



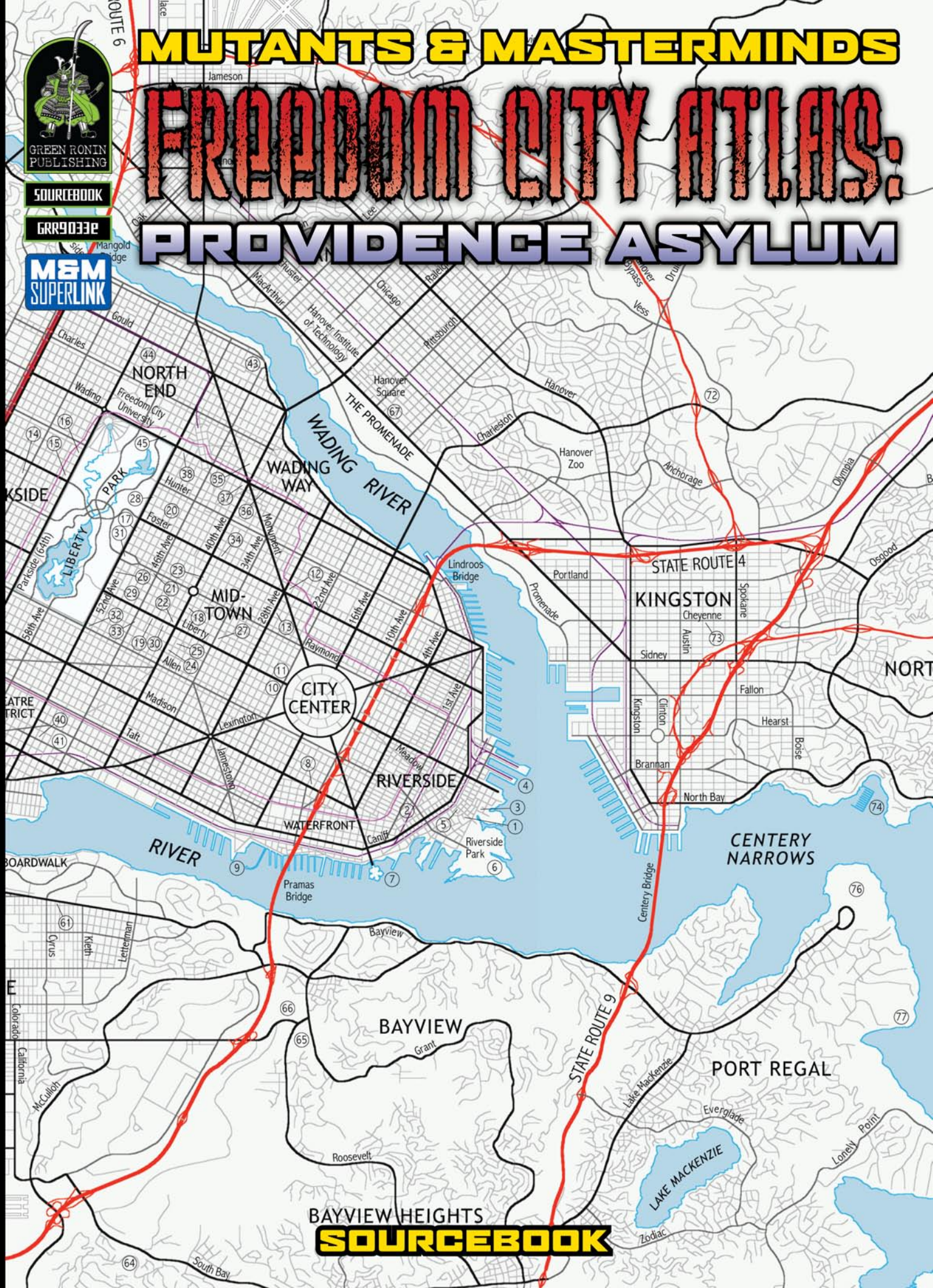
SOURCEBOOK

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# MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS

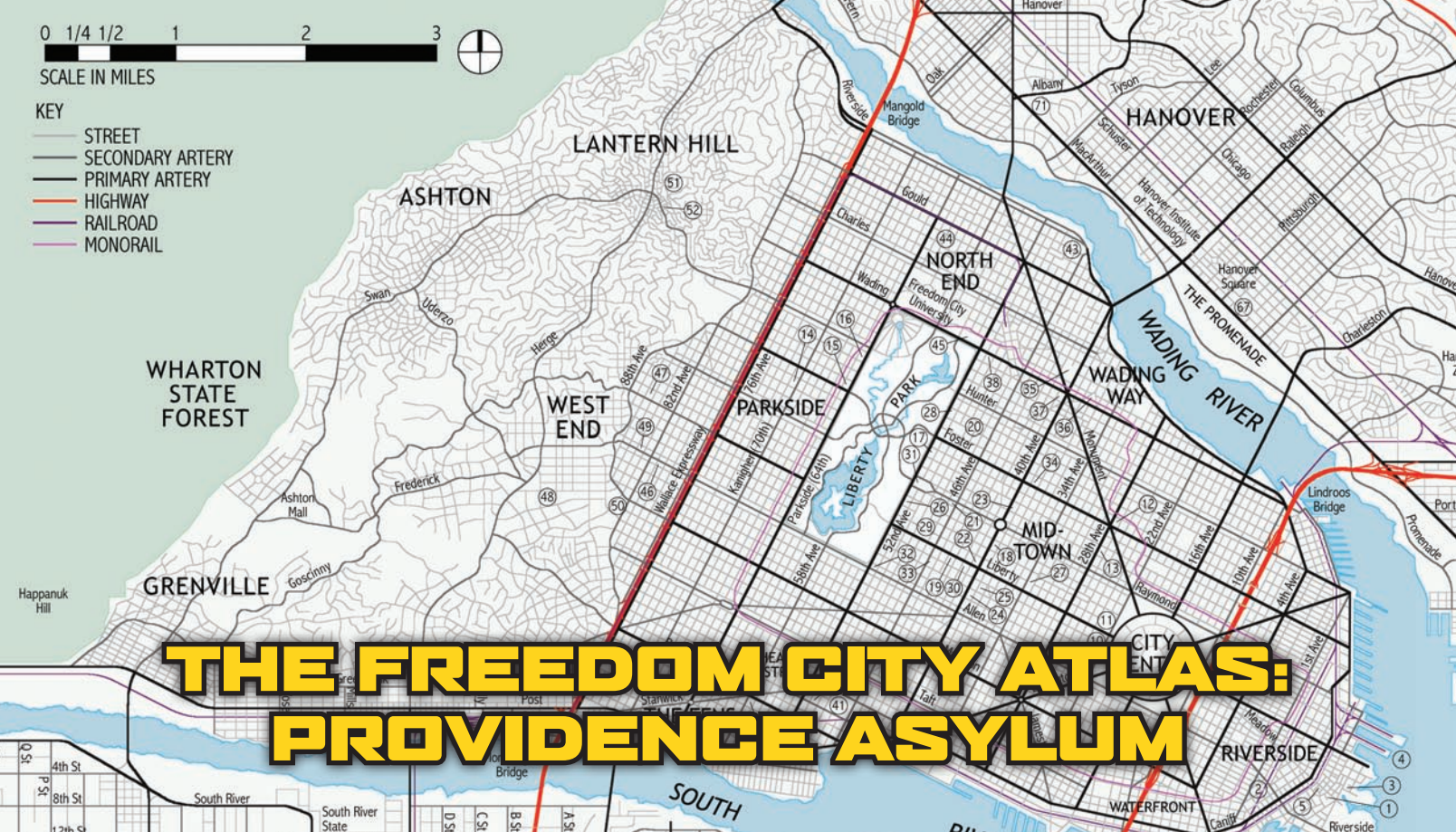
# FREEDOM CITY ATLAS: PROVIDENCE ASYLUM



BAYVIEW HEIGHTS

**SOURCEBOOK**





A GREEN RONIN PRODUCTION

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# PROVIDENCE ASYLUM

**A**fter their defeat at the hand of Freedom City's heroes, costumed criminals are bound for one of two places: The first is Blackstone Penitentiary (detailed on pages 75-78 of *Freedom City*), the other is Providence Asylum, where those deemed mentally-ill by the justice system can receive treatment, and what is more of a sign of questionable sanity than putting on a strange costume to go out and commit crimes? (Save, perhaps, putting one on to go out and *prevent* them...)

