



# THE MINISTRY

OF EXTRAMUNDANE AFFAIRS

*The World of Ministry*

PRE-RELEASE EDITION, v1.0

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# *This document presents the established Ministry setting with ideas for representing the hidden occult underbelly of Great Britain.*

*While you are absolutely free to use all of this, exactly as it is presented, you should also feel no obligation whatsoever to the source material. After all, just because we liked an idea doesn't mean that you will. Play with the setting, do what you will with it!*

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# BRITAIN IN 1941

By 1941 the situation in Britain is tense indeed. Six months ago the Dunkirk evacuations of Operation Dynamo were concluded. France fell to the Germans, the Channel Islands were invaded and occupied, and the Battle of Britain raged in the skies. The war in North Africa is in full swing and Rommel now commands German forces there. 1941 sees Britain watching nervously over the Channel, expecting invasion at any moment while the bombing of cities commences in earnest. Whilst the American government is loaning money and selling equipment to the British Empire, the American public have no interest in getting involved in another European war, and the other great power - the Soviet Union - is still standing by, uninvolved in the conflict with the Third Reich. Prime Minister Churchill advocates defiance, but the nation's future seems tenuous at best.

## A Different Time

Even more so than the modern era, the United Kingdom of 1941 is a very stratified society. Class still has a strong grip on society, a self-reinforcing cycle of “knowing your place and respecting your betters”. Britain is still a massive industrial power, backed by the Empire's enormous resources. Its leaders were essentially educated by Victorians and have that extremely socially conservative mindset firmly in place. Male homosexuality is still punished by imprisonment and there are a range of capital crimes (murder, treason, espionage, piracy with violence, and oddly specifically: arson in royal dockyards). But it is also a time of radical flux in social attitudes; women are gaining the ability to work in traditional men's industries for the first time. With the men conscripted, Britain desperately needed women in heavy industry and working the land. It would also be the beginning of the end of Empire although few knew it at that time.

Britain's victory (with the aid of allies) in the Great War had given an overconfident air to the populace's expectations of its intervention in France. The sweeping aside of the Expeditionary Force by Blitzkrieg came as a powerful shock. Though Operation Dynamo rescued many hundreds of thousands of troops and was touted as a triumph the sense of defeat and worry for the future is palpable. The sense of superiority that Britain's Empire had granted it was dented.

## A Darker Side

There is an understandable tendency to mythologise the Britain of WW2 as the “stiff upper lip, keep calm and carry on digging for victory” that the propaganda of the time displays. Indeed, many of the most famous images of resilience (a milkman delivering across Blitz rubble for example) were staged in order to have morale-boosting pictures in the papers. With so little popular dissent from the Official Line in the media it is tempting to believe it all. But while the “all pull together” spirit was very much in evidence and the majority of the population were working for the common good, significant sections of the populace saw criminal opportunity in war.

The blackout gave cover to a massive spike in burglary, robbery and violent crime. Black marketeers and racketeering were rife. Looting of bombed houses and closed shops during air raids was common. Indeed a common tactic was to steal Air Raid Precautions helmets and armbands and thus look like you were simply rescuing goods. People would help criminals load vans, such was the respect for the ARP and the rule of law. This crime spree was not helped by the mass early release, at the outbreak of war, of anyone with three months left on sentence and any boys in Borstals (juvenile detention centres) who had served at least 6 months. The final exacerbating factor came with a large swathe of the police force joining the army, and the rest being as busy watching for signs of espionage and sabotage as they are fighting crime.

# Total War

While there had been some measure of targeting industrial production during the Great War, the lack of long-range air power had made the sort of relentless destruction witnessed through the Second World War impossible. This was no longer a factor; thousands of bombers were able to comfortably fly across Europe, strike targets with tonnes of explosives and return. As a result, there was no escaping the fact that Britain was At War. Windows were taped to reduce glass shrapnel, air raid shelters were built in gardens and under sturdy tables in homes so that those buried in rubble *might* be recovered alive. Children had been evacuated from major cities – twice, as many parents brought their children home during the “phony war” period where no danger seemed likely – and any decorative metalwork was removed to be melted down for the war effort. The war in the North Atlantic and the endless predations of the U-boat wolf-packs on shipping led to strict rationing.

Adding to this all-pervasive sense of hardship and conflict was a dread fear that the Germans would deploy poison gas. The war in the trenches had seen gas used as a regular and horribly effective weapon. Chlorine, Phosgene and Mustard Gas had been used by all sides, but Germany had been the first to use poison – rather than irritant – gas. The reality of history being written by the victors meant that Germany and poison gas were inextricably intertwined in the popular conscience. So certain were military planners that Germany would use gas if stalemated that every citizen in Britain was issued a gas mask and carrying them in their little cardboard cases was mandatory.

The prevalence of night raids meant that underground trains ceased function at night and the stations, outfitted with army beds, were used as shelters for anyone caught away from home. The howling of an air raid siren was the cue to seek immediate shelter. Not only to avoid being crushed in rubble, but to avoid being hit by shrapnel from the thousands of anti-aircraft rounds being fired at the skies above. These shells detonated at a set altitude and were designed to force the attacking aircraft higher to avoid damage. This made it harder to target vital industry but meant that the population suffered more even when this was not the intent of the raid.

## *Tea and Rationing*

*The British relationship with tea is an obsessive one. Tea is grown in India mainly because Britain wanted a source other than China to secure stable supply. Of all the goods rationed and hardship suffered, tea was never, ever allowed to run out. Indeed, in 1942 Britain set out to buy every pound of tea from every nation on earth they were not at war with. There are some accounts that only imports of bullets outweighed Britain's imports of tea.*

## CONSCRIPTION AND RESERVED OCCUPATIONS

In September of 1939 the National Service (Armed Forces) Act came into law and all men between 18 and 41 years of age were liable to be called up for service. By 1942 this would increase to 18-51 years and all women of 20-30 years old. There were exceptions to this: police; medical workers; prison warders; students; clergy; married women (causing something of a spike in marriage licences issued); women with children aged 14 or under; people with certain disabilities, and anyone in Government service (including, of course, Ministry of Extramundane Affairs personnel). Northern Ireland never introduced direct conscription but many volunteered. Those in reserved occupations were kept in those occupations - indeed, as of 1943 many people were directed to the mines rather than military service (the so-called “Bevin Boys”).

Reserved occupations included many skilled workers, railway and dock-workers, some miners, farmers, agricultural workers, schoolteachers and doctors. Engineering was of course in massive demand and thus had the highest levels of reserved occupation. Conscientious objectors, *if* they could justify their position to a tribunal, were often placed into reserved civilian occupation or the medical corps. All of this means that there was a significant reduction in the young to middle-aged male populations of towns and cities. Initially, overseas service was restricted to those over the age of 20 (this was removed in 1942, when all conscripts became liable for overseas service).



# PARANORMAL CONTROL IN GREAT BRITAIN

All around the world and throughout history humans have coexisted with the paranormal. Some populations have come to terms with the spirits and monsters that share their world. They appease the dangerous, respect the merely weird, and pay the price demanded for such coexistence. Others – especially the industrialised nations – attempt to control and contain the darkness. These efforts are almost always conducted in secret for a number of reasons. Many of the creatures out there draw power from fear or the mere knowledge of their existence, and secrecy robs them of this. Perhaps more importantly, the purpose of these efforts is to keep these creatures where they belong: in myth and story, where they can do no harm. Better that the public believe they do not exist and continue to trust in reason and the light than let them know that there are options out there for power that cares nothing for morality.

In Britain these duties have passed through a few different bodies over the centuries but now reside in the purview of the Ministry for Extramundane Affairs.

## The Ministry for Extramundane Affairs

While there are many posts in government that the public and press pay little attention to, there is only one which is completely invisible. His Majesty's Secretary of State for Extramundane Affairs is a tricky post for the Prime Minister to fill. You need someone who is willing to do a great deal of work for absolutely no recognition or fame, not even a cabinet seat. Furthermore they need to be unimpeachably discreet while at the same time open to the realities that the job brings with it. As a result the post tends to be filled with one of two options: quiet, conscientious, unremarkable politicians; or a sinecure position chucked to a PM's crony with no work expected for the role. The work falls to the Permanent Secretary for Extramundane Affairs. In truth the ministry prefers this second arrangement as the Permanent Secretary, being a civil servant, tends to be in post for a long period whereas ministers do tend to shuffle about.

The Ministry for Extramundane Affairs as a department of State is mostly concerned with the identification, regulation and administration of those humans possessing extraordinary or occult powers and those non-human residents that choose to reside within the United Kingdom. Beyond the administrative body, the Ministry is further split into three departments: The Preternatural Criminality & Justice Department, The Esoteric Treaties Office, and the Department of the Impossible. The first two departments are run by their Deputy Under-Secretaries of State and spend much of their time fiddling with the minutiae of regulations.

The Preternatural Criminality & Justice Department (PCJD) is tasked with the adaptation of mundane laws and sentencing as applied to the paranormal community. They are the most police-like of all the departments, combining Magistrates and investigative officers aware of the magical world and often part of it. Their investigative officers are sometimes mistaken for DoI field teams (see below) but their only remit is the investigation of suspected occult involvement in criminal acts. Their officers operate as policemen, going largely unarmed and doing the mundane house-to-house work of investigation of minor offences. Technically as any criminal offence committed by a member of the magical community falls under the remit of the Ministry, the majority of the work of the PCJD is in the investigation, conviction and punishment of minor offences.

