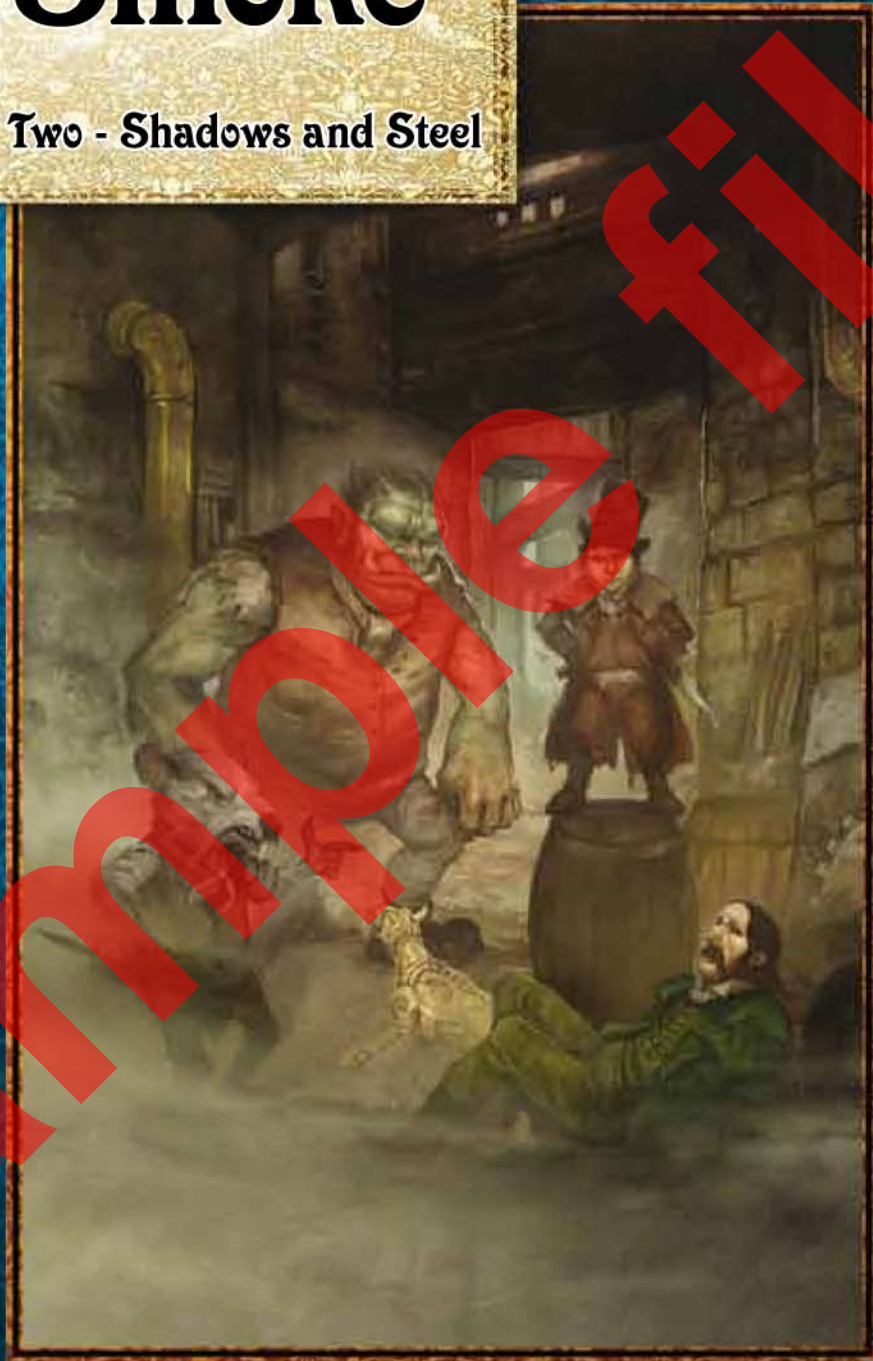


Faces in the Smoke

Volume Two - Shadows and Steel



VICTORIANA



CREDITS

Written by: Chad Bowser, Jennifer Brozak, Walt Ciechanowski, James 'Grim' Desborough, Caz Granberg, Andi Newton, Andrew Peregrine, Scott Rhymer, Peter Schweighofer

