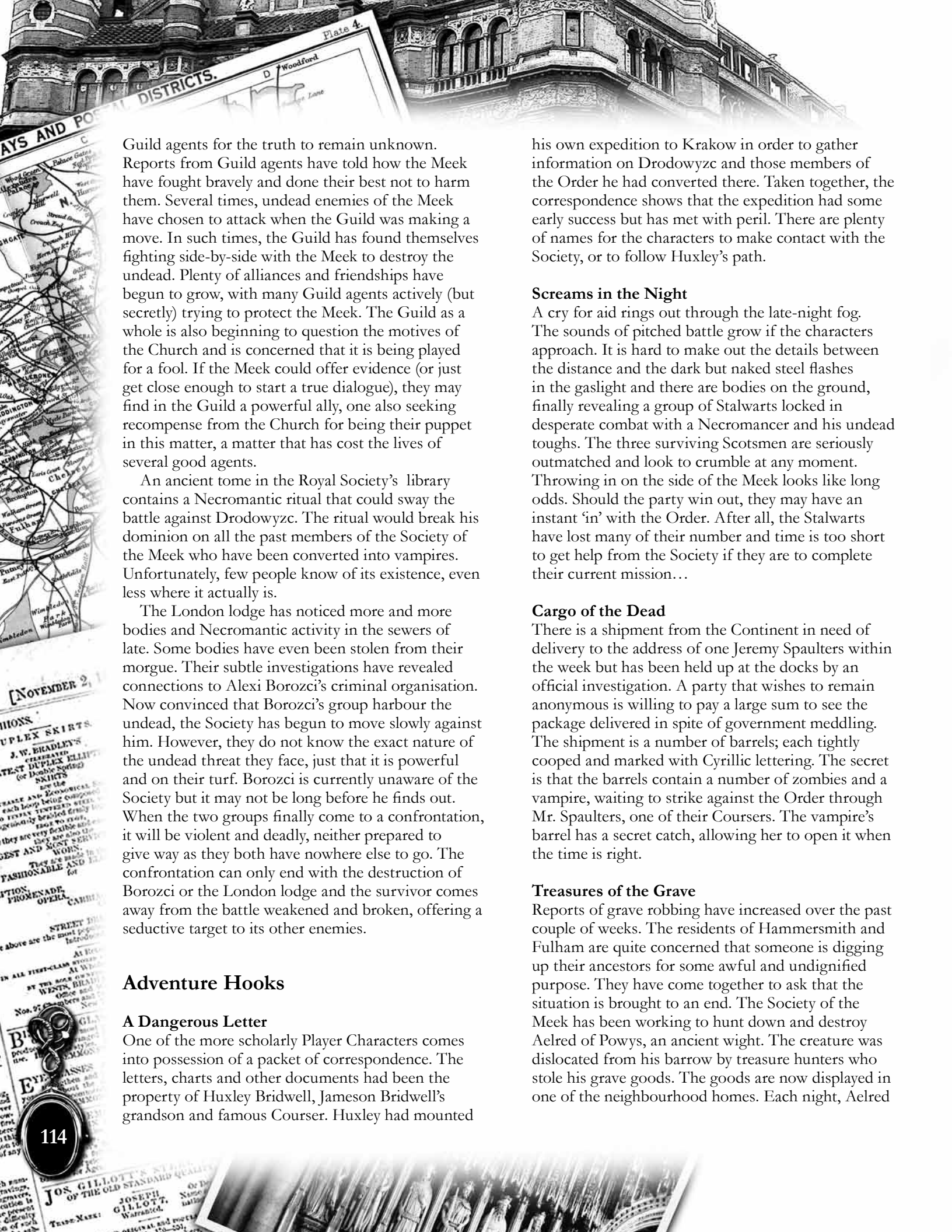
THE OBSERVANT SOCIETY OF THE MECK

Secrets

Burgess Rasmussen delved too far into the secrets of Necromancy. He has fallen under the dominion of Pallius, a powerful and ancient Liche. Now, Burgess works to enact a ritual to release the monster from his Roman-era tomb beneath the city. Burgess has a number of restricted Necromantic spells at his disposal.

Cosmo McAllister is a Scottish separatist. He bides his time with the Meek in order to gain enough support to strike a solid blow against the Royalty and the British government.

Relations with the Guild are not quite as bad as they appear. Officially, the Guild considers the Meek to be a cult of Necromancers. However, there have been too many encounters between Meek and



Guild agents for the truth to remain unknown. Reports from Guild agents have told how the Meek have fought bravely and done their best not to harm them. Several times, undead enemies of the Meek have chosen to attack when the Guild was making a move. In such times, the Guild has found themselves fighting side-by-side with the Meek to destroy the undead. Plenty of alliances and friendships have begun to grow, with many Guild agents actively (but secretly) trying to protect the Meek. The Guild as a whole is also beginning to question the motives of the Church and is concerned that it is being played for a fool. If the Meek could offer evidence (or just get close enough to start a true dialogue), they may find in the Guild a powerful ally, one also seeking recompense from the Church for being their puppet in this matter, a matter that has cost the lives of several good agents.

An ancient tome in the Royal Society's library contains a Necromantic ritual that could sway the battle against Drodowyc. The ritual would break his dominion on all the past members of the Society of the Meek who have been converted into vampires. Unfortunately, few people know of its existence, even less where it actually is.

The London lodge has noticed more and more bodies and Necromantic activity in the sewers of late. Some bodies have even been stolen from their morgue. Their subtle investigations have revealed connections to Alexi Borozci's criminal organisation. Now convinced that Borozci's group harbour the undead, the Society has begun to move slowly against him. However, they do not know the exact nature of the undead threat they face, just that it is powerful and on their turf. Borozci is currently unaware of the Society but it may not be long before he finds out. When the two groups finally come to a confrontation, it will be violent and deadly, neither prepared to give way as they both have nowhere else to go. The confrontation can only end with the destruction of Borozci or the London lodge and the survivor comes away from the battle weakened and broken, offering a seductive target to its other enemies.

Adventure Hooks

A Dangerous Letter

One of the more scholarly Player Characters comes into possession of a packet of correspondence. The letters, charts and other documents had been the property of Huxley Bridwell, Jameson Bridwell's grandson and famous Courser. Huxley had mounted

his own expedition to Krakow in order to gather information on Drodowyc and those members of the Order he had converted there. Taken together, the correspondence shows that the expedition had some early success but has met with peril. There are plenty of names for the characters to make contact with the Society, or to follow Huxley's path.

