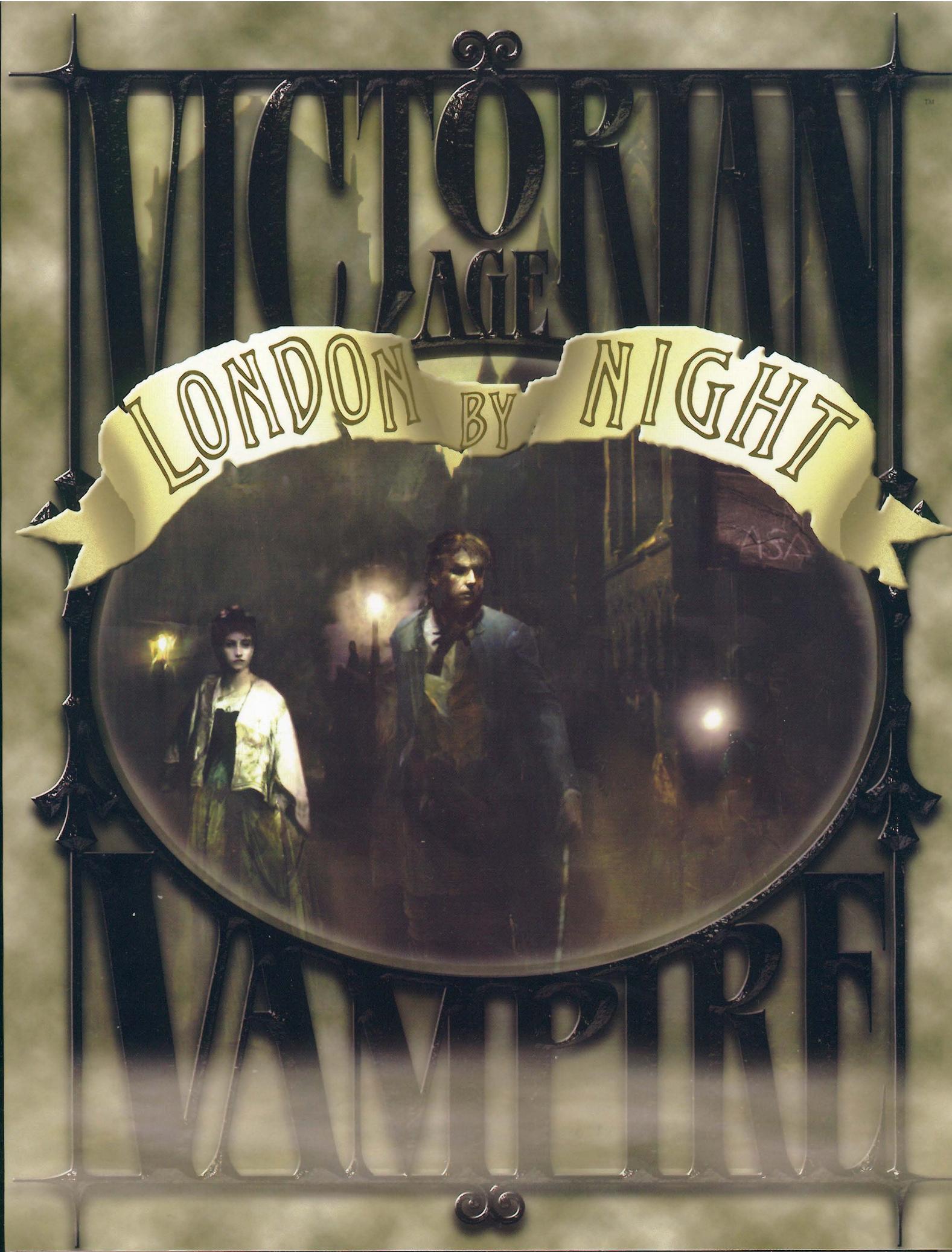


London By Night



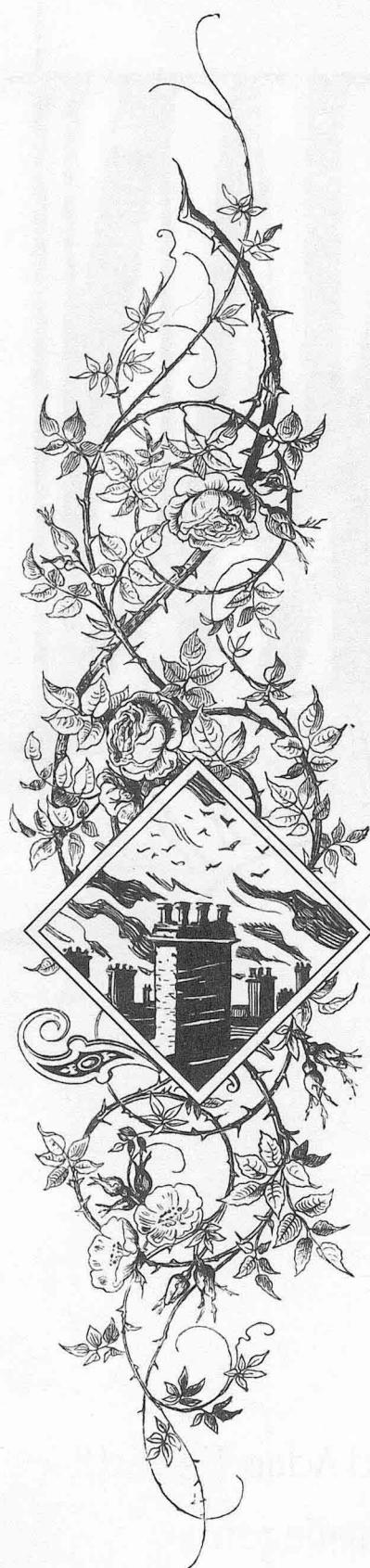
VICEMORAN
AGE OF THE
VAMPIRE

LONDON BY NIGHT

The title is presented in a gothic, ornate font. 'VICEMORAN' is at the top in tall, vertical letters, with 'TM' in the top right corner. Below it, 'AGE OF THE' is in a smaller, horizontal arch, and 'VAMPIRE' is in a large, bold, vertical font. A decorative banner with the words 'LONDON BY NIGHT' in a stylized font is draped across the bottom of the title.

By Brian Campbell, Chris Hartford and Adam Tinworth

Vampire created by Mark Rein•Hagen



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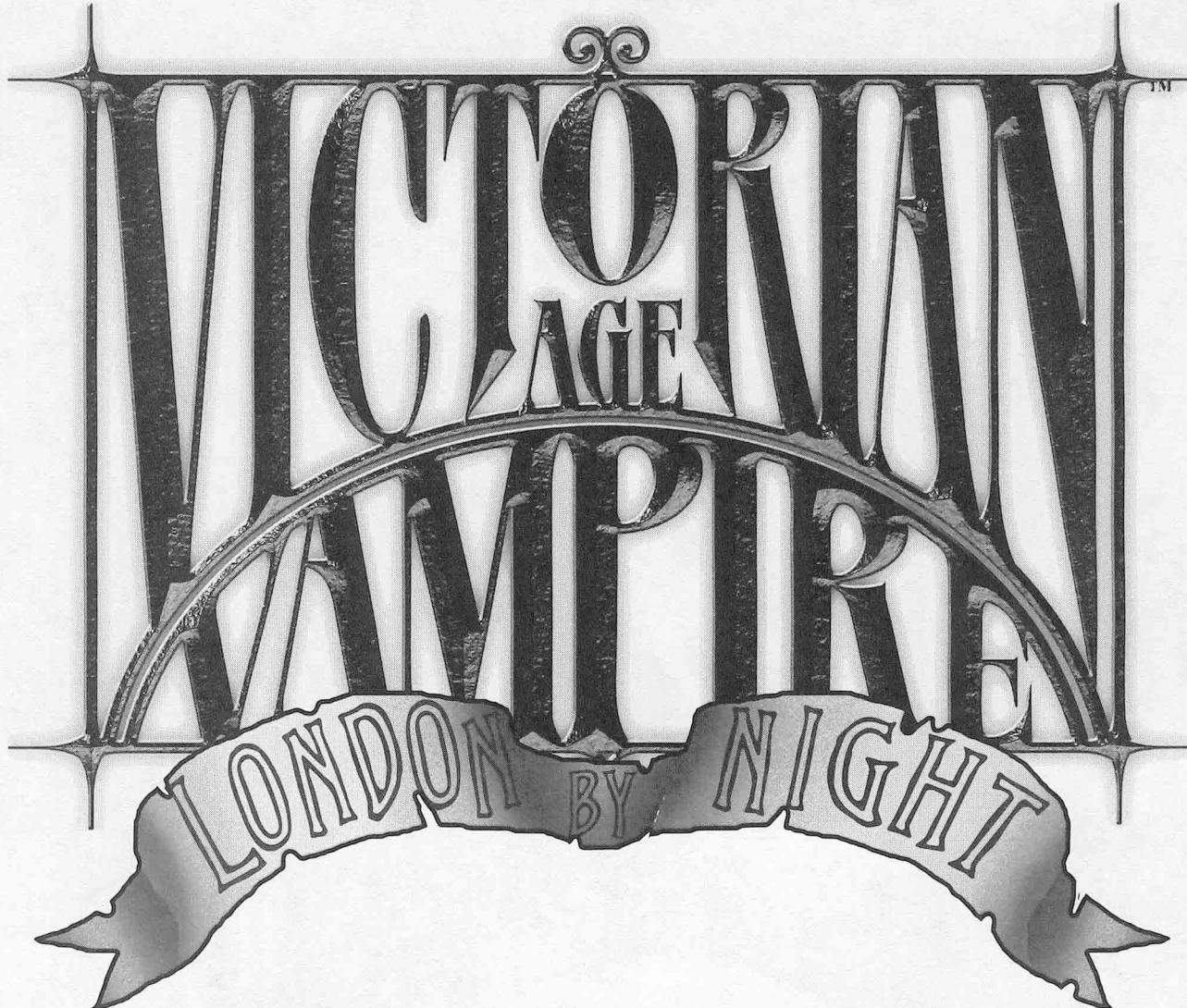
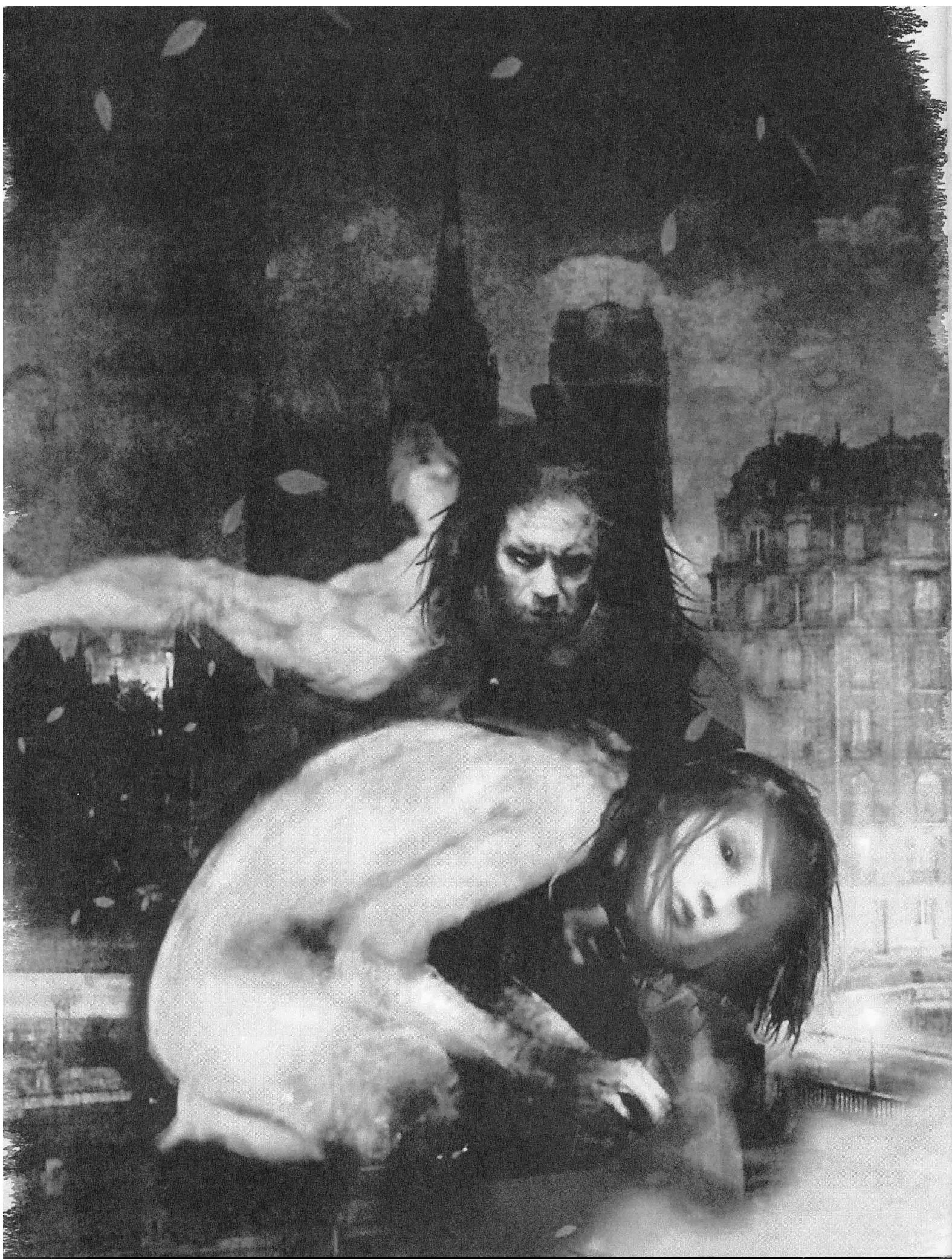


Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Chapter One: London From the Dawn of Time	12
Chapter Two: The City Revealed	44
Chapter Three: London's Host	64
Chapter Four: Conspiracies	116
Chapter Five: Storytelling	132



Introduction

When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life.

— Samuel Johnson

Johnson's famous quote about London applies just as well to unlif. For the kindred of the Victorian era, London is one of the most important — if not the most important — cities on the face of the planet. It is also the most evocative era of the city's millennia-long history.



When people think of London, even today, they tend to think of the Victorian era. Modern London is much like any other city: It has its history, true, but it is a mishmash of styles and trends, many of which can be found in any major city anywhere in the Western world. The drifting, thick London smog is long gone, swept away by the Clean Air Act and a century of industrial decline. The ubiquitous black cab long ago replaced hansom cabs; and the future of the monarchy is a subject of heated debate, when the institution was once the very heart of the nation.

No wonder, then, that people prefer to think of the city as it was in the latter part of the 19th century: the London of Queen Victoria, Sherlock Holmes, Jack the Ripper and, of course, Count Dracula in the infamous book by Bram Stoker. It was the very heart of an empire that spanned a quarter of the globe. British children, at least those who received a decent education, learned of the Crown's right and responsibility to fairly rule and develop more primitive countries. Money poured into the city from the whole of the empire, sparking a building boom that would last throughout the century. Railway lines, museums, hospitals, schools, public buildings, private buildings and all manner of homes sprang up rapidly, some in planned developments, some not. The city grew, almost like a cancer, eating into the countryside around it. The railway lines drove into the countryside around the city, transforming the rural parishes first into residences for the richest, then quickly into commuting towns for the middle classes. Throughout the middle part of the century, rapid building caused the gaps between many of the parishes on the outskirts of the City of London itself to close up. This dramatic growth created the London we know today. Indeed, two of the authors of this book live in just these suburbs, one of them in a building that stood during the time referenced in this book. At the time of *Victorian Age: Vampire*, these suburban centers were newly born, less than half a century old, and struggling to cope with the change from rural parish to integral part of the overall city.

Along the riverside, new docks sprang up as the trade with the rest of the empire increased. More and more people moved to the city from the countryside to sate the ever-increasing demands for labor in the factories, docks and railways. Very little housing was available for these workers, and the slums of Whitechapel and Soho grew rapidly to allow them to live within walking distance of their places of work. In the meantime, the middle classes who could afford the rail fares moved to the growing suburbs.

In the World of Darkness, London took on a gothic magnificence that the real city could never muster. Under the grand, imperial buildings that transformed the London skyline, the poor struggle to survive in slums that barely supported life. Epidemics of "King Cholera" swept through the city until a major new sewage system eased the terrible water pollution problem. Each new railway line destroyed another section of housing for the working men and women of the city, forcing them into greater and greater overcrowding and squalor. The rich and aristocratic lived a life of pleasure and decadence, with unprecedented amounts of leisure time. The expanding middle classes grew fat on dedicated work, pious Christian values and the ruthless exploitation of workers.

Meanwhile, the numbers of Kindred in the city grew as the population blossomed from 2.5 to 6.5 million in the last fifty years of the 19th century, increasing the number of vampires the city could conservatively support to

around sixty-five. The actual number was probably higher: The deprivation and overcrowding in slums like Whitechapel lent themselves to easy feeding for careful Kindred. The docks and the railway stations allowed other Kindred to arrive in the city with greater ease than before, so the number of vampires constantly fluctuated and was probably difficult to pin down at any particular time.

In many ways, Victorian London was a model for the cities of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Driven by commerce and linked to the world by several different means of transport, it was no longer an isolated city with clear and manageable boundaries like the Kindred power hierarchy had been used to in the years since the Wars of Princes. In time, the suburbs would become known as the Barrens and shunned by the Kindred. Here, they were new opportunities for havens and influence that attracted those looking to carve out a slice of this mighty city for themselves. With larger numbers competing for wealth and influence, the pattern of power seen in so many modern cities slowly took shape.

London was right at the heart of the Victorian Age setting, and would help define the age to come – which makes it a perfect setting for a chronicle. After all, Bram Stoker, Charles Dickens and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle all found this city an ideal place to tell a story or two. Why not walk a few steps in the shoes of giants?

How To Use This Book

As with many recent **by Night** releases, this book presents the city and its undead inhabitants as a story setting rather than offering a detailed treatise on the historical London of over a century ago. It's a tool to allow a troupe to create dramatic stories, lit by flickering gaslight and wrapped in smog, against of backdrop of hackney carriages, steam railways and the grand buildings of the British Empire. We touch on the basic geographic structure of the city, but it is in continual flux during the period of **Victorian Age: Vampire**, and maps of the period are spotty at best.

You can, if you wish, learn more about the city to give your games greater depth and realism. There's a reasonably extensive list of resources later in this chapter to help you do just that. Or, you might choose to work with the fictional ideas of the city presented in a thousand Holmes and Dracula adaptations on the big and small screens. Either is a perfectly valid approach, and we won't send the White Wolf Ripper around if you choose

to take the city in a different direction from the one presented here.

Chapter One tells the history of London, with a particular emphasis on the role of the Kindred in that long, long story. It takes you from the earliest, pre-Roman nights of the settlements that would become the city, through to the return of Mithras to the domain he has claimed for most of recorded history, after an absence of the best part of a century.

Chapter Two covers the geography of the rapidly expanding city. While the focus is on the City of London, along with its East and West Ends, and the city of Westminster, there's also a brief look at the significant suburbs of the city, from Greenwich and Sydenham, to Hackney and Islington.

Chapter Three introduces the Kindred of the city. Some have been there for centuries; others are new arrivals from the far-flung ports of the British Empire.

Chapter Four details the main plots at work in the city. This is mainly for Storytellers, giving them a good point to start building their chronicles using the ideas and story hooks contained within, tailoring them to the needs of their troupe.

Chapter Five gives advice, hints and ideas for telling stories in London. It includes suggestions for evoking both the feel of the city and the mood of the era, as well as a discussion of the particular thematic issues that make Victorian London such a unique place to set your **Victorian Age: Vampire** game.

Theme and Mood

London is a city of contrasts. It is the shining jewel of the British Empire, constantly being improved with grand new buildings, both public and private. Yet much of the city is still full of slums. The powerful people of London rule countries thousands of miles away, yet most of the populace have no control over their own lives. Great strides are being made in art, science and education, even as poverty, crime and prostitution grow rife.

It is almost two cities: the daytime city of culture, achievement, destiny and vision, and the nighttime city of power struggles, selfishness, cruelty and hypocrisy. The book is about **London by Night**, and so will focus more on the latter than the former, like much of the literature of the period that is still read today. The tales of Sherlock Holmes give people a vicarious peek into London's underworld. Arthur Machen's writings are obsessed with the dark that lurks under the surface in the city. *Dracula*, of course, opens up the sexual and evil parts of human nature that people work so hard to deny.

Theme

The main theme of *London by Night* is power, with its inevitable attendants, opportunity and powerlessness. The city of London enjoys a power across the rest of the globe that no city since Rome has acquired. The British Empire, the greatest empire the world has ever seen, has conquered country after country by sheer force of might and technological prowess. Over a quarter of the globe is now colored pink — the color the British use for their empire — on maps, and the empire is so large that there is never a part of it that is not lit by daylight. As the saying of the day goes, the sun never sets on the British Empire. Power over this vast area, and the untold billions of souls within, radiates from this very city.

For the Kindred of London, this is the chance to seize unprecedented influence on a global scale. Their eyes turn from an exclusive focus on the city beneath their feet to lands beyond their reach only a century before. The steamship and the railway engine have increased the speed of communication beyond anything experienced before, and a missive to a well placed “associate” in India can have a substantial impact. This is a time of profound opportunity for an enterprising vampire.

The power structures of the Kindred themselves are in flux, however. Mithras, the ancient prince of this city, has returned after ninety years of absence. He did not like what he found when he returned, and has moved to break and remold the existing order among the Kindred. The ambitious Ventre Anne Bowesley became his right hand, and she plans to remake the primogen in his image — or so Mithras assumes. Anne herself is hungry for power, and does her best to assure that Kindred newly risen to positions of power owe at least as much to her as they do to Mithras. After all, an ancient vampire spends long periods in torpor, and someone has to handle the domain in his absence.

Mithras is the very embodiment of power. He is a vampire over three millennia old who claims to be the childe of the Ventre clan founder, and on occasion, to actually be the god with whom he shares his name. He is a prince of princes, wielding absolute authority in the domain he has successfully defended against Kindred whose names are now lost to history. Yet, he is out of touch. He little understands how London has changed, let alone the rest of the United Kingdom and its empire. While his absolute power goes unchallenged, at least by those who wish to see another night, his command of the details of rule is negligible, and that responsibility he has passed to Anne.

Meanwhile, Kindred, like the parasites they are, flock to the city from all over the globe, hoping both to

take advantage of the city’s preeminence and to win the favor of one of the most powerful vampires still active in the Victorian age. They find in London, and in its prominent Kindred, a city of strong moral values coupled with an abiding hypocrisy. The British middle and upper classes talk of their duty to the rest of the world while millions of Londoners live in squalor. The Kindred, while making claims to gentility and unity, struggle against each other with words and deeds with a savagery that many in the hovels of Whitechapel would find strangely familiar.

However, the new arrivals stand no chance of reaching the pinnacle of power. While the same is true of all of Kindred society, in which the elders inherently have more power than their childer, it probably shows more clearly in London than any other city of the period. Mithras is near godlike in his strength. All other power is merely the crumbs from his table. However much they achieve, the Kindred of London have to face the fact that they are, in their own way, nearly as powerless as the slum-dwelling mortals.

Mood

The mood in London is one of desperate struggles for survival or power hidden behind a concealing veil of civilization. The mortals and Kindred of the city are both obsessed with building their own power at the expense of others. Opportunity lies before them and they must seize it, others be damned. Just as the thick fogs often wrap the city in a blanket that obscures its true face, the people of the era conceal their true faces behind masks of civilized behavior and pious demeanor. Less than three miles from the great centers of art and science in Kensington, the women of Soho and Whitechapel sell their bodies to men, rich and poor, for three pennies a fuck. For every wealthy man endowing museums and homes for fallen women, a thousand people starve on the streets.

Amid the fog, behind the facades of gentility and civilization, lurks an animal in every mortal and vampire that is always willing to break through the veneer when the need arises. Perhaps that’s why the Whitechapel Murders caught the public imagination to such a vivid degree. The corpses of those five butchered prostitutes were vivid reminders of how easily that animal side could break loose, even in the glory of Victoria’s empire. The fact that they took place in Whitechapel, which many people saw as little more than a breeding ground for human animals, made the story all the more powerful.

For the Kindred, the Ripper stands as a vivid reminder of their nature. He is not one of them, yet he makes everyone aware of the monsters that hide among humanity. Each murder breaches a Masquerade that the

perpetrator has never heard of or been party to in any way. Yet the whole of Victorian society is in its own way a masquerade. Both men and women dress in all-concealing clothes, and overt displays of sexuality and emotion are frowned upon. The human animal is denied in favor of the civilized mind, even as piano legs are covered just in case they arouse desire in a man.

The grieving Victoria, lost in mourning for her beloved husband Albert, is the dark heart of the empire. The very moral core of the people has lost its light: It is an empty shell no longer attuned to the realities of the world.

Resources

Books

Books on Victorian London are numerous, as are those which just give a general history of the city. Here are some of the more easily available titles:

Dickens's Dictionary of London 1888 (Old House Books, 1993) is probably the single most useful companion volume to this book you can lay your hands on. A facsimile of a guidebook written by one Charles Dickens in the middle of our chosen period, it also has an extremely useful map of London during that period.

Victorian London Revealed: Gustave Doré's Metropolis (Penguin Books 2001) is a useful guide to the city of the period, with some wonderfully evocative illustrations of the city. Thoroughly recommended.

The London Encyclopedia (Macmillan, 1995). While not specific to the Victorian era, it's just about the best reference guide to the city ever published.

Victorian & Edwardian London (Brockhampton Press, 1999) is a glossy book with some lovely paintings and a decent look at some of the key features of London. Not as useful as the other books, but worth having all the same for its skillful evocation of the elegant feel of the city as seen by the upper classes.

Victorian London Street Life in Historic Photographs (Dover Publications, 1994). It's amazing how much more a city comes to life through photographs rather than illustrations. These photos of ordinary people in Victorian London make it feel much more immediate, and could be very useful in bringing the city alive for your players.

London: The Biography, by Peter Ackroyd (Vintage). A superlative "biography" of London organized on thematic lines.

A History of London, by Stephen Inwood (Macmillan), another good history of the city, on more chronological lines than Ackroyd's book.

This Sceptered Isle, by Christopher Lee (Penguin Books), a solid overview of British history from the Roman Invasion until Victoria's death.

A History of Britain 1: 3000BC - 1603 AD, by Simon Schama (BBC Books), *A History of Britain 2: 1603 AD - 1776 AD*, by Simon Schama (BBC Books). This pair of books accompanies the BBCTV series of the same name, providing an easily accessible history of the British Isles.

London 1900, by Jonathan Schneer (Yale Nota Bene). An interesting social and political overview of London at the end of the Victorian era.

On the fiction front, the works of Arthur Machen, if you can find them, are some of the most evocative of the era. Buy them simply because you can swipe great chunks of them for your game. *The London Adventure*, sadly long out of print, is the best portrait of Victorian London in the World of Darkness you could hope to find. Any of his other works would be just as good.

Dickens is particularly good on the grimy underbelly of Victorian London, and is a must. Any of the good gothic horror tales of the period are worth a look too. All of Stoker's work, not just *Dracula*, is worth exploring. Even the Sherlock Holmes stories are worth reading for their period detail. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* catches the clash of rationalism and superstition particularly well.

Books — Jack The Ripper

From Hell (Knockabout, 2001). A compilation of Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's comic, a retelling of the Ripper story incorporating the latest theories. Into that it weaves a mystical conspiracy that seems perfect for the World of Darkness. You'll never look at Hawksmoor's churches the same way again.

The Complete Jack the Ripper, by Donald Rumbelow (Penguin Books). One of many books on the Ripper, Rumbelow's book, while far from perfect, isn't hung up on any one theory and provides a good overview of the evidence and suspects.

MUSIC

This is an era of classical music, opera, operetta and the music hall. While tracks from the bawdy music halls are surprisingly hard to come by, other authentic music of the era is commonly and cheaply available (and probably more appropriate for the gaming table). This is

the era of Brahms, Bruckner, Debussy, Gustav Mahler, Puccini, Richard Strauss, Tchaikovsky and Verdi. A quick browse through the classical section of your local music store should provide a decent selection of their work, which makes excellent background music for a game. You could even try some of the operettas of Gilbert & Sullivan, if you wish, but be aware that their comedic tone might not be appropriate to the mood of a *Vampire* story.

If the thought of classical music is too much, the soundtracks to *From Hell* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula* are appropriately mood-setting and unobtrusive in the game, so long as you exclude the horribly misjudged Annie Lennox track on the latter.

Film, Video and Television

The Victorian era has been captured on film in any number of costume dramas. However, few of them are really evocative of the sort of mood appropriate to a *Vampire* game.

From Hell is a movie adaptation of the comic strip of the same name, and catches the feel of the city surprisingly well. Worth a look.

Bram Stoker's Dracula is worth viewing, as it captures the spirit of the book far better than any other adaptation, though that isn't saying much. Its depiction of London is pretty good, too.

There have been many, many adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories on TV and film. The TV series starring Jeremy Brett in the 1980s and 1990s is regarded by many as the definitive version, and is well worth watching for its evocative recreation of the Victorian city if you can catch it on TV or video.

In a similar bent, *Murder Rooms*, a recent British series, focuses on the creator of Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and his friendship with the man who inspired the famous consulting detective in a series of fictional investigations. While much of it is set in Edinburgh, not London, it's also a good reference for the UK in the Victorian period.

Websites

<http://www.casebook.org/> - A comprehensive site on Jack the Ripper

<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/> - An online resource of Charles Booth's poverty maps of London in the late Victorian era

<http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg/landow/victorian> - The Victorian Web, resources on many aspects of Victorian life

http://www.fidnet.com/~dap1955/dickens/dickens_london_map.html - Details of London as it appears in the works of Charles Dickens

A Concise British Lexicon

George Bernard Shaw once quipped, "England and America are two countries divided by a common language." Many of the words and phrases used by Londoners in the time period of *Victorian Age: Vampire* will be familiar to non-British readers, but some — forgetting the spelling and grammar differences, and the Hollywood conceit that Londoners are either toffs or Dick Van Dyke clones who speak "Cockney rhyming slang" — are sufficiently different in the "Queen's Tongue" to cause confusion or else have no equivalent in modern parlance. Of course, many words used in regional dialects pose comprehension problems for those of us born and bred in Britain, and are difficult enough for those of us who have lived here all our lives, let alone for our colonial brethren in the United States of America.

This short list explains a few of the words that may cause confusion, but those wishing to learn more are advised to seek a dedicated tome. Items in italics are definitions rather than "translations," while (sl) denotes slang that, of course, no proper gentleman or lady would think to use.

£1 — Pound Sterling (20 shillings). British people just say "a pound" rather than "a pound sterling."

1d — 1 Penny (4 farthings)

2d — tuppence (two pennies)

6d — sixpence (six pennies)

Autumn — Fall

Badge — pin

Barmy (sl) — crazy

Biscuit — cookie

Bill — check

Bob (sl) — shilling

Bowler hat — derby

Bobby (sl) — a policeman

Braces — suspenders

Bum (sl) — butt

By law — ordinance

City, The — the old Roman and Medieval city of London, now its financial district

Corporation — city government

Curtains — drapes

East End — the areas of London east of *The City*, notably Whitechapel and Shadwell

Europe — the European mainland. British people regard themselves as distinct from Europe.

Farthing — smallest coin in circulation

Fag (sl) — cigarette

Fun fair — Carnival

Gaol — Jail

Gobsmacked (sl) — amazed

Ground floor — first floor (etc.)

Kip (sl) — sleep

Kipper — smoked herring

Knock up — wake up

MP — Member of Parliament

Nosh — food

Pants — shorts

Peeler — policeman (also "Bobby")

PM — Prime Minister (leader of the government)

Post — mail

Quid (sl) — Pound Sterling

Shilling — 12 pence

Sitting room — living room (also drawing room)

Sofa — Davenport

Square Mile — The City, London's financial district

Suspenders — garters

Sweets — candy

Telegram — wire

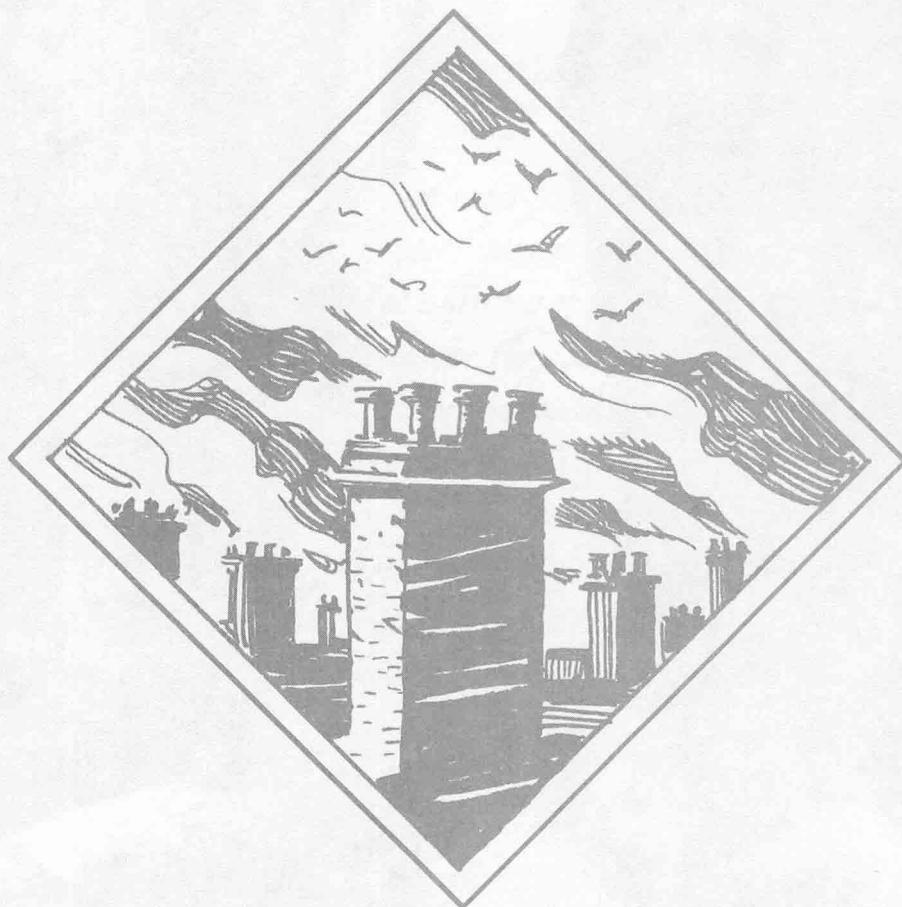
Trousers — pants

Truncheon — nightstick

Waistcoat — vest

West End — the districts of London west of *The City*, notably Soho and Mayfair

Wonky — broken/wobbly





Chapter One: London From the Dawn of Time

My Lady,

Pursuant with your request for information upon attaining your new post, please find enclosed my insignificant attempt at a history of this glorious city of ours. One must apologize for the sketchy nature of the early periods – it has not proved possible to locate a source of reliable information on the origins of London and thus the truth and accuracy of the information must be treated with a degree of skepticism. I sincerely apologize for this omission, but hope the myths and legends help you understand the mortal and Kindred population of our city.

– Harold of Hoborn,
Childe of de Worde

A Chronology of London With Reference to Events in Britain



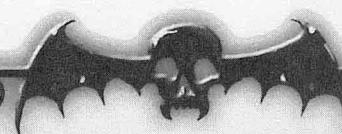
London is without doubt the most important city in Britain and the world, but to examine its history in isolation would be to miss the forces that drove events in London and provided the motivating force for its occupants, rulers and conquerors. As such, this chronology occasionally strays from details of the city itself to the wider scope in Britain (and occasionally the world). I beg your indulgence in this matter and pray it does not inconvenience you, dear reader.

The Mists of Time

When the first Cainites came to London one cannot say, but mortals had been living in the isles for millennia when the Romans arrived on these shores in 55 BC. My lord Mithras has told me of Ancients abiding in Britain when he came to these shores, but it does not seem that any yet survive — or at least are known, or willing to share their knowledge. We know from the annals of Marcus Verus that Gangrel dwelt here, according to legend having pursued “a great betrayer” from the East. Who or what this was I cannot say, and efforts to draw information from the ancient Baron of Chester have been met with hostility. A substantial Venttrue and Brujah population also resided in Britain, perhaps having accompanied the mortal migrations across Europe, or mayhap displaced there by events in the civilized lands of the Mediterranean.

One legend associated with the founding of London builds on such events, claiming that the founders of London came from Asia Minor, fleeing a great war that claimed their city eleven centuries before the birth of Christ. They say that the people followed their great leaders to the edge of the known world, crossing the narrow seas to a cool but verdant land where they sought to rebuild their lost glories. Their city they called Troia Novantum: New Troy. My lord Mithras decries these claims as “unsubstantiated musings” and asserts that the story is a modern invention popularized over the last fifteen hundred years, one that was never heard in the first century after Christ when he came to the isles (the first reference appears to be in the 6th century AD in the poems of Taliesin). The pre-Roman name for London, Trinovantum (according to Geoffrey of Monmouth), would seem to lend some credence to the legend, though it was superceded by the more probable, but equally speculative (save for some place names such as Ludgate), Caer Ludd — Ludd’s Fort — transformed by the imperials into Londinium. Whatever the truth, the Troy origin story appeals to both Kindred and kine, suggesting an antecedent for the city’s glory, most recently exhibited in its role as the capital of the empire. But I digress.

The location we now know as London was a place of power, important to mortals and supernaturals alike. The springs of Tower Hill, Penton and Tothill were sacred to the druids, and Lupines were also drawn to these sites, though I know not why. Around the times in which Christ walked



the Earth, a precarious balance existed between the British Cainites and other supernatural forces in the land. The arrival of the Roman invaders in 43 AD disturbed this balance, as well as the mortal equilibrium. Roman rule was tolerated after the invaders suppressed the initial resistance, but in 63 AD, Roman outrages against the Iceni tribe under Queen Boudicca provoked a full-scale revolt that razed first Colchester (Colchester) and then London, which was abandoned by its outmatched Roman garrison. This revolt took place by night and day, with British Lupines seeking to throw back the interloping Roman Cainites. As with the mortal revolt, the Lupine attacks wrought considerable damage but were ultimately futile. Several high-profile Ventre fell to the claws of the shapechangers, but this only spurred the clan onward, prompting an ongoing pogrom against other supernatural creatures.

London was rebuilt and grew in importance in the years that followed. The Cainite population of both the city and province of Britannia increased, and numerous Cainites young and old found themselves drawn to the city. Stories of Britain spread through the Empire and many acknowledged the prospects for advancement in the still-forming power structure of town and country in the new province. One such migrant would become the dominant supernatural force in the islands and rule its nights — with a five hundred year gap after the fall of Rome — for almost two thousand years. Already over a millennium old, my lord Mithras was not initially the most powerful Cainite in Londinium; his frequent absences on campaign prevented him from focusing his influence in one place. Instead, his influence pervaded the province, taking root in the soldiery who saw him as a god of war, and building a broad power base that would eventually become the largest domain in Europe. As peace descended on the frontier province, and its importance to Rome grew, so did Mithras's power.

Playing a slow game of manipulation and action, the Methuselah soon became the de facto shadow master of Londinium, and through it the overlord of all Cainites in Britannia, albeit ostensibly as a "first among equals." The Walbrook Mithraeum became the seat of his power, the series of concealed chambers serving as both haven and audience chamber during the Roman era. The prince entertained numerous guests, most notably — as far as his contemporaries were concerned — Bindusara, one of the few Kindred he regards as a peer. A less well-known meeting (which required serious digging to confirm) took place in 121 AD between Mithras and a gentleman of Middle Eastern descent. That the prince met such an individual is not unusual, as Persia and parts of the lands now known as Araby fell within the Empire's borders,

Myths and Legends

London is beset with legends, but the most enduring — though older Kindred deride them — are of Brutus, a descendant of Æneas, and Gog and Magog. These tales are intertwined or distinct, depending on the version perused.

The former is best exemplified by the 6th century poem *Taliesin*, the *Roman de Brut* by Wace, and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. All three tell of the adventures of Brutus and his associates after the fall of Troy, including their flight across Europe and their attendant adventures as they journeyed to a new land, Britain. Brutus' greatest companion was Corineus, who slew the leader of the giants who ruled their new island home — in some tales, that leader was named Gogmagog. Corineus subsequently received the western peninsula of the island, modern Cornwall (perhaps originating as Corineus's Wall), as his domain. The tale also goes on to feature the pre-Roman lord of London, Cunobelin, also known as Cymbeline (best known from Shakespeare's play) as well as Arthur and Merlin, demonstrating (according to those I have spoken to), that there is some truth in the tale, however slight.

Another version of the Gogmagog story has its origin in Roman times, claiming that two giants (allegedly the descendants of Diocletian's promiscuous daughters) were tied to the gates of a palace in London as its guardians. These figures were known variously as Gog and Magog, or Gogmagog and Corineus (a throwback to the Troy origin story), and became symbols of The City by the 16th century, appearing in the Lord Mayor's show from 1554 onward.

Distinct from the tale of Gog and Magog is that of Bran the Blessed. Bran was a legendary king, though some say he was a god or a giant, whose head was buried beneath the White Hill (the site of the Tower of London) to guard Britain against invasion. According to some versions of the tale, Bran's head continued to converse with his men after being removed from his body, and those who spoke with him had little or no sense of time passing. Other variants state that Bran's head was removed from White Hill by King Arthur so as to leave the king the sole guardian of Britain. Links between Bran's head and guardianship of Britain persist, however, with the modern legend of the ravens in the Tower; should they leave, the tale states, the monarchy — and Britain — will fall.

but the identity of the visitor, were it widely known, would shake the foundations of that newborn faction known as the Camarilla. As you know, the Inner Circle has enough difficulty accepting Mithras for what he is: Imagine what they'd think if evidence of something older and more potent than our prince was presented to them. Mithras' guest was, like him, a vital god, but not simply a Methuselah. His guest was, I am reliably informed, an Antediluvian — yes, you read that correctly — known as Haqim. My sources tell me the meeting was cordial, some sort of philosophical discussion though I know not the subject, which ended when Haqim left in the company of a band of robed Saracens. No one has seen him since, nor have any efforts to follow his trail been successful. Now, had this been a one-off incident it might have been swept under the carpet, as they say, but there's another occurrence, albeit slightly darker, about a thousand years later. You will forgive me if I postpone discussion of that incident until the appropriate moment in the history.

During this era, London shifted from being a simple port to being a major hub of governmental and artistic endeavor. Magnificent edifices rose on the banks of the Thames, and the Roman city walls, erected in 121 AD, would form the principal boundaries of London for over a millennium; even tonight, on the eve of the 20th century, fragments of the Roman defenses can still be seen at Tower Hill and Aldersgate.

The rise of "British" emperors such as Constantine, and Mithras's subtle influence over their supporters via the Mithraic cult, expanded Mithras's power and earned him influence throughout the Empire. However, this led to a number of clashes over religion, particularly with the Lasombra and Toreador. Mithras's efforts to undermine Christianity failed, but he was able to ensure tolerance (for a while). His legacy would be a succession of Britain-based heresies such as Pelagian Heresy, which prospered in the 5th century. Its tenets stated man was innately good, contradicting the accepted concept of "original sin." This heresy was subsequently eradicated among mortals but it retained a grip on the Kindred population until the Reformation as a compromise religion tolerated by anti-Christian Mithras.

The withdrawal of Roman troops to assist the general Stilicho undermined Mithras's power base, removing many of his military adherents. Whether this was a deliberate undermining of his position by the Cainites of Rome or simply a side effect of mortal actions is unclear, though my lord prince has expressed belief that it was the former. With Britain marginalized, many young Cainites turned their anger on the prince, and a veritable civil war raged across Britain with London at its heart. The blood-



letting shattered the Cainite power structure as mortal institutions likewise dissolved. Although victorious, Prince Mithras succumbed to torpor, leaving the surviving Cainites to deal with the period of retrenchment later known as the Dark Ages, fighting among themselves and beset by their foes all the while.

Time of Troubles

With the collapse of the Roman government and the British economy, the population largely abandoned urban sites such as London in favor of smaller rural settlements. A few hardy souls eked out an existence in the city, its value as a port and trading center still recognized by some. Abandoned structures provided numerous lairs for vampires seeking to carve out their own domains, but also sheltered beings inimical to Caine's childe, such as Lupines, who prospered in this era of chaos. Civil war wracked the land, but by 445 the warlord Vortigern had seized effective control over Britain and authorized the remaining nobles to hire mercenaries — mostly of Saxon and Jutish origin — to defend their holdings. Legend has it that the first of these guardians were the brothers Hengist and Horsa, accompanied by "three keels" of warriors; their arrival was later chronicled as the *adventus Saxonum* — the arrival of the Saxons. Known as *foederati*, these warriors were initially loyal to their employers, but it soon became apparent that while the Romano-British ruled, true power lay with the troops. Having been granted land by Vortigern for services rendered, the "Saxons" (Hengist and Horsa were actually Jutes) established themselves in what is now Kent and soon came to govern their lands as kings, inviting their fellows to join them from across the sea. This brought them into conflict with Vortigern, who fought a campaign against them before eventually being forced to grant Hengist — Horsa died in 455 — the lands now known as Sussex and Essex (the "South Saxon" and "East Saxon" lands respectively). Cainites accompanied the colonists, principally Gangrel, but some Brujah followed as well. When exactly London fell to the Saxons is unknown, but it seems likely the town (which was not a major settlement at the time) came under their authority in the late 5th century, presumably around the time of the land grant to Hengist.

Attempts to broker a peace with the guardians-turned-invaders came to naught; the supposed massacre of more than three hundred nobles at a peace conference perhaps represented the feeling of betrayal that pervaded. War raged by night as well as day as the Saxon Kindred sought to establish their own dominions at the expense of Roman and Celtic kin. Many Britons — including Kindred — fled to Brittany (Little Britain)

where they struggled against another group of invaders, the Franks, but some stayed and fought the Saxons. The first of these war leaders was Ambrosius Aurelianus, whose use of cavalry and Roman tactics helped stem the Saxon tide for a while. His successor had even more success, dealing a crushing blow to the invaders in the west of England, driving them back toward the North Sea. This warrior, called by some Arturos — Arthur — gained a fearsome reputation, much of which has been glossed over by the writings of Chretien de Troyes and Thomas Mallory. He wasn't chivalrous — that is a medieval conceit — but rather did what he needed to do, a true warrior of Mithras though he had the misfortune to live in a time when our lord prince was not active.

Arthur's base of operations is known to legend as Camelot, though its exact location is a mystery. Some suggest the fortifications of Cadbury, others the rocky outcrop of Tintagel, or even the Roman city of Camolodunum, now known as Colchester, which was known to be in Saxon hands at the time and is thus an unlikely candidate. Some antiquarians have claimed London was Camelot, and several Kindred extant at the time have confirmed the town was reoccupied briefly, its walls reinforced against the invaders. They say, however, that like much of the Arthurian legend Camelot is a myth, a fabrication imagined in the grim nights that followed.

Arthur's peace did not stop the conflict among the Kindred, though the pattern of conflict became increasingly complex. Where once Saxon fought Briton, by the end of Arthur's rule (allegedly in 542) a conflict was as likely to be between Saxon or British Kindred as it was to cross such lines. The result was a fragmented hodgepodge of domains, and little information about that time survives. We know St. Augustine arrived in Britain around 597, was received by King Aethelberht at Canterbury, and was allowed to preach in the kingdom. His monastery-church there became the center of the Christian faith in the Saxon lands, but he also founded the See of London in 604, building the first Cathedral of St. Paul. The people of London were not eager converts to Christianity, their pagan roots continually reasserting themselves, though eventually the city and its inhabitants did accept the Church of Rome. The growth of the Church brought with it the same parasites that plagued Rome's satellites — the Lasombra and Toreador — but the fragmented nature of the Saxon lands hampered their expansion.

By the early 9th century, the Saxon kingdoms had solidified their grasp on power, but it wasn't until 779 that Offa, King of Mercia, would be accepted as Bretwalda, the lord of all Angle-land (England). London, known as

Lundenwic, remained aloof in this conflict, serving as a pseudo-independent port (notionally under Mercian rule) situated between what is now The City and Westminster. The wealth of the city attracted raiders, with Viking ships attacking in 842 and again in 851. The first defense was successful, if somewhat bloody, but in the second attack the Scandinavians prevailed, sacking the city, burning the Saxon buildings and slaughtering many of the occupants. Cainite fought Cainite in that bloody conflict, with many meeting Final Death or fleeing under the effects of the Red Fear. The invaders left, but returned a dozen years later in an effort to seize Mercia for themselves. For a decade the city remained in Danish Viking hands, but in 883 Alfred of Wessex besieged the city, regaining it for his kingdom in 886. London, though on the frontier between the Danish and Saxon lands, was already a symbol of power in England; control of the city was a sign of dominance in the ongoing struggle. The city's occupants, mortal and Cainite, came to understand their significance in the grand scheme of things, a conceit that has only grown over the millennia. Indeed, in the 11th century it was the councilors of London who chose the next king — the concept of a hereditary monarchy was an alien ideal for the next half-century.

Although largely forgotten by the mortals, the former kingdoms remained in the hearts of the Kindred population, with the attendant power structures forming the basis of regional lordships that would become the fiefs of Britain over the next two centuries. In these proto-fiefs, the concepts of Roman, Saxon, Celtic and Danish were forgotten, replaced with a sense of alliance (if not amiability) among the inhabitants. A Cainite might call himself a Gloucesterman, a Londoner or a subject of Lincoln, rather than an English or Danish Kindred, finding his own niche in the power structure.

Fires had always been a regular problem in Saxon towns, but the fire of 959 — which was followed by a plague — was hard on London, destroying St. Paul's. The city remained capable of defending itself, as Danish raiders found to their peril. Indeed, by the late 10th century London had its own army, existing more as a city-state than a dependant city. For all its martial strength, however, it was unable to resist the full might of the Danes, and in 1013 the city fell to Sweyn. The Saxon King Aethelred returned a year later with Norwegian allies, destroying London Bridge and waging a three-year campaign for control of England.

The construction of the Church of St. Peter on Thorney Island at Westminster, later known as Westminster Abbey, was the last great Saxon endeavor in London, begun in 1050 by Edward the Confessor and

continuing for the next half-millennium. Edward's death in 1066 triggered a cataclysmic change in the fortunes of London and England, and the repercussions shook Europe. Although William, Duke of Normandy, claimed the Kingship, Harold Godwinson of Wessex succeeded Edward the day after the Confessor died. Harold knew that Duke William would likely attempt to seize the throne, but he faced a more pressing problem in the form of his estranged brother, Tostig, who had allied with Harold Hadrada of Norway. The Norwegian force landed in Yorkshire and Harold marched north to face them, defeating them soundly at Stamford Bridge. The last Saxon King then force-marched his army south; William's Normans had landed at Pevensey in Sussex while Harold battled the Norwegians. William could have struck at London but his advisors urged caution, allowing the weary Saxon army to come to them in terrain that would suit their cavalry. Harold took on provisions in the capital but did not wait for reinforcements to arrive, presumably attempting to surprise the Normans as he had Tostig and Hadrada. The gambit failed, and Harold was brought to battle on what would later be called Senlac ("bloody lake"; its original name was Santlach, or "sandy stream"). The ending is known to all children raised in England, drummed into them from an early age: Thrice the invaders were pushed back, but eventually the Norman invaders overran the Saxon defenders. According to a legend scorned by those (like Valerius) who were present at the battle, Harold fell, his eye transfixed by an arrow. The Saxon forces broke and the Normans won the day, ushering in a new era of subjugation for England.

What mortal history does not recount is the vampiric involvement in the campaign, particularly on the Norman side. The Ventre Roald Snakeyes had been a major force behind the support of Normandy under the former-Viking dukes, and he allied with Geoffrey of Calais and Liseult de Taine to expand their domains into weakly governed England. Their plan was successful and "the Triumvirate" set about consolidating power, manipulating mortal and Cainite conflicts to strengthen their position. Their support, or its withholding, often made the difference between a viable Kindred domain or one that would fall to Lupines or other foes. Those who displeased the Triumvirate found their lands beset by mortal strife, their havens betrayed to mortal hunters.

The Normans advanced on London with great care, securing a broad swathe of land before taking control of the capital itself. Duke William of Normandy was crowned William I on Christmas Day, 1066, and immediately set about building fortifications to strengthen his grip, establishing a wooden fort on the low hill east of the city

(later known as Tower Hill). In 1069-70 (at the instigation, it is claimed, of Countess Liseult) he dispatched forces to "harry the north," bringing to heel a population that resisted his rule. The bloody carnage that ensued accomplished his desires, but also had an unforeseen (and for the Triumvirate, deadly) side effect. In the far north, near the Scottish Border, Mithras awoke.

The First Empire

The former prince of London was in no rush — what are a few years when you are two millennia old? He did not return to his city until 1085, after gathering his strength in the borderlands. What he found surprised him — the Roman Empire was long gone, and the city's new Cainite lords were hostile to his presence. They burned his temple, forcing the Methuselah to flee to the countryside, then sought to shore up their suddenly precarious positions. With a little nudging from Mithras, the Triumvirate descended into bickering and distrust, each accusing the others of plotting with the former prince to elevate themselves. This distrust spilled over into a small-scale civil war among the Kindred, each sniping at the others while lesser Kindred sought to take advantage of the confusion. This conflict mirrored that of the mortal world between the sons of William the Conqueror, a dispute that turned vicious in both En-

gland and Normandy. William Rufus succeeded the Conqueror; then Henry I succeeded him. When Henry's heir died in the wreck of the White Ship, England degenerated into chaos by both day and night.

The civil war between Stephen, Henry's nephew, and "Empress" Matilda, Henry's daughter (her first husband had been the Holy Roman Emperor, the second the Duke of Anjou), ranged far and wide. Mithras and other ambitious Cainites exploited this conflict — known as the Anarchy — to advance their positions. As the mortals jockeyed for support of the nobles, so Mithras made deals with the Cainite lords who claimed the outlying fiefs. The war provided the prince with the ideal opportunity to eliminate his rivals: The initial battles of the Anarchy resulted in the Final Death of Baron Geoffrey at Winchester, and the assassination of Liseult de Taine was disguised as a Lupine assault. Matilda reigned briefly and disastrously in 1141 after capturing Stephen at Lincoln, and was quickly deposed after a popular uprising. Stephen's forces gained the advantage at the Battle of Farringdon, routing the Empress' forces, but the advantage was short-lived. The involvement of Matilda's son, Henry of Anjou, also called Plantagenet, proved decisive, and his invasion of 1153 finally brought Stephen to heel and left him little choice but to acknowledge Henry as his heir. To Mithras' gratification, the assaults also led to the death of Roald Snakeyes. With the last of

The Death of Thomas à Becket

Many years ago I spoke to Adrian of the Toreador, once a most influential member of the Cainite Heresy in the British Isles before the Reformation gilded it. He told me the tale of Thomas Becket, one-time friend and confidant of Henry II, who served as Chancellor of England before being raised to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, part of the "old boys' network" the two had going. Henry expected Becket to be a tame puppet, enhancing his influence over the Church in England, but instead Becket underwent some sort of epiphany, resigning his secular posts and attempting to block Henry's efforts to reform Canon Law, which, until then, took precedence over Civil Law. That primacy meant the priests could sidestep many of the offences of secular law, and gain vastly reduced punishments when someone did manage to convict them of a crime. If you think the nobility was made up of scoundrels, you should study the medieval clergy.

Henry sought to change this, proposing the Constitutions of Clarendon that reduced the Church's authority and sought to give the Crown the right to defend its interests. Becket rejected this and the squabble that followed shattered what little remained of their relationship. Becket was exiled, but eventually in 1170 a compromise was reached that allowed both to salvage something of their pride. Unfortunately, Becket was even more pigheaded than people thought and changed his mind at the last moment, prompting Henry to utter the immortal phrase — according to Shakespeare at least — "Who will rid me of this meddlesome priest?" A group of knights took it on their own heads to remedy the situation and set off to Canterbury to "persuade" the archbishop. Things became messy. Over the years, I've heard rumors that "Saint" Thomas received the Embrace, but Adrian assures me that wasn't the case. Even a Malkavian would struggle to operate with that much of his brain spread across the flagstones. Henry was, of course, filled with remorse. Hair shirts, pilgrimages, that sort of thing. Did Henry order it? His wife, Eleanor, seemed to think so and she — a fairly nasty piece of work in her own right — thought it was a bit too much. Occasionally, even we Kindred can learn from the kine...

the Triumvirate defeated, Mithras entered London in triumph in 1154. The Cainite barons acknowledged his claim and, thanks to his negotiations, recognized London and its prince as their feudal overlord. To all intents, Mithras ruled the English nights, his influence extending throughout the Angevin domains in France to the Pyrenees.

