

THE UNITED KINGDOM

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

A Nation Reborn

At the turn of the century, in the wake of “Independence Fever,” the kingdom of Great Britain turned its attention inwards. His Majesty, King George III, consolidated his assets on the British Isles by creating the *United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, more commonly known as the United Kingdom. Comprised of the Principality of Wales, the Kingdom of Scotland, the Irish Territories and Great Britain proper, this Union would grow to become the greatest industrial power that the world has ever known.

The Industrial Metamorphosis

For the next twenty five years, the United Kingdom worked to streamline the nightmarish logistical process of bringing four separate realms into sync. Development was slow and laborious. All of this changed with the introduction of our great hero and savior, Lord Charles Babbage. Aware of the taxing endeavor that had already claimed the sanity of King George III and the life of his regent, King George IV, Lord Babbage sought a more steadfast solution to the problem. In 1825, after many years of research, Lord Babbage introduced the first of his miracle machines to King William IV: The Difference Engine. Built with cogs and gears and powered by steam, this machine could perform mathematical calculations faster and with less overhead than a dozen trained accountants. The device astonished his Majesty, who immediately commissioned as many Difference Engines as could be made. Together, King William and Lord Charles Babbage transformed the whole of London into one giant Difference Engine, all constructed underground. No matter where you stand in London, there is a machine beneath you keeping the Kingdom together.

The Last Betrayal

Within five years, the United Kingdom had transformed into an industrial giant. What space was not used for living and resources was repurposed for manufacturing. The landscape of London and most major cities was riddled with chimneys, smokestacks and air towers, the ground too thick with smoke and soot to provide air for combustion. The year was 1830, the Age of Wonder had emerged in the United Kingdom, and it was King William’s wish to share its splendor with the world. He invited all the nations of the world to the first ever “International Exhibit of Science and Industry,” to be hosted in London.

All the major nations of the world flocked to England to witness his Majesty unveil the industrial marvel. Even the Americans were allowed to attend, as a gesture of goodwill. After days of exhibits and curiosities, it came time for his Majesty to present the *London Central Data Hub* (the ‘Hub, for short) and show the world the might of the Difference Engine. It was the United Kingdom’s day to shine, at least until the United States of America unveiled their rival secret project and ruined everything. Through unknown nefarious means, the Americans acquired the secrets of the Difference Engine and announced their Hubs in Philadelphia and Boston. What was supposed to be the United Kingdom’s finest hour turned into a bitter and humiliating defeat. To this day, this slight has not been forgiven. It is said that the heartbreak of the experience drove King William to an early grave in 1831, leaving the young Queen Victoria to take the throne.

The Legislation Wars

Barely 16 years old, Queen Victoria rose to the throne amidst political disaster. In their presentation, the Americans also announced sweeping reforms in their legislation. Their first bold move was to enact women's suffrage, which all but removed the divide between men and women. They also announced reforms in social welfare, the division of wealth and state-funded education. These policies would completely transform the world as it was known, so the subjects of the United Kingdom waited in anticipation for her Majesty's move.

Like a force of nature, Queen Victoria tackled the situation with relentless determination. She countered the Americans by enacting similar policies in her kingdom, which granted the same liberties to her citizens. Parliament was more than eager to ratify her proclamations and counter the American maneuver. Her Majesty countered by proclaiming the *Slavery Abolition Edict*, which ended slavery in the United Kingdom. The Americans followed suit to counter her move, which thrust their slavery-backed economy into chaos. Despite all the proclamations that followed, this act would forever give the United Kingdom the last laugh, as the chaos it caused America can still be felt to this day.

A Juggernaut Emerges

In the wake of the *Legislation Wars*, Queen Victoria focused her attention outwards towards expanding the boundaries of the British Empire. Having conceded the 13 colonies of the fledgling nation of America, the Queen turned her focus to Africa and the Pacific isles of the South for colonization. The Queen and Parliament considered it their obligation to bring civilization to lands in desperate need of rulership, a task they were more than willing to undertake.

By 1835, the United Kingdom's navy had grown significantly, boasting a fleet of metal steam-powered *Ironships*. Travel from Great Britain to Africa and the Pacific, although still a long journey, took far less time than it did in the age of wind-based travel. In fact, *Ironship* travel made it timelier to travel to her Royal Territories of India by boat than it did by land. Such was the naval might that the United Kingdom brought forth in their march to tame the savage world.