Screams in the Night


A cry for aid rings out through the late-night fog. The sounds of pitched battle grow if the characters approach. It is hard to make out the details between the distance and the dark but naked steel flashes in the gaslight and there are bodies on the ground, finally revealing a group of Stalwarts locked in desperate combat with a Necromancer and his undead toughs. The three surviving Scotsmen are seriously outmatched and look to crumble at any moment. Throwing in on the side of the Meek looks like long odds. Should the party win out, they may have an instant 'in' with the Order. After all, the Stalwarts have lost many of their number and time is too short to get help from the Society if they are to complete their current mission...

Cargo of the Dead

There is a shipment from the Continent in need of delivery to the address of one Jeremy Spaulters within the week but has been held up at the docks by an official investigation. A party that wishes to remain anonymous is willing to pay a large sum to see the package delivered in spite of government meddling. The shipment is a number of barrels; each tightly cooped and marked with Cyrillic lettering. The secret is that the barrels contain a number of zombies and a vampire, waiting to strike against the Order through Mr. Spaulters, one of their Coursers. The vampire's barrel has a secret catch, allowing her to open it when the time is right.

Treasures of the Grave

Reports of grave robbing have increased over the past couple of weeks. The residents of Hammersmith and Fulham are quite concerned that someone is digging up their ancestors for some awful and undignified purpose. They have come together to ask that the situation is brought to an end. The Society of the Meek has been working to hunt down and destroy Aelred of Powys, an ancient wight. The creature was dislocated from his barrow by treasure hunters who stole his grave goods. The goods are now displayed in one of the neighbourhood homes. Each night, Aelred



rises to search for his treasures, chief among them a gold and copper axe-head. Each night, the Society searches for the corpse that the wight has infested so that they can put an end to it. Aelred was a powerful knight and warlord in life. Given time, he may raise a new army from those resting in the earth of the city to claim what is his.

A Sudden Chill

One of the archivists at the Royal Society's library has fallen ill. The illness came quite suddenly and the Player Characters are asked by friends and family to find a cure. The illness gives the victim a death-like pallor and weakens them terribly. The characters might have been called on for their medical knowledge or their skill with strange occurrences.

The truth is that the archivist recently handled the dark Necromantic book containing the ritual that might break Drodowyc's power. Even touching the book has placed a nasty curse on the poor archivist. Can the Player Characters find the cause, which may contain the detail of the cure as well? Will they destroy the book out of hand, not realising its importance? Will its strange Necromantic power corrupt them too?

THE SECRET CARNIVAL

Secrets

The barrier between good and evil is not always so clear and defined. In the darker days before heaven and hell, the forces of Order and Chaos clashed. Neither was good or evil but each held the potential for both. As mankind changed and the easier morality of good and evil came to hold sway the old powers faded but never left.

The old ways of Order and Chaos did not vanish entirely; instead, they sunk away into the ancient places, gradually forgotten. In his younger days, Paul Bartholomew Johnson travelled extensively. Like most young men of his class, he embarked on a voyage around the world with an older relation, that he might see the Empire. As a scion of upper class society, he was already well versed in the lore of magic and he was eager to discover more. Under the guardianship of his uncle, himself a respected Guild member, Paul visited the ancient places of the world seeking learning and diversion.

It was in India that things went wrong. On a trip out into the wilds of India, Paul and his uncle

came across an ancient temple, its worn figures and stonework covered in vines. Paul cannot remember what happened next. All he knows is that inside the temple he came across a book as old as the temple, its fragile pages protected by fading magic he could not recognise. Only Paul left the temple. He does not know what happened to his uncle, whether there was an accident, if he fell afoul of some magical trap, or even if Paul himself killed him. When he returned to civilisation, Paul declared his uncle had died when part of the temple collapsed. As he was a nobleman, no one questioned his word.

From that moment on, Paul's attention was focussed only on the book. He kept it hidden, knowing it was ancient lore, magic from the time of Chaos. It gradually took a toll on his mind, and eventually his family became concerned for his mental health. However, before anything could be done, there was a terrible fire in the family home.

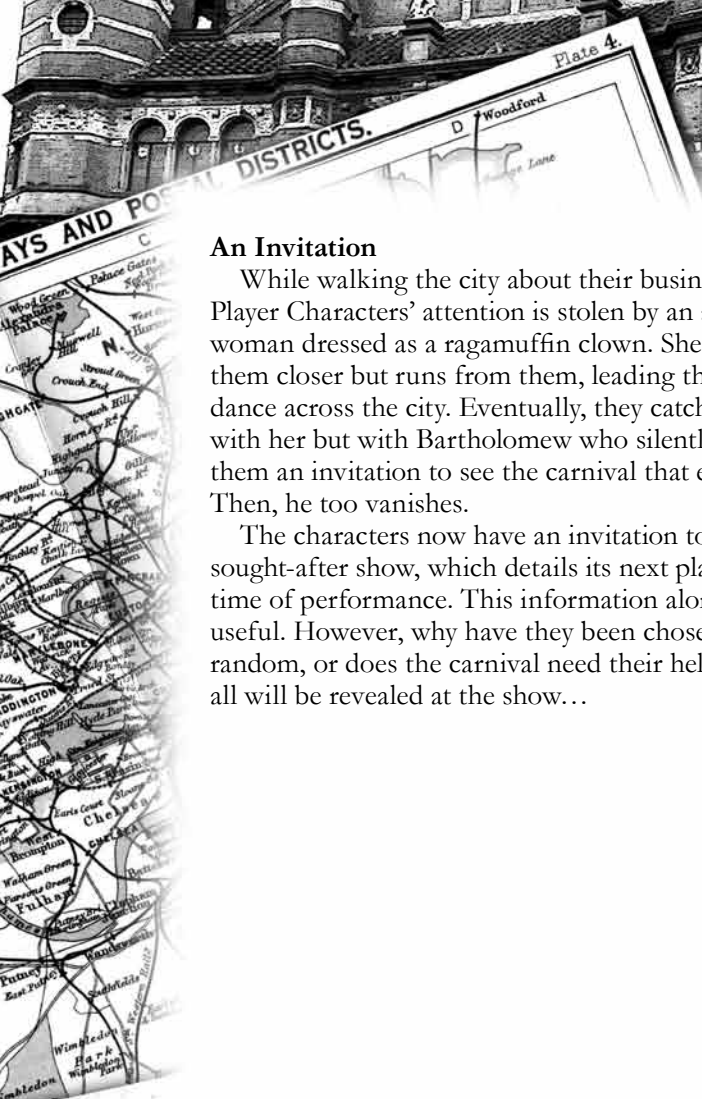
Paul was the only survivor again but instead of taking over the remains of the family fortune he used the opportunity to leave society for good. He reinvented himself as Bartholomew and began the carnival so that he might experiment with the powers of Chaos magic he had learnt.

