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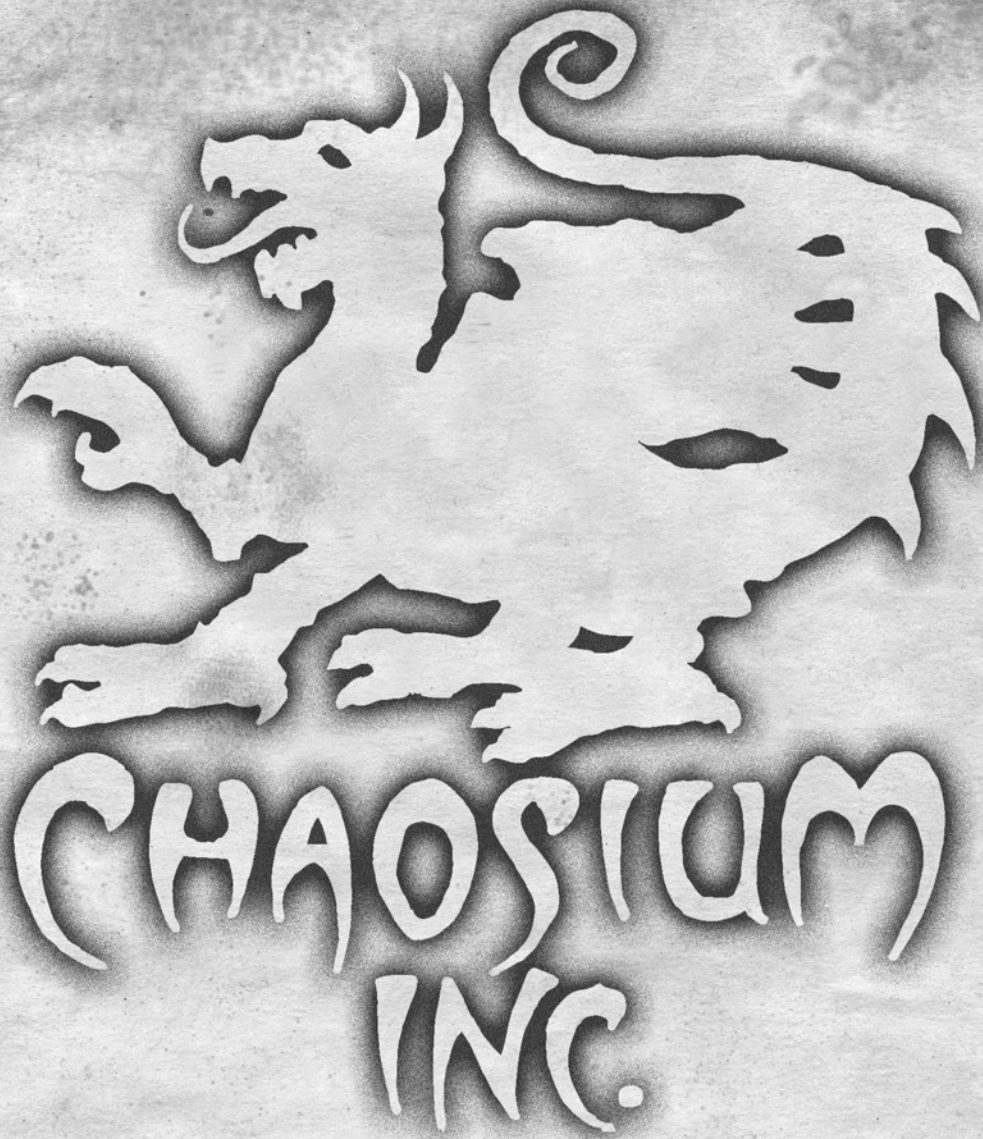


SECRETS OF THE CONGO



FLYING INTO THE HEART OF DARKNESS





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SECRETS OF THE CONGO

Flying into the Heart of Darkness...

Michael Fredholm von Essen



Secrets of the Congo

Flying into the Heart of Darkness

Michael Fredholm von Essen

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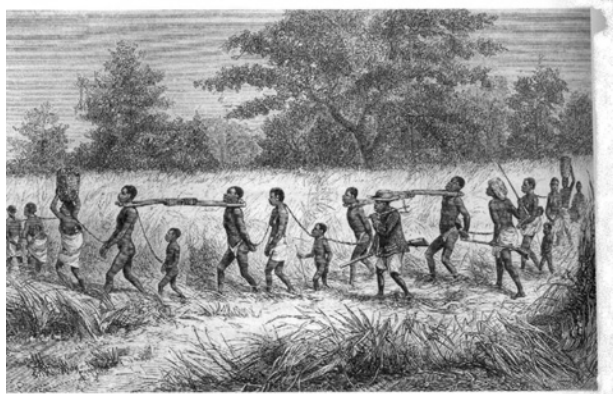
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Introduction

The early 1920s saw the first, small commercial airlines. The aircraft, often flying boats, were sturdy and easily patched up but had few instruments for navigation. Flying was an art, not a science. This was especially so in the still wild regions of the Dark Continent, Africa.

Darkest of all was the wilderness of Belgian Congo, in the very center of the continent. Belgian colonial rule was often very harsh, and traditional practices such as slavery and witchcraft remained rampant. The few airmen who would offer their services in such a place were often veterans of the Great War. They could navigate Central Africa by following the wide, dark Congo River, but when night fell, the only place to land was on the river itself. And there, in the African continent's true heart of darkness, little had changed in the twenty years since Joseph Conrad wrote his well-known book on the hellhole that was Belgian Congo. Superstitions ruled the vast number of tribes that lived on or near the river. The greed of the Belgian colonial administration, for ivory, rubber, and copper, surpassed even that of the Zanzibari slavers, still feared for their raids among the Congo natives.



A slave raid

But the Dark Continent hid secrets as well. In deepest Congo, a treasure-house from primeval times awaited those who dared to seek it out—and survived the search. An ancient flying city reportedly known as Devapura, built by an unknown civilization and last recorded in an ancient manuscript seen in the early eighteenth century by Jonathan Swift, who copied the details into a fictitious story about one Lemuel Gulliver, who reportedly saw the city flying in July 1707. Grounded in the heart of Africa for millennia

and now inhabited by nameless horrors, will Devapura again rise into the sky?

This monograph consists of a series of linked adventures that bring the investigators on a flying expedition across the Atlantic and along the Congo River into the very heart of the Dark Continent. They race against time, since a rival expedition, led by a sinister, wealthy industrialist bent upon summoning Great Cthulhu himself, already seeks for the ruins of Devapura and the secrets hidden there. But the investigators have one ace up the sleeve: their Curtiss F-5L flying boat can move faster than any river steamer. But only in daytime, and only if they survive the cannibals and other sundry dangers that strike at night.

This monograph is devoted to two themes, those of air flight and the Congo. The latter is equally inspired by the real Congo under Belgian colonial rule and the novel *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. In addition, an appendix provides information on airline operations in the early 1920s. The monograph for obvious reasons also contains detailed descriptions and maps of the Congo in the 1920s, with plenty of illustrations from the period. Chaosium, Inc., has already published a description of Africa in *Secrets of Kenya* (2007); however, Kenya in the 1920s was quite different in character from Belgian Congo. It was certainly a far more civilized, developed, and peaceful place than the Congo basin. To sum it up, wealthy visitors in the 1920s would go to Kenya on vacation. In comparison, only those who had lost it all, or had no choice, would consider Belgian Congo. Welcome to the true heart of darkness of the African continent, where cannibalism, slavery, raw exploitation, diseases, evil, and suffering are real—and not even the wilder sides of the Mythos reign unchallenged in savagery.

Keeper's Information

For practical reasons dependent on the mode of travel, the series of adventures follows a linear outline. The Curtiss flying boat cannot proceed into Central Africa in any other manner than the one suggested here: by following the Congo River. This is realistic and no mere railroading of the investigators to their destination; while in theory, the investigators could have chosen to fly around the entire African continent and instead approach the alleged site of Devapura from the east, it would then be very hard, if not outright impossible, to locate the proper site, since all references to it are based on travel up the Congo river—which is not yet very well charted. No exact latitude and longitude is available, only

descriptions of landmarks. In Africa, the pilot would have to navigate by following railroads (few) or rivers, and hope that he or she picked the right river! The investigators have no way of navigating by night, and the flying boat can only land on the river itself. Any landing can only be accomplished during daylight hours. The river is wide but not very straight, and no sources of light are available on the ground.

Any successful fiction or game of horror depends on the central characters feeling a sense of isolation. There is nobody to call for help, and they are on their own. In this series of Congo adventures, the sense of isolation is easily created by the geographical situation of the investigators. Having arrived in deepest Africa, they are literally on their own. In some locations, not even hostile natives are available, and there is certainly nobody to call for assistance. Outside support is not an option, simply because it does not exist.

While this series of adventures, like others of the game *Call of Cthulhu*, is ultimately intended to result in stories of uncovering the occult horror mysteries of the Cthulhu Mythos of H. P. Lovecraft and others, some keepers distinguish between what some refer to as scenarios in respectively purist and pulp mode (see, for instance, *Trail of Cthulhu* by Kenneth Hite, published in 2008 by Pelgrane Press by arrangement with Chaosium, Inc.). As written, this series of adventures would seem to be most suitable to the pulp mode, that is, they tend to focus on the physical struggle against the Mythos and in the best traditions of pulp fiction provide plenty of opportunities for the players to engage in various acts of derring-do. The adventures, after all, focus on aircraft aces and the exploration of unknown territories. But the setting of the adventures, the Congo, can also be used to recreate a game in purist mode, focusing on philosophical horror and acts of uncovering the truth that dooms investigator and unfortunate bystander alike. It cannot be denied that Belgian Congo was an extremely unpleasant and violent place, and yet events since the country became independent in 1960 in many ways have been more savage still. Cannibalism, conditions close to slavery, belief in witches, and other traditional practices have survived the civil wars of the second half of the twentieth century, which were fought with modern weapons and thus were more devastating than the old slave wars. So has the practice of genocide, such as in neighboring Rwanda. Contemplative players will find plenty of opportunities to reflect on later miseries in the Congo while playing through this series of adventures. While an Indiana Jones-like investigator temporarily might do some good in one or two isolated spots along the Congo River, he cannot stem the tide of pure brutality that has been the fate of Central Africa as a whole. Whether the sad, later

developments in Central Africa were caused by the viciousness, evil, and greed of earlier colonial and indigenous rulers, or the shortcomings and viciousness of later, post-colonial leaders, or perhaps even the lingering effects of the Mythos (or, for that matter, the failure of the players to stop the rot), I leave to the readers of this monograph to consider. Yet, no alien Lovecraftian horror, however well crafted and described, would seem to be able to unleash worse than what the evil inside the human mind has accomplished in Central Africa. Do not trivialize the dark side of the human race by blaming it all on the Mythos.



Congolese slaves

Keeper's Abstract

The hook that will bring the investigators into this series of adventures is a combination of three events. First, one investigator will find evidence that a mysterious relative is lost in the Congo. Not any old relative, but one from which the investigator would expect to inherit a substantial amount of money. If the relative can be proved to be dead, that is. Second, a baffling burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History leads to the suspicion that something Mythos-related is going on in the Congo. Third, the investigators will have to act fast, since they learn that a secretive New York industrialist named Hubert van Damme is in the process of sending his own expedition to the Congo. This will conclude the research part of the scenario, which will be fairly brief and straightforward.

Four key adventures will then take place during the actual expedition to the Congo, which takes up the greater part of the scenario. First, at Vivi Station, the investigators will encounter horrible *biological experiments* aimed to produce a superior hybrid race out of native African orphans and man-eating crocodiles. The investigators will have to stop these experiments. Some groups will also wish to eradicate the results, even though this means the wholesale destruction of a colony of mutated orphan children. (Failure to stop these

experiments may not harm the investigators but will surely cause increased suffering and bloodshed in Central Africa.)

Second, in a small native village, the investigators will encounter the *Mami Wata*, a dangerous spirit of native African origin. Their purpose there is to survive. They will have to kill (almost impossible) or drive off the *Mami Wata*, or if they fail, lose at least one of their team to this spirit.

Third, near the village of the cannibal *Wakiwaki*, the investigators will stumble upon the ruins of *Devapura*, a flying city of the ancient Hyperboreans which contains a primeval monster known to the natives as *M'Bolo Bakula*—the Flying Eater. Their purpose is, again, merely to survive. Failure to defeat or at least contain the Flying Eater will surely lead to the death of many members of the party. This is also the likely outcome if the investigators cannot make their way back to the ground after the city has taken off into the sky.

Finally, when the battered investigators have faced these various horrors of the Congo and think that they have already experienced the climax of the series of adventures, they must take part in a showdown with the industrialist *Hubert van Damme* and his men. This villain is bent upon summoning *Great Cthulhu* himself and expect to sacrifice the investigators to this being. The investigators will have to stop the summoning, or die in the process. If they fail, they will also abandon this part of Central Africa to the ravages of a *Spawn of Cthulhu*.



If the investigators fail to prevent these various problems, or if they simply run away, they should not be allowed to forget that they have thereby condemned Central Africa to all sorts of disasters, ranging from a sudden increase in cannibalism to the unleashing of monsters such as the Flying Eater and the Spawn of Cthulhu. Neither of these outcomes would be much noticed outside the region, but they will surely spell disaster for the unfortunate Congolese natives and wreak havoc with the establishment of any form of civilized government there for decades, if not centuries, to come.

Note from the Author

Although this series of adventures has been designed for a setting in the early 1920s, before air travel became common in Africa, there is nothing to prevent the Keeper from changing the period to almost any other period of time, even before the invention of air flight.

The setting could just as easily be, for instance, the 1890s, when Belgians and others followed the former *New York Herald* journalist Henry Morton Stanley (of Dr Livingstone fame) in the process of taking control over the huge territory of the Congo basin. If an 1890s setting is chosen, the flying boat will obviously have to go, but the Congo River and all its dangers remain as described here. Simply make sure that the investigators, who will have to endure a long and hazardous voyage by river steamer, bring along a balloon which can be attached to the steamer for scouting purposes. The ability to send up such a balloon, large enough to take several passengers, would assist in selecting the right course in the notoriously treacherous Congo River, which in many locations split into several arms separated by strings of islands, some of which will lead travelers astray and strand them in flooded areas and swamps. A balloon will also, incidentally, ensure that the investigators find a means to return to the ground when caught on *Devapura* (more on this below).

In the same manner, a modern setting can be used as well. Even today, much of the Congo remains unexplored wilderness. One or more lost ancient ruins would not feel out of place. Beliefs in the supernatural and, one would assume, the *Mythos*, remain widespread. Cannibalism has survived as well, and although the natives of today would present a less “tribal” appearance, any one of the multitude of armed groups within the country would be more than able to cause problems for the investigators. For some added spice, throw in the nefarious activities of one or two multinational mining corporations, which would have refineries and laboratories of their own, guarded by suitably well-armed forces of military contractors (what we used to call mercenaries). In a modern setting, there is no obvious need for the investigators to follow the Congo River in as lineal a fashion as in earlier periods, but any

able Keeper will be able to ensure that the preliminary adventures, which can take place in any order, occur before the final showdown with the arch-villain, Hubert van Damme (who in a modern setting will be in control of one of the multinational mining companies). If a modern setting is chosen, it is particularly important to maintain a feeling of geographical isolation. No outside help should be available, even though the investigators might carry satellite telephones. Here the climate and geographical circumstances of the Congo will help the Keeper. Modern electronic equipment tends to break down. Any spare parts might have fallen into the river or been damaged by heavy rains. Natives or whatever form of aggressive wildlife is available might smash the investigators' means of communicating with the outside world. Even if communications can be maintained, help may not be able to reach the investigators because of ongoing civil war. For further inspiration of Congo adventures in a modern setting, see Michael Crichton's 1980 novel *Congo*, which itself was inspired by H. P. Lovecraft's *Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family* (1921), in the same way that Crichton's better-known 1990 novel *Jurassic Park*, and its 1995 sequel *The Lost World*, was inspired by Arthur Conan Doyle's novel *The Lost World*, published in 1912.



Congo warrior



The Rival Congo Expeditions

Summary: Two events induce the group to undertake the arduous expedition to the Congo. First, one investigator has found documents which prove that a relative, a hero of the Great War named Aaron, has gone to the Congo in search of an ancient Hyperborean fortress, known as Devapura, which he claims to have identified in an old manuscript. He never returned. Second, and possibly of greater importance, a number of cult-related objects from the Congo has been stolen from the Arkham Museum of Natural History in a baffling burglary. Clues point to a wealthy but secretive New York industrialist, Hubert van Damme. The Arkham Museum of Natural History decides to employ the use of a Curtiss F-5L flying boat to get its own Congo expedition underway faster and beat van Damme to the Congo.

Getting Started

This series of adventures is written as taking place in the early 1920s, before the rise of most commercial airlines and before the large-scale exploration of Africa by air. Having said this, the scenario can without changes be set anywhere from 1920 to the late 1930s.

As written, the scenario assumes that the investigators will be based in or around Arkham, where they will have at least some kind of connection, however tenuous, to Miskatonic University or the Arkham Museum of Natural History. The latter is in the process of organizing an expedition to the Congo to investigate early historical remains found by an Italian explorer and hunter, Count Vito dell'Acqua, believed to be able to shed further light on the prehistory of not only Africa but of Classical Mediterranean civilization as well.

The preliminaries, before the actual departure of the Congo expedition, will be carried out in four phases:

1. Initial newspaper clippings: background information already known to the investigators.
2. The heir's story: special information for one of the investigators.
3. Selection of participants in the expedition: who will join, and in what position?
4. Investigation of a mysterious burglary in the Museum of Natural History, seemingly involving the goals of the expedition.

Since the investigators are based in Arkham, they will already have read some news along these lines in the *Arkham Advertiser*. The Keeper will accordingly, and before anything else, hand out several newspaper clippings to the players as background information. No research is needed to be aware of this information. (All newspaper clippings and similar documents are reproduced as player handouts, in the Handouts section at the end of this monograph.)



Belgian Congo

1. Initial Newspaper Clippings

The following stories in the *Arkham Advertiser* will be known to all investigators based in Arkham.

Mysterious African Artefact Displayed in Arkham

The new African gallery in the Arkham Museum of Natural History continues to attract excited crowds, even after the first week of opening. The main displays in the exhibition are of course the two stunning, stuffed white African rhinoceroses brought to Arkham by Count Vito Dell'Acqua, the Italian hunter and explorer. Yet, no display has aroused so much curiosity, and so much idle gossip, as the mysterious and evil-looking, yet diminutive African idol on loan from Mr. Dell'Acqua's personal collection.

The idol depicts a being of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with a head somewhat resembling that of a squid, ending in a mass of feelers. The crude body of the idol hints of long, narrow wings at the side of the being, giving it the appearance of a strange and not entirely natural crossbreed between a deep-sea squid and what can only be compared to one of the great, flying lizards of the time of our Cave-Man ancestors, so eloquently described by modern anthropologists. Said to depict a cruel and most ancient cannibal deity, the artefact's utter strangeness and air of genuinely abysmal antiquity have divided Arkham's scholars on the question of the idol's utmost origin. However, there are at least no questions with regard to where, and under what circumstances, the curious artefact reached the civilized world. Mr. Dell'Acqua recovered it in 1908 from the dreaded Wakiwaki cannibals, a degenerate race of marsh dwellers, prone to evil superstitions and much feared by other tribes because of their curious form of devil-worship, at the time of his rescue of the famous explorer, Dr. Schnabel.

The Wakiwaki, living in damp caves along one of the furthest tributaries of the dreaded Congo River, regularly raided their somewhat less primitive neighbors in the impenetrable, damp jungles of the steaming Congo. Dr. Schnabel, in his zeal to convert the wayward children of the Dark Continent, had stumbled upon the Wakiwaki and, far from being recognized as a benefactor and representative of higher truths, he was cruelly captured and suffered unspeakable tortures, in monstrous rites frightfully suggestive of old and unhallowed cycles of life in which our world and our conceptions have no part.

Had not Mr. Dell'Acqua chanced upon the scene, the good Doctor would surely have met his fate there and then, since the dreaded Wakiwaki are known for their horrible rituals and human sacrifices. Instead the intrepid great white hunter managed to free the Doctor and, at the same time, teach the Wakiwaki a lesson of gunpowder and cold steel not soon forgotten.

But the most curious thing of all, Mr. Dell'Acqua has related, was not the awesome idol itself, which he brought with him, but the massive slab of dark rock on which it rested, and which perforce must still remain in Wakiwaki territory due to its sheer size and mass. This slab of rock, Mr. Dell'Acqua told this correspondent, was covered in hideous petroglyphs and bestial samples of repulsive, arcane writing, glyphs in such teeming numbers that the slab must have been used for nameless rites for countless aeons, possibly since the very beginning of time.

As for Mr. Dell'Acqua, he only expressed his sincere regret that he did not, at the time, have a sufficient supply of dynamite so as to blast the evil-looking slab of rock to bits. Now it indubitably still remains among the hideous primitives of the haunted, fungous marshes of the unholy Wakiwaki.

Among the visitors to the new exhibition were several notables, including the wealthy but secretive New York oil tycoon and archaeologist, Mr. Hubert van Damme, who spent a considerable time studying the blood-stained Wakiwaki idol.

Notorious Big Game Hunter Visits Arkham

The arrival in Arkham of the notorious Italian big game hunter, Count Vito Dell'Acqua, who delivered the skins of two extremely rare, white African rhinoceroses and sundry other unusual or near-extinct beasts to the Arkham Museum of Natural History, has caused mixed feelings in Arkham polite society. On the one hand, Mr. Dell'Acqua in 1908 acquired well deserved fame as the hero of Lualaba, having rescued the famous explorer, Dr. Schnabel, from the dreaded Wakiwaki cannibals. On the other, he also has a reputation for savagery and ruthlessness, in particular with regard to the native population of the Dark Continent. This reputation in particular derives from his various semi-military expeditions, including those during the suppression of the Batetelas in 1900 on behalf of Baron Dhanis, of Belgian King Leopold's Congo State; the suppression of the great native uprising in Angola in 1902; and the opening of the

railroad from Dar es-Salaam to Tabora in 1912, the then main line in German East Africa. Yet more regrettable rumors are being whispered about his unpublished exploits during the Great War.

Indeed, death and destruction would seem to have been Mr. Dell'Acqua's constant companions on his many expeditions into the Dark Continent. Indeed Mr. Dell'Acqua is widely reported to live for only one goal, and an impossible one at that. The big game hunter is reputed to be obsessed with the discovery and successful killing of the one elusive target of naturalists everywhere since the time of Dr. Darwin: a living relic of the kind the survivors of the ill-fated Professor Challenger expedition, when they returned from Brazil in the years before the Great War, told in their ludicrous stories of living dinosaurs somewhere deep into the treacherous jungles of the Amazon. Mr. Dell'Acqua has been known to relate that precisely such carnivorous monsters also inhabit the depths of the steaming Congo jungles. Once, Mr. Dell'Acqua claims, while he was still a young man and on an expedition with that other famed explorer, the late Mr. Quatermain, the two men came within thirty yards of such a beast. This was Congo's fabled *mokele-mbembe*, never before, or since, seen by a white man, although the natives swear to its existence in the deep, steaming forests of the great river that traverses the very heart of darkest Africa.

But who can tell? Mr. Quatermain and Mr. Dell'Acqua were the only two survivors of the expedition. When they finally returned to civilization after several months, having lost all men and supplies and only carrying one Martini-Henry rifle and one revolver, with no more than three rounds between the two of them, both men were delirious from exposure, and who knows what they may have encountered in the savage reaches of the treacherous Congo swamps.

The Arkham Museum of Natural History to Outfit Expedition to the Congo

Academic curiosity has been awakened by the infamous Dell'Acqua stone slab, discovered among the savage Wakiwaki but not yet studied by men of science. Is it really of prehistoric origin? Will it tell us of an unknown African civilization that ultimately influenced Western culture, as some eminent archaeologists believe? Not so, says Phillip H. Loveman, well-known Arkham writer of occult fiction. Although he has never visited Africa, Mr. Loveman disagrees strongly with those who put

forward such theories, stating that it would be quite inconceivable to expect to find an ancient Negro civilization in Africa. However, the Dell'Acqua ruins hint strongly at the former existence of a white man's civilization in Central Africa. Do not forget the mines of King Salomon and the Queen of Sheba, reminds us Mr. Loveman. There may be discoveries in the Congo of utmost importance for the understanding of the history not only of Africa, but of the entire world, concludes Mr. Loveman, who has expressed a willingness to take part himself in the Great Congo Expedition of the Arkham Museum of Natural History, which is expected to set out as soon as suitable transportation can be found.

Daring Burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History

Last night, a daring burglary occurred at the Arkham Museum of Natural History. The unknown burglars apparently broke in through the roof of the building and entered the collections by way of the Director's office, which they seemingly left untouched, despite or perhaps because of the existence of a modern safe there for the Museum's valuables and cash.

