



MAGARCHY

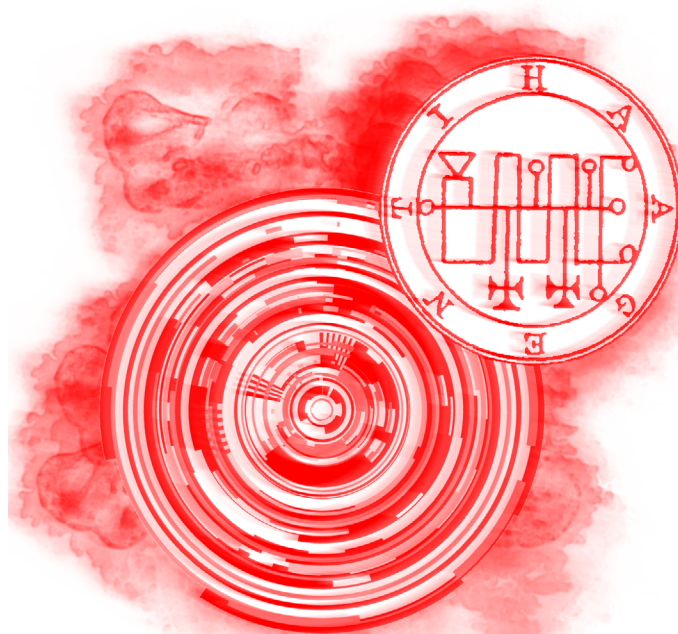
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FATE

Magarchy

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To Sir Edward Wodehouse,

As you have probably heard by now, Lord Huffleman has died in a tragic and bizarre accident. I mean really, drowning in his own soup. His death is part of a series of accidents and scandals systematically targeting my allies in London. You will recall several months ago, Lord Buxton was caught in bed with that young man. Shortly after that, Lord Hood died in a riding accident, and Sir Long caught ill and died before he could reach a doctor. In total, seven of my closest allies have either died in unusual circumstances or been discredited by acts so unseemly I cannot cover them up.

It was the recent death of Lord Huffleman that made suspect something more sinister than a simple streak of bad luck. Unsure of the origin of this attack, I was forced to contract with Catherine de Medici. While I have little trust of the Medici, I must say that Catherine is a frightenly competent businesswomen and cyberneticist. Besides the obscene cost in gold, I have agreed to help her lobby His Majesty to allow Medici Company to manage certain state security contracts. This will work to our advantage, as I was already looking to replace those contracts held by the Church.

After several months of investigation, Catherine uncovered that my allies had been cursed. The investigation clearly pointed to mages from the Church. We were able to acquire two novices who had been involved in rituals used to curse several members of the court. Their interrogations revealed two more victims that we were able to save before the spells could take hold. Knowing which churches to look at, I had Bishop Bonner retrieve correspondence from Archbishop Cranmer's own hand indicating his desire that the curses be worked, as well as which nobles were to be targeted.

The gall of that man. Did he really believe that I wouldn't discover this information?

To the heart of the matter: I cannot allow such brazen attacks against my allies. I have learned that the monks in Bolton Abbey have recently made a rather remarkable discovery. It seems the monastery had within its vaults a grimoire containing the arcane seals originally used for the warding spells of church buildings. As you know, many of the monasteries in France are holding out against the King's expansion, and such a text could be instrumental in disabling their defenses.

Evidently the Archbishop of York came to a similar conclusion, and was going to leverage the discovery to gain some concessions from His Majesty. Instead, I have enclosed with this letter orders calling for the dissolution of Bolton Abbey, and the seizure of all its arcane and material assets.

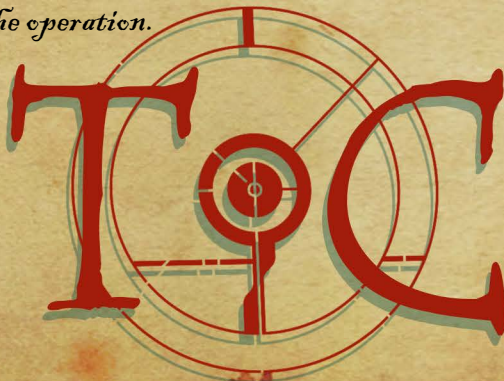
You are to immediately carry out these orders. Spare no time for the Prior to remove anything from the premises. I doubt that you will need very many men, as Bolton Abbey is a somewhat obscure facility. However, do be careful, they may have several golems for protection. As usual, you and your men may take your bonus from the monastery's coffers. The most important aspect of this operation is that you recover the text. Along with a description of the book, I've enclosed a brass key and a glass lens. Both have been enchanted by Catherine de Medici specifically for this task. The key should disable any wards that our agents cannot handle. The lens should bypass any illusions the monks may be using to disguise the grimoire. Check every person who leaves the monastery, I don't want any mistakes.

After you have removed the assets from Bolton, you are to occupy the monastery until representatives from Medici Company arrive. As a part of the payment for help in this endeavor, I am granting them lease over the estate. The family has requested a facility outside of London to develop security magics in a more secure environment.

Finally, I have sent documentation granting you Crown authority to enact the interrogation and execution of the treasonous monks involved in researching the text. Do so quickly, that you may prevent Church interference.

Contact me as soon as you have seen to the operation.

Sir Thomas Cromwell



Introduction



What is Magarchy?

Magarchy is a setting for Fate, intended to be used with the Fate Core rules. Simply put, it is an answer to the questions: What if magic exists? How would history be changed? What if this strange source of power formed the basis for modern technologies, at a much earlier point in time?

Magarchy is set in the mid-16th century, the year 1536 CE to be precise. It is an alternate history in which many actual figures and events are present, but have been changed to suit the themes of the setting. We've gone a step further than simply putting magic in the time of Henry VIII though. Magarchy is a play on the cyberpunk genre, postulating that the great minds of the Renaissance might use magic to create an industrial and information age in the middle of their heyday. We speculate as to how the world might be rocked by such a change and begin to alter the course of history from that point forward.

Player characters are Magarchs: those who practice magic and who were born to change, lead, and rule the world. They could be the scions of nobility or ruffians with a talent for arcane tricks, but somehow they've come together with a common purpose: to change things up.

What is Cyberpunk?

Cyberpunk is a type of science fiction which focuses on the following themes:

- ☞ The information age and all of its implications, such as lack of anonymity, the potential for artificial intelligence, constant connectivity, publicly available information, identity theft, virtual reality, etc.
- ☞ The dominance of “faceless” corporations over the world, supplanting traditional human power structures. Particular emphasis is placed on clandestine and immoral actions taken by the multinational powers which bow to no authority.
- ☞ The effects of some current trends, such as pollution, urban sprawl, and overcrowding. This also includes cultures becoming blended and language changing rapidly.

Magarchy incorporates these ideas while at the same time attempting to keep a little historical perspective. What would a Silicon Valley look like in Renaissance Florence? In what ways would England prosper from industrialized alchemy? How would a corporation run by the Medici family work?



A Smaller Picture

All of these questions and concerns are great, but they're really big picture. A game needs to be in a well-detailed place to truly come alive. It needs to provide the proper context for player character heroes to save the day against impossible odds. This book focuses on events in England, as Henry VIII struggles against the Catholic Church, France, and his own people. We present three distinct forms of magic prevalent there, go into the regional politics of the Kingdom (now being called a Magarchy under their mage-king's rule), and provide a detailed account of London itself.

Hopefully, through the intellectual wonder of history, the unlimited nature of magic, and the gritty dystopian fears of cyberpunk, Magarchy provides everything you need to craft a beautiful, entertaining game.

A History of Magic and the World

Since the dawn of civilization, magic has had an effect on the lives of humanity. At first it was unconscious and frightening. Magic is made through will and thought, projected into the Astral Realm and unleashed upon the Earth. The first humans to cause such phenomena did so by accident, invoking the collective dreams of their society, for that was all that dwelled in the Astral Realm of the time. These people seemed to be calling down the gods and so they were known as demigods themselves, or else as priests and shaman.

Through tens of thousands of years people formed an understanding of how to make thoughts take form. The first way discovered was quite dangerous, for it entailed travelling to the Astral Realm physically through ritual or

hidden gateway. Those who did so took their lives into their hands, for the most terrifying of ideas stalk the world of dreams and thoughts. But the power they learned to wield was great and their legacies live on as legends of heroes plunging into hells and shaman walking twisting paths to heavens. These heroes made changes to Earth through the acts they took in the astral world, and they often returned with powerful artifacts infused with the magical nature of that place.

It was in the time of ancient Rome that magic began to change in Europe. The dangers of the Astral Realm were seen as too great a threat to the empire and too tied to the various peoples they intended to conquer. A new magic was brewing amongst the priesthood, one that would allow for direct magical acts through careful and studied rites. These rituals became the foundation of what we now call hermeticism, the use of magic through elaborate works. Relying on the invocation of symbolism, this new magic could alter the Astral Realm from Earth before calling down the constructed spells.

Hermeticism was safer than walking the world of dreams, but it was not a magic for the common folk. It took study, patience, and material resources. It took scholarship and apprenticeship, which fit in well with its inception among the priesthood. When the empire converted to Christianity, Hermeticism converted too, over time becoming the practiced ritual and theatre of Catholicism. The Church, wherever it reached, became the only source of reliable magic. Peasants came to the Church for blessed enchantments, healing rites, and fortune-enhancing baptisms. Nobles came to the Church for aid in battle and in keeping their various kingdoms in working order.

Some of the nobility even learned the ways of magic themselves, unbound by the priestly vows to lay no curses and beguile no maidens. These un-vowed magi learned such things in secret, trained by priests their families had bribed. They became the first European Magarchs: those who ruled with the aid of magics, both feared and loved by their lessers.

In the late 15th century one final change came to magic. The artist and inventor Leonardo da Vinci discovered a way to enter the Astral Realm through a meditative trance, projecting one's mind alone into the dangerous landscape of ideas. But he did not stop there. Da Vinci

used stolen and otherwise secreted hermetic texts to learn the rudiments of symbolic magic. He experimented with various ways of circumventing the use of ritual in making spells, finally succeeding by projecting the idea of his drawing of the Vitruvian Man into the Astral Realm. This spell, more powerful than he could have possibly imagined, altered his body in ways no magus to this day understands. Da Vinci became a half-magical being, infused with astral energies.

What came after this act was an explosion of arcane innovations. In the wake of his transformation, da Vinci shared his discoveries with others in Florence, who helped him devise a new system of magic. This system was faster and more precise than ritualism, and less dangerous than the dream walking of the ancient folk heroes. The Renaissance of magic had begun.

The artisans of Florence discovered ways of calling upon magic through inscribed sigils, often using gold and other precious materials to do so. They etched magic upon armor, creating powered suits with great protective and destructive properties. They animated statues and pieces of statues, leading to field-working automatons and replacement limbs for the wounded. Most importantly, they found ways to store knowledge in the Astral Realm and later retrieve it. They even found ways to send this information across the astral plane to arcane receivers far away. In short, they invented information technologies, robotics, and alchemical techniques for constructing advanced materials, all within the span of 50 years. And the world was rocked.

The technologies and magics, dubbed "cybernetics" after the Greek term for skillful governance or ship piloting, spread across the Continent. Those who embraced it flourished. The Knights Templar, already having established a sort of banking system, used the astral information network to become the most powerful lending institution in the world. The Medici family, entwined with political and economic power, had been early patrons of the emerging technologies in Florence. Within a decade they became the world leaders in cybernetic research, employing cutting edge technologies at each of their far-flung castles.

"Companies" of businesses began to form from the various guilds and families who had learned these new ways.

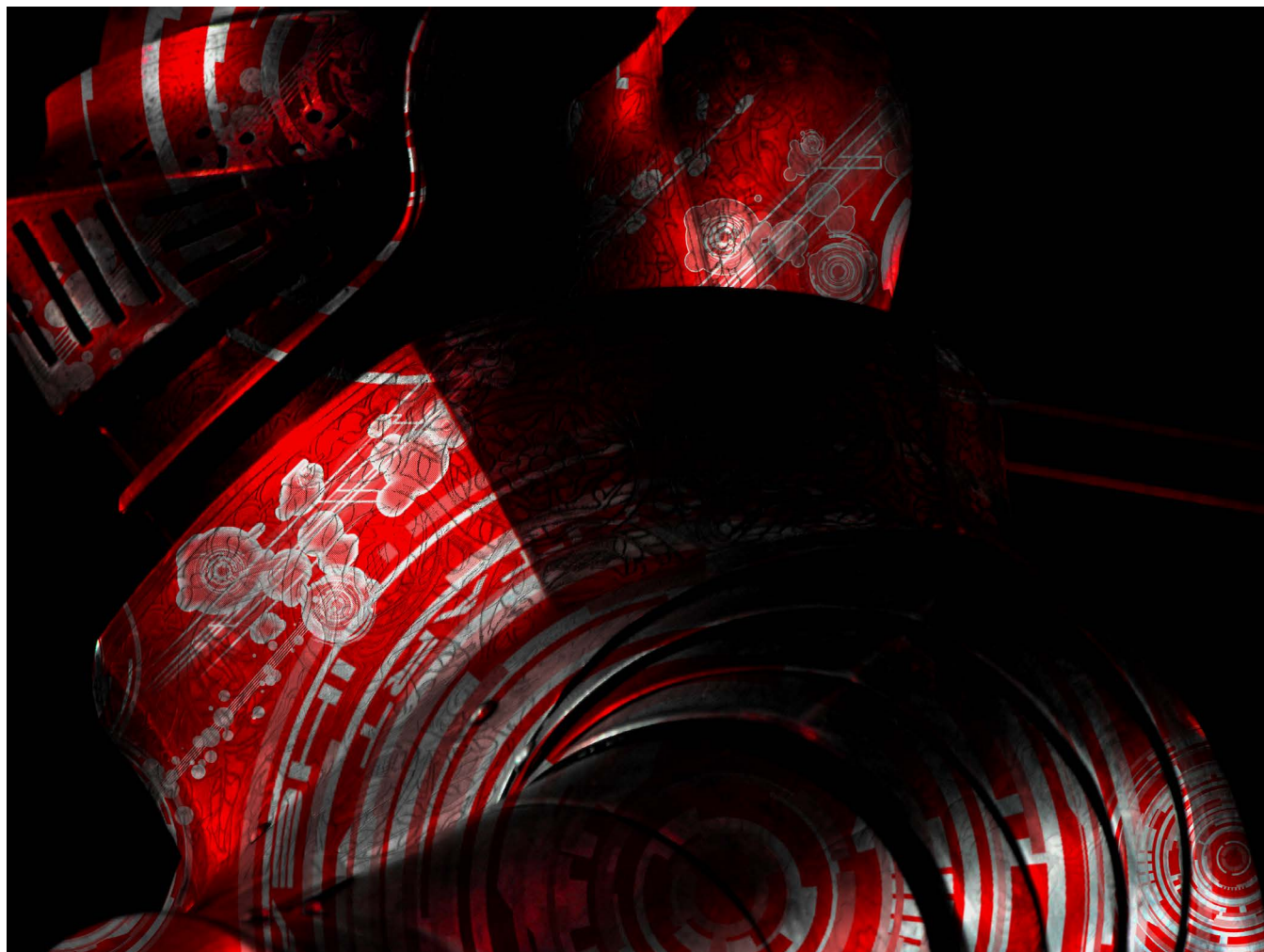
The companies quickly grew in size and scope, using new-found machinery and manufacturing systems to undercut their competition. Some even used animated statues to replace peasant workers, particularly in England, where the mage-king Henry VIII was rumored to have become enamored by all things cybernetic. As the peasant class began to move from the fields into the cities to find work, overcrowding and mass joblessness has become the issue of the day for the masses. Yet the King appears far more concerned with his new bride, an artificial intelligence constructed within the Astral Realm itself by the seemingly immortal Leonardo da Vinci: Anne.

Failing to gain the right to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, in favor of his new love Anne, Henry has taken the drastic step of splitting the Church of England from Catholicism. The hermetic magi-priests within the Anglican Church now find themselves attacked from all

sides, by their former Catholic brethren in Europe, as well as anti-Church forces within England itself. Distantly cast spells rock the cathedrals of England while agents of the Crown loot ancient magical relics in the night.

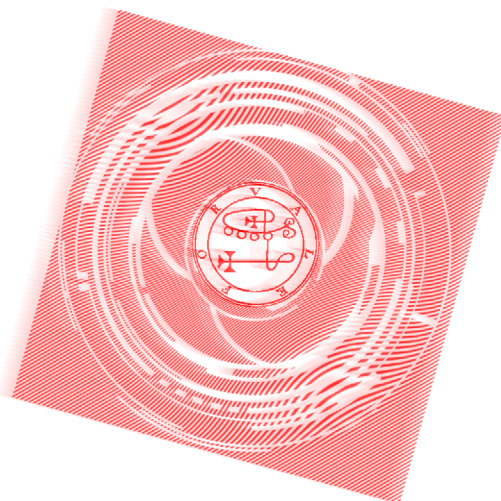
In the alleyways of the now sprawling English cities, some whisper that an old magic has returned. They claim that Druids meet in secret, using old faerie roads to evade those who would condemn their forgotten sorcery. Seeking to overthrow the current order, the Druids are said to be inducting new members and using any magic or technology they can to fight the abuses of the companies and the injustices of the Crown.

The known world is amidst drastic upheaval and change. Some might even say a revolution is at hand.



Recent Developments

- 1480 Leonardo da Vinci discovers the astral trance and projects the first sigil into the Astral Realm, becoming immortal in the process.
- 1487 Leonardo da Vinci creates the first cybernetic computer, a large machine tied to the arcane through runes and sigils. The Medici family begins patronizing da Vinci's efforts in this area and bring in many more artisans to explore related technologies.
- 1492 Filippo Brunelleschi refines the astral trance by programming da Vinci's computers with his newly invented perspective drawing to create a kind of "virtual reality." Together these inventions allow for nearly instant immersion of the mind into the Astral Realm.
- 1501 Leonardo da Vinci creates an intelligent system of astral sigils. The intelligence comes to call itself "Anne" and begins to travel the Astral Realm in search of a place to call home.
- 1503 Niccolò Machiavelli manipulates the Florentine state into investment in an astral communications network, called "Scrynet," connecting the Republic's virtual reality computers together.
- 1505 Henry VIII learns of cybernetics and becomes obsessed. Already a magic user, he learns to go into an astral trance and forge his own sigils in the Astral Realm.
- 1512 The Medici regain political control of Florence and come to dominate the production of cybernetics, selling them to the highest bidder. Their reign means the expulsion of their enemy Machiavelli, who eventually finds a home in the Astral Realm itself.
- 1533 The artificial intelligence called Anne marries Henry VIII and becomes Queen of England, as Henry forces the Anglican Church to separate from Rome. These actions make the King and new Queen rather unpopular.
- 1534 Catherine de Medici travels to England to study, rather than France to be married, where she quickly becomes the world's expert on bypassing cybernetic security.
- 1535 Henry VIII begins a series of highly successful military campaigns against France using cybernetically enhanced troops. Some say his best troops are controlled through the AR by Queen Anne.
- 1536 The present day.



Lexicon

Anne. The only cybernetic artificial intelligence known to exist. Created by Leonardo da Vinci and currently the Queen of England.

Astral Projection, Astral Trance. Projecting one's mind into the Astral Realm without actually taking one's body along as well. Not quite as dangerous as going in person, but not perfectly safe either. Requires an Astral Trance Inducer.

Astral Trance Inducer. Computer that uses virtual reality technology to assist cyberneticists in entering an astral trance.

Astral Realm, AR. An alternate world of thoughts, dreams, legends, and horrors from which all magic is derived. Layered on top of our reality, it reflects the current and past thoughts of the people who live there.

Catherine de Medici. Teenage scion of the Medici family, reluctant leader of Medici Company in Britain. Known as a "hacker" due her ability to quickly cut past cybernetic security systems.

Card Inscriber. A large cybernetic device used in printing magical sigils onto paper cards, which may carry information, memories, or even magical spells.

Company. A large business, akin to modern corporations, usually involved in the production of cybernetics. In England companies often work closely with the Crown.

Cyborg. A person with cybernetic prostheses.

Cybernetic. A machine which calls upon codified interlocking magical sigils in the AR to produce predictable magical effects. Many technologies are created through these principles, such as prosthetic limbs and senses, robotic golems, and spell-infused clothing.



Daemon. A spirit from the AR, often bound into servitude to operate golems or patrol important locations in the Astral Realm.

Druids. Inheritors of an ancient religious tradition, hiding in the shadows of Britain, who hold that the key to their return is in practice of the secret ways.

Fey, Faerie. Eldritch and ancient creatures of the AR in Britain.

Giant. A dead race of massive AR creatures, said to have ruled Britain at one time.

Golem. A cybernetic automaton, given life through the forced efforts of a bound daemon.

Henry VIII. King of England and husband to the artificial intelligence named Anne. Obsessed with using cybernetics to overcome his foes. Known to be a cyborg.

Hermetics. The traditional roots of theurgy, allowing for magic through symbolic acts, such as carefully prepared rituals.

Leonardo da Vinci. Reclusive inventor of cybernetics and creator of Anne. Said to be immortal due to the effects of his first astral sigil.

Magarch. One who is born to play a major role in the history of the world, due to knowledge and ability with magic.

Magarchy. Rule by Magarchs.

Movement. The underground political operations of the druids.

Niccolò Machiavelli. Italian politician credited with organizing the creation of the Scrynet. Said to now reside within the Astral Realm so as to avoid death.

Scrynet. A network of cybernetic computers, communicating across the Astral Realm.

Secret Ways. A collection of teachings related to the magic of the Fey, practiced by the Druids; focused on speedy travel through the Astral Realm and interactions with spirits there.

Theurgy. A form of hermetic magic practiced by the Catholic Church, created to produce magical effects without the need to travel to the Astral Realm. As such, it relies heavily on ritual and ceremony.





Chapter 1: The Triumvirate

The defining feature of Magarchy is the Magarchs. Wielding arcane powers barely understood, they are the explorers, inventors, and rulers of this world. Though many important figures are not versed in spellcasting, those who find themselves in possession of magical secrets invariably become movers and shakers in the world. It is for this reason that such knowledge is not freely shared, for a Magarch can only trust her closest allies. And because of this secrecy the three styles of magic have come to be associated with organizations dedicated to those practices.

This chapter goes into detail exploring the three major styles of magic and the people who have learned them. They are:

☞ **Cybernetics.** An extrapolation of magical practices into technological, industrial, and biological directions. Begun in the recent Renaissance in Italy, cybernetics has been taken up by powerful multi-kingdom companies, thriving by coupling the arcane with economy of scale. Backed by the Crown, cybernetics is currently the most powerful force in England.

☞ **Secret Ways.** A set of eldritch whispers originally crafted by the faeries of the Astral Realm, they are now the last and most potent weapons of the underground druid Movement among the peasantry.

☞ **Theurgy.** Ritual magic developed during the glory of the Roman Empire, it has come to be the province of the leaders of the Christian churches. The Anglican Church in England now stands apart from Catholicism, making their brand of magic a beautiful if dying symbol of the past.

Player Characters are assumed to be part of at least one of these factions, and most characters should have at least one aspect relating to their affiliations or enemies among them. Magarchy is a particularly political game at default and PCs would do well to ally themselves with Magarch organizations such as these.

“Three major forces shape Britain.
Three dogs snarling for the same
meal.”

-Niccolò Machiavelli

Philip sat in the charity clinic waiting room, eyes focused on the grey stone floor. The benches were hard, but Philip was so nervous that he barely noticed how uncomfortable he was. There was a faint smell of acid in the air, which added to his apprehension. As a rule, charity clinics were to be avoided, and until four months ago, Philip would have agreed with that sentiment. Then he had lost his right arm in an accident at the factory, and for months now he and his family had survived off the small wages his wife earned as a laundry woman. It was humiliating, and Philip was tired enough that he would brave whatever came from the clinic visit.

“Mr. Digby,” a masculine voice called, startling Philip out of his stupor. He looked up and saw that a young man with a roll of parchment had entered the waiting room from the clinic door. “The doctor will see you now.” The man gestured to the door.

Philip slowly got up and made his way through the door, following the young man. He was led to an office; while it still smelled somewhat acidic, the office was decorated with several landscape paintings, giving it a warmer feel. Behind a small mahogany desk sat a woman in a sober black dress. She immediately rose at his entering the room. “Good evening Mr. Digby, my name is Dr. Ainsworth, I’ve been assigned your case,” she said, shaking his hand with a firm grip. “From your intake form, I can see that you are seeking a bio-arcane replacement limb for your right arm.”

“Um, yeah, I guess that’s what you would say,” Philip said, rubbing where his arm had been. “I can’t pay.”

“I understand Philip. That’s why my company has built clinics like these, to help folks who are otherwise unable to retain our services.” Her smile was quite charming, and he cautiously returned it. “You know that we ask our clients to allow us to perform certain tests in return for services rendered.”

Philip squared his shoulders and said, “Yes, and I’m willing to submit to whatever is necessary.”

“Wonderful. If you will just sign this form, we can begin immediately,” the doctor said as she pulled a stack of paper from under the pile on her desk. Dr. Ainsworth handed Philip a quill, which he accepted gingerly. As he signed his name he asked, “What exactly do you want to do to me?”

“Oh, I’m afraid it’s terribly technical, but essentially we’re looking at…” She paused. “Looking at ways of enhancing certain internal functions of the body.”

“That doesn’t seem too bad,” Philip said, relief in his voice.

“It really isn’t. In fact, I doubt you will even notice any difference in your day to day life.” Her smile was back. “Now, if you will follow me, we’ll perform the enhancement, then we can get your new arm attached.”

Philip looked at his new arm, moving his fingers. It looked kind of like a knight’s armor, only he could see several parts moving as he wiggled his digits. Also, there were strange marks that glowed a dark green color. “What are these?” he asked, pointing at the glowing marks.

“Oh, those show that the unit is operating correctly,” the doctor said, examining his shoulder. “If for any reason they should stop glowing, return here.” She walked over to a counter to scribble some notes. “You’re free to go now.”

Philip broke through the clinic door, using his new arm to literally rip it off its hinges. He tossed the door aside like it was paper and stumbled in. The smell hit him, and began to vomit chunks of meat all over the floor. The sound summoned the doctor, who rushed into the waiting room. “Excuse me, you can’t…” She stopped, mouth gaping at the sight of Philip. Covered in blood and viscera, Philip stood up and wiped his mouth.

“What, what did you do to me?” Philip wailed, tears streaming down his face.

“We needed to enhance certain functions of your body. In this case, I elevated your sense of hunger.” Her voice was cool.

“I - I ate them.” Philip’s whole body was shaking.

“Yes, that is unfortunate, but think of what you have gained us. His Majesty continues to send soldiers into France, where they often must spend weeks away from proper supply lines. With what we learned from your experiment, we can turn off the feeling of hunger, greatly reducing their suffering.”

The doctor now smiled. “Really, you’re a hero.”

Cybernetic Industries

Magic isn't some mysterious gift passed onto humanity by a capricious deity. Magic is a resource to be exploited, and only those with the ambition and talent will harness its full potential. The cybernetic companies of London live by this motto, striving to tap into the vast potential that sorcery offers. These new barons of industry want to explore the arcane arts to their fullest extent, and profit obscenely from their advancement. Where the Church sought to keep magic locked away in monasteries and cathedrals, the cybernetic masters want magic to permeate every aspect of human existence.

The cyberneticists are not alone in their desires. The King has imperial ambitions, and the backbone of his new military industrial complex is cybernetic sorcery. The masters of the companies know who is responsible for their rising star, and have thrown their wealth and influence behind the King's chief advisor, Thomas Cromwell. With the successes of the French campaigns, many cybernetic leaders rub their hands with greed, knowing that the wars in Europe have only just begun.

Cybernetic Magic

Cybernetic magic is the process of constructing spell forms through the projection of one's consciousness into the AR. Unlike hermetic mages, cyberneticists rarely cast the spells they need in the moment. Rather, they call on spells they previously built in the AR and stored for

later use. Cybernetic spell forms are never built wholly from the ground up. Cybernetic mages use pre-built spell constructs to build the spells they want, saving time and energy.

Astral Projection -

Mages of the past were forced to travel into the dangerous Astral Realm and make the changes they wanted there. Later, hermetic magi developed a safer practice, but one that was tedious beyond measure, taking years to master the simplest of spells. Da Vinci's breakthrough with astral projection has allowed cybernetic mages the best

of both practices. Cybernetic practitioners can send their minds in to the AR, allowing them to build their spell constructs without the dangers of being physically present. Many achieve this state through meditative practices, though a few alchemists have been exploring elixirs that can enhance the process.

