# The Pats of Saint Abbans by Richard Marpole

Intro & 120n-Jlayer Character Book

# The Wats<sub>of</sub> Saint Abbans

# AN ADVENTURE FOR LEVELS 1-3

The once-respected Abbey-Cathedral of Saint Abbans has stood at the top of Wellholy Hill for centuries.

Revenue is scarce and the abbey is falling into disrepair. An upcoming celebration might help fill the coffers, but church bats have infested the upper reaches of the building. They are causing a dangerous nuisance which risks the celebration going ahead and further damaging the precarious structure.

Abbess Jessamine is looking for brave souls without fear of heights to ascend the cavernous cathedral and bring the problem under control.

Maybe, just maybe, that's you?





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The content in these pages is always intended to be treated with a light heart, and no offence is intended if there is any to be seen.

# The Pats of Saint Abbans Introg. Non-Hlayer Characters

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# Contents

Creaits	1
Adventure Flowchart	3
Introduction	4
Adventure Summary	4
Background	4
The Abbess' Task	5
Ecclesiastical Time	5
Themes and Setting	6
The Town of Saint	
Abbans	7
Wellholy Hill	7
River <b>River</b>	7
Map Locations	
1. Abbey-Cathedral	
2. Clock Tower	8
3. Fighting Cockatrice Inn	
4. Wellholy Spring	
5. Old Goman Hypocaust	
6. Muddy Duck Tavern	8
7. Breckon Sweet Shop	8
8. The Piscacean Inn	
9. Gaddesden's Tower	9
10. Glover's Tailors	
11. Flagg Arms & Armour	
12. Wall of Heroes	
13. Merchant Guardhouse	
14. Mayor Winstead's Offic	
15. Haunted Heart Hotel	
16. Watermill	
17. Ladd Ropemakers	9

Town Adventure Hooks ...... 11

# **Town NPCs**

-	87	
	1000	Э
	1935-s	٩.
-	-	

Barbara Breckon	13
Elsie Flagg	
Hailey Commett	14
Harry Glover	14
Jack Ladd	15
Mandeville 'Breakspear' P	rice
	15
Mayor Kyra Winstead	
Gaddesden Halfmoon	
The Order of the Slug	
Vin	
Powys	19
Кгоор	
The Finches	
Mama Finch	20
Poshboy Finch	
Chimp Finch	21
Around the Abbey	
'Honest' Bart	
Pearl Vintner	22

## Abbey NPCs 24

Abbess Jessamine	.24
Brother Banshee	.26
Brother Fortune	. 27
Brother Makepeace	.28
Brother Prudence	.29
Brother Henger	.30
Brother Scapula	
Novice Andrew	
Random Monk Generator	.33
<b>Relationship Diagram</b>	

# Notes

34 36

# Abbey-Cathedral, Abbey, or Cathedral

The Abbey-Cathedral is also referred to as both the 'abbey' and 'cathedral' throughout the text. Both these words are intended to mean the same thing. It's actually both an abbey and a cathedral in game setting terms. The locals tend to refer to it as 'the abbey'.

# ADVENTURE FLOWCHART



# INTRODUCTION

# ADVENTURE SUMMARY

#### BACKGROUND

Once the most respected temple to **The Watcher From The Shore** in all of Havenland, the Abbey-Cathedral of Saint Abbans stands on the verge of ruin.

Coin for the abbey's upkeep is scarce. Little of the tithes paid by the townsfolk goes towards its upkeep nowadays, much of it instead ending up diverted by the mayor to civil and guild needs.

Blind ghosts and other oddities stalk the upper levels, whilst demons assault the roof at night. The edifice itself is suffused with strange energies and riven with cracks that spread slowly, but surely.

All this might have been overcome by the prayers and rituals of the monks of St. Abbans, but now a flock of once-tame Church Bats flaps and swarms along the abbey's galleries and into its roof-spaces, gnawing beams, stealing rooftiles, and attacking anyone who disturbs their nests. In despair at the failure of their prayers, the abbey authorities have turned to outside help, placing printed signs throughout the town, each asking for careful and trustworthy mercenaries to visit the abbey and speak to Abbess Jessamine about a lucrative and righteous job opportunity.

If asked about the job or the Abbey-Cathedral of Saint Abbans, the locals—known as Abbanians will grumble and mutter about tithes, raids by crown officials, and vicious bat-attacks. Some will put the latter down to the wicked were-bat known as Gloom Bat, but others will denounce it as utter bollocks, the writings of that fool pamphleteer, Mathias Pouke. They will also say that although the abbey is the greatest cathedral in the world, 'They're all mad there'.

If the adventurers go to the abbey to meet with the abbess, then the adventure proper begins.

#### **Adventure Level**

This adventure is for characters of Level 1–3 and based on the *Swords* & *Wizardry Complete* rules system but can be adapted to any OSR system.

It contains a number of challenges that make use of a 'roll equal to or under a specific stat' mechanic to resolve them—feel free to replace this with Saving Throws if you wish. Text that mentions 'stat rolls' is referring to this mechanic.

#### THE ABBESS' TASK

The abbess wants to hire bold and competent adventurers prepared to make the daring climb into the crumbling upper reaches of the abbey and **tame** or **kill** the pack of swooping, shrieking monsters that has infested them. These are actually large Church Bats, two of which are Royal Church Bats.

Watcher's Week: An upcoming celebration at the abbeycathedral occurs in three day's time. Watcher's Week will bring much needed coin to the abbey's coffers, so the abbess will want St. Abbans cleared of bats by then, an added time pressure for anyone undertaking the task of removing the bats.

#### Church Bats & Royal Church Bats:

These large bats aren't strong or organised enough to present a threat to most adventuring parties in combat, but they're cowardly and scattered and will need to be lured, tricked, or trapped before they can be dealt with.

**Structure Weakness**: The true danger comes from the mouldering

# Important Note About Monks

The monks presented in this adventure are not the character Class 'Monk' presented in the *Swords & Wizardry Complete* rulebook, but rather an Abbey Monk (or Friar) as per the character Class presented in the Appendices in this book. structure of the abbey itself. Weakened supports, falling tiles and gusts of wind could all prove fatal.

**Goman Legacy**: The abbey is partially made from the ruins of Goman buildings—the fortune magic woven into Goman bricks and tiles has interacted curiously under the mysterious gaze of **The Watcher From The Shore** over the years. Odd happenings are commonplace and creatures stranger and more perilous than any bat wander the rooftops, towers and upper galleries of the abbey.

**The Bells**: The bells in the belfry can be used to tame the bats when rung in a special sequence known as the *Carillon Cotillion*.

**Conclusion**: Once the bats are killed or tamed, and the abbess has control of the abbey again, the adventure is concluded.

# ECCLESIASTICAL TIME

**[Optional]**: This adventure uses a timetable that the abbey monks follow called *Ecclesiastical Time*. The abbey monks sleep, rise, eat, pray, and work at specific times according to this regimented time.