Among the objects stolen are four highly important sacral bronze vessels from ancient China, along with a few other, lesser objects such as the curious African idol on loan from Mr. Vito Dell'Acqua and a well-preserved but hardly unique *Boa Constrictor* cranium. The Arkham Police Department believes that the theft of the lesser objects was incidental only, as the real value, both to science and in monetary terms, lay in the Chinese objects.

Keeper's Note

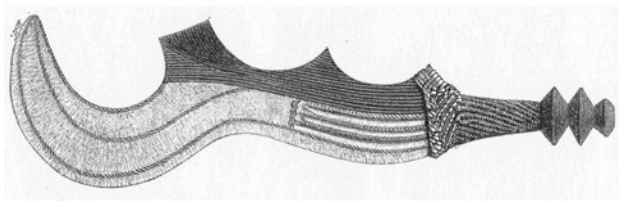
The references to Congo's fabled *mokele-mbembe*, the alleged dinosaur-like creature of Central Africa, are intended to be a red herring, although they no doubt will catch the imagination of the investigators. Some ideas concerning the possible survival of dinosaurs in the Congo will be found in a later chapter, for those Keepers who wish to introduce them.

As for the burglary at the museum, it is only Count dell'Acqua's African objects that are of interest. The other objects were stolen merely to confuse the issue and hide the true nature of the theft.

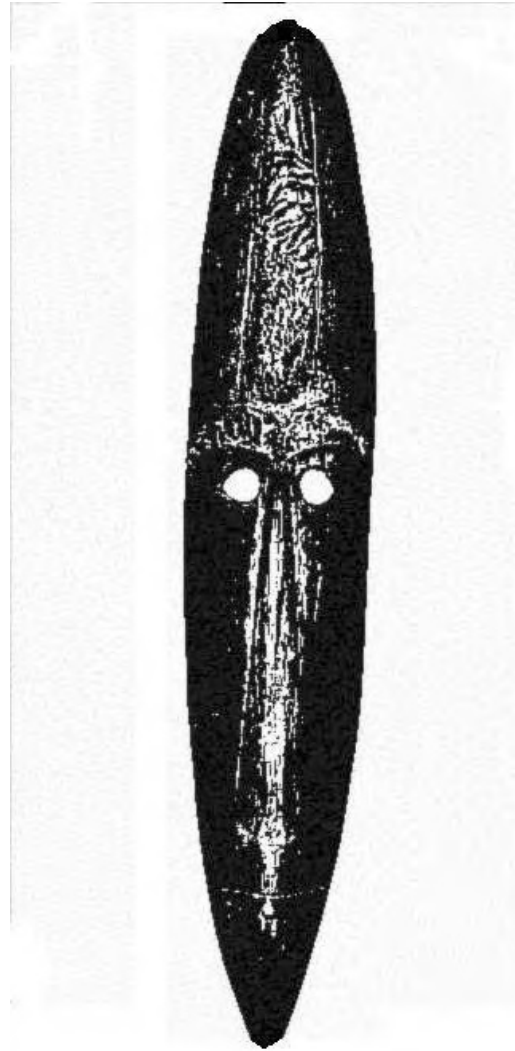


Count dell'Acqua's mysterious artefact

With regard to the blatantly racist remarks expressed above by Mr. Loveman, do not forget that for decades to come, any significant archaeological ruins discovered in Africa would routinely be attributed to Phoenicians or other Mediterranean peoples, since few if any scholars at the time were prepared to entertain the idea that black Africans themselves could have built great states and empires.



Count dell'Acqua's Congolese sword, also stolen



Count dell'Acqua's African mask, stolen as well



One of the stolen Chinese bronze vessels

2. The Heir's Story: The Mysterious Uncle Aaron

In addition to the background information provided above, available to all, one of the investigators will be involved on a more personal level. He or she begins the adventure by suddenly finding an undated letter from an unknown uncle, Aaron W. Carter, apparently written to a sister, the investigator's aunt. The letter (which in fact is a couple of years old, although this will not be obvious to the reader) is accompanied by two other documents of the most extraordinary nature, an ancient papyrus full of Egyptian hieroglyphs and a page torn out of an unknown book.

The Keeper may wish to point out that the investigator finds the documents apparently forgotten, in the personal library of the aunt. When asked, she adamantly refuses to talk about her brother Aaron. Other relatives, if asked, will not deny that there was a brother; however, they simply will not discuss him under any circumstances. The aunt will also not explain when she received the letter. Moreover, the investigator's own parent, Uncle Aaron's sibling, died recently and cannot shed any further light.

This should be very vexing to the investigator, since the letter suggests that the investigator would be set to inherit a substantial amount of money from Uncle Aaron, when he dies. If Uncle Aaron can be confirmed to be dead, that is.

Keeper's Note

The letter and the torn page (but not the papyrus) are available as handouts to the players, in the Handouts section at the end of this monograph. Anybody who reads these handouts will notice that not only is the information provided of a highly extraordinary nature, the choice of words and phrases used by Aaron, the author of the letter, gives plenty of reasons to suspect his mental state. The player should be encouraged to come to the conclusion that the aunt refuses to discuss her brother because he went insane and was the black sheep of the family. Although most sane, ordinary people immediately would dismiss the author of such a letter as a lunatic and forget the whole thing, *Call of Cthulhu* investigators obviously are cast from a different mold and will instead wish to investigate, however extraordinary the situation appears. Besides, there is an inheritance to be won.

Dearest Sister,

In my life-long and seemingly eternal search for the ancient Hyperboreans, of which I have told you so much during the years, I have finally found some good news! When I recently, for reasons of health, had to stay for several months in a private institution, I was recommended some light reading to ease my recurrent anxieties. The local library had a substantial selection of popular literature, in several world languages, and for reasons which I, unless I knew better, would be tempted to call pure chance, I picked up the Italian book about that explorer fellow, Dell'Acqua. This biography, which in no ways can be described as of high literary value, recounted a number of the adventures of the explorer in more or less credible detail. However, I found the chapter about Dell'Acqua's tribulations among the Waki-Waki, a Negro tribe of darkest Congo, to be of considerable interest. I realized that, unbeknownst to Dell'Acqua, the savages had actually settled in Devapura, one of the million-year old, abandoned forts of the Hyperboreans! You will recall, that I have many times told you of the primordial, global network of Hyperborean forts, from which this ancient race of eternal light, joyousness, peace, perpetual health, sunshine, and youth sallied forth to conquer Earth, multiply in peace and freedom, cleanse our noble planet from lesser races, etc. How the present, savage cannibals came to end up in such a place of Light and Knowledge is beyond my, or indeed anybody's, understanding, but I expect to find out. In other words, I have resolved to go there, regardless of expenses and other costs, to retrieve whatever I can find of the wisdom of our Hyperborean ancestors.

Although I expect the journey to be somewhat dangerous, do not worry, since it cannot be much worse than when I was a voluntary ambulance-driver, with my old Commer, you remember? Besides, to solve the enigma of this Hyperborean fortress is, I am sure, the only way to save Mankind from utter horrors and eternal bloodshed. Although I may be, and probably is, the only living soul on the planet who fully realizes what odds Mankind is up against, at least I know what I am doing.

I only regret one thing. I wish that I had taken a greater interest in my close relatives. As you know, I never married and my estate is good for a considerable amount of money. In case I die during my travels, I wish to bequeath it all to the next generation of our family, whom I never had the time to meet.

By the way, I enclose a few pages from an old Egyptian ms. which I recently secured. The ms. is but a trifle of no monetary value, although a curiosity for collectors like myself. Please keep these pages safe and do not show them to anybody who might come making inquiries. Dark forces are again attempting to steal all my discoveries, as they have indeed been trying ever since we were small children. Ever and ever again.

Warm embraces,

Your loving brother,

Aaron

In addition to the letter and the ancient papyrus with Egyptian hieroglyphs, the bundle of documents includes a page torn from a modern book. On the blank, rear side of this page, somebody has made a translation into English of the Egyptian document. Due to similarities in handwriting between the letter and the translation, the translation must have been made by Uncle Aaron. But first the printed page, as it



appears with a few yet more mysterious handwritten notes, in Uncle Aaron's handwriting, below the

printed text.

The texts of Vedic literature, the origin of which goes back in history far further in time than both its Assyrian and Egyptian counterparts, abound in references to this topic. As is well known, a war broke out between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas, identified with the early Indo-Aryans, were routed due to the better organisation and leadership of the Asuras, identified with the Dravidians. So the Devas copied the institutions of the Asuras and eventually became victorious throughout the sub-continent. After the great victory of Rama over Lanka, Vibhisana presented him with the Puspaka *vimana* which was furnished with windows, apartment, and excellent seats. It was capable of accommodating all the Vanaras besides Rama, Sita, and Laksmana (*Yuddha*, ch. 8). Whether the origin of the Puspaka *vimana* was in Lanka is nowhere stated but would seem likely. Rama flew to his capital Ayodhya pointing to Sita from above the places of encampment, the town of Kiskindha, and others on the way. Valmiki beautifully compares the city of Ayodhya to an aerial car (*Bala*, ch. 5). There is a statement in the Harsacarita that shows that the Yavanas were well acquainted with aerial machines. So it is hardly surprising that Comarius and the other philosopher-mystics of Alexandria knew of Devapura from the same source that also provided their knowledge of Katala.

The Yavanas were the Greeks. Vanaras were short, furry ape-men who fought for Rama. A Deva (from Sanskrit, meaning "bright; light"), unlike a god, is of course a celestial inhabitant subject to change and decay. But do not forget that the followers of Zoroaster regarded a Daeva as a maleficent supernatural being, a Demon. Just like a magical spell, a name can thus be read in two ways, with opposing significance and meaning. Cf. our word "devil"—a fallen angel, or some say, the offspring of the sons of Elohim (the original Hebrew god) who married mortal women. The dragon or serpent. His color may be black.

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And finally the translation, on the blank side of the page:

*The formula is the following:
IOEL, HARJ, PHTHA.*

(as translated from the hieroglyphs)

Mighty Typhon, scepter-holder and ruler of the scepter-power above! God of gods! Lord! ABERAMENTHÔOU. Shaker of darkness! Bringer of thunder! Stormy one! Night-lightener! Breather of cold and warm! Shaker of rocks! Shaker of walls! Raiser of waves! Raiser and mover of the deep sea! IÔERBÊT'AU TAUI MÊNI.

I am he who, along with you, searched the whole earth and found the great Osiris, whom I have brought before you in chains. I am he who fought at your side against the gods. I am he who shut the double folding doors of heaven and put to sleep the dragon whose sight nobody can endure. I stopped the sea, the streams, the flowing of rivers, until you

became ruler of this kingdom, I, your soldier, was overcome by the gods, and because of their vain wrath I was hurled to the ground. Raise me, your friend, I beseech you, I entreat you! Do not throw me on the ground, lord of the gods.

ÆMINEÆBAROTHEERRETHORABEANI MEA. Give me strength, I beseech you, and grant me this favor.
 NAINÉ BASANAPTOU EAPTOU MÊNÔPHÆSME PAPTOU MÊNÔPHI * ÆSIMÉ * TRAUAPTI * PEUCHRE * TRAUARA * PTOUMEPH * MOURAI * ANCHOUCHAPHAPTA * MOURSA * ARAMEI * IAÓ * ATHHARAUI * MÉNOKEP * BOROPTOUMÉTH * ATTAUI MÉNI CHARCHARA * PTOUMAU * LALAPSA * TRAVI TRAUPESE MAMÓ PHORTOUCHA * AEÉIO IOU * EAI ÆÉI ÓI IAÓ ÆÉI AI IÃO.

I conjure you by the god of the Hebrews, IESU, ATHHTHOUIN THOUTHOUI TAUANTI * LAÓ APATÓ, you who appear in fire, you who are in the midst of land and snow and fog, Tannetis, let your angel descend, the pitiless one, for I pray to the holy god through AMOUN AVANTAU LAIMOUTAU RIPTOU MANTAUI IMANTOU LANTOU LAPTOUMI * ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI.

I conjure you AMOUN AVANTAU LAIMOUTAU RIPTOU MANTAUI IMANTOU LANTOU LAPTOUMI * ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI, I conjure you by him who appeared to Osrael in a pillar of light and a cloud by night and who has saved his people from Pharaoh and has brought upon Pharaoh the ten plagues because he would not listen, I conjure you, every daemonic spirit; I conjure you by the seal that Solomon put upon the tongue of Jeremiah.

For I conjure you by him who revealed the hundred and forty tongues and distributed them according to his own command.

I conjure you by him who burned down the stiff-necked giants with his beams of fire, who praises the heaven of heavens.

I conjure you by him who put mountains around the sea, a wall of sand, and told it not to overflow, and the deep obeyed.

Thus must you also obey, every daemonic spirit, for I conjure you by him who has moved the four winds together from holy eternities, by the heavenlike, sealike, cloudlike god, the fire-bringer, the invincible.

I conjure you by him who is in Jerusalem, the pure city, for whom and near whom the unextinguishable fire burns forever and ever, with his holy name IOEL * HARI * PHTHA, before whom trembles the hellfire, and flames leap up all around, and iron explodes, and whom every mountain fears from the depth of its foundations.

I conjure you, every daemonic spirit, by him who looks down on earth and makes its foundations tremble and has created the universe from a state of non-being into a state of being.

AMOUN AVANTAU LAIMOUTAU RIPTOU MANTAUI IMANTOU LANTOU LAPTOUMI * ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI.

Come here, god. Listen to me, for he who wants this and commands this is ACHCHÔRACHCHÔR * ACHACHACH PTOUMI CHACHCHÔ CHARACHÔCH * CHAPTOUMÉ * CHÔRACHARACHOCH * APTOUMI * MÉCHÔCHAPTOU * CHARAPTOU * CHACHCHÔ * CHARACHÔ * PTEACHÔCHEU.

Researching Uncle Aaron

Since the aunt does not talk about her brother, the obvious thing for the investigator to do is to search for information elsewhere. A few hours spent in the library or the archive of the *Arkham Advertiser* will easily (through a successful Library Use skill roll; re-roll once per hour until the investigator succeeds; any spectacular failure will only result in further waste of time by, for instance, re-sorting the box of old newspapers that the investigator dropped on the floor in front of the librarian) make the investigator find the following news clipping. (The news clipping is also available from the Handouts section, at the end of this monograph.) This is a core clue that the investigators eventually will need to understand the developing situation.

The Arkham Advertiser, July 10th, 1918

Return of a War Hero

A great American has returned home. At a time when most of our countrymen shied away from taking up the noble cause of fighting despotism and cruelty on a distant continent, a few heroes went, on their own, to take part in the eternal fight for peace and freedom that constitutes the Great War of our times. One of them was Mr. Aaron W. Carter, of a distinguished Arkham family and the heir to a substantial estate. And what made Mr. Carter unique was that he was neither young nor particularly fit for the struggle that he, in the absence of his government, took upon himself. Mr. Carter, an outspoken pacifist, went alone to aid our close cousins on the other side of the sea. As early as in the beginning of 1915, he signed on as voluntary ambulance driver with the Royal

British Army. From this date until just weeks ago, he served, with valour, distinction, and integrity, on the Western Front in the demanding and difficult role of an unarmed ambulance driver and medic, helping thousands if not tens of thousands of his fellow human beings back to their own lines, and back to life and health, instead of perishing in the monstrous No Man's Land that separated the two warring sides in France. Who at home can fully grasp the total extent of Mr. Carter's achievement? He experienced, without shrinking from the duty that he so nobly had taken upon himself, the first yellowish-green mist of chlorine gas at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915, the horrifying slaughter at Verdun from February to December 1916, and the bloody Somme in July to November 1916, where more than a million men died, as well as the gruesome battle of Passchendaele Ridge in July 1917. And yet a cruel fate compelled the valiant Mr. Carter, himself always willing, nay aspiring, to the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of his fellow human beings, instead to watch, forced into inaction by the needs of the many as opposed to those of the few, the death, on October 13th, 1915, of his beloved fiancée, the English nurse Miss Edith Cavell, who was cruelly and without procedure or guilt shot as a spy by the despicable Huns. Mr. Carter has done his duty. Mr. Carter, we salute you as a noble benefactor of Mankind and an American patriot.

Keeper's Note

Since the hook of a long-lost uncle is somewhat of a cliché, the Keeper may wish to play the inheritance angle for all it is worth. If necessary, introduce a lawyer with whom Uncle Aaron deposited his last will, to the effect outlined in his letter, and offer a monetary value of his estate, which should not be insignificant.

If any investigator wonders what Uncle Aaron meant when he referred to "my old Commer" in the letter above, it should not be too difficult to learn (through a successful skill roll of either Library Use, Drive Automobile, or Mechanical Repair) that Commer was a manufacture of ambulance often used on the Western Front. Since Uncle Aaron served there, that was the car he was driving at the time.

The investigator may also wish to research the various names and circumstances found in Uncle Aaron's papers. If so, research at any major academic reference library, most likely the one at Miskatonic University, and a number of successful Library Use skill rolls will determine the following:

1. Nothing conclusive can be found with regard to the ancient Hyperboreans. Although they were mentioned by several classical Greek writers, this seems

to have little or nothing to do with Uncle Aaron's theories.

2. The hieroglyphs, if checked by an expert, do indeed correspond to the available translation into English. Similar formulas are known to serious researchers and are generally interpreted as magical supplications to one god or another.

3. The Vedic literature of ancient India does indeed contain references to all names and places mentioned in the printed text, except the name Katala. Again it is hard to tally the conventional understanding of these terms with Uncle Aaron's theories. A *vimana* was a flying vehicle in ancient Indian myths. Nothing is known of how such vehicles operated, or what they might have looked like, if they ever existed—a thought which no proper academic would deign to entertain.

4. Devapura is obviously a name, meaning "city of Devas" in Sanskrit. Who the Devas were remains unclear. Many researchers do identify them with the early Indo-Aryans, as the printed text suggests.

5. The name Katala does not turn up in any library search. The name recalls a Sanskrit term for a large fish or sea-monster, however, so might conceivably have come from one of the many Vedic texts. The Sanskrit term can be checked in any comprehensive Sanskrit dictionary; the name's actual significance beyond what is stated here remains unknown.

These are all core clues for the *understanding* of the scenario, and all these clues should be made available to the players if they attempt to research the matter. However, these clues are not essential to play out the scenario. Yet, the players should be encouraged to research Uncle Aaron's documents, since it will help them to anticipate and perhaps prepare for later events. However, some groups of players are so inherently lazy that they cannot be bothered to engage in research of this kind. The Keeper in such a group can save his strength and carry on to Africa instead. The players will learn the truth soon enough.

Inquisitive players, as opposed to their 1920s characters, may wish to research the various historical terms in Uncle Aaron's papers on the Internet. By all means encourage them to do so; all terms and names in Uncle Aaron's papers appear in real history, and none will be the wiser for reading up on them.

* In a modern setting, the investigators would find such formulas in, for instance, Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi; Magic and Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), from which these particular formulas have been adapted.

3. *The Arkham Museum of Natural History Great Congo Expedition*

These preliminaries having been concluded, play really begins when the investigators get involved in the plans for the expedition to the Congo. By doing so, they will also get involved in the investigation of the burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History. Since the board of the Museum realizes that the plans for the Congo Expedition must not be delayed any further, or there is a chance of arriving too late for what some board members believe to be the discovery of the century, it decides to charter an aircraft to fly to the Congo. A deal is rapidly struck with a newly established commercial airline, Arkham Aeromarine, Inc.

At this stage, at least one player should, due to his or her lost uncle, be interested in finding out what goes on in the Congo. If the others remain complacent, it is now time to involve them as well.

The Keeper may use one or more of the following methods to involve players:

1. Any character with a suitable academic background who can be assumed to be known to the Museum of Natural History may be approached to lead the expedition. (If no such character is available, then a non-player character such as Professor Curtis Mathieson of Miskatonic University will be chosen for this position.)
2. Any character with a background in Africa, for instance a big game hunter or even somebody who merely has visited the Dark Continent, may be approached by the Museum of Natural History to participate in the Congo expedition as a paid guide.
3. Any private detective or former law enforcement officer may be approached by the Museum to investigate the burglary and, subsequently, join the expedition to look out for the stolen objects. (Since some objects belonged to individuals and not the Museum, this is also an insurance matter.)
4. The Museum will actively approach people with suitable skills to join the expedition, including but not limited to academics (from almost any discipline, including archaeologists, anthropologists, naturalists, and geologists), physicians, aircraft pilots, mechanics, and general handymen, including those with appropriate weapons skills, who might be of use during the arduous expedition to the Congo.
5. Any individual connected to Arkham Aeromarine, the airline providing the Curtiss flying boat, will be considered for inclusion in the expedition.

6. Lecturers and even students at the Miskatonic University will be recruited to participate in the endeavor to fill any remaining gaps in manning the expedition.

If the players are too few, or lack the appropriate skills (Pilot Aircraft, etc.), the Keeper may wish to add one or more non-player characters from the following list (statistics follow at the end of the monograph):

- Professor Curtis Mathieson of Miskatonic University, archaeologist and noted leader of scientific expeditions.
- Phillip H. Loveman, well-known Arkham writer of occult fiction and self-proclaimed expert on African folklore and mythology (although he has never visited the Dark Continent).
- Frank Black, the archetypal private eye.
- Dr Zeb Quincy, an experienced Arkham physician and forensic surgeon.
- Lord Bertie Lockwood, a disgraced English nobleman formerly of the Royal Air Force; an excellent pilot.
- Father William E. MacGregor, a Jesuit priest who served as field chaplain in the Great War.
- John North, a bootlegger and veteran of the Great War; now he would sign up for anything to get out of the country for a while.



4. Investigating the Burglary at the Museum

The investigation of the burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History is easy in some ways and difficult in others. The Arkham Police Department will already have mounted a full-scale investigation. Since the investigators work for the Museum, the police will offer full cooperation and the investigators will easily get access to any available information.

The police investigation quickly determines the following facts (also available as a handout for the players):

1. The burglary occurred at night, between 1.30 and 2 a.m. A night watchman, Mr. Edward Harrison, was patrolling the building, but he heard nothing unusual since he was on the ground floor at the time of the break-in. He only discovered the burglary when he returned to the top floor, going his customary rounds. Then the intruders had already left. This indicates that the intruders knew the habits of the guard.
2. The unknown burglars broke in through the roof of the building and entered the collections by way of the Director's office. They left the same way. Fresh but rough footprints in the dust in the attic prove that this way was being used.
3. They left the Director's office untouched. They did not attempt to force the safe there, which is quite modern and is being used for the Museum's valuables and cash. Despite a very thorough search, there is no indication whatsoever that the burglars even searched the Director's office. They presumably did not have the time.
4. A total of eight objects were stolen: four highly valuable sacrificial bronze vessels from ancient China; a well-preserved but hardly unique *Boa Constrictor* cranium; the African idol known from the *Arkham Advertiser*; a sickle-shaped executioner's sword of Congolese origin; and an African wooden mask. The last three objects were on loan from Count Vito Dell'Acqua.
5. The real value, both to science and in monetary terms, lay in the Chinese objects. The others have no substantial monetary value, although it was embarrassing for the Museum to lose several objects on loan from a private individual. All objects were fully insured.

Either the investigators or the police will quickly suspect Harrison, the night watchman, of complicity in the burglary. If confronted, he will at first deny

everything. However, a full investigation will determine that Harrison has gambling debts as well as a police record. Before he became employed by the Museum, two years ago, he was well-known to the police as a minor crook. His landlord can testify that he has fallen behind in paying rent. Eventually, by means fair or foul, the police or the investigators will break him. Harrison will then admit that he was paid to turn a blind eye to the burglary. He can also identify the man who paid him, a local antique dealer of dubious repute known as Steven Pickman, who has often been suspected of selling stolen goods. Pickman lives in a small apartment on top of his antique store. When the investigators and police search the premises, they will immediately notice that the stolen *Boa Constrictor* cranium remains sitting on his desk, next to a crate clearly destined for shipping to an unknown location. They will then find Pickman's corpse on the floor behind the desk, shot through the head and very dead.

This was the easy part of the investigation. Pickman paid off Harrison and also received at least one of the stolen objects. But the antique dealer cannot himself have taken part in the burglary, since he suffered from a deformed leg and could not possibly have climbed to the roof of the Museum. Besides, whoever burglarized the Museum presumably then murdered Pickman.

The next, more difficult part of the investigation will baffle the police. In fact, no more information will come from the police until well after the end of the expedition to the Congo, if at all. Since the evidence points straight to the antique dealer, Pickman, and since he has been murdered, the burglary will be treated as an open and shut case. Pickman commissioned the burglary, and now he is dead. The police will continue to investigate the murder of Pickman, but this is easier said than done. They will retrieve a caliber .45 bullet out of the victim's head, but there is no way of tracing it. Eventually, the police will assume that the murder was committed by an out-of-town hit man, who may well have been in league with the equally unknown gang of burglars. At this point, they will give up and close the case.