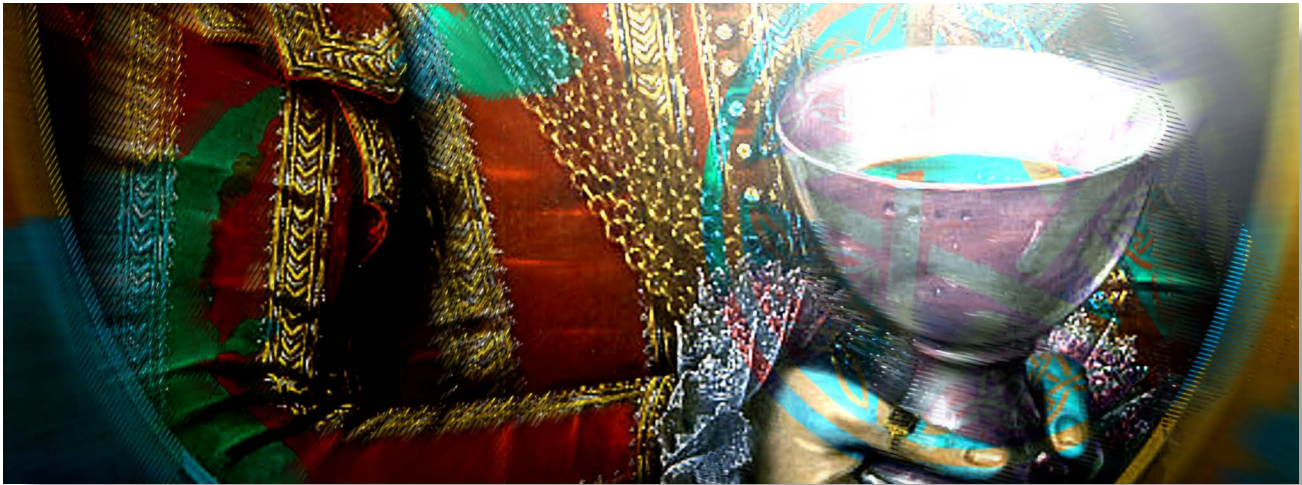
Sigils -

Cybernetic magic at its foundation is based on many of the principles developed in hermetic sorcery.

The cybernetic mages have developed their own series of arcane sigils, which they project into the AR during spell casting. Through linking their AR spell constructs to sigils they create, cybernetic mages are able to instantaneously call upon spells they have already developed. Using cybernetic sigils allows the mages to sell one-time uses of spells they develop, or to put spell effects into objects such as swords and armor, which can be used without the mage needing to be present.

"The so-called companies present an interesting breed of merchant. Vastly wealthier and more influential than their forebears, they are a class apart. It is their trans-kingdom nature that makes them so important, for it is they who ensure that people of all places unite under shared technological advancement. They make banking and communication between noble houses possible at great distance. In time, I predict this will help to unite us."

-Niccolò Machiavelli



Alchemy -

Far from the vain attempt of hermetic mages to reach some sort of physical perfection, cybernetic alchemy is extremely practical. Studying the components of the physical world and their AR counterparts, cyberneticists have learned how to alter and enhance mundane substances. From feather-light building materials to nearly indestructible armor, industrial alchemy has nearly limitless potential.

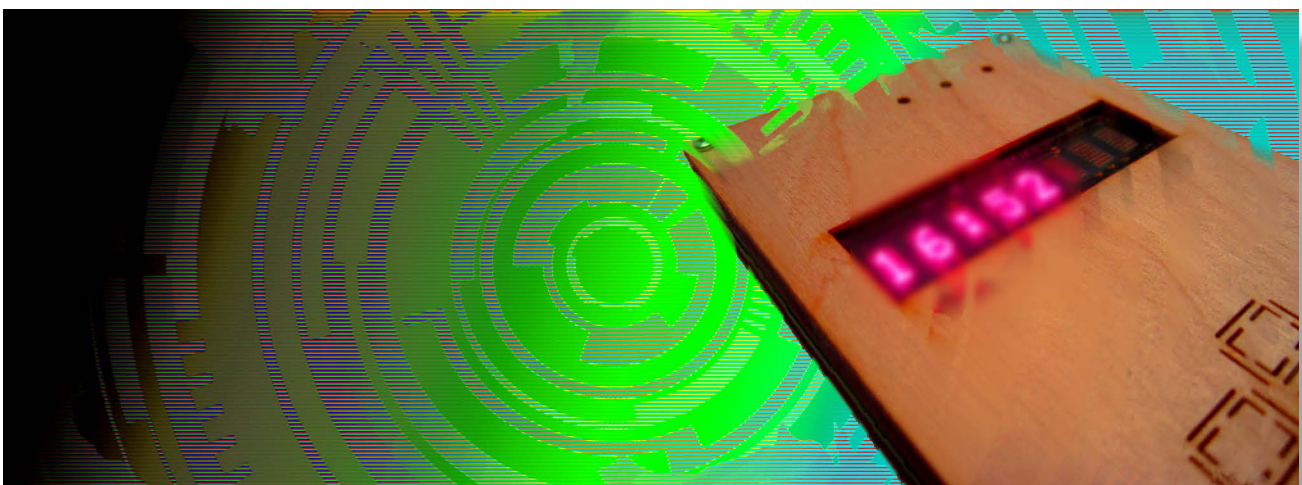
Scrynet -

A vast interconnected web, Scrynet allows cybernetic mages to scry and transmit messages over vast distances. Not limited to simple communication, mages are also able to send thoughts and memories and access spells

that they have built in the Astral Realm. Accessing the net requires the use of a divination tool such a mirror or crystal ball.

Daemon Binding -

From the texts recovered from Church archives, the cyberneticists were able to successfully summon and bind several daemons to their will. These early experiments required knowledge of the daemon's true name; with limited records of the subject, they knew very few true names. New techniques were developed, allowing a mage to summon a daemon out of the AR without knowing its true name and then bind a new name to it, thereby granting the mage control. This technique has expanded the role of golems, allowing magi to gift their constructs with actual intelligence.



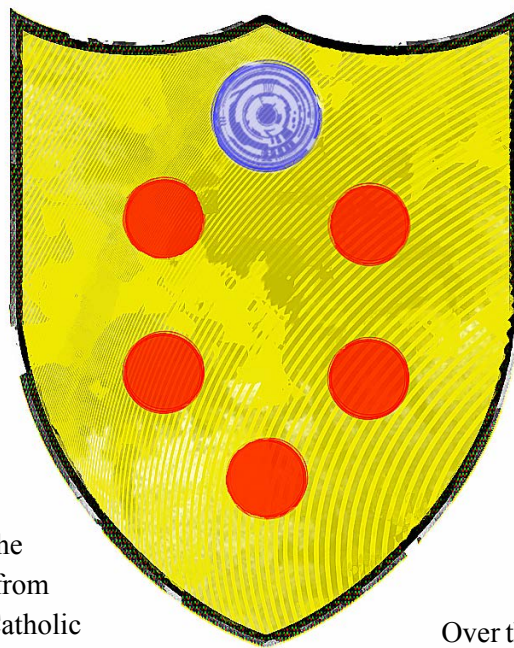
Medici Company

Overview

In the Italian city-states, great masters of the Renaissance have brought about the greatest revolution in magic since the fall of Rome, and the Medici family made it all possible. With incredible foresight, the family provided the capital necessary for these visionaries to create cybernetics, and provided the continued patronage to see it flourish. Besides financial backing, the Medici shielded the budding artists from the wrath of the Papacy and the Catholic Church, angry at the usurpation of their mystical monopoly.

As the magical revolution slowly began to trickle away from Italy, the family was quick to see the opportunity that Henry's new empire brought, and used its considerable financial resources and mystical know-how to set up their own cybernetic company. Due to the emergence of so much magical technology in all levels of society, from memory cards to bio-artifact limbs, the need for cybernetic security has become paramount. The nobility have almost exclusively benefited from the availability of so much magic, but have also become uniquely vulnerable. When all it takes is looking at the wrong glyph or sitting in the wrong chair for all of your secrets to come tumbling forth, the aristocrats have become more paranoid than ever. Enter the Medici, long time masters of cybernetics, possessing security techniques few can imagine. Dealing in everything from warding thoughts to guarding spell constructs in the AR, the Medici provide top of the line mystical security, and aren't afraid to charge a premium for their services.

Along with cybernetic security, the family has also begun a personal security force service, providing guards for the wealthy and paranoid. Comprised of mercenaries



outfitted with the latest in cybernetic gear and protective enchantments, the Medici security force is second only to the soldiers of the King. With the rise in anarchist activities of the druid circles, many of the nobility rest easier knowing Medici security forces patrol their streets and guard their homes.

Rise to Prominence

Over the course of a few short years, London has transformed itself into the metropolitan hub of Europe. Magic has suffused the city, touching the lives of noble and peasant alike. With the rise of so many mage-backed companies, the need for cyber security was paramount. The intense infighting that arose in the circles of English power made room for Medici insertion, much to the chagrin of several enterprising English companies. Not trusting any company of English origin for fear of secret alliances, wealthy English elite were very willing to enter into contracts with the new Medici Company.

With the nobility cooperating with the Medici, Henry allowed them to expand into the arena of mercenary security, an act that surprised many in the court. What few realized was that the upswing in druid attacks dangerously stretched the military's resources, with the bulk of the army dedicated to the French campaign. The Medici thus became integral to London's peace and security.

Headquarters and Holdings

The Medici Company resisted the temptation to create massive, ostentatious headquarters. With the family company focusing on security and policing, they decided early on that decentralized, understated locations

would serve the company better. To this end, the Medici built a small directing office where they are able to interact with clients and potential clients and manage the various company enterprises.

Sprinkled about London are the various precinct houses, containing the staff that engages in the physical security for the company. The locations of the central office and the precinct houses aren't advertised but aren't secret either, unlike the Medici towers. "Tower" is somewhat a misnomer, as the buildings tend to be whatever best fits into the local neighborhood. The towers act as safe havens for the Medici agents who constantly project themselves into the AR, providing the bulk of the company's mystical security. They also act as anchors for the

"The Medici. I have aided those foes of mine in the past for the right cause. I would do so again to unite the world if aiding them would help me in mine. I am proud, but not so proud as to put the past before the future when it comes to the fate of humanity."

-Niccolò Machiavelli

Medici's own private Scrynet, local to the City of London. This subnet allows the family to monitor much of the magical activity around the city, an asset that could seriously cost them if discovered.



Membership

For obvious reasons, company leadership is restricted to the Medici family. However, recently the company has allowed several English members to rise to Director levels, finding that they are better able to negotiate on behalf of the family. Potential mages are usually hired based on their abilities in the AR, though the family has always seen the value in anyone who can prove their abilities worthwhile. Other valued skills include cybernetic artifact crafting and mental manipulations.

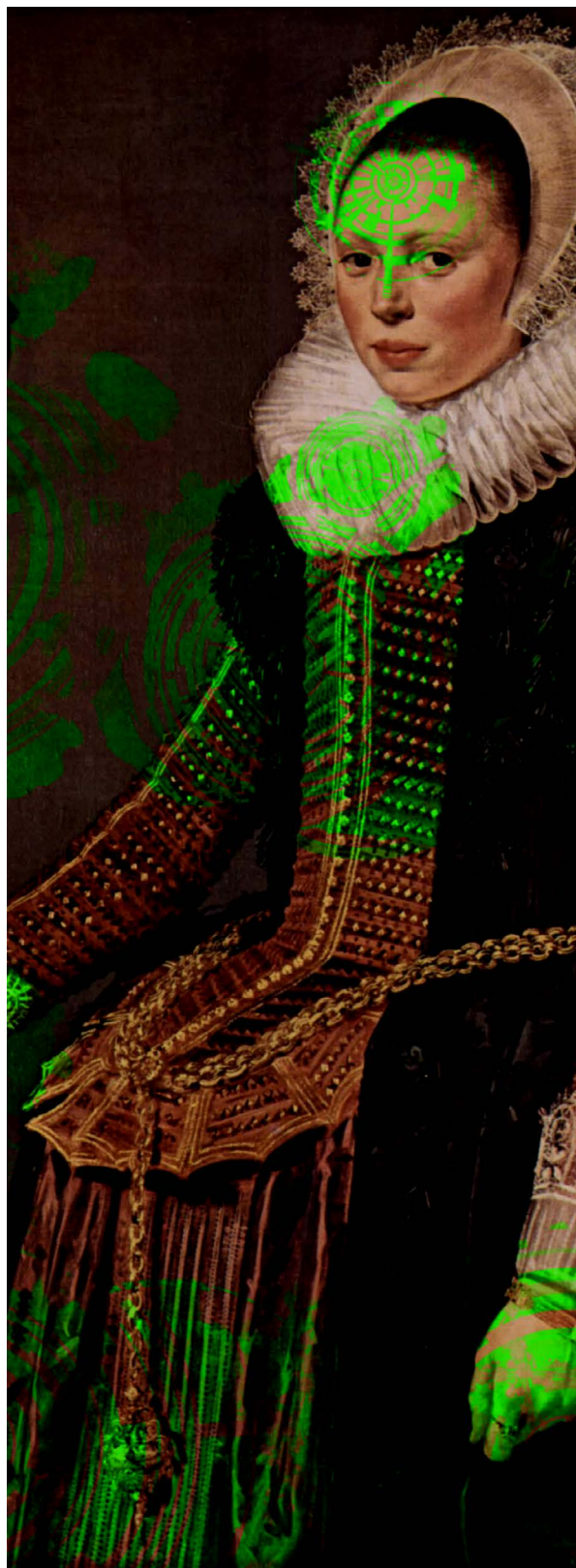
Besides mages, the Medici recruit mundane commoners to populate the ranks of their private police force. While these individuals don't receive any training in the practice of magic, they do receive a rudimentary education in its capabilities so as to better fight anarchists, secret ways members, and rival company magi. Coupled with the state of the art Medici cyber artifacts, the Company police are a fierce group to contend with.

Rivalries and Alliances

The Medici Company of England holds an interesting position in the game of courtly intrigue. The family is acknowledged to be something of an outsider, giving it the façade of a neutral party. The façade of neutrality cannot last forever, given the family's ties to nearly all of the nobility in England. Many at court have become resentful of the Medici, and have sought to create companies to offer similar services, though they all lack the Medici's skill and resources.

Guarding the powerful has also caused many of the other mage companies to come into conflict with the family, as they variously engage with Medici security in the machinations of court. On the other hand, the Medici almost single-handedly keep the druid circles from getting out of hand, which has earned them begrudging respect from many of the other cybernetic companies' masters. This has led to collaboration between the companies in tracking down known members of the circles, though the alliance is a temporary one.

More than any other company, the Medici directly fight with the mages of the secret ways. Though experts in magical security, the company has yet to be able to crush the anarchist movement, much to the anger of the family's leaders.

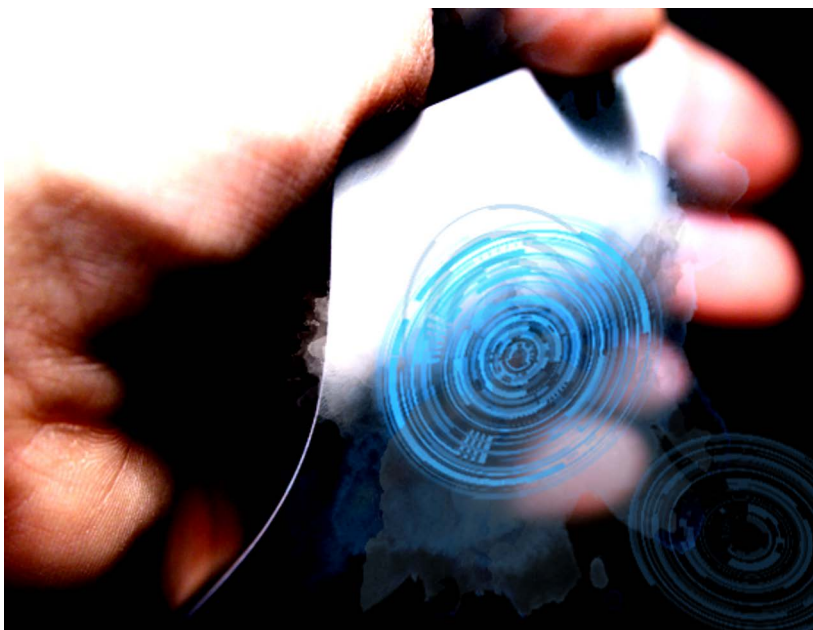


The Gilded Curtain

Overview

War and industry are not the only things to have benefited from the Italian city-states' development of cybernetic sorcery. The synthesis of art and magic has propelled the visual and performing arts forward in a way that Europe has not seen since the time of the Roman Republic. Capitalizing on these developments, the Gilded Curtain Company has launched a line of products and experiences that reach nobleman and pauper alike.

Commercial art in London is about magic used to manipulate the thoughts and experiences of consumers. In the performing arts, plays are now being produced that use everything from set design to costuming to enhance the emotional experience of the audience. Galleries are springing up all over the elite districts of London, filled with ensorcelled paintings and statuary. Even the government has invested in a number of public works aimed at instilling loyalty and patriotic pride towards the Crown and parliament.

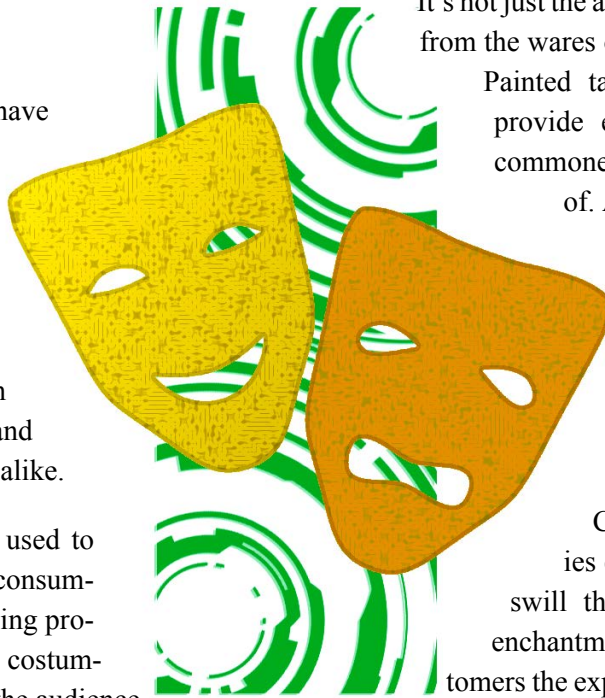


It's not just the aristocracy who benefit from the wares of the Gilded Curtain.

Painted tarot "memory cards" provide experiences that few commoners could even dream

of. A night with a beautiful courtesan or the thrill of an exciting joust are but the simplest of experiences available from Gilded Curtain distributors.

Cheap pubs and eateries can charge for the pig swill they serve because of enchantments that allow customers the experience of dining like the King.



Rise to Prominence

Fredrick Spring expanded his family's textile import business to include fine arts, particularly those arts coming out of Italy, given their popularity amongst the English nobility. The choice of art was not by accident. Spring himself was an amateur painter, and the import business allowed him to surreptitiously consult with many Renaissance masters, something his father never would have allowed. It was during one of Spring's business trips that he met with a master who showed him techniques allowing the artist to implant emotions or thoughts into pieces of artwork.

After years of refinement, Spring was able to launch the Gilded Curtain Company, specializing in an art form mostly new to the English. After having several pieces installed in his castle, it was the King

himself who suggested to Cromwell that the state commission several public works by the company. With large sums coming in from the Crown contracts, Fredrick Spring was able attract a number of premier artisan mages to the company, including a few mages eager to develop mass production technologies for the company's memory card line.

Headquarters and Holdings

The company headquarters for the Gilded Curtain is located in a fashionable section of London known for shops and services catering to the elite. The building is reminiscent of many of the more famous Italian palazzos, and inside can be found one of the most stunning galleries in all of Europe. Along with the gallery, the workshops of the company's finest artists can be found, crafting the highly prized and very expensive pieces commissioned by the nobility of England and Europe.

The Gilded Curtain operates a number of additional facilities throughout London, mostly dedicated to the mass production of experience entertainment spells. While employing a number of magical artisans, each factory also has numerous mundane workers, making Gilded Curtain one of the largest employers of the common populace.

The demand for magically enhanced theater has risen dramatically in London over the last few years, and the company has responded by opening a number of new theaters around the city. Some are exquisitely designed buildings, providing the most sumptuous of experiences to those with money. Others are less refined and cater to the needs of the lower class, providing cheap beer and a bawdy atmosphere.

Membership

Gilded Curtain is famous for the talented artists it employs, but the fact is that the Curtain likes a somewhat eclectic mix of mages. Individuals who can prove to have a novel concept are inducted into the company and provided the resources necessary to field the idea. In this way, the Gilded Curtain is one of the easiest mage companies to join, and certainly has the most diverse employee population. On the other hand, position in the company is directly tied to current taste and fashion, making it very difficult for junior members to remain in favor. This has caused a cutthroat atmosphere to a degree that the other companies seem to lack, but which the masters of the Curtain seem to relish.

The Gilded Curtain, more than any other company, contains mages who are considered affiliate members: cyberneticists who provide entertainment spells as independent





contractors and not through company-run establishments. Independent contractors who serve noble or wealthy patrons can afford company certification, ensuring that nothing inappropriate makes it into the spells they're selling. Those servicing the lower class rarely bother with such certification, making the purchase of memory cards from street dealers a dangerous proposition. You never know when a pleasant experience with a courtesan carries with it a hidden command to break the law.

Rivalries and Alliances

The Gilded Curtain is currently very popular with the Crown, with their ability to placate the masses in high demand. That popularity makes the company masters very popular at court as well, though some remain jealous of their position. A few of the savvier nobles have begun to wonder what could happen if an ambitious leader of the company used their skills to manipulate the vast numbers of employees that the company has. This speculation has been kept very private, but it certainly puts the company into the thick of courtly politics.

The Church disapproves of the Gilded Curtain and most of the products it provides, but has been careful to keep its criticism to a minimum. Surprisingly, the Church has even commissioned a few works from the company, an act without precedent in recent history.

The druid circles have an interesting relationship with the Gilded Curtain. There are a number of independent mages trained by the company operating in the seedier parts of London; the circles have worked with and even recruited a number of these mages. Certainly the techniques developed by the Curtain have proven invaluable to the Movement. On the other hand, the Curtain profits from keeping the population sedentary and docile, something the circles despise. For this, Gilded Curtain factories and public works are some of the highest priority targets for the Movement, and even the masters of the company are considered fair game.

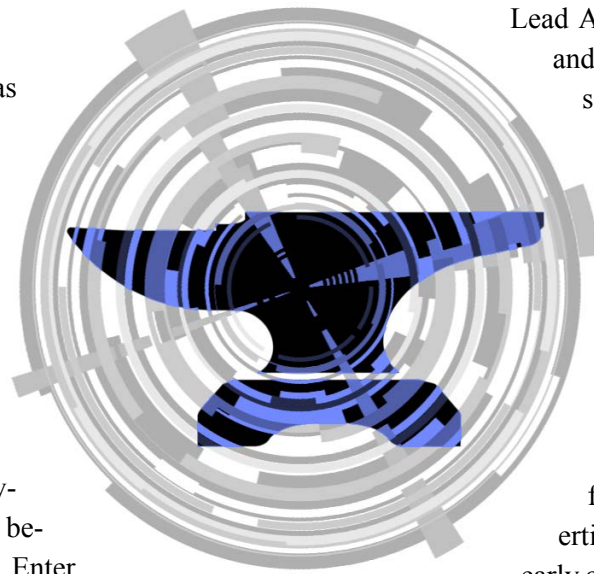
The Lead Anvil

Overview

The age of cybernetic artifice has led to a revolution in industry and knowledge, and the Lead Anvil Company is pushing the limits of this revolution. Italy revolutionized logic-based magic, but it's the English who mastered industrial cybernetics. Spells of convenience are all well and good, but if you have to pay a mage every time you want access they become expensive and tiresome. Enter Lead Anvil, crafters of cybernetic artifice, devices capable of producing the same mystical effect over and over again. Unlike the workshops of Italy, this company is able to easily and cheaply produce devices for the consumption of almost anyone.

Beyond items of convenience, the armories of the company produce the deadliest arms and armor found in Europe, helping the Crown carve the most powerful empire in the history of the world. Armor as light as a wool shirt, yet twice as hard as iron and capable of increasing the wearer's strength fivefold. Factory-produced swords that never dull and contain the power of a lightning storm, never leaving the grip of the knight who wields them.

The variety of artifact weaponry available from Lead Anvil is impressive and terrifying, and the mages trained there share the same reputation.



Rise to Prominence

Paul Blackmore was the first founder of a mage company in the whole of the British Isles. His family owned several of the properties that smiths rented from, and early on he saw the potential that magical weaponry had to offer. Using much of his family's resources, he attracted a number of Florentine cyberneticists to London, connecting them with the most talented English smiths his family knew. From this synthesis he began to produce some of the finest cybernetic artifact weapons, which the Crown quickly snapped up.

With the popularity of cybernetic magic in London, Blackmore realized that artifacts containing all kinds of spells would be in high demand, and so he pushed his craftsmen to broaden the scope of their craft. Soon he founded his company, specializing in the crafting of cybernetic artifacts, which the nobility were eager to purchase.





Headquarters and Holdings

The looming smoke stacks of the Lead Anvil headquarters can be seen from almost anywhere in London, billowing black smoke into the air. Given the need for security, manufacturing of weapons and armor is confined to this central complex. The headquarters also acts as the company's primary spell crafting center, where designs for the latest circuit spells are developed.

A number of factories operate outside the company's primary complex, producing the more benign items of convenience and the base materials for the weapon shops. With the need to move so many materials, the company petitioned the Crown to be allowed to invest in a mass transit delivery system. Thanks to the efficiency of the service, Lead Anvil now operates the largest mail service in England.

In order to procure the base supplies needed for manufacturing purposes, the company has set up a number of very modern mines and other resource gathering operations. Wages and worker attrition make up the largest expense in resource gathering, pushing Lead Anvil to contract with the Enchanted Sheaf to produce golems for use in their operations.

Membership

Despite being one of the largest cybernetic companies in London, Lead Anvil employs surprisingly few mages. Due to the breakthroughs in mass production, the company is able to maximize the efforts of its magi, allowing a few masters to produce the spells necessary for all of the company's products. Acceptance into Lead Anvil's training program is extremely prestigious, virtually guaranteeing the mage entry into any field of cybernetics they might desire. With the need to produce almost all forms

The development of mass production technologies was mainly due to the Anvil's need to meet the ever growing demand. Relying on individual mages to make individual artifacts simply wasn't fast enough, leading the company to make a number of manufacturing and arcane breakthroughs. These breakthroughs were useful for the company, but it also became apparent that other industries could benefit from the techniques, so Lead Anvil began helping a number of other manufactures start factories to produce goods.

of magic, the company has masters in almost every field, making the education available unrivaled.

After surviving the education process, a lengthy ordeal of five years, cyberneticists in the company take two paths. They can work as spell engineers, creating the AR constructs built into every Anvil artifact. The other option is to work as crafters, creating the exclusive one of a kind items sought after by Lead Anvil's most elite clients. These individuals tend to be the Anvil's actual masters, their projects leading to a number of new inventions.

With the expansion of English goods into European markets, many junior members have sought permission to open offices across the Continent. This provides the opportunity to make a vast amount of money, but the company keeps a close eye on these magi, constantly worried they might sell proprietary secrets.

Rivalries and Alliances

The bulk of income the company receives continues to be from royal contracts for the war effort. This has led the Lead Anvil to join with Navis Company in pushing a pro-empire agenda amongst the lords in Parliament. While purchasing so much influence might be useful in court, it has also earned the company a number of enemies from among the other cybernetics companies, jealous of the firm's influence.

The heads of Lead Anvil and Vital Enhancements, Paul Blackmore and Peter Bankes, have started a joint venture with Queen Anne to create a second artificial intelligence, code named

Project Elizabeth. The mages not only want to create a new AI, they are working to provide her with a state of the art body. Blackmore is developing the internal arcane artifice necessary to contain the power of an AI.

With the Lead Anvil responsible for much of Henry's war machine, the masters of the company have earned a number of enemies from among the elite of Europe's kingdoms. Particularly resentful are the Hapsburgs, who have joined in an effort with the Papacy to undermine the Anvil's interest across the Continent and even in England. This animosity has led the company to supply mystical support to the enemies of the Hapsburgs, which has served to ignite further tensions. The Papacy's involvement also pushed the company to openly support the Crown in its decision to sever ties with the Catholic Church, a choice many question.



The Enchanted Sheaf

Overview

We are shackled to our basic needs, and only magic can break that bond. From its inception, the Enchanted Sheaf has made its goal the elimination of unnecessary human labor. A worthy goal, and all it cost was that the country folk give up their positions on the farms to the new class of golems who would never tire.

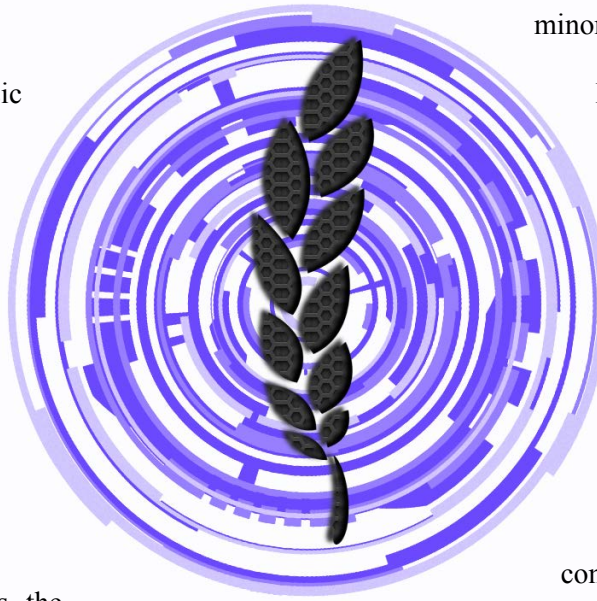
The Enchanted Sheaf controls the majority of food production throughout the Isle, and has set its eyes on the farms of France. The landed nobility who have turned over their land to this mechanized revolution have seen profits soar as production drastically increases. The company doesn't just focus on the creation of useful golems; it also manipulates the flow of earth energies, allowing it to greatly increase the yield and season of every crop.