The United Kingdom's advances into Northern Africa and the Pacific met with stern resistance. The local population had been armed and trained by soldiers from the United States of America. Despite Britain's acquiescence of the Americas south of Canada to them, the United States of America insisted on interfering in the Crown's endeavors elsewhere, showing their true, selfish nature. Because of their meddling, the campaigns into the territories of Angola, Egypt, Libya, Australia, and the Congo regions met fierce opposition. Many of the Queen's brave soldiers died away from home because of American greed.

The Queen was forced to counter their treachery by impeding the United States of America's colonization of the Western half of their continent. The Canadian Territories of the Crown were ordered to dispense weapons, munitions and training to the native population of the North American continent. With British support, the native population was more than capable of stopping the United States Army's advance into native soil. If they would interfere with our expansion, we would interfere with theirs. Had the United States of America simply left well enough alone, there would not have been the dozens of small wars that spanned the globe during the first half of the century.

The Identification Inscription Decree

As the United Kingdom grew in power and complexity, it grew more difficult to serve the individual citizen. Queen Victoria refused to see any of her citizens get "lost in the cracks," so her Royal Engineers devised an elegant solution. Each citizen would receive a unique identity token to allow the 'Hub to quickly identify them. Citizens could walk to any terminal, enter their token, and have their work orders, welfare allocations and more, right on the spot. The *Identification Inscription Decree* passed officially in 1851. This decree mandated all citizens of the Crown to be registered and issued their own token: a small, red gem. In order to prevent theft or fraud, this token would be permanently attached to each citizen, by wristband or choker, as they so chose.

Her Majesty's next public address set the fashion world ablaze, with her red gem choker proudly displayed. The United Kingdom embraced the token trend wholeheartedly. The aristocracy, ever in search of new ways to distinguish themselves, added decorations and other frills. The staunchest patriots attached it permanently to their flesh. In short order, the *Royal Mark*, as it became known, became a status symbol by which all proud citizens could show their devotion to the Crown.

Charles Dickens, Traitor to the Crown

Not all citizens agreed with the direction that the *Identification Inscription Decree* took the United Kingdom. Some even planned open sedition against the Crown. One of the most outspoken critics of the Decree was Lord Charles Dickens, a minor lord in Parliament. Once an author of fiction, his imagination painted a world of tyrannical oppression. He repeatedly spoke out against the Crown and the overwhelming control that the 'Hub had on daily life. This made him unpopular amongst his peers, but with each passing year, he gained more supporters in Parliament.

Lord Dickens proved to be a man not only of words, but of deeds. In 1854, a plot to usurp the Crown was discovered, involving key members of Parliament and the Church of England. The Church, already in severe decline due to the faith that citizens placed on the Queen and the 'Hub, saw this plan as means to recover their lost power. Fortunately, the plot was discovered and those responsible were executed for their crimes. In the wake of the *Parliament Revolt*, both Parliament and the Church of England were officially dissolved. Both were outdated institutions that interfered with the well-being of the citizenry, as citizens could communicate directly with the Crown through the 'Hub.

Although the Traitor Dickens was executed that day, several books were published via underground press in his name--*Hard Times*, *Great Expectations* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, all of which criticize the Crown and paint bleak pictures of industrial society--have become popular behind closed doors. As such, all publications from the traitor Dickens have been outlawed in the United Kingdom. There are still whispers that followers of Dickens' agenda still hide amongst us, but those are mere rumors, started by gossipmongers.

The Cataclysm and the *Personal Augmentation Decree*

The Cataclysm struck on June 21, 1865. No one knows what caused it, but everyone felt it. It was the greatest natural disaster in history, and it forever changed the world. Earthquakes and tidal waves rocked the United Kingdom, doing untold damage to the great infrastructure of the 'Hub. Despite this, the Crown endured. Everyone did. The citizens worked together and quickly started reconstruction. Days after the Cataclysm rocked the known

world, Queen Victoria gave an address to the people of London. However, her appearance had been forever changed. She had abandoned her long gown and replaced her flesh with clockwork magnificence. Her body and arms, unobscured by clothing, showed a diorama of gears, springs and other moving parts, all functioning in perfect mechanical harmony. Her crown, now a part of her body, shone brightly in the noon sky as she declared the *Personal Augmentation Decree*. As per her words, all citizens who wished it would be augmented, as she had, in order to better serve the Crown in this desperate time of reconstruction. This would be done for free, and a lifetime of upkeep was guaranteed by the Crown.