Investigating Pickman

The investigators will be allowed to continue searching Pickman's shop and living quarters. This will take time, since both shop and apartment are cluttered with antiques of every kind. A few objects are of considerable value but most are mere trinkets, of little value in monetary terms. For this kind of work, the following four skills will be useful: Spot Hidden, Anthropology, Archaeology, and

Accounting. These skills will give the investigators one or more core clues that point in the direction of a certain individual in New York.

It is essential to the adventure that the investigators are pointed in this direction. Yet another core clue concerns a book and a letter by the eighteenth-century author Jonathan Swift. This too is a core clue. It is therefore essential that these clues are made available to the investigators before the expedition gets started, regardless of how many die rolls it takes for them to locate the information, which in any case is fairly easy to find. Virtually every investigator is likely to have a suitable level of Spot Hidden skill, and if the other skills are missing, the Keeper should not hesitate to bring in outside support, for instance from a non-player character involved in the Congo expedition or even a stubborn police investigator who simply cannot let go of the case. If the investigators are relying upon their own skill levels (which is highly recommended), allow one die roll per hour of search. If the skill roll is unsuccessful, tell the players that they did not find anything yet, but there is plenty of other locations in the shop and living quarters in which to look. Each player can attempt the skill roll, since the house is so full of objects that even the casual observer will realize that more than one clue might be present.

Clue No. 1: The Book and the Letter

A first successful Spot Hidden skill roll will result in the finding of what appears to be a genuine first-edition copy of *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift. It is put away in a drawer in Pickman's desk. He must have studied the book some time before he was murdered.

Assume that most investigators have heard of this famous book, even if they may never have read it. Since most of the objects in the shop are junk, this sticks out as a valuable antique. It is likely to be worth no less than \$200 and perhaps much more to a collector. The investigator will notice two unexpected things about the book. First, an apparently genuine, old letter written in eighteenth-century English is found tucked inside the front cover of the book. Amazingly, it is signed Jonathan Swift so would most likely be worth a small fortune if found genuine. However, this looks unlikely, since the letter is actually addressed to one "Lemuel Gulliver, Esq." Since all historians of literature regard Swift's book as a clever parody of conditions in his native England, and consider Gulliver a fictitious character, the letter must accordingly be a spoof. Or maybe not. The letter is accompanied by a type-written sheet of stationery with further notes by an unknown hand (these notes were typed by Pickman, but this can only be verified by comparing the text with the typewriter in his study). Both letter and notes are also available from the Handouts section at the end of the monograph.

To Lemuel Gulliver, Esq.

SIR,

As I am credibly inform'd you intend to oblige the Publick with a Second Volume of The Travels, and are now actually collecting authentick Matter; I was of Opinion, that the sending you this Letter would be no unacceptable Office; and I hope, you will not take the following Remarks in ill Part. I think the Publication of a Second Volume of The Travels will do you both Honour and Justice, and therefore shall make no Apology, but come to the Point. I examined very thoroughly the Hindoostani Volume you sent. I know not its Origin. Having consulted with Captain Bonnerman, formerly of the East-India Company, we have thought fit to render the Volume into English as The Secrets of Gravitation. But the Words are in no Hindoostani Captain Bonnerman knows, and I cannot find what these Words can refer to. I am of Opinion, that the Volume you sent me cannot be rendered into English without considerable Effort; it would be a just Regard to the publick Good, and I would not have you deterr'd from vigorously pursuing it; but Circumstances are now such, that I cannot fulfil your Commission.

JONATHAN SWIFT

The following notes have been typed on a sheet of white stationery, kept with the original letter:

Mr. Lemuel Gulliver was a merchant adventurer of the early eighteenth century, with business interests in primarily Persia and India. He was the author of "Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World," published by Jonathan Swift in 1727. Lemuel Gulliver reportedly visited the city in July 1707.

The book Swift refers to in his letter is one of the books generally believed to be lost from the Secret Society of the Nine Unknown Men as formed by the ancient Indian Emperor Ashoka. This was a body of great Indian scientists who were tasked with the duty to record the sciences and document all discoveries. Ashoka

kept their work secret because he was afraid that the advanced science catalogued by these men, gathered from ancient Indian sources such as the Vedic literature, would be used for the evil purpose of war, which Ashoka, a fervent Buddhist, feared greatly. He had been converted to Buddhism after defeating a rival army in a bloody battle, which had convinced him of the virtues of pacifism. The Nine Unknown Men wrote a total of nine books in Sanskrit, presumably one each. One was "The Secrets of Gravitation." This book, known to historians but not actually seen by them in modern times, dealt chiefly with gravity control. What did Swift do with the book? Did Sir Isaac Newton study it?

There is a book-mark inside the *Gulliver's Travels* book. It is not necessarily obvious to the investigators that the location marked in this way is important. The Keeper should only tell the players that they have found a book with a book-mark inside. The location of the book-mark should only be given if the players actually care to ask. Although the section marked by the book-mark certainly would constitute an important clue to events that will follow, unlike the letter and note this is not a core clue. The discovery of Devapura might even be more of a surprise to the players if they ignore this clue. Anyway, the book-mark marks the following pages of Swift's book (*Keeper's Note*: To a 1920s character, the following text suggests nothing but a description of a fictitious flying island; in a modern setting, the description would sound dismayingly similar to the common description of a UFO, a flying saucer).

The flying or floating island is exactly circular, its diameter 7837 yards, or about four miles and a half, and consequently contains ten thousand acres. It is three hundred yards thick. The bottom, or under surface, which appears to those who view it below, is one even regular plate of adamant, shooting up to the height of about two hundred yards. Above it lie the several minerals in their usual order, and over all is a coat of rich mould, ten or twelve feet deep. The declivity of the upper surface, from the circumference to the centre, is the natural cause why all the dews and rains, which fall upon the island, are conveyed in small rivulets toward the middle, where they are emptied into four large basins, each of about half a mile in circuit, and two hundred yards distant from the centre. From these basins the water is continually exhaled by the sun in the daytime, which effectually prevents their overflowing. Besides, as it is in the power of the monarch to raise the island above the region of clouds and vapours, he can prevent the falling of dews and rain whenever he pleases. For the highest clouds cannot rise above two miles, as naturalists agree, at least they were never known to do so in that country.

At the centre of the island there is a chasm about fifty yards in diameter, whence the astronomers descend into a large dome, which is therefore called *flandona gagnole*, or the astronomer's cave, situated at the depth of a hundred yards beneath the upper surface of the adamant. In this cave are twenty lamps continually burning, which, from the reflection of the adamant, cast a strong light into every part. The place is stored with great variety of sextants, quadrants, telescopes, astrolabes, and other astronomical instruments. But the greatest curiosity, upon which the fate of the island depends, is a loadstone of a prodigious size, in shape resembling a weaver's shuttle. It is in length six yards, and in the thickest part at least three yards over. This magnet is sustained by a very strong axle of adamant passing through its middle, upon which it plays, and is poised so exactly that the weakest hand can turn it. It is hooped round with a hollow cylinder of adamant, four feet in thickness and twelve yards in diameter, placed horizontally, and supported by eight adamantine feet, each six yards high. In the middle of the concave side, there is a groove twelve

inches deep, in which the extremities of the axle are lodged, and turned round as there is occasion.

The stone cannot be removed from its place by any force, because the hoop and its feet are one continued piece with that body of adamant which constitutes the bottom of the island.

By means of this loadstone, the island is made to rise and fall, and move from one place to another. For, with respect to that part of the earth over which the monarch presides, the stone is endued at one of its sides with an attractive power, and at the other with a repulsive. Upon placing the magnet erect, with its attracting end towards the earth, the island descends; but when the repelling extremity points downwards, the island mounts directly upwards. When the position of the stone is oblique, the motion of the island is so too: for in this magnet, the forces always act in lines parallel to its direction.

Clue No. 2: The New York Connection

A second successful Spot Hidden skill roll, perhaps made by another player, will result in the investigator finding, under a pile of books on a sideboard, a letter from a certain Hubert van Damme in New York. In the letter, which is dated two months prior to the burglary at the Museum, he expresses his interest in “certain African antiques” and requests Pickman to come to visit him at his office in New York.

However, no further information is available in the letter, which is very short and to the point. A successful Anthropology or Archaeology skill roll will tell the investigator that there are in fact no African antiques in the shop, which in the light of the letter sounds somewhat curious. There will be sales records to go through as well, but they are incomplete and not in very good order. A successful Accounting skill roll will turn up an interesting piece of information, however. It seems that almost all really valuable objects over the last two years have been sold to the same individual, the very same Hubert van Damme of New York. Yet none of the sold objects are described as being of African origin. Besides, the investigators may recall that this man was mentioned in the *Arkham Advertiser* as having spent considerable time studying the African idol in the Museum of Natural History, before it was stolen. Hubert van Damme is known as a very wealthy collector of antiquities and the sponsor of several private archaeological expeditions.

The various references to Hubert van Damme should tell the investigators that this is, perhaps, the link to out-of-town criminals that the police was looking for but never found. However, neither letter nor sales records would be sufficient evidence to open a court case against an influential man like the wealthy Hubert van Damme in the burglary and murder case. If asked, the police will tell the investigators so.

The reason for this will be revealed by even a cursory search through the newspaper section in any library or the archives of the *Arkham Advertiser* (allow a Library Use skill roll per 30 minutes of research; if the skill roll fails, tell the player that there are more newspapers to search through). Hubert van Damme is a well-known, very reputable, and very rich New York industrialist. To implicate him in a burglary and the murder of a small-town antique dealer would take far more evidence than a couple of letters or sales receipts that in any case contain nothing out of the ordinary.

However, the investigators will soon find yet another reason to be interested in the activities of Hubert van Damme. When the players have made a successful Library Use skill roll, the Keeper should give the players the following two handouts with information on Hubert van Damme.

New York Times

Hubert van Damme, Oil Tycoon and Philanthropist

Not much is known about Mr. Hubert van Damme, the Belgian-born American success story. Originating from an old Belgian noble family, he started his business career in the service of his father, who was prospering in the rubber business in the Congo Free State. After the death of his father in darkest Africa late last century, the family rubber business went bankrupt and Mr. van Damme moved to America to start all over.

After buying his first small oil company in Texas, one thing quickly led to another and at the turn of the century, Mr. van Damme was one of the fastest rising stars in American oil business. Being the main oil contributor to the armed forces of the United States of



America, van Damme in no small way helped secure Entente victory over Imperial Germany in the Great War.

As a resident for over twenty years in this greatest of cities, Mr. van Damme has frequently contributed to Catholic churches and several hospitals in New York. Yet he is arguably even better known for his interest in the occult and anything relating to the prehistory of our planet. His private collection of antiquities in this field is said to rival that of several major museums, and Mr. van Damme, who otherwise stays out of the public eye, often shows up during auctions of curious antiques.

and much coveted stone slab. That is, unless the bold decision of the Arkham Museum of Natural History to gain time and beat the New Yorkers at their own game by employing the renowned flying firm Arkham Aeromarine, which generously has volunteered to fly the expedition team members to the Congo, pays off. The race to the Congo is on!

Arkham Advertiser

Two Rival Congo Expeditions to the Cannibals! Who Will Secure the Dell'Acqua Stone Slab, Arkham or New York?

The sensation caused by the intrepid burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History has excited the academic as well as the popular mind. While notables such as Arkham's own Mr. Phillip H. Loveman have come out in favor of the Arkham Museum of Natural History endeavour, Arkham has found itself in danger of losing the contest to gain the infamous Wakiwaki stone slab to outsiders. No less a personage than Mr. Hubert van Damme, the celebrated oil tycoon of New York, has announced that he will fund his own Congo expedition, with the stated task to recover the very same stone slab! Mr. van Damme has in recent years funded several private scientific expeditions, to Greenland, Central Asia, and South America. Although the secretive Van Damme expeditions seldom publish their findings, they are believed to have excavated several very remarkable archaeological sites in recent years. The New York academic community is reported to be extremely excited by this great chance to acquire, and learn more about, the artefacts of the infamous cannibals, and in particular cult items relating to their horrifying form of devil worship.

The Van Damme Congo Expedition will depart by ocean liner in just two weeks' time, so it now seems certain that the New Yorkers will gain the infamous



One of the Aeromarine aircraft



Happy Aeromarine passengers!

Flying across the Atlantic

Summary: In the early 1920s, a flight across the Atlantic presented a number of problems and risks. This chapter describes the Curtiss flying boat, possible routes, travel distances, and the maximum cargo weight the aircraft can handle under different conditions. This entire chapter, with the single exception of the Keeper's Note at the end, can be made available to the players.

Final Preparations

The expedition will fly to Africa in a Curtiss F-5L flying boat. This will save time but also means that there will be severe restrictions on how much equipment can be carried.

Although a single pilot can handle the flying boat, it will under most circumstances have a crew of three:

- First Pilot
- Second Pilot/Navigator
- Mechanic

For the transatlantic crossing, which is the most critical part of the flight since it is the longest distance without stop-over, the flying boat can carry no more than exactly 2,230 lb (1,012 kg) of passengers and equipment, in addition to the needed fuel. A lighter cargo load would be even better, since this would allow additional, precious flying time in case of navigational problems or unexpected winds. The weight allowance will severely limit the number of weapons and the amount of provisions brought on this leg of the journey. A small suitcase with clothes and a personal weapon per person would be about it. Food, drinks, and especially ammunition would have to be ruthlessly limited. The sensible thing to do will be to bring only an absolute minimum of goods and instead arrange, by telegraph, to have ordinary supplies, rifles, ammunition, and so on waiting on the other side of the Atlantic, preferably at Banana Point in Belgian Congo, so as to avoid customs fees and other complications.

Camping equipment, mosquito nets, food supplies, medical supplies, spare parts, rifles, ammunition, trade goods, etc., will accordingly have been ordered in advance. Remember that everything, including passengers and crew, must be weighed in so that the pilot can be sure that the flying boat will be able to reach its destination. In the 1920s, even camping gear was much heavier than after the introduction of light-weight materials. In other words, supplies will have to be limited, or the expedition will never reach its destination.

Aircraft gasoline will be available in major settlements. However, extra fuel tanks have been installed, and preparations have been made to have fuel shipped to the last stop-over of the journey, a remote trading post, so that the expedition will be able to reach its destination and then return to civilization.

The cargo weight limits will be in effect in the Congo as well. Since distances are shorter there, there will be some leeway. However, the aircraft can still take no more than about another 1,100 to 1,500 lb (500 to 700 kg), in addition to what was carried across the Atlantic. And in the Congo, food supplies, rifles, ammunition, and camp equipment will have to be carried as well. The investigators will have to learn to live frugally.

Navigation will not always be easy. The pilot will have to follow landmarks recognizable from the air, since maps of the African interior in particular are not yet fully reliable. Rivers, railroads, and the seashore will be relied upon for guidance. The transatlantic crossing carries a clear risk of not finding the destination before the flying boat runs out of fuel. However, in such circumstances flying boat pilots had a habit of landing on the open sea next to any passing steamer—to ask for directions! As long as the sea is not too rough, this is always an option.

En Route to the Congo!

The flight to Africa cannot be made without an appropriate number of stop-overs. It is also advisable to land only in friendly countries, or at least countries in which the expedition will encounter a minimum of hassles. The flight plan will accordingly, at least in theory, be as follows, as long as weather, pilot fatigue, mechanical problems, or other delays do not interfere (however, it might be advisable to allow the pilots some additional rest at certain stop-overs):

- Day 1: Expedition departs Arkham, lands at Trepassey, Newfoundland, Canada (12.4 hours of flight).
- Day 2: To Horta, Portuguese Azores (18.1 hours of flight)—the most critical leg of the journey.

- Day 3: To Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spanish Canary Islands (11.6 hours of flight).
- Day 4: To Bathurst, British Gambia (13.6 hours of flight).
- Day 5: To Freetown, British Sierra Leone (5.5 hours of flight).[†]
- Day 6: To Accra, British Gold Coast (14.8 hours of flight).
- Day 7: To Port Harcourt, British Nigeria (6.3 hours of flight).
- Day 8: To Banana Point, Belgian Congo (11.8 hours of flight).
- Day 9: To Léopoldville (2.7 hours of flight).
- Day 10: To Coquilhatville (5.1 hours of flight); old name Equateur, located on the Equator; the indigenous name is Wangata.
- Day 11: To Stanleyville (7.7 hours of flight), or possibly onwards to the nearby Stanley Falls, which is known as Singitini in Lingala and as Kisangani in Kiswahili.
- Day 12: To Nyangwe by way of Kindu (about 5 hours of flight); Nyangwe used to be the old Arab capital of the Congo, established by Zanzibaris in 1860 on the Lualaba River, near the new town of Kibombo which is on the railroad but has no port.
- Day 13: Across most of the rapids known as the Portes d'Enfer (Gates of Hell) to the Outpost of Progress at the mouth of the Luika River (about 3 hours of flight).
- Day 14: Proceed by air (about 10 minutes) and river steamer (about 7 hours), respectively, up the winding Luika to the final landing site.

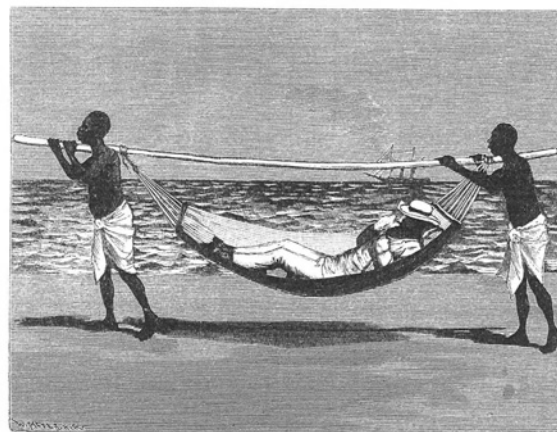
Landing can only take place during daylight hours, so some legs will result in very early morning departures.

While planning for the expedition and consulting the various maps available to the Museum of Natural History, it should become clear to the investigators that even without the intervention of the van Damme expedition, it is surely only a matter of time before

[†] Freetown was established to be the home of liberated slaves from America. In 1915, Freetown was described in the following words: "Freetown, the chief port and the seat of the Government, is a city with a population of about 35,000 inhabitants, of which about two-thirds belong to a class known as Creoles, the majority of whom are the descendants of the liberated slaves. It is beautifully situated, at the foot of a circle of hills on the summits of which are barracks belonging to the Garrison Artillery, the West India and the West African Regiment; and a short distance beyond lies Hill Station, the residence of the majority of the European officials stationed in the Colony."

somebody stumbles onto the ancient ruins again. Civilization is slowly approaching even the Wakiwaki, although it will no doubt take several years before they are overly disturbed by its speed of progress. The reason is the shipping problems caused by the Portes d'Enfer, in which the river moves through a gorge with several rapids between Kasongo and Kongolo that make shipping impossible. The region received its name from these rapids as well as the number of steaming hot springs next to the river. A railroad company named Compagnie des Chemins de Fer du Congo Supérieur aux Grands Lacs Africains (C.F.L.) has been working steadily to improve communications. By 1906, the C.F.L. had already built a railroad between Stanleyville and Ponthierville. From 1906 to 1910, the company built a railroad between Kindu and Kongolo near the Portes d'Enfer. During the Great War, the C.F.L. even built a railroad alongside the Lukuga River between Kabalo and Albertville on Lake Tanganyika. Later these lines were connected so that one could travel by train from Kindu to Albertville, bypassing the rapids. While the railroad runs far from the Wakiwaki ruins, it will surely lead to increased exploitation of this part of the Congo.

The final destination is known to the investigators through the detailed instructions with references to natural landmarks, on how to reach the site from the Congo River, supplied by the explorer, Count dell'Acqua. Assume that the investigators, or at least the Museum of Natural History staff, interviewed the well-known Italian great white hunter before setting out on the journey. There would be no hope whatsoever for anybody, especially one new to the territory, to find a small tributary such as the Luika from the air, unless he or she follows the main Lualaba River.



The Expedition Arrives

[Upon approaching the mouth of the Congo River] all along the formless coast bordered by dangerous surf, as if Nature herself had tried to ward off intruders; in and out of rivers, streams of death in life, whose banks were rotting into mud, whose waters, thickened into slime, invaded the contorted mangroves, that seemed to writhe at us in the extremity of an impotent despair.

Joseph Conrad

Whatever effect this first impression of the Congo may have on the investigators (probably none, hardened souls as they are), the party will make their first landfall immediately at Banana Point. To do so should be strongly encouraged, even if several daylight hours of flying time remain, since they by the 1920s will be expected to go through customs formalities upon arrival in Belgian Congo. Gone are the days when white men could simply arrive as explorers, with guns blazing and glass beads ready for trade with the natives. Now Belgian Congo is, at least on the surface, a well-ordered colony under European administration. At Banana Point, the investigators can also exchange money and inquire about conditions upriver. The currency used in Belgian Congo is the Belgian Franc (Fr.), divided further into 100 Centimes. Banana Point is the obvious place to change currency. Banana Point is also the site of the Congo's key telegraph station for contacts with ships at sea and much of the outside world.

The Belgian Franc was devalued in 1926 and subsequently tied to the British Pound Sterling (£). This produced the following rough exchange rates:

£1 = 175 Fr. = \$5
\$1 = 35 Fr.

By 1931, the U.S. Dollar had appreciated in relation to the Sterling, which produced the following rough exchange rates:

£1 = 175 Fr. = \$4
\$1 = 43.75 Fr.

In 1935, the Belgian Franc was again devalued, this time by 28%. As a consequence, investigators who visit the Congo several times over the decades are likely to find that everything is getting cheaper, with the possible exception of human lives. Belgian Congo saw much improvement and development from the late 1920s onwards.

From 1927, bank notes existed in denominations of 5, 20, 50, 100, 500, 1,000, and 10,000 Francs. Coins

of nickel existed in the form of 50 Centimes and 1 and 2 Francs. A few older coins of lower denominations may still have been in use in backwaters such as the Congo.

For the purposes of this scenario, however, the currency employed is of little consequence. Belgian currency is in any case only used in the settled areas. The natives that the expedition will encounter away from the towns seldom if ever use currency. A selection of trade goods will be far more useful for those who wish to purchase something. Metal knives are particularly viable means of payment.

The next stop, following Banana Point, would in the early days usually have been Boma, about 54 miles (87 km) upriver. Boma was the capital of Belgian Congo from 1886 to 1926. However, by the 1920s the port of Matadi, a further 44 miles (70 km) upriver, had developed as the main port of the colony, since it was the last stop on the way up the Congo which could be reached by ocean-going vessels.

While a large number of native languages and dialects are used in Belgian Congo, the common language of administration and commerce is French. However, quite a few Scandinavians, Germans, English, and Americans have also chosen to make a living in Belgian Congo, either as traders or as officials of the Belgian colonial administration, so among whites at least it should not be overly difficult to find somebody who can speak a language known to the investigators.

Plans for the Return Flight

Having concluded work at the site of the cannibals, the then current situation will obviously affect how the expedition may return home. Nonetheless, the navigator will have made some plans in advance. Unless the expedition chooses to return the same way it came, it might this time, when the destination is better known, be easier to fly home by way of East Africa and Europe. It will still be necessary to follow landmarks recognizable from the air, however, since maps of the African interior are not yet fully reliable. Rivers, railroads, and the seashore will be relied upon for guidance.

- Day 1: Flight to Kisumu, British Kenya (about 7 hours of flight, depending on how difficult it will be to find the place—a significant issue when flying over unknown wilderness).
- Day 2: Flight to Nairobi, British Kenya (5.2 hours of flight).
- Day 3: To Mogadishu, Italian Somaliland (9.8 hours of flight).

- Day 4: To Aden, in the Arabian peninsula but under British rule (16.3 hours of flight)
- Day 5: To Port Sudan, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (9.8 hours of flight).
- Day 6: To Port Said, Egypt (9.8 hours of flight).
- Day 7: To Valletta, British Malta (14.6 hours of flight).
- Day 8: To British Gibraltar (14.6 hours of flight).
- Day 9: To Lisbon, Portugal (3.8 hours of flight).
- Day 10: To Horta, Portuguese Azores (13.3 hours of flight).
- Day 11: To Trepassey, Newfoundland, Canada (18.1 hours of flight).
- Day 12: To Arkham (12.4 hours of flight).

Public Means of Transportation in Belgian Congo

Although of no relevance to this particular scenario, it would of course also be possible to travel by sea to the Congo. The way chosen depends on the level of luxury desired and the speed needed. Comfortable liners would leave for Cape Town, South Africa. From New York, the trip costs about \$500 (\$1,500 for first-class passage) and takes 12 days. These liners would never make a stop-over in the Congo, however. Less luxurious but still first-rate liners depart from Europe, in particular from Anvers (Antwerp) in Belgium, from which they sail straight to Matadi in Belgian Congo. Passage would cost from 16,000 Fr., and the trip would take no less than 15 days. One could also travel with a cargo ship (not a passenger liner) from New York, and at times New Orleans, to Matadi. This would cost between \$425 and \$525, depending on the ship, and take no less than 15 days. Such a ship has capacity for only a limited number of passengers and has limited facilities.