Few realize the potential that Enchanted Sheaf golem servants represent. The company doesn't just employ animated servants, it binds daemons from the AR into its creations. With the bound spirits inside the construct shells, the company has highly intelligent, versatile slaves that lack the drawbacks of human workers. The only limit to the golems is the need for mages to control and direct the spirits, but with one mage able to control multiple servants, the company foresees many markets opening to them.

Rise to Prominence

Golems have for many centuries played a role in the game of sorcery. Giant cathedrals and remote monasteries have often utilized golems as mystical security, but

their limitations always relegated them to a minor role.



Richard Grey inherited a large estate at the age of fifteen. Fascinated by the new practice of magic in Italy and inspired by His Majesty's own practices, Richard hired several Italian masters to come to England and tutor him in the practice of magic. Enthralled by the new mechanical wonders being created, Richard's earliest experiments were in the combination of self-automation and the binding of daemons.

After publishing several guides on his inventions, Richard was contacted by Thomas Cromwell, who provided Richard with several ancient hermetic scrolls on the creation of golems. Armed with this new knowledge, Richard was able to create a host of servants that he put to work on his estate, nearly doubling its production.

Soon the Enchanted Sheaf Company was formed, providing services to the estates of England. At first the company merely utilized the golems, but after a profitable exchange with Medici Company, the Enchanted Sheaf began implementing ley line control as a part of the crop growing process.

Headquarters and Holdings

The Enchanted Sheaf is the only cybernetic company that doesn't have its headquarters in London, though of course it does maintain a company branch there. The Enchanted Sheaf's headquarters remain at the Grey Estate, now one of the most profitable farms in the Empire. Master Grey allows the London branch to coordinate most business arrangements and the operations of its various golem factories scattered around the city. Grey Estate is where

most of the summoning and binding of the spirits used in golems takes place. Along with the prudence of keeping daemon summoning away from prying eyes, Church animosity has made the practice a necessity.

Outside of Grey Estate, the company has acquired a number of large farms, though most of their work is contracted. Given Britain's expansion into France, the company has been eager to snap up any properties that have become available. Farm land isn't the only goal now, for if golems can grow food, why not quarry stone or mine metal?

Membership

Membership with the company requires keen spatial reasoning and an iron will. Summoning and binding daemons is no small feat, and requires that the mage have absolute focus to bring them under control. Once enslaved, the mage must then keep control over her servants, which can itself be a trying task.

Will is not enough, for the company doesn't want just summoners who call forth spirits from the beyond. That can be left to the heathen shamans in the east. The company wants engineers, individuals capable of designing the vessels for the spirits they call. Gone are the days of clay golems who shamble about in parody of humanity. The Enchanted Sheaf desires complicated clockwork machines, designed for any task that they might require.

Members of the company mostly find work either at Grey Estate designing new golems and binding new daemons or on the great estates managing the golem work force. Some few have gone into private practice, creating customized golems for a variety of tasks. There is even a group that has petitioned the King to allow them to create a series of war golems to help in the Empire's expansion.

Rivalries and Alliances

Grey's noble birth has proven to be a mixed blessing at court. While many of the nobility are glad to see one of their own at the seat of power in a cybernetic

company, others are resentful of his growing wealth. This resentment is fueled by the fact that most of the nobility will be forced to contract with Enchanted Sheaf in order to keep their estates competitive. A growing rivalry between Lead Anvil and Enchanted Sheaf has emerged due to the company's attempt to expand into the war business. With the effectiveness of the golems so far, Lead Anvil is afraid that the need for human soldiers might come to an end.

The most significant concern for the Enchanted Sheaf is the almost universal disgust they face by the populace at large. With the droves of English out of work because of the company, and the whispers by the Church that they contract with demons, Enchanted Sheaf faces more and more resentment every day. This resentment has started to become costly, with riots at factories and shipments of food being destroyed as they enter London. The company has resorted to draconian security measures, and has even employed the Medici family in some cases. The problem seems to be that the druid circles seem to take an unhalloved glee in targeting Enchanted Sheaf facilities, something that has proven quite difficult to defend against.



Vital Enhancements

Overview

In an age where millions suffer at the cruel hands of plague and accident, the British Empire seeks to create a society free from such miserable burdens. The cybernetic company Vital Enhancements certainly likes to promote the idea that it seeks to alleviate the suffering of the people. Truthfully, the company mostly provides assistance to those members of society who are able to pay, though it will occasionally experiment on those who are less than economically fortunate.

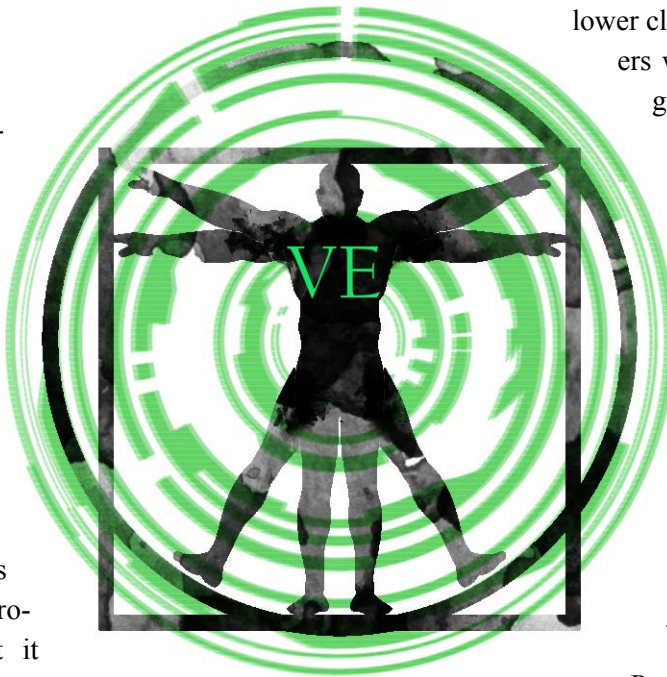
Vital Enhancements seeks to understand the functions of all living organisms on the material plane, with a specific focus on the human body. The goal of understanding the human body goes well beyond the practice of medicine; the company intends to enhance the human experience through the use of bio-arcane enhancements. Magical enhancements have begun to pop up all over London, from mystically enhanced eyes to golem replacement limbs. Most of the aristocracy prefer that their enhancements look as real as possible, but the

lower classes have become used to seeing workers with rune-traced metal limbs or strange glyph-infused eyes.

While many in the populace fear the guild and all it represents, the nobility flock to its centers in droves, and not just for cures. Beauty enhancements, cosmetic procedures, and age abatement have all become the norm for the upper crust of English society as well as the wealthy from across Europe.

Rise to Prominence

Peter Bankes was the only child of a wealthy merchant house. Wanting to break away from the family practice of trade, Peter decided to go into the study of medicine. After obtaining his education, Peter traveled abroad, where he had the opportunity to meet and study with many Italian masters in the fields of life magic. With the rise of cybernetic practice in England, Peter returned home and used his family fortune to set up a hospital where he was able to test his new theories.



After a year of success, Bankes decided that it was time to expand the operation of the hospital, and formed the company Vital Enhancements with the backing of a few wealthy lords. After recruiting some of England's most promising new doctors and several of his former Italian acquaintances, Bankes began the process of expanding the services of the company. In particular, the saturation

company leadership restricts the kinds of research being performed within, keeping it as banal as possible. The hospital is reserved primarily for paying patients, though there are several charity wings where the disenfranchised can purchase care in trade for agreeing to certain experimental procedures.



of magic led many of the nobility to seek enhancements that allowed them to perceive the presence of magic. While eyes remain a favorite, tongues able to taste the flavors of magic have risen in popularity.

Headquarters and Holdings

Vital Enhancements is headquartered in a giant hospital in the heart of London. The headquarters acts as both hospital and teaching facility, where the finest medical students pursue the final stages of their education. With the volume of clientele passing through the hospital, the

For the more unsavory practices of the company, several charity clinics and chop shops are sprinkled throughout London. While lauded as good Christian charity by the elite, most Londoners realize that these clinics are the sites of dangerous experimentation, where Vital Enhancements doctors are able to refine their techniques. Even less savory are the chop shops where the poor are paid for their various organs and body tissues to provide the necessary materials for company experiments and procedures.

Membership

More than any of the other cybernetic companies, Vital Enhancements requires that its potential members have already received an extensive education. The company refuses to test anyone who hasn't already studied medicine, making it one of the more elite institutions. The need for highly qualified candidates was the reason Peter Bankes gave several large donations to the University of Oxford and opened his headquarters to help educate new doctors.

Members of Vital Enhancements tend to set up their own private practices far more than practitioners in any other cybernetic company, even moving out to the Continent to do so. These individuals are the ones who provide more of the private services, and tend to be more closely

associated with the nobility. There are even a few who specifically cater to the needs of the lower classes, though they are often seen as extortion artists. Those members who choose to work at company-run facilities tend to be the radical experimenters, and frankly need the protection the company can offer.

There are a few individuals who break their ties with Vital Enhancements, seeking either to sell their knowledge to foreign entities or who want to practice unsanctioned magics. The former are hunted down ruthlessly, while the latter are tolerated based on their success rate.

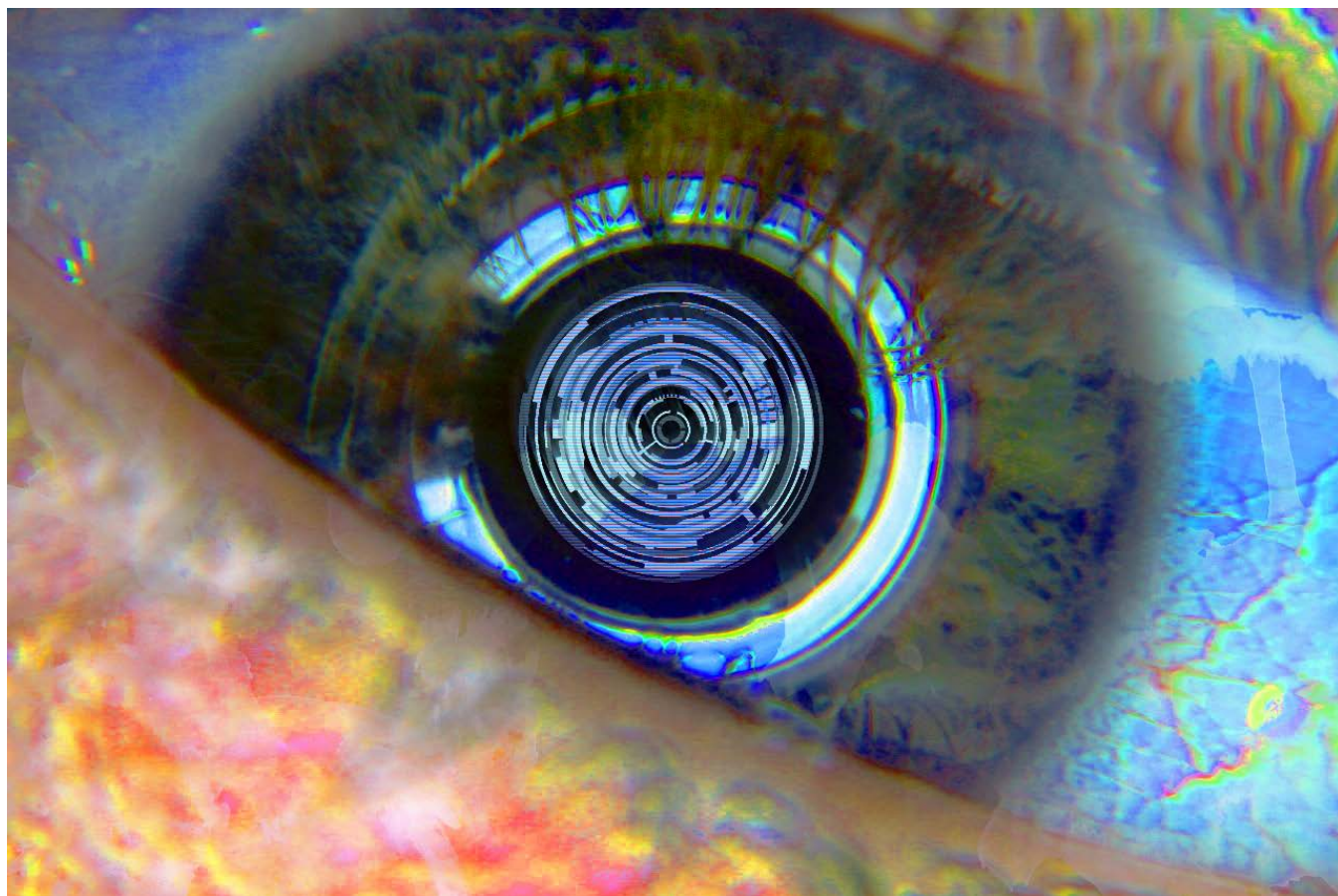
Rivalries and Alliances

Vital Enhancements enjoys popularity amongst the upper tiers of English society, though a few nobles, urged on by the vengeful clergy, grumble about blasphemy. The company has a close association with Enchanted Sheaf, given the need to develop new golem body enhancements. Foreign elite also favor the company, even allowing them

to build centers in many of the European kingdoms. This has piqued the interest of a few at home, who wonder what else the guild might be doing for foreign powers.

Peter Bankes is working closely with Paul Blackmore on project Elizabeth. Building a human body from scratch is no small feat, and given the needs of an AI, it has become Bankes' sole area of research. Due to the sheer enormity of the task, Bankes has ordered the help of many of his top cyberneticists. The researchers believe they are developing enhancements that will become common for customers in the future, totally unaware of what they are contributing to.

Though the company doesn't like to mention it, several of its charitable clinics and chop shops have come under attack by members of the secret ways. Given the experiments that Vital Holdings performs on the lower classes, they are a natural target, and the attacks are increasing. This has led the company to experiment in the creation of defense homunculi: terrifying biological constructs made from a host of different creatures.



Navis Company

Overview

Naval power is the key to the future of the British Empire, and the alchemists of Navis Company plan on delivering the greatest navy the world has ever seen. Employing powerful alchemies, the company has now been able to create ships much larger than even the Spanish produce, made from materials lighter than wood and harder than iron. The company has also begun to outfit the ships of the Royal Navy with fearsome alchemical weapons, from exploding canisters of deadly toxin to ammunition capable of spreading unquenchable fire.

With no apparent end to His Majesty's plans for expansion, Navis Company has already decided to expand its operations into the development of personal alchemical weapons. Armed with siege weapons capable of obliterating walls in a single shot and side arms capable of felling a dozen soldiers, the British army will be unstoppable. The continued war will also make the company far richer than it already is.

Given the promise of obscene wealth that the upcoming conquest will bring, the Navis Company masters have begun a campaign of courting those in the court and Parliament who are friendly to the idea of British expansion. Several prominent members have already received lavish gifts from the company, some in gold and some in magical convenience.

Rise to Prominence

Thomas Cromwell's "inspection" of Church holdings turned out several interesting hermetic texts, including dozens of guides and treatises on the practice of alchemy. Initially Cromwell took little heed of the texts, finding the

church's obsession with creating gold and living forever a frivolous endeavor.

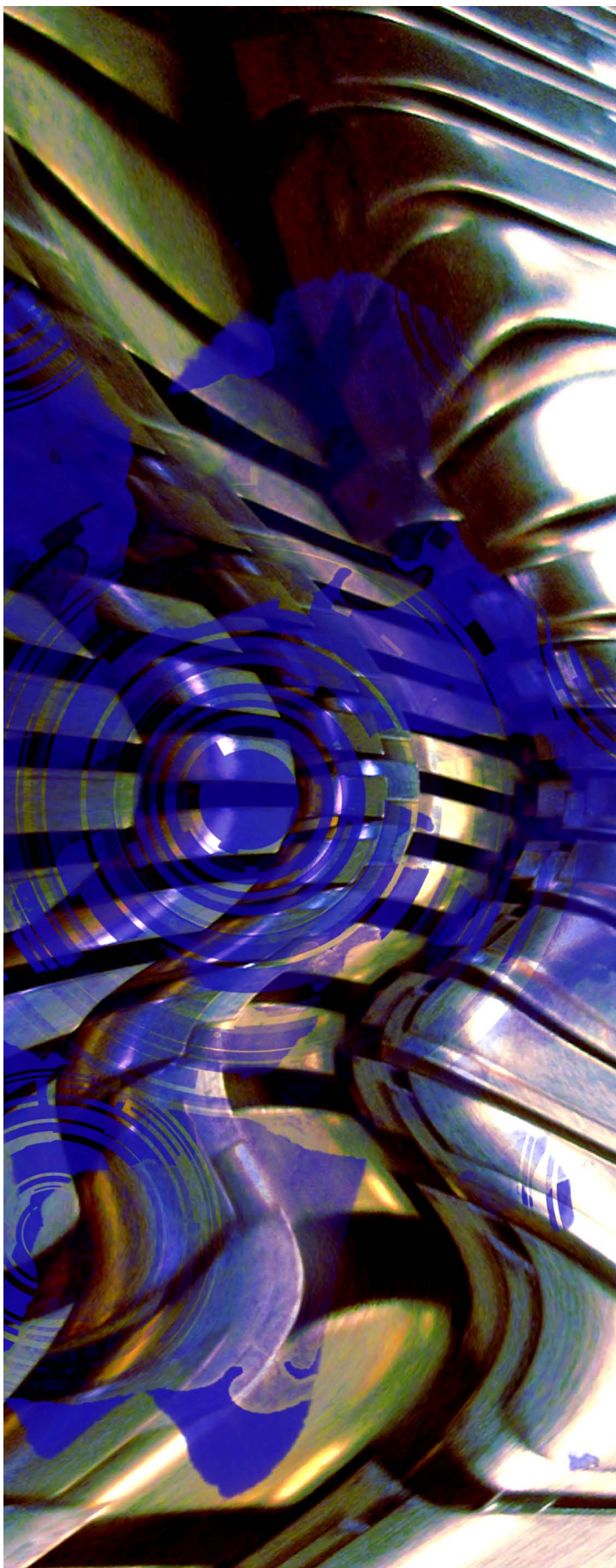


Cromwell's friend and colleague Edward Blackmirror was the first to realize the potential that alchemy held. Given the superiority of the Spanish navy and the rise of Portugal in the spice trade, Blackmirror knew that naval power would be key to the King's ambitions. After spending two years abroad in Italy, Blackmirror returned to England with several Florentine ship engineers. A year and half later Navis Company was formed, promising the King the greatest warship ever seen in Europe.

With the immense returns that have come from building new ships for the Royal Navy, the company was able to expand its operations and provide services to other European kingdoms. The Dutch and Portuguese in particular are interested in the hardier ships created by the company. The Spanish have resisted the purchase of any English ships, but even they cannot ignore the usefulness of the company's alchemically enhanced building materials.

Headquarters and Holdings

Grey and foreboding, the headquarters of Navis Company sits on the outskirts of London. Most Londoners avoid the complex, eyeing with suspicion the lifeless grounds and iron-worked fences. While it is true that the company likes the privacy afforded by the ominous appearance of its headquarters, the simple fact is that the dangerous nature of the experiments conducted within makes dissuading intrusion an absolute necessity.



Most of the interior space of headquarters is dedicated to alchemical laboratories, with the rest given over to spellwork rooms, glass foundries, and offices of the various high ranking members. The majority of the laboratory space is for common use, and company members can be found performing experiments day and night. Several masters have private laboratories where the company's most proprietary work is performed.

By necessity, Navis Company maintains extensive facilities outside of London. Besides the numerous shipyards located around the Isle, large production facilities have been built where the various alchemical materials and reagents can be manufactured. Most of the local peasants have fled these areas because of the pollution produced. Given the labor needs of the company, shanty towns have popped up and quickly become havens of misery and vice.

Membership

Membership within the Navis Company is a guarantee of wealth and security, making it a very popular company to sign on with. Beyond the basic requirements of literacy and logical thinking, Navis Company members need a certain amount of fearlessness. While it's true that all magic is dangerous to some degree, alchemy is dangerous on the physical plane. While most other cybernetic mages practice their art in the AR, alchemists have to perform many of their experiments in material laboratories, sometimes with dangerous results. This has led the company to create one of the most harrowing initiations, where prospective members are subjected to fear over and over again so that they might prove what they are made of.

Once accepted by the company, members find that the organization is extremely accommodating, working very hard to find a place for each of its mages. New apprentices are required to pursue two years of general study followed up by a year and a half's internship with a master.

After the internship, apprentices are granted the title of mage or magus, which is the rank the vast majority of company cyberneticists attain. Only those seeking to really push the bounds of alchemy ever take the masters trials, and few have ever passed.

Mages of the company pursue two different paths: scholars who develop new areas of alchemy, or practical alchemists who create materials for the company. The scholars spend their time almost exclusively at the company headquarters in London, developing new recipes and fiddling with different delivery devices. The practical alchemists can be found in facilities all around the kingdom, producing the reagents and materials that Navis Company uses.

Rivalries and Alliances

The friendship between Edward Blackmirror and Thomas Cromwell and the success of the new battle ships have made the Navis Company very popular at court. The obscene bribery of the more powerful parliament members might also have contributed to the company's ascendance. Blackmirror has also begun working closely with Paul Blackmore to develop his next generation of alchemical land weapons. This alliance has put many of the other cybernetics companies on edge, particularly the Enchanted Sheaf, given its rivalry with Lead Anvil. The most dangerous enemy of the Navis Company is the Church, which is seething in resentment at the company's flagrant use of the church's alchemical texts. The resentment has become so great that the company has needed to substantially increase the amount of mystical security it uses. Every facility is now armed to the teeth with deadly wards, and the AR space used by the company is fortified with terrible constructs.



Golden Ring Bank

Overview

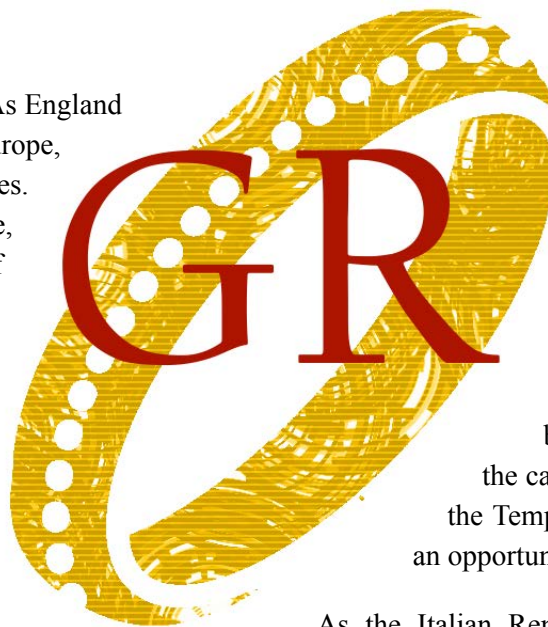
Empire is an expensive proposition. As England spreads the wings of conquest over Europe, the need for financing ever increases. Hungering for dominance once more, the Golden Ring Bank, inheritors of the mighty Knights Templar, seek to establish themselves as a power once again. Practiced in ancient sorceries, the bank has sought to harness the new practices of cybernetics in order to reestablish their international bank. The leaders of Golden Ring Bank are now the undisputed masters of the Scrynet, granting them an unprecedented advantage in the arena of communication.

As the bank has mastered the use of Scrynet for communication, its masters have unlocked many of the underlying principles behind the construct, allowing member mages to become skilled in the area of sympathetic magic. Given the bank's need to protect the vast number of assets it's accumulating, the old warding magics developed during the crusades have been brought back, this time guarding vaults instead of fortresses.

The Golden Ring Bank is by far the wealthiest banking institution on the continent of Europe. Many of the European nobility see the use of such an institution and have begrudgingly embraced the bank. Many others, including the French King and the Pope, fear the revival of the Templar institution, realizing that vengeance may be the price the bank has asked of the new Magarch King.

Rise to Prominence

After the massacres in France in the early 1300s, the remaining Templar fled with their portable wealth and magic to England. The Church of England has long



embraced the role of wizards, disdaining the self-hatred of the Papacy and its chokehold on the progress of magic. Using its influence within the court of the King, the Church of England persuaded the English monarch to allow the Templar to establish a limited number of monasteries across England. The many bribes the Templar paid helped the cause, and for nearly two centuries the Templar bided their time, waiting for an opportunity to emerge.

As the Italian Renaissance came into swing, the Templar realized that there was an opportunity for advancement. Several masters were dispatched to Italy in disguise, and it was in Florence with guidance from Machiavelli that the Templar began their mastery over the Scrynet. Upon returning to England, the masters decided that it was time to return to rekindle lost practices, and Golden Ring Bank was founded. Cromwell was the first to realize the potential that the bank had to offer, and so used his influence to have the Crown name Golden Ring the chief bank for the Kingdom.

Headquarters and Holdings

Golden Ring Bank is headquartered in a massive building found in the center of the City of London, the ancient seat of wealth in England. The headquarters' architects embraced a number of eastern styles, most prominently a large golden dome that can be seen from all over the city. With the Golden Ring being given charge of the government's money, the bank is now the largest repository of gold in the British Isles. Correspondingly, the headquarters possesses some of the most powerful wards in existence, rivaling those of the Vatican and Henry's palace.

With the Templars' return to banking, several branches have been built around Europe, usually in the largest population centers. There are rumors the Golden Ring has constructed secret paths through the AR in order to move personnel and money between these locations, but no one has been able to substantiate such claims.

The Golden Ring still maintains several of its remote monasteries throughout England, using these fortresses as training grounds for new mages. It is commonly believed that these locations are where many of the oldest artifacts are hidden, items of such power that they could fundamentally alter the political landscape of all Europe. The bank is silent on the issue.

Membership

The Golden Ring has maintained much of the old Templar structure for its members, though martial skill has taken a limited role in the new order. More than any of the other companies, the bank demands absolute loyalty of its students, and there are rumors of mystical oaths similar to those found among the hermetic practitioners.

After an intensive study of sympathetic and warding magic, most members are assigned to helping maintain the area of the Scrynet that the bank uses. Security is of the utmost importance, and comprises the bulk of activities that the mages engage in.

Keeping in the tradition of the Knights Templar, a small minority of the membership pursue combat as their vocation for the bank. These individuals are terrifying to behold, given their ability to operate magics at extreme distances. Coupled with the Templars' experience with warding magics, bank security agents are some of the most feared in the Empire. Many rulers of the European kingdoms have come to worry about this advantage granted to England, particularly the Pope and Holy Roman Emperor.

Rivalries and Alliances

As with all creditors, the popularity of the Golden Ring at court depends on who owes them money at any given moment. Learning the lessons of the past,

the bank often tailors the pursuit of its debtor noblemen based on who holds the most influence at court. At this stage of the game, most of the other cybernetic companies are courting the Templar bank, seeking to learn the nuances of sympathetic magic that they have mastered.

The Medici Company in London is slightly resentful of the Golden Ring's usurpation of the Italian-built Scrynet. Catherine de Medici has used Templar security to hone her hacking skills, causing friction between the two companies.

The bank is the only cybernetic company that isn't currently in conflict with the Church of England; their relationship is undoubtedly aided by their previous history together. There is some growing tension over the Crown turning over so much Church gold to the bank, but so far it appears rather benign.

The biggest adversary that the bank seems to face is the Catholic Church. Fueled by fear of retaliation, the Catholic Church has dedicated significant resources to undermining the Golden Ring. The church still commands powerful hermetic mages, and the bank now believes that several sorcerous agents are operating in England against their interests.



Father Holton made his way towards the the monastery's inner sanctum, where the night's ritual was to be performed. Already he could feel the growing power of the rite, the eddies of magical power snaking around him. As he approached the heavy oaken door of the chamber, Father Holton made the appropriate hand gesture, disarming the ward lock that sealed the entryway. He pulled on the thick brass ring, and despite its age, the door swung easily open. Candlelight and air, bitter with the smell of incense, swept past Father Holton as he stepped inside. Immediately his gaze focused on the simulacrum standing off to the left side of the room. The construct stood as tall as a man and slumped at an awkward angle, as though it had been tossed in the corner. The simulacrum had the appearance of some madman's notion of a child's doll, sewn together from scraps of burlap and animal skin. The sight of such creatures always made Father Holton feel vaguely unclean, like he had placed his hand on something greasy.

Many of the novice priests were at work, tossing powdered incense on the bronze braziers, or intoning the lesser names of arch-angels to summon the power that would be needed. As his gaze swept the room, Holton saw that he was the last of the senior priests to arrive, spotting Fathers Graham, Camden, and Ridley huddled together in the chamber's center. "Father Holton, good, we can begin," Father Ridley said, gesturing to the novices to exit the ritual room. As they filed out, Holton took a moment to survey the arcane diagrams that had been inscribed on the floor. Any mistake in the drawings would at the very least cause the spell to fail, and could easily cause harm to himself and the other senior priests.