Bartholomew does not seek just to shock and dismay the audience. He has learnt enough about the ancient magic for the performance itself to be one big ritual. The effects are magical but very subtle and the Chaos sorcery invoked is random and unpredictable. For now, it just twists the nature of those it affects, warping their sense of order, breaking down the barriers that protect people from their own inner chaos. At present, this is all that Bartholomew has learnt to do but as his knowledge increases, he may return an entirely new but wholly ancient form of magic into the world.

Adventure Hooks

The Lady Vanishes

The Player Characters are employed by a wealthy upper class gentleman to escort him and his wife to the carnival. They are eager to see the new spectacle but sensible enough to worry that they might fall afoul of the wrong sort of people. Unfortunately, they are correct. Trusting to the abilities of the characters to protect them against the impossible, they both end up lost in the crowd. While the gentleman is quickly located, his wife is nowhere to be seen. Has she simply wandered too far and found some enticing spectacle, or are some carny folk taking advantage of her?



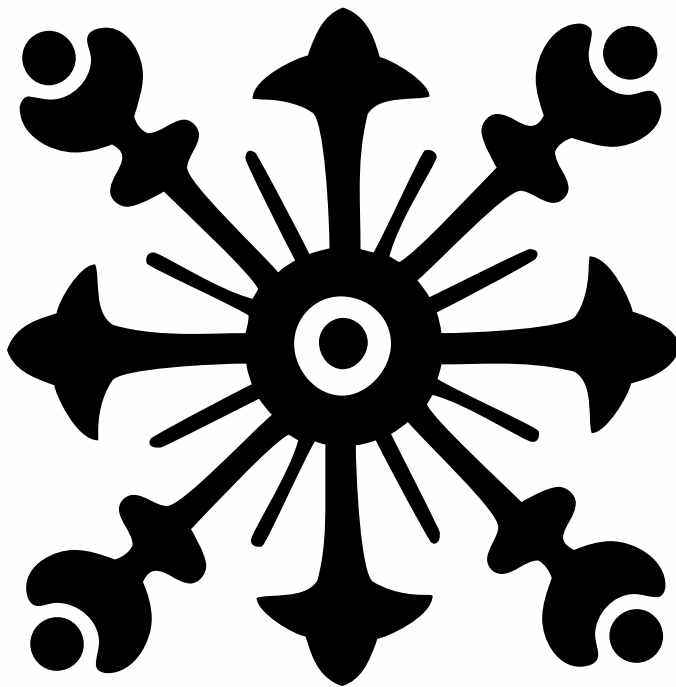
An Invitation

While walking the city about their business, the Player Characters' attention is stolen by an attractive woman dressed as a ragamuffin clown. She beckons them closer but runs from them, leading them on a dance across the city. Eventually, they catch up not with her but with Bartholomew who silently hands them an invitation to see the carnival that evening. Then, he too vanishes.

The characters now have an invitation to the sought-after show, which details its next place and time of performance. This information alone is useful. However, why have they been chosen? Was it random, or does the carnival need their help? Perhaps all will be revealed at the show...

Among the Thieves

Bartholomew has a problem. One of the outer carny folk turned up dead recently, the story being he got drunk after a very good haul at the latest show and got into a fight with the wrong person. Bartholomew thinks this is a lie. The carny in question came to him the previous day saying he wanted to talk about Troggart, that he had some information. Bartholomew cannot investigate using his own people, as Troggart knows them all. He needs someone outside the carnival to look into the matter and to find out if there is anything he can use to remove Troggart. That is where the Player Characters come in, and Bartholomew can offer money, contacts or tickets to the show if they can find out. Did the murdered carny actually know something, or is the whole thing a plan by Troggart to see what he can get away with? If the dead carny did know something, what was it, and is there any evidence? However, for all those questions, the first that needs answering is how to get close enough to the carny folk to get some answers.