Situated on the seaside bluffs overlooking Great Bay in Port Regal, Providence was once the private estate of a wealthy Freedom City family beset by tragedy. Even now, the asylum looks more like a Gothic manor from the outside than a mental hospital. Still, no one admitted to Providence's "Special Patient Care" wing for the treatment of super-criminals would mistake it for anything else.

## HISTORY

What is now the Providence Asylum was originally the estate of the wealthy Phillips family, one of the Freedom City area's founding families from the 1700s. The estate was built in imitation of French country estates, called "the Versailles of the South Bank," although more in mockery than admiration, particularly following the French Revolution, as the Phillips family were noted for their "French sympathies".

The estate remained the property of the Phillips family for over a century, until 1908, when Howard Phillips willed it upon his death

to Dr. Reginald Carter, to be used as a hospital for the treatment of the insane. This came as quite a shock to the remaining members of Mr. Phillips' family, many of whom protested, but the will was upheld in court. Some believe Phillips' unusual generosity was due to the death of his younger sister Wilhelmina, believed to have committed suicide at the age of fifteen by throwing herself from the bluffs overlooking the Great Bay. Dr. Carter treated Howard during a nervous breakdown in his later years, leading to accusations of coercion and malfeasance.

Dr. Carter established an asylum in accordance with Howard Phillips' wishes, naming it "Providence," and served as its first director. Eleven years later, in 1929, Dr. Carter disappeared without a trace. Authorities could find no evidence of foul play or blackmail, although speculation was rife that Carter fled Port Regal due to guilt, or that he cracked under the strain of his work and took his own life, perhaps in the same fashion as Wilhelmina Phillips, although no body was ever discovered.

## SPECIAL PATIENTS

The Providence Board of Trustees appointed a new director, and Providence Asylum continued to function. In the years following Dr. Carter's disappearance, Providence Asylum began treating the first of what became known as their "special" patients, namely the criminally insane, prone to dressing up in strange costumes and adopting particular motifs for their crimes. Initially, they were the foes of Freedom City's first costumed heroes, those declared incompetent to stand trial.

For decades, the asylum's policy was only to treat those patients who could be rendered "reasonably safe" through the use of conventional restraints and drugs. When true superhuman criminals appeared in the wake of the Centurion's public debut, Providence Asylum wanted nothing to do with housing them. Those deemed criminally insane needed to receive treatment at South River Penitentiary or whatever other facility housed them.

Still, Providence Asylum saw more than a few of Freedom City's costumed criminals, those considered relatively harmless when deprived of their unusual devices, costumes, and gimmicks, or given sedatives or other drugs to control their "conditions." The success rate of treatments remained small, but better than the conventional prison system in terms of rehabilitation.

## THE SPC

Improvements in technology and Providence Asylum's record (along with a need for more government funds for the aging hospital), led to the bold proposal in recent years to refit an area for "Secure Patient Care," capable of holding superhuman patients in much the same manner as state-of-the-art prisons like Blackstone. Not only would this deal with concerns about prison populations and overcrowding,

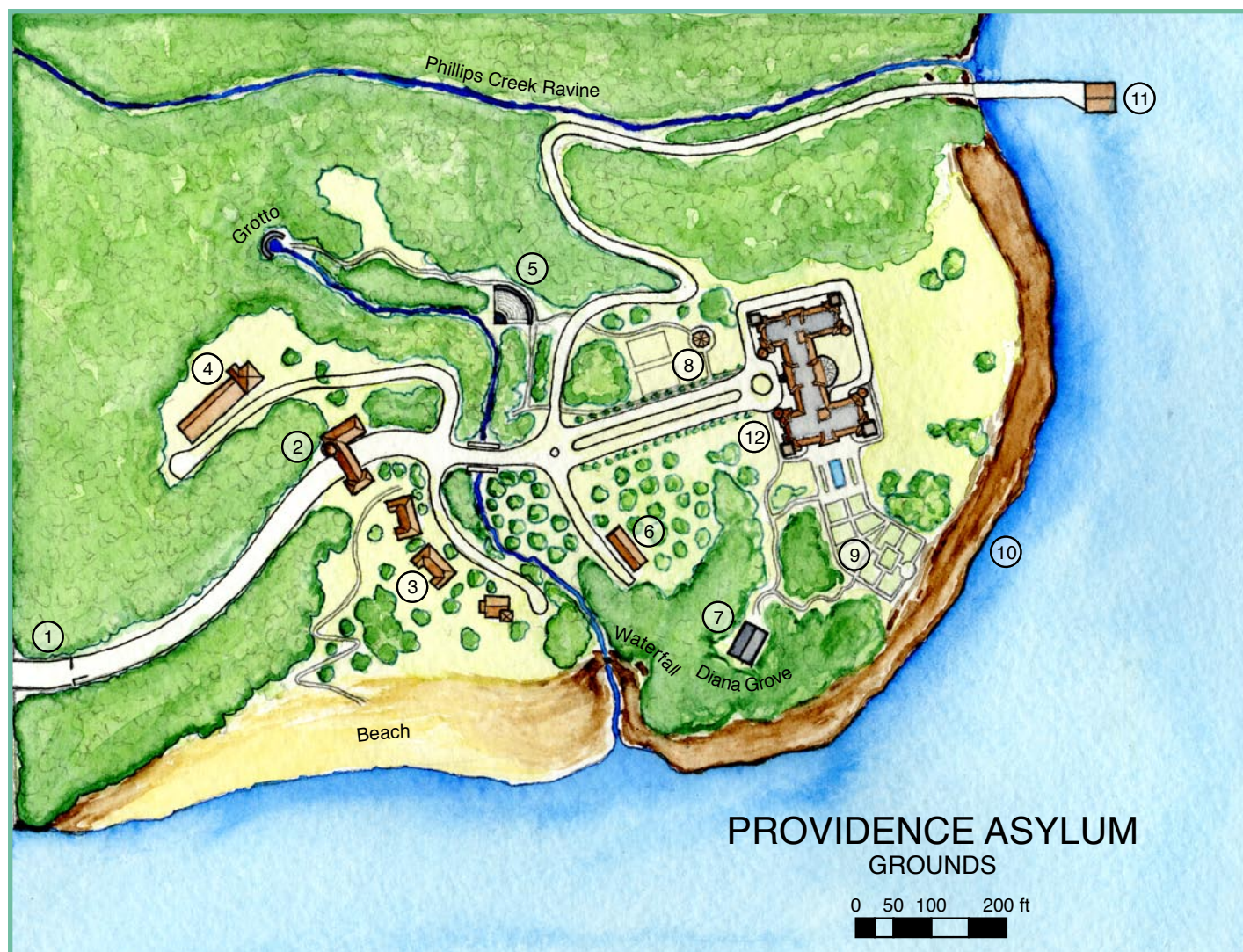
### THE FREEDOM CITY ATLAS

Welcome to the *Freedom City Atlas*, a series of products intended to flesh-out and further detail the award-winning *Freedom City* setting for *Mutants & Masterminds*. In this series, we "zoom-in" to look at different facets of Freedom City in detail, providing you with all the information you need to know about them to make them centerpieces in one or more adventures set in the city.

Freedom City, like most comic book universes, is the work of many people who have contributed to it. While writers, editors, and artists have added their elements to the world, a big contributor is cartographer Phillip Lienau. He brought Freedom City to life like never before in the Second Edition of the sourcebook with his comprehensive map, found on pages 26 and 31 of *Freedom City, Second Edition*, along with several other detail maps. Phillip's work transformed a fantastic and fanciful superhero setting into a place that seems extraordinarily real. Using his maps, you could easily navigate the streets of Freedom, envisioning its various landmarks and buildings.

Now we're finally able to bring you more of Phillip's extraordinary work, coupled with some adventure hooks and ideas for your own *Freedom City* games. Whether you're a first-time visitor to Freedom or a long-time resident, we know you'll enjoy this tour of some of the city's hot spots. Welcome to Freedom City, and enjoy your stay!





but Providence's administration offered a compelling case for potential treatment and rehabilitation, as well as the humanitarian issues involving locking the mentally-ill up with hardened criminals.

Since its approval, the SPC program has had mixed success. Conventional treatments often prove difficult under the conditions required to keep patients secure, and government guidelines favor safety and security over an effective clinical environment. Providence's director, Dr. Ellis, has worked hard to prove the effectiveness of the program, and even lobbied for its expansion, but she faces an often-balky Board of Trustees along with endless amounts of bureaucratic red tape in her pursuit of treatments for the patients entrusted into her care.