The aristocracy jumped at the chance to improve their station within their ranks. Lords and ladies jostled to be the first in line for augmentation. Those with generous pockets purchased fancier, more intricate augmentations than the standard issue. The citizenry who became augmented quickly found themselves with better pay, more work hours and higher prestige within their jobs. It was common for an augmented person to do the work of five people with their improvements. Being unaugmented soon became synonymous with being lazy, prejudiced, or otherwise unwilling to pull one's own weight. Some to this day have gone without augmentations, but they are a dying breed. The fusion of flesh and steel is the wave of the future, so you'd best get on board or be left behind!

New Discoveries

Within five years of the Cataclysm, the United Kingdom was back to its former industrial capacity. This was accomplished in no small part by the ranks of augmented citizens, who worked tirelessly to meet their demanding quotas. Now at full strength, the Queen sponsored several expeditions into the unknown world, in hope of finding survivors who were loyal to the Crown. As far as anyone knew, the United Kingdom stood alone in the world in the wake of the Cataclysm, and it was time to confirm that either true or false.

Many explorers traveled via *Ironship* through the jagged waters of the Broken Atlantic. Many never returned. Those that did brought with them tales of horrors that defied description. Europe was completely destroyed; replaced by an ocean filled with treacherous rock outcroppings and jagged peaks. Scandinavia and Russia had met the same fate, with nothing left of either one.

It would be years before the United Kingdom made first contact with another civilization. The first of these was the survivors of Italy, who had changed their name to *The Roman Ascendancy*. Explorers learned little of them, save that the Church had been overthrown and the new regime worshiped angels instead of their divine creator. Shortly after, a fleet of *Ironships* of unknown origin approached the United Kingdom. Once landed, the vessels identified themselves as being from the United States of America. No other nations have made themselves known since then. The United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Holy Nation of the Vatican stood alone in this shattered world.

The Treaty of Cardiff

The three surviving nations agreed that any war between them would be futile and ultimately self-defeating. They each agreed to sign a nonaggression treaty in the hopes of opening the door to trade and diplomatic ties. In an act of benevolence, Queen Victoria offered the city of Cardiff, in the Principality of Wales, as a neutral port for all three nations to meet. As the United Kingdom represented the mid-point between all three nations, they all agreed on the location and the Treaty of Cardiff was born, signed by all three nations on August 15, 1875.

At its heart, the Treaty of Cardiff was a simple agreement. All member nations would respect each others' sovereignty, share information about the known world, and never march national forces on neutral ground. It was

not much, but it was a start, one that would hopefully help all nations rediscover this new world. The first task for the Cardiff Nations, as they became known, was to explore the remains of the known world. They sent a joint task force that they created called the Cardiff Forces, a small military group designed to enforce Treaty policy. It was from their ranks that the first explorers headed in all directions to find new lands and people. For years, these expeditionary forces yielded no results. In some cases, they never returned at all. Then, in 1881, the first sign of steady land was discovered by one of our own, Sir David Livingston. He brought back evidence of open and fertile land to the far West, land that could easily sustain the needs of all Cardiff Nations. It would be thanks to United Kingdom determination and grit that the surviving nations would receive a second chance at prosperity.

On to the New Frontier

The first Cardiff expedition left for the new world within a year of Sir Livingston's discovery. Comprised mainly of Cardiff Forces, their goal was to establish a steady beachhead for future colonization. It took them almost three years of untold perils, but in the end they established three coastal towns for the Cardiff nations. All three were heavily armed camps, walled and bristling with defenses against the many dangers of the new World. There were tales of wild natives, monsters that defied description and even the walking dead! Children's stories, some of them...but better safe than sorry.

One of the early discoveries of the new world was the emergence of three new nations. The first were the tribes of the Native Americans. In the time since the Cataclysm, they had united into one tribal band, their agenda unknown. The second was a group of survivors who banded at Fortress Laramie, the last of the American fortresses that survived the Cataclysm. Despite their many efforts, The United States of America has failed to re-annex Fortress Laramie back into their fold. The last was a group of Chinese that claimed to be from a place called *Lhasa*. Very little is known about them, save that they avoid contact and prefer to be left alone. How a population of Chinese made the new Frontier their home is a mystery that has yet to be solved. All three nations have a different take on our survival, but none of them should be trusted too much.

Now that the coast is safe for civilian travel, you have answered the call of the Queen to embark on the second expedition to the new frontier. You now go to represent the United Kingdom and to show the other nations just what British ingenuity and a stiff upper lip can accomplish. Tally ho!