It appeared as though everything was in order. Holton smiled to himself. Father Graham was responsible for directing the ritual inscription, and he seemed to have attended to it with his usual meticulous manner.

Holton picked up the ritual crooked staff before taking his place in the southern quadrant. Father Graham took up the sword and moved to the eastern position, while Father Camden stood in the west with the chalice. Father Ridley was the last to take his position in the circle, adorned with the large medallion with the nine-, seven-, and five-pointed stars. Ridley nodded to Father Graham, indicating they should begin.

Father Graham began to sing, a song that was reminiscent of a Gregorian chant. Along with his singing, he also traced sigils on the ground, using the point of his sword. In the position of Air, Graham was responsible for creating the form of the spell. His voice grew in volume, and Holton could feel the ambient power built by the novices taking shape into the spell's form.

Holton and Father Camden performed the next step together. Standing in the position of Fire, Holton was responsible for the force behind spell. He began chanting the Key, a series of power words that rose in pitch. As he did so, Father Camden also began his own Key, a harmonious counterpart to Holton's own. If Fire was the force behind a spell, Water was the change being wrought in the world.

The power of the spell spun around the priests, the tension growing tighter and tighter. Finally, when it seemed that the power would shatter, Father Ridley raised his arms into the air and shouted one word, "Huc."

Like the wind of a storm at sea, the power of the spell slammed into Father Holton, nearly toppling him over. He shook his head and peered at what their spell had called. A young man, perhaps eighteen years old, curled up on the floor, retching. In between heaving the youth managed, "Where am I?" Before he could ask any further questions, Holton pointed at him and spoke a word of power. The boy went rigid, all of his muscles seizing up.

"Ah, John, we have need of your services," Father Ridley replied, having already retrieved the ritual dagger from the altar. He proceeded to prick the young man on the shoulder, staining his nightshirt with blood. Father Ridley then walked over to the simulacrum and inserted the dagger into its abdomen. The thing shivered violently and appeared for the briefest time to melt like a candle. Suddenly the boy was standing there, though completely naked.

"Take his clothing," Father Ridley ordered as he replaced the dagger on the altar. After the simulacrum had removed the boy's clothing and Camden had pulled him out of the circle, the creature took his place. Sending the simulacrum to the young man's room was much easier then fetching the boy, taking only a few simple words. With a crack, the creature was gone.

"You have nothing to fear, John," Father Graham said, leaning over the still frozen form. "We simply felt that it would be better if Lord Cromwell's personal secretary was under our command. We aren't going to kill you, for you see, the simulacrum needs you alive in order to access your memories."

As Camden and Graham lifted the youth up to take him to the monastery's dungeon, Holton couldn't help himself. "Remember lad," he said, "You do this for God, and He will surely reward you come Judgment Day."

Religious Theurgy

For over a thousand years, the Church of England has guided the magical destiny of the British people. Masters of hermetic sorcery, the mages of the Church will not allow their position to be usurped by an unbound King or his cybernetic sycophants. The road ahead is a difficult one for the Church, but the stewards of God's kingdom have always known that their path wasn't easy. As the King spreads his hand across Europe, the theurgists spin plans to bring the Crown back into the fold and the cybernetic mages to heel.

The war for control of English sorcery is a silent one, but that doesn't mean it's bloodless. The Church is content to let the cyberneticists tinker with industrial magic. Real power comes from binding fate to your will, commanding the elements of nature, shackling the minds of your foes. Unafraid of the consequences, the clergy will destroy any noble who stands on the side of the cyberneticists. It's hard to care about profits if your heirs keep dying or your wives prove barren. Practice has given the theurgists an advantage in directing the actions of the people, and they will use the peasant class as a weapon against the industrialists. People, whether lord or serf, fear the retribution of God, and the Church plans on showing the upstarts just how powerful a weapon that can be.



Hermetic Magic

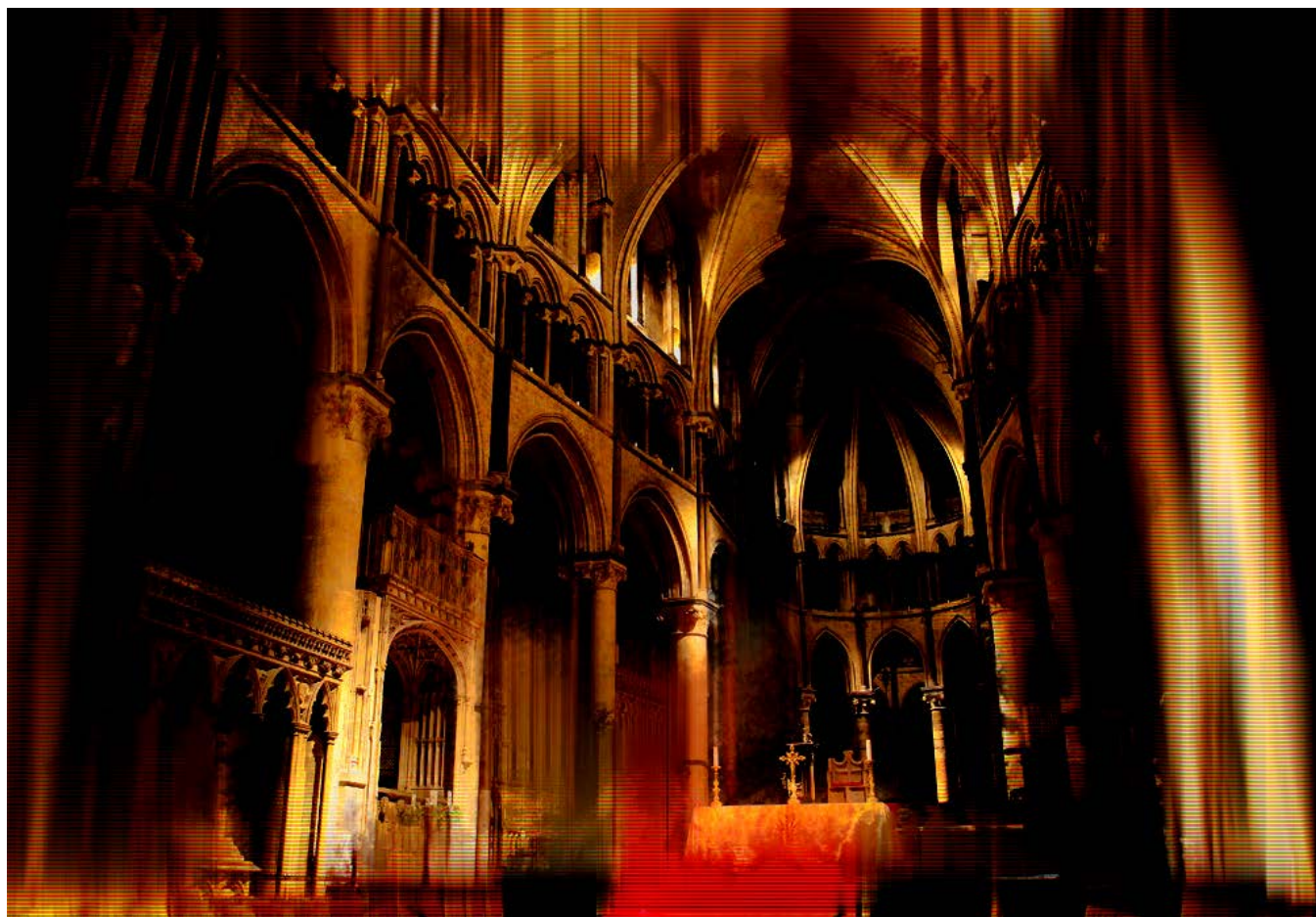
Hermetic magic is the ritual practice of using symbols to draw the power of the AR down into the physical plane. Ritual implements, sigils, incense, chant, and gestures all become a part of the symbolic chains necessary for the function of hermetic magic. Formula also plays a key role in the implementation of hermetic sorcery. Every ritual act is carefully laid out, and the magic cannot function if not performed to the exact specification of the spell.

Sympathy and Ritual -

Hermetic mages harness the power of the AR through the sympathetic links of creation. With precise and complex rituals, they are able to draw down magical change into the physical realm. Years of study are required to master the art, but this is the strength of hermetic sorcery. Hermetic teachings prescribe exactly what is needed for every magical act, giving the clergy incredible versatility.

Twists of Fortune -

Bending fortune is one of the most fundamental abilities of the hermetic mage. Whether it's granting a minor boon of luck or cursing a family for seven generations, command over fate is a powerful weapon in the Church's arsenal. Every theurgist masters the art to one degree or another, never knowing when a minor blessing might come in handy. True masters of the practice are like Merlin, moving the universe to some unknown plan.



“The choice to split from Rome seems to have pushed the English clergy into a state of near chaos, though they likely do not yet fathom it. Only time will tell if they can adapt to the changing times or lose everything they have wrought to the peasantry on one side and the Crown’s favored companies on the other. I do not envy them.”

- Niccolò Machiavelli

Command over the Forces of Nature -

Devastating storms, columns of fire, city-razing earthquakes – all are part of the hermetic mage’s weapons chest. Command over the forces of the world comes straight out of the Bible, and has been one of the focuses of hermetic magic from the beginning. Most theurgists confine their efforts to minor illumination spells or simple telekinesis. While it has rarely ever been seen, masters who join the battlefield can wreak havoc on a scale few can imagine.

Divination -

Many foolish believe that divination grants the mage a glimpse of the future. Theurgists laugh at the utter nonsense of future gazing, claiming it to be the realm of charlatans and card readers. Real divination is the magic of distilling the vast pattern into a readable form, gaining a small insight into current events. Skilled adepts in the field can gather quite a bit of information, granting the Church a powerful edge.

Division for Governmental Guidance

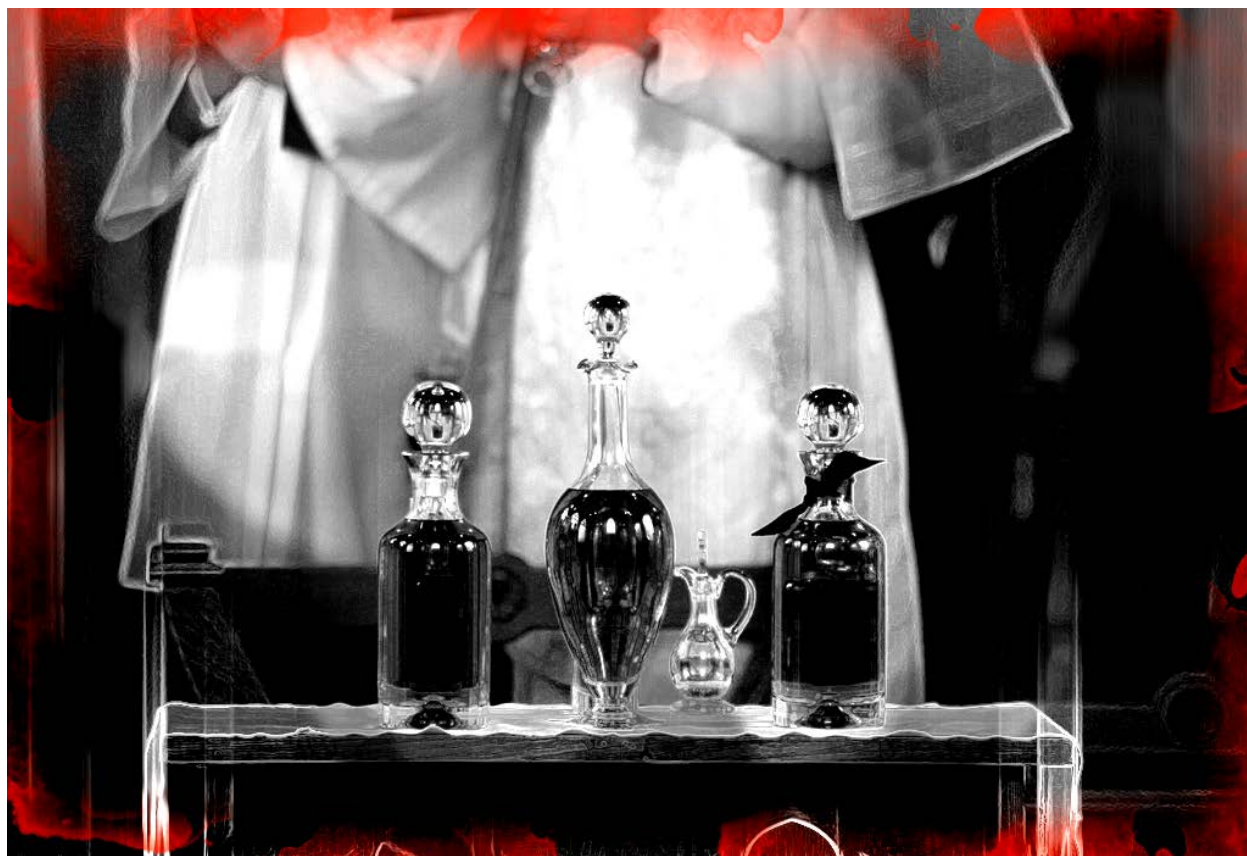
Ever since the mission of St. Augustine, the Church of England has played a key role in advising the noble rulers of the British Isles. As a part of the Church's reorganization after Henry's order to separate from Rome, the synod council ordered the creation of the Division for Governmental Guidance, or DGG. The DGG consists of those clergy who work as advisors and confessors of the nobility, promoting the goals of the Church with their influence.

Much of the power of the Church has been curbed by Thomas Cromwell's inquiry into Church holdings. In response, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, has instituted a much more organized effort on the part of those clergy who have direct access to the holders of power at court. The nobility are used to the idea of going to the Church for many of their needs. Blessings on fields and help in conceiving children, along with a host of other services, are traditional gifts presented by the

Church on behalf of God. Before, such gifts were given with the expectation that the nobility personally support an individual priest or bishop. Archbishop Cranmer has done away with this policy, instituting a more strategic gathering of favors for the Church.

Magical Focus

Bending the flow of fate has always been a primary focus in the practice of hermetic magic, and for the DGG it is their bread and butter. The desires of the nobility often lie in the improvement of their lot or in the downfall of their rivals, and the clergy seek to make fate oblige. This service is not for free, and the Church takes payment in money and favors. Manipulating fate is a very lucrative venture, for if you would pay to have fate turn your way, wouldn't you also pay for insurance that it never be turned against you?



With the prevalence of mystical security now available from sources outside the Church, using mind magic to catch useful information has become a far more difficult prospect. A subtlety in stealing secrets has become necessary, and the confessional provides the perfect opportunity for priests to wield their craft. Most defenses are keyed against direct intrusions, so Church theurgists have turned to spells that encourage trust, and inspire the need to unload one's burdens. Because the magics create nothing more than an intense feeling, the victims rarely believe anything is wrong, and in fact often feel better after a session with their confessor.

Education

Those who end up in the DGG are the most educated of the clergy. Moving in the circles of the noble elite requires not only formal education, but also an understanding of etiquette and politics. Knowledge of the history of the nobility, alliances, and who supported whom during the last coup all make up the required credentials of those priests who now interact with the powerful. In the past, patronage was what got priests access to the aristocracy, but Archbishop Cranmer feels that there is too much at stake to allow such a system to continue.

With the need for the Church to step up its game against the cybernetic companies, young priests who show any promise are quickly moved to the parishes in London where they can tutored by the more experienced power players of the Church. Once a priest has shown he is capable of handling the delicacy of a political position, the bishops arrange for him to make contact with nobles that the Church needs to influence. While many clergy are excited by the power of such a position, they quickly learn that their actions are strictly monitored by their superiors.

Current Endeavors

Outmaneuvering Thomas Cromwell is the top priority for the DGG. Cromwell has at every turn encouraged the King to strip wealth and power away from the Church, which cannot be allowed to stand. The actions against Cromwell must be delicate, for he has been given significant authority by the King and is currently in high favor.

Archbishop Cranmer has ordered that the DGG begin cursing the strongest noble supporters of Cromwell, from heads of families all the way down to children. He also wants to see if any of Cromwell's servants can be brought over to the cause of the Church.

Knowing that the key to Henry's favor is support of the war effort, the DGG has also moved to spying on key figures in France. With the Church's ties to many of the clergy in France, the theurgists of the DGG have been able to magically steal several important pieces of correspondence between the King of France and the Holy Roman Emperor. Currently the DGG is looking for sympathetic links to some of France's generals, hoping to neutralize some of the kingdom's more effective military strategists. The DGG is hoping that successes in the war effort might encourage the King to turn over magical resources captured from French monasteries to the Church rather than Cromwell's cronies in the cybernetic companies.

Intra-Church Affairs

Henry VIII is now the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, and while historically decisions in the Church were often related to the political landscape, being close to the nobility has never brought so much influence. The DGG believes in the usefulness of commoner parish priests but is often in conflict with them. The current situation in England is bleak for most commoners, and many of the priests on the ground are arguing that the Church should be pushing for more reform on behalf of the common people. The DGG realizes that their influence is already diminished, and doesn't want to do anything that might push the King further onto the side of the cybernetic companies.

The monasteries have always been the centers of magical research for the theurgists, and with so many of them being closed, those few left are of paramount importance. Unfortunately, the DGG needs talented young mages to help them return the Church to its former position, which often means taking talented researchers away from the monasteries. In response, many of the monasteries have been "slow" to pass on necessary breakthroughs, causing increased friction between the two divisions.

Division for Parish Management

Parish priests and country vicars have always been the main point of contact between the Church and the common folk. Besides seeing to the spiritual wellbeing of the community, the parish priest has been who a common person could go to for magical assistance. Healing, child blessings, help with the weather: all these things were given to common people as a gift from Christ in return for their loyalty to His kingdom and His church.

The King's infatuation with cybernetics has endangered the Church's rightful place as dispensers of the arcane mysteries, and the synod council wants to prove to His

Majesty that the Church theurgists still have a role to play. To that end, the Bishop of London has ordered the formation of the Division for Parish Management. The division's purpose is to use the Church's sorceries combined with the trust of the priests to help manage the discontent that has been cropping up all over London.

The position of being a parish priest has become a difficult one. Where once priests were left on their own to tend their flocks, now their every move is dictated by the will of their diocese bishop. The King is pleased with the project's success and has directed that the program be expanded.

Parish priests now must balance their desire to do right by the people and the desire of their lords to manipulate them.

Magical Focus

Clergy in the DPM are often disregarded by their more ambitious peers, seen as trifling with minor magics. Quite to the contrary, parish priests are often some of the most skilled theurgists, due to the almost daily practice they have with their craft. The magics focused on by the DPM are the small magics most useful to the common people. Before the intrusion of cybernetic magic in farming, weather sorcery and earth magic were commonly used. Parish priests were also called upon to assist their flock during times of famine and drought. More than anything, priests of the parish engaged in healing magics. Everything from broken limbs to combating plague, tending to the health of the common people fell on the shoulders of local priests.



Manipulation of the mind is a power that the bishops have been pushing the DPM to use more and more often. Usually reserved to help mediate problems that would spring up in communities, the priests of the DPM are now called on to use this power to encourage loyalty to the King and subdue discontent among the populace. Many of the displaced peasant class still turn to their priests for comfort, and that trust provides the perfect opportunity for the Church.

Education

The traditional training for clergy who interacted with commoners focused heavily on Church doctrine, with magical education leaning towards healing and minor blessings. The position of local priest was far from glamorous, so those who ended up in those positions either chose them or were forced there due to lack of skill. With the increased importance of the DPM, many more ambitious priests are finding their way to the local parishes, eager to prove their value to the leadership as well as exercise their arts of arcane manipulation.

Local clergy are now being educated on how to elicit, through confession, information that the Church wants to know. This new process includes training in interrogation as well as hermetic techniques that inspire trust and loosed tongues. Those priests who are talented mind mages are also being taught how to retrieve memories from a distance or those memories that have been long buried.

Current Endeavors

With the separation of England from the Catholic Church, discontent has sprung up all over England. The DPM has taken the opportunity to channel that anger towards its enemies, mainly Thomas Cromwell and the cybernetic companies he's helped build. With the closing of so many monasteries, and the Crown's suspension of pilgrimages, the priests have started a campaign of claiming that the new magical companies are to blame. The DPM has started two rumor campaigns against Enchanted Sheaf and Vital Enhancements. Against the Golden Sheaf,

they have claimed the company consorts with demons, fueling the already considerable rage against the company. As for Vital Enhancements, the Church has encouraged parishioners to avoid their charity clinics, where they claim unwholesome experiments are conducted. They encourage commoners to turn to the Church for their medical needs.

The King's war has taken a heavy toll on his popularity, and the synod council

has pushed the DPM to encourage the common folk to support the war effort. In particular, the bishops want the commoners to enlist in the King's service, and they use magic to push the agenda. They also want to know those people who oppose the war effort. Turning in traitors who oppose the Crown is always popular with the King.

Finding members of the druid underground has become the mission of the DPM. With the druid circles' constant disruptions, the Church feels that quashing the resistance





would be a major coup in their battle for supremacy at court.

Intra-Church Affairs

More than any other clergy, those who fall into the DPM have been concerned with the wellbeing of the lowest classes of English society. The intrusion of more ambitious priests and the push to manipulate people has caused a great deal of resentment towards the bishops and the DGG. The resentment has led a number of priests to begin clandestine meetings in the hopes of organizing some resistance against these new policies. Some argue that clergy of conscience should be helping Rome bring

England back into the fold. Others argue that reform of the current Church leadership is all that would be required. Suffice it to say, tensions between the leadership and the parish priests are becoming a problem.

For the most part, the priests of the DPM are ambivalent to the activities of their more research-oriented brethren. Many feel that those who have dedicated themselves to hermetic research are too removed from God's work on behalf of the poor, but this tends to be more of a philosophical quandary than a serious objection. The recent tension with the bishops has led many DPM clergy to court the members of the DHR, who also resent the actions of the leadership.



Division of Hermetic Research



England has a rich tradition of magical practice. From the druids to Merlin, the Isle has long been a place where the secrets of the arcane are explored. The Church of England has always embraced its magical heritage, honoring the practice of its legendary forefathers and celebrating their accomplishments. Following in the footsteps of great English mages, the monks in the Division of Hermetic Research spend their whole lives unlocking the secrets of hermetic sorcery. Cloistered away in their isolated monasteries, these theurgists pursue the art of God, leaving all other concerns behind them.

In many ways, the DHR is the backbone of the Church's power. With the startling speed that the cyberneticists are producing advancements in magical application, the work of the DHR theurgists is more important than ever. The monks have responded to the needs of the Church, looking deeper into the arcane practices, ferreting out clues to the keys of ancient power. Many artifacts and secret texts have found their way to British shores, and the monks plan to find them. With more than a thousand years of magical prowess behind them, the mages of

DHR will not allow the Church to fall at the hands of upstart children.

Magical Focus

All of the hermetic arts are the purview of the DHR theurgists. Most advances in the art come from the monks, who have the time, resources, and facilities necessary to complete meaningful research. Traditionally, those theurgists who now occupy the DHR were left to pursue whatever research struck their fancy. With the need to protect the interests of the Church, inquiry into the arcane has become a more directed affair.

While sympathetic magic has been a pillar of hermetic practice for more than a thousand years, the cybernetic Scrynet has renewed interest in the study. Vital intelligence and magical secrets are transmitted through the net, making its subversion a top priority. The monks laugh at the arrogance of the cybernetic mages, who naïvely thought that they could secure something from the prying

minds of theurgists. Who invented the principles that this new sorcery relies on? The DHR also seeks to penetrate the defenses of the Templars' strongholds, believing that they contain a number of useful artifacts.

Though the practice is expressly forbidden in canon law, the monks are pursuing the binding of daemons. The cybernetic companies rely on the use of daemons, and the ability to subvert them would be a powerful tool in the Church's arsenal. Given the possibly inflammatory nature of such investigation, this area of research is kept secret.

Education

Those theurgists who pursue magical research as a calling receive the most involved education of all the priests of the Church. Every priest receives an education in Latin, but the DHR also pursue Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Babylonian, and a host of other dead tongues that magical texts have been written in. The monks are also taught the mystical practices of other lands, something rarely discussed. If hermetic magic is to remain dominant, knowing the strengths of others and how to counter them is something the Church must pursue.

In order to deal with the cybernetic mages, a few of the monks have begun learning the practice of cybernetic magic. The process has proven difficult, particularly since the cybernetic companies are naturally resistant to giving members of the Church access to their knowledge. In order to gain the information they need, the DHR has sent several of its more talented students to secretly infiltrate the ranks of the cybernetic companies. Having access to cybernetic masters and their knowledge has proven quite useful, and the DHR has been able to develop several countermeasures to cybernetic security.

Current Endeavors

Locating the ancient artifacts hidden around England is a top priority for the Division. While many artifacts are being pursued by the DHR, the one most sought after is the famed sword Excalibur. Finding the ancient blade and its scabbard is a top priority, and one that the monks have spent significant time and money on.

Many of the books on hermetic magic hint at powerful spells that the modern day theurgists have lost the ability to re-create. In an effort to reclaim this lost knowledge, the Church has financed a number of expeditions into the lands of hermetic sorcery's origin. Beyond the normal danger of such an endeavor, the Pope has learned of the expeditions and has dispatched agents to follow the monks and recover any discoveries they might make.

England might have a long tradition of magical practice, but it is not the only place of hermetic sorcery. Many monasteries around Europe contain valuable texts and artifacts, as well as ancient and powerful wards. With the King's plans to sweep across the Continent, the DHR has begun research on how best to crack open these strongholds of magical power and take the secrets they have within.

Cromwell and his inquiry into the monasteries of England have caused a number of valuable assets to be lost from the Church's control. A number of the new cybernetic companies owe their very existence to Church research and magic. Since the King continues to support Cromwell and his efforts, the DHR has decided to protect the resources that still remain. Using magic to hide what is valuable is something that the monks have practiced for centuries.

Intra-Church Affairs

Many of the research theurgists have come to see the closing of so many monasteries as a failure on the part of the Church's leadership. Between that and the frequent demands made by the newly formed DGG, the monks have become resentful of their leaders. On the other hand, with the loss of money-making properties, the patronage that the DGG can secure has become the researchers' primary source of income.

The theurgists of the DHR mostly look down on their commoner-serving colleagues. For the monks, studying the magical laws of God's creation is the highest calling one can pursue, and they see no reason for mucking about in the mud. More recently, the support that the parish priests are able to drum up from the peasantry has proven useful in protecting the monasteries remaining under Church control.

The bards gathered in the alley behind the Scarlet Cat, the shrieks and singing of the brothel distracting anyone who might wander through this part of the city. Benet, Annabelle, and Charles all checked and rechecked their supplies; the AR was a dangerous place. “Did you bring the goat’s blood?” Charles asked, eyes darting from side to side.

“Relax Charles, Benet and I have done this dozens of times,” Annabelle said as she passed Benet the jar of blood.

“If no one has ever met this faerie before, how can you say that?” he replied, biting his nails.

“We’ve never opened this particular doorway, true, but we have opened dozens like it,” Benet answered. He used the blood to paint a door-sized rectangle on the alleyway wall. Annabelle removed several candles from her bag and placed them at the foot of the doorway. With a whispered word, the candles sprung into life, casting flickering shadows on their faces. After painting the door, Benet also painted several runes along each side. “You both ready?” Benet asked, looking at his two companions. Annabelle pulled a handful of powder from her belt pouch, and Charles grabbed his dagger. They both nodded.

“Hello, Hello, under the tree. Sing sweet the tale of the scarlet bee.” As Benet finished the chant, Annabelle threw the powder at the door, which rippled like a pond after a stone was dropped in. All three of the bards pushed through the doorway, not knowing what they would find. The air was damp and smelled of dirt, and it took a moment for Benet to pull his cybernetic lantern from his bag. Finally, light spilled out from the glass sphere, illuminating a twisting tunnel with a sandy floor and rough bark-covered walls. “They’re roots. We must be under a giant tree,” Annabelle whispered, pulling out her polished yew wand.

“Where do we go?” Charles asked.

“Follow this tunnel, I guess,” Benet replied. “Use this red chalk to mark where we’re going,” he said, tossing it to Charles.

They kept along the tunnel, trying to follow the turns that sloped upward. Occasionally they heard scratching noises, and avoided the turns where they came from. As they turned a corner, illumination suddenly shone from what was clearly a large chamber. “What do you think it is?” Charles whispered.

“Not sure, wait here,” Annabelle replied, creeping forward around the corner. A moment later, a chorus of hissing met their ears, along with the sound of running. Annabelle surged past them towards a different tunnel, yelling back, “Run!” Several forms emerged after her, loping along the tunnel floor or crawling along its ceiling. Painfully thin, they had pale, flabby skin, six arms, and heads shaped like large voles. As they drew closer, they began to emit a high-pitched whine along with the hissing. The druids ran as hard as they could, not caring which tunnels they chose. Eventually Annabelle’s voice rang over the cries of the creatures: “I see an exit.” They came around a final bend and emerged outside in a dusk-swept swamp. Charles turned around and pulled an alchemical grenade from his bag. Pulling the pin, he chucked the device back into the tunnel and hit the ground. There was a loud boom and a blast of heat, followed quickly by the child-like screams of the creatures. None emerged from the tunnel’s entrance.