## LAYOUT

Providence Asylum is housed in the castle-like Phillips estate in Port Regal, on acres of lightly wooded grounds overlooking Great Bay. Provisions of Howard Phillips' will maintain many of the older features of the estate, while others—particularly the main house—have been substantially renovated for the mental hospital's use.

## THE GROUNDS

The grounds of the old Phillips estate have been kept largely as they once were, at the request of Mr. Phillips. The land is surrounded by copses of trees, providing shade and privacy, and a small orchard of fruit trees (mostly apples) is planted along the access road leading up to the hospital building; their blossoms are quite beautiful in the springtime.

### 1. ACCESS ROAD

A private access road leads off the main road to the grounds, cutting through the tall trees on either side. There is a swinging gate across the road just before the main gate lodge comes into sight. Visitors are required to check-in here via intercom with the security personnel at the gate lodge before proceeding further.

### 2. GATE LODGE

The gate lodge spans the access road with a graceful arch and wrought iron gate, with the name "PROVIDENCE" spelled out above

the span. Uniformed security personnel (use the Thug archetype, *M&M*, page 229) man the lodge and check the credentials of visitors before allowing them entrance. At least three guards man the gate lodge at all times.

### 3. COTTAGES

The three small cottages along the side road past the gate lodge have been converted into office and administration buildings for hospital staff, along with some simple overnight quarters for personnel (like Dr. Ellis) who sleep over on-site from time to time.

### 4. STABLES

The former stables have been converted into a garage for the storage and maintenance of hospital vehicles, including two mini-vans and two patrol jeeps used by the security staff.

### 5. THEATER

The outdoor theater set up alongside the babbling brook running from the artificial grotto down towards the bluffs is largely unused and maintained by the grounds personnel. On occasion, asylum staff have received permission to use the theater to stage benefits or talent shows, or even for art therapy. It is also a spot of interest to patients with theatrical leanings; the Maestro (*Freedom City*, page 150) was quite fond of it, for example.

### 6. WORKSHOP

The workshop building at the far side of the orchard serves as a machine shop and maintenance facility for the asylum. Access is restricted, simply because many of the tools and other items from the workshop are potentially dangerous in the wrong hands.

### 7. THE DIANA GROVE

A bit of whimsy on the part of the estate's original designers, past the end of the road leading through the orchard is a stately grove of trees centered on a neo-classical "temple" a rectangular building of pillared white marble featuring a life-sized statue of the Roman goddess Diana. Marble benches are set around the "temple" to sit and enjoy the peace and quiet of the grove.

Providence staff members like to tell tall tales about how the temple was actually used as part of some pagan black magic rituals that took place on the grounds, and how the Phillips estate was involved in the British "Hell-fire Club" phenomenon, but these are just stories, so far as anyone knows.

### 8. THE TEAHOUSE

The "teahouse" is a decorative gazebo near the tennis courts, and a popular place for staff members or patients allowed access to the grounds to gather and sit in the shade. The tennis courts themselves are clay surfaced and do not see much use, except for occasions when off-duty staff members set up a portable basketball hoop (edicts of the asylum's charter do not permit modifications like the installation of a permanent hoop on the courts).

## 9. ROSE GARDEN

Past the south wing of the manor house, a terraced rose garden stretches down towards the bluffs. It is laid out in an English style, featuring a variety of different colors, and proudly maintained by the grounds-keeping staff. Marble benches are placed around along the gravel paths for people to sit and enjoy the peace and fragrance of the gardens.

## 10. THE BLUFFS

The bluffs overlooking Great Bay feature a fifty-foot drop down to the narrow strip of rocky beach below, where the surf regularly surges and pounds, particularly in stormy weather. A narrow set of wooden stairs down to the boat launch is the only way up or down the bluffs short of climbing them (a DC 16 Climb check).

## 11. BOAT LAUNCH

At the base of the bluffs along the beach is a small boat launch owned and maintained by the asylum, where small watercraft (not much larger than a motorboat) can be moored. Providence has and maintains a motor launch and there is a shed with maintenance equipment and extra fuel. The boat launch sees very little use except in rare emergencies when a patient manages to get out into the water.

## 12. THE MANOR

The large and imposing manor house situated on the rise overlooking most of the grounds, with a commanding view of the bluffs and the bay beyond them, is used as the asylum proper.

### GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor of the asylum is the only one accessible to the public. The south wing consists of staff offices and examination and treatment rooms, with the old conservatory turned into a waiting room and a large recreation room occupying the former ballroom of the manor.

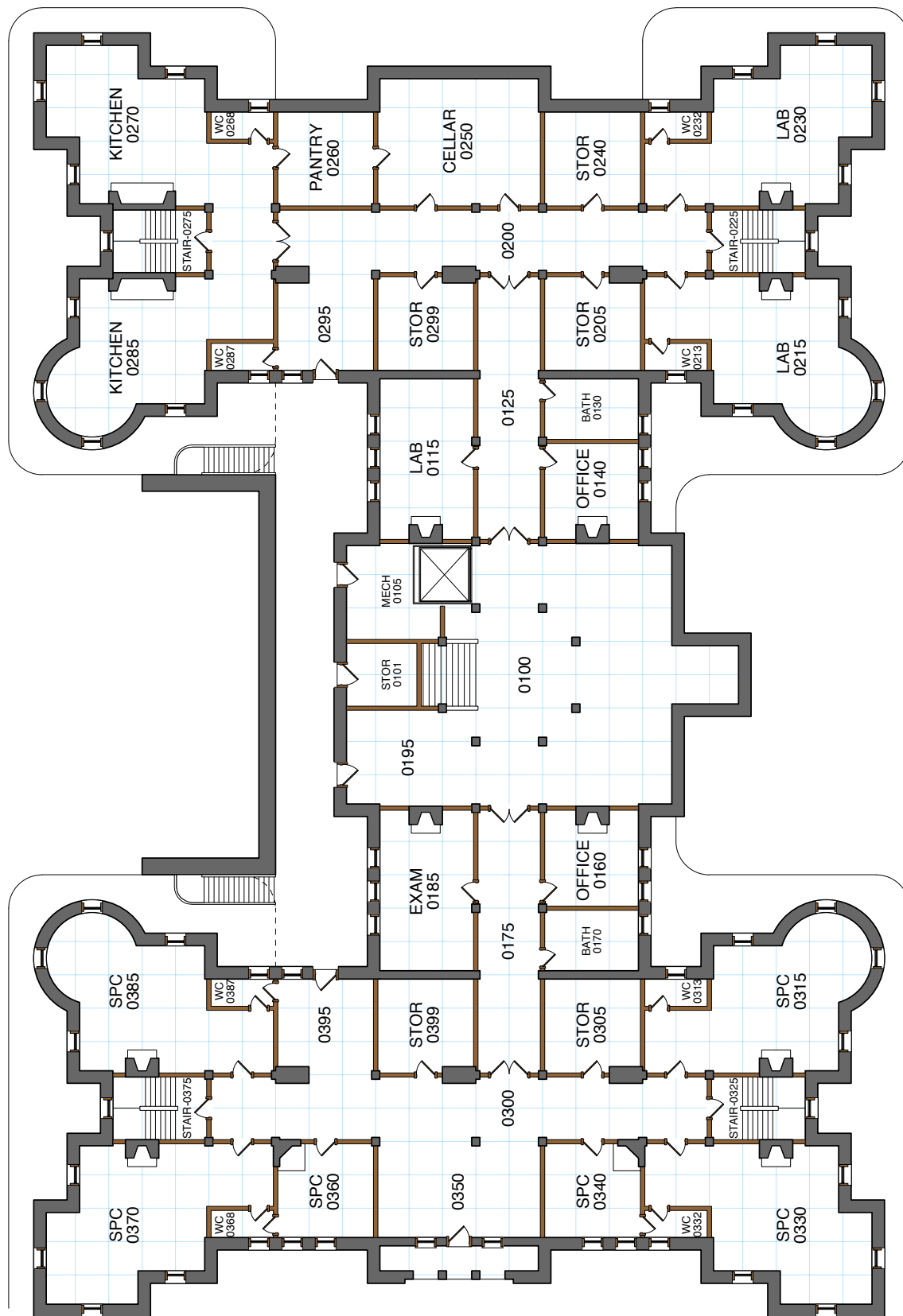
The north wing still contains the manor's substantial library, including all the volumes donated by Mr. Phillips along with the estate. Much of the library is taken up with psychological reference works, but it also holds recreational reading available to residents. The east side of the wing, towards the bluffs, holds the director's office and reception room, while the west side has a reading room and the main reception area off the library, where visitors are typically asked to wait.