The lands under Mithras's influence were called the Court of Avalon; it was the largest and most influential Kindred institution of the age, though the prince's influence wasn't as all-encompassing as one might have thought. The Toreador dominated the patchwork duchies of France, and the lands brought into the empire by Henry's marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine resisted Mithras's authority, falling instead under the Parisian domains. Mithras tried briefly to exert his dominance in France but, being more than occupied with London and his English fiefs, made a deal with the Toreador who claimed the lands as her domain and whom he recognized as "Queen" of Anjou — albeit notionally subordinate to his own principedom in London. This done, Mithras largely forgot about France save for Normandy. The civil strife that took place as Henry's sons sought to depose him bothered the prince little — Melusine, the queen of Anjou, used the conflict to strike at him but he dealt handily with her pawns, and Cainite society continued to operate normally. The prince scarcely noticed when Richard, called "Coeur de Lion," assumed the throne. That the Angevin rulers were hardly in England, and when they were they were often on a "progress" around the lands of their vassals and thus away from London, was a major boon to Prince Mithras, affording him greater freedom of action when he chose to manipulate mortal institutions. This absentee rulership came to a head during Richard's reign — the king spent only eight months of his ten-year rule in England — fostering corruption in the mortal world and advancing the cause of the king's younger brother, John.

John bought support with lavish promises. One of the most significant, made during his revolt in 1191, was the inalienable right of the city to be a self-governing and self-electing city-state. This was not actually a new development, but rather a formal recognition of the situation that already existed. The core principle was that the city could elect its own mayor, the first of whom, Henry Fitz-Ailwin, served until 1212. Together with his council, the mayor governed the city (eventually from the Guildhall, founded in 1414), employing full-time clerks and lawyers to oversee its affairs.

Prince John's excesses — most notably he sought to extort ever-higher taxes and depose those who opposed his "regency" — prompted a series of mortal troubles, and

several young Cainites (Brujah, as ever, with a handful of turgid Malkavians) sought to exploit the situation. Initially, these rebels targeted the fiefs of Lincoln and Canterbury, and the 10-year insurrection denuded the barons' resources. Eventually, the Cainite nobles called on London for assistance, prompting Mithras to dispatch a number of agents. Many of the brigands met Final Death at the hands of the prince's agents, but the most influential, one Robin Leeland, was merely driven into torpor for several decades. He would later emerge as a major thorn in the prince's side in the late 14th century. King Richard died at Chalus in 1199 and was formally succeeded by John. The new king's nickname — Lackland, as his father had not willed him any property — was about to come horribly true.

New Wars

At the opposite end of Europe, the bloody events of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 suddenly changed the rules of Kindred politics. The fall of Michael in Constantinople, together with the reemergence of Mithras and Melusine signaled the end of the Long Night. Instead, a new era — the War of Princes — had begun, pitting Cainite lords against each other under the chaos of mortal conflict. The King of France, Phillip Augustus, staged major assaults on the Angevin holdings of Normandy, Poitou, Brittany and Anjou. As mortal armies fought by day — or more accurately the Angevin troops routed or accepted their new lords — the Plantagenet Kindred of the Angevin territories staged a more spirited, if no less futile, defense of their lands. This nighttime war lasted for much of the year but when Mithras, safe in London, refused to send aid to "his" lands, many of the Kindred turned coat or withdrew. This aggravated the relationship between Mithras and his French subjects — never particularly strong — and the ill feeling spread to other noble Kindred.

This first major crisis of the prince's tenure festered for several years, though it never matched the downward spiral of his mortal equivalent's reign. John was excommunicated in 1208 and England placed under papal interdict, a result of a dispute over the new Archbishop of Canterbury. John found a way around this by signing away his right to rule to the Pope and accepting the lands back as a vassal of Rome. This gave the barons, mortal and Cainite, ideas, and both presented a series of demands to their leaders. Sporadic outbreaks of vampiric violence broke out as hotheads sought to exploit the situation, manipulated by the malign influence of the undead Queen of Anjou, but Mithras preempted further violence with the Rose Treaty, a Cainite equivalent of the Magna Carta. This provided the barons with the

The Fiefs of Avalon in the Victorian Era

The fiefs of England have formed the Court of Avalon since the nights of the Norman Conquest, disparate lordships brought together under Mithras' aegis to form a cohesive, albeit imperfect, vampiric domain. Wales, Scotland and Ireland form satellite fiefs to the primary domain, their involvement with the prince and the other fiefs waxing and waning throughout the last millennium.

• London

The Fief of London is the heart of the Court of Avalon, home to Mithras' domain and many institutions of mortal government. The city of London is the focus of the fief, but the towns of Colchester and St. Albans play a major role in mortal and Cainite society, as do the surrounding counties.

• Birmingham

A new fief carved from Chester, Gloucester and Lincoln, the Fief of Birmingham emerged during the Industrial Revolution as the West-Midlands became heavily industrialized and its population boomed.

• Winchester (Glastonbury)

The Fief of Winchester, formally headquartered at Glastonbury, is the most mystical of those in England, encompassing Stonehenge, Avebury and the Cerne Giant. Winchester stands in lingering opposition to London; a major Tremere presence remains in the fief, and it was once the seat of Melusine of Anjou.

• York

Once a major ecclesiastical center, the focus of power in York has shifted since the Industrial Revolution, moving to the manufacturing centers of Leeds and Bradford. The Kindred inhabitants of the fief retain the strong edge of independence that has characterized them since medieval nights.

• Canterbury

The importance of Canterbury has dwindled since the Reformation but it remains an important part of the Court of Avalon, both spiritually and as a focus of trade with the continent.

• Newcastle (Carlisle)

Like many of the northern domains, the focus and character of this fief has changed over the last two centuries. Now centered on Newcastle, its focus is mining and heavy industry, notably shipbuilding, though it remains one of the most rural fiefs.

• Manchester/Liverpool (Chester)

Although Birmingham is England's second city, the growing industrial centers of Manchester and Liverpool are the focus for opposition to London's

supremacy, their massive economic might almost unimagined by those in the south. Much of North Wales falls under the fief's authority after Gwynedd was broken by Edward Longshanks' campaigns.

• Exeter

Of all the fiefs, Exeter has changed least over the centuries. It remains a largely rural domain with little to offer Victorian Kindred.

• Severn (Gloucester)

The Fief of Gloucester (now renamed Severn) encompasses lands formerly regarded as part of the Welsh courts (Deheubarth), grouping them together in an industrial supra-fief after the depredations of William Biltmore (see below) in the 1850s.

• Lincoln

Lincoln has struggled to meet the challenges of the modern age, though several of its cities are major manufacturing centers. However, only Nottinghamshire has prospered, with Lincolnshire remaining principally a rural domain.

• Norwich

The Fief of Norwich has long been a land of anarchy and has had little chance to exploit the changes of recent centuries. It remains a largely rural area, with only a scattering of urban centers.

• Powys

The only surviving Welsh fief, Powys is a wild land, still home to Lupines. It offers little succor to the Kindred.

• Glasgow

A schism within the leadership of Edinburgh led to the creation of the Fief of Glasgow in 1824, centered on the industrial plants along the Clyde. It remains, however, an unstable fief, fractured by internecine struggles.

• Edinburgh

The Toreador capital, Edinburgh's power has waned since the Act of Union brought Scotland and England together as a single entity and focused the government in London. Nonetheless, it remains a center of culture and learning.

• Ulster

The most pro-London of the Irish fiefs, Ulster benefits from strong links to Glasgow and Liverpool.

• Connachta (Dublin)

Dublin is the center of the opposition to London's mortal dominance of the British Isles and is the only British city whose leader Mithras recognizes as an independent prince.

assurances they needed, solidifying their authority over their fiefs and diminishing the prince's influence. The main provision prevented Mithras from fielding his own forces beyond a small personal bodyguard, instead binding the barons to the prince, some by loyalty and others by blood oaths, and requiring them to defend the capital. Self-interest prevented the barons from uniting against London, and the prince skillfully manipulated his feudal subordinates, playing off their rivalries and ambitions for almost fifty years before another round of conflict prompted a revision of the treaty.

King John's signing of the Magna Carta was much less successful — the barons continued to rebel against him, and eventually they called on the forces of the French king to aid them. Several leading Londoners, distressed by oppressive taxation and John's abrogation of the city's rights, invited Louis to take the throne in 1216. However, the French king's efforts stalled at Lincoln the following year, and John's death at Newark removed much of the baronial support (and the support of the Londoners). Louis had little choice but to depart, though he did so considerably richer than when he arrived.

The Toreador sought to use the mortal conflict to usurp Mithras's authority, but the prince's bodyguard and the forces of the fiefs secured London against their efforts, leaving several prominent Toreador staked in the sun as a warning against further efforts. Indeed, the only achievement of the Toreador efforts was to solidify support behind the prince. Mortal support likewise strengthened behind the boy-king — Henry III was only nine years old — and Mithras took the unusual step of pronouncing that any Cainite who sought to influence the boy would answer to him personally. Although he made a general pronouncement, Mithras intended the message for Melusine of Anjou, whose hands he had seen in the efforts against his primacy. Having established herself as the head of the Fief of Winchester, the queen was the most public of his opponents, though others also plotted against the prince. The prince was dismayed by Melusine's tacit alliance with the Tremere who resided in her fief; Mithras had banned them from London and discouraged their presence in England. The Rose Treaty hampered the prince's efforts to undermine Melusine's position and his efforts only served to build resentment against his influence. In 1249, tensions among the Cainites erupted into a low-scale war, as the fiefs of York, Carlisle and Winchester protested the prince's abuses of power. Surprisingly, the Tremere stayed out of the conflict — they did not desire open conflict with London, and Meerlinda blocked efforts to organize the Winchester Tremere into taking action against the prince. She

Clash of Titans

The arrival of the second godlike individual went unnoticed at first; the dark stranger's predilection for operating during the day allowed him to avoid contact with the Cainite population. In the summer of 1212, several neonates disappeared without trace, and though their sires protested to Mithras, little was done. The prince knew that casualties were an inevitable part of the War of Princes. However, when the number of disappearances escalated, he called upon Athelwulf, his warlord, to investigate. Athelwulf quickly ascertained that the disappearances took place during the day, which largely ruled out other vampires. The perpetrator crept into havens and dragged the occupants into the sun. The warlord's mortal agents soon identified the slayer — a tall, dark man with one eye — but they were defeated when they approached him, and barely escaped with their lives.

Athelwulf conceived a plan whereby he would turn the tables on the interloper, surprising him at night in his lodgings. That part of the plan went well, but the Gangrel found that despite his phenomenal martial prowess, the dark man was stronger. He fled into the night, slowly making his way to Mithras' haven. Unbeknownst to him, the dark stranger followed and for the first time met the Methuselah who claimed the domain. Unlike his lieutenant, Mithras knew the tales of this man, the dark avenger, and knew there could be no peace between them. The man was Horus the undying, as powerful as the prince — if not more so.

I gather it was a sight to behold, the battle between the two godlings. Mithras was stronger, but Horus was faster. They ranged far and wide, first one then the other gaining the advantage, devastating parts of the city as they went and igniting a grand conflagration. Eventually they reached the Tower of London, its defenses much expanded during Richard's reign, and fought on the bank of the Thames near what in the modern Victorian era is Tower Hill. Only the coming of dawn forced the combatants to part, Mithras seeking shelter from the sun and Horus seeking succor — he was unfathomably powerful but his kind could die. They swore the fight was not over, and went their separate ways. The vampire slayings dwindled over the next few months; the wariness of the Cainites made Horus' task harder, and eventually the undying lord abandoned the city, preferring to focus his war on the Children of Set descended from his uncle.

knew that doing so would invite a devastating response, something she was not yet prepared to handle.

The Cainite barons' revolt fizzled out for a short while, as Mithras adopted a less confrontational approach with the fiefs, but the northern fiefs exploited mortal concerns that had been brewing since the signing of Magna Carta to re-ignite the nocturnal conflict alongside the mortal strife. King Henry's ineptitude led to the Provisions of Oxford, which greatly enhanced the barons' powers at the expense of the king and were grudgingly accepted by the king and his son, Edward. The Provisions of Westminster, which required the barons to accept reforms on behalf of their tenants, were less well received by those to whom they applied.

When open conflict erupted between the king and the barons in 1263, London threw its lot in with the latter. This angered Prince Edward, who took every opportunity to slight the city and its representatives, costing the king the Battle of Lewes the following year. The rebels, lead by Simon de Montfort, captured Edward and became the *de facto* governing body. The prince escaped, however, winning a stunning victory at Kenilworth and slaying the rebel leader at Evesham in 1265. King Henry allowed Edward effective control over the government, but this only served to prolong the conflict until 1267, since Edward's harsh policies continued to alienate the barons and London. The prince took up the cross in 1268, departing on a Crusade to the Holy Land; he was on his way home from Acre when he learned of his father's death. Perhaps surprisingly, the barons accepted his accession without qualms, as his choice of advisors and a general mellowing repaired the damage of the civil war. In fact, most of his reign proved profitable for the kingdom and London, including a number of constitutional reforms to consolidate legal and administrative matters. The Statute of Winchester contained provisions for maintaining public order and other statutes governed trade and government institutions. Edward made particular use of Parliaments, organizations which had come to the fore during the latter years of his father's reign and which would henceforth be a cornerstone of English politics—and something the vampiric lords pushed their mortal pawns to exploit. The king also sought to reinforce the tenets of feudalism, which was already beginning to fade, though his efforts were counterproductive and served to hasten feudalism's end in favor of true nationhood.

Although little changed among the Kindred, the revolt demonstrated that the fiefs would not sit idly by as London and Mithras sought to dominate English affairs. In response, the prince expanded the Privy Council, the body of Cainite nobles who advised him, to include all



the barons of the English fiefs. He also invited the representative of Bordeaux to join his inner circle, making the Privy Council more akin to the Grand Council, the conclave of all the British Cainite leaders, which remained distinct due to the presence of Scottish, Welsh and Irish representatives. This arrangement would remain in place until the mid-seventeenth century and the Great Revolt.

Many London Kindred regarded these developments with a detached aplomb, believing the reforms would be short-lived and that government would soon revert to feudalism. Older, more experienced Cainites such as the prince were less sure. They knew that feudalism was a relatively new invention, certainly when compared to democracy; though when a young Brujah suggested that a parliamentary system be adopted for the Kindred of London, the result was predictably bloody.

Mithras admired King Edward's military campaigns, departing London for a time to study the campaigns in Wales in the 1270s and 80s, leaving Thomas Camden, his seneschal, as London's Kindred overlord. Edward's forces reminded Mithras of events a thousand years earlier when Roman legions moved against the Celtic fastnesses of Mona (Anglesey). Edward's French and subsequent Scottish campaigns against William Wallace and Robert the Bruce were less to Mithras's tastes — the autocratic nature of the king was perhaps too close to the prince's own for comfort. Instead, Mithras returned to London where he remained until the Black Death. The disease, which ravaged England in the mid-14th century, arrived in London in 1348. It killed almost a third of the city's population. To their horror, the Kindred discovered they were not wholly immune to the plague's effects, and a number of neonates quickly succumbed to its symptoms. Having been somewhat relaxed about managing the city's vampiric population — a number of Tremere and Setites had established havens in the late 13th century — Mithras re-exerted his dominance with ruthless efficiency. He expelled the Tremere and Setites, blaming them for the plague, and imposed harsh penalties for those failing to present themselves to him on their arrival in the city. Although the prince's actions relieved his anger, they did nothing to stem the Black Death, and more Kindred and kine succumbed. The most prominent of these was Richard de Worde, his Nosferatu spymaster, who contracted the disease while Embracing an infected monk.

The Dawn of a New Age

The Hundred Years War (1337-1453) marked efforts by mortal authorities to regain the lands lost by John Lackland a century earlier. A few adventurous Kindred

accompanied the armies onto the continent, particularly during the French and Castilian campaigns of Edward the "Black Prince," the militaristic son of Edward III; but Mithras discouraged such foolhardiness, not wishing to provoke a response from the French Cainites. The conflict ebbed and flowed, as internal problems (including the Peasant's Revolt in England) distracted the combatants.

The Peasant's Revolt was caused by a harsh poll tax imposed in 1381, though it also reflected the general dissatisfaction among the working classes since the Black Death. The massive reduction in the workforce caused by the pandemic had greatly increased the demand for labor, and many workers felt their recompense was insufficient. Indeed, the Statute of Laborers, issued in 1351, attempted to fix the maximum wages they could earn. The focus of the conflict was London, where rebels, led by Wat Tyler and Jack Straw among others, converged in June. The king, Richard II, had little choice but to negotiate. He met a group under Tyler's leadership at Mile End, agreeing to free trade and the abolition of serfdom. Meanwhile, a second group of rebels forced the surrender of the Tower of London, slaying the chancellor and treasurer whom the rebels blamed for the taxes. Despite the treacherous slaying of Tyler at Mile End, the king persuaded the rebels to disperse, though once the crisis was over his promises were conveniently forgotten.

A number of Brujah provided the rebels with assistance, seeking to undermine the authority of both the king and the Kindred prince. The key agitator was Robin Leeland, the brigand who had led the Brujah revolts of the late 12th century. Seeing great potential in Patricia of Bollingbroke, Wat Tyler's mistress, Leeland rescued and Embraced her; she would later adopt her lover's name and play a major role in the Anarch Movement. For a short time Patricia worked with Leeland against the Kindred nobility and in support of the peasant cause, but dissatisfaction prompted her to abandon England. Leeland continued the struggle, eliminating several high-ranking Kindred and making unlife difficult for the Cainite nobility by stirring up the mortal masses. He threw his lot in with the Lollard heretics, encouraging the spread of John Wycliffe's views (notably disbelief in the transubstantiation of flesh, belief that the clergy were corrupt, and use of a bible translated into English to allow anyone to read the Testaments). Henry IV, who became king in 1399, had little tolerance for heresy, and Leeland's efforts to stir up trouble ensured harsh repression. In 1401, a law, the Statute De Heretico Comburendo, was passed to allow the burning of heretics, and the martyrdom of several Lollards led to an uprising in 1414 and severe reprisals from the king. Although dismissive of

The Privy Council

The authority to enforce the Traditions in London and the Court of Avalon remains vested solely in the figure of the prince, but attempting to do so without insight into broader affairs would be tantamount to suicide. For much of the last eight hundred years, a series of councils have advised the prince, presenting information and viewpoints from around the nation, though the councils have no decision-making powers. The most notable of these is the Privy Council, initially comprised of the Barons of Lincoln, York, Carlisle and Canterbury, as well as representatives of Bordeaux.

In the 1260s, the council was opened up to all the English barons, who had hitherto been relegated to the secondary Great Council together with provincial representatives. The expansion of the council was a cunning ploy by Mithras, seeming to concede an advantage to his opponents while strengthening his own power. The enlarged council gave more baronial Kindred access to the prince, but it also made it nigh on impossible for him ever to be overruled. The Blood Laws contained a provision for the council to overrule the prince, but only in the event of a unanimous decision; Mithras' influence over key members of the council via the blood oath (or, less directly, his warrior cult) ensured this would never happen. Nonetheless, the Privy Council became a useful forum for the gathering and dissemination of data at monthly gatherings, and served as a staple of government until the reign of Elizabeth. By that time, however, the barons realized the council's lack of teeth and were drawn into the Brujah's open rebellion against the established order. The Great Revolt (the mortal civil wars of the mid-17th century) led to the dissolution of the Privy Council that, together with the industrial revolution, led to increased regionalization in the centuries that followed.

Indeed, though the Court of Avalon remained extant after the civil wars, and continues to exist tonight, it is more a polite fiction among the fiefs than any representation of reality. Many of the fiefs barely acknowledge its existence, particularly those whose commercial and industrial hearts have grown exponentially in the last two centuries, and who pay only lip service to the prince in London. Some Cainite nobles even dare to style themselves princes, though as William Biltmore found recently, not all get away with it. (The term "baron" slowly fell out of favor after the formation of the Sabbat, though both the British Kindred and the anarchs use it to mean the same thing: the preeminent vampire in a city, or in Britain's case, fief.) Nonetheless, this regionalization has changed the fabric of Kindred society in the British Isles, something the prince seems ill aware of, to his potential chagrin and ruination.

The Blood Laws

Even before the formation of the Camarilla, English Kindred jurisprudence enshrined the Traditions of Caine as the "Blood Laws." Prince Mithras used his position as the dominant Kindred of Britain to entwine the traditions with mortal laws to create a series of clear and unambiguous rules regarding Kindred existence in England and the lands under his authority.

Minor infractions, particularly involving the Traditions of Domain or Hospitality, usually result in fines (often as a "blood-tithe" paid to the appropriate baron) or perhaps the blood oath. More serious violations, often involving the Traditions of Progeny and Accounting, can result in more severe punishments such as banishment or a blood hunt. Violations of the Traditions of Silence (later the Masquerade) or the Tradition of Destruction usually draw the most severe penalties — blood hunt or outright destruction — though minor violations of the Masquerade may receive more lenient punishments.

The creation of the Camarilla changed the Blood Laws little; a few revisions were made to bring the British version into line with the standard interpretation of the Traditions. Indeed, the Kindred of the British Isles are unusual in having a written form of the Traditions, particularly one that is geared to the practicalities of nightly existence rather than simply being abstract concepts learned by rote. Consequently, greater uniformity of interpretation occurs across the Isles — the definition of infractions of each Tradition in London will differ little from those in Dublin, as both refer to the same written rules. The formality that surrounds proceedings throughout the isles also points back to the Blood Laws. They are not simply Kindred Traditions, but English traditions.

the laws that were aimed at his people, Leeland silently applauded the introduction of burning, a punishment feared even more by Kindred than mortals.

Although guilds had existed since Saxon times, they became increasingly important in the London political scene during this period. Money equaled power and influence, and the labor shortage after the Black Death increased the value of the guilds. Several times their economic might allowed them to dictate the composition of the city council, and in 1397 Richard Whittington of the Mercer's Guild became the city's elected mayor, surrounded in the years that followed by a host of legends. Unbeknownst to Mithras, the Tremere, despite their exclusion from London, had contacts among the guilds from the mid-14th century onward, seeking to subvert the power of the monarchy and, by extension, the prince.

The Wars of the Roses began in 1455, a series of dynastic conflicts between the houses of York (whose emblem was the white rose) and Lancaster (which used the red rose). The disastrous rule of the Lancastrian Henry VI prompted the rival Yorkists to place their Duke Richard as Protector of the Realm, leading to a back-and-forth struggle for power. Edward of York was pronounced king at Westminster in 1461 but this did not provide a long-term solution; dissent within the House of York led to renewed fighting in 1469. Edward was captured in the fighting but escaped, though Yorkist forces deposed him the following year prompting his flight to the Netherlands. Edward returned in 1471 and defeated the Yorkists at Barnet just north of London. Henry VI was captured and imprisoned in the tower where he was murdered in May of that year. With Edward IV's throne secure, peace reigned until 1483 when the king died and was succeeded by his 9-year-old son, Edward V, with his uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, acting as regent.

Richard was, however, ambitious, and persuaded various factions that the young Edward was illegitimate and that he was the rightful king. An assembly accepted this argument and the duke became Richard III on June 26. Edward V and his young brother were incarcerated in the Tower of London, and disappeared in August. Rumors circulated — most likely true — that the new king had murdered his nephews, and this led to a succession of revolts that cumulated in the Battle of Bosworth Field in the summer of 1485. The Lancastrian forces, lead by Henry Tudor, the Earl of Richmond, were outnumbered, but the defection of many powerful nobles during the battle doomed Richard's cause and he fell to the overwhelming odds. Henry was enthroned as Henry VII, marrying Edward IV's daughter to unite the Yorkist and

Mithras and the Camarilla

Although low-level revolutionary activity had occupied many English Brujah for more than two centuries, the Anarch Revolt shocked the prince and his confidants. The assassination and diablerie of Hardestadt, who was sometimes an ally and others an opponent, made the prince concerned for his unlife, and prompted him to radically strengthen his bodyguard and the defenses around his haven. In 1394, the Ventre Hardestadt had proposed a "society of vampires" to better conceal their existence from mortals. With the Inquisition in England lacking the strength and influence of its continental branches, Mithras was scornful of the proposal, declaiming that he would "never scurry in the shadows." The Anarch Revolt that raged through the 15th century prompted the prince to reconsider his position, though he still advocated strength and defiance rather than deceit and concealment. Mithras rebuffed the Toreador and Ventre representatives who sought to persuade him to their cause after the convocation of 1486, and he and the English Kindred were discounted as members of the nascent Camarilla.

It was, therefore, something of a surprise to the gathered assembly when Thomas Camden, Mithras's seneschal who was attending the convocation in his master's stead, accepted the basic tenets of the Camarilla. Perhaps it was the diablerie of the Lasombra Antediluvian and (allegedly) Hardestadt that convinced him. Perhaps it was self-interest and the anarch activity in England. In either case, London became a locus of the Camarilla, its Traditions and rules taking hold among the resident Kindred. Mithras himself, however, has never formally accepted the precepts of the Camarilla, though by and large he operates within them. Consequently, he has never been entirely trusted by the Camarilla's Inner Circle — not that this has worried him. One interesting side effect of Mithras's position was that both the Camarilla and the anarchs accepted England as neutral ground when it came to finding a venue for the meeting that ended the Anarch Revolt, the Convention of Thorns, which took place near Silchester.

Lancastrian claims and found the Tudor dynasty. A century later, William Shakespeare would immortalize Richard III in his play of the same name, an unsubtle piece of pro-Tudor character assassination that colored perceptions of the ex-king henceforth.

Although the War of the Roses was a mortal conflict, several of the northern Cainite barons used the conflict to settle their own scores and to renegotiate the relationship with London. The prince dispatched his warlord, Athelwulf, to deal with the insurrection and protect the nascent Masquerade. The Saxon encountered the Kindred rebels who accompanied the mortal forces at Barnet, a few miles north of London. Precisely what happened is unclear, but on the eve of the mortal battle, Athelwulf met his Final Death at the hands of Nathaniel of Carlisle. Angered by the slaying of his henchman, Mithras personally led a force against the Lancastrian Cainites. Nathaniel and his associates were staked out on Hadley Green and left to meet the sun, a warning to those who would challenge Mithras's authority in his own fief.

The next century was a time of great progress in both London and England, as the rule of Henry VII gave way

to that of Henry VIII in 1509 and the Renaissance took hold. William Caxton established his printing press at Westminster in 1476. This new invention intrigued the Kindred, who followed the lead of rich merchants and purchased books on a wide range of subjects. Learning and sophistication became a central facet of unlife in London, with libraries appearing in the havens of the well-to-do.

The young Henry VIII was a powerfully built man who enjoyed physical pursuits such as hunting, and he reminded Mithras of himself. In what some later claimed was a breach of the Masquerade, Mithras occasionally sparred with the king, disguising himself as the noble scion of a minor house. Henry's association with Thomas Wolsey mirrored the prince's own with Thomas Camden, his seneschal, the two leaders having absolute trust in their allies. Camden's assassination in 1514 by the Giovanni greatly angered the prince, who slew the surviving assassins and used their remains as part of a ritual to protect Camden's crypt. Mithras's childe, the Duke of Amber, became the next seneschal, and over the next few decades he stamped his own mark on the city.

The Witch Trials

Fear of witchcraft had been prevalent in England since the Middle Ages but responsibility for policing it lay with the Church and the heresy statutes. In 1542, however, the first Witchcraft Act of England was passed, making it illegal to be a witch or to associate with them. While to some extent this had the desired deterrent factor, many so-called witches simply went underground, practicing their art in secret. A second act, passed in 1563, tightened the restrictions, but it was the 1604 act, initiated during the reign of James I, that is best known. Under its provisions, numerous witches were burned at the stake, hung, drowned or otherwise executed. The anti-witch hysteria reached its peak in the mid-17th century during the civil war, with individuals such as Mathew Hopkins, the Witchfinder General, making a career of hunting down and executing witches in East Anglia in the mid 1640s.

Although Mithras did not instigate the anti-witch laws, he used Hopkins and others like him to curb the power of the Tremere (whom the prince falsely believed were broken by the trials), providing the investigators with subtle (and not so subtle) hints as to the location of the Witches and their agents. Hopkins was, however, corrupted by the power and wealth his position afforded, fabricating and falsifying evidence where necessary in order to receive payments (20 shillings per witch) from the towns he "cleansed." His "tests" included binding suspects and throwing them in the river: If they sank, they were innocent — but drowned — and if they floated they were guilty. He also exploited the "devil's mark," a blemish believed to be immune to pain, by using a retractable spike to ensure his victims felt no pain and were thus guilty. Ironically, Hopkins was forced to take one of his own tests in 1647. He floated, and was sentenced to death.

The frenzy spread to North America with the English colonists, culminating in the Salem Witch Trials of 1692. The 1604 Witchcraft Act was finally repealed in 1736 during the reign of George II, and execution was replaced with custodial sentences and placement in a pillory. Prior witchcraft acts will remain in force until 1951, though they are largely ignored in the late 19th century during the occult revival. Nonetheless, a careless Kindred might find himself accused of witchcraft and be punished accordingly — and must face the wrath of the prince or his seneschal should he survive the ordeal. While the pillory itself poses few risks to a vampire, exposure to sunlight will spell his fiery doom. This perhaps explains the miraculous disappearance of several witches over the years.

Reason, Religion and Revolution

Amber, Embraced by the prince in one of his waking periods in the first millennium, was an ambitious and hard-nosed politician whose secret desire was to claim the city as his own domain. The prince had been leery of advancing his childe, particularly after Camden had warned him of Amber's ambition. The new seneschal's tenure was unimpressive, but he did oversee a diversification of Ventre interests to incorporate mercantile investments. Mithras had seen the rising fortunes of the merchant classes as partially due to Tremere manipulation, and sought to safeguard his own position by expanding his range of influence. Parliament became the new political battlefield of the Kindred, this time with the Brujah as the instigators.

The turbulent reign of Henry VIII saw his break from Rome to establish a Church of England with the king at its head. Unlike other acts of "Reformation" in Europe, the changes in England were for dynastic and political reasons. The Pope refused to let Henry annul the marriage to his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. By making himself head of the Church, he gained the power to do so. Henry's intention was to retain the trappings of Catholicism, but his heir, Edward VI, advocated Protestant reforms, supported by Thomas Cranmer, a clerical reformer. When Edward died in 1553 his half-sister, Mary, ascended to the throne. A staunch Catholic, she earned the nickname "Bloody Mary" for her brutal suppression of Protestantism. Cranmer, along with many others, was burnt as a heretic (for his Protestant faith, but also for supporting Lady Jane Gray as a protestant alternative to Mary's enthronement). Mary even considered eliminating her Protestant half-sister and heir, Elizabeth. When Mary died in 1558, Elizabeth succeeded to the throne and, despite opposition from members of the nobility, pushed through the Act of Uniformity to strike a balance between the Protestant and Catholic faiths. In 1580, Pope Gregory authorized the Queen's assassination, though numerous attempts failed. Spanish efforts to depose her likewise came to naught, and England entered the seventeenth century as a Protestant country, albeit one that would not be solidly so until the enthronement of William of Orange in 1688.

The Brujah sought to use the mortal struggles of the Reformation as a means of opening up London's power structure — hitherto almost all positions of power lay with the Ventre — and the political chaos that followed certainly dispossessed a number of mortal pawns who sought to remain true to Rome. The Brujah also

attacked the Ventre directly, seeking to eliminate several prominent individuals and launching a Kindred civil war in the capital that would last until the end of the 16th century. The religious frictions provided an ideal cover for this war, and agents of both sides went to the flames. No small number of Kindred perished too, but though the Ventre were weakened, they retained their dominant influence over the city.

In 1588, Philip of Spain sent a vast fleet to invade England and depose its "heretic queen," Elizabeth, who also happened to be his sister-in-law. The English fleet harried the invaders but it seemed unlikely that they could prevail. Mithras had no intention of allowing the Spanish — accompanied, he believed by a number of Lasombra and Brujah — to seize his domain. What exactly was done to defeat the armada is unclear: The Spanish ships were forced to break off the battle in the English Channel and seek passage around Scotland, where many were subsequently wrecked in storms. The appearance of a small Tremere chantry in London in early 1589 would suggest that Mithras cut some form of deal with his enemies. Nonetheless, the prince continued to harass the Warlocks, eventually expelling them (again) in the mid-17th century.

The Elizabethan age saw England's first faltering steps to establish colonies in North America, though it would be until the reign of James I before real efforts were made in this direction, with the arrival of the Pilgrim Fathers (a 19th-century term) in Boston. The concept of new lands far beyond the sea appealed to many young Kindred eager to build a power base for themselves, but the practicalities of such a voyage — nine weeks on a small ship — discouraged all but the most adventurous from attempting the crossing.

The Brujah-Ventre civil war changed little in the capital, but it did distract the prince from affairs elsewhere in the country, a task he had delegated to Lord Amber. How badly distracted he had been — and how treacherous was Amber's nature — became apparent in 1602 when Elizabeth died and James IV of Scotland was enthroned as James I of England. In a single stroke, this gave the Toreador vast influence over the king, relegating Mithras to the role of regional lord and making the Toreador of Edinburgh the "real" national power. Fortunately for the prince, the Toreador were not adept at manipulating large-scale events and failed to capitalize on their coup. Indeed, their steadfast determination to clinging to the monarchy greatly reduced their power, particularly after the civil war. In a fury, Mithras removed Amber from his office — his association with the Toreador was now clear, and he barely escaped with his unlife intact. The prince elevated Valerius, London's

All the world's a stage ...

The Elizabethan era saw radical changes to the acting profession and theatre in England, particularly in London. Hitherto, troupes had either been itinerant professionals, touring inn yards and halls, or else amateurs acting out plays for the gentry and nobility. The development of permanent theatres — the first appeared in 1576 — gave professional troupes a solid platform for their presentations and attracted a wide range of clientele. Those with the least money could stand in front of the stage (as "groundlings"), while wealthier attendees sat on benches in the surrounding galleries or even had private boxes.

By the late 16th and early 17th centuries, a number of famous theatres emerged, such as Philip Henseloe's Rose, Francis Langley's Swan, and Richard and Cuthbert Burbage's Globe, all on Bankside in Southwark. These theatres staged plays by a variety of authors, notably William Shakespeare, Philip Marlowe and Ben Jonson. Each theatre supported a particular acting troupe — the Admiral's Men at the Rose (and its replacement, the Fortune) and the Chamberlain's Men at the Globe (including one W. Shakespeare as both dramatist and player).

This combination of performance art and social spectacle intrigued a number of Kindred, particularly those of Clan Toreador, and despite the difficulties of attending plays — in Elizabethan times most plays took place in the afternoon, to take advantage of the natural conditions in the open-air playhouses — many became patrons of the theatrical arts. These undead thespians encouraged London as a center of such entertainment and helped theatre gain respectability in the years that followed, making London the center of British theatre and a (if not *the*, until the 20th century) major contributor to world theatre. London's West End became famous (and in many cases infamous) for its theatres, many of which deservedly gained a reputation for licentiousness — a reputation that once besmirched the entire profession. The first "modern" theatre appeared on Drury Lane in 1663, the Theatre Royal Drury Lane; it still stands, though it has been rebuilt numerous times, and remains open in the Victorian nights. Indeed, since the opening of the theatre and the commencement of nighttime productions by lamplight, a number of Kindred have chanced their skills on the boards, sometimes "playing fair" and simply acting, at other times breaching the Masquerade and using Disciplines to enhance their performance. The prince has sought to keep such abuses in check, but allows the thespian Kindred a degree of leeway. After all, many mortals expect actors to be a little bit strange, which explains away many of the Kindred's foibles.



warlord since the Battle of Barnet, to the position of seneschal.

The Toreador's choice of kings was a poor one. James I was a despotic ruler, a strong believer in absolutism who frequently clashed with Parliament. Only Parliament's established power over the raising of taxes kept him in check, though he never missed an opportunity to harangue the Commons and Lords regarding his "rights." James sought to use the courts to circumvent Parliament, and managed by stealth to undo most of the fiscal good his predecessor Elizabeth had done. James became increasingly erratic, and the last 18 months of his reign were managed by his heir, Charles, and the Duke of Buckingham. Charles's rule — he became king in 1625 — was even harsher than his father's. Although a patron of the arts, he was shy and unimposing (his portraits are unduly flattering), and he lacked political sophistication. Like his father, he hated Parliament. When Charles attempted to arrest several members of Parliament in 1642, the stage was set for the English Civil Wars.

Remember, Remember, the Fifth of November. Gunpowder, Treason, and Plot.

On November 5, 1605, a group of English Catholics conspired to blow up Parliament, the king and his heir. These zealots, seeking to take over the country in the confusion that would follow the assassination, smuggled twenty barrels of gunpowder into a cellar under the Palace of Westminster. One of the conspirators, Francis Tresham, warned his brother-in-law not to attend Parliament on the fateful day, and the brother-in-law in turn alerted the authorities. Another conspirator, Guy Fawkes, was arrested in the cellars and revealed the identities of his accomplices. Several were killed trying to escape, and the rest were executed in January of 1606. That same month, Parliament established the Fifth of November as a day of thanksgiving, marked ever since with fireworks, bonfires and the burning of effigies of the conspirators. The plot also heightened anti-Catholic suspicions, prompting the imposition of fines on those who refused to attend Anglican services. In effect, the Catholic plot worsened their position, though the Protestant-Catholic issue would haunt the monarchy for years to come.

The wars, also known as the Great Revolt, were fought as much by night as day while the Ventre sought to undermine the Toreador hold on the reins of power. The Ventre, with surprising allies in the form of the Brujah, sided with Parliament, while the Toreador chose to ally with the King's cavaliers. When the king raised his standard at Nottingham, the Toreador of the city stood behind him, and several other Cainite fiefs gave the king their support. London, naturally inclined to Parliament, did not. Indeed, early attempts by the king to establish a presence in the capital were rebuffed by the militia, with the addition of a few Ventre soldiers to deflect the Toreador accompanying the king. For the next ten years, the clans' positions remained in a state of constant flux with numerous advances and regroupings, but Ventre efficiency won out over Toreador sentiment. The New Model Army, developed with Ventre aid and incorporating a number of Valerius' and Mithras' retainers, provided the Parliamentarians with a decisive edge, and the Royalist gains of 1643 were quickly reversed in the campaign of 1645. London was never directly threatened. When the king fell into Parliament's hands in 1647, betrayed by the Scots he sought to woo to his side, the wars seemed over.

As with the Wars of the Roses, however, internal politics ruined the peace. Distrust reigned with the army believing neither the king nor Parliament to be entirely trustworthy. Oliver Cromwell, Member of Parliament (MP in the argot of the common folk) for Huntingdon, and his son-in-law, Henry Ireton, attempted to mediate, seeking to persuade the king to accept the constitutional reforms Parliament demanded. Cromwell bore the king no malice, but when Charles fled from Hampton Court he changed his mind and became a staunch opponent of the king. Charles prompted a series of Royalist uprisings and a Scottish invasion, but the insurrections failed and the king was captured once more. Despite some hesitation, Cromwell accepted the need to try the king and sat as one of the commissioners. When Charles refused to cooperate, Cromwell signed his death warrant. Charles was beheaded outside the Banqueting House in Westminster on January 30th, 1649. England was declared a commonwealth with Cromwell as head of its ruling council, but it would be another two years before the last pockets of Royalist resistance were crushed and hard-line Puritan groups such as the Levellers (who sought to "level" the imbalances between rich and poor) were brought to heel. The army and Parliament continued to squabble and, after vain attempts at negotiation, Cromwell used force to dissolve Parliament. He constituted another, smaller Parliament, but came once more to the conclusion that it was corrupt. In 1653, after a coup

d'etat against this "Little Parliament," he accepted the title of Lord Protector. He was king in all but name, his reign lasting until his death in 1658.

The Masquerade teetered on the brink several times during the Civil War, prompting a major upsurge in witch trials during the conflict. Several prominent Kindred disappeared during the revolt, perhaps slain or alternatively withdrawing into torpor. Fearful of what might happen should the Masquerade be ripped asunder, the Camarilla dispatched several observers — the Inner Council regarded Mithras as a borderline supporter of everything they stood for. Mithras resented this move, particularly as the principal justicar involved was Violetta of Paris, childe of Francis Villon, and the prince of Paris had provided the Royalist Toreador with discrete aid. The charismatic justicar was, however, able to convince Prince Mithras of the need to monitor events. Violetta's mediation eventually brought peace to the warring Cainites. The Restoration of Charles II in 1661 was a concession to the artisans, and England's status as a constitutional monarchy where the real power lay with Parliament acceded to Venttrue demands. For a few scant years, peace reigned in London, though a full settlement would not be reached between the factions until 1692 and the Treaty of Durham.

One result of the Great Revolt was Mithras' decision to handle his domain without the direct advice of the barons. Many had sided with the Toreador and Royalists (and would continue to do so for the next few decades as the Venttrue-Toreador war wound down to the Treaty of Durham) and the councils were a shambles. Rarely did all the barons attend or send representatives, and when they did they were more concerned with fighting each other or undermining the prince than with their official goal of cooperatively maintaining the domain of Britain. In 1556, the prince dissolved the Privy Council and the Grand Council. Where advice was needed — and Mithras was far from convinced it would be — it would come from the seneschal and his immediate circle, or from individual barons rather than from the councils, which he described as "a pack of squabbling women." By distancing himself from the fiefs' advice, Mithras made it much harder to influence them, and the increasing independence of the fiefs over the next two centuries reflects this. At the same time, however, giving each of the fiefs greater rein over its own affairs reduced the desire to undermine London. The city and its authority survived, albeit in a weakened state.

Plague, Fire and Finance

By and large London welcomed the return of the king, but public opinion of Cromwell — who was ini-

tially seen as a brave and courageous man who had made England great — soured. In 1661, his body was exhumed from Westminster Abbey and then hung at Tyburn before being beheaded. His head was placed on a pole atop Westminster Hall where it remained throughout Charles' reign.

The Restoration of the king was not the only great change that took place in the 1660s. The year 1663 began with a shock for the Kindred inhabitants of the city — after meeting with the new Baron of Winchester, Mithras announced that henceforth, the base tongue of the English would be acceptable at his court; previously he had required all business of his domain be carried out in a "civilized tongue," namely Latin. The Roman language would remain the staple of Mithras' domain formalities until Valerius' regency, but the linguistic bar to playing a role in domain politics was removed, and henceforth matters would be more dynamic.

The sudden return of the Black Death in 1665 shattered the hopes that had emerged after the civil war. Whole families were boarded up in their houses after infection was detected, all condemned to die in a vain effort to protect the city. By the time the plague died down in 1666, more than 100,000 Londoners had died, though the deaths among the Kindred were limited to a handful of neonates. The mortals blamed rats transported on merchant vessels for the outbreak. Mithras believed otherwise.

Mithras already suspected the Tremere of aiding the Toreador in the Great Revolt, and now he accused them of bringing the plague back to London with the Followers of Set (who had recently reinforced their presence in the city) as their allies in this unholy act. Both groups were banished from the city under pain of Final Death, with several recalcitrant members of the clans falling to the sheriffs after failing to heed the warnings. In 1666, when several Setites were involved in another plot involving a rare piece of mystical lore, the prince himself took a personal hand in dealing with the incursion, driving off those involved. What followed may have been a mortal accident, but to the Kindred in the city, it was hell on earth.

In the early hours of Sunday, September 2nd, a fire broke out in Pudding Lane in the city. Mortals claim it began in the house of Mr. Farryner, the King's Baker, or in an adjacent cattle shed. The city's Kindred authorities claim differently, saying that in truth it began in the neighboring Giovanni mansion, perhaps the result of ill-cast magics or a battle gone awry, or else a deliberate attempt to destroy the city. Nonetheless, the result was a conflagration that, though far from unique in the city's history, is remembered as the Great Fire of London. A

combination of environmental conditions — August had been free of rain so the thatch and timbers were dry, and a strong east wind fanned the flames — ensured that the fire spread quickly. It raged out of control until Wednesday the 6th, consuming much of the city east of Fetter Lane. Approximately 13,000 houses burned (including many of those on London Bridge, though the crossing itself survived), together with eighty-nine churches, including the old St. Paul's Cathedral. The fires were brought under control thanks largely to the use of gunpowder, which was used to demolish houses and create a firebreak. Moorfields became the primary refuge of the homeless, but others fled to Hampstead and Highgate or else south of the river in Southwark — areas spared the fire's devastation. To the mortals of the city,

only six of whom died in the inferno, it was a major tragedy. To the Kindred it was Armageddon. Almost twenty Kindred died in the fire, either burned to ash by the flames as they lay torpid in their lairs, or else slain by their peers after succumbing to Rötschreck. Several others simply disappeared, perhaps claimed by the flames, or maybe eliminated by their enemies under cover of the inferno.

The rebuilding of the city began almost immediately, aided by architects such as Christopher Wren, John Evelyn and Robert Hooke, who presented plans to the king within days. Their grandiose plans for remodeling the city (as Baron Haussman had recently done in Paris) came to naught, but Wren and Hooke were soon immersed in rebuilding the city, the former designing the

Lights of the Renaissance: Wren, Newton and the Royal Society

Although the 17th century is best remembered for the Great Fire, the plague and the Civil War, it is also the time in which some of Britain's greatest intellectuals lived and worked, particularly in London. These men of learning resided in the city for years and, via institutions such as the Royal Society, passed on their learning. Many upper class Kindred of this era claim knowledge of Wren and Newton, but few were ever more than passing acquaintances. Agents of Mithras and Valerius secretly chaperoned the leading lights of the Renaissance to discourage outside interference — the Ventrule claimed the Royal Society as domain — much to the chagrin of other scientifically minded Kindred.

Christopher Wren, knighted in 1673, is best known for St. Paul's Cathedral, whose dome became a symbol of the city and ultimately spawned imitations across Britain and the world, such as St. Isaac's Cathedral in St. Petersburg and the Capitol in Washington. In addition to serving as chief architect for Charles II, James II and William and Mary, he also served as MP for Old Windsor, as the Savilian Chair of Astronomy at Oxford, and was a founder of the Royal Society (of which he served as president in the early 1680s). He died in 1723, aged ninety.

One of Wren's contemporaries was Isaac Newton, renowned as a physicist and mathematician, and undoubtedly the greatest scientist of the 17th century. Newton is best remembered for his Law of Universal Gravitation and the three Laws of Motion, but he also studied optics. His work *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica* contains many of these theorems and is one of the most important works of modern science. In mathematics (he was Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Trinity College Cambridge), he discovered infinitesimal calculus, his methods and solutions surpassing the lost works of Archimedes. Newton also served as Warden of the Royal Mint from 1696 and as President of the Royal Society from 1705, holding both offices until his death in 1727.

The Royal Society of London for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge was founded in 1660. It began as a loose association of those interested in science, and finally received a royal charter in 1662, though it received little formal support from the crown. Its periodical, *Philosophical Transactions*, linked its members and provided a forum for the free expression of ideas. The Society's reputation spread, its membership growing to include Newton, Edmond Halley and Francis Hauksbee. Beginning in the mid-18th century, the society sponsored expeditions, notably the 1768 scientific expedition to the Pacific under James Cook. The society also issues various awards, the most notable of which is the Copley Medal, the country's most prestigious award for scientific endeavor, which was awarded annually after its bequest by Sir Godfrey Copley in 1709. Membership in the Society is by recommendation of existing members (or fellows as they are termed). The first (but by no means last) Kindred fellow of the Royal Society was Stephen Goldcrest, who was elected in 1747 on the strengths of his anatomical knowledge.

new St. Paul's Cathedral with its distinctive dome, and the latter surveying and rebuilding housing. Hooke was also a scientist and a fellow of the Royal Society, a contemporary of Newton, and was interested in a wide variety of fields from the stars and geometry to evolution and physics. Both Hooke and Wren are variously credited with designing the Monument that was built in the 1670s to commemorate the fire. The 205-ft Monument is said to be the tallest freestanding stone column in the world, its height exactly matching the distance to where the fire started. The Monument is hollow, with more than 300 steps ascending to a platform with a superlative view over the city. Although the Monument is officially closed after dark, numerous Cainites nonetheless ascend the structure to survey their domains.

The death of Charles II in 1685 threatened to undo a century of progress and plunge England back into the religious strife of the Tudors. Charles's successor, his brother James II, was a Catholic and thus not widely liked. Actual opposition to his accession had been suppressed by his alliance with Anglican parties. There were, however, rebellions against his authority; after putting down the rebellions, James set about enlarging the army, with Catholic officers leading the new units. This provoked a major outcry in Parliament, further exacerbated by the king's manipulation of the courts to circumvent the Test Oath (which limited the roles Catholics could play in public office). His 1687 Declaration of Indulgence suspended the laws against Roman Catholics and Protestant dissenters, perhaps as part of a process of religious tolerance. This he might have weathered, but the combination of his attempts to remodel elements of the power structure and the news in November of 1687 that the queen was pregnant — and thus that there would be a Catholic succession — was too much for many.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought the Dutch William of Orange to the throne at the invitation of seven leading Englishmen. Ostensibly, the invitation called upon William to investigate the legitimacy of his nephew's birth (William's wife was Mary, sister of James and Charles II), but when many of James' Protestant officers defected to William's army, the king fled. Parliament offered William and Mary the throne on February 13th, 1689, but James, supported by the French, attempted to regain his throne later in the year. He landed in Ireland and was recognized as sovereign by its Parliament. William defeated James at the Boyne in July, a battle still commemorated on the faction-torn isle.

Kindred politics played a substantial role in the Glorious Revolution, directed notably toward efforts to minimize damage to Kindred-dominated institutions.

The Treaty of Durham

The Toreador-Venture civil war finally came to an end in 1693 with the signing of the Treaty of Durham. The treaty recognized the extant situation — the Venture dominated London and the southeast, while the Toreador could do little but skulk in their Scottish fastnesses. It was not an agreement between equals: The Treaty of Durham ensured that the Toreador couldn't fall any further, guaranteeing the safety of Edinburgh in exchange for promises not to seek power in London beyond the Elysium. Furthermore, the treaty barred the Toreador from dealing with the Tremere, either to seek their aid or to support any of their machinations in London.

Under the treaty, any Toreador who sought domain beyond the accepted Elysium of London without first seeking the Prince's permission was in violation of the terms and subject to expulsion or, in extreme circumstances, blood hunt. Those Toreador who were allowed in London stood as surety against the behavior of Edinburgh, liable for execution should their northern kin (often their sires) seek to undermine London's authority. In exchange, the Venture would not seek to suborn the Kindred of Edinburgh, with Venture hostages standing as surety for Mithras and his kin. Enforcing the treaty in London fell to the sheriffs, who were charged with tracking all Toreador in the city and dealing with any who were there without official sanction or who sought to expand their influence in contravention of the treaty.

Many Toreador resented the treaty, but they knew that to reject it would be to risk what few holdings remained in their hands after the civil war — almost every English domain that began the 17th century in Toreador hands was now under Venture, Brujah or Malkavian authority. The treaty would not go untested. Reactionary Toreador attempted to circumvent it several times in the 18th century, but even tonight, in the shining jewel that is the Victorian age, the treaty remains in force, even if it is barely worth the parchment it is written on. Enforcement of the treaty declined during Valerius's regency, and Lady Anne faces an uphill struggle to re-impose its restrictions on the city.

Mithras had once been intrigued by the king — James had been a notable commander and served as High Lord Admiral during Charles II's reign, masterminding the seizure of New Amsterdam (later New York) from the Dutch — but this new king repulsed the prince. In one of his few mortal power plays, he directed Valerius to find a more appealing monarch, which the seneschal promptly did through a series of mortal pawns. One pawn in particular caught Valerius's eye and, with the prince's approval, received the Embrace. That woman, Anne Bowesley, would come to dominate the politics of London's Kindred.

The late 17th century was also a time of financial growth. The Royal Exchange (later to house the stock market) opened in 1675, and Lloyd's of London began trading insurance in 1680 at the owner's city coffee house. Most significant, however, was the establishment of the Bank of England to raise funds on behalf of the government to support its war against France. The bank would also play a major role in financing another English war against France a century later, that time with the covert support of Cainites after their own ends in the pan-European war.

Regents and Empire

The 18th century was a time of retrenchment and development, for mortals and Kindred alike. It witnessed challenges to the established order — 1715 and 1745 saw attempts to reinstall members of the Stewart family on the throne, James the Old Pretender and Bonnie Prince Charlie respectively — but as a whole the century was marked by the increasing sophistication of the courts and the upper echelons of society. Restoration-era London was an increasingly glamorous place, marked by the rituals and customs that bound its occupants.

In 1733, the increasing desire for land in the city led to the covering of the Fleet River and most of the streams in what would become central London, leading to a network of rivers beneath the city. Together with the sewer network, which was expanded in the 19th century, these served as a home for a burgeoning population of Nosferatu, allowing them to traverse the city undetected. The industrialization that took place in the second half of the century likewise aided the Kindred's cause, providing a number of havens and opportunities to conceal excavation work. The era marked the first great surge outward from the old Roman and medieval cities, as London began expanding to include the lands now regarded as the West End and the process of incorporating what were once outlying villages such as Islington and Greenwich. New bridges at Westminster and

Blackfriars stimulated growth south of the river, establishing Lambeth and Walworth as major suburbs.

The Rutherford Incident of 1743 presented Mithras with his one great challenge of the century (he regarded the Toreador efforts in the Jacobean revolts to be nothing more than ÅggamesÅh), when one Charles Rutherford revealed himself and his vampiric nature to a Masonic lodge in the city. This breach of the Masquerade prompted the formation of a group of Masonic hunters who would be locked in mortal combat with the prince's enforcers for almost a quarter of a century. That the breach was not more wide-reaching was thanks to the speed of the prince's response and a campaign among mortal agents that undermined the believability of the lodge.

Meanwhile, Britain's political and economic influence expanded across the globe. The East India Company became the de facto government of India in 1757 after Robert Clive defeated the Nawab of India. This led to an influx of goods and people from the subcontinent to the city in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, lending London a cosmopolitan air. Corruption within the company led to government intervention in the 1770s, with the India Bill of 1773 installing a Governor-General to oversee British interests, and starting the slow decline of the company's fortunes.

The 1770s wrought immense changes on Britain, with the American War of Independence and ongoing conflicts with European powers such as Spain, France and Holland sapping the resolve of the government. Many Britons sympathized with the colonists, and the city of London, having recently eclipsed Amsterdam as the center of world trade, objected to the war on economic grounds: It interfered with the profits of trade. Others, however, regarded rebellion against the king's authority as a grave sin. With little interest in overseas empires, Mithras cared not at all about America, but he did take note of the political maneuverings that gave Ireland legislative independence in 1783; fear of a wider European war (which would shortly erupt) prompted London to slacken the reins on its nearby colonies, trading power for flexibility. Calls for political and social reform also sounded at home, but some of the changes sparked a major backlash. The relaxing of anti-Catholic laws (the Catholic Relief Act of 1778) led to the creation of the Protestant Association under Lord George Gordon. Gordon's followers in London rioted and, in what many regard as the British equivalent of the storming of the Bastille, rushed Newgate Gaol in 1780. Three Kindred died in the rioting, and Mithras blamed anarchs for their demise. A crackdown on Kindred newcomers to the city followed, with strict enforcement of the

Presentation protocols until Valerius' regency, which began in 1798.

The growing madness of King George III became apparent in the late 1780s. Though several other monarchs had been insane, Prince Mithras turned his attention this time to the Malkavians in his city. What passed for authority among the madmen denied any responsibility, and observation by the prince's agents supported their claims. What did become clear, however, was the extent to which the Toreador were involved with the royal household, particularly the associates of the Prince Regent, whose excesses and lifestyle were well-known. Mithras suspected the Toreador of, if not engendering King George's madness, then at least exploiting it for their own ends. He ordered the Toreador to abide by the Treaty of Durham and foreswear their influence among the royalty. In 1795 he went one step further and named the royal household as his personal domain, barring all other Kindred from influence among the royal family without his express permission.

The Revolution in France brought a horde of mortal immigrants to London, and no small number of Kindred accompanied the kine. Although there was no love lost between the Princes of London and Paris, Mithras offered the Parisian refugees succor and directed Valerius to integrate them with the denizens of the fief. These immigrants — principally Toreador but including some Brujah and Malkavians — resisted the moves and sought to establish their own enclaves. Valerius stood firm, though it would be several decades before the situation was fully resolved.

The Jacobite Revolts

The deposition of James II was not universally popular, with various groups in Scotland, Wales and France striving to restore the Stewart line via his son, James Edward (the Old Pretender) and grandson Charles Edward (Bonnie Prince Charlie). James's supporters became known as Jacobites (in Latin, James is rendered as *Jacobus*). The Toreador found the Jacobites useful pawns, and used the movement to strengthen their own position and to strike back at the Ventre. The revolts of 1715 (culminating in the battle of Sheriffmuir) and 1719 (the Highland Revolt) had little appreciable impact, and the Ventre largely ignored the Final Death of several hostages in Edinburgh.