While the PCJD feels much like the Home Office, The Esoteric Treaties Office is in many ways the Foreign Office, only instead of negotiating with foreign powers, the ETO deals with extra-planar entities, ancient races and creatures of the deep places of the world. In addition, the ETO has the unenviable job of co-ordinating the control and management of the extraordinary world across the Empire. All of Britain's colonies maintain their own local versions of the PCJD and the Department of the Impossible and it is up to the ETO to keep them consistent across the length and breadth of the Empire. In Britain their proudest accomplishments are the Extradition & Mutual Respect of Tradition Agreement with the ephemeral realm of Ælfheim, and the fisheries treaty with the Ceasg and Merrow folk of the coastal waters that prevented a war at sea. The Esoteric Treaties Office likes to say that their best work results in literally nothing happening at all. This stands in rather stark contrast to the way the final and oldest department works.

## The Department of the Impossible

It would be easiest to describe the Department of the Impossible as handling “everything else.” The Department can be described as a blend of the Secret Intelligence Service, Special Branch and the Ministry of Defence. They are responsible for the more physical aspects of enforcing Ministry policy. They police the worst elements of the extramundane community, defend against foreign occult menaces, investigate preternatural threats and crimes and literally fight monsters to protect the mundane public. It is perhaps not surprising, considering the fairly straightforward approach to threats to the Crown and its subjects that the DoI is the oldest element of the Ministry. Indeed, the Ministry formed *around* the Department; a frame of regulation and law developed and the modern arrangement was achieved. Its history was a little more independent.

### A SHORT HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

To see the origins of the DoI we must look four hundred years into the past. In 1558 Elizabeth was somewhat turbulently crowned Queen, the date having been selected by her personal astronomer and wizard John Dee. Dee was to go on to serve Gloriana for the remainder of his life and in concert with Sir Thomas Walpole – Her Majesty's spymaster – would protect her from the many threats to assail her.

While Walpole took charge of the defence of the Queen's body and soul from mortal threats, Dee committed himself to defend against preternatural forces. Acknowledging that he could not do this alone he gathered a group of like-minded men and women about him as his acolytes and soldiers. Over time they came to refer to themselves as the *Defensores Diademae Animi* – Defenders of the Crown's Soul. On Dee's death in 1580, the *Defensores* revealed themselves formally to Her Majesty and requested to continue serving her and the future line of Kings and Queens. Elizabeth consented and formalised them as independent Crown Agents.

The fortunes of the *Defensores* become a little murky after this as they treasured their independence and secrecy. Presumably they were doing their duty far from official scrutiny and in the shadows of society. It is known that they renewed their vows of service on the accession of the Stewart line in 1603. The next evidence of their existence is in arrest warrants issued by Cromwell against these staunch defenders of the Crown around 1650. They presumably lay low during the period of Parliamentary control and subsequent unstable Restoration of the Monarchy. What is known is that some form of agreement was reached as Queen Mary II, in concert with her Parliament, created the post of Privy Councillor for Esoteric Affairs. This Privy Council would drift over to pure government service, and during the reign of the “mad king” George III the remaining ties with the crown were cut and the Ministry was founded. Chapter House became its base around this time, 1771.

## OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

Those working in the Department of the Impossible fall into three rough categories:

1. Clerical Officers who have security clearance and support the running of the Department but have little notion of the true scale of the work.
2. Attached Officers: experts and craftsmen who serve the Department at Chapter House and other Ministry facilities.
3. Field Officers: those who are expected to go out in to the world and serve at the sharp end.

Field Officers, as you might expect, are the most diverse of these. A very few work as lone agents with a remit to infiltrate and remain in deep cover in organisations the DoI wants to keep an eye on. More commonly, Officers work in field officer teams. Anything from 3-6 per team is usual and organisation tends toward mutually supporting personalities rather than any official make up. Teams gain reputations for being adept at solving particular problems and thus are dispatched on those missions rather than being designed for the purpose. New teams are given particular missions or objectives to accomplish and are kept on a fairly close leash. As they grow in experience they tend to be given the looser or messier missions with less clear objectives and expected to act in the best interests of the service and nation. Eventually they rise to the rank of Senior Officers; they can be issued chambers and clerical staff and can declare their own interests and lines of enquiry. By this time they are trusted to be capable of independent action although still expected to respond to any objective set by the Ministry.

Overseeing this whole chaotic group is the head of the Department of the Impossible: Mr Pilgrim.

### Mr Pilgrim

In a department whose remit is the mysterious and enigmatic, it somehow seems to fit that not a great deal is known about its leader. Experienced officers tend to respect him too much to speculate on what they may have gleaned in their years. It is known that his is a permanent position; he holds the old Privy Councillor title as well as Deputy Under-Secretary for the Department of the Impossible. He has certainly led the Department for as long as living memory holds true but appears as a man in his early fifties. He rarely, if ever, leaves his office and he is rumoured to have apartments in the roof behind that office.

While rumours might fly about his nature, it is known that he is a quiet, learned man whose schooling seems to cover an astonishing range of arcane and esoteric subjects. He is an excellent judge of character and has a reputation for stern fairness. He will give his officers considerable latitude as to the “how” they conduct their missions as long as they serve the Light. His wrathful vengeance for those rare officers who fall to darkness is legendary. Whatever else might be true, he is in charge, and in occult circles his word is law.

## CHAPTER HOUSE

The Headquarters of the Department of the Impossible is deliberately nondescript from the outside, just another of the rows of Georgian houses running the length of Threadneedle Street. The imposing, Bath-stone façade rises six stories from the street. The wrought-iron fence that used to line the road has gone to be remade into rifles and tanks. The threshold is now just a line of rust-stained stone blocks and the five semi-circular steps leading to the baize-green door. Only a discrete brass plaque bearing the royal warrant and crowned portcullis gate of the palace of Westminster give any indication of official purpose. Stamped alongside are the simple words: Chapter House; 22 Threadneedle St, EC2. This deliberately ordinary appearance is not uncommon in the area. Most inhabitants of the Square Mile assume Chapter House to be an extension of the Bank of England at the other end of the street. This supposition is one that the DoI are only too happy to permit to continue.

Stepping across the threshold and into the interior, you would be aware a change in the air, a subtle shift in pressure. You are now within a warded space, magic worth more than a foot of armoured plate skinning the building with near impenetrable strength. A small reception area with a high desk bars your path. Any casual visitor will go no further but be gently but firmly refused admittance. Hostile visitors would meet the hidden forces garrisoned in the rooms either side of the reception. A dozen Magebane Warders and a couple of DoI field teams on down-time security duty would make a mess out of almost anything to attempt entry. They hope.

### **The Inner Workings of Chapter House**

If you are granted entrance past the reception room then it immediately becomes clear that Chapter House is larger than its façade makes it appear. Indeed, it stretches into the two buildings either side of it – both ostensibly private residences – with long corridors stretching off left and right and a pair of grand spiral staircases, a dual helix piercing all six floors to a stained glass dome depicting the archangel Michael in combat with the Dragon. The building is busy at all hours with teams coming and going, analysts, archivists, scientists and magi all working on various projects. To aid in navigation the two wings of Chapter House tend to be referred to as Port and Starboard, so an instruction to take a box to the library on “3 starboard” would be the third floor on the right hand side of the building as you enter.

Beneath Chapter House are more levels, down to sub-sub-basement and spreading back from the building beneath its rear gardens. A large vehicle garage is also found beneath the gardens at basement level accessed through a ramp disguised as a brick garage opening onto the lane behind Threadneedle Street. Most DoI Officers use this as their main point of entry and exit as it is a little more discreet than the front door.

### **Departmental Plan of Chapter House**

Working from the top down, the layout of Chapter House is roughly as follows.

#### **Roof Port: Mr Pilgrim’s Office and Waiting Room.**

At the top of the spiral staircase, lit by the daylight streaming through the stained glass is the rotunda and reception desk for Mr Pilgrim’s office. Visitors will be met by one of the rotating shifts of administrative staff that bustle around the bank of desks in the starboard wing of the roof. Around the central area are knots of comfortable chairs where the many visitors and teams requiring personal briefings wait. When he is ready for you, you will be shown into a formal room panelled in rowan wood inlaid with silver sigils. Ancient books and scrolls line fine bookcases. In the centre of the room is a large, green-leather covered desk with a traditional wingback padded chair behind it. A semicircle of chairs faces the desk. Light comes from sconces in the walls or through skylights whose glass is etched with arcane marks and wards. Behind the desk a single, unassuming door leads to the rest of the Port wing. You are never invited beyond.

#### **Roof Starboard: Administration**

The Starboard wing of the roof space is a jumble of desks, phones, mobile blackboards and ad-hoc project groups. It is here that day-to-day operations are planned, data received is analysed and reports generated. The busy staff that work here reshape the space to suit their needs from week to week. At its calmest, the starboard roof space is rows of individual desks with people working. The last time that was seen was 1939.

#### **Fifth Port: Briefing and meeting rooms, retrofitted war room**

Before the start of the war there were around a dozen decent sized meeting rooms scattered along a thin corridor. Chapter House is something of a hub for Ministry Operations and thus need regular space for people to meet who aren’t permanently based at Threadneedle Street. These days, three of them have had their walls knocked through to form a war room – although there is some evidence that this is not the first time this has had to happen – where the Shadow War is fought. Maps and charts track the movement of occult enemy forces and known hostile actors. Entry to this room is restricted and an armed DoI guard on the door prevents access to anyone without permission.