From Cape Town, ships are available that take passengers to Banana Point at the mouth of the Congo. There would usually be such a ship, bound for various ports on Africa's west coast, every day. The trip might cost £16, depending on the vessel used, and takes about 9 days from Cape Town to Banana Point. These vessels normally do not enter the Congo River.

River steamers run from Banana Point to Boma and Matadi. A steamer would usually leave every day. It takes no less than 7 hours to reach Boma and a further 5 hours to reach Matadi. The trip costs about 50 Fr. for a white passenger and 15 Fr. for steerage passage, for passengers of color.

Between Matadi and Léopoldville is a series of major falls or cataracts, which makes the river unnavigable for steamers. One can go by train (1st

class, 915 Fr.; 2nd class, 458 Fr.; 3rd class, 152 Fr. for a one-way ticket to Léopoldville), which takes 11 hours. There is one train per day, departing Matadi at 6.45 a.m. A single passenger can also rent a private airplane with pilot (prices vary widely, roughly 2,000 Fr. per trip). Aircraft came early to the Congo, the first flight took place already on 18 November 1912. The flight from Matadi will take about two hours. A third option is to go by private car or public bus, which costs 105 Fr. and takes two days, stopping at night in a native village.

By the 1920s, modern means of transportation had reached Belgian Congo. Inland travel was by no means safe, however, and a river steamer was usually preferred whenever possible. A river steamer would take no less than 11 or 12 days to traverse the distance upriver from Léopoldville to Stanleyville. The return trip downriver is faster, but still takes from 8 to 9 days. Steamer departures were infrequent, and the traveler would usually have to wait for a departure, sometimes for several weeks even on this frequent route. A one-way ticket to Stanleyville would cost 2,688 Fr. upriver, and 1,512 Fr. downriver. In addition, a cost for meals would be charged of typically 160 Fr. per day. However, driving overland was dangerous, and native guides would usually be needed.



The Curtiss F-5L Flying Boat

The Model F-5L flying boat was a unique collaboration. It traced its origin back to the Curtiss America flying boat first designed by Glenn Curtiss and John Cyril Porte for the planned transatlantic crossing of 1914. Lieutenant Commander Porte, formerly of the British Royal Naval Air Service, had hoped to participate in the crossing. However, upon the outbreak of the Great War he returned to Britain where he rejoined the Royal Naval Air Service. With

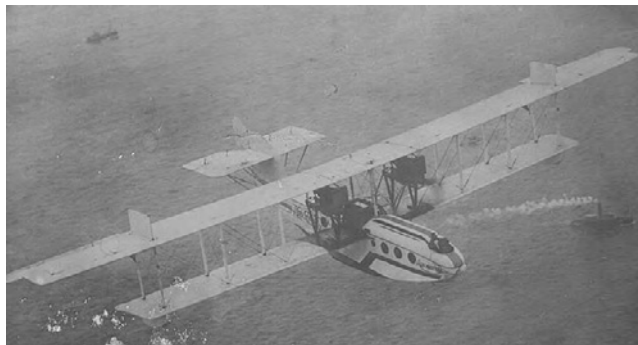
his support, the Curtiss flying boats were made more suitable for wartime operations over the North Sea.

The result was the F series of flying boats, built in Britain for military use. Their main targets during the war were German submarines and Zeppelins. In Britain, the F5 relied on the 345 hp Rolls-Royce Eagle engine. However, Curtiss F5 flying boats built in the Americas (at the Naval Aircraft Factory at Philadelphia; Canadian Aeroplanes Ltd of Toronto; and Curtiss Aeroplane and Motor Corporation of Long Island, New York, respectively) used 400 hp Liberty engines, which explains the American designation of F-5L.

The Curtiss used for the Congo expedition was purchased as surplus from the U.S. Navy for \$6,000. Many were sold as surplus in the 1920s, with prices ranging from \$6,000 to \$9,000.

Curtiss F-5L Flying Boat Aircraft and Flight Characteristics

Wingspan:	103 ft. 9¼ in. (31.63 m.)
Length:	49 ft. 3¼ in. (15.03 m.)
Height:	18 ft. 9¼ in. (5.73 m.)
Wing Area:	1,397 sq. ft. (128.78 sq. m.)
Engines:	2× 400 hp Liberty 12A twelve-cylinder Vee-type
Empty Weight:	8,720 lb. (3,959 kg)
Take-off Weight:	13,600 lb. (6,169 kg)
Maximum Speed:	90 mph (145 kph) at sea level
Cruise Speed:	77 mph (124 kph)
Stall Speed:	67 mph (108 kph)
Maximum Range:	1,470 miles (2,365 km)
Climb to 2,200 ft.:	10 minutes
Operational Ceiling:	5,500 ft. (1,676 m)
Crew:	3-4

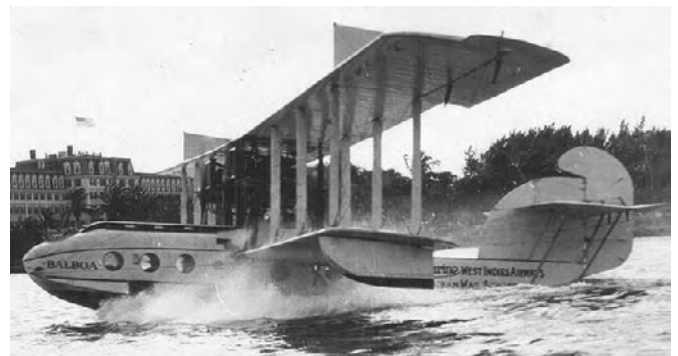


Curtiss F-5L Flying Boat

Keeper's Note

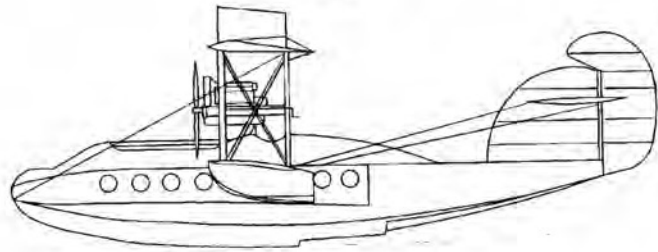
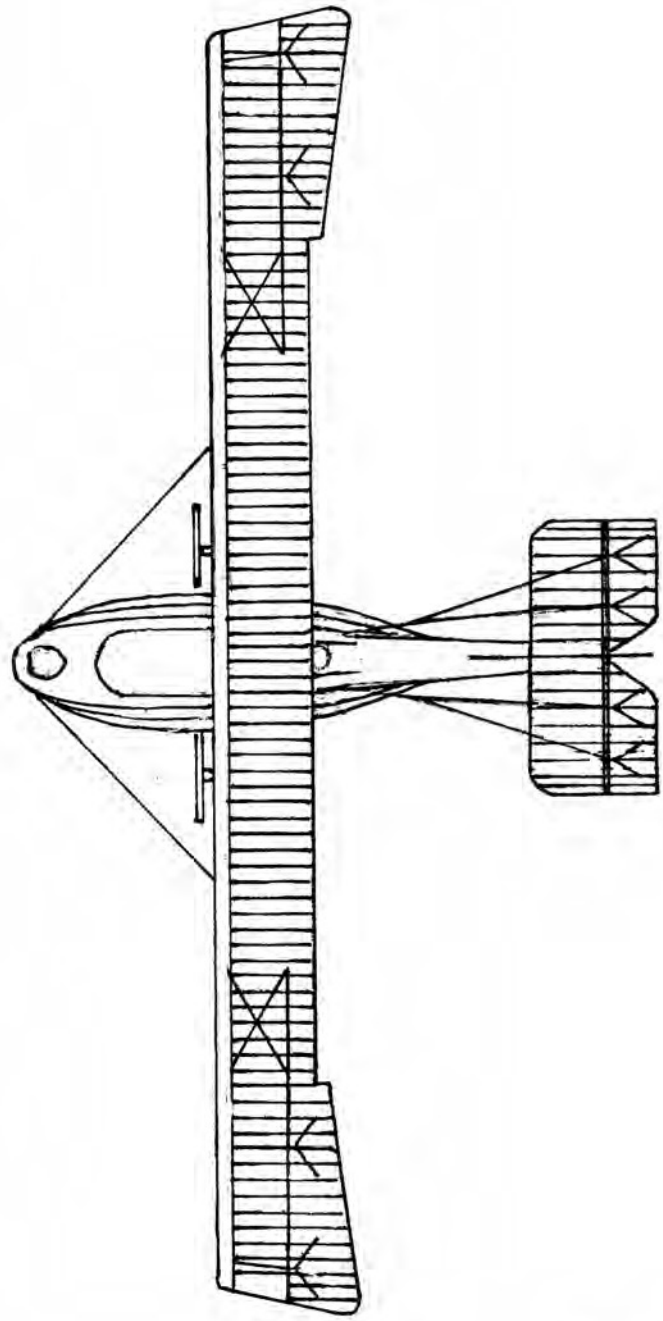
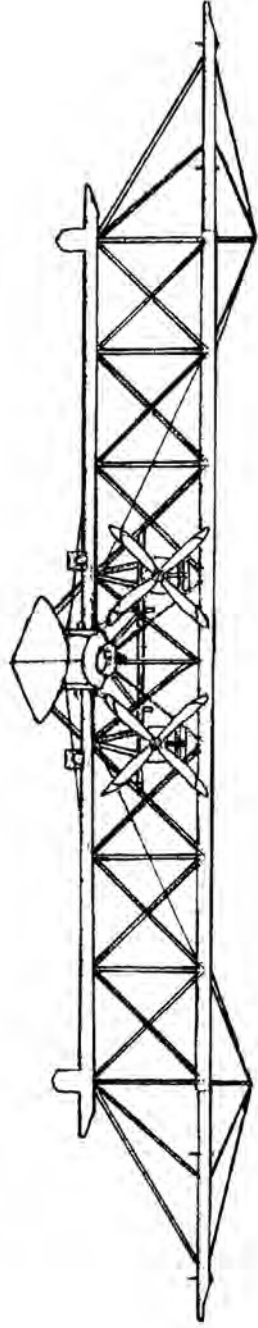
To enhance the dramatic aspects of air flight during the Congo expedition, the Curtiss flying boat should be treated in almost as detailed a manner as any non-player character.

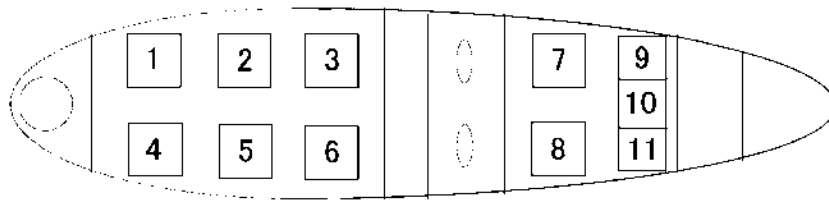
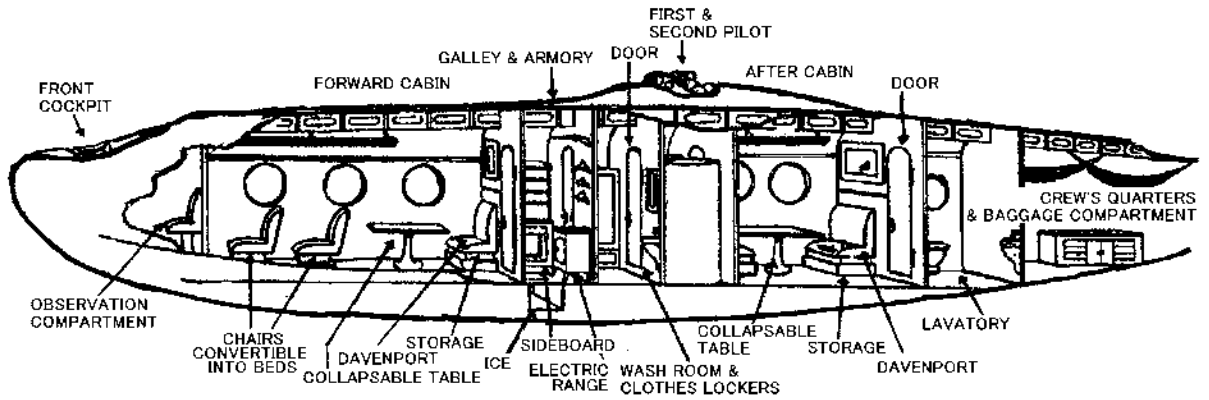
The pilot may indeed regard the flying boat as real a personality as any of the people onboard. The flying boat should develop its own personality. Perhaps the engine will always stutter immediately after take-off. There may be constant trouble with oil leaks. Or the altitude meter will develop some quirk, for instance by always indicating an altitude of 300 feet regardless of actual altitude. A truly eccentric Keeper may even choose to endow the flying boat with some kind of spiritual possession. If so, do not let this aspect of the scenario dominate the series of adventures. It is sufficient if, say, the flying boat develops an aversion towards any investigator who insults it verbally, for instance by calling it ugly or slow. The offending person will then suffer frequently from small and insignificant but still unexpected events such as oil spills on his gear or oddly stuck doors whenever he or she is to embark or disembark.



Taking off!







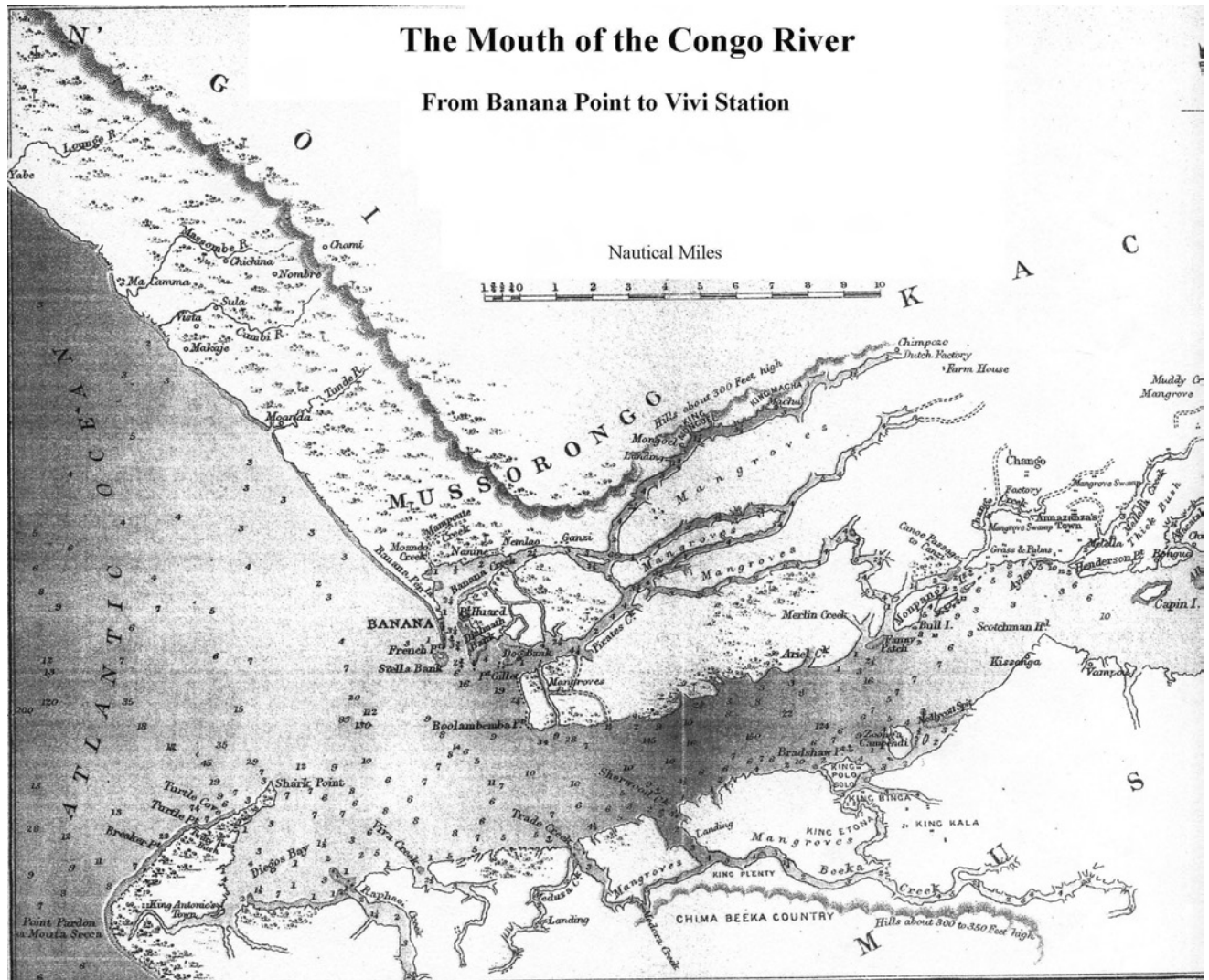
Interior arrangements of the Curtiss flying boat. The large tank below the pilots contain gasoline and oil



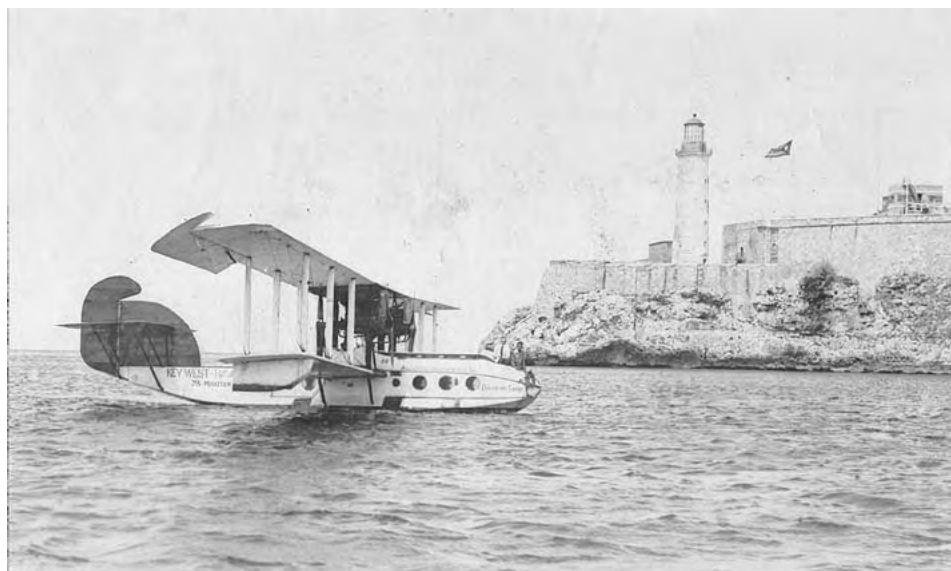
The flight to the Congo!



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For a continuation of this map, see a later chapter



Belgian Congo

Summary: This chapter provides background information on the Congo and the Congolese. It can be made available to the players in its entirety (with the possible exception of the short passage on Mythos history).

The Unexplored Central Africa

Africa is an enormous continent. It is almost as large as North America and Europe combined. It is nearly twice as large as South America. Few people realize this, since not that many people ever visit Africa. Besides, the African continent appears quite small on most maps of the world due to peculiarities of the Mercator projection on which these maps are based. The central region of Africa is covered in vast, equatorial rainforests. This is the drainage basin of the Congo River, which encompasses one-tenth of the African continent. The damp, dark Central African rainforest forms a unified geographical and climatic entity that is nearly half the size of the continental United States. The human inhabitants of the enormous Congo basin, by the 1920s less than 14 million in number, are mostly gathered in villages along the banks of the great river and its tributaries that flow through the jungle. Huge areas of the great expanse of the rainforest remain unexplored. Even major rivers remain poorly surveyed, unless they are important for the exploitation and transportation of raw materials.

The Congo River

The interior of Africa had become a place of darkness. But there was in it one river especially, a mighty big river, that you could see on the map, resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest curving afar over a vast country, and its tail lost in the depths of the land.

Joseph Conrad

When the Portuguese reached the mouth of the Congo River in 1483, it was called Nzadi (“great water”) by the native Bakongo tribe. Hence the newcomers named the river Zaire. With a length of 2,900 miles (4,700 kilometres), the Congo is according to some calculations the fourth largest river in the world and, in Africa, second only to the Nile in length. Judged by its flow of waters, the Congo is second only to the Amazon. The Congo twists like a giant snake through the very heart of Africa. The Congo and its many tributaries form Africa’s largest network of navigable waterways. However, a series of cataracts over the lower course of the river means that

the Congo is unnavigable between the seaport of Matadi at the Congo estuary and Stanley Pool (Mpumbu; Stanley Pool was after independence renamed Malebo Pool), from which inland navigation departs. Despite its great capacity for sea transport, there is thus no way to bring ocean vessels deeper into the Congo than to Matadi. The early Portuguese explorers indeed called the cataracts beyond Matadi the Cauldron of Hell. To overcome this barrier, a railway between Matadi and Léopoldville (following independence renamed Kinshasa), since 1926 the capital of Belgian Congo and located on Stanley Pool, was opened in 1898.

The Congo is a very old river, which has retained its main channel across time ever since Precambrian times, that is, no less than 570 million years ago (a conservative estimate) and quite possibly even earlier, when sediments began to accumulate and formed dry land in the region that now constitutes the Congo basin, which is often referred to as the *cuvette* (French for “shallow bowl; basin”). The Congo basin has remained tectonically stable since it was formed between 3.6 and 2.0 billion years ago. Moreover, the Congo basin is known to have existed as dry land ever since the existence of the earliest known supercontinent, by modern science called Rodinia. This continent, which incidentally was not known to have existed in the 1920s, began to split apart about 750 million years ago and it seems likely that a Congo River of sorts was in existence already by then. The Congo may possibly be the oldest river on the planet.

In Mythos terms, this means that the Congo basin was more than a billion years old even when the elder things settled on Earth. The Congo River was in place already when the mysterious flying polyps arrived on Earth about the time when Rodinia split apart, and had already been in existence for hundreds of millions of years when the upstart Cthulhu and his spawn seeped down on Earth about 350 million years ago. When the serpent people created their famed First Empire about 275 million years ago, they did so in the very land that now is called the Congo basin. When the main, northern part of their territory eventually was submerged beneath the waves of what would become the Mediterranean, the Congo basin yet stayed on as it had been. And thus it has remained ever since, the abode of creatures and plants that rose, changed, evolved over the aeons of time but itself remaining constant, unchanging. Even the climate of the Congo basin changed but little over the aeons, since the



land always was situated on or close to the equator and never suffered glaciation or extreme temperatures. The species of trees and plants that currently constitute the Congo rainforest are old too, in most cases having been there, unchanged and unchallenged, for more than sixty million years.

To describe the Congo River, we will begin at its upstream origin. The Upper Congo is characterized by confluences of tributaries, lakes, and waterfalls or rapids. The tributaries cut a series of gorges, the most dangerous of which is the Portes d'Enfer (Gates of Hell) at Kongolo, where the hitherto placid Lualaba River breaks through a gorge half a mile deep and a hundred yards wide. Several streams of approximately the same size join to form the Congo. In little more than sixty miles, the upper Lualaba joins first the Luvua, then the Lukuga, to become the Congo. The Upper Congo, despite being a mile wide, can only be navigated by vessels of low tonnage. Many stretches are in constant danger of being overgrown by vegetation, particularly the water hyacinth. Real possibilities to navigate the Congo begin only at Stanleyville, just downstream of the Stanley Falls, a series of seven cataracts. This forms the beginning of the Middle Congo, which flows steadily for more than a thousand miles to within 22 miles (35 km) of Léopoldville. While the river's course is at first narrow, it soon grows wider, from which point numerous islands occur in midstream. The Congo thus divides into several arms, separated by strings of islands. The width of the Congo increases first to more than three and a half, then from five to seven or even eight miles. Flooded areas cannot always be easily distinguished from the rain swamps between the river and its tributaries. Eventually the width of the river shrinks again, to at most a mile, the current becomes rapid, and water flow increases. The Ikelemba River, almost as wide as the Congo itself, joins the Congo slightly upriver of Coquilhatville. Its water has the color of black tea, while the water in the Congo is grey-brown. The two distinct water streams eventually mix, but only 125 miles (200 km) from the inflow, which gives the lower reaches of the Congo its light brown color. Stanley Pool marks the end of the Middle Congo. The Lower Congo begins immediately downstream of Stanley Pool, with a series of cataracts and rapids. Downstream from these rapids, the Congo's long estuary begins at Matadi, which can be reached by ocean-going vessels, although the river divides into several arms and strings of islands that make navigation difficult. The age and power of the river is such that the course of the Congo actually continues offshore, beyond the estuary's mouth, as a deep underwater canyon no less than 125 miles (200 km) long.

Three types of natural environment can be found along the Congo and its tributaries: the narrow sections of the river, bordered by firm ground; the wide stretches of the river, dotted with islands and accompanied by backwaters; and extensive marshes where flooding regularly occurs. Since the Congo twice crosses the equator, there is always a rainy season somewhere along its path. Floods accordingly take place at regular but not always predictable intervals, especially so since so many tributaries from widely different climate zones flow into the Congo. The water level often varies considerably. Generally speaking, water is at maximum level in May and December, while July and March-April generally find it at low level until the water flowing down from the north arrives in August. Annual fluctuations may alter water level drastically as floodwaters from different tributaries coincide with each other or, in other years, arrive at separate times.