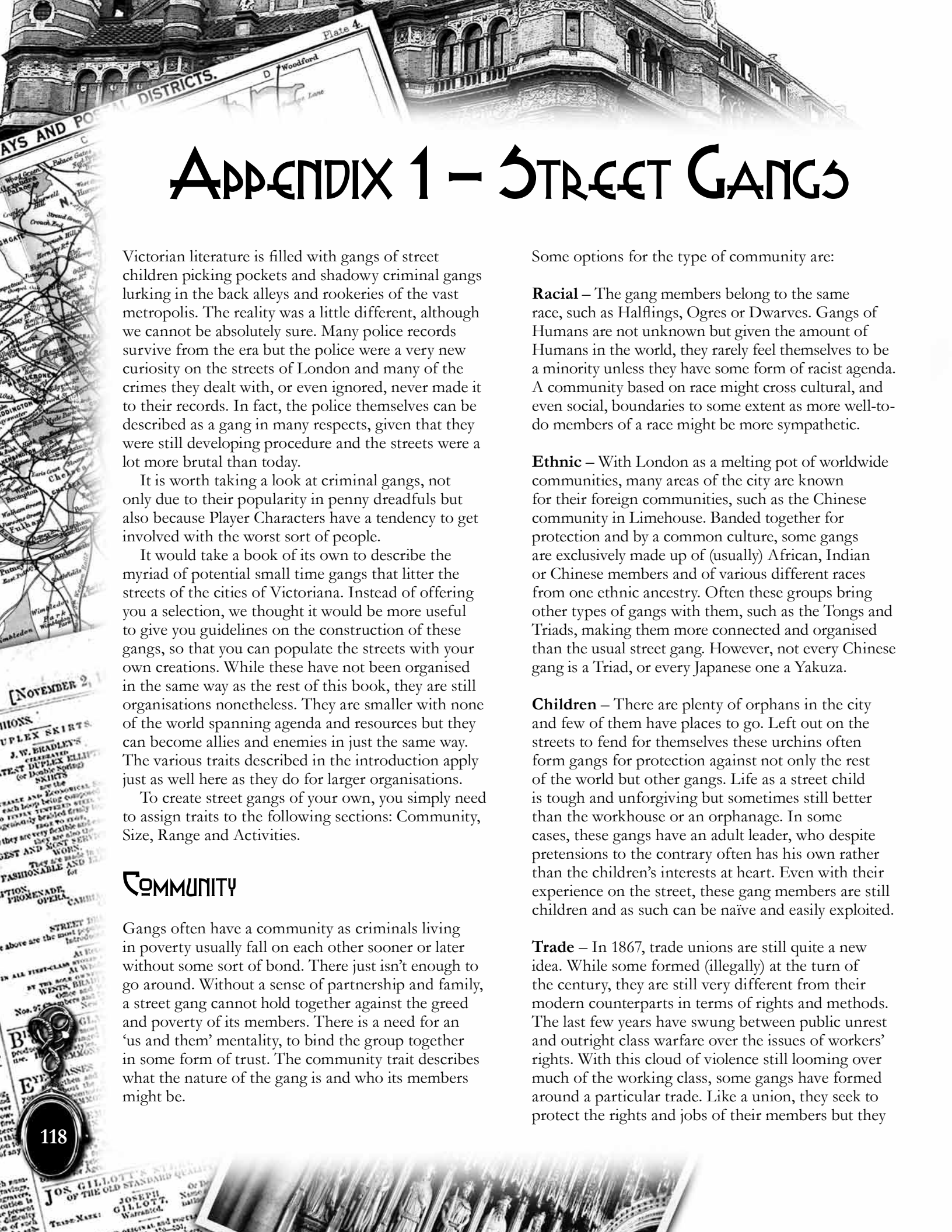




APPENDICES

STREET GANGS AND NPCs

“You’ve got to pick a pocket or two,
boys. You’ve got to pick a pocket or two.”
- Fagin, *Oliver Twist*



APPENDIX 1 – STREET GANGS

Victorian literature is filled with gangs of street children picking pockets and shadowy criminal gangs lurking in the back alleys and rookeries of the vast metropolis. The reality was a little different, although we cannot be absolutely sure. Many police records survive from the era but the police were a very new curiosity on the streets of London and many of the crimes they dealt with, or even ignored, never made it to their records. In fact, the police themselves can be described as a gang in many respects, given that they were still developing procedure and the streets were a lot more brutal than today.

It is worth taking a look at criminal gangs, not only due to their popularity in penny dreadfuls but also because Player Characters have a tendency to get involved with the worst sort of people.

It would take a book of its own to describe the myriad of potential small time gangs that litter the streets of the cities of Victoriana. Instead of offering you a selection, we thought it would be more useful to give you guidelines on the construction of these gangs, so that you can populate the streets with your own creations. While these have not been organised in the same way as the rest of this book, they are still organisations nonetheless. They are smaller with none of the world spanning agenda and resources but they can become allies and enemies in just the same way. The various traits described in the introduction apply just as well here as they do for larger organisations.

To create street gangs of your own, you simply need to assign traits to the following sections: Community, Size, Range and Activities.

COMMUNITY

Gangs often have a community as criminals living in poverty usually fall on each other sooner or later without some sort of bond. There just isn't enough to go around. Without a sense of partnership and family, a street gang cannot hold together against the greed and poverty of its members. There is a need for an 'us and them' mentality, to bind the group together in some form of trust. The community trait describes what the nature of the gang is and who its members might be.

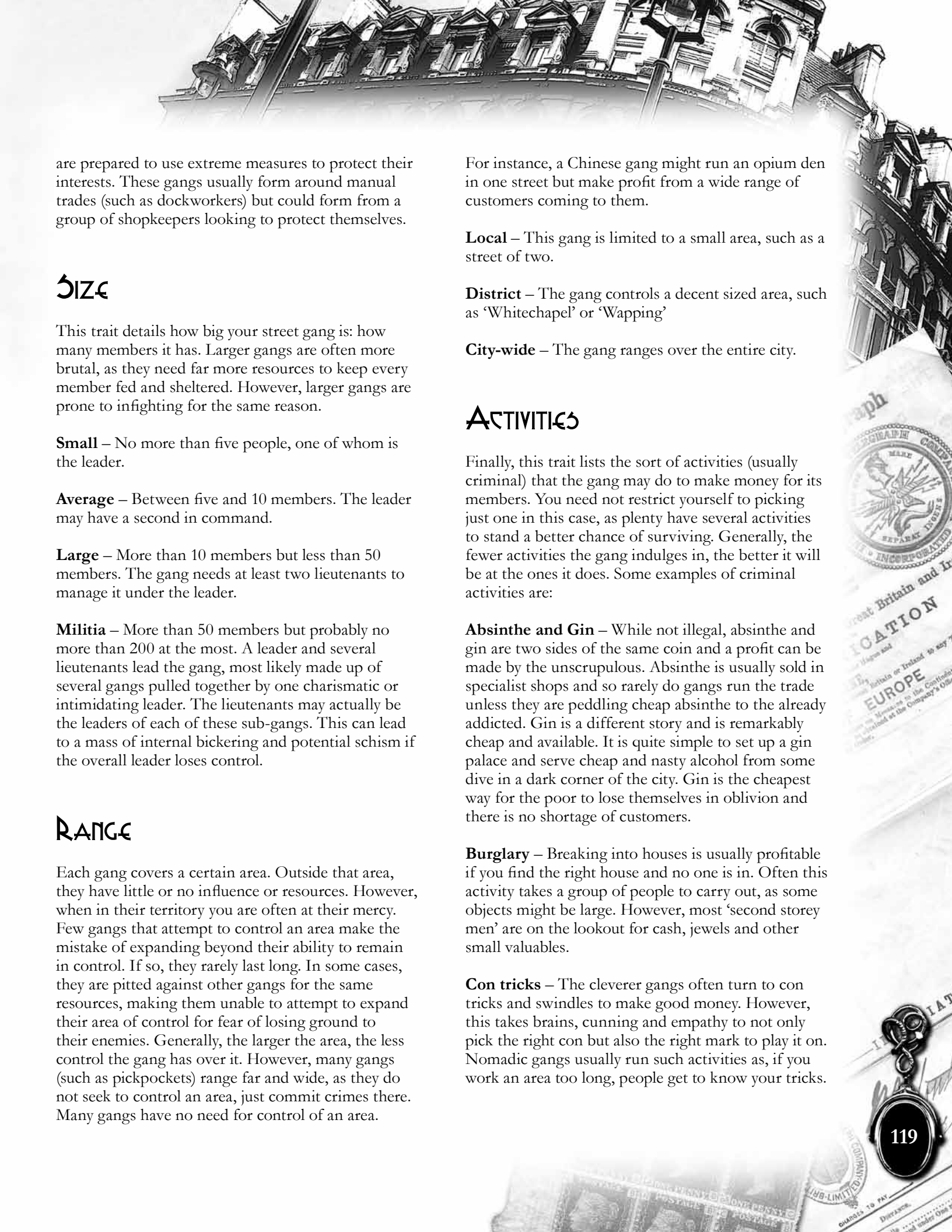
Some options for the type of community are:

Racial – The gang members belong to the same race, such as Halflings, Ogres or Dwarves. Gangs of Humans are not unknown but given the amount of Humans in the world, they rarely feel themselves to be a minority unless they have some form of racist agenda. A community based on race might cross cultural, and even social, boundaries to some extent as more well-to-do members of a race might be more sympathetic.