They all stood up, dusting themselves off, and looked around. Annabelle had been correct; they had in fact been underneath a giant tree, taller than the tallest building in London. All of the other plant life appeared to be normal and there was a path leading away from the tunnel entrance towards the swamp. After a half hour walk, they finally rounded the bend and came into a large grove. Sitting in the middle of the grove on a giant toadstool was a human sized toad wearing a fine set of scarlet and gold velvet clothing. “Good morning,” the faerie said. Its voice sounded like a boys’ choir all singing in unison.

“Hello,” Annabelle replied, stepping forward. “We’ve come...”

“Yes, yes, you want me to answer a question. Do you have my payment?”

“Him,” Benet said. He pointed at Charles.

“What? What payment?” Charles said, frantically looking between the other two bards.

“We know you work for Cromwell. He isn’t nearly as clever as he thinks himself,” Annabelle replied, anger making her flush.

“Oh, lovely. I haven’t had a handsome young man to grow my children in for many years,” the toad replied cheerfully, hopping off its toadstool. Charles turned to run, but suddenly large vines sprung up from the earth, wrapping around him like a cocoon.

“Now that’s settled, what is your question?” the old faerie asked, looking at the two druids.

“We want to know, what is Project Elizabeth?” Benet asked, avoiding looking at the now cocooned Charles.

The faerie smiled. “Simple. Anne wants what all living things want. She wants a child.”

Ancient Resistance

People suffer every day under the tyranny of the King, the Church, the mage companies. Sorcery was once used in service to the community, and now it is used as a tool of profit and exploitation. Greedy, ambitious men fight for control of England, with total disregard for the effects of their machinations. Standing defiantly against the oppression of the elite, the druid circles wield long-forgotten magics in the fight to free England from the grasp of the powerful. The Romans were wrong in the belief that they had driven druid magery from the Isle. Their mistake will prove the doom of the Magarch King and those who fatten themselves at his table.

No longer bearded old men gathering in hidden groves, the members of what are now called the secret ways circles meet in abandoned basements and pub cellars. Through clandestine means they coordinate the resistance, using every weapon available to dislodge the powerful from their thrones. While ancient druid magics have

proven useful, the secret ways mages are not above stealing and using cybernetic sorcery against their oppressors, and have even developed a few useful spells of their own. The biggest advantage the Movement has is their direct access to the Astral Realm, an ability lost to the church and cybernetic mages.

Secret Ways Magic

Druidic magic relies on the mage traveling physically into the AR and interacting with spell constructs there. Travel relies on the druid using an ancient place of power, like Stonehenge, or building a door. Both rely on a ritual process involving old rhymes and druid runes. Druidic magic is not based on a logical system. Practitioners must learn the secrets of the druids through a teacher or by negotiation with a faerie.



Astral Travel -

Mages of the secret ways travel physically into the AR, giving them direct access to spell constructs and allowing them a quick, hidden means of movement. Early on, the mages were only able to access the AR through special sites, like old burial mounds or stone circles. Soon, however, the mages learned techniques that allowed them the ability to open doors anywhere they pleased. While

“Few know of the druids of Britain. A lost order of forgotten monks or some such, they have rediscovered an old magic hidden in the Astral Realm. Like most primitive magics, their power relies on direct connection to the astral. I have seen the enduring potency of walking this Realm and I cannot argue with its efficacy. If everything is stacked against you, dangerous magic may be the only viable path to success.”

- Niccolò Machiavelli

most mages rely on rituals to open these temporary doors, skilled secret ways mages have learned to hop in and out of the AR at will, making it appear as though they can teleport.

Calling the Faerie -

According to lore, the ancient druids first learned their magics from the teachings of the faerie folk. One of the first lessons learned was that everything has a reflection in the AR, and that all manifestations in the AR have within them a fey spirit. Mages of the circles use this knowledge to call up the fey spirits of spells created by their enemies, and then alter or destroy them. If the mage has a sympathetic link to the caster of the spell, like a lock of hair or drop of blood, then the mage

can simply compel the fey spirit in question. If no link is available, then the mage must negotiate with the creature, offering something in return for its cooperation.

Hidden Passages -

While traveling through the AR has its benefits, it is also extremely hazardous, making it not always very practical. In response, the secret ways mages have developed magics that partially shift certain pathways through London so that they are partly in the AR and partly not. This gives them safe, secret movement throughout the city without needing to traipse through the AR. They have also learned to use this practice on rooms and buildings, giving them hidden meeting spaces.

Folk Magic -

The mages of the circles are willing to use more than just cybernetics or druidry. Folk charms and spells have thrived in England for thousands of years, and that knowledge has found a home in the secret ways resistance. While often small in scope, folk magic is usually much easier and less time consuming than other forms of magic, making it ideal for resistance members.



Burned Oak Circle

Overview

The magic of the Church has always been married to those in power, used as a tool against the interests of the common people. The emergence of cybernetics has further demonstrated that adopting magics from foreign lands serves the interests of the powerful. The Burned Oak Circle looks back to the time of the druids, when sorcery was harnessed for the benefit of all. The wizards assert that reclamation of the old ways is the path to liberty.

Traveling to the furthest reaches of the AR, the Burned Oak Circle has relearned many of the old druid magics. The circle is responsible for teaching the Movement the secrets of traveling in person through the AR and the necessary precautions for such travel. They have also taught



the other circles the ability to call forth the fey spirit within astral spells, allowing the caller power over the spell if they can successfully negotiate with the fey. These sorceries are virtually unknown to the Church and cybernetic companies, making them potent weapons in the Movement's fight.

There are answers to be found in AR, deep hidden places where the oldest fey reside. The wizards search for these demi-realms, convinced that the oldest druid magics will be needed if they are to push out the influence of the Church and cybernetic firms. They also know that the druids built sanctuaries in the AR, way stations for themselves during their many visits to the fey realms. Long held rumors claim that as the Roman invaders began to stamp out the druid practice in the Isle, the ancient masters hid much of their lore and artifacts in these sanctuaries.



Tactics

Cybernetic magic relies on pre-set spells stored in the AR, waiting for the mage or user to call upon. AR spell constructs are vulnerable to those capable of traveling there. Relying on the silkmen for intel, agents of the circle will transverse the AR, find these stored spells, and attempt to disrupt or destroy them. Summoning and binding faeries is tricky in best circumstances, so destruction of a spell

is rarely an option. However, fey love tricks, so often a wizard can convince them that changing the nature of the spell would be a good idea. There's nothing like a mage believing he's about to cast a shielding spell who instead makes rain, and the wizards love causing such confusion and dismay.

The mages of the Church and the cybernetic companies have caught on to the fact that the Movement is traveling through the AR to perform its various acts of resistance. To protect their interests, these institutions have deployed increasingly dangerous protections in AR, making travel there exceptionally hazardous. The Burned Oak Circle is often called upon to take down these protections, a feat of significant difficulty. Wards are tricky beasts, notoriously hard to disrupt even for the wizards. Often times, wards can only be brought down for a few minutes at a time and missions have to be highly coordinated. Another tactic has been to hoodwink a ward, making it believe that druid mages are in fact its allies. This is quite dangerous.

While not often used, there does come the occasion where the circle will release a faerie into the physical world to cause mischief and havoc. Given the unpredictable nature of this ploy, the Burned Oak usually reserves it for moments when all other attempts at sabotage have failed.

Recruitment

The Burned Oak often looks to the displaced country folk for its recruitment needs. For the circle, the metropolis of London has become a symbol of everything they oppose, which is why they maintain their lodging outside the city, near Stonehenge. The wizards have found the rage and disillusionment of the displaced peasants a powerful motivator, and have found these recruits to be most zealous.

The ancient druids spoke of those called to the path rather than chosen. These individuals without any training could move into the AR while dreaming, making them natural practitioners. The wizards are constantly on the lookout for such individuals, meeting them in their dreams, calling them to the cause.



These people seem to be particularly sensitive to the enclaves of the fey, making the circle wonder if the legends of fey-blooded people are true.

Britain has always been an isle of magic, and though the druids were powerful mages, they were not the only ones who wielded the arcane arts. Witches, herb women, cunning folk: all use magics native to England. Fear of the Church has pushed many of these people underground, but the knowledge is not lost. The Burned Oak Circle looks for the signs of such practitioners, and eagerly recruits them into their ranks.

believe that the circle will need to discover the locations of the eldest fey, original teachers of the druids. Both possibilities are being explored.

Wizards have long held the belief that they are the sole force in true opposition to the Church. They see the Church of England as having usurped their position as the mages of the people. Remote monasteries act as research citadels, where the most skilled hermetic mages fuel the machine that is the Church's ambition. The Burned Oak has taken up the task of unseating these monasteries, disrupting their spell work, stealing their artifacts. The



Current Operations

Locating the ancient druid sanctuaries hidden in the AR is the circle's top priority. Several expeditions have already been sent out, and the circle is planning several more that will be the longest trips into the AR in recorded history. The circle is of two opinions on how to best locate the sanctuaries. Some believe that it will take literal explorations, traveling the distant paths of the AR. Others

operation has proven difficult, for the monasteries have some of the Church's most ancient wards and protections.

The Enchanted Sheaf is responsible for some of the most heinous acts against the people, literally replacing them with golems. The circle has decided that the best way to handle the company is to secretly switch the daemons they bind with capricious trickster fey. The results have proven hilarious and very expensive for the company.

Web Weavers Circle

Overview

The enemies of the people are powerful, organized, and absolutely ruthless in their resolve to rule the world. Opposition to the tyranny of the aristocracy is going to take a lot more than a few assassinated leaders or blown up factories. Coordination, information, cybernetics: these things will liberate the people, not some ham-handed attempt by half-drunk thugs in the night. The Web Weavers Circle has dedicated itself to lifting the druidic Movement from a brawl of ale-soaked rabble to a conscious opposition to the elite's rule.

Communication is of paramount importance to the Movement, and the silkmen spend much of their efforts facilitating safe communication between the various members of the circles in London. Originally communication was through a system of druid symbols and runes, stylized so as to disguise their purpose. With the circle's new understandings of cybernetics, the system now includes actual psychic messages, keyed to those who know how to activate them. Keying these runes can involve anything from reciting old rhymes to offering traditional fey sacrifices like cream and honey or crushed herbs like juniper and verberna.

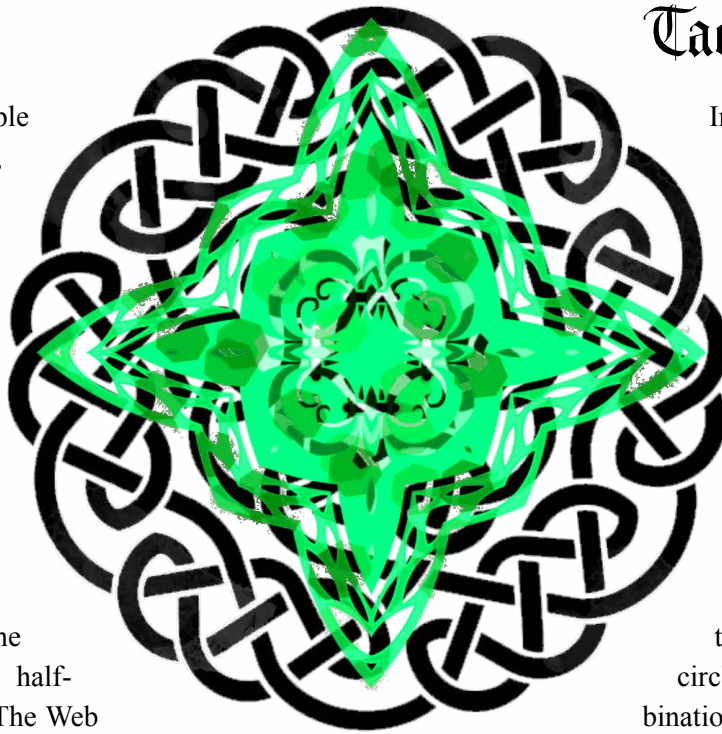
The circle believes in the power of information, spreading its operatives throughout the organizations of the enemy. The silkmen also spend a great deal of time in the AR, nearly as much time as the wizards. Most of the circle's efforts lie in hijacking the Scrynet to steal secrets from aristocratic mages and to spy on the activities of the Crown and nobility.

Tactics

In its effort to provide coordination to the Movement, the Web Weavers maintain the most public locations of any of the circles. Butchers, pubs, and dress shops all serve as fronts hiding in the mass of London commoner businesses. These fronts provide the space for secret meeting rooms and secure safe houses, available to the members of the other circles. The silkmen use a combination of ancient druid magic and cybernetics to keep these sanctuaries hidden from the authorities. They also coordinate with the Keystone Circle in order to build in access to the safe houses using the hidden AR paths.

Master spies of the London scene, the Web Weavers often gain positions as servants in the businesses and households of the powerful in order to gain access to the information found there. The need to maintain this network of servant spies has led the circle to specialize. Some members act as handlers, moving through the ranks so as to be able to place agents in various strategic positions. These individuals rarely do any actual spy work, and are often trained in the arts of mind magic. The second group are the actual spies, slipping into places they do not belong, gathering the information the circle requires. These spies are often armed with the circle's latest cyber tech to aid in their endeavors.

Scrynet may be the greatest invention of the cybernetic era, and the Web Weavers are fully willing to use it to their advantage. Most of the defenses in place assume intruders who will be using a scrying focus interface, not physically in the AR itself. This doesn't mean that



the defenses aren't formidable, making the shelf life of silkmen who travel the AR very short. With the druidic knowledge of bargaining with AR fey spirits, the mages of the circle are able to not only steal the secrets passed through Scrynet, but usurp the Net for their own surveillance needs.

Recruitment

Of all the circles, the Web Weavers are the most likely to recruit mages from the companies, usually those who wash out or who have a falling out with their superiors. Many of the other circles object to the policy, claiming that these fallen mages will betray the Movement in order to get back in their masters' good graces. The Burned Oak Circle also objects to the silkmen's over-reliance on cybernetics, feeling the movement should focus on the old druidic ways. The Web Weavers dismiss these complaints, pointing to the success of using the stolen knowledge against the aristocracy. This stance oddly puts them in accord with the Keystone circle, which also relies on cybernetic magic.

The emergence of the educated laymen in England has proven to be excellent for recruitment. These individuals fit the temperament the circle is looking for: cool, detached observers who value rational discourse over the more emotional rhetoric of the other circles. It is often difficult to train these individuals to act as servants, however, forcing the Web Weavers to continue recruitment from among the lower classes. To this end, and despite their name, the silkmen often recruit from among London's women, finding them to be excellent spies.



Current Operations

Medici security is a major concern for the Web Weavers, and breaching their protections has become a top priority. To this end, the circle has sought to compromise the Medici's private London Scrynet. The efforts of the Keystone Circle have proven to be a useful distraction, so the silkmen continue to send them known locations of the safe house anchors. So far, the Medici use of AR guardian constructs has proven a successful countermeasure to the operation.

Rumors of a new weapon being built by Vital Enhancements and Lead Anvil called project Elizabeth have the circle worried. The union of these two formidable companies is dangerous enough, but sources in the royal palace indicate Queen Anne may be involved. The security surrounding the headquarters of each company is dangerous, and palace security isn't even worth mentioning. With no other leads presenting themselves, the circle has turned to the dream experts in the Singers Circle in the hopes that they might be able to help ferret out the information.

The AI Anne has proven to be a formidable weapon in Henry's war for magical supremacy, and the Web Weavers agree with the Iron Dagger that her destruction is of utmost importance. While the Iron Dagger seeks to penetrate Anne's defenses, the Web Weavers believe that exploring the furthest reaches of the Scrynet, which da Vinci helped build, may lead to the Queen's core glyph. If this is the case, da Vinci was certainly clever in where he hid such information.

From observing Scrynet communications, the circle has learned that the Templar have stashed several ancient and powerful artifacts somewhere in the English countryside. Unfortunately, the circle's resources are almost exclusively limited to London, so they have had to turn this intel over to the Burned Oak circle.

Iron Dagger Circle

Overview

Magarchs play the game of magic on the board of power. The simplest way to win is to kill the other players. Elimination of the aristocracy's key mage players is the goal of the Iron Dagger Circle, zealous in their belief that mages hold the keys to freedom.

Calling the cutters zealots is like calling the ocean wet. The fervor with which

the circle pursues its goals is a frightening thing, and the other circles know to stay well out of their way. Bringing death to the mages of the Church and the cybernetic companies has caused more fear than the actions of any other circle, but has also made the members of the Iron Dagger the most hunted members of the Movement. This only serves to fuel the fervor of the circle, every crackdown and dead comrade one more reason to keep going.

Of all the circles, the Iron Dagger is the one most willing to use all tools available to them. Cybernetic artifice, druid astral travel, hermetic-born cures, they all serve in the arsenal of the cutter assassin. The circle is the most oriented toward personal combat, training at all times in both mystical and mundane fighting techniques.

Patience is the quality that makes the cutters so deadly. A cell will watch a given target for months before acting. The opportunity to gather so much intelligence has often proven useful to the Movement, and the Iron Dagger often acts as watchers for the Web Weavers.



Tactics

The Web Weavers Circle may style themselves as the spies of the movement, but intelligence gathering is what the Iron Dagger spends most of its time doing. Threats to the people and to the Movement must be assessed. Once targets are chosen, constant observation is required to plan the perfect op. The members of the Iron Dagger have little patience for pretend, preferring to use stealth

magics and steal thoughts to gain the information they require. The circle has been known to use druidic sorcery to create hidden watch rooms in the AR corresponding with a target's home. However, the practice can be dangerous, as most targets know to ward such areas.

Methods of assassination vary from cell to cell. The circle places little value on stealth kills, and rather prefers that the nobility realize that they are being hunted. On occasion, it does amuse the cutters to stage bizarre and inexplicable accidents, enjoying the chaos that the investigations bring. Cutter cells have been known to act as assassins for hire, allowing the elite to finance their operations. The other circles question the wisdom of such a tactic, but added income is always welcome. Alchemical explosives are quite effective, but most cells prefer a more surgical approach. Many have begun exploring the use of alchemical poisons as a viable alternative. These experts have developed toxins with a variety of delivery methods. The most recent fad is the use of memory cards: mail the upper servant of a target a memory card and watch as they take care of the assassination for you.

Recruitment

Former soldiers are often recruited into the Iron Dagger Circle. Particularly favored are those soldiers returning from campaigns on the Continent. Soldiers who have survived warfare often have superior fighting skills, and the horrors of the conflict make them excellent recruits for overthrowing the state. The other benefit for recruiting ex-soldiers is that they often have training in the latest magical weaponry, skills that the cutters find useful.

Expert criminals acquire many of the skills that the circle finds necessary for their work, particularly illicit entry into places that they are not welcome. Life on the streets of London has become quite harsh, and those who survive gain the edge that makes assassination possible. Taking in cold-blooded killers makes the other circles nervous, but the results are hard to ignore.

Those who have personally suffered at the hands of a noble or clergy member or those ruthlessly experimented on by the cybernetic businessmen are ideal candidates for the Iron Dagger. In London such individuals are in abundant supply, and often there are too many possible candidates. Many times the circle need simply wait for a person to take matters into their own hands, and then step in before the person gets killed by a lack of experience.

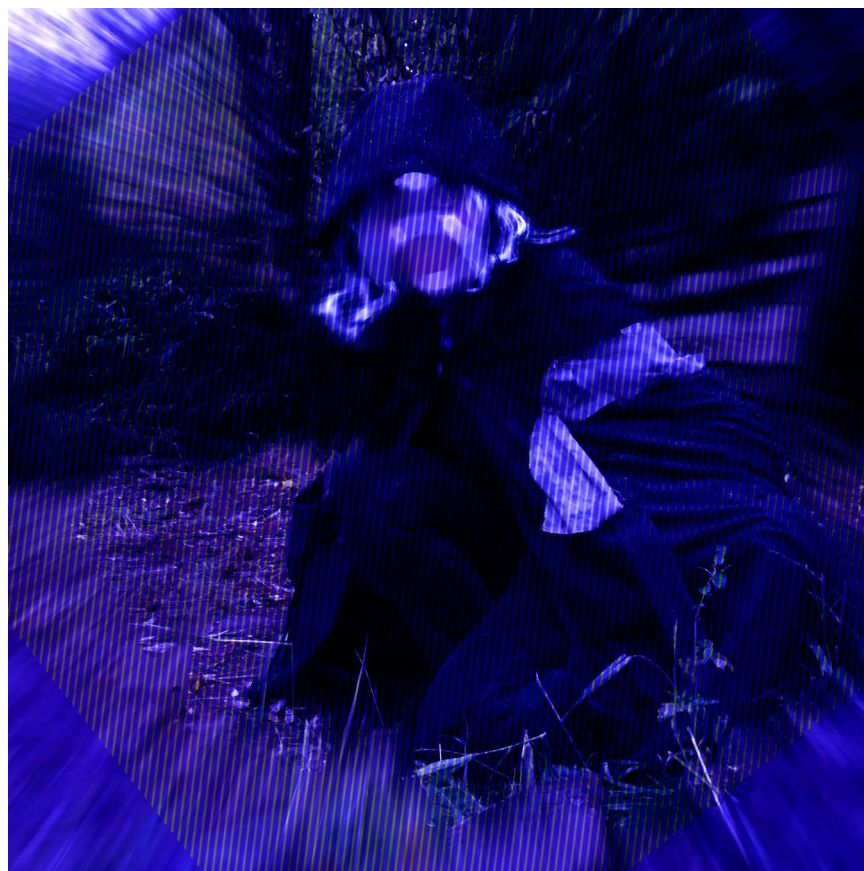
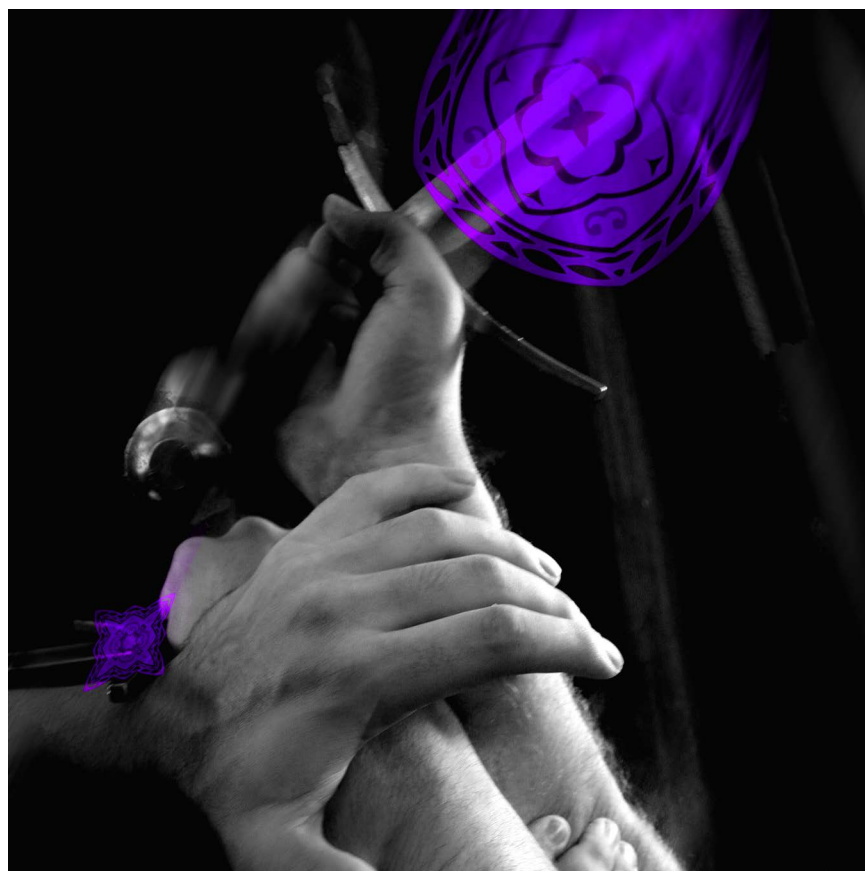
Current Operations

Queen Anne has proven to be the most formidable weapon in the arsenal of the Crown, moving her to the circle's number one target. Taking on the Queen will not be easy, so several of the circle's cells have taken on the task. Killing her is not as simple as a knife in the ribs or a drop of poison in her wine. To destroy Anne, the circle needs to discover her core glyph, giving them the ability to craft



a dispellation spell. Her Majesty's defenses are many, and despite the circle's caution, a number of cutters have already died.

Even with Thomas Cromwell's recent inroads into the Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury continues to hold much sway in the English court. A magus of considerable ability, he is believed to be responsible for the identification of a number of Web Weaver spies, making him a primary target for the Iron Dagger. Currently the operation is about observing the movements of the Archbishop at a distance, as he is a powerful mind mage and getting agents close to him has proven impossible.



The Web Weavers have identified that the heads of Lead Anvil and Vital Enhancements are developing a devastating new weapon called Project Elizabeth. The silkmen want more information, but the Iron Dagger has decided that killing the heads of the two companies will be more efficient. Peter Bankes and Paul Blackmore are powerful cybernetic mages and well connected, but such positions lead to arrogance. Rather than pursuing the two mages directly, the circle has decided to watch the servants of the two men, waiting for the right moment to magically subvert them as sleeper agents. The attack will have to be nearly simultaneous, as any forewarning will place the men out of reach.

Keystone Circle

Overview

Oppression is not some ephemeral concept held in the shackles of scholars and poets. The material suffering of the people operates through material means, and stopping it requires direct action. None of the circles understands this better than the Keystone Circle, mages who strike at the foundations of the aristocracy's power.

Cybernetics is not the great achievement that the powerful proclaim it to be. Advancements in magic have led to mass unemployment and the displacement of thousands from their ancestral homes. The Keystone Circle seeks to destroy the industrial means that the elite use to create these crises. If golems are responsible for putting farmers out of work, sabotage the golem factories. If alchemical foundries pollute the villages, destroy the foundries.

Members of the Keystone Circle often come under fire from the other circles for their brazen tactics. Other members of the Movement feel that such radical action harms more than it helps and that the circle should be more tactical in its choices. They also point to the collateral damage, the harm brought to the common populace. The key holders, as they have come to be known, dismiss such criticism as soft-hearted and foolish. They are quick to point out that every factory destroyed means fewer factories producing the instruments of oppression used by the nobility, used to maintain their structure of power and privilege. The key holders might lament the loss of commoner blood, but are firm in their belief that any participation in the institutions of power is collusion, and that

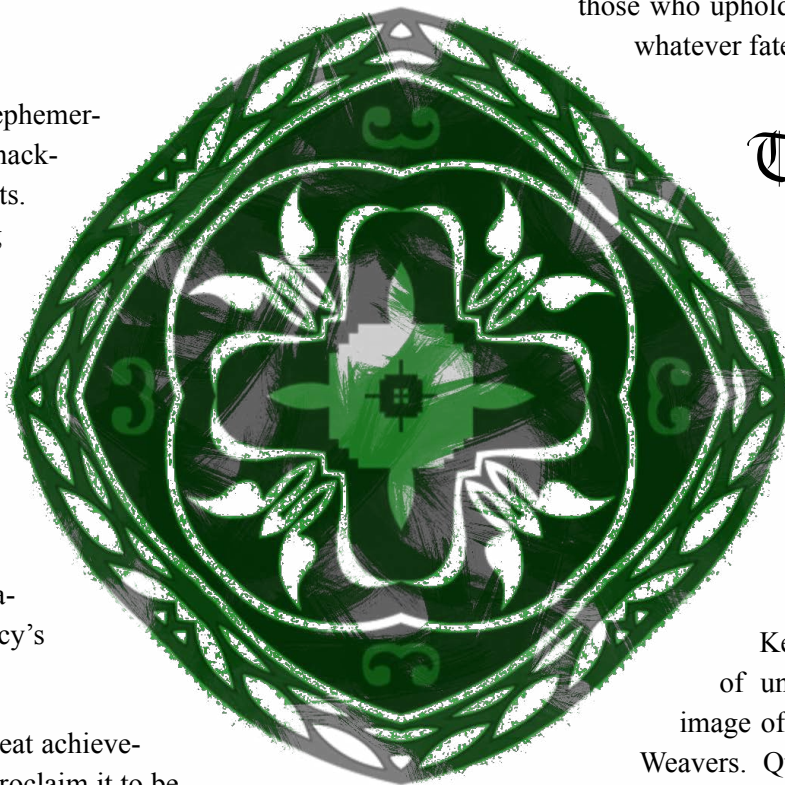
those who uphold their oppressors deserve whatever fate is coming to them.

Tactics

Holding true to the druidic ways, authority in the Keystone circle is granted to those capable of carrying out a specific task. This idea, coupled with an intense rejection of hierarchy, gives the appearance that the Keystone Circle is a gang of unorganized anarchists, an image often promoted by the Web Weavers. Quite to the contrary, the circle values organization; it just realizes that isolating itself into independent cells helps prevent the authorities from compromising the circle's efforts. Since the Crown and the cybernetic companies often viciously hunt the Keystone Circle, such practices are extremely important.

With the extreme measures the key holders are willing to take, quick escapes are vital for the continued survival of the circle. To this end, the Keystone Circle has mastered the use of druidic astral travel, utilizing the mystical twists and shortcuts found throughout London. Some members have become so good that it appears as though they can teleport, making them deadly in any combat operation. The circle has also learned the ability to wrap the AR around a specific location, making it virtually impossible to enter without preexisting knowledge of its existence. This skill has made the key holders invaluable to the Movement, which is perhaps why the others tolerate their destructive proclivities.