The rebellion of 1745 was fought more determinedly by both mortal and Kindred participants. Charles Edward seized control of Scotland after the Battle of Prestonpans in Lothian, but hopes for a more widespread revolt in England came to naught. Nonetheless, he marched south as far as Derby before retreating to the

Highlands. April of 1746 saw the end of the Jacobite revolts with their sound defeat at Culloden near Inverness, and the execution or flight of the rebels. Tiring of the Toreador ruses, Mithras ordered the execution of several prominent Toreador hostages in the city. This drew a string of protests from Edinburgh, which the prince laughed down given the Toreador's perfidy in 1715. In the years that followed, the hostages were replaced and relations between the two cities normalized, though the Act of Union in 1801 established London's dominance beyond doubt.

Whence the Prince?

In 1798, Mithras departed London, supposedly on a routine journey. He had done so several times in the past, spending weeks, months and occasionally years outside the capital, so his departure raised few questions. The prince's crossing to France was likewise unremarkable, as his journeys to the Great Court and the Court of the Black Cross were a regular feature throughout the Middle Ages. The prince met Francis Villon in January of 1799 to discuss the recent tumultuous events in France and England. Mithras then promptly disappeared.

At first stories circulated that he had been slain by Sabbat agents; the sect was believed to be strengthening their hold in France. Over the next decade, tales emerged that he had been seen in Rome, in Venice and in Constantinople. The last sighting placed him in Baghdad in 1814, a guest of the local Ashirra (a Muslim sect of Kindred) prince. After that there was no news, and whispers began that Valerius planned to seize the domain. The seneschal insisted that he merely sat as regent for London's true prince, and would restore power to Mithras upon his return. When the prince did return — in 1885! — Valerius was true to his word, though Mithras was less than impressed with his seneschal's tenure.

But where did Mithras go? That he traveled to the East is certain, though whether this was for the full duration of his disappearance is unknown. Unsubstantiated rumors place Mithras in India during the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857, but sightings also placed him in Alexandria, the Crimea and St. Petersburg. One rumor also placed Mithras in Australia for several years — though when told of this tale, the prince merely laughs.

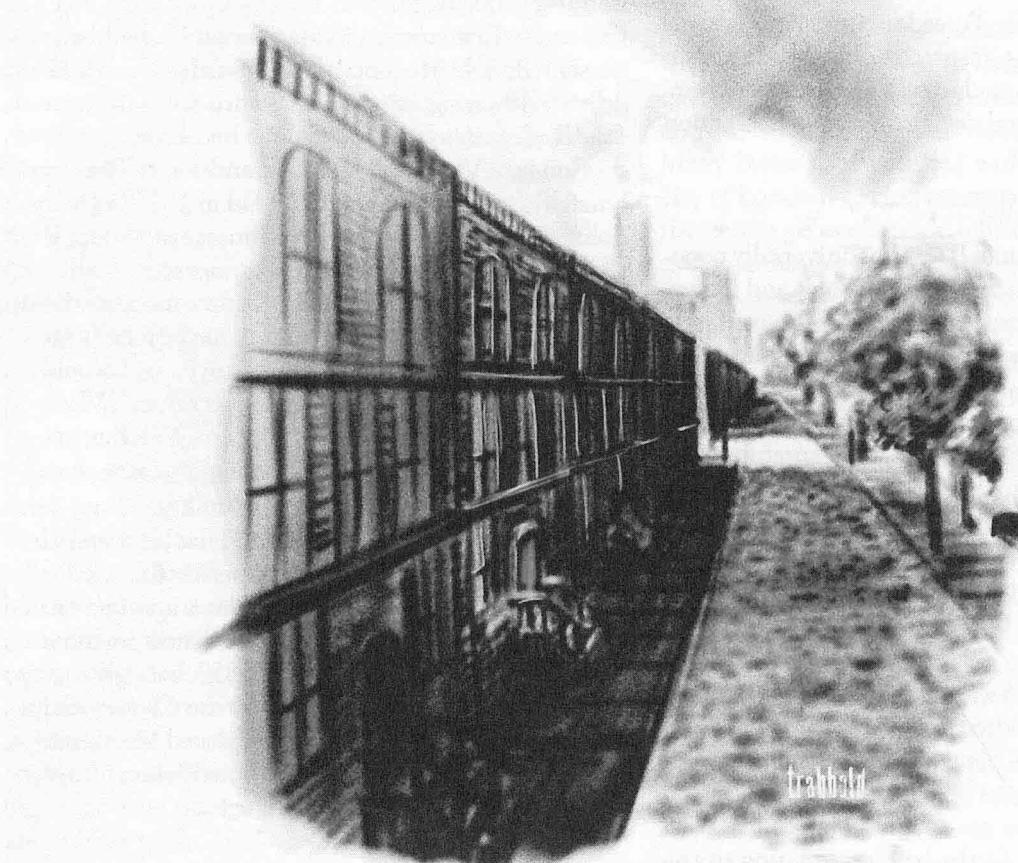
Birth of an Age

By 1810, George III was incapable of ruling Britain, and the hedonistic Prince of Wales became Prince-Regent. Despite the warnings twenty years earlier, members of Clan Toreador—mainly recent French immigrants—attempted to subvert the Prince-Regent by placing agents at the royal court. Valerius stood firm against these efforts and dealt harshly with the interlopers, seeking to discourage further Kindred attempts to manipulate the monarchy with his brutal punishments: The ringleader of the French attempt was staked and left to meet the sun, and other conspirators were exiled from London.

The wars that ravaged the mainland in the early 19th century had little direct effect on London, but British commitments, particularly to the Peninsula Campaign and later in Belgium, drew heavily on the economy. The authorities feared an invasion by Napoleonic forces and bolstered Britain's defenses while Valerius took steps to minimize Sabbat influence in the Court of Avalon. The principal British figure in the campaign — Arthur Wellesley, the first Duke of Wellington — remained popular, and became Prime Minister in 1828 (though his

tenure lasted only until 1830, when he resigned over the matter of parliamentary reform). He was offered the post of PM again after the 1834 elections that marked the ascension of William IV, but he demurred in favor of Robert Peel, under whom he served as Foreign Minister and later Minister without Portfolio. When his wife died in 1831, Wellesley struck up an intense but entirely platonic relationship with a hitherto casual acquaintance at Parliament. To the surprise of many, Anne Bowesley never revealed her true nature to the Iron Duke (who went on to serve as a surrogate father to the young Queen Victoria), and Anne is said to have mourned Wellesley's passing in 1852.

The formation of the Metropolitan Police by Robert Peel in 1829 was a major step forward in law enforcement in London, though the Square Mile, as London's financial district is often known, retained its own police force, leading to numerous disputes over jurisdiction. The Kindred quickly saw the potential of this police force and insinuated themselves into its power structures. For several years, the Ventrue (principally Valerius) and Brujah (under the leadership of one Roman Pendragon) contested this area of influence, but eventually the



Venture prevailed and by 1835 claimed exclusive domain. The Venture's hold over Parliament likewise remained strong, though a great fire in 1834 destroyed all of the structure save Westminster Hall, the Jewel Tower and the crypt of St. Stephen's Chapel. The cause of the fire was unknown, but many Kindred — including Lady Anne — suspect the Sabbat, who were fighting a civil war at the time. The restoration of the Palace of Westminster would take until 1860, and Anne used the rebuilding to conceal considerable work beneath the palace, carving out extensive chambers for the prince and a haven for herself beneath St. Stephen's Tower (better known as Big Ben for its clock and bell).

The mortal turning point of the 19th century was 1837, when William IV died and was succeeded by his niece, Victoria (born Alexandrina Victoria in 1819). The brief and unpopular regency of her mother — Victoria was a minor when she became queen — gave little indication of the sixty-four-year rule that would follow. Valerius took Mithras's prohibition on Kindred interaction with the monarchy seriously, particularly given the queen's tender years, and worked strenuously to isolate her from supernatural influence. The results of the regent's efforts were mixed. A number of Victoria's associates were aware of the Kindred and their power games, particularly after a small group of Sabbat sought

Underground, Over-ground

In 1863, the world's first underground railway system, the Metropolitan Railway, began operation in London, running between Bishops Road in Paddington in the northwest, and Farringdon Street (extended to Moorgate in 1865) on the edge of the Square Mile. Built using the cut-and-cover method (a trench is dug, the tunnel structure assembled, and then the whole structure re-covered), the line formed the route for the Marlylebone, Euston and Farringdon Roads. The venture was conceived and executed by mortals without vampiric assistance, but the Kindred soon saw the benefits of the system and sought to influence its development. Secret side-tunnels linked the underground into the wider network of tunnels under London, increasing the speed and efficiency with which the Kindred could traverse the city.

Other lines opened in 1868 (South Kensington to Westminster as the Metropolitan and District Railway) and 1870 (the short-lived cable-drawn line between the Tower of London and Bermondsey). In 1884, a southern stretch of railway linked Westminster and The City, and together with links between the Metropolitan Railway and the Metropolitan and District Railway formed the Circle Line, which circumnavigated both the West End and The City. The deep-level City and South London Railway, twenty meters beneath the ground, opened in 1890, and was a marked contrast from the shallow lines of north London. This line, running between King William Street and Stockwell, was bored through the mud and rock under the city and passed beneath the Thames. Whereas the Metropolitan Railway used steam locomotives (initially at least), the City and South Line used electricity to power its trains. By the last days of the 19th century, the backbone of the Tube (as the underground railway was called from 1890 onward, though the name *ÅgThe UndergroundÅh* would also be used from 1908) was in place. Indeed, between 1907 and 1977 no new Tube lines would be built in central London, though with the creation and subsequent extension of the Jubilee Line there will be 253 miles of Tube tunnels by 2002, with three million passenger journeys per day.

Few mortals, however, appreciate the true extent of the tunnels beneath London. A number of Kindred have established havens in the depths of the earth and some — mainly Nosferatu — have built their own maze-like tunnels to link their dens and to facilitate travel unseen by prying mortal eyes. Of course, the Kindred are not the only denizens of the tunnels beneath the city. Many shapeshifters call warrens under the city home, though the network is not as extensive as that beneath Paris. By and large, the Kindred and shapechanger tunnels are distinct, but both exploit the modern excavations of the mortals; thus encounters between the two supernatural groups, though infrequent, occur more often than either would like. Rumors abound of something else residing deep under the city, and certainly a number of Kindred have disappeared in the deepest tunnels (though this is usually attributed to rumors of were-rats, if such mania can be believed). What this dark presence might be — if anything, beyond Kindred fears and imaginings — is unknown, but some have suggested a link to the tale of Bran the Blessed.

to influence the queen in the 1840s by dominating her Lord Chamberlain.

Although London was a Camarilla city, it retained a substantial Sabbat and non-aligned population until the late 1840s. Ravnos were the largest non-Camarilla group thanks to the Indian connection, and a number of Setites also set up havens in the city, particularly after Britain gained control of Egypt in 1882 (though they were considerably less welcome than the Ravnos). With London the center of world commerce, the Giovanni likewise had a substantial presence in the city, though after the Sabbat strikes against Valerius and the primogen in the late 1840s the Giovanni — suspected of complicity in the affair — weathered earnest scrutiny. The assault greatly lessened the Sabbat's strength in the city, and those who remained, such as Lady Astor of the Lasombra, were less inclined to direct action against the Camarilla authorities.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was a massive undertaking that showcased works from around the empire. The Exhibition was as much a Kindred affair as one for mortals, with a whole Åghidden Exhibition taking place at night in a wide variety of locations. The Crystal Palace in Hyde Park was the venue for several sophisticated soirees under the auspices of Lady Penelope Hope-Lancaster of the Toreador, while the Ventre organized a vast ball at Somerset House. The Crystal Palace itself was dismantled following the exhibition and moved to Sydenham to the south, where it continues to serve as a major cultural center. The collections from the palace can be seen at the Museum of Manufacturers in Kensington.

The 1850s and 1860s saw increased interest in the occult, combined with increased efforts by the Tremere to strengthen their presence in London. Whether the Tremere were behind the occult revival or were merely exploiting it is unclear, but the activity of individuals such as Robert Lees, the queen's psychic, certainly provided excellent cover for the Witches, and for mortal magi as well. The most notable institution to emerge was the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, founded by William Westcott and Samuel Mathers in 1888 as an offshoot of the Rosicrucians, and linked to the Gnostic traditions and the rites and rituals of ancient Egypt. The Theosophical Society, founded by Madame Helene Blavatsky and Henry Olcott in New York in 1875 (and arriving in London with Blavatsky in 1887), leaned more toward spiritualist traditions mixed with various Eastern ideas. Other groups included the British National Association of Spiritualists, founded in 1873 and later known as the London Spiritualist Alliance; and the Society for Psychical Research (founded in 1882), which sought to

investigate such phenomena with rigorous scientific methods, unmasking fraudulent practitioners (including, they claimed, Blavatsky). Less well known is the founding of the Arcanum by Benjamin Holmscroft, which took place near London in 1885, building on Hermetic traditions. Holmscroft's origins have never been firmly established, but he and his cabal have surprisingly accurate information on the Kindred and may pose a real threat to the vampiric population of London.

The year 1885 was also notable for Prince Mithras's return to London, with no explanation to pardon his absence. The Methuselah immediately set about rectifying perceived wrongs in the city. He dismissed Valerius as seneschal, and installed Anne Bowesley in his place. Valerius, though disenchanted with the post since the Sabbat uprisings, was nonetheless angered by the prince's peremptory action, but was unwilling to face Mithras directly. Other London residents saw the writing on the wall and fled before the prince's wrath fell on them. Most notable of these was the Brujah Roman Pendragon, who had been a thorn in the Ventre's side for most of the 19th century.

Shadows of Gehenna

The summer of 1888 began innocuously enough, though a grisly murder on August 31st led the prince to suspect one or more Lupines were active in the East End. In the months that followed, Polly Nichols was joined by Annie Chapman (Sept. 8), Liz Stride (Sept. 30), Catherine Eddowes (Sept. 30) and Mary Kelly (Nov. 9). The precision of the attacks led Mithras to discount Lupines, and among the Kindred, not even a Malkavian would breach the Masquerade in such a manner. The Sabbat might, as might mortal sorcerers, but eventually the prince assumed that the killer — nicknamed Jack the Ripper — was nothing more than a deranged mortal. Nonetheless, the slayings forced the Kindred to be on their guard — in the autumn of 1888, the mortals were on the lookout for murderous individuals. Hunting, even in the once-easy East End, became more challenging. Indeed, many Kindred found the summer and autumn of 1888 particularly unsettling; the thought that there was something more vicious than they in the city weighed heavily on their minds. That the killer was in all likelihood a mortal was central to this malaise: Many Kindred attempted to maintain their humanity, but if a mortal could go to these extremes, what hope was there for them?

Through no action of the prince's, the appointment of William Gull as Victoria's physician in 1887 increased the protection afforded to the queen against supernatural forces. Shrouded in mystery, Gull is believed to be a

member of the Freemasons with extensive knowledge of the occult, including the Kindred. Where he learned about vampires is unknown, but he has declared himself a stalwart foe of those who would manipulate the queen and has sworn — ignorant of Mithras's decrees — to use his power and knowledge in defense of the queen. He even faked his own death in 1890 to disguise his presence near the queen, and to throw his enemies off his scent. Mithras found Gull's gambits amusing, at least until Gull's actual death in 1897.

After several years of settling back into London, the prince has recently taken action further afield in protection of his rights as overlord of Britain. In his most overt action in centuries, Mithras led a war party against the mad ÅgPrinceÅh of South Wales, William Biltmore, driving him out and folding the Fief of South Wales (Deheubarth) into Gloucester to form the Fief of Severn. This show of force prompted a wave of public contrition from the other Kindred barons, though many of them continue to scheme against the prince and several use the title of prince themselves within their own fiefs. Whether the prince will see through this duplicity remains to be seen.

On May 26th, 1897, a book was published. Written in the form of diaries and journals, it proved surprisingly popular with the mortal population, who lapped up the far-fetched tale of love, the supernatural and vampires. Dracula was less well received among the Kindred, who saw in it a barely disguised tale of one of their own. The real Dracula, Vlad Tepes, was accused of breaking the Masquerade, though as he stood aloof from both Camarilla and Sabbat there was little to be done. Indeed, some Kindred argued that Dracula's "revelations" actually strengthened the Masquerade by transforming legend into literary tradition — yes, people knew fragments of the truth, but they would henceforth regard similar information as fiction "just like Bram Stoker's book." Others regarded the revelations as a herald of Gehenna, which would surely follow if mortal society managed to separate fact from fiction.

Irrespective of whether Dracula's manipulation of Stoker was for good or ill, it marked the end of a Kindred era. Henceforth, the world would know about vampires, and that would color the Kindred's relationship with the kine.



A Note of Welcome

Dearest Kindred,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to London, greatest city of the Empire and seat of both Prince Mithras, Lord of London and all Britain and Her Majesty Queen Victoria, Empress of India. I am certain that I don't need to inform a guest such as yourself of the details pertaining to the singular honor the prince has granted you by giving you leave to remain in this mighty metropolis. You are, for the time being, a welcome guest in this, the greatest of all cities on the face of the Earth.

Of course, such an honor brings with it certain obligations and responsibilities that I am sure you will find it your pleasure to perform. A society such as ours can function only with the clearest of guidelines and strictures and any violation of said strictures will be met with the appropriate punishment. I hardly need mention the possible severity of such a chastisement. London, both by day and by night, is a city where law reigns supreme. People know their place in society and, while they may work to better it, until they have achieved that worthy aim they do not step beyond those bounds for fear of losing the approbation of their peers. You would, my Kindred, do well to remember that in the coming nights. The particular demands of our own society will be made clear to you in the normal way. I feel it is my duty, though, to guide you through the onerous task of dining out in your first weeks in London.

While this letter contains much worthy advice, I would caution you against hoarding it for many nights. Read, learn and act upon what is within. Then, destroy it utterly, for you know the penalty for transgression against our primary custom. This letter is dispatched to you with the approval of Lady Anne, and the urchin who carried it is tied to us by the oath that cannot be broken. Its security and secrecy are your responsibility and your responsibility alone.

Dining Out

As a newcomer to this city, I suspect that it is unlikely that you have made appropriate arrangements for a regular supply of sustenance to your lodgings. I thus offer a few guidelines for a gentleman or lady of our society who seeks to dine with the minimum of fuss and inconvenience. When selecting your repast for the evening, one would do well to consider the social stratification of London society among the kine. They define themselves clearly into three classes, each of which carries its own set of responsibilities and manners of behaving.

The Working Class

The lower or working class is composed of those men and women who work with their hands to make a living. They are the laborers, dockworkers, cabbies and cleaners of London. They undertake the manual tasks that keep this city running, yet which require little in the way of higher thought or initiative. Their clothes match their station in life: simple, shoddily fitted yet robust and often somewhat dirty. Among themselves, their manner is coarse and bawdy, yet they show due deference to those of higher status within the city, at least to their faces. Their discussions in the mean and overcrowded slums they call home are of a quite different tone. The dwellings of such folk can be found in particular parts of the city. The East End houses many of them, for example, providing a ready source of menial labor for both the City itself and the docks that facilitate the communication with Empire.

(If I may insert a parenthesis here, one would do well to note the distinction between the city, which is London in its wider sense, and the City, which is the square mile within London's medieval city walls in which the major financial business of the city is transacted. Displaying an ignorance of this distinction is a certain way to mark yourself as an uncivilized buffoon from some rural retreat.)

Those among us whose manner or lineage brands them as part of this lower class will find themselves able to dine easily and freely in such parts of town. They run the risk of consuming a meal tainted by alcohol or the opium many people of all classes use to distract themselves from the reality of their lives. London can be a harsh mistress for those too weak or ignorant to seize the opportunities offered, as you will no doubt discover.

The Middle Class

The middle classes are those who make their living from the skills of their minds. They are the scholars, businessmen and lawyers of the city; the very lifeblood, if I may venture such a play on words, of London's power and wealth. Most are well educated and some of the men, if their fathers were successful, may well have attended one of the better boarding schools that dot the countryside. Their clothes are stylish and well made, though they are not prone to the excesses of fashion that often characterize

the upper classes. On the whole, they are a dour, serious lot with a strong work ethic and traditional and strict moral and religious beliefs that lead them to repress their emotions and passions. This, of course, makes them deliciously easy to manipulate and ideal dining companions for our Kindred.

Many of the middle classes reside in the center of the city, in areas a short walk from their places of work. The houses of Mayfair, Knightsbridge and even the better parts of Soho are home to them. Of course, there are other places suitable for such a person, but I will not trouble you with the complexities of London's geography just yet. Many of the middle classes now choose to live in the new suburban areas of London, developing thanks to the rapid growth of London's splendid railway network. Many of our kind have found such places to be suitable location for an evening meal, though one would do well to consult with Gen. Sir Arthur Halesworth before making such a journey. Protocols must be observed in such matters.

The Upper Class

The upper classes are composed of those families who have ruled London, England and the whole of the United Kingdom by day for much of the last millennium. They consist of those people whose birthright is aristocracy. They are the lords and ladies, barons, baronets and baronesses of the mortal world. You can recognize them by their expensive, exquisitely fashionable and beautifully constructed attire, their arrogance and, more often than not, their utter debauchery. Most have enough financial resources to negate the need to work, and so they lose themselves in such pastimes as hunting, politics, military service or sexual adventuring. You should discount them as potential dining partners: to even move on the fringes of their society requires a particular station of birth, significant wealth and a member of their ranks who is prepared to offer you an introduction. Those of the Kindred who are in a position to do so are often loath to provide such an introduction to one like yourself easily, at least without a significant price being attached to it.

The upper class's right to rule is unquestioned but rarely exercised. The twin houses of the United Kingdom's parliament, housed in Westminster, work together to create the legislation that determines country and Empire's destiny. The House of Commons, voted for by men of all classes, decides upon the nature of the legislation needed and the House of Lords, in which the men of the upper classes sit by right, advise and aid their inferiors by dint of their long experience and noble upbringing.

Many of our kind feel themselves compelled to build some form of influence over mortal society. If you, too, suffer from this affliction, you would be well advised to steer a course toward the middle classes rather than the upper classes. The reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, the middle classes offer greater influence over the day-to-day running of society, trade and politics. You will find that the right pressure applied on a member of this class can bring a most satisfactory conclusion to pass. Members of the House of Commons are particularly susceptible to pressure of the financial variety. Many of them consider such incentives to be an accepted means of supplementing the stipend they receive for their service in the House.

A note of caution: Those people who have been knighted by her Majesty and are now known as "Sir" are usually members of the middle classes whose service to the crown has been such that they are subject to special recognition or reward. They occupy a place in society that is both within the echelons of the upper middle classes and the lower upper classes. Thus, they can often be a useful bridge between the two strata of society.

In Conclusion

The living people of London are well aware of their place in the social order and are inherently suspicious of any who attempt to move in circles that do not match their standing. Your clothes, manner of speech and bearing will all mark you as a member of a particular class. You should attempt to dine amongst those kine who are of your own apparent class. Any attempt to do otherwise will, unless you are skilled indeed in your choice and manner of dining, attract unwelcome attention and render your chances of remaining within this city somewhat negligible. For example, a gentleman of the middle or upper classes who is found walking the slums of the East End will be subject to the query and rumor amongst those people who are of the lower class, and indeed may attract the attention of the Metropolitan Police. A lady doing the same will attract greater attention and indeed subject herself to significant danger unless some stout servant who can look to her safety accompanies her.

I hope that this short work was sufficiently edifying and will prevent any embarrassing misdemeanors in the near future. I look forward to your further education in Elysium in nights to come.

I remain, sir, your most obedient servant,

STEPHEN LENOIR, ESQ.

Who was Saucy Jack?

Theories! We were lost almost in theories; there were so many of them.

— Inspector Frederick Abberline, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 1892

Over the years dozens of theories have been put forward as to the identity of Jack the Ripper, from the highest to the lowest in the land. Some have supporting evidence; others are based on hearsay and supposition. None are entirely convincing, and the truth may never be known for sure, particularly as many records were lost or destroyed in WWII (something many conspiracy theorists have used to “prove” their case, claiming a cover-up by the authorities). An exhaustive treatment of the evidence is best left to dedicated works such as Donald Rumbelow’s *The Complete Jack The Ripper*, Paul Begg’s *Jack the Ripper, the Uncensored Facts* or even the fictionalized *From Hell* by Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell. The following is a précis of the main suspects for Storytellers who don’t have access to the plethora of Ripper books. Of course, as this is the World of Darkness, a host of additional possibilities open up, far beyond those put forward by the police and “ripperologists,” which we examine briefly. **London By Night** makes few assumptions as to the identity or motivation of Saucy Jack, instead leaving the choice with the Storyteller.

Montague Druitt

A barrister and part-time schoolteacher, Monty Druitt is seen by many as the leading candidate for the Ripper. The McNaughton report indicates that Druitt’s family believed him to be the killer, and his suicide in December of 1889 coincides with the end of the slayings accepted as Ripper murders. Druitt bore an uncanny resemblance to “Prince Eddy,” the Duke of Clarence, perhaps triggering the “Royal Conspiracy” (see below) or, as the fictional *From Hell* suggests, becoming a victim of it.

The Royal Conspiracy

Various theories have linked “the highest in the land” to the Ripper murders, directly or indirectly. All focus on Prince Albert Victor Christian Edward, Victoria’s grandson and the Duke of Clarence. One theory postulates that Eddy was the Ripper, or he at least committed the first few slayings, and that the evidence was subsequently covered up by the police. A variant of the theory lays the blame for the later murders with a host of accomplices, variously William Gull, John Netley or Walter Sickert. A further twist on the idea put forward in *Jack the Ripper: The Final Solution* by Stephen Knight and based on Sickert’s information is the allegation that the Duke of Clarence secretly married one Annie Chapman, an alleged (but not proven) Roman Catholic. This fact was subsequently used to blackmail the authorities by Anne, Liz, Polly and Mary, leading to their deaths to hush matters up. **London by Night** assumes Gull’s innocence.

Walter Sickert

Sickert is, via his son Joseph, the alleged source of information for Knight’s version of the Royal Conspiracy, but he has also been put forward as a suspect in his own right. Little solid evidence exists for this, though his painting “Blackmail, or Mrs. Barrett” is intriguing — Mary Kelly’s common-law husband was Joseph Barnet, and some suggest “Mrs. Barrett” is really Mary Kelly, her name misspelled or deliberately falsified.

The Mad Doctor

The nature of the victims’ injuries and the knowledge require to find and extract the organs quickly and efficiently lead the coroners to believe Jack the Ripper was a doctor, or at least a medical student (though some theories suggest a butcher or a *shochet*, a Jewish ritual slaughterer). In connection with this idea the names of William Gull, Neil Cream and Alexander Pedachenko have been advanced, though none are particularly likely. One version of the doctor theory claims that the Ripper was tried by a panel of his peers and condemned to a mental asylum, where he subsequently died.

The Masons

The seemingly ritual nature of the mutilations inflicted on the victims, and the wording of the Goulston Street message has led to some suggestions of Freemason involvement in the slayings (the message that was left on the wall of a passage after the slaying of Catherine Eddowes contained, according to some, Masonic terms). Again, little solid evidence exists; but the Masonic angle, with its suggestions of cover-ups and secrecy, plays well to conspiracy theorists, particularly those who believe that Sir Charles Warren, commissioner of the Metropolitan Police at the time and a known Mason, was complicit in the crimes.

The Lodger

Belloc Lowndes' book, *The Lodger*, suggests another solution to the mystery, an otherwise innocuous and hitherto unidentified culprit. Lowndes' work was fiction, but the concept of an anonymous murderer, sufficiently bland to fit into the slums of Whitechapel without arousing suspicion, is both possible and motivationally sound.

Kindred

In the World of Darkness, a vampire could easily be responsible for the Whitechapel murders, perhaps a blood-crazed Tzimisce, an insane Malkavian or even a Tremere seeking ritual materials. **London by Night** assumes this is not the case, but a Storyteller may wish to change that in her chronicle.

Werewolves and Shapeshifters

Lupines have the strength and ability to carry out the slayings, but few venture into the heart of the cities, let alone into ghettos like the East End. Other, more esoteric shapeshifters are more at home in urban settings (and in fact have a major nest in the area) — though again, little rationale exists for their involvement.

Mages

Of all the supernatural factions active in the World of Darkness, mages are the most likely culprits for involvement in the slayings, many having the requisite medical knowledge and the powers to subdue and slay their quarry. Perhaps the slayings were part of some occult ritual, and perhaps the perpetrator is still active but seeking the more potent blood of Kindred prey...

Demons?

Something dark lurks below London, perhaps associated with the legend of Bran the Blessed (see above), which may manifest in some form, or otherwise possess bodies as it needs. Although clearly a *deus ex machina* in the context of **London by Night**, the presence of some hitherto unknown dark force cannot be ruled out.





Chapter Two: The City Revealed

It is, no doubt, not to the taste of everyone, but for the real London-lover the mere immensity of the place is a large part of its savour. A small London would be an abomination, as it fortunately is an impossibility, for the idea and the name are beyond everything an expression of name and number.

- Henry James, Essays in London, 1896

Dear Lady Anne,

It is with the very greatest of pleasure that I present you with this account of the current geography of our Imperial city. Much has changed in the century since our prince last graced London with his presence, and I sincerely hope that this current endeavor will go some little way toward informing Prince Mithras of those changes.

I t was my fervent pleasure to keep the descriptions pithy, as per your ladyship's request. Should Prince Mithras feel that further explanation is expedient, I shall, of course, make myself available to him. I humbly submit to your notice that Miss Juliet Parr, my junior in the office of sheriff, has also contributed to this pamphlet. I hope and trust that you find it to your satisfaction.

Yours faithfully,
Gen Sir Arthur Halloworth (ret)

A Guide to Victoria's London

As I am sure that the reader is already aware, the term "London" most properly applies to the square mile that makes up the City of London itself. However, colloquial usage has long since replaced such a meaning, and the word is now used to describe the Cities of London and Westminster, and the areas that immediately surround them. With the advent of Mr. Stephenson's locomotive engine and its rapid deployment in this city by various commercial concerns, areas once considered to be little more than rural parishes now fall under the title of Greater London.

While some call the city a hodgepodge of unrelated towns, an aspersion I do not hold with, there is an element of truth in the slander. As this city has grown, it has absorbed certain other settlements and made them its own, as the West End of the City of London absorbed the City of Westminster long ago. That growth has continued in recent years, so that the boundaries of the city take in many towns that we would have considered separate unto themselves.

One result of this growth has been the retention of large open areas within the city itself, which is one of the treasures of London, to my mind. We shall discuss the parks of the city in some depth later in this pamphlet, a task I have relinquished, with some regret, to Miss Parr. The combination of wide streets, garden squares and parks is characteristic of the center of the London that we know tonight. While the slums of the working people, if one may dignify such types with the sobriquet "working," still exist, they do little to distract from the city's beauty to a right-thinking man. Indeed, to one of our particular nature, they serve a most useful function in providing for our inescapable needs.

When one steps outside the central area, which one might define by the loop of the new Metropolitan and District Underground Railway, the nature of the city changes once more. Many of the former rural parishes have become stops on the railways, and so have become popular residences for the more moneyed members of the middle classes. Astute builders have been swift to seize upon the fiscal opportunity such people offer, and the growth in spacious homes built in such locations has been dramatic. I myself have a haven in the Lewisham vicinity, which affords me easy access via the railways to the heart of the city when my duty calls me there.

One might conceive of the city as two concentric circles. The inner circle houses much of the commerce of the city, as well as the business of governance. There, the upper classes and working classes both reside within walking distance of their places of work, though each lives in markedly different conditions, I assure you. The outer circle is largely residential in nature, though some choose to conduct their business farther from the core of the city. This circle also houses many leisure attractions, not the least of which is the beautiful Crystal Palace, now in Sydenham.

The Railways

For me to describe accurately the tangle of iron tracks that make up London's railways would be beyond my limited literary power. Half a dozen railway companies have been busy building any route that to them seems profitable, armed with the powers of compulsory purchase to make sure that the land they need becomes available. This has resulted in some horrors,



including the devastated triangle of land in New Cross that has been lost to these rapacious operators.

Thankfully, the companies have named themselves with commendable simplicity, and it is easy to gain an impression of the direction in which they run based on their names alone.

Great Eastern; Great Northern; Great Western; South-Eastern — these companies operate services to and from London in the directions indicated.

London and North Western; London and South Western — again, the name indicates the directions in which the trains travel.

London, Brighton, and South Coast and Isle of Wight; Ludgate, Chatham and Dover; Ludgate, Tilbury and Southend — These services run to the south, southwest through Kent, and east through Essex, respectively. They are popular with the masses for daytime excursions to coastal resorts, and so of little interest to our Kindred.

Midland

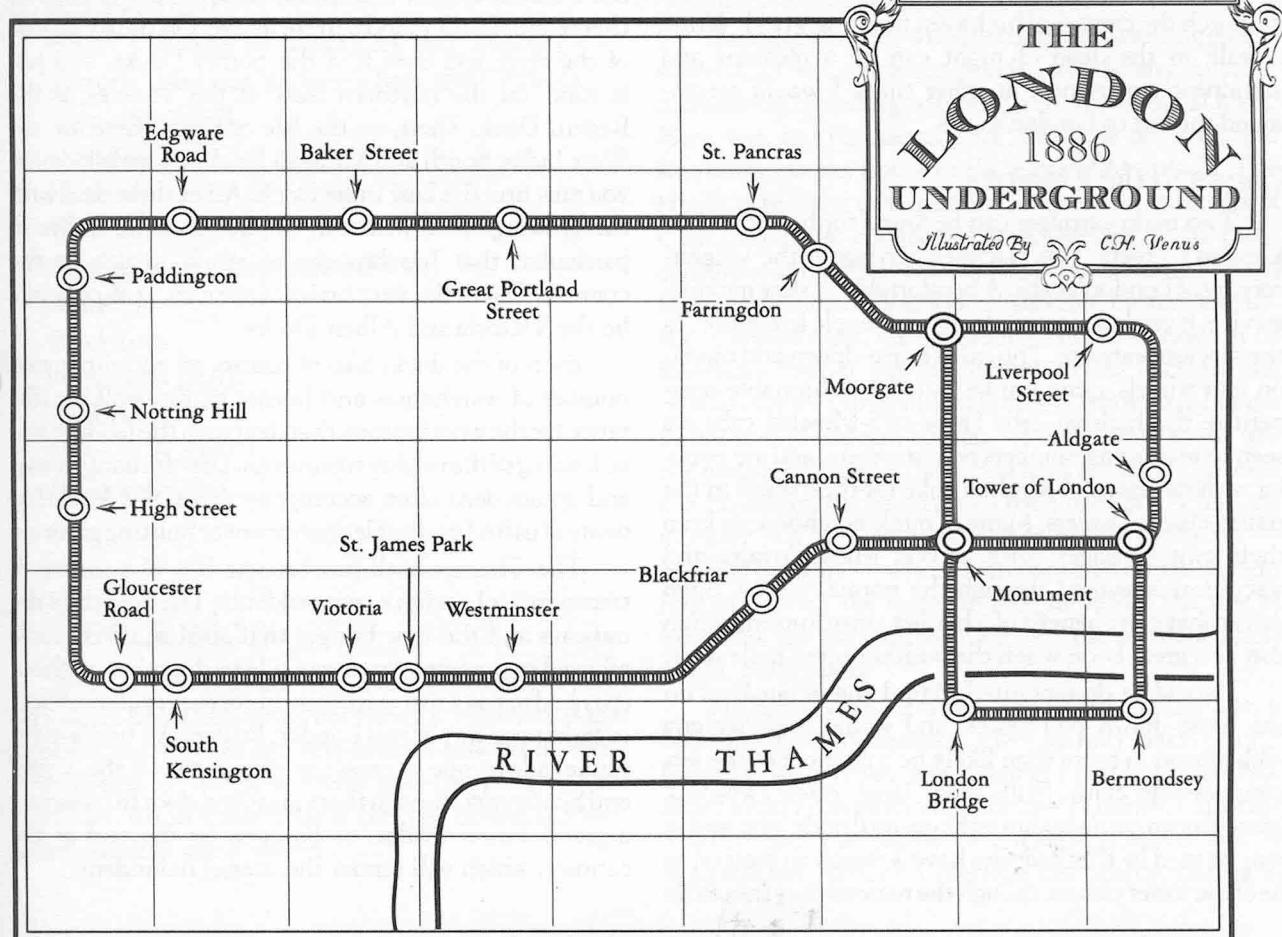
The Stations

Great foresight on the parts of our civic leaders has prevented the railway companies driving their business

into the very heart of the city. Instead, they insisted on termini at the very edges of the central area of the city. Great amounts of capital and architectural skill have gone into many of these stations, and they are truly wonders of our age. What visitor to this city could fail to be impressed by the grand vaulted ceilings of the stations, or the ornate hotels attached to many of them? I, for one, while seeking sustenance among the travelers arriving in the city, always take the time to marvel at the skill displayed in these buildings.

The Underground

The nature of the main stations caused London significant inconvenience in recent years, as foot and cab traffic between them increased. The traffic in London became slower and slower. It was evident that something needed to be done to alleviate the problem. The solution is a model of engineering: a railway that runs under the city, rather than through it. The District and Metropolitan railways, as they are known, run in a circle around the heart of the city, joining all the major stations in a loop. Thus it is at last possible to travel from,



say, Charing Cross to St. Pancras without causing inconvenience to the users of London's roads. Although developers conducted some experiments with a pneumatic system, the trains are steam-powered like any others, with the smoke dispersed by mechanical contrivances that are beyond my comprehension.

As well as the Inner Circle, the line extends out to the East, through Whitechapel and Mile End, and to the West, through Knightsbridge, Kensington and Putney. Even Shepherd's Bush, Hampstead and Swiss Cottage are accessible through the Underground. The lines do not run late into the night, so many of our subterranean Kindred take advantage of the tunnels for easy movement during the night.

The Roads

A walk on London's roads is not for the weak or easily disturbed. Certainly, ladies should always travel in cabs, for the din of iron-shod hooves and wheels on stone cobbles is loud enough to offend delicate constitutions and to make conversation difficult. The mud and horse dung that cover much of the streets does a little to muffle the sound, but also ensures that a gentleman must have a boot scraper outside his front door, lest visitors' boots besmirch the carpets of his haven from the world. While a walk in the dead of night can be a pleasant and sustaining experience, at other times I would recommend the use of London's cabs.

Cabs and the Omnibus

Two main carriages can be found for hire found on London's streets. The Hackney carriage is the longest-serving of London's cabs. A comfortable, if slow moving, service, it easily accommodates four people in comfort in the spacious carriage. The cab is horse-drawn and travels on four wheels, quite unlike its more fashionable competitor, the hansom cab. These two-wheeled cabs are seen in increasing numbers on our streets, and are popular with mortals and Kindred alike for their speed in the traffic-clogged streets. Many of our kind choose to keep their own carriages, with drivers whose loyalty and discretion is assured through the normal means. Such drivers have the benefit of a hardier constitution, which can be a great boon when the weather turns inclement.

I would be disappointed to find any of our kind on the horse-drawn omnibuses, and would consider any such person to more than likely be a member of the less conscientious clans. Still, these large, often two-deck horse-drawn carriages run right up until midnight, and so may be used by Kindred who have a reason to pretend to be of the lower classes, though the reasons they should do

so elude me. The majority of buses are run by the London General Omnibus Company, though a number of smaller, competitive companies have offered their services to the public.

In recent years, a system of trams has started to appear on our streets. While these carriages are useful for the lower classes and some Kindred of lower status, the fact that they cease running early at night makes them of very limited use to us.

The River and the Docks

The Thames is the very life blood of London, and therein has lain its problem. As the British Empire has grown, the number of ships entering the river from all parts of the world has likewise grown. In the recent past, the number of ships moored in the river had numbered so many that navigating the river had become all but impossible. The solution was simple, and achieved with considerable expenditure from both private and public purses. A large number of docks are now found along the river, right up to Greenwich.

Starting at the Tower of London and moving eastwards, you will find the St. Katherine's Dock, followed by the London Docks, a magnificent and busy docklands that remains in demand despite its age. On the south side of the river you then find the Surrey Docks, and just beyond, on the northern bank of the Thames, is the Regent Dock. Then, on the Isle of Dogs, there are the West India, South and Millwall Docks. A little beyond, you may find the East India Dock. All of these deal with the growing trade with the empire, and the Indies in particular, that has brought so much wealth to the country. Out at the very limits of the city, at Woolwich, lie the Victoria and Albert Docks.

Each of the docks has, of course, an accompanying number of warehouses and houses within walking distance for the working men that deal with the loading and unloading of the mighty steamships. Low drinking houses and opium dens often accompany these, of a kind that many of us find profitable enterprises or hunting grounds.

The Thames itself has become less of a means of transport for London's own residents. The growth of the railways and the new bridges that span the river have allowed easy passage from one side to the other, without the need to pay a row man, join one of the regular services or fight your way across London Bridge. An under-river tunnel allows one to cross the river between the Tower and Southwark, though there are plans afoot to construct a grand Tower Bridge, to be open by the end of the century, which will render the tunnel redundant.

The Bridges

For centuries, London has had to make do with a single bridge between Southwark and the east end of the City. In the last century, technical advances have led to the river being spanned by eighteen different bridges, allowing easy passages between the two banks and the unification of the two sides of the river. We now have thirteen footbridges, four rail bridges and one combined bridge. Their importance to the city, and to its Kindred residents, cannot be underestimated. The fiefs of South London are some of the best hunting grounds in the city, and hunting rights are swapped for favors nightly among those who do not already have established territory in the East and West Ends of the city. Yet most of our Kindred still keep their main havens north of the river. Hence, for many of our kind, the night begins with a walk across the river.

Starting with the furthest upstream and working downstream, the bridges are as follows:

- Hammersmith
- Putney
- Wandsworth
- Battersea (rail)
- Albert (between Battersea Park and Chelsea)
- Victoria (between Battersea Park and Pimlico)
- Grosvenor (rail)
- Vauxhall
- Lambeth
- Westminster
- Charing Cross (both rail and foot)
- Waterloo
- Blackfriars
- Alexandra (rail)
- Southwark
- Cannon St. (rail)
- London Bridge

In Conclusion

As I have made plain, the advent of the railway and the empire has transformed our fair city. Nowhere is this more evident than in her very heart. I now include the contribution of my dear friend and compatriot, Miss Juliet Parr, whose knowledge of central London is unsurpassed amongst our Kindred.

The Villages and Rookeries North of the Thames

North London is a land of contrasts. Rich and poor live within a stone's throw of each other, vice and culture going hand-in-hand. Hills give way to river lands and forests to the Urban Jungle. Here, new stands atop old. It is the most venerable part of the city, home to places of power, dark and light, rich and poor.

— Juliet,
Childe of Oliver,
Childe of Seren.

The Far North

London's northern suburbs, situated on the hills overlooking the Thames, are a stark contrast to the image of London as a maze of streets and squares. These northern reaches — Hampstead, Highgate and Muswell Hill for example — are positively rural, nestling among woodlands, fields and heaths. Each is a pseudo-village, tied to the city by a thin strip of houses that follow the main roads north from London (the Finchley Road and Holloway Road respectively) as well as the recently expanded railway networks.

Hampstead is renowned for its heath, a rolling green-sward that encompasses ponds, woods and ancient monuments including, so legend has it, Boudicca's Grave. Here, too, lies Parliament Hill, the Vale of Heath and Kenwood House, home to the Earls of Mansfield. The Heath is beloved of London's Gangrel, but members of Clan Brujah also congregate here, meeting in the 18th-century coaching inn called John Straw's Castle, named for a companion of Wat Tyler. Another, even older pub, the Spaniard's Inn, attracts young Toreador drawn by its illustrious former patrons Byron, Keats, Dickens and Shelley. Other things lurk here too — I spoke to a Lupine in this area (I had just broken her right femur so she was not particularly polite) who said her kind sought to resist the expansion of the city into their domain. A hulking monster of a man who claimed to be one of the fae — horrible creature — whom I encountered on Parliament Hill said much the same, in that he feared the tide of humdrum life that was washing over the mystical places of old. Balderdash.

Highgate, with its woods and elegant village life, is best known for its cemetery. Here lie Karl Marx, George Elliot (a fine woman, Mary Anne; I met her once. Not afraid to defy convention!), Michael Faraday, Christina Rossetti and the family of Dickens (Charles lies in Westminster Abbey). Coleridge lies nearby, resting in

the vault of St. Michael's Church, while Francis Bacon also died in the "village." The sylvan cemetery's architecture ranges from the Classical to the Romantic; its subterranean Egyptian Avenue features massive obelisks and family vaults, while the Lebanon Circle comprises a number of crypts sunk in a circle around an ancient cedar. Highgate has a reputation, a little exaggerated, as one of London's premier haunted sites, exceeded only by Westminster Palace, Marble Arch (Tyburn as was) and the Tower of London. The combination of occult mystery, literary inspiration and social zeal attracts Toreador and Brujah to Highgate, and London's few Tremere also visit occasionally. I'm reliably informed that if you want to speak to the dead, here is the place to do it, though the idea of communicating with the departed really doesn't appeal.

Muswell Hill is the third memorable "village" in the north, perched on a hilltop and dominated by two massive edifices. Alexandra Palace — the people's palace — looks out over the Thames valley and is home to numerous soirees and orchestral galas. The grounds here are home to a fun fair, cricket ground and lakes, as well as a popular racetrack, most of which have been added since the first palace burnt down in 1873 scarcely two weeks after its opening. On the lee of the hill, as the land rises toward Barnet, sits Colney Hatch, a massive asylum whose reputation is second only to Bedlam. A Malkavian of my acquaintance calls the asylum home and preys on the inmates, though she prefers to wander further afield.

Highgate and Wraiths

In mechanical terms, the difficulty of using Necromancy within the cemetery is reduced by 1 (2 in the case of the Ash Path).

The Near North

Closer to the heart of London are the slums and tenements of Camden and Islington, as well as the more affluent Regency Houses of Regent's Park. Camden sits astride the Regent's Canal (which links the Grand Union Canal at Paddington with the Thames at Limehouse) just northeast of Regent's Park and its famous zoo (I tried lion's blood once — too coppery for my tastes). It is an area of mixed fortunes, the well-to-do houses bordering Regent's Park giving way to the slums of Camden and Somers Town, the latter widely adjudged one of the worst in London. It is here that Dickens set parts of his books such as *A Christmas Carol* and *David Copperfield*. Between Camden and Highgate lie the homes of numerous immigrants, particularly Irish, though the

Tuffnel Estate at the upper end of Holloway Road en route to Highgate has retained an aura of respectability, despite its proximity to the City House of Correction. The distinctive redbrick gothic Midland Grand Hotel (built in 1874) at St. Pancras Station lies between Somers Town and Bloomsbury, and is a major way station for Kindred heading north from the city, as it features a covered passage leading from the nearby underground station to the basement and another to the station proper.

Once a popular spa famed in the 18th century for its tea gardens and medicinal well, Islington has fallen on hard times since the construction of the Regent's Canal. The area has seen a massive population boom and become increasingly urbanized, and tonight some parts of Islington are little better than Camden. The Sadler's Wells Theatre was once among the most notorious in London (certainly not the sort of place I'd care to venture) but has, in recent years, been "rescued" from disaster by Samuel Phelps and become a respected venue for drama, though still not as well regarded as those of central London. Underneath the southern part of Islington, known colloquially as Angel after the Angel Inn, a recently rebuilt coaching inn, is the 960-yard long tunnel of the Regent's Canal, which opened in 1820. This tunnel is the site of an ongoing conflict between a group of Nosferatu and other vermin who desire it as a lair. Immediately south of Angel lies Clerkenwell, centered on Clerkenwell "Green" (in fact a paved square). The rookery here is among the worst slums in the city, made famous by *Oliver Twist*, and is known locally as Little Italy for all the Italian immigrants who have moved into the area.

The houses around Regent's Park, on the Outer Circle or nearby roads such as Baker Street, are within easy reach of the West End and thus seen as prime residences for the well-to-do. Here lies one terminus of the newfangled underground railway, which passes the surgeries of Harley Street and the slums of Tottenham Court Road en route to The City. Several Ventreue lair in the area, and Toreador are drawn to the cultural attractions of the neighborhood, notably the open-air theatre and the zoological gardens. In 1835, Madame Marie Tussaud (once tutor to Louis XVI's sister and maker of death masks during the Reign of Terror) set up an exhibition of her waxworks in Baker Street, which has become one of the area's foremost attractions, moving to new premises around the corner on Marylebone Road in 1884. The exhibition site is regarded as a place of pilgrimage by many Parisian Toreador and is accepted as part of London's Elysium. On the far side of Regent's Park, across the canal in St. Johns Wood, lies the Lord's

Cricket Ground, home since 1814 to the Marylebone Cricket Club (affectionately known as the MCC) and undisputed birthplace of the game. Surprisingly for a game that can last five days and that takes place only during the day, Lord's is popular with a number of Kindred who use a mixture of technical apparatus (mirrors, shutters and the like) and magic (the bestial power of *Subsume the Spirit*, for example) to view the games from a secure subterranean chamber. Personally, I can't see the attraction of watching men hit a leather ball with a lump of wood. Harley Street, running south from Regent's Park parallel to Baker Street, features a number of large houses, many of which are doctor's practices. At least one Tremere has his lair here, risking the prince's wrath should he be discovered.

The Great Detective

Arthur Conan Doyle's superlative detective, Sherlock Holmes, lived at 221b Baker Street, just south of Regent's Park. The cocaine-addicted Holmes is, of course, a fictional character who first appeared in *A Study in Scarlet* in 1887, but his methods of observation and deduction are closely based on the real-life exploits of Dr. Joseph Bell, Doyle's mentor and lecturer at Edinburgh Medical School. In recent years, the *Murder Rooms* books by David Pirie (also made into a TV series with several original stories) have linked Bell and Doyle as a "real world" Holmes and Watson, solving a series of mysteries. Some Storytellers may regard such a duo as an interesting addition to the World of Darkness, a combination of criminologists and hunters in the Victorian night.

West London

West London is, as a whole, more affluent than other districts, containing many of the homes of the rich and well-to-do. In common parlance the whole area west of The City to the edge of London is known as the West End. As this is such a large area I have, for simplicity, divided it into two broad districts: the principally residential and cultural "West London" (encompassing Kensington, Hammersmith, Chelsea and Acton), and the more commercial and governmental "West End" (principally Westminster, Holborn and Soho).

Chelsea is an affluent district on the banks of the Thames, once a riverside village and home to numerous artists and writers. The fine houses are favored residences of the well-heeled (and no few Venttrue and Toreador, it stands to reason) but the most notable features of the

district are the Physic Garden and the Royal Hospital. The former, established by the Royal Society of Apothecaries in 1673, contains a wide variety of medicinal herbs and a bewildering array of exotic species of plants. Although not as large as the gardens at Kew, it is nonetheless an essential stop for those interested in horticulture or desirous of certain rare herbs. The Royal Hospital is a retirement home for soldiers, designed by Christopher Wren in the years after the civil war. Its residents are notable by their red coats and tricorn hats, which date from its 17th-century founding. The prince has declared the hospital off-limits to other Kindred, claiming it as his exclusive domain, and the residents, the Chelsea Pensioners, under his personal protection. Under Valerius's tenure, this practice fell into neglect, but after his return, Mithras made bloody examples of those who flouted the prohibition.

Kensington and Knightsbridge are likewise well-to-do areas, encompassing some of the key cultural and educational institutions in London, both mortal and Kindred. Lying south of Hyde Park (to which I will return forthwith) is the recently constructed Royal Albert Hall. Originally to be called the Hall of Arts and Science — Queen Victoria changed its name in memory of her husband — the cylindrical edifice is surprisingly humble for a Victorian building, though its red-velvet interior, used mostly for classical concerts, is breathtaking. Construction was partly funded by selling seats and boxes on a 999-year lease, and numerous Toreador and Venttrue of the city are seat-owners, considering the price a fair investment given their unlife expectancy. As might be expected, the Albert Hall, the adjacent Royal College of Music and the nearby Royal College of Arts are part of the Elysium.

Due south of Albert Hall lies the Royal College of Science, the Royal School of Mines, and the City and Guilds College, which together work to advance the understanding of the natural world. I have heard talk of merging the three schools into a unified "imperial college," but disagreements among the governors of the institutions mean this is unlikely to happen soon. The atmosphere in the schools is rather stuffy, certainly compared to the gothic edifice of the Natural History Museum on Cromwell Road. Opened in 1881, this massive structure houses all sorts of exhibits relating to the natural world, though the most impressive are the dinosaur skeletons situated in the massive entrance hall. Lectures and soirees are frequent features of the museum, at which the Toreador and Malkavian Primogen and their entourages are regular attendees.

Just up the road from the Natural History Museum is the Museum of Manufactures, containing exhibits from

all over the British Empire. Opened in 1857, it serves as the permanent home of the decorative items displayed in the Crystal Palace during the Great Exhibition. The trustees feel that the present buildings are too small and plans are afoot to construct a new museum on a nearby site. The expanded premises will be called, no great surprise, the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Hyde Park, directly north of Kensington, is the largest open space in central London, covering 340 acres but completely surrounded by buildings. Once the lands of Westminster Abbey, the park contains a boating and bathing lake (the Serpentine), woodland and gallops. It was the site of the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition, and continues to be the favored place for duels, though the practice has largely disappeared since the British Army banned dueling in 1844. Speaker's Corner, in the northeastern reaches of the park opposite Marble Arch, is the favored haunt of radicals (and no few Brujah in my experience) who seek to voice their opinions. It was established by an Act of Parliament in 1872, and anyone with an opinion can express it here, traditionally on a Sunday morning though obviously Cainites don't hold with this restriction and hold their own gatherings in the small hours, without fear of interference (though haranguing is quite likely).

Marble Arch, located just outside the park at the head of Oxford Street, is a massive stone edifice, originally intended as the main entrance to Buckingham Palace. It soon proved too small, however, and was relocated to its present site in the year of the Great Exhibition. The site formerly housed the Tyburn Gallows, London's principal place of execution until 1783 (when it was superceded by Newgate). I can personally attest that the area is haunted by the tortured souls of those dispatched here in front of jeering spectators.

The West End

The core of London (for good or ill...) is the West End, a series of interlocking "villages" that serve as the brain (Westminster), heart (Soho) and soul (Royal Palaces) of the city — and I suppose St. Giles would be the bowels.