Ethnic – With London as a melting pot of worldwide communities, many areas of the city are known for their foreign communities, such as the Chinese community in Limehouse. Banded together for protection and by a common culture, some gangs are exclusively made up of (usually) African, Indian or Chinese members and of various different races from one ethnic ancestry. Often these groups bring other types of gangs with them, such as the Tongs and Triads, making them more connected and organised than the usual street gang. However, not every Chinese gang is a Triad, or every Japanese one a Yakuza.

Children – There are plenty of orphans in the city and few of them have places to go. Left out on the streets to fend for themselves these urchins often form gangs for protection against not only the rest of the world but other gangs. Life as a street child is tough and unforgiving but sometimes still better than the workhouse or an orphanage. In some cases, these gangs have an adult leader, who despite pretensions to the contrary often has his own rather than the children's interests at heart. Even with their experience on the street, these gang members are still children and as such can be naïve and easily exploited.

Trade – In 1867, trade unions are still quite a new idea. While some formed (illegally) at the turn of the century, they are still very different from their modern counterparts in terms of rights and methods. The last few years have swung between public unrest and outright class warfare over the issues of workers' rights. With this cloud of violence still looming over much of the working class, some gangs have formed around a particular trade. Like a union, they seek to protect the rights and jobs of their members but they



are prepared to use extreme measures to protect their interests. These gangs usually form around manual trades (such as dockworkers) but could form from a group of shopkeepers looking to protect themselves.

SIZE

This trait details how big your street gang is: how many members it has. Larger gangs are often more brutal, as they need far more resources to keep every member fed and sheltered. However, larger gangs are prone to infighting for the same reason.

Small – No more than five people, one of whom is the leader.

Average – Between five and 10 members. The leader may have a second in command.

Large – More than 10 members but less than 50 members. The gang needs at least two lieutenants to manage it under the leader.

Militia – More than 50 members but probably no more than 200 at the most. A leader and several lieutenants lead the gang, most likely made up of several gangs pulled together by one charismatic or intimidating leader. The lieutenants may actually be the leaders of each of these sub-gangs. This can lead to a mass of internal bickering and potential schism if the overall leader loses control.

RANGE

Each gang covers a certain area. Outside that area, they have little or no influence or resources. However, when in their territory you are often at their mercy. Few gangs that attempt to control an area make the mistake of expanding beyond their ability to remain in control. If so, they rarely last long. In some cases, they are pitted against other gangs for the same resources, making them unable to attempt to expand their area of control for fear of losing ground to their enemies. Generally, the larger the area, the less control the gang has over it. However, many gangs (such as pickpockets) range far and wide, as they do not seek to control an area, just commit crimes there. Many gangs have no need for control of an area.

For instance, a Chinese gang might run an opium den in one street but make profit from a wide range of customers coming to them.

Local – This gang is limited to a small area, such as a street or two.

District – The gang controls a decent sized area, such as ‘Whitechapel’ or ‘Wapping’

City-wide – The gang ranges over the entire city.

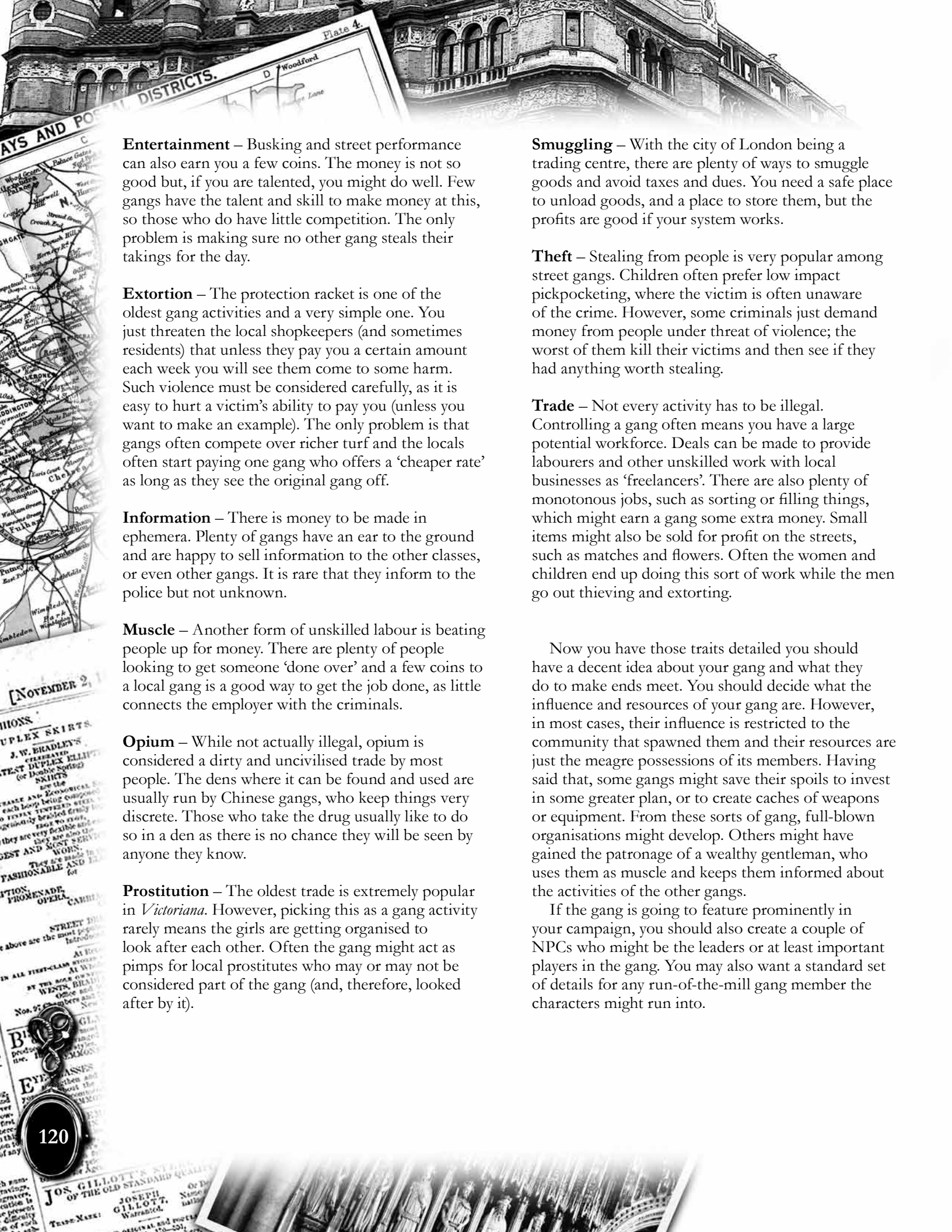
ACTIVITIES

Finally, this trait lists the sort of activities (usually criminal) that the gang may do to make money for its members. You need not restrict yourself to picking just one in this case, as plenty have several activities to stand a better chance of surviving. Generally, the fewer activities the gang indulges in, the better it will be at the ones it does. Some examples of criminal activities are:

Absinthe and Gin – While not illegal, absinthe and gin are two sides of the same coin and a profit can be made by the unscrupulous. Absinthe is usually sold in specialist shops and so rarely do gangs run the trade unless they are peddling cheap absinthe to the already addicted. Gin is a different story and is remarkably cheap and available. It is quite simple to set up a gin palace and serve cheap and nasty alcohol from some dive in a dark corner of the city. Gin is the cheapest way for the poor to lose themselves in oblivion and there is no shortage of customers.