Direct sabotage is the name of the game, and the circle has embraced the secrets of alchemy stolen by the Web



Weavers from Navis Company. Every Keystone cell must have at least one alchemist, and the circle has makeshift alchemy labs hidden throughout London. Knowing alchemy isn't enough, for the practice often requires a number of material resources not available on the open market. This has led the circle to become expert thieves, a task they are well suited to given their mastery of AR travel. The circle has also forged relationships with a number of black market operations, giving them connections to London's underworld.



Recruitment

Above any other trait, the Keystone circle values rage. Rage is what allows a key holder the ability to carry out the circle's tasks. Rage will keep you going when victory seems so far away. There's plenty of rage to go around in London these days, but the circle has found the youth to be particularly fertile ground for the circle's recruitment.

A certain degree of fearlessness is required to join any of the druid circles. For potential key holders, addiction

to fear is a valuable quality. Much of the circle's work requires running and leaping and falling, not to mention crafting and placing dangerous alchemical devices. Those who seek the thrill of fear make excellent key holders, and their membership feeds the reputation of recklessness that the circle is known for.

The need to appropriate materials from cybernetic company stores makes thieves and burglars natural candidates for the cause. The Keystone Circle has forged many friendships with the less reputable, constantly on the lookout for those who might benefit the cause.

Current Operations

With thousands of peasants flooding London to escape lost jobs and pollution, the circle has mostly focused its efforts on Navis Company and the Enchanted Sheaf. The Enchanted Sheaf maintains a number of golem factories throughout London, which are all targets for the circle. The company's headquarters, Grey Estate, is located outside the city, and as yet no attack has successfully been implemented there. According to the Web Weavers, the estate is where the golem's daemons are summoned, making the HQ a high priority for the circle.

Navis Company has a number of choice targets in and around London, particularly around the shipyards. The company is of particular interest for the whole Movement, as it is one of the companies responsible for Britain's imperialist expansion, which is opposed by the secret ways. Another benefit of any attack on one of their holdings is access to new designs and reagents, something key holders are eager for.

The circle prefers large targets, leaving individual assignments to the Iron Dagger Circle. Recently, however, the two circles have partnered up on a joint venture against Medici Company in London. The operation has taken the form of simultaneous attacks on high-ranking officers as well as Medici safe houses that anchor the family's mini Scrynet. The attacks have disrupted any attempts at an organized response so far, but there are rumors that the Medici Company has petitioned the Crown to allow them to bring in officers from family holdings abroad.

Singers Circle

Overview

Propaganda is the weapon of the oppressor class, one they wield with sorcery. The Church bends the minds of the flock, proclaiming the divine right of the Crown to rule over the populace.

Cybernetic companies pump out magical devices aimed at keeping the poor docile, while constructing magnificent public works that ensorcel the minds of the commoners into a patriotic fervor. The druidic Movement must meet the aristocracy on the battlefield of the people's minds if it has any hope of victory.

The Singers Circle and its bards have always known that the Movement was ultimately the battle for the hearts and minds of the English people. In order to battle the magics of both the Church and the cybernetic companies, the bards have delved deep into the magics of the mind and the heart. Fighting the lies spread by the state and the Church is not easy, and the Singers Circle has also begun using ancient dream magics in order to counter the efforts of the Crown-led cyberneticists.

As the wars in Europe have escalated, the circle has moved in a more proactive direction. Where traditionally they have focused their efforts on lifting the veil from the common people's eyes, they now also actively go after the ruling class. This mostly takes the form of stealing information from the lips and minds of the nobility, but has also become a terror campaign against the powerful, in which nightmares plague the worst offenders in the state's propaganda machine.



Tactics

Dream singing is an ancient art, one practiced by the druidic bards for centuries. Little is known about the original practice, but the circle has found an excellent contemporary use for the

art. Bards who practice the ability usually target neighborhoods where the clergy are directing their magics on behalf of the Crown. While the sung dreams rarely take on the form of literal dissent, they help keep the populace from feeling too comfortable with the lies of the cloth.

By far the largest contingent of the circle are street performers who craft absurd farces and parodies of state activities, lacing their creations with magics that enhance the experience. The bards who engage in this practice are careful what they put into their performances, not wanting to reveal that they have access to state secrets.

The realm of dreams is dangerous and mutable, making it difficult to gain the information that the movement might need. It is often easier for a bard to enchant a wayward noble, pulling secrets from their lips and leaving them with the memory of a passionate night with a beautiful man or woman. Using a combination of glamouring and memory manipulation, the Singers Circle has stolen any number of important pieces of information.

Sometimes the best way to contradict a lie is to simply reprint the truth. A few dedicated bards spend hours a day crafting memory cards containing corrections to the lies spread by the Crown and the cybernetic companies. Since the cards dispel after one use, it is almost impossible to find them before the information is disseminated.

Recruitment

Artists make up the majority of those recruited into the Singers Circle. While performing artists are a natural choice, any person with the spark of creativity is a likely candidate for recruitment, making the bards an eclectic group of individuals. Dream singing often requires a unique imagination, and the more creative the individual, the better the dream.

The Singers also look for strong debaters to attract to the cause. When combating the propaganda passed down by the elite, those with silver tongues have proven themselves invaluable, especially in the pubs and eateries of the poor. Many brawls have broken out because of new recruits flexing their magical muscles, and occasionally because seasoned veterans don't want to be shown up.

Surprisingly enough, former clergy, disaffected by the political nature of the Church, have found a refuge amongst the bards. The men of the cloth are well trained in the use of words as weapons, and those who are angry at the Church for its collusion in oppressing the people are powerful members of the circle. Bringing in an ex-priest is a dangerous thing, but the circle takes perverse joy in turning them into lewd street singers and pub ruffians.

Another interesting group that the Singers Circle recruits from is the third and fourth children of the elite. Since these nobles are often ignored, they occasionally gain the notion that they might be artists. As their dreams are crushed by parents with political marriages in mind, some few find their

way into the hands of bards, who are all too willing to provide an outlet for their rage.

Current Operations

The Singers Circle has begun to target powerful members of the court and Church with an unending stream of terrible nightmares. The goal is to diminish the capabilities of the Crown's most useful leaders. This campaign has forced the Medici to step up their game, inundating the



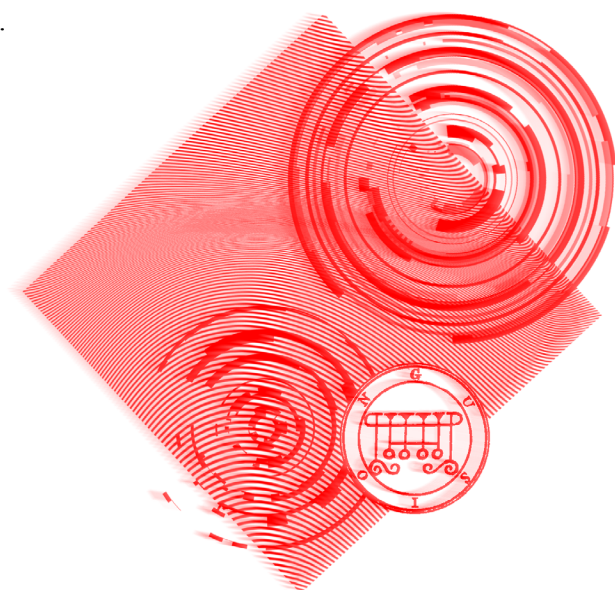


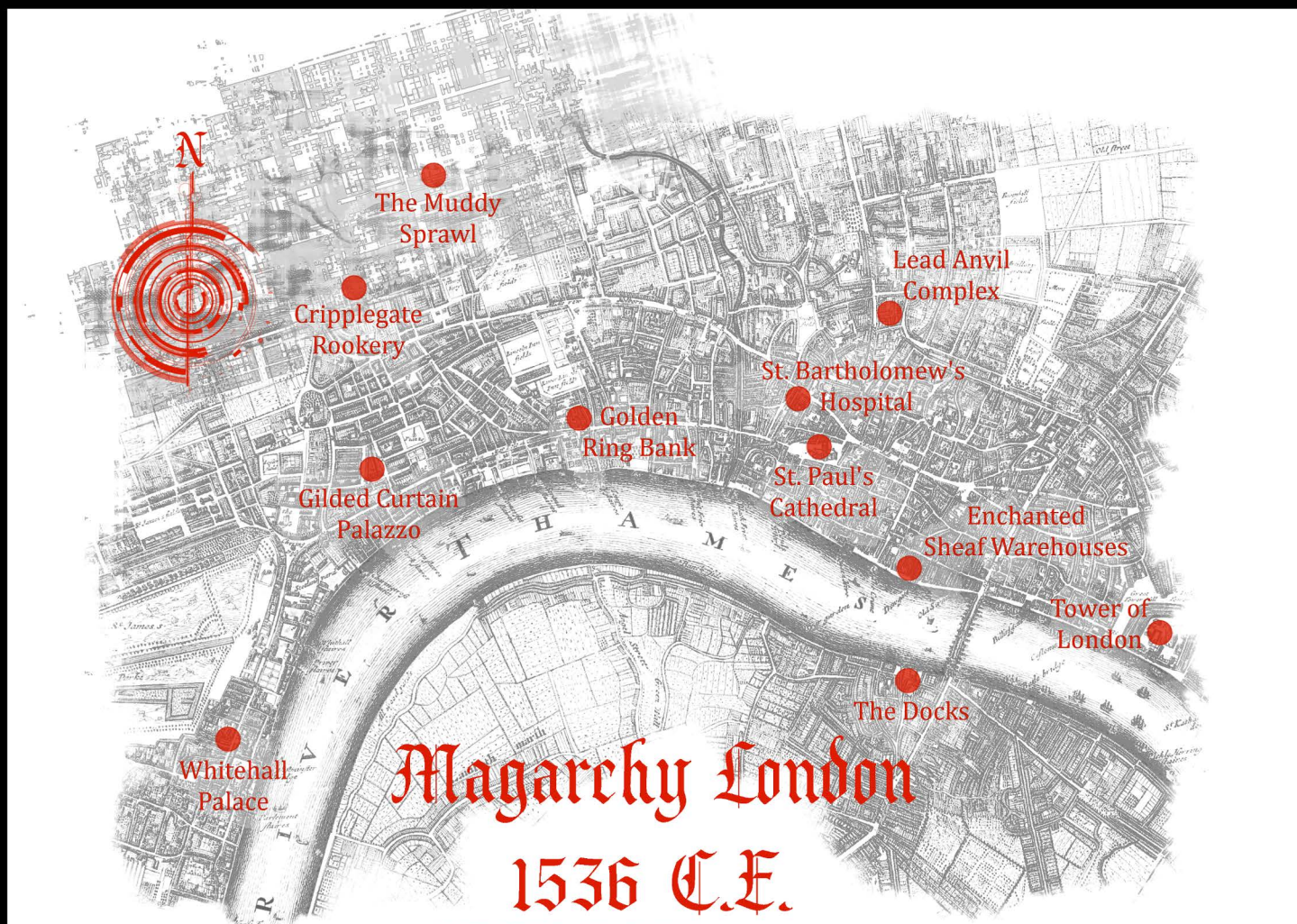
dream portions of the AR with deadly constructs. While this has made dream singing a dangerous proposition, the campaign is clearly having an effect.

The Web Weavers circle has asked the bards to help in their search for any information about Project Elizabeth. Given that the project's creators are the heads of two of the most powerful cybernetic companies, caution is in order. Interrogating mages in their dreams is difficult in the best of circumstances, but nearly impossible with Magarchs of this caliber. The circle is hoping that eventually some employee will become involved, which will provide an easier point of access.

Disruption of the aristocracy is always a goal, and the Singers Circle has started a campaign of stealing illicit gossip from the powerful and ensuring that it falls into the wrong hands. While ultimately the project causes little material change, a lack of unity at court is useful to the Movement.

Taking a cue from the Keystone Circle, the bards have started to use their gifts to incite worker riots at many of the largest factories around London. The targets are random, and the instigators always seem to be gone by the time the authorities arrive.





Chapter 2: Londinium



Magarchy is an expansive setting, with the whole of 16th century Europe and beyond as a potential canvas for the artwork of your game. But a good setting is detailed and specific. We present here a take on London in the cyberpunk of Magarchy. It is an urban landscape at the heart of political power in the realm. It is a massive, dirty wellspring of criminal acts, political maneuvering, and corporate takeover. What better place to set your game?

London

The London of Magarchy is more populated than that of the real 16th century. Displaced by mechanical field workers, many have taken to the cities looking for work. As the ancient city sprawls into the countryside, the powerful cybernetic companies vie for control of the centers of power within. Using advanced cybernetic and magical practices developed in the Italian Renaissance, the companies and the Crown are hard at work shutting down monasteries and erecting skyscraping castles in their

place, taller than any on this side of the world. To most, London is an industry-choked mass of humanity at its worst.

Legendry

Legends hold that Britain and London were founded by a hero of the Trojan War named Brutus, who slew giants that had occupied the region. While in our world this account is fantastical, in Magarchy it is largely true. The City of London itself, the area inside the original Roman wall, is in fact built on the bones of the giants who once lived there.

In fact, the region holds many such secrets of the magical past. In particular, those who know the old and secret ways claim that a race of faeries once dwelled here, erecting eldritch bridges across space and time. Now the faeries have left the world and hidden in the Astral Realm, which only the wise and powerful may walk. But their secret pathways still remain, winding through the labyrinthine streets of London, providing dangerous but quick paths for those who stumble upon them.

Issues

The following are examples for use as Current Issues during game creation in your version of London:

- ☞ Alchemical Waste Everywhere
- ☞ Big Companies Own Everything
- ☞ It's Every Man For Himself
- ☞ Magic Runs the World
- ☞ Memory Dealers Steal People's Lives
- ☞ Orphans Litter the Streets
- ☞ Ruffian Gangs
- ☞ Spirituality is Dying
- ☞ The King and Queen Are Despised
- ☞ The Law Turns a Blind Eye
- ☞ The Poor are Starving
- ☞ There's a Price For Everything (and Everyone)
- ☞ Those With Power Use It For Ill
- ☞ Too Many People

Similarly, here are a few examples for Impending Issues in London:

- ☞ A Druid Circle Threatens to Destroy the City
- ☞ A Magical Plague
- ☞ City Life Driving People Insane
- ☞ Civil War
- ☞ Golems Revolt Against Humanity
- ☞ London's Streets Form an Eldritch Faerie Sigil
- ☞ Memory Dealers Begin Stealing Personalities
- ☞ Peasants Have Had Enough
- ☞ Skyscraper Castles Cannot Hold (the magic eventually fails)
- ☞ Technology Makes People Inhuman
- ☞ The Medici Are Taking Over the Kingdom
- ☞ The Pope Seeks Revenge on England
- ☞ The Queen is Going to be Assassinated
- ☞ The War With France

"Is London so bad? I can see the crush of human flesh, the bustle of commerce, and the coughing spew of alchemical waste. But I also see it as a city with aspirations. A symbol of a kingdom with something to say and do in the world. It is a fevered dream of humanity's pledge to shape the world into what we see fit. It is a mirror of our souls."

-Niccolò Machiavelli

Places

The locations below are crafted for stories in London. They are places of importance, in some ways providing their own plot hooks. But even if they're just used as backdrops, the aspects provided should prove evocative of the setting. Each is shown on the map of London below.

Cripplegate Rookery

A den of thieves and other undesirables snaking through the north section of town and ending at the gate in the Roman wall leading to The Muddy Sprawl. Generally a safe haven for criminal types, as no agent of the Crown is willing to enter without a dozen or more soldiers. A number of gangs operate out of the Rookery, including the Magog Dogs (robbers), Robert's Hilt (smugglers), and the Soot Kin (pickpocketing child army).

Aspects: *Filthy and Dangerous; Haven for Criminals*

Gilded Curtain Palazzo

A collection of shops catering to the nobility and other wealthy patrons, serving as the headquarters for the Gilded Curtain Company. Deep within the building's

bowels, an army of peasant women weave fabrics laced with arcane sigils and diagrammatica.

Aspects: *Covered in Emotion-Inducing Fabric; Volatile Arcane Dyes*

Enchanted Sheaf Warehouses

The London branch of the Enchanted Sheaf Company, the warehouses are used primarily as a shipping and storage facility for the thousands of demon-bound golems it uses. As the Enchanted Sheaf is the primary reason so many peasants have been pushed out of the countryside and into the cities, the compound is often a place where the lower classes come to make a ruckus, complaining about this or that perceived injury. As such, the massive warehouses are strong and made entirely of stone and iron, so as not to be put to the torch.

Aspects: *Filled with Golems; Impossible to Burn*

Golden Ring Bank

The most prominent and powerful bank in England, an imposing golden dome arcs behind the brick towers of central London. Due to the bank's ancient ties to the fallen Knights Templar, the area is well patrolled with Golden Ring guards, well trained and equipped.

Aspects: *Bristling with Armed Guards; Gold on Every Surface*

Lead Anvil Headquarters

Comprising much of the new industrial sections of the city, the Lead Anvil complex in London is a collection of alchemical plants and discolored stone towers. A network of catwalks bridge these buildings, high above the city.

Aspects: *Dangerous Chemicals and Heights; Criminal Elements*



Palace of Whitehall

The royal residence, an expansive castle unmatched in all of Europe. Designed as both the center of the King's court (and thus the Kingdom), as well as a place of feasts, cock fighting, and jousting. As the center of Henry's power, the palace has been outfitted with the most advanced Medici Company cybernetic security systems. Medici guards are not used, however, as the King fears the Pope may pull strings and employ them against him.

Aspects: *Brimming with Lusty Nobles; Opulent and High-Tech*

Saint Bartholomew's Hospital

Headquarters for Vital Enhancements, Barts is the largest medical facility in England. Though ostensibly a place of healing, most know that peasants can expect to be treated with experimental procedures that defy logic and humanity.

Though few are aware of it, the hospital has many strange properties due to its past. The layer between this world and the Astral Realm is thin, and inhabitants have been known to see "ghosts." Wandering its twisting halls long enough can eventually lead one into places outside our reality.

Aspects: *Screams of the Altered and Dying; Close to the Astral Realm*

Saint Paul's Cathedral

As the seat of the Bishop of London, Saint Paul's is the center of power for the Church in the city. As such, it is where much of the intrigue takes place between the various factions within the Church. Looming over the city, the façade does not betray the fact that the insides are being gutted by various acts of the King and his advisor, Thomas Cromwell. Many of the Church properties in the

courtyard have been sold off as well, and the building has become a symbol of the changing times.

Aspects: *Echoing Footsteps; Secret Alcoves*

The Docks

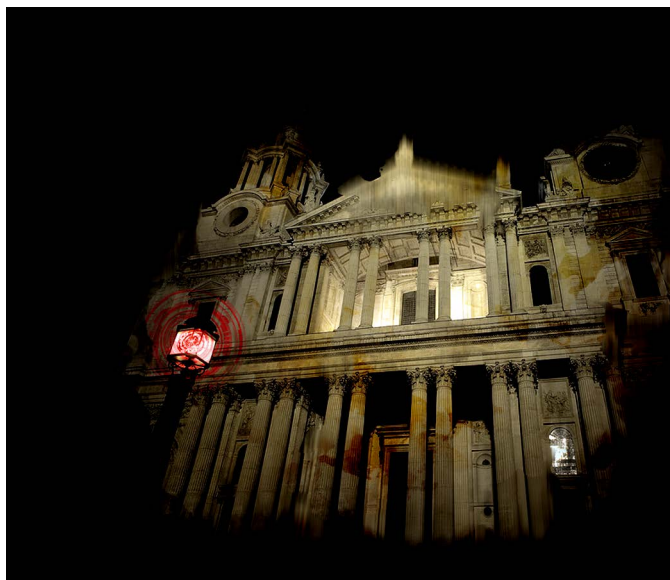
A collection of typical ship docks, warehouses, and advanced laboratories for Navis Company, the London Docks are a bit of a hodgepodge. Sitting on the chemical-scented Thames River, the docks are a disorganized mess of rotting wood and dangerous folk.

Aspects: *Seedy Inhabitants; Slime-Covered Wood*

The Muddy Sprawl

Abutting the northern section of the old Roman wall around the City proper is an unending sprawl of a shanty town stretching outward, seemingly forever. The sprawl accumulated only recently and most of its inhabitants are economic refugees, driven to the city for want of work. Though most were once farmers and other humble workers, many have turned to crime and prostitution as a means to get by here.

Aspects: *Overcrowded With Angry Peasants; Unending Labyrinth*



Tower of London

Currently used as a prison, the Tower and its surrounding area has been reconstructed in recent years by Medici Company, whose guards now work as the city's hired gaolers. The new construction has largely been the creation of a vast and intricate underground cell system. Many in the Church have

remarked on the layout's similarity to certain magical sigils which promote dominance and power.

Aspects: *Difficult to Escape; Pervasive Aggressiveness*



N

The Muddy
Sprawl

Cripplegate
Rookery

Lead Anvil
Complex

St. Bartholomew's

Hospital

Golden
Ring Bank

St. Paul's
Cathedral

Enchanted
Sheaf Warehouses

Tower of
London

The Docks

Magarchy London

1536 C.F.

Whitehall
Palace

Astral Places

For those who can find their way into the Astral Realm, London is another world. A ghostly landscape of towering nightmares and dotted with magical constructs, the level of danger here is immense.

Giant's Bones

The ancient bones of a long dead giant lay across the city, along the same lines that many of the streets have been built back in the material world. None know for sure how the bones affect the residents of London, but many speculate that their influence is protective.

Aspects: *Bestows Curses and Blessings; Strong as Iron*

Scrynet Tower

A spire constructed of intersecting magical energies, piggybacked off of the existing astral ley lines, the Tower dominates the landscape of London in the AR. Serving as the hub for all Scrynet communications in England, the various companies work together to maintain and protect this important artifact from the ravages of this strange world.

Aspects: *Covered in Powerful Runes; Guarded by Bound Daemons*

The Black Sigil

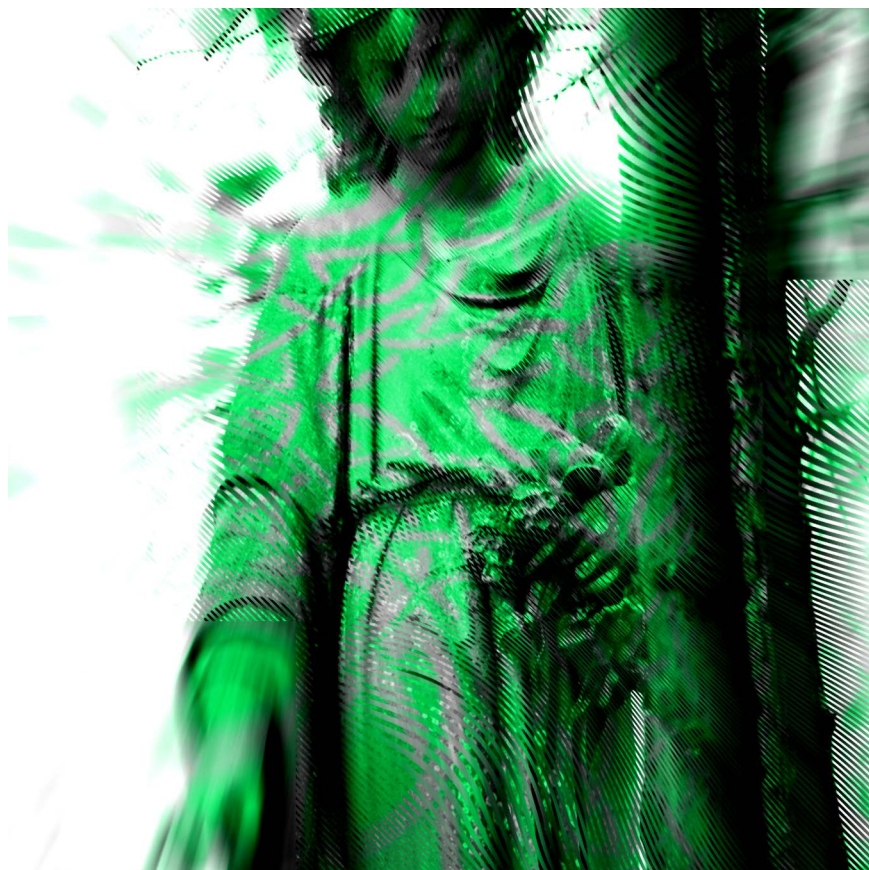
Old as the city itself, a set of circular sigils marks out several city blocks in inky black. Avoided by all but the druids, the Black Sigil is said to be a place where faeries can be found. Nearly all who venture near are never seen again.

Aspects: *Smothering Black Cloud; Hungry and Capricious Faeries*

The Necropolis

Though the spirits of the dead do not normally go the Astral Realm, memories of them often fester there, becoming real through the fears of the living. The Necropolis is a place where the “dead” have come to congregate, whether through thought or instinct, clustering in a volatile crowd of thousands of spirits.

Aspects: *Moaning Without End; Winds of Cold Anger*



Whitehall Fortress

A shining construct of sigils and coherent light, the Fortress stands as the astral version of the Palace of Whitehall. It is from here that the Queen controls her countless sigil programs and taps into the Scrynet. Anne essentially holds court here, hearing from creatures of legend and dream as though their plights were the same as the living.

Aspects: *Crawling With Strange Creatures; Domain of the Queen*

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Giant's Bones



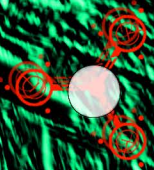
The
Black Sigil



The
Necropolis



Whitehall
Fortress



Scrynet
Tower



Astral London

1536 C.E.

Faces

The Church of England

Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer

A quiet man with a scholar's demeanor, Archbishop Cranmer is in reality one of the most powerful hermetic mages in the world. After the King separated the Church of England from the Catholic Church, Cranmer was given greater authority than ever. On the other hand, Thomas Cromwell has influenced Henry in a direction away from the Church, a situation the Archbishop cannot allow to continue.

Aspect: *Plans for the Long Game*

Bishop of London Edmund Bonner

Coarse in manner and speech, Bishop Bonner is considered to be Cromwell's greatest ally in the Church of England. With a long and distinguished career in service to the King, the recently appointed Bishop has many plans for the Diocese of London. Bonner is responsible for the organization of the DPM, and plans to use his new division to ferret out members and supporters of the druid resistance.

Aspect: *Manipulative Schemer*



Father Alfred Baker

A dedicated hermetic scholar, Father Baker has recently been transferred to London to assist the efforts of Archbishop Cranmer in the fight against the cybernetic companies. Father Baker's specialty is manipulating others mages' spells, making him invaluable to the Archbishop. Recently the Father has been given the task of subverting the security measures used in Scrynet communication.

Aspect: *Obsessive Arcane Scholar*

Father Colin Dale

Father Colin Dale is an ambitious young priest who has recently been assigned as the confidante to several minor lords in the London court. A skilled interrogator, Father Dale's real specialty lies in the practice of mind magic, particularly in the area of memory retrieval and manipulation. The Father's skills have been put to test given the level of Medici security in London, but Dale relishes the challenge.

Aspect: *Ruthless Social Climber*

Cybernetic Companies

Bertram Adler, Grandmaster of the Golden Ring Bank

Holder of the famed Ring of Solomon, the badge of office for the Grandmaster, Bertram Adler likes to project the appearance of a cool, rational businessman. In reality, Grandmaster Adler burns hot with hatred for the old enemies of the Templar order. Using his position as head of the Golden Ring Bank, Adler has ensured that the King has the financing necessary to continue his expansion into France.

Aspect: *Vengeful Powerbroker*

William Bailey, Cyberneticist, Navis Company Research Division

A strange and obsessive man, William Bailey designs new delivery systems and alchemical munitions for Navis Company. Always tinkering with a new device, William's current project is designing small, concealable side arms. In order to test the efficacy of his new items, William has released several to some criminal associates of his to see whether or not they hold up in the field.

Aspect: *Befuddled Tinkerer*

Sarah Whiteapple, Cyberneticist, Vital Enhancements Security

A pioneer in homunculi sciences, Sarah Whiteapple has recently moved from research to security in Vital Enhancements. When Whiteapple isn't on site building security homunculi for the company's holdings, she can



usually be found exploring the sewers and back alleys in search of the raw materials needed for her constructs.