Other strange events may occur within the abbey that also follow this timetable. Use of this is optional, but it will add a sense of religious devotion to the adventure.

Refer to the Appendices chapter in the **Adventure Book** for more information.

# THEMES AND SETTING

The Abbey-Cathedral of Saint Abbans is intended for use in *The Midderlands* setting, which is grim, grimy, green-tinted, weird, and rooted in British history, folklore and geography. That said, it can be dropped into any setting you like, with minimal alterations.

The abbey itself is a busy, working building. During the day, the ground floor throngs with local folk attending sermons, gawping pilgrims, monks performing increasingly frantic ceremonies intended to tame the eldritch forces trapped in the building's fabric, and workers attempting to shore up the abbey's spreading collapse and fighting a losing battle. Whatever the Player Characters are doing, it's likely to interfere with someone else's business. During the night, the nocturnal bats are more active and a menace, although the abbey itself is usually devoid of Abbanians.

Unlike the classic dungeon there are very few things in the abbey that are actively trying to kill the Player Characters. Creatures may still blunder into the adventurers and kill them by accident or misunderstanding. There are no traps, but the abandoned upper reaches of the abbey were partially built from magic-infused Goman bricks and tiles and are rife with strangeness, neglect, and decay, so a ledge might crumble beneath an adventurer's feet, sending them tumbling groundward. This adventure rewards careful exploration and common sense and usually offers some warning of danger, no matter how slight.

As a temple to **The Watcher From The Shore**, the abbey carries a strong theme of watchfulness, sight, and eyes. The Player Characters should feel as though they are constantly being spied upon or weighed and found wanting by ancient, unhuman intelligences.

# THE TOWN OF SAINT ABBANS

Saint Abbans is a small cathedraltown in central Hertshire, which is a prosperous, landlocked county in the south-east of Havenland. Hertshire borders the outskirts of the city of Great Lunden and Saint Abbans is a popular stop for people travelling into or out of the capital.

Saint Abbans is dominated by its large abbey-cathedral. An impressive number of coaching inns and pubs cater to the steady stream of pilgrims that visit the abbey, as well as the many travellers passing through on the way to Great Lunden.

Like everywhere else in Hertshire, the town is surrounded by rich farmlands. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday is market day in the town, raucous, smelly, and bustling. The small, weedwracked, River *River* wends its way past Saint Abbans on the east and south side and carries on through meadows and forests and, some say, into other worlds.

Saint Abbans has no ruling lord or lady, so consequently taxes are paid to the abbey. The proud Abbanians can switch between boasting about the size and splendour of the abbey to cursing the abbess for hiking tithes in a matter of seconds. Various guilds and merchants owe allegiance to the town's mayor, who oversees most of the business of the town. She rivals the abbess in terms of power, wealth, and influence in the town.

## WELLHOLY HILL

The Abbey-Cathedral sits atop this steep-sided hill with the town sprawling out down its sides.

# **RIVER RIVER**

When outsiders ask the name of the local river, Hertfolk merely say "Arr yes that there's *'The River'*" and stare truculently until the questioner goes away. No visitor has ever got a better answer out of the locals and so the river was officially named the River *River*.

The river is a thin, deep and gently flowing watercourse, sometimes sluggish and often secretive. Fish of all kinds lurk in its weed-choked waters. Watercress beds situated just to the northeast of the town provide fresh greens that are the pride of Hertshire and are often sent into Great Lunden for use in the kitchens of the well-to-do. Travelling too far down the river may lead you into a different world than the one you started in.

# MAP LOCATIONS

#### **1. ABBEY-CATHEDRAL**

The imposing edifice where the adventure is based. This is where Abbess Jessamine and the monks reside. Refer to the **Adventure Book** for more information on this location.

#### 2. CLOCK TOWER

Over the years, the people of Saint Abbans have pushed for more independence from the abbey's religious control. The Clock Tower was built in the town so that Abbanians didn't have to rely on the abbey's bells to keep time. Standing at four storeys tall, it's also—coincidentally—high enough for anyone standing on top of it to see the roof of the abbey and make rude gestures at it.

#### **3. FIGHTING COCKATRICE INN**

Also referred to as The Legendary Fighting Cockatrice Inn. This cosy, timber structure is supposedly the oldest pub in Havenland, (a hotly-disputed fact), it straddles the River *River* and is not far from the abbey. Folks of renown always find their way here and someone is always telling a good tale whenever the Player Characters enter the building. Legend tells of a terrible guardian who lurks beneath the pub and will turn those who don't pay their drinking debts to stone at the stroke of midnight.

#### 4. Wellholy Spring

A spring at the base of Wellholy Hill is associated with the story of the martyrdom of St. Abban and is said to have healing properties, particularly for afflictions of the eye. It's seemingly drinkable too. Refer to The Story of St. Abban sidebar.

#### 5. OLD GOMAN HYPOCAUST

This half-buried structure, once a Goman bath-house, stands a little way outside the town limits. It's still richly decorated with painted tiles and sometimes spawns mosaic elementals that drift into town and terrorise the locals. Abbanians occasionally steal painted tiles from the hypocaust<sup>1</sup> to use as decorations or good luck charms. Better treasures may still be buried somewhere beneath its floor.

# 6. MUDDY DUCK TAVERN

One of the inns visited as part of the tavern-crawl that often ends with folk finding the Wall of Heroes.

#### 7. BRECKON SWEET SHOP

Owned and run by Barbara Breckon (see page 13), this sweet shop on the slopes of Wellholy Hill is also a good location for obtaining healing and other 'miracle cures'.

## 8. THE PISCACEAN INN

Another inn on the Wall of Heroes tavern-crawl list. Also, the place where Captain of the Guard, Mandeville 'Breakspear' Price can

A hypocaust is a Goman method of heating by directing heat into under-floor cavities.

be found when not at the Merchant Guardhouse.

There are rumours that Giant Stag Beetle racing can be found here for those looking for a discreet wager.

#### 9. GADDESDEN'S TOWER

The alleged wizard, Gaddesden Halfmoon (see page 17) resides here. Considered eccentric by most, some say that he can work wonders with mirrors and windows, hence his nickname—The Mirror Mage.

#### 10. GLOVER'S TAILORS

Owned and run by Harry Glover (see page 14) this smart-looking, glass-fronted shop has tailoring fit for a lord.

#### 11. FLAGG ARMS & ARMOUR

Owned and run by Elsie Flagg (see page 13) this series of stone and timber-framed extensions has a good array of goods associated with fighting.

#### 12. WALL OF HEROES

No one knows who built this low wall or even precisely where it stands. It only manifests to the heroically drunk. Sitting on the wall while blind drunk grants the sitter a curious and startling revelation about themselves.

