



The Lostfinders Guide to MIRE END

an **A|STATE** supplement

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The Lostfinders Guide to
MIRE END

credits

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contents

'The Lostfinders Guide To Mire End' is the first supplement for the a/state role-playing game. Within these pages you will find the people, places, organisations, history and background that go to make up the unfortunate, dank burgh of Mire End.

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Tale the Tenth: Alley

A cooling corpse left half submerged in an alley. Scurts twittered and twitched at its toes. Stripped of clothes and possessions, the corpse lay forlorn. Another anonymous vagrant dead in the night. The roughly shaven head glistened with blood already beginning to congeal. Who had he been? No one would know. No one would really care. In Mire End, it didn't really pay to care too deeply.

Tale the Ninth: Robbery

"Nice coat." said Scree.

"Nice coat." said Arthur.

"Give us it." said Scree.

"Yeah, give us it." said Arthur.

The tall figure appeared surprised by this, not alarmed, but surprised. Scree drew a slim, rusty dagger from the recesses of his vest and waved it uncertainly at the figure.

"Coat, give us it."

"No. No, I don't think I will."

There was a tussle. The tall figure coughed briefly and crumpled to the ground. Scree and Arthur stood briefly, regaining their breath and their composure. Then they proceeded to strip the body.

Tale the Eighth: Departure

A figure emerged from Detseteds Pawn Shop and strode purposefully into the night. The item was safe now, away from the prying eyes of those who would misuse it. Arcane methods would allow it to be tracked down when the need arose. For now, it was a long walk back to Longshore and the comfort of a gas fire and a warming glass of spirits. The Green Canal was not far away, from there a water taxi could be procured for the journey home. Doubtless it would be a damp, miserable journey, but the promise of home and hearth was enough to keep one moving onwards.

Tale the Seventh: Father Herbert

Father Herbert gazed morosely out into the night. It was a foul evening; no doubt there would be trouble afoot for some of the poor souls in this parish. Two figures wobbled uncertainly past, doused by rain. Herbert recognised the ungainly walk of one and the stiff backed demeanour of the other: Scree and Arthur, local Hohler Gang thugs. No-goods of the highest order, drunk again and probably spoiling for a fight. Bless any that come into contact with them. And bless them for the evil they will surely do.

Tale the Sixth: Scree & Arthur

Half blind with drink and stinging smoke, Scree and Arthur staggered from the Locomotive and on to the sodden streets. A light, greasy rain was falling, creating haloes around the few functioning gas lamps. Leaning on each other in a vain quest for balance, they tottered off in the direction of the Green Canal. Wanderers were rare at this time of night, at least not the kind of wanderers whom you'd care to interrupt. Nefarious individuals went about their secretive business, skulking in windswept doorways or on creaking bridges. A wind blew through the cables and wires overhead, whining and whinging. Scree and Arthur staggered through puddles and rivulets, swearing and cursing.



Tale the Fifth: Examination

Detseted carefully locked the door, placed a substantial bar across it, and then, for good measure, propped a heavy chair under the handle. On his cluttered desk lay the oblong package wrapped in oiled rags. The man had taken surprisingly little money for it. Strange, given the workmanship of the piece. He looked carefully at the cogs and gears through an ancient loupe. Amazing workmanship, truly amazing. A fine piece of dinginsmithery. Questions as to where it came from and who really owned it bobbed about in his mind. Best to stash it away for a while, hide it somewhere out of sight and sell it on later. Amazing. Wonderful craftsmanship.

Tale the Fourth: Detseted

Stairs creaked theatrically. A door opened with a screech too carefully tuned to be natural. Depositing dark brown splashes of water on the bare floor, the figure examined his surroundings. An artfully concealed mirror swivelled to point at the newcomer. In the depths of the packed pawnshop, Emmanuel Detseted glared at his reflectors and prisms. The newcomer coughed. Groaning, Detseted raised himself and called out: "Through this way, please." It was more of an order than a request. The newcomer strolled through the dusty stacks, occasionally picking at items as if amused.

"I have something of value."

"Perhaps. The item?"

The newcomer placed a small, oblong packaged wrapped in oiled rags on the stained table.

"This," he said, a touch too portentously, "Is it."

Tale the Third: Southern Street

Within sight of Redberry Park lay Southern Street. On this inclement night, few were out and about to any great degree. Yet, one figure strode purposefully through the gloom and the rain. A tall, drawn out figure wrapped in a black coat that repelled the rain. A broad-brimmed hat was perched on his head, hanging low under the weight of water. A couple of young cutpurses, sharing a pipe of nebelweed in a secluded portico were surprised at the appearance of the figure. Questioned, they pointed and gestured up the street, making elaborate directional motions with their hands. The figure doffed his hat, bowed slightly and continued on his way.

Tale the Second: The Locomotive

The singing reached an almost unbearable pitch, then ended. The various denizens of the bar took lengthy pulls from their drinks, stamped their feet and clapped the grizzled accordion player on the back. As usual, the Locomotive was noisy, crowded and stuffy. Nebelweed smoke hung in the air, everyone had stinging eyes and aching throats. At one table sat a pair of men with iron hard stares and nervous hands. Scree and Arthur nursed their drinks and tried to block out the raucous caterwauling of the crowd. People steered clear of Scree and Arthur if they knew what was good for them. And this crowd most certainly knew. The accordion player struck up another wheezing tune and Scree and Arthur winced.

Tale the First: Volkoff

"That's taking a bit of a risk, isn't it?"

"Well, Mire End isn't too bad. There are worse places I'm sure."

"Yes, but couldn't we send one of the Portreeves?"

"To be honest, I'd rather handle this myself. It is rather sensitive after all. You see?"

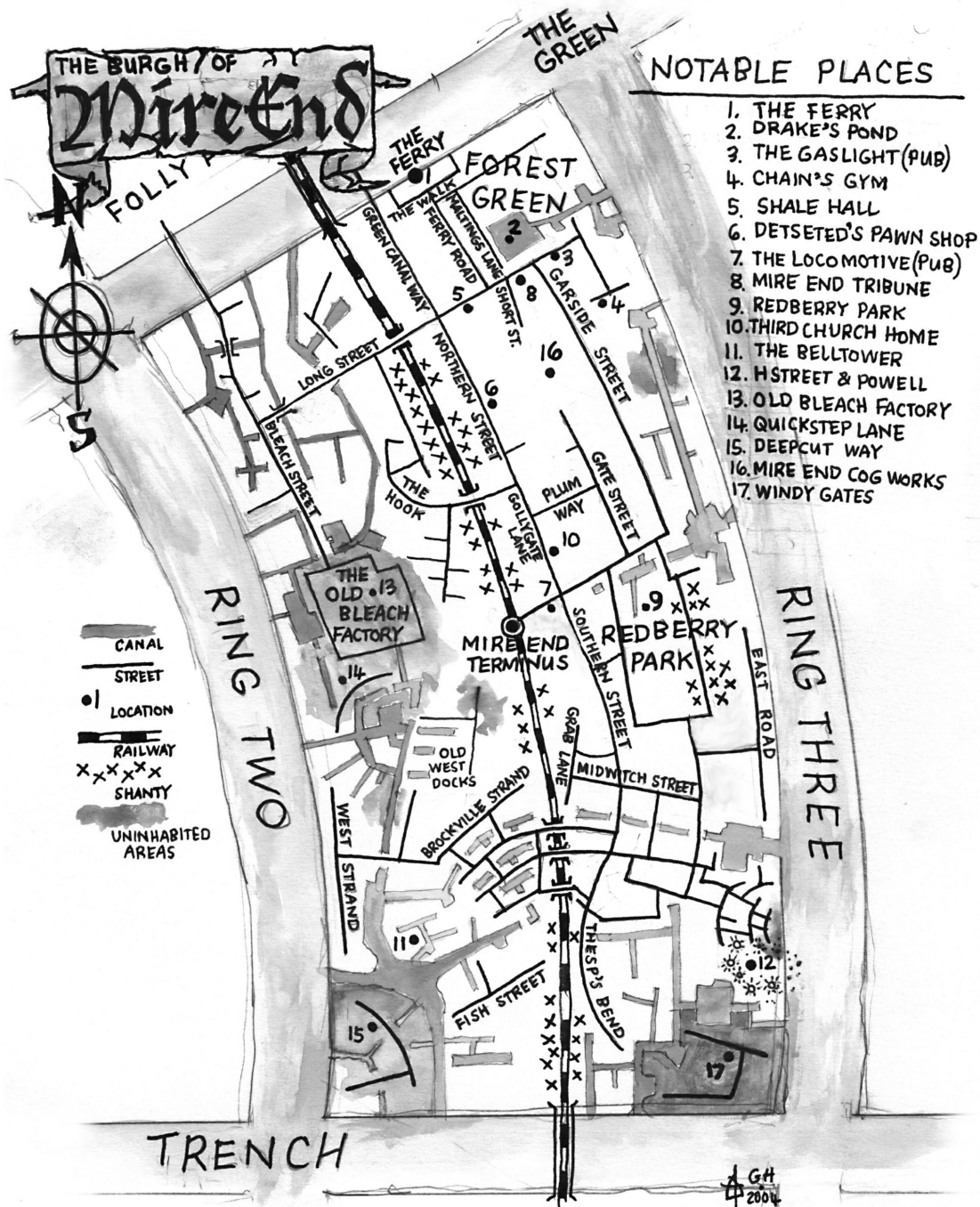
"But are you sure this is the right course of action? I mean, there's always a chance."

"But my dear fellow, Mire End needs this. Someone will find it and use it. Then, our actions will be justified."

"I bloody well hope you're right, Volkoff. I bloody do."



a map of mire end 1



"A while back, I had a friend of mine draw me a map of the burgh. Now, I don't say it's the most accurate map there is, nor is it the most comprehensive. But it is a map, and there aren't many of them floating around Mire End. You may use it if you wish, but don't blame me for any inaccuracies. And I'm certainly not responsible if it gets you into any trouble. That clear? Good."

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End



An overview of Mire End

Some places may be poorer than Mire End. Others may be in a worse state of repair. Some are subject to greater levels of violence. But few areas in The City can boast such an overwhelming atmosphere of gloom and desolation.

Perched on the eastern bank of the Green Canal, Mire End butts up against the relative security and comfort of the Three Canals Metropolitan Area (TCMA). While many areas within the TCMA are as destitute as (if not worse than) Mire End, the TCMA still refuses to take on board the poor little burgh on its eastern edge.

After The Shake (see 'History'), the burgh's situation became even worse. The destruction of what remained of its infrastructure and the resulting dissolution of any vestiges of local government made its slide into chaos inevitable.

Mire End is perhaps best known for its dampness. When the sewers and pipelines were cracked by The Shake, the water level rose alarmingly. In the present day, a layer of water, ranging from a couple of centimetres to knee deep, covers the burgh from one end to the other. The lack of a proper waste disposal infrastructure means that this 'water' is mixed with raw effluent, waste from what small businesses exist and various noxious liquids which bubble up from beneath the ground. This toxic brew drains sluggishly into the capillary canals and eventually flows into the main network. Old reservoirs and vaults underground keep the water levels high. Galoshes are a popular accessory in Mire End.

Light & Water

The lack of any controlling authority in Mire End means that people really do have to fend for themselves. Individual tenements make their own arrangements for light, heat and clean water. Ramshackle wind generators are guarded ferociously, with some housing blocks making small sums of money by selling power to their neighbours. Light, when it is available, is dim and power outages are common. Most cables are slung between the buildings, well above the level of the water, their exposed wiring and cracking insulation causing sparks and fire to rain frequently on the streets below. 'Spark tapping' (i.e.: attaching a cable to someone

else's power supply and nicking their electricity) is very common. Webs of wires and cables lead off from any main power supplies, giving tiny, attenuated amounts of power to all the people who have tapped in. That is, until the original owner of the main cable cuts all the wires.

Clean water is a very rare commodity, with different neighbourhoods adopting startlingly different methods to ensure disease free supplies. The neighbourhood of Forest Green, at the northern end of the burgh, has an archaic, complex and massive filtration plant communally tended by the adults of the area. Occupying the entire top floor of a tene-

ment block, this mechanism draws water from the canals and rooftop tanks, squeezing it through filters, distillers and purifiers to provide a reasonable supply of the cleanest water in Mire End. Each resident has a ration of water per day and an assigned number of days per year to be spent tending the machinery and operating the pumps.