Westminster centers on the Houses of Parliament (also referred to as the Palace of Westminster since it incorporates the last relics of the old Royal Palace). Parliament has sat here since 1612, but the present building is mostly less than a century old. A major fire in 1834 gutted all but Westminster Hall and the Jewel Tower, and the new building wasn't completed until 1860. Since the days of Oliver Cromwell, Parliament has been the domain of Lady Anne Bowesley, though she is constantly on her guard against challengers, both exter-

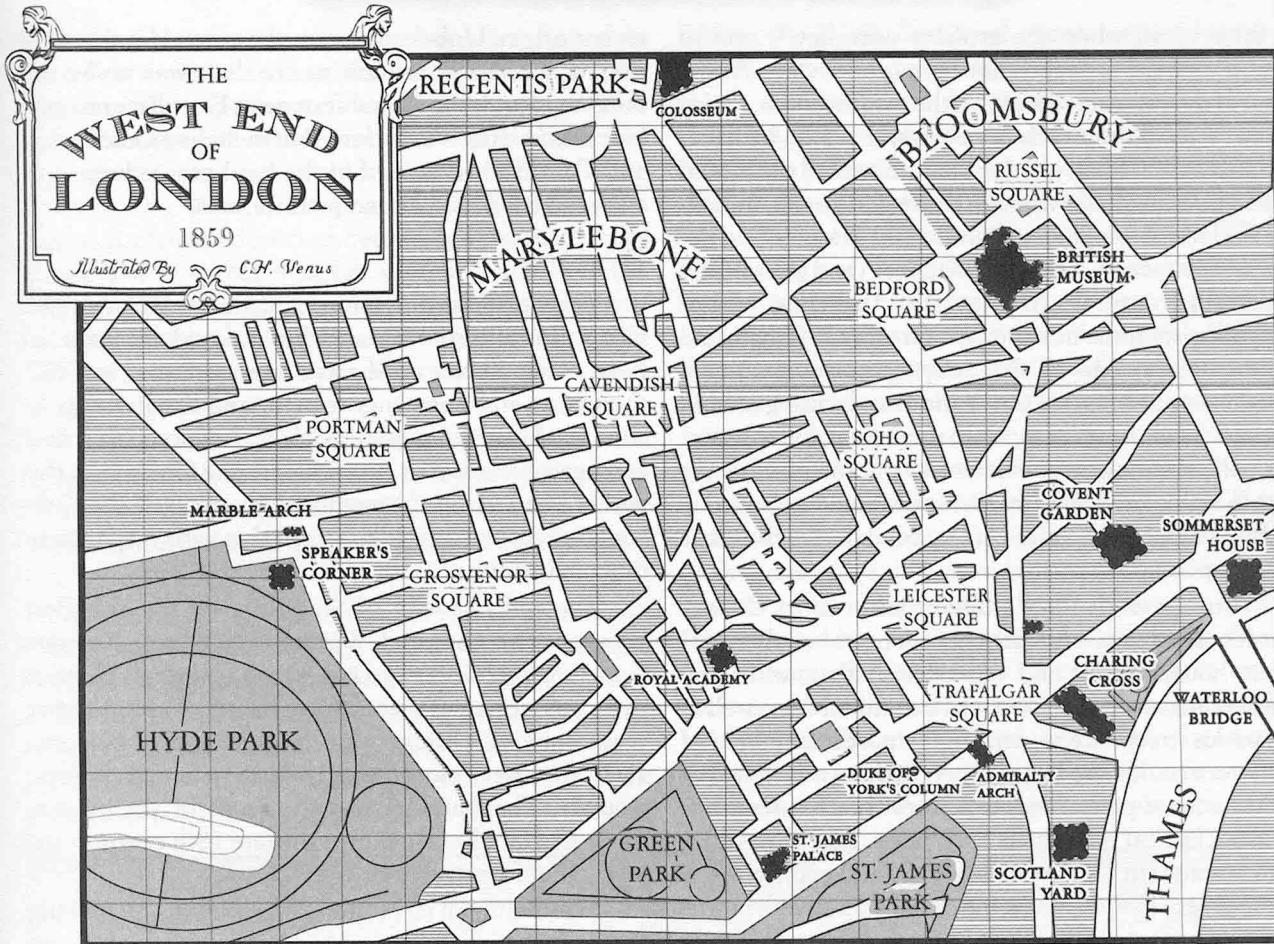
nal and from within her own Clan Venture. The seneschal believes the fire of 1834 was an attempt to undermine her authority, perhaps by the Sabbat forces active in the city at that time, or maybe by dissident Camarilla forces led by the now-exiled Roman Pendragon.

Across the square from Parliament stands Westminster Abbey, an impressive edifice begun in the reign of Edward the Confessor before the Norman invasion. Most of the construction dates from the reign of Henry III in the 13th century, but the building was not fully completed until shortly before the Reformation (with additions made by Nicholas Hawksmoor in 1745, but I will speak more on Hawksmoor as we proceed). The gothic building, originally a Benedictine Abbey, incorporated a school and cloisters for study and contemplation though this function was replaced by political machination (the Commons used to meet here after the Reformation). The abbey has remained a major religious structure, as the site of almost every state coronation since William I and the burial place of many kings and queens. Perhaps because of its continual use and place at the heart of English society, Westminster Abbey is a difficult place for Kindred to enter; even the most strong-willed feel uncomfortable and the majority suffer immense pain, if they were able to cross the threshold at all. The Tremere, who seek access to the abbey's formidable library, have long sought a way round this aura of holiness but must, by and large, resort to mortal proxies.

Up Whitehall toward Trafalgar Square lies Downing Street, the residence of Prime Ministers since 1732. Mithras discourages any interference with the workings of the residence but Lady Anne is a frequent "guest," both officially (in the guise of a peer of the realm) or using her Kindred powers to bypass the guards. Also in Westminster is New Scotland Yard, a Ventre domain and the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police, having moved from Great Scotland Yard in 1890.

Trafalgar Square stands at the head of Whitehall, established in the 1830s and home to the 165-ft. tall Nelson's Column. On the north side of the square is the National Gallery, a Neo-Classical building opened in 1838 that houses a superlative collection of state-owned art. The National Gallery and the neighboring National Portrait Gallery are part of the Elysium, overseen by Toreador interests with Malkavian support. The new Tate Gallery, opened on Millbank in 1897, has yet to be formally recognized as part of the Elysium but most London Kindred behave as if it were.

West of Trafalgar Square lies St. James Park, and beyond that is Buckingham Palace, the queen's London Residence. By Mithras's decree, no Kindred is to enter the palace on pain of Final Death, a response to the



presence of William Gull, Queen Victoria's physician and unofficial protector. St. James's Palace is likewise out of bounds but this has not prevented the city's Kindred from enjoying a nighttime stroll in Green Park and St. James's Park.

Due north of Green Park is Picadilly, home to many of the city's gentlemen's clubs, and beyond that Mayfair, where lie the most sought-after residences in the city. Valerius owns a house in Albany, close to Burlington House (the Royal Academy of Arts), but to Lady Anne's chagrin, she has been unable to acquire a property in the exclusive close thanks to the misogynist rules governing their ownership and occupation. At the eastern end of Picadilly is Picadilly Circus, a gaudy mélange of shops and music halls, at the center of which is a newly erected winged statue. Even further east, the music halls of Leicester Square — notably the Empire and Alhambra — have recently taken over what was once a prime residential area. Both the square and Picadilly are popular rendezvous points and ideal hunting grounds for Kindred.

Heading further north and east from Leicester Square, the West End's character changes markedly. To the

north lies Soho, a fashionable area in the 17th and 18th centuries but shunned more recently. Some parts of Soho attempt to cling to respectability but much of the area is home to impoverished immigrants. The "night houses" of Soho are home to prostitutes of both sexes, exploiting the more liberal attitude of the immigrant-dominated area. Drinking and opium dens are also rife in the area, managed by mortal and Kindred crime bosses. Although seedy, Soho pales in significance compared to the area to the northeast, St. Giles Rookery in Holborn. Without doubt, this is the most rundown part of the city; the maze-like slums of the rookery are home to numerous vagrants, cutthroats and prostitutes. The squalid conditions of the houses — some rooms house more than twenty people — are worse than those of animal lairs, and are a breeding ground for disease, particularly cholera and consumption, making the area less appealing to discerning Kindred. Despite the small space occupied by St. Giles, several Nosferatu make their havens there.

Surprisingly, not far from the St. Giles' Rookery is the British Museum, London's preeminent center for history and learning. Private evening soirees allow London's Kindred to enjoy the museum's exhibits (some

of them recall when the artifacts were new!) and to mingle with the upper echelons of mortal society. At the heart of the museum complex is the reading room, which houses tens of thousands of books and is seen by many Kindred as *their* library. Others have nurtured the mortal souls who have passed through the reading room, including Karl Marx, Mohandas Gandhi and Thomas Carlyle. It is an open secret among the Kindred (and presumably other supernaturals in the city) that one of the Egyptologists at the museum, Dr. Gregory Wildham, is a Shemsu Heru, one of the undying more commonly known as mummies. He is gregarious and willing to hold forth on a wide range of topics to those prepared to listen. He will not, however, tolerate any form of violence within his domain, and the British Museum is not only an Elysium for the Kindred of London but also the city's other supernatural entities.

Turning south from Holborn takes us to Covent Garden, an area of stark contrasts. The covered central piazza houses a fruit and vegetable market, while the surrounding arcades house shops and chambers as well as numerous street entertainers. In the northeast corner of the piazza stands the Royal Opera House, a mélange of Victorian and preexisting structures that has seen numerous classical performers and shows. Like the Albert Hall, prominent Kindred regularly attend performances at the Opera House, observing each other and the well-to-do kine from their private boxes.

Running parallel to the Thames is the Strand, the principal thoroughfare linking The City and Westminster, as well as the site of many prestigious residences (including that of Prince Mithras) and newly opened Savoy Hotel. The massive Somerset House marks the eastern limit of the Strand, built in the late 18th century to house various government offices. The building also houses what little exists of Kindred governmental bureaucracy, and a secret tunnel leading from the Kindred warrens to Mithras's house.

The eastern extension of the Strand toward The City is the heart of the legal system in London, Britain and the empire. Completed in 1882, the Royal Courts of Justice on Fleet Street (also renowned for its newspaper offices) are the nation's principal courts, and the surrounding buildings are geared to supporting them. The so-called Inns of Court, a combination of legal school and chambers for lawyers and barristers, stand north and south of the court. Middle and Inner Temple lie situated south of the Strand toward the Thames, and Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn to the north around High Holborn. The first two trace their origins to the Knights Templar, who had premises on the site, though most of the buildings in the four Inns of Court are of Elizabethan or more

recent origin. Unbeknownst to the mortal legal practitioners, a series of tunnels weave their way under the buildings, avoiding the subterranean Fleet River to provide Kindred (mostly Ventre but including some Brujah and Toreador) interested in the legal proceedings with access to the premises and practitioners.

The City

The site of the old Roman and medieval towns, The City (also called the Square Mile) is London's financial heart. The old city walls came down (mostly) in 1760, though several fragments remain, and the line can be seen in the street names (such as London Wall near Moorgate) and layout. Even before the Great Fire, this part of London was the merchant quarter, and the 17th-century reconstruction bolstered this with magnificent financial edifices.

Situated just west of St. Paul's, on the boundary between The City and Westminster, stands Newgate Gaol, London's infamous jail, which replaced Tyburn as the city's principal place of execution. For eighty-five years, such executions were held in public, but after 1868, they were moved into the security of the prison's grounds. The building was the focus of the Brujah-sponsored Gordon Rioters in the late 18th century, and it remains a target of that clan's enmity.

The Guildhall (rebuilt in 1673 after the Great Fire) is the center of mortal and Kindred power in this city-within-a-city; the City of London Corporation has controlled affairs for over eight hundred years. Indeed, The City has its own police force independent of the Met, which is a constant source of friction, both among the mortals and between the Kindred who claim dominion over the police.

The Bank of England on Threadneedle Street, founded in 1694, is the fiscal center of not only The City but also of London, Britain and the empire as a whole. Also located on Threadneedle Street is the Stock Exchange, the largest in the world. Almost as important, and certainly of higher profile, is nearby Lloyd's of London. Once little more than a coffee shop managed by Edward Lloyd, it is tonight based in the Royal Exchange and is the heart of the maritime insurance industry. With shipping the lifeblood of the empire, vast fortunes can be made — or lost — here underwriting policies, with the tolling of the Lutine Bell signifying a vessel lost at sea. Lloyd's and the Stock Exchange are home to a number of fiscally minded Ventre, though the Giovanni also have a minor presence.

Built originally by William the Conqueror and both extended and refined by his successors, the Tower of London stands guard over the city. Seemingly the ideal

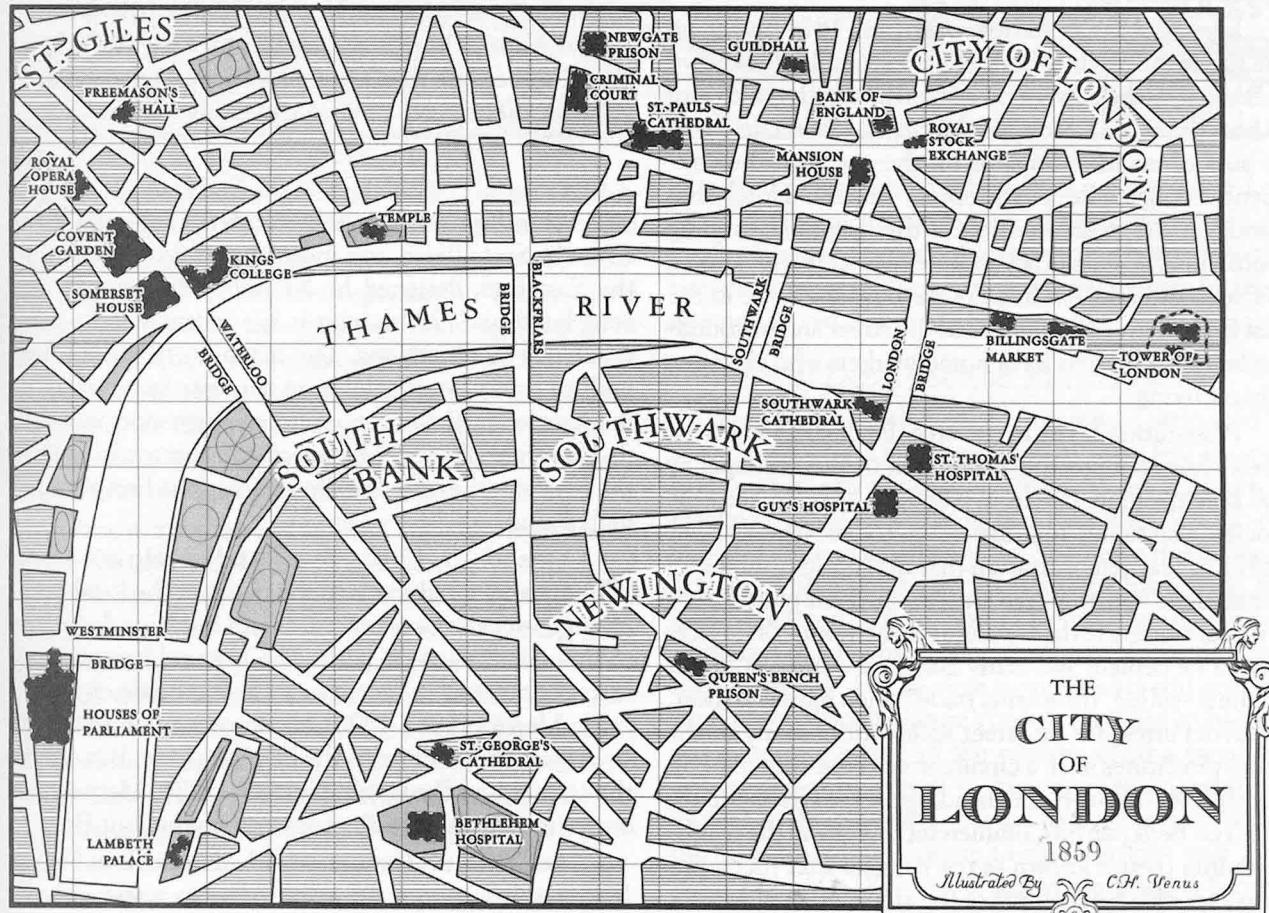
place for Kindred to reside, outsiders are surprised to learn that none reside there and few will even contemplate entering its precincts. That the tower is haunted is beyond doubt — it has been a place of imprisonment and execution for centuries, with notable “guests” including Anne Boleyn, Walter Raleigh and, according to popular legend, Richard and Edward, better known as the Princes in the Tower — but a darker shadow hangs over the fortress. Some say that Lupines lair there (though this seems unlikely given their love of open lands) or that some great evil is buried far underground. It matters not; we do not go there.

To the east of the Tower, work is underway on a new Thames crossing, to complement or replace the existing tunnel and that at Greenwich. This fortress-like Tower Bridge' is the source of much work in the East End, and is to open in 1895.

In times past, the center of the prince's blood-cult was to be found in The City, as the capital's principal Mithraeum was located on the banks of the Walbrook. Since the prince's relocation to the Strand, the new temple there has become the focus of routine meetings. The Walbrook site remains the venue for important gatherings (such as December 25th). Although the best

known, St. Paul's Cathedral is only one of dozens of churches in the Square Mile. The sanctity of the site means that few Kindred can enter the cathedral or its precincts without pain, though the aura of holiness is less fierce than at Westminster. Some of the London Kindred whisper that this strength of faith in St. Paul's — and the key placement of other churches, notably those of Nicholas Hawksmoor, around the capital — is part of some wider conspiracy by a secret mortal faction (perhaps the Masons) to hamper the activities of the city's Kindred. These paranoid vampires claim “proof” in the alignment of key buildings in the city, but as far as I'm concerned a few colored lines on a piece of paper make for pretty patterns, not evidence of some hidden conspiracy.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital, just north of St. Paul's, is the oldest in London, established in 1123 and attached to the adjacent priory (part of which survived the Reformation as the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great). The hospital has particular significance to the Brujah: The peasant rebel leader Wat Tyler was brought here for treatment in 1381, but he was removed and executed by soldiers. By order of the Brujah elder Tyler, the hospital precincts are sacrosanct, in recognition of their attempts to treat her lover, and any vampire who attempts to feed



on or harm the patients or staff of Bart's must answer to her. In stark contrast, the Brujah are specifically encouraged to trouble occupants of the Fishmonger's Hall near London Bridge (it was a member of that guild who slew Wat Tyler), though the practice has fallen out of fashion under the strictures of the Camarilla.

The East End

To the east of The City lie the slums of the East End, notably Whitechapel and Spitalfields, but also Shadwell (renowned, perhaps unfairly, for its opium dens). Living conditions are atrocious, with prostitution and petty crime abundant. Immigrants dominate the area, particularly Irish fleeing the potato famine of 1845-49 and Jews escaping the Eastern European pogroms of the last two decades. It was here, with the exception of Catherine Eddowes (whose body was found at Mitre Square in City jurisdiction), that Jack the Ripper hunted. This den of villainy is home to thousands of immigrants and is prime hunting ground for the Kindred. Indeed, one enterprising individual, the Nosferatu Fagin, has sought to turn the East End into his personal fief. Mithras has so far tolerated this "insurrection" — he has bigger fish to fry — but Fagin is mistaken if he thinks the prince will leave him alone forever.

Liverpool Street station, opened in 1874, stands on the site of the original Bethlehem Hospital (also known as Bedlam — the current hospital in Lambeth is the third to bear the name). Many of the city's Malkavians swear an aura of madness remains on the site, and they frequently congregate at the Great Eastern Hotel that stands on the exact location of the hospital. Running south from the station is Middlesex Street, better known as Petticoat Lane, the heart of the clothing trade in the East End. Many of the houses in the street and surrounding lanes are the abodes of home-workers who eke out a meager living.

Prostitution is rife in the area. Estimates vary, from twelve hundred prostitutes counted in Whitechapel by the Metropolitan Police in 1888, to "one in sixteen" women practicing this lowest of trades (the *Lancet*, 1857), a clear demonstration that the "upright values" of the modern Victorian age are a sham. That prostitution is illegal matters little: Demand for the women's services cannot be denied, and many East End women fall back on the so-called "thrupenny trade" when money is short. To avoid arrest for on-street solicitation, many of the area's prostitutes walk a circuit around the church of St. Botolph at Aldgate before heading off with their clients. The Ten Bells pub on Commercial Street and the nearby Britannia (better known as the Ringers after its proprietors) are also focal points of the trade.

Common Lodging Houses

Even in the East End, housing is prohibitively expensive and most families have little more than one or two rooms in which to live, cook and sleep. Many residents cannot even afford these poor accommodations and instead reside in common lodging houses (there are over two hundred in Whitechapel, housing some 8500 people), paying a nightly rate for a bed and sharing cooking and washing facilities.

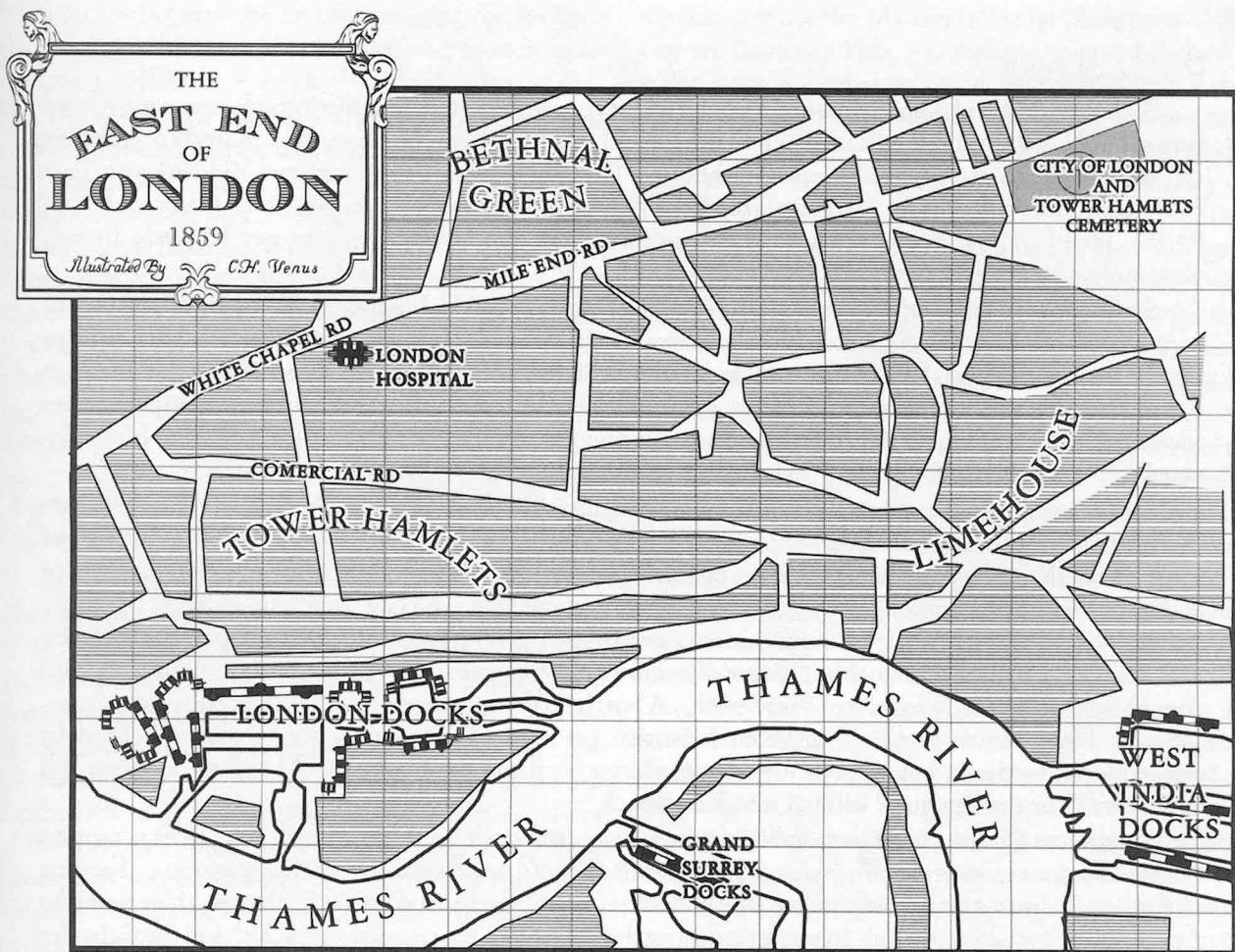
Accommodations in these houses are dormitory style, a mix of double and single beds, sometimes with privacy screens but most times not. A single bed costs fourpence a night, while a double costs eightpence. Those without the funds for a bed could instead pay a twopence to sleep upright leaning on a clothesline, whose removal first thing in the morning often resulted in the sleepers collapsing to the floor.

These lodging houses are inspected at least once a week by a police sergeant, but this does nothing to improve the conditions — vermin and insects are commonplace and the buildings are generally unhygienic. It is no wonder, therefore, that many will trade themselves for a night's lodging, something that Kindred who aren't particular about their source of vitae can easily exploit.

Across from the Ten Bells stands the baroque Christ Church, Spitalfields, the most impressive structure in the East End, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor and completed in 1729, though it has recently undergone numerous modifications. The magnificent church was built to stamp Anglicanism on the area, preventing its domination by the non-conformist Huguenots who had fled here from France. The structure is regarded as part of the Elysium, the only building in the East End afforded such status.

Opened in 1740, the London Hospital on Whitechapel Road tends to the needs of the local community, including several wards and kitchens dedicated to those of the Jewish faith. The hospital has gained a certain notoriety in recent years as the home of Joseph Carey Merrick (1862-1890), also known as John Merrick — or less sympathetically, the Elephant Man. Brought to the hospital by Frederick Treves in 1886, Merrick has drawn many of the city's physicians to the East End.

The Salvation Army, established in the East End in 1865, retains a strong presence in the area and seeks to



support the poor and disaffected. Under the generalship of William Booth, the Army operates soup kitchens and homes for alcoholics, fallen women and released prisoners. Initially ridiculed, the organization has received considerable public attention and funding (thanks in part to the public awareness generated by the Whitechapel Murders). Unbeknownst to Booth, several Kindred have exploited the Salvation Army's operations in the East End for their own purposes, "recruiting" a herd from its numbers in stark defiance of the Army's goals.

More north than east of The City is Hackney and its attendant districts of Stoke Newington, Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, which lie between Islington and the rest of the East End. There have been settlements here almost as long as the city of London has existed — they stood at the time of Domesday, and Stoke Newington claims to be pre-Roman in origin. Shoreditch is little different than the neighboring district of Whitechapel, but Hackney and the other northeastern areas still cling to a measure of respectability. Buildings such as Sutton House, a red brick structure of Tudor origin, once dominated the area though large residences remain the norm.

The broad Hackney Marshes, flanking the River Lea, block the eastward expansion of the city though the locals claim the remains of buildings can be found in the now-flooded land. The marshes serve as a refuge for those fleeing the law, Kindred and kine alike.

The Isle of Dogs and the Mile End Road

Miss Parr's excellent account grows a little sketchy as we move east. I feel compelled to add a few observations on areas to the east of Whitechapel, yet south of Hackney. Most notable is the land that lies in the majestic southward sweep of the Thames in this region of London. This promontory, known as the Isle of Dogs, has long been left to nature. Somewhat marshy and swampy in character, it has been a favorite haunt of mine for some time, lying as it does so close to the city yet still being an example of Mother Nature's power. It earned its name as an island at the turn of the century when a canal was driven along the top of it. However, the demand for further docks in London has led to the northern end of the island becoming home to the vast East and West India Docks in 1870. Now the whole place is become

Places of Faith

Although England is an increasingly secular society, many of its religious institutions retain a powerful aura of Faith, making it difficult for Kindred to approach or enter them. To do so, the Kindred's player must roll Willpower against a difficulty equal to the site's True Faith rating (those very rare Kindred with True Faith reduce this difficulty by their own True Faith rating). In the case of "radiating sites," (indicated by an R) the True Faith rating decreases with distance from the site, roughly 1 point per 10 yards, though ultimately subject to Storyteller discretion.

Success means the Kindred can enter the site though he may still feel uncomfortable and perhaps unwell (one success indicates the character feels seriously unwell, three that he feels discomfited, and five or more that he feels no ill effects). Each success also determines how long the Cainite may remain in the site; each dawn, the effective number of successes automatically decreases by one and the Cainite becomes increasingly uncomfortable. Mortals can notice this discomfort on a Perception + Empathy roll (difficulty equal to the Kindred's Willpower) and may act accordingly.

Failure results in the character experiencing considerable physical pain if he tries to enter the site, though he may force himself to do so. Characters who do so suffer one health level of bashing damage per scene. A botch, however, indicates that the character immediately suffers one health level of lethal damage and must spend a Willpower point each turn to remain in the area. The pain that follows a botch steadily builds, and on the third turn (and in subsequent turns) a second Willpower roll is needed against a difficulty of 7. Each success allows the character to put off additional Willpower rolls for a turn, while failure indicates the character falls victim to frenzy (Rötschreck). A botch on this roll means the character bursts into flame, suffering three health levels of aggravated damage per turn. These flames may be extinguished by conventional methods, but in each turn the character is aflame the player should make a Courage roll (difficulty 8) or the character will fall into Rötschreck.

Even when Kindred feel comfortable in a holy place, the site's True Faith impacts on their activities. All blood point expenditures are doubled, and the difficulty of using Auspex or other perception-enhancing Disciplines increases by 2. Furthermore, any characters with True Faith effectively increase their rating by 1 while on holy ground (though characters without the True Faith trait do not gain a dot) and the difficulty of all Faith-related rolls (exorcism, for example) decreases by 2.

London's Holy Places

Well-used church with devout parishioners	4
Rarely-used church with devout parishioners	3
The Hawksmoor Churches	6 (R)
Lambeth Palace	7 (R)
St. Paul's Cathedral	7 (R)
Temple Church	5
Westminster Abbey	8 (R)

little more than a mass of shipyards, warehouses and docks.

As well as legitimate business, the area is a den for activities of the most notorious kind. The working people here are of a distressingly troublesome mood, and their disruptive actions and strikes have had some negative impact on a few ventures I have invested a modest sum into in recent years. However, I have my suspicions as to the true motivations behind these actions, which I shall discuss presently.

The area to the north, around the Mile End Road, is much as you would expect from an area sandwiched between the horror of Whitechapel and the Isle of Dogs — a den for paupers, criminals and the low of society. The sole building of note is the People's Palace, alongside the Jewish cemetery on the Mile End Road itself. It was built following generous bequests from Mr. Baber Beaumont and the Drapers' Company, in which Valerius has several associates, I believe. Its stated aim is to be an educational institution for the poor of the East End, and in that function it serves admirably. At nights, this

building has become the favored meeting place of our disgraced seneschal and his lackies, and as such bears keeping a watchful eye upon.

The rest of the area is given over to depressingly uniform terraced homes, and the Bethnal Green, a decent expanse of land that feels more like untouched field than an organized park. A short walk southwest of the green is the Bethnal Green branch of the South Kensington Museum, which currently houses a collection of portraits and is one of the venues used for Elysium. It is not one I favor myself, and I believe that you hold similar views, Lady Anne. Your distaste for the neighboring Bethnal Lunatic Asylum, just to the museum's south, is evident and understandable.

South of the River

Let us now turn our gaze to the lands south of the Thames, long derided by many of those who dwell north of that mighty river as being inferior to the other shore. To them I say, this is the very place where Shakespeare first performed his notable plays, and it is home to some of the greatest scientific ideas of our age, not least the Meridian Line at Greenwich. It would be a foolish Kindred who did not turn his eyes toward the possibilities of this fief, as I have done. Indeed, I am not a little insulted by suggestions from some quarters that those Kindred who are new to the city should be given fiefs here, at the cost of those of us who had the foresight to stake our claims decades ago.

The Riverside Regions

The southern banks of the Thames remain as busy and prosperous as ever, although the arrival of the railways has had its impact on these fiefs as well.

Battersea, Wandsworth & Lambeth

This region of the city, especially the area around Putney, may be familiar to Prince Mithras as it was a fashionable place to reside a century ago. However, the railways have done their work, and the once-open fields have been filled with those depressing terraces that make up much of the area now. Notable buildings include the Surrey House of Correction, the Royal Victoria Patriotic Asylum and the Friendless Boys Home, which I think make plain the current tone of the area.

More pleasing to the eye is the new park, which opened a scant thirty years ago. Battersea Park is therefore one of the most recent of the city's parks and, I might venture to suggest, one of the prettiest as well. I find that the sub-tropical gardens bring back pleasant memories of

my time serving Her Majesty in the far-flung parts of the empire. Battersea Park also features splendid paths for walks, rides and other activities, and even a lake, if the mood should take one. Battersea itself was a pleasant area of market gardening before the arrival of the iron roads. Now it is a tangle of rails surrounded by industry of various sorts, from candle factories to glucose works. The Albert Palace, an impressive structure of glass and iron, is currently under construction in the remains of Battersea Fields, which should prove an added reason to visit the area when it opens.

Lambeth is home to much heavy industry, and as such is considered the choicest part of this fief. However, this choice sweetmeat comes at a price. It is also home to Lambeth Palace, the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury for centuries, and considered by many to be the home of the Church of England. Thus, the damnable place has a painful aura of faith around it that makes approaching it agonizing for those of our persuasion. While the publication of Mr. Darwin's *Origin of the Species* has without doubt undermined belief in the Christian faith, it has made not a jot of difference to Lambeth Palace, the adjacent St. Mary's Church, and the grounds of both, which remain effectively barred to us. Fortunately, the bridge that links the vicinity of Lambeth Palace and Westminster is amongst the ugliest on the river, and so its loss to us is no great issue. In my breathing days I enjoyed visiting the Oval cricket ground, but alas, nocturnal cricket is all but impossible, even under gaslight.

Which brings us to Bedlam, or as it more properly known, the Bethlehem Royal Hospital. This infamous mental hospital has existed since the 13th century, but has stood on these grounds only since 1815. For many years it housed both the criminally insane and those who were merely mad. Since the criminals departed for Broadmoor in the West Country in 1864, it has catered only to those whose minds are damaged in legal ways, as it were. The place is renowned for the terrible noise its inhabitants make upon occasions. I suggest you speak to Miss Parr in person if you wish to know more of this terrible place.

Southwark & Deptford

The eastern part of Southwark has seen the normal development, as a result of the construction of Waterloo Station and Blackfriars Goods Yard. By day, the nearby Borough Market is one of the busiest in the city, and the remaining public houses in the area still do good trade. However, it has not lost the bad reputation it earned a century ago. By contrast, the bankside region of Southwark remains one of the most notorious in the city.

It is little more than one large drinking house, interspersed with the working places of ladies of easy virtue and an inordinate number of prisons of various sorts. Even the influence of St. Saviour's, a large church near the river, seems to have done little to improve public morality in the area. Indeed, a goodly number of churches have been built in Southwark, but the piety is so lacking that precious few of them trouble the Kindred at all.

The inevitable consequence of such moral laxity is injury and sickness, and the arrival of Guy's and St. Thomas's Hospital have done something to allow the continued survival of the residents. It is, of course, a prime hunting ground that has been passed to many Kindred by Valerius through recent decades.

The London Bridge station on the edge of Southwark was the first to be built in the city, but has had perhaps less impact its surroundings than the other stations. But then, Southwark has been disreputable since days nearly three centuries ago, when Shakespeare staged his plays in the Globe Theatre by the river. A modern contrivance like the railway will have little impact on such debauchery.

Bermondsey is a center of tanning, as it has been since your namesake, Queen Anne, granted the leatherworking industry a charter in 1703, despite the offensive vapors the process creates. The Bermondsey Leather Market is detectable by the nose long before you lay eyes upon it. The market has been open barely a year, yet already it has enhanced the reputation of the area for evil odors and has reduced the streets around it to slums.

Moving westward, we encounter the Surrey Docks. I have already related the nature of London's docklands elsewhere in this pamphlet, and do not need to repeat those observations here. Around twenty acres of land have been given over to the docks here. I need not tell quite how busy that makes them.

Beyond the docks is Deptford, once the home to the Royal Naval Dockyards, but fallen in stature to the Foreign Cattle Yard. The dockyards can now be found further down river at Woolwich. Deptford has become rife with the Irish; and with the recent wave of Fenian bombings, the police keep a particular watch out for those who sympathize with the cause of Irish independence. Given the Irish penchant for religion, it should be no surprise that the area is one of the few strongholds of the Catholic faith in this Protestant city. For this reason, and the rumors of Lupines haunting Deptford Park, the region is infrequently visited by our kind, though I try to pay regular, if not enthusiastic, visits as part of my duties.

Greenwich

In the last century Greenwich has gone from a distinct town to part of London itself. Yet, it has always been part of the city by virtue of its position just downstream of London proper. Greenwich Palace, built in 1426, and the nearby Queen's House, built in 1635, have long been popular locations for celebrations, banqueting and balls for the aristocracy. Indeed, at least three mortal monarchs of the realm were born here: Henry VIII, Mary and Elizabeth. Of course, the prominent Kindred of the city have never been averse to taking advantage of its attractions when the mortal dignitaries had moved elsewhere, as I am sure you recall, my lady. The palace itself is long gone, but the Queen's House remains a favorite with mortal aristocracy and Kindred primogen alike. Mortals once used the expansive Greenwich Park for hunting, and now we Kindred maintain that tradition, after our own fashion.

Deep in the park, atop a hill, the Royal Observatory still stands as it has since the 1680s. In addition to its role in advancing science by cataloguing the heavenly bodies that populate our skies, it has become a crucial part of Britain's naval prowess. Its Nautical Almanac, published annually, is the standard work by which most ship captains navigate. A time-ball in the northeastern turret is a signal that the shipmasters in London's docks use to set their chronometers precisely. Greenwich Mean Time was recently accepted as the national time. In a conference held in 1884 in Washington in the former colonies, the Greenwich Meridian, devised in the observatory, officially became the prime meridian from which all others are measured (as is already the case in practice, as it has long been a boon to timekeepers and sailors worldwide). It has done nothing but bring more glory to London.

Another of Mr. Hawksmoor's churches, which Miss Parr makes no notice of in her contribution, stands in the town center and goes by the name of St. Alphege's. I must make note of the Trafalgar Tavern that sits on the riverfront itself. For those Kindred who find the river soothing and mortal-watching an entertaining pastime, I feel that there is no better public house to be found in the whole of London.

The Royal Naval College has now opened in what was the naval hospital by the river (which in turn stood on the ruins of Greenwich Palace), although some medical use remains within the building. The Naval College moved here from Portsmouth; it focuses on the training of Naval officers and specialized members of Her Impe-

rial Majesty's armed forces. I myself spent a little time here in my breathing days. I have found it a useful source of committed associates, some of whom are now in my employ full-time, because their lack of aging caused remark. Their services are, of course, yours to call upon.

The Southern Fringes

As we move further south of the river, the number of places of interest declines sharply. I make no claim to comprehensiveness for the following remarks. I have held true to your request for brevity and clarity of information and added discourses only on the areas of particular interest to the Kindred of this city.

Clapham

While few buildings merit note in Clapham, which lies to the south of Battersea, it houses more influential people than anywhere but the center of the city itself. Over recent centuries it has been the home of a major Christian revival, which lead to the construction of the Holy Trinity Church on Clapham Common. Its residents have included the poet Shelley, the architect of the Houses of Parliament, and the founder of the *Thunderer: the Times* newspaper. I'm sure the significance of the fief to our kind is self-evident.

The town has become part of London as houses have sprung up along the railway route through south London to the town. It is based around the Clapham Common, a body of ground best known for its famous trees. Around it are clustered a number of expensive villas that house the wealthy of the city. The town has remained a prime fief, and had been a secondary fief for Valerius for much of the century, one where he let important visitors to the city hunt.

Since your wise decision to revoke Valerius's claim on the region, several Kindred have tried to lay claim to the fief, but I am glad to say that my assistants and I have been successful in rooting out these individuals and apprising them of their error. However, I would be grateful if you could resolve the issue of the fief's claimant before too many more years have passed.

Lewisham & Blackheath

Lewisham, like Clapham, was fashionable a century ago. Unlike Clapham, it has not maintained its appeal to the fashionable, successful and rich. The arrival of the railway has transformed the mansions on Lewisham High Road into shops, and the residents into the solid middle classes. It is expanding rapidly southward into the parishes of Catford and Hither Green, and is a main

residential area for The City, yet it is within walking distance of Greenwich. As you are aware I have taken this growing domain as my own fief, with your own blessing, and have granted hunting rights to some of my protégés in the surrounding areas.

Why have I included this fief in my pamphlet? I humbly submit that the growth of such small parishes into significant suburbs of London will provide the solution to our growing problem of legitimate Kindred residents without any fiefs of their own. I have already, again with your permission, granted Hither Green to a "rising star" among the younger Kindred, and hope that within a decade Catford, too, will be ripe to be used as a reward for a loyal servant of Prince Mithras. Brixton, which lies right at the south of London, shows the same signs of rapid growth. What was once a residence for city businessmen now accommodates ever-growing numbers of clerks and skilled workmen. It will be ready for claim as a fief within the decade, by my judgment. Camberwell, to the east of Brixton, may take another ten years, but is another possibility.

Sydenham & the Crystal Palace

Sydenham technically lies outside London's borders, at least for the time being, but is notable for one reason: It is the final home of the Crystal Palace. It lies some seven miles south of the city, and can be reached by train from London Bridge and Victoria stations.

Until 1854, Sydenham was a small rural town, divided into fashionable Upper Sydenham, where the wealthy lived, and mean Lower Sydenham, home of the laboring classes. Following the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, its centerpiece, a vast palace of iron and glass, was taken down and re-erected in Sydenham at the cost of £1,500,000. There, it was enlarged and divided into courts to form the center of an amusement and leisure park for the city. It is used as a theatre, menagerie and exhibition hall, and, on special occasions as decreed by your predecessor, Elysium. The surrounding two hundred acres is known as Crystal Palace Park, and houses gardens, boating lakes, a zoo and the largest maze in London.

The Palace has made Sydenham fashionable, and it grows rapidly. Many wealthy and influential mortals who have no good reason to reside in London proper have chosen to make their home here. I would recommend that this new fief be awarded to a loyal supporter of Prince Mithras as soon as a good candidate becomes apparent.

Salons and Elysium

Social gatherings — clubs for gentlemen and soirees for ladies — are a central part in the lives of London's well-to-do. The Kindred are no exception. Such gatherings provide a mechanism through which the undead interact or, where the organization comprises principally of mortals, of influencing the affairs of the kine without breaching the First Tradition. There are two broad groups of such meetings: the mortal salons and the Kindred Elysium.

The Clubs

Most clubs are mortal institutions but this has not prevented their exploitation by Kindred. Indeed, a handful of clubs operate purely in Kindred circles, or at least involve only those known to Kindred society, while others operate on multiple levels, at their heart involving only the Kindred but with increasing involvement of the kine as matters are further removed from the centers of power. Those on the fringe of such societies have little reason to suspect our existence, let alone their association with us.

The hundreds of clubs and societies in London are as diverse as their members. Some are gatherings of like-minded individuals to discuss social events or listen to music, while others are dining clubs where members may wax eloquently on various matters of science, the arts or society. Indeed, many societies exist because of a common theme but their members use them principally as social gatherings.

In mortal society, new members join the clubs by invitation of an existing member, a process usually subject to ratification by the existing membership. Usually this is by secret majority vote (often using colored balls, with white for yes, black for no, the latter of which giving rise to the term "blackballing"), but some of the most prestigious and exclusive societies require a unanimous decision before an applicant will be inducted into the society. Kindred clubs are usually less rigid in their conditions, saving that the new member must be a member of the undead, or at least (and very rarely) a trusted ghoul. In hybrid Kindred-kine clubs, progression to the next level of initiation — and thus greater knowledge of the mysteries of the society — is by approval of the higher-ranked members, with induction into the higher mysteries at the discretion of the Kindred involved in the society.

Most clubs admit only gentlemen, though ladies may enter some of them as guests of members, though usually only in select rooms. Instead, ladies frequently meet in afternoon soirees to take high tea and discuss social affairs in a genteel manner. Such quaint restrictions rarely apply in Kindred society, with most vampiric soirees admitting both sexes as equals. This has not, however, prevented many of the more chauvinistic Kindred from favoring male-only mortal societies.

There are too many clubs and societies to name in such a brief treatise, but some of the most notable include:

Brooks

Brooks is far from the most vocal of clubs but its emphasis on history and continuity — it was founded in 1764 and encourages membership by successive members of the same family — has made membership an attractive proposition for Kindred and esteemed ghouls who, after absences of a decade or two, can pass themselves off as their own descendants.

The Carlton

Inextricably bound to the Tory (later Conservative) party, the Carlton Club came into being in 1832, five years before Victoria became queen. The Duke of Wellington was a founding member, encouraging Tory MPs to pay the club's membership fees. Here too, several Kindred are members, including Anne Bowesley who uses her Disciplines to circumvent some of the Club's more chauvinistic requirements.

The Marlborough

The Marlborough is one of the newest clubs in London, founded in the late 1860s by a group disaffected with Whites, including the Prince of Wales, who desired a more liberal attitude to smoking.

Merritt House

Situated on Park Lane, Lady Merritt's house has garnered a poor name among the well-to-do of London, allegedly a "house of ill-repute" whose residents are prostitutes servicing the city's rich and powerful. This bad reputation conceals Merritt House's true purpose as a meeting place for the city's Kindred. The only mortals allowed at Lady Merritt's soirees are those who have been inducted into Kindred society, either as ghouls or trusted servants or vessels.

The Reform Club

Standing in opposition to the Carlton Club, supporters of the act of the same name founded the Reform Club in 1832. The club's more liberal views have made it popular with the city's Brujah, two of whom are known to be members, though several Toreador are also known to frequent the club, no doubt attracted by its links to the recent novel by Jules Verne entitled *Around the World in 80 Days* in which the club is the starting point of the protagonist's epic journey.

The Taurus Club

Like its near-neighbor the Army and Navy Club, the Taurus Club draws its membership from soldiers who have served throughout the Empire. Unlike most clubs, however, the Taurien Brotherhood wasn't founded by mortals but is instead

a modern incarnation of the Cult of Mithras. The most junior members of the society are mortals, but at its heart stands the Prince of London with various grades of initiation in the club reflecting the members' involvement in Kindred society. Among the mortals, only males may join the society but Kindred of both sexes — albeit almost uniformly Ventre — are involved in its affairs.

Whites

The oldest and most prestigious of London's clubs is Whites, founded in the late seventeenth century as a chocolate shop. Whites is a male-only preserve — women aren't even allowed in as guests — whose membership includes the upper echelons of the aristocracy and high-ranking members of the government. Whites is well known for its gambling. Indeed, almost any sort of wager may be made within the club, its details recorded in a great book that resides in the main hall. At least three Ventre are known to be members of Whites, including some of the most influential figures in the city.

The X-Club

A small society, officially numbering only nine members, the X-Club exists to debate and promote science in Victorian society. It supported Darwin's revolutionary theories and has worked diligently to shape modern scientific thinking. No Kindred are members of the X-Club, though Edward Bainbridge of Clan Tremere is a close associate of several members and is widely suspected of manipulating the club to his own ends.

The Elysium

London's Elysium is far-ranging and incorporates a wide range of cultural and social institutions. Most are concentrated in the city's West End, but some are further afield. At such venues, Kindred are instructed to put aside their grievances; they may still argue and debate but are not to use violence against their fellows. London also contains several sites that are out of bounds to the Kindred by order of Prince Mithras. Although not part of the Elysium *per se*, any infraction of these prohibitions is harshly punished.

The Places of History

These are areas considered part of London's Elysium by dint of their historical significance or the importance of the items they house. The most significant are the Natural History Museum and the Museum of Manufactures in Kensington, and the British Museum in Bloomsbury, though numerous minor sites are also included. Although not commonly used as meeting places (the British Museum is an exception, the site of numerous soirees), they are considered inviolate.

The Places of Culture

These are parts of London held in high esteem because of their social and cultural merit. They are the principal meeting places of the Kindred, both for Kindred-only functions and for those involving mortals. The main places included in the Places of Culture are the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery and the Royal Academy of Arts. The Tate Gallery is held by some Kindred to be part of the London Elysium but neither prince nor primogen has confirmed this. Other culture-related elements of the Elysium include Madame Tussaud's waxworks at Baker Street and Albert Hall in Kensington. Much of the area around Shaftsbury Avenue and Drury Lane is regarded as a blanket Elysium by dint of the many theatres in the region. The Crystal Palace in Sydenham, the pre-eminent venue for Kindred social gatherings, is also considered a "Place of Culture."

The Places of Power

As the capital of an empire, London seethes with power and to preserve the Masquerade while allowing the Kindred to influence matters should they desire, all government and judicial buildings are considered part of the Elysium. The most notable of these are the Palace of Westminster (that is, Parliament), Somerset House and the various buildings on and around Whitehall. The Royal Courts of Justice are considered part of Elysium, as is the Guildhall and New Scotland Yard.

The Places of Faith

The most sensitive of the sites considered Elysium are those linked with religion. Those with the strongest auras — Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral — are difficult for the Kindred to enter but are nonetheless considered Elysium. London's lesser churches are also considered sacrosanct, though a number of Kindred have questioned whether this is true Elysium or merely a respect for holy ground.

The Prohibited Places

Most of the places the prince has placed under interdiction tie in with other prohibitions he has issued. The most notable are all the Royal Palaces in the city (principally Buckingham, Kensington and St. James' Palaces) as an extension of his prohibition vis-à-vis interfering with the monarchy. His bar on Lambeth Palace, the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, is more focused and rather than preventing meddling in government, serves to protect the Masquerade from the supreme cleric of the Church of England. In stark contrast, the prince's protection of the Royal Chelsea Hospital is a purely personal matter, securing his herd and safeguarding the soldiers who have served the United Kingdom well. Mithras has never needed to prohibit Kindred access to the Tower of London, as its reputation is sufficient.



Chapter Three: London's Host

*A unreal city,
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,
A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many,
I had not thought death had undone so many.
- T.S. Eliot, The Waste Land*

The city itself serves a story as the setting – what truly makes the city and a chronicle come alive are the characters who stalk through its fogged streets or traffic in the halls of Elysium. This chapter includes many of the prominent Kindred of London (as well as a few curious parties of something other than the Kindred variety). Vampires new to the city would do well to court the favor of certain of these Kindred, and to avoid the attentions of others. Of course, exactly who treats with whom is up to the Storyteller and her troupe...

Brujah

Reginald Moore, Ambitious Intellectual

Background: As a boy, Reginald was free to roam the grounds of Oxford University, pretending the campus was a kingdom and he was the heroic knight who defended it. His father was a groundskeeper who tended the gardens there. While his family didn't have much money, the traditions of the university stirred the young man's enthusiasm. The idealistic boy grew up to be a struggling scholar, teaching himself Latin from used textbooks purchased at the local bookstore. Reginald dreamed of receiving a classical education at his "father's university," but lack of money, breeding and social position doomed that dream to failure. His father's sudden death from illness quickly reduced Reginald to poverty.

As a dedicated young student, Reginald continued to teach himself the elementals of classical languages to further his chances of passing entrance exams. Society deemed that he was unworthy of such accolades. By the age of 18, he had become a capable tutor in Latin and Greek, but he found his avocation was insufficient to support him as a career. Destitution and drinking led him to many sad nights roaming the streets of the town he loved. As he was unable to find his dream, a nightmare found him instead.

Reginald's Embrace was a botched and horrific affair. Through painful and tortured memories, he still remembers fighting against a vampire who nearly killed him in a mad passion for blood. What was meant to be a casual feeding turned into a frantic brawl. Somewhere in the haze of blood and agony that followed, an unseen savior interceded on his behalf. When Reginald awoke, he lay at the feet of his powerful new patron, and the vampire who had tried to kill him lay dead. Although Reginald did not realize it at the time, he had endured the first stage of a blood bond, and from that moment on he would remain indebted. His master was overwhelmed by remorse for carelessly violating the Sixth Tradition. Certain of retribution from the prince's hounds, he fled the city.

Without the education or instruction critical to one of the Victorian Kindred, Reginald was at a distinct disadvantage. Favoring the intellectual gatherings of his clan, he sharpened his skills at debate, engaging in discussions with "contemporaries" who had learned their Latin and Greek centuries before — and in some rare instances, in eras when such languages were the vernacular. By attaining respect in the clan for his intellect, not his fists, he seemed a natural candidate for clan politics. His lack of training in Kindred etiquette mattered not one jot in the gatherings of Clan Brujah. A clever tongue and judicious use of Presence allowed him to ascend to a representative position in London itself, where he eventually became the city's Brujah primogen. Reginald felt as



though he had finally attained the respect he deserved. The city's Rabble, on the other hand, were glad to find someone eager to fill a position no one else wanted.

An ardent idealist, Reginald still believes in the concept of democracy. As part of this, he insists that the primogen of a clan must act as a representative of its local Kindred. His respect for classical schooling has given him respect for tradition, as well as those who preserve it. His political position is one others rarely envy. Few would emulate his approach to its duties, for it requires him to make compromises with those in power. The role of a Brujah primogen in a city claimed by a Ventre Methuselah is not an easy one. His ambition has made him appear at times as a social climber, one who would try to rise above his lowly status as a member of the Rabble. Some of London's Kindred think he considers himself too good to be Brujah, while many of London's Nobles consider him far beneath the Ventre. Reginald's ambition has earned him nominal status within the Camarilla, but he has gained it at the cost of respect from his peers.

Image: Reginald pays lip service to social change, yet he knows that he will never achieve it by antagonizing the city's Ventre. From his very appearance, he tries to play the role of a businessman or gentleman, but he does it badly. His clothes approximate current fashion among the Victorian Nobles, but his lack of funds results in a small wardrobe of ill-fitting suits. Mr. Moore is handsome in a rugged way, with curly dark hair, pale skin, steel-gray eyes, and a trace of a beard. He is perpetually rough around the edges — both physically and socially — and always will be. When dealing with other Brujah, he attempts to relax and appear more casual, but even among his own kind he is uncomfortable, just as they are typically uncomfortable with him.

Roleplaying Hints: Be respectful to your superiors, but never obsequious. Impress others with your intellect while attempting to remember proper etiquette. You don't relent easily, but you are still respectful of authority. You could never cultivate the affectations of an ancient Ventre, so speak plainly when you must. Your attempts at social graces barely serve you at social functions, but if you fail in your attempts, you must answer to the other Brujah of London.

Clan: Ventre

Sire: Donal

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1840

Apparent Age: early 20s



Reginald Moore

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 1, Expression 3, Intimidate 3, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Ride 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Linguistics (Classical Latin and Greek) 2, Politics 4, Science 1

Disciplines: Fortitude 1, Presence 5

Backgrounds: Resources 2, Retainers 1, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 1

Morality: Humanity 8

Willpower: 6

Note: Reginald knows that the vampire who saved him and instructed him was Brujah. He has never been told, however, that the Kindred who Embraced him belonged to another clan. His Brujah "sire" had interrupted a feeding gone wrong, one perpetrated by a careless Ventre.

During a casual feeding, a blood-starved Noble named Donal lost control, almost killing his vessel. To cover his indiscretion, he offered up his own blood, hoping to create a ghoul. From an impulse of the perverse, he then decided to hurriedly Embrace his victim. Unfortunately, one of Donal's rivals, an elder Brujah, was stalking close

behind him. The Brujah was outraged that Donal could so casually curse another with undeath to cover up his own mistake. By the time the Brujah's frenzy had passed, Donal had met with Final Death. Reginald's defender did his best to cover up this misadventure, even going so far as to claim Mr. Moore as his own childe.

Since Reginald never intended to become a combative Brujah, he never learned the arts of Celerity or Potence — which would have been difficult for him because of his lineage. Both Brujah and Ventru command Presence, however. Thus, he has focused almost exclusively on that clan Discipline. Thorough investigation would reveal Reginald's true lineage, as would a simple act of Thaumaturgy (more precisely, A Taste for Blood). The scandal would destroy him, however, and humiliate the clan he has spent so long defending, should someone discover this secret. This leaves him in an excellent position for blackmail or manipulation. Just to be safe, Reginald's "sire" has instilled in him an absolute terror of Thaumaturgy, which manifests as a hatred and distrust of all Tremere.

Don Cerro, Camarilla Dignitary and Scholar

Background: Don Cerro believes in the Camarilla with a passion few would understand. He fervently believes that freedom from the constant fear that conflict creates is the surest route to progress for a society, be it mortal or Kindred. The Camarilla is the best hope for vampires, he reasons, and some people need to be prepared to fight to protect it so that others are left free to help it grow. He has spent the last three centuries of his existence doing just that, and is now grooming promising neonates to fill that role alongside him.

Don Cerro was born, grew up and fought among the minor nobility of northern Spain, surrounded by the religious tension of the 15th century. He was adept at hunting and fighting, as his father wished, and gave little of his time to study. Instead, he took advantage of his position to dispense justice as he saw fit among the common people. Years of religious warfare and constant fighting had made them a fractious, rebellious lot, given to using violence as the first solution for everything. Cerro reasoned that he could bring a measure of peace to their lives by making them more afraid of him and his anger than of each other. He was right, and over the course of the next five years he brought a measure of peace to his father's lands.

One night, while riding home from a hunt, he disappeared. An elder Brujah known as Helissente took Don Cerro from his horse without apparent effort. She then challenged him to fight her. She had watched the young noble for months, drawn by his passion for bring-

ing order to people's lives and curious as to his motivation. Was he merely sadistic, or did he genuinely believe in what he was doing? Within minutes of Don Cerro's acceptance of the challenge it became obvious both that he would lose and that she was merely toying with him. He then tried to talk her around. By doing so, he passed her test and entered the ranks of the unliving.

For the first century of his new existence, Cerro found himself subjected to a rigorous training regimen that developed his physical prowess far beyond anything that he could have expected. Equally, though, his sire focused on training the Spaniard's mind, teaching him about the history of Europe's mortals and Kindred, and teaching him to see that the brief flashes of conflict were part of patterns of struggle that played out over decades and centuries.

In the early 16th century, Helissente declared that Don Cerro was now ready to face the world alone. She told him to meet a contact of hers in Madrid, who would help him find suitable passage to the Americas. He has not seen his sire since.

Cerro spent a little while on the American West coast. Clashes between the Sabbat and the Camarilla there slowly angered him. He approved of the progress the Camarilla stood for, and the more of the Sabbat he saw, the more he grew to hate their anarchy. It reminded him too much of the excesses of medieval Europe. He took it upon himself to train neonates whose sires had been destroyed in those conflicts, so that they would have both the physical and mental skills needed to take revenge should they wish to do so. This, he reasoned, would turn the young Kindred into useful weapons for the Camarilla.

