

## The Kentish Men – A company for In Her Majesty’s Name

*“It’s a loose federation of the most cunning and deadly villains in the capital and the Home Counties, Sergeant. I have long suspected that behind them lies but a single mind. A proud Englishman whose capacity for hate and venal deceit knows no bounds.”*

*Chief Inspector McTavish, Scotland Yard, 1894.*

The greatest metropolis in the civilised world is a place of great inequality. Some bear the injustice of their station in life with the faith and stoicism so typical of the English character. However there are those who, though of low birth, display the tenacity to rise above their origins through guile and savage violence.

Typical of these are The Kentish Men, so named by their mysterious patron the Professor after a long forgotten rebellion by the poor against their Norman overlords. They are truly the scum of the earth – men who even the British Army would reject.

Amongst them are many hardened criminals, unemployed navies and men for whom the only hope of redemption is the rope. They are often fearless when they should retreat; sometimes this enables them to prevail over supposedly superior opponents but on other occasions they are cut down in swathes.

Rising through their ranks are a few who make even these tough men quail, for these are truly the masters of Hell on Earth. Men like Black Jack Hines, a survivor of terrible experiments as a child, and as a result a sociopath capable of the most brutal acts of mindless savagery. Many men have tried to lay Black Jack low but have found that he rises again, transmogrified into a thing of nightmare.

Then there is Abel Caine, the ‘Lord o’ the Docks’ as he is sometimes known. A smuggler of anything, including young white English girls for the harems of the Turkish court. Nothing moves through the East India Docks without his permission. Shipmasters and Dock owners all pay him homage and coin for this; those that resist have a habit of turning up dead, or worse.

Caine is utterly ruthless. He will happily sacrifice every man in his command for a single gold sovereign, yet toast their deaths in the taverns later and call them his heroes.

Another man of note is ‘Gentleman’ Johnny Bristow. This giant of a man runs a number of prize fighting rings in the East End and reports to Caine. He is an able and savage prize fighter himself and always fights to the death.

Behind the activities of the Kentish Men is the Professor. His plans and schemes keep these villains one step ahead of the law and they have come to trust that no matter how bizarre his requests they will profit. His one foible is his patriotism. He will often send his thugs against any who threaten London and the Empire but who the authorities have failed to combat effectively.

He is considered to be one of the greatest threats to order by none other than the Consulting Detective, his nemesis. Their paths have crossed many times with the Professor usually getting the better of it.

The most unexpected character in this company is Colonel Septimus Morgan. He was cashiered from the British Army over serious irregularities in the accounts at his officers’ mess – and for nearly killing the Auditor who brought them to light.

While in the Army, Col Morgan had the reputation of being possibly the best shot in the Empire. Since his enforced departure, he has been selling this skill to the highest underworld bidder – usually The Professor – and showing no scruples whatsoever about his targets.

Only one person can match Caine for vicious cunning and that is Molly Maguire. A madam of low repute, she runs some of the most depraved brothels in the East End. Like Caine she is Irish by birth and was sold to a mistress when only nine years old. By the time she was twelve she was running her own string of street whores. When she is on the field she can encourage men to acts of suicidal bravery.

The ‘soldiers’ of these dangerous men come from the gutter. They are hard and they are desperate. Some are recruited directly into the Kentish Men. Their initiation rite is said to be a random murder of some innocent. Each of the Kentish Men is marked by a tattoo of a playing card on their face for all to see. Each card is different, so there are only fifty-two such men at any one time. They also have a habit of wearing long coats under which they conceal their deadly sawn-off shotguns.

Note: Both Black Jack Hines and Johnny Bristow bear the tattoo of a Joker on their faces.

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Where the Kentish Men need more muscle they can turn to the many unemployed Irish Navvies who haunt the gin taverns and dives of the Docklands. These are men made strong by years of hard labour and they generally fight with the tools of their trade.

Abel Caine often brings one or two boys with him. These he calls ‘Dodgers’ and uses them to get things he wants while his men tie down his enemies. They are light on their feet and know how to be one with the shadows.

### The Company list

The list has a number of unique talents and pieces of equipment, these are described below.

Type	Pluck	FV	SV	Speed	Cost	Talents	Basic Equipment
The Professor	4+	+0	+0	+0	67	Leadership +3 Erudite Wit, Intuitive, Immortal <sup>1</sup> , Meticulous Planning <sup>2</sup>	Impervious waistcoat <sup>3</sup> , pistol
Black Jack Hines	4+	+2	+2	+0	64 <sup>4</sup>	Transmogrification <sup>5</sup>	Lined coat, pistol
Black Jack Hines transmogrified	2+	+5	+0	+2		Berserker, Fearless, Terrifying	His lined coat is ruined and he discards his pistol.
Abel Caine	4+	+2	+2	+0	49	Fearless, Inspirational, Leadership +2	Magneto-static waistcoat,, sawn-off shotgun, knife, Clockwork Bulldog <sup>6</sup>
Johnny Bristow	3+	+4	+0	+0	28	Martial Artist <sup>7</sup> , Tough	Needs none
Molly Maguire	3+	+1	+3	+0	31	Leadership +1, Inspirational.	Lined Dress, pistol.
Man of Kent	5+	+1	+1	+0	12		Lined Coat, club, sawn-off shotgun
Navvy	5+	+2	+0	+0	10		Jack, two-handed spade, hammer or axe
Dodger	5+	+0	+0	+2	15	Stealthy	Pistol, knife
Col. Morgan	4+	+2	+5	+0	49	Hunter, Marksman	Lined coat, hunting rifle

1. The Professor’s apparent Immortality comes from the fact that each time he is killed or captured it turns out to have been a double.

2. **Meticulous Planning** (unique talent, 15 points): When the Professor is involved everything seems to unfold according to his plan. Each turn he can choose to move a single figure (from either side) a second time at the end of the Movement phase. The normal rules for movement apply but he cannot move them into immediate mortal danger (i.e. into a lava pool, off a cliff or into the path of a moving engine) or off the table. He can move the figure

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into base-to-base contact with another figure. As this is not a mental attack the figure concerned does not get a Pluck roll to resist it.

3. **Impervious Waistcoat** (16 points): This tailored waistcoat is a heavily customised version of an SRC Breastplate which can be worn without its armour function being obvious.

4. Hines is costed as his transmogrified self, i.e. the second line of stats.

5. **Transmogrification** (unique talent): The first time Black Jack fails a Pluck Roll for any reason he transmogrifies into a terrible hulking beast. He will then rampage through his enemies until all are dead. He always charges the nearest enemy, he cannot choose his targets.

6. **Clockwork Bulldog** (unique item, 5 points): The Bulldog reduces one designated enemy's Armour value by 2 as it distracts him by attacking his legs and feet. It has Armour 10 and Pluck 5+. It is of no use against mechanical walkers or steam driven vehicles.

7. Bristow's particular martial art is bare-knuckle fighting – but definitely not to the Marquess of Queensbury's Rules.

### Options

- Any figure can buy a Bicycle (+3 points each).
- Any Man of Kent or Navy can buy the Tough talent (+5 points each).
- One Navy can take a Johnson MkVII Mechanised Walker (+22 points).