**Fifth Starboard: Senior Officers' chambers, Preternatural Criminality & Justice Liaison.**

The mirror of the port side, the starboard side is a maze of two dozen smaller offices, all with stout locks on the doors. These are the Senior Officers' chambers, they each contain a decent safe, a weapons rack and desk space. Each chamber comes complete with a clerical officer chosen from the available pool by the team occupying the chambers. Beyond that it is up to the occupants, so some of these chambers contain bizarre collections indeed. One of the chambers contains the liaison office of the Preternatural Criminality and Justice Department. Preternatural Criminality have a rather nice building south of the river. This liaison office is a room overflowing with files and documents relating to active cases that might require DoI involvement to bring them to conclusion. The PCJD can petition for field officers to be dispatched to bring in particularly violent or dangerous offenders. Indeed, sometimes they might even ask that the field officers take over a case in its entirety if it is complex or dangerous enough to need more resources than a normal PCJD partnership can handle.

**Fourth Port: Physical and forensic analysis laboratories**

Chapter House maintains a well-stocked series of chemical and forensic laboratories with highly credentialed scientific staff working alongside more mystical analysis like psychometric scanning. Not all cases are cracked by the extraordinary. The DoI has long held that the mundane business of police work, forensics and analysis can solve most cases.

**Fourth Starboard: Biological and crypto-zoological laboratories**

In addition to its work managing the magical world, the DoI plays its part pushing the frontier of understanding about the supernatural world. The dissection labs and biological analysis workshops of the starboard wing help to expand humanity's knowledge of the magical world. It is fair, however, to say that their work may be somewhat more focussed around *defeating* the magical world than some of the civilian centres of study. It should be noted though that while all this study is undertaken, newcomers are sometimes alarmed to discover a certain "suck it and see" approach permeating the DoI's culture. The answer to the question "what does this do exactly?" is all too often: "let us know when you figure it out..."

**Third: Library and studies**

The entire third floor is an open-plan space surrounding the spiral stairs; pierced ironwork arches support the floors above. The central space is taken up with reading desks and a large card index built into the librarian's counter. The starboard side is a well-stocked mundane library focussing on mythology, history, archaeology and theology. The port side is a more esoteric collection of books on arcane lore and ritual magic, journals of long-dead field officers, and a host of other texts. Unlike the starboard wing, the shelves here are locked with decorated metal cages. Only the librarians have keys, and so readers have to ask to see potentially dangerous texts. The far port wall is lined with small reading rooms for studying texts that have sections which could harm the unwary even if only glanced at.

**Second Port: Medical and recuperative**

Working for the Ministry is a dangerous life and the DoI takes its responsibilities to their people seriously. The entire port wing is a well-stocked and modern hospital wing complete with operating theatre and small recuperation ward. This being the DoI, the medicine available is supplemented by the arcane; rituals of healing and wellbeing combine with magical and faith healing for remarkable results.

**Second Starboard: Documents fabrication; photography analysis and darkrooms.**

While it would be simplicity itself to gain any documentation needed by the Ministry simply by asking another government department nicely, that would create quite the security problem. The DoI finds it convenient not to exist officially, so a steady stream of ID cards and other documentation streaming into a nondescript building in London would, at the very least, raise questions. Instead, the Ministry has permission to "officially forge" documentation. In the starboard side of the second floor there are desks of clever men and women obsessing over paper weight and feel, typefaces and inks. New identities can be crafted in hours, and backing this department up are the photographic offices. Even beyond the difficulties of darkroom work, Ministry photographic analysis can be fraught. Beings that don't resolve properly on film, or whose visage burns photographic negatives, or whose essence is duplicated in any image... can be problematic at best.

**First Port: Canteen; Kitchens; Tailor's workshop**

The large body of men and women working in Chapter House around the clock need feeding and first floor port is where it happens. The canteen is a large airy space with well-scrubbed bare wooden tables and benches. This is often an impromptu meeting space for Officers. The kitchen does its best with the rations and the large garden space at the rear has been turned over to growing food to keep Chapter House functioning. In a small corner office there is a pair of tailors working on uniforms

for officers to masquerade as military or police personnel. Other alterations for concealing weapons or unusual appendages keep them and their rattling machines busy.

**First Starboard: Chapel; reliquary**

As an unusual adjunct to a government building, the starboard first floor is occupied by a large chapel dedicated to St Michael the Archangel. Traditionally the Archbishop of Westminster chooses a trusted Archdeacon to administer to the needs of Ministry personnel. Behind the altar a vault door leads to the Reliquary of St Michael. Here are stored relics of saints, sacred weapons and icons of faith from around the world. These are as much a part of the arsenal of the DoI as anything in the sub-basement armoury. Hidden away, secure even within this locked room are the exact opposite: cursed or daemonic artefacts kept subdued and restrained by the presence of all the relics.

**Ground Port: Magebane barracks, communications switchboard & post room.**

While the central ground floor is dominated by the staircase and atrium, the port and starboard wings contain much of the backroom staff of the DoI. On the port side the casual visitor will find the communications hub. A well-staffed switchboard (the telephone number of Chapter House is London 1771) and post room keeps Chapter House connected to the rest of the world. Hidden from public view behind concealed doors is a small barracks room with attendant armoury. In here are housed half a dozen Magebane Warders. As part of their centuries-old agreement with the Ministry they maintain a secret presence here to defend the DoI from arcane assault. They do not mix with Ministry personnel and rotate out with others from Galdrefæsten on a monthly basis.

**Ground Starboard: Strangers' meeting rooms & lounge, Security ready room.**

On the rare occasions that non-ministry personnel are permitted in the building, the starboard ground floor is as far as they get. There is a somewhat luxuriously appointed lounge, reminiscent of a London club where "strangers" can be entertained without letting them further into the Department. There is also a nice conference room for when strangers are required at larger discussions. Concealed in the panelling of the Strangers' Lounge are more doors, these leading to a ready room where usually 2-3 field teams of DoI personnel on down-time from active duty are stationed for defence.

**Basement: Garage; mechanics and tooling workshop; basement access security; generator room; long term storage; laundry; carpenter's workshop.**

Beneath Chapter House and the grounds surrounding it are something of a labyrinth of rooms and tunnels. Among these workshops and storage areas is the underground garage where Ministry vehicles are concealed from public view. A concealed ramp from the back alley behind Chapter House allows for even lorries to enter without raising suspicion.

**Sub-Basement: Gunsmiths, Armoury & Firing range; Gymnasium**

Insulated from the surface by an entire basement level, the DoI's sub-basement is home to the armoury, weapons maintenance and practice ranges. There is also the gymnasium. This is in two parts, there is the normal type of gym with its ropes, bars, weights, clubs and medicine balls. Then there is the magical gymnasium. This is a large, round room panelled in hawthorn and rowan. Potent silver magical circles are inlaid into the walls, floor and ceiling creating an impenetrable cylinder from which no magic can escape. Arcane instruments line the walls and you will regularly find DoI practitioners testing their talents here.

**Sub-Sub-Basement: Holding cells; hazardous study laboratories; incinerators; morgue**

Far from the light of the surface, the sub-sub-basement is a grim, steel-walled affair. Down here are found holding cells more reminiscent of bank vaults than normal cages. A large room, built like a water tank with water- and air-tight doors fit for a submarine houses the hazardous study laboratory. Here the atmosphere can be changed or even replaced with water in order to study creatures incompatible with our environment. A slightly grimmer requirement is the secure morgue and incinerators.

## ST JUDE'S COMMONWEALTH CLUB

A fair distance from Threadneedle St, in a quiet residential street in Islington is a grand old house bearing the name "St Jude's Commonwealth Club". On the surface this is just another members only Gentlemen's club – of which London has dozens. Its real purpose is to serve the DoI as a home away from home for field agents, visiting experts and even a less intimidating place to bring members of the mundane public should the need arise. Rooms are available for field staff without London residences. There is an excellent stranger's tea room where members can bring the public. The uniformed and decorated serving staff (all former military stewards with appropriate clearance) and the excellent range of cream teas has led to the fond appellation "Tea & Medals Club" among DoI field staff. Better to use that name than invoking Jude, the patron saint of lost causes, too often and wearing out the luck. It would seem exposure to the paranormal does little to stifle human superstitiousness.

## REGIONAL OFFICES

It would be impossible to police the entire nation from one building in the City of London. Thus the DoI maintains satellite offices in the further flung reaches of the country. Edinburgh, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Liverpool and Belfast all house small satellite versions of Chapter House. Each has a slightly different remit depending on the local requirements but each houses an armoury, a vehicle pool, a regional head office and clerical support for officers. In fact, many large cities will have a member of the Ministry personnel stationed there in the manner of a news correspondent, keeping an eye on supernatural matters and alerting the DoI should anything worthy of their attention rear its head.

## JOINING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

There are a few routes into the DoI: for members of the magical community, already aware of the DoI, it isn't much different to mundane folks joining the Secret Intelligence Service. Application, interview, assessment and investigation for clearance will tell them whether they want you or not. Sometimes people serving in other departments of the Ministry apply for transfers to the DoI wanting to go into field work. The most dramatic fashion of joining is the way the mundane populace join the DoI: usually, that of surviving an experience with the extramundane, acquitting yourself well, and being recommended by the agents who turned up to fix the mess you were in.

Having joined up, you would normally enter a period of training and mentorship. Special forces would train you in fighting techniques; senior agents would bring you along on missions and impart their hard-earned wisdom. Once the Department felt you were ready they would find a team that you suited and rotate you into it. These days the procedure has changed somewhat. Senior agents are dying at a terrible rate, many are overseas fighting the Third Reich directly. The others need to be working with those they trust rather than bringing on new agents. In these conditions an experimental program is being trialled: learning the job by doing the job. Rookie teams are being assembled and being monitored and developed by the very top. It is hoped that teams can learn fast enough to survive. With German forces poised to invade and Britain's very existence hanging by a thread, this is a slim hope indeed.



# MAGICAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

For the most part the laws surrounding the paranormal world are fairly straightforward. If it is illegal to do something in under mortal law, it is illegal for the magical community as well. Use arcane or preternatural powers to commit a crime, and its enforcement will come under Ministry jurisdiction. Prisoners ostensibly have similar rights to due process as their mundane counterparts but sentencing is often at variance. Trials are overseen by a trio of magistrates appointed by the Preternatural Criminality & Justice Department as it would be difficult to allow trial by jury.

These processes only apply to humans who are accused of crimes. Other sentient, law abiding races are dealt with by their own treaties or special arrangements. Usually this means handing them over to their leaders who, if they respect and wish to continue to have that treaty, enforce the law themselves. This causes some bizarre situations for field officers who have been known to give testimony to Ælfheim tribunals by both moon and sunlight in order to properly try the accused. It is fair to say that once you stray from human cultures things get a little more “make it up as you go”. There are categories of creature that may well be sentient but respect no law and obey no authority beyond “might makes right.” The fact that these creatures are almost universally cruel, dangerous and self-centered means that summary execution is all too often the only option for field officers to enact, and it is for this reason that field officers are always armed.

There is one last consideration of law enforcement that applies only to the magical community. Those of the human population born with the Talent for magic must be registered with the Ministry of Extramundane Affairs. There are restricted practices, texts and materials that those with Talent must not possess or perform. Practitioners of magic (or ‘adepts’ as they are commonly called) find that DoI teams make infrequent but unannounced audits and inspections of their homes and other properties. Enforcing these laws is handled much as any other prohibition. Minor infractions may simply result in a warning and confiscation. Repeat or major offences will see jail time. The DoI has seen the awful consequences of black magic too often to be lax about such things.

## Black Magic

It is difficult to truly define black magic, as in reality *all* magic can be used for both good and ill. A hammer isn’t good or ill, whether it is building a house or crushing a skull. Intent is all-important. That having been said, there are practices that cause nothing but harm; rituals and artefacts that are made for nothing but suffering. There are also practices that might not be intrinsically evil but have the universal result of corrupting those that use them. These are what are normally referred to as “black magic”.

Necromancy is the most famous of these practices, with the summoning of demons and other extraplanar entities being a close second. These practices are so dangerous that they represent a mortal threat to the country as a whole. Thus the Ministry maintains a zero tolerance policy: distributing materials that encourage or enable these practices will earn you a lengthy spell in Galdrefæsten. Actually using these magics is a capital crime and will see your neck in a noose.

# Prison

For those with Talent or whose nature means that incarceration in the general prison population is impossible, the Preternatural Criminality & Justice Department maintains a special facility. Hidden away in the wilds of Dartmoor are the Grey Wethers: a pair of prehistoric stone circles arranged in a north-south line. These circles guard the entry and exit points of a hidden fortress: Galdrefæsten. Enter the northern circle from the east at dawn and the land around the two circles is suddenly occupied by the courtyard of a massive, stone-built castle. Modern weapons installations cover your movements and plate-armoured warriors watch your every step. These are the Magebane Warders and they tolerate no deviation from their instructions.

Regular prisoners are housed above ground in small, spare cells. Iron-studded wooden doors bar the minimum security doors whereas modern steel has replaced the medium security cells. Officers delivering the prisoners will usually be granted hospitality until sundown in the upper quarters of the castle where the Magebane Warders make their home.

Maximum security prisoners are led underground to a series of tunnels, their floors made of cold iron grating. Through this can be seen the cells. Each is a cylindrical hole in the ground, 10 feet across, lined with tight fitting stone. Over the walls pour a thin skim of water designed to ground magical energies and prevent easy climbing. A dry wooden platform rises above the sloped floor and its strongly barred drain. On this is the meagre furniture allowed to the prisoner. Entry and exit to the 12 foot deep hole is via a rope ladder carried by the Warders. To say that Galdrefæsten is a grim place is to do it poor service. For convicts sent here it is a cold hell and not a place that the Department lightly confines people within.

Exiting Galdrefæsten is only possible at sunset, by walking across the southern ring to the west. The twelve hour turnaround means that the Warders usually take charge of their prisoners out on Dartmoor rather than wasting an entire day of a team's time. Mr Pilgrim will sometimes insist on a team accompanying their prisoner. It is good after all to keep an eye on conditions within and the conduct of the guards.

## THE MAGEBANE WARDERS

The Department of the Impossible is a relic of an organisation dedicated to defending the Crown and thus has a mindset associated with detection and prevention. The Magebane Warders are a relic of an organisation with just one purpose: to seek and slay monsters and the malefic. Their origins are shrouded in secrecy but were thought to be a Protestant alternative to the Catholic inquisition. It is rumoured that they were among the forces hunting the *Defensores* during the chaos of the English Civil War. Today, they stand allied to the DoI, brought out of the shadows and into service by the same process that created the Ministry for Extramundane Affairs. They were granted custodianship of Galdrefæsten as their unique attributes suit the work well.

Candidates suitable for the Magebane Warders are rare, the Warders have agents out in the world constantly looking. They have to be mortal human. They have to possess a certainty of faith that would not be out of place in a monastery. Most importantly, they have to have iron clad willpower. Those men and women who are selected – discovered would be a better term – are brought to Galdrefæsten and thoroughly tested. Those who fail are either too mentally damaged to easily reintegrate into society and are institutionalised or serve the warders as agents, seeking better men and women than they. Those who succeed are given the final horrifying stages of the process.

To finish becoming a Magebane Warder you must become impregnable to spellcraft of any kind. To achieve this, the Warders take the extraordinary step of surgically scalping each new Warder then etching the cranial bones with sigils of warding. The skin is sewn back into place and then further wards are tattooed on: runes to prevent bafflement and glamour around the eyes and ears; protective signs on the chakra points; images of the saints and

of angels. The end result is disconcerting and modified Warders rarely go abroad in the daylight without good cause.

From then on, the life of a Warder is one of devotion: they pray, train with the sword; halberd and firearms. A popular leisure activity is adding etched wards and decorative panels to their steel plate armour so that the Warder's armour are often lavishly decorated in unique, subtle, devotional scenes. Theirs is an utterly democratic society, they make decisions in their conclave and none gainsay the collective decision once taken, regardless of their own view before conclave. While they do elect mission leaders for the rare excursions into the world beyond their fortress, this is more to provide those they have to deal with on the outside with a single point of contact. Whoever is best placed to decide at any given moment will call the shots. They guard their charges fiercely but help guide those who seem to show real remorse into confession, repentance and acceptance. They are zealots, but zealots leashed and used for a single purpose: to guard mankind from the worst that the magical world can throw at it. The only other place you will see an altered Warder is if Chapter House should ever be attacked. They remain in seclusion in their barracks at all other times. Technically they can be called upon to fight should a terrible enough foe present itself but if you see such a thing, know that the situation is as bad as it is possible to be.

There are many people within the Ministry for Extramundane Affairs who would be delighted to find an equally effective force to replace the Magebane Warders. While they are allied to the British Government they are not under its direct control. Their obedience is more through habit and tradition than compulsion. The fear amongst the civil service is that one day the values and traditions of the Magebane Warders, hidebound since the 1600's, will no longer match those of the country that they serve. At this point you would have lost control of a near mythical fortress, impossible to assault except at an extremely predictable hour of the day, filled with highly trained, zealously motivated warriors and their charges: some of the most powerful and least ethical sorcerers in the United Kingdom. Overtures to allow sharing custodianship of Galdrefæsten with DoI agents have been met with polite yet firm refusal. Thus the nervous status quo continues, and while the Ministry know what their contingencies and plans are, no-one knows the plans of the Magebane Warders; their conclave is utterly secret.

# PLAYER SECTION APPENDIX:

## EVERYDAY LIFE

To give some sense of everyday material considerations, this section briefly details expected rations, how money works and what its modern equivalent would be. Hopefully this should make immersion a little more straightforward.

### CURRENCY IN 1941

Never one to do things simply, pre-decimalised Britain used a system of pounds, shillings and pence. There were 12 pence to the shilling and 20 shillings to the pound. The written system had two forms: for example, one pound, two shillings and three pence could be written as £1 2s 3d but was more often written as £1 2/3.

The coins and notes in use were as follows:

<i>Farthing:</i>	worth quarter penny, written as ¼d
<i>Halfpenny:</i>	("ha'penny") worth half a penny, written as ½d
<i>Penny:</i>	written as 1d
<i>Three pence:</i>	("thrup'ny bit") worth three pence, written as 3d
<i>Six pence:</i>	("Tanner") worth six pence, written as 6d
<i>Shilling:</i>	("Bob"), worth 12 pence written as 1s or 1/-
<i>Florin:</i>	("Two Bob") worth two shillings, written as 2s or 2/-
<i>Half a Crown:</i>	("Two and Six") worth two shillings and 6 pence, written as 2s 6d or 2/6
<i>Crown:</i>	worth five shillings. Really only a commemorative minting but still legal tender.
<i>Ten Shilling Note:</i>	("Ten Bob"), written as 10s or 10/-
<i>Pound Note:</i>	written as £1. Composed of 20s or 240d
<i>Guineas:</i>	an auctioneers value worth 21s or £1 1/- . Essentially the auctioneer kept the shilling, the seller got the pound. Written as 1 Gn.
<i>Sovereign:</i>	a bullion coin in gold worth 20 shillings, replaced by the pound note.