By the 1920s, most tributaries of the Congo remain fundamentally unexplored. Even the reasonably safe, main channel of the Congo often remains hard to identify among its many tributaries for any but the most experienced river captain.

The Rainforest

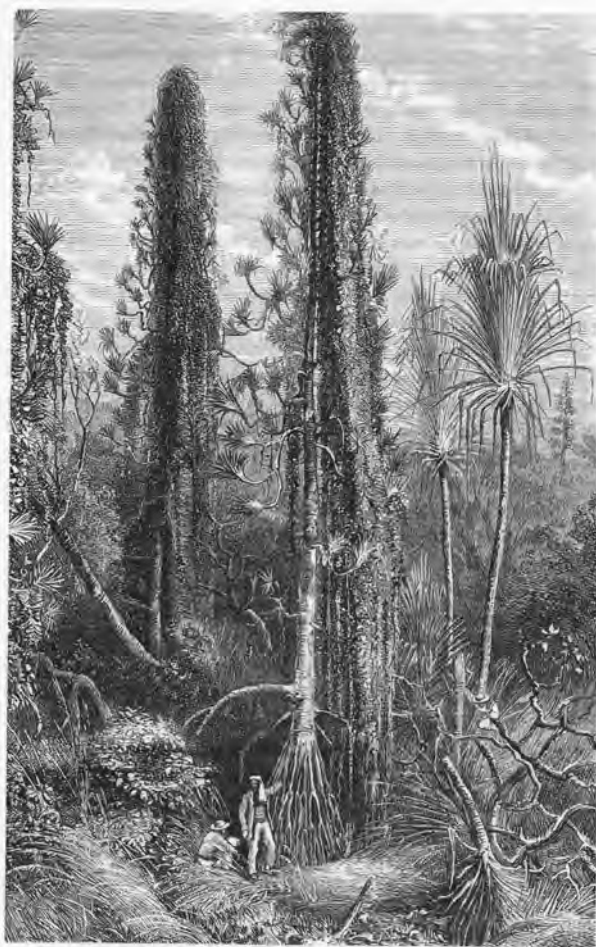
The rainforest is a formidable environment. The air is damp and steaming due to the tropical heat, water is constantly dripping, above you and wherever you can see are gigantic water-laden trees that never dry out, violent storms come with monotonous regularity, and the sound of animals, birds, and above all insects never die.

Yet, rainforest comes in two, quite different varieties. Mature, primary rainforest is characterized by dimly lit but fairly open terrain below vast and impenetrable tree canopies. The dense leafy canopies of the tall, huge trees block out the sky and shuts out the daylight, thus preventing the undergrowth from growing too tangled. Little grows on the dark, gloomy forest floor, which usually consists of greyish black soil covered with similarly colored, decaying fragments of leaves and plant life that has fallen from above. The vast bulk of the canopy ensures that dew is perpetually dripping to the ground below, but little light will penetrate that far. Any traveller will within minutes find his or her clothes heavily saturated with dew—and with perspiration exuded from every pore, because the atmosphere under the wide-spreading canopy is stifling and clammy. The air is humid and fetid, dampness penetrates everything, indeed whatever plants you see always remain moist from the perpetual dew.

Then there is the comparatively younger, secondary rainforest, far more difficult to walk in. Since many parts of Central Africa in fact have had a fairly dense human population for centuries, generations upon generations of natives have cleared trees, then allowed them to go into

long fallow, only to be followed by new clearings and again periods of extended fallow. Such a secondary rainforest is characterized by less dense canopies but extensive, truly tangled undergrowth, which produces a nearly impenetrable mass of vines and bushes along with tall and medium-sized trees. Secondary rainforest often lets in the light from the sun. The forest then glows with ethereal light, producing odd effects such as suddenly turning electric white, then moments later turning metallic in color, with every leaf and even the falling rain appearing in shivering tones of silver. Yet later, the rainforest may appear the color of indigo blue ink diluted in water, or even shift into the deep red shades of apparent fire.

Despite the typical feeling of humid and fetid warmth exuded by rotting vegetation, rainforests of either type feel chilly at night and in the early morning. Only the rising sun, at best seen as pale light seeping through the canopy in early morning, will burn away the morning chill and the clinging, damp mist. Yet, the perpetual dripping water never allows a feeling of anything but dampness. The rainforest is a land of humidity and mist-like steam.



The chief feature of the rainforest is its trees. There are trees everywhere. Many, in mature rainforests most, are huge. The gigantic baobab and the slim bamboo are only a few of the numerous species that exist in the Congolese jungles. Many trees are old and indeed enormous in size, with trunks forty feet (12 m) in diameter or more. In the primeval mature rainforest, most trees rise two hundred feet (60 m) overhead. There are curtains of grey moss, creepers, and lianas, long vine-like growths that rope their way up along and around the trees. These hang down in a tangle from the tall, voluminous trees. Among them can be found the rubber liana, often used to add further to the profits of exploitation. From the trunks of the huge trees sprout orchids, living on them as beautiful, colorful parasites, among the more subdued mosses and lichens that hang from them as well. The perpetual murky green darkness of the rainforest is also broken by other dashes of color, from the deadly poisonous red acanthena blossoms and the blue dicindra vine, which only opens in early morning and only for a brief period. The entire jungle is permeated by a smell of rotting vegetation. Then there is the blueish grey mold, covering aged tree trunks and young vines and lianas alike. There is underbrush as well, including aloes and huge ferns, growing higher than a man's chest and gleaming with moisture from the perpetually dripping water from the canopy high above. Even when the sun has risen high in the sky, fog will remain near the ground, held in position by the moist ferns. In large part due to this perpetual gloom, the rainforest looks alien and inhuman. It is dim and monochrome. Even the natives fear it; with the single exception of the enigmatic pygmies, the survivors of times past and terrifying.

Near the villages are significantly different species of vegetation, including fruit trees, banana trees, cotton plants, and coffee bushes. Some species were introduced by man, from Brazil. This, unlike the rainforest, is the world of men, not spirits and wild animals. It is hardly surprising that few Congolese but the pygmies ever voluntarily go into the rainforest. They prefer to live on whatever farming and fishing will provide.

For that reason, large animals are seldom seen near the settlements, except in the river which is the habitat of crocodiles, hippopotamuses, semi-aquatic tortoises, and a seemingly unlimited number of species of water snakes, all poisonous to man. There are even manatees, a species referred to as a fish by the natives and in the time of the old Kongo kingdom reserved for the king's table. The river contains numerous species of fish, including the black catfish. Wildlife usually consists of small carnivores such as civets and servals, two kinds of felines; chimpanzees, colobus monkeys; honey badgers; elephant shrews; and tiny tusked antelopes. Gorillas can be found in remote areas, but they avoid humans and most humans stay away from them. Birds include parrots,

storks, ibises, and fishing eagles, among many others. Insects are everywhere: mosquitoes, centipedes, spiders, and beetles of a large number of species are only the most obvious.

Most river peoples engage in fishing. Some use fish traps attached to stakes or dams built in the rapids. Others, especially the Ngombe (“water people”) who live in the vast marshlands, fish by using poison. They also cultivate cassava, often on land sheltered from flooding by raised dikes of sometimes monumental size, as well as occasionally sweet potatoes, bananas, and yams. These are farmed by other Congolese as well. None but pygmies wants to live in the rainforests, and certain parts of the Congo basin consist of more savannah-like terrain.

Native food in the Congo is spicy, not sweet. In addition to various meats and fish, beans, yams, pumpkins, and tubers of different kinds as well as a large variety of fruits including oranges, lemons, and bananas are commonly eaten. As for drinks, the Congolese consume mainly water and palm wine (*malafu*). Other alcoholic drinks include corn beer, sugar cane wine, and pineapple wine. But the Congolese often also consume caterpillars, insects, termites, savannah rats, snakes, and other small creatures unpalatable to the Western explorer. Those who have no other food, but also, curiously enough, a number of Congolese gourmets who wish to aid their indigestion after a heavy meal, even engage in geophagy, by eating the soil of termites’ nests.

The Old Kongo Kingdom

Little is known of the Congo River before the Portuguese under Diogo Cão reached the mouth of the Congo in 1483. The ancient Egyptians and after them, the Phoenicians, knew of the rainforest, however, which their traders had first reached by following the Nile towards its origin far to the south. This was a land of trees, a dark and strange place with forests so dense that the sunlight failed to penetrate them and each day was as dark as night.

The land of trees was inhabited by strange creatures, as reported by explorers of various nationalities. Among them were animals half black and half white (presumably the okapi, the short-necked forest giraffe which only again attracted Western attention in 1890 when Henry Morton Stanley mentioned the creature in his book *In Darkest Africa*) and little men with tails, no doubt a reference to the enigmatic pygmies who inhabited these rainforests long before the negro Bantu tribes first dared to enter them and who were traditionally dressed in pounded-bark loincloths which hang down and look like tails.

The pygmies were certainly the earliest human inhabitants of the rainforest. Although encountered

already by the ancient explorers, such as the Egyptian official Harkhuf who brought a pygmy to Old Kingdom Egypt already in the 23rd century BC, knowledge of them subsequently became entangled with myths. Rumor said that they could fly through the trees, make themselves invisible, and despite their diminutive size, kill elephants. When skeletons of chimpanzees eventually reached European eyes, these were at times mistaken for those of pygmies. Yet several of the legends were true: the pygmies have a well-deserved reputation of blending into the forest so as to appear invisible, and they do hunt and kill elephants. They are also said to hunt and kill the enigmatic *mokele-mbembe*, the dinosaur-like survival in the Congo of which more below.



Pygmies

When Diogo Cão reached the Congo River in 1483, the territory was already since about a century under the control of the powerful Kongo kingdom of the Bakongo people. The Portuguese expedition, which had hoped to ascend the river and so reach the Nile, never got further than what is now Matadi. The river soon grew too narrow for any ships, and worst was the stretch named the Cauldron of Hell, where the Portuguese gave up. Realizing the usefulness of trade links with Europe, the Kongo kings from Afonso I Nzinga Mvemba (r. 1509–c.1542) onwards, soon adopted the trappings of Christianity and European civilization. Christianity was adopted as a source of *ngolo*, or power, and as a means to reinforce central monarchical power over the vast territory conquered by the Bakongo kings. In fact, upon taking the throne, the king had to demonstrate in a symbolic manner that he had renounced all family ties. This was done through ceremonial murder of some of his family; the king “buried” his lineage as a display of royal power. But the Kongo kings did not have the means to keep their vast territories and frequently very mobile population together. Their capital, named São Salvador, thus became the anchor, with its cathedral, tombs of dead kings, and other religious sites, of the Kongo kingdom. It was fought over, occupied, and reoccupied time and time again during the seventeenth-century civil wars. It was easier to move one’s armies

and their families than to conquer territory. It was even easier to enrich oneself by enslaving and moving entire populations than conquering territory held by rival kings. In fact, the well-established Kongo slave markets became a major source of slaves for Portuguese traders and other European powers. Most of the slaves exported were war captives of the Kongo kingdom's many wars of expansion.

The violence engaged in by the Kongo kings and its effects (which with the single exception of the slave markets would not have been out of place in contemporary Europe) should not detract from the fact that they made great achievements, even as seen in a European perspective. In 1506, King Afonso I sent two young relatives, Henrique and Rodrigo, as the first of many to Lisbon to study. The first, Dom Henrique, eventually became bishop of Utica (in 1518), and another, Dom Afonso, in time became a professor and head of a school for the humanities in Lisbon. King Afonso I sent a first embassy to Rome in 1513. By 1516, the capital of São Salvador had schools in which the sons of noblemen learnt not only to read and write in Portuguese and Latin but studied the humanities and Catholicism as well. There were also schools for girls, under the control of the king's sister, and some schools were established in the provinces as well. Various fruits and plants were introduced from Brazil. Muskets were introduced into the Kongo army. A number of Portuguese settled in the kingdom, under Kongo laws, and became a part of the population. By the 1580s, the Kongo army even included a musketeer corps manned by local Portuguese and their mixed-race offspring.

However, vast areas of the Congo basin remained ruled by other warrior peoples. One warlike group was the Imbangala, often described as a militaristic sect. In the early seventeenth century, Imbangala marauders, based in temporary armed camps under local warlords south of the Kongo kingdom, made a living from pillaging. When one area no longer could sustain their looting, they moved on to another. According to some reports, they killed any children born in their camp through exposure and instead forced captive adolescents to serve in their army. Loyalty was enforced among the new recruits by rituals in which they had to kill and eat people. Infanticide, cannibalism, human sacrifices, and torture characterised the laws under which the Imbangala were said to live. (The similarity to many modern Central African militia groups is only too striking.)

The kingdom of Kongo eventually went the way of most other conquest kingdoms. One key Portuguese interest in Kongo was the expectation that the country would contain vast deposits of gold. However, the Portuguese abandoned their attempts at prospecting in 1667 and most Portuguese withdrew from the country,

which then since long suffered from frequent and recurring civil wars. At about the same time, the capital of São Salvador was abandoned. The kingdom of Kongo had long been waning, and now decline was terminal. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, any form of political unity of the Kongo had collapsed. The former kingdom fell into a long period of wars between different pretenders, provinces, and tribes. Europeans stayed away, or died soon after arrival. In 1816, a British naval officer, Captain James Kingston Tuckey (1776–1816), led an expedition up the Congo, but he failed to penetrate more than 130 miles (210 km) and his men were decimated by tropical diseases. Many died, including in the end Captain Tuckey himself.

Stanley and the Congo Free State

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, it was said that in the Congo, there was no longer a single Christian, although a few remaining crosses were worshipped as pagan idols. There was also no unified kingdom, not of the Bakongo nor of any other tribe.

The heart of the Dark Continent was ripe for exploration, and exploitation, by white men. Among those who at this time went into the Congo basin, the most remarkable explorer was Henry Morton Stanley (1841–1904), a Welshman by birth and first known as James Rowlands. Even more extraordinary was that he was a journalist, not a traditional empire-builder. In his early years, he went to the United States, became an American citizen, and worked for the *New York Herald*. It was this newspaper that in 1869 first ordered him to Africa, with instructions to locate the missing Scottish missionary David Livingstone (1813–1873). Stanley's search in Africa took the better part of a year, but in 1871 he did find Livingstone—and wrote articles and a book about his discovery.

In 1876, King Leopold II of Belgium (r. 1865–1909), who was eager to acquire an African colony, called a geographical conference in his capital Brussels to examine the African situation, and, as he expressed it, “to open to civilization the only part of our globe where Christianity has not penetrated and to pierce the darkness which envelops the entire population.” This eventually led to the formation of the International Association of the Congo, under his personal control, which he soon came to use to great effect.

By then, rivalry among the colonial powers was at its height. Each great power had sent exploration parties that pushed inland into the African continent from the coasts, which were better known and more easily controlled. It was in many ways a free-for-all, with frequent conflicts between opposing expeditions. To resolve these differences, and to introduce certain rules on how to share the African continent, in 1884 a conference was called in Berlin. The parties there

approved a resolution to the effect that each nation should notify the others of its plans for colonization and at the same time outline the territories within which it proposed to operate. The 1885 Berlin Congress also recognized the rights of King Leopold's International Association of the Congo, which gave King Leopold *carte blanche* in exploring and taking control of the central part of the Congo basin. In the same way, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Portugal laid claims to other territories of the African continent. Only two African countries remained free of colonial rule: Abyssinia and Liberia.



Henry Morton Stanley

The Congo may have been ripe for the taking, but somebody would have to do it. For this purpose, King Leopold contacted Stanley and asked him to become his agent in the Congo. The latter gladly accepted, and in the years 1879 and 1880 explored and laid claim to vast territories in the Congo on behalf of King Leopold and his International Association of the Congo. Further exploration took place under other adventurers of various origin in the following years. Both the Berlin Congress and subsequent legislation passed by the Belgian Parliament agreed that the Congo should be the personal property of King Leopold. A new State of the Congo, named the Congo Free State, was then established under the King, and this was united to Belgium in a union that was exclusively personal. King Leopold retained personal control of his African territory until 1908. The term "Free" in the name of the new state signified the free trade that the Berlin Agreement obliged King Leopold to establish for the benefit of all nations who wished

to trade there. However, the King managed to evade this condition through awarding territorial concessions for rubber extraction to a number of private companies, some of which were mere fronts for King Leopold himself. Having made considerable personal investments in setting up a colonial administration in the Congo, King Leopold ruthlessly exploited the interior forest regions of the territory's natural resources, mostly rubber, to amass substantial private wealth—which he eventually squandered, falling into severe debt in the process.

The Force Publique

Like any new country, the Congo Free State found that it had to form an army. Although following the explorations of Stanley reasonably well known, the Congo remained under the physical control of various tribes, slavers, and—a particular menace—a strong Arab presence on the Aruwimi and Lomami. The latter were heavily involved in the slave-trade and had perpetrated appalling atrocities even as judged by the usual standards of the Congo.

A new Congo army was accordingly formed in 1886 by a Captain Roget. Men both black and white arrived from all corners of the world to sign up for service with the *Force Publique*, as the new army came to be called. The whites came from almost every country in Europe, although most were Belgians, Scandinavians, Swiss, and Italians, while the blacks were primarily Hausas from English-speaking West Africa, both from independent Liberia and the British colonies. Early on, the force also included Zanzibari and Somali mercenaries. Although most African mercenaries were later replaced by Congolese conscripts, much of the original mercenary ethos remained. There was always a shortage of officers, which helps to explain the new armed force's rapidly acquired reputation for harsh discipline and brutality, in particular towards the civilian population.

In fact, cannibalism in the Congo region may have increased substantially as a result of the wars, famines, and other calamities of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Belgian *Force Publique*, led by European officers, employed many Batetela and other cannibal tribes. It was widely suspected at the time that the enlistment, if not the active encouragement, of cannibals was the unofficial policy of the *Force Publique*. This saved money on rations and served to spread terror among the force's enemies. The eating of the enemy dead not only served as a solution to the difficult supply situation of the *Force Publique* but was a deliberate means of spreading terror. This worked particularly well against the Congo Arabs, who controlled large territories of the Congo for the purposes of slave-collection, since they believed that they would enter paradise in the same

state as their bodies were left in on earth—and were thus horrified by the idea of being dismembered and eaten.

The *Force Publique* officers of course knew what was happening; however, in the words of one Lieutenant Oscar Michaux, “we have to pretend not to see it”. Thus, the cannibal battle-cry of *Nyam-Nyam!* (usually translated “Meat! Meat!” but probably onomatopoeic to describe the gnashing of the teeth) was often heard as the *Force Publique* moved in to pacify whichever tribe did not fulfil its quota of ivory or rubber deliveries. Once, in 1893, when then Commandant Francis Dhanis (1861–1909) finally regained control over his cannibal auxiliaries after two days of looting and ordered the enemy dead to be buried for fear of epidemics, the cannibals, at a loss, replied: “What enemy dead?”

The Congo Free State Becomes Belgian Congo

There was during this period no shortage of reports from the Congo on the sad state of affairs there, including widespread and frequently outrageous abuses including forced acquisitions of supplies, slave labor, and the outright slaughter of the native population by the soldiers of *Bula Matadi* (“Breaker of Rocks”), the name used by the natives for the colonial administration of King Leopold. It was not unusual for a local officer flogging mercilessly, without any legal justification, any individual Congolese who failed to comply with his wishes. Murder and mutilation were frequent punishments.

Even whites were not exempt from the risk of abuse; a British subject, a certain Charles Stokes, an ivory merchant settled in German East Africa, was in 1895 summarily hanged together with many of his native followers by a Belgian officer, Captain Hubert Joseph Lothaire, for the alleged selling of arms and ammunition to Arab slavers. To compound the matter, Stokes had been invited to the Belgian’s camp under circumstances that had appeared to be entirely social. The incident may have inspired the acclaimed semi-fictional novel, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, published in 1899. This novel, and a preceding similar short story by the same author, “An Outpost of Progress” (which Conrad himself judged the best of his works), published in 1898, revealed the Congo situation to a wider audience. Conrad, employed by the major Belgian trading firm Société Anonyme pour le Commerce du Haut-Congo, had in autumn 1890 made a voyage up the Congo River as captain of the steamer *Roi des Belges*. His literary works increased public interest in the reports of abuses and hellish conditions in the Congo.

Another source of information on the state of affairs in the Congo was the journalist Edward Dene Morel (1873–1924) who wrote several articles about the atrocities in the Congo Free State. Yet another was the British Consul, Roger Casement (1864–1916; knighted for his services to the Crown in 1911, hanged for treason in 1916 for his part in the Irish Easter Rising), who also witnessed the Congo first hand. Casement and Morel together formed the Congo Reform Association. In 1903, after the British House of Commons passed a resolution about the Congo, Casement was charged to make a formal inquiry into the situation there. This resulted in the 1904 Casement Report, forty pages of Parliamentary Papers to which is appended another twenty pages of individual statements collected by Casement, which detailed abuses in the Congo Free State including the killing, maiming, abduction, and beating of natives by soldiers of the Congo colonial administration. Copies of the Casement Report were sent by the British government to the Belgian government as well as to those nations signatory to the 1885 Berlin Agreement. The British Parliament demanded a meeting of the 14 signatory powers to review the Berlin Agreement. As a result, the Belgian Parliament forced King Leopold to set up an independent commission of enquiry. Its findings confirmed the Casement Report. This led to the arrest and punishment of several officials who had been responsible for the killing of natives during a rubber-collection expedition in 1903. Among those arrested was one Belgian who was given a five-year sentence for causing the shooting of at least 122 natives.



The Force Publique at dinner-time

Despite these findings, King Leopold retained control of the Congo until 1908 when the Belgian Parliament annexed the Congo Free State and took over its administration. The Congo Free State became Belgian Congo. Between 1910 and 1912 a number of reforms were initiated, particularly with regard to land ownership and native labor. Although much hardship remained, the



Congo was finally, or so it seemed at the time, moving away from its reputation as the hellhole of Africa. Missionary work intensified, and missionaries provided whatever education might be available. Railways were built, and a postal service and telegraphic communications were established, although by no means all or even most parts of the sparsely populated colony were so connected.

The progress that did take place also served to increase political awareness among the natives. As early as by 1920, the Bakongo, whose leaders had not quite forgotten the old Kongo kingdom, took the initiative in what in time would become a movement for independence. Laying claim to the title of king to establish continuity, in the aftermath of the Great War an independent and rejuvenated Kongo kingdom for a while seemed possible.

Yet, it was not only the Belgian colonial regime which caused sufferings. Roger Casement also noted that the Congo territory was “the home, or birthplace of the sleeping sickness—a terrible disease, which is, all too rapidly, eating its way into the heart of Africa ... The population of the Lower Congo has been gradually reduced by the unchecked ravages of this, as yet undiagnosed and incurable disease, and as one cause of the seemingly wholesale diminution of human life which I everywhere observed in the regions revisited, a prominent place must be assigned to this malady ... Communities I had formerly known as large and flourishing centers of population are today entirely gone.”

Tribal Groups and Languages

By the 1920s, the enormous territory of the Congo basin was not yet densely populated. The number of white settlers was negligible. The entire native population counted less than 14 million people, spread throughout the vast territory. They were divided into what is now believed to have been roughly three hundred tribes of widely different origin. By the 1920s, however, only about two hundred tribes were recognized as such, or even known.

Most indigenous languages in Belgian Congo belonged to the Bantu language group. Among those who spoke Bantu languages were the tribes known as the Bakongo, Bateke, Bakuba, Bashi, Baluba, Bayeke, Baboma, Badia, Basakata, Basongo, Bamfumu, Walese, Ngombe, Fang, Mongo, and others. Most of these tribal names begin with the prefix Ba- or Wa-, indicating plural (the singular form would be Mu-, not to be confused with Ki- which in this case signified the name of the language and not the tribe). Other tribes, which arrived more recently, spoke languages of Sudanic origin. Among these were, for instance, the Azande, Mangbetu, Ngbandi, and Walendu. Yet

others spoke Nilotic languages—the most recent African immigrants, including the Alur, Kakwa, Bari, Lugware, and Logo. There were also a few tribes that spoke languages that were described as of Hamitic origin, including the Watutsi.

Investigators who can speak one of these languages can communicate in other languages belonging to the same language group at one-quarter normal skill percentage.

There was no common spoken language among the natives in the Congo. Each native would usually know his own tribal language as well as those of the neighboring tribes. The Kikongo language, the language of the Bakongo tribe, perhaps came closest, being spoken as a *lingua franca* (and known as Fiote to confuse things) throughout the Lower Congo, from Stanley Pool to the mouth of the Congo and northwards along the coast to the Ogooué (or Ogowe) River. Kikongo was spoken in the interior of the country as well, as far as the territory of the Bateke and to the east, beyond the Kwango River.

Along the northern reaches of the Congo and in the north, another Bantu language named Lingala was widely spoken. This was the language of the Bangala (“river people”), and also was commonly spoken by the native troops of the *Force Publique*.

