

A black and white illustration of a dragon breathing fire from a window. The dragon is positioned in the center, with its head and neck extending through a window frame. It has large, curved horns and a fierce expression. Fire is being breathed from its mouth. The window is set in a stone wall, and the scene is lit by a bright light source, possibly the moon, in the background.

The Horror on Haldon Hill

by
Rick Lippiett

renegames

The Horror on Haldon Hill

'I longed to learn the songs the demons sing as they swoop between the stars, or hear the voices of the olden gods as they whisper their secrets to the echoing void. I yearned to know the terrors of the grave; the kiss of maggots on my tongue, the cold caress of a rotting shroud upon my body. I thirsted for knowledge that lies in the pits of mummied eyes, and burned for wisdom known only to the worm'

Robert Bloch, Shambler from the Stars

Investigator Introduction

The peace and tranquillity usually associated with the sleepy Dartmoor village of Trusham, was shattered early Sunday morning when dairy herder Alan Hicks stumbled on the gruesomely ravaged bodies of three University students. The three students, as yet unnamed, had been ripped from their automobile by an animal of savage strength, and speculation runs rife around local villages as to whether the Beast of Dartmoor has made an unwelcome return. Readers may remember the previous attack on Sarah Roselands of Chagford whose violated body was found last month on the moor, and the disappearance of Edward Shaul a woodsman from Dunchideock. Accordingly to customers of the Nobody Inn, Doddismbesleigh, the students were last seen leaving the inn at about eleven o'clock Saturday night after a jaunt in the countryside that day. Inspector Jack Bruce of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is at present presiding over the investigation.

The death of three students from Exeter University as reported in the Exeter Herald, Monday November 17 1924.

The investigator's may either be friends of the students at the University, in which case they may have already been interviewed by Inspector Bruce, or merely investigator's whose interest is piqued by the ferocity of the attack. If this scenario is played in conjunction with 'An Experiment in Time' the letter in Brewster's office coupled with the attack should have the investigators champing at the bit!

Keeper's Background

The source of this attack originated about two hundred years ago in a very different landscape to Dartmoor, namely the hot, arid plains of northern India. In the 1740's British empire building in the East Indies was reaching it's zenith. The armies of the crown and the ubiquitous and influential East India Company were exerting their powers over the Nizams, Nabobs and Rajahs of India. One such empire builder was Major General Stringer Lawrence, now revered as the founder of the Indian Army. Although later superseded by Clive, he was initially the leading British military force in India. Strongly allied with his friend Robert Palk, the governor of Madras, he was instrumental in carving up India into bite size pieces to feed the colonial lust of the British Empire. Obviously this was not always appreciated by the local inhabitants and Lawrence was notorious for his ability to quell dissent. One of these tiresome episodes, particularly galling to Lawrence, was that concerning the takeover of the Tanjore area in the Carnatic in 1749.

Lawrence's army had already suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Mahrattan mercenaries, and many of his men were made captive. Lawrence relieved Captain James Cope of his command and together with Clive led the reprisal. The Mahrattan mercenaries had been engaged in guerrilla war with the Europeans for some time and many strange and horrifying tales were told of their barbaric deeds. However, the Indians were no match for the well armed and well disciplined colonials and after a particularly bloody massacre and heavy bombardment Lawrence broke through and routed a fifteen thousand strong army. The Mahrattas fled and the ruler of Tanjore was forced to make peace with the British. There followed the obligatory taking of tribute, a thinly veiled term for looting, and Lawrence discovered an underground cavernous temple that the Mahrattas had used for the worship of their foul god. In the ruins of this cavern Lawrence discovered what had become of his missing men; strewn around the place were the dismembered bodies of the colonials horribly ripped and shredded. The high priest and some followers were found buried beneath a large rockfall caused by the bombardment of the city, and when the rubble had been cleared, a large statue of their vile god was exposed.

Indigenous troops refused to enter the chamber under pain of death and the ruler of Tanjore claimed that even he, who had employed the Mahrattas, was afraid to enter their sanctum. This forced Lawrence and his men to excavate the ruins themselves. Consequently it was Lawrence himself who found, buried beneath the body of the high priest, a weighty tome bound in strange blood-stained leather and some silver Bagh Nakh. The book was a powerful mythos artifact, the Cthaati Kardath, and the claws were used to sacrifice victims to the Small Crawler - an aspect of Nyarlathotep associated with Kali and the thuggee cult.

Bagh Nakh

These claws are a weapon associated with the thuggee cults. Consisting of four rings in between which lie razor sharp prongs of metal. These were used by thuggees to mask assassinations by causing them to appear the victims of man-eating tigers. Although useful against a recumbent foe they are relatively useless for hand to hand fighting and only do 1D3+1 damage; base chance 20%

The Cthaati Kardath

Originally written in Sanskrit, this volume adds 14% to the reader's Cthulhu mythos knowledge by reduces his SAN by 2D8. The book also gives a X4 spell multiplier.

The book was first inscribed by priests of the Persian cults of Darkness, many of these plundered India and eventually their cults were to become entwined with those worshipping Kali.

The aspect of Nyarlathotep that this weighty volume worships is that of the Small Crawler, a particularly vile avatar of the Dark Messenger resembling a bleeding Cthonian with a human face. The volume that Lawrence discovered was a very good translation in Hindustani that adds 13% to Mythos Knowledge and retains the SAN loss penalty and the spell multiplier.

Lawrence took these items as souvenirs of his Indian campaigns and destroyed the underground cavern with copious amounts of explosives. Later Lawrence was overtaken by Clive and the veteran General was retired out of the army due to health in 1759, whereupon he returned to England and lived the majority of his retirement with his old time friend Sir Robert Palk at Haldon House, near Exeter.

Lawrence lived peacefully enough for several years but the change of life style in retirement lead him to become acutely bored and depressed - not surprising after over a decade of power and the thrill of command in his hack and slay campaigns. Lawrence became increasingly interested in the Romans and

their society and beliefs. He had always admired their puissance but he soon became interested in their gods, particularly those worshipped by the military. He discovered a book in London by the latin author Quintus Phaedrus (described later) and found the reference to the Small Crawler. This triggered his memory and he dug out his old campaign souvenirs. He thus uncovered the Cthaati Kardath he obtained from the thuggee cultists. Interested, he read the book with his working knowledge of Hindustani and quickly fell under the sway of the book's power.