#### **13. MERCHANT GUARDHOUSE**

This imposing stone structure is where the Captain of the Guard, Mandeville Price can be found when not supping ale at The Piscacean Inn. Guards generally mill about, preferring the warmth of the guardhouse to the relative cold of outside. There is a buzz about the guardhouse about the recent antics of the highwaywoman known as—The Wicked Lady.

#### **14. MAYOR WINSTEAD'S OFFICE**

Another stone-built structure. The mayor's office has an important looking portico decorated in brightly coloured heraldry. A guard stands on the outside by the doors looking equally garish and not-toohappy about it.

#### **15. HAUNTED HEART HOTEL**

This inn is owned by the Abbey-Cathedral. It is a sprawling timber-framed structure which various floors, lean-tos, and hidden passages behind its panelled walls.

Rumours tell of many-eyed ghosts that wander its corridors at night, groaning and clinking chains.

#### **16. WATERMILL**

The watermill is an old structure that leans as if pushed over by the power of the water driving the wheel. Most of the local flour is ground here, but there are many shafts, pulleys, and belts that drive saws for timber cutting too.

#### **17. LADD ROPEMAKERS**

Owned and operated by Jack Ladd (see page 15), this single storey building painted in white is draped with nets and ropes of all kinds around the outside. An artisticallyrendered sign states: 'Ladd Ropemakers—Quality Ropes & Nets to Get Caught Up In.'

# The Story of St Abban

The heroes don't need to know this story in order to complete the main adventure, but it'll add some context to the abbey and its hazards. Throw it in if your players show interest. Townsfolk and monks alike are more than happy to relate this story to visitors. Player Characters from Hertshire will already know it.

"When the first Gomans arrived in Havenland they faced heavy resistance and were driven back. It took a century for them to return. Goman spies learned that the priests of the Watcher from the Shore had set up watchtowers all along the coastline and it was their warnings which had united the local tribes.

When the second invasion was more successful, the victorious Gomans set about persecuting the followers of the Watcher and they were driven into hiding for years.

Abban was a retired Goman soldier living in the settlement of Riverlamion. He met a fugitive priest of the Watcher and took pity on him, offering him sanctuary. The priest eventually moved on, but not before converting Abban to his faith. Abban's change of heart was noticed by the Goman authorities. He was arrested and told that he would be exonerated if he abandoned his new faith and gave up his accomplices. He refused and was executed by beheading on a hill just outside Riverlamion.

Immediately after the fateful strike, the executioner's eyes fell out and rolled to the bottom of the hill. A spring bubbled up where the eyes came to rest. Local Hertfolk—impressed by this miracle—took to venerating Abban and the Watcher—despite living in a landlocked county. The hill where the event took place was renamed Wellholy Hill."

# TOWN ADVENTURE HOOKS

Here's a handful of tasty plot seeds, in case the Player Characters are local to Hertshire or you just want to offer them some extra adventures in the local area.

#### **ADVENTURE HOOK TABLE**

#### # Adventure Hook

#### 1 Just One More

Saint Abbans claims to have more taverns and inns per square mile than any other settlement in Havenland—A local gentleman offers good pay to mercenaries who will accompany and protect him during a pub crawl to all twenty plus establishments, but naturally, hijinks ensue. (This is a good point for the party to encounter the Order of the Slug—see 'The Order of the Slug' on page 18). Completing the crawl will cause the drinkers to find the Wall of Heroes. Taverns and inns include;

- the Muddy Duck Tavern
- The Hooded Robber
- The Piscacean Inn
- The Ram
- The Bald Gary
- the Seven Bells
- The Mouseling's Tower
- The Greenish Man
- The Haunted Heart Hotel

#### 2 Waves in the Watercress

Watercress gathered from the beds in the River *River* is a key ingredient in local healing potions and fetches a fair sum, if the adventurers can avoid the Redlure Sticklebacks (see The Midderlands pg. 125) and other carnivorous fish that lurk amongst the weeds. Hailey Commett has a boat which she is willing to lend the heroes in return for a cut of the profits.

#### 3 Straw-weavers Revenge

Today is the day of the local straw-weaving fair where Abbanians present figures made from tightly woven straw for the consideration of a panel of harsh judges. A wizard-in-hiding, who lost last year's competition and was soundly mocked by the judges, plans to wreak his revenge by animating all of this year's figures and setting them loose on the crowd.

#### 4 The Wicked Lady

Trembling locals whisper that the notorious highwaywoman known only as The Wicked Lady has been robbing merchant caravans near Saint Abbans. The Merchant Guard has utterly failed to catch the criminal and Mayor Winstead has offered 100 gold quids to anyone who can bring her in alive.

#### 5 Operation Hatefield

The royal residence of Hatefield House, which lies a little way outside Saint Abbans, will soon host a visit by Queen Elspeth. In preparation, royal agents swarm across the town like angry, paranoid bees.

# Don-player Characters

# TOWN NPCS

These NPCs provide services and items that Player Characters may need to complete this adventure or one of the side quests mentioned in the previous 'Town Adventure Hooks' section.

In the descriptions that follow, numbers in [square brackets] indicate locations on the Saint Abbans town map (refer to the Map & Handouts booklet).



Where to Find: Breckon Sweet Shop [7]

**NPC Information**: An old woman who runs Breckon Sweet Shop. Her shop is on the slope of Wellholy Hill, but she sets up a stall in the town square on market days.

She is always dressed practically and prefers trousers to skirts.

She runs a side-line in semi-legal medicines and 'miracle cures'. She can provide healing potions but will charge 50% more than the going rate.



Where to Find: Flagg's Arms & Armour [11]

**NPC Information**: Elsie is a thin, nervous, and peaceable middle-aged woman, with ash-blond hair.

She inherited her mother's shop, Flagg Arms & Armour, and hasn't been able to find her way into any other business opportunities so far.

She doesn't know much about her own merchandise and can be convinced to give discounts.

# What Do They Know About the Bats?

Barbara and Elsie only know that there are rumours about bats causing a menace at the abbey.

# HAILEY COMMETT



#### Where to Find:

1) Wandering the town.

2) Travelling the River *River* in her boat.

3) Fly-fishing from the bridge outside the Fighting Cockatrice Inn[3].

**NPC Information**: A cheerful fisherwoman originally from Great Lunden. Of indeterminate age, she has dark hair and skin, and a crooked smile.

Hailey always has some kind of scheme going to make extra money—ranging from hiring out her boat to adventurers, to selling replicas of the abbey made out of cheese.



Where to Find: Glover's Tailors [10]

**NPC Information**: A slender, aging man, impeccably dressed and rather handsome, Harry runs Glover's Tailors. He aims to keep the finer folk of Hertshire up to date with the latest Great Lunden fashions. Glover's shop has lace, dyed cloth in various cuts and colours, and some of bolts of exotic silk.

### What Do They Know About the Bats?

Hailey, Harry, and Jack are aware of a bat problem at the abbey, either through their own experience during services there or from gossiping customers.