Behind the main hall is the old solarium, looking out over the gardens and towards the bay. It provides a quiet sitting area for patients and staff, particularly during the winter months when it is too cold to go outside.

### UPPER FLOORS

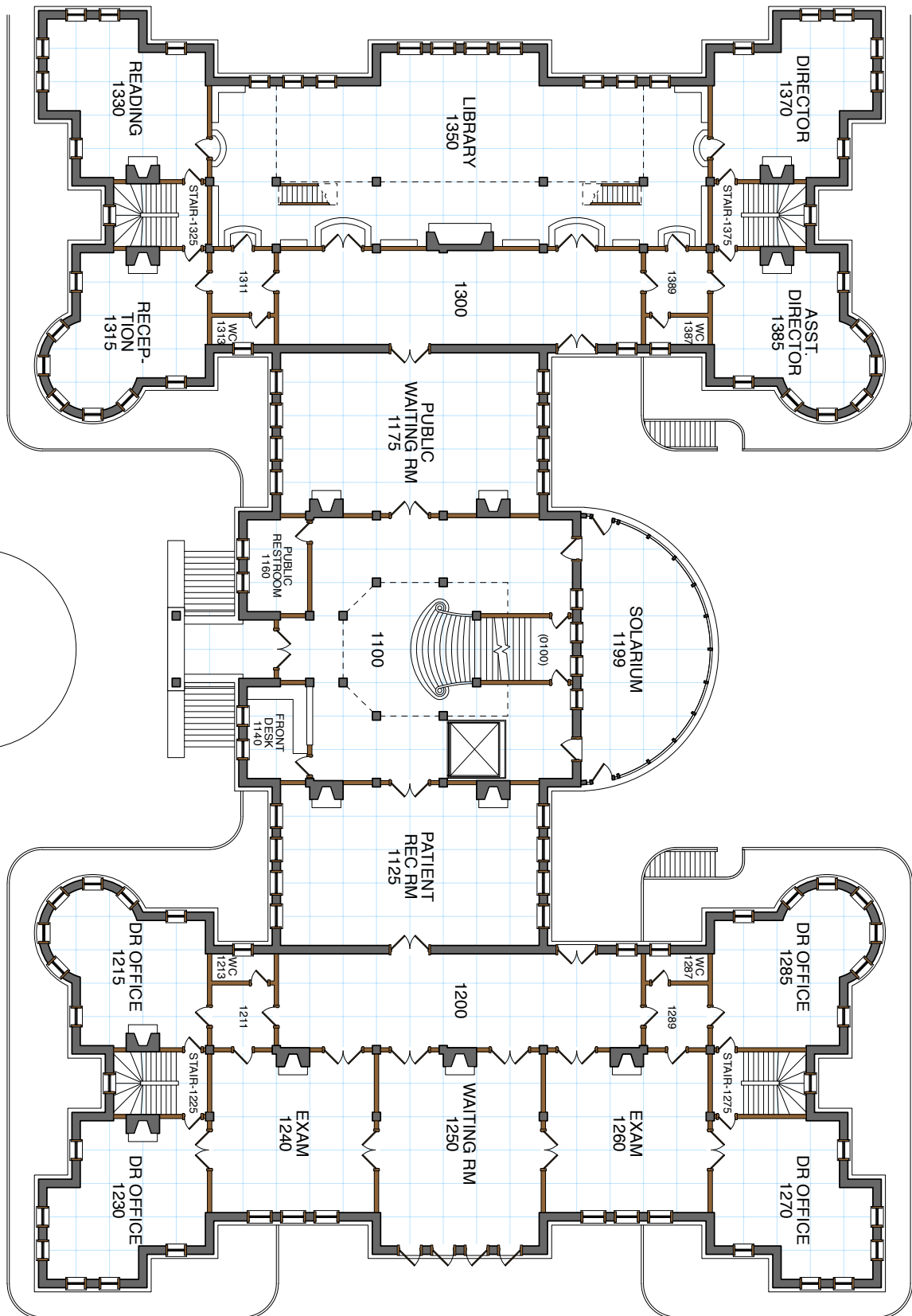
The second, third, and fourth floors of the manor are used primarily for patient care at Providence, bedrooms and the like converted into patient rooms for long-term care and treatment rooms. The patient