Fundamentally a bloodthirsty man, he became corrupted by the books account of the power to be gained by consorting with the Small Crawler; thus his mind was unhinged. Palk noticed his friend becoming stranger and more distant, but said nothing until Lawrence disappeared without warning into Dartmoor. His disappearance coincided with the first reportings of the Beast of Dartmoor and over the next month several victims were found horribly ripped and dismembered on the moors. Palk became increasingly suspicious and discovered the Cthaati Kardath, he too read the book but his stronger character and morality overcame the book's influence.

Meanwhile Lawrence, already in his late seventies by 1775, had gained the favour of the Small Crawler and had been rejuvenated by the Dark Messenger. Lawrence returned to Haldon House to convert Palk. Palk refused to be converted and Lawrence struck his old friend, knocking Palk unconscious and abducting his wife Anne to sacrifice to the Small Crawler. Palk recovered his senses and followed Lawrence up to the summit of Haldon Hill where Palk was forced to shoot Lawrence before he could sacrifice Anne to his foul god.

Palk was greatly saddened by the forced slaying of his old friend and the demise of the once great man, and as a tribute in 1788 he built a castle dedicated to Lawrence on the spot he was killed. Inside he erected a statue of Lawrence in the garb of a Roman general, who Lawrence had always revered.

The affair was hushed up (the official version states he died of a stroke in his London residence) but all the events were hand-written in Palk's private diaries which were buried with him in Dunchideock Church in 1798. The Cthaati kardath and the Baagh Nakh had long been bricked up in the foundations of Haldon House to keep them out of harm's way.

We rejoin the story six generations later in 1924 with Sir Lawrence Edward Bloomfield Palk. Lawrence Edward's great grandfather, also Lawrence Palk, had been created the first Lord Haldon in 1880. During the First World War Lawrence Edward was given a commission as a second lieutenant in the Royal Engineers in 1916.

His father was unfortunately gassed and although he survived the war (unlike his brother Lawrence Charles Walter who was killed in action 1916) he died from his injuries in 1919. His wife, Lidiana (Lawrence Edward's mother) died the following year. These events, coupled with the horrors experienced in Flanders, caused the young Palk, only twenty-four in 1920, to become very cynical, irresponsible and hedonistic. Palk thus squandered a great deal of his families' wealth in crackpot ventures and drinking and gambling debts. His failures led him to more debauchery with the prostitutes of Plymouth and London, where he frequented seedy drinking dens to obtain the girls and opium he craved. Here he rubbed shoulders with other depraved individuals, one of which was a Hindustani occultist and opium dealer named Chandra Soukh...*

Sometime before, the bodies of the Palk family were removed from the tower of Dunchideock church and reinterred in the graveyard to enable structural repairs from a lightning bolt that severely damaged the tower. On transport the Reverend Ian Holmbridge uncovered the iron box containing Robert Palk's dairies and handed them over to the current Lord Haldon. Haldon read the diaries and intrigued by the occult references determined to find the dark tome. A few months later, as coincidence would have it, a new boiler was fitted in the basement and the Cthaati Kardath and the Claws were uncovered.

On his next visit to London he mentioned the title of the book to his occultist friend Soukh. Soukh had heard of the book and eager to peruse its pages he implored Haldon to let him stay at Haldon House and study the tome. Haldon agreed but made sure they conducted their studies at Lawrence Castle away from prying eyes. Haldon was greatly excited as he hoped that the power of the book may restore his fortunes. Over the next month Soukh was able to learn most the spells, but his already low sanity from drug taking, murder and debauchery was irreparably damaged. Unbeknown to Haldon, Soukh abducted Sarah Roselands for the Summoning of the Hunting Horror and took her back to Lawrence Castle for the ritual. However, he had not realised that his translation of the spell was not quite correct and as Soukh killed Sarah with the claws during the ritual and the Horror arrived hungry for blood. However, because the Bagh Nakh are a powerful artefact of Nyarlathotep, the Horror was deterred from killing Soukh and dispelled itself, much to the detriment of Soukh's already flagging sanity.

After the event Haldon, in a panic, dumped the body on the moors near Chagford and quarrelled with Soukh about the murder. Soukh convinced Haldon they must try again but assured him that the sacrifice was not necessary but a victim was needed from which to drain energy

**Note: If Experiment In Time is played in conjunction with this scenario Palk can have met Brewster and the scenario played with-Brewster instead.*

Haldon conceded and the next week Soukh again abducted a local woodsman with his blowpipe and poison dart. That weekend on the Saturday, Soukh summoned the Horror again and this time it appeared and devoured Shaul. Both Soukh's & Haldon's sanity were appropriately blasted and without any clear command from the gibbering summoners, the Horror flew through the windows to find some more feasts before it departed this plane. It was this Horror that was responsible for the deaths of the students. Once recovered they resolved to try the other contact spell, seeking divine guidance as to their purpose. The requirement for this spell is a cloudless sky and a full moon, the next full moon is the next Saturday. The investigators have five days to foil their plans.



Investigator Leads

The three students murdered were Fiona Lance-Corberton, Henry Mackenson and Douglas Farr-Jones. All three were students at the University of Exeter who had been enjoying a drink at the Nobody Inn at Doddiscombesleigh and had left at about midnight on Saturday night to drive back to Exeter in Farr-Jones' new Bentley (the landlord gave the time they left as nearer eleven o'clock to the papers as he did not wish to have his license revoked).

Alan Hicks is currently at Exeter's Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital suffering from shock. If the investigators visit Hicks he will give them a garbled account of how he found the ripped and shredded corpses in the morning; the site of the bodies has clearly knocked the simple dairy herder's mind for six.

Leads at the University will not uncover anything untoward about the students, they were just run of the mill hooray henries out for a jaunt. Indeed the investigators might be student colleagues or may be employed by one or more of their grieving relatives to discover the perpetrator of the heinous crime.

The only two useful leads outside of visiting Haldon House or Lawrence Castle itself are to be found at the museum and at Shaul's family home.

Devon and Exeter Constabulary

Heading the current 'Beast' investigation is a dour veteran of the force, Inspector Jack Bruce. Bruce is a large thick-set man, heavy jawed and in his late forties. He also has a healthy respect for the law and will do his utmost to uphold justice. On the Sunday the bodies were found he interviewed friends at University and the landlord of the Nobody Inn. He has already interviewed the families of the previous victims but has drawn a blank so far. Social etiquette and the lack of any real evidence has prevented him from interviewing Lord Haldon, no matter what the locals think. He will therefore be quite willing to give information to investigators as he believes that with the current lack of evidence his own investigations will not get very far. He will not however, throw a suspicious light on Lord Haldon, leaving it up to the investigators to make their own conclusions. If the investigators do come to him with some evidence he may be persuaded to join the team on further expeditions (if for instance the blood-stained Bagh Nakh are discovered). If the investigators rant and rave about supernatural monsters he will dismiss them as cranks and warn them away from Lord Haldon's residence. In the event of the investigators killing anyone without good reason, he will be very harsh. If he does accompany them he will discourage use or presence of firearms, especially if investigators seem intent on gunning for Haldon; after all the man is a peer of the realm.