Don Cerro relished unleashing his passion and anger in face-to-face confrontations with the Sabbat. It soon became a running joke among the American Camarilla that the surest sign that the Sabbat were on the way was Don Cerro's arrival with his protégés in the city. Still, few princes turned him away, for their domains were usually safer when he left at next to no cost to the city's native Kindred population. As a result, powerful Kindred all over America, and even some in Europe, owe Don Cerro more than a few estimable boons.

By the beginning of the 19th century Don Cerro was acknowledged as one of the Camarilla's leading figures. However, he grew distracted by the first stirrings of the desire to Embrace a childe of his own, to train as his sire had trained him. His curiosity was aroused by a series of wanted posters he found in the Deep South. Eventually, he tracked down the man in question, one Theophilus, and observed him for over a year. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that the man would make the prefect

childe: He had a passion for his cause, and the brains to approach it calmly and sensibly.

The relationship was everything Cerro could have hoped for. Once Theo had worked the desire for revenge on the man who had kept him as a slave out of his system, he proved an apt pupil and learned quickly: faster than Cerro himself had, in fact. In the aftermath of the American Civil War, an educational experience in its own right, he decided that it was time that Theo experienced the Camarilla at its best and worst — and that meant going home.

It has been years since Cerro traveled widely in Europe. While his main objective remains Bell's education, he also finds the experience quietly fascinating on a personal level. The growing conflict between the sect and Mithras fascinates him, and he is keen to see how it develops. He has no intention of actually getting involved, unless outright conflict within the Camarilla seems inevitable. If that happens, he will move to prevent that happening.

Image: Don Cerro is a tall, thin figure, draped in carefully tailored but restrained suits. He rarely goes without his cane while in London, but tends to affect different mannerisms in each city he visits, to see if people respond differently to him as a result. This experiment has been running for two hundred years now. Cerro has a slightly hooked nose and bushy eyebrows over deep-set eyes. Many people, both mortal and Kindred, find his presence disquieting because he always appears to be watching and appraising them. Underneath his civilized demeanor, the mind of a warrior is clearly at work.

Roleplaying Hints: You are quiet, calm and dignified in social situations, and flamboyantly joyful in combat. You know that you and your protégé are the center of attention wherever you go, but that doesn't matter. As long as he is educated properly and comes to understand all that is good and bad about the Camarilla and why he should fight to protect it, that is of little consequence. Pretend to be utterly disinterested in current events in London, but drink in every detail nonetheless. You have no real desire to be any more involved than you have to be: Your agenda is bigger than this city.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Helissente

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1428

Apparent Age: early 40s



Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Ride 4, Etiquette 5, Firearms 4, Melee 5, Performance 2, Stealth 5, Survival 4

Knowledges: Academics 4, Finance 2, Investigation 4, Law 4, Linguistics 3, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 5, Science 3

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 5, Dominate 3, Fortitude 5, Potence 5, Presence 3, Protean 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 4, Influence 2, Resources 3, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 8

Theo Bell, Neonate and Protégé

Background: Theo Bell is a curiosity in the Victorian era, a black vampire of good standing, traveling with a notable European Kindred. He has been the center of attention at Elysiums all over Europe. Now he is in London, garnering the same attention here, though it has been moderated by the chaos brought on by Mithras's

return. Bell can hardly believe that he, a slave from Mississippi, is here, at the seat of empire. He can also hardly believe quite how much he hates it.

For the young Theophilus, all white people did was order you to work, whip you, separate you from your family and rape your sisters. No wonder that he grew up with a burning hatred of them in his heart. Once his mother died, he managed to escape the Bell plantation and become part of the Underground Railway, operating out of Ohio. A number of successful raids into the South to rescue other prisoners were so successful that a good likeness of him appeared on wanted posters throughout Dixie.

One night, it all went wrong. Theo was wounded, and chased from the estate by dogs. When he paused in his flight for a drink from a stream, he was caught, but not by the mortals and their dogs. The stranger bested Theo easily. He informed Theo that his name was Don Cerro, and that he'd been following the runaway's exploits for over a year now. Cerro offered Theo a new existence, one where he had the strength to take revenge for the wrongs done him and his family. Theo accepted.

Theo proved a quick study in the ways of the Kindred, and within a year, Cerro granted him leave to revisit his old plantation. Theo tracked down his old master easily, and in a red haze whipped old Mr. Bell to

death and drove himself into a frenzy. When he recovered the estate was ablaze, and dozens of people, black and white, lay dead. To his horror, he realized that his own family was among them. Rather than forget his past, he took his old master's surname as a constant reminder of life under the yoke of slavery.

Bell spent the Civil War years training as a warrior and scholar under Cerro, and practicing his skills by freeing slaves and destroying Confederate supply depots. By the end of the war, Cerro deemed that the time had come for Bell to see a little more of the world, and the pair traveled to Europe.

Bell's experience on the continent has not been good so far. The endless procession of white faces at interminable balls is not to his taste at all. There is something about the European Camarilla's attitude that reminds Bell of his master and others like him. He was delighted to leave Paris, because he found the decadence of the Kindred there nearly unbearable. London, however, is more interesting. While it is, on the surface, much like the other cities of Europe, Bell detects an undercurrent to the city, an edge to its politics that show a viciousness in the fight for survival and power that he had not expected. While Cerro has warned him against becoming involved in the current situation, Rory McAndrew has approached him about resolving a few problems for him in a way that requires a certain directness that is not his style. Bell has been more than happy to oblige.

Image: Bell is tall, dark, handsome and black, and thus an irresistible curiosity to the Kindred of London. He wears a neatly trimmed beard and moustache. His back and shoulders are scarred from his slave days; he takes care to conceal this, though he has been forced to show off his scars a few times at his sire's insistence. Don Cerro has also insisted that Bell dress in the modern fashions of London, which he finds not at all to his taste. He enjoys taking on little "jobs" for McAndrew because it allows him to wear rougher clothes and mix with London's cosmopolitan poor for a little while.

Roleplaying Hints: You are polite, diffident, but curious and eager to learn. You show respect to your elders and know your place. Oh, and you're hating every second of it. The decadence of the European Camarilla disgusts you, as it's far too close to the behavior of your old master. However, you still love Cerro like a father, and assume that he must have some good purpose in putting you through all this. You've seen the Sabbat, and know that the Camarilla is the better option, but you're beginning to wonder if Cerro is seeking to change that opinion.



Theo Bell

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Don Cerro

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1857

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Streetwise 3

Skills: Etiquette 2, Melee 4, Performance 2, Stealth 4, Survival 4

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Law 1, Linguistics 1, Occult 1, Politics 3

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Potence 2

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 3, Mentor 4, Resources 2, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 8

Willpower: 6

Paul Bedwell,
Agent of the Prince of Manchester

Background: Liverpool's docks are among the busiest in Europe. Trade across the Atlantic and to other parts of the world brings the city great wealth, and Paul Bedwell was happy earning a small piece of it for himself, doing what little he could to better the conditions of the workers. As a foreman at the Albert Dock and a union activist, he did his level best to maintain a friendly relationship with management, rather than falling into the traditional adversarial relationship.

Paul's father drummed the idea of a fair day's work for a fair wage into him as a child, prior to his death from consumption. Bedwell walked out of a succession of jobs, much to his mother's despair, until he found one where the management didn't seem to be quite as exploitative as the rest. Once he'd settled in, he tried to make sure things stayed that way.

A skilled negotiator and a reasonably astute politician, Paul was able to keep worker/management relations running smoothly. So smoothly, in fact, that he came to the attention of one of the minority investors in the docks, who paid him a visit late one night.

The next morning the dock management received a note informing them that Mr. Bedwell was now in the employ of Mr. Therwell, and would be unable to con-



Paul Bedwell

tinue in his current role. That evening, Bedwell started learning about the world of the Kindred, a process he's not entirely convinced is going the way he would like. His sire always treated interaction with other vampires as something that could happen later. For now, he was to concentrate on helping develop his influence over the local shipping industry.

After only five years advising his sire on the developing international trade, Bedwell and his coterie, made up of young Kindred from Liverpool, most of whom had had some connection with the docks before their Embrace, received a summons from the Prince of Manchester. In a private meeting, the prince informed them that they were leaving for London the following evening, and would be staying there for the foreseeable future. Their job was to sow unrest and dissension in the ranks of London's Kindred as best they could, by carrying out the wishes of the prince's childe, who was already in the capital. Bedwell was to be the public face, seeking admission to the city via Stephen Lenoir, whose penchant for looking after newcomers to the city was well known to Prince Shawlands. The others were to stay hidden, and act against the holdings of London Kindred as and when Bedwell directed them.

Within a week, Bedwell was ensconced in London, and desperately trying to find some handle on the swirl-

ing currents of local politics. Bedwell and Shawlands' childe, Janet Latimer, are careful to avoid one another as much as possible. Bedwell plays the part of a neonate seeking to find a niche for himself in the rapidly expanding city well, but not *too* well, to completely avoid suspicion from London's Kindred, including Halesworth and Lenoir. Latimer and Bedwell now communicate mainly through Lorna Dingwall, the Scots hostage, and Bedwell goes out of his way to make sure that he meets members of his coterie only while well away from other Kindreds' havens or hunting grounds.

Image: Bedwell is a heavy-set man of average height. He dresses in respectable working man's clothes and is rarely seen without his cap. Although he doesn't realize it, he very rarely looks anyone in the eyes, unless he's in deep debate with them, and even then he only does it occasionally. This has the effect of making him seem much less confrontational, despite the strength of his views.

Roleplaying Hints: You know perfectly well that you're out of your depth and are probably regarded as disposable by your prince. However, you've been putting on a mask of confidence since your days as a dock foreman negotiating with management, and you have no intention of letting that mask slip now. You're friendly to everyone you meet, if unwilling to give away much about yourself. You're a damn good listener and are using that to your advantage. While you're still following Latimer's orders, you're growing more and more uncomfortable about some of them. Attacks on docks and other places where ordinary men work ill suit you and your temperament, not to mention your political inclinations. You can't help feeling that it's only a matter of time before that bastard Halesworth catches up with your coterie and discovers your true reasons for being in London. You suspect that Latimer feels the same way and have considered broaching the subject with her, but the risks involved if you're wrong have stopped you from doing so. As an alternative, you cultivate a relationship with Dingwall, in the hope that Edinburgh might prove an alternative route of escape.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Robert Therwell

Nature: Caregiver

Demeanor: Martyr

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1872

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Leadership 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Crafts 4, Etiquette 1, Performance 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Finance 1, Investigation 1, Law 1, Politics 2, Science 1

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Potence 3, Presence 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 1, Influence 1

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 5

Herbert Westin, Anarchist Infiltrator

Background: Born in Ireland in the early 19th century to English parents, Herbert Westin learned contempt for authority as early as his stern disciplinarian of a father could punish him. As a fervent supporter of British rule in Ireland, Herbert's father had little tolerance for a son who seemed to sympathize with the plight of his impoverished neighbors. When Herbert was 20, his village was decimated by a severe famine. He was horrified to witness his father's callous indifference to so much human suffering. After a heated altercation came to blows, Herbert gave his father a solid thrashing, an outburst resulting in his rapid exodus to Britain.

Young Mr. Westin later had ambitions to take up arms against what he considered an oppressive government. He even pursued a brief career as a gun smuggler for a wealthy group of freedom fighters in the mid-19th century. His fervor earned the attention of a devil-may-care anarchist, who made Westin a ghoul and employed him as his personal armorer. When Westin discovered the truth behind the monster he was aiding, he demanded the full power of his master's Blood. Mere Potence and Fortitude weren't enough for him. Another outburst ensued, culminating in gunfire. The anarchist gleefully battered his errant ghoul into submission, but knowing a useful weapon when he saw it, Westin's sire Embraced the violent childe. After several nights of torture, he bound the fledgling's loyalty in blood, and Westin's social conditioning resumed.

The next few years were spent indoctrinating Westin in the ways of the Kindred, from the flaws of their status-seeking society to the extent to which they had manipulated the political movements of Britain for their own benefit. The ardor of a blood bond led Westin to believe his sire's elaborate conspiracy theories of how the Kindred had shaped all of British history, including the formation of a mortal government he claimed was almost as oppressive as the Camarilla itself.

With the help of other anarchists in his cell, he then conditioned Westin to serve as an agent of chaos in the

midst of London's largest city. A pack of anarch Nosferatu instructed him in the fundamentals of Obfuscation, then tested him on a hunt through London's Aethenium. His conditioning was even crueler. As the result of an abusive joke, Westin doesn't even remember his sire's name. He thinks of him only as "Thursday" — the day when he was allegedly set free. Westin's independence was purely illusory, however, for his brainwashing was as extensive as his indoctrination.

London's Brujah paid little mind to this pensive gun-runner from Ireland. His ability to smuggle firearms of all calibers and capabilities into a city where the police were armed with truncheons quieted any objections to his presence. Cautious to never overtly indulge in violence himself, he helped expand the personal collections of highly esteemed Kindred. Yet in most cases, his clients never actually deigned to use the firearms he provided. Trade in holdout derringers as last-ditch defenses soared, but because of the obvious advantages of vampiric Disciplines over pistols, Herbert's actions did little to stir the oppressed to action. Many ghouls, on the other hand, learned to ask for him by name when requesting incendiary assistance.

Believing he acted of his own free will, Westin traveled to the New World to witness alleged "innovations" in America's government. He abruptly arrived in New York after a brief correspondence with the city's Brujah primogen. As one of the largest cities in the world, Victorian Gotham stood divided. Its weak and fearful Camarilla "prince" could do little to stop the rampages of the Victorian Sabbat, who were, in fact, the dominant sect there. Accordingly, Westin ignored his introduction to the Prince of New York for a full week. His callous disregard for proper social introductions was taken poorly by the other primogen, but the prince could do little about it.

While Sabbat spies observed intrigues among the city's Kindred, Westin began scouting the Sabbat's activities. He returned to sell information — and firearms — to the beleaguered Kindred population of Victorian Gotham. To ensure a balance of power, he then assumed a false persona and sold incendiary ordnance to the other side. For a full month, hostilities flared, and the city's vampiric population was briefly reduced. The social gatherings of Gotham's Kindred did little to impress Mr. Westin. The situation with New York's Sabbat merely amused him. But business, it would appear, was very, very good.

While in New York, Westin also had the good fortune to observe the political turmoil of the city's mortals. He was astounded by what he saw. Throughout the Victorian age, mortals redefined and strengthened

the anarchist movement in the United States. Nearly every day, men and women organized meetings with passionate rhetoric extolling the merits of anarchism. Visionaries condemned all governments as tools of oppression, and blasted the societies that upheld their corrupt and unsanctioned rule through the threat of violence. Yet somehow, mere rhetoric seemed inadequate to him. Rabble-rousers knew how to fire up a crowd, but beyond immediate and ill-conceived acts of violence, they did not seem to effect social change. Westin was inspired to not only take violent action to rouse the Kindred from their lethargy, but also to stir the mortal populace to outrage and action.

Leaving chaos in his wake, he returned to London, where he ranted about the carnage in New York. He immediately became a vocal advocate for hunting and destroying Sabbat spies, a position Valerius would not dare question. The death of a network of Brujah *antitribu* agitators then solidified his status in the city. Valerius never realized that Westin's actions were really an attempt to appropriate the resources of this rival terrorist group. For several months, his alliance then shifted to the blood cult of Nosferatu that trained him in misdirection and subterfuge. Their network supplied him with information on political dissent in exchange for explosives. For these missions, he learned many of the finer



points of their Discipline of stealth, developing a "thousand faces" for his mask of deception.

Thus began Westin's lengthy, if peripatetic, career as an enemy of the state. Wearing any face, he could infiltrate almost any mortal assembly. No one gathering of revolutionaries, whether political or apolitical, could satisfy the rage within him. In the years that followed, Westin dabbled with Marxism (reading *Das Kapital* in its original German), socialism (acting as a "guardian angel" over many Fabian Society meetings), and even enjoyed a brief stint as a Dynamiter (supplying explosives to various terrorist groups). Each time, he has assumed a different persona, hiding behind the hardworking and patriotic image that ensured his anonymity among the Damned.

Herbert Westin is now a spy awaiting activation, a time bomb waiting to go off. His travels to New York allowed him to make contact with his master's hidden allies. His sire, "Thursday," has made some strange alliances, including a *kumpania* of Ravnos and a conspiracy consisting of a dozen Nosferatu. Some of these confederates lurk in the Camarilla, some scheme in the Sabbat, and all of them wait for one event that will strike at the heart of both societies. Westin will light the fuse, but his sire's organization, the Morlock Society, will guide his hand.

Image: Herbert remains nondescript, for obvious reasons. He prefers workman's clothes, often sporting boots and a long coat of some kind; he can discard these outer clothes quite easily when they are soiled with the blood of a victim. Each persona he develops through Obfuscate is equally indistinguishable, for he is a master of faceless anonymity. While using the Mask of a Thousand Faces, his favorite alternate persona sports dark spectacles and wears a high collar to obscure the lower half of his face. The only inheritance he has kept from his brutish father is his sandy hair, firm chin, and broken nose.

Roleplaying Hints: By steadily mastering his sense of self-control, Herbert Westin has gained a reputation as a quiet professional. He has learned to hide his rage well. Any one façade frustrates him if he must maintain it for long. When he can no longer contain his impatience, he indulges in violent, predatory feedings miles away from London. He is thorough enough to conceal all evidence of such indiscretions. Westin quickly supports any revolutionary movement that can act as conduit for the rage of the Beast within him. He rationalizes each "change of conscience" in intellectual terms.

When dealing with the acceptable society of the Kindred, he plays the role of a working-class Brujah. He finds it all too easy to take on some of his father's

characteristics, including a harsh attitude toward miscreants, a habit of speaking directly and vocally when upset, and the caution to act with stoicism around those who can destroy him. This often gives the impression that he fully supports the status quo, offering him the opportunity to silently undermine it. What he cannot overtly achieve through words, he covertly attains through firearms, sabotage and nitroglycerin.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: "Smiling" Jack Drake

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1850

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3

Skills: Demolitions 4, Firearms 4, Performance (anonymity) 4, Security 3, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Politics (anarchism) 5, Science (chemistry) 3

Disciplines: Obfuscate 4, Potence 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Mentor 3, Resources 2, Retainers 3

Virtues: Conscience 3, Courage 3, Self-Control 4

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 5

Followers of SET

Halim Bey, Scholarly Heretic

Background: As a dealer in antiquities, Halim Bey had an interest in the obscure. When he was a very young child, he had come to believe the tales of Scheherazade were true. Although he never really expected to find the lamp of Aladdin, he found Egypt's artifacts almost as romantic. Perhaps, then, he was in the right frame of mind when he found the Scroll of Nephren-Ka, an Egyptian artifact of mythic significance. He celebrated

his achievement by reading it aloud, savoring the rich language of ritual. Intoxicated by the mere thought of the power it promised, he went through the motions of performing the ceremony it described. The results he achieved were sobering.

Halim intoned the sacred words and gesticulated as though an outside force compelled him. At the ritual's conclusion, his skin wept copious amounts of blood. At the moment he collapsed, he finally realized the magic it promised was real. When he awakened, drained and weakened, a silent servitor stood watch over his prone body. The artifact had rewarded him with power over Nephren-Ka, an ancient mummy from a bygone age. Yet the power held a curse: a sacrifice in blood for each year he held the Amenti enthralled. The next morning, he read in the *London Times* of three men who had been brutally slain within a mile of his home.

A bloody ritual had bound the immortal servant to the will of the ritualist. Other occultists had pursued such power; tracking the artifact through mystic means, they found Halim instead. These madmen, knowing an opportunity when they saw it, abducted the poor fool who had summoned Nephren-Ka. As they transported their prisoner's body down the Thames, the high priest of their Setite cult quickly and brutally Embraced him.

For three nights, the Setite cultists fled the vengeance of Halim's guardian. Sirian, their high priest, forced their captive into a blood bond as quickly as he could. Halim was kept imprisoned in complete darkness for a week. When he emerged from hisoubliette, he still commanded the mummy, but Sirian held power over him. The antiquarian's innocence was gradually replaced by guile, if only to ensure his own survival. The Setite cultists swiftly returned to their temple in Alexandria. Faithfully, the mummy summoned by Halim followed, leaving death in his wake.

Despite the horror of this experience, Halim was astounded to see the wealth of Egyptian lore they had amassed. Their collection of artifacts impressed him even more, especially once he learned that several of them had been created by Assamite Sorcery. At first hesitant, he eventually found the idea of Set's actual existence to be a romantic one. Now that he knew that magic was real, he quickly adapted to the rituals of the cult. In darkness, dreams of great wealth and power took form.

By the early 1880s, foreigners had taken a particular interest in the artifacts Halim knew so well. The activities of a British archaeologist named Petrie began a veritable craze in the new science of Egyptology. When outsiders began to steal the treasures of Egypt, and even the artifacts dedicated to Set, Halim was outraged. He re-



peatedly summoned Nephren-Ka as the instrument of his vengeance, unintentionally adding to the mystery of Egypt when those same tomb raiders died horribly.

Halim Bey had spent most of his mortal life in Alexandria. When the British Empire decimated the city in 1882, slaughtering thousands of Egyptian citizens, his hatred of the empire became a frenzied rage. Yet his years of indoctrination among the Setites taught him that if he was to exact revenge, it was a task that should be pursued slowly and carefully. He savored the opportunity, especially when it meant he might recover more of Egypt's treasures from the musty hallways of British museums.

By that time, cults of Setites had made several brief forays into London. None succeeded as well as Halim Bey's enterprise. Masquerading as a dealer in Middle Eastern commodities, his years of business experience and impeccable English served him well. Halim Bey never needed to stain his hands with the blood of others — with an immortal minion at his command, he did not need to worry about performing such unpleasant tasks himself. When Set and the Pharaohs must be avenged, Nephren-Ka kills.

Halim needs an Anglo face for many of his negotiations, and thus retains many mortals as intermediaries.

The thought of Embracing British men and women as Setites amuses him in a perverse fashion, though it is a risk to his carefully assembled organization. Nonetheless, he has done it on three occasions. One poses as a London Ventre. The second watches over some of the more disreputable clubs visited by Cyril Masters of Clan Ventre. The third is a beautiful English lady who has mastered the culture and arts of Egypt. His childer now serve as the high priests of three Setite temples in London. He takes pride in their accomplishments, but if any one of them strays, their indiscretions could be traced back to him.

The thousand-year-old *kher-minu* mummy Halim commands has also ensured his continued authority. This servant's soul has an abundance of *ka* energy, making him a useful guardian for the sites of the Setite temples in London. However, across the years, the monster has become more difficult to control. Nephren-Ka has killed over thirty people, and Halim demanded the destruction of only ten of them. He has increased his blood sacrifices, but this has only added to the carnage resulting from his curse. Halim and his Setite cult are oblivious to a certain spiritual corruption that has set into the creature's soul. As such, Halim's most powerful weapon has become a sword of Damocles. It hangs over his head, threatening his own destruction.

Image: Halim could pass for an Egyptian Ventre if necessary, but he would secretly find the subterfuge too distasteful. Instead, he passes himself off as a mortal dealer in Egyptian commodities and antiquities. He deals with legal trade between Britain and Egypt, and thus maintains appearances as a Victorian businessman. His business suit and impeccable manners serve him admirably in such transactions, though his swarthy skin, kohl-dark eyes, and thinning jet-black hair all mark him as a foreigner, a handicap when dealing with the exclusive elements of London's business society.

Roleplaying Hints: The empire has been a plague on Egypt. Like the Victorian mortals of Britain, London's Kindred believe that their civilizing influence is reforming the rest of the world. Yet Set's ways are far older than their young society, for Set is even older than Caine. You are powerful and self-assured, emulating the etiquette of a gentleman while harboring a hatred for the Camarilla. Be very formal when dealing with matters outside your cult. Be utterly ruthless and remain unchallenged when acting within it.

Clan: Followers of Set

Sire: Sirian

Nature: Traditionalist

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1880

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 2, Ride 2, Security 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Linguistics 2, Occult 4

Disciplines: Dominate 5, Serpentis 3, Thaumaturgy (Setite Sorcery) 3

Sorcerous Paths: Path of the Dry Nile 3

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Resources 4, Retainer 5

Virtues: Conviction 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

Morality: Path of Typhon 5

Willpower: 6

GANGREL

General Sir Arthur Halesworth, the Sheriff

Background: Arthur Halesworth was the second son of a minor aristocratic family in rural Suffolk. Faced with little chance of inheriting the family estate, he joined the army to serve queen and country overseas. After a spell as a captain in Africa, he rapidly rose through the ranks, eventually reaching the rank of general, and earning knighthood for his efforts in helping suppress uprisings in India.

The general bought a small property on the edge of Blackheath in South East London for his occasional visits back to England. Most of the time, however, he spent in India. He and small groups of fellow officers would enjoy their leave exploring the country that they had helped pacify, climbing its mountains and exploring its wilder regions. At times, he considered asking his father for a greater stipend so he could quit the army and become an explorer for a while. However, his pride prevented him from doing so and he instead chose to save more of his pay to that end.

Halesworth never had the chance to fulfill that dream. One night, while walking on Blackheath and debating whether to accept a posting back to Africa, he had the distinct impression that he was being followed. He made briskly back for Blackheath Village, hoping to

force his pursuer to reveal himself. That's the last memory he has of his mortal life.

Halesworth recovered his wits deep in the Suffolk countryside, drinking a drunken farmhand dry. His initial nights were hard. He had been a man of discipline and control, and now each night he struggled with a monster inside him that demanded blood. His survival instincts were strong, though, and he slowly began to adapt to unlife as a vampire. For over three years he roamed the wilds of Suffolk, preying on the unwary and trying to reassert his old military discipline in himself. Finally he succeeded, and shortly afterward his sire, Haedde, returned and took him back to London. She explained that she had seen in Halesworth a combination of the discipline and etiquette needed to survive in the city coupled with a love of the wilderness and ability to flourish there that would make him an ideal Gangrel voice in London's political structure. After a short period of tutoring him in the ways of Camarilla society, Halesworth's sire introduced him to the Kindred of the city and left him with instructions to do his best to make London's vampire society what he would wish it to be.

As the childe of an elder Gangrel who rarely spent any time in London, Halesworth was treated with a surprising amount of respect for one so newly Embraced. He took to the politics of the London Camarilla easily, finding it quite reminiscent of the officer's club in India. When he wasn't building his position, he would explore the city in a way he had never bothered to when still breathing. Seeing the slums and clubs of the city through the eyes of an animal was just as rewarding as exploring the wilds of India. Over the next few years, he came to appreciate just how much the laws of tooth and claw held sway even in the underbelly of this, the greatest city of the world.

On Mithras's return, the previous sheriff of the city quit, partially out of loyalty to Valerius and partially out of a sense of self-preservation, and left London to visit her sire. Mithras asked Anne which of London's Kindred knew the city best, and she didn't hesitate before recommending Halesworth. Halesworth surprised them both by suggesting that London was now too big to be adequately covered by a single sheriff, and he made the appointment of a second sheriff a condition of his acceptance. It was granted.

In the few years since, Halesworth has brought to his duties as sheriff a military precision and brutal efficiency that has made him an invaluable asset to Anne. He has an almost paternal interest in his junior sheriff Juliet Parr, leading some to suspect that he hides a regret that he never married or had children. After a year of working together, the two decided to split their responsibilities,



General Sir Arthur Halesworth

with Halesworth focusing on the rapidly expanding part of London south of the Thames, and Parr confining her work to areas north of the river.

Image: Halesworth is the very image of a modern general; strong, broad and upright with a full yet well-trimmed moustache and beard. His dress is never less than impeccable when he's in company. When he's on duty as Anne's sheriff, which is most of the time, he dresses in his military uniform. The rest of the time, especially if he's hunting or just walking the streets of the city he has come to love (finding it an adequate substitute for his passion for India's less civilized regions) he dresses in smart but discreet modern fashions or rough street clothes, depending on his mood.

Roleplaying Hints: Many Kindred new to London mistake you for a Ventrue, such is your insistence on proper etiquette and behavior. This is just the result of your time in the army, though. Underneath, you yearn to explore the streets, squares and parks of the city. You are never happier than when you are stalking your night's prey, be it mortal or errant Kindred, through the city.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Haedde

Nature: Thrill-Seeker

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1843

Apparent Age: late 40s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 1, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Ride 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 4, Melee 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Politics 3

Disciplines: Animalism 1, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 1, Protean 3,

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 3, Herd 2, Resources 2, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 6

Nathaniel Simmons, the Faithless Hound

Background: Nathaniel's distant memories of childhood feature many happy hours of hunting with his father. By the time he was 16, he could kill with a gun, knife or bow; track prey; dress game; and most importantly, enter and leave private land without being detected. His family was poor, after all. Since the hedge nobility that watched over the land felt no obligation toward the people who lived on it, Nathaniel felt no remorse over poaching to feed his family—none, that is, until the first time he was caught.

The year was 1682, but the traditions of the county were anachronistic. A seneschal watched over the lord's domain, protecting all the benefits of feudalism while ignoring its obligations. The scrawny young boy he had caught stealing game led him on a chase through forest and fen, culminating in a furious exchange of fisticuffs. Nathaniel was hauled before Lord Richard Grey, the petty and vindictive "laird of the land." The nobleman threatened to drive the boy's family off his land, a plot the boy's ancestors had tilled for generations. Grey's seneschal intervened, claiming that he could use a young man with skill at hunting. The young man did such an impressive job of proving his worth that even Lord Grey's master took notice.

Obfuscated from the common populace, an undead overlord named Vilmius had enthralled Lord Grey, binding him to his will. In fact, the haughty Gangrel had been making ghouls of certain lords of the land for over five centuries. The endurance of feudal traditions had been at

his behest. Every few decades, Vilmius would kill the old lord, then help the lord's heir ascend to take his place. The transition always coincided with some form of ritual or ceremony. In good times, the Gangrel overlord would hunt down his prey alone. In bad times, when Vilmius was filled with wrath, he would demand that the son hunt down his own father to prove his worth. The year Lord Richard Grey died required the latter ceremony.

Purely for sport, the land's Gangrel overlord created a pack of ghoul "hounds" to help harry the prey. Lord Richard's son responded by displaying the family's characteristic perfidy. Because he wouldn't perform the deed himself, he bribed Nathaniel to kill his father for him. Empowered with Potence, Nathaniel was swift, savage and inventive in his kill. When the Gangrel overlord found out, he appointed Nathaniel as the new seneschal. Richard's son ascended to take his father's place, but he was denied the Embrace. The new heir watched his seneschal carefully from then on. Enriched by Cainite vitae, the ghoul Nathaniel easily outlived the mortals who exploited him, including Lord Grey's son.

A century and a half later, an archon named Geoffrey Leigh uncovered the Gangrel's bloody rituals. Without alerting the Gangrel justicar, he moved in to dispatch the beast himself. In a desperate gambit, Vilmius set fire to the estate, then quickly Embraced Nathaniel, hoping a frenzied and frightened childe would distract the archon long enough to ensure his own escape. Raised in ignorance of the Camarilla, Nathaniel had no idea why the archon was there. While maintaining his self-control, Nathaniel confronted Geoffrey Leigh in the midst of a surging conflagration. The neonate refused to fight, instead betraying his infamous sire's plan of escape. Although the archon denied any claim Nathaniel had on the domain, the neonate Gangrel readily helped him track down and destroy his sire. From then on, Nathaniel was eager to prove his usefulness.

Thereafter, Nathaniel wandered from fief to fief, dabbling in Camarilla politics. Since hunting was all he knew, he eagerly responded to any rumor of a possible blood hunt. The sport of killing mortal prey no longer challenged him, but the justice of Lextalionis thrilled him. The blood hunts of that time had become an effective way of driving a troublemaker from a domain. When Nathaniel joined a blood hunt, however, the quarry always met with Final Death before dawn. After the first score of kills, princes began to ask for him specifically when rivals troubled them. His fame became such that his arrival in a city became a warning that another blood hunt would be at hand. By his thirtieth kill, he took to the practice of arriving in his destination secretly, without immediately announcing his presence.

to the prince. Although this was clearly a defiance of the Second Tradition, no one relished the thought of hunting this hunter. Few princes had the audacity to call a blood hunt against such an efficient killer.

After his fiftieth kill, Nathaniel Simmons took up residence in London, sitting at the right hand of the Methuselah Mithras, the Prince of London. Of course, a Methuselah prince has little reason to traffic in the night-to-night affairs of a city. When Mithras disappeared for months at a time, he left a Ventrue seneschal named Valerius in charge. A Gangrel sheriff kept the peace, but Nathaniel's presence ensured a constant threat that if a blood hunt was called, it would be a fatal punishment. Thus Nathaniel learned to weather endless nights as he did the days of his youth; in proving his usefulness to the lords of the land, he still kills to ensure his status and freedom.

Image: A hirsute mountain of a man, Simmons has become a trifle arrogant. He prides himself on his immaculate grooming, from his cultivated mutton-chop sideburns to his carefully combed and oiled hair. In other words, he's stylish, but only for a rustic Gangrel. His thick wool garments display meticulous patterns crafted by hand. Yet in the thrill of the hunt, he becomes unraveled, surging like a force of nature through the nocturnal streets of London. His eyes go wild, his hair becomes disheveled, and he evinces the mania of a madman, one who lives to kill the most dangerous game imaginable in London.

Roleplaying Hints: Mr. Simmons walks a fine line between civility and ferocity. He strains to maintain proper etiquette when dealing with his social superiors. Yet he also remains quite strained with other Gangrel, who either regard him as a legend or condemn him for attempting to be so cosmopolitan. He is impatient with subterfuge, usually preferring direct threats and confrontation. For the nonce, he supports the status quo, but seeing so many Gangrel treated as low-class citizens of Camarilla society grates on him. It is as though his years of work have done nothing to improve the sect's opinion of Gangrel, save as faithful watchdogs. The Gangrel sheriff seems to have no problem with this tradition; thus, Nathaniel secretly loathes him.

Mr. Simmons confronts those who question the seneschal's authority, but as his displeasure has grown, it has become a subterfuge for testing them. With the patience of a jungle cat on the prowl, he seeks the one candidate who seems likely to depose the prince. Unlike Herbert Westin, he does not simply join with any sudden radical movement. He will risk everything once he finds the one rival worthy of support. That one conspirator must clearly be stronger than he is. He has met with many



Nathaniel Simmons

Gangrel passing through London, but he has not yet found one who is strong enough or certain enough to aid his ambitions.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Vilmius

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1830

Apparent Age: mid-30s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 3

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Melee 2, Ride 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Law 2

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Potence 3, Protean 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Retainers 2, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 1, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 3

Willpower: 6

The Hunt Club

Attitudes toward blood hunts change drastically over the next century. The Gangrel find other ways to find status in society, and the sport of legally hunting other Kindred becomes a distasteful anachronism. Blood hunts eventually rely more on police dispatches and media campaigns than violent Gangrel. As such, only a few London Kindred manage to keep what they perceive as a highly cultured practice vital in the 21st century. The practice endures through England's illegal and unsanctioned "Hunt Clubs." Nathaniel Simmons' fame fades away by the Final Nights, but he secretly patronizes one of the most effective clubs. His packmates leave a single foxtail at the scene of their kills — and sometimes, in the havens of victims they plan to kill.

LASOMBRA

Stephen Lenoir, Aid to London's Lost

Background: Stephen Lenoir's arrival in London was not an auspicious one. Most vampires in the city mistrusted his clan, understandably once the news spread that a pack of Lasombra had diablerized their clan founder. When packs of young Lasombra busied themselves hunting down their elders who had not joined the Sabbat and destroying them, Stephen, not long to the Blood, suddenly found himself yanked up from his home in Abertawe by his sire and thrust into London unlif.

His sire, who went by the name of Timothy Leaver, embraced the young Welshman for his business skills, knowledge of the law and astute judgment of character. The neonate had just established himself in Abertawe's Kindred society when the diablerie of the Lasombra Antediluvian triggered the revolt of the clan's neonates. Leaver, moving quickly to protect his loyal childer and set up potential boltholes for himself, called in a major favor he was owed by Mithras himself, requesting the guarantee of safety for his childe in the prince's city. Mithras agreed readily. Leaver then left the city, telling Lenoir that he had to make sure his other childer were safe.

Lenoir found himself distrusted and shunned by London's Kindred. Few believed his claim to be *antitribu*, and most assumed that he was there as a Sabbat spy. Only Mithras's explicit protection of Lenoir prevented his destruction during those early nights. He learned to survive through a combination of humor — often forced — and by keeping himself out of the major affairs of the city, so no one thought him too much of a threat during the periods when Mithras was absent. He avoided Valerius with a particular care. The seneschal made no effort to conceal his distrust of Lenoir, and their mutual dislike persists to this night.

Over the course of decades, Lenoir eventually found a niche for himself as a guardian angel, of sorts, for young vampires who arrived in the city alone. In particular, he became known for his commitment to finding Sabbat refugees a place within the Camarilla, either in London or elsewhere — ostensibly in sympathy for their plight, so similar to his own. The truth, of course, was that he was well placed to spot infiltrators and spies. Each one he exposed won him a little more leeway in London. Slowly, he moved from a tolerated outcast to a useful member of Kindred society.

His new position became obvious to him in the mid-18th century, when a pack of Sabbat Lasombra entered the city with the sole purpose of destroying him. Nearly a dozen of London's vampires worked together to destroy the pack and protect Lenoir. The few other direct attempts on his existence in the intervening years have been dealt with just as efficiently.

For a while, Lenoir listened eagerly for word of his sire, but has abandoned that hope long ago. Lenoir knows perfectly well that the name he has for is sire is as blatantly false as his own, but it doesn't matter to him. If his sire still exists and wishes to make contact, he will do so. In the meantime, Lenoir's links with his clan are all but severed, and his loyalty is with the Camarilla and the prince who sheltered him.

The Lasombra *antitribu* steadily used his position of trust to build a network of contacts and ghouls and other pawns in and around London's docks and, later, railway stations. Indeed, he largely feeds from his acquaintances in the middle management of the docks. A few wise investments in the railway companies have boosted his wealth and influence significantly.

Despite those fiscal gains, the last ninety years have been difficult for Lenoir. Mithras's extended absence and Valerius's growing confidence in his position have led to Lenoir becoming slowly isolated once more. The Sabbat incursion only made matters worse, as the old suspicions returned. Lenoir was one of the first people Anne re-



Stephen Lenoir

cruited to aid her after Mithras returned, knowing that he had absolutely no loyalty to the deposed seneschal. Lenoir thoroughly enjoys his return to grace and is a familiar face in Elysium for the first time in over a century.

Image: Lenoir is a master of understated fashion: not showy, but not dowdy, either. He wears well-cut outfits in classical styles with the slightest nods to modern fashion. His entire dress sense seems to be tailored toward avoiding attention by being neither good enough nor poor enough to attract it.

Roleplaying Hints: You have a wide-ranging sense of humor, which would earn you trouble if you weren't so good at keeping it reined in. It does still lead to you being thought of as unreliable by the humorless, though. You have carefully avoided putting yourself on the firing line up until now, and you're not going to make trouble for yourself if you can possibly avoid it. Your aim is to protect your niche and those who come to the city as you did: confused and alone. After all, having a sizeable proportion of the young Kindred owing you a favor or two may just prove useful. Try to conceal anything of your origins, only confessing to being "Anglo-Norman" if pushed. It's a lie, but it seems to satisfy most people.

Clan: Lasmobra *antitribu*

Sire: Timothy Leaver (assumed name)

Nature: Pedagogue

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1503

Apparent Age: late 30s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Crafts 2, Ride 3, Etiquette 5, Firearms 2, Melee 4, Performance 2, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Academics 3, Finance 3, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 4, Occult 2, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Obtenebration 5, Potence 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Herd 3, Influence 2, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 6

mAALKAVIAN

Abraham Mellon, Demented Mentor

Background: The Renaissance brought a rebirth in many fields of scholarship, including the occult. As a Jew in Britain, Abraham Mellon failed to attract the patronage other scholars found. His dreary life consisted largely of long hours cataloguing books in the personal library of an indolent scholar. To reflect the whims of a would-be Renaissance man, the librarian was forced to continually shift the organization of tomes in the collection. Abraham's vocation was especially frustrating because he was more studious than his employer. A voracious appetite for learning allowed him to rapidly exhaust many of the conventional scholarly subjects of the age.

At liberty in one of the most educated cities in the Western world, Abraham gradually turned his attention to the occult. A mastery of Middle Eastern languages facilitated his studies in *gematria* and the Kabbalah. His eloquence in correspondence allowed him the chance to exchange his insights with other paragons of the age — including an esteemed associate known to work as an

agent of the queen herself. Dr. John Dee was impressed with Abraham's insights. He hinted that several august personages might be interested in acting as a patron for such an accomplished and promising visionary.

Yet Abraham had made more questionable associates as well; some of London's occult dabblers had stranger practices than he had yet seen. Abraham's perspicacity amused an Elizabethan magus conversant in a most unusual application of blood magic. This correspondent, known only as Primus Magister, wanted to patronize Abraham's scholarship, but could not be as convincing as Dee. The man's correspondence rambled in turgid prose, advancing arguments that seemed to have no basis in logic. To convince Abraham of his sincerity, he offered to show first-hand the thaumaturgical mastery he was capable of performing.

Abraham agreed to participate in one of the unknown magi's more elaborate rituals. At the consummation of the ill-fated and ill-considered ceremony, he balked at the idea of consuming blood. Magister Primus then decided to convert his guest to his deviant beliefs through force. The ceremonies that followed were hellish, for a Malkavian vampire had chosen Abraham for the Embrace. He had carefully contemplated the particulars of an elaborate ritual that would shatter the scholar's sanity. But at the height of the ceremony,

Abraham plunged a magical dagger into his sire's heart — leaving him insane and alone in the occult library of a paralyzed madman. Sacrificing him was all too easy, and the act of diablerie came to Abraham as if by instinct.

Cursed and alone, Abraham turned to Dr. Dee for help, but he could only hint at what had happened him. Dee soon considered Abraham insane, yet did his best to help his associate fathom the mysteries he had discovered. Upon various occasions, Abraham found deciphering the tomes of the library easier when he tried to consider them from Dee's point of view. In a revelation both shocking and liberating, he found that he could actually assume Dee's likeness through the use of his undead powers, impersonating him during some of his more unusual rituals. Although the thought of Embracing Dee was tempting, he knew that he could never condemn such a brilliant man to an unkind fate that promised centuries of torment. When Dee died, Abraham silently and subtly acquired the magi's personal library. Unaware of the resources other Kindred, most notably the Tremere, could place at his disposal, he developed a system of occult knowledge so circuitous and elaborate that few could decipher his writings.

Almost two centuries later, an incautious ritual of his own invention forced perturbations in the heavens over London. Through a bastardized version of Weather Control, he attracted the attention of London's Tremere. He was terrified to discover that other "Un-Dead" who sustained themselves on human blood had developed entire cabals devoted to blood magic. At first, Abraham preferred to affect an alternate identity when confronting them, attempting to intimidate the Tremere by actually claiming to be Dr. John Dee. The subterfuge backfired, summoning scions from Vienna to meet with such a luminary of the occult world. Abraham fled to Scotland, where he quickly and brutally suborned the owners of a highland castle to find a new haven. Consumed with paranoia, he began the practice of astrally projecting to the depths of Scottish lochs when performing his most elaborate rituals.

As the centuries passed, Abraham found more subtle ways of interacting with London's Tremere. The thought of others possessing rituals of Thaumaturgy fascinated him, but the power of the Viennese Tremere terrified him. Cautious correspondence through conditioned messengers allowed enough brief contact for him to make an introduction. When he learned of the Tradition of Domain, he appealed to Mithras himself, requesting enough amnesty to make proper introductions and visit London. The scion of the largest London chantry, Monsieur Pachard, was horrified to learn that the master of magic he encountered was not Tremere, yet he was



impressed enough to avoid challenging him. Instead, he dutifully reported the occurrence to Vienna.

By the mid-19th century, Abraham Mellon had made almost a dozen visits to London. After meeting the illustrious Malkavian primogen, Dr. Timothy, he obtained promises that the primogen would help defend him against any intrigues of the local Tremere. After all, a Malkavian with such an extensive command of Thaumaturgy would be a definite asset to the clan. Abraham took up a modest haven in London, and even began to study the various occult and spiritualist movements of this new age — along with their mortal practitioners.

In particular, the innovations of the Golden Dawn fascinated him, though he knew that if he attracted the interest of the actual founders, he would come into conflict with the Tremere. Obscured and unseen, he chose to observe some of the more peripheral members of the sect. On several occasions, he gained the distinct impression that some of them could actually see him through their sorcery. During one of his astral jaunts through London, he encountered a singularly promising mortal, one who later had the audacity to attempt to summon him.

Mellon's supreme triumph concerns this aspiring mortal magus. With a bit of prompting, the mortal scholar performed an elaborate ceremony beside a loch in Scotland to appease an astral essence named "Abra-Melin." In the corridors of Boleskine Manor, Abraham manifested before a magus named Aleister Crowley, then attempted to slowly twist him to his will. Although unsure how to proceed with such a visionary, he has resumed one of his old habits. When sequestered with his latest bibliographic acquisitions, he asks himself how Dee would perform the ritual — and sometimes, what Crowley would do. In moments of supreme frustration, he even assumes the guise of Aleister Crowley while attempting some of his more innovative rituals.

As the sun sets on Victorian London, the city still fascinates him. Abraham is far too solitary to traffic with anything as ephemeral as influence in the Camarilla. If the Tremere harass him, however, he may decide to contest a cabal of them for primacy in a chantry, especially the knowledge and power contained within it. He has already begun to scout Edward Bainbridge's haven astrally, easily overpowering its wards. He has even gone so far as to leave a trail of rambling tomes and letters to frustrate Tremere who try to track his activities. Some are attributed to Dee, Crowley and other occult luminaries, leading to wild speculations about their respective fates. These imitations are less than perfect, however. In every case, an occult scholar can eventually prove incon-

sistencies between Abraham's inventions and actual historical documents.

When Mellon tires of these diversions, he roams the astral plane. Eventually, he will face the same dilemma Blavatsky envisioned for the secret masters of the Golden Dawn. He aspires to become entirely astral, merging with infinity, yet his physical form and concerns within the mortal world trap him. To attain the infinite, he dreams of performing a ritual of surpassing brilliance — and widespread destruction. Bainbridge's chantry would make for a fitting sacrifice.

Image: When dealing with matters outside his sanctum sanctorum, Abraham usually prefers his astral form. Even then, he appears to have the vibrancy and power of a Renaissance magus. Flowing robes, long white hair, and a hoary beard complete the image. If he must walk about in the realm of mortals, he assumes the guise of a frail, old, scholarly man. An immaculately tailored suit fifty years out of a fashion, dusty spectacles, and a wicked wooden cane complete the image.

Roleplaying Hints: When deception works to your advantage, you are old and frail. It makes you appear more powerful when you condemn inferiors in your clear and resonant baritone voice. Latin is your preferred language, especially since you come from a time when university students would learn to speak it both inside and outside of their classrooms. By day, however, you dream in Hebrew. You cannot respect those who do not speak at least one of those languages fluently. Avoid direct confrontation whenever possible — that's what minions and protégés are meant for, a lesson you have learned from elders and Methuselahs alike. If you must confront your equals, do so on the astral plane. If they can't reach it, after all, they aren't your equals.

Like all Malkavians, Mellon is demented. His madness manifests as megalomania. After centuries of study, he considers himself superior to Dee or any other mortal magus. He has found even greater pleasure in assuming Crowley's guise. The thought of taking Aleister's role in the gatherings of the Golden Dawn does not interest him in the slightest, however, since he enjoys watching the secret societies' political rivalries from the outside entirely too much.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Dositheus (Magister Primus)

Nature: Loner

Demeanor: Pedagogue

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1583

Apparent Age: early 70s

Physical: Strength 1, Dexterity 1, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 4, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 5
Skills: Crafts 3, Stealth 2
Knowledges: Academics 5, Linguistics 5, Occult 5, Theology 5
Disciplines: Auspex 5, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 3, Protean 3, Thaumaturgy 5
Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Movement of the Mind 4, Hands of Destruction 3, Lure of Flames 3
Backgrounds: Resources 5
Virtues: Conviction 4, Instinct 3, Courage 4
Morality: Power and the Inner Voice 6
Willpower: 9

Doctor Timothy, Vigilant Paranoid

Background: Willum Timothy was baptized into darkness at the age of sixty. The Embrace was intended as a punishment for him, as he was a steadfast scientist with a skepticism of the supernatural, an obsession bordering on mania. At the height of the Renaissance, Timothy dabbled in a wide range of physical sciences, arrogantly asserting his mastery of many of them. His sire simply claimed him to prove a point: that the Kiss of a Malkavian would break him. It did, but Doctor Timothy has managed to meticulously piece himself together again. He fully expects other Kindred to display the same indomitable will. The doctor had found what he considered immortality, and resolved to employ it for the furtherance of scientific knowledge.

By the 19th century, the self-styled "Doctor" Timothy realized that he possessed an abundance of knowledge about the world around him, but little about the men and women who inhabited it. The burgeoning science of alienism fascinated him, for the human mind was a mystery he could not fully fathom. He resolved to do all he could to advance this new science, forsaking many of his studies in chemistry and physics to do so. Unfortunately, after centuries of stagnation, he lacked the imagination and creativity of a mortal genius. Much to the chagrin of the Kindred he helped, he desperately attempted to adapt the ideas of Freud and Jung to the world of vampires. He has since formed analogies that are, like his façade of sanity, highly strained.

Dr. Timothy now claims the largest asylum in London as his domain. As part of his obligation, he personally tends to the mortals within the facility, both patients and doctors. Willum considers the Malkavians of London his wards as well. Whenever his sense of duty compels him, he summons a London Lunatic to the lowest level of his

asylum, where he conducts a session of psychoanalysis to ensure the continued well-being of the poor soul. The defense of the Camarilla, he insists, depends on the eternal vigilance of all Kindred, especially Malkav's insightful childer.

The doctor is motivated not only by altruism, but also through paranoia and fear of the Sabbat. Doctor Timothy fervently believes that the greatest danger the Sabbat presents is not a physical threat — it is an unseen and intellectual one. Within the Camarilla, he posits, Malkavians have learned to turn their insight to the cause of science, furthering their studies of the human mind. Sabbat Malkavians, on the other hand, are relics of a bygone age, when insanity was viewed as a disease that could be passed from a vampiric host to any victim. He has seen the effects of the Dementation Discipline on victims firsthand, and knows of the time centuries ago when all Malkavians were capable of inflicting it. He is fanatical about looking for signs of its influence at work within the clan, largely because he feels that it is inevitable that a relapse should occur. Should the madness of the Sabbat infect his clan, he argues, the city's degeneration into chaos is assured.

After a series of Sabbat attacks on London, Valerius reconstructed his primogen council, considering councilors more for their political agenda than experience. After Dr. Timothy hosted a private demonstration of his ability to... interrogate... captured Sabbat spies, Valerius quickly extended his invitation. The seneschal has since come to think of Dr. Timothy's regular sessions with his wards as "keeping the Lunatics in line." The status and influence Dr. Timothy receives as primogen has other benefits as well. With growing frequency, the primogen has invited Kindred of other clans into his facility, usually under the guise of gathering information. The invitation is something of a veiled threat, for it is clear that some Kindred who enter the asylum do not leave. Few would dare whisper that neonates who fail to make a proper introduction in London eventually receive Dr. Timothy's "aggressive hospitality." After all, it is not politic to make accusations against one of the primogen.

In the meantime, Dr. Timothy's asylum in northern London has prospered greatly under his influence. It has grown from a modest facility for the incarceration of criminals at the turn of the century to a progressive, modern and brutal facility for the incarceration of the insane. By day, Dr. Timothy sleeps in the Deep Ward, the lowest and most occulted level of the building. Through attunement and telepathy, he has trained his mind to wander through the diurnal thoughts of his patients, savoring their pleasures and pain. Conditioned patients and ghouls are the only mortals who may set foot within

the Deep Ward. Ordinary humans would be scarred forever by what they saw.

Image: Meticulous grooming is the hallmark of a meticulous mind. Dr. Timothy's spectacles are immaculate, and his clothes are freshly laundered each day. His pate is shorn by ghouls each night, so that it conforms to the standards a soldier in the Royal Guard might maintain. Each day, half an hour before dawn, his skin is scoured in a bath of hydrogen chloride by three pretty nurses. This procedure not only reflects his discipline, but also his resistance to mere physical temptation.

Roleplaying Hints: Speak precisely. Take your time to phrase your thoughts carefully. Never waste a word. Remember that the Socratic method is one of the most effective methods of discourse. If someone poses a question to you, turn the question upon your interlocutor, and discern his reason for asking it. When dealing with Malkavians, always be wary of their dementia. You love to circuitously approach the trigger that will reveal a patient's madness without forcing an actual episode. The mind is a labyrinth, and only you have the insight to penetrate its interior. Through pure intellect, you surely can overcome any horrors you find within it.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Father Clarence

Nature: Sadist

Demeanor: Caregiver

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1576

Apparent Age: 60

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 5, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 3, Security 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Medicine (psychoanalysis) 5, Occult 3, Psychology 3, Science (chemistry) 5

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 5, Fortitude 2, Obscure 4

Backgrounds: Herd 5, Resources 3, Retainer 5

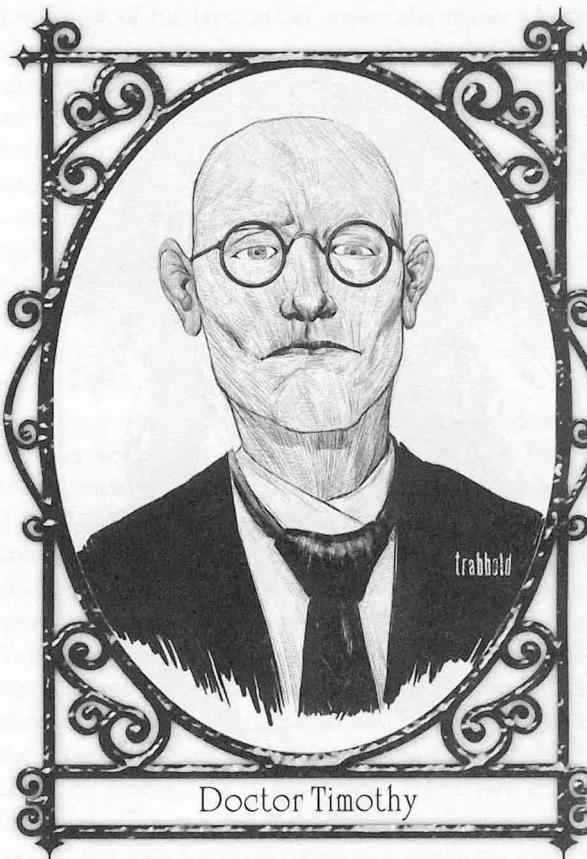
Virtues: Conscience 5, Self-Control 4, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 7

Merits and Flaws: Iron Will

Note: The very thought of Sabbat infiltration fills Dr. Timothy with wrath, a violent emotion he takes out on some of his more recalcitrant patients. In moments of madness, he disciplines his patients with brutal (and

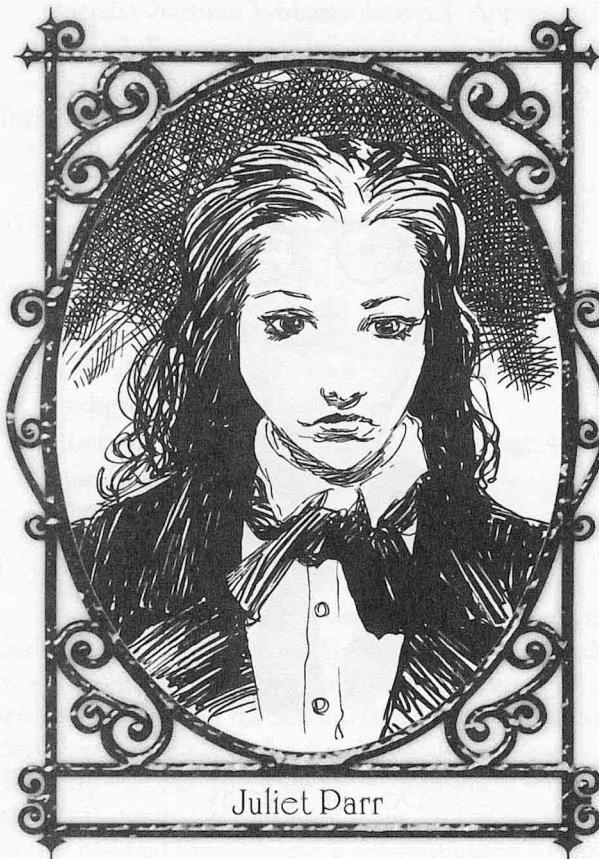


sometimes fatal) results. His most dangerous patient is one he keeps hidden from everyone but his ghouls: a Malkavian *antitribu* he captured a decade ago.