MAJOR EVENTS

1825 - Charles Babbage unveils the Difference Engine to the Royal Court. Support is overwhelmingly positive, which leads to the construction of the London Central Data Hub.

1830 - The United Kingdom is humiliated at the unveiling of America's Difference Engines, which rekindles a bitter rivalry between the two nations that continues to this day.

1831 - With the death of King William IV, Queen Victoria ascends to the throne, where she continues to rule to this day.

1851 - Queen Victoria issues the *Identification Inscription Decree*, which grants all citizens access to the *Hub*, so as to handle their day-to-day needs.

1854 - Led by the followers of the usurper Charles Dickens, the *Parliament Revolt* fails to overthrow the Queen. Parliament and the Church of England are disbanded, and Dickens is publicly executed.

1865 - In the wake of the Cataclysm, the Queen spearheads the reconstruction of her nation by issuing the *Personal Augmentation Decree*, whereby all citizens are sponsored to undergo mechanical augmentation.

1875 - Queen Victoria offers the city of Cardiff to serve as neutral territory for the newly-reunited nations of the world. The Treaty of Cardiff is signed.

1881 - Sir David Livingston discovers the lost continent of America. The Cardiff nations quickly mobilize to colonize this new land, which begins the next year.

1884 - The second wave of colonization begins, as the nations of Cardiff, shepherded by the United Kingdom, head to civilize the new frontier.

NOTABLE LEADERS

Ever since she ascended the throne in 1831, Queen Victoria has ruled the United Kingdom. Formerly a parliamentary monarchy, the United Kingdom became a monarchy after the dissolution of Parliament in the wake of the *Parliament Revolt*. Since then, the Queen rules her land with efficiency and an eye for progress. Thanks to the *London Central Data Hub*, which by now reaches as far as the territories of Ireland and Scotland, Queen Victoria is able to rule her lands directly from London. There is nowhere in the United Kingdom that the Queen's influence does not reach.

The Queen calls upon members of the nation's aristocracy to handle the day-to-day affairs of her citizens. The centralized architecture of the Queen's infrastructure makes it so that the many ranks of aristocracy are obsolete. As such, members of the aristocracy are merely referred to as *Lords*, regardless of gender. Status amongst the *aristos*, as they are nicknamed, is acquired through the administrative titles that they achieve. For example, the Chief Lord Administrator of London carries much more clout than the Assistant Lord Administrator of Fenwick. It is incumbent upon members of the aristocracy to learn the "pecking order" within their ranks.

Some notable leaders in the United Kingdom are:

Jane Digby, High Lord Administrator of London. Said to have had a scandalous youth that gave her three husbands and cause to live around the world, Lord Digby returned to the United Kingdom in the wake of the *Parliament Revolt* and quickly proved herself a force to be reckoned with. Since then, she has secured herself the top position in the noble hierarchy through various and sundry means.

Tristan Kensington-Smythe, President of the Cardiff Assembly. As one of the main architects of the Treaty of Cardiff, Lord Kensington-Smythe is one of the biggest voices for cooperation and diplomacy between its member nations. His term as the first President of the treaty assembly has been busy, yet lacking in crises. Some say that his calm demeanor and easygoing nature is the only reason its members haven't torn each other to shreds.

Constable Sebastian Clarke. One of the Metropolitan Police Service's most decorated Constables, Sebastian Clarke is nicknamed "The Clockwork Sentinel" by friend and foe alike, due to his many body modifications. Despite his outstanding record, he has been linked to various incidents in which the interests of the common man have been placed above those of the Crown. All accusations of his involvement in vigilante justice have been soundly disproven.

Dr. David Livingstone. A man of the world and a constant explorer, it was Dr. Livingstone who discovered the lost American Continent. Despite receiving a noble title for his efforts, he refuses to acknowledge his new rank and actively ignored any references to his lordship. Ever the philanthropist, he spearheads various scholarly programs through the Royal Geographic Society. Many a would-be adventurer claims to have met the man while on one of his "walkabouts" throughout the Kingdom..

THE LANDS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

It was once said that the sun never sets on the United Kingdom. That was once true, before the Cataclysm destroyed the known world. Now, all that remains of the once-great nation are its original territories, which set the United Kingdom back to where it was at the beginning of the century.