Further to the east and in the south, the language that a traveller might hope that somebody would understand was Kiswahili, which in the role of *lingua franca* was also known as Kingwana. This well-known East African trade language, also known simply as Swahili, belonged to the Bantu language group although it had numerous borrowings from Arabic as well since the original Kiswahili-speakers were of mixed ancestry with roots among both native Africans and Arab settlers. Kiswahili made inroads in the Congo basin due to the influx of Zanzibari slavers, as did the religion of Islam. These Arabicized groups were known as Congo Arabs or Bangwana and were characterised by Arab-influenced architecture and the use of long robes of the Arabic type. Investigators with a knowledge of Arabic can speak Kiswahili at a quarter of their Arabic skill and vice versa.

In the extreme south, the commonly spoken language was Kiluba or Tshiluba, the tribal language of the Baluba people, which in its role as *lingua franca* was called Kituba along the River Kasai.

The group of dialects used by the pygmies (*mbaka*) did not belong to any of these language groups. However, most pygmies communicated in the language of the main negro tribe of their area. They only used their own languages among themselves.

The pygmies were both feared and despised by negroes of Bantu origin. They were feared because they were believed to be “sons of the spirits”. They were known to be the earliest human occupants of the land. They represented creatures from primeval times and

knew powerful magic. In the rainforest, they were skilful and dangerous hunters of men and beasts. However, they were also despised by many because they had been pushed out of the most fertile lands by the later-arriving Bantu tribes. Many Congolese who due to the intervention of missionaries and Belgian colonialists said that they no longer would eat human flesh believed that pygmies still could be eaten, since they were not true humans.

There were no written African languages in Belgian Congo. For written messages, those few who had need of them relied on French or, in certain spots in the east of the Congo basin, Arabic.

Many Congolese names were of Portuguese origin, although adapted to the phonetic requirements of the Congo languages. Such names include Fusu or Funsu (from Afonso), Mbelenadu (from Bernardo), Mpetelo (from Pedro), Nzauu (from João), and for women, Kiditina (from Cristina) and Fineza (from Inès). However, Congolese names can for obvious reasons come from all language traditions of the region.

Although the complexities of the language situation of the Congo might seem insurmountable, quite a few European languages were known by individuals even in the most remote locations. Anybody who had served in the *Force Publique* would certainly know some French, and those who had had contact with any of the non-Belgian officers of the Congo administration or any foreign missionaries might well understand a few words of whatever language they had used, that is, very possibly English and perhaps even German, Italian, or plausibly one of the Scandinavian languages.

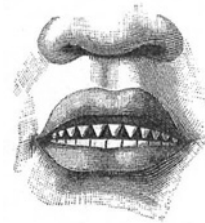
For the purpose of the Congo expedition described in this monograph, the most often encountered native languages would be Lingala and Kiswahili.

Cannibalism in the Congo

Although cannibalism was widespread in the Congo, different tribes had different customs and taste in flesh. Some were more than a little ghoulish in their tastes. The Bangala, for instance, regarded as special delicacies human flesh that had been buried for some days. They also enjoyed human blood boiled with manioc flour. Although the women of the tribe technically were forbidden to touch human flesh, they had found many ways of circumventing the taboo and were reported to be particularly addicted to human flesh extracted from graves and in an advanced state of decomposition.

In fact, many tribes enjoyed the flesh of bodies that had just been buried. Among them was the curious tribe of the Bamba, a half-breed tribe part pygmy, part Bantu and thus much smaller than average height. Their teeth were filed to sharp points.

It was indeed customary among the Congo cannibals to sharpen their teeth to a point. Such teeth were oddly enough referred to as “laughing teeth.” The practice was more an aesthetic requirement than the need for a mark of identity or initiatory obligation.



Laughing teeth

A large number of books have provided eyewitness accounts of cannibalism in the Congo. Here follow a few samples.

Captain Sidney Langford Hinde, formerly of the Congo Free State Force Publique, 1897

[S]ix of the crew were in irons on board the ship, whom the captain delivered up to justice at Bangala for having eaten two of their number during the voyage up to the Falls. I was not at the trial, but the captain told me that two of the crew had fallen ill on the upward voyage, and had been given a day or two's rest. On the next ration day these two were missing, and, upon making inquiries, the captain was informed that they had died in the night and had been buried on shore. This, however, did not satisfy him, and having his own suspicions he searched the ship, and discovered parts of the men smoke-dried, and hidden away in the lockers of the six Bangala, whom he was then handing over to the authorities.

Léopoldville, as the chief port of the Upper Congo, has large numbers of these Bangala constantly coming and going, and has, as a consequence, to keep a guard on the cemetery, several cases of body-snatching having been proved against them. This practice became at one time so inveterate that capital punishment had to be resorted to as the only means of putting it down.

The Bangala have themselves told me when, on shooting parties, I remonstrated with them for only breaking the wings and legs of the wounded game instead of killing it outright, that it was better to let the bird linger, as it made the flesh more tender. This led to conversation, in which they explained that, when at home and about to prepare a feast, the prisoner or slave who was to form the *piece de resistance* had always his arms and legs broken three days beforehand, and was then placed in a stream, or pool of water, chin-deep, with his head tied to a stick to prevent him committing suicide, or perhaps falling asleep and thus getting drowned. On the third day he was taken out and killed, the meat then being very tender. ...

That same week a young Basongo chief came to the Commandant while at his dinner in his tent, and asked for the loan of his knife, which, without thinking, the Commandant lent him. He immediately disappeared behind the tent and cut the throat of a little girl-slave belonging to him, and was in the act of cooking her, when one of our soldiers saw him, and reported what he was doing. This cannibal was put in irons, but some two months later I found him in such a wretched condition that, fearing he would die, I took him out of the chains, and gave him his liberty with a warning. Scarcely a fortnight had passed, when he was brought in by some of our Hausa soldiers, who said that he was eating the children in and about our cantonments. He had a bag slung round his neck, which on examining we found contained an arm and a leg of a young child. As three or four children had disappeared within the fortnight, and there had been no deaths amongst them in camp, this was at the trial considered sufficient evidence against him, and he was taken out and shot, as the only cure for such an incorrigible.

Shortly after this a number of the prisoners of war took to deserting, and, finding out in which direction they went, we demanded of the great chief of the district that they should be given up to us. He replied that, with the exception of one prisoner, they had all been eaten, and sent thirty-seven slaves in exchange. The one he returned proved to be a little boy-servant of mine who had been persuaded to run away by some of the deserters. By a lucky chance, however, he had found a friend in the village, and was the only one of the party not eaten. His descriptions of what he had seen at the time were quite sickening.

Prisoners or servants have often spoken to me in this manner: "We want meat; we know you have not enough goats and fowls to be able to spare us some, but give us that man [indicating one of their number]; he is a lazy fellow, and you'll never get any good out of him, so you may as well give him to us to eat." ...

So far as I have been able to discover, nearly all the tribes in the Congo Basin either are, or have been, cannibals; and among some of them the practice is on the increase. Races who until lately do not seem to have been cannibals, though situated in a country surrounded by cannibal races, have, from increased intercourse with their neighbours, learned to eat human flesh; for since the entry of Europeans into the country greater facilities for travelling and greater safety for travellers have come about. Formerly the people who wandered from their own neighbourhood among the surrounding tribes were killed and eaten, and so did not return among their people to enlighten them by showing that human flesh was useful as an article of food.

Soon after the station of Equator was established, the residents discovered that a wholesale human traffic was being carried on by the natives of the district between this station and Lake M'Zumba. ...

The captains of the steamers have often assured me that, whenever they try to buy goats from the natives, slaves are demanded in exchange, and the natives often come on board with tusks of ivory or other money with the intention of buying a slave, complaining that meat is now scarce in their neighbourhood.

Judging from what I have seen of these people, they seem fond of eating human flesh; and though it may be an acquired taste, there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that they prefer human flesh to any other. During all the time I lived among cannibal races I never came across a single case of their eating any kind of flesh raw; they invariably either boil, roast, or smoke it. This custom of smoking flesh to make it keep would have been very useful to us, as we were often without meat for long periods. We could, however, never buy smoked meat in the markets, it being impossible to be sure that it was not human flesh.

The preference of different tribes, more than different individuals of a tribe, for various parts of the human body, is interesting. Some cut long steaks from the flesh of the thighs, legs, or arms; others prefer the hands and feet; and though the great majority do not eat the head, I have come across more than one tribe which prefers the head to any other part. Almost all use some part of the intestines on account of the fat they contain; for even the savages of Central Africa recognise, in common with our own cooks, that fat in some form is a necessary ingredient of different dishes.

During the war in which we were engaged for two years, with our enormous crowds of camp followers we reaped perhaps the only advantages that could be claimed for this disgusting custom. In the night following a battle or the storming of a town, these human wolves disposed of all the dead, leaving nothing even for the jackals, and thus saved us, no doubt, from many an epidemic.

A man with his eyes open has no difficulty in knowing, from the horrible remains he is obliged to pass on his way, what people have preceded him on the road or battlefield;—with this difference: that on a battlefield he will find those parts left to the jackals which the human wolves have not found to their taste; whereas on the road—generally by the smouldering camp fire, or the blackened spot indicating where the fire has been—are the whitening bones, cracked and broken, which form the relics of these disgusting banquets.

Sidney Langford Hinde, *The Fall of the Congo Arabs* (London: Methuen & Co., 1897).

Rev. William Holman Bentley, Baptist Missionary Society, 1900

The whole wide country seemed to be given up to cannibalism, from the Mobangi to Stanley Falls, for 600 miles on both sides of the main river, and the Mobangi as well. ... Often in the early days did the natives beg Grenfell to sell some of his steamer hands, especially his coast people; coming from the shore of the great salt sea, they must be very “sweet”—salt is spoken of as sweet, in the same way as sugar. They offered two or three of their women for one of those coast men. They could not understand the objections raised to the practice. “You eat fowls and goats, and we eat men; why not? What is the difference?” The son of Matabwiki, chief of Liboko (Bangala), when asked whether he ever ate human flesh, said: “Ah! I wish that I could eat everybody on earth!” Happily his stomach and arm were not equal to the carrying out of his fiendish will.

Fiendish; and yet there is something free and lovable in many of these wild men; splendid possibilities when the grace of God gets a hold of them. Bapulula, the brother of that “fiend,” worked for us for two years—a fine, bright, intelligent fellow; we liked him very much. ...

They divided up their human booty and kept them in their towns, tied up and starving, until they were fortunate enough to catch some more and so make up a cargo worth taking to the Mobangi. When times were bad, these poor starving wretches might often be seen tied up in their towns, just kept alive with the minimum of food. A party would be made up, and two or three canoes would be filled with these human cattle. They would paddle down the Lulonga, cross the main river when the wind was not blowing, make up the Mobangi and sell their freight in some of the towns for ivory. The purchasers would then feed up their starvelings, until they were fat enough for the market, then butcher them, and sell the meat in small joints. What was left over, if there was much on the market, would be dried on a rack over the fire, or spitted, and the end of the spit stuck in the ground by a slow fire, until it could be kept for weeks, and sold at leisure.

Sometimes a section of a town would club together to buy a large piece of the body wholesale, to be retailed out again; or a family man would buy a whole leg to divide up between his wives, children and slaves. Dear little bright-eyed boys and girls grew up accustomed to these scenes from day to day. They ate their own morsels from time to time, in the haphazard way that they have, and carried the rest of their portion in their hand, on a skewer or in a leaf, lest any one should steal and eat it.

Rev. William Holman Bentley, *Pioneering on the Congo* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1900; 2 vols.).

Captain Basil Spence, 1920

[I]nnumerable acts of cannibalism have been reported from time to time by both Belgians and French, the most recent of which I have actual knowledge being the waylaying by a party of Azande of a Belgian Officer proceeding on leave from the Lado Enclave (now Western Mongolla); they tore him limb from limb and ate him raw; this occurred 12 years ago.

Basil Spence, “Cannibalism in the Bahr el Ghazal,” *Sudan Notes and Records*, vol. III, No. 4 (Khartoum: The Sudan Printing Press, December 1920), pp.300–302.

Congolese Sorcery and Sorcerers

Sorcery (*kindoki*) was much feared among the Congolese. Witchdoctors or sorcerers (known as *bandoki* if they were known to practice magic for evil ends, *nganga* if not) tried to capture, domesticate, or neutralize, by magic, the tremendous powers of the spirits of nature, who manipulated countless and dangerous forces. The sorcerer was able to destroy the boundaries between the world of men and the world of nature. He or she could appear as a human or animal at will. The sorcerer was capable of altering his human appearance too.



Fetish

Witchdoctors were feared, but they were also held in high esteem. They cured diseases through a variety of tested and tried means, as well as through the use of fetishes (*mikisi*) of various kinds. However, when an illness did not yield to the usual remedies, or appeared to be of a new type that could not be cured, the sorcerer’s

job was to use his magic to identify the witch or other sorcerer who had sent the illness to the patient, since such an illness could only be caused by ancestral wrath, intervention of dangerous fetishes, or the influence of sorcery. Usually an unknown witch, male or female, was found to be guilty, being in the process of stealing or eating the souls of others. By means fair or, more often, foul, the sorcerer would “discover” the identity of the threat and denounce the culprit. The latter, who in most cases was a neighbor who never had been known to practice witchcraft, would quickly be put to death without the need for further evidence. Nobody dared to question the wisdom of the sorcerer who “discovered” the culprit. The exception was if the assumed culprit had powerful relatives. Then a trial by ordeal was commonly undertaken. Often this took place as a trial by poison. The suspect would be given a powerful poison to eat made from the powdered wood of the *nkasa* tree, in either paste or liquid form. If he vomited it, he was believed innocent. If he died, he was considered guilty and his body was commonly burned or at least denied burial. Naturally, the witchdoctor could choose to administer the poison in a strong or weak dose, depending on the circumstances.

Sorcerers also acted as general diviners, taking it upon themselves to foresee the future of a supplicant or the outcome of a certain activity. The sorcerer would make the supplicant sit on the ground. He would then sit down himself and grasp the supplicant’s hands. The sorcerer would pull and rub them very hard, while spitting, panting, shaking his head, and shouting in a frenzy. He would repeat this three times. Finally he would tell the supplicant the outcome he had seen.

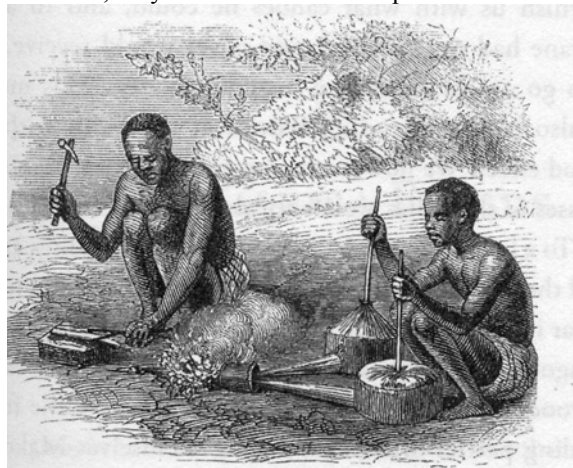
Sorcery of the evil variety was believed to bring back chaos and cancel the progress of human civilization. Whether sorcery was evil or not was not always obvious to the outsider. A few powerful sorcerers claimed to be able to raise the dead. These were called *nganga matombola* (after *tombola*, to raise, restore, or teach), a term that interestingly implies that they were seen as a force for good. In *Call of Cthulhu* terms, they raised zombies, pure and simple. However, they may have done so at least in part to assist their community.

There were several ways to assume the powers of the spirit world. Fetishes of various kinds were often used, as were powerful ingredients from different sources. Natural albinos (*ndundu*) in particular often lived short and harsh lives among the Congolese, especially if males. Because of their pale complexion and blond hair, both of which made them look like spirits in the eyes of the Congolese, albinos were believed to be linked to the spirit world. Sorcerers often used their hair and other body parts as vital ingredients and tools for their magical practices.

However, a few female albinos rose to extraordinary power through their unusual skill in magic. Such a personage would be referred to as *Ma Ndundu* (Venerable Madam Albino) and would be dreaded by all, not necessarily for any acts of evil but certainly for their strong links to the spirit world and the powers gained thereby.

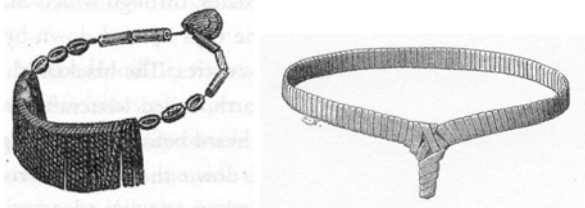
In the Congo, the natives believed that spirits were people of the water while human beings were people of the land. While men, or strictly speaking their ancestors (*bakulu*, from *nkulu*, elders) controlled that ordered nature whose cycles and regularities are known, the spirits controlled nature in flux, such as the rivers. Both spirits and ancestors (*bakulu*), that is, deceased members of the clan, were pale, almost white in appearance. A spirit was a dangerous being; an ancestor retained rank and personality from his life in the world of men.

In the context of Congolese magic, the skill of the blacksmith (*nganga lufu*) should be mentioned as well. Usually of noble or even royal origin, he had to undergo an initiation, honor particular powers, and respect numerous taboos and prohibitions. His art and principal implements, the hammer and forge, went back to the first ancestors and evoked the sacred origin of the Kongo kingdom. For this reason, the water of the forge and the air of the bellows were frequently used for medical purposes. Metalwork was a sacred act, and unlike other forms of sorcerers, there never seems to have been any ambiguity in it. The blacksmith was always a force for good, not evil. The old Kongo king was often referred to as the “blacksmith of the kingdom”. Not all tribes had blacksmiths, only the settled and more powerful ones.



Most Congolese, including the pygmies, beautified their bodies with clay or paint, tattooing, scarification, and even tooth chipping. Tattooing (*nsamba*) took place for a number of complex reasons. It served as an identity card, with each region and village having a type of tattooing peculiar to itself. However, tattooing also took place for ritual and magical reasons, for instance to ensure fertility, and for aesthetic reasons. In the case of women, tattooing was in the Congo even associated with

a refinement of erotic technique—at least this was the opinion of several missionaries.



Waist-belts, the sole piece of clothing of many young Congolese females—missionaries beware!

Tropical Diseases

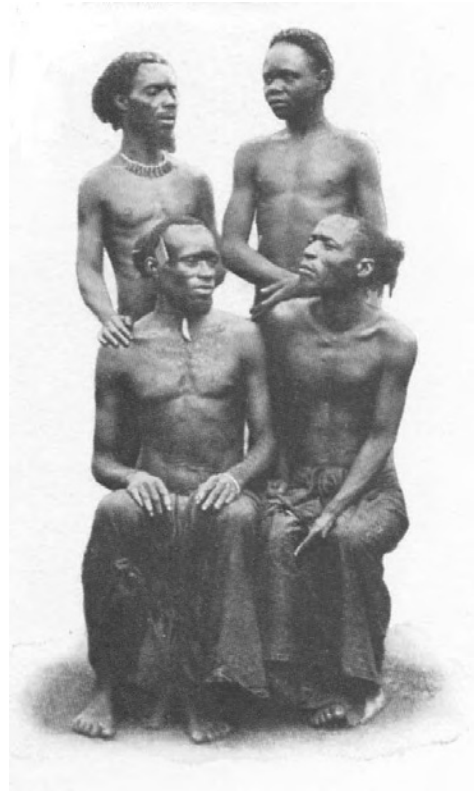
Tropical diseases killed more explorers in Africa than any natives, however savage. For every week spent in the Congo, each member of the expedition should make a CON roll to see if they catch a disease.

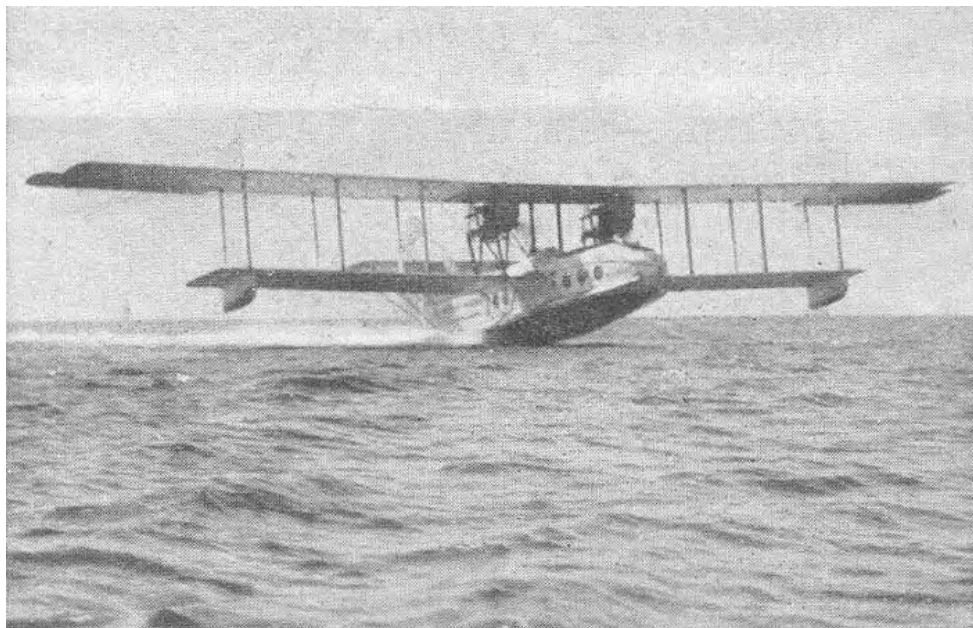
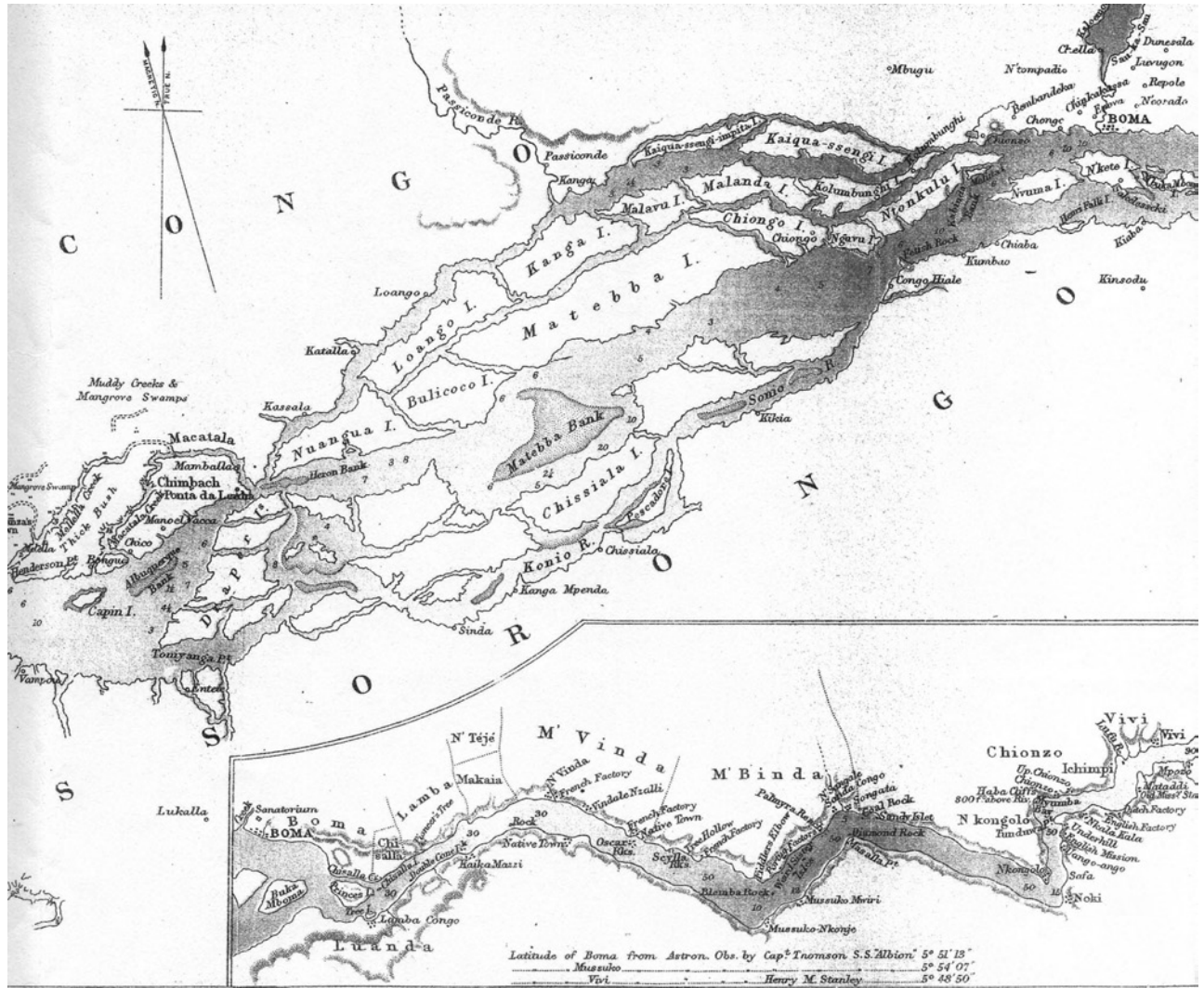
If the expedition members are in good health, remain unwounded, and eat only clean, properly cooked food, then the CON roll is made at x5 under D100. If conditions are less good, then the CON roll multiplier decreases to x4, x3, and so on as the Keeper deems appropriate. Native Africans always double their percentiles to resist diseases in their region of birth (that is, Congolese are more resistant to diseases prevalent in the Congo basin but not necessarily those elsewhere in Africa).

