

Guide to Kingsport, City in the Mists

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The Unbound Book
Call of Cthulhu Adventures in the 1920s

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Introduction

Guide to Kingsport, City in the Mists is a short document designed to assist Keepers in running *His Wildest Dreams*. In essence the information presented here is an overview of the Kingsport, City in the Mists source book published by Chaosium in 1992 and has been collated with the kind permission of Chaosium.

As at the time of publication (August 2002) the author is aware that Chaosium plans on reprinting and repackaging the Kingsport Guide in 2003.

History of Kingsport

1639

Kingsport settled by farmers and fishermen from the South of England and the Channel Islands.

Late 17th Century to Early 18th:

Grows from village into a thriving town. Many of Kingsport's important families trace their heritage back to this time.

1774- 1779 War of Independence:

Kingsport is a base of operations for many American privateers. Many Yankee boats built at its wharves.

- In 1778 a British fleet blockades the harbour and begins to shell the town. Argus Blaine and friends drag a cannon up to the lower cliffs of Kingsport Head and drive off the British.
 - The heroism of Blaine is remembered with a plaque in Circle Court.
 - Even today occasional cannonballs are still dug up and the old Custom House still has a cannonball embedded in its wall as a reminder of the town's history.
- After the war an attempt is made to change Kingsport to Georgetown, but is defeated in a town wide vote.

Early 19th Century:

While most of New England was gearing up for the Industrial Revolution Kingsport stays wedded to the sea. Many large mansions built around Central Hill.

- First signs of trouble are seen when embargos are placed on trade with the warring British and French. These are soon extended to the entire European continent.
- War of 1812 sees a strong blockade of the town and trade is strangled, as a result very little privateering is done from Kingsport.
- By the end of the war, Kingsport's sea trade has seriously declined.

- A retired sea captain opens Kingsport's first industrial plant - a paint factory. Its success leads to a glue factory being opened beside it. Both factories still operate today on the south side of town.
- 1824, Eben Hall private high school is opened. Named after well-known 18th Century official.
- 1829, the Kingsport Chronicle founded.
- 1835 sees Kingsport lose its Right of Entry (which allows overseas materials and goods to be landed in its harbour). Trade now limited to the east coast of the U.S.
- Storm of 1842 sees 8 of Kingsport's fishermen die near Innsmouth.

By the mid 19th Century:

Kingsport settles into a community of ship builders and fishermen.

- 1861-1865, the American Civil war sees Kingsport's ship building trade boom as demand for Union boats almost outstrips production. 17 Kingsport men lose their lives in the war - all at sea.
- 1878 - 88. The Decade of Storms. Ten years of storms almost destroys Kingsport's trade. Many buildings damaged and a number of lives lost.
- 1888 and the last big storm knocks down the steeple of the abandoned Congregational Church on the top of Central Hill.

With the turn of the 20th Century:

The town's fortunes had not changed.

- In 1905 the Typhoid epidemic spreads from Arkham to Kingsport. Dozens die.
- 1906, retired sea captain Stephen Cabot elected Mayor and successfully taps into New England's growing tourist market.
- 1912, under the guidance of Mayor Cabot the old Congregational Church on Central Hill is pulled down and the Congregational Hospital is built.

Since that time Kingsport has become a major summer tourist centre and is also home to many budding artists. Although still one with the sea, the number of fishermen have dwindled as larger packing factories to the north and south take the trade. Only one ship builder still remains - building pleasure craft.

Despite the renewed prosperity, Kingsport still lags behind the times, it is a place where people still do things the old fashioned way. Electricity does not reach all homes and only one in 6 families owns an automobile.

Layout of Kingsport

Kingsport is divided into seven areas (or suburbs), each of which has its own social and economic base. This adventure deals with the area know as 'Central Hill' and its neighbouring suburbs, and as such only these are detailed here.

Central Hill

This is the largest of Kingsport's many hills, and is covered with many ancient and crumbling Georgian homes. The skyline of Kingsport is dominated by Central Hill and perched on top of it the Kingsport Congregational Hospital dominates the view.

Most of this suburb's residents are old and poor, unable to repair their even older homes. Some, however, use the neighbourhood air of antiquity to hide their personal wealthy and family secrets.

Talk abounds about a honeycomb of ancient tunnels under the hill, but most sensible Kingsporters dismiss these rumours as fair for the curious tourist.

The Hollow

To the north of Central Hill, and concealed in its shadow is a suburb know as the Hollow. Residential and middle class, it is the home to many of Kingsport's shop owners and merchants.

Downtown

Kingsport's business district lies at the Southern foot of Central Hill, is a busy and bustling neighbourhood. The location for most of the town's day to day business it's narrow streets and lack of street parking make it a hazardous, but exciting suburb.

The Kingsport Cult

The people of Kingsport are, in a strange sort of way, proud of the cult that once met at the Congregational Church. It is not something they talk to the tourists about, but occasionally one over hears reference to it. The following is fairly common knowledge:

- In the late 1600s the cult was quite prevalent in the town. That is until the Salem witch trials of 1692 and as a result rumours became accusations and in turn lead to the arrests of dozens of Kingsport citizens. By the time the frenzy was over 13 people had been trialed and hung on counts of grave robbing and necromancy.
- 1720 rumours surface about the revival of the cult.
- 1722 Mayor Eben Hall and many sea captains, sailors and town folk surround the Congregational Church on Central Hill after a sickly green glow is seen emanating from it. When people (cultists) finally emerged from the church they were revealed as simple Kingsport townsfolk. Strangely they were people from all walks of life, from influential sea captains to dock hands and shopkeepers through to the unemployed layouts. In the end more than three dozen arrests where made, with the charges of breaking and entering, unlawful assembly and grave robbing laid. These resulted in fines, imprisonment and banishment for those found guilty, while the leaders were tarred and feather and exiled from the town.