Jack Bruce, Staunch Upholder of Justice and Inspector for Devon and Cornwall Constabulary

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 16 INT 13 POW 11
DEX 10 APP 12 EDU 11 SAN 50 HP 15

Weapons: *Nightstick 50%, damage 1D6+1D4*

Skills: Accounting 40%, Anthropology 20%, Botany 30%, Credit Rating 35%, Dodge 38%, Drive Auto 50%, First Aid 31%, Geology 19%, Law 75%, Library Use 30%, Mech Repair 46%, Psychology 53%, Ride 35%, Spot Hidden 64%, Track 30%



Trams in Sidwell-Street - 1900s

Exeter in the 1920's

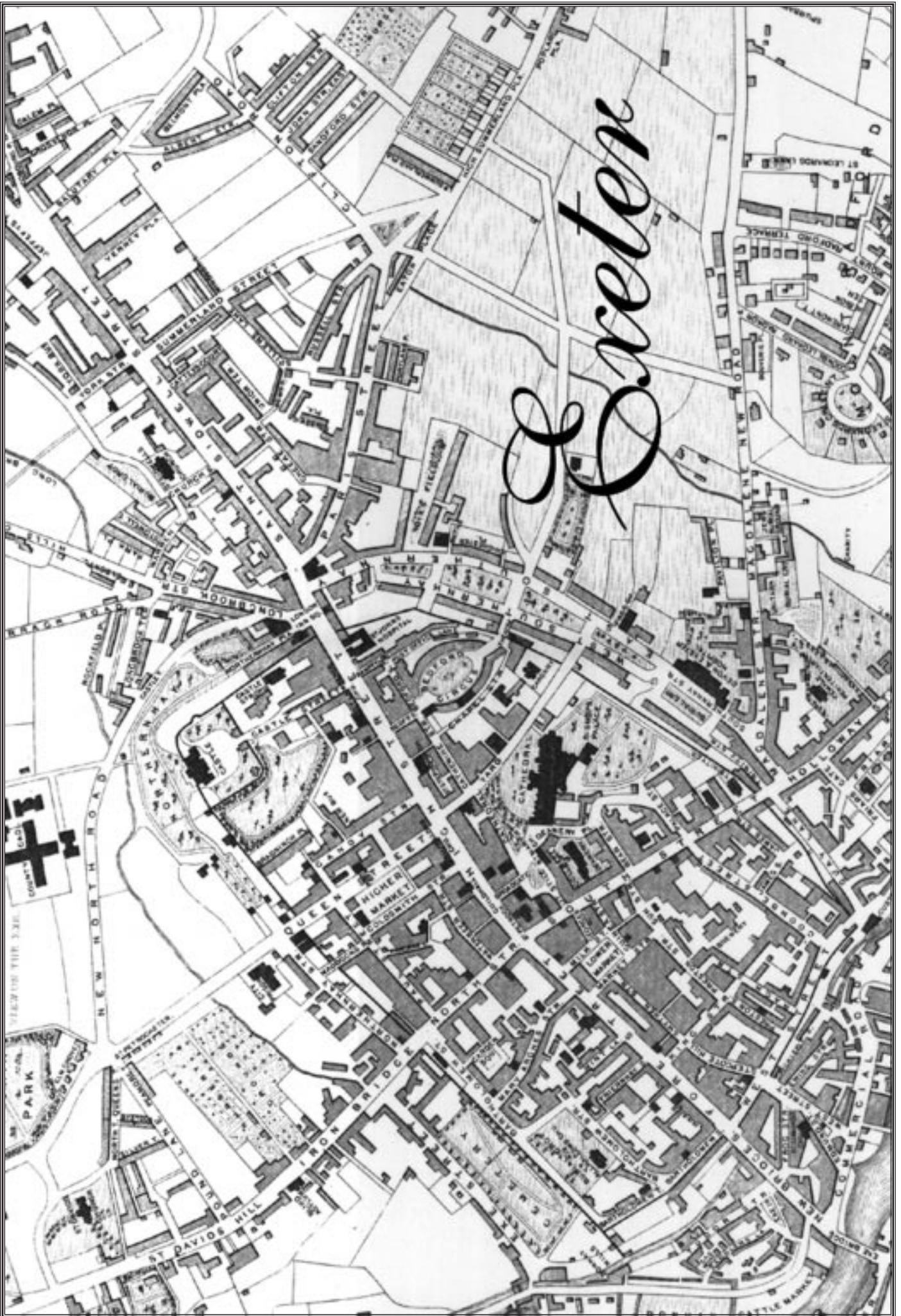
Exeter at this time (and indeed to the present day) is a provincial city in the heart of Devon. Close to the wilderness of Dartmoor, it is some 170 miles from London. Exeter was founded in 50AD by the Romans as a barrack town and as such may have had many Mithraens - temples for worshipping Mithras, the Persian god of light. However, this connection to the Romans is purely coincidental and Exeter became an important cloth manufacturer, agricultural centre and a busy port, remaining so until the eighteenth century when it was superseded by Exmouth and Plymouth as larger ships were not able to draw enough water to travel up the Exe Canal. Exeter has always been a base for insurrections and was Monmouth's capital in the plot to overthrow James II in 1685. The important cathedral was built by Saxons in 1050AD but by the fourteenth century had almost totally been rebuilt by the Normans, featuring the famous gothic west front. Interestingly enough the last witch in England was hung here in 1648.



West Front Exeter Cathedral - 1920s

Exeter is still important for two reasons in the 1920's - firstly, Exeter Cathedral is the largest and most impressive in the West country and as such is the capstone of the powerful Devon and Exeter diocese (incidentally it is thus the capital city of Devon although Plymouth is larger in actual size); and secondly, it is home to the University College of the South West (created as the Royal Albert Memorial College in 1899 and expanded in 1922 to the University College of the South West with new grounds on Streatham Hill). Exeter is also an important GWR rail junction on the route from Penzance to Paddington. Travel to London and elsewhere is via St David's Station. If investigators wish to travel to London, for instance to the British Museum, there are three trains a day and it is just feasible to catch the early morning train spend a couple of hours in London and catch the return train. The price for 1st Class travel is £1 15s 5d and the price for 3rd Class is 12s 6d

Sweeten



Travel around the centre of Exeter is by the popular tram system, inaugurated in 1895. This system is frequent and relatively cheap.