Burglary – Breaking into houses is usually profitable if you find the right house and no one is in. Often this activity takes a group of people to carry out, as some objects might be large. However, most ‘second storey men’ are on the lookout for cash, jewels and other small valuables.

Con tricks – The cleverer gangs often turn to con tricks and swindles to make good money. However, this takes brains, cunning and empathy to not only pick the right con but also the right mark to play it on. Nomadic gangs usually run such activities as, if you work an area too long, people get to know your tricks.



Entertainment – Busking and street performance can also earn you a few coins. The money is not so good but, if you are talented, you might do well. Few gangs have the talent and skill to make money at this, so those who do have little competition. The only problem is making sure no other gang steals their takings for the day.

Extortion – The protection racket is one of the oldest gang activities and a very simple one. You just threaten the local shopkeepers (and sometimes residents) that unless they pay you a certain amount each week you will see them come to some harm. Such violence must be considered carefully, as it is easy to hurt a victim's ability to pay you (unless you want to make an example). The only problem is that gangs often compete over richer turf and the locals often start paying one gang who offers a 'cheaper rate' as long as they see the original gang off.

Information – There is money to be made in ephemera. Plenty of gangs have an ear to the ground and are happy to sell information to the other classes, or even other gangs. It is rare that they inform to the police but not unknown.

Muscle – Another form of unskilled labour is beating people up for money. There are plenty of people looking to get someone 'done over' and a few coins to a local gang is a good way to get the job done, as little connects the employer with the criminals.

Opium – While not actually illegal, opium is considered a dirty and uncivilised trade by most people. The dens where it can be found and used are usually run by Chinese gangs, who keep things very discrete. Those who take the drug usually like to do so in a den as there is no chance they will be seen by anyone they know.

Prostitution – The oldest trade is extremely popular in *Victoriana*. However, picking this as a gang activity rarely means the girls are getting organised to look after each other. Often the gang might act as pimps for local prostitutes who may or may not be considered part of the gang (and, therefore, looked after by it).

Smuggling – With the city of London being a trading centre, there are plenty of ways to smuggle goods and avoid taxes and dues. You need a safe place to unload goods, and a place to store them, but the profits are good if your system works.

Theft – Stealing from people is very popular among street gangs. Children often prefer low impact pickpocketing, where the victim is often unaware of the crime. However, some criminals just demand money from people under threat of violence; the worst of them kill their victims and then see if they had anything worth stealing.

Trade – Not every activity has to be illegal. Controlling a gang often means you have a large potential workforce. Deals can be made to provide labourers and other unskilled work with local businesses as 'freelancers'. There are also plenty of monotonous jobs, such as sorting or filling things, which might earn a gang some extra money. Small items might also be sold for profit on the streets, such as matches and flowers. Often the women and children end up doing this sort of work while the men go out thieving and extorting.

Now you have those traits detailed you should have a decent idea about your gang and what they do to make ends meet. You should decide what the influence and resources of your gang are. However, in most cases, their influence is restricted to the community that spawned them and their resources are just the meagre possessions of its members. Having said that, some gangs might save their spoils to invest in some greater plan, or to create caches of weapons or equipment. From these sorts of gang, full-blown organisations might develop. Others might have gained the patronage of a wealthy gentleman, who uses them as muscle and keeps them informed about the activities of the other gangs.

If the gang is going to feature prominently in your campaign, you should also create a couple of NPCs who might be the leaders or at least important players in the gang. You may also want a standard set of details for any run-of-the-mill gang member the characters might run into.

APPENDIX 2 - NPC CREATION REVISED

As you can see, we had to create quite a few NPCs for this book. To help the Gamemaster create the statistics for her creations more easily, it seemed a good idea to take another look at NPC creation and summarise it here. Don't worry, we haven't changed anything! Instead, here is a slightly more detailed look at the process, with everything in one place so you need not keep track of different pages in the Core Rulebook when making your NPCs.

Let's take one of the characters from Chapter 1 as an example as we go through things. You can create a character following these simple steps quite swiftly, and we've reprinted the tables here to help.

Mallerton Smythe Rank 17 Eldren Medium (Generalist)

Physical Competence: +5*

Mental Competence: +10

Initiative: 6*

Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)

Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)

Signature Skills: Channelling Medium +4, Etiquette +3, High Society +3, Perception +2, Sensate Medium +4, Thaumaturgy +1

Traits: Cantankerous +3, Privileged +4

Special Abilities: Any Sensate or Channelling Medium ability and at least five Thaumaturgy spells of the Gamemaster's choice

Combat Abilities: Too old to fight, insists someone else does it for him

*reduced due to old age

Mallerton Smythe Rank 17 Eldren Medium (Generalist)

The title bar details the name, rank, race, type of NPC and gives them a concept 'hook', in this case 'Medium'. There are three types of NPC, Generalist, Focussed and Specialist. You should pick one of these to tailor the competences of the NPC but Generalist is a good default. As the Gamemaster, you already know who this person is but giving them a 'tag' helps you find them among your listings of adversaries.

Physical Competence: +5*

Mental Competence: +10

The competences are noted in the table on p324 of the Core Rulebook and reprinted here for convenience. Just find the two numbers in the table

defined by rank and type of NPC (both of which are up to you as the Gamemaster). The numbers can be either Mental or Physical competence, depending on which you think the NPC favours more. However, you need not be too constrained by the table. If you think the NPC needs more or less of one or the other, they adjust them as you see fit. Common things to modify such competences are the age of the character as well as their race. Optional modifiers for race are detailed below (from Core Rulebook page 322).