Mandeville has seen the bats swooping around on the rooftops late one night. He assumed he was seeing things in his drunken state.

## HARRY GLOVER

## Jack Ladd



Where to Find: Ladd Ropemakers [17]

**NPC Information**: Jack is a young and earnest man, dark-haired, greyeyed, and permanently tousled. He runs Ladd Ropemakers selling ropes and nets of various sizes from his shop near the banks of the River *River* adjacent the watermill [16]. MANDEVILLE 'BREAKSPEAR' PRICE



Mandeville 'Breakspear' Price (Human): HD Level 2 Fighter; hp 17; AC 5 [14], Atk Mortuary sword (1d8); Move 12; Save 12; AL L; CL/XP 3/60 S: 14; I: 10; W: 10; D: 11; C: 13; Ch: 13 Special: strength bonuses, multiple attacks, additional languages (Gaulandian and Giant); Equipment: Mortuary sword, (as longsword), chainmail armour, list of likely suspects, bottle of good wine.

#### Where to Find:

Merchant Guardhouse [13] or The Piscacean Inn [8]

He's easily impressed by tales of adventure and could be convinced to give a discount to a suitably 'heroic' group.

NPC Information: The captain of the Saint Abbans Merchant Guard, which is paid for by the wealthier townsfolk and reports to the mayor. Since the last cleric of St. Abbans passed away, they guard the roads into and out of town and enforce local laws. Price is a former nobleman, exiled from his family for an unknown crime. He's more of a fighter than an investigator and relies on a couple of sharp-eyed constables to solve any cases that aren't immediately obvious. Failing that, he'll drag likely suspects into the street and scream threats into their faces until someone owns up to something. Price can usually be found in The Piscacean Inn [8], morosely cleaning the ale out of his long and drooping black moustache.

# MAYOR KYRA WINSTEAD



Where to Find: Mayor Winstead's Office [14]

**NPC Information**: Aside from her elaborate mayoral garb, with its gold trimmings and colourful guild badges, Mayor Winstead appears at first glance to be perfectly average. Average height, ordinary face, hair the dull brown of freshly turned dirt, mouth full of crooked teeth. Then she speaks, her voice laden with authority, and it becomes almost impossible to focus on anyone else.

Mayor Winstead wants to make the guilds and businesses of Saint Abbans—and by extension, herself—richer. She recognises the importance of the abbey in drawing visitors to the town but resents the money it leaches from 'honest citizens'. She has been making sure that the tithes to the abbey are dwindling, diverting some to other areas such as 'civil and guild matters'. A match for the abbess in cunning, stubbornness and charisma, she's not above marching into the abbey and haranguing her rival.

**Mayor Winstead** will leave **Mandeville Price** to deal with any matters of law and order, but if a group of newcomers start making strange deals around town, she'll likely take an interest in them. She may even offer them a job if she thinks they can make St Abbans safer or more prosperous, or if they can embarrass or impoverish the Abbey.

She'll gleefully buy any objects stolen from the abbey, if only to annoy the abbess. She'll baulk at purchasing anything that costs more than **50 gold quids**.

# What Do They Know About the Bats?

Mayor Winstead has heard the rumours of bat trouble, but cares neither way really. If it's a real problem, then she sees it as the abbess' problem to solve.

Gaddesden knows nothing about the bats.



Gaddesden Halfmoon (Human): HD Level 4 Magic User; hp 11; AC 8 [11], Atk Staff (1d6); Move 12; Save 12 (+2 versus spells); AL N; CL/XP 4/120 S: 8; I: 15; W: 13; D: 9; C: 10; Ch: 10 Special: spellcasting (read magic, detect magic, shield, wizard lock, and detect object), additional languages (Demonic, Gaulandian, Elvish, Goblin); Equipment: Staff, notebook, magical longcoat, and a magical pocket mirror.

### GADDESDEN HALFMOON

Where to Find: Gaddesden's Tower [9]

**NPC Information**: Gaddesden is a large, balding man with wide jowls. Officially, Gaddesden Halfmoon is a retired merchant and local eccentric with more money than sense. He likes to wear a *magical long coat* studded with small mirrors. This is a magic item which improves AC by 1 point and grants a 1 in 3 chance of reflecting any spells that target the wearer back upon their caster. Magic-User and Cleric spells of Level 5 or greater ignore this effect.

It's an open secret amongst Hertfolk that Gaddesden is, in fact, a semiretired wizard. Gaddesden was trained in the hermetical arts and regards magic as a means to achieve enlightenment rather than a method for wielding temporal power. Still, he seems happy enough to use it to

make money on the side. It is unclear how he has managed to avoid the claws of local witchfinders for so long, but bribery hasn't been ruled out.

Gaddesden has a seven-foot-high mirror in his parlour. If you speak the words '*By Seelie paths take me*' and walk into the mirror while holding the image of a particular window or mirror in your mind, you will pass through and emerge from the piece of glass that you imagined. There is a one in six chance that you'll actually appear out of a different window or mirror. Gaddesden charges **20 gold quids** per journey and does not give refunds, even if people emerge from the wrong place.

If anyone stands in front of the mirror and says 'Mirror, mirror on the wall' and asks it a question, it will tell them to 'Piss off!'.

Gaddesden also has a *magical pocket-mirror* which he can use, once per day, to identify the properties of a magical item. He charges **10 gold quids** for this service. If an item piques his interest, he'll offer to buy it from the Player Characters, otherwise he can arrange for magical items to be sold, for a small commission, to one of his hermetical colleagues.

# THE ORDER OF THE SLUG

#### Where to Find:

Outside the Abbey or inside any of the taverns or inns on the taverncrawl of Saint Abbans.

NPC Information: Three friends who seek adventure together, accompanied by their three mutated, not-quite-human hirelings. They all wear matching tabards that depict a happy slug raising a pint with an arm that it shouldn't have. You can use them as ready-to-play Player Characters, replacement Player Characters, rivals, or just an encounter in town or the abbey.

If the Order of the Slug also takes on the job of hunting the church bats, its members may be encountered multiple times shooting crossbows at shrieking church bats, fruitlessly searching the catacombs for undead, clambering across roofbeams, or discussing increasingly improbable plans for traversing the abbey.

The Order's three hirelings, known as The Finches (see page 20), are all part-human at best and may be related to each other. They've all adopted the same surname possibly as a joke. None of them understand money so the Order members usually buy things for them.