Gas supplies in Mire End are few and far between. Those buildings which do have gas are generally nearer to the Green Canal end of the burgh, taking the precious vapour from pipes which cross the canals to illegally tap in to TCMA supplies.



The TCMA occasionally makes attempt to shut down these thieving pipelines, but the people of Mire End generally have them up and running again within a few days (usually with the connivance of friendly Folly Hillians). In those buildings that do use gas, small explosions and fires are, sadly, not uncommon due to the deteriorated state of the pipes, valves and fittings. When fires and explosions do occur, due to electricity, gas or gang warfare, it's generally up to local residents to help contain the conflagration and attend to the injured.

If anything, the communications network in Mire End is in a worse state of repair than any of the other infrastructure sections. Cablenets are non-existent and only a few telephone and dilapidated telegraphic lines connect with the outside world. These are slung from the tops of buildings, across the Green Canal to, yet again, connect with main lines in Folly Hills. The old Central Exchange in Mire End is, by some form of miracle, still in an operable condition. It is kept running by a couple of local flowghosts who value the anonymity and seclusion that Mire End offers. They tend the rusting switching mechanisms and ancient dingins which keep the exchange functioning. If truth were told, there is precious little communications traffic to tax the exchange and the flowghosts tend to use the systems for their own personal enjoyment.

Crime & Criminality

The lack of central control, deteriorated state of services and general lack of security have meant that Mire End has become a fertile breeding ground for criminal and gang related activity. Top of the food chain in Mire End are the various elements of the Hohler Gang. However, they do not exactly present a cohesive front, with various factions constantly squabbling for dominance and control. Technically, they are under the aegis of the fearsome Four Fingers Crew in Folly Hills, but the leader of that mob of thugs, one Kerwyn Broadbarn, tends to leave the Mire End factions well alone until they do something which could really damage the efforts of the gang. Local gangs also proliferate, either allying themselves with the Hohlers or being stridently independent. Gangs come and go as they grow, expand, get too big for their boots and are crushed into oblivion by one faction or other of the Hohlers. Top dog in the Mire End factions of the Hohler Gang is one Garsey Hatchett, a skeletal, mad individual of fearsome reputation. His methods of control are extreme and he's not averse to using tactics that would make even hardened criminals blanch.

There are numerous lesser gangs in Mire End, other than the more organised Hohlers. Many of these are made up of youths, swaggering bravos who band together for mutual protection and the chance to look like big men in front of the locals. Most of the low-level local gangs are fractious, riven with internal disputes and extremely unstable. Few remain in existence for any length of time, fading out as the founder members get older, are killed or simply move on to other things. These gangs are a fertile recruiting ground for Garsey Hatchett and his cronies, the 'best and brightest' being recruited into the more hard core world of the Hohler Gang. Some of the more long-lived Mire End streetgangs are the Southern Street Strollers, the Chain Dogs and the Yard Boys.



here & there

Unsurprisingly, transport in Mire End is pretty much limited to walking or getting about in a rickety old skiff. The old railway branch line which ran through Mire End was shut down decades ago (the Fulgurators were thoroughly fed up with the constant attacks on the trains and staff and the money it ate just to keep running) and there are no trams or other means of surface travel.

Most people tramp through the sodden streets in order to get where they are going. Some enterprising (or mad) individuals have tried to set up water taxi services in Mire End (as most TCMA water taximen won't come anywhere near the place), but these have met with universal failure. A couple of hardy, one-man enterprises still manage to exist but these are rare and always backed by the protection of the Hohler Gang.



the history of mire end a selection of important and significant events for interested parties

"Mire End has a sad, unfortunate history. For decades, happy times have been few. The Shake, The Chairman, the coming of the Hohler Gang, the strife with the Three Canals, it all drags our poor burgh down. But, we are not without hope. For if things have been better in the past, then they can be better again in the future. Possibly."

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End

-155:

The Shake. A seismic shift of unknown but highly localised origin shatters most of the tunnels and sewers under Mire End. Attempts to repair the systems are fragmentary at best and over the next few years, the remaining functioning underground ways begin to choke up with rubble and garbage.

Mire End's main source of employment at the time, known as the Bleach Factory, is almost destroyed by The Shake, its chemical vats being cracked open, flooding the surrounding area with toxins.

-150:

The tunnels under Mire End have become completely choked and a layer of water now lies over most of the burgh, draining down into the canals via a variety of streams.

-100:

With the expansion of the TCMA in full swing, Mire End petitions, like many other burghs, for entry into the new local government.

-97:

After years of prevarication, the TCMAA finally gives official word to representatives of Mire End that they will not be permitted to join. Thus begins a near century long campaign to have Mire End integrated into the TCMA.

-96:

The 'Cutting Tom' killings strike fear into the heart of Mire End as nine women are brutally slain. The killer is never apprehended.

-76:

The Ancient & Honourable Guild of Fulgurators finally closes down the railway line through the Burgh, after years of decay, lack of maintenance and general apathy.

-40:

Archibold Flint arrives in Mire End and opens up the now famous Mire End Cog Works, providing employment for many impoverished Mire Enders.

-21:

First appearance of the vigilante who would become known as 'The Chairman', a killer of criminals who fashions small chairs from their bones and leaves them in the streets of Mire End.

-15:

The first tendrils of influence from the Hohler Gang begin to creep across the Green Canal from Folly Hills.

-12:

The first issue of The Mire End Tribune appears, much to the amazement of the mainly illiterate citizens of Mire End. Over the years, this crusading journal grows and flourishes, becoming one of the burgh's best loved institutions.

-5:

Father Guy Herbert arrives in the burgh as the new parish priest, with responsibility for running the Third Church Home For Unwanted Children.

-3:

Infamous Hundred Block War Arclight attack on a faked Hirplakker staging post built to the south of Mire End. Hundreds of men, women and children are killed and maimed and a several streets are reduced to rubble. (See p71 of the a/state MRB for more details.)



highlighted locations

the belltower

Description: Ruined building with attached shanty

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A



A teetering remnant of a much larger structure, The Belltower is (possibly, maybe, who knows?) the oldest structure in Mire End. Constructed from cubic blocks of weathered grey stone, it rises an impressive sixty metres above the ground, topped with a conical roof of rusted, pitted iron. The bell which gave the tower its name is long gone, yet the ancient clockfaces remain, their hands halted at thirteen minutes past the thirteenth hour of the day. Yet, a ticking and a tocking still emanates from the Belltower. In the lean-to shanties which cluster round the base of the stone giant, faint lights can be seen to glow, yet no cables and wires or gas mains run into the pitiable hovels. Inside the Belltower is an open secret, a precious resource which those who inhabit the lean-tos guard with a religious fervour.

Crude iron stairs run up the empty inside of the tower, all the way up to a platform at the very top, a platform which holds the massive clockwork mechanism that formerly powered the clocks. A rhythmic thumping comes from the mechanism, gears rotate, springs wind and unwind and pulleys whirr.

One chain, attached to a pulley, leads down the tower, down to a smaller, lashed up platform about halfway down. The chain disappears into a collection of gears (bearing the inscription of the Mire End Cog Works) and from this mass of whirring cogs emerges a shaft, rotating at high speed. This shaft connects to a dynamo which pumps electricity into cables which lead down to the base of the tower where an ancient, sparking, arcing transformer sits. This transformer sends power out to junction boxes where the shanty dwellers can wire themselves in and obtain light and heat for their homes.

Although this system is lashed up, slightly (perhaps slightly more than slightly) unreliable and more than a little dangerous, the shanty people work together to keep the entire mechanism running and giving them precious electricity. Their source of power means that they are beholden to no-one and gives them a fierce independence. Anyone who isn't a resident who attempts to gain entrance to the tower, damage its mechanisms or even just take a sneaky look will find themselves hung in a gibbet halfway up the tower, a warning to those who would be foolish enough to replicate such a daring feat.

detseteds pawn shop

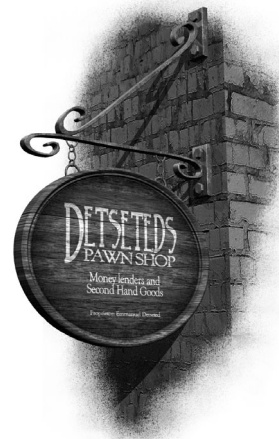
Description: Money lenders and second hand goods store

Associated NPC?: Emmanuel Detseted

Associated Nugget?: 'Engines of Despair'

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Located in what can only be described as one of the better areas of Mire End (a purely relative term), this is one establishment that almost everyone in the burgh has visited at one time or another. Run by the sanguine Emmanuel Detseted, the pawnshop exchanges the property of Mire Enders for cash loans and then sells it on when they, invariably, cannot afford to repay the loan.



Located on the second and third floors of a remarkably well maintained stone tenement building, the shop is a labyrinth of rooms and spaces, all stuffed to capacity with furniture, brick-a-brack, weapons, ornaments and almost anything other than entire vehicles (although there are parts of vehicles lying about). In his slim, domed head, Emmanuel Detseted seems



to carry a mental catalogue of everything in his shop. If you want something, he can find it within minutes. He also has a rather ingenious anti-theft system. Strung throughout the rooms, hanging from walls and ceilings, mounted on shelves and hammered into doorways is a series of intricate mirrors and prisms. All of these lead back to Detseteds desk on the second floor. Via a series of pulleys and levers, he can keep an eye on any area of the shop and, if required, utilise a variety of concealed traps and weapons to intimidate (or sometimes kill) would-be thieves.

If you need anything at all, then this is the place to find it. If Emmanuel Detseted doesn't have something in stock, then it probably isn't available in Mire End.

forest green

Description: Area of Mire End

Associated NPC?: 'Captain' Rudyard Burnbark

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'

Associated Organisation?: The Forest Green Regulars

Considered to be 'posh' by most of the rest of Mire End, Forest Green is slightly less run-down than most of the rest of the burgh. That's not to say it resembles anything approaching an attractive living prospect, far from it. Forest Green is simply a slum where people take pride in their surroundings, rather than just a slum. A lot of this is down to 'Captain' Rudyard Burnbark and his motley crew of Forest Green Regulars, local vigilantes on a mission to keep their end of the burgh free of criminal activity. The sodden streets of the area are still sinister and oppressive, the alleys home to unsavoury characters and a seedy underworld just a brick's throw away, but on the surface, the Green tries hard to present an air of normality and civility.

The teetering tenements of Forest Green are kept in a slightly better state of repair than most of Mire End. The majority of the residents take at least some interest in maintaining the rotting fabric of their homes, rather than simply being content to let them crumble. Many petty tradesmen, minor artisans and less than successful traders make their homes here, relying on the small amount of security offered by the Forest Green Regulars to keep their businesses from being wrecked by the Hohler Gang or other shady elements.

There are a few youthful streetgangs operating in Forest Green, but seldom do they carry out anything which does more than irritate the Regulars. Most youngsters travel down the burgh to get their kicks, taking in the cripplecut fights at Shale Hall, drinking in low taverns like the Gaslight and the Locomotive and brawling with other young crews who take exception at the dandified Forest Greeners invading their patch.

the mire end cog works

Description: Factory and engineering works

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: 'In Like Flint', 'Engines Of Despair'

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Viable industries are few and far between in Mire End, the economic and physical conditions being what they are. Yet some far-sighted entrepreneurs have taken it upon themselves to establish businesses here, offering employment, a future and a bit of comfort to some of the residents. Most famous of these community minded businessmen is Archibald Flint, founder, owner and manager of the Mire End Cog Works. Seeing the potential of a business operating outwith the tax strictures of the TCMA, Mr Flint opened the Cog Works nearly fifty years ago, setting up in a series of abandoned brick sheds in northern Mire End. Since then, the original cluster of shabby little sheds has expanded and grown into a factory of reasonable size, its brick chimney towering over the surrounding tenements, the legend "Mire End Cog Works" painted in white letters down its elegantly tapering sides.

The five original sheds are now the research and metallurgy offices for the Works, where men and women in stained brown coats rush about with crucibles of molten metal, sheaves of blueprints for new gears or sit patiently waiting for the nurse to attend to them. Mr Flint financed the construction of new production sheds thirty years ago and his investment has been handsomely repaid. The Cog Works has a reputation for quality that extends far beyond Mire End. They produce all manner of gearing systems, spare parts and individual bits and pieces. If it's a cog or gear, then the Works can probably make it for you. Such is the expertise of their craftsmen, that many notable dinginsmiths make a regular pilgrimage to Mire End in order to specify and select parts for their latest projects and take one of Mr Flint's famous guided tours of the factory.