For travel into Dartmoor the City of Exeter provides the Devon General bus service. Investigators wishing to travel to Dunchideock, Doddiscombesleigh, Trusham and Chudleigh may catch any of the four timed services per day. Travel to Chagford and Moretonhampstead is by bus again, three services per day. There are no facilities for car hire in Exeter, and cars are relatively few in Exeter itself, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary does have about a dozen stationed in Exeter.

Business in Exeter is generally trade and agriculture related and keepers may wish to note that side-arms are generally unavailable and the only guns available will be shotguns for vermin control or .30-06 rifles for game. One gun shop exists in the High Street and sells cartridges and rifle shells, but there is no supplier in the city centre. This may cramp some players, gung-ho style...

There are a wide variety of old world ale houses in Exeter and larger ones, such as The Black Horse in Longbrook Street, the White Hart in South Street, or the Bishop Blaize near the Canal Quay - the oldest public house in Exeter with a license that dates back to 1327 - will provide accommodation. If the investigators have unlimited funds they may stay at the more upmarket Rougemont Hotel in Queen's Street or the even more expensive Royal Clarence Hotel overlooking the Cathedral green.

A night at the Clarence costs 16s 6d with breakfast inclusive, whereas the Rougemont is slightly cheaper at 12s 6d per night.

People in Exeter are generally involved with the trade business or the Church and those outside of the city are fairly rural folk with heavy west country accents and strange turns of phrase. When dealing with these superstitious, simple folk litter the conversation with the following:-

Common Phrases

He be mazed as a wheelbarrow - the man is obviously quite mad

He woz mazed as a dumbledrone - literally meaning he resembled a huge bee staggering about on a summer's afternoon, what it actually means is the character in question had probably had a skinful of cider.

Thar woz a load a clitterin over thax - there was a lot of mess thereabouts; clitter refers to the stone debris around the foot of the granite tors.

Ere, my good zur, I tell 'ee what - Well, my dear sir, I'll tell you something. This is frequently used as a beginning to a sentence

Will 'ee 'ave glass o'zoider - will you join me in a glass of cider? Remember cider from the West County is about twice as strong as bottled commercial cider, very cloudy, and likely to give you gut rot.

'Ee's a dodgy janner a'right - That fellow is a person of suspicious character. Janner is a derogatory term for an inhabitant of Plymouth - clearly grounds for suspicion.

Wol I'll be bugger'd! - My God, what a surprise!

That little barstard wood steal the crust ov yer parstees - I do not trust the fellow, he would steal the crust of your meat pie. Pasties, or oggies, as some locals call them are large meat turnovers originally made to feed the tin miners; investigators be warned, what goes in them is nobodies' business.

Ow you'm 'ackin - How do you do. Literally, how are you making out, but more similar in sentiment to the French phrase, comment ca va.

Where's 'em too 'en? - what's going on?

Proper Job, I'll do it directkly - great, I'll do it soon. NB West Country definition of soon can be anytime this year!

It's 'em bloody emmets - It's those damn foreigners i.e. anyone not from Devon and Cornwall. (Emmets are actually ants)

Exeter Library & Museum

The Exeter Library is quite extensive, holding the largest selection of Saxon literature in the country; the library is housed in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and is also a part of the University college. The building was built in the 1860's and has a highly decorated front.

The curator of this reputed museum is the serious archaeologist and anthropologist Timothy Anderton, a wiry man in his early forties with sandy hair and half-moon glasses. If consulted about local legends he will mention the Beast of Dartmoor among others e.g. St Sidwell's legend and the other Dartmoor legends of the Manaton Dragon that lives in a lake on Dartmoor and the Grim Rider of Grimspound with his fire breathing steed.

Anderton's pet subject are the Celts and ley lines; if consulted over the latter he will provide the players with an intricate map of ley lines in the South West region. Coincidentally there are two nexus of these power lines; one at Haldon Hill and another at the Cheesewring in Bodmin moor.

He will also tell investigators that Haldon Hill is the site of an ancient iron age hill fort and known to be a site of druidic activity in that time. Strangely enough Anderton spent his formative years in India and has a fair knowledge of Hindustani and Asian anthropology. If the investigators present him with the Bagh Nakh he will be able to identify them as Indian in origin and sometimes used by the thuggee death cults. If they present him with the Cthaati Kardath he is quite able to read the volume and will be able to grasp the rudiments of its content given a day to digest its contents. Some of the language tutors at the University will also be able to read Hindustanti, but none to the degree of Anderton.

If the investigators express an interest in the thuggee or any other cult he may direct them to the rare books section on ancient pantheons in the British Museum. If the investigator's do visit this collection they will be able to find two books of interest, library use rolls permitting. The first is a 19th century thesis by an English author Charles Akehurst living in India entitled 'Cults of Thuggee'. This slim volume will add 1% to the readers Cthulhu Mythos, but no additional sanity loss will be incurred as the book merely described Thuggee practises and links them to the god Kali. It also mentions an offshoot cult that worships the envoy of a daemon sultan and names the messenger as 'The Small Crawler'. Cthulhu Mythos rolls will identify this as one of the lesser known forms of Nyarlathotep. The author believes that worship of the Small Crawler may pre-date Kali and might be traced to a far more ancient Persian God. A footnote that accompanies this statement is a bibliographical reference to *Sectae Romanorum*, a latin volume by the author Quintus Phaedrus. This book is also in the rare books collection of the British Museum and gives information about the Roman Gods, particularly those worshipped by the military. In one chapter it describes the worship of Mithras, the Persian god of light, later in this chapter it gives evidence of a breakaway cult worshipped in the higher echelons of the army - the worship of the Persian god of darkness. However, it surmises that the cult was crushed and many of its worshippers fled beyond the borders of Persia itself. Phaedrus also goes on to give the nickname of the cult being the Dark Crawlers.

If shown the Cthaati Kardath or the claws, Anderton may become interested enough to join the players; at worst, once he has read the book he will be able to tell them that the best time for calling the god is on the night of the full moon.