Despite the term *Kingdom* being an outdated term, the United Kingdom still adheres to that bit of tradition. The four Kingdoms that comprised this nation are:

The Kingdom of England. As the heart of the United Kingdom, the core of the nation's Difference Engine infrastructure resides here. With the *London Central Data Hub*, the Kingdom of England is riddled with miles upon miles of Difference Engines and industrial facilities, all of which maintain the prosperity of the nation. The capital city of London is a marvel of technological ingenuity. The entire city is aglow with gaslight, which illuminate massive spires of clockwork, spanning as far as the eye can see. If it is British and has any bit of ingenuity in its manufacture, it surely came from England.

The Kingdom of Scotland. With its mountain ranges and highlands, Scotland serves as the resource center for the United Kingdom's manufacturing complex. Many of the once-green plains have been strip mined to provide stone, metals and other precious materials for the many machines that keep the nation going. Scotland has done marvelous work in incorporating their processing infrastructure within the craters and quarries from years gone by. As a result, while England continues to build up towards the sky, Scotland builds down into the earth. No one knows for sure just how deep some of Scotland's plants have gone.



The Kingdom of Wales. Home of the Royal Shipyards and the Royal Archivist Society's private Data Hub, Wales serves as the transportation and information exchange for the nation. Its central location with the nation means that most goods and information passes through Wales at some point. Wales also holds the Free City of Cardiff, home of the Treaty of Cardiff facilities and meeting place for its member nations. Every so often, one hears rumors of a thriving illicit goods and information market within this Kingdom.

The Kingdom of Ireland. The fertile lands of Ireland serve as the nation's breadbasket, which provides the majority of the United Kingdom's food and cattle. The Crown has taken careful measures to preserve the fertility of these lands through severe decrees against industrialization, which has led to a more rural, less progressive quality of life for the Irish. Consequently, Ireland is treated as a backwards and provincial land by the other kingdoms--a sore spot for Ireland.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A CITIZEN

Thanks to the 'Hub and Queen Victoria's benevolent rule, the average citizen enjoys a decent quality of life. Food is plentiful, there are plenty of communal amenities and entertainment for the average citizen, provided you do your part for the Crown. Most citizens access the 'Hub shortly after they wake. By presenting their *Royal Mark* to the 'Hub Portal, they receive their daily notices, monetary allowance and any news that is relevant to the citizenry. Once they are caught up on their task list and have breakfasted at the local eatery, most citizens head to work to do their job, according to their assigned schedule. As more and more citizens become augmented, the average list of assignments grows larger. Non-augmented citizens ("nogs") struggle to keep up with their work assignments, poor things. Their augmented counterparts finish their tasks with time to spare. In time, nogs will no longer be able to keep up with their assignments. Such is the price of falling behind.

By contrast, the aristocrats, or "aristos" for short, spend much of their time jockeying for status and prestige. Aristocrats are granted official posts, through which they fulfill some vital task for the Crown. The higher rank afforded by your post, the more prestige you bring to yourself and your family. Therefore, aristos must play a dangerous balancing game, whereby they must do their job well and still make time to appear in society. Failure at one will inevitably lead to the failure of the other, so a good aristocrat learns to play both games well.

At the end of the day, it is customary to stop by a local Royal Clockworker's Guild office for a check-up on your augmentations. Thanks to the 'Hub, any clockworker anywhere can access your augmentation records and give you the proper attention. After that, most citizens indulge in one of the many social activities available to the public, such as theater, variety shows, or a solid game of cricket.

Despite everything that the Crown offers, there are still those who reject these benefits and seek to spread trouble. Many of those use the banner of the traitor Dickens, in whose name they commit acts of vandalism and sabotage. Their followers are few and scattered, and citizens are encouraged to report any information on them to the local authorities.

All in all, the life of a citizen of the United Kingdom is one of hard work, but with commensurate reward. Thanks to the miracle of Personal Augmentation, every citizen can do the work of ten nogs, which leaves them plenty of time for entertainment, personal training or social interaction. Best of all, the 'Hub keeps track of your personal affairs so you don't have to.

All Hail the Queen!

CUSTOMS AND STYLE

As a citizen of the United Kingdom, you are expected to know your place in society. Everyone does their part in bringing glory to the Crown, and you are no exception. As such, what is considered acceptable varies depending on whether you are part of the common class or of the aristocracy.

For the aristocracy, appearance and image is paramount. In a world where everything happens so fast, you have but a moment to make an impression to your peers. Therefore, you must do everything in your power to communicate your agenda in everything you do. Whether it is a particular look, a stare, or a carefully placed sigh, your every move tells a story for others to read. If it is opulence and wealth that you wish to project, then you are

expected to dress the part and wear your wealth in your clothing. Political savvy or intellectual prowess demands that one be well-read on current events or the latest theories in academic circles. If you fail in this regard, you give the impression of being false in your intentions. Whatever image you portray, make sure you can pull it off!