For reference, a pound note had the buying power that £50 has today.

An average week's earnings was around £3 17/-, a loaf of bread 1d, a pint of milk 2d, a pint of beer 8p, a London house was yours for £550.

### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

For those raised on sensible kilograms and kilometres, the Imperial measuring system will come as something of an over-complicated shock. Still using measures developed in Tudor times they were as follows:

For **volume**, the pint is roughly equivalent to a little over half a litre. Units were as follows:

1 Pint (pt) = 4 Gill (gi) = 20 Fluid Ounce (fl oz) (so 1 gi = 5 fl oz)

2 Pints made a Quart (qt); 8 Pints made a Gallon (gal).

For **length**, the yard is basically a metre.

1 yard (yd) = 3 feet (ft or ')

1 foot = 12 inches (in or ")

22 yards make a Chain (ch), 10 chains make a Furlong (fur) and 8 furlongs make a Mile (mi) – so a mile is 1760 yards or 5280 ft! – and 3 miles make a League (lea)

There are nautical measurements of a Fathom (ftm) which is 6 feet, a Cable which is 100 fathoms and a Nautical Mile which is 10 cables

Most of these relate to standardised objects used in surveying and measuring. Standard length chains and rods were used to measure areas of land (an acre is a square of 1 furlong and 1 chain) and there was a practical maximum length to cable.

## RATIONS

As food shortages started to bite at the start of the war, rationing was the sensible solution to ensuring starvation was not a real prospect. Fruit and vegetables were not rationed but were often in short supply. Strict price controls were in place to prevent profiteering. Most goods were rationed by weight, but meat was rationed by price thus rewarding thrifty shoppers willing to cook cheaper cuts. It seems paradoxical, but having rationing actually increased the living standards of many of the poorest in Britain by granting them regular access to fresh meat and other consumables.

The basic weekly ration per person was as follows (minimum-maximum):

Bacon and Ham: 4-8oz; Sugar: 8-16oz; Loose tea: 2-4oz; Meat 1s – 1/2d; Cheese 1-8oz; Preserves 8oz-1lb per month; Butter 2-8oz; Margarine 4-12oz; Lard 2-3oz; Sweets 8-16oz per month.

Fighting men and women got higher rations and certain groups in high calorie industries or with medical needs could get extras. This included vegetarians who could exchange their meat rations for another 8oz of cheese.

Soap was rationed to four coupons that could be exchanged for one of several units of soap (4oz bar hard soap; 3oz bar toilet soap; ½ oz liquid soap; 6oz soft soap; 3oz soap flakes; or 6oz powdered soap). Clothing was rationed in similar coupons that could be traded

for different items. In 1941 there were 66 points per year, an overcoat was 18, a suit around 27 (depending on lining), men's shoes 9, women's shoes 7. Extra rations were available for children between 14 and 16 and for work clothes. Second hand clothes were not rationed but again, were price controlled. Timber, paper, fuel, even coal was rationed to ensure enough for steel production.

At this time there was considerable disquiet that restaurants were not ration restricted, so those who could pay to eat out could eat more. This was partially fixed in 1942 by restrictions brought in on maximum numbers of courses and so on. But it remained true that the rich could buy their way out of rationing through either the black market or eating out. Similarly, there was a distinct difference between living in rural areas where easy access to growing land for vegetables, unrationed game meat and, frankly, stealing from fields meant there was rarely real scarcity. The same could not be said for the cities and long periods would go by with basic staples out of all stock.

In the magical community, rationing only really applies to these essential foodstuffs. The Ministry is not interested in trying to police how much incense is sold and so on, and has no time for price control measures. As a result, scarcity breeds profiteering and the commercial world of the magical community is more cut throat than ever.

# STORYTELLER

## BACKGROUND SECTION

### Are you a player?

Slow down! The following information is the deep background of the world that your storyteller may wish to drip feed to you through playing the game. That way there is so much to discover. If your character should know about a certain aspect of magical life then your storyteller will certainly give you that section to read. Alternatively, if your campaign has you as knowledgeable and integrated parts of the magical world (or you are just excited/ nosy) then read on...

### Living in a Magical World

Whilst the current priorities of the DoI are skewed towards defence against the Thule Society and associates, their day-to-day operations must still continue. Much of this is to do with maintaining the boundaries that exist between the magical and the mundane world. In this there are two main spheres: Magically inclined humans (the Talented Population); and the Etheric Treaty Races. Both present their challenges, but often in wildly different directions.

For the supernatural community, open knowledge of their existence in these teeming times would mean destruction. There are hundreds of humans for every supernatural entity and long experience with the mortal world means that the magical community expect fear to lead to violence. To avoid this, almost all of the magical world live quiet, hidden lives among the mortal population. For those lucky enough to closely resemble humans, they can simply integrate with mortal society. Many take mortal partners, some of whom may never know of their spouse's nature. Others quietly tell their significant others and induct them into a secret world that they never knew existed. For those whose physiognomy is outlandish or evidently different, a twilight existence beckons. Some work in the markets that trade exclusively with the magical world, others simply at night or in jobs far from the sun. More than one mining company or underground contracting firm are run entirely by supernatural creatures.

Of course, wherever you have a minority community you have trade that caters to that community's needs. There are secret markets all over Britain that allow those in the know to trade for magical artefacts, esoteric ingredients, unnatural services or supernatural medical care. These vary wildly in form and structure, from the ad-hoc markets of Liverpool's docks – taking over the holds of ships by the dead of night – and Edinburgh's buried streets; to permanent and ancient markets like the Wyrmarket of Glastonbury, the canopy sales of Sherwood and the chaos of London's Portobello Below. This last one occupies and expands the sewers and passages under London's most famous market and is the one that agents have interactions with most often. Contacts and informants can be found for the right persuasion, and trade in prohibited items keeps the Preternatural Criminality & Justice department busy.

### THE TALENTED POPULATION

One of the first things “mundane” – as the term goes for non-magical humans goes, no matter how extraordinary they may be – officers joining the DoI have to absorb is just how much magic there has been under their very noses. Most will have been dismissed as cranks, charlatans, scam-artists or just plain deluded by the mundane population. Some actually are: not everyone claiming to be a Fakir from the jungles of Borneo can be trusted as such and there

are far more scam fortune tellers than actual Romany Wise Women. For those in the community it is fairly easy to spot the real thing from the fraud. For one thing, their own populations tend to consult them, for another, they tend to be light on flash and heavy on unsettling details. Somehow it is more disconcerting to watch someone scry in a pool of still black ink than in a sparkly crystal ball, not least because it works.

However they choose to comport themselves, all magical residents of The British Empire are required to register in order to practice. This usually happens when an existing family line with the Talent produces a new generation. These families are known to the DoI and they each strive to maintain a good relationship with the other so that everyone's lives are easier. People who develop the Talent spontaneously tend to be harder to spot, but between stories of incredible happenings in local papers, the word of mouth of those in the magical community and even the efforts of DoI magi scrying for Talented individuals, they tend to be found. Really, there is not much to the licensing. It costs nothing in material terms and most in the community prefer the imposition on their civil liberties of inspection and light monitoring to the days of witch hangings. There are of course hot heads or the criminally inclined who rage against injustice or try to keep their Talents a secret for their obvious advantage in the mundane world. It is for people like this that the Ministry for Extramundane Affairs turns to the DoI and their capable field agents.

## THE CRAFTY AND THE WISE

Very few people are born inherently able to work magic. They may well have the Talent, and small paranormal happenings could occur during times of stress, but to set out to actively impose your Will upon the universe is a whole other level. Magic is all about unbalancing natural forces and being *able* to do it doesn't mean knowing how. Indeed, trying too much too fast can be damaging or even fatal. An athlete who lifts too much weight only risks muscle tearing or dislocations. An adept trying too hard for their Talent can cause aneurism or a devastating feedback lash which leaves them permanently damaged. Thus teaching is essential and two broad structures exist: Hermitage and Heritage.

### Heritage

The Heritage path to magical knowledge is often called the Craft and its practitioners make up the Crafty of the Crafty and the Wise. In its simplest terms, this is the magic of witchcraft, village wise women, soothsayers and the like. It is called Heritage as the Craft is often passed directly through family lines or between generations through apprentices. It is important to note that while this is indeed the method by which most of women's magic has passed through the years neither Heritage, nor Hermitage are gender specific. It is simply defining the relationship between the knowledge and the student. In Heritage teaching the knowledge belongs to the tutor who is directly instructing the pupil. Very few extant written treatises are available for teaching these skills. The knowledge exists only in the minds of its practitioners. This is in stark contrast to Hermitage.

### Hermitage

Hermitage is the polar opposite to Heritage in style and practice. It is the manner in which the Wizards (literally Wise Men) passed on their teachings. In this case, the word Hermitage is referring to the study of the teachings of the God Hermes, not a place where Hermits live. There are many independent Hermetic orders throughout Britain, spreading their teachings with a liberal sprinkling of ritual and tradition. Many of the oldest secret societies in Britain owe their existence to founding as a Hermetic order. For those that wish to study in a more academic fashion, there are even colleges at some of the oldest educational institutions in Britain. There are many euphemisms for them, The Colleges Invisible, The Etheric Academies, etc.; the Ministry refers to them as the Esoteric Faculties. Given that "esoteric" is a usefully ambiguous word to put on, for example, payroll statements, it seems to be sticking.