Timothy Anderton, Respected curator and Chief Archaeologist of Exeter Museum

**STR 9 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 15 DEX 13
APP 10 EDU 19 SAN 70 HP 12**

Weapons: *Crossbow 35%, damage 1D6+1 (medieval reconstruction made for the Museum)*

Skills: Anthropology 60%, Archaeology 70%, RWS Hindustani 50%, RWS French 30%, RWS Ancient Celtic 12%, Linguist 20%, Mech Repair 30%, Credit Rating 40%, Occult 18%



View of Dartmoor

Dartmoor

Dartmoor is a large granite extrusion thinly overlaid with sparse peaty soils and windswept grasses. Occasionally, towering outcrops of rock break the surface as imposing monuments to nature's savagery. Dartmoor is bleak but beautiful, and there are many wooded vales to contrast the rough moorlands. Dartmoor stands about 1000ft above sea level and was an important pre-historic site with a relatively dense population. Evidence of this can be seen at such places as Grimspound, a large settlement said to be the most impressive Bronze Age site in Britain.

Dartmoor is also a rich source of tin and there are several mines and stannary towns (silver and tin assessing sites) such as Moretonhampstead.

The prison was built in 1806 to house prisoners from the Napoleonic wars; it was later enlarged to house prisoners from the wars of Independence in the Americas. Superstition and legend have always been rife in Dartmoor, such tales as the Grim Rider, the Manaton Dragon and the beast date back centuries, but even as recently as 1921 'ghostly hands' were reported to have caused several accidents on the same stretch of road.

Exeter 1900s



The Previous Victims Families

Fast talking any employee of the Exeter Herald in Sidwell Street will reveal the addresses of Sarah Roselands and Edward Shaul; Inspector Bruce will only divulge the information if he has enough faith in the investigators to research responsibly on his behalf.

Sarah Roseland's family live near Chagford and are grieving over the loss of their daughter, they provide no relevant leads and will lament at length the loss of their beautiful English rose, who was abducted on her way back from Exeter market whilst driving the families horse and cart. The Shaul family at Dunchideock will be rather more helpful, Edward Shaul's father, Ernest, believes it was the work of the Beast of Dartmoor and recalls tales his grandfather used to tell him as bogeyman legends. Ernest also recalls that the records of the Beasts' previous deeds are catalogued in the Dunchideock Church parish records.

Dunchideock Church

Inside the church is a plaque dedicated to Major General Stringer Lawrence and tells of his deeds in India and his friendship with Sir Robert Palk. it also gives the date of his death, 1775. The reverend Iain Holmbridge will talk to the investigators and will gladly dig up the old records pertaining to the previous activities of the Beast. These go on to described three separate incidents of the beasts activity all in the same year Lawrence died. The bodies were all found ripped to pieces as if by a wild, tenacious animal. On a luck roll the Reverend will also prattle on about the Lawrence plaque and the Palk family and if a further luck roll is made he will mention that the Palk family bodies were recently re-interred in the graveyard. If players enquire further to this removal the Reverend will mention that there was quite a bit of excitement as the tower was struck by lightning and during the transportation an old iron box was found belonging to Sir Robert Palk. This box contained a diary, but the good Reverend did not pry further and turned the contents over to the present Lord Haldon. If asked about Lord Haldon the reverend will merely say that he is an insular fellow who has had some financial difficulty maintaining the large Haldon Estate.

Iain Holmbridge, Urbane Reverend of Dunchideoak

**STR 11 CON 16 SIZ 13 INT 14 POW 14 DEX 9
APP 11 EDU 10 SAN 70 HP 15**

Weapons: Tact & Decorum!

Skills: RWS Latin 30% RWS English 50%, Credit Rating 35%, Library Use 36%, Spot Hidden 42%, Etiquette 80%

The Nobody Inn, Doddiscombesleigh or The Cridford Inn Trusham

The reverend is merely being polite, any visits to these public houses and conversation with the locals will reveal that the present Lord Haldon is a bombastic drunkard who nothing has been seen of since he returned from his last trip to London; furthermore the lights at Lawrence Castle have been on all hours of the night, which is strange as before Lawrence Castle was largely vacant. Further stories about Lord Haldon are suggested, such as his gambling debts and his interest in ladies of the night from Plymouth and London.

Both inns are large sprawling affairs with large amounts of rough stone flooring and oak beams. The Cridford Inn is slightly more rural, the Nobody Inn is popular with University types.

The investigators should now know about connections with Lawrence, the thuggee and should have some reason to suspect Lord Haldon. An investigation of the Castle or Haldon House itself would seem to be in order, what?

Haldon House

Haldon House is a large Georgian manor with about seventeen bedrooms, a lounge hall, a large library, a ballroom and numerous lounges. The grounds are large and impressive too, with statues and fountains and a wide gravel driveway which passes in front of its colonnaded facade to reach the neo-Classical porch. The house was built in the early eighteenth century and even includes a separate block for servants quarters and stables.

Investigators requiring audience with Haldon are greeted by the Butler, Jackson. He is a tall reedy man, with thinning grey hair, a hawk-like nose and sunken cheeks. He is dressed in an immaculate Butler's outfit at all times, with spotless white gloves on his long delicate hands. This butler represents the epitome of an upper class aide, he can judge people's credit rating just by the cut of their clothes, brand of cigarettes, make of shoes and hat etc. If he makes his credit assessment roll he will be able to judge correctly the status of all present. If non-one appears to be over 40% he will dismiss them out of hand saying that Lord haldon is not available. If he fails or a character of this social standing is present he will show them through to the reception room and call Lord Haldon.

Haldon will be there 80% of the time during the daylight hours Jackson, was butler to the previous Lord Haldon, and is shocked by the young master's debauchery and lack of financial aplomb.

This is the reason he wishes to shield Haldon from anymore of the middle classes suggesting financially unwise propositions. Characters may try an oratory roll at - 20% to convince him otherwise, failing that they will just have to be of high enough social standing. The credit assessment skill is peculiar to excellent Butler's and other members of like professions.

Once passed old stony-face they will be shown to the reception room, Jackson will disappear for a couple of minutes and then return to announce Lord Haldon. Lord Haldon is a tall man with a powerful physique and a pale complexion framed by thick raven coloured hair. He appears to be in his early thirties and is impeccably dressed. He will sit down and listen politely to investigators as long as they do not accuse him outright of foul play. The investigator's may glean a number of things from this meeting.

Spot Hidden will reveal that Haldon's hands shake a little, his skin is unduly pale, his eyes are ringed and baggy and there is a stain on his lips. Any one with a relevant biology roll will be able to determine that Haldon is a heavy user of an opiate substance.

Psychology rolls will reveal that when the Beast is mentioned in connection with the recent victims, he becomes edgy, although dismissing the Beast as pure fantasy and suggesting it is a hushed up escaped convict from Dartmoor prison.