A pack of ghouls brings fresh blood to the captive and tends to his room. They must wear gloves, masks and protective gear as precautions against infection, and they undergo regular examination for signs of corruption from the patient's formidable mental Disciplines. Dr. Timothy conducts this patient's sessions personally, and each is followed by at least half an hour of physical cleansing as well. Dirt breeds sickness, after all, and sickness can fester into madness. When Dr. Timothy is frustrated, he has lengthier sessions with this Cainite, who has become the embodiment of all he hates and fears. A rigid mental block prevents him from ever recognizing that the creature he has tortured, blood bound, and imprisoned is indeed his sire.

Juliet Parr, Sheriff of North London

Background: The apple of her father's eye, young Juliet Parr wanted for nothing, and was spoiled beyond imagining by her doting father. She had all the clothes, books and toys she desired, and was also allowed to hunt and explore the Parr's vast estate in Gloucestershire, dressed in boyish clothes. Lord Parr believed this was nothing more than a passing phase and indulged her, but



Juliet was lonely and isolated, her adventures and books the only pleasure in her cloistered life. She felt marginalized by the restrictions society placed on women, and wished she had the same freedom of action as her male counterparts.

Shortly after her 15th birthday she attempted suicide, believing she would be reborn in a form better suited to the lifestyle she desired. Her father's retainers plucked Juliet from the River Severn and thenceforth kept her under close scrutiny. This only exacerbated Juliet's desire for freedom, and despite her chaperones, she made several more attempts to kill herself over the following months. Her father despaired, knowing that his line would end with her if Juliet succeeded, and arranged a hasty wedding to the son of a local landowner. The young man was beneath her station, but her father hoped that marriage and a family would provide his daughter with the anchor she needed. At first, it seemed to work, but shortly after the birth of her daughter Juliet began to relapse and frequently talked of "escaping her mortal prison."

One of those who heard of her plight was a young naturalist called Gregory who, unbeknownst to Juliet, was a childe of the baroness who claimed the Fief of Gloucester. He saw the encroaching madness and, with-

out waiting for the approval of his lord, offered Juliet a way out, an entry to a hidden world where the restrictions of gender were less binding. Her family believed she had committed suicide, her body lost, but Juliet began a nocturnal existence as a member of the Malkavian clan. She soon became a favorite of Baroness Seren, who sent her to Mithras's domain in 1790 as her eyes and ears. The baroness' increasingly erratic behavior after 1800 — she was blood bound to Mithras and the prince's absence removed what few restraints existed on her psychotic behavior — caused Juliet, though respectful of her grandsire, to foreswear Gloucester in favor of cosmopolitan London.

When the concept of women's suffrage came to the fore in the mid-19th century, Juliet involved herself in the National Society for Women's Suffrage, much to the consternation of Valerius who saw it as undermining the established order. Anne Bowesley, however, recognized the potential of the suffrage movement and encouraged Juliet's involvement with various members of the organization, notably Emily Davies and John Stuart Mill. It was also Anne who saw the potential of Juliet's combination of presence, knowledge and charm, proposing her as Sheriff of North London, a post she has held since 1879. Seemingly a strange choice for sheriff, her tenacity — a manifestation of her obsessive-compulsive disorder — and ingenuity means she often succeeds where a more brute-force approach would not.

Juliet's principal haven is in Highgate, a short distance from the cemetery, but she has numerous secondary lairs across North London between Ealing and Walthamstow.

Image: Slender and short with flowing chestnut hair and delicate features, Juliet Parr is far from the normal image of a sheriff. In nightly unlife, she is polite and reserved, even a little shy. However, when pushed — and mocking her size is a good way of angering her — her intense and forceful personality comes to the fore. Although she is often found wearing traditional female clothing, Juliet favors men's clothes, particularly when "working." Her disguise as the orphaned daughter of a missionary family explains this eccentricity to many mortals, and to the other Kindred of London, this is simply another Malkavian personality quirk to be reckoned with. Nonetheless, her eccentric dress does not sit well with the more uptight Kindred who claim to espouse Victorian values, while every complaint made to Mithras (or Lady Anne) reinforces the prince's view that Juliet was the right appointment.

Roleplaying Hints: You are quite capable of acting up to your physical image — the coquettish young woman — but despise it when others talk down to you.

You rarely lose your temper, instead maintaining a polite appearance while resorting to cutting remarks. Many find your cold, clinical, matter-of-fact recitation of facts (particularly when they involve the prospective fate of someone who has offended you) rather disturbing, though in fact it is part of your mental balancing act, a focus for your efforts to retain self-control.

Clan: Malkavian

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 9th

Sire: Gregory of Gloucester

Embrace: 1782

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Firearms 2, Melee 3, Performance 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledge: Area Knowledge (London) 3, Bureaucracy 2, Camarilla Lore 4, City Secrets (London) 3, Investigation 4, Law 3, Occult 3, Politics 1, Science 1

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 1, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 2, Potence 1

Background: Allies 1, Contacts 2, Herd 1, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 4, Courage 2

Humanity: 6

Willpower: 6

don knew of his reputation, especially those who had been displaced by his schemes. Their children even imitated his mocking laugh and theatrically exaggerated his gestures. A miserly man, he had carefully spent decades investing money in various stocks and bonds, building his future on the misfortune of others. His comfortable retirement was assured, until almost overnight, businesses in which he had invested mysteriously withered away. Because the chances of all of them failing at once were improbable, Haversham became paranoid, suspecting that someone or something had engineered his downfall. His fears had basis in fact.

The well-known blackguard had become a diversion for two venerable Kindred. One was Blind Peter, a Nosferatu who believed that any man could be redeemed if he suffered enough. After destroying Haversham's cruel mortal life, Peter wanted to mentor and rebuild the old man's brilliant financial mind to benefit the unfortunates in his domain. His associate was a Transylvanian Ventre, a cynic who believed Haversham's would-be mentor was a hypocrite. After all, most Kindred employed exploitative tactics that easily exceeded those of the most ingenious slum lord. It was easy for the two elders to manipulate a few minor businesses through financial influence. After many nights of amusing arguments, the two Kindred came to a decision. How the mortal reacted would determine whether he was deserving of the Embrace... and whether it would be a reward or a punishment.

Haversham suffered the tortures of the Damned. Stripped of wealth and evicted from his own home, he could find no refuge. Too many people on the street recognized him, and took the opportunity to inflict further suffering upon him. Within a week, a pack of men cornered Haversham in a sewer tunnel, where they hurled stones at him. Fortunately, Blind Peter witnessed the entire incident. He realized that if he did not intervene, he would be indirectly responsible for a man's untimely death. After driving the angry mob away with an army of rats summoned from the sewers, he abducted Haversham and carried him into his underground kingdom beneath London's Aethenium. The poor mortal thought a demon was taking him to hell. In a way, he was right. The Embrace transformed Haversham into a creature as hideous outside as inside. Beneath the Earth, the childe's mentor began the arduous process of instructing him in the ways of the Kindred.

Blind Peter was a relic of an older age. During the Dark Ages, he had tried to convert the lame and diseased to the Christian faith. He still held some hope that his clan would be accepted for their vestigial humanity, not condemned for their hideous appearance. Yet the Victor-

Nosferatu

Rathe Haversham, "Prince Fagin"

Background: A Victorian businessman with sufficient capital and deficient morals can easily turn a profit at the cost of human life. Mr. Haversham was such a man, an owner of questionable properties in London's East End. With ready money at his command, he made a fortune acquiring properties in disrepair and transforming them into respectable (or at least profitable) business endeavors. The tenants he was forced to evict were unfortunate, if financially intangible, obstacles to his plans.

Even in his mortal life, Haversham had a reputation as a bloodsucker. Many destitute souls throughout Lon-

rian mindset could not accept such an idea. Clearly, if the Nosferatu appeared evil, they were evil. Even other Nosferatu rejected him, forcing him to retreat to centuries of isolation in the subterranean Aethenium he helped construct. When the Prince of London discovered that an exiled Nosferatu within his city had actually sired a childe without his permission, he was furious. Mithras called a blood hunt against Blind Peter for violating the Second Tradition. The humane mentor fled, leaving Haversham with some degree of infamy as the childe of an outcast.

Humbled and humiliated, Haversham followed his sire's example by retreating into obscurity. His supernal ability to occlude himself came all too naturally, as his desire to hide was fueled by shame. As soon as he could master the proper monstrous Disciplines, he assumed the guise of an elderly beggar. For sustenance, he drifted to where large concentrations of blood were easily found: the rookeries where masses of the destitute gathered. His sire had taught him the need for penitence. He had seen the impossible happen, and thus began to make a change within himself.

Haversham has come to see himself as a protector of the unfortunate, though it is a concept he struggles with constantly. He still acts as a landlord of sorts, but over squalid and abandoned properties that will never be

redeemed. He watches over the inhabitants of the rookeries where he stalks unseen, if only for the sake of protecting his own herd. Indeed, the rampant rumors of "Prince Fagin" originate with Haversham's exploitation of his destitute domain, and also with his employment of its unfortunates to do his bidding. He has become an expert in the geography of London's seedier side, learning of thieves' dens, flash houses, and locations where the homeless gather. Some of the children who once mocked him have since become his ghouls, forming a pack of "street Arabs" that act as his eyes and ears within his self-proclaimed domain.

When he displays humane attitudes, they are a sharp departure from Victorian conceptions of the Nosferatu. Like his sire before him, he is shunned not only by the city's prince, but his own clan as well. His interference in mortal affairs may even be interpreted as a breach of the Masquerade, though none have so far challenged him on it. Of course, his assistance still has a price. When he helps an unfortunate victim, "Prince Fagin" feels he has earned the blood he later draws in compensation. His pack of children sometimes assists him in these hunts. They have become more than mere messengers or thieves, for they have found the practice of murder progressively easier. Blind Peter's legacy has become tainted, for the incomplete redemption of one mortal has resulted in the corruption of many.

Paranoia still plays an active role in Haversham's unlife, as he still believes someone is out to destroy him. He never learned the identity of Blind Peter's associate in Transylvania. To keep himself safe, he maintains at least five havens at any given time. His favorite one stays the same, or at least degenerates consistently. It is the St. Giles Rookery, an infamous location in London's underworld. When endangered, he retreats to London's Aethenium, which he knows intimately.

Image: Haversham's face has been ruined by a mockery of extreme age, enough that he has begun to resemble a withered corpse. His apparent age is at least one hundred. The pitiable creature displays a shock of white hair, dark eyes, and a hooked nose. On the rare occasions when he must appear before other Kindred, Haversham uses his mastery of the Obscure Discipline to present himself as he once was, sporting a top hat, a black cape, a dark suit, and spats — fashions easily twenty years out of date. When descending into the underworld, he wears the same clothes, but makes them appear as though time has weathered them as much as it has weathered his soul. His favorite guise is as an elderly beggar, the persona he presents to his "children."

Roleplaying Hints: Be humble. You still have the manners and breeding of a gentleman, even if you were



Rathe Haversham

a moral reprobate. Among respectable folk, you shuffle and ingratiate yourself like the beggars you've studied. When dealing with the people you have wronged, you are straightforward and affable. You find self-esteem only while playing fagin to your pack of ghoul children. You do not like meeting new Kindred, preferring to act through your intermediaries instead. If you were to find one who was humane, however, you might risk further social intercourse. Until then, cunning, vicious and clever children speak for you. When you deliver a message, you choose the messenger very carefully.

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Blind Peter

Nature: Penitent

Demeanor: Architect

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1801

Apparent Age: extremely advanced

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Empathy 3, Leadership 3, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 3, Security 3, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Finance 4, Law 3, Politics 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 3, Potence 2

Backgrounds: Herd 5, Influence (underworld) 4, Mentor 1, Resources 0 (3 as "Prince Fagin," though obtaining these resources may take some time, as they come mostly from ill-gotten goods that must be fenced.)

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 3, Courage 1

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 6

Harold Tanner, "Holborn Harry" the archivist

Background: Harry's earliest memories are of the caves beneath Nottingham where his father worked as a tanner; the twisting sandstone passages seemed as much a home to him as the streets of Narrow Marsh and Drury Hill. By the standards of the town, his family was rich and influential and Harold received a top-notch education. He was a bright student and thirsty for knowledge, but as he grew older a dark side of his character began to emerge. He did not like to have information withheld from him — deliberately or by omission — and took to sneaking around, listening at doorways and snooping where he should not. In a young child, this was seen simply as mischievousness, but as Harold grew it took on a more sinister aspect. Discovered spying on his elder



Harold Tanner

brother and his new wife, Harry was sent away to the abbey school at Westminster, where he was expected to learn discipline and restraint from the monks.

The privations of the school went some way to tempering Harold's desires, structured learning replacing his insatiable quest for knowledge, and he surprised his family by deciding to take vows and become a monk. He studied in the Abbey's libraries but also added to their knowledge, writing several treatises on life in the capital during the early years of what became the Hundred Years War. His keen observations and ability to discern the forces behind public goings on caught the attention of Richard de Worde, the Nosferatu spymaster for Prince Mithras. De Worde would frequently call upon Harold's insights, while leading the scholar-monk to believe he was nothing more than a wealthy, albeit afflicted, patron. The terrible events of the mid-14th century would change that and unsettle the politics of the city for decades.

In 1348, the Black Death swept into London from the continent, ravaging the population in waves for the next two decades. Westminster was not immune to the scourge and Harold fell victim to the plague. De Worde could not bear to lose someone he considered a superlative scholar, and with the permission of the prince, he revealed his true nature and Embraced the dying monk.

The transformation to the vampiric state saved Harold at the same time it cursed him, purging his body of foul humors. Ironically, his sire was less fortunate; in a quirk of fate, De Worde contracted the Black Death — one of the few mortal diseases capable of harming a vampire — after only seven years tutoring his protégé, succumbing to Final Death in the spring of 1356. Although unready to replace his sire, Harry had built up a network of contacts throughout London that he administered from the abbey, and over the next century he became a key member of the Nosferatu network in the city.

The dissolution of the monasteries in 1537 and the religious strife that followed destroyed Harry's network and base of operations, and he spent a century traveling in Britain and Europe, returning to London shortly before the civil war. Narrowly escaping death in the Great Fire, he found refuge among the common people he had studied in life, eking out an existence in the slums that bordered the Thames. Prominent Kindred sought him out for his insights, and Harold soon found himself peripherally attached to the prince's cohort. Unlike his sire, who sought to integrate himself into the prince's retinue, Harold prefers to keep his distance (though he is quite capable of adopting airs and graces when required). Indeed, he seems to seek out the roughest and most despicable parts of the city, currently residing in the slum district known as St. Giles' Rookery.

Image: Harry is the archetypal Nosferatu — a horrible visage linked with an incisive and inquisitive mind. Harry has also inherited his sire's more sophisticated tastes and is usually both charming and urbane, despite his ravaged visage and stooped body. When attending the prince or Lady Anne he wears fine clothes, tailored specially for him, but Harry's usual dress is that of a resident of the rookery. For all his civility, however, he takes great pleasure in distressing some of the more snobbish Kindred with his appearance and odor; his Embrace left him with a hunched back, bloated body and perpetual scent of rot. Furthermore, while the Embrace saved Harry from the plague, it did not eliminate the disease from his body; many of those he feeds from suffer lesions and boils, though few die or suspect anything more than the unsanitary conditions of the rookery.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a font of wisdom on the goings on in London, particularly the seedy underbelly of mortal life and Kindred unlife. You listen attentively and know just how to play people to get the information you desire while giving as little as possible in return. You never lie — telling a falsehood is completely against your morality as an information broker — but you are well versed in circumlocution, avoiding the issue at hand with clever wordplay.

Clan: Nosferatu

Nature: Traditionalist

Demeanor: Director

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1348

Sire: Richard de Worde

Apparent Age: Indeterminate

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (London) 5, Camarilla Lore 3, City Secrets (London) 4, Investigation 5, Law 4, Medicine 3, Occult 3, Politics 3, Science 3

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Obfuscate 4, Potence 2

Background: Contacts 4, Influence 1, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 5, Courage 3

Humanity: 5

Willpower: 7

Note: Although he pretends to be pained by the holiness of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, Harry is in fact immune to the Faith effects associated with the churches, something he believes is a legacy of his Embrace within the abbey precincts.

Violet Mary, the Invisible Harpy

Background: Like many of the Cleopatras of Clan Nosferatu, Mary's story begins as one would expect: "Once, she was beautiful." Skin white as porcelain, lips as red as the rose, and a slightly eccentric affinity for shades of lavender in her formal dress made her a woman few could resist. As a wealthy ingenue, she was fated for marriage to a wealthy man who could not resist her. And there the fairy tale goes astray, for the man who really desired her was not a man at all.

Mary turned aside a host of mortal suitors before the age of 18, and all for the same reason. Cautiously instructed in Victorian etiquette, she believed it unseemly for an aristocratic woman to accept marriage before her proper introduction to society. She knew the ritual by heart: first, a formal ball where she would meet the paragons of society; then a whirlwind tour of her father's noble and wealthy associates, so that she would develop appropriate relationships and correspondence. And finally, in a marriage calculated to advance herself and her family, ascension to an even higher stratum of society, where she would play the role the world intended for her.

Mary had attracted the ardor of a man who was neither wealthy nor handsome. He had acquired one of the basest habits a Nosferatu could possess: a fascination with his mortal prey. He had cultivated a taste for rich blood, preferring to steal it from the very herds of Ventre and Toreador aristocracy. Yet Violet was a morsel he could not consume in one rapacious feast. He watched her ascent into society, strolling unseen through her life until the night of her engagement. He had seen the dance far too many times: She was preparing for her marriage to a nobleman who would, inevitably it would seem, cast her aside as he fulfilled the obligations of his business, his society and his hobbies.

Each night he would watch her, dreaming of the consummation of their relationship. How would it end? Would he assume the guise of her true love, shattering the illusion on the night of the groom's death? Perhaps the wedding night scenario would be best, the one in which he killed her suitor on the night of her nuptials. Or maybe he would simply abduct her, revealing himself as the monster in a fairy tale who would never allow her fate to reach fulfillment.

Unsure of how to proceed, he began by summoning her to a trysting place, using his supernatural powers to draw her to him. Mary became aware that someone or something was watching her. Each night, she would walk out into the cold night air seeking something she could not name. She began to dream of him. Her skin soon paled from his repeated feedings, and her parents were vexed by how to cure their somnambulist daughter. Her unseen paramour hadn't planned for her anemic condition and the cold night air to weaken her health. As the wedding day approached, she succumbed to a disease no doctor could identify, dying slowly before the night when her introduction to society assured her dreams would come true.

Enraptured by her tragic beauty, the vampire who had condemned her took pity on her. Without the formality of asking for approval from the prince, he came in the night like an Angel of Death, spiriting her away to his underground kingdom. With the act of the Embrace, he destroyed her beauty and broke her heart. When he realized the horror of what he had done, he fled London. From afar, he then worshipped her, writing passionate letters delivered by his animalistic servants. Mary knew that she must eventually confront him, but she never responded to his letters. For years, the thought of him tortured her, as it reminded her of the tale of a ravishing beauty condemned forever to be a hideous beast.

Image: Richly attired, Mary has adapted the finest and most ostentatious dresses she can acquire. To compensate for her ugliness, her attention to fashion has

become excessive. She is a mockery of mortal ingenues, walking erect and unseen wearing ballroom gowns, wedding dresses, funeral attire or occasionally the sort of ensemble one would expect from the French aristocracy of the previous century. Nosferatu know her for her formal gloves reaching up to her elbows, elaborate rats' nests of coiffure, and the artful application of scents on her attire. And, of course, she is known for her affection for lily white, funereal black, lavender, indigo and violet. Under it all, she is as shriveled as a corpse, leading some to speculate that she has stolen some of her finery from the bodies of the recently deceased. When no one with Auspex is present, she is tempted to use her powers of obfuscation to assume the beautiful form she had in life. It is an act that inevitably reduces her to tears.

Roleplaying Hints: Shy to a fault, you refuse to appear at formal gatherings without the benefits of obfuscation. If you are seen by insightful viewers, however, you must maintain appearances, no matter how ugly the truth may be. In the same way that your supernatural power masks the ugliness of your appearance, etiquette hides the unpleasant aspects of society from view. Thus, civil discourse, and society itself, may continue. This attitude has allowed you to become one of the city's most feared and respected harpies. Even powerful Kindred dread the moment when you whisper a sugges-



tion of proper behavior in their ears, for you can condemn improper acts and destroy the reputations of the brutish without revealing your presence.

You silently record each transgression of social etiquette that occurs, then dutifully report them to other harpies and the seneschal. The very structure of society depends on your efforts. If Nosferatu are meant to be heard and not seen, then that is a standard you must uphold. This earns you enmity from many Nosferatu, but status within the Victorian Camarilla. Above all else, you hold in reproach those who would expose the truth. As you have seen repeatedly in affairs of the heart, the truth hurts, and occasionally kills. As such, you do not traffic in secrets. You report what the harpies, as the eyes of society, have seen. This responsibility distracts you from your own failures.

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Alexander

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Martyr

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1854

Apparent Age: indiscernible

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 0

Mental: Intelligence 2, Perception 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 5, Performance 1, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Linguistics 2, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Obfuscate 4, Protean 3

Backgrounds: Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 5

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 5

Note: Violet Mary's retainers maintain shops in London that offer the finest fashions a lady can afford. Each has a bricked-up cellar where Mary can sleep by day. Yet few know of her more secretive haunts. Mary's fantasy was elaborate enough to involve the rest of a human life as well, for she dearly wanted to have a child. When sadness overwhelms her, she frequents one of several cemeteries where dead children have been interred. Each day before dawn, she descends into the grave of a dead child using Earth Meld, cradles the corpse in her arms, and sings to it sweetly as it eternally sleeps.

RAVNO'S

Dhita Choudhair, Mystery From the East

Background: Dhita's father, a British soldier, no doubt boasted of his conquest of a dusky Indian maiden when he was back in England. Dhita's mother, a serving girl named Shaila had a different way of describing it: rape. Shaila's family cast her out when her pregnancy became obvious. She managed to scrape together a living for herself among the street people of Delhi. A matter of weeks before Dhita's birth a poor family of the low Sudras caste took pity on her and allowed her to live with them.

Dhita was born and raised as one of the family. The girl had a sharp wit, exotic looks and a contempt for the British instilled in her by her mother. Eventually, she secured work serving in the home of a local merchant who seemed amused by the ambition and intelligence of this girl trying to live outside the boundaries of her caste.

It was only a matter of weeks before Dhita spotted something unusual about her employer: He only ever seemed to appear by night. Several months passed before her curiosity overcame her fear and she asked Debtosh what he did during the days. He laughed at the girl's presumption and then offered her a choice: Go back to the streets, or give up her old life to become his full time servant. With some misgivings, she chose the latter option and drank the proffered liquid.

Dhita served Debtosh well as a ghoul, using her looks and wiles to manipulate his mortal business contacts. Less than a year later, though, she was mortally wounded when a strange creature attacked Debtosh as the pair returned to his house a few hours before dawn. Dhita threw herself at the creature, slowing it down long enough for Debtosh to gather his wits. After a long struggle, Debtosh destroyed his attacker. He then Embraced the dying girl, a rash decision made in the heat of the moment. He was of the Vaisyas *jati*, and should not have Embraced a girl from such a lowly background. Still, together the pair concocted a story that she was the daughter of one of his business partners, given over to his keeping after her father was lost at sea. The conflict between the Ravnos and the *asuratizayya* — the strange vampires of the Orient — was particularly intense at the

time, so few questioned the story, preferring to simply welcome a new soldier to the struggle.

Over the next twenty years, Dhita and her sire grew in prominence among Delhi's vampires. She was an asset in both his business dealings and in his role in fighting the *asuratizayya*. Ironically, this was because of her contacts among India's lowest caste, the secret she had to hide from other vampires. One of Debtosh's enemies suspected the truth, though, and managed to track down Shaila, exposing the improper nature of Dhita's Embrace. Dhita's sire was shamed but forgiven. Dhita herself was immediately demoted to the Chandala *jati*, the lowest of the low among Indian Ravnos. With nothing to lose and every reason to fear the miserable existence that she would endure as Chandala, Dhita stowed away on a merchant ship bound for London.

Weeks later, the ship finished its journey to the East India Dock with a depleted and frightened crew. Dhita made her way off the boat in the early hours of the morning. Within minutes, she found herself held fast by tentacles of shadow. Stephen Lenoir had recognized the signs of a Kindred stowaway and had come to "greet" the new arrival.

In the years since, Dhita has been able to turn her heritage into a bargaining chip in London. Many Kindred are eager to know more about the subcontinent, but

are somewhat reluctant to travel there themselves. While Indian *ghuls* have provided some of the information they require, Dhita has proved a invaluable source of information. India remains of interest to London's Kindred, and thus, Dhita's position in the city remains secure.

Image: Dhita is a strikingly attractive woman whose father's genes lighten her skin tone and prevent her looking too foreign to British and European eyes. Somehow the hint of Western features in this Indian woman serves to reassure them of her relative trustworthiness and elevate her above other "natives" in their eyes. Her time in London has taught her that wearing traditional Indian dress is a useful affectation at Elysium, but much of the time she is better off wearing the clothes of a British lady. London is far too cold to warrant saris, even for a Kindred.

Roleplaying Hints: Your history and background are your power, so you play up your Indian heritage. You're aware that you pander to English stereotypes of a "mysterious Indian woman," but that's better than the life you would have had back in India. Give away nothing about India, your past or your abilities unless you are sure that you will prosper as a result. You will not suffer for your shame, the way your mother did. You have a unique niche among London's Kindred, so exploit it wisely.

Clan: Ravnos

Sire: Debtosh

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1849

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 1

Skills: Etiquette 2, Performance 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Investigation 2, Linguistics 1, Politics 3

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Chimerstry 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 6



Toreador

Eric Baring-Gould, Impassioned Solicitor

Background: For Baring-Gould, success as a barrister and solicitor brought wealth, privileges — and some measure of guilt. His social status, education and vocation allowed him the opportunity to enjoy the finer things in life, but the ethical dilemmas of his profession plagued him. Outside of his profession, he could cultivate an Epicurean's tastes, attend the theater, afford suits crafted by London's most skilled tailors, and even mingle in the social circles of the powerful and influential. Yet whenever bureaucracy, incompetence, or outright malice circumvented justice, the privileges of his profession did little to deaden the pain. Risking the lifestyle he had come to treasure, he began to take his work personally, crusading only for causes he could morally justify.

Someone took notice. A wealthy and eccentric gentleman asked Eric Baring-Gould to meet with him privately over dinner. Although his host refused to even drink the vintage century-old wine at his own table, the feast was a stunning work of culinary achievement. The gentleman at first seemed reluctant to speak of legal matters, instead conversing about everything from the intrigues and scandals of high society to performances of the local opera. Once they were on a first-name basis, Eric felt comfortable enough to deftly handle all such topics, demonstrating his cultivation.

The host segued seamlessly to a discussion of ethics in law, a topic the young barrister took very seriously. By his reasoning, all the accomplishments of society meant nothing if the law could not protect justice. His host, Rafael, immediately hired him on retainer, promising him a lifetime of work if he found it to his liking. The position had one considerable drawback, one Eric did not anticipate. At the conclusion of the feast, Eric realized that the unusual aftertaste in the mulled wine he had been savoring was that of human blood. A quick application of supernatural acumen erased all memories of the unpleasantness and alarm in the barrister's reaction.

Eric's position in society immediately launched to heights he could not previously imagine. His dealings opened doors into the homes of many of London's rich and powerful, including some curious individuals he had never met before. The most unusual was an old-fash-

ioned man named Valerius, who was deeply impressed with his attitudes toward justice. Raphael calmly explained a career move that lay before the young lawyer. Before Eric could accept, Rafael Embraced him in the haven of the seneschal of London. From that moment on, Eric was instructed in the intricacies of a very different form of law: the Six Traditions of the Camarilla. With Valerius' blessing, the childe of Raphael de Corazon was then accepted as a primogen of the city.

Although his vitae is potent, Baring-Gould is inexperienced in the ways of the Camarilla. His sire is famous for having helped establish the Six Traditions as the foundation of the sect, yet Rafael's childe remains modest. While he participates in the necessary gatherings of London's Kindred, he treasures his privacy. He has taken up residence in the theater district, where he has cultivated a relationship with a Ventrue who has claimed the area as his domain. His flat is subtle, but well-defended by his servants. When Cyril Masters does the courtesy of paying him a visit, they engage in impassioned discussions about their common interests, including legal events in London.

Eric Baring-Gould has a mastery of the law few would dare challenge in any gathering of Kindred. He has become an expert in the history of the Six Traditions and gained a reputation because of it. Unfortunately, he has become particularly critical of lapses of judgment within his own clan, a stance that has placed him at odds with many Degenerates. The London Toreador who support him do not see their clan as a gathering of artistes, but as paragons who demonstrate the humanity represented by art and culture. Several have petitioned Lady Anne to accept Rafael's childe as one of London's primogen, but just as he has staunch supporters, he has passionate rivals, including Horace Holden. For the nonce, Anne values Baring-Gould's insight, but that could easily turn if he was forced to criticize the seneschal's actions.

Image: Baring-Gould is understandably overwhelmed by all that has happened to him, yet he does his best to conceal his alarm and remain professional. He still dresses impeccably in the fashions of the day (and the night). His dark hair and blue eyes are a remarkable contrast to his pale skin, enhancing his already handsome appearance. His demeanor makes him a polite companion to cultured ladies, yet the all-consuming obligations of his profession — and his nature — force him to remain aloof.

Roleplaying Hints: You are always professional and polite, even when dealing with individuals you find personally annoying. Many neonates seem to expect you to be some kind of artist or visionary because you are Toreador. Although you appreciate artistic achieve-

ment, you find artistic temperament bothersome. The very fact that you are associated with a clan sometimes known as Degenerates is distasteful to you. That haughty fop named Holden is one of the worst, embodying many of the traits you cannot stand in your consanguineous brethren. By your thinking, Clan Toreador should uphold and protect the finer qualities of mankind, not mock them through excess and exploitation.

The only time you display passion is when it is appropriate in "court" to sway a case, particularly if it involves the Traditions. Your advocacy preserves the civility of the Empire. Those laws prevent the undead from victimizing an unsuspecting public. Even if the Camarilla's customs are situational, or lie at the whim of a Methuselah's Lextalionis, you usually argue for what you think is right. Such displays of honesty cost you dearly. In your finer moments, one would think you were almost human.

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Raphael de Corazon

Nature: Autocrat

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1880

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 2, Empathy 2, Expression 4, Intimidation 1

Skills: Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Performance 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law 4, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 5, Presence 5

Backgrounds: Influence 2, Mentor 5, Resources 3, Retainer 4

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 6

Note: On a few singular opportunities, Baring-Gould has learned what it is like to have power over others. He has been discriminating in choosing his servants, but he has found himself oddly comfortable in instructing and conditioning them. Raphael de Corazon taught him the importance of upholding the proper priorities of his clan through the auspices of social custom. His current situation has tempted him to consider his authority as a way to enforce his own interests. Although based heavily on precedent, the Traditions' situational nature lends itself to abuse.



Eric Baring-Gould

As the Beast Within stirs, Eric has come to consider inflicting other forms of abuse. When driven nearly to frenzy by the treacherous and degenerate actions of his clan, he takes his rage out on his servants. The sight of their broken bodies intrigues him enough to trigger his Toreador fascination. He has come to find beauty in music, in art, and in private acts of violence. He finds his lapses of composure both terrifying and compelling.

Lorna Dingwall, the Scottish Hostage

Background: The Kindred of Edinburgh assumed that Lorna was Embraced because of her incredible singing voice. They were quite, quite wrong. Her sire chose her for her extensive contacts in Edinburgh's underworld, gained through her admirers and lovers in the five years she lived in the city.

Lorna was born in the small village of Dollar to a well-to-do family. She was never satisfied with her lot in life, trapped in a rural location at the base of the Ochils. As she blossomed into a fetching young woman with a talent for music, she pressured her father into paying for her to travel to her aunt's house in Edinburgh for further study. She quickly became quite the sensation in Edinburgh society, becoming a favored guest at evening soirees in the city. She also enjoyed the attentions of

many young men, many of them classed as "disreputable" by her aunt.

This mattered to Lorna not one jot. The underside of Auld Reekie was too exciting to be denied, and she soon found herself moving in a second, more secret, social circle. Her sire, Andrew Campbell, found her irresistible. A wonderful singing voice, a ruthless mind and influence in the underworld already: the perfect childe. He sought permission to Embrace from the prince and obtained it. Two nights later, during a private but well-paid recital, Lorna joined the Kindred.

For the next twenty years, Lorna relished her unlife. While she worked at the direction of her sire, unlife offered chances she had never expected to have. If it weren't for the occasional stirrings of the Beast and the need to hide from some of her acquaintances and admirers from her mortal days, her new existence would be close to her childhood dreams. However, the nightly need to drink the blood of others, the struggle for control and the ruthless and patronizing behavior of the Edinburgh elders quickly turned her nights into a trial she came to hate.

Then, one evening, Lorna's sire took her aside and told her that she was to be sent to London. He expected her to be nervous, or angry. In fact, she was delighted. She had the chance to be at the very center of the empire,

in a politically significant, if rather powerless, position as a hostage under the recently re-instated Treaty of Durham. What's more, she could escape the stifling world of Edinburgh's Kindred.

To Lorna's dismay, the first months in London were the toughest of her unlife. The city was in chaos. The old prince was gone, swept aside by some ancient pretender, as Lorna saw it, and the Kindred were in disarray. No one had time for a young Scottish neonate, except Janet Latimer, who was also a newcomer to the city. The two have formed a wary acquaintance and have taken to arriving at Elysium together and leaving together. Of late, Lorna has been running a few errands for Janet, which involved talking to an attractive, rather dangerous and deeply naive vampire by the name of Peter Bedwell. She is doing her best, despite her sire's warnings that Kindred no longer feel sexual desire, to awaken his interest in her, almost as an experiment.

One of Lorna's clanmates, a strange woman by the name of Victoria Ash, has recently started to make overtures of interest in the Edinburgh lass after some initial hostility, so Lorna is beginning to feel that she is finally making some headway amongst the local vampires.

Image: Lorna is a petite redhead, standing no more than five feet high. Her hair tumbles in long cascades down her back, and her face is round and slightly imp-like. She dresses fashionably and expensively, especially at Elysium, which has earned her a reputation for tackiness among the more discerning Kindred in the city, who see her pursuit of ostentatious dress as symptomatic of a provincial mindset unworthy of the Kindred of the empire's capital. In company, she is all radiant smiles and perfect manners. When she thinks she's not being watched, a more thoughtful, calculated expression sits on her face. She has yet to learn to wear the mask at all times.

Roleplaying Hints: You are aware that you are technically a hostage to the Treaty of Durham, an agreement made centuries before you were born, but you don't care. You are in the greatest city in the world, and are close to the center of attention. This is your chance: You're going to exploit it to the full. In mortal society, you would be viewed as ruthless and cunning. Among Kindred, things are different. You're pleasant to everyone, especially people you perceive as important, and you listen far more than you speak. You think you're building a good base of contacts, but you're wrong. Among vampires, you're a beginner and sooner or later you're going to make a mistake.

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Andrew Campbell



Lorna Dingwall

Nature: Deviant

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1860

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Expression 4, Leadership 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Crafts 1, Etiquette 3, Performance 4, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 2, Law 1, Linguistics 1, Medicine 1, Politics 2

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 1, Presence 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 1, Fame 2, Mentor 2, Resources 2

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 6

Horace Holden, Insightful Dilettante

Background: At the dawn of the Gothic literature movement, Horace Holden possessed an uncanny knack for being at the right place at the right time, and with the right people. As the inheritor of a family fortune of dubious origins, he grew up as a consummate dilettante. Each new rage of artistic innovation, whether in music, fashion, theater or literature, attracted his interest. Although he lacked the fire to create such works, he quickly gravitated to the individuals who created them. Failing that, he found the people who knew the people who could introduce him, exploiting temporary friendships.

Where social grace failed, money prevailed. He dabbled in brief stints as a patron of the arts, but his wandering from one artistic fad to the next made him an unreliable benefactor. However, it did gain him admittance to some very remarkable parties, where he cultivated an ability to blend in with each new crowd. By the mid-19th century, he became fascinated with literature, even struggling to pen his own creations. The Gothic movement consumed him from the first time he read *Castle of Otranto*. Within a few scant years, he had made his introductions to the exemplars of this prurient style. Most promptly forgot his name, remembering only his unctuous enthusiasm.

What Horace lacked in talent, he made up for in insight. He could not create trends, but he could certainly spot them before they became known. Increasingly desperate for acceptance, he drifted where his instincts led him. In the year he first thrilled to Polidori's "The



Horace Holden

Vampyre," he entered a rather curious variant of this literary movement: a network of hedonists who aspired to attain the same passions evinced by Gothic poetry. If nothing else, their Dionysian revelries were diverting, leading to epic bouts of intoxication.

As he progressed through this social scene, wine gave way to absinthe, and in one shocking evening, the consumption of human blood. He had cultivated an ability to separate the artistes from poseurs in any given crowd, but it led him to a cult that took its degeneracy all too seriously. To the depths of his heart, he knew that this was a cultural movement that would transform him forever. He had seen through the mysteries of their Masquerade, finding a conspiracy of jaded and indulgent Toreador. He had read accounts of such monsters, but he was completely unprepared and amazed by the fact that they actually existed.

His first encounter with vampires galvanized him. He instantly aspired to attain all the grace and style these creatures of Gothic legend possessed. The most potent allure for him was the promise of immortality. Imagine an eternity to practice one's craft. Assuredly, it would be worth the sacrifice of never seeing the sun again to perfect one's poesy over centuries! The torments of the Damned would undoubtedly inspire him to new heights of artistic vision. And perhaps once he infiltrated Kin-

dred society, he would be able to usher other visionaries across the threshold of eternity. Imagine if Byron and Shelley had centuries laid before them. What masterworks would they present to the night? Horace threatened to expose the blood cult's activities if they did not make him one of them.

The weak-willed Toreador he confronted was shocked. Although he had been lax in hiding his illicit activities, he thought his circle had been cautious enough to preserve the Masquerade. Fearful of a blood hunt, or worse, the necessity of brutally killing an innocent, the humane Toreador welcomed him into the society of the Damned. Horace quickly learned how much of the glamour of vampiric existence was a lie. His poetry was still execrable, and his immortality was an illusion. Until his Final Death, he would be what he had been in life: an imitator of mortal culture. Throughout the Victorian age, the salons of London welcome him, but the accomplished artists of his own clan still pity him. Cursed in a way he would never have understood in his breathing days, he still seeks out visionaries who possess talent he can never have.

Image: Being tall and thin never goes out of style. Each night when Horace awakens, he has one of his servants style his hair in whatever manner is currently fashionable. Another one brings clothes that are currently *avant garde*, but never so innovative as to be offensive. He is a social chameleon, stoic and silent one night, then wildly boisterous the next. When Kindred festivities bore him, he delves into anachronistic fashions, revisiting styles that were in vogue decades or even centuries ago. Among mortals, he has mastered blending into crowds, assimilating their attitudes, and then working to stand out as vibrantly as any true Toreador should.

Roleplaying Hints: You do not create; you emulate. You prefer to be a flamboyant bon vivant, but you also know such behavior is considered scandalous in some circles. Fortunately, your insight aids you admirably. As an eternal dilettante, you adapt new styles quickly. You have come to see mortals as transient, for only true art endures. Only those with vision distinguish themselves from the herd of humanity. You are an expert at telling the difference between someone who is a true artiste and someone who is as much of an imitator as you are. Sometimes this insight extends to other fields of endeavor as well, most notably politics.

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Rudolph Paulsen

Nature: Conformist

Demeanor: Visionary

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1819

Apparent Age: 32

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Empathy 4, Expression 1

Skills: Crafts 1, Etiquette 4, Performance (imitation) 5, Ride 1

Knowledges: Academics 3, Finance 3, Linguistics 4, Occult 1

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 3

Backgrounds: Herd 4, Resource 3, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 2, Courage 1

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 5

Tremere

Edward Bainbridge, Experienced Primogen

Background: As a professor of anthropology and archaeology, Edward had a promising mortal career. Initially, his singular vice was a fascination with the occult. Hidden within his sedate and outdated scholarly library, Edward hid treatises on the shocking rituals of savage tribes. During an alleged vacation in the Congo, he actually participated in tribal rites that would have scandalized him at the university. The natives of that tribe worshipped a "blood goddess," a beautiful creature who came in the night to take whomever she pleased. He prayed she would take him, bestowing upon him the true knowledge he craved.

Edward knew nothing of the object of their veneration. Elaine de Calinot was a powerful Tremere sorceress whose aegis of domain extended across the continent. As one of the clan's seven pontifices, she watched over African chantries from Capetown to Alexandria. The Empire's colonialism had given her an opportunity to discover methods of magic unknown on the European continent. To aid her in studying the forbidden, she began the controversial practice of Embracing mortal natives who had demonstrated magical acumen. When she discovered Professor Bainbridge, she turned the timid scholar from the light to a path of darkness. She then patronized his researches into activity across the

African continent, encouraging him to learn from firsthand experience. She had chosen wisely.

Upon his return to the heart of the empire, Edward's knowledge of African magic made him a curiosity in Britain, assuring his fame within his clan. Years of devout service to the pontifex resulted in his ascension up the pyramid of power that is Clan Tremere. His ability to blend so thoroughly into other cultures, observe their magical practices, and assiduously document them earned him admiration in the scholarly circles of the Damned. When the spiritualist movement began, he eagerly participated in many such gatherings, quickly sorting the charlatans from the visionaries. As a panorama of occult societies took hold in Europe, he traveled widely at the behest of the pontifices, documenting the evolution of magic. Triumphs of scholarship eventually earned him a position as a primogen in London, a cosmopolitan locale that Edward decided should host a wide array of practitioners, whether living, dead or undead. Through extensive correspondence, he extended invitations to occultists and loremasters throughout the world.

Edward's enthusiasm was a sharp departure from the attitudes of the city's previous primogen, Monsieur Pachard. The former councilor's mysterious death scandalized the London Camarilla. Openly, his disappearance was blamed on an attack by Sabbat crusaders, but privately, some insightful ancillae whispered that he had been eliminated through intrigue. The local Nosferatu hinted that the former primogen had a falling out with the primogen council, possibly resulting in his sudden "committal" to the Deep Ward of Dr. Timothy's asylum. Within half a century, several old and treacherous primogen councilors had been replaced by younger and more inexperienced ones. Was it because of the Sabbat, as the seneschal claimed, or a scheme to make the primogen council more subservient to their prince? Bainbridge dismissed such gossip. Just in case, however, he recruited a clan whip who could also act as his bodyguard.

During his decades of travel and research, Edward had encountered a vast array of disturbing supernatural activity. One of the most remarkable was a cult of magi who had claimed to practice techniques preserved from the Dark Ages — most notably, sorcery involving fire. For reasons he could not understand, the Inner Circle of the Tremere moved quickly to destroy this hidden cabal. A few survivors were taken to Vienna, where they were extensively conditioned to obey the clan, enforce the clan's will, and forget the existence of the Order of Hermes. More specifically, their minds were cleansed of all memory of their former sect: House Flambeau.



Edward Bainbridge

Edward was later rewarded with a blood bound servant who would act as his clan whip, punishing any who would exploit his generosity in welcoming the diverse occult traditions within London. As long as these practitioners coexist, he sees no need to ask this assistant, Mr. Smythe, to punish those who act with indiscretion. It is hinted, however, that if Edward does not ask Smythe to perform such services, Vienna will.

Despite this veiled threat, Edward has decided that London must maintain numerous chantries if it is to remain innovative. In a sense, all London Tremere belong to his one chantry, but this is little more than a formality adopted to ensure that the local Witches remain unified. He extends great lenience to Kindred who wish to form their own mystical societies, even tolerating those who want to patronize mortals seeking occult knowledge. His generosity has one condition: In London, no one outside Clan Tremere is to learn Thaumaturgy. He considers his clan's dabbling in mortal practices to be "research," but the boundaries of such activities are enforced by his whip. Valerius currently supports the idea that outsiders who learn true Thaumaturgy threaten the Masquerade. Thus, when a curious Kindred is turned to ash by the Path of Flame, Edward's whip cites the First Tradition as his justifica-

tion for unleashing swift retribution. Truly, Edward's hospitality exceeds Smythe's brutality.

The primogen's favorite haunt is the British Museum, which Clan Tremere has collectively pressured to have declared an Elysium. Years of scholarship have made Edward Bainbridge a respected and inimitable guide to its riches. His modest estate is within walking distance of the museum. It is a three-story Victorian house with charming décor, an eccentric display of stone gargoyles in its garden, and elaborate Thaumaturgical wards. He never conducts business there, preferring instead to walk to the museum at night, where he handles introductions and negotiations in the corridors. Between the Tremere, the Venttrue and the Toreador, several mortal guards have been empowered as ghouls to protect and defend this national treasure. Bainbridge claims the neighborhood between his haven and the museum as his domain.

Image: Scholarly to a fault, Edward has only three suits at any given time, which his servant has meticulously repaired upon countless occasions. The spectacles he wears are not an affectation; when he was Embraced, his vision was poor, his hairline was receding, and a paunch had settled around his midsection. Outsiders in other clans make the mistake of considering Edward harmless. Yet during high rituals, he is as passionate as a force of nature. His approach to magic usually involves assuming a particular persona of mythic significance during a carefully planned ceremony. He seems to transform his very identity when his craft demands it.

Roleplaying Hints: As a consummate host and visionary researcher, you rarely pass judgment on those who wish to consult you. Your tolerance for a wide array of magical styles and practices has garnered you support from a wide array of Witches, but also the resentment of more conservative factions. You threaten with the wrath of the elders (or your whip's retribution) when a Tremere's actions would endanger a chantry, the clan, the city or the Camarilla. When dealing with gentlemen, you listen more than you speak, only lapsing into the pedagogical mode of your days in academe when you are actively consulted. When dealing with the "weaker sex," you are exceptionally gentlemanly and genteel. Soft-spoken and even-tempered, you seem to have tamed the very Beast within you through the discipline of scholarship and the healing qualities of magical practice. Many consider you a paragon of Humanity.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: Elaine de Calinot

Nature: Thrill-Seeker

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1850

Apparent Age: mid-40s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 4, Melee 3, Performance 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics (Theology) 4, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4, Occult 5, Science 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 5, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 3, Thaumaturgy 4

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 4, Movement of the Mind 3

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Herd 4, Resources 4, Retainers 3, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 5, Self-Control 3, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 6

Merits & Flaws: Eat Food

Note: The Tremere primogen is blessed with the ability to enjoy food and drink. He usually exercises this ability for the purpose of drinking exotic teas. A solitary practitioner within the clan, Rebecca Grey, visits him once each month to bring him a fresh supply of herbs. She also informs him of recent events involving witchcraft and magi. These and other "human" tastes help him assume an alternate persona, one that travels freely through mortal magical societies. It is a habit he adopts more often than anyone else in his clan, as he continues to research through experience.

At times, his contact with mortals has become so intimate that it presents a risk to the Masquerade. More precisely, he has a weakness for female flesh, and has taken many mortal lovers. It is a natural extension of his many scandals in his breathing days, when he engaged in furtive couplings with native women in Africa. He would promise to show his conquests the wonders of the civilized world, then promptly and conveniently forget them. As a good anthropologist, he learned the punishments for sullied women in a wide variety of tribes. The tribes he enjoyed the most were the ones that killed the pregnant and disgraced women he left behind.

As a vampire, his abductions of the innocent are equally exploitative. Although he usually conditions the objects of his indiscretions to forget their supernatural affairs, proper applications of that Discipline require him to abduct his victims for extended periods of time. It is only a matter of time before he is exposed as a criminal,

though he sees his need for "human contact" as proof of his own humanity, a sacrifice he makes for love. It is a degenerative enterprise that has corrupted him to his very core. Since Rebecca Grey guards her humanity and sanity with far greater vigilance, she would be horrified to discover what Bainbridge has secretly become, and might possibly scheme to destroy him.

Sri Sansa, Rakish Mountebank

Background: Born to a wealthy family, Sri could never hope to fully capitalize on his family's good fortune. A native of India, he would always be second-best to the British imperialists who claimed his country as a colony of their empire. Even during his years of schooling in Britain, he was treated as an inferior. When he returned, he was reluctant to struggle as a functionary in his father's export business. The fortune his family amassed came at the cost of the suffering of his countrymen. At first, he was overwhelmed by guilt, but with access to his family's riches, he could afford ways to numb that troublesome emotion. Growing increasingly demoralized by his contact with British culture, his diversions blossomed into outright hedonism. In the pursuit of pleasure, he became a rake, a degenerate and a scoundrel.

A handsome man, Sri charmed British women who sought an escape from propriety through indulgence in the forbidden. They held certain expectations of him, ones he was all too eager to exploit. Through rumors of Blavatsky's discoveries, India acquired a certain mystique related to the occult, one complicated by misunderstandings of everything from yoga to tantric practices. The women he found most attractive were the ones who repeatedly asked if he had any acquaintance with magic. He sought it with all the passion of a young man eager for a quick tryst. Before long, he traveled in a circle of occult charlatans eager to uncover the mysteries of India, whether real or fabricated. By learning the patter of a drawing room spiritualist, memorizing fragments of Blavatsky, cultivating a taste for illicit substances, and parroting a mishmash of topics acquired from other fakers, he learned to play the role of a occultist.

As with other victims of the Embrace, he found what he was seeking. Sri's misfortune began in England, where he sought to ply his criminal trade. The would-be Indian mystic offered his services as a fortuneteller and spiritualist to the wealthy and desperate. Smuggling various substances brought from abroad amply supplemented his already considerable income. It was a role he played all too well, for it enabled him to make gullible acquaintances eager for spiritual advancement. By presenting himself as an expert in Indian mysticism, he made the acquain-



tance of many curious individuals, including a pale man who hinted at his own occult knowledge.

In a late night rendezvous, the pale man offered to hire the Indian spiritualist as an advisor. Sri feigned insouciance, remaining aloof as he claimed to possess secrets he could never willingly disclose. The pale man lacked the discipline to condition his associate, but by performing a "ritual" masking the first stage of a blood bond, the foolish Tremere made Sri his ghoul. He was sorely disappointed to learn of the so-called expert's fraud, but he found a student eager to learn the intricacies of Thaumaturgy. After ensuring the second stage of a blood bond, he Embraced Sri and acquired him as an apprentice.

Sri's talent for deception has served him in good stead. The opportunities afforded by his clan allow him to ascertain the truth behind many of the myths he had previously encountered. Sri still has a fierce addiction to many of the substances he sampled in his breathing days, including an exotic brew he claims to be "soma." By distilling the substance with a small portion of his own blood, he has begun to develop a blood cult fascinated by his false teachings in Indian mysticism. The most benevolent contributors learn of reincarnation, shortly followed by revelations of their mystical and supernatu-

ral past lives. They pay for it with their current lives, or at least their blood. He freely dispenses falsehood, but he reserves the truth for himself.

Image: Sri adopts the eccentric garb of a Victorian spiritualist. Although his suit is a somber black, his white turban often sports a colorful feather affixed by a silver pin. Reputable sorts suspect he is a con artist, yet Sri can blend enough truth with falsehood, or magic with trickery, to prevent exposure. The costume jewelry he occasionally sports holds no mystical power, but the wards he wears against other supernatural creatures are potent. In his attire, as with everything else, he considers walking the fine line between fooling the gullible and exposing the Masquerade a dangerous and delightful game.

Roleplaying Hints: Always appear to know more than you actually do. Within the realm of the occult, that isn't difficult. Even among Tremere, you are a con artist, yet the resources you bring to the clan prevent them from actually calling your bluffs. Keep in mind, however, that you must respect a few powerful individuals. It is imperative, for instance, that the Tremere primogen allows you to continue drawing blood from your cult. If he were to find out the illicit substances you partake through it, he might withdraw his support. Do not depend on Thaumaturgy when you can use the Dominate Discipline, or preferably subterfuge, instead.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: Thomas Thorne

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Director

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1879

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Expression 4, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 2, Performance 5

Knowledges: Academics 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 3

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 3, Thaumaturgy 1

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 1

Backgrounds: Herd 4, Resources 4

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 5

VENTRUE

Mithras, Prince of London

Background: Born in the lands that are tonight Persia, the man who became the Prince of London led an army into the mountains to defeat a rebellion by local lords. It was a long and bloody campaign — supernatural powers aided the rebels — but eventually the army defeated all but one of the insurgents, claiming their severed heads as proof of their demise. The surviving lord, their leader, used his powers to enter the general's tent unmolested, and magical forces prevented the war leader from crying out or resisting. The general steeled himself for death, but rather than exacting his revenge, the rebel leader acknowledged his opponent's strength and tenacity and instead offered him a choice: eternal unlife or instant death. The general chose the former, faking his own demise to fool his followers and masters. Eventually, he returned to civilization, his newfound powers convincing those of his former homeland that he was the god of war, whose name he adopted.

Mithras.

The cult of Mithras worked well with his vampiric existence, explaining his nocturnal routine and the importance of blood. By means of the cult, Mithras was able to manipulate mortal societies and forge a vast empire. Eventually, however, he tired of this shadow governance, and when a new, more dynamic and militaristic power began to nibble away at the lands under his suzerainty, he chose to journey west to the lands of this new power, studying their military and power structures. It wasn't long before Mithras's image appeared in armed camps throughout the empire of these Romans, an ever-growing network of military and ex-military adherents expanding his influence across the land. Other Cainites challenged Mithras's influence but none could dislodge him, despite his constant wandering throughout the lands of the empire.

To some extent, the staid core lands of the Roman Empire bored Mithras and he came to favor the fringe lands such as Hispania, Germania and Britannia — his adopted homeland from 71 AD. The constant fighting against barbarian incursions appealed to the Methuselah, and his cult was well established at all levels of society. Furthermore, the island-province was free of the political backbiting that had infested Rome; most other claimants for domain over the isles had fallen several years earlier in revolts by the indigenous peoples. Mithras

continued to journey in Britannia and the northern parts of the empire, encountering other Methuselahs such as Bodhmall of the Gangrel; but Londinium became his home, and the Mithraeum by the stream that ran through the city his principal haven. Once again, others challenged his power, subtly at first but with increasing vigor. Many of the tenets of his cult (such as the celebration of December 25th, tales of a virgin birth, twelve followers, and the death and resurrection of its figurehead) were adopted by an offshoot of the Jewish faith that spread westward in the years he resided in Britannia. Efforts to stem the growth of this despised faith by persecuting its followers came to naught, and it eventually became the state religion of the Roman Empire.

In the century that followed, the empire became steadily weaker and unstable, drawing in resources and prompting a collapse in government in the far provinces. Many younger Cainites blamed Mithras for this state of affairs, turning on him and the other elder Ventre in Britannia. He survived numerous attempts on his unlife, defeating his challengers with ease, but the internecine conflict sapped his resolve. Feeling the weight of years — he had been active for over *sixteen centuries* — he journeyed to the frontier fort of Vercovicium where he entered torpor. He would wake several times over the centuries, but as far as the other Cainites in Britain were concerned, Mithras was no longer a factor in their affairs.

Mithras's waking shortly after the Norman Conquest was a turning point for the Kindred of Britain, representing the return of unifying Cainite power to Britain. A triumvirate of Kindred stood against him and rebuffed his initial attempts to regain his position of supremacy, but over the century that followed he undermined their power base. By 1154 he was acknowledged prince, not only of London, but also of Britain. Revolts against his authority in 1215 and again in 1254 heralded the upheavals that were to follow in the Anarch Revolt but still Mithras clung to power, his principal opponents the Toreador of Edinburgh and the Tremere of Durham. He tacitly accepted the outcome of the Convention of Thorns, using the principles of the Masquerade to rein in the excesses of his opponents while never fully accepting the Camarilla's ideology. To the Prince of London, the Camarilla was a young upstart that thought it knew better than a Methuselah, but one that could be manipulated toward his own ends.

The enthronement of James I marked the start of a new phase in the War of Princes in Britain. The new king's Scottish power base was solidly under the sway of the Toreador, for the first time removing Mithras's influence over the king. The Cainite conflict reached its peak with the English Civil war of the mid-17th century,



which restored Mithras's authority but left him jaded. He delegated much of his work to his seneschal, Valerius, who would become prince pro tem in the late 18th century, when Mithras disappeared for almost one hundred years.

Where the prince went during the period is a mystery — "the East" is as much as most know, though Persia and India are suspected destinations — and he returned to a London much changed by the Industrial Revolution and Cainite politics. He found Valerius had squandered the resources of his position, weakening both the office of the prince and the position of London. He demoted Valerius and installed Anne Bowesley as the new seneschal, binding her to him. Mithras works diligently to repair the damage left by Valerius, but he relies on Anne for much of his insight — being over three thousand years old, he is locked very much into an anachronistic mindset and struggles to adapt. Anne has had little success dissuading the prince from some of his more direct actions against those who displease him.