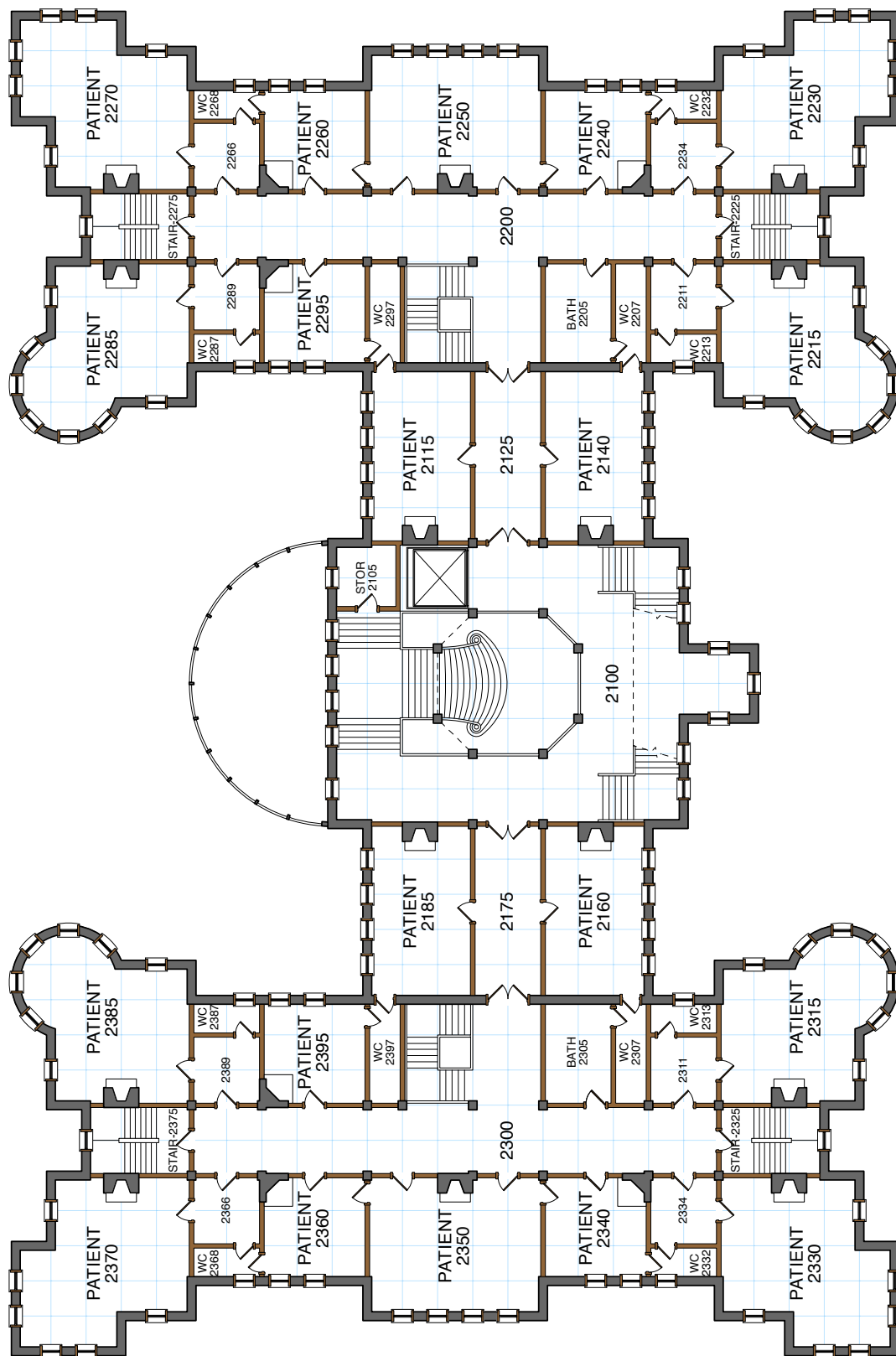


## PROVIDENCE ASYLUM

O-BASEMENT  
SPC = SECURE PATIENT CARE

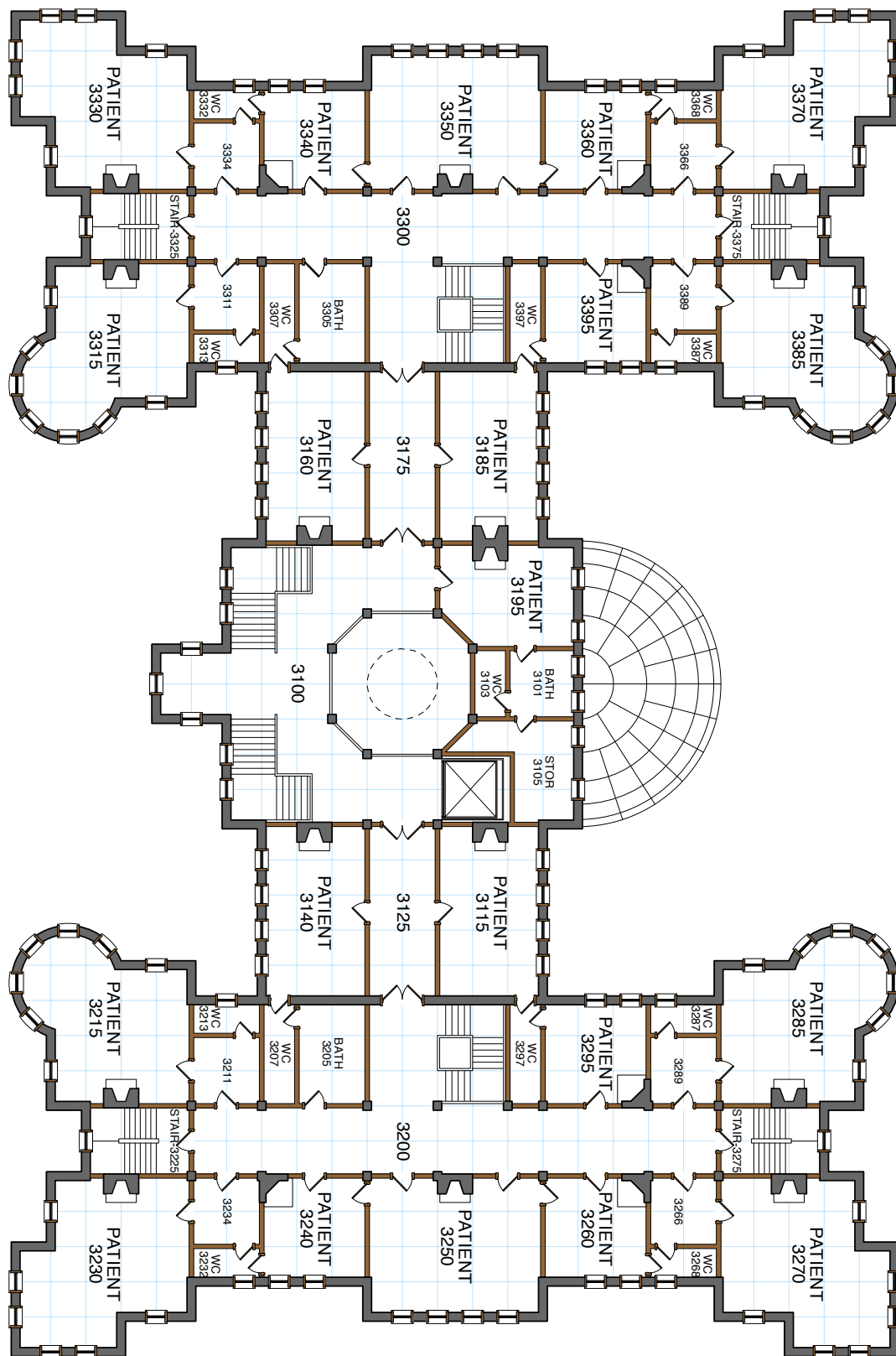


**PROVIDENCE ASYLUM**  
1-FIRST FLOOR

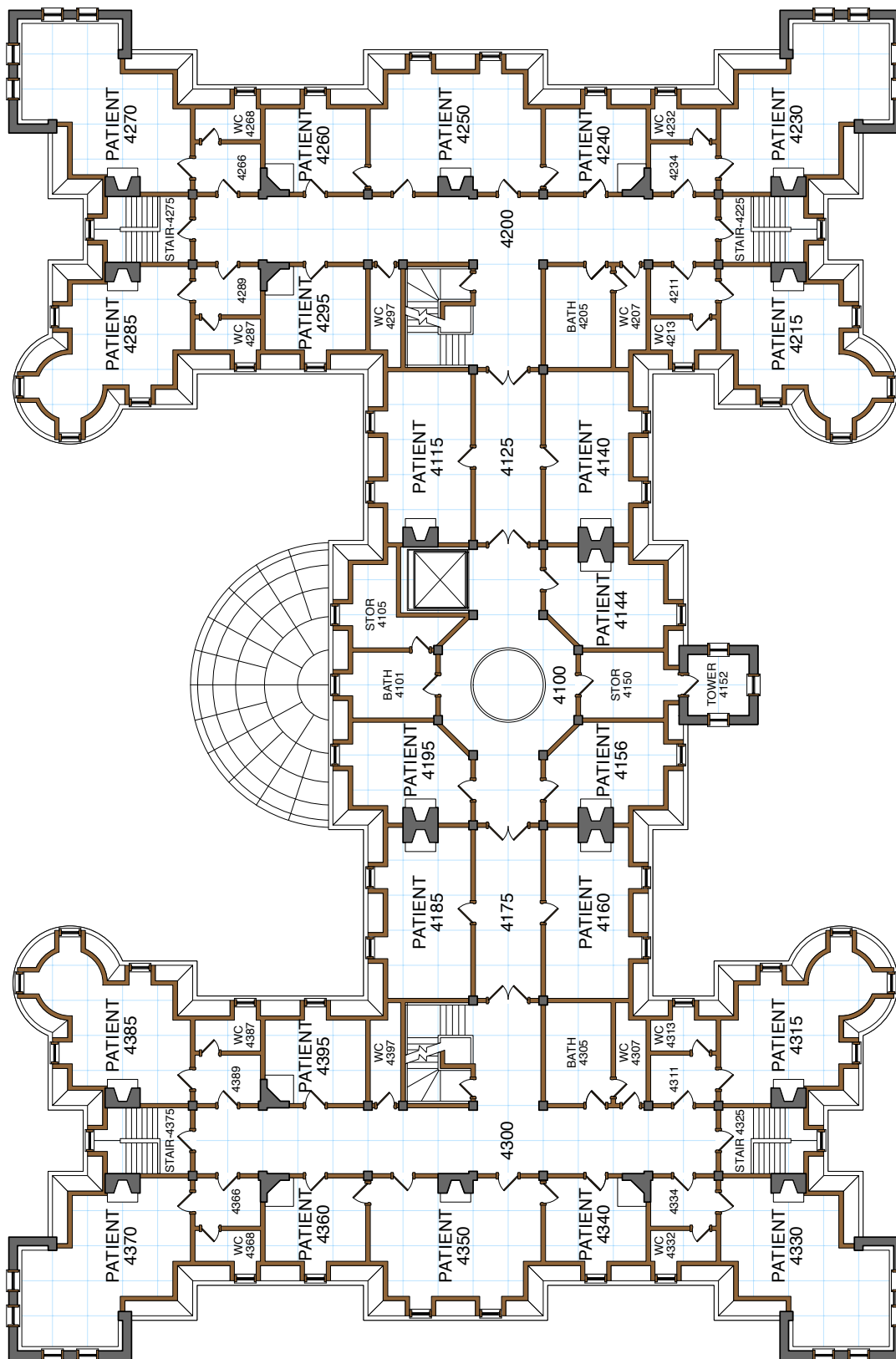


PROVIDENCE ASYLUM  
2-SECOND FLOOR





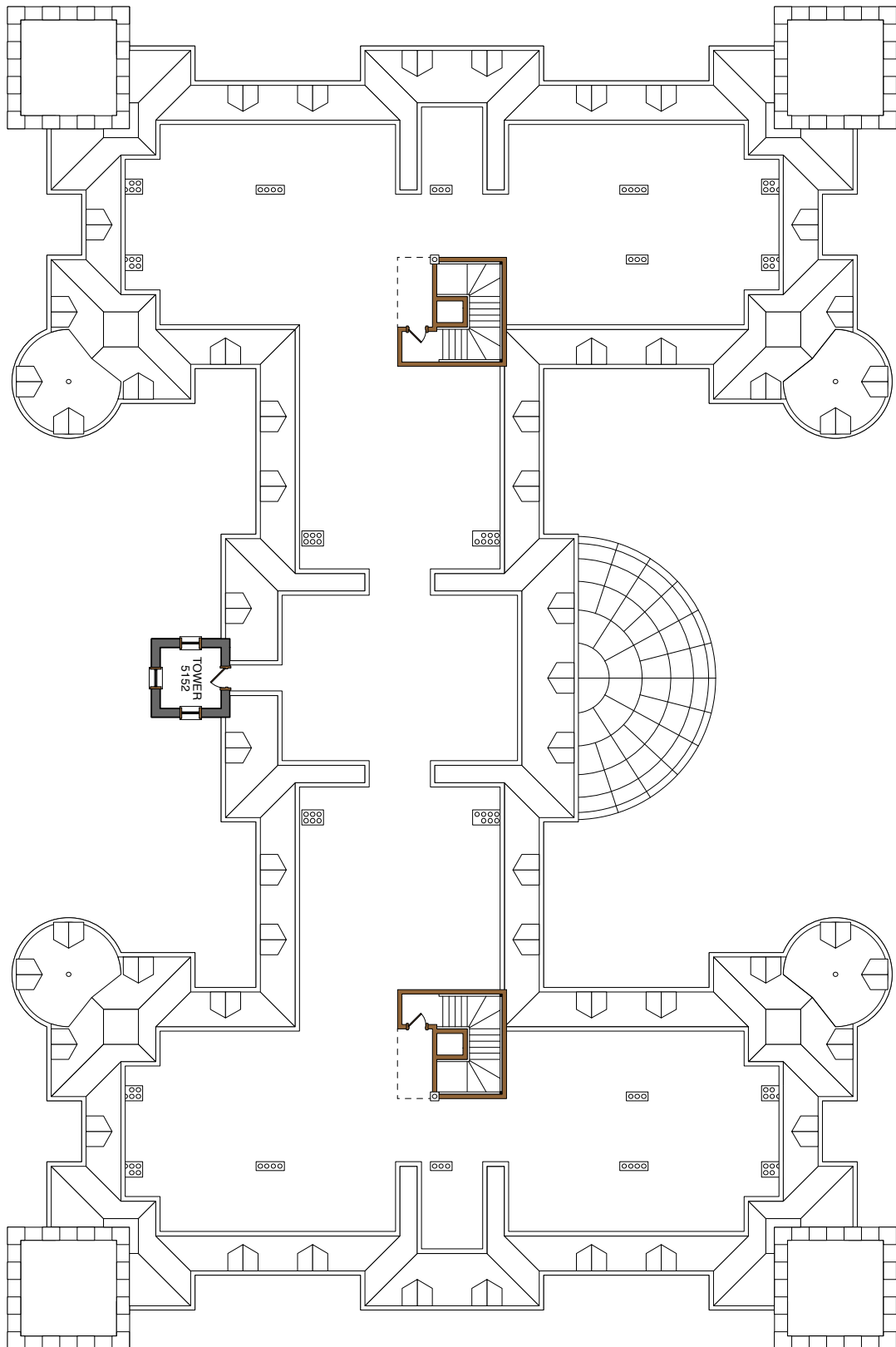
PROVIDENCE ASYLUM  
3-THIRD FLOOR

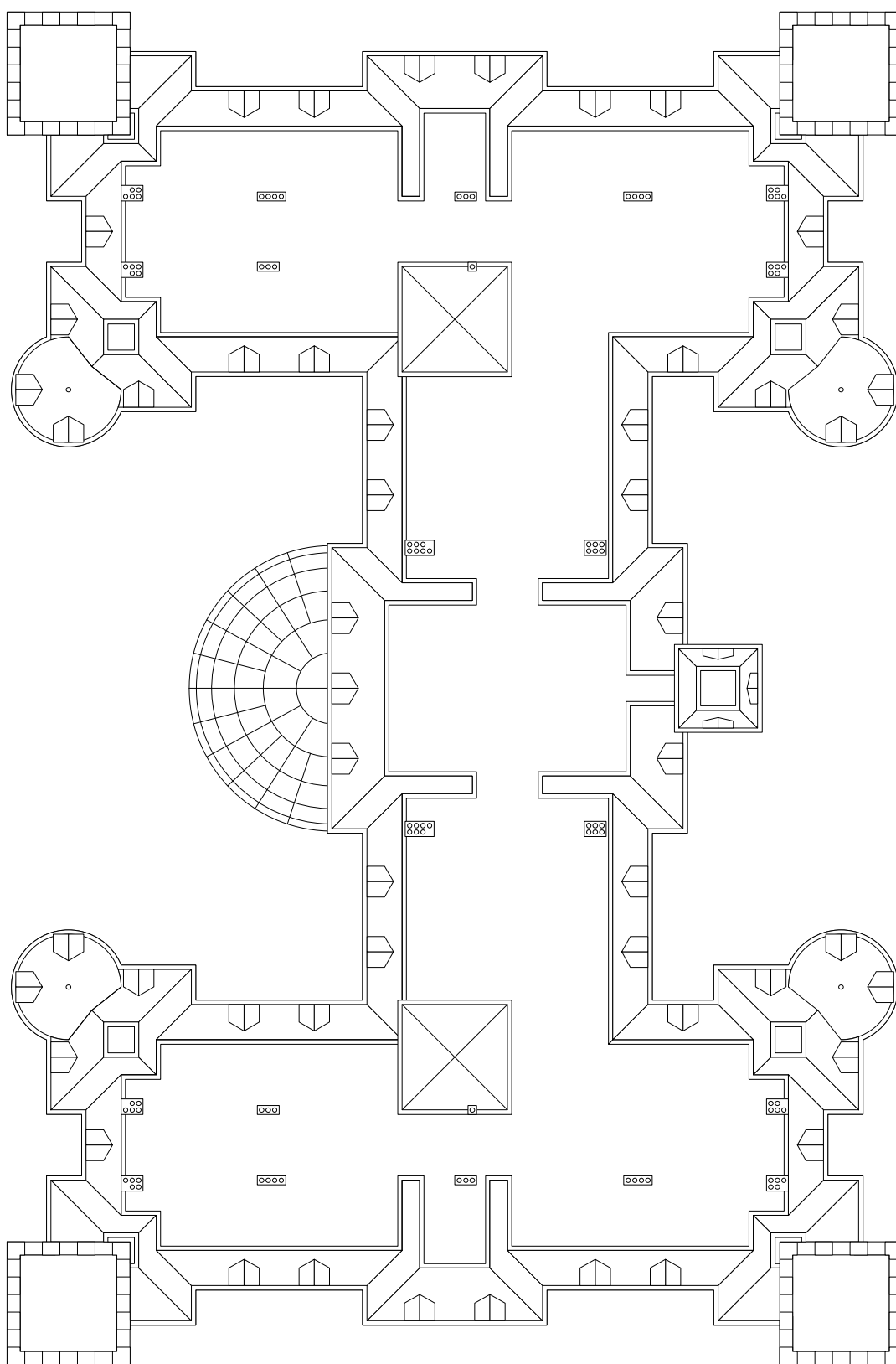


PROVIDENCE ASYLUM  
4-FOURTH FLOOR



**PROVIDENCE ASYLUM**  
5-ROOF ACCESS & TOWER





PROVIDENCE ASYLUM  
6-ROOF



rooms are equipped with electronic locks (Disable Device DC 30) accessible by staff key card or from the central floor station.

Some patients housed on these floor have had criminal careers; the Secure Patient Care wing in the basement is reserved for those patients with innate superhuman abilities, not costumed criminals *per se*. Many of Providence's clients are otherwise ordinary human beings when deprived of their various gimmicks, and therefore housed here, although some of them have proven extraordinarily inventive in the past.

## ROOFTOP

The sprawling roof of the manor, accessible by the two main stairwells, is primarily flat in the middle. The edges are steeply sloped down to the upper parts of the walls below, with the tops of the nine towers rising above the main portion of the roof. At the edges of the sloped portions of the roof are decorative Victorian wrought-iron railings slightly more than knee-high for someone standing on the rooftop (and thus providing fairly little actual safety in terms of preventing a tumble).