VIN

Vin (Human): HD Level 2 Dragon Singer (see The Midderlands Expanded pg. 151); hp 10; AC 8 [11], Atk Brass knuckles (1d4); Move 12; Save 14; AL N; CL/XP 2/30

S: 14; I: 11; W: 9; D: 11; C: 14; Ch: 14 Special: slatescale, dampen sound, songcasting, additional languages (Oldenwalish and Goblin); Equipment: Brass knuckles, pouch of herbs from Oldenwale, a tankard, and 7 gold quids

A tattooed and bearded Dragon Singer from Oldenwale. Has a deep and abiding love for his home country and longs to transform into a true dragon. Fights with his fists. Loves banter. Hates park benches due to an incident in his past. Vin is the joker of the group and is as likely to encourage shenanigans as he is to dispense wise advice. Still, if anyone threatens or harms his friends, he'll smash their teeth in.

You can adjust the Level of the three Order members (**Vin**, **Powys**, and **Kroop**) to match that of the Player Characters. If that puts their Level at 3 or higher then raise the hirelings' Levels as well but keep them one Level below the Order members.

#### Powys



*Powys* (Human): HD Level 2 Fighter; hp 14; AC 7 [12] (+1 bonus with shield), Atk Spear-blade (1d8) or two-handed sword (1d10) or exotic longsword (1d8); Move 12; Save 14; AL L; CL/XP 2/30

S: 15; I: 10; W: 8; D: 14; C: 13; Ch: 12 Special: Parry, strength bonuses, multiple attacks, additional languages (Emeraudian and Fey); Equipment: Spear-blade (circular sawblade attached to a spear-shaft (as battle-axe), two-handed sword, exotic longsword, *potion of healing*, leather armour, shield, bag of shiny stones, 2 gold quids

A bold young warrior with short blond hair, he hails from Emeraude. Powys is impulsive and easily frustrated, but has the makings of a true champion. His preferred tactic in battle is to climb onto something then jump off it and hack at his enemies on the way down. Favours exotic weapons. The first time he's encountered he has a pole with a circular saw blade attached to it. The second time he bears a twohanded sword. By the third time he's somehow acquired a curved sword from a distant land.



Kroop

Kroop (Human): HD Level 2 Magic-User; hp 7; AC 9 [10], Atk Dagger (1d4); Move 12; Save 14 (+2 versus spells); AL L; CL/XP 2/30 S: 9; I: 16; W: 14; D: 9; C: 10; Ch: 11 Special: Spell casting (detect magic, hold portal, light, magic missile, protection from evil, read languages, read magic, and shield), additional languages (Celestial, Elvish, Old Tongue, and Goblin); Equipment: Dagger, small shield, spellbook, 1d3 books of hidden lore, and 5 gold quids

A solemn, sagacious, and wise beyond his years Havenlander. He is the Order's voice of reason and calm. He is not trained in the use of shields himself, but brings a spare one with him in case one of his companions loses theirs. Kroop loves stories and will often dispense ancient lore to his companions. He is deeply loyal to his friends, but often exasperated by their antics.

# THE FINCHES

Where to Find: Outside the Abbey or inside any of the taverns or inns on the tavern-crawl of Saint Abbans.

NPC Information: The Finches are the hirelings of the members of the Order of the Slug; Vin, Powys, and Kroop.

# MAMA FINCH



What Do They Know About the Bats?

The Order of the Slug will only find out about the bats if they are involved in looking into the problem for the Abbess.

The Finches won't get to know anything more than the Order of the Slug decide to tell them to get them to do their dirty work. *Mama Finch* (*Mutated Human*): **HD** Level 1 Fighter; **hp** 9; **AC** 7 [12], **Atk** Battle axe (1d8) or light crossbow (1d4+1); **Move** 12; **Save** 14; **AL** N; **CL/ XP** 2/30

**S:** 17; **I:** 6; **W:** 6; **D:** 12; **C:** 13; **Ch:** 10 **Special:** strength bonuses, multiple attacks

**Equipment:** Battle-axe, crossbow, 10 crossbow bolts soaked in naphtha, bag of fried meat, and bottle of turnip vodka.

A burly woman with skin the colour of fresh grass and pink hair who wears red lipstick. She survives entirely on a diet of fried meat and ridiculous quantities of alcohol. She has left a string of jilted lovers and abandoned children behind her.

The Bats of Saint Abbans

## POSHBOY FINCH



Poshboy Finch (Human? Goblin? Something else?): HD Level 1 Assassin; hp 6; AC 7 [12], Atk Bladed whip (1d6) or dagger (1d4) or hand crossbow (1d4); Move 12; Save 14; AL C; CL/XP 1/15

S: 13; I: 6; W: 8; D: 15; C: 12; Ch: 4 Special: Disguise, magic item use, backstab, poison.

Equipment: Bladed whip, dagger, hand-crossbow, 30 gold quids.

A stringy goblinoid creature wearing greasy, but expensive clothing, a tricorn hat, and a monocle that contains no glass. His face is distorted and frog-like, with a wide mouth, yellow sideburns and a spindly moustache.

He fights with a bladed whip and sees monsters everywhere. He is the last scion of a degenerate noble house and was raised by a nanny as his father couldn't stand the sight of him.

Poshboy doesn't understand the concept of money, but likes to leave shiny gold coins in prominent places.

Chimp Finch (Mutated Human): HD Level 1 Thief; hp 4; AC 6 [13], Atk Dagger (1d4); Move 12; Save 15; AL N; **CL/XP** 1/15

S: 11; I: 5; W: 9; D: 13; C: 12; Ch: 8 Special: Backstab, saving throw bonus, thieving skills.

Equipment: Leather armour, dagger, shield, sun symbol.

Chimp has pale, almost-blue skin and brown hair in a bowl-cut. He's possibly the result of a mad wizard's attempts to cross humans with apes.

He carries a dagger and shield, but doesn't actually know how to use the shield and gains no benefit from it. Chimp worships a nameless—and unpronounceable to him—god of the sun and friendship.

If levelling Chimp Finch up, multiclass him into a Fighter to represent him working out how to use the shield.

CHIMP FINCH

# AROUND THE ABBEY

In the descriptions that follow, Where to Find locations for the NPCs are referred to on the Abbey maps (refer to the Map & Handouts Book).



Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Outside Main Entry.

**NPC Information**: 'Honest' Bart has lank brown hair, a crooked smile and an obsequious manner. He's not particularly dirty, but he has the personality of a human greasestain.

A crooked trader who hangs around outside the abbey, fleecing pilgrims and visitors alike.

He has contacts with local criminals and is willing to fence stolen items for the Player Characters. He'll absolutely overcharge them and/or betray them if he can make profit by so much as a bent penny in the process.

# PEARL VINTNER



Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Outside in the Garden near the Shed.

**NPC Information**: Pearl is a stringy woman in her forties, with greying hair cut very short. She wears workers' overalls and is always chewing a wad of herbs. Her breath smells variously of mint, basil, and watercress.

Pearl is the chief builder in charge of all the workers trying to repair the abbey. Pearl knows that, with the bats making things worse, she and her workers are fighting a losing battle to repair the abbey, but doesn't much care.