Image: Dark-skinned and of compact build, with handsome features, somber eyes and shoulder-length dark hair, Mithras is extremely charismatic, even without his vampiric abilities. He normally wears a soft cloth

hat of the Phrygian style, as well as loose clothing that does not impede movement.

Roleplaying Hints: You radiate energy and power, your authority clear to even the most casual observer. You are not given to rash speech, but when you do speak, your words carry the weight of millennia. You are detached, almost bored with mundane goings on, but this conceals your shrewd political mind — and violent temper. Given the years you have walked the earth, and the power sustaining your deathless body, your mindset is barely human — your intellect, motivation and morality are alien to all but the oldest Kindred. Indeed, less insightful Kindred might use the word *insane*.

Clan: Ventre

Nature: Autocrat

Demeanor: Architect

Generation: 4th

Embrace: 1258 BC

Sire: Ventre Antediluvian

Apparent Age: Mid 20s

Physical: Strength 9, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8

Social: Charisma 8, Manipulation 9, Appearance 7

Mental: Perception 9, Intelligence 9, Wits 8

Talents: Alertness 8, Athletics 7, Brawl 8, Dodge 7, Intimidation 7, Intrigue 7, Intuition 7, Leadership 9, Subterfuge 7

Skills: Archery 5, Drive 4, Etiquette 6, Firearms 4, Melee 9, Security 5, Stealth 6, Survival 5

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (London 6, British Isles 4), Bureaucracy 8, Camarilla Lore 4, City Secrets (London) 5, Economics 4, Finance 1, Investigation 1, Law 3,

Linguistics 4, Occult 5, Politics 6, Sabbat Lore 2, Science 1

Disciplines: Dominate 9, Fortitude 6, Potence 5, Presence 8, Quietus 4

Background: Allies 7, Contacts 7, Herd 4, Influence 7, Resources 5, Retainers 6, Status 8

Virtues: Conviction 3, Self-Control 5, Courage 5

Humanity: 2

Willpower: 8

Note: The blood of mortals cannot sustain the unlife of vampires of Mithras's age — he can gain sustenance only from other Cainites.

Lady Anne Bowesley, the Seneschal

Background: The civil war divided many families, shattering the established order; but it also gave others the opportunity to reclaim heritages lost in the rise of the Tudors or, worse still, the Stewarts. The Bowesleys of Warwickshire were one such family, siding with Cromwell despite their noble family tree with ties to Richard, Earl

of Warwick, called "Kingmaker" by many. Together with a handful of other pro-Parliament nobles they formed the Optimates ("Best ones"), a secret society whose goal was to reshape the government of England and place themselves at its head.

As a woman in the mid-17th century, Anne Bowesley was denied a formal education but nonetheless learned much of politics by listening to her father and brothers. While her siblings were hotheaded and tempestuous, Anne was a subtle diplomat and peacemaker, adept at getting her own way by manipulating those around her. The Restoration of the monarchy after the death of Cromwell and his heir foiled the Optimates' scheme but didn't end Anne's ambition to be part of the ruling elite. Through her husband, she made contact with nobles in England and the Netherlands and together they sought to depose Charles II and later his brother, the Catholic James II, with a more pliable — and Protestant — sovereign. Their choice was William of Orange, who in 1688 was invited to England from Holland and who would become William III.

Anne's role in this constitutional coup went unnoticed by many mortals, but not by all observers. One London noble saw her potential and offered her power and influence beyond her imaginings. He was Valerius, scion of Clan Ventre and seneschal to the Prince of London. It did not take Anne long to accept the offer, faking her death on an embassy to the Low Countries. She kept a low profile for several decades, learning the intricacies of Kindred society as she waited for those who knew her in life to grow old and die, then reasserted herself in the halls of power she knew so well. Before, she had sought to advance her position and deny the Catholic scourge. Now she fought against bitter foes called Toreador and Tremere. Her worth to Clan Ventre soon became apparent, particularly as the patriarchal society continually underestimated her abilities, rivals and enemies alike falling before her acumen and ambition. The prince himself recognized Parliament as her domain, fulfilling her father's dreams, and she courted mortal and Cainite alike to advance the cause of Mithras and the fief of London.

Yet, all was not well. Her sire, Valerius, saw in her a threat to his own ambitions — she accomplished in a century what had taken him half a millennium to achieve — and subtly sought to limit her progress. When Mithras disappeared in the late 18th century and Valerius became regent, he elevated Anne to the role of seneschal pro tem. Although a notional promotion in the Kindred hierarchy, the demands of the position prevented Anne from advancing her own cause, hampering her efforts and tying her fortunes to those of Valerius. A series of



Lady Anne Bowesley

disasters followed including a Sabbat insurrection, which forced Anne to strive hard to maintain order. When Mithras returned, Lady Anne had no compunctions about "filling in the gaps" about events in his absence, resulting in the demotion of Valerius and Anne's elevation into his post.

Anne finds the situation under the returned prince both better and worse than before. She is still buried in the nightly work of managing the city's Kindred affairs but has more freedom in her methods — Mithras is somewhat less hands-on than Valerius. However, though decisive and undoubtedly potent, Mithras's outlook is somewhat less refined and more feudal in its outlook. Anne realizes that Mithras does not fully comprehend the changes that have taken place during his absence and sees both dangers and opportunities in this. She can steer his thoughts to advance her own agenda, but knows that a single misstep would be fatal, and that while the prince remains active — and she is blood bound to him — her power can never be absolute.

Lady Anne is a diablerist, and though not yet reliant on Kindred vitae to subsist, yearns for the taste. Many of those who fall afoul of her political machinations find themselves under her fangs, but she constantly searches for opportunity to diablerize elder vampires, improving her abilities and taking her one step closer to mastery of

the city. Curiously, her blood bond to Mithras helps mask the taint of diablerie in her aura.

Image: Anne is small and slightly built, with delicate features and chestnut hair tied in a bun. Indeed, casual observers mistake Anne for an elegant and well-heeled matriarch. Those who survive their first encounter with Lady Anne come to know a confident and powerful woman who maintains her domain with an iron will and whose eyes, bearing and dress betray her aristocratic roots.

Roleplaying Hints: You are — quite literally — a born aristocrat and natural leader and can be by turns charming and domineering, knowing exactly how and when to change attitudes to get what you want. You tolerate no insolence; and accept few as equals, and only one person, the prince, as your superior and him — though you do not yet admit it to anyone — only grudgingly.

Clan: Ventrue

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Autocrat

Generation: 6th. (Anne was 8th generation upon her Embrace, but diablerie (with Valerius's complicity) lowered her generation to 7th. During the Victorian period, certainly before World War II, further diablerie will reduce her generation to 6th.)

Embrace: 1688

Sire: Valerius

Apparent Age: 50s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 5, Brawl 3, Diplomacy 5, Dodge 5, Grace 3, Intimidation 4, Intrigue 6, Leadership 4, Masquerade 4, Style 2, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Etiquette 4, Interrogation 4, Meditation 2, Melee 2, Performance 3, Ride 3, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Academics 3, Area Knowledge (London) 5, Bureaucracy 6, Camarilla Lore 4, City Secrets (London) 5, Finance 6, Investigation 4, Law 6, Linguistics 4, Occult 3, Politics 6, Psychology 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Presence 4

Background: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Herd 4, Influence 5, Resources 5, Retainers 5, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 5, Courage 4

Humanity: 7

Willpower: 8

Note: Anne is blood bound to Mithras, but the strength of the ties have weakened to the level of the second

drink, allowing her to ignore Mithras's dictates by spending points of temporary Willpower.

Valerius, Deposed Would-Be Prince

Background: In life there was no Valerius, only Walhhere, a minor Saxon noble, loyal to King Harold and happily married with three strong sons. His people prospered and he ruled his lands well. Then came King Harold's call. The Normans had invaded the country and each lord was expected to raise men in the country's defense. Walhhere answered the call without question, marching to battle with a cool, calm, confident frame of mind.

Valerius entered unlfe on the battlefield of Hastings, shortly after being run through by a Norman blade. He took his new name to reflect his new existence. After a few decades spent with his sire Bindusara, a noted scholar, he pledged his sword to Mithras. For several centuries he served as sheriff, keeping London free of undesirables for his Lord. When Mithras's chamberlain, Lord Camden, was slain in mysterious circumstances, Valerius replaced him. Respect for him grew to such a point that when Mithras disappeared in 1798, no one questioned Valerius's right to claim the domain in his stead.



After the Sabbat attack in 1848, the would-be prince's mood changed. First of all, he decided that the city needed to be better defended, and that meant welcoming Tremere into the city to help bolster its defenses. He finally cast aside his mentor's prejudices against the Witches and gave the clan full rights and positions in the city. He granted Embracing rights generously and invited vampires from other cities to help replace those Kindred destroyed during the incursion. He also decided that waiting for Mithras to return after half a century was a waste of time, and that he should seize the position of prince for himself.

Valerius's efforts to open up the city to other vampires and win Camarilla approval for formally adopting the title prince has been his undoing. The previously unquestioned Ventre grasp on power then looked less assured, as the Gangrel took a greater interest in London, often sending powerful childe to represent their interests in the growing city. The Tremere quickly leveraged their open invitation into a substantial power base in the city. Few of London's elder Kindred were prepared to support Valerius's open revolt against Mithras's policies; and certainly the princes of other cities showed no signs of approving his adoption of the title, concerned as they were by the likely repercussions should Mithras return. When Mithras did return, Valerius immediately summoned the primogen, to give himself enough time to work out what to do next. The moment the Tremere Primogen walked into Elysium, Mithras exploded in rage, publicly stripped his former seneschal of all rank and privilege and physically threw him out of the building.

Since then, Valerius broods and plans in a new haven hidden in the East End. His former mentor has taken no further action against him, but has set about destroying the power structure Valerius so carefully built. Valerius's own childe, Anne, has turned against him, throwing her lot in with Mithras rather than the Kindred who Embraced and mentored her. Valerius is well aware that he has been rejected by his mentor and betrayed by his childe. He wants revenge, but he hasn't yet decided if he has the courage to move against the ancient Prince of London.

Image: Valerius is a wiry, athletic man, with red hair that he's taken to wearing short and a trimmed, neat beard. His clothing is erratic. On occasions he looks like the perfect Victorian gent, but when a depression takes him he may be found in 16th century or earlier garb. His eyes have taken on a distinctly haunted look in the last few years, and he rarely ever smiles. With each passing year he grows more and more inactive. He spends a few months in torpor each year. Even when he's active, he

moves only when necessary, and then with an absolute economy of action. Anyone watching him for a more than a few minutes could spot that he was something other than mortal, for he looks like a pale, perfect statue until a small, considered movement betrays that he is animate.

Roleplaying Hints: You suffer marked mood swings. At times you seem to relish unlife without the burden of power; more often you sink into a dark depression and wonder aloud about the spiritual fates of creatures such as you when they are destroyed. You vaguely remember that you were once known for your level head, but that time has long passed. You are quick to anger at the best of times and recent events give you much to be angry about. You also remember a time when you loved Mithras like a father, but that too has passed. Now, you have decided that the prince is a danger to the city, too unpredictable and unreliable to function as a prince any longer. It is your duty to find a way to bring him down.

Clan: Ventre

Sire: Bindusara

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1066

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Intimidation 5, Leadership 5, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Etiquette 5, Firearms 4, Melee (Rapier) 5, Ride 4, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Knowledges: Academics 1, Bureaucracy 5, Finance 5,

Investigation 4, Law 4, Linguistics 3, Occult 3, Politics 6

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude

5, Obscure 2, Potence 3, Presence 5, Thaumaturgy 1

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 1

Backgrounds: Allies 1, Contacts 2, Herd 2, Influence 1, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 7

Rory McAndrew, the Eye of the Camarilla

Background: The early 17th century was a time of profound change for the British Isles. After centuries of warfare between England and Scotland, the two became one as King James VI of Scotland also became King James

I of England after the death without heir of Queen Elizabeth. Rory McAndrew, a Presbyterian preacher in the Church of Scotland, gave little thought to the implications of the change. Like most Scots, he was amused and pleased to see a Scottish king on the English throne, but he had more important business to attend to: saving the souls of the people of Glasgow.

McAndrew, like most of his fellow clergy, was a fearsome hellfire and damnation preacher, teaching the strictest of moral codes and the dourlest of lifestyles. He was a well-respected and competent speaker, and thus climbed rapidly through the ranks of the Church. When James the First and Sixth returned to Scotland on one of his infrequent visits singing the praises of "superior English culture," McAndrew reacted with disgust. He saw the English as an effete, ineffectual race, much given to vice and with no willpower to withstand temptation.

Then, in 1618, King James imposed English Bishops on the Church of Scotland in a blatant attempt to integrate it with the Church of England. McAndrew was unwilling to tolerate it. He, along with several other senior figures in the Church of Scotland traveled to London to petition the king against this measure. McAndrew spoke eloquently on the difference between the Scottish and English Churches and inherent superi-



ority of the Presbyterian faith. The king listened attentively and then simply dismissed the petition.

That same evening, McAndrew suffered a serious crisis of faith. He knelt by his bed in the lodging provided for the delegation and prayed for a sign that God had not abandoned the Church. Instead of a sign from God, he felt the fangs of Albert Wainwright, a Ventre of respect and standing in London, at his neck. Mithras had granted Wainwright leave to Embrace some years before, and McAndrew's nationality and oratorical skills were just what Wainwright sought.

Any last vestiges of faith in McAndrew died as he sucked down the blood of a vicar Wainwright had subdued and brought for his new childe to feed on. As the Scot adapted to unlife, he reasoned that God would not let creatures such as him exist, therefore there was no God. He abandoned his previous commitment to a frugal, parsimonious lifestyle, using his new supernatural abilities to build for his sire a thriving trading business importing Scots goods. McAndrew spent his profits on luxurious mansions and the finest clothes. Under the guidance of his sire, he then entered the cut and thrust of London's Kindred politics and proved an able student and a talented politician. When Wainwright decided to leave for the Americas, McAndrew neatly stepped into the power void left by his departure.

In the early 18th century, the charming and ruthless Scots Kindred was noticed by Violetta, the Toreador justicar, on one of her many visits to London. She watched McAndrew over the course of her next few visits and eventually asked him to serve as an archon in her retinue. McAndrew leapt at the chance, and traveled all over Europe with the justicar. His political skills and judgment, well-honed in London, served him well, and by the mid-19th century, he was working separately from Violetta, yet still under her direction.

Image: McAndrew is a tall and lean man with intense eyes. Even before his Embrace, his face was unusually thin, the result of a simple and frugal diet. As a Kindred, he looks on the brink of starvation. Since his return to London, he has returned to a family firm of Saville Row tailors, whose founding member he knew back in the 18th century. Their suits are absolutely exquisite, and make even his thin frame look imposing. He commissions two or three new suits each year and is thus always clad in the latest styles. Usually the suits will have a discreet Scottish touch: a tartan lining, or a waistcoat with an embroidered thistle, for example.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a cynical analyst of human and Kindred nature. The talent served you well as a preacher, allowing you to judge the weakness of your flock. It now aids you in judging the characters and

aspirations of the Kindred around you. Conversations are a game for you, a means of learning more about the person you are talking to without revealing anything significant about yourself. Your ability to unsettle people by picking up on hidden conflicts and suppressed hostilities is what has made you so valuable to the Camarilla as a whole and Violetta in particular. You have mixed feelings about your return to London. You are dealing directly with Mithras for the first time in your unlife, and he's even more intimidating than you imagined. His dislike of Scots does not make your job easier. However, you are determined to make the most of this opportunity. You sense that Violetta is considering stepping down as justicar, and you enjoy your role as an archon too much to let your career end when hers does. This is your chance to make a real name for yourself in the sect, and you're not going to let it pass you by.

Clan: Ventre

Sire: Alfred Wainwright

Nature: Autocrat

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1618

Apparent Age: early 40s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Empathy 5, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 4, Melee 2, Performance 3, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics (theology) 4, Finance 3, Investigation 4, Law 2, Linguistics 3, Politics 5

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2, Presence 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 1, Influence 3, Resources 4, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 6

Janet Latimer, Ambassador to London

Background: Janet Latimer is not a child of the cities, and its shows. Born to a well-to-do family in rural Cheshire, she spent her childhood and teenage years enjoying the country pursuits of the landed upper class. The local people deferred to her and her family without question, not least because her father owned most of the farmland in the surrounding area and thus controlled all the jobs.

A few trips into Manchester with her mother were the sole extent of Janet's experience of the city, until Shawlands chose to Embrace her. The Baron of Manchester had some business dealings with George Latimer, and would occasionally drive out to the estate for a late supper with him. Naturally, Latimer expected his wife and daughter to entertain his business associate. Shawlands became quite fascinated with the young woman. He spotted a keen intelligence in her that went to waste on a life of rural pursuits. Her upbringing and status could make her a useful asset in Britain's surprisingly class-conscious Kindred society.

Shawlands invited the whole family to join him for a night at the theatre in Manchester, then had his ghouls set upon the coach carrying Mrs. Latimer and her daughter into the city. They beat the coachman into unconsciousness, at which point Mrs. Latimer fainted dead away and they kidnapped Janet.

Even as Shawlands comforted the distraught Latimer over the loss of his child, he was training her in her responsibilities as his first childe. While it took a decade for her to grow used to the idea of drinking blood, life in Manchester's Kindred community suited Janet just fine. Shawlands had been right: Her fierce intelligence came into its own in the new setting. With the blessings of the city's primogen, Janet eventually became Shawlands' seneschal, a duty she enjoyed thoroughly. With the prince's attention split between Manchester itself and the rapidly growing port of Liverpool, he needed a second pair of eyes. Janet was able to act in his stead in Manchester when he passed several nights in Liverpool.

The rapid influx of country people into the city through the 19th century has made existence much easier for Janet. She is able to feed only on farm workers, and the number of them now working in the docks and factories of the area makes hunting much less onerous for her.

Janet's sire's decision to send her to London came as a shock to Janet. He explained that the similarity between Lady Anne's new position and her own experiences in Manchester would hopefully allow the two to build up a rapport that could be usefully exploited in the long term. Again, his assessment proved remarkably accurate. Anne has more than once sought out Janet's advice in the year or so she had been in London. Indeed, Janet has grown to enjoy Lady Anne's company and becomes increasingly uncomfortable with the knowledge that her sire has other agents in the city, whose actions cause Anne some degree of consternation. Furthermore, having met Mithras in person several times now, she wonders what Shawlands really hopes to accomplish against such



Janet Latimer

a Kindred. The delights of London and the easy feeding all add to London's attractiveness. Should the time come when her sire summons her back to Manchester, she will be reluctant to leave. Perhaps if she reveals her sire's plans, she might be given permission to stay...

Image: Janet is a fairly comely woman of above average height. Her eyes are dark blue and her expression tends to flit between friendly condescension and outright haughtiness. Her long, chestnut hair is always worn up and pinned into place under the most ornate hats she can manage. She walks in short, measured steps and does not hurry for anyone. Rushing is unladylike and betrays a lack of confidence in one's position, after all.

Roleplaying Hints: You were born to rule, and even here, out of your territory, you demand respect. So far you have always received it. You don't win many allies among your peers — London's senior Kindred, as you see it — because you see every discussion as a chance to prove your worth and status. Your relationships with those who are clearly your inferiors are much more straightforward. You still do your best to dominate any conversation you are involved with, unless it is with someone blatantly more powerful than you: Mithras, the justicar Violetta or her archon, and Lady Anne, for example.

Clan: Ventre
Sire: Shawlands
Nature: Architect
Demeanor: Traditionalist
Generation: 8th
Embrace: 1694
Apparent Age: early 20s
Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2
Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Animal Ken 3, Crafts 3, Ride 2, Etiquette 4, Performance 1, Stealth 3
Knowledges: Academics 3, Finance 2, Law 2, Linguistics 3, Politics 4, Science 1
Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Presence 4
Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Herd 1, Influence 2, Mentor 3, Resources 3, Status 2
Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 3
Morality: Humanity 6
Willpower: 5

Cyril Masters, Legal Mastermind

Background: Masters had served with distinction in several of Britain's colonial wars. Upon his return to his homeland in 1829, he was horrified by what he saw. For all of the empire's idealism, the government could not keep crime, poverty and squalor from thoroughly infesting London, a locale that was supposedly the grandest city in the world. England allegedly brought civility to colonies around the world, but a few blocks away from the homes of wealthy gentlemen and stylish aristocrats, the abject poor victimized each other like animals.

The year that Cyril returned, a man named Robert Peel presented a plan to save the city from degeneracy and decay. The largest force of police constabulary in the world would patrol the streets, becoming a visible presence to deter the schemes of criminal miscreants. Masters pledged to help wage another war, this one against crime in the very heart of the empire. His military experience earned him a commission in Robert Peel's new constabulary. The citizens of London called him a "Peeler;" years later, he would be known as a "Bobbie."

At first, the enterprise was overwhelming. Many police constables (or "PCs") could only back up the threat of the law with force. The sight of a Peeler walking his patrol, truncheon in hand, spread fear into the populace, but with fear came hatred. Justice became

personal and arbitrary, especially once stories spread of how easily some of the defenders of justice could be corrupted. Empowered without restraint, some zealots became little more than thugs for the Empire, skipping the formality of a trial to bludgeon a would-be criminal into submission.

Masters was disgusted by these stories, but responded with increased vigilance. His efforts paid off. Festering in London's East End, a cult of criminals had been abducting London's citizens and butchering them in a sacrificial fashion. The victims had been carefully selected from the lower strata of society. Masters personally led a campaign against this secret society, coordinating the efforts of several officers to expose and destroy this menace. His crusade culminated in a raid on a warehouse, where he discovered that the madmen had been systematically draining their victims of blood to appease a heathen god.

Shortly thereafter, Masters's superiors insisted that the general public could not handle the alarm of such a scandal. His men were dispersed to different parts of the city, the building was burned to the ground, the criminals were never seen again, and Masters was stripped of his command. At the same time, he received a most unusual promotion. From that point on, he would report to a member of the British aristocracy with certain connections to other powerful men within the government.

Cyril Masters patrolled the streets of the East End by day, but by night, he took his supper at an exclusive gentleman's club in central London. Once each week, he reverently consumed the vitae of the Ventre Valerius, sustaining his flesh, spirit, and career in each singular act of submission. Within the Camarilla, Valerius personally claimed London's police force as part of his domain. By this edict, any Kindred attacking a London police officer would be assaulting Clan Ventre. Twenty years later, Masters conveniently assumed a position of authority on the police force. The seneschal of London delegated authority to his faithful servant immediately after draining him of blood and cursing him with vampirism.

By 1880, Masters's network of minions within law enforcement was formidable. A small cabal of high-ranking officers within the British police force reported to him regularly. A select few demonstrated their loyalty by drinking his blood. His spies sported the affectations of obscure gentleman's clubs, complete with secret handshakes and jeweled rings. The few insightful fellows who suspected subterfuge typically dismissed these strange habits as the incunabula of a Victorian fraternity. The men did not frequent the same clubs, however, for the only link that united them was their association with Masters, who visited each of them in turn. When Masters retired, it was a subterfuge allowing him to use the



constables of London as his eyes and ears. In the Victorian age, the police of London still carry truncheons, but for ghouls with Potence, the efficacy of their weapons has improved considerably.

Masters keeps up appearances. Just as he is an expert in the social scene of London's clubs, he lives in a modest but tasteful home within London. It is within walking distance of the theater district, where he often takes his entertainment. Because of his cultured attitudes, he finds it relaxing to converse with visiting Toreador about London's social and artistic events, even when he fails to understand them. Several restaurants and pubs are in the neighborhood surrounding Masters's haven, making it the "Rack" for those he allows to feed there.

Image: Masters poses as an elderly man of wealth and influence, a benefactor to the mortal world. His unkempt beard, wispy hair, and wrinkled visage all speak to his years of wisdom. Should he be capable of perambulation for only a few hours each night, no respectful man will question his activities. On these brisk walks, he wears heavy woolen garments, sports a silver-tipped cane, and watches shadows carefully. When nervous, he holds the knuckle of his index finger to his lips, where one may notice a silver ring with a strangely shaped sigil. Few have the occult knowledge to recognize the Thaumaturgical

wards carved into the ring, his lapel pin, and his cane. Potent strength and wards against supernatural creatures make him a veritable demon in a brawl, should his other supernatural Disciplines fail him.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a proper English gentleman with a strong sense of justice. You speak very plainly, for few can challenge your authority. Even if your sphere of influence is limited, your authority is unquestioned within your domain. Some of your attitudes are anachronistic, yet you firmly support the empire's colonial efforts. Victorian Kindred dare not speak of your brutality, zealous obedience or quiet vengeance. When your officers fail, elders may reproach you, but you are stoic enough to endure it. If necessary, you will spend years hunting down an enemy of the empire. As your power has grown, you have contemplated hunting down and driving unwanted supernatural creatures from the city. If you find an excuse to do so, you will probably take it.

Clan: Venttrue

Sire: Valerius

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Architect

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1849

Apparent Age: early 50s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina (indefatigable) 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Firearms 3, Melee 3, Security 3, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 5, Law 5, Occult 2, Politics 1

Disciplines: Dominate 5, Fortitude 2, Potence 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Herd 3, Influence (police) 5, Resources 3, Retainers 5

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 6

Note: Masters's actions against the cult he found in the East End decades ago attracted the attentions of the supernatural world. Valerius spent decades carefully orchestrating events to advance Master's career. The seneschal kept his eye on the vigilant officer, but so did the survivors of the cult, who continued their worship of a vile god named Set. The raid delayed the Setites' efforts in London for decades, but they never lost track of the man who discovered their schemes.

Three of the clubs Masters frequents provide him with pleasures he cannot attain anywhere else. Although he cannot eat or drink, he may still feel the affects of hashish, laudanum and opium by drinking from a vessel who imbibes them. His intake is prodigious, enough to offset the expenditure of blood sufficient to sustain his ghoulds. For now, he has enough Fortitude and self-control to keep his vices well-hidden. Of course, all of these substances are legal, and Masters secretly uses his influence to help make sure they stay that way. In the meantime, Masters is careful in what he relays to Valerius, balancing it against the secrets he grants to Halim Bey. His hidden ally is the architect of a recent Setite infestation, one who needs to maintain his own appearances. In return, Masters's more exotic appetites are sated.

Hunters

Father Jeremiah Marshal, an Inquisitor

Background: Jeremiah Marshal's father ran a small Hansom cab business, and his elder brothers were already involved in the trade. That left no room for the youngest member of the Marshal family. He didn't care, though, for he had known since he was a little boy what he wanted to do with his life. One of his earliest memories was of a preacher belting out the word of the Lord with utter conviction and passion to spare on Clapham Common one Sunday afternoon. The whole town had been alive with faith through his childhood, and he couldn't wait until he was old enough to train for the ministry.

Once the necessity of formal training was out of the way, Marshal was able to do what he longed to do: preach God's word to the people. He was assigned a small parish in Southwark, preaching to an even smaller congregation. His family was distraught. What was their youngest son doing living and working in such a rotten area? Jeremiah didn't mind, though. This was his chance to bring faith to these poor people and the glory of God into their lives.

Marshal's life changed the night one of his parishioners fled toward the church as he was locking up for the evening, calling desperately for sanctuary. At first, Marshal assumed that he was drunk, and tried to calm him down, but was interrupted by the sight of something crawling warily toward the pair of them. It was not human; nothing human could move like that. Marshal didn't hesitate. He called out to God, and bid the creature be gone in Jesus' name. He felt a movement of the Spirit within him like never before, and the light of God burned in his soul. The creature cried out in surprise, and fled into the night.



Father Jeremiah Marshal

Not surprisingly, Marshal's preaching changed from that night on. He ceased the very academic teaching that most priests pursued and instead talked repeatedly of the Enemy, of damnation, of lost souls and creatures of Hell abroad in the streets of the city.

Marshal was quickly noted by senior figures in the Church for his fire when preaching that Satan was real and worked among God's people even today. However, his preaching against rationalism and the work of Darwin as tools of the Adversary did the Church more harm than good. When the previous London head of the Order of St. George — the Anglican Inquisition — passed away, Jeremiah was offered the job. At first he was honored and excited. His life's beliefs were confirmed. Satan's spawn prowled out there, and he was being given access to the Church's records on them.

What Marshal found disappointed him. The archives were full of reports of creatures of all kinds preying on humanity, and the work of the Inquisition against them. They told of the links between the Order of St. George and the Catholic Inquisition, and of nearly six centuries of struggle. However, the members of the order, numbering barely a dozen, were dispirited. They had spent too long dealing with the disbelief of their superiors and a lack of modern evidence of the supernatural at work.

Marshal realized that God had finally given him his calling. It was his place to revitalize the order and he intends to do so, in His name. Now, all he needs is some evidence of the work of Satan, and he can go to work.

Image: Marshal is of average height and stocky build. He is almost without exception to be found in his cassock and priest's collar, known colloquially as a dog collar. His black hair is graying noticeably at the temples, and his mouth has a tendency to look slightly downcast. However, it is his eyes that catch most peoples' attention. They burn with the fire of righteousness even as he goes about his day-to-day business, but positively blaze when he preaches.

Roleplaying Hints: You miss the preaching that came with being a parish priest, but you know that this job is your true calling. You are chronically incapable of separating your job and your life, and few purely social conversations go by without you attempting to gauge how much faith the person you're talking to has and gently moving the topic to God. However, when you're working, seize upon anything that is unusual or unconventional in any tale you are told and either note it for further investigation, or try to get further details about it as subtly as you can. While you appear pleasant enough on the surface, underneath you are a fanatic, but one with a very real and Christian faith in God.

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Architect

Age: 35

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 1, Performance 2,

Knowledges: Academics 3, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 1, Influence 1, Resources 2, Retainers 1

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 8

Willpower: 5

True Faith: 3

Peter Harker, Co-Founder of the Arcanum

Background: Peter Harker is the only son of respectable middle class couple who owned a business that initially shipped slaves from Africa to the Americas, but which has since diversified into general trading.

Harker's father had an astute eye for saleable goods and made a small fortune as a result.

However, the young Harker's inclinations lay in the academic realm. After a spell at a private boarding school in Bournemouth, he won a place for himself at University College in London. He took lodgings in Gower Street and worked hard and diligently, securing a first-class honors degree in ancient history. He followed this up with postgraduate work on tracing the links between ancient mythologies and modern societies, and applied to join the Foreign Office in the hope of being able to pursue his interests in the field.

Harker's relationship with his parents grew distant as his studies progressed. They were in Southampton, he was in London, and their lives rarely coincided. He wasn't lonely, though. Although he had few friends, they were all interested in the same fields as Harker, and their social lives were effectively an extension of their working lives.

A period studying the cultures of the people of India impressed on Harker the importance of what he deemed "the supernatural" to their lives. He had never found Christianity particularly interesting or relevant to himself, and believed firmly that it collapsed under the onslaught of the rational mind. Instead he probed into



the pre-Christian beliefs of the British with varying degrees of success.

Then his life suffered two tragedies. First, the Foreign Office rejected him after an interview, deeming him to be of "unsuitable character." Afterward, during an extended sojourn in South Africa, his parents took very seriously ill within weeks of each other. The doctors diagnosed a rare tropical fever, and said there was nothing they could do. Harker found himself strangely unmoved by this, but returned to Southampton for some months to help care for them.

After his parents passed on, he knew that he had no interest at all in running the business. It was still a growing concern, and was worth a considerable amount of money. He sold the business for an excellent price with the aid of his cousin, bought a house in London and lived off the rest of the profits. His studies progressed quickly, and he soon became known to other enthusiasts in the field. One of them invited him to join the Hermetic Order of the Rising Day, which he found a fascinating synthesis of Greek spirituality and modern occult thinking. His membership in the order and remarkable success in unearthing rituals and ancient documents around the worship of Hermes led to his invitation to join the Arcanum.

At the beginning of the **London by Night** period, Harker is just another scholar with an interest in the occult. His membership in the Arcanum changes all that, as he converts his house into its London meeting-house. His fine intellect serves remarkably well at assembling a clear picture of the possible links between apparently unrelated events, and he will quickly start to develop a picture of Kindred unlife once the Arcanum reports arrive at his home, becoming a major threat to the Masquerade.

Image: Harker is heading toward an early middle age. He is running toward fat, with the distinct signs of a double chin forming. His suits were clearly expensive at some point in the distant past, but are now shabby, ill

kempt and poorly fitting. He gives over minimal time to his appearance, and his puffy brown eyes show that he spends far too much time reading by gaslight and not enough out in the daylight.

Roleplaying Hints: You know people underestimate you because of your shabby appearance, but you really don't care. The intellect is all that matters to you, and you have enough friends that appreciate you for who and what you really are. Your students and inferiors in the Arcanum are there to learn from you, not be mollycoddled by you. Small talk and polite banter bore you; you have no desire to participate in them if you can possibly avoid it, unless you can see major benefit to yourself in doing so, in which case you can be quite charming. Otherwise, why waste your life that way, when there are serious debates to be had? Anything at all to do with the supernatural fascinates you. It never occurs to you for a moment that it may, in fact, be dangerous. After all, it's just the remnant of the superstition of primitive peoples. Once your interest is aroused, your curiosity is boundless and your intellect dangerously sharp. Nothing will stop you from getting to the bottom of the matter.

Nature: Competitor

Demeanor: Pedagogue

Age: 41

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 1, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Melee 1, Stealth 1

Knowledges: Academics 4, Finance 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Science 2

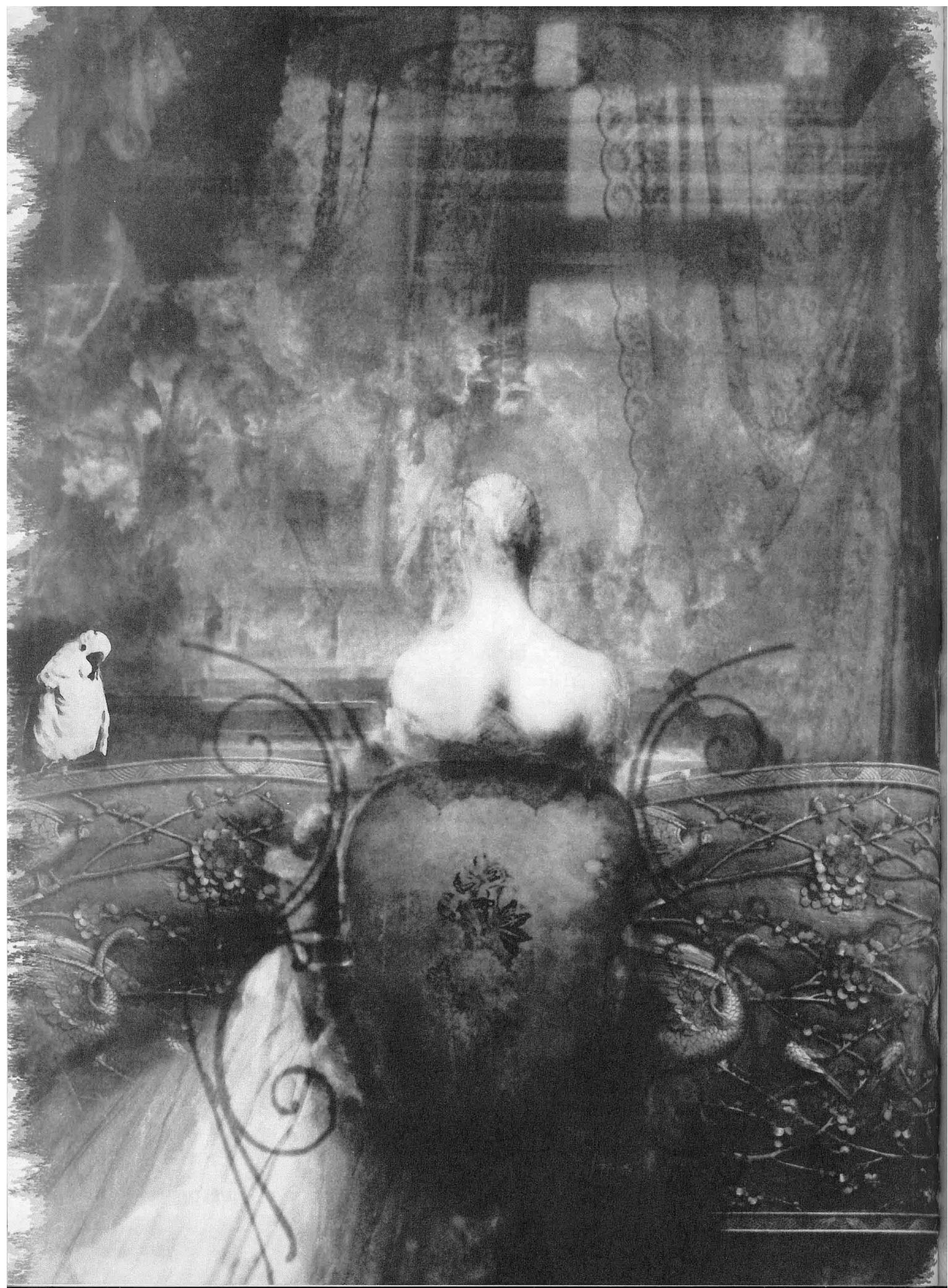
Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 2, Mentor 1, Retainers 1, Resources 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 7





Chapter Four: Conspiracies

*Young men dream. Old men scheme.
- Mason Cooley*

On London's Future and the Returned Prince

In which the nature of the Kindred's society is subject to considerable change

However much vampires like to tell themselves that they can plan centuries ahead, things have a habit of changing quickly for them. Take Valerius, for example. Merely thirty years ago, he went unchallenged as Prince of London. Mithras may still have held the title theoretically, but he had been missing for sixty years. The Sabbat made a concerted incursion into the city and destroyed many of its inhabitants, including some of the elders. Valerius saw this as an opportunity to remodel the city in his image and curry favor with the Camarilla.

London needed defending. It was one of the most important Camarilla-held cities, it was growing rapidly, and its depleted number of Kindred left it vulnerable. Valerius granted his more loyal associates leave to Embrace, and invited other vampires into the city. He also did the one thing he would never have had the courage to do if Mithras were active: He allowed the Tremere to establish a significant presence in the city. Valerius had been in discussions with the chantry in Durham even before the Sabbat incursion, and he took advantage of the city's weakened position to invite the clan into London formally, as part of a move to shore up its defenses once more. The Witches' Thaumaturgical prowess would be invaluable in the event of another attack, he argued.

When Mithras returned, he did not like what he saw. Valerius might have retained his position had he not allowed the Tremere into the city, but once the supposedly loyal primogen saw the Methuselah's anger, support for Valerius melted away. Mithras stripped him of rank and promoted his childe Anne Bowesley to the position of seneschal in his place. Her orders were explicit: Create a new order in the city, one that was loyal to Mithras, not to Valerius. Anne, who was never treated well by her sire and who saw her future opening up by allying herself with Mithras, went to work with a ruthlessness few had suspected her capable of before.

Those fiefs that had been granted by Valerius became open for renegotiation. Prime hunting grounds, especially those in the expanding suburbs and the inner-city slums, were reassigned to those Anne deemed loyal, or those she wished to owe her a favor or two. The face of vampiric power in the city changed rapidly.

Unfortunately, Anne's confidence at this point is a bluff. She is aware that Mithras's attention seems to be elsewhere much of the time, and that she has only his stated authorization to work from. She realizes that she may have only a limited time to establish herself as his right-hand woman, before he loses interest in the nightly affairs of the city completely.

Dramatis Personae

Virtually every vampire in London is a player in this drama to one extent or another. Lady Anne and General Sir Arthur Halesworth are probably the most influential figures in determining the prince's favor. Valerius remains a significant player, hoping still to replace Anne in Mithras's favor, and he



has enough of the major players in the city in his debt that he will certainly make an impact on the political future of the city.

The other main players are, of course, the troupe. This plot is here purely and simply to give the characters a chance at becoming significant players in the most important city in the world during this time period. London changes rapidly, and the characters stand some chance of winning influence over the new rail companies, building contractors, shipping operators or any of the other industries that have sprung up to support this heart of the empire.

The Resolution

Kindred love politics, and this is an opportunity for the characters to indulge themselves in it at a high level. However, unlike many cities, one post is not really open to any of the characters — that of prince. Part of the distinctive nature of the London setting is that Mithras is the unquestioned authority, an ancient and increasingly alien force that maintains the Kindred order with devastating force on occasions, and then spends long periods completely ignoring nightly politics.

In essence, this thread should have no final resolution. While London will settle into a new status quo over the course of the next few years, new events and Mithras's continued but occasional interference will shake up the power structure of the city's Kindred repeatedly.

In the longer term, according to published World of Darkness material at least, Mithras goes into torpor in the 1940s. He re-emerges briefly in the 1990s, but is diablerized by a young Assamite *antitribu*. Anne, once she becomes aware of what has probably happened, realizes that if she is to survive the fall of her mentor she must move fast. She swiftly rallies her supporters in London to have herself declared prince, or queen as she chooses to call herself. If you wish your game to cleave to World of Darkness canon, then the characters will either have a powerful ally or an implacable and well-placed foe. You can, of course, discard all of this and go your own way. It's your story. Tell it your way.

The Case of the Unwelcome Guests

In which visitors from the Camarilla make their entrance

Mithras is a walking, unliving problem for the Camarilla. He may be the prince of the most significant city on the planet, but he also claims to be the childe of a being that the sect denies exists: an Antediluvian. Of

course, this is not something that he talks about very often, but he is of an age and generation that makes it plain that he is far above most vampires in raw supernatural power. When he disappeared, the Founders metaphorically breathed a sigh of relief and hoped that he had finally entered torpor permanently. His return has stirred up enough consternation that a justicar is sent to "welcome him back."

Of course, both Mithras and the Toreador justicar Violetta know perfectly well that her visit is a warning to him. He does not care. The Camarilla has been in existence for such a tiny part of his unlife that he really does not consider it to be of note, as a whole. Individual members are a problem for him, though, and the choice of a member of Clan Toreador as the official ambassador to the returned prince is either an inspired political decision or a terrible misstep.

Mithras has long vied with the Toreador of Edinburgh for preeminence over the Kindred of the British Isles. Their various confrontations led to the Treaty of Durham in 1692, at which both sides agreed to leave each other's territories alone. One of the many orders that the prince has given since his return was that the provision of the treaty for an exchange of hostages should be honored once more. Valerius's other childe is now resident in Edinburgh, and a Toreador called Lorna Dingwall has arrived in London. In this climate, the visit of the Toreador Justicar in London can be seen as a careful reminder that the clans are formally allies now, united in the sect. It could also be seen as a direct provocation of the prince.

To add to the Camarilla's concerns about the prince, his hatred of the Tremere has not eased in the century since his last appearance. One of his first moves after his return was to strip them of all rank and privilege in the city, and to punish Valerius for allowing them to gain so much power. The fact that one of the most prominent Tremere in the city, one Anthony Bellamy, disappeared at around the same time has not helped matters. This is the driving motivation behind Violetta instructing her archon Rory McAndrew to stay in the city.

For the archon, this is a dangerous game. While he has a history in the city, the stakes are much higher than during his last period of residence. The Camarilla has to be seen to be in control of the situation, yet they cannot risk a direct confrontation with the ancient. That would run too much of a risk of a very public defeat and humiliation, with the subsequent risk of losing London as a recognized Camarilla city, notwithstanding any breaches of the Masquerade that might occur during the conflict. Thus, McAndrew has to walk a very careful line between reminding the prince of his allegiances and

responsibilities and actually provoking him, which would be an error of possibly terminal proportions.

Luckily, McAndrew is an accomplished politician. Few of his clan rise to the position of archon without those skills being exceptionally well-honed. An equal part of his job is to establish which Kindred are likely to hold the real power in the new structure that is forming in the city, and make sure they are aware of the true source of their authority: the sect. After all, Mithras is old and spends much of his time away from the city. Without the protection of the prince or the sect, where would their fiefs be then?

In essence, the Camarilla presence in the city serves to reinforce the tenuous nature of any power that the characters might obtain through the course of the chronicle. Indeed, a story that focuses on these elements should raise the question of whether the pursuit of power within such an environment is actually a worthwhile enterprise. Valerius serves as the perfect example of the possible costs of such a mission. Marginalized by Mithras and largely ignored by the Camarilla, the erstwhile would-be prince is an almost pathetic figure.

Dramatis Personae

Archon McAndrew is obviously the most prominent figure in this plot. He seeks reliable allies in the city to keep him informed of the events that tend to go hidden from someone of his prominence. After all, a small band of neonates can often be privy to secrets simply because they lack any great significance in the order of things. Many elders see the young Kindred as essentially a disposable resource at their beck and call. Few credit them with the perspective needed to see how a particular request or assignment might fit into a grander scheme. There's an element of truth in that. A Kindred with only decades in the Blood under their belts is ill equipped to understand the thought processes of a centuries-old vampire. However, McAndrew has the experience necessary to pull together disparate information and make some educated deductions as the motivations and conflicts underlying those actions.

Don Cerro and his young protégé Theo Bell are here for more than just a grand tour, as well. The Inner Council has courted Cerro as a potential justicar for Clan Brujah, and has assigned him to London as a test of his abilities. While he and his protégé busy themselves enjoying the whirl of the most glamorous city in the

world and the intense political debates that spring up in the capital, they covertly work for McAndrew by making contacts with local Kindred for him.

Stephen Lenoir remains uncomfortable with the presence of McAndrew and Don Cerro. As a member of Clan Lasombra, even as an *antitribu*, he is constantly the focus of suspicions within the city, despite his valor in battle during the Sabbat incursion. He uses his extensive contacts among the city's newcomers to attempt to feed reassuring information through to the visitors, in the hope that it will hurry their departure. Lady Anne is well aware of Lenoir's activities and tacitly approves.

Depending on their political inclination, the characters could be approached by any of the above and drawn into the careful dance of Camarilla politics in the city.

The Resolution

The archon and Don Cerro will leave London only when they are convinced that the prince poses no great threat to the Camarilla, and that the city is secure. While Lenoir and Lady Anne work toward that end, they have no guarantee it will happen in a hurry.

Only two groups in the city regard McAndrew's and Don Cerro's continued presence as a benefit. The first is the Tremere, who quite rightly surmise that the continued presence of these vampires prevents Mithras moving against them more directly. The second group is Valerius's supporters, who believe much the same thing, but with less justification. Mithras really sees Valerius as something of an irrelevance until such time as he becomes useful again. Both groups will try to create enough "incidents" to keep the Camarilla guests in the city, but not too many, lest it draw more official attention.

Any major incident, such as open conflict between the Tremere and those loyal to Mithras or a major Masquerade breach, will immediately end the air of civility in the archon's dealings. Anyone from Lady Anne downward will become fair game as a potential scapegoat — the archon will still not act against Mithras directly, and the ancient will not be foolish enough to give him cause to do so.

In any event, McAndrew and Don Cerro will depart by the early part of the 1890s, and the city will remain free of direct Camarilla oversight until the publication of a certain gothic horror novel in 1897.

The Curious Nature of the Supernatural Cultists

In which the prince of the city resumes his ancient business, yet faces recent adversaries

Many of London's Kindred are surprised how subtle the friction has been between Mithras and the Tremere. After all, the prince has never hidden his contempt for the clan he still sees as nothing more than murderous usurpers. A few vampires speculate that the real battle is being fought out of sight. They are correct.

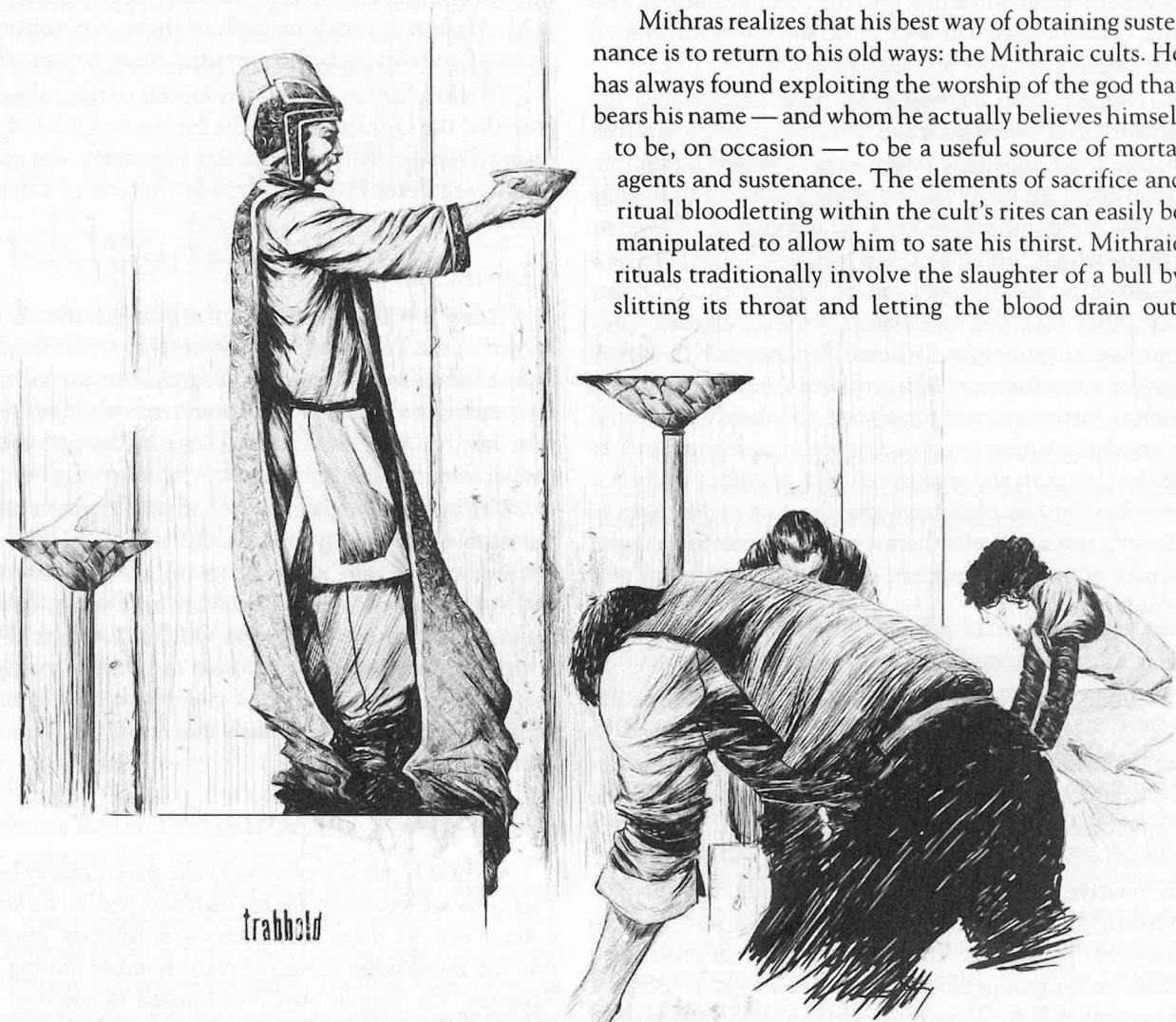
The Tremere of London have been waiting for Mithras's return. They were well aware that their growth in power under Valerius was going to be only temporary, but it did allow them to establish several chantries in the

city that would be difficult to root out once the prince returned. Their next objective, if they were to secure lasting power in London, was to undermine the prince himself. The best way to do this is through his influence over a group of mortal cultists.

It's an unfortunate facet of unlife that the longer one exists, the less satisfying human blood becomes. Mithras has long passed the point where mortal blood alone will sustain him. He needs to feed on other vampires with increasing regularity. Not long after he returned to his city, he gave into the Beast long enough that he found and drank dry a high-ranking Tremere by the name of Anthony Bellamy. While he's well aware that several of the city's Kindred have a suspicion of what happened, not least the Tremere primogen Edward Bainbridge, none of them have enough evidence or confidence to make an issue of it by bringing it to the archon's attention.

Mithras Cults

Mithras realizes that his best way of obtaining sustenance is to return to his old ways: the Mithraic cults. He has always found exploiting the worship of the god that bears his name — and whom he actually believes himself to be, on occasion — to be a useful source of mortal agents and sustenance. The elements of sacrifice and ritual bloodletting within the cult's rites can easily be manipulated to allow him to sate his thirst. Mithraic rituals traditionally involve the slaughter of a bull by slitting its throat and letting the blood drain out.



Images traditionally show a dog drinking the blood.

Mithras has subtly twisted the cult's rites over time such that exchanges of blood and human sacrifice are now viewed as higher forms of the blood sacrifice. Members of the cult are granted unity with the god by becoming like him for a period of days. At the end of that time he claims their blood and they become one with him.

The prince's particular form of the cult has thrived in London since the nights of the Roman Empire and has almost always managed to sustain itself through his long periods of absence. While the cult still exists in the late 19th century, Mithras has had to put a significant amount of effort into supporting it. Of course, the return of its god in person has a revitalizing effect on the cult. A number of factors have been at work while he was away. The Tremere have been aware of his activities and have done their best to influence the cult in his absence, with strictly limited success. Mithras had long built suspicion of other creatures like him into the cult's initiations, and the Tremere have had little or no success in infiltrating the cult.

Instead, the Tremere have been encouraging the growth of Hermetic Orders in London — groups that pursue the Kabbalistic tradition of Western mysticism. The orders are usually based around the idea that a few people have discovered mystical documents of the ancients, which can open a select group of people to new levels of mystical power and enlightenment. In many ways they take the supernatural and occult and apply rationalistic principles to them. They are occult societies for the scientific man. Most involve a degree of ritual as well as initiation ceremonies and membership nominations that are more reminiscent of the gentlemen's clubs of the day than the traditional idea of cults. While few members of the clan have the time or inclination to directly run such cults themselves, they provide a useful source of influence, agents, ghouls and occasional new chilider.

The Occult Revival

London proves a fertile breeding ground for many occult organizations. The tradition of Freemasonry is already well entrenched in society, and many intellectuals now apply rational analysis to occult ideas. It is the perfect environment for Hermetic research. The idea of hidden secrets possessed only by an elite few who operate in relative secrecy with obscure rituals matches the existing forms of Freemasonry extremely well. During the early part of the 1880s, the number of orders and small occult groups grows rapidly. However, in 1884 the Reverent A.F.A. Woodford, a Mason and a member of

one of those groups called the Hermetic Society, finds what appears to be an ancient document in a bookstall. He shares it with some of his friends, and by 1888 those individuals have become the founding members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, basing their group's practices on the information in the manuscript.

The very public face of this branch of occult interest has drawn potential recruits away from both the Mithras cults and the Tremere's own Hermetic orders, even though the Golden Dawn itself is a purely mortal phenomenon. That doesn't mean that the vampires have left it alone. The Tremere in particular have been watching the group for signs of people with the potential to be Embraced as useful members of the clan. However, they know that they have to be very circumspect, because McAndrew has expressed his concern that such a supernaturally oriented group has gained so much attention. He considers it to be a possible risk to the integrity of the Masquerade. This has upped the stakes for both Mithras and the Tremere. Both know that they have to be careful as McAndrew is watching both of them, but neither is prepared to relinquish the potential these groups offer.

To add a further complication, one of the cults that preceded the Golden Dawn, the Hermetic Order of the Rising Day, actually spawns the Arcanum. For more details, see Peter Harker's entry at the end of Chapter Three.

A Third Cult

There is a third factor in the struggle that is unknown to the Tremere. Somewhere deep under the East End slumbers something that predates Mithras's arrival on these shores. A small but committed cult of worshippers, based on a few family lines, keeps the thing protected and devotes the lives of its members to serving it.

The prince is reasonably confident that whatever the sleeping thing is, it isn't another vampire. He's been content to leave it be, as long as its cultists don't interfere with his own worshippers. Like everyone else, the cultists are curiously interested in the Golden Dawn and the other cults, and are trying to boost their membership in the hope of awakening their master through greater rituals. Eventually a clash with Mithras or the Tremere is inevitable.

Dramatis Personae

Mithras himself is obviously the major player here. The cults are necessary for his own survival, so he keeps a keen eye on them and intervenes directly himself. Edward Bainbridge is his opposite number among the Tremere. He directly involves himself in some of the Hermetic Orders and keeps an eye on others through

younger members of the clan. For example, Sri Sansa has built up a small following among those scholars looking to find further truths in the mystical ways of the Orient and other distant parts of the empire. Mithras is aware of this imbalance and reluctantly comes around to the idea that he might need to involve others in his schemes to fully keep the Tremere at bay.

McAndrew is suspicious of the growing occult revival and is actively investigating. So too is Father Marshal of the Order of St. George.