Additional Material by: Simson Leigh

Editing by: Andrew Peregrine & Nimrod Jones

Layout Design and Typesetting by: Dominic McDowall-Thomas

Cover Art by: Jon Hodgson

Interior Art by: Talon Dunning, Andrew Hepworth, Jerome Huguenin, Rich Longmore, Linda Pitman, Natalie Sandells, Chad Sergesketter, Francisco Rico Torres & Debbie Lambert (with apologies for Debbie's omission in Volume One)

Art Direction: Angus Abranson & Andrew Peregrine

Production: Dominic McDowall-Thomas

Proofreading: Angus Abranson, Charlotte Law & Sarah Newton

FOR VICTORIANA AND CUBICLE 7

Victoriana Line Developer: Andrew Peregrine

Cubicle 7 Directors: Angus Abranson and Dominic McDowall-Thomas

Original Victoriana Graphic Design: Gabriel Strange and Andrew O'Hara

Second Edition Logo: Sean Buckley

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

Published by Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd.

The Victoriana Game World © 1992. This book, including all art, concepts, characters, text and intellectual properties © 2010 Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd.

Any unauthorised use of copyrighted material is illegal.

Any trademarked names are used in a historical or fictionally manner; no infringement is intended.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL GAMES STORE.

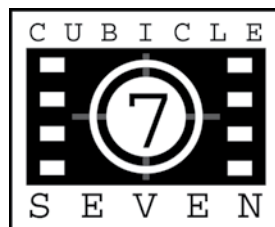
If you haven't got one, you can buy our games direct from www.cubicle7.co.uk, where you can also browse the discussions taking place on the Victoriana Forum. If you have any comments or suggestions about the game, send them to:

info@cubicle7.co.uk

Cubicle 7 Entertainment Ltd. is a private limited company, reg. no. 6036414.

Its registered office is at Riverside House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, UK.

www.cubicle7.co.uk



FACES IN THE SMOKE

VOLUME TWO – SHADOWS AND STEEL

CONTENTS

4 INTRODUCTION

11 CHAPTER 1 – GENTLEMEN AND ADVENTURERS

- 12 The Adventurers' Society
- 20 The Pan-Asiatic Spice Delivery Service
- 27 Briggs' Gang

31 CHAPTER 2 – THE BLADE OF JUSTICE

- 32 Black Dogs
- 37 Agents of the Queen
- 44 The Deceivers

50 CHAPTER 3 – HEARTS OF STEEL

- 51 Phoenix Squadron
- 60 The Worshipful Order of Horologists
- 68 The Knights of Ludd

79 CHAPTER 4 – ARCANÉ SHADOWS

- 80 Fellowship of the Red Pharaoh
- 87 The Observant Society of the Meek
- 95 The Secret Carnival