Pearl isn't a bad person, but her first loyalty is to her lads and lasses rather than her employer, particularly since **Abbess Jessamine** argues and haggles over every farthing. Pearl is open to side-jobs and underhand deals as long as no one is likely to get hurt and the price is right. She must also be convinced that no blame will fall on her or her guild. For example:

- Renting out ladders to the Player Characters or providing advice on scaling the outside of the abbey.
- Hiring out some of her workers to travel up to the **Bell Tower** with the Player Characters and ring the *Carillon Cotillion* sequence while the Player Characters hold off the summoned bats.
- Running interference and/or providing the equipment and expertise to allow the Player Characters to open a window in a gallery and winch down any heavy items they want to steal.

# What Do They Know About the Bats?

Pearl and her workers know that the creatures steal everything! One of them is lurking about in the attics somewhere. If you need to determine her workers' Strength or Dexterity, roll 1d3+9 for each stat.

'Honest Bart' knows nothing useful. He will attempt to sell the Player Characters a 'bat-proof helmet' if asked. Will assure the purchaser that it is fool proof and works perfectly (it isn't and it doesn't).

Intro or NPCs: Town NPC

# ABBEY NPCS



**Abbess Jessamine** (Human): **HD** Level 7 Abbey Monk; **hp** 19; **AC** 7 [12], **Atk** fist (1d3) or spells; **Move** 12; **Save** 9; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 7/600

S: 8; I: 15; W: 17; D: 10; C: 9; Ch: 14 Special: spellcasting (blinding curse, cure light wounds, protection from evil, bless, find traps, silence 15 feet radius, cure disease, remove curse, cure serious wounds, and commune), turn undead, additional languages (Old Tongue, Lawful, Elvish, and Scrottish) Equipment: ceremonial robe, Quill pen, holy books, notebook, holy eye pendant, ceremonial blindfold.

## ABBESS JESSAMINE

"The creatures are a menace!" They're eating away at the very fabric of this sacred place. They devour everything useful and steal everything precious. My brethren cannot sleep at night for their caterwauling. Two of them set upon Brother Scapula and caused him to tumble off the North Stair! We are a peaceable order and these bats are curiously resistant to the holy powers of The Watcher. I'm not a violent woman, but I give you licence to spill the creatures' blood if that is what it takes to end this scourge."

#### Where to Find:

Abbey Level 1: **Abbess's Office** off the **South Transept**.

During the day she may also be officiating over-elaborate ceremonies in the **Choir**, **Presbytery**, or **Chancel**.

**NPC Information**: The abbess is a short, sharp-featured, confident woman in her late 60s. She can usually be found in her office,

writing letters to all and sundry in the hopes of gaining funds for the repair and upkeep of the abbey.

She will offer 100 gold quids to the Player Characters if they can get rid of the flock of church bats that plague the abbey.

- An upcoming celebration at the abbey-cathedral in three days' time— Watcher's Week—will bring much needed revenue, however, not dealing with the bats will deter visitors so they must be dealt with before the celebration.
- She expects every bat to be dealt with, and fully expects that no abbey monks be harmed, and that no relics go missing from the abbey.
- She warns the adventurers that the upper reaches of the abbey, "Haven't been stable or safe for some time" and that they'll "need to use their initiative" to find their way through.
- She'll also note that Brother Makepeace's pet church bat should be spared.
- The abbess doesn't know precisely how many church bats there are but is sure there can't be more than ten.
- She'll suggest that the PCs make their way to **Brother Eustace's** old quarters in the **Bell Tower** to get a proper accounting. "He used to keep the lot of them as pets, before he passed into The Watcher's care."
- She'll also direct them to speak to **Brother Scapula**, who was attacked by a church bat not long ago and is in the infirmary, being tended by **Brother Henger**.
- If asked about were-bats, Gloom Bat, or Mathias Pouke, she will sigh in exasperation and firmly stated that, "I haven't all day to deal with such twaddle. I have ecumenical matters to attend to."

If the Player Characters want to know why overgrown bats are a problem when there are ghosts, animated swarms of tiles, and literal demons wandering the abbey, she'll impatiently explain that the other creatures are simply manifestations of the abbey's decay and will be quelled if the abbey monks could only reach the upper areas and conduct certain rituals.

If the Player Characters ask too many questions, the abbess will wave them off. Jessamine is a very busy woman who just wants someone to make the bat problem go away so she can focus on money problems instead.

If pressed, she'll mention that:

- the creatures are cowardly when challenged but are inveterate thieves,
- each one seems to like different things. **Brother Eustace** used a series of bell chimes to control them, but that was before her time.

Particularly persuasive or insistent Player Characters can get the abbess to recall that one of the 'big' bats likes bright cloth and stole a lady's hat during a ceremony.

Jessamine wears a *ceremonial blindfold* that improves her Armour Class by 2 and allows her to see out of any other pair of eyes, (living, carved, painted, or stitched), once per day. She can see through the blindfold as if she wasn't wearing it.

# ABBEY MONKS

All of the abbey monks venerate The Watcher From The Shore. These 'monks' are not to be confused with the Monk character Class from the Swords & Wizardry Complete rulebook.

# **Easy Healing**

Wait, isn't adventuring in a place full of friendly NPCs with access to healing spells really easy?

Yeah. no.

If the Player Characters request magical healing from the abbey monks, they'll be told that:

- using healing spells on visitors and townsfolk is one of their order's last remaining stable forms of income.
- all spells are precious and anyone who wants healing must pay for it, no exceptions.

Even Brother Scapula was only treated with one use of cure light wounds to ensure that his leg healed straight. He has to allow paying customers to come to his sick bed so that he can use his spells on them rather than himself.

Cure light wounds costs 20 gold guids per casting.

Cure serious wounds costs 60 gold quids per casting.

Persuasive and cunning heroes might be able to wangle a better deal with the abbey monks, who can and often do accept useful goods and services instead of coin.

# BROTHER BANSHEE



Brother Banshee (Hook-nosed Wart Goblin): HD Level 2 Abbey Monk; hp 6; AC 9 [10], Atk fist (1d3); Move 12; Save 13; AL L; CL/XP 2/30 **Special:** spellcasting (blinding curse, cure light wounds), turn undead; **Equipment:** robe

#### Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Crossing.

NPC Information: An unusually small and wiry hook-nosed wart goblin with an unusually small nose for his kind.

He fixes things around the abbey and used to play the **Church Organ** when it was still operational. He follows the usual timetable for abbey monks but may be found fixing things anywhere on the ground floor or basement level in between prayers and sermons.

He dislikes the church bats because they do more damage than he can fix, but also talks about how useful they could be if only they could be tamed.

He thinks that the Church Organ is haunted, feeling as though something is watching him when he tends to it.

If asked about church bats he describes

one particular creature, Winsome Marie, that eats pigeons and swoops around covered in feathers.