The workers themselves are a happy, well cared for lot, Mr Flint being a considerate employer. The pay is excellent by local standards, the Cog Works provides a canteen for breakfast, lunch and dinner, bonuses are paid for meeting particularly demanding targets and safety is of paramount concern. Competition amongst Mire Enders for employment at the Works is fierce to say the least, with the annual round of retirements and hirings being a subject of intense debate.

Needless to say, the success of the Cog Works and the happiness it has brought to many residents is a sore point with some of the more unscrupulous denizens of the burgh. The Hohler Gang hate Flint and his burgeoning enterprise. Hence, the large number of rather burly men that Flint employs as watchmen at his premises. In truth, these would probably not be needed due to the respect and admiration in which Mr Flint is held by his workers and their families.



Mire End Terminus

Description: Wrecked and abandoned train station

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: 'Single Track Mind'

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Crouched over the disused tracks of the old railway line, the squat brick structure of the inappropriately named Mire End Terminus is mute testament to the decline of the burgh. In truth, the railway line never did terminate at Mire End Terminus, it carried on through, right out towards the eastern regions of The City. Like many of the other stations throughout The City, however, Mire End Terminus is a utilitarian, functional building, devoid of ostentation or frippery. This reflects the frugal nature of the Ancient & Honourable Guild Of Fulgurators, with their disdain for the grandiose and pompous (if you discount the architectural riot that is CrossBar terminus, of course). It is, despite the years of neglect, still a fairly solid building. Admittedly the roof panels have fallen in and many of the iron roof spars have rusted through, but the basic structure remains intact.

The solid nature of the building has made it a popular choice for the citizens of the Railway shanties. The platforms, booking hall and waiting rooms are crowded with little lean-tos, tents and makeshift dwellings. The air is heavy with the smells of cooking oil, sweat and damp. Some families have lived here for a long, long time and have strictly defined boundaries around their 'property'. Such is the code of honour amongst the shanty people that these boundaries are always respected as one would respect the house of a more conventional property owner.

As well as the smells and sounds, the Terminus is alive with rumour, superstition and folk tales. It is a hub for the imaginings of the shanty people, with tales of ghostly trains screeching along tracks that no longer exist, headless Fulgurators haunting the halls and the cries of the spirits of those killed in long forgotten accidents. Every child learns these tales from family, friends or the elders of the shanties. To these people, there is no borderline between history and folk tales.

the Mire End Tribune Offices

Description: Local newspaper offices

Associated NPC?: Felicity Clearwater, Harold Cresswell, Muriel Halliday, Elijah Youngman

Associated Nugget?: 'Publish And Be Damned!'

Associated Organisation?: The Mire End Tribune

Located in a shabby tenement on the eastern side of Long Street, this humble suite of rooms is the nerve centre for that campaigning organ of the press, The Mire End Tribune. Extremely unprepossessing in appearance, the only outward notice of its presence in the building is a hand painted sign nailed to the lintel of the stairwell entrance: "The Mire End Tribune: Local News For Local People". Climbing the moist stairs (being careful not to dislodge Gadgie Maurice, the resident jake), you would find a extremely old, much patched and repaired door. What marks this door as unusual is the carefully pasted headlines plastered all over its mouldering surface. Notable Mire End events, crusading campaigns by the Tribune and tragic tales all shout in bold print from the door, coated in paste and yellowing varnish.

The interior of the Tribune offices is not much more impressive than the exterior. Once through the main door, the visitor is greeted by the printing room. The room is dominated by the two massive printing machines, one larger, blacker and oilier than the other. The larger machine is the oldest, a dreadnought of a thing that clanks and clacks and groans when operating. This tends to be the machine used for printing single sheets, posters and pamphlets. The smaller machine is marginally newer and uses a vast, menacing array of retractable pins to print the pages. Controlled by a substantial dingin located on a bench, the operator punches in the desired page layout, type size and so forth, then lets the machine go. The advantage of the pins printer is that the dingin can store the layout for several pages, allowing the user to set everything up, then go for a nice cup of tea whilst the contraption bangs away to itself. It is used to produce the content of each issue of the newspaper, but gives a rough and inelegant result compared to the old press. The gigantic old press can no longer keep up with the demands of the paper's growing circulation, but it is still used to produce headed stationery and the like, where the flowing lines of its intricate copper plates are put to best effect. Arrayed around the walls of the print room are



racks of moveable type, reams of cheap, rough paper, barrels of low grade ink and boxes of tools, oil and spares for keeping the presses running. A spiral stair leads up from the print room to the rather grandly titled 'editorial suite'.

With a single phone, some battered typewriters and a fierce determination, the staff of the Tribune polish their stories, follow up leads and harangue unwilling correspondents. The room is cluttered with notepads, maps, lists of contacts, ledgers, cups and plates. A gigantic samovar whistles constantly in the corner, providing the endless supply of tea that the staff rely on to keep them going through the long, hard days and nights.

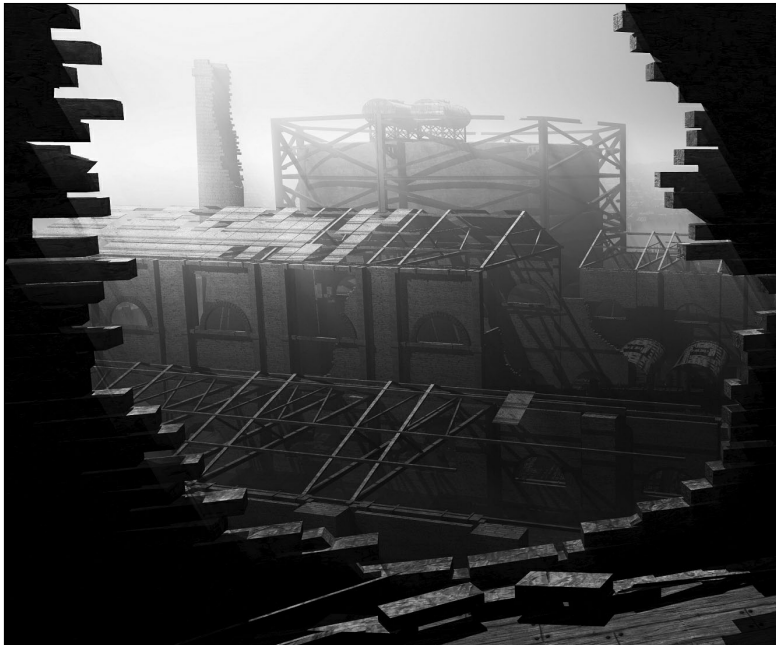
the old bleach factory

Description: Derelict factory area

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A



Once the biggest employer in Mire End, the Old Bleach Factory was wrecked by The Shake, its vats, silos and giant distillers wrenched open and their toxic contents spilled out into the surrounding dwellings and canals. Bubbling chemicals, acids, alkalis and salts spewed from smashed pipes, killing hundreds of those poor employees who happened to be in the factory at the time. Many more were killed in the surrounding area as the creeping tendrils of the noxious flood spread through the capillary canals, the lanes, alleys and boulevards.

These days, few people venture into the Old Bleach Factory, as the legacy of its chemical past still lingers after 150 years. The occasional desperate scavenger or antiquities hunter can sometimes be found raking through the ruins, risking a painful death for the chance of finding long hidden valuables. Persistent rumours talk of precious metals and other valuables stored in the encrusted vaults of the Factory. The scantest rumour is always enough to attract a few souls every once in a while. Even the hardened academics of Longshore University have, once in a while, sent a small party into the Factory to collect sample of the seeping toxins, the distorted flora and mutated fauna.

The physical environment of the factory is one of desolation and doom. Strangely coloured pools fill the cracked concrete and twisted, warped plants lethargically climb the walls. Any fauna sighted in the factory is usually mutated or malformed in some way: seven legged scurrs, swollen, wingless bleeders and slaving, hairless dogs are some of the more common sights. Most of the old factory buildings are badly damaged in some way, a large number are dangerously unstable and

apt to shed large chunks of their fabric at the slightest provocation. Wanderers in the Bleach Factory are advised to tread lightly, avoid touching anything and not to linger in its precincts for too long.

The crumbling sheds, towers and pressure vessels of the Factory are slowly decaying into oblivion: piles of rust and dust. However, local folklore has it that some...people (or things that once were people) live in the rotting tanks and silos.

On quiet nights, passers-by have sworn that they could hear strangled voices drifting from the shell of the factory, voices unlike those of locals or itinerant foragers. Even some of the half-mad scavengers claim to have seen shadowy

figures flitting between the buildings and across the shattered roofs, keeping to the darker parts. Suffice to say, no residents of Mire End feel any great inclination to venture into the Factory to ascertain whether or not these vague rumours are true. Most have a well enough developed sense of self-preservation to avoid the toxic shock and blasted wasteland of the Old Bleach Factory.



Redberry Park

Description: Former park, now shantytown and dump

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: Wastrels Lot

A wasted relic of years gone by, Redberry Park is as far from being a pleasant place to stroll as it is possible to imagine. Once, in the distant past, a dear, green place, the park is now nothing more than a decaying swamp made up of shanties, refuse heaps and the occasional twisted tree. Nobody comes to Redberry Park for pleasure any more, at least not for any legal pleasures. Around the fringes and in the shanties live hundred of prostitutes, dealers and traders, all eager to part the impoverished citizens of Mire End from their meagre cash reserves. Massive, rusted wrought iron gates lead into the park, but the old railings which once topped the low stone wall have long since been removed and smelted down.

The eastern end of the park resembles little more than a massive rubbish pile. However it is, in fact, a massive shantytown constructed from the detritus and waste of an already decaying burgh. For all the good it does them, the inhabitants might as well be living in a rubbish heap. Infant mortality runs way beyond even the alarming levels of Mire End as a whole, disease is rife, violent death commonplace. The male and female prostitutes, dollymops, rent boys and hookers who ply their trade here are, almost without exception, riddled with all manner of infections and diseases, most are permanently wasted on drugs or alcohol. Those who pay for their services are equally disease ridden, spreading the various infections far and wide throughout the community.

The northernmost segment of the park, nearest to the rusting main gate, has been used as a dumping ground for all sorts of waste for decades. The stench is unimaginable, the filth unquantifiable. The entire swampy mass sometimes convulses with methane explosions or bursts into flame as the combustible gases are ignited by sparks from the meagre cooking fires of the shanty.

All in all, Redberry Park is an open sore sitting right in the very centre of the diseased body of Mire End. In a place which already ranks low on any list of decent places to live, Redberry Park can even shock the most hard hearted and time-ravaged slum dweller. It symbolises all that is worst about this impoverished, ravaged burgh.

If Mire End ever does realise its collective dream of becoming part of the TCMA, then the canker of Redberry Park will be one of the first places to receive all too urgent attention.

the Railway Shanties

Description: Slum village strung out along the old railway line

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: 'Single Track Mind'

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Strung out along the old railway line which runs through Mire End, the shanties huddle under arches and perch precariously on the old railbed. Ever since The Shake and the closing of the branch line, which passed through Mire End, the railway has effectively become dead space. The rails were ripped up and melted down a long time ago, the sleepers scavenged and even the gravel of the railbed used in building. Seeking shelter from the rain or just to be above the level of the general flooding, some people took to the raised railway line and ever since, there have been rickety little dwellings marking the line of the old railroad.

Life in the shanties is diverse and exciting: Mudlarks who sell their muscles in the docks of Folly Hills, wasted scavengers who root around in the toxic pools of the Old Bleach Factory, artisans bent over tiny forges and bellows, all manner of life is to be found here. And the life here is considerably friendlier than that to be found in the barrios of Redberry Park. The dwellers in the Railway Shanties have developed a sense of comradeship and community spirit which sets them apart from the majority of Mire End society. They actively look out for each other, help those in need and take pride in their lowly homes. Much to the annoyance of Garsey Hatchett (the local Hohler Gang leader) and his cronies, the Hohler Gang are firmly excluded from the Shanties. Theft and violence are frowned upon and property is respected with an almost fanatical zeal. Would-be thieves, muggers and other criminal types are actively discouraged by the residents. Those who ignore the warnings are seldom heard of again...