If the investigator's accuse Haldon of foul-play but show no sign of any evidence, he will angrily dismiss them and get Jackson to show them out. If the investigators show some form of proof; for instance the Bagh Nakh, or suggesting they have read the Cthaati Kardath, he will dismiss Jackson and ask the investigators to explain their theories.

'Oh dear, this is all very serious, I gave my friend the old book to study as he is an avid fan of the occult. I myself cannot read the language it is penned in, and he has been staying at the castle to conduct his researches in peace. Please tell me your theories over some sherry in the study.'

Haldon will lead them through the library and into his private study. He will sit the investigators by the fireplace and go over to a drinks cabinet shaped like a globe. He will open the top hemisphere and thus shielded from view will administer a deadly Indian poison to all the sherry glasses but his own. The investigators have two chances; firstly a spot hidden at -25% to guess what Haldon is doing behind the globe, and they have to state an intent to watch; secondly any character of similar social standing (over 60% credit rating) will be amazed that he hasn't called for the butler to do this menial task and may be duly suspicious. The poison is potency 16 and causes death in minutes; Soukh gave Haldon this poison for use in emergencies. Haldon will attack any survivors of the poison with his derring and if

successful will pass them off to Jackson as disreputable blackmailers that have been the cause of his ruination. Jackson will not necessarily believe this but in true old school tradition will do his best to cover up the master's deeds. Soukh and Haldon will then take the bodies onto the moors and rip the evidence with the Bagh Nakh - the Beast will be accredited with more victims in the following days Exeter Herald. If the investigators manage to overpower Haldon and gather a sample of the poison they will be able to prove that Haldon was trying to murder them, thus clearing their names if they have killed anyone, or causing Haldon's arrest if they took him alive. In either case they will have to deal with Ralph and the stable-lads who will be alerted by the shooting.

Investigator's preferring to opt for a midnight visit may reap more benefits. As long as they are quiet, (luck rolls will do) there is only a 10% chance of detection as Ralph, Jackson and Lord Haldon, (only 15% chance of being present at night as Haldon prefers to visit other revellers and prostitutes in Torquay and Plymouth), all spend most of their time in their rooms on the first floor at night. The chance of detection thus rises to 40% if they ascend to the first floor and fail sneak rolls. The chance will rise to 60% if they break a ground floor window and 80% if they break an upstairs window. Once detected they will be set upon by Ralph the manservant and four chunky stablelads. These chaps will beat the investigators and Jackson will call the police. If Haldon is by some chance present and ascertains they were searching his premises he may try the poison sherry. The constabulary will charge any one they manage to keep hold of with breaking and entering, and if any one is shot at they will be immediately incarcerated with no bail.

If they manage to avoid capture by running away or hand to hand combat, the police will not be too diligent with following up investigations, but if anyone is shot at they will be hard on the heels of the investigators, especially if they have discussed matters with Inspector Bruce. Remaining undetected the investigators are free to roam the house, check detection rolls every ten minutes or so spent in the house. There is nothing of interest in the house apart from the library and the study (Haldon has sold off most of the valuable property). The library is a large oak panelled affair, with a good number of books from all over the world.

Library Use will reveal that there are quite a few volumes on the occult and Indian History.

Spot Hidden will reveal a slim volume entitled *The Cults of Thuggee*, this is an identical version to that owned by the British Museum.

Haldon's study holds one vital clue, in one locked drawer of the large desk is the diary of Sir Robert Palk, detailing the history in the keepers background.

The relevant entries are as follows:

14th June 1773

L. very low today, being a good twenty years older than myself he seems to have become acutely frustrated at his ageing - not surprising when I think of his vitality and lustiness in the Carnactic. Suggested he moved from his London abode to the fresher air of the moors for the summer. L. has agreed.

9th April 1774

Feel rather pleased with myself today; managed to obtain a rare Lat. volume for a considerable sum in London. The book, *Sectae Romanorum*, should cheer up L. at least - the Romans are something he never tires of, especially their pagan gods!

21st May 1774

L. seems to be growing more inconsolable, I hope that he will improve after his birthday soon, I will present him with the book then.

6th August 1774

L. 78th birthday today, he seemed to be set on being more gloomy than usual until I presented him with the *Phaedrus* volume. L. has been unusually jubilant since, thank goodness"

28th November 1774

L. has requested some of his Indian Campaign souvenirs be brought from London. A large book, a trunk and the famous diamond hilted sword presented to him by the East India Co arrived today.

3rd January 1775

L. has spent most of Christmas in the study reading the *Hindustani* tome, it seems to be of the most un-Christian matter, but if it keeps L. happy I have nothing against his perusals. Besides it seems to have instilled in him a youth and vigour I have not seen for some time.

19th March 1775

Most worrying today, L. seems to have disappeared, he has left all his belongings and has left no note!

22nd March 1775

Still no word from L. however, a savage beast has ripped a woman's body to shreds on the moors and I fear even more for his safety.

25th March 1775

The so called 'Beast of Dartmoor' has claimed another victim, a young man this time. The body seems to have been ripped by an animal with the claws of a tiger according to a local physician. This connection to India is very disturbing, I will endeavour to read the *Hindustani* paganism.

March 27th 1775

Have read the terrible tome and discovered that it is most likely L. who is committing the atrocities on the moors - the Dear Lord only knows how. The book is detrimental to ones mental well-being at a glance let alone the months of study L. embarked upon.

March 28th 1775

L. has struck again, another ripped cadaver has been found on the bleak hills near Chagford. I must halt this flow of blood sacrificed to such an ancient evil.

March 30th 1775

Oh, most odious day! Lawrence returned, wild eyed, haggard and yet strangely more youthful. He babbled like a man in the direst fever, telling me of the Dark Crawler and the benefits a mortal powerful mind could reap. I tried to restrain him, but the old man was possessed with supernatural strength, flinging me to the ground and causing me to fall unconscious. I regained my senses quickly to find that the evil apparition had abducted Anne and was heading for Haldon Hill. I took my brace of flintlocks and raced up the hill on my best filly. I arrived just as L. was about to start ripping poor Anne with some terrible claws. I had no choice but to fire both my flintlocks into my old friend. He died slowly, convulsing and uttering profanities scarcely imaginable. I must cover up his death and keep his demise from his peers.

October 13th 1775

After covering the demise of L, officially now he was found dead of a stroke in his London apartments, I have been faced with the problem of disposing of the malignant book. I am left with no choice but to brick up the accursed thing with the rest of L's macabre relics.

November 1st 1775

The navvies have finally buried the book and the evil claws of death in the foundations of the new bridge on Haldon Hill, at last I can rest easy. Have also resolved to build a monument on the hill, dedicated to my old friend, Stringer L.