As for commoners, much less is expected of them, but they are still representatives of the United Kingdom. Your status is measured by how well you do your job. Success in your work is a far higher sign of prestige than material wealth. It helps to be wealthy, but not at the cost of being seen incompetent or a buffoon. All commoners are viewed as being of the same lot, so what each does reflects on the other. If one commoner makes a fool of himself and mocks the Queen or the Crown, it reflects badly on all. You are expected to keep your peers in line, while still being mindful of your job at hand. You needn't be a curmudgeon, but you must be willing to stand up for the Crown.

When dealing with embarrassment or shame, the aristocracy is expected to show more subtlety than the common man. Aristocrats may cover their eyes, cough, or otherwise give a signal to the offending party, signaling to correct their behavior and spare them mortification. Commoners are far more direct. The threat of a talking-to or a good beating serves as a more direct incentive to stay in line.

All citizens are expected to proudly display their *Royal Mark*. This is what sets you apart from the rest of the world. While others quarrel and bicker over petty personal concerns, you stand a proud and productive member of society. Your *Royal Mark* is the key through which the 'Hub identifies you; it is the badge by which you show that you are one of many, united in a singular purpose.

Whether commoner or aristocrat, all citizens of the United Kingdom are expected to observe Relaxation Intervals, also known as High Tea. These are scheduled around the work day and generally happen three times a day, each lasting about 20-30 minutes. These breaks are a time for citizens in the same community, job location or such to relax, exchange information and talk about current events. It is considered very inappropriate to talk for too long, interrupt others as they speak, or to leave abruptly without being excused by your peers. Other than that, they can be run however you want, so long as polite behavior is maintained. As tea has been more scarce since the Cataclysm, you are welcome to drink coffee, milk or, as they do in some parts of the Kingdom, warm chicken broth.

HOLIDAYS AND ENTERTAINMENT

The Crown acknowledges the need for leisure and entertainment, which it provides amply. The Royal Shakespeare Society provides many performances of plays, variety shows and music recitals. There are also many billiards halls, bowling centers, and other forms of friendly sport. Although gambling is not illegal, it is not covered by a citizen's daily allotment, which means that you'd have to find some form of currency to wager.

Shortly after the *Personal Augmentation Decree* was issued, Queen Victoria declared four official holidays for the people of her land. Once per season, the Crown would sponsor a week-long festival in honor of the nation's great historical events. These are as follows:

Spring. Anniversary of the *Identification Inscription Decree*, also known as *Unity Day*. Citizens proudly display their Royal Marks and participate in hourly lotteries that are run by the *Hub*.

Summer. Anniversary of the *Personal Augmentation Decree*, also known as *Reconstruction Day*. Citizens display their augmentations and attend various Technology Fairs, where the latest and greatest scientific marvels are displayed. This is the highlight of the year for the Royal Clockwork Guild.

Fall. Anniversary of the Parliament Revolt, also known as *Charles Dickens Day*. Mischief is encouraged as effigies of Charles Dickens are lit ablaze in the streets. Less savory people treat it as an occasion for acts of revenge and retribution.

Winter. Anniversary of the coronation of Queen Victoria, also known as *Coronation Day*. All citizens gather at their local Hub Portals to hear Queen Victoria's royal address. This is the time of year when the Queen grants new noble titles and issues reassignments of the many offices in her infrastructure.

Queen Victoria also resurrected the ancient tradition of Royal Tournaments, but with a more modern twist. All citizens are encouraged to participate in any of three competitions:

Scrimmage. Also known as "free-for-all," participants engage in all-out melee combat in groups of eight to twenty combatants. The last man to surrender is declared the winner.

Dueling. Pairs of competitors test their mettle against each other, either with sword or pistol. The last man to walk off the field is declared the winner.

Joust. A crowd favorite, Technologists enter their mechanical constructs in a jousting competition, just like the knights of old. The competition can be explosive!

The fourth competition, not open to all citizens, is the elimination matches for the Royal Cricket League. Teams from all over the United Kingdom meet at the various tournaments across the nation to compete for ranking. The top four teams compete at the Grand Championship, held in London on Coronation Day.