#### BROTHER FORTUNE



**Brother Fortune** (Human): **HD** Level 5 Abbey Monk; **hp** 11; **AC** 9 [10], **Atk** fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 11; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 5/240 **Special:** spellcasting (*blinding curse, cure light wounds* ×2, *bless* ×2), turn undead; **Equipment:** robe Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Nave.

**NPC Information**: Very old and creaky with a fading, but extremely dramatic voice. His memory is also fading and hence his advice is confusing.

Brother Fortune often leads prayers or ceremonies when the abbess is unavailable. He's the abbey's chandler and is expected to carry out this duty during Vapours (4 pm to 8 pm) but mainly supervises **Novice Andrew** in doing the actual work of making and lighting candles.

He tells the Player Characters that every time he puts new candles out, they quickly go missing.

If asked about anything else he'll hold forth about the history of the abbey for as long as the Player Characters will listen to him—if they listen for ten minutes or more, he'll usually answer their question and will provide another piece of garbled, but useful information more or less at random. Things that Brother Fortune can tell the Player Characters include;

- The abbey once had a spirit guardian in the form of a great black dog. "Oh, a very big dog. But she went mad centuries ago and got walled up in one of the smaller towers on the abbey's roof. Now, which tower was it?"
- The waters of the **Lady Chapel** have incredible properties. "The things I've seen there! Him! With the eyes and teeth! Gloom Bat? No, he's mnade up. And the great hands throbbing in seething purple skies! Prunes!"
- "Eh? Yes, yes, walking the Cloister is not very safe for the uninitiated. Unsafe. Extremely unsafe. Anyway, I told her, you'll need lime for that, or it won't set right and that'll be a to-do."
- "Those church mouselings actually worship **The Watcher From The Shore**, that's why we're to have no traps. It's in the church ordinances somewhere. But the abbess will have her cat, oh yes. Such a pretty kitty yes-she-is."
- "The Baron's true name is... Oh, what was it again? Began with a J, I think. Paulinus? Egbert? Something like that. You tell him! Terrible fuss it was."

### BROTHER MAKEPEACE



Brother Makepeace (Human): HD Level 2 Abbey Monk; hp 7; AC 9 [10], Atk fist (1d3); Move 12; Save 13; AL L; CL/ XP 2/30 Special: spellcasting (*cure light wounds*), turn undead; Equipment: robe Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Kitchen.

**NPC Information**: The abbey's cook. Brother Makepeace gets up at 4 am to ensure that the first meal of the day is ready for his brethren by 6 am. He also cooks from 11 am to noon and 5 pm to 6 pm

He spends much of his time cleaning up after meals and is excused from giving sermons. Oddly, he doesn't eat a lot himself.

He does dote on his chubby little pet bat **Burbling Cheese** and will fling pot lids and curses at any Player Character that dares harm the placid creature.

If questioned about the bats he says that he, "raised **Burbling Cheese** from

*a pup*" and that the others only went wild after **Brother Eustace** passed away a year ago. He knows that **Burbling Cheese** used to be friendly with an ink-covered bat called **Scrumptious Veil**, but she's taken up with another bat now.

He also knows that "one of the big bats has a sweet tooth" and will steal any tarts, elderberry wine, honey, or sugar that she can find.



#### BROTHER PRUDENCE



**Brother Prudence** (Human): **HD** Level 3 Abbey Monk; **hp** 9; **AC** 9 [10], **Atk** fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 13; **AL** L; **CL/ XP** 3/60

**Special:** spellcasting (*blinding curse*, *cure light wounds* ×2), turn undead; **Equipment:** robe

Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Printing Room.

**NPC Information**: Chronicler and printer for the abbey. A tall and lanky man who always seems to be struggling to fit his limbs into the available space. If anyone has commissioned him to print something, he'll be excused regular duties (except for major ceremonies and dispensing healing), and can be found in the **Printing Room** from 8 am until 6 pm.

He's deeply depressed that he cannot write chronicles due to the royal ban and instead must print local broadsheets and posters.

If asked about the royal ban he will explain, a little shamefacedly, that

past editions of the Abban Chronicle were quite scandalous in places. But it was his predecessor's political speculations that led to the royal court taking an interest, confiscating twenty years-worth of chronicles and revoking the abbey's licence to make more.

His predecessor, **Brother Parry**, is *"enjoying the hospitality of her Majesty"* in a prison in Great Lunden. Breaking him out would be an act of near-suicidal righteousness.

He will lend the Player Characters ink if it can be used to lure the church bat called **Scrumptious Veil**, who is an absolute pest and will drink ink straight out of the bottle. He knows **Scrumptious Veil** by name and believes that another bat is called **Blandly Chalk**.

# BROTHER HENGER



**Brother Henger** (Human): **HD** Level 4 Abbey Monk; **hp** 11; **AC** 9 [10], **Atk** fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 12; **AL** L; **CL/XP** 4/120

**Special:** spellcasting (*blinding curse, cure light wounds* ×2, *bless*), turn undead; **Equipment:** robe

Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Infirmary.

**NPC Information**: The herbalist and gardener. Brother Henger presides over the **Infirmary** and takes care of injured or sick abbey monks and visitors.

He is excused morning prayers so that he can tend to his patients during Matins (4 am to 8 am).

He is also allowed to work in the **Herb Garden** during Nonce, (8 am to Noon), unless a major ceremony is underway.

He must perform extra prayers during Evensong, (8 pm to Midnight), to make up for these dispensations.

He will insist on being present if the **Brother Scapula**.

Player Characters choose to question Brother Scapula.

Once he learns what they are here to do, Brother Henger offers to give a potion of healing to each of the Player Characters on completion of their bat-hunt, but only if they manage to spare at least half of the church bats. If they subdue or tame all of the church bats without killing them, he'll give them a *potion of extra healing* as a bonus.

He'll offer them a peaceful solution to their quest in the form of the *Carillon Cotillion*—a tune that can be played on the bells of the abbey in order to summon and tame all the church bats in the area. **Brother Eustace** had a copy of it, but, *"Watcher knows where it's got to now"*.

He knows that the queen bat has a sweet tooth and is called **Winking Jade**. He also knows that the king bat is called **Peachy Keen** and that others are called **Diverse Alarums** and **Winsome Marie**.

#### BROTHER SCAPULA



**Brother Scapula** (Human): **HD** Level 3 Abbey Monk; **hp** 9; **AC** 9 [10], **Atk** fist (1d3); **Move** 12; **Save** 13; **AL** L; **CL/ XP** 3/60

**Special:** spellcasting (*blinding curse, cure light wounds* ×2), turn undead; **Equipment:** robe

Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Infirmary.

**NPC Information**: A flabby man with a soft face, creased into a near-permanent frown. Normally he organises the many complex rituals of the order and does more than his share of preaching.

Currently, he's in the infirmary with a broken leg, having been attacked by the church bats on the **North Stair**. He's excused all duties except for dispensing healing spells to others and spends much of his time in private prayer, contemplation, and studying holy texts.