LOT 1, HALDON HOUSE—SOUTH ELEVATION

Haldon House Residents

Jackson the Butler, shrewd judge of character and faultless servant to Lord Haldon

STR 7 CON 10 SIZ 11 INT 15 POW 12 DEX 13 APP 9 EDU 10 SAN 60 HP 11

Skills: Accounting 35%, Credit Assessment 75% Etiquette 100%. RWS English 70%, Immaculate Appearance 80%, Listen 42%, Psychology 37%, Spot Hidden 58%

Ralph, Burly manservant and dogsbody for Lord Haldon

STR 17 CON 13 SIZ 16 INT 7 POW 14 DEX 10 APP 11 EDU 6 SAN 70 HP 15

Weapons: Fist 65% 1D3+1D6, Club (heavy walking stick) 48% 1D6+1D6

Skills: Bargain 36%, Dodge 45%, Drive Auto 50%, Jump 42%, Mech. Repair 30%, Throw 35%, Track 25%

Four Rough Stablelads

	STR	SIZ	CON	DEX	POW	SAN	HP
Jacko	12	15	14	11	8	40	15
Bob	16	14	12	9	15	75	13
Smudge	10	9	11	16	14	70	10
Luke	13	12	15	14	10	50	14

Weapons:

Jacko	Club 35% 1D6 + 1D4
Bob	Pitchfork 40% 1D8+2+1D4
Smudge	Throwing Knife 45% 1D6
Luke	Club 30% 1D6 + 1D4



Lawrence Edward Palk, Fourth Lord Haldon, and Seventh Baronet Palk

STR 14 CON 13 SIZ 15
INT 16 POW 10 DEX 12
APP 18 EDU 13 SAN 5
HP 14

Weapons: Derringer 45% 1D6 3/Round, Shotgun 40% 4D6-2D6, Sword Cane 55%, 1D6+1D4.

Skills: Accounting 0%. Anthropology 30%, Bargain 20%, Credit Rating 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 11%, Dodge 35%, Law 20%, Occult 39%, RWS English 65%, RWS French 45%, Ride 60%. Spot



Note: Haldon is not quite insane yet and if the investigators spare him Haldon will be acquitted of the murders; as long as he has not killed a policeman or a policeman sees him killing anyone, Soukh will get the blame. Peers of the realm can easily evade charges of collaboration. Summoning the Hunting Horror again or The Small Crawler will probably send him over the edge, if that happens his paranoia manifests itself into psychosis and Haldon will do his utmost to kill anyone interfering in his affairs.

Lawrence Castle

This tall monument stands at 800 ft above sea level and is itself a further 70ft tall. Built in 1788 as a monument to Major General Stringer Lawrence it consists of three towers arranged in a triangular pattern with three floors in between. From the battlements a commanding view of Exeter, Dartmoor and the Quantocks may be seen. The building makes an eerie silhouette against the skyline and the wind of the moors batters incessantly against its old stone walls. Investigators making a Spot Hidden whilst approaching notice broken panes and broken frames on the large second floor window. A small wooden outhouse contains firewood, gasoline, and an axe. If a Spot Hidden is made whilst searching here, the investigator will notice two cardboard boxes behind the woodpile, one contains white chalk, the other black tallow candles.

Entrance is by locked double doors, STR 30 or by the locked double window-doors, breaking of which will alert anyone inside. The ground floor is dominated by a large stone statue of Stringer Lawrence in the garb of a Roman General. There are plaques over each door recounting the deeds of Lawrence and if a Spot Hidden is made whilst examining the plaque on the plinth of the statue, loose cementing will be discovered.

The plaque can be carefully removed and behind is a small chamber containing a bundle of rust stained muslin. This contains the Bagh Nakh, still streaked with Shaul's dried blood, as is the muslin. These Bagh Nakh are powerful mythos artefact and no Hunting Horror will attack anyone within 20 foot radius of these unless it is attacked first. In other respects they are normal, very sharp Bagh Nakh made of a silvery metal that no chemistry roll or metallurgical skill can identify.

The first floor was once used as a lounge area, containing a large leather sofa, two chaise-longes and several comfy armchairs. There is also an upright piano and previous Lord Haldon used to hold small private balls here on this attractive wooden floor. Now the furniture is pushed back against the walls and a successful Spot Hidden will reveal that chalk marks have been recently scuffed off the floor. No spot hidden is needed to notice the broken panes and twisted hinges on the huge window, but investigators may notice that the window has been broken outwards and a successful Idea roll will reveal it was something larger than a horse (it was in fact the Hunting Horror, eager for blood, that tore through the loosely latched window). Sadistic keepers may subtract a point of SAN here and now if they wish. In a small bureau-desk on this floor are some scrawled notes in Hindustani, dated using English dates. These are Soukh's study notes, the latest dated the 15th November translates as follows:

Tonight Haldon and I summoned the beast once more, this time it stayed and I watched with glee as it devoured the woodsman's body with such effortless grace. Like a huge winged worm it was, with a villainous face of unspeakable evil. However, I could not bend it's power to my will and the accursed creature fled outside to wreak destruction unguided by my hand. Haldon is getting more uncertain, I must summon the Small Crawler to seek divine guidance and show the faltering Haldon the true path. When the next full moon ascends to its zenith, the Dark Messenger shall be omnipotent once more, India's darkest in the very heartland of the usurpers...

The next full moon is exactly one week from the date of this note. If the investigator's move the desk, or make a Spot Hidden at -10% to notice scuff marks on the floor, they will notice a discoloured floorboard underneath the bureau. Once prised open a small recess will be revealed, containing a locked iron box. Soukh has doctored the lock and unless a further Spot Hidden is made the lock tamperer will be pricked by a poison needle, Poison potency 12. This box of course contains the Cthaati Kardath.

The top floor is Soukh's bedroom and has two low beds and several trunks. The trunks contain clothes of Hindu cut and style (successful Anthropology roll needed) but contain no further incriminating evidence.

On a small table is an intricately cared silver opium pipe, worth about 20 guineas, and next to it are a pocket knife, some lucifers (bulbous headed matches), a bobe blowpipe and some darts, some sticky resin in a china pot (potency 12 poison) and about half an ounce of reasonable quality opium.