KNOWN ORGANIZATIONS

Royal Armed Forces. The strong-arm of the United Kingdom, this organizations manages the Royal Army and the Royal Navy. With the discovery of the other nations and the new expeditions, recruitment is at an all-time high. Many commoners who aspire to earn a noble title serve in the Royal Armed Forces, in hopes of making a good enough impression to earn their lordship.

Royal Archivist Society. As the caretakers of the London Central Data Hub, they are responsible for keeping the flow of data moving across her Majesty's kingdom. Their day-to-day activities are strictly monitored by the Crown, as they are privy to a great many of her Majesty's secrets. All Archivists are highly-augmented, so as to better perform their duties.

Metropolitan Police Service. Also known as the Scots, due to the location of their headquarters at Scotland Yard, this organization is responsible for maintaining the peace from threats foreign and domestic. It is rumored that they've expanded their operations to handle the many strange events that emerged after the Cataclysm, although the Crown officially denies any and all supernatural phenomena.

Royal Geographic Society. Founded in 1830, this organization is the premier explorers' club of the known world. They are known to fund several expeditions a year into the uncharted lands, as well as to pay handsomely for unknown curiosities from around the world. Members are expected to serve as examples of her Majesty's tenacity and determination in the face of the devastation of the Cataclysm.

Royal Clockworker's Guild. As the chief purveyors of implants to the Crown, this organization rose to power in the wake of the *Personal Augmentation Decree*. They are known to have a very secretive social structure and are recognized by their watchwork symbol. Those with a penchant for mechanical design are encouraged to join.

Royal Shakespeare Society. One of the oldest organizations in the nation, this group is responsible for training thespians in the various desired forms of performance. As the Crown places live entertainment in their purview, all live performances must be approved by the Royal Shakespeare Society if they are to be performed in a public forum.

Ordo Ex Machina. Also known as "The Clockwork Club", this secret society emerged in the wake of the *Parliament Revolt*. Mainly a social club for the aristocracy to hobnob with the elite, everyone knows that the members secretly serve the Queen, though no one can say exactly what they do.

The Dickensians. This organization does not exist. Any rumors about such an organization should be discredited and reported immediately to your nearest constable.

OTHER NATIONS

The United States of America - The Queen has never forgiven them for their many slights over the years, especially when it came to the unveiling of *The Hub* in 1830. They are a boorish and brazen lot who need to be taken down a notch, but for now we must work with them on colonizing the new continent.

The Roman Ascendancy - Their adherence to archaic notions of divinity makes them appear simple, but the discipline and order with which they run their nation is to be admired. Dealings with them, especially if they thwart the United States, should be encouraged.

The people of the new continent - Brute strength, chants, and rumors of their "spirits" do not a nation make. It will take a lot more than their paltry displays of force to put them in the same league as the civilized nations, doubly so to even consider comparing them with Queen's Kingdom.

Fortress Laramie - Anyone who can humiliate the United States of America with their defiance has earned the admiration of the Queen and her people. However, those who did not return after Laramie was discovered are traitors to the Crown and should be given no aid. It is only because any reprisal would violate the Treaty of Cardiff that the Queen's has stayed her hand..

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Here is a list of common crimes and the punishments that the United Kingdom levies on perpetrators:

Horse Thieving: To steal a horse or a herd from its rightful owner. (1 year of hard labor)

Rustling: To steal a herd of cattle from its rightful owner. (1 year of hard labor)

Buffalo Hunting: To hunt wild buffalo without owner. (Hunter awarded \$20.00 per hide)

Murder: To end the life of another person, regardless of circumstance (Hanging)

Attempted Murder: Like Murder, but without success. (Re-Education)

Bank Robbery: To rob resources or funds from an established bank. (Re-Education)

Train Robbery: To rob resources or funds from an active train. (Re-Education)

Theft from an Official: To rob resources or funds from someone who holds an official position of office, such as a sheriff, marshal or mayor. (1 year of hard labor, or Hanging if the official is a representative of the Queen)

Grand Larceny: The theft of resources or funds in excess of \$100.00, not counting horses or cattle. (1 year of hard labor)

Theft: The theft of resources or funds under \$100.00, not counting horses or cattle. (3 months of hard labor, caning)

Drunk in Public: Displays of egregious behavior while drunk. (First Offense: Shaming, Further Offenses: Caning)

Public Lewdness: Appearance that promotes lewd behavior or otherwise considered indecent (First Offense: Shaming, Further Offenses: Caning)

Disorderly Conduct: Behavior that causes a ruckus, such as rough-housing, bar fights and the like. (First Offense: Shaming, Further Offenses: Caning)

Carrying a Weapon in a No-Weapon Zone: Being armed in an area marked as a "No-Weapon Zone" by the authorities. (Confiscation, plus Fine)

Punishments unique to the United Kingdom:

Re-Education: You are immediately returned to a Royal Re-Education Clinic, until such time as you learn to be a productive member of society.