The major centres are, predictably, the oldest universities: Oxford, Cambridge, St Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh with "newer" players like Durham, Belfast, London and Cardiff starting to break in to their



dominance. After all, the “whippersnappers”, as the ancient Esoteric Faculties refer to the newer colleges, have only been at it for a century or so. There was a university at Oxford when the Normans conquered England. There are a few specialisms as well, Edinburgh has long been fascinated by the healing magics and Durham – with its long associations with the Palatinate Bishops – has made a special study of Divine (or Intecessationary) magic. The universities usually have just one college where the study of magic takes place. So you will hear people saying they attended “Marlowe College, Cambridge” or “Oberon College, Oxford”.

Of course, all of this study brings with it one thing: Thousands upon thousands of written words on the theory and practice of magic. As long as they remain within the studies of wizards and scholars this is of no matter. It is when they get in to the community that problems occur. Not just in the way that you might imagine — a self-taught wizard with no grasp of the moralities or limitations of magic — there are spells that will happily run all by themselves.

## RITUAL MAGIC

Over the millennia that humankind and their paranormal tutors have practiced magic, every conceivable style and shape of magic has been developed and practiced. There remains, though, one common factor in most magic. In order to effect your Will, you must possess the Talent: mundane minds cannot conjure; except where ritual magic is concerned.

Rituals are, usually, lengthy spells and incantations that have been developed to cause a magical outcome without a practitioner. They, almost without exception, comprise three things: a power source, a framing ritual and an element of sacrifice. The power source varies: some are Intercessionary rituals which ask for the power from a divine force or a being so powerful that it can grant the necessary energy if appeased. Some use borrowed energy stored in geographical locations, such as ancient ritual sites brimming with stored magical energy from their still running containment enchantments or ley lines of natural magical flow. Others use the massive forces of planetary conjunctions or phases of the moon. The most dangerous, for they are the least able to be predicted, use the lifeblood of a sacrifice to power the magic.

When this power is correctly channelled through the framing ritual – dances, costumes, runes, sigils, incantations, and so on – then it is converted into an effect. What that effect is depends on the design of the ritual. It may imbue an object with power, reveal secrets, or slay a living person half a world away in a heartbeat. In any ritual that has a target the petitioner – what we call a mundane person conducting a ritual – must generally possess some “aiming” token. Blood, hair, a trinket that has been with them a great while; all these are excellent tokens. This is usually consumed in the ritual, but allows the forces to be unerringly targeted.

While working rituals are rare and their correct executions are tricky, often time-dependent, and dangerous. Their power and utility are such that the DoI spend considerable effort in recovering ritual texts and tomes “loose” in the community. The thought of such power unchecked is not a happy one.

### *When things go wrong*

*It is worth noting that those who do possess the ability to reshape the world from birth are astonishingly dangerous. The mind of a child with its petty cruelties and capriciousness should not be in charge of the means to defy the laws of physics.*

*Such unprotected raw talent attracts attention from more than just the mundane world. There are creatures for whom the Talent is food, and a child such as this is a feast. In other times it is the DoI or members of the magical community who step in to try – for example – to save the child’s home village, now just mind puppet thralls to a child’s whim. In these situations they try their best to save the child, but raw power sometimes leaves no option but to eradicate the threat.*

# Realms of Existence

While the normal beat of the DoI is the United Kingdom, this does not encompass the entire story. There is more to this world than mundane, mortal soil and the shell of the atmosphere. The world is wrapped and overlaid by layers of alternate realms, sharing a basic geography but little else. These Realms “stack” almost like the layers of an onion, and the further you get from the Mortal Realm, the stranger it gets.

## THE SPIRIT REALM

Closest to the Mortal Realm, and with the thinnest skin separating it from us, is the Spirit Realm. This is a dark mirror of our own world, a cold Realm of shadows and smoke. Here the Unclaimed Dead dwell and those that feed upon them. It is unknown what causes a mortal spirit to become trapped in the Spirit Realm rather than passing on to who-knows-what. But those that are trapped are quickly sorted into predator and prey. When the skin between worlds grows thin, spirits can cross over into the Mortal Realm and appear as ghosts or other malevolent entities.

## ÆLFHEIM

A step further from us is the world of the Fae. Ælfheim is a strange, otherworldly place sharing only a passing resemblance to our geography. It is a world of magic where some of the strangest creatures of our mythology call home. Access to Ælfheim is through very specific, often at ritual sites. Some stone circles denote places of transit into Ælfheim, but the main method is the Faerie Ring. These are naturally occurring circles of mushrooms or toadstools created by the reproduction process of the fungus. All of these rings can be used as transit sites by those with the knowledge of how to transition. All of the Fae can do this, but for humans, it usually requires a ritual magic to be worked to allow transition. The final path is trees: the only commonality of geography between Ælfheim and the Mortal Realm are the positions of certain trees. Ash, Oak, Hazel and Rowan all grow both in Ælfheim and the Mortal Realm. It has been posited that these are split trees; that their spirit grows in Ælfheim and their bodies grow in the Mortal. They certainly seem to “pin” Ælfheim to the Mortal Realm, and are probably the only reason that it dwells as close to us as it does.

## THE MALEFIC SPHERES

Beyond the Realm of Ælfheim there are a stack of Realms that shift and change their position according to some impossible-to-catalogue tides. These are the places where Other intellects dwell and plan. It is rare that they drift close enough to the Mortal Realm to cross over “naturally”. Sometimes they are close enough to whisper into receptive, dreaming minds, but this is the limit of their intrusion. Normally the only way one of these denizens can enter our world is to be called by someone in our Realm. Depending on the exact nature of the Sphere these things are called from, they might be protean creatures incapable of holding their form, classically daemonic entities, or creatures of pure intellect and light. It is utterly forbidden to call entities from the Malefic Spheres, and no-one that has attempted to journey out to these Spheres has ever returned to the Mortal Realm.

## BEYOND

It is known that there are Realms Beyond the Malefic Spheres. No-one can even speculate as to their nature. But there are rumours and myths of creatures and deity-level entities that dwell Beyond. Any rumour of anyone attempting to reach Beyond is investigated and discouraged intensely by the Ministry. Considering the trouble that the Malefic Spheres can cause, no-one wants to see what Beyond could produce.

## The Darkness and The Light

The Ministry has little truck with the tales of religion; they recognise scripture as parable and tools of mostly benevolent control that shapes faith. They do have a *lot* of time for faith. Enough evidence exists within the Ministry archives to make it certain that there are forces far more powerful than ourselves out there and taking an interest. It is the Ministry's official position that the Light and the Darkness are real, but that whatever form or name they wear is irrelevant: their intent is all. The Ministry does not care what name or manner of worship you offer to the Light. Only that your service is given to the Light.

## The Esoteric Treaty Races

Contrary to popular belief, humans are not the only sentient race living in the British Isles. There are many other intelligent races that live in the wild places of the world or in shadow-thick gaps between reality and Somewhere Else. Some are fiercely independent of any authority but their own; a good example would be the Jacks of Yorkshire, an odd race of Giants each with their own purpose and name – Jack in the Green, Jack in Irons etc. With these groups it is usual to have a simple “stay out of the way and we shall not bother you” agreement, barely worth the name ‘treaty’. The ones that need more elaborate diplomacy are the ones who intersect more often with humankind, even to the extent of mixed bloodlines.

### THE TRANSACTIONALS

Most countries in the world have sprites; house spirits; elemental spirits of green places; brownies; gnomes or similar creatures. They all broadly fall into the category of the Fae but are very much of the Mortal Realm. Most of these are classified by the Ministry as Transactional Entities. These are creatures whose purpose is to trade one thing for another, usually their aid for some favour or specific good. People who breach their conditions can fall afoul of poor luck or some other minor malady. Some of the entities are more malevolent, trolls, for example can declare a bridge their property and enact tolls. The Esoteric Treaties Office maintains a maddening series of ancient agreements with elders of each kind of transitional entity, designed to mitigate the harm that these creatures can inflict. Telling a leprechaun not to trade in luck is like telling a goldfish to breath air but requiring that the gifts and penalties be minor in nature is possible. Creatures that step outside of these bounds are considered Monsters: they have trespassed upon hospitality and will be hunted, often by their own kind, to keep their existence both quiet and tolerated.

### WYLD SPIRITS

Everyone has been to places that seem to have a soul of their own, a beauty or power that compels personification with human traits and emotions. There is a reason for this, they are indeed inhabited by a spirit. The natural spirits claim dominion over a particular landscape feature, a pool, a waterfall, an ancient grove, an underground cave. No-one knows what causes the spontaneous generation of geosentiences, but it is certain that their consciousness develops over millennia. They are fiercely protective of their domain and will viciously assault any who would defile it. They are a little too wild to truly understand treaties, so the Esoteric Treaties Office usually handles them by adapting mortal law instead, declaring sites of special interest or preventing construction in some way. Sometimes they attempt to help a spirit accept human intrusion into their domain and even adapt to an urban life. Many an unexpected city green space is especially tranquil through this process.

### THE HALF-BLOODED REMNANTS

Once, there were many races occupying the world: boggarts, gnomes, goblins, ogres and giants were once commonplace in the wilderness places. Humanity's dominance and increasing industrialisation has pushed these creatures to, and often beyond, the edge of extinction. However, many of these creatures could either take human form or otherwise interbreed with humans. The results of these liaisons are still to be found all over the world. The

overly hairy bouncer at an East End pub might well have a little ogre or giant in them and the cruel, sadistic murderer with the sharp features may claim reliably claim goblin ancestry. Some of these people are completely unaware of their heritage. Others have family legends going back centuries and are proud of their bloodline. As far as the Ministry is concerned, unless they have magical Talent they need not register themselves and can live a normal life within the law. That having been said, whole teams of researchers keep a weather eye on the genealogies of the Remnant Races as the possibility, however slight, of a pure-blood goblin being born into modern Britain with all their strength, guile and murderous rage is not to be countenanced.