Soukh will not be at the Castle in the day, either being at Haldon House or travelling abroad, and at night will only be there 40% of the time as he is fond of accompanying Haldon on his nocturnal excursions. Both he and Haldon will be there on the night of the full moon, ascending from Haldon House at eleven o'clock that night, the Irish wolfhound is there all the time and will attack any breaking in on the ground floor. If alerted to prowlers, for instance by the disappearance of the Kardath, the claws or just a dead dog, both Haldon and Soukh will come heavily armed to the ritual. If they are not alerted, only Haldon will have his sword cane and derring.

Soukh has learnt all the spells in the book, but is not yet proficient in their use, although he will happily use the investigators as guinea pigs!

Chandra Soukh, Depraved Hindustani Opium Dealer and Occultist

**STR 10 CON 16 SIZE 9 INT 17 POW 15 DEX 13
APP 7 EDU 14 SAN 0 HP 13**

Weapons: Shotgun 40% 4D6 -2D6, Fighting Knife 62% 1D4+2, Blowpipe 55% Special Attack (depends on poison coated on dart)

Skills: Astronomy 31%, Brew Poison 45%, Chemistry 15%. Credit Rating 20%, Cthulhu Mythos 25%. Dodge 40%, Evaluate Narcotics 75%, Hide 36%, Occult 58%, Pharmacy 25%, Psychology 34%. RWS English 54%. RWS Hindustani 70%, RWS Sanskrit 30%. Sneak 65%. Spot Hidden 32%. Treat Poison 22%

Spells: Shrivelling (slightly incorrect translation means that the spell has an extra 10% chance of not working), Shield of Darkness, Contact Sand Dweller (from an old Sanskrit Scroll), Contact Nyarlathotep (as Small Crawler), Summon/Bind Hunting Horror (the summoning part of this spell is fine, however the Horror cannot be bound unless one possesses the claws. In addition Soukh has really cocked up the translation of this part and the spell has an extra 50% chance of not working, see the Ritual).

The Ritual at Midnight

With any luck, the keeper should have the investigators heading towards the Castle on the night of the full moon, Saturday 22nd November. They may be accompanied by Inspector Bruce, but he is unlikely to bring further back up. Haldon and Soukh will ascend the hill at eleven p.m. with a drugged girl that Haldon and Soukh picked up from Plymouth the night before.

She is walking but is supported by Haldon and seems to be giggling. Soukh will then proceed to fetch candles and chalk for the summoning of the Horror, whilst Haldon takes the girl upstairs. The investigators will be noticed on a Spot Hidden if they haven't hidden discreetly, but Soukh will ignore them preferring to deal with them by summoning the Horror. Adequately hidden investigators will notice that the girl is dressed in a flapper's costume of knee-length blue chiffon dress, pearls, feather boa and gold shoes. However, a successful Idea roll will reveal that she wears a lot of make-up and her clothes are cheap and nasty rather than chic, they can thus deduce that she is probably a prostitute. Note, Bruce will want to let them incriminate themselves further so he will encourage investigators to hold their horses. He will also warn against using guns without damn good reason. If they do wait, Soukh will start chanting at 11.30 p.m, if the investigators let this continue for several minutes they will see a large shape appear in silhouette, followed by a sharp scream as the Horror devours its sacrifice. This will shortly be followed by another scream as Haldon flips over the edge of sanity. The Horror will then, because of Soukh's deficient binding translation, made double impossible if the investigators possess the claws, tear through the window and attack the nearest human it smells. This is likely to be the investigators. however, if they possess the claws and have worked out that they have influence over beings of Nyarlathotep they may be saved by displaying the Bagh Nakh in full view (that's if they had the good sense to bring them along). Otherwise it's fight it out time.

If the investigators enter before the ritual allow Haldon and Soukh their listen rolls, if they fail the investigators may be able to foil the ritual, save the girl and maybe save the remnants of Haldon's sanity. If Soukh is alerted he will summon the Horror in seven combat rounds - the investigators have this amount of time to stop him. If they wait and are caught by the Horror, Soukh will then begin to chant for Nyarlathotep. This will last for twenty minutes, but Soukh will have cast the Darkness of Kali around himself and Haldon will deal with any intruders with his derringer.

If they foil this part all well and good, if Soukh completes the ritual the Small Crawler will appear and after the initial SAN losses the Small Crawler will attempt to devour or kill any defilers other than Soukh or Haldon. The investigator's are really in deep water if this happens. If they save the girl, Philippa Ambridge, they gain 1D3 SAN, if they save Haldon a further 1D4 is gained. If the Horror is killed they gain 1D8 SAN and if Soukh is killed whilst trying to complete the Nyarlathotep summoning they will gain an additional 1D10. If by some amazing feat they kill the Small Crawler then award 1D20 each, but if your earning your keep as keeper (excuse the pun) the investigators should be massacred.

If Soukh does manage to summon the Small Crawler and the investigators are disposed of, Soukh will be created new High Priest of the Order of the Small Crawler. Haldon will become increasingly depraved and both will disappear into Dartmoor and its numerous caverns. From here Soukh will command a slowly increasing web of terror and the West Country will become a haven of evil.

If the investigators do succeed, but Bruce is killed, or isn't present they may have a tough time explaining the murder of the peer of a realm to the police, and may even be accused of Bruce's murder too.

Cthulhu Entities

Small Crawler

STR 70 CON 50 SIZ 70 INT 86 POW 100
DEX15 HP 60 Move 6 / 1 burrowing.

Tentacle: 90%, 6D6 damage plus 1D3 magic points drained per hit

Crush: 70%, 10D6 to all within 10 yard radius. Spells: All (as usual)

Armour: 5 point skin, plus regeneration 5 points/ round

SAN: D20 on failed sanity roll, 1D6 points on successful sanity roll

Hunting Horror

STR 35 CON 12 SIZ 37 INT 16 POW 25
DEX 13 HP 25 Move 6 / 10 flying

Bite: 65%, 3D6 damage

Tail: 90%,grapple

Spells: Dread curse of Azathoth, Shrivelling, Contact Nyarlathotep, Implant Fear

Armour: 9 point skin, no impale

SAN: D10 on failed sanity roll, none points on successful sanity roll

Darkness of Kali

A new mythos spell. This spell takes three combat rounds to intone, costs 1D4 points of SAN and from 2 magic points to a max of 10. When created the caster is enveloped by a dark cloud which only he can see out of. For the expense of 2 magic points this will afford him/her the protection of -10% on the attackers to hit rolls. Each further point protects him/her a further 5% up to a maximum of 50% - this is an impenetrable as the darkness will go. This spell only affects aimed and hand to hand weapons, area weapons are not affected (except shotguns which suffer no to hit penalty but only do half damage as the darkness always causes the caster to be affected by the least amount of blast). The caster suffers no penalties attacking out of the darkness.