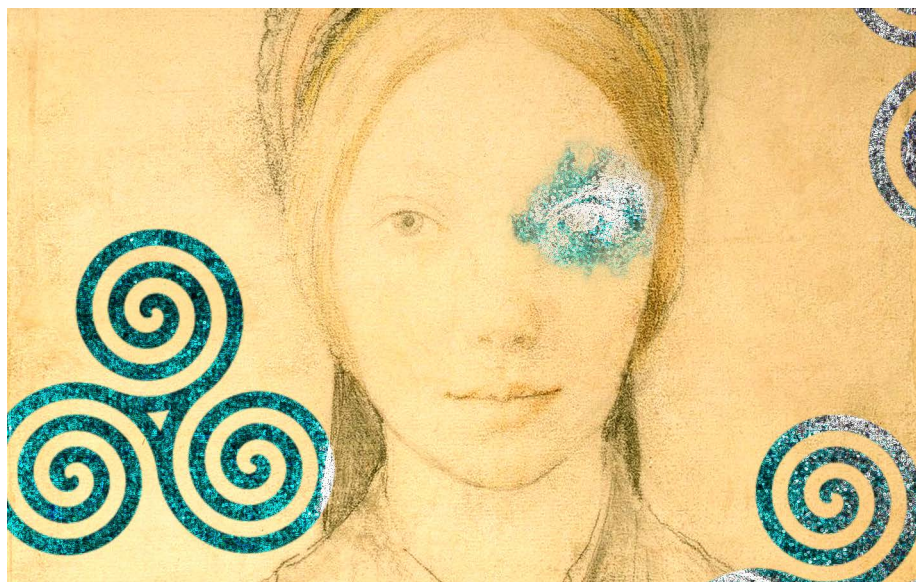
Aspect: *Dangerous Experimenter*

Clare Earnshaw, Cyberneticist, Proprietor of Earnshaw Dress Company

After finishing her education with the Gilded Curtain, Clare Earnshaw decided to open her own business selling high-end women's clothing and accessories. With her training in emotional projections, Earnshaw designed a whole line of clothing that allowed the wearer to subtly manipulate anyone they might desire. Earnshaw clothing is now the fashion of the court, and she is thinking of expanding her business to include a new men's line.

Aspect: *Magical Entrepreneur*





Evelyn Fitzroy, Iron Dagger Circle

Most of the cutters prefer to remain outside of society, but Ms. Fitzroy loves the thrill of working under the nobility's nose. As a high end courtesan, Evelyn gains access to many of the people the Iron Dagger needs eliminated. Her assassination style involves implanting mental commands to get her clients to perform the assassinations for her.

Aspect: *Perfect Companion*

The Secret Ways

Amy Ellis, Web Weavers Circle

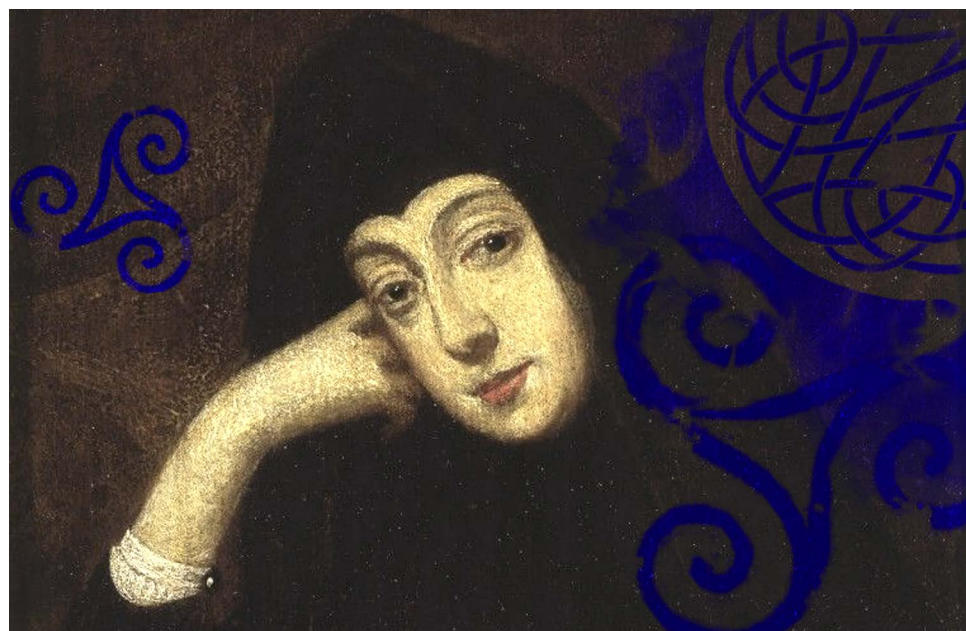
Amy Ellis is the chief maid in Thomas Cromwell's household. With her position, Ellis is able to have members of the Movement appointed to the house's staff with relative ease. A master of sympathetic magic, Ellis passes along intel gleaned from Cromwell's correspondence, usurping the Scrynet node he established.

Aspect: *Clever Actress*

Bridget Greene, Keystone Circle

Bridget Greene is the leading alchemist for the Keystone Circle. Early in her career, Bridget focused on developing high-yield explosives, but her current project is developing poisons for the cause. She wants to develop a toxin that will absorb through the skin and paralyze the victim.

Aspect: *Elixir for Every Occasion*



Jacqueline Devall, Singers Circle

Jacqueline Devall is the educated daughter of a minor noble family. All her life, what Jacqueline loved most was to read the books in her father's library. When her father announced that he had arranged her marriage with a man more than twice her age, Jacqueline fled to London. There she joined up with the Singers Circle, and quickly realized she had a talent for dream singing. Now she is one of the circle's most notorious nightmare spinners, plaguing the dreams of the powerful.

Aspect: *Weaves Terrors*



Chapter 3: Making Magarchs

This chapter details the interplay between Magarchy and the Fate Core rules with regard to player characters (Magarchs). For the most part Fate is unaltered, with only a few additions and modifications. In this chapter you'll find the skills and stunts available for use, details on how to use the reputation stress track, and an all-important Extras section.

Who Has the Magic

Before we go into those rules we should talk a bit about what characters in a Magarchy game are about. Magarchs are the heroes of a story set in an alternate history version of 1536 CE Europe, most likely living in England, our default setting. Specifically, they are people who have found a way to learn magic. There are three kinds of magic presented in this book, and a Magarch can be knowledgeable in more than one of these.

For our purposes, two things define being capable in magic. Firstly, PCs should have an aspect related to one of the organizations presented in Chapter I. The aspect

could relate to magic itself, or the group they work for (or are enemies with). Examples include: “*Cyborg Enforcer for the Medici*,” “*Pilfers Church Magics*,” or “*Sees the Work of the Faeries in the World*.” Secondly, each of the three styles of magic has a skill, which is where the magical powers actually come from. Magarchs should at the bare minimum have one of these skills at +1. More likely, a capable Magarch will dabble into another magic type, and take stunts related to their area of magical expertise.

Gaining access to each of these areas of magic is a defining element of the character and thus likely to take up an aspect. A noble who possesses magical abilities likely bribed a member of the clergy to teach them theurgy in violation of their solemn vows. A young cybernetic programmer might be apprenticed under an artisan working for one of the powerful companies, putting them under the scrutiny of the executives in that business. A druid might have been recruited by a circle for their criminal talents or ties, being taught eldritch lore to aid them in operations against the Crown. In any case, magic connects the character to the world and provides both motivations and NPCs of importance.

Issues of Gender

A note to those concerned with the lack of social status and mobility afforded to women in the 16th century. We've done everything we can to allow for women to exist in Magarchy as equally viable characters. We think you should do the same in your game, so that people who want to play them can have a good time. Women become Magarchs just as often as men do. Magic takes talent and that talent is blind to gender. Those with the talent for magic are sought after in Magarchy. Once a person learns the fundamentals of magic they are a Magarch - destined to play a role in shaping the world.

While many of our presented NPCs are adaptations of historical figures, many of whom are men, this is not to say that women are not important in Magarchy. Queen Anne (who appears as a woman) and Catherine de Medici are both powerful figures in this time and place, and both are seeking out up-and-coming Magarchs to use as pawns in the game.

Skills and Stunts

Magarchy uses all of the skills presented in Fate Core, even Drive, which applies to handling horses and beasts of burden. All of the stunts normally associated with those skills can be used by Magarchs. We've added at least one stunt to each of them, representing the particular flavor of Magarchy adventures.

Magic, a defining feature of the setting, is divided into three skills, each representing a different style practiced in England during this period. Druid magic uses the Secret Ways skill, hermetic church magic uses the Theurgy skill, and the cybernetic magic of the companies and their noble patrons uses the Cyber skill.

"I have before advocated and fought for a unified Italian state. Today I do the same for a unified world, under a single magically powerful ruler. Who should be Magarch of the world? Whoever is strongest and most cunning I say. The fox and the lion in one."

- Niccolò Machiavelli

Athletics

Within the tangled streets and alleyways of London and Manchester, those who are agile enough make use of the terrain to their benefit in a pinch.

New Athletics Stunts:

- ❧ Back Alley Escape. +2 to overcome actions with Athletics when attempting to lose someone who's following or chasing you in an urban environment.
- ❧ Wall Scale. You don't need climbing equipment to attempt to climb a wall of any kind.

Burglary

In large cities with a sprawling underclass, Burglary can be an important skill for navigating the various criminal gangs. Additionally, the sleight of hand elements of the skill are often employed by those at court looking to get ahead via poison or other underhanded tricks.

New Burglary Stunts:

- ❧ Distracting Conversation. You can pickpocket or otherwise use sleight of hand against someone as part of a social action, such as fast talking or making a good first impression. You may make a roll for both Burglary and the relevant social skill in the same round.
- ❧ Walk the Walk. Prerequisite: Talk the Talk (see Fate Core pg. 99). Your criminal ties are vast, due to your reputation as a thief. You may now use your Burglary skill in place of Contacts, Provoke, and Rapport for rolls when dealing with anyone even remotely shady in their dealings.
- ❧ Work the System. You have an eye for those who can and can't be bribed, allowing you to automatically know any NPC's aspects that relate to taking coin and looking the other way, such as "Law Abiding Merchant" or "Corrupt Prison Guard."



New Contacts Stunts:

☞ **Black Market Ties.** You are trusted enough among shady dealers that you're able to buy and sell on the black market without the need for a roll. A roll is still required when attempting to find something really unusual or specific, but most illegal goods are at your disposal. This stunt will not function if you are suffering from a reputation consequence that would make others concerned that you might be working on behalf of the law.

☞ **Courtier.** You are accepted as a member of the royal court, allowing you access to the halls of power without the need for a roll to overcome social obstacles. You are invited or at least admitted to most state functions without a

problem, unless you are suffering from a reputation consequence that would put you on the outs.

☞ **Court Chameleon.** Prerequisite: Courtier. Your mastery of your own reputation and public image allows you to invent a new situational aspect for

Contacts

Knowing the right people is all the more important in a world of competing magical institutions, companies, noble houses, and feudal classes. In many ways Magarchy is about changing the social order of the world. Contacts figure prominently in this world, and mechanically this means that Contacts are even more useful than in other settings. Magarchy adds a new stress track to the setting: reputation.

As Contacts best represents your connection to society, the skill provides extra boxes in the reputation stress track, just as Physique and Will do for the physical and mental tracks. Average (+1) or Fair (+2) give you a 3-point stress box. Good (+3) or Great (+4) will give you a 3-point and a 4-point stress box. Superb (+5) and above grants an additional mild consequence slot along with the extra stress boxes. This slot can only be used for damage to your reputation.

"I have witnessed much from my perch in the Astral Realm. The peasantry rises up in the land of Magarch Henry, seemingly stoked like a fire. Some old force rears its head in those lands, ready to take back what it once held."

- Niccolò Machiavelli

yourself at the beginning of each event at court. This aspect must relate to your persona, such as “*Flirtatious to a Fault*” or “*Rumored to be on the Rise*.” Every time you use this stunt you should come up with a new aspect you’ve never used before. The aspect goes away at the end of the court event.

- ❧ **Faction Resources.** Your position within one of the major factions that are now powerful in England allows you to use your Contacts skill instead of your Resources when rolling to create an advantage or aspect from needed items you might have on hand. Additionally, you may spend a fate point to gain a piece of cybernetic or otherwise expensive equipment associated with your group, so long as you don’t have any reputation consequences that might harm your standing within the organization.
- ❧ **Web of Sympathizers.** Your causes are supported by a variety of individuals throughout the realm. You can almost always use Contacts to create an advantage or aspect for an upcoming conflict, and you have a +2 on the roll to do so.

Crafts

In the Magarchy setting, Crafts represents the ability to build, modify, and exploit mundane, non-magical items. Objects empowered by magic or cybertechnology fall under the purview of one of the three magical skills (Cyber, Theurgy, and Secret Ways). This means that Crafts is far more concerned with wood, iron, stone, handicrafts, leatherwork, etc. It’s not as flashy, but since most of the world is made up of these materials, it can come in handy.

Additionally, Crafts can be useful when dealing with golems and other animated machines, using some of the following stunts.

New Crafts Stunts:

- ❧ **Cybernetic Repair.** You are capable of using Crafts to repair cybernetic devices, rather than the Cyber skill. This does not allow you build such devices; that falls under the Cyber skill Technologist stunt.
- ❧ **Slay Machine.** You gain a +2 bonus when attacking or creating an advantage against golems and other automatons, as well as people with cybernetic prostheses (cyborgs).

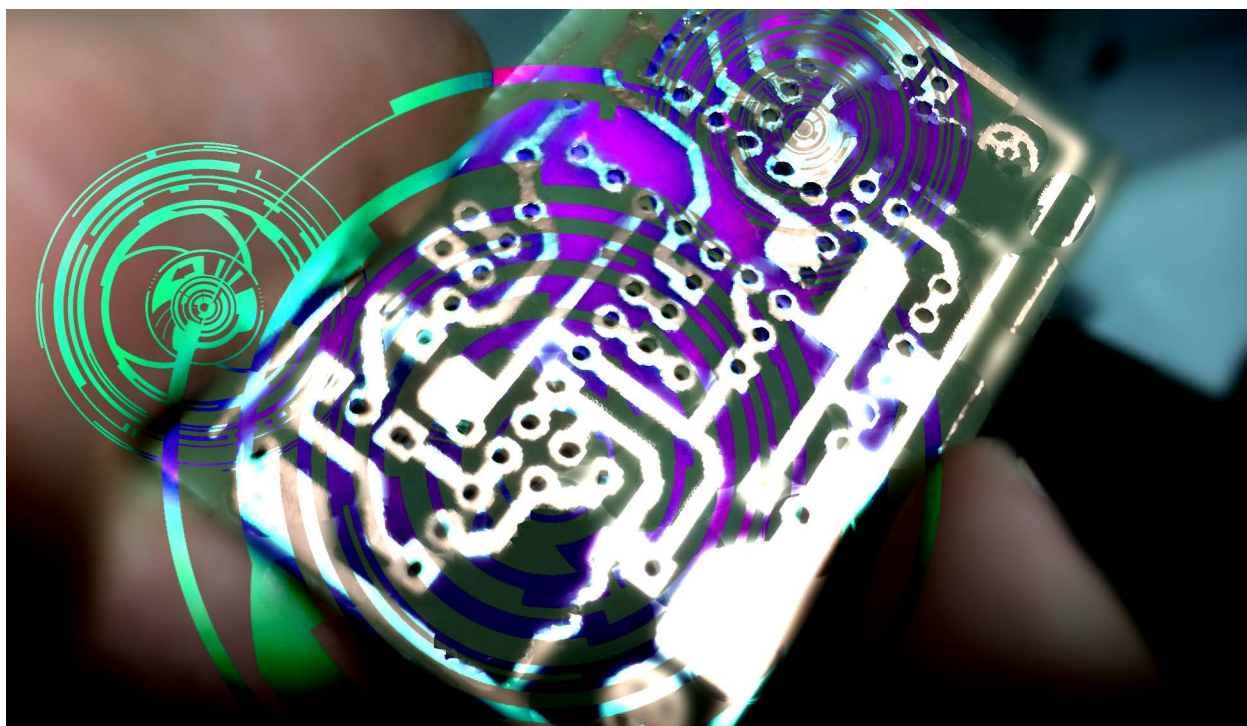
Cyber

The skill of utilizing magical information technologies. This skill generally requires the use of particular gear, such as Scrynet access points or cybernetic card inscribers, depending on the particular use of the skill.

Overcome:

- ❧ Cyber can be used to bypass obstacles related to cybernetic technologies, such as security systems on doors (keypads, facial recognition, etc.) or warding programs in the Astral Realm.





- You can repair broken cybernetic devices, such as cyberlimb prostheses, power armor, or Scrynet access points. Doing so can take hours or days depending on the nature of the job.
 - Craft simple cybernetic technologies such as memory cards or spell cards using a card inscriber (see sidebar). You know a number of magical spells you may cast or inscribe into cards, such as the following:
 - **Electrocute.** You shock one person or object you touch, doing +2 shifts of damage or +3 shifts if affecting a cybernetic device.
 - **Geolocation.** You learn your current location in relation to known landmarks.
 - **Lighting.** You artificially illuminate the area for one hour, adding the “Well Lit” situational aspect to the location.
 - **Intrusion Countermeasures.** You protect a single cybernetic device from the Override and Virus spells for the next seven days.
 - **Override.** You force a cybernetic device to do as you command for one minute.
 - **Virtual Reality.** You peer into the AR for ten minutes, able to see and hear what’s going on there.
 - **Virus.** You inject malicious sigils into an existing spell or cybernetic device, causing its effects or functions to change in random ways for the next hour. This may be used on magics created by Theurgy or Secret Ways, as well as Cyber.
 - It grants a small smattering of alchemical tricks, primarily used for creating inscriptions. Without the proper stunts, this knowledge is limited, but can be used in identifying alchemical substances and processes.
 - Cyber is the skill used for operating most cybernetic devices, such as industrial machinery.
 - You can enter a meditative trance, during which your mind enters the Astral Realm.
- Create an Advantage:
- The Cyber Skill can be used to jury rig, temporarily improve, or destructively tinker with cybernetic devices, granting an advantage in situations where those technologies are important.
 - You can program sigils in the Astral Realm when you’re at a Scrynet access point or are currently in a meditative trance. Those sigils act as short-lived programs, following your instructions to provide an advantage within that strange world.

Attack:

- ☞ Cyber is used when making attacks using industrial machinery, such as cranes or vehicles.
- ☞ It's used when you make attacks when your mind is in the Astral Realm due to a meditative trance, as you quickly project harmful sigil programs into the astral ether. These attacks can only be made against people and creatures that exist within that realm.
- ☞ In addition to the standard actions associated with Cyber, the skill allows you to cast cybernetic spells through imprinted cards or devices. Imprinting is done either by putting a spell into a spell card using a card inscriber apparatus, or by placing it into an artifact such as a golem, cybernetic limb, or other major technology.

Defend:

- ☞ Similarly, Cyber is used when using massive cybertech machines to defend you.
- ☞ It is also used when crafting sigils in the Astral Realm for defense.

Cyber Stunts:

- ☞ Arcane Combatant. You can charge a rapier or small metal weapon with arcane energy, causing it to do +1 shift on its effect. Pushing magic through it in this way is reflexive and takes no time. This may not be used on larger swords.
- ☞ Cyber-Alchemy. You are able to craft the kind of cheap but effective alchemical substances that the companies have developed in

Cybernetic Equipment

There are a number of technologies used by cyberneticist Magarchs, the most basic of which is the cybernetic card. These are hard slips of paper imprinted by a Card Incriber (see below) with a thought or spell. They come in a number of varieties:

- ☞ Memory Card. A card which introduces a memory, thought, idea, or cache of information into the mind of the person who touches it. Memory Cards can be used by non-Magarchs.
- ☞ Lore Card. A more advanced card, storing a large enough amount of information to provide a +2 bonus on related Lore rolls while the card is held.
- ☞ Spell Card. A highly advanced card carrying a one-time-use spell. Any Magarch may utilize the spell once it is stored there.

One may be tempted to hold a number of cybernetic cards at once, and certainly many Magarchs do. However, if a cybernetic card is damaged, it explodes in a magical burst. Walking around with a large deck of cards makes you a walking bomb. Any character with more than 5 spell cards on their body is considered to have the "*Explosive*" aspect.

The following cybernetic devices are important to the use of the Cyber skill. All of them are quite expensive, reserved only for the extremely wealthy (Resources +4 or higher) and those with connections to a major company.

- ☞ Astral Trance Inducer. A device which enhances a Magarch's ability to visualize the Astral Realm, by projecting a "virtual reality" simulation of the AR into the forefront of the user's mind. This allows instantaneous meditation for quick projection of the mind into the astral ether. Any ATI is, at its heart, a mechanical and magical computer, and it has some of the functionality of a modern personal computer such as data storage and some basic menu programs.
- ☞ Card Incriber. A hefty machine, usually attached to a work bench, which uses rare materials and a Magarch's knowledge of cybernetics to inscribe silver and gold sigils onto a piece of cardstock. These sigils can then be activated by touch or intent to access stored memories, information, Lore, or spells.
- ☞ Scrynet Access Point. A mirror, crystal ball, or other device allowing a Magarch to communicate with others on the Scrynet instantaneously. Usually connected to an Astral Trance Inducer.

recent decades. Most of these substances are acids, poisons, solvents, and explosives that can break through nearly any physical barrier. So long as you have your alchemical gear with you, you receive a +2 bonus on rolls to destroy an object or poison a person.

- ☞ **Hacker.** You enjoy a +2 bonus on attacks made within the Astral Realm, as well as Cyber rolls made related to bypassing security systems.
- ☞ **Mental Command Card.** You can use a card inscriber to craft a card which, when touched by bare skin, places a mental command into the person who touches it.
- ☞ **Technologist.** You are able to craft one specific type of cybernetic artifact, such as cybernetic prostheses, power armor, Scrynet access points, etc. Doing so takes at least a week and an expensive workshop filled with rare alchemical materials.



Deceive

The courts, as well as the streets, are places filled with lies and other deceptions. Those who skillfully wield such tools are the most likely to survive.

Magarchy adds some additional functionality to the skill, by allowing attacks to be made through the Deceive skill against an opponent's reputation (by spreading lies, etc.).

New Deceive Stunts:

- ☞ **Act As If.** Once per game session you may give yourself an aspect to reflect a reputation you don't actually have, but are pretending to live up to. You might act like you're a "*Well-Known Scoundrel*" or a "*Famous Dignitary*." In any case, the aspect lasts until the end of the scene.
- ☞ **Cybernetic Impersonation.** You are able to use Deceive instead of Cyber when attempting to bypass cybernetic security systems.
- ☞ **Harder They Fall.** You receive +2 shifts on successful social attacks made using the Deceive skill against the reputations of famous or upstanding people.

Drive

Used to ride horses, drive carts, and generally work with beasts, Drive is the skill for getting somewhere fast in the 16th century without using magic.

New Drive Stunts:

- ☞ **Experienced Joust.** You've worked hard learning to fight while mounted and armored, granting you a +2 bonus to attack rolls when using melee weapons while on horseback.
- ☞ **Loyal Steed.** Your horse is always there for you, conveniently nearby when you need a quick escape by jumping out a window onto your mount below.

Empathy

In the social games played by the Magarchs, being able to sense deception and the general mood of a room is critical. Whenever a scene is strictly social in nature, Empathy is used instead of Notice for the purposes of determining initiative.

New Empathy Stunts:

- ❧ **Mnemonic Explorer.** You are a master of utilizing memory cards, allowing you to make rolls with Empathy to learn far more about those who recorded a given memory than was likely intended by the creator. Each shift of success allows you to discover or create an aspect about the person whose memory was recorded.
- ❧ **Read the Room.** You enjoy a +2 bonus when using Empathy to uncover social aspects of a crowd.

Fight

Though the rapier has only recently been invented, in the England of Magarchy this weapon has seen use as the weapon of choice amongst noble mages. Let us not forget, however, that the 16th century saw knights in full plate armor upon the battlefield, often wielding massive weaponry. Thus, fighting is a mixed bag in this era, with many different options at hand.

New Fight Stunt:

- ❧ **Cyberlimb Attack.** Prerequisite: Must have a cybernetic prosthetic limb through an aspect or by simply affording one with Resources. You are able to use the cyberlimb as a weapon. See the Weapons table for details.

Investigate

As the skill concerns itself with piecing together information, the information age of the 16th century presents all kinds of ways for an investigative mind to find knowledge.

New Investigate Stunts:

- ❧ **Identify Caster.** Prerequisite: +1 in Theurgy, Secret Ways, or Cyber. You are able to see the telltale signs of previous magical casting at a location, and even use Investigate to piece together the person who likely conducted the magic. You need not possess the magic in question, but you do need to have seen the magical work of the caster before to identify it again.
- ❧ **Scrynet Investigation.** You probe the information found on Scrynet and the AR itself to discover clues.



Doing so must take place through a Scrynet access point and costs a fate point, but each shift allows you to discover one aspect related to the subject of your search.

- ❧ **Scry Window.** Prerequisite: Scrynet Investigation. You spend a fate point to utilize a Scrynet access point and see and hear a distant person or location you're familiar with for five minutes. If the subject of your remote viewing has a Scrynet access point near them, they get to make a Notice roll against your Investigate roll to sense your spying.

Lore

A number of potential areas of knowledge exist for specialization in Magarchy (as per the Specialist stunt on page 115 of the Fate Core rules). They include alchemy, cybernetics, druid magic, heraldry, hermetic magic, and war.

New Lore Stunt:

- ❧ Information Assimilation. Whenever you use a cybernetic lore card to gain access to a stored Lore, that Skill counts as +1 higher while you're jacked into it.

Notice

Due to the existence of cybernetic prosthetic senses, such as eyes and ears, there are those who have mastered the art of observing their surroundings, some of whom can even perceive magic.

New Notice Stunts:

- ❧ Astral Sight. Prerequisite: cybernetic eyes, gained through Resources (3+) or an aspect. You are able push your senses to the very limit, perceiving the hidden Astral Realm around you, including hanging magic, pathways of the Scrynet, and the dangerous dream-beings of that world. Doing so costs a fate point and lasts for the rest of the scene.
- ❧ Hyper Hearing. Prerequisite: cybernetic ears, gained through Resources (3+) or an aspect. You are able to make the most of your superior hearing, granting you a +2 on all auditory Notice rolls.
- ❧ Ultra Vision. Prerequisite: cybernetic eyes, gained through Resources (3+) or an aspect. You are able to make the most of your superior vision, granting you a +2 on all visual Notice rolls.

Physique

In a world in which full plate armor is popular, Physique becomes all the more useful as a means of enduring the weight of such protection. With the added weight of cybernetics, the so-called power armor becomes unwieldy, requiring operators to have specialized training.

New Physique Stunts:

- ❧ Power Lift. Prerequisite: Power Suit Operation. You are capable of herculean feats of strength through overcome actions, such as throwing and lifting large objects.

- ❧ Power Suit Operation. You are capable of using cybernetic power armor in combat. See the Weapons and Armor section of this chapter for details.

Provoke

Used to intimidate and bait foes, Provoke is especially useful in the politically charged setting of Magarchy. In particular, Provoke may be used as an attack to cause a rival to make a foolish political move against you, giving you the advantage when you retaliate.





New Provoke Stunts:

- ☞ **Shock and Awe.** You make a spectacle while attacking someone's reputation (using any social skill), allowing you to enjoy a +2 bonus on your next Provoke action, even against a totally different target. Example: You demoralize another Magarch at court through cutting insults and use the momentum of that time in the spotlight to aid you in intimidating one of the spectators into providing you with useful information.

- ☞ **Strike the Shepherd.** Once you've successfully made an attack on someone (using any social skill) you enjoy a +2 bonus on all Provoke actions against their allies and minions.

Rapport

One of the most useful skills in the complex web of allegiances involved in the world of Magarchy, cultivating your persona is invaluable.

New Rapport Stunt:

- ☞ **Useful Mentor.** You are patronized or otherwise guided by a powerful person of note. Once per game session, this person is willing to help you (granting an advantage), usually in an endeavor which also helps your mentor. Aligning your goals with theirs is the best way to ensure their assistance.

Resources

In the worlds of court and the cybernetic companies, money is both influence and the ability to impress. Dressing right is only the beginning. One must live the life of a noble, statesman, or other upstanding person in order to even be acknowledged by those who are worth a damn in high society circles. Resources also represents one's ability to outspend one's foes, bribing and hiring the people you need on your side during a political or impending physical conflict. Therefore, Resources can often be used as the attack or defense skill when your reputation or status is under attack socially.

New Resources Stunts:

- ☞ **Big Spender.** You constantly spend money, making it obvious to all who see you that you're a person of wealth and privilege - a useful reputation in certain situations. You may choose to use this stunt while making a social attack against someone, granting you a +2 bonus on the roll, but reducing your Resources level by 1 for the rest of the game session.
- ☞ **Dress to Impress.** You are up on the current fashions, granting you a +2 on social rolls made to impress others in any way.

Secret Ways

Magics practiced by the underground druid Movement in its secretive work to bring down the English Crown, they are a cobbled together collection of arcane knowledge said to have been learned from the faeries of the Astral Realm. Few have seen the faeries in recent times, but those who've caught glimpses of the creatures claim that the Secret Ways only scratch the surface of the eldritch secrets they hold.

Secret Ways, like many old magics, relies primarily on actually going to the Astral Realm to create effects. Druids do this in the faerie style, by briefly walking through the AR in short hops, making their journeys shorter and allowing them to bypass physical barriers and the limitations of distance. However, some magical effects are possible through the invocation of faerie and giant names. Doing so doesn't usually require astral travel to bring about magic, but is said to be dangerous in the long run, as it brings those creatures closer to our world.

Overcome:

- ☞ Secret Ways can be used to bypass any wall or door simply by stepping across the AR. The difficulty of the roll depends on how physically close to nature you are when you do so. The heart of London is a difficult place to work faerie magic (Superb, +5). Failure indicates that you not only fail, but suffer a 2 point physical or mental consequence - a faerie curse preventing you from taking certain kinds of actions or going to certain places.
- ☞ At the proper location, the skill can be used to walk into or out of the Astral Realm, a dangerous and chaotic place of dreams, mythical creatures, and cybernetic sigils. These locations can be difficult to find and are often remote, but the Druids know of a few within London at the sites of the bones of dead giants,

"The world holds many courts and there are many tongues spoken among them. Take care that you hear them all, even those heard only in the Astral Realm."