Children in the Shanties are actively encouraged to learn to read and write, a rare thing in these parts. A number of small, informal schools have grown up to teach the children the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. Consequently, the level of literacy and numeracy in the area is remarkably high for a run down slum area. The profession of teacher and mentor is well respected and those who educate the children are held in particularly high esteem by the rest of the community.

While not actually discouraged from entering the shanties, strangers are watched very carefully. Everywhere they go, small children will dog their steps, reporting back to older kids and adults if the newcomers appear to be up to anything untoward. That having been said, once a stranger makes friends with the shanty dwellers, he or she will find them to be loyal, trustworthy and, above all, unflinchingly generous with their meagre possessions.



Shale hall

Description: Former civic centre, now fighting arena and general meeting place

Associated NPC?: Andy Mickay (MET3), Boris 'Sophie' Micvey (MET5)

Associated Nugget?: See Issues 3, 4 and 5 of the Mire End Tribune (available to download from the CGS website) for further detailed information on the cripplecut scene in Mire End

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Once a grand, imposing, impressive building, the only thing that impresses now about Shale Hall is the fact that it still remains standing. Its former glory is long gone, its gilded entrance hall stripped of its finery, the rooms and corridors crumbling and festering. Clouded by folklore and viewed through the centuries, the origins of Shale Hall and its original purpose remain unclear. The most popular theory posits that it was once a civic centre, back in the alleged glory days of Mire End, before everything was ruined and the burgh degenerated into a miasma of degradation. Suffice to say, it certainly looks as if it could once have been an important edifice: the main hall has sweeping ceilings nearly forty feet high, there are numerous rooms, suites and offices and the entire structure is topped with an iron-ribbed dome which was once, they say, clad in burnished steel.

Nowadays, Shale Hall, for all its dangerous, crumbling masonry and rotting floor, serves a more sinister purpose. The main hall has become a gathering point for those denizens of Mire End for whom the sport of cripplecut exerts a strange attraction. Looking down on a central fighting circle from tiers of crude benches, the crowd bays for blood and pain, exhorting the fighters to greater displays of martial prowess or brutal cunning. A good number of Mire Enders despise what Shale Hall has become, hating the sight of the uncouth mobs tramping in through the grand entrance and hearing the echoing yells of the crowd, the screams of injured and dying fighters and the cacophony of the bookies and pit bosses.

Few outside of the cripplecut circuit would shed any tears if Shale Hall collapsed into a pile of mouldering brick. Its looming bulk represents, to those who look towards a better future, everything that is worst about Mire End: the spite, the hatred, the violence and the greed.

third church home for unwanted children

Description: Orphanage

Associated NPC?: Father Guy Herbert, Dandy, Fritillery & Hoop

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'

Associated Organisation?: The Third Church of God The Architect



A ramshackle row of teetering tenements occupying the entire eastern side of Gollygate Lane, the Third Church Home for Unwanted Children is one of the few charitable institutions in Mire End that actually does any reasonable kind of work. Although overcrowded and understaffed, the home is always willing to take in strays, orphans and lost children, give them three square meals a day and attempt to teach them some form of trade. Of course, there is a certain element of religious indoctrination involved in all of this, with prayers three times a day (before meals) and special services on holy days and high days.

Within the confines of the home, in excess of four hundred children live and work, sleeping in packed dormitories and eating in the single canteen and workroom which stretches for most of the length of the first floor. The second floor of the



home is given over to the dormitories, storage areas and rooms for the priests, deacons and laypeople who run the orphanage. The third floor comprises more workrooms, classrooms where the rudiments of reading and writing are taught and the offices of the priest in charge of the entire operation. Finally, the loft space contains the generators and cisterns connected to windmills and rainwater catchers on the tiled roof. Only the most adventurous children venture into the loft space, which is the domain of the handful of technicians who carry on a furtive and secretive life of their own in amongst the dynamos, tanks and thick black cables.

Uninhabited areas

Description: Abandoned areas of Mire End

Associated NPC?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Scattered about the burgh are several areas of quiet desolation and abandonment. For one reason or another, whole streets or even whole areas have become devoid of inhabitants, left to crumble into dust. These areas are uniformly free of life, the rotting buildings having been stripped of anything salvageable and left to fall to pieces. A strange quiet hangs over these places and layers of folklore surround them.

Windy Gates is rumoured to be haunted by the ghosts of a family murdered in their beds by the mad grandmother who lived with them. Quickstep Lane is said to be rife with foul vapours and a toxic miasma that can sear a man's lungs and burn his eyes. Deepcut Way has little more than the shells of tenements left, the burnt out remains of a horrific fire many, many years ago. Mire Enders say you can still hear the screams of the people who died in flaming attics, trapped in tiny rooms as the smoke and flame overcame them.

Suffice to say, there is a whole mass of superstition surrounding the uninhabited areas of Mire End that even the most cynical and jaded of residents pays some credence to. Folk songs have been written about these places, melancholy airs sung in smoky pubs. 'The Children of Deepcut Way' has become something of an anthem for some parts of Mire End society, who claim that had they been part of the TCMA, then fire services could have saved all those poor children.

"No. No way. No more finding lost dogs. Not after the last time. No chance."

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End



highlighted personalities

bysom bacco

Age: 34

Height/Build: 5' 10"

Eye/Hair Colour: Blue (deep set)/Black

Occupation: Drug dealer

Affiliations: None

Associated Location?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A



Cultivator of the finest nebelweed in Mire End (indeed, some would say it is some of the finest in The City), Bysom Bacco is an outgoing, effusive and generous man of unusually sunny disposition. Using the entire loft space of a semi-derelict tenement block, he has rigged up lights, heaters and fans to grow carefully selected and bred nebelweed of the highest quality.

Now something of a legend in Mire End, he doesn't sell his product for outrageous prices, he doesn't resort to violent means and won't sell in large quantities to criminal groups. Unusually, he also refuses to operate a credit system: if you have the money, he'll be happy to sell you some weed. No money, no weed. Bacco is also a regular donator to the Third Church Home for Unwanted Children and often hands out small packages of food and clothing to the poor people of Redberry Park.

'Captain' Rudyard Burnbark

Age: 42

Height/Build: 5' 11"/Stocky

Eye/Hair Colour: Brown/Dark brown (shaven)

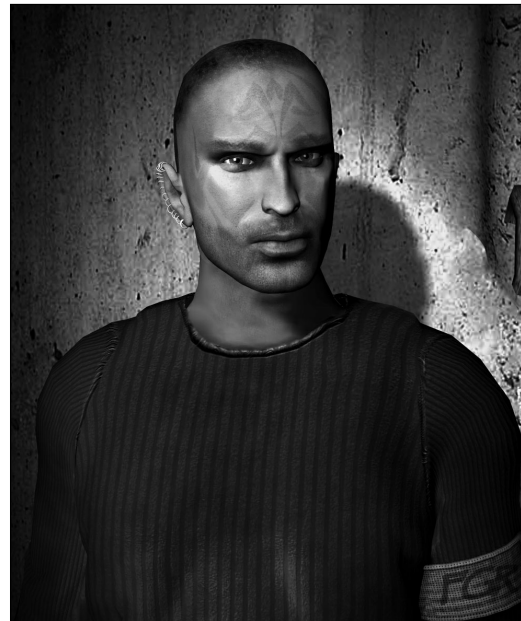
Occupation: Craftsman & Vigilante

Affiliations: The Forest Green Regulars

Associated Location?: Forest Green

Associated Organisation?: The Forest Green Regulars

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'



Bumbling, power-hungry oaf or well-meaning community leader, depending on your point of view and interactions with the Forest Green Regulars. Rudyard Burnbark is a crass, uncouth vulgarian of the first rank, a man with few social graces and even fewer pretensions to manners and decency. He runs the Regulars with the eye of a benevolent dictator, believing himself to be a man of courage, decency, honesty and community spirit.

In fairness, Burnbark is neither corrupt nor criminal and does have the well being of Forest Greeners at heart. It is his manner which causes people to passionately dislike him, his loud-mouthed pronouncements on all aspects of life in Mire End, his interfering in the business of his neighbours and his desperate hold on the actions of the Regulars.

A family man, Burnbark has four children, ranging in age from five to fourteen years old. His long-suffering wife Greta looks after home and children with a love which puts the vulgar meanderings of Burnbark to shame. It is unsurprising therefore that Greta is perhaps more of a figure of respect and admiration in Forest Green than her husband. Despite all of the pomposity, Rudyard does genuinely love his wife and children. They are secretly the reason he wants to make Forest Green



(and Mire End as a whole) a better place, so that they can grown up without fear of the Hohler Gang, wandering madmen and predacious childsnatchers.

dandy, fritillery and hoop

Age: Approximately 8 years old

Height/Build: 4' 0"/Small

Eye/Hair Colour: Blue/Dirty brown

Occupation: Urchins

Affiliations: Third Church of God The Architect

Associated Location?: Third Church Home For Unwanted Children

Associated Organisation?: Third Church Of God The Architect

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'



Three grubby little urchins from the Third Church Home, Dandy, Fritillery and Hoop are almost the distilled essence of the young scallywag, tow-headed ragamuffin and cheeky little streetkid. Of indeterminate age and sex, the three of them are inseparable and at times, indistinguishable. Ignoring the protestations and admonishments of Father Herbert and the other orphanage staff, they scuttle about Mire End on their own nefarious business, watching through keyholes, scampering along gutters and shinnying up drainpipes. Despite their lack of years, their knowledge of the minutiae of Mire End underworld life is astonishing. Few suspect that such innocent little cherubs (albeit, dirty and ragged little cherubs) are poking their noses into everyone's business.

In truth, Dandy, Fritillery and Hoop can be very valuable sources of information for those willing to put up with their endless conversational diversions, teasing, practical jokes and inability to get to the point. Father Herbert despairs over his three wayward charges and constantly bemoans the example they set to the other children. However, he pretty much ignores most of their shenanigans and happily receives the few shillings

they occasionally produce, adding it to the meagre resources of the orphanage. When they leave their tiny piles of money on his desk (having picked the lock to get in to his office), he simply shakes his head, stares at the ceiling and wonders what to do with them.

emmanuel detseted

Age: 48

Height/Build: 6' 4"/Slim

Eye/Hair Colour: Watery blue/Grey

Occupation: Pawnshop owner and moneylender

Affiliations: None (that anyone is aware of)

Associated Location?: Detseteds Pawn Shop

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: 'Engines of Despair'



In the strange economy of Mire End, Emmanuel Detseted is disliked and relied upon in equal measure. Sometimes, he drives hard bargains, at other times, he hands over money for goods that are less than worthless. Simultaneously charitable and miserly, Detseted is something of an enigma. A tall, pale man with a distinctive, high domed forehead permanently coated in a light sheen of sweat, he peers over wire framed glasses at his customers, craning forward over his stiff, starched collar. Viewed as somewhat paranoid about thieves, he keeps a close eye on things through his intricate arrangement of mirrors and prisms, tracking the movements of suspicious characters through his shop. Few have ever successfully stolen anything from him and those that have will often reveal that they have met with mysterious, inexplicable accidents in relation to the stolen property. Seldom seen on the streets of Mire End, Emmanuel Detseted only ever seems to deal with people in a business capacity. No one is aware of him having any friends



or family. In all, he cuts something of a lonely figure, hemmed in by the stock which forms so much of his life.

tobias glym

Age: 36

Height/Build: 5' 9"/Slight

Eye/Hair Colour: Pale blue/Black

Occupation: Fixer and Black Marketeer

Affiliations: Hohler Gang

Associated Location?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A



Mr. Glym, as he insists on being called, is Mire End's most high-profile black marketeer, a slick salesman of all manner of illicit goods and services. For the right price, Tobias is said to be able to procure nearly anything, whether hitech firearm, the hiring of muscle, or the most potent of drugs. It is these latter goods that also form Tobias' greatest flaw, for he is addicted to Sliver, a refined and extreme version of Edge. Under its influence his senses become hyper-acute, so much so that noise above talking level is discomforting, and even bright light is uncomfortable.