Given the potential dangers of a four-story drop, rooftop access is limited and the entryways kept locked using the same electronic locks as on the patient rooms (Disable Device, DC 30, to overcome them). They are also equipped with sensors to alert asylum security whenever a rooftop door is opened, by authorized means or otherwise (DC 25 Disable Device check to thwart this).

## BASEMENT

The extensive basement level of the manor is divided between support facilities like storage, offices, laboratories and the kitchen in the south wing and the Secure Patient Care north wing, containing exam, treatment, and patient rooms.

The SPC wing has security measures similar to those found in Blackstone Penitentiary, although not as overt or forceful, out of a desire to create a better therapeutic environment. Still, the patient rooms are heavily reinforced (Toughness 15) and have stun gas dispensers (**Fatigue 10**, DC 20 Fortitude save). Power nullifying manacles are available, but only used when necessary (*Freedom City*, page 71—essentially a Continuous **Nullify 10** versus all powers).

## STAFF AND PERSONNEL

Working at Providence is both a tremendous opportunity for anyone in the field of criminal psychology and a serious risk, given the nature of some of the patients treated at the asylum. Small wonder, then, that the place tends to attract extreme personalities in its staff as well as its residents. When they say "You don't have to be crazy to work here, but it helps" at Providence Asylum, it can be difficult to say whether or not they are really joking.

### DR. ASHLEY ELLIS

The current Director of the Providence Asylum, Dr. Ellis is either a saint or a martyr, depending on whom you ask. She fiercely devotes herself to helping patients many deem incurable and is seen as "soft" when it comes to dangerous or super-powered psychotics, as she holds out hope for treatment and rehabilitation.

At the same time, Dr. Ellis keeps the asylum running smoothly and ensures its patients receive quality care rather than simple incarceration and heavy medication. It remains to be seen whether or not her work will ultimately prove successful. Already she's fended off complaints about the asylum's Secure Patient Care program and fought efforts to move some of its patients to Blackstone.

Ashley Ellis is an attractive woman in her late-30s with shoulder-length auburn hair and striking lavender eyes. She usually wears her white coat over a pastel blouse and a dark skirt or slacks, and wears black-rimmed glasses for reading.

### DR. JEREMY PHILLIPS

A newer member of the Providence Asylum staff, Dr. Phillips is Howard Phillips' great-grandson, and inspired by his ancestor's generosity, although he tries to quickly dismiss any lengthy discussion of his familial relationship to the estate that he might have otherwise inherited.

A good deal of Dr. Phillips' devotion to the field of mental health comes from his own family's lack of the same. Much of the Phillips clan is embittered and filled with passive-aggressive obsession with status and appearances, clinging to bygone days when they were more prosperous, although as a whole they still control more wealth than most will ever have. Jeremy is something of an empathetic aberration, and while his family applauded his brilliant success in medical school, they cannot understand why he chooses to work at a place that only reminds them of the start of their downfall.

Dr. Phillips is a tall, thin fellow with dark hair and dark-rimmed glasses in an unintentional sort of "geek chic." He's exuberant when discussing his work, a bit shy otherwise.

### DR. KAREN BLACK

Dr. Black lists her position as "clinical occultist," an unusual title anywhere but Providence. She combines a doctorate in clinical social work with considerable education and experience with occult lore and symbolism. Although she works a great deal with patients with mystical delusions and consults with the police on occult-themed crimes, Dr. Black knows full well that much of the occult she studies is all too real. Indeed, she has been borderline obsessed with occult knowledge since she discovered the truth of its existence during an experimental phase in her high-school days, which resulted in a brush with the denizens of some hell-dimension.

Dr. Black knows a bit about the hidden side of the Freedom City occult world discussed in *Book of Magic*, just enough to be dangerous. In their few face-to-face encounters, Adrian Eldrich as tried to dissuade Karen's interest in the arcane, to no avail. Instead, he tries to keep an eye on things at Providence, just in case.

### DEREK GRADY

Providence Asylum's director of security, Derek Grady walks a thin line between the security and safety needs of the facility and its personnel and the clinical and therapeutic needs of its patients. He is in charge of a staff of some two-dozen security personnel who handle the asylum and its grounds. The ex-military Grady

frequently disagrees with the more optimistic Dr. Ellis about appropriate security measures, although he generally defers to the director's wishes. He sees it as his job to imagine worst-case scenarios and plan for them, which tends to make him more than a bit cynical and pessimistic.

Derek has harbored an attraction to Dr. Ellis for some time, but chooses not to act on it, given their professional relationship and

the doctor's clear dedication to her work. Still, he's quite protective of her, even more than his professional duties require.

Derek Grady is average height, but broadly built and in excellent physical shape. He has reddish-brown hair and a neatly trimmed beard and wears a staff security uniform when on duty. He's fond of playing cards (mainly poker) in his off hours and solitaire when he needs to pass time and he's rarely without a deck of cards close at hand.

## SECRETS OF PROVIDENCE ASYLUM

Providence Asylum has a long history, and the following are just a few of the secrets its shadowy halls and tree-covered grounds may conceal. There is considerable room for *Freedom City* gamemasters to include details about past scandals and tragedies of the estate and the mental hospital that now occupies it.

### FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

Providence Asylum makes an ideal backdrop for various occult goings-on, particularly involving such preternatural forces in Freedom City as the serpent people, the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, and the Nameless Ones they serve, like their patron, the Unspeakable One.

The Phillips were an "Old World" family with a long history in the area, perhaps they had some ties to secret cults or forbidden practices. The death of Mina Phillips (see the following) could have been connected. It may be she did not commit suicide, but served as an unholy sacrifice or an unwilling (or unwitting) broodmare to bring some eldritch horror into the world.

The bluffs below the asylum could be riddled with caves and tunnels, perhaps even linked to the realm of Sub-Terra (see *Freedom City*, page 95) where the serpent people still dwell. Hidden or barely-concealed passages might lie in the manor's basement, and the very structure of the building could be suffused with occult forces. The "temple" on the ground might truly be devoted, not to a neo-classical Diana, but to a darker woodland goddess of fecundity and unnatural spawn.

Gamemasters interested in expanding upon the occult aspects of Providence Asylum should see the *Book of Magic* sourcebook for ideas, archetypes, and additional information on the mystic side of Freedom City.

### THE GHOST OF WILHELMINA PHILLIPS

The tragic suicide of Mina Phillips at such a young age is left as either just one more macabre element of Providence's history, or a potential story hook, if the GM wishes. The reason for Mina's death is for you to decide, depending on the style and tone of your series. She might have been lovelorn or perhaps even pregnant when she hurled herself off the bluffs, or the truth could reveal far worse things about the history of the Phillips family. She may have even been murdered; perhaps Howard Phillips' willingness to give away his ancestral estate stemmed from guilt!

Mina can still be an active presence in stories set in and around the asylum as well. Unable to rest, her spirit may have become a ghost. You can use the archetype from page 88 of *Book of Magic*, or base her game stats on the Silver Scream from page 218 of *Freedom City*. Depending on the circumstances of her demise, she may be vengeful or still filled with despair and inflicting it upon anyone sensitive to her presence (including some patients of the asylum!). The ghostly presence also allows Mina Phillips to transcend time periods, as usable as a plot element in a pulp-era 1930s series as in a modern day one, or anywhere in between.

### THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DR. REGINALD CARTER

Dr. Carter's strange disappearance in 1929 is an open-ended mystery for the Gamemaster to solve, or not, as desired. No "official" explanation is forthcoming, but some possibilities include the following:

- Dr. Carter was murdered, either by a patient cunning enough to cover up the deed, or by an outsider to the asylum. His death might have been due to something he discovered, perhaps in listening to the ravings of a patient everyone else considered delusional. The cause could have been any of Freedom City's various conspiracies, like the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign or the Labyrinth, forbidden cults, or criminal organizations.
- Dr. Carter committed suicide, perhaps by throwing himself from the bluffs overlooking Great Bay. If Mina Phillips is indeed a vengeful ghost (see the previous), then she might have brought about his death, and the deaths of many others over the years. Carter could have also succumbed to depression concerning his work, guilt over some past indiscretion, or even been the victim of sorcery or psychic influence.
- Dr. Carter was driven mad by the secrets he learned about Providence Asylum, the manor house, and the estate, including the occult history of the Phillips family and the blasphemous secrets of cults like the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. He either took his own life in terror and despair, or was a carefully arranged sacrifice to further the agenda of some eldritch force.