For the purposes of this scenario, the investigators will be better off than most explorers. Since they fly, they will be less exposed to diseases and when so exposed, it will be for only short periods. For this reason, any diseases caught during the expedition as described in this monograph can be assumed to be limited to diarrhea and fever, at the Keeper's discretion. For further details on tropical diseases, and many other more interesting and certainly more debilitating varieties, see Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* (2007).

Either diarrhea or fever will cause all physical skills to be at three-quarters normal chance during the course of the illness, which will last until a successful CONx3 roll under D100 takes place. The roll can be attempted once a day.

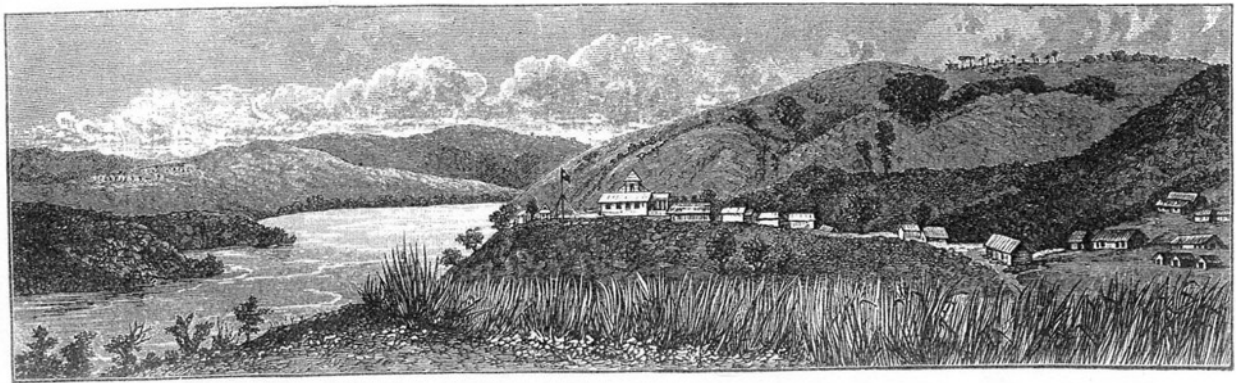
Not only human explorers suffer badly from diseases. Horses and donkeys tend to die rapidly as well, so there are few if any such animals in the Congo basin.





The Nightmare at Vivi Station

Summary: Having arrived at the mouth of the Congo River, the expedition enters African territory. However, a stop-over at Vivi Station, one of the first trading and missionary outposts but now abandoned by most traders, introduces the investigators to the bleak, violent daily life of many Congo natives. Vivi Station, under the harsh military rule of Colonel Strauch, is also the scene for horrifying medical experiments. Under the protection of Strauch, a missionary named Father Escher maintains several groups of young orphans. While taking care of them, he also conducts experiments on them through surgical procedures and by mixing their blood with primarily that of crocodiles. His ambition is to improve the human race, by producing a new, ruthless master species. When the investigators arrive, Father Escher is in the process of conducting stage two of his plan, to breed the hybrid orphans with a group of recently captured native girls. Any investigator worth his salt will no doubt wish to prevent such an atrocity from taking place before the expedition continues up the Congo. This incident also sets the theme for later events.



Vivi Station

Having landed at Banana Point upon arrival at the mouth of the Congo River, the investigators will no doubt inquire about Uncle Aaron. If so, they will learn, for instance from Colonel Thierry Coville, the Commandant at Banana Point, that a certain American gentleman of that name indeed passed through Banana Point about a year ago. He took Old Tom Curtin's riverboat towards Vivi Station. At Banana Point, they seldom get news from Vivi Station these days, Coville adds. (If no investigator bothers to ask, they will in any case be reminded of this when somebody, upon learning the names of the investigators, connect the relative's name to that of Uncle Aaron, or at least seeing that they are Americans, remember the other American eccentric who passed through about a year ago.)

This information should be sufficient to make sure that the investigators make a stop-over at Vivi Station (or possibly in Matadi on the opposite shore of the Congo, since Matadi is the current main port at this

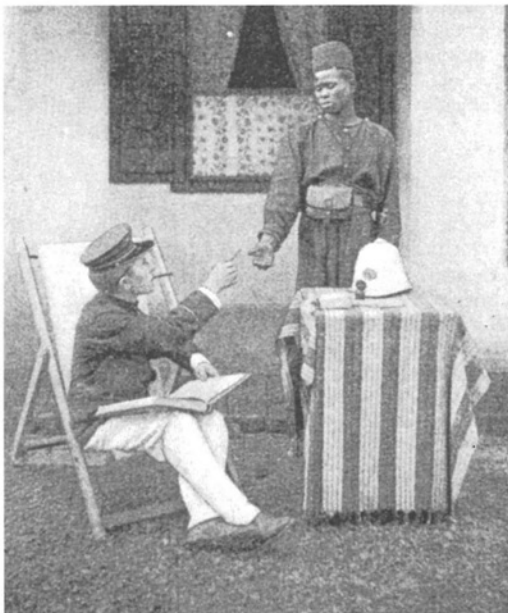
stage of the Congo River, but if so they will have to acquire local riverine transportation across the river to Vivi Station).

Vivi Station is one of the first trading and missionary outposts but now abandoned by most traders in favor of Matadi. In the days of the slave trade, Vivi was the station furthest up the Congo, and then a station of central importance, but in these days it is of little significance, only occasionally serving as a depot for goods in transit. By the late nineteenth century, Vivi counted five factories owned by respectively British, French, Belgian, Dutch, and Portuguese trading companies. The Dutch factory even had a concrete basin for captured crocodiles, destined for European zoological gardens.

Vivi Station is currently under the harsh military rule of Colonel Strauch, the local commandant. Since few traders now ever come, he is pretty much free to run Vivi Station and its native population as he sees fit. Most natives fear the Colonel and his loyal soldiers, and any protests invariably lead to summary

executions, never reported to the Belgian colonial government.

At Vivi Station, nobody claims to remember Uncle Aaron or knows what happened to him. The few inhabitants are dour and sullen and appear unwilling to cooperate. Lieutenant Pierre Bouchier, a Belgian army officer who will come down to meet the investigators after they have landed, is equally unwilling to assist. He will not send the investigators on their way in so many words, but it is obvious that he finds their presence a nuisance. A successful Psychology skill roll will suggest that Lieutenant Bouchier is vain and not particularly interested in what is going on around him. He is indeed mainly interested in booze and the native women. The only one at Vivi Station remotely willing to talk is Trader Joe Kaczynski, who also is sullen but at least is willing to sell supplies.



Lieutenant Bouchier and an orderly

If asked about Old Tom Curtin and his riverboat, any native will indicate a semi-submerged wreck in the river, which used to be the riverboat. But nobody wants to discuss what happened to Old Tom himself. If persuaded (through a successful Persuade skill roll or simply through successful roleplaying), Trader Joe will suggest that the Colonel might know. Then he will look worried and refuse to divulge any further information



Trader Joe Kaczynski

If the party approaches the Commandant's house, located uphill next to the sanatorium, they discover that Colonel Strauch is preparing for what he calls a punitive raid into the hinterland. If asked for a reason, he says that there have been reports of cannibalism in a number of native villages. And cannibalism has to be put down, he concludes. A successful Psychology skill roll will determine that Colonel Strauch is a totally ruthless, harsh man but no doubt a very efficient soldier, with little or no love for his fellow man. If asked about Uncle Aaron, the Colonel claims not to have met him. If Uncle Aaron ever was in Vivi, Strauch says, surely he has long since moved on. And so should the investigators; he cannot guarantee their safety with so many cannibals on the move. That is the end of the interview as far as Strauch is concerned, and he has the military manpower to back up his position.

Any investigator with a military background will notice that the askaris (native soldiers) of Colonel Strauch are well disciplined and give the appearance of knowing what they are doing. These men are Congo natives, but they are also Belgian colonial troops. During the Great War, officers adopted kaki uniforms worn with peaked caps or khaki tropical pith helmets as appropriate. The askaris, at least in backwaters such as Vivi Station, continued to wear their old blue Free State uniforms but each henceforth used a light blue cotton cover over his fez to reduce visibility. The continued use of old uniforms does not detract from the efficiency of these men. Even the most sedentary investigator will see that they are a tough lot.

The Breeding Plan

The true situation at Vivi Station is far more serious than the usual conditions of bleak, violent daily life experienced by many Congo natives. Vivi Station is also the scene for horrifying medical experiments.

Under the protection of Strauch, a missionary named Father Escher maintains several groups of young orphans. The oldest of his age groups are about 14 years old. While taking care of them, he also conducts experiments on them through surgical procedures and by mixing their blood with that of various reptiles, primarily crocodiles. His ambition is to improve the human race by producing a new, ruthless master species. When the investigators arrive, Father Escher is in the process of conducting stage two of his plan, to breed the hybrid orphans that his experiments have produced with a group of recently captured native girls.

The reality of the punitive raid prepared by Colonel Strauch is that he needs to procure about 150 young native women for breeding them with the 14-year-old group of orphans. He has already caught 18 young women, all in their early teens, which he stores in a guarded stockade down in Old Vivi, the site of the old village, currently located on the shore below the present Vivi Station. Now he needs more.



A captive girl

Father Escher, meanwhile, maintains a combined hospital and laboratory in the abandoned Dutch factory. In two separate compounds within the abandoned Dutch factory, Father Guillaume maintains two groups of orphans, of ages 3 (30 individuals) and 7 (28 individuals). While taking care of them, he also conducts experiments on them through surgical procedures and by mixing their blood with primarily that of the crocodiles, living in the concrete basin, first built by the Dutch, in order to produce the new, ruthless master race desired by the Colonel. He feeds them only when they are alone, and then raw meat.

There is also, in a separate compound down in Old Vivi, a third group of 26 orphans, each 14 years old. They are utterly savage, enjoy swimming, have sharpened teeth like cannibals, but these are natural. They eat only raw meat, sometimes that of humans.

As for Old Tom Curtin, the riverboat captain, he accidentally learnt the truth of what was going on at Vivi Station, after having delivered Uncle Aaron there. Since this was bad even according to the appalling standards of the Congo, he meant to inform the Belgian colonial administration at Matadi. To prevent this, he was killed by Colonel Strauch and fed to his cannibals.

The Encounter with Father Escher

The word 'ivory' rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it. A taint of imbecile rapacity blew through it all, like a whiff from some corpse. By Jove! I've never seen anything so unreal in my life. And outside, the silent wilderness surrounding this cleared speck on the earth struck me as something great and invincible, like evil or truth, waiting patiently for the passing away of this fantastic invasion.

Joseph Conrad

Except the Commandant's house, the most prominent building at Vivi station is the church. No visitor can miss it. After the departure of the Colonel and his men, any investigator worth his salt would wish to visit the local priest, Father Guillaume Escher. Anybody will quickly notice that he looks very nervous and seems reluctant to talk to the investigators. If he talks at all, he will mainly admonish them not to sin. However, while doing so he looks even more depressed than usual. A successful Psychology skill roll will determine that Father Escher is filled with remorse and anxieties on sin.

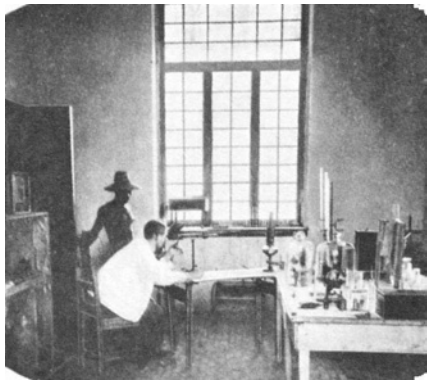
Father Escher denies ever having seen Uncle Aaron. He also claims to know nothing about the Colonel's punitive raid, but if this subject is mentioned, he will merely shrug and say that such things must be done, this is the will of God. If asked about Old Tom Curtin, Father Escher will suddenly look afraid, mumble something about crocodiles, and then walk away in a hurry. He will take refuge in the church.

If the investigators follow him there, he will be extremely uneasy. If confronted, he will say nothing, unless (a) the investigator also is a priest, in which case Father Escher will confide in him; or (b) he is threatened in any way, in which case he will run away. But in doing so, he will drop his black notebook.

In this black notebook, Father Escher has described his research and experiments. Anybody reading it (and

has some knowledge of the language, the text is in French and Latin) will quickly learn the details of the breeding plan. There is also a chance, if a successful Occult skill roll is made, that the investigator will realize that the notebook also contains an unusual magical spell that Father Escher has picked up somewhere (see below for details). This spell is partly in English, so for this purpose no foreign language skill roll is needed.

Anybody searching the buildings around the church will also find Father Escher's combined hospital and laboratory. It takes no skill roll to notice that the children there have been experimented upon. They will have fresh but treated wounds, and Father Escher's surgical implements and bottles of reptile blood are in open view.



Father Escher's laboratory

Resolving the Situation

[The tamed natives near the coast] passed me within six inches, without a glance, with that complete, deathlike indifference of unhappy savages.

Joseph Conrad

At this point, the investigator will have a choice. They can simply abandon the inhabitants of Vivi to their fate, arguing that Uncle Aaron is nowhere in sight, their destination is still far away, Hubert van Damme's expedition is catching up rapidly, and the situation at Vivi is anyway the problem of the Belgian colonial government and nobody else. If so, let them leave—but ensure that the investigators will feel remorse for the rest of their lives by halving all Sanity awards for the rest of (at least) their Congo adventures.

Or the investigators can choose to stand up to Colonel Strauch and Father Escher. Nobody at Vivi will help them, since the inhabitants are all terrified of the Colonel and his harsh rule. The only ones who will positively be willing to assist are the 18 captive young women. Since they are unharmed, merely locked in,

they will be easy to free. These girls, ranging in age from fourteen to sixteen, will be scared. They have been captured and enslaved over the last year, either by the Colonel's men or by slavers who sold the girls to Father Escher. However, they are not from the area around Vivi so they cannot simply go home. If so, they would no doubt be enslaved again and possibly eaten. The oldest among them is a bright and resourceful sixteen-year old, named Deosa. She speaks some French and, the investigators soon learn, picks up simple English quite easily.

So far, so good. But the Colonel will return within a couple of days with a new batch of captive young women. Colonel Strauch will send Lieutenant Bouchier with a few men to get the girls already in the stockade. He will then order Father Escher to come to conduct a mass wedding. The trappings of Catholic church ritual remains important to the Colonel, although if no priest is available, he will simply dispense with the formalities and “marry” the orphan boys to the captive girls anyway (*Keeper Option*: In the Congo, there was a traditional belief that a pregnant woman would give birth to a monster if she went to work in the fields on a Saturday; this legend may be alluded to, for instance by Strauch and Escher insisting on sexual union taking place on the very day of “wedding” which happens to be a Saturday). Combat-oriented investigators might get into their heads to engage the Colonel's troops head on. This would be a very bad idea, since the soldiers are well-trained, highly motivated, and fight on their own territory which they know intimately. They would not hesitate to kill anybody opposing them, white men or not. Some of them did just that in German East Africa during the Great War. Besides, by taking up arms against the military garrison of Vivi Station, the investigators will in fact have declared war upon Belgium—not a prudent thing to do while visitors in a Belgian colony.

A sneak attack might be a better option. If Colonel Strauch dies, his men will lose much of their motivation. Besides, command will then fall to Lieutenant Bouchier. A terrible substitute in any other situation, he might well be the best choice available at Vivi. Yes, he would continue the tradition of harsh, military colonial rule, and he would not give up his booze and native women, but he has no interest in raising young cannibals or engaging in biological experiments. He would also be quite willing to cover up any wrongdoings at Vivi so as not to appear in a bad light himself. If the Colonel is killed, Lieutenant Bouchier would be happy to explain it away as a tragic loss in an attack by cannibals. He would then hug the glory, or what little glory there is to be had in Belgian Congo, by informing his superiors in Matadi that he defeated and routed the rebellious cannibals.

Father Escher, if he survives, will conveniently die of a heart attack. Just before he dies, Father Escher will ask: "Is it a sin to wish to improve upon the human race?" However, his final words, to whoever of the investigators who is within range, will be: "Take care of the orphans!"

And this leaves the moral dilemma of what to do with the orphans. The girls will have no way to return home. Many do not even know where their home village is, since they were brought to Vivi by slavers. The best recourse, and the one anybody at Vivi would suggest, is to take them to the nuns at Matadi, the Sisters of Mary of Pesches (Les Soeurs de Marie de Pesches), who run a charitable institution there. Lieutenant Bouchier would be able to arrange this, although one or two of the most beautiful girls might well end up in his hut instead.



The captive girls

As for the half-breed cannibal boys, there is no easy solution. Leave them or kill them, either way the investigators will be in trouble. It would be better for mankind and the inhabitants of the Congo to kill all the half-breeds, but genocide and wholesale murder of children would not (one may hope) be an option for decent investigators. But again, to let the young cannibals grow up and multiply will pose a threat to all natives within reach.

Conclusion

If the investigators defeat the evil plot of Strauch and Father Escher, award each surviving investigator 1D8 Sanity points. Although the outcome of their plan would have been of regional rather than global significance, it still had the potential to cause extensive suffering in Central Africa (and still might, if any of the "improved" orphans survive). For each native girl saved, all investigators are rewarded with an additional Sanity point up to a maximum of 15. However, reduce this gain by one point for each

member of the team lost. In addition, reduce this gain, on an individual basis, by a further point for each of Father Escher's orphans killed by the individual up to a maximum of 20 (that is, if one individual kills several orphans, this character may actually end up with a Sanity loss despite resolving the situation). While wiping out the orphans would benefit mankind in the long term, genocide and child murder are hard on the nerves of decent people such as the investigators.

Having left Vivi Station, the investigators will find yet another surprise when they make camp the following evening. The young woman Deosa will turn up as a stowaway in the flying boat. The investigators may already know that she was an orphan. When asked, she will simply say: "I have nothing to go back to, so I want to go to America!" How the investigators deal with her is up to them (her weight will limit their cargo allowance further, but at least she is quite petite and does not weigh that much), but the Keeper should feel free to mention that not only is she quite resourceful, it might also be a good idea to have a native guide on the expedition. If she ever arrives in the United States, she will most likely change her name into Daisy Doe.

Statistics (Vivi Station)

Colonel Adolphe Strauch, Commandant



In his mid-fifties, Colonel Strauch is a ruthless but very efficient military man.

Colonel Strauch controls 20 askaris, most of whom are in their early twenties, armed with rifles, and fanatically loyal to the Colonel, who took care of them as young orphans and raised them in a camp. He has also imposed a personality cult and various cannibalistic rituals on them, which has caused them to believe that he has supernatural powers. In addition, they are well-trained soldiers.

In 1890, Colonel Strauch met and befriended Gobila (see a later chapter). Realizing Gobila's mixed heritage, Strauch was inspired to create a master race of conquerors through what he believes are the same methods.

STR 14 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 14

DEX 13 APP 13 EDU 16 SAN 32 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 65%, damage 1D10+2

7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 75%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 70%, damage 1D3+1D4

Rapier 55%, damage 1D6+1+1D4

Skills: Anthropology 30%, Bargain 25%, Credit Rating 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 2%, Dodge 45%, First Aid 50%, Hide 60%, Jungle Survival 50%, Listen 45%, Natural History 35%, Navigate 65%, Occult 30%, Psychology 55%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 60%.

Languages: French 85%, German 65%, English 65%, Lingala (Bantu) 60%

Note. The Belgian 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 rifle was based on the German Mauser and in game terms functions exactly like the .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle, which in effect is what it is.

Father Guillaume Escher

Around 60 years old, Father Escher is very nervous and filled with remorse and anxieties on sin. He maintains a church at Vivi Station and a combined hospital and laboratory in the abandoned Dutch factory.

Father Escher has described his research and experiments in a black notebook.

STR 10 CON 7 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 10
DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 18 SAN 20 HP 10

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 25%, damage 1D10+2

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Spells: Devolution/Evolution (see below for details)

Skills: Anthropology 50%, Biology 85%, Chemistry 90%, Credit Rating 45%, Cthulhu Mythos 2%, History 65%, Library Use 65%, Medicine 75%, Occult 50%, Psychology 50%.

Languages: French 90%, German 75%, English 65%, Kikongo (Bantu) 65%

Father Guillaume's Notebook

In a black notebook, Father Guillaume Escher has described his research and experiments. The notebook, written in French, also contains the following words, for some obscure reason mainly in English (also available from the Handouts section):

*Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton *
Tetragrammaton.
The Creator at which all Things in Heaven, on
Earth, and beneath the Earth tremble.
Ely * Sother * Adonay * Sabaoth * Alpha * Omega.
I conjure thee by the Sun and Moon; the Heavens
and Earth; all Animals; Creeping Things; and Flying
Things, whether Bipeds, Tripeds, or Quadrupeds; the
Wounds of Christ and the Crown of Thorns; all the
Characters of Solomon and the magical Acta of
Virgilius; all the Things which hath power to terrify
and constrain thee. Devolvere ad naturam rerum ad
omnes partes.
Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton *
Tetragrammaton.*

Any investigator who succeeds in an Occult skill roll (with a die modifier of -20% to make success easier) will know the solid reputation of Solomon and Virgil (Virgilius) as having been great sorcerers. A second successful Occult skill roll (without die modifier) will make the investigator recognize certain words (*Ely * Sother * Adonay * Sabaoth * Alpha * Omega*) as early Christian names of God. A third successful Occult skill roll will tell the investigator that the many references in the occult formula to Rome and early Christianity indicate that this is a formula for life rather than death, for the body rather than the spirit, for something akin to resurrection rather than the mere re-animation of a dead corpse for which death cults such as voodoo are notorious. Furthermore, anybody who succeeds in making a Latin Language skill roll (or is able to consult a Latin dictionary) will understand the Latin text at the end of the formula (*devolvere ad naturam rerum ad omnes partes*, meaning “devolve (or descend; the opposite of evolve) into the natural state in all parts”) which clearly indicates that the formula is intended to force a being to descend into an earlier, more primitive state of nature. The formula indeed seems to have something to do with the concept of evolution, as understood by Darwin.



Father Escher and some of the boys

In game terms, the notebook contains in abbreviated form a magical spell that Father Escher picked up in his youth. Several components are needed as well, primarily blood from various reptiles, and these ingredients too are listed in the notebook, although in French. The spell is Devolution/Evolution (depending on the order in which it is performed; like most magical spells it can, based on the magical law of inverted influences, be used in reversed mode by being read in the opposite direction, that is, from rear to beginning). It costs 24 magic points, 1D10 sanity points, and takes 2 rounds to cast. Match the 24 magic points against the target's magic points on the Resistance Table. If successful, the target will in 1D6 months descend the evolutionary ladder, transforming into an animal-like thing. Witnesses lose 0/1D4 Sanity points due to the slow speed of the process. If used in reversed mode, costs are the same but the target will instead gain in intelligence and brain power. The Keeper should consider how this will affect the game; an increase of 1D3 INT points seems reasonable. The target may also experience changes in appearance, since his brain and skull are likely to grow, for instance by losing 1D3 points of APP.

Lieutenant Pierre Bouchier



In his mid-twenties, Lieutenant Bouchier is unkempt and dirty-looking, but vain. He is mainly interested in booze and native women. Bouchier knows little of what is going on at Vivi, and cares less, but he will follow orders.

STR 15 CON 10 SIZ 14 INT 10 POW 10
DEX 12 APP 14 EDU 10 SAN 35 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

- .455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 45%, damage 1D10+2
- 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 55%, damage 2D6+4
- Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+1D4
- Rapier 35%, damage 1D6+1+1D4

Skills: Anthropology 15%, Bargain 25%, Credit Rating 20%, Dodge 35%, First Aid 35%, Hide 40%, Hold Liquor 65%, Listen 40%, Sneak 30%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Languages: French 50%, German 40%, English 40%, Lingala (Bantu) 10%

Note. The Belgian 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 rifle was based on the German Mauser and in game terms functions exactly like the .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle.



Trader Joe Kaczynski



Trader Joe Kaczynski is in his early thirties. He is sullen and afraid but sees no real way out and makes a reasonable profit, being the only trader at Vivi Station. He will neither assist nor oppose Colonel Strauch and Father Escher.