NPC COMPETENCES TABLE

Rank	Competences			
	Generalist	Focussed	Specialist	Mob
1	+2/+2	+3/+1	+3/+1	+5/+0
2	+3/+2	+3/+2	+4/+1	+6/+0
3	+3/+3	+4/+2	+5/+1	+6/+1
4	+4/+3	+5/+2	+6/+1	+7/+1
5	+4/+4	+5/+3	+6/+2	+8/+1
6	+5/+4	+6/+3	+7/+2	+9/+1
7	+5/+5	+6/+4	+8/+2	+9/+2
8	+6/+5	+7/+4	+9/+2	+10/+2
9	+6/+6	+8/+4	+9/+3	+11/+2
10	+7/+6	+8/+5	+10/+3	+12/+2
11	+7/+7	+9/+5	+11/+3	+12/+3
12	+8/+7	+9/+6	+12/+3	+13/+3
13	+8/+8	+10/+6	+12/+4	+14/+3
14	+9/+8	+11/+6	+13/+4	+15/+3
15	+9/+9	+11/+7	+14/+4	+15/+4
16	+10/+9	+12/+7	+15/+4	+16/+4
17	+10/+10	+12/+8	+15/+5	+17/+4
18	+11/+10	+13/+8	+16/+5	+18/+4
19	+11/+11	+13/+9	+16/+6	+18/+5
20	+12/+11	+14/+9	+17/+6	+19/+5

RACIAL COMPETENCE MODIFIERS

Race	Physical Competence	Mental Competence
Human	0	0
Eldren	-1	+1
Dwarf	+1	0
Gnome	-2	+2
Halfling	-2	+1
Ogre	+4	-3
Beastman	+1	-1



Initiative: 6*
(should be 10, but reduced for old age)
We've taken a look at Initiative in the introduction but we've reprinted it here for convenience.

For all NPCs the base initiative rating is 2. To represent Dexterity they can add a third of their Physical Competence and to represent Wits, a third of their Mental Competence. To simplify this, add Physical and Mental Competences together and divide them by 3 (round down) for the value of their Initiative bonus.

Finally, if the NPC has Perception as a Signature skill, add that to the final number.

To make matters easier, we have summarised the results of this calculation in the table below. It also seemed fair to give Rank 20 a little extra, so we allowed that one to round up.

The final calculation is: **Initiative Bonus + Perception skill** (if noted).

Health: 7 Dice (14 pips)
Mana: 6 Dice (36 pips)

These two stats are worked out from the competences you assign, so make sure you have those the way you want them first. If the character has no magical ability, there is really no need to work out their Mana stat. Remember that Health Dice have 2 pips, Mana Dice have 6 pips.

Health is a base of two dice, plus one for each two levels of Physical Competence (round down). There is also a bonus for Rank. Add +1 for 5th Rank and above, +2 for 10th Rank and above, +3 for 15th Rank and above or +4 at 20th Rank. A Rank 11 character with a Physical Competence of 7 has seven Health Dice, worth 14 pips.

Mana has no base and is calculated purely from Mental Competence. You gain one Mana Dice for every 4 points of Mental competence they have but this time round up. Mana also has a bonus for Rank. So add +1 for 5th Rank and above, +2 for 8th Rank and above, +3 for 14th Rank and above and +4 at 19th Rank and above. A Rank 11 character with a Mental Competence of 7 has five Mana Dice worth 30 pips.

INITIATIVE BONUS TABLE

Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus	Rank	Bonus
1	+3	6	+5	11	+6	16	+8
2	+3	7	+5	12	+7	17	+8
3	+4	8	+5	13	+7	18	+9
4	+4	9	+6	14	+7	19	+9
5	+4	10	+6	15	+8	20	+10

Signature Skills: Channelling Medium +4, Etiquette +3, High Society +3, Perception +2, Sensate Medium +4, Thaumaturgy +1

This part is very simple, just pick a few skills the NPC is especially good or bad at and make a note of them (see list, right). Avoid assigning higher than +4 as these add to the Competences and need not be high. Feel free to assign negative skills to things at which the NPC would be bad.

Traits: Cantankerous +3, Privileged +4

Traits are designed for character building and really take the place of assets and privileges, etc. You can pick Talents and Traits from the book but then you will have to check up what they do to figure out how to apply them to the NPC. Instead, you can use traits to grant a bonus to something the NPC might do and give them a bit of character background. A character who is 'Wealthy +4' is very rich indeed, more so than a character who is 'Wealthy +1'. Having the trait also means wealth is important to the character, it is something that defines them, so do not start giving each character a Wealth trait just because everyone has some form of resource. Just think up to four traits that can describe the character of the NPC as well as a bonus for any special abilities they might have.

Special Abilities: Any Sensate or Channelling Medium ability and at least five Thaumaturgy spells of the Gamemaster's choice

This section helps you keep a note of anything weird and non-standard the NPC might be able to do. Mostly this is a list of any spells or Medium abilities but can also include vampiric powers and anything else that just does not fit anywhere else! Racial abilities like Eldren Medium abilities and Beastman Animal traits can also apply.

[NOVEMBER 2, 18...]

DUPLIX SKIRTS

J. W. ERADLEY'S
CELEBRATED
BEST DUPLIX ELLIPTIC
(or Double Spring)
SKIRTS

MADE AND ECONOMICAL. Each loop being composed of two finely twisted steel wires, ingeniously braided firmly together, they are very flexible and easy to wear. They are also the most serviceable and most fashionable and elegant for

FASHIONABLE AND ELEGANT for

PROVENANCE OPERA

STREET DRIFT

above are the most popular introduced

At Royal

At West

BY THE SOLE OWNERS

WEST, BHA

Office and

No. 27, Cannon Row, New

BIG

GLASS

produced

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EXAMINATION

EYE GLASSES

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JOS. GILLOTT'S STEEL PENS

OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

JOSEPH GILLOTT, Name and Address Warranted.

TRADE MARK:

ORIGINAL and PURELY

50-550.



Combat Abilities: Too old to fight, insists someone else does it for him

Damage: Very little

Under Combat Abilities, list the weapons with which they are especially skilled. Combat is the time you want an easy list to help things flow, so add the NPC's Physical Competence to their appropriate weapon skill for a rating for each weapon they might use. Not everyone needs to be a fighter though, so do not feel you need combat notes for NPCs who will not fight. Damage is a simple listing of the weapon damage with any bonuses for strength or the like. Here are two more examples for more fighter types.

Combat Abilities: She keeps a Derringer for emergencies but if she is in a fight, something has gone very wrong.