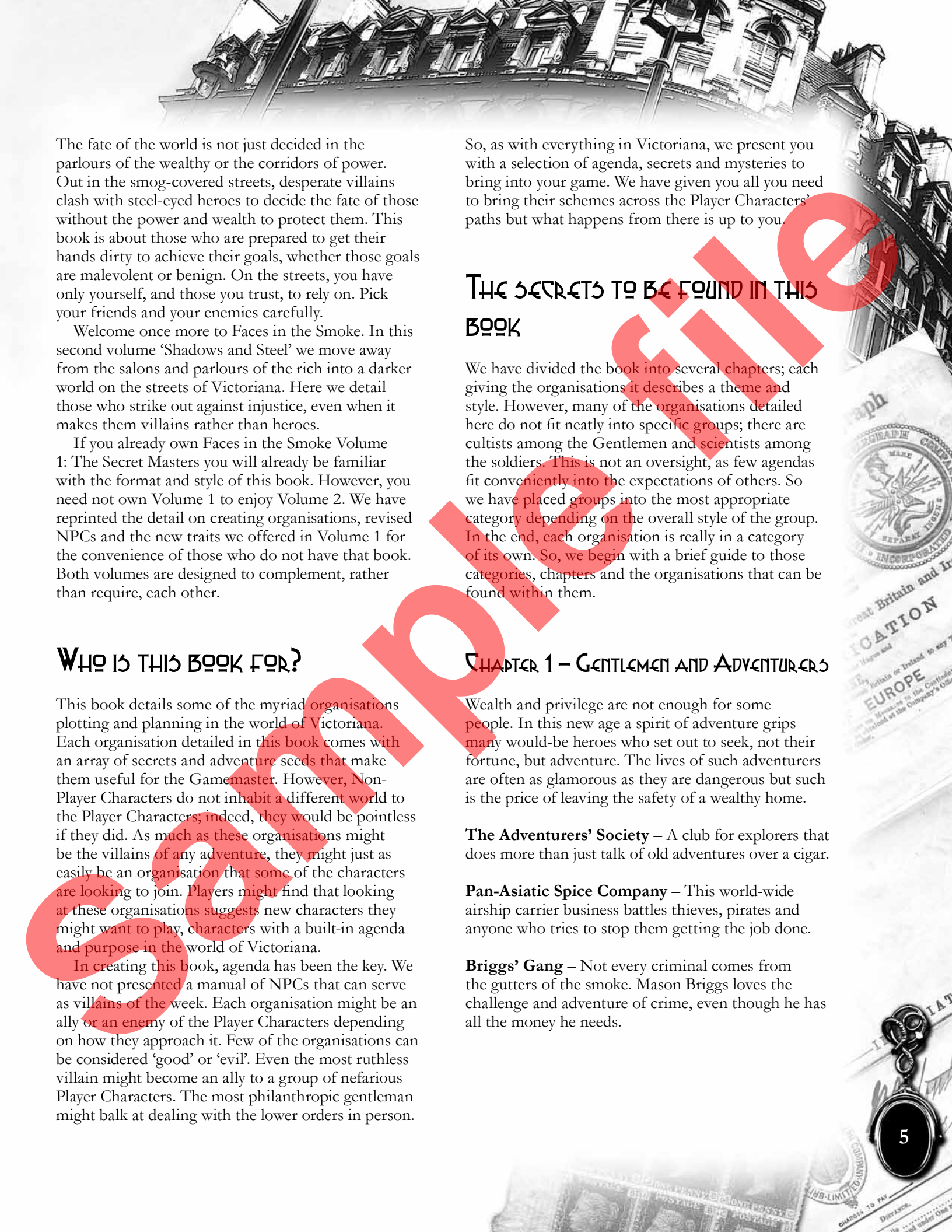
101 CHAPTER 5 – SECRETS AND ADVENTURES

117 APPENDIX – STREET GANGS AND NPCs

INTRODUCTION

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

- The Black Mistress



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

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

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

WHO IS THIS BOOK FOR?

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

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

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

THE SECRETS TO BE FOUND IN THIS BOOK

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

CHAPTER 1 – GENTLEMEN AND ADVENTURERS

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

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

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

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



CHAPTER 2 – THE BLADE OF JUSTICE

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER 3 – HEARTS OF STEEL

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER 4 – ARCANIC SHADOWS

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER 5 – SECRETS AND ADVENTURES

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

APPENDIX – STREET GANGS AND NPCs

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

[NOVEMBER 2]

PHIONS

UPLEX SKIRTS

J. W. BRADLEY'S

CHELSEA

BEST DUPLEX ELLIPTIC

(or Double Spring)

SKIRTS

TRADE AND ECONOMICAL

each being being compared

to the best of the world

they are very flexible and

they are also the most

GENT AND MUST BE WORN

FASHIONABLE AND

STREET

above are the most popular

IN ALL FIRST-CLASS

BY THE ROAD

WESTON, BRADLEY

No. 97, Cornhill

B

prod

the

EYE

very

low

first

class

of any

JOS. GILLOTT'S STAMPS

OF THE OLD STANDARD QUALITY

JOSEPH GILLOTT

WARRINGTON

TRADE MARK

ORIGINAL AND PURE

1851-1853



CREATING YOUR OWN ORGANISATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

USING YOUR ORGANISATIONS

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