The Resolution

With so much interest in the activities of these groups, somebody is eventually going to make a mistake, expose their interference and bring down the wrath of the Camarilla or the Inquisition on themselves. Whichever party makes this foolish misstep will need allies quickly to survive. The exception, as ever, is Mithras. If it is he who makes a mistake (though given his centuries of experience at playing this game, that isn't very likely), the Tremere are likely to suffer more than he does as the Camarilla clamps down on this potential breach of the Masquerade.

The Secret of the Hidden Rival

In which the Prince of Manchester seeks an advantageous outcome of the present situation

Britain has changed considerably since Mithras left. The Industrial Revolution has swept through the country, and cities have grown dramatically. Until the early part of the century, the preeminent Kindred of London's lesser cities were called barons, and were subordinate to Mithras, as Prince of London and *de facto* Prince of England. Around seventy years ago, Baron Charles Shawlands, who claimed the cities of Manchester and Liverpool, noticed the rapid expansion of the population, and cautiously granted new Embracing rights to some of the primogen.

As the population continued to grow and the Liverpool docks became increasing popular as a means for Kindred entering the country, Shawlands followed Mithras's lead and was generous in granting newcomers the right to stay in the city. Thirty years ago, with Mithras still missing, his power base much expanded, and many powerful Kindred now owing him favors, Shawlands actively petitioned for the right to call himself prince, and was rewarded with a visit from a justiciar proving that the sect recognized his claim. Anne has not

yet seen fit to inform Mithras of this fact, and none of the other Kindred in London have dared to do so as yet, either. Anne's judgment is that Mithras is so focused on making sure his city is restored to his notion of order, that the politics of Manchester are no more significant than those of Paris or Vienna. Indeed, it has not occurred to Mithras that the barons could be a problem. He still thinks in terms of Edinburgh's Kindred being the main threat to his authority.

Shawlands, meanwhile, has listened to the tales of increasing instability among London's Kindred with interest. He has no desire to provoke Mithras, but believes that he will have longer to firmly establish his own position if the problems in London continue for as long as possible. To that end, he has sent his own childe to London as the official ambassador to Mithras and aide to Anne in this trying time, and one relatively experienced neonate — Paul Bedwell — to unofficially do his best to make the situation in London worse rather than better.

Dramatis Personae

Paul Bedwell has successfully been welcomed into the city by Anne, after spinning a tale of the destruction of his sire while traveling, not long after his Embrace.

Janet Latimer has made the acquaintance of the hostage from Edinburgh, Lorna Dingwall, and is attempting to use her as a go-between with Bedwell. Latimer can see that Mithras is the only London vampire who seriously considers Edinburgh a threat, and thus no one pays the young Toreador any attention at all. For Dingwall, Latimer presents an opportunity to gain the patronage of a senior figure in Manchester's vampire community, one who is shown some respect in London.

Stephen Lenoir has taken Bedwell under his wing, but harbors growing suspicions about his young charge, and may soon seek some aid in confirming them.

The Resolution

It's entirely possible that the Mancunian agitators will succeed at their task in the short term. At a time when most of the Kindred in London are scrambling to establish their own power bases, mistrust is so pervasive that a small group with no ambitions to establish their own position can easily spread rumors, misinformation and outright lies between different groups, making the subtle games of power and prestige even more volatile than normal. If the players' coterie realizes what is afoot, they may be able to use that knowledge to their advantage, either by blackmailing the Manchester contingent, or by exchanging it for favors from Anne or another major player in the city.

A coterie that establishes a good rapport with the agents may suddenly find themselves with a back door out of London if things go sour for them in the city. Shawlands is more than ready to welcome into his domain any Kindred of London with knowledge and connections he can exploit. At the other extreme, the agents could be exposed, with unfortunate consequences for the relationship between London and Manchester. Mithras's reaction will not be as bad as some people suspect. To him, the Prince of Manchester just another uppity baron getting out of line, something that has happened repeatedly through the centuries. Indeed, the Camarilla, in the form of the archon McAndrew, is likely to take a dimmer view of the situation. The archon is in London to make sure Mithras is not angered unduly and maintains the status quo. Another Camarilla prince seeking to undermine that mission is likely to find his position becoming rather tenuous.

A Study in Righteousness

In which the forces of faith and science work against the creatures of the night

Clouds gather over London. In 1897, Bram Stoker succeeds in putting his vampire novel, *Dracula*, in print. This fictionalized account of the life of a real vampire sends shockwaves through the Camarilla. The Masquerade is breached, and right under the nose of the London Kindred.

Worse, by then London is already a haven for hunters who can take advantage of the crisis. However, at the point where **London by Night** begins, they are just beginning to build their presence in the city. The sudden explosion of occult activity in the city in the latter part of the century does not go unnoticed. London saw a major Christian revival in 1859, which filled some members of the Church with joy, and irritated others because much of it was led by lay preachers and others not directly part of the Church of England hierarchy. The fervent believers within the Church are sincerely concerned that the occult revival is an attempt by satanic forces to fight back against this movement of the spirit.

Added to that division is the fact that the Church is already under assault after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of the Species*. His theory of evolution challenges the accepted theology and leads to many people leaving the Church for the philosophy of rationalism. Indeed, by the late Victorian era, Christianity is mainly a faith for the prosperous middle classes. Thus, the growth in occult

societies is enough that the Archbishop of Canterbury's office activates the Order of St. George, the Church of England's equivalent of the Inquisition, to investigate and deal with any unholy influence it finds.

At the same time, one of the many occult societies of the time finds evidence of the reality of supernatural creatures in their midst. Several key members quit, and devote themselves to discovering more about these beings, starting in London. The Arcanum is born, and rapidly turns its attentions to the Kindred of London.

The Whitechapel murders committed by Jack the Ripper, while actually unrelated to vampires, focus both the Inquisition's and the Arcanum's attentions on the city. The Kindred can ill afford to step out of line. In essence, the characters are going to have to toe that line. While London is a city of opportunity for the canny in this period, it is also one where a misstep can have serious consequences for a reckless character.

As mentioned above, the presence of an archon in the city means that the Masquerade is strictly enforced. Any overt display of supernatural power is going to bring the wrath of the primogen, the archon and the attention of mortal hunters down on the character.

Dramatis Personae

In 1880, comparatively few hunters are active in London. Father Marshal resides in Lambeth Palace, but the occult revival is only just gathering adherents and he won't receive a mandate to investigate until the latter half of the decade. The Arcanum does not form until 1885.

The Inquisitors

The key figure in the Inquisition is Father Marshal, a senior member of what remains of the Order of St. George. The Anglican Inquisition has been in decline for the best part of two centuries, and is little more than a small group of clerics charged with the maintenance of a set of records and the investigation of any rumors of activity by supernatural creatures. The latter, in particular, has proven to be a fruitless endeavor in recent years.

Marshal, though, takes his calling seriously, rather than seeing it as another step in the Church hierarchy. After spending weeks and months reading the records available to him at Lambeth Palace and elsewhere, he comes to the conclusion, quite accurately, that the devil's creatures haven't gone away, they've just grown more skilled at hiding from the Inquisition.

Father Marshal has carefully provoked conversations with members of organizations like the Golden Dawn, and is building up a picture of external influence

on them. His pleas for extra resources fall, for now, on deaf ears. That will change in the coming years as the evidence builds. In the meantime, he has actually had meetings with his colleagues in the Catholic Inquisition, which have led to the establishment of a discreet Cenaculum of Inquisitors in southeast London, who actively investigate the Father's findings.

The Arcanum

The Arcanum comes into existence in October 1885, when a mysterious figure named Benjamin Holmscroft invites a group of disaffected members of the Hermetic Order of the Rising Day to a meeting in his home at Vannever Hall. These scholars, occultists and religious men form the Arcanum as a group dedicated to studying the unnatural, the arcane and the uncanny. The group is particularly adept at tracking the existence of the supernatural through disparate pieces of documentary evidence, cross-referencing the various accounts to find the common points throughout. A few members, not least Holmscroft himself, seem also to have firsthand experience of vampires and other creatures.

The Arcanum's main base of operations is in Vannever Hall, in rural Hertfordshire. Its London base is a large terraced house just off Berkeley Square, which it uses from 1886 onward. Peter Harker is the head of that house, and directs the studies of other scholars from there.

The scholars of the Arcanum aren't actually interested in destroying vampires, only in studying them. Unfortunately, that mission clashes directly with the Masquerade, so they are still a threat to the Kindred. The Arcanists are most likely to be found investigating the aftermath of any possible supernatural event with a scientific rigor worthy of Sherlock Holmes himself. Over a period of months, Reginald Moore's sloppy feeding habits lead to the Arcanum seeing a pattern of attacks and murders that the police fail to detect. While the Arcanists try to apply the same standards of evidence and logical deduction as the police, they have the advantage of an open mind to the supernatural world that allows them to see connections the official investigators miss. The Arcanum is aware of the man in the ill-fitting suit that seems to be a common link between the attacks on students, lecturers and publishers of ideological pamphlets that make up Moore's accustomed herd, but which the police have discarded as unrelated crimes because of the apparent lack of motive. A few of the Arcanists have even put forward the idea that the mysterious attacker is taking some sustenance from his victims, though they're at a loss as to exactly what. The current theory is that their superior minds must be a factor.

The Resolution

The Inquisition does not go away. The death of any inquisitor will focus the attention of the Order of St. George on the city. The two branches of the Inquisition, Catholic and Anglican, will continue to work closely together, and will eventually become one by the end of the 20th century.

Neither does the Arcanum vanish. Admittedly, Mr. Harker dies in mysterious circumstances by the end of the 19th century. The chances are that his death comes under the fangs of one of the vampires of the city. It may even be one of the players' characters who kills him. However, despite this loss, the Arcanum increases in knowledge and efficacy into the 20th century, and London becomes the focus of much of its intelligence gathering and analysis.

The growing strength of both of these organizations poses an interesting challenge to the characters. They cannot simply dispose of the problematic hunters, because that merely draws the attention of their backers, and risks a Masquerade breach as well as damage to their own Humanity. However, they cannot simply ignore them, either, as they are already a breach of the Masquerade. If they can find a way of "managing" the hunters, keeping them suitably distracted with false leads and misdirection, they can leverage that success into greater standing among London's Kindred.

Smaller Conspiracies

Many of the most dangerous conspiracies involve only a handful of confederates. After all, the more individuals who are involved in a scheme, the more their chances of discovery increase. In some cases, desperate situations can turn enemies into temporary allies, who are all the more effective because their alliance is so unthinkable. Even in a time as short as the two decades of *Victorian Age: Vampire*, the Kindred of London scheme and plot against each other as they maneuver for influence, power and other rewards within the Camarilla... and outside it.

Machinations Against the Seneschal

Methuselahs do not need to personally intervene in gatherings of Kindred when conducting their affairs. By dispatching minions and conditioning younger vampires, they set great events in motion. Prince Mithras of London is no exception. He may disappear for months at a time, but his influence is still felt during his absence.

His seneschal, Lady Anne, capably serves in his stead. For all intents and purposes, Anne Bowesley acts as the prince, even when Mithras is present in the city.

Conspirators know that liberating the city from a Methuselah's obsessions requires far more than the elimination of the seneschal, but many campaigns against Mithras begin with actions against her. The deposed seneschal Valerius has watched and waited for his opportunity to retake his place, but he is by no means the only envious Ventre in the city. London has seen several Nobles arrive in Mithras's domain to gain recognition for centuries of service to the Camarilla. In most cases, their ambitions do not center on becoming prince. Some hope to become a Primogen of Clan Ventre. A few have aspired to depose the seneschal herself.

One of the most notable heirs apparent was Joseph Gaiman, who assumed the position of primogen in 1843 after implicating Anne in a possible violation of the First Tradition. Shortly thereafter, Mithras supposedly fell into torpor through an intrigue of the local Sabbat (or according to rival accounts, several powerful Giovanni). Gaiman then insisted that the city needed a prince, and even foolishly contested with Valerius for the position. Once Gaiman's true ambitions had been revealed, Mithras himself arrived at the Ventre's ceremony of investiture, destroying him before a gathering of London's Kindred. Each time a Ventre aspires to become primogen, the story of Gaiman's demise is retold. A few pretenders have attempted to take Lady Anne's place, but like many Victorian princes, her position withstands the assault.

Nathaniel and the Gangrel

Among the Victorian Kindred, Gangrel have few chances of gaining status. Except for the short-lived claim of the Gangrel Prince of Glasgow in the 1850s, most have sought political esteem within the Camarilla by serving as sheriffs, scourges and hounds. Nathaniel has seen firsthand what becomes of Animals who fail at such efforts. Many retreat back into the wilderness, where they are still expected to risk their existence hunting for signs of intrusion by the Sabbat or other supernatural forces. Stereotypes are an unfortunate and anachronistic failing of Victorian society. While a Gangrel may gain respect for his achievements as an individual, status in the Camarilla is hard to attain for the Animals.

Despite this prejudice, Nathaniel's fame for his brutal efficiency in blood hunts has gained him entrance into many gatherings where Gangrel are usually shunned. He has put the time to good use, watching and listening to see how various Kindred regard the paragons of his clan. He watched Lady Anne's intrigues with great

interest, hoping she might become the one aspirant who could usurp Valerius's authority, and indeed, he was correct. He knows the look of a hunter on the prowl, and he fully believes Anne ultimately wants to take the prince's place as well. He even suspects (but cannot prove) that Anne may have actually helped others to undermine the prince's childe. For now, Nathaniel considers her too weak to ever succeed. Valerius is even worse, as he is only powerful because he has the Blood of an ancient supporting him.

As he patiently endures the intrigues of the Ventre, Nathaniel follows events within his own clan. Each day at sunset, he awakens in a garret apartment overlooking London's zoological gardens. He has made ghouls of two of the attendants, who ensure that his meetings with other Gangrel in the zoo at night remain undisturbed. When discussing politics in these meetings, he paces like a tiger in a cage. Some aspects of clan politics are clearly evident. The competition for territory outside major cities has increased since the time of Nathaniel's Embrace, and without strict methods of maintaining the Six Traditions, enforcing claims of domain is difficult. Additionally, dissent among the Gangrel is growing. To ensure their mutual survival, some have even considered becoming anarchs. On rare occasions, he has received messengers speaking on behalf of Gangrel anarchs in the wilderness.

Since then, Nathaniel has also learned that many of his meetings in the gardens have been watched by Violet Mary. He has taken the fact that the sheriff and Lady Anne have not interfered as evidence that Mary has not informed them of this conflict among the Gangrel. This is true, for Violet Mary has passed this information to Valerius instead. Mary suspects that Nathaniel would be a useful asset to Valerius in reclaiming his position as seneschal. If she can ever confirm that Mithras is actually gone for good, she will work to bring the three of them into a common conspiracy. Perhaps some of the neonate Gangrel who have taken audiences with Nathaniel may aid them as well.

A Chantry of Malkavians

Dr. Timothy has placed a dangerous idea in the mind of Abraham Mellon. When Mellon first made his introduction to the Malkavian primogen, he thoroughly impressed Timothy with his knowledge of the occult. Timothy has suggested that Abraham would find many willing initiates within Clan Malkavian. In fact, a chantry of Malkavians — a entire cabal of insightful and prophetic practitioners — would be a considerable innovation.

Timothy's idea holds an obvious agenda. Edward Bainbridge, the Tremere primogen of London, main-

tains that only Tremere should study Thaumaturgy in London, and Lady Anne agrees. It is a dictum that helps maintain the clan's power and domain within the city. The very thought of teaching Thaumaturgy to someone outside the Camarilla is considered a breach of the Masquerade in some cities, and Lady Anne has gone so far as to claim that anyone outside Clan Tremere who learns such knowledge while in London is also breaking the First Tradition.

Abraham Mellon has found the idea of teaching vampiric initiates amusing enough to do further research. Traveling through the astral realm, he has found his way through the corridors of several London chantries, even penetrating the sanctum sanctorum of Bainbridge's personal chantry. His megalomania encourages the idea of actually seizing one of London's chantries, destroying the Tremere within it, and patronizing a cabal of Malkavian scholars in their place. He is unsure of which persona to use in instructing his initiates: his own, John Dee's, or a Malkavian interpretation of Aleister Crowley. Along the way, he has learned of one of Bainbridge's "sullied women": a mortal named Margaret O'Meary who suspects Edward Bainbridge is a vampire.

As Abraham's research continues, Dr. Timothy's paranoia grows. A few Malkavians with Thaumaturgy would be potent weapons to wield in his crusade against the Sabbat. His vigilance demands that he periodically interview (or interrogate) London's Malkavians in the Deep Ward of his asylum. As part of these interviews, he is considering which ones would best take to the practice of Thaumaturgy. Although these efforts could undermine the prince, he would pursue the enterprise to empower the clan he supports and frustrate the machinations of the Sabbat. Abraham is not restrained by such altruism. He would act purely out of his own need for power; he is a force of evil that Timothy has summoned through his scheme, but cannot ultimately control.

Justice and Corruption

Dr. Timothy also knows of Cyril Masters and admires his vigilance. Both firmly believe in upholding security in their city, and by extension, the Lextalionis of the prince. Of course, affairs of the Camarilla occasionally demand the swift elimination of those who would undermine that state. With that in mind, Lady Anne has requested Masters' help in hunting down anarchs and anarchists within the city, as well as any who would undermine Mithras's supremacy.

The seneschal continues these purges quietly. After all, when enemies of the Kindred's orderly society are found within the city, whether mortal anarchists or Cainites, it suggests the prince has been lax in his

leadership. If an independent vampire passes without a proper introduction through the domain and survives — whether it's a Ravnos, Giovanni, or other creature of the night — it hints that the prince cannot enforce the Tradition of Domain effectively, and that threatens the survival of all of London's Kindred. Several Ventre (Valerius among them) have found such infestations on their own, and have even brought them before the primogen or the prince to discredit the seneschal's efficacy.

When loyal Kindred uncover the prince's enemies, Lady Anne wants those enemies to quickly disappear. Unleashing Nathaniel on a blood hunt is the most overt tactic, but the seneschal has more covert methods as well. Masters and Timothy are working together to learn more about these criminal networks. Several "Camarilla criminals" have been escorted by Masters' ghoul thugs to the Deep Ward of Dr. Timothy's asylum, where they receive lengthy interrogation. Some never leave. Those who do have usually been broken by Timothy's skill at manipulating the weak-willed.

Masters also wields enough influence over high-ranking officials in the British constabulary to make mortals disappear just as easily. The most troublesome are transferred to other rooms in Timothy's asylum, where a few are permanently lobotomized. Timothy has undertaken surgical research to determine a way to permanently remove the frontal lobes of a vampire, but with little success. The best he can do is to repeatedly inflict aggravated injuries on selected portions of the brain and deprive the victim of sufficient blood to heal.

The Morlock Society

Anarchs do not merely rebel against one authority figure — they often rebel against them all. Many of London's Kindred have come to fear the Brujah of Britain, fully expecting them to be swept up in the recent and turbulent upheavals of the mortal anarchist movement. Much of Victorian society is predicated on individuals acting according to their station; thus, each time Dynamiters detonate satchels of nitroglycerin outside a public building, or when Irish freedom fighters discharge firearms in the streets, paranoid Kindred suspect the Brujah may somehow be involved. This stereotype and similar misperceptions allow Britain's more sinister anarchs to act with greater secrecy — and greater impunity. Few suspect that one of the greatest threats to London's Camarilla depends heavily on a cabal of Nosferatu: the Morlock Society.

The Morlock Society looks to the future, acting on prophecies that are often dismissed or neglected. It is said that in the Final Nights, Caine's childe will be cursed with

a Time of Thin Blood, when the last generation will be unable to sire childer. Some consider that event to be a precursor of Gehenna. Two Morlock loremasters share that belief. They consider it a distinct possibility that within a century, the 13th, 14th, or 15th generation descended from Caine will be the last. Their network of information is obsessed with gathering lore that supports that theory.

Fear drives the Society to prepare for that future, even if they must act decades or centuries in advance. In six underground Nosferatu Kingdoms across Europe, followers of the cult have been creating childer away from the domains of princes or archbishops. These neonates are Embraced in darkness, bound in blood, and conditioned to serve the six elders who have organized the cult. In recent years, they have found inspiration in a novel by H.G. Wells, in which a subterranean atavistic race plots against the beautiful Eloi, who enjoy the pleasures and privileges of the surface world. The Kingdom of London and refuges in the surrounding fief hide a community of a dozen or so self-styled Morlocks who await the night when they will arise and claim the world above them.

The eldest supporter of the society is a sixth-generation Nosferatu who has allied with an unusual array of confederates. Two Ravnos have come to rely on the elder's extensive information network, eagerly awaiting news of princes and primogen in the cities they have chosen as destinations in their travels. A Malkavian naming himself the Erlkonig specializes in abducting children in Germany, who are then raised and bled as food for a Morlock Kingdom in caves beneath the Black Forest. And in London itself, a Brujah anarchist known as Thursday has found reasons to sympathize with the Morlock's plot.

Thursday's childe, Herbert Westin, has spent years in London and New York searching for potential allies, or at least fools who can be misdirected against the rulers of the surface world. Through Thursday's guidance, he has been sent to investigate countless anarchistic societies, developing contacts through them all. Soon Thursday will be forced to accelerate his activities. The Morlocks have sired so extensively that one of their descendants is a fifteenth-generation vampire. When that vampire tries to create a childe and fails, the Morlocks will misinterpret the event, believing that the end of the century heralds the Final Nights.

According to their legends, in the Time of Thin Blood, the last generation of the Morlocks will rise from the depths to hunt the rulers of London one by one. Until then, they manipulate a handful of minions on the surface of the Earth, strengthening them through conflict, gathering information through their intrigues, and scheming against the hated Eloi. Herbert Westin is their faceless agent in the world above them.

The Children's Crusade

Rathe Haversham's influence has steadily spread throughout London. He is capably assisted of his pack of "street Arabs," the children who act as his minions. They have repeatedly told him of the presence of a legendary Caitiff vampire, a master thief who appears as a nine-year-old child. His reputation has grown so much that many believe he was actually Embraced during his childhood. That belief is correct.

Some of Haversham's young ghouls have taken the existence of this "child vampire" as encouragement that they should be Embraced as well. The undead wastrel has even stolen and fed in "Prince Fagin's" domain, as though taunting him, or punishing him. At one point, the little monster killed over a dozen mortals inhabiting the same squalid apartment. He then left obscene messages to Haversham scrawled in blood. Rathe Haversham has wasted years searching for the bloodsucking bastard, but his ghouls have repeatedly failed to find him. As with so much in the Nosferatu's unlif, someone is actively frustrating his efforts.

In truth, the child — variously known as Arthur, Art, or "Wart" — has learned to play upon the sympathies of another of London's Nosferatu: Violet Mary. She has become a mentor to him, rather like a doting undead aunt. In her breathing days, she dreamed of having a child, but the dream has become twisted in her suffering. She cannot see Wart for the monster he is, but as a pitiable creature who must be redeemed through love. As penitence for past sins, she has even taught him the elementary rituals of the Obfuscate Discipline. She would dearly love to adopt him as her childe, but his lengthy stay in London has been a violation of the Tradition of Domain. If Mithras doesn't destroy him outright, Haversham would insist on it shortly after the boy's discovery.

Wart has lured a few of Haversham's ghouls astray, promising them better treatment. Most disappear, never to be seen again. Haversham's hatred for the child is so great that he has promised the Embrace to the ghoul who destroys him. Violet Mary already hates Haversham's shabby treatment of his so-called children. Were she to find out that her young ward is being hunted by London's premiere fagin "prince," it would motivate her to act against him — or aid Wart's campaign against him. Any characters who have been aided by Haversham, Violet or even Wart would no doubt find themselves caught in the middle.

Love's Labours Lost

Edward Bainbridge has become a bit too careless in his dalliances with mortals. In one ill-conceived affair, a scorned lover slashed his throat in the midst of one of their encounters. Instead of committing an outright act

of murder to silence her, Bainbridge sent one of his Gargoyles to do the deed for him. Little did he suspect that the demented woman armed with a straight razor had caught a large quantity of his blood in a steel pan. The madwoman was actually an abandoned Sabbat revenant lingering in London after a failed Sabbat invasion. When the frenzied Tremere stormed from the room, she eagerly lapped up the blood that had spilled on the floor. By the time he had returned, she had consumed enough of the captured vitae to survive another month — and flee the scene of the crime.

After a furious altercation with the enslaved Gargoyle, the scorned lover escaped. She had learned enough from their affair to seek aid and revenge. The Gargoyle, terrified at the thought of dealing with the consequences of failure, reported only that it had delivered fatal wounds to its prey. Perhaps it truly never suspected that the woman had enough Fortitude to survive them. This scorned revenant, Margaret O'Meary, then deduced within a week that Sri Sansa and Rebecca Grey shared Edward's magical practices.

Sri has offered Margaret admission to his blood cult, but has kept her survival a secret. He thinks that she is a ghoul, and that Edward is her domitor. Furthermore, he knows that revealing one of Edward's little indiscretions could discredit the Tremere primogen. He is waiting for the opportunity to use the revelation against him. He does not suspect that Margaret has also gone to Rebecca Grey, claiming that she is a ghoul who has been cruelly discarded and hunted by a former domitor, whom she has refused to reveal. Edward was first attracted to Margaret for her approach to Enochian magic, and Rebecca has offered to teach her

more. In fact, she has come to consider her a candidate for the Embrace — which would have deadly consequences for Edward.

The plot thickens. Margaret O'Meary's desperation is motivated by grim circumstances. She believes her first-born child must gain the truly supernatural power she could never attain in life. She is at best a hedge magician, but her egomania eagerly outpaces that. Through Enochian rituals, she has called down the Hosts of Heaven to possess her child and give it strength. Instead of summoning the heavenly host, however, her hunt for the supernatural led her to London's Kindred.

Bainbridge never suspected that the revenant was already pregnant with a mortal child — or that his blood would be used to feed it in the womb.

Margaret's motherly instincts are vastly misinterpreting the transformation happening within her. The fetus, fed on vitae, has not aged one day. Her appetites, however, have become unpredictable and overwhelming. An ill-fated tryst has fueled the survival of a madwoman motivated by sudden hungers, seething revenge, and love for the inhuman, unaging monster "slumbering," inert, in her womb.

Conceived in Darkness

A nest of vipers has infested London, spawning in the three Setite temples that lie hidden there. All three are aided by

the financial patronage of Halim Bey, who keeps younger Serpents in line with the constant threat of his enslaved mummy, Nephren-Ka. Each temple has one of Halim's children as its high priest or priestess. They do not reside permanently in each temple, but they do host rituals at each one at least once a week. None of these cult leaders have been foolish enough to submit to a blood bond, however, so each presents a different measure of problems for Halim.



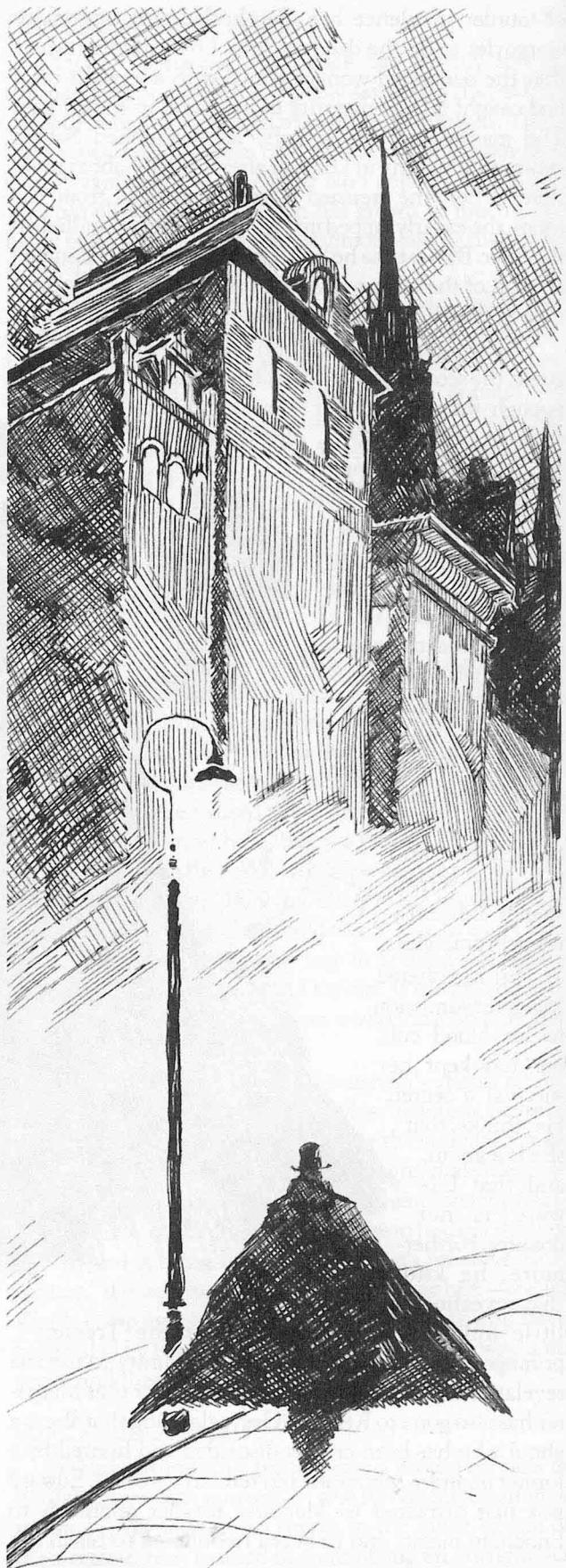
The first one, Danvers, is the most indiscreet childe. He has infiltrated the Camarilla by posing as a Ventrite, even going so far as to learn the basics of the Fortitude Discipline, and to master Presence. His wealth comes from the sale of pharmaceuticals in London, the two doctors he employs as retainers, and dens of iniquity where drug addicts sate their hunger for opium. Cyril Masters is one of his best clients, though the two have never met socially. Away from the gatherings of the Kindred, they have conducted their transactions in a businesslike (but desperate) fashion. Cyril merely believes that his Ventrite benefactor maintains the dens as a questionable source of income. He suspects that Danvers also has dealings with the Setites, but he is oblivious to the fact that Danvers is Halim's childe.

Halim's second childe, Patricia, masquerades as a mortal woman with a fascination with the Middle East. She has studied its many exotic arts, including dance, and taught them to the women who serve as her students (or on some occasions, her lovers). Like Halim, she has studied the works of Sir Richard Francis Burton, but her favorite work is his forbidden translation of the *Kama Sutra*. Patricia also serves as the *grande dame* of a brothel on the East Side of London, though she administers the business through intermediaries. As one would expect, she is never there during the day. Her temple is served exclusively by female acolytes, who conduct monthly rituals invoking the names of Egyptian goddesses. Rebecca Grey has been astute enough to learn rumors of the temple's existence, but she believes it is a mortal coven. If she decides to investigate further, she may expose Patricia's activities — and invoke Halim's wrath.

The third childe, Ferguson, belongs to the Inner Circle of three fraternal brotherhoods in London, including a splinter group of Egyptian Freemasonry. One of Cyril Masters' childe has been lured into this latter organization. Cyril believed that the organization would act as a sedate front for his liaisons, and he still thinks he can infiltrate it as he has so many others. He is unaware that Ferguson has watched and learned of Cyril's secretive meetings with his childe, a high-ranking official in the British police force. Ferguson has sent intermediaries to several of London's other neonates, hinting at the opportunities (from political influence to blood) offered by this secret society. His ambition is his greatest weakness, for he has recently attempted to suborn some of the other clubs Masters visits.

The Ripper

For all the might and power of the London Kindred, their vigilance has not aided them in finding a killer who easily exceeds their atrocities: a mortal known as Jack the



Ripper. Cyril Masters' influence over London's police has yielded little in this regard, although he suspects that mortals within the department may have constructed their own conspiracy to actually aid the Ripper, or at least cover up his identity. Among the Kindred, several have advanced wild theories of who and what Jack the Ripper might be. Nathaniel believes it is an insane variety of werewolf; Dr. Timothy is certain the deaths are the actions of a Sabbat Malkavian. They are both wrong, for they cannot accept that a mortal is capable of such monstrous efficiency.

The terror unleashed by such atrocities forces the Kindred of London to investigate people and places they dared not question before. By the end of the century,

many of the intrigues discussed previously have been revealed. An investigation into Cyril Masters over his failed attempts to find the Ripper soon reveals his thorough exploitation by a society of Setites. Lady Anne and five Tremere force their way into the Deep Ward, not only finding witnesses that have been hidden, but vampires they never suspected had been abducted and tortured. As secret after secret is revealed, the resulting firestorm distracts from any further attempts to find the mortal killer. For all the supernatural puissance of the London Camarilla, the self-interest and intrigues of the Kindred prevents them from stopping a mortal madman who kills as efficiently as one of their own kind.



Chapter Five: Storytelling

When the fog thinned, I looked and saw a man standing opposite the pub where the bar maid lived. Of a sudden his throat turned dull red like a robin's, and he crumpled, having cut his throat.

- Rudyard Kipling, Something of Myself

Setting a chronicle in another time period, and most likely a different country, creates a whole new raft of challenges for a Storyteller. Not least of these is recreating Victorian London vividly for your players. It may only be 120 years ago, but the attitudes and outlook of the people and the physical face of the city make it much more than modern-night's Vampire dressed up in a top hat, cloak and cane.



The first step, as always, is research. **Victorian Age: Vampire** and **London by Night** are just the beginning. Get yourself down to the local library or bookshop, and look at some of the books mentioned in the reading lists. See the movies or TV shows recommended. Steep yourself in the mortal London, which is the backdrop for your story. Fiction is as good as factual books, here. After all, you're looking to recreate the feel and mood of the city, not a historically accurate duplicate.

The next step is to talk to your players: What do they want out of a Victorian London chronicle? What is it about the setting that interests them in particular? Is it the traditional image? Is it the Jack the Ripper-style horror associated with the era? Is it the fact that it's at the very heart of the British Empire? The answers to these questions will give you an idea of which of the plots in this book you'd best focus on. It's also worth establishing what they know and what they don't know about the city. We've tried to be as historically accurate in this book as we can, but there's absolutely no reason to cleave to historical details if they run contrary to your players' expectations of the era. After all, this is all about telling an enjoyable story, not studying a textbook with added vampires.

Victorian Gothic

Thanks to Hollywood's obsession with Victorian London through the years, most of your players should already have a good idea of some of the basic tropes of the city: the fog, the clothes and the cabs. This is both a blessing and a curse to you. It gives you a ready source of evocative images to use to conjure up the setting for your players. However, it does mean that you need to avoid straying directly into cliché, because then you run the risk of turning your game into an exercise in Victorian camp, or modern **Vampire** with a silly hat on.

The simple way to avoid this is to capture the spirit of the era and the city. In essence, the fascination of the era springs from its duality: It's a time of tradition, hierarchy and the done thing, while also being a time of progress, expansion and rapid change. It's a time of abject poverty and disgusting living conditions mirrored by wealth and refined civilization for the few. On the surface, sexual morals are more restrictive than at any time in history. In truth, the people had made a mental division between those who were sexual (poor people and themselves) and those who were not (their wives, usually).

One main duality that defines the Victorian Gothic London, though we'll look at some others later in this chapter.

Rationality Versus The Supernatural

The particular theme of much of the horror literature of the time is the duality between rationality and the supernatural — the sublime, as **Victorian Age: Vampire** defines it. The protagonists are usually men and women of reason and scientific method. They are educated and know the way the world works. Yet, they are still confronted with enemies that defy classification in their scientific systems. However great science has become, there are still things that lie outside its boundaries, and they are dangerous. One way of evoking the mood of the era for your players is to tell tales in a similar mien. To take the archetypal London-set work of the period, *Dracula*, we see the forces of rationality in the form of Van Helsing and his allies fighting against the ultimate in the supernatural, Dracula. While the rational

ultimately triumphs in that book, this is the World of Darkness and the outcome will never be so clear-cut.

After all, the characters are supernatural beings. That duality may well be played out within themselves: If they were believers in rationality prior to the Embrace, they're going to have to do some adjusting to come to terms with their new nature. Even if they weren't, the nature of the Camarilla and the Masquerade makes rationality an extremely useful tool for the city's Kindred. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter Four, while the occult revival led by groups like the Golden Dawn may be useful to some vampires (notably Mithras and the Tremere), interest in the occult is not something they wish to encourage over much.

The characters may well find themselves in the somewhat ironic position of being supernatural beings actively seeking to destroy the belief in the supernatural. This is not to suggest that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories are in fact a vampire's plot to suggest to the mortals that rationality can overcome all, but certainly the London Camarilla would prefer Doyle's works to those of Stoker, Poe and Machen.

The other way to use these themes, of course, is to present the characters with antagonists that embody rationality. The Arcanum and Society of Leopold are particularly good for this sort of plot. In effect, you are telling the Dracula story from the other point of view.

Hypocrisy

That selfsame hypocrisy we see when vampires aim to destroy belief in their nature is evident throughout Victorian London. The British direct their efforts to civilize the world through the empire from the very city where their own countrymen live in medieval squalor only a short walk away. The wealthy dine expensively and in style mere yards from alleys where the poor lie dead.

Of course, this hypocrisy is an important implement in the Kindred's toolbox of influence. A character does not have to be a Setite to know how to take advantage of a mortal's weakness, especially in a period when so much is forbidden. The conventional wisdom among the upper classes, for example, is that women are incapable of enjoying sexual intercourse, and that a woman who takes pleasure in it may actually be deranged. While a cursory glance at the lives of the poor women of the East End would soon put an end to the notion, the Victorians seem to be pathologically incapable of seeing such contradictions, even in the empire's capital.

The interaction between Kindred and mortal society is often a key part of many Vampire stories, and to truly evoke the feeling of the era, the hypocrisy of many

people's lifestyles needs to be a key element in the game. Indeed, in Kindred society, those layers of hypocrisy and deception should be more richly layered. Take the presence of the justicar in the city, for instance. On the surface, she is here to welcome the prince home. Some vampires realize, of course, that she's here as a warning to Mithras that he must behave by the rules of the sect. However, by involving other vampires in this hidden mission, she is being a hypocrite, because she has no intention of actually moving against Mithras. Taking on an elder of his stature is a sure way to add fuel to the Sabbat's fire, by showing up just how dangerous creature like him can be when roused.

Empire

One fact concerning London in this setting makes it utterly unique. It is not just the capital of the United Kingdom; it is the capital of the British Empire. That has a profound effect on the city, and you won't be doing the setting justice if it doesn't become apparent to the players that this is the case. A number of the major ways in which the city is affected that might come to notice of vampires are listed below.

Ethnic Diversity

Unlike most previous major empires, the British Empire is not local to the British Isles, it is scattered all across the planet. That means that the racial diversity of the subject people is staggering. Most of Africa and southern Asia lies under British rule, and people of those regions are starting to appear in London for the first time. In general they are still regarded as third-class people at the very best, items of curiosity and living signs of British Imperial power. Some become permanent residents of the city, though wholesale immigration won't take place for another sixty years or so. For the time being, they are usually transient visitors, adding a new dimension to the city.

The net result of all these different nationalities passing through the city is that people are being exposed to more cultural diversity than ever before, and they hunger for it. Many Londoners have been exposed to different cultures during time abroad working in the colonies. Whereas in the past outsiders were often seen as threats, Victorian London is likely to welcome them as novelties and curiosities. The degree to which that has extended to the Kindred, too, is up to you. Vampires are, by their predatory nature, somewhat less trusting of newcomers, who may well become a threat to their position.

It's also worth remembering that this is not just a city of white English guys. People from all parts of the British Isles can be found in the city. The railway network has made it much easier to move around, and much of the city's population boom comes from people commuting from elsewhere in the country. While English accents are still the most common, Scot, Irish and Welsh voices rise above the din with increasing frequency. They bring with them their own distinctive cultures, and their speakers can often be found living in enclaves, some of which are noted in Chapter Two. While the majority of these new residents are working class, people from other parts of the country can be found at all levels of society — and among the vampire population as well.

The Cathayan Question

So, you may well be asking, if the empire is really making Britain that cosmopolitan, why aren't there any Cathayans in the book? Are the vampires of the East really that disinterested in the west? The short answer is "Yes, they are."

Well, there's nothing to stop you from including one or two of the Kuei-Jin if you feel you want to. However, during the Victorian Age, the Kindred of the East still keep very much to themselves. They concentrate on protecting their lands from invaders, not infiltrating the West. That's why we've chosen to exclude them from this book. By all means, if you'd like Kuei-Jin in your London chronicle, do it, but remember that Kindred — even Cathayans — follow mortal trends, not set them. It's unlikely for a vampire to be a pioneer, and the immigration that has yet to occur large-scale in London includes the courts of Golden Cathay.

Business

Many of the foreign faces seen in London are the result of the boom in trade with other parts of the world. London has been a major trading center for centuries, but as the capital city of the empire, it has expanded dramatically. The proliferation of docks along the Thames has expanded to cater for the demand from the trading companies for harbor space. Goods from all over the empire are imported into the United Kingdom and then sold to customers both in the UK and overseas.

Small concerns rapidly grow in size as new markets open. Elder vampires, used to long-held patterns of trade,

are likely to be caught by surprise, especially by younger, more adaptable Kindred. Influence over London's tradesmen was usually applied through the livery companies — groups based in the City of London that are dedicated to a particular trade, such as drapers, goldsmiths and so on. The new breed of independent trading companies soon become the predominant economic power in the city, opening the chance for young vampires to establish their own fields of influence.

Public Services

The Victorians are fascinated by science and engineering. Notable figures in both fields and their achievements are celebrated and treated almost as tourist attractions. In London, this manifests itself as an almost continual process of improvement and rebuilding through the latter decades of the 19th century.

The construction of London's sewer systems, with vast vaults and underground chambers that put many great banqueting halls to shame in their scale, and the beginning of the underground railway systems open up the potential for new, secure havens for a vampire with influence in the right places. While the Nosferatu are the obvious candidates, particularly for the massive sewer system, many other vampires will realize the potential of London's growing network of tunnels. Other projects also offer opportunities, including the building of the embankments alongside the Thames.

Of course, this burst of construction also brings threats to havens, both by accident and by design. London is in a continual state of redevelopment through the era. Part of that is due to the expansion of the railways. Using their powers of compulsory purchase, the railway companies devastate whole areas of the city and relocate thousands of people with little or no compensation. With enough influence applied to the right railway company, a rival's haven can be reduced to rubble and his hunting ground to little more than a barren tangle of iron rails. Alternatively, the decision to build a station in the middle of the vampire's fief will bring thousands of new residents into the area, making it a far better hunting ground.

No one vampire could hope to have any singular influence on all this development. The network of companies and individuals involved and the lack of an overall governing body make exercising any sort of dominance over the whole scope of London's development impossible in the short term. Given the brief space of time in which most of the work happens, the long term simply isn't an option (though that's not to say some Kindred won't think it is).



History

A key point to remember about London is that, quite unlike the cities of America, it has over two millennia of history to look back on at this point in time, from its early days as a Roman settlement to its current status at the heart of the Empire. Mithras stands as a testament to that history: He's seen the majority of it. Many of the Kindred in the city can boast histories of at least centuries in London, if not longer.

The physical environment of the city bears this out, too. While nothing survives of the Roman era, except perhaps a few hidden chambers used by Mithras's cultists, buildings dating back hundreds of years are the norm, not the exception. Street names hint at histories all but forgotten. Distaff Lane in the city refers to the street's history as the place to buy distaffs — staffs used for spinning — hundreds of years before. The city of Westminster owes its name to a monastery, the West Mynster, which stood there a thousand years ago. A little investigation into the place names of the city can prove both an invaluable source of plot ideas and further color for the game. Some books to use as a starting point are listed in the Introduction.

Currency

Britain uses an unusual currency system in the Victorian era, which has evolved over several centuries. It is based around three coins: the pound, the shilling and the pence.

1 pound = 20 shillings

1 shilling = 12p

Prices are written in the format pound/shillings/pence, so something costing £1/8s/3p costs one pound, eight shillings and three pence.

To give an idea of costs during the era, a trashy paperback book costs a shilling, while a luxurious meal in a restaurant starts at around £2/0s/0p. Cabs cost around 1p per minute.

Symbolism

We've already talked about the iconic images of London: the fog, the clothes, the street urchins and the cabs. As discussed earlier they can be used to ease players into the right frame of mind for the setting, by playing on their experience of it in films, TV shows and books. You can go a step further, though, by thinking about the symbolism that underlies those icons, and the meanings they can convey to your players.

Use of symbolism like this is better done too little than too much, but the Victorian Gothic mood is one of slightly overblown, florid tale-telling and extensive use of symbolism is definitely redolent of the period. Something that would be over the top in modern *Vampire* may be just the right effect for a story told in this setting.

Fog

While other cities of the period have their fogs, London is unique. As Dickens wrote, "Even Paris itself can occasionally turn out very respectable work in this way and the American visitor to London will very probably think, in passing the banks of Newfoundland, that he has very little to learn on the subject of fog. But what Mr. Guppy called 'a London particular' and what is more usually known to the natives as a 'pea-souper' will very speedily dispel any little hallucination of this sort." The idea of fog in London is so powerful that even today people come to the city expecting it... and come away disappointed. It's certainly something you should be using in the game. However, as something that has such a powerful resonance, you should think carefully about how and where you use it: London wasn't foggy all the time.

The most dramatically appropriate connotation of fog is its power of concealment. In a thick London fog, visibility drops to a matter of yards, the traffic slows and it's easy to become lost, even when the gas lamps are alight. Those lamps themselves are part of the symbolism: they are half-concealed beacons of hope, always in danger of being swallowed up in the fog. Fog should always conjure up a feeling of unease. Anything could be out there, hidden by the drifting banks. A scene set on a foggy night where the characters can see nothing beyond themselves and hear only muffled sounds will have a profoundly different feel to one that takes place on a clear, moonlit evening, with perfect visibility. It will reek of concealment, lies and conspiracy, not to mention the hidden dangers of such activities.

Remember, too, that London's fogs are the result of heavy pollution from the surrounding factories, and untold thousands of fires burning to provide light and heat to the city. They are far more than mere suspensions of condensed water in the air. They have a distinct taste and smell, and often are tinged black or orange instead of gray. Most mortals, given the choice, stay in on a foggy night, for the sake of their lungs and their safety. While vampires do not have the same concerns, they will find hunting harder on such nights.

These twin messages of concealment and inner corruption touch neatly on *Vampire*'s themes. So, don't just use fog as random background, think about the

impact of setting scenes in these infamous pea-soupers and the extra drama you can create by conjuring up that alien environment.

Society

When you think of London's people, two images come to mind. The first is of the ragged street people, the poverty-stricken of the East End and the other slums. The second is of the rich, dressed in fine, ornate clothes, parading around parks, taking cabs and enjoying elegant balls.

While these two images are far from the whole social spectrum of the city, they remain a powerful contrast, and one that has a particular resonance for vampires. Indeed, London as a city is very much a reflection of vampiric nature. It presents on its surface a picture of uprightness, control and civilization, as reflected by the lives of the upper classes. They enjoy unprecedented wealth and privilege, and have more leisure time than at any other period of history. The industrialized society has brought them freedom and luxury, while destroying the health of the workers. Underneath the surface lurks a bestial fight for survival, with the people of Whitechapel, carving out life in an uncaring society, reflecting the vampire's own inner beast. Women prostitute themselves in the street to earn enough money for a doss house that night. Men drink away the remains of the day's pay, hoping that there will be work available for them the next day. Children beg or steal from the gutters.

After the revolutions across Europe only a few decades before, the wealthy and powerful of London have as much cause to fear their own poor as the vampire does her predatory nature.

The rich and the poor are conveniently geographically separated, yet still about one another, a juxtaposition that is easy to exploit to enhance the mood of your chronicle. Scenes focused on intrigue, politics and civilized discourse should take place among the ornate buildings and cultured drawing rooms of the city, while acts of predation and violence are better suited for the slums, workhouses and opium dens. Once those links are established in the players' minds, you can start to play with those expectations to unsettling effect. If a meeting with one of Anne's aides is arranged in a doss house in the East End, the players might well expect to find their characters caught up in violence, but may instead be forced into a political situation that is every bit as predatory as the lives of the poor. Equally, the sudden outbreak of violence in a cultured evening's gathering at a ballroom in one of the new railway hotels is a powerful reminder of how thin the veneer of control is with most vampires.

The City as Vampire

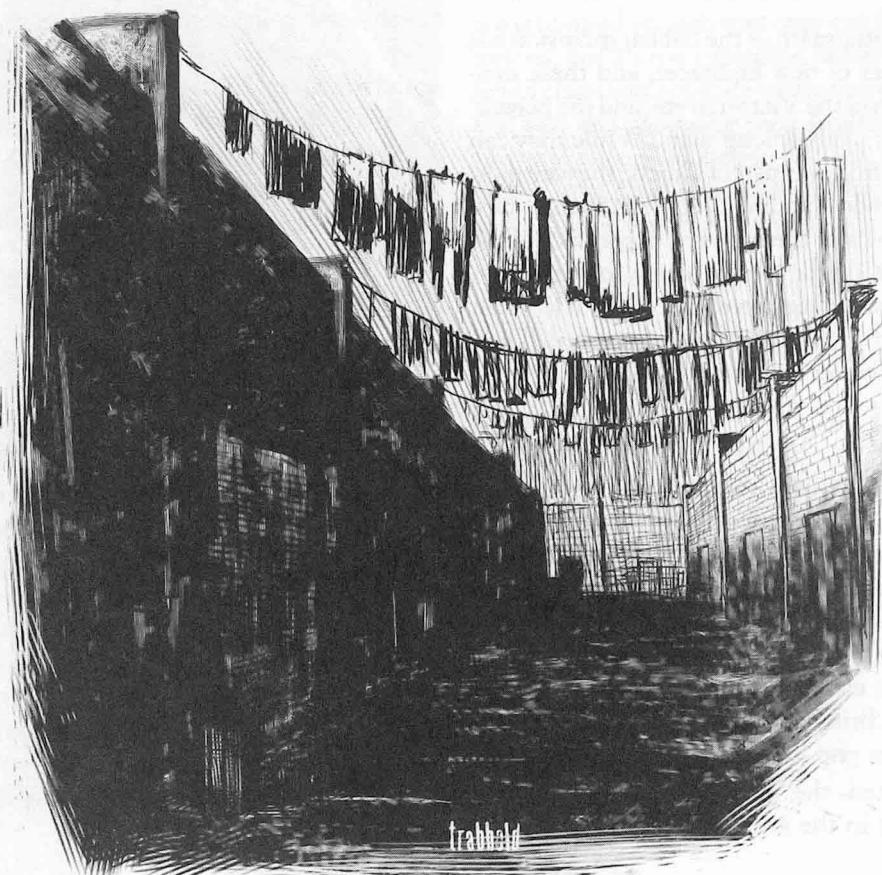
It's worth noting that London itself is effectively a vampire during this period. It's an enormously wealthy city, which drives its rapid expansion, but much of that wealth is not its own. Instead, money flows into its coffers from the whole of the British Empire. The opulence of London is financed by the labor of people continents away, people who have no hope of ever seeing the fruits of those labors. Within the city, the rich grow richer through the labors of the masses, and while some unions have enough power to be able to make a difference, most of the working classes live a hand-to-mouth existence, as their health is destroyed in factories for their employer's gain. London grows rich and powerful by draining its own people and those of conquered countries. It sucks their life just as a vampire drains the blood of his prey. By occasionally reminding the players about these aspects of the city, you can continually echo the predatory nature of their characters.

The Undercity

As we mentioned above, London has a lot of history, and most of it is buried beneath the city. The latest wave

of development under the city, from the sewers to the trains, is just the latest step in creating a whole undercity that exists below London's muck- and straw-strewn streets. New buildings are built over the cellars of long-demolished structures. Rivers that once flowed freely through the countryside now disappear underground. Old caves and tunnels remain from centuries ago, forgotten by mortals, but still home to vampires and other, stranger creatures.

Stories that delve into these dark, hidden places touch on the hidden history of both the city and its Kindred inhabitants. They show that there is always more afoot than is shown on the surface of any story, and more history behind any action than most people care to consider. The city itself has seen more secret crimes, murders and violence than could ever be recorded. Its older Kindred inhabitants have just as much to hide, from Anne's diablerie to Mithras's continued need for Kindred blood. As the characters travel through the tunnels and caverns, they should have a sense of delving into both the secrets and the history of the city. By highlighting the nature and age of the various sections they pass through you can help enhance that feeling.



Traveling underground in a chronicle also reminds the characters that under the surface of civilized, urbane London above exists a rougher, nastier, more primitive world, which the Victorians have buried under their great works of engineering and construction. Just as with the contrast between rich and poor, using London's lower levels hints at the nature of vampires, too, with their Beasts somewhat hidden by their civilized exteriors, especially in a Camarilla city like London.

Characters

A city is far more about its people than its physical environment. The supporting cast of your game is the final piece needed to make a truly believable Victorian London come to life.

Kindred

Inevitably, the Kindred of London as a whole are not as tied to this particular era as the mortals. Mithras dates back to the nearly prehistoric times, and Valerius remembers the Norman invasion. Others among the London Camarilla remember the civil war, the Great Fire and seeing Shakespeare's works upon their first performances.

However, the aftermath of the Sabbat incursion has seen a large number of new Embraces, and these neophytes are very much of the Victorian era, and the players' characters are most likely among them. While they can theoretically come from any part of society, they are most likely to have an understanding of some of the key new developments of the age: the railways, experience of the empire, knowledge of the docks or any of the other changes that have made London the great city it is. Their sires seek to take advantage of those innovations. Their hope is that their children will provide it.

Mortals

To understand the new vampires of the age, you have to understand the mindset of the people. For all but the most wretched of the working people, this is actually a time of great hope. Science and engineering transform the lives of everyone. The steam engine is now commonplace, and has made mass transport for all a possibility. By the end of the era, electricity makes its presence felt. More significantly, Britain rules much of the world, and shows no sign of her grip loosening.

For the educated, the world is full of possibility: Commerce, service in the army or overseas, and entry

into one of the professions make a sustainable and civilized way of life less of a goal and more of a certainty. The future is glorious, and the past can be swept away in its name. Education is the key to unlocking that future, for Londoners themselves, for their children and even their servants.

In short, as well as food and a recruiting pool, the mortals of London are actually a bigger threat to the Kindred population than they have ever been. No longer caught in the grip of superstition and fear, they have accepted rationality and progress and seek to make the world a better place. They will fail, of course, just as the British Empire fails, but for this moment, hope and progress are the watchwords for a nation. If they become aware of the presence of vampires among them, those Kindred will be seen as both subjects for learned inquiry and as a challenge to overcome.

While the Kindred are not likely to give up their influence over mortal society, they are forced to learn to be increasingly circumspect as their contacts grow more powerful.

Class

The class system is very much at the heart of life in Victorian London. It roughly divides society into three segments: the upper, middle and lower classes. Each has their own role to play within society, their own set of standards and morals and their own living spaces. There is very little mobility among the classes. However, all three mix freely on the streets of London and all three should be present in your story. Class is also at the root of the problems that afflict Victorian mortals. While their outlook on the world is one of hope, they seem unable or unwilling to see the iniquities in their own society. This is the way it has always been, they reason quite erroneously, and if we change, we weaken the country.

The Upper Classes

The upper class is the traditional aristocracy of the United Kingdom. Most of the families that count themselves as upper class have enjoyed lives of luxury for centuries. Many of them are independently wealthy and do not need to work for a living. They hold a certain degree of power within society, both through the House of Lords in Parliament and because they are respected and listened to simply because of their position. While they have considerable interplay with the upper reaches of the middle classes, they generally only encounter the lower classes as servants, cab drivers and other menial service providers.



The Middle Class

The middle class is the great success story of the Victorian era. It is mostly made up of professionals — lawyers, accountants, surveyors, doctors and vicars — and wealthy businessmen. The two groups work with each other, and generally respect each other, too. They are the driving economic heart of London in this period, both generating wealth through their companies and paying themselves a comfortable wage. The upper reaches of the middle classes live adjacent to the upper classes in the great terraced streets of central London, while the lower reaches are the residents of the new suburbs that have developed in the last twenty years. Most aspire to the privileges and status of the upper classes, even if they reject their lifestyle. The middle classes tend to have strong work ethics, committed moral (often Christian) beliefs and the traditional family structure that most people today mean when they talk about Victorian values.

The Lower Class

The workers of London who keep the docks bustling and the factories in business have not profited from their toil. Their employers, who can easily replace them if any problems occur, see most workers as a disposable asset. A small number of trades, most notably the dockworkers, are unionized enough that they can demand better conditions, but it's the exception rather than the rule. The lower classes accept a life where much employment is by the day, and damaging their health, and which barely provides enough money to live. All the members of the family work, including the children. Most live within easy walking distance of their place of work.

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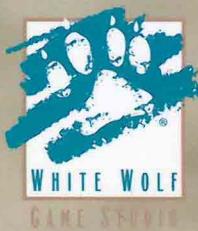
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