-Niccolò Machiavelli

the intersections of astral forces, and other magically significant spots.

- ☞ You can cast spells under the right conditions. Some of these effects can be used in the real world, but the more powerful ones can only be cast from inside the AR:
 - Bard Song. Your voice enchants and enralls all who can hear you.
 - Break Down. You speak the nickname of a faerie, destroying any single non-magical object in the scene.
 - Coincidence. You happen to bump into a person you'd like to see. This effect will take place within one day and the person must be someone you've met before who is within a day's travel of you.
- Escape Route. You use knowledge of hidden pathways to leave the scene.
- Greater Curse. You place an aspect of your choice onto a person, which lasts for seven days. This aspect should take the form of a ban or other curse, forcing or prohibiting certain types of actions, such as "*Cannot Cross Water*" or "*Trips Frequently*." This spell may only be cast from inside the Astral Realm and takes several hours to complete. It is known to attract dangerous creatures from the astral deeps to the caster.
- Long Leap. You teleport to any location you can see. This spell costs a fate point to cast.
- Summon Spell Spirit. You summon forth the faerie spirit embodied by a spell or magical effect, allowing you to negotiate with it. If successful, you can alter or remove that spell effect. Failure can be dangerous, as the faerie may turn that magical power upon you if displeased. Magical effects created by Anne, Queen of England, are oddly immune to this spell.

Create Advantage:

- ☞ Quick leaps across short distances of space can be just the advantage you need when moving across dangerous terrain or sneaking past guards. The action used to create the advantage is usually spent locating the

proper route to take advantage of the ley lines and other elements of the astral landscape known only to the druids.

Attack:

- ☞ The names of faeries can be spoken as simple curses, directed at any individual who can hear you. These attacks count merely as short range weapons, dealing +1 shift effects.

Defend:

- ☞ The names of giants can be spoken to defend against curses cast against you.
- ☞ Secret Ways can counter a magical spell being directed at you.

Secret Ways Stunts:

- ☞ Bard. You are able to empower song with the arcane, granting you a +2 on rolls to create music, though

this does not apply to magical casting rolls of any kind.

- ☞ Faerie Grin. Your smile is disarming, granting you a +2 on social Deception rolls so long as you remain seemingly gleeful.
- ☞ Illusionist. So long as you are inside the AR, you can create visual and auditory illusions of your choice within the real world, up to a large room's size. Opposed Notice rolls may be made to pierce your illusion.
- ☞ Giant's Blood. You may spend a fate point to lift nearly any object for up to a minute, during which time the object may be used as a weapon. Very large and heavy objects provide +4 shifts to the attack effect when swung and +5 shifts when thrown.
- ☞ Path Finder. You can use Secret Ways to locate the nearest place to cross over into the Astral Realm.



Shoot

Though firearms are not prevalent in England during this period, the Shoot skill does apply to uses of bows in combat. Additionally, with the right stunt, cybernetically inscribed cards may be used as powerful thrown weapons.

New Shoot Stunts:

- ❧ Alchemical Archer. You are capable of using alchemically treated arrows for a variety of purposes. You can use the Shoot skill to create advantages from the effects of your arrows, such as lighting clothing on fire, blasting apart locks, or causing skin to burn and itch.
- ❧ Card Thrower. You know the trick to throwing an inscribed card so that it explodes when it hits its target.



You can use any cybernetic card, such as spell cards, information cards, or even mere memories. In any case, the weapon does +3 shifts on the effect.

Stealth

Though the utility of hiding, sneaking around, and spying is as useful in Magarchy as it is in any other setting, the existence of magically woven stealth fabric makes those with the right equipment and training into masters of the art.

New Stealth Stunts:

- ❧ Dark Cloak. You are trained in the use of clothing made to provide assistance in stealth by altering the

minds of those who view you. So long as you're wearing a dark cloak (requiring Resources at +3 or better to buy) you may become essentially invisible to people until you draw their attention by attacking, etc.

- ❧ In Plain Sight. You're great at fading into a crowd, granting you a +2 on Stealth rolls when five or more people are around for you to blend in among.

Theurgy

A form of ritual magic developed in ancient Rome and passed down by Catholic priests, it is a blend of church ritual, alchemical symbolism, and occult rites. Designed to take the danger out of magic, Theurgy is slow and methodical, with explicitly prescribed ritual implements.

Overcome:

- ❧ Theurgy can be used to detect and analyze existing magical effects, including those created by Cyber and Secret Ways sources.
- ❧ Theurgy can be used to conduct magical rituals, creating nearly any effect. Each ritual requires about an hour of preparation, and at least two hours to actually conduct the spell. Example rituals include:
 - Anointment. A ritual performed on someone attaining a new position, usually within the Church or the state. The subject must be present for the ritual, after which time one of their aspects is altered or utterly transformed to include the new title. For instance, an



“Ambitious Monk” might become a “Bright Eyed Chaplain.”

- Blessing. You placed the *“Blessed”* aspect on a target within the same city as you. This aspect lasts for one day and may be invoked when defending against attacks and other harm.
- Divination. You peer into the future of a target, granting you an intuitive grasp of what’s to come for them. Your portents are often vague, but simply having done so can provide an aspect on them in a later scene, such as *“Fated to Carry Excalibur”* or *“Destined to Wear a Broken Crown.”*
- Fate Twist. You alter the fate of a target in some major way. This usually requires an item of some importance related to the person you are affecting, or the person themselves being present. This is sometimes used to baptize or provide luck, but it can also be used for harm.
- Healing. You remove one physical consequence from the target, who must be present for the ritual.
- Holy Ground. You consecrate a stone or brick building, so that creatures from the Astral Realm may not affect those within it.



- **Vestments and Trappings.** You invest magic into a uniform or other official clothing. Whenever a person wearing those clothes performs the official duties of that office, they enjoy a +2 on related rolls.

Create Advantage:

- ☞ The skill can be used to find useful magical properties, such as ley lines, to aid in a casting. It can also employ astrology to line up the best timing for a ritual.
- ☞ Rituals, as explained above, can often be used to create advantages for those who put them to opportunistic use.

Attack:

- ☞ Theurgy can be used when attacking creatures in the AR by creating bursts of raw magical energy.
- ☞ In the physical plane, Theurgy can harness elemental forces to strike at foes.

Defend:

- ☞ It can be used to defend against attacks made from within the Astral Realm, by unraveling the magic of the attack.

Theurgy Stunts:

- ☞ **Cautious Caster.** Your casting times may be doubled, granting you a +2 on the Theurgy roll.
- ☞ **Charmed.** You are immune to all curses, such as those cast through the Secret Ways skill.
- ☞ **Corner Cutter.** Your casting times may be halved, but you suffer a -1 on the Theurgy roll.

Will

Due to the diversity of magic flying around, Will can be important. It's the only line of defense against enchanted fabrics and other powerful mind-altering artifacts. Most importantly, it can be used to defend against thought-controlling cybernetic cards.

New Will Stunt:

- ☞ **Mental Block.** You have total control over your mind when it comes to cybernetics, allowing you to completely block out any compulsions or forced experiences deriving from those technologies - they simply don't work on you unless you let them.

Weapons and Armor

The following table is to be used as a guideline for the effects of weapons and armor, listing types of these things, the shift value added or subtracted from a successful hit, and the required Resources skill needed to buy one.

<i>Armor</i>		
Type	Shifts	Resources
Buckler, Shield	+1*	+1
Leather, Mail	+1	+1
Plate	+2	+2
Full-Plate	+3	+3
Power Suit**	+4	+3

* Adds this +1 to the effect of the armor it's paired with.

** Requires the Power Suit Operation stunt from the Physique skill. Grants a +2 on Physique skill actions related to lifting and carrying.

<i>Melee Weapons</i>		
Type	Shifts	Resources
Improvised Weapon	+1	+0
Club	+1	+0
Dagger	+2	+1
Rapier	+2	+2
Sword	+3	+2
Two-Handed Sword (or other large melee weapon)	+4	+3
Cybernetic Limb*	+4	+3

* Requires the Cyberlimb Attack stunt from the Fight skill.

Social Systems

Magarchy is not merely a game about slinging spells down Wormwood Street. It's a game about taking the world by the reins due to some glimmer of destiny wrapped up in your magical potential.

Magarchy is about working within or against the existing structures of society which cause so much injustice and strife. Whether that's by manipulating your fellow courtiers, infiltrating the company board rooms, or inciting the common rabble to rebellion against the Crown, you're working with social groups.

As such, we recommend adding a third stress track called reputation, which represents just how well your name is weathering the ups and downs of the social game. The Contacts skill adds stress boxes and potentially a consequence slot for this track, representing the importance of a network of supporters for maintaining your good (or fearsome) name.

"Ah, the thrill of court life. The interplay of competing forces, dancing in unison to the nearly audible song of greed, lust, passion, and ambition. Were I of a state to walk once again among the Magarchs of the world, I would dance that dance with any partner who could keep up."

- Niccolò Machiavelli

Attacks against reputation are made using a variety of skills. Deception might be used to spread lies, Rapport to gather allies against someone, and Provoke could be used to cause an enemy to make a faux pas. Reputation consequences work generally as consequences normally do, though some stunts will not work if your reputation is hurt in the

wrong way. When in social combat, if initiative is needed you'll use the Empathy Skill.

Social maneuvers can easily turn into the basis for a campaign, as the player characters work to outmaneuver one or more major figures in the city or world. Even minor scenes can be made much more meaningful to the larger issues at work if they're within the context of political maneuvering.

You're a Magarch.
Take up the scepter and rule.





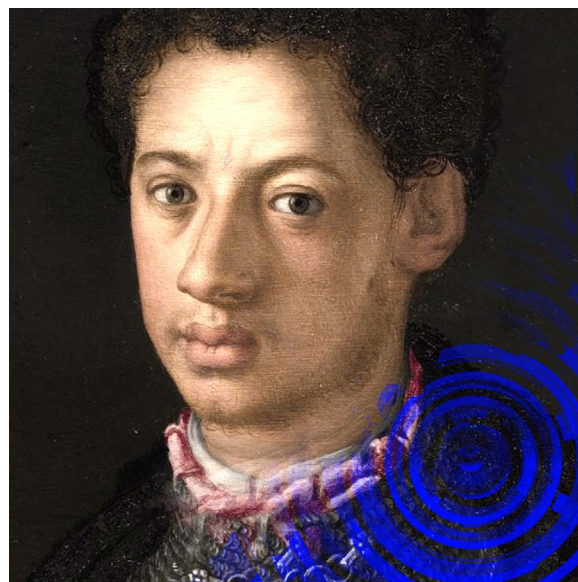
Chapter 4: Arcane Masters

The following characters may grace your games from time to time. They are powerful figures shaping the world in their image. Most are Magarchs or the equivalent, tied to fate through their magic, influence, and drive. These are historical figures, transformed by the alternate history of Magarchy. Some would be dead by 1536 in our timeline, but have thwarted such peril in this game. Magic affords much in the way of extending life and cheating death.

Alessandro "The Moor" de Medici

Duke of Florence and chief executive officer of Medici Company, Alessandro is one of the most powerful men in Europe. Truth be told, however, Alessandro is an unpopular leader within the family, who gave their respect largely to the late Pope Clement III. There are whispers that Alessandro was the illegitimate son of Clement, who always supported his rise to power before his death, so family members are willing to give Alessandro at least nominal support.

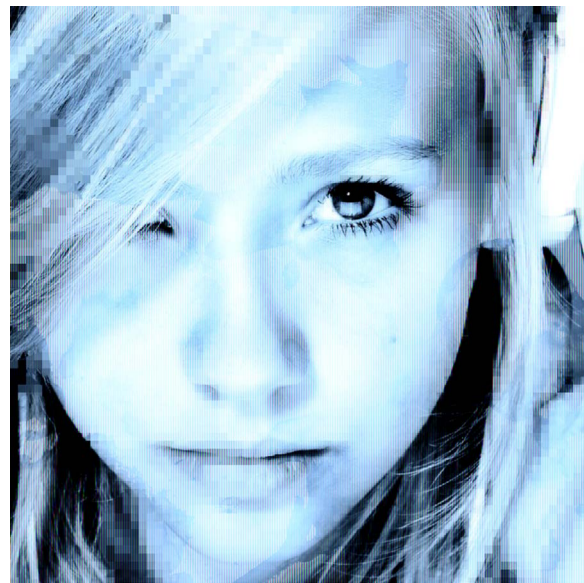
Despite his difficulties, Alessandro is a capable if ruthless company head, directing his time and energy to securing expensive security contracts with kings and merchant princes alike. Thanks to him, the Medici are on the rise in the world. Recently surviving a number of assassination and kidnapping attempts, likely by rivals within his own family, Alessandro bears a great deal of resentment toward his ungrateful relatives. Trusting only his closest allies, Alessandro now surrounds himself with automated security drones, hiding away within his Florentine tower and nursing his injuries.



Anne

An astral construct made of coherent magical sigils that formed intelligence and personality by interacting with people, Anne is the creation and some say the masterpiece of Leonardo da Vinci. Now the Queen of England, Anne is a controversial figure to say the least. Anne's personality, though artificial, is quite complex and constantly evolving. She has been known to study arcane secrets herself, programming smaller intelligences within the Astral Realm to do her bidding. Tapped into the Scrynet, her minions form a small but powerful astral army, capable of disassembling nearly any magic and producing instant arcane effects within localized areas.

For all her power, Anne is a hated figure in certain areas of England, particularly among those who remain Catholic and those who fear the emerging cybertechnology. Many claim that Anne plots to kill her husband and turn the Magarchy into a land of golems and thinking astral programs like her. Such paranoia surrounds Anne's every act, making those who ally with her at court bold indeed. In need of political allies, Anne has sought out young and impressionable courtiers looking to move up in the world, often granting them titles and astral guardians in return for their public support. Though this only serves to deepen the divide between the Queen and the more traditional powers at court, it grants her a few soldiers in the war of English politics.



In recent years, Anne has begun working with a number of companies to find a way to reproduce. Called Project Elizabeth, Anne seeks to give her child the means to physically exist in the world, not merely as an astral projection the way the Queen does.

Catherine de Medici

The most surprisingly up and coming member of the Medici family is the 17 year old Catherine. Originally slated to marry Henry, the second son of the King of France, Medici Company has chosen to instead encourage her childhood talents with cybernetics. This change in plans is due in part to France's losses in their war against England's technologically bolstered troops, and also due to the company's driving need for magically talented leaders. Training in London under the some of the most advanced researchers in cybernetic arts, the intelligent and often stubborn Catherine has gained a reputation as a magical prodigy.

Though her life in London is pampered compared to the peasant masses, Catherine's existence is far more rigorous than any of her wealthy teenage peers. Due to Medici Company's policy of deferring to their Medici family leaders, Catherine finds herself in the strange situation of being the executive officer for the London branch of one of the most powerful companies in England. Though her underlings try not to interfere with her studies and

experiments, she's often in the position of deciding the family's course in this part of the world. In times of need, Catherine uses Scrynet to seek advice from her brother Alessandro, the Duke of Florence and CEO of Medici, though he generally encourages her to take care of things herself.

As a major officer of the company most responsible for security technologies in Europe, Catherine has focused her studies in recent years on learning all there is to know about security sigils and systems. As a result, she has become one of the world's foremost masters of intrusion, both in real space and the Astral Realm. Realizing the kinds of power a master of "hacking" into security systems might grant her family, Catherine has begun befriending other similarly talented "hackers" and encouraging them to join her company.

Henry VIII

First known Magarch of England, Henry is the epitome of the cybernetic age. Secretly educated in sorcery by his ally Cardinal Wolsey, Henry was a powerful magus even before cyber-tech spread to England. Since then, he has become obsessed with its power and potential, allowing companies to flourish in England under royal patronage and contracts for cybernetics.

In recent years, Henry's situation has become vastly more precarious. Choosing to spurn his queen, Catherine of Aragon, for the artificial intelligence known as Anne, Henry has split the Anglican Church from Catholicism in order to secure his divorce. This action has been an unpopular one with far reaching implications, not the least of which has been the separation of the Anglican hermetic magi from those of the Catholic Church. At the same time, Henry's trusted political advisor Thomas Cromwell has been taking the split with Rome as an opportunity to plunder the riches of the Church in England.



But Henry's obsession with cybernetics has not been all for naught. Greatly improved by cybernetic enhancements and new alchemical materials, the English military has become one of the strongest in Europe. This has emboldened the Magarch, and England has once again taken to war with France in recent years. The war is going well for England, as France has not adapted much to the new technologies, and large areas of the kingdom are now part of England.

Earlier this year, during a joust at his Hampton Court castle, Henry fell from his horse and the entire armored animal rolled over him. Deeply injured in body and perhaps mind, it has only been through the use of advanced cybernetic prostheses and mental enhancements that Henry has been able to recover. Some claim he is a new man, with even more radical ideas than he had before.

Leonardo da Vinci

In 1481, Leonardo was living and working in the Garden of the Piazza San Marco in Florence, an academy of artists and philosophers established by the Medici family. It was here that he became exposed to hermetic magics, which he quickly began improving upon. His passionately curious mind craved new ways to experience magic. Working with other artisans at San

Marco, he discovered a means of altering the AR without the use of rituals, and yet without the need to physically enter the spirit world. Through a trance he began to craft spells with his mind alone. Half-art, half-magic, he created a way of using sigils and runes drawn by the mind to craft sustained magical effects that could interlock and interact with each other, now known as cybernetics.

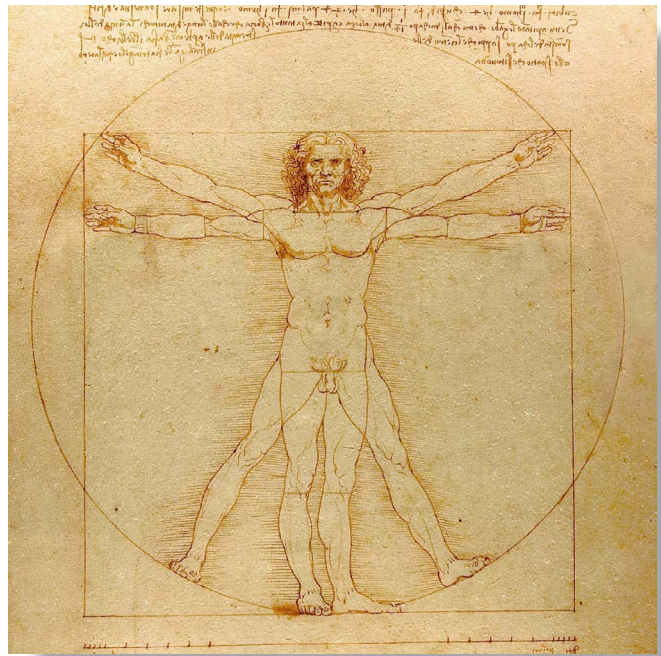
Leonardo's first cybernetic spell, during his first trip to the Astral Realm, was a projection of the Vitruvian Man, a spell which rendered him seemingly immortal. He has never been able to duplicate this effect again, and neither

has any other cyberneticist. This strange physical state, that of a being made partially of cybernetic spells, has had many effects on Leonardo. Firstly, it has caused him to enter seclusion, for fear of those who seek immortality for themselves. Secondly, it has given him a unique insight into cybernetic sigils themselves, allowing him to construct the most complicated collection of spells known to exist: the artificial intelligence known as Anne.

Da Vinci has allowed his creation to find her own way in the world and she has chosen to marry the cybernetically obsessive Henry VIII, becoming a rather controversial Queen of England. Leonardo keeps watch over her through scrying spells from time to time, but for the most part wishes to leave her be and see what she becomes. Like most of his projects, Anne was important for a time but ultimately only one of many ideas. Leonardo's place in the world remains to be seen, as he now keeps to himself with only a few promising apprentices aware of his doings.

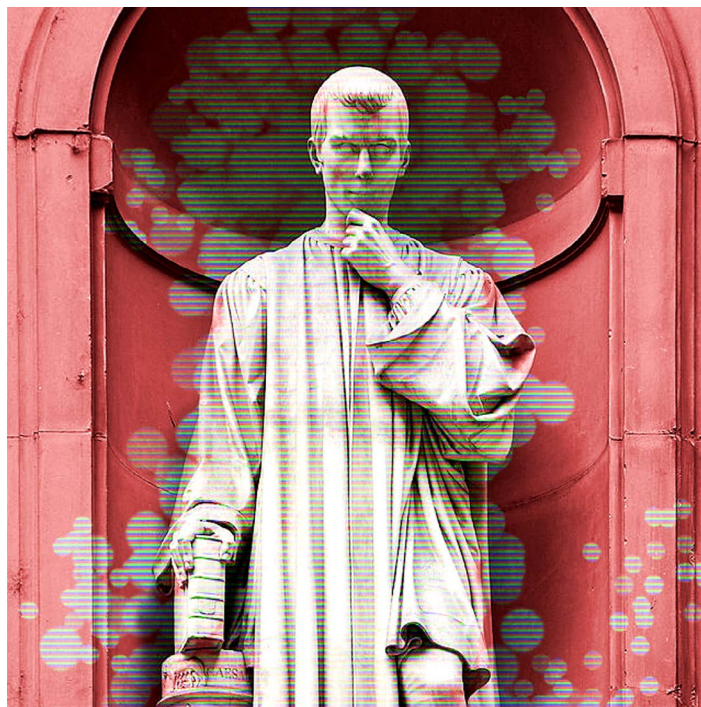
Niccolò Machiavelli

As the Florentine artisans began to create cybernetics, around the dawn of the 16th century, Machiavelli found himself a somewhat powerful bureaucrat living amongst the bustle of a technological and magical revolution. Using what power he had, the relatively young Machiavelli worked with Florence to adopt these new technologies as his own, wielding them on the world stage. Through his manipulations, funding through both state investment and outside patronage led to an astral communications network spread across Europe, now called the Scrynet.



Over time Niccolò's body and mind began to deteriorate, and at first he turned to cybernetic arts to restore them. Decades later, Machiavelli has been forced to enter the Astral Realm entirely using cybertechnology, becoming the first "uploaded" man. It is from there that he watches, waits, and at times even participates in the machinations of the world. Some say he is constantly patched into the Scrynet there, able to eavesdrop on any important communiqué that crosses Europe.

He has even been known to project himself as an illusion upon the earth, speaking with those he deems important to the new world he wishes to forge. Ultimately, his goal appears to be to enable a single Magarch to conquer the world, to somehow end the turmoil of warring kingdoms and principalities.



Thomas More

Formerly the Lord Chancellor of England, Thomas More is a controversial and hounded figure. Having sided against King Henry on both his marriage to Anne and the imposed separation of the Anglican Church from Rome, More has made himself an enemy of the most powerful and vengeful man in Britain. More is now in hiding, protected by the Church and working in secret against the Crown.

Though once well-connected, his talents are now put to use organizing long-term actions to restore the power of the Church to its former glory in England. To that end, he works with top arcanists at the Division of Hermetic Research to develop far-spanning rituals that will rock the island and the world. One such ritual is said to involve twisting the fate of the King himself (normally a difficult figure to affect), though it requires acquiring his Crown somehow and melting it.

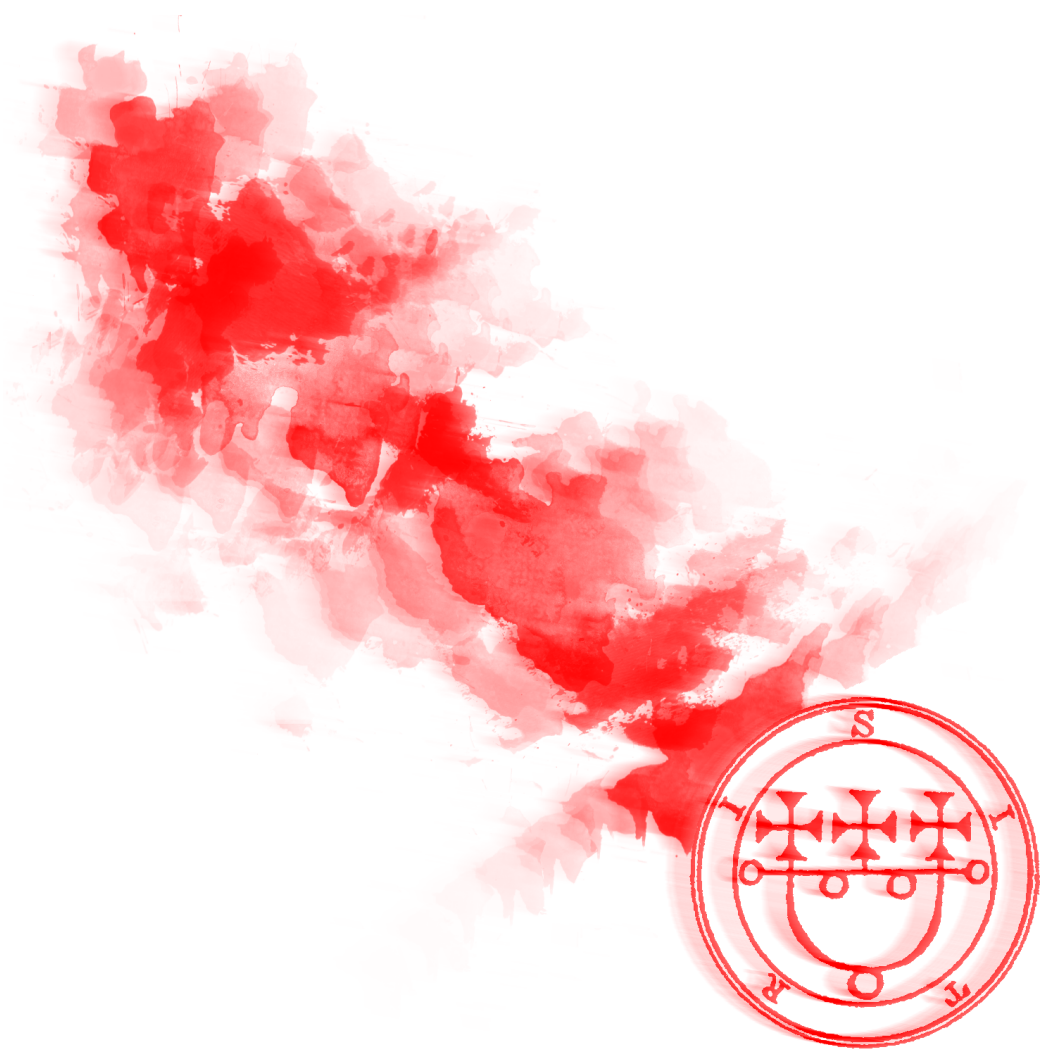


Thomas Cromwell

Trusted advisor to King Henry, Cromwell is a master bureaucrat, statesman, and parliamentarian, passing important legislation for the Crown and overseeing the dismantling of countless monasteries throughout England. This last task seems to be his constant drive, making him a major enemy of the Anglican Church he worked to separate from Rome not so long ago. Cromwell is a political predator in the court of Henry VIII, doing what is needed to achieve his master's goals. Some say he speaks with the astral spirit of Machiavelli himself.

Cromwell has been greatly involved in the Crown's close ties with the cybernetic companies, helping to create a military industrial complex the likes of which the western world has never seen before and making England one of the most powerful forces in history. These ties, while largely financial in nature, put Cromwell in position to receive the most advanced cybernetic technologies available. In particular, he is known to be protected by his own recently created knighthood, known as the Red Knights of Cromwell. Each Red Knight is outfitted with scarlet armor that has been alchemically treated to withstand magic of all kinds.





About the Authors



Jordan Marshall is a fantasy writer and gamer who lives in the wastelands of the Midwest region. He studied political science and economics at university, which served to deepen his already considerable love of political intrigue. Through college, Jordan discovered a calling for social justice, which seemed to be opposed to his desire to become evil overlord of the known universe and all the realms beyond. He deals with this paradox by designing games where mages plot to establish world dominion. Jordan seeks in his writing to demonstrate the deep and complex ways politics affect our lives and how power can be a place of both oppression and liberation.



Ryan Chaddock is a full time writer and game developer living in Bloomington, Indiana with his wife Katherine who is awesome. He holds a degree in economics from Southern Oregon University and enjoys spirited political debate. He's an advocate for nerd pride and wants to help foster a growing, positive nerd culture on the planet.

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The world is shaped by those with the means to shape it. Wealth, power, smarts... and in your case *magic*. You have seen the ills of this world and found them wanting. You step forward to take your place in the annals of history.

Magarchy is an alternate history fantasy setting in which magic has existed since the dawn of time. Having somewhat altered the faces and events of the past, magic takes center stage in the Italian Renaissance, when it allows for an early information and industrial age like no other. Players are Magarchs, those with the magical abilities and will to take part in the major events of the world, whose drama is set in the 16th century England of Henry VIII.

Magarchy takes its inspiration from both history and modern cyberpunk genre stories, posing a thought provoking juxtaposition of places and themes. Hacking cybertechnologies and slinging powerful spells to fight or aid trans-kingdom companies bent on exploiting the peasant masses, Magarchs find themselves at the center of a timeless conflict between tradition and innovation, church and state, power and principle.

Welcome to the world stage, Magarch. Hope you brought a weapon.