

A Joining

Those people in London who can feel the wastes most keenly sense a gentle connection. In his chambers Professor Cooper inhales deeply, as what *feels* like a new rush of air enters his lungs. Tom Quick clasps his nose and his body shudders at a vision of spokes on a wheel within a wheel. Bells play in churches, an ephemeral woman completes her ritual, supported by others.

Calais links itself to the London Realm. This is to many not a surprise. It stirs the wastes greatly, but any number of soldiers are there to see it happen. The ritual road created by the royal society has been used before by members of the Commission and this is no different. In Calais members of the Commission – Gideon, The Spaniard, Agrin, Susan Malvess and Pieter receive the road as had been the intention. There was by all accounts quite a heft battle at their end with any number of potent bladeliike creatures and flying coins.

Calais has been well prepared and there have been tentative links made with London in the time before the link is made (indeed they had been ready some time before but the Dragon Days had made completing the ritual impossible for any number of reasons. As such when the realm is linked intentions are well under way for Calais to integrate into London society. They are skilled at such negotiations and their plans are realised quickly.

There is not a *great* deal of space in Calais, it is not going to be somewhere that solves the problems of over-population or under resourcing, it's benefits however are numerous.

In his study, Simon Callowfield begins to bleed.

Calais Guilds

With the reconnection of Calais in 1826, its various societies have become players on the London stage. Calais dates from the early 16th century, when it was controlled by England, though the majority of its population are Dutch and the rest a mix of almost all the European cultures. Post collapse, it lacked any real nobility with the strength to control the place and as a result its various powerful guilds took over, some amalgamating to produce more potent groups. The Dutch were in contact with Calais, sending ships to trade with them (as the Dutch seem to be able to traverse the wastes) and, as such, it managed to maintain its strong trading and manufacturing base. Bringing Calais into Britain's sphere once more involved a great deal of political manoeuvring, as the Dutch were keen for it to either join them or remain independent. Only the potential threat of the French, who the Guildmasters of Calais felt only Britain could defend them against (even though there has been no direct contact as yet), plus some promises from Parliament, swayed them towards Britain.

The three Realm Artefacts for Calais were all in fact paperwork: the Treaty of Bretigny (when France ceded Calais to England), the set of rules for how guilds are governed within the city and the master list of guild charters. These were all torn up in a riot shortly after the collapse and are in many tattered pieces, most of which are held by various guilds (and have *mostly* been sealed in metal and look like coins). At the time of this riot the realm warden - a British nobleman - was also killed and his wardenship split between various guild leaders for reasons that remain obscure.

The so called 'tattered coins', the remains of the realm foci, when in the hands of one of the various Realm wardens (who are all guild masters) empower that guild's members. The more tattered coins, the more power. As a result, while Calais was isolated, there was a great deal of fighting and sometimes outright civil war. This situation has, presently, quieted down, with a number of guilds now dominant. Each of these guilds is available to players who meet the criteria.

Although these societies are all listed here together, each is a separate one. They have certain things in common. If a character joins one, they must specify which at the time of joining.

The guilds accept anyone as an associate -the lowest level of membership, as long as they are not a member of another of the guilds or any other commercial organisation (LGC or its subsidiaries, East Indian company et al).

Promotion to journeyman (*second rank*) requires at least one rank in the craft skill appropriate for the guild, promotion to master (*third rank*) requires master level in that craft skill. The final rank, guildmaster (of which each guild has several, with one, the Realm warden surrogate, senior) is a matter of politics.

The guilds strictly control the commercial behaviour of their members: all selling is done through the guild, though this is waived for wastelanders away from anywhere connected to Calais (*thus, it only probably makes a difference in FL*).

All the guilds grant a point of either skill or knowledge per rank, players choice, changeable between events.

As a result of the tattered coins, all members are very slightly better at any craft skill they possess than someone of the same rank who is not a member. This has no practical effect on things made in game terms, but they will always be that 'little bit' better.

The Guilds specialise in hand made, quality goods. They have been allowed to keep their 'trade secrets' without registering a patent and to require anyone else using those secrets to cease and desist, though they have to prove such before a closed court. They aggressively seek to maintain (in Calais) and develop (elsewhere) a monopoly on quality, handmade goods. Their opposition to mass production makes them something of a natural ally of the Luddites.

There are five main Calais guilds, each of which may incorporate other guilds -a member of one of these five might style themselves as a member of the one of the guilds that is incorporated into it (so, if you were a member of the Grand Sisterhood of the Scissors you might say you were a member of the Gentle Society of Lacemakers). There are more minor ones incorporated into larger ones than are listed here, so you can make some up if you wish).

The guilds often war (economically or actually with violence, intimidation and so forth) over who gets to control various 'ancillary' trades. For example, the making of sails and rope is hotly contested between the Sisterhood of the Scissors and the Lathe of the Sea.

The Grand Sisterhood of the Scissors (incorporates the Scissormen and the Gentle Society of Lacemakers) – this is the biggest and most powerful guild in Calais, making all sorts of cloth and lace. They hold the most tokens and are, amongst the cutthroat and amoral Calais guild structure, the most cutthroat and the most immoral. Wider markets for their goods persuaded them into the Empire. The lace is especially sought after for talismans.

The Lathe of the Sea (incorporating the Brotherhood of the keel and the Fishing Guild) – makes ships, especially the most perfect of keels. Naval orders got them to join the Empire. Via Fishing, they controlled most of the food production of Calais before the collapse: much looks now to be imported.

The Royal Society of Builders – very skilled masons and carpenters (for making fixtures and fittings, doors for instance). They are the only guild with a proper, full on, Royal Warrant, dating from the 16th century, but renewed by King George as they have been given a lot of work in Brighton. They have challenges, as they are not good with glass, galvanics or plumbing.

The Mercers of Calais -are a trade guild, and members have merchant rather than crafter, and gain an extra penny a rank of merchant stipend for goods. All sale of goods (rather than direct contracts for goods or services) from Calais goes through them. They try and remain politically neutral. They are very good at presenting quality goods in shops and, with the backing of the other Guilds, are spearheading a commercial move into London.

The Great Paperworks - makes paper. It does it by hand, with minimal machinery, but manages to produce very high quality paper at phenomenal rates. Before joining London, it was in dire straits., as there was no wood pulp available - now it is creating a large number of new guild halls in Germania and raking in money, though it does not produce 'mass produced' paper, for cheap books or newspapers, for instance, as yet. Its senior members often have knowledge of a variety of arcane scripts