Note that a number of "pulp" era figures of Freedom City's history—such as Bluesman, Johnny Danger, the Ghost, and others—were active in the late 1920s; Dr. Carter's disappearance could be con-



## BLACKSTONE OR PROVIDENCE?

An important consideration when a super-criminal is captured is whether or not the villain is incarcerated in Blackstone Penitentiary (see *Freedom City*, page 75) or placed in the care of Providence Asylum, with some hope of treatment and an eventual cure. Providence inmates (Dr. Ellis prefers the term “patient” or “client”) must be judged psychologically unfit, not terribly difficult for a lot of the caped-and-cowled criminal set.

The following is a list of villains from *Freedom City* and the supplement *Freedom's Most Wanted* likely to end up in Providence Asylum. If a villain from those books is not listed here, assume they are more likely to be imprisoned in Blackstone, assuming they can be imprisoned at all, and do not end up apparently dead, missing, banished to a netherworld, or the like.

- **Freedom City:** Baron Samedi (depending on the status of the spirit possessing Simon DuLac), Conundrum, Fear-Master, The Green Man, The Hellqueen (or at least her human host), The Maestro (who has done time in Providence before), Megalodon, Toy Boy, Warden, Wildcard (which might constitute a “lucky break” for him).
- **Freedom's Most Wanted:** Blackbird, Conqueror Worm, Daddy-O Long-Legs, Doc Holiday, Dr. Mayhem (largely due to his “delusion” of being from another timeline), Fear-Master I, Firebug, Fly-Boy, Glacier, Looking Glass, Luna Moth, Mad Maple, Madame Zero, Nero, Recall (potentially), Red Death II, Silver Hyena, Sky Lord II, Alister Usher.

nected with one or more of them in some fashion. Perhaps whatever caused it returns, leading the modern heroes to investigate a case parallel to one of their early 20th-century predecessors.

## BENEATH THE BLUFFS

At first glance, there is little of interest along the narrow strip of rocky beach at the base of the bluffs, save for the asylum's small boat launch. However, if you wish, there may be ancient sea-caves in the bluffs, visible only at low tides, which could even extend in a network beneath the grounds of the asylum and the manor house itself. These caves can serve as a secret lair for some threat, or might have been used as a hideout for pirates or revolutionaries in bygone days. Perhaps they are where Dr. Carter disappeared, and where clues about his fate can be discovered.

## DIANA'S GROVE

Are “the Temple” and “Diana's Grove” merely artistic neo-classical whimsy on the part of the designers of the estate, or something more significant? The default assumption is there is nothing sinister to the area apart from the spooky stories told by members of the asylum's staff to haze newcomers, but the truth is entirely up to you. If you prefer, the grove could have seen use as an occult ritual site or a place of pagan worship at some point in the past. Even if it was not originally intended for such, someone could be using it for that purpose now. Certainly *Freedom City* is home to enough mysterious cults to raise the possibility.

## PERSONAL AGENDAS

There is a fair amount of flexibility in the personal agendas and personalities of the staff members of Providence Asylum. Apart from Dr. Ellis, any one of them could be a dedicated mental health professional or a barely-concealed psycho as bad (or worse) than any being treated at the hospital. For example, Dr. Phillips might be secretly obsessed with his family estate or the victim of “the Phillips Curse” leading him into madness. Similarly, Dr. Black may be trifling with occult forces beyond human ken, and Derek Grady could be a brutal thug secretly terrorizing Providence's inmates. There's also plenty of room to add other staff members, from doctors and nurses to administration, maintenance, and members of Grady's security staff. Any of these could have personal agendas or secrets when it comes to Providence Asylum.

## GAME USES

Providence Asylum can see a number of uses in a *Mutants & Masterminds* series, including: a setting for adventures focused around the hospital, its staff, and patients; a place where some of the heroes foes may be incarcerated (and perhaps interviewed or interrogated); a headquarters or facility for a hero or team (with some modifications), or even the basis for an unusual *M&M* series focused on the asylum and its work.

## ADVENTURE SETTING

First and foremost, Providence Asylum can serve as a setting for *M&M* adventures centered on the mental hospital. A number of possibilities are suggested in this product, but others may include:

- A villain taking over the asylum and attempting to convince the heroes they are patients, and their heroic identities—perhaps even their entire lives—are nothing more than delusions.
- One or more inmates staging an escape, perhaps one that goes wrong or involves taking members of the staff hostage in order to secure their release. The authorities call the heroes in to help them break the stalemate.
- A psychic plunging the asylum into a dream-realm, where the heroes must enter a nightmarish version of Providence and deal with the psychoses of its patients brought to life in order to stop the villain's plans.
- Evidence of a haunting in the asylum can lead the investigators to a genuine ghost or an elaborate hoax intended to make everyone think Providence is haunted, perhaps to shut the place down. Of course, a hoax can also raise the ire of a *real* ghost present in the old manor.
- A staff member begins brainwashing patients, either returning them to their former criminal careers or turning them into *new* costumed criminals when they are pronounced “cured” and released from Providence.

## VISITOR'S PASS

Heroes might visit Providence Asylum for a number of reasons, mainly to consult with a member of the staff or to speak to a patient currently being treated there.

Providence has some of Freedom City's best experts on criminal psychology and behavior, as well as the effects of various superhuman abilities on the psyche. Investigators might consult with them about a criminal's *modus operandi* or to build a psychological profile of a mysterious new foe.

The staff of the asylum offers potential supporting cast characters, perhaps someone related to a hero or involved in a romantic relationship. Anyone studying the psychology of masked superhumans is sure to find real superheroes fascinating. A hero with a psychological or counseling background might even work at the asylum, providing interesting story hooks, as well as challenges in keeping secrets from notably curious and inquisitive colleagues.

Heroes may also go to Providence to speak with a patient, either to interrogate a foe or to find out from a long-time resident about something that happened in the past. They may even find some of their heroic predecessors here, mute testimony to the toll the life of a masked hero can take on one's sanity.

## HEADQUARTERS

The maps of Providence Asylum in this product can also serve as the basis for using the estate to create a "stately manor" or other superhero headquarters for a team or a single wealthy hero. Perhaps the estate was not converted into a mental hospital, but remained in the family until it was willed to a superhero team or an heir who is secretly a masked vigilante. You can change around the rooms, perhaps even adding a sub-basement level modeled on the basement with additional facilities, like a secret vehicle hangar with a hidden cliffside entrance.

The asylum might also be closed down in your *M&M* series, perhaps by the events of the Terminus Invasion (see *Freedom City*, page 16) or even earlier. This allows a villain to move in and take it over

## PROVIDENCE AND OTHER SETTINGS

Although described for modern day *Freedom City*, much of Providence Asylum can be used unchanged in earlier eras of the setting, including *Golden Age* and *Iron Age*. The mental hospital is in operation for the entire time public superhumans have been active in the area.

With some slight modifications, Providence Asylum can also serve in various other settings, from *Freedom by Gaslight* to the near future or other worlds. In the turn-of-the-century *Gaslight* setting, either assume the asylum opened a few decades earlier, or use the place as the Phillips estate, where the heroes might be called for a weekend in the country or to solve a murder or track a mysterious cult. It can just as easily show up in pulp-inspired games set in the 1920s and '30s, either as private estate or mental hospital.

If you are using the *Paragons* setting sourcebook, then Providence Asylum also makes a useful template for the Rosemont Center (see *Paragons*, page 79), a similar private estate turned into a psychiatric institute for the treatment of paranormals. You can use it as a basis for a series involving the Center and the activities of the Collected, the paranormals assisting Dr. Rosemont in her work.

Lastly, the Asylum makes an excellent backdrop as an adventure location or even headquarters for characters in a *Supernaturals* series of monster-hunters.

as a hidden lair, perhaps even a team of villains. A covert hero team might do the same, using the closed-down and derelict mental hospital as cover for their operations, suitable for an *Iron Age* style game.

## SERIES SETTING

Lastly, you could set an entire *Freedom City* series at Providence Asylum. It would be an unusual series, to say the least, but imagine a group of misfit superhumans, remanded to Dr. Ellis' care in the Special Patient Care wing, who adopt secret identities in order to try and do some good with their unusual abilities, while at the same time struggling with their own psychological issues. They have to deal with hiding their activities from the authorities as well as sharing space with some true psychotics, perhaps even some of their defeated foes!





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