A slight man of medium height, Tobias certainly strikes an unusual figure, his long dark hair slightly curled and loose, his aquiline face dominated by a closely trimmed beard and moustache, and two intense blue eyes. His skin, however, marks his addiction, for years of avoiding even the wan light of The City's streets have made him horrendously pale, so much so that the faint lines of veins can be seen, especially around his eyes. He only ever wears the finest bespoke suits in the rarest of materials. His voice is a smooth whisper, his manner

fluid and easy-going, and although he can seem affable, he is quite capable of ruthless, even vicious behaviour, backed up by his bodyguards: brutish, heavily scarred men with long dogskin coats, and a relish for dealing with any potential threats to their master.

garsey hatchett

Age: 29

Height/Build: 6' 2"/Skeletal

Eye/Hair Colour: Light grey/Blond

Occupation: Gang leader

Affiliations: The Hohler Gang

Associated Location?: Shale Hall

Associated Organisation?: The Hohler Gang, Wastrels Lot

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep', 'Publish And Be Damned!', 'The Winged Man'



Limping, cadaverous, slimy and sadistic, Garsey Hatchett is not a popular or well-liked man. Even within Hohler circles, he is generally viewed with disdain by the higher echelons. He is only tolerated due to his ability to keep the rather fractious and argumentative gang factions within Mire End on some sort of level footing. That having been said, the frequent infighting and internecine warfare is testament to the fact that his control is far from absolute.

Tall and painfully thin, Hatchett is known as 'the Skeleton' behind his back. His dead eyes are set deep in dark sockets, permanently blackened as the result of childhood diseases. What passes for fine clothes in Mire End drape across his wire-like frame, failing entirely to hide the angular, bony caricature of a man. Hatchett is, by any reasonable standard, a deeply ill man. Not only physically, but also mentally. He is an extreme



sadist, taking delight in devising painful ways of torturing his enemies or procuring 'confessions' from alleged 'traitors' and 'infiltrators'. His pride and joy is an ancient, but still functional and very powerful, semi-automatic cartridge rifle he obtained some years ago. The weapon is his first choice for threatening people, even though he has precious few rounds of ammunition for it.

All in all, he is as unpleasant a person as you could hope to meet in Mire End. He only manages to maintain his position by being willing to commit acts that even other hardened criminals would find repugnant and repulsive.

father guy herbert

Age: 49

Height/Build: 5' 8"/Rotund

Eye/Hair Colour: Light blue/Grey

Occupation: Parish priest

Affiliations: Third Church Of God The Architect

Associated Location?: The Third Church Home For Unwanted Children

Associated Organisation?: The Third Church Of God The Architect

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'



Former spiritual adjutant within the Lay Reserves Martial, respected pillar of the church and advisor to Cardinal Ducreux, the fall of Father Herbert was spectacular to say the least. Allegedly found in flagrante with an underage girl (an accusation he has always strongly denied), he was stripped of his honours and banished to one of the worst parishes the Church could find. Rumours abound of a secret plot by Deacon Vespasian of the Lay Reserves to discredit Herbert, rumours

that refuse to die down. Of course, no one within the church hierarchy would be foolish enough to directly question Deacon Vespasian about the matter, but a dense weave of innuendo and gossip has grown up around the tale.

At times a hearty, jolly man, at other times a quiet and contemplative, Herbert refuses to let the horror of Mire End break his will. In fact, since being sent here, his reputation as a doer of good deeds, carer for the sick and father to lost children has grown impressively. Many of the less politically aware parishioners in Mire End are vociferous in their demands that he be made a Bishop at the first possible opportunity. Even the hardened, violent barrio dwellers of Redberry Park treat him with respect and affection. His unstinting devotion to his flock, whether they be believers or not, has earned him a place in the folklore of the burgh.

cornelia hessell

Age: 54

Height/Build: 5' 1"/Slight

Eye/Hair Colour: Light green/Blackish brown

Occupation: Dinginsmith

Affiliations: None

Associated Location?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A



A sublime artist in her field, Hessell is one of those people born to a particular task. The task in question is the creation of the most marvellously intricate, delicate and wondrous dingins. Few can avoid marvelling at the magnificence of her machines and none can doubt her skill and artistry.



Her garret rooms hum to the sounds of dingins, clockwork mechanisms and other devices of her own devising. Occasional shadowy figures appear at her door to collect packages wrapped in oily rags, leaving bundles of currency, sacks of food or boxes of parts. Few claim to know who she sells her works to, few could afford such fine workmanship.

Standing a little over five feet tall, she appears shorter due to a permanent crouch inflicted by years of bending over microscopes and magnifying glasses. Her fine, red hair is confined under a stocking cap and her tongue permanently juts from the corner of her mouth as she muses on some knotty problem. Her hands, though, are the steadiest in The City, fine boned and long fingered, never quavering, even when attempting the most delicate manipulations.

Not many people have anything more than a nodding acquaintance with the woman who is, if truth be known, something of a recluse. Mr Flint of the Mire End Cog Works is a frequent visitor and, much to the surprise of all who encounter her, Hessel can sometimes be found advising at the Cog Works, consulting with the engineers and dinginsmiths, deep in conversation over some arcane point of dinginsmithery.

Old Sally

Age: 65

Height/Build: 5' 3"/Extremely thin

Eye/Hair Colour: Watery blue/Grey

Occupation: Prostitute

Affiliations: Third Church of God The Architect

Associated Location?: N/A

Associated Organisation?: N/A

Associated Nugget?: N/A



Scarred by a life on the streets, worn down by the relentless harshness, Old Sally is a sad, familiar figure on the Walk. Prostitute, madam, dealer and thief: Sally has been all of these things in her time. The years and her choice of profession have not been kind, every encounter with a sweating, faceless client has been written in face, every beating she's taken can be seen in her watery eyes. Sally now sells herself cheaply, cheaper than the rest of the dollymops and prozies. It's the only way she can still make some cash from her ravaged, broken down body when young girls offer themselves for a shilling or two.

Sally was once well off by Mire End standards, running her own shabby brothel, accepting the coin of regular clients for the services of her coterie of ladies. But times change and nothing ever stays the same. Sally lost her business, her girls left her and she was forced to once more turn to the perilous streets, unable to rely on others to make money. Many view her with a mixture of pity and dislike, seeing her current position as just reward for her years of living high on the back-breaking pains of others.

Lonely and broken, she cries her wares amongst the gaily clad dollymops of the Walk. The poor and the desperate, the diseased and mad use her services. She accepts clients whom even the most degraded girl would refuse to take to bed with. Her life is coming to a dark, shameful close as the physical pressures of her life gradually mount. Infections and diseases are written into her skin, a stark warning to those who would tarry with her. Mothers point at her in passing, warning their daughters as to what they may become if they do not work hard or find a reliable husband. Sally can only stare back with her watery eyes, envious of the children and their young lives, ashamed of what she has finally been reduced to, fearful of the ending of her life.

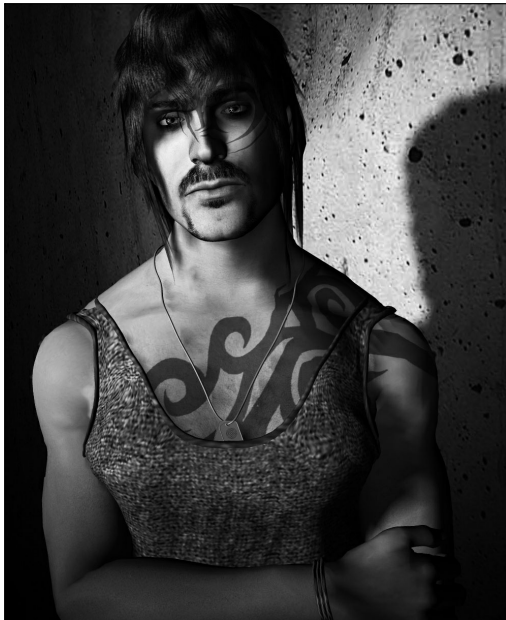
"There are few sadder sights in Mire End than the prostitutes, dollymops and rent boys of the Walk. They sell their bodies and their souls for a handful of dull pennies. They engage in furtive trysts with faceless strangers in dank alleys. Few survive for any length of time, consumed by disease, knifed by a rival or thoroughly brutalized by a client."

Good people like Father Herbert and Mr Youngman try to keep youngsters from joining the vile cavalcade of flesh parading up and down the Walk. It's an alarming and heart-breaking sight to see those you have watched grow from babes in arms selling themselves to the night."

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End



carnelian yet

Age: 28**Height/Build:** 5' 8"/Stocky**Eye/Hair Colour:** Green/Black (plus droopy moustache)**Occupation:** Political activist for hire**Affiliations:** None that are permanent**Associated Location?:** N/A**Associated Organisation?:** N/A**Associated Nugget?:** N/A

Carnelian Yet is a political firebrand, an activist of the most vociferous kind, a banner waving politician of the first rank. However, Carnelian Yet doesn't really believe in anything. The reason for this is that Carnelian Yet is a ghostwriter, a political activist for hire, a firebrand for those who pay his fee. If you have a cause that you want publicised, if you want inflammatory graffiti painted on walls or demonstrations organised, Carnelian Yet is your man. From an early age, this unassuming character had a talent for rabble-rousing and loud-mouthed oratory. A native of Mire End, he realised this might be a useful skill and one which he could turn to his advantage. Over the years, he has built up a reputation as a man who can get the job done. Many small groups have paid for his services out of their meagre budgets, relying on his skills to gain their causes wider exposure. Armed with a can of paint, a suitable banner and a battered loudhailer, he can have a demonstration up and running within minutes, induce a groundswell of opinion or even encourage 'spontaneous' political uprisings.

His current cause of the week is on behalf of Mire End as a whole, encouraging citizens to support the drive to get Mire End into the TCMA. Graffiti has appeared all over Mire End, Folly Hills and further afield (including, to the consternation of others, numerous Provost bunkers throughout the TCMA).

the staff of the mire end tribune

felicity clearwater

Age: 46**Height/Build:** 5' 5"/Slim**Eye/Hair Colour:** Sparkling blue/Brown, streaked with grey**Occupation:** Secretary**Affiliations:** The Mire End Tribune, Third Church of God The Architect**Associated Location?:** The Mire End Tribune Offices**Associated Organisation?:** The Mire End Tribune**Associated Nugget?:** 'Publish And Be Damned!'

Stalwart figurehead of the Mire End Tribune, the redoubtable Felicity Clearwater is the first point of contact for the various stringers, streetpeople, locals and outsiders who bring stories to the Tribune. A kindly woman, she is always there to dispense hot, sweet tea to a shivering urchin or sodden stringer. Then again, she can also dispense a firm hand on the shoulder to hasten the egress of the many mad, raving, drunken or drug fuelled maniacs, ranters, one-issue loonies and conspiracy theorists that the Tribune attracts.

A Mire Ender by birth, Felicity grew up on the hard streets of the burgh, running in a gang with her older brothers. The death of her eldest brother, Devon, in a brutal knife fight opened her eyes to the harsh nature of Mire End and gave her the impetus to better not only her own life, but the lives of those around her. She taught herself to read and write, educated herself about art and science and voraciously devoured any texts that passed through her hands. Not all of her learning materials, it must be said, came into her hands by legal means. Although determined to better herself, she still had the traditional Mire End talent for skullduggery and a little bit of petty crime.



Earning a meagre living as a scribe for those in Mire End who required such a service, she spent much of her spare time helping out in the Third Church Home. She was also heavily involved in setting up soup kitchens for the most needy in the burgh and generally helping out as much as she could. When Elijah Youngman arrived in Mire End, he heard almost straight away about this talented, well-read woman and approached her with an offer: he needed someone with her skills, but also with her compassion and feeling for the people. It was an offer she couldn't refuse.

Ever since her first meeting with Youngman, Felicity has faithfully served Mire End through the Tribune, doing her own small part to make peoples lives just that little bit better and, perhaps, offering a little hope for the future.

harold cresswell

Age: 42

Height/Build: 6' 0"/Wiry

Eye/Hair Colour: Emerald/Brown (balding)

Occupation: Mechanic

Affiliations: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Location?: The Mire End Tribune Offices

Associated Organisation?: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Nugget?: 'Publish And Be Damned!'



The printing presses of the Tribune are operated and maintained by Harold Cresswell. An accomplished mechanic, who finally decided he had had enough of the cut-throat world of ekranoplan racing and came to work at the Tribune as a maintenance man. He has taken apart and reconstructed the Tribune presses countless times and they always seem to run just that little bit smoother each time.