Shaming: You are forced to wear a sign around your neck, upon which is listed your crime. Citizens are expected to scoff and shun those who are shamed.

Caning: You are to be struck on the back with a piece of cane, no longer than two feet long, no more than ten times. This is to be done in public assembly.

The United Kingdom does not advocate long-term imprisonment, as it is wasteful. Instead, criminals are sentenced to work off their crime through hard labor, which can last anywhere from a season to a year or more. Criminals are expected to report to work and serve out their sentence under their own recognizance. Anyone who fails to report to serve their time is declared a traitor and will be punished as one.

Only in cases of murder or treason is the criminal executed. This is traditionally performed by firing squad if the offender has a noble title, or by hanging if they are a common person. Also, it is expected that all citizens have enough personal pride to make Shaming and Caning viable punishments. Those who lack this quality will find themselves shipped off to a Royal Re-Education Clinic, where they will undergo treatment for their deviant behavior. All rumors of unorthodox or punitive conditioning have been disproven.

CLOTHING AND STYLE

Citizens of the United Kingdom are expected to behave with pride and dignity, whenever their nation's honor and reputation are at stake. As such, a citizen is expected to maintain themselves properly attired and groomed. Citizens shall bathe twice a week at least. Grooming expenses, such as clothiers and hair technicians, are included in a citizen's daily resource allocation. As far as the Crown is concerned, anyone who is dirty, unkempt, disheveled or otherwise unpresentable, without proper cause in the pursuit of their duties, has chosen to disregard their nation's principles and is guilty of Public Lewdness and Disorderly Conduct.

There is a discrepancy between how the common people and the *aristos* dress. Common folk typically wear multiple layers of simple but tailored clothing, which they add or remove as the situation merits. A common citizen may have a nice coat, to be worn on Holidays, but will also own a couple of shirts and pants that will allow them to dress down as needed. Together with a heavy work coat and some boots, the common citizen can mix and match their clothing to handle whatever responsibility is thrust upon them. You may see a citizen wear trousers and a shirt to work, then head home to change his shirt, put on his nice coat and a cravat, shine his boots and head out for a classy social gathering. In short, a common citizen's wardrobe is a practical affair.



By contrast, members of the aristocracy compare each other by the quality and extravagance of their outfits. Clothiers are constantly experimenting with new styles in order to create the new popular look. Whether it is extended collars, gold-woven cravats, a dozen buttons on their coats or fancy epaulettes, there is nothing that the aristocracy won't try to one-up their peers. That being said, it is considered very gauche to dress in a manner not befitting the social situation. In other words, a person who dresses opulently for clerical work, or who dresses in elaborate gowns to go on a wilderness hunt, is seen as foolish and unaware of what is required of them. Don't wear a tuxedo when playing cricket, or a duelist's gambeson to a Shakespeare performance.

Personal modesty is key when considering your look. It is customary for men and women to be covered from wrist to neckline to ankle. Exposed skin in public is seen as a sign of lewd and demeaning behavior, and is often punished accordingly. More than one rebellious youth has been caned for going out with their chest, calves or forearms exposed. As with all matters, these customs

are enforced according to the formality of the situation. For example, factory workers will often wear sleeveless shirts and have their tunics open several buttons. However, once done with their workday, they are expected to button up before heading into town. Similarly, modesty is far more enforced at the Royal Conservatory in London than they are at the seedy docks of Cardiff. The only exception that is universally accepted is the display of augmentations.

Citizens are proud of their augmentations, as they show a certain amount of clout that they carry in their circles. Fashion encourages citizens to display their augmentations. Augmented laborers will often sport sleeveless coats, in order to show up their pistoned arms, just as a popular dancer may wear a skirt with the front completely hiked up, in order to display her sleek digitigrade legs. So long as you display augmentations when doing so, you can pretty much get away with revealing anything.

In summary, the general appearance of citizens of the United Kingdom is a serious affair, as they are a reflection of the Queen and her realm. Tread carefully, always seek the approval of your peers, and keep each other in line. After all, you are citizens of the greatest nation in the world, and it should show.