His religious fervour prevents him from using his healing spells on himself, believing that the **Watcher** 

is testing his faith through pain. Also, the abbess and other monks would strongly dissaprove.

During Nonce, (8 am to Noon), the abbess or any of the other abbey monks could be visiting **Brother Scapula** to check the details of an upcoming ceremony.

**Brother Scapula** didn't get a good look at the church bats and doesn't know their names, but there were two of them and one of them had a needle sticking out of its head. He's very angry about the attack and will offer an extra reward to Player Characters who kill all the bats.

He's not foolish enough to demand the death of **Brother Makepeace**'s pet, **Burbling Cheese**, but he won't shed any tears over the creature either.

He knows a magic ring was hidden somewhere in the abbey and will reveal its location when he has proof that all the bats are dead. The ring, called the *dolorous ring*, is in the **Angel Tower**, tucked under a brick, and is extremely difficult to find if you don't know what you're looking for.

# Novice Andrew



Novice Andrew (Human): HD Level 0 Abbey Monk; hp 3; AC 9 [10], Atk fist (1d3); Move 12; Save 16; AL L; CL/XP B/10 Special: none Equipment: robe Where to Find: Abbey Level 1: Nave.

**NPC Information**: Thin and nervous. Andrew is expected to spend time learning from all of the abbey monks. He is most often found helping **Brother Makepeace** or **Brother Banshee** during the day.

He usually helps **Brother Fortune** make candles during Vapours (4 pm to 8 pm)

He does not give sermons or take part in ceremonies, but instead cleans things, rings the hours, or performs other menial tasks. He is not entirely settled in his vocation and could be persuaded to become a crap, but very cheap, henchman.

He saw a church bat in a helmet stealing a shiny vambrace off of a local man-at-arms and retreat with it into **Bowmount Tower**, although he doesn't know its name.



# RANDOM MONK GENERATOR

If you want or need extra abbey monks to flesh out the Order of St. Abbans or for any monastic encounters down the line, you can use this generator. Roll 3d20 and consult the table below to determine the monk's name, appearance, and quirk.

RANDOM MONK GENERATOR TABLE			
1d20	Name	Appearance	Quirk
1	Truth	Has a large black beard and tiny eyes	Carries a small bell and rings it at odd intervals
2	Vane	Moon-faced and pie-eyed	Winces any time anyone uses bad language
3	Sandrich	Painfully handsome	Chases naughty children and other undesirables out of the Abbey with a broom
4	Godliman	Looks like somebody's dad	Answers every question with a question
5	Elfton	Gaunt and ascetic with harshly chiselled cheekbones and haunted eyes	Laughs at inappropriate moments
6	Prudence	Red-cheeked and portly	Exudes a palpable aura of serenity
7	Clavicle	Withered and ancient	Squeezes his spots in public
8	Cornea	Has black hair with white streaks in it, giving him the aspect of a distressed magpie	Hums when he walks and rocks slightly on his feet when listening
9	Albumen	Young and dough-faced	Regards almost everything as a sin
10	Sobriety	Corpulent, with pockmarks on his cheeks and hooded grey eyes	Has a high-pitched, girlish voice and no sense of humour whatsoever
11	Dandelion	His robes are stained with, (roll 1d6),1) Honey, 2.) Jam, 3) Wax, 4) Guano, 5) Oil, or 6) Blood.	Has terrible hay-fever
12	lchor	Has a hawk-like nose and a scar under his left eye	Is incredibly randy
13	Fugue	Dark-skinned and fine- featured	Fixes birds' wings and looks after orphaned baby animals in his spare time
14	Dancer	Oddly greasy	Has no time for your crap
15	Stefan	Smiles too much	ls a masochist
16	Frater	Wears a white robe	Is a retired soldier
17	Beauregard	Tall, with an ageless face and piercing eyes	Says "Umm" after every third word
18	Perish-Sin	Has a shock of ginger hair	Came here from another land
19	Hel	Looks perpetually sleepy	Is secretly a worshipper of Morgontula
20	Joy	Pale and unhealthy looking	Once per Adventure, he will take a Player Character by the hand, look deep into their eyes and say, "It will all be alright" The Player Character will feel a great sense of wellbeing and heal 1d3 HP



<sup>34 |</sup> The Bats of Saint Abbans

# Index

# A

Angel Tower ..... 31

#### B

belfry		. 5
Bell Tower	23,	25
Blandly Chalk		29
Bowmount Tower		32
Breckon Sweet Shop	8,	13
Brother Banshee		
Brother Eustace 25,	28,	30
Brother Fortune		
Brother Henger	25,	30
Brother Makepeace		
31, 32		
Brother Parry		29
Brother Prudence		29
Brother Scapula 24,	25, .	26,
30, 31		
Burbling Cheese	28,	31

#### C

Carillon Cotillion 5, 23,	30
Chancel	24
Chimp Finch	21
Choir	24
Church Organ	26
Clock Tower	
Cloister	
Commett, Hailey	14
Crossing	

#### D

Dragon Singer ..... 18

#### E

Ecclesiastical Time ...... 5 Emeraude..... 19 **7** 

#### 

# G

Gaddesden Halfmoon 9, 17	
Gaddesden's Tower 9	
Giant Stag Beetle 9	
Glover, Harry 9	
Glover's Tailors	
Goman 5, 8, 10	
Great Lunden 7, 14, 29	

## H

 Haunted Heart Hotel, The.. 9

 Havenland
 4, 7, 8, 10

 Herb Garden
 30

 Hertshire
 7, 10, 11, 14

 'Honest' Bart
 22

#### l

Infirmary ...... 30, 31

#### K

#### L

#### M

Mama Finch	20
martyrdom	8
Mayor Winstead's Office	9
Merchant Guard	15
Merchant Guardhouse	9
Mirror Mage, The	9
Muddy Duck Tavern	8

#### N

Nave	27,	32
North Stair	24,	31
Novice Andrew	27,	32

# 0

#### P

Pearl Vintner	22
Piscacean Inn, The 8, 9,	15
Poshboy Finch	21
Powys 18, 19,	20
Presbytery	
Price, Mandeville 'Break-	
spear' 8, 9, 15,	16
Printing Room	29

# R

Riverlamion	10
River River 7, 8, 14,	15
Royal Church Bats	. 5

#### S

Saint Abbans 4, 6, 7, 8,	15, 16
Scrumptious Veil	28, 29
South Transept	24
St Abban	

#### 1

#### v

Vin	 <b>18</b> , 20
11)	

#### -----

Wall of Heroes 8, 9
Watcher's Week 5, 25
Watercress 7
Watermill
Wellholy Hill 7, 8, 10, 13
Wellholy Spring 8
Wicked Lady, The 9
Winsome Marie 26, 30
Winstead, Mayor Kyra 9, 16