Harold came to Elijah for help when a syndicate attempted to blackmail him into rigging a race by sabotaging the ekranoplan of his own pilot. By threatening to go public with the story, and with Elijah backing him up, he managed to scare off the syndicate, but got out of the racing business while the going was good. Elijah offered him the job and he has been there ever since.

Never seen without a spanner or screwdriver (or, for that matter, a steaming mug of tea) in his hands, Harold is perhaps the quintessential mechanic. Anything that needs fixed is attended to with loving care and nothing is ever done by half measures. The popular phrase "If a job's worth doing, it's worth doing well" could have been invented for Harold Cresswell.

However, he's not a man to be crossed. He still maintains a few contacts from his racing days and has a good network of friends amongst the scattered craftsmen and artisans of Mire End. It is said that he occasionally even enjoys a drink with that respected citizen, Archibold Flint.

muriel halliday

Age: 24

Height/Build: 5' 4"/Compact

Eye/Hair Colour: Brown/Dark brown

Occupation: Stringer

Affiliations: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Location?: The Mire End Tribune Offices

Associated Organisation?: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Nugget?: 'Publish And Be Damned!'



Muriel Halliday is a young woman with the kind of drive that startles even the enthusiastic Elijah Youngman. Of indeterminate and ill-defined origin, she turned up at the door of the



Tribune three years ago and demanded a job. While the staff were used to dealing with all manner of nutcases and lunatics, they were not used to a fiery eyed young lady practically battering down the door in her quest for employment. In what he considered a rather shrewd bit of bluff-calling, Youngman gave her a job. Armed with a pencil, notepad and grimly set jaw, Muriel set out into Mire End and beyond. And she never looked back. Youngman had to admit she was good at her job, but would never admit that he would be far too scared to fire her.

A slight, compact woman, Halliday is dark of skin and bright of eye. Formidably intelligent and seemingly very well educated, nobody has the guts to actually ask her where she comes from or why on earth she's working for the Tribune. She also packs one of the meanest right hooks this side of the Green Canal and, rumour has it, she's also pretty handy with a hatchet (for reasons which, unsurprisingly, remain unexplained).

By turns, Halliday can be tough, feminine, wheedling, persuasive, cajoling or any other of the many conversational and psychological weapons she has in her armoury. Many an interviewee has left her presence feeling that they have given away far more than they intended to and, in some bizarre manner, they're actually grateful for it.

Elijah Youngman

Age: 52

Height/Build: 5' 10"/Wiry

Eye/Hair Colour: Blue/Jet black

Occupation: Newspaper proprietor & editor

Affiliations: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Location?: The Mire End Tribune Offices

Associated Organisation?: The Mire End Tribune

Associated Nugget?: 'Publish And Be Damned!'

The driving force behind the undoubted success of the Mire End Tribune, Elijah Youngman is a singularly focused, intelligent man. Yet, he is also a man of great compassion for the people of Mire End. His first and only concern is to make things better for Mire End as a whole, hence the crusading stance of the Tribune and its constant hammering away at the prejudice and mistrust which surrounds the burgh.

A sprightly chap of wiry build and energetic demeanour, Elijah appears far younger than his true age. That's not to say he doesn't exercise a certain amount of vanity regarding his appearance: his elaborately coifed hair is suspiciously jet black and shiny for a man of his advancing years, even for one who carries his years so well. He affects a monocle, which he ostentatiously peers through when checking copy, scrutinising photographs or sizing up a stranger bearing unusual news. When out and about, he can be seen walking confidently, his

battered bowler hat clamped to his head, his sturdy galoshes keep the water out and his ancient umbrella keeps the rain away from his hairstyle.



Yet, his confidence is, again, something of an affectation, for Elijah Youngman knows he is an unpopular man in some quarters. Certain figures within the TCMAA would prefer to see the back of him and his jumped up rag. The Provosts do not take kindly to the stance of the Tribune, particularly in relation to alleged misdemeanours by that organ of the law. And within Mire End itself, the local cripplecut fraternity and the Hohler Gang (two groups with close associations at times), have their grievances against Youngman.

But, none of this outwardly bothers Elijah Youngman. Far from being dissuaded, it only makes him all the more ardent in his desire to right the wrongs of Mire End, to give the good people of the burgh a better place to live and to see the gangs and thieves turfed out on their collective ears.

"Dear Sir,

Again, I call upon your esteemed organ for assistance. I have been engaged to discover the whereabouts of a certain Mr Volkoff, not of this burgh. If any of your readers could provide me with information of any kind which relates to this matter, I would be happy to furnish them with some small reward.

Yours sincerely,

Janus Kripitsch (Lostfinder of this burgh)"

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End



highlighted organisations

the forest green regulars

Status: Vigilante organisation

Headquarters: 67 Maltings Lane, Forest Green, Mire End

Membership: Core of 20, with 30 associates.

Areas of Operation: Local protection, security and generalised neighbourhood watching.

Associated Location?: Forest Green

Associated NPC?: 'Captain' Rudyard Burnbark

Associated Nugget?: N/A

A vigilante group that has been through as many name changes as it has members, the Regulars are a mis-matched bunch of thugs and do-gooders determined to make their own little part of Mire End a 'safer' place to be. Another vigilante group, also called the Regulars, forced the Forest Greeners to change their name, which they duly did, becoming the New Regulars (in a fit of bloody-mindedness). The Regulars then changed their name to the Originals, so the Forest Green New Regulars changed their name back to the plain old Regulars. The Originals then disbanded, leaving only one vigilante group extant in Forest Green and many people confused over what to call them and if they actually knew what they were doing in the first place.

A core of twenty or so members make up the heart of the Regulars, with another thirty or so lackeys, hangers-on and part timers making up the numbers. They patrol the lanes and alleyways of Forest Green in groups of five, clutching their boathooks, staves and fishoil lamps as they seek out ne'er-do-wells, villains and other assorted undesirables.

Despite their half-arsed approach and general lack of anything approaching a clue, the Regulars have in fact made Forest Green a safer place. Criminal types are wary of messing with a group which purports to represent the entire community and has the tacit backing of a few hundred people.

Lead by 'Captain' Rudyard Burnbark, the group has no formal structure, but is organised as a loose democracy, under the benevolent eye of 'Captain' Burnbark. Meetings are held on a weekly basis, usually in a public house or tavern of some sort or another. The weekly patrol groups are assigned at the meetings and rosters drawn up by the more literate members of the Regulars. Thus, the Forest Green regulars struggle on, attempting to clean up their little corner of The City.

the hohler gang

Status: Hohler Gang crew

Headquarters: None fixed, various pubs & Shale Hall

Membership: Core membership of around 50 individuals, approximately 50 to 100 'allies'.

Areas of Operation: Prostitution, narcotics, protection rackets, and extortion.

Associated Location?: Shale Hall

Associated NPC?: Garsey Hatchett

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep', 'Publish And Be Damned!'

The local Hohler Gang crew in Mire End is an offshoot of the larger and far more powerful Four Fingers Crew of Folly Hills. Known as the Watermark Crew, they pay tribute and owe allegiance to the leader of the Four Fingers Crew, Kerwyn Broadbarn. In truth, Broadbarn takes little interest in the gang activities in Mire End, viewing it as way beneath his station to bother himself about such a lowly, inconsequential place. In many ways this leads to the paranoia and violence exhibited by the Hohler Gang in Mire End. Their overwhelming feeling of subservience and worthlessness causes them to try and prove their worth at every possible turn, through violence, outrageous crimes and fawning obsequiousness.

A hard core of approximately fifty dedicated gang members makes up the main strength of organised crime in Mire End. Led by the leering, sneering Garsey Hatchett, they swagger and preen in front of the locals, but cower and snivel in front of the Four Fingers. They are badly equipped, even by the rather low standards of slums throughout The City. Most are equipped with old sparklocks and cartridge pistols, relying more heavily on knives, clubs and swords than firearms. Ironically, their psychotic minions, Wastrels Lot, are generally better equipped than they are.

the mire end tribune

Status: Local newspaper

Headquarters: Mire End Tribune Offices, Long Street

Membership: Four full-time staff

Areas of Operation: Political activism, local news, local community support

Associated Location?: The Mire End Tribune Offices

Associated NPC?: Felicity Clearwater, Harold Cresswell, Muriel Halliday, Elijah Youngman

Associated Nugget?: 'Publish And Be Damned!'

A newspaper for the people of Mire End may seem like a bizarre idea, but the Mire End Tribune is the brainchild of owner/manager/editor Elijah Youngman. Elijah started small, with a hand-operated press, printing short runs of any-



thing people wanted done and using the proceeds to produce his own pamphlets of stories he felt people ought to know. His burning desire to help the people of Mire End, to educate and inform them, has ensured the continuing existence of that most remarkable of institutions, the Mire End Tribune.

The Tribune employs a small staff: Youngman as editor, a mechanic named Harold Cresswell to operate and maintain the presses, a young stringer named Muriel Halliday to get out there and find stories and a secretary called Felicity Clearwater who keeps the entire operation running. Of course, there are many stringers across the city who will bring a story to the Tribune, despite the meagre remuneration, because the story is too small for Sideband, or it is only local news for local people, or just because they like and respect Elijah Youngman and the integrity with which he has always run the paper. Members of the public will often bring stories to the attention of the Tribune's small staff, without desire for reward, just to have their voices heard.

Youngman's main aim with the Tribune was always to educate the people of Mire End and to help them improve their lot. While rampant illiteracy may seem like a barrier to running a successful newspaper, Youngman tackled the problem head-on and runs classes and literacy programs for any Mire Enders who wish to attend. Much to his surprise, these classes have been a roaring success, attracting people of all ages to crammed rooms where they can learn the inner mysteries of the written word. Thanks to Youngman and his tireless work, literacy in Mire End is experiencing a steady increase.

From cripplecut fighting to gang violence, there's hardly an issue which remains untouched by the Tribune. However, its main focus still remains the issue of the TCMAA and its lack of movement on integrating Mire End into its fold. Scarcely a page can be turned in the Tribune without mention of this thorny, contentious subject. Youngman harangues the TCMAA from the pages of his organ, vilifying the Burgesses, Provosts, businessmen and gang lords of the Three Canals. Needless to say, the Mire End Tribune does not have many friends on the other side of the Green Canal. A state of open hostility exists between the newspaper and the great and the good of the TCMA.

Without the Mire End Tribune, the local people would have a much narrower view of the outside world. It brings news to them from further afield, but also raises their consciousness of local issues. While this doesn't always prove popular with some parts of Mire End society, there is a strong groundswell of support and a great deal of good feeling towards a much loved institution.

the third church of god the architect

Status: Religious organisation

Headquarters: Third Church Home for Unwanted Children

Membership: Regular congregation of about 100 people

Areas of Operation: Caring for the sick & needy, spreading the word of God

Associated Location?: Third Church Home For Unwanted Children

Associated NPC?: Father Guy Herbert, Dandy, Fritillery & Hoop

Associated Nugget?: 'Digging Deep'

One of the few religious organisations to take an actual and active interest in Mire End, the Third Church maintains an orphanage, two chapels and a number of small soup kitchens scattered about the burgh. Often castigated for its austere, unbending attitude, the church actually does a lot of good work in Mire End, providing sustenance, shelter and support to the impoverished, malnourished citizens.

During the horrific Bag Rot epidemic of fifty years ago, priests, deacons and lay members of the church stayed in Mire End to tend the sick and dying, at no little personal risk to themselves. Actions such as this, while not increasing the congregation's numbers by huge amounts, have endeared the Third Church to the people of Mire End in a way that simple preaching could not.

However, things are not going so well for the church at the moment. Falling revenues from outlying parishes, increasing demands from the Lay Reserves Martial and the threat of schism from various factions have caused the hierarchy to review their charitable activities. While the soup kitchens and orphanage are valuable in promoting the positive aspects of the church, they are a drain on resources. Consequently, Father Guy Herbert (the most senior church figure in Mire End) constantly has to justify the pittance Mire End actually receives from the central coffers. As a result of this, Father Herbert has had to engage in some rather un-holy tactics to keep things running...

He has come to an arrangement with the local Hohler Gang elements to provide them with a certain amount of 'aid' if they will 'donate' sums of money or goods in order to keep the soup kitchens and orphanage running. If the parishioners found out about this dodgy deal, they would doubtless be appalled (as would some of the more hardcore Hohler Gang members). Suffice to say, Father Herbert keeps this shady arrangement very much to himself.