## METAMORPHIC BEINGS

There are many types of being that can alter their form. Some, like the alarming but thankfully rare Shapechangers, can simply alter their appearance. Others become an entirely different creature – such as the therianthropic werewolves – and can walk the world as either animal or human. Still others are cursed to have a bestial nature, a horrific amalgam of the worst aspects of man and beast. These creatures all fall under the Metamorphic Beings Criminal Responsibility Act. This states that a Metamorphic Being is responsible for its conduct *no matter the form it is in*. If that Metamorphic Being cannot control one of its forms then it must take steps to contain that form. The Ministry is perfectly willing to assist with this process and maintains many facilities across the United Kingdom to do just that. If you are not willing to contain your other self, then any crimes that self commits are yours to be punished for. Shapechangers and other form altering creatures are welcome to be whosoever they wish to be as long as they commit no crime in doing so.

## THE FAE

The most famous recipients of a formal treaty are the denizens of Ælfheim, the Fae peoples – sometimes called the Fair or Shining Folk; and sometimes Faeries, although this is an insulting term to them. The Fae are a slender, graceful people with personalities much geared to the aesthetic and performing arts. All Fae have access to magic to a greater or lesser extent, some for a very particular purpose such as invisibility or swift movement; others have powers comparable to the strongest human wizards and beyond. Almost all of them have the ability to choose their form and appearance at will by an illusory magic called Glamour, making it difficult to nail down exactly what they look like.

If they were not so fascinated by humankind we probably would never encounter them. They are quick, stealthy, and live out of phase with our reality; but the truth is that most of the Fae are bound to us in some fashion. Some have adapted their purpose to live alongside us such as Cobbler Elves or Brownies who help humans in exchange for small tokens of appreciation. Others simply see us as a source of amusement: most Fae are immortal and messing with our brief lives is a source of much merriment. Some human scholars have speculated that the Fae connection to us is far more significant than they pretend. It is theorised that our belief in them sustains them in some fashion. . Certainly no Fae will ever confirm this, but authors and playwrights are influenced over the years (Spenser, W.B. Yeats and Shakespeare are all excellent examples) to keep the memories alive. Some Fae even transition permanently to the Mortal Realm and live among us.

Perhaps the oddest thing about the Fae is their politics. As you would imagine from a race with an immortal lifespan, their plots and schemes are always set to the long game and their alliances are cat's cradle tangles of interwoven favours. From the outside though, only two major groups are visible, the Seelie and the Unseelie.

### Queens of Dawn and Dusk.

Almost all of the Fae folk pledge allegiance to one of the two “Courts”. The Seelie Court rules from dawn to dusk, at which time the Unseelie Court gains power and rules over the night. Each court is ruled by a single Queen – always a Queen for some reason – and her consort, should one exist. The Queens are almost always of the Irish and Scottish Sidhe, again, for no human-known reason, although they are among the most powerful of the Fae.

Queens appear to rule by consent of their courtiers, and the crown passes to a more suitable/powerful Fae should a monarch appear weak. It is known that Titania has been the Seelie Queen since before Shakespeare's day, and it is rumoured that her influence upon the playwright has secured her throne ever since. The Unseelie throne is currently in flux: the previous Queen – Morgana – having renounced the throne suddenly. It remains to be seen how the power struggles play out - given that the Fae prefer to fight through cats paws and dupes, it is often difficult to see who is winning.

Though all Fae can be capricious, even cruel in their manner, there is a distinct partition in tone between the Seelie and Unseelie. Both will seek to gain any advantage over you that they can muster; it is what they do with it that changes. The Seelie are more likely to seek to break you politically, leave you without power, influence, treasure or pride. The Unseelie are far more likely to simply take your life. Neither side can ever be fully trusted but the Seelie are safer to deal with. You'll likely only suffer injury to pride or pocket. It is also an unacknowledged truth that the wilder, more dangerous Fae tend to find favour within the Unseelie Court.

### Dealing with the Fae

Most of the Esoteric Treaties associated with the Fae peoples are to do with permitting them to go about their traditional business without overly harming humankind. The trouble is that Fae law is a lot to do with the letter of the law and not the spirit. A Fae ordered to "not kill this human" would not be breaking the law to "accidentally" lead said human into a treacherous bog, or to the lair of a wild animal. That would merely be unfortunate, not deliberate. A more useful request would be to "prevent any harm befalling this human" though even that is open to abuse. Fae deal primarily in favours, so an action done on your behalf will entitle them to similar recompense at a time of their choosing. It is how they structure their entire world: they never forget, and expect that you are true to your word. It took the longest time to convince them that a treaty was needed at all. To a Fae, a broken promise simply invites retribution. What point is paper in that arrangement? Indeed, the only clause that they insisted on was that broken faith is the only good cause that a Fae has to directly harm a human.

Thus the advice for dealing with the Fae is both simple and maddeningly complex at the same time. Mean what you say, for they will take you at your word. Enter into no bargain, accept no gift, not even food or drink unless it is offered without obligation. Even then, check that the food or drink will not harm you or cloud your judgement. Should you have need of asking a favour, be specific about what you want, but be aware that the more detail you put in to the request the more inclined the Fae will be to seek to find a way out of it. They see it as an invitation to engage in the Dance to its fullest, and they are better at it than you. In their opinion you should only ask a favour if it would naturally benefit the asked party to complete it. Safest all round. Finally, while they seem not able to lie directly – due to the need to take every party at their word – they delight in doublespeak and duplicity. They can mislead you while speaking the absolute truth ("no, there are no dangerous creatures in that cave", but there is a pitfall trap...). In short, if you do find the need to deal with the Fae: consider either bringing a representative from the Esoteric Treaties Office who regularly handles their affairs, or alternatively, tread very carefully and acknowledge that you are literally putting your life on the line.

### CHANGELINGS

Before the Esoteric Treaties with the Faerie Courts were ratified, the Fae regularly spirited away human babies, replacing them with their own offspring. Like a cuckoo in a nest, the parents would raise the Fae infant as their own while teaching them much about human society that would stand them in good stead in their later games. The fate of the human child depended largely on which type of Fae had taken them. These days, the Fae do not do this... legally. Most Changelings return to Faerie lands eventually; their blood calls to them and they cannot resist. But some remain Glamoured as humans for decades. Long enough to marry, long enough to conceive children. These children carry within them a genetic legacy of Faerie. Some say it is how the Talent for magic manifested itself in humans (others ascribe that to the blood of dragons). Whether this is true or not, the offspring and their subsequent

generations of children tend to have preternatural powers based on the type of Fae in their lineage. They tend to be beautiful, delicate and sometimes a little malevolent in attitude. Their lives are longer than the average, but not extraordinary. Most will never know of their nature. Some though, will find themselves embroiled in Fae politics by virtue of their blood and it rarely ends well for the half-breed.

Those that remain in the Mortal Realms are, through the Esoteric Treaty Office's efforts, bound by our laws, not those of Ælfheim. Any crime committed by them here will be tried exactly as though they were humans.

## THE NEPHILIM

Fae heritage in human bloodlines is rare, but compared to the Nephilim it might as well happen every day. Long, long ago in human history, it is said that beings that identified themselves as Angels moved among the mortal realms. Some of these Angels took an interest in humanity beyond their role as guides and teachers. Inevitably, some of these relationships became physical and children were born of these unions. If scripture is to be believed, the existence of these children, called Nephilim, helped start the War in Heaven and the Fall of Lucifer.

Regardless of whether this tale is true or not, the fact is that there exists a second race of humans. Physically, they are identical, often striking in appearance but indistinguishable from the majority of humankind. These are the children of the Nephilim and within them is a fraction of the spark of an Angelic soul. The Nephilim are not one group, good or bad. Instead they seem to have humankind's free will, some serve the light, some the darkness. Their lives are long – many hundreds of years – and their goals seem unknowable. The DoI keep as close an eye on them as they can but long practice and an affinity with occult powers make this difficult.

The Etheric Treaty with the Nephilim is relatively straightforward. Negotiated by John Dee in the reign of Elizabeth Tudor, the Treaty bound the Nephilim to leave humanity out of their machinations, in return for this: humankind would not interfere with the plans of either side, light or dark as long as they did not impact humanity. Dee was said to consult "Angelic messengers" for much of his power and it is likely that these were the Nephilim. There is one additional caveat: no Nephilim are permitted within the Square Mile of the City of London. The fact that this is where the modern DoI make their home cannot be co-incidence but confirmation of this seems unlikely to be forthcoming.

## MONSTERS

Those magical creatures that do not fall under the categories of Magical Human or Etheric Treaty Race are mostly termed "monsters". They tend to be animalistic or lacking sentience entirely but some are simply the cruellest of the sentient races that simply will not tolerate succumbing to Etheric Treaty and restricting their lives. The DoI operates a policy on these creatures much as rangers do with wild creatures in Africa. If they at all can, they leave them to their own devices. If close contact with humanity seems likely they may take steps to avert this, a word with a town planner here, a massive tranquiliser dart and relocation there. It is only if the monster takes the step of directly harming humankind that the DoI move to terminate the creature. This policy helps maintain good relations with the Etheric Treaty Races – many of whom would take a dim view of exterminating close cousins – and preserves creatures whose interactions with our world are difficult at best to understand and whose absence may have unforeseen consequences.