Damage: Derringer (4 Dice)

Combat Abilities: 'Angela' S&W Model 3 .44-40 revolver (11 dice)

Damage: 'Angela' S&W Model 3 .44-40 revolver (10 Dice)

SKILLS LISTING

Common Skills

Act	Presence
Athletics	Dexterity
Blunt Weapons	Dexterity
Bull	Presence
Charm	Presence
Conceal	Wits
Concentration	Resolve
Dance*	Dexterity
Disguise	Wits
Dodge	Dexterity
Drive Carriage	Wits
Empathy	Presence
Etiquette*	Wits
Firearms	Dexterity
Fisticuffs	Dexterity
General Knowledge	Wits
Hide & Sneak	Dexterity
Horse Riding	Dexterity
Improvised Weapon	Dexterity
Intimidate	Presence
Might	Strength
Perception	Wits
Streetwise*	Presence
Swordplay	Dexterity
Throwing	Dexterity

*social class modifier usually applies

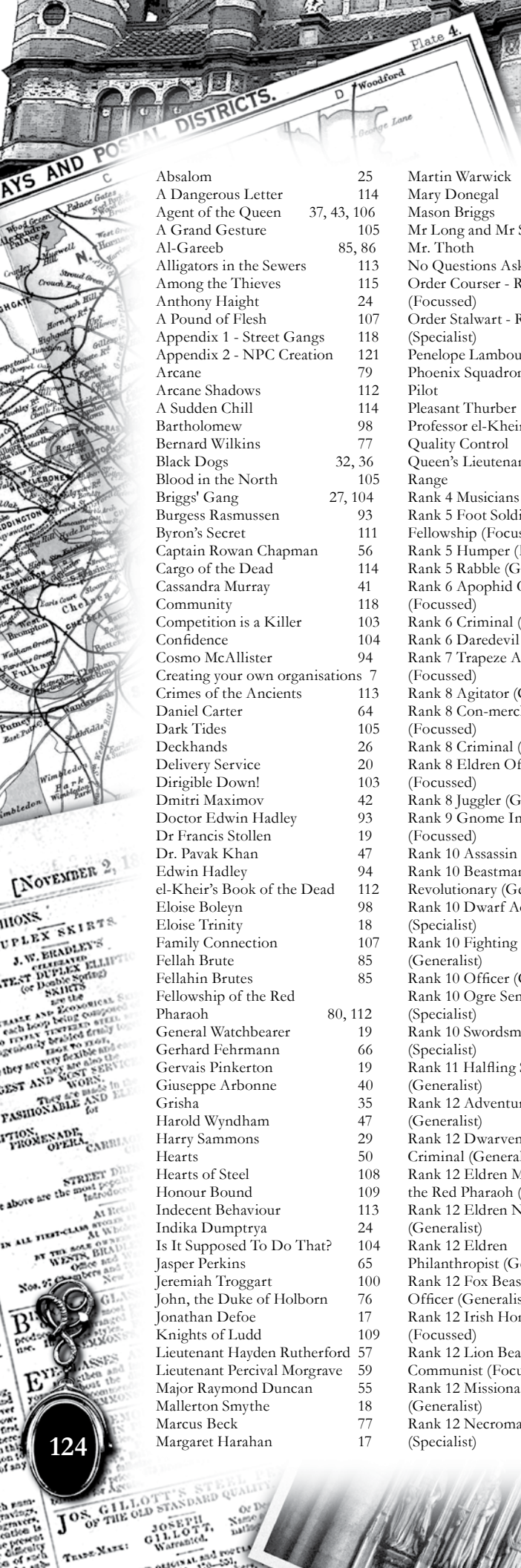
Specialties

Accounting	Wits
Ad hoc repair	Wits
Airborne Rider	Dexterity
Animal Handling	Wits
Archery	Dexterity
Art (specify)	Presence
Appraisal	Wits
Boating	Dexterity
Bribery	Presence
Business	Wits
Conversation	Presence
Craft (specify)	Strength/Wits
Cryptography	Wits
Criminology	Wits
Culture (specify)	Wits
Demolition	Wits
Engineer (specify)	Wits
Gambling	Wits
High Society	Wits
History	Wits
Instrument (specify)	Dexterity/Wits
Fashion	Presence
Forgery	Wits
Interrogation	Presence
Language (specify)	Wits
Legal Matters	Wits
Lip Reading	Wits
Lore	Wits
Medicine	Wits
Navigation	Wits
Photography	Wits
Politics	Wits
Pick Pockets	Dexterity
Pick Locks	Wits
Research	Wits
Science (specify)	Wits
Sewer Lore	Wits
Sleight of Hand	Dexterity
Specialist Weapon (Specify)	Dexterity
Survival	Wits
Tactics	Wits
Teaching	Presence
Theology (specify)	Wits
Tracking	Wits
Ventriloquist	Presence

Magical Skills

Channelling Medium	Presence
Demonology	Presence
Faith Medium	Presence
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Necromancy	Resolve
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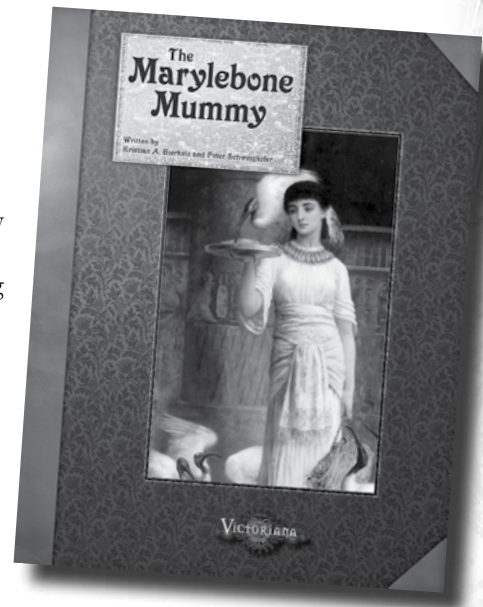
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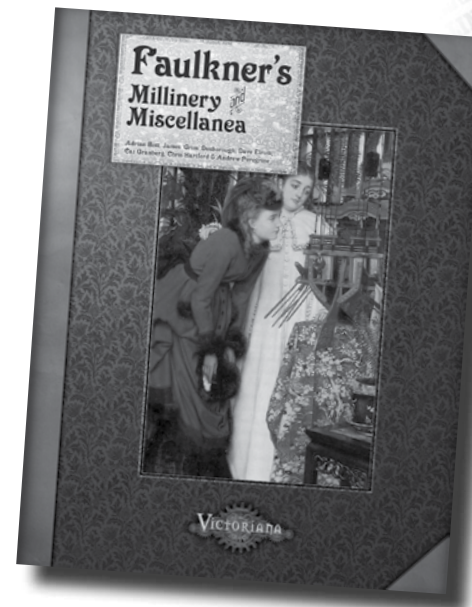
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