Wastrels Lot

Status: Streetgang

Headquarters: Somewhere in the shanties of Redberry Park

Membership: Varies, between twenty and forty

Areas of Operation: Assassination, intimidation, extortion and general egregious violence

Associated Location?: Redberry Park

Associated NPC?: Garsey Hatchett

Associated Nugget?: N/A

A bunch of psychotic children operating from the shanty of Redberry Park, Wastrels Lot are something of a youth division of the local Hohler Gang elements, although, if possible, they are even more psychotic and deadly. Ranging in age from seven to twelve years old, Wastrels Lot are the meanest, maddest and just plain evil bunch of kids you are ever likely to come across. Such is their reputation for extreme violence, they are used as something of a hit squad by the Hohler Gang, who sometimes even send them further afield than Mire End to wreak carnage or terminate with extreme prejudice certain targets. In order to support this posture, the Hohler Gang have generously equipped the 'Lot with firearms and clothing.

Dressed in black dogskin coats and wielding laughably large (for a child) cartridge pistols, the gang present an almost comic sight. That is, until they lay waste to anything and everything around them. Any statement or even a gesture can be taken as a slight against the gang, leading to the characteristic outbursts of gunfire and brutal beatings. Everyone in Mire End fears the 'Lot and finds them almost impossible to deal with because of their abject madness and ever-changing hierarchy.

The Hohler Gang has recently equipped them with a consignment of Nakakatayari SkyLine cartridge pistols stolen from a Provost impound yard. The kids were delighted to receive these heavy calibre weapons and immediately set out on a round of random shootings and destructive gunplay.

Nakakatayari SkyLine Auto Pistol

Short, ugly and brutal, the SkyLine is not exactly the last word in hitech firearms design. However, what it lacks in aesthetic appeal, it makes up for in firepower. While the big, heavy bullet may be fairly slow, it carries a substantial amount of energy and to unarmoured targets, it's something of a menace. Against hitech armours, this lotech handcannon doesn't really stand a chance, but against the average street ganger, it can provide a very persuasive argument.

Damage:	12
Penetration:	6
Range:	10
ROF:	4
Reaction Mod:	+5
Clip:	7
Weight:	1.5kg
Availability:	Uncommon
Cost:	£150

Adventure nuggets

Cutting Tom

Nearly a century ago, Mire End was stricken by a series of brutal murders. Nine women were slain in the most horrific manner and their bodies left in the streaming streets. Brave individuals vowed to track down the murderer, only to disappear, be consumed by their obsession or be forced into admitting failure. The killer was only ever known as 'Cutting Tom', after Tom Bayberry, the prime suspect in the case. Bayberry, a half-mad, alcoholic flowghost was never a realistic suspect. That never stopped the constant abuse, beatings and threats he suffered at the hands of the people of Mire End. Bayberry disappeared, but the killings continued. Cutting Tom has since become part of the folklore of Mire End, a quasi-mythical figure, weaved about with stories, tales and legends. But Cutting Tom is back.

Over recent weeks, there have been three murders, each exactly following the pattern of the Cutting Tom killings. Locals are terrified, the dollymops are staying indoors and everyone is baffled.

Possibilities

1) Constanze Craving: The killings are the work of an imitator of Cutting Tom. Constanze Hodgwick is a local prostitute with a grudge against anyone prettier and more successful than her. As she has been ravaged by years on the street, this covers a lot of ground. Like most people, she was told the tales of Cutting Tom as a child and sees this as a means of spreading fear and alarm. She is quite, quite mad. Hodgwick isn't very careful about the killings and, despite disguising herself as a man, she's been spotted on several occasions.

2) Sins Of The Past: The killings were not the work of a single individual, but a group of people who were part of a long dead sect of Shift worshippers. The killings were conducted as 'sacrifices' to their idols. Some papers and suchlike belonging to the sect have recently been discovered in a pawnshop in Mire End by a member of a Shift worshipping tendency which has recently established itself in the burgh. The new cult are delighted to have found the papers detailing the activities of the old cult, treating them as ancient wisdom and a guide to contacting the Shifted. The killings are the result of the new cult following the recommendations of a group which has been dead for nearly a century.

3) The Wanderer: The original killings were the work of an Ubel which made its home in Mire End for a while. This particular Ubel has been wandering The City for centuries



and has now returned to Mire End. The original killings involved the removal of three toes from each foot (in addition to the savage brutality of the evisceration). Again, all the bodies are mutilated in such a manner. The Ubel will move on after a few weeks, leaving a trail of killing in its wake.

digging deep

From across the canals they come, clutching spades, shovels, axes, mattocks, picks and crowbars. An unruly mob of treasure hunters, glory seekers, robbers and ne'er-do-wells. The reason for their presence in Mire End: Treasure, the glinting promise of buried treasure.



A score of days ago, a section of the long disused Barrack Way Main Sewer collapsed in on itself, leaving a cavernous trench down the middle of Barrack Way. Now, Barrack Way is a pretty poor neighbourhood, even by Mire End standards and the sudden appearance of a big hole didn't really cause that much consternation. Most of the denizens were concerned with more pressing matters, such as where the next meal was coming from. Then some local youths went exploring. They came back with rambunctious tales of derring-do in the darkness below Mire End. Of fighting strange creatures, of finding passageways sealed for centuries, whole buildings buried underground and the tantalising prospect of pecuniary enrichment.

Like ripples on the canal, the rumour of riches spread out through the burgh, rebounding off of itself, changing, metamorphosing and growing stronger. The rumour took on a life of its own when it reached across the canals, into the burghs which border Mire End. The rumour became fact, that Mire End was sitting on top of a cache of ancient technology, of vast wealth, a buried library from before The

Shift, the key to controlling The Shifted. To the poor, the dispossessed and the plain greedy, this was a chance too good to pass up. Tools were dusted off, families bade good-bye and fishoil lamps primed. A few scant days ago, the people of Mire End, and in particular the rag-clad people of Barrack Way, found themselves facing a steady stream of outsiders.

Needless to say, things are not going well. Barrack Way has turned into a cross between a quarry and an archaeological dig. Bodies are constantly being brought back to the surface due to gas explosions, cave-ins and fighting between the diggers. The Barrack Wayers are also less than pleased. They have been going out of their way to inconvenience the diggers, lobbing rocks at them, mugging them, coshing them over the head and generally making their lives a misery. And that was before the Hohler Gang decided to get involved. Ever ones for an opportunity, they saw a great many chances of robbery, drug dealing, prostitution and protectioneering. Then, as Barrack Way lies quite close to Forest Green, the Regulars decided to stick their oar in and attempt to bring a bit of order to the chaos. Successfully? Maybe not.

gm notes

The area under Barrack Way is a warren of flooded, blocked sewers, buried rooms, vaulted tunnels and ancient passages. Everything is either sodden and fungal, or dry and dusty as death. Sometimes there are entire buildings to be found, buried for centuries, the air tasting of ancient tombs. The eeriness of the place should be emphasised, the mausoleum like quiet, the awesome feeling that they are treading where no one has been for a long, long time.

possibilities

1) Dig! Dig For Your Lives! The PCs are scouted out by a very aggrieved and distressed looking Father Herbert. Dandy, Fritillery and Hoop, his three well-known wayward charges, have disappeared. Some of the diggers at Barrack Lane adopted them as mascots, giving them food, letting them carry tools and so forth. Now, there has been a major cave in down in the diggings and Father Herbert believes the children are trapped. As the characters are known to be good souls who wouldn't shy from the task of rescuing these poor little orphans, could they please, please help? He'd be most awfully grateful.

2) False Hopes: After an extended period of digging and exploring, the assembled hordes have concluded that the entire thing has been something of a hoax. They're now angry, frustrated and looking to take it out on someone. And the people of Barrack Way are very close at hand. A riot is brewing and someone must intervene to defuse the situation and prevent bloody murder breaking out in the streets.



3) The Truth Will Out: The is indeed an opportunity for enrichment at the dig site. Some strange looking gents with funny hats, spectacles and odd accents have been hanging about offering money for any 'interesting' finds. Mind you, their coin is good, according to some. These gents are actually from Longshore University and are more than keen on using this ad hoc excavation for a bit of archaeological research. If the PCs are in or around the site, it's more than likely they will be approached and quizzed about strange things they might have found, what they've seen or even if they'd like to do a bit of digging for money...

4) Money, Money, Money: For the less than scrupulous, the fracas at Barrack Way presents a golden opportunity for a bit of freelance gouging. There are plenty of people here who need food, water and a variety of other services, legal or otherwise. The PCs can take it upon themselves to exploit this situation, as many others are already doing. But be warned! The Hohler Gang might not take kindly and the Forest Green Regulars are taking a great interest in the crowds of diggers.

engines of despair

For some, it's simply not enough that most Mire Enders have a particularly miserable existence. For some, the misery of others is of no consequence. For some, profit and their own enrichment comes before all other matters. For Hosanna Nicely and her associates, misery is their stock in trade.

Taking over an abandoned tenement off of Thesp's Bend, Nicely and others have set up their own little factory to produce much needed parts for the Mire End Cog Works. Needless to say, their methods are somewhat underhand. Fooling the respectable Archibold Flint into thinking the parts are made by a reputable factory in Folly Hills, they use what is effectively slave labour to line their own pockets.

Children lifted from the streets, addled junkies and half-dead jakes are all put to work in the sealed off rooms of the tenement, tending presses for as many hours a day as they can stand. Death and injuries are commonplace in the humid, cramped, foetid environment. Nicely and the others keep discipline with the lash and iron rod. Those who expire in the private workhouse are simply fed to the dogs.

possibilities

1) Will Nobody Think Of The Children?: Early one foggy morning, the bedraggled, emaciated body of a small child was found at the northern end of Thesp's Bend. The tiny, wasted body was covered in bruises and cuts and clutched in the small hand was a single cog. Where did this child come from? Why the cog? Cogs? Everyone knows the Cog

Works make most them hereabouts. Has Flint been using child labour in his factory? What could be going on?

2) Here Today, Pawn Tomorrow: Emmanuel Detseted is not, by nature, an inquisitive man. Yet, something about Hosanna Nicely's manner made the hairs on the back of his neck stand on end. Not being a man of action, he has tasked the PCs with finding out why exactly Nicely was asking about spare machine parts and, above all else, thirty feet of iron chain and some heavy iron balls. Detseted suspects something ill is afoot, but is relying on the PCs to confirm his suspicions.

3) Take Note, Mr Flint: Boxes of small cogs do not often contain badly scrawled notes crying out for release from slavery. But this one did. Foreman Jupp immediately alerted Mr Flint who, being of decisive mind, called upon his friends the PCs to investigate these disturbing matters for him. Flint assumes that the small cogs are made at the Brick Lane Metalworks in Folly Hills, yet, if the characters investigate, they will find the Metalworks have no knowledge of supplying Mr Flint. Where are the cogs coming from? Perhaps the delivery cartwoman, a Ms Nicely, may know the answers...

in like flint

On the occasion of his birthday, the respectable Mr Flint demonstrates his generosity by throwing a party for his workers and their families. There is food and drink provided and activities for the families to take part in. Sack races, three-legged races, a fancy dress competition for the children and the hotly contested tug-of-war between the machinists and the foundry. All Mr Flint asks is that the attendees listen to his birthday speech. The foreman is also expected to make a speech congratulating the benevolent owner on another successful year.

possibilities

1) A Veneer Of Respectability: A news team has heard a rumour that the upstanding Mr Flint is not as respectable as he might seem. They decide that his birthday fete would be a good opportunity to uncover the truth.

2) Heave Ho! The PCs are the Machinists' tug-of-war team. There has been a rumour that the Foundry lads are bringing in a ringer.

3) Smash And Grab: There will be a lot of people around the Cog Works for the fete. Who will notice a few more? This is the perfect opportunity to hit the old man's safe. Perhaps there will be cash or, even better, blueprints of his new asynchronous gearing.



4) With Extreme Prejudice: You have been hired to kill Mr Flint, as publicly and as humiliatingly as possible. But you should probably have a plan for getting out too...

5) Without Extreme Prejudice: Someone has been hired to kill Mr Flint. He is a stubborn man and refuses to cancel his birthday party. His wife, Eloise, has hired you to make sure her husband survives the party.

6) Let Them Eat Cake: You have heard about a big event with free food! Now, if only you can get past the burly guards on the gate, you might be able to have your first decent meal in weeks!

publish and be damned!