With all that in mind, there are creatures termed "Irredeemable Monsters". These are so dangerous, so predatory, or so cruel, that their extermination is the only thing that makes sense. The list is long and diverse but creatures such as Vampires, bog hags, the Welsh Gwyllgi black dogs, untamed werewolves and the like are subject to shooting-on-sight orders. That they are hard to kill simply makes this more of a challenge and reinforces the need for the specialist field officers of the DoI.

## The Refugee Crisis

One of the more recent causes of DoI workload has been the influx of refugees from the continent. Not the humans: those are the Home Office's problem. Amongst the humans, or hiding in their boats, are magical creatures fleeing ahead of the Nazi armies and their Thule allies. The Thule Society doesn't confine their vicious experimenting to humans and many sprites and other creatures have taken the difficult decision to leave their territories and places of power and flee to safety. Most are harmless, Dutch Kabouter; French Reyarnd; Svartálfar Dwarves from Scandinavia. But among them are worse creatures, things whose impact upon the human population is too severe. For the most part the DoI pass foreign magical entities along to a new and overworked section of the Etheric Treaties Office (the War Resettlement Division) who delicately suggest that they keep moving to neutral Ireland. If that doesn't work – avoiding old enemies or just too fatigued to continue – then they try to find them a temporary home in Britain that won't enrage any existing inhabitants. Monsters need more thought. If it is possible to contain them for the duration then the DoI might consider it. Most have to be dealt with permanently though. It isn't fair, but neither is the job.

As if this were not bad enough, some of the human population are actively complicit in relocating monsters. Not all humans owe their fealty to nation-states or Earthly kings or potentates. Some serve dark masters from the supernatural world. Vampires have ever used human allies to smuggle them among Realms of Men. The Free French may have Loup Garou werewolves, who have sided with the Vichy government, among their number posing as allies. That's even before considering what horrors might have been decanted into human skins by the Thules and set to wander in amongst the refugees. Compassion wars with pragmatism and the DoI know better than any what danger lies amongst seemingly harmless people. No matter how careful they are, some are getting through. Better that than send innocent people back into the teeth of the Third Reich. The field teams will simply have to work harder.



# The Mortal Threat of the Third Reich

By far the most dedicated opposition facing the DoI's efforts are the Thule Society, a merging of military might, fanatical dedication, religious doctrine and occult power. They are apart from the Wehrmacht and all other organs of the Nazi state existing instead to prove the Nazi ethos rather than to rule its people.. There is no means they employ that they feel the ends cannot justify and through research and experimentation they perfect new occult weaponry to unleash upon us.

## ORIGINS OF THE THULE SOCIETY

As far as most Germans are aware, the Thule Society only lasted from their founding in 1918 to their dissolution in 1925. During that time, they had supported the founding of the DAP – later to become the NSDAP or Nazi party – and had been merely another anti-Semitic organisation with some odd beliefs and practices. The reality is slightly different and they are active and at the heart of the Third Reich even now.

The Thule Society believe passionately that the Aryan peoples stem from a lost Atlantic continent - Hyperborea - and its capital Ultima Thule. The word Thule comes from mysterious references in ancient Greek texts of a far northern continent. They believe that Hyperborea is Atlantis, which sank beneath the waves and continues to exist beneath us in the hollow earth. They believe they can find their way back to Hyperborea and reconnect with the ancient Nordic warrior spirit of the Aryans. After their apparent dissolution Heinrich Himmler absorbed the most dedicated of the group into the growing Schutzstaffel (SS). This merging created a hidden organisation within the SS: The Thule Society of the Thousand Year Reich.

## THE THULE SOCIETY OF THE THOUSAND YEAR REICH

Himmler's creation formed an inner circle for the SS. Their plans, even for their own country, are ambitious. They are attempting to promulgate a new Teutonic, Völkish (folk/pagan) faith centred on the veneration of the sun and the arcane properties of runes. It is intended to replace Christianity for the true Aryan peoples who, through the Society's efforts, will inherit the Earth. Their leaders, twelve shadowy figures known as the Knights of Thule, encourage experimentation and practice with arcane arts and advanced sciences. Each Knight commands a chapter of followers, chosen from the ranks of the SS, who share their particular interests. All twelve answer to Himmler alone, and through him the Führer. No other Earthly power commands them. Chapters vary in size depending on the needs and ability to recruit to that Knight's personal cause. Chapters are named according to the whim of the Knight. Egotists will name it for themselves, some use propaganda terminology, others for the ancient Teutonic deities of the Old Faith.

Much is rumoured about the Knights but as no agent has been able to penetrate the fortress of Wewelsburg, most is speculation. The heads of the public organisations under Himmler's aegis – the Gestapo, the SS, and the Ahnenerbe – are almost certainly Knights. The only known Knight is Oberstleutnant Tobias Daschner, the head of the terror troops of the Thule Society: Sonderkommando Thule.

## SONDERKOMMANDO THULE

The title "Sonderkommando" is used fairly often in German military circles and simply means "Special Unit". Sonderkommando Thule are the military wing of the Thule Society and are mostly drawn from true believers amongst the SS. There is no such thing as a typical Sonderkommando Thule unit. They form and disband active cells on a mission-by-mission basis. These missions include guarding and deploying arcane weaponry; infiltrating enemy lines – often by parachute drop; assassination; kidnapping; looting of artefacts and anything else the Knights command. Their skills are honed by constant training and sometimes augmented with the results of the Thule medical experiments. Some Sonderkommando Thules cannot be said to be entirely human any more. Rumours of still wilder members circulate: demonic possession, mechanical augmentation, shapeshifters, nothing is impossible.

While the invasion of Britain is officially paused until the Luftwaffe can vanquish the RAF. Sonderkommando Thule is routinely sending agents, units and whole platoons to destabilise the country. They seem to have no shortage of volunteers and their resolve is ironclad. There is precious little way of knowing what DoI agents going up against Sonderkommando units will face, for who knows what the Knight's experiments have turned up this time?

### AHNERNERBE THULE

The Ahnernerbe are a mundane organisation of archaeologists and historians. They work to uncover evidence in support of Nazi claims of Aryan supremacy. Their activities provide the perfect cover to also unearth ancient relics and artefacts of arcane power. Ahnernerbe Thule is the section dedicated to this pursuit. Their fondest hope is that they will stumble upon the means to access Hyperborea and Ultima Thule. Until then, they are content to locate ritual sites and magical power to further their masters' designs.

### WEWELSBURG

The centre of Thule power in Germany is Wewelsburg castle in the heart of Westphalia. A triangular, stone fortress built in the renaissance atop a high ridge overlooking the surrounding countryside. Three massive towers linked by three-storey walls make it almost impossible to infiltrate, even before the scrying of Thule wizards is taken into account.

Himmler has made Wewelsburg the centre of occult study and is intending for it to be the centre of the Völkish world should Nazi domination become complete. Work is underway to significantly expand the fortress and evidence of mining to create tunnels and caverns beneath the castle has been seen in reconnaissance photographs. From here, the Knights of Thule despatch their dread soldiers and conduct their vile experiments. If ever an opportunity arises to destroy Wewelsburg, it must be taken, to secure the safety of the world.

## Thule Menace on the Home Front

As if infiltration by the fanatical Sonderkommando Thule was not enough to contend with. The DoI also face Nazi challenges on the home front. Most notably from the Thule-nurtured occult organisation within the largest pro-nazi group in Britain, the Brethren of the Union, birthed from the British Union of Fascists.

### BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS

It is an uncomfortable truth, not often acknowledged in these patriotic times, that not all citizens of Great Britain or the United States of America were opposed to the rise of fascism in Europe. Many groups approved of fascist policies and their message and campaigned for their adoption. In Britain the most visible group were Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists. The BUF were similar in structure to Hitler's NSDAP, using quasi-militaristic themes and uniforms to reinforce their image. Parliament passed laws outlawing elements of their group but they were still agitating for a negotiated peace with Germany. In 1940, Mosley and most of the known fascists in Britain were interned in Holloway Prison.

Unbeknownst to all at the time – perhaps even unknown to Mosley – Mosley's party had not just inherited Nazi politics. Through Theodore Paxton, a junior lieutenant in the BUF and a secret student of Himmler, they had inherited the Völkish occultism as well. Paxton formed a hybrid secret society comprising elements of British Masonic traditions and the new Völkish beliefs and practices. With the BUF interned, the Brethren have no intention of cooling their heels waiting for the war to win itself.

## BRETHREN OF THE UNION

Arguably, the Brethren of the Union are among the most dangerous foes of the DoI. They are well schooled in arcane practices, fanatically devoted to the Nazi message and importantly, on home soil. They can be anyone. Linguistic tricks or forged papers won't trip them up, they know the country and importantly know that there is a force opposing them in the DoI. Paxton's men and women are acting as an occult fifth column. Their campaign is three pronged:

1. Awaken native threats that the DoI will be forced to contain once more, thus weakening their focus on the war effort and crucially, exposing their field teams.
2. Carry out both mundane and arcane acts of terrorism and sabotage to undermine the mundane war effort and demoralise the population.
3. Identify and eliminate as many DoI field personnel as possible to clear the way for Sonderkommando Thule infiltration.

With this strategy and local knowledge they are an ever-present threat. Field teams can never know whether an incident they are called to is a staged trap designed to ambush them as they work to contain a terrible threat or simply background paranormal noise. This simple paranoia and worry is enough to weaken and slow DoI efforts, and as a result, any opportunity to eliminate the Brethren of the Union *must* be taken.