Some unscrupulous ruffian has broken into the offices of that august journal, The Mire End Tribune. While the valuable, irreplaceable presses seem unharmed, the staff have found movable type scattered everywhere, their records ransacked and the offices generally vandalised.

While a large chunk of the Mire End population are aghast that such an attack could be perpetrated against their beloved Tribune, there's also a sizeable part of the citizenry who would be only too glad to see the paper dead and gone. Its crusading nature has won it many enemies, so the list of suspects is substantial to say the least.

possibilities

1) The Provosts: The TCMAA is thoroughly fed up with the Tribune constantly banging on about the lack of recognition that Mire End receives. Consequently, a small group of Provosts have been tasked with bringing down the journal. The break in is only the first stage of an escalating campaign of terror against the Tribune and its employees. Assault, further break-ins and even arson are on the agenda to get the Mire End Tribune shut down once and for all.

2) The Hohler Gang: Garsey Hatchett knows that the Mire End Tribune hates the Hohler Gang. And he hates them back. Sick of being told about stories in the Tribune (he can't read, so people have to read stuff out to him), he's decided to teach those smug bastards a lesson. The break-in was stage one in an escalating campaign of violence. His next plan is to kidnap a member of staff and as a ransom, demand that the Tribune cease operation. Obviously, if the ransom is agreed to, Hatchett has absolutely no intention of sticking to his side of the bargain.

3) Andy Mickay, Luke Chain and the local cripple-cut fraternity: It's well known that the Tribune has been running a long standing campaign against the sport of cripple-

plecut. While local worthies in that particular scene have no great enmity towards the paper, they'd rather not see their names splashed across the front page at regular intervals. In conjunction with the break-in, Andy Mickay has paid a visit to the Tribune, warning staff to lay off and stop bringing his good name into disrepute. Unwilling to back down in the face of such threats, the Tribune has contacted the characters in order to carry out a bit of sabotage and intimidation of their own...

4) The Fulgurators: 'Publish And Be Damned!' can be easily integrated with 'Single Track Mind'. The Fulgurators are furious that the Tribune has blown open their plans to re-open the railway through Mire End. Certain elements of the Guild have vowed to bring down the Tribune and all those associated with it. Discovery of these clandestine activities could go very hard for the Fulgurators, so they're very keen to cover up all traces of their involvement. And that includes the removal of anyone nosy enough to start investigating the strange goings on...

5) Random Burglars: The break-in was nothing more than a burglary attempt by some local youths. They didn't find anything they considered valuable and simply trashed the place in a fit of pique. They're not exactly keeping quiet about their activities and shouldn't be too hard to track down and serve appropriate chastisement on...

single track mind

Rumour has it that the Ancient & Honourable Guild of Fulgurators have designs on the old railway which runs through Mire End. Local gossip indicates that that the Guild are very interested in re-opening the railway and once more running their trains through Mire End.

Local opinion is very mixed on the subject: some see it as the ideal opportunity for the re-birth of Mire End, others view it as callously disregarding the views of locals, especially those who have made their home on the old railway. In the pubs and gambling dens of the burgh, tempers are fraying and arguments have become increasingly heated.

The situation is not helped by stories of black-clad people seen wandering mysteriously round the burgh with strange, arcane instruments of curious design in their hands. Strangely, few can actually agree on what these curious figures look like and certainly it seems as if it's all a load of tosh. Yet, some sober and reliable witnesses have claimed encounters with the mysterious figures, transitory encounters in the darkness of the night.



possibilities

1) Fulguratory Machinations: The Fulgurators are very interested in re-opening the railway and have hired the PCs to spread misinformation around Mire End. Their prime targets are the people who live in the Railway Shanties and the PCs have been tasked with either scaring them off or creating an atmosphere of mistrust towards them.

2) Worthy Victims: The PCs are either local worthies, or persons contacted by local worthies, who have been asked to investigate the rumours and ascertain whether or not the Fulgurators are up to anything. This could involve a lot of serious investigation and perhaps travel to other parts of The City or it could simply concentrate on Mire End. Whether the Fulgurators are actually up to anything is up to the GM.

3) A Mysterious Concoction: The rumours all spring from the feverish criminal mind of Garsey Hatchett. He hates the fact that the people of the Railway Shanties seem unafraid of the Hohler Gang and desperately wants to do something about them in order to impress his boss in the gang, Mr Broadbarn. He's therefore concocted this tale about the railways to stir up the people and create an atmosphere of fear. He's hoping that the locals get wound up enough that something horrible will happen or that a little shove in the right direction will get rid of a conspicuously annoying thorn in his side.

the winged man

High atop a squalid, run-down tenement in Mire End, a small hovel nestles, a ramshackle hut of rusting iron sheets, and pit-ted brick: the home of the Winged Man.

The Winged Man is a virtual hermit, a slight, old man, grimy with dirt, slightly hunched with age, his eyes a touch of pale blue amid the wrinkles and tangled beard of his face. Though clad in rags, his eyes sparkle, and his expression is contented and dreamy, for he has found a form of freedom and escape. He can fly.

Rarely encountered by the residents of Mire End, the Winged Man is seldom seen, save when he takes to the skies on his greatest and only joy, the hang-glider that earned him his nickname. At these times, he soars over and around the urban landscape, a great, bird-like silhouette in the sky, and a source of small wonderment among those locals gazing skywards. His hang-glider is a rudimentary construct, a frame of twisted metal struts, wires, plastic, and polythene. But it's a rudimentary construct that works, and he takes infinitely more care of it than he takes of himself.

gm notes

Details about the Winged Man are left deliberately vague, allowing the GM to customise him as much as desired, providing answers to questions such as: Who is the Winged Man? What did he used to do? Why has he become a hermit? When, why, and how did he create his hang-glider or obtain it? Do Mire End's locals envy, admire or despise him?

possibilities

1) Fallen Angel: The PCs witness the Winged Man's flight one day, only to watch as a freak wind sends him out of control, causing him to crash in the street nearby. What do they do? How do other locals react? Will people help him or try to take advantage of his plight? Is the Winged Man badly injured? If his hang-glider is damaged, how will the Winged Man react?

2) Clipped Wings: The Winged Man is found wandering the streets of Mire End, dazed, bereft, and utterly distraught, because his hang-glider has been stolen. Can the PCs find out who has stolen the hang-glider and why? Is it still intact or has it been wrecked?

3) Thieving Talons: Members of the Hohler gang have decided that hang-gliders would make ideal criminal tools, allowing them to glide silently to rooftops to commit burglaries and raids, before making equally useful airborne escapes. As a result, they have decided to convince the Winged Man into making them a number of hang-gliders, whether he's interested in doing so or not. What happens when they threaten the Winged Man? Does he seek help? Is he found in peril or having suffered harm? What happens if he caves in to the gang's demands?

"Take a look around. Through the fog and rain I can see home. It's not perfect, far from it, but it's home.

And we don't have much here, but we have hope."

Janus Kripitsch, Lostfinder, Mire End



Average Mire Ender

AWR: 50 **AGL:** 50
INT: 45 **DEX:** 45
PER: 55 **HLT:** 35
WIL: 50 **STR:** 40

Skills: Criminal Culture 40, Drinking 50, Folklore 50, Foraging 60

Gear: Precious little to speak of. Perhaps a tenement room shared with family or friends, a few items of clothing, some personal possessions.

Cog Works Artisan

AWR: 60 **AGL:** 50
INT: 55 **DEX:** 65
PER: 50 **HLT:** 45
WIL: 50 **STR:** 45

Skills: Dinginsmith 70, Machinist 60, Mechanical Systems 60, Mechanics 60

Gear: A few tools (normally kept in the workshops), heavy dogskin apron, gloves, goggles, spectacles, jewellers loupe and other such items.

Cog Works Labourer

AWR: 45 **AGL:** 45
INT: 45 **DEX:** 40
PER: 55 **HLT:** 45
WIL: 50 **STR:** 65

Skills: Blacksmith 60, Drinking 60, Folklore 50, Unarmed Combat 50

Gear: Heavy dogskin apron, protective gloves, workmans boots.

Cog Works Watchman

AWR: 60 **AGL:** 50
INT: 45 **DEX:** 50
PER: 55 **HLT:** 45
WIL: 60 **STR:** 55

Skills: Armed Combat 60, Criminal Culture 50, Longarm 50, Unarmed Combat 60

Gear: Stout club, sparklock carbine, heavy dogskin jerkin.

Cripplecut Fighter

AWR: 55 **AGL:** 65
INT: 45 **DEX:** 60
PER: 45 **HLT:** 35
WIL: 55 **STR:** 45

Skills: Act 40, Armed Combat 70, Criminal Culture 60, Tactics 60

Gear: Loose fighting clothes and a selection of knives.

Downtrodden Prostitute

AWR: 60 **AGL:** 55
INT: 45 **DEX:** 55
PER: 60 **HLT:** 30
WIL: 45 **STR:** 30

Skills: Act 60, Economics 40, Negotiation 60, Persuasion 50

Gear: 'Presentable' clothing to attract clients, very cheap perfumes or ointments, umbrella, variety of cheap and possibly ineffectual medications and balms.

Forest Green Regular

AWR: 50 **AGL:** 50
INT: 45 **DEX:** 50
PER: 50 **HLT:** 40
WIL: 60 **STR:** 50

Skills: Armed Combat 40, Criminal Culture 50, Running 40, Shadow 40

Gear: Home-made polearm, stout club, green armband, air of righteous anger.

Hohler Gang Boss

AWR: 65 **AGL:** 55
INT: 55 **DEX:** 55
PER: 60 **HLT:** 40
WIL: 65 **STR:** 55

Skills: Armed Combat 60, Criminal Culture 70, Persuasion 60, Longarm 60

Gear: Knife, cosh, hatchet or some other form of melee weapon, a gun of some variety, dogskin coat and a gang HQ of some kind.

Hohler Gang Soldier

AWR: 55 **AGL:** 55
INT: 40 **DEX:** 50
PER: 40 **HLT:** 40
WIL: 50 **STR:** 60

Skills: Armed Combat 60, Persuasion 50, Pistol 50, Unarmed Combat 40

Gear: Some form of melee weapon or other, a gun if they are lucky.

Orphaned Urchin

AWR: 60 **AGL:** 65
INT: 35 **DEX:** 60
PER: 60 **HLT:** 25
WIL: 45 **STR:** 20

Skills: Climbing 60, Fast Talk 50, Hide 70, Running 60

Gear: Rags.

Petty Crook

AWR: 55 **AGL:** 50
INT: 55 **DEX:** 55
PER: 60 **HLT:** 35
WIL: 55 **STR:** 40

Skills: Bribery 40, Criminal Culture 60, Forgery 40, Pickpocket 50

Gear: Perhaps a small knife, a few tools of his or her particular criminal trade (cutpursing blade, cosh, fake documents, etc.) and some cheap personal possessions.

Railway Shantyite

AWR: 60 **AGL:** 50
INT: 45 **DEX:** 45
PER: 55 **HLT:** 35
WIL: 55 **STR:** 40

Skills: Common (Read & Write) 40, Folklore 60, Foraging 60, Unarmed Combat 40

Gear: A place in the shanties, some cooking pots and a few scraps of clothing.

Random Tough

AWR: 50 **AGL:** 45
INT: 40 **DEX:** 45
PER: 45 **HLT:** 35
WIL: 60 **STR:** 60

Skills: Armed Combat 40, Drinking 60, Sneak 40, Unarmed Combat 50

Gear: Some kind of knife, club or other melee weapon, a rusty sparklock if they're very lucky.

Redberry Park Dweller

AWR: 45 **AGL:** 40
INT: 45 **DEX:** 40
PER: 40 **HLT:** 25
WIL: 50 **STR:** 35

Skills: Fast Talk 50, Folklore 50, Foraging 70, Hide 50

Gear: A sodden, stinking hovel, some rags and very little else.

Wastrels Lot Kid

AWR: 40 **AGL:** 60
INT: 35 **DEX:** 55
PER: 20 **HLT:** 25
WIL: 50 **STR:** 15

Skills: Armed Combat 30, Pistol 40, Sneak 50, Unarmed Combat 30.

Gear: Black dogskin coat, Nakakatayari 'SkyLine' pistol, club, knife or similar weapon, drugs or alcohol.