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 13
DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 12 SAN 48 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 65%, damage 1D10+2

Fist/Punch 70%, damage 1D3+1D4

Skills: Accounting 25%, Anthropology 30%, Bargain 85%, Credit Rating 20%, Dodge 45%, First Aid 50%, Hide 40%, Jungle Survival 40%, Listen 50%, Natural History 45%, Navigate 60%, Psychology 65%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 60%.

Languages: Polish 70%, English 65%, French 60%, Kikongo (Bantu) 40%

Deosa

Intelligent, courageous and resourceful, Deosa gives the impression of being far more mature than her sixteen years—the effect of a harsh life as an orphan in a Congo village. To be captured by slavers at the age of fifteen was another experience that made her grow up fast. Deosa did, however, take part in a tribal coming-of-age initiation before she was captured, and has the ritual tattoo on her shoulder to prove it. This tattoo, she has been told, will protect her from black magic. In game terms, the tattoo functions as a defensive charm against any offensive spell by increasing her POW for defensive purposes by 5 points.

Deosa has learnt some French and will pick up easy English quite rapidly. She is vivacious and can easily learn to fit into modern, Western society, although she will personally remain unconcerned about Western morals involving Christian taboo subjects such as the

proper age of marriage or the expected dress code of young women. She might end up a very successful nightclub entertainer, or she might, conditions permitting (and racism will definitely work against her), become a success in almost any field that she chooses. What she will *not* do is marrying a deadbeat good-for-nothing and be satisfied with a life in poverty. Despite her youth, she has endured far worse already.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 10 INT 14 POW 15
DEX 17 APP 15 EDU 6 SAN 75 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

Small Knife 30%, damage 1D4

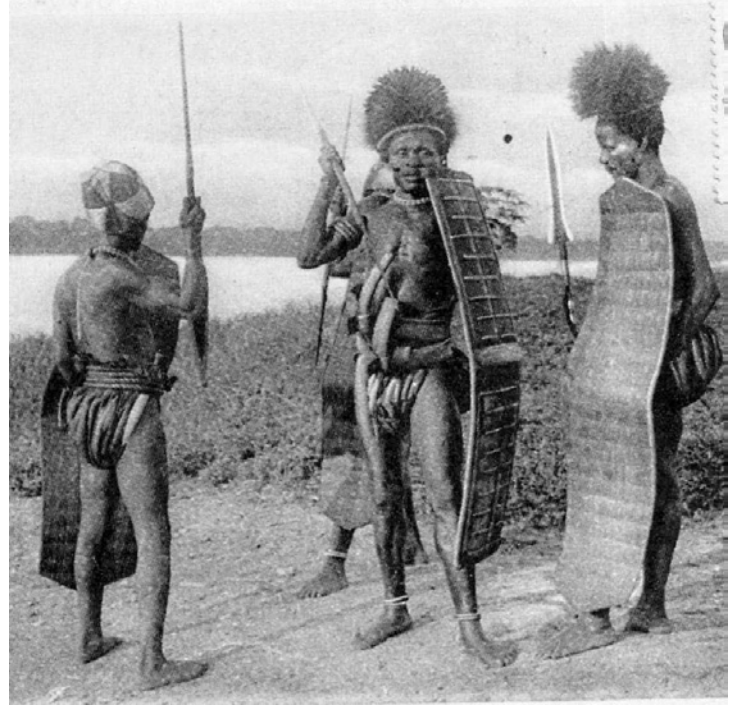
Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Skills: Art (Cooking Bugs) 10%, Art (Singing) 40%, Art (African Dancing) 50%, Dodge 50%, First Aid 40%, Jungle Survival 40%, Listen 35%, Natural History 10%, Psychology 10%, Swim 55%.

Languages: Ngombe (Bantu) 60%, French 40%, English 10%



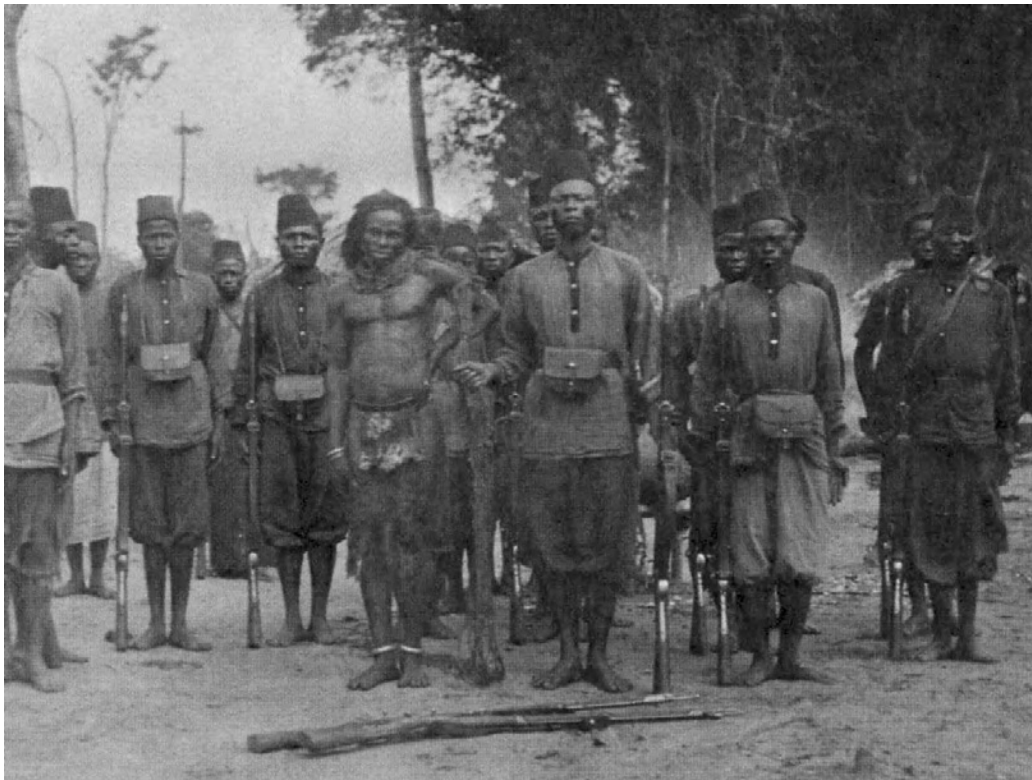
Deosa



Congolese warriors

Belgian Colonial Troops

Belgian colonial troops—askaris—should not be sneered at. Well-trained and often battle-hardened against both native and white (that is, German) enemies, they are dangerous opponents.



Belgian Askaris

Squad A

Individual	STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	DB	HP
Sergeant	16	13	13	11	13	13	5	10	65	+1D4	13
Corporal	13	13	13	9	10	15	9	9	50	+1D4	13
Private #1	14	13	17	13	11	12	9	3	55	+1D4	15
Private #2	15	16	12	16	15	13	7	8	75	+1D4	14
Private #3	12	12	15	11	10	13	6	4	50	+1D4	14
Private #4	12	16	13	11	12	10	12	6	60	+1D4	15
Private #5	11	12	16	12	8	16	9	6	40	+1D4	14
Private #6	11	10	14	8	9	17	10	9	45	+0	12
Private #7	12	13	11	14	8	11	13	8	40	+0	12
Private #8	12	15	11	17	12	17	7	4	60	+0	13

Squad B

Individual	STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	DB	HP
Sergeant	14	13	15	14	13	12	9	10	65	+1D4	14
Corporal	15	15	13	13	12	14	15	7	60	+1D4	14
Private #1	12	10	14	15	8	13	6	4	40	+1D4	12
Private #2	15	11	12	10	10	10	11	6	50	+1D4	12
Private #3	15	15	14	13	5	16	14	3	25	+1D4	15
Private #4	16	16	15	14	7	16	9	9	35	+1D4	16
Private #5	14	17	14	17	9	9	9	4	45	+1D4	16
Private #6	12	15	13	15	10	15	5	6	50	+1D4	14
Private #7	12	12	12	13	10	16	9	3	50	+0	12
Private #8	16	13	17	17	9	13	10	4	45	+1D6	15

Sergeants:

Weapons: 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 60%, damage 2D6+4

Bayonet 50%, damage 1D8+1+db

Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 50%, First Aid 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Jungle Survival 60%, Listen 60%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 50%, Throw 50%, Track 50%.

Languages: Kikongo (Bantu) 50%, Lingala (Bantu) 50%, French 45%

Corporals:

Weapons: 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 55%, damage 2D6+4

Bayonet 45%, damage 1D8+1+db

Fist/Punch 55%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 45%, First Aid 45%, Hide 50%, Jump 45%, Jungle Survival 55%, Listen 55%, Sneak 55%, Spot Hidden 55%, Swim 45%, Throw 45%, Track 45%.

Languages: Kikongo (Bantu) 50%, Lingala (Bantu) 50%, French 40%

Privates:

Weapons: 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 50%, damage 2D6+4

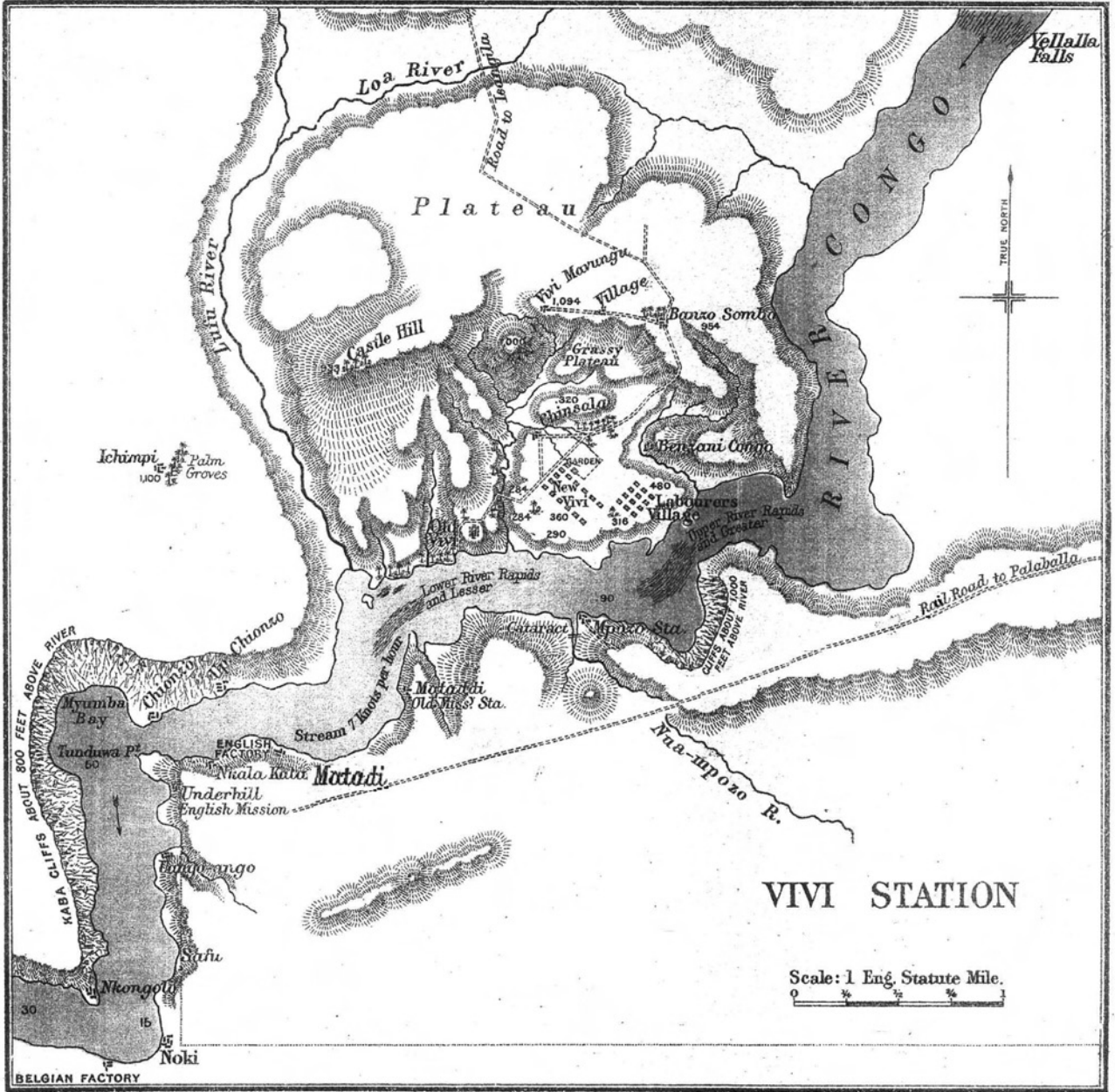
Bayonet 40%, damage 1D8+1+db

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3+db

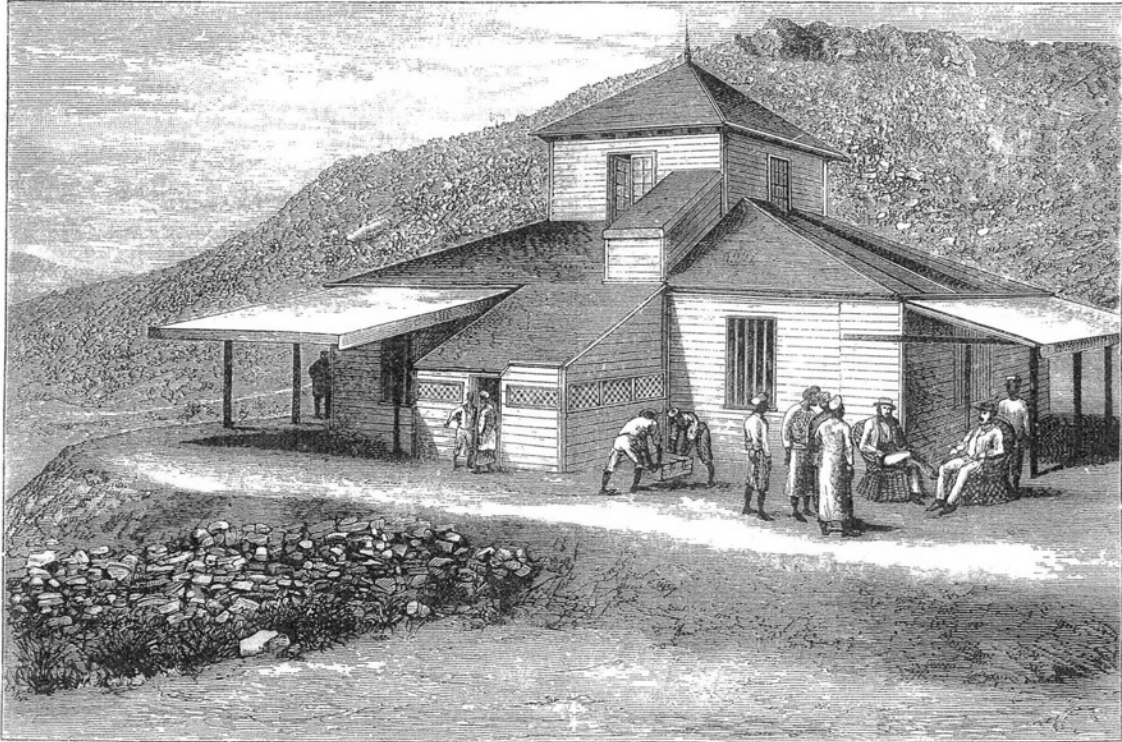
Skills: Dodge 40%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Jump 40%, Jungle Survival 50%, Listen 50%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Swim 40%, Throw 40%, Track 40%.

Languages: Kikongo (Bantu) 50%, Lingala (Bantu) 45%, French 35%

Note. The Belgian 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 rifle was based on the German Mauser and in game terms functions exactly like the .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle.



Government buildings



The Colonel's Headquarters



The punitive expedition

In the Clutches of Mami Wata

Summary: Since the Curtiss flying boat has to follow the river, the journey takes several days. Upriver, the investigators encounter the Ngombe (“water people”), living in temporary huts and on rafts in wooded marshlands, in water the color of black tea. There are crocodiles, tortoises, water snakes, hippopotamuses—but also a young American trader, McCoy. However, it turns out that McCoy has fallen under the spell of the Mami Wata, a dangerous river spirit who appears to him at night as an exceedingly beautiful native woman, although with a somewhat pale complexion. In reality, the Mami Wata is a serious threat, and unless the investigators solve the puzzle of the legend of the Mami Wata, certainly McCoy and possibly one or more investigators will end up dead, their bodies showing signs of having been eaten by crocodiles.



Fortunately, a native village on the river is within sight, so the pilot will land in front of this settlement. A successful Pilot Aircraft skill roll (at the pilot’s normal chance of success since conditions are bad) will land the flying boat without further trouble. A failed skill roll represents further damage to the flying boat, but nothing that cannot be repaired by the crew concurrently with the mechanical repairs. The Keeper only need to be concerned with a result of 00, which in this situation signifies a very rough landing during which the hull of the flying boat is damaged by a submerged rock. If so, the crew and passengers need successful Luck rolls to avoid injury (1D3 hit points), the aircraft takes in some water, and certain useful but non-vital supplies, for instance any heavy weapons, are damaged beyond repair.

As soon as the emergency landing has been resolved, the investigators are greeted by the curious natives, who will approach in canoes or along the riverbank. The Keeper may wish to emphasise their savage appearance, perhaps to provoke an incident, but soon it should become obvious that the natives are friendly and only eager to help. These are the Ngombe (“water people”), living in temporary huts and on rafts in wooded marshlands.

The Keeper should emphasize the primitive conditions of the Ngombe village. In comparison to this, Vivi Station and Léopoldville are old, established settlements. Now the investigators are finally out in the real jungle, where civilization only appears at most a couple of times per year, in the shape of river steamers

Emergency Landing

At some point between Léopoldville and Coquilhatville, the flying boat must make a sudden emergency landing. The nature of the emergency is up to the Keeper. If the investigators were involved in a gunfight near the flying boat at Vivi, then the aircraft was hit by a stray bullet which caused an oil leak which in turn caused a vital part of the engine to overheat. If no gunplay occurred, then it was an unexpected mechanical engine failure. Either way, the flying boat must land and the crew will have to engage in repairs, which will take at least two days.

that arrive for trading purposes. The investigators will notice that here the river water, which incidentally is also the only source of drinking water, is the color of black tea. There is plenty of wildlife. Crocodiles, tortoises, water snakes, and hippopotamuses can be seen in or near the river. This is the real Congo, the living heart of the primeval rainforest, which seemingly has existed since the beginning of time.

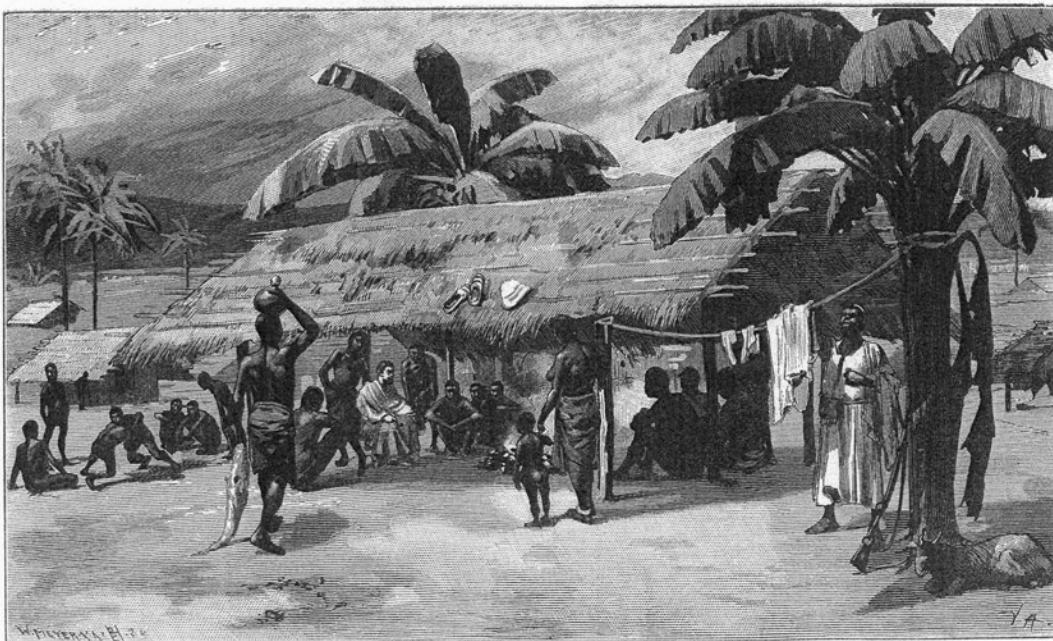
The great wall of vegetation, an exuberant and entangled mass of trunks, branches, leaves, boughs, festoons, motionless in the moonlight, was like a rioting invasion of soundless life, a rolling wave of plants, piled up, crested, ready to topple over the creek, to sweep every little man of us out of his little existence. And it moved not. A deadened burst of mighty splashes and snorts reached us from afar, as though an ichthyosaurus had been taking a bath of glitter in the great river.

Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginnings of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were kings. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine. The long stretches of the waterway ran on, deserted, into the gloom of overshadowed distances. On silvery sandbanks hippos and alligators sunned themselves side by side. The broadening waters flowed through a mob of wooded islands; you lost your way on that

river as you would in a desert, and butted all day long against shoals, trying to find the channel, till you thought yourself bewitched and cut off for ever from everything you had known once—somewhere—far away—in another existence perhaps. ... And this stillness of life did not in the least resemble a peace. It was the stillness of an implacable force brooding over an inscrutable intention. It looked at you with a vengeful aspect.

Joseph Conrad

As for the repairs, a successful Mechanical Repair skill roll will take care of the problem. However, the decisive skill roll should not be allowed before the events in this adventure have been played out. The Keeper should not allow the investigators to take off and forget the situation on the ground before it is properly resolved. However, to keep the players guessing, it is recommended to allow one Mechanical Repair skill roll per day. If it succeeds, but the adventure has not yet been resolved, the Keeper will inform the players that they have now stopped the oil leak, but the resultant exhaust problem remains to be fixed. At the end of the next day, if the Mechanical Repair skill roll again is successful, the exhaust problem will have been solved, but now there is a problem with the ignition system, and so on. (Anybody who has had an old car serviced by a greedy car mechanic knows the routine; just keep finding problems until you have milked the customer dry.)



The Ngombe village

Fred McCoy

The primeval nature of the surroundings make it all the more striking suddenly to see a white man approaching among the natives. This is Fred McCoy, a young American trader. He lives with the Ngombe in a rude hut of reeds on the outskirts of the village. For a suitably grim verbal description of McCoy's living quarters, the Keeper may use the words of Conrad:

(Next to the hut stood) an inclined and melancholy pole, with the unrecognizable tatters of what had been a flag of some sort flying from it, and a neatly stacked woodpile ... A torn curtain of red twill hung in the doorway of the hut, and flapped sadly in our faces. The dwelling was dismantled; but we could see a white man had lived there ... There remained a rude table—a plank on two posts; a heap of rubbish reposed in a dark corner.

Despite his dismal and thoroughly uncared-for surroundings, McCoy appears to be in excellent health and behaves in a somewhat detached manner, full of confidence in himself. He is, in fact, exceedingly good-looking. If asked, he will cheerily acknowledge that he almost a year ago once met Uncle Aaron travelling up along the river. If nobody remembers to ask, but one of the investigators happen to mention Uncle Aaron's name, McCoy will volunteer this information. He is quite friendly and seems genuinely pleased to have white men as visitors.

If the investigators make a clandestine search of McCoy's hut, they will find a fortune in ivory hidden under the neatly stacked woodpile. McCoy also possesses documents, hidden in a tattered old ammunition crate, proving that he has no less than 600,000 Fr. in *Crédit Général du Congo*, a major bank in Léopoldville, worth more than \$17,000. Clearly McCoy is a very successful, and lucky, trader.

Witchdoctors, Leopard Men, Evil Spirits, and Dinosaurs

Except McCoy, the only one in the Ngombe village who speaks French, and a sprinkle of English, is the witchdoctor, Limi. His appearance is simply repulsive, since he is severely afflicted by Elephantiasis, a disease that is characterized by the thickening of the skin and underlying tissues, especially in the legs, male genitals, and female breasts. The disease can cause certain body parts, such as the scrotum, to swell to the size of a basketball. Legs affected by the disease

look horribly deformed and remind far more of alien tissue than mere obesity.

In fact, Limi's appearance is so repulsive and terrifying that any investigator from a pampered background without previous experience from the rougher parts of the world (among the optional characters supplied for this scenario, the New England writer Loveman comes to mind) will have to make a successful Sanity roll or lose 1D4 points of SAN. Characters with backgrounds as doctors of medicine, missionaries, police, soldiers or the like will be immune to this effect since they can be assumed to have seen horrible results of human physical suffering already.

Limi lives in a hut full of artefacts having to do with his witchcraft. Technically speaking, Limi regards himself, and is regarded by the villagers, not as a witchdoctor but as a tribal priest.

Any investigator who enters Limi's hut will notice that one wooden idol stands out among the others, both because of its size and its striking craftsmanship. Any investigator who makes a successful Anthropology or Occult skill roll will recognize this as a statue of Mami Wata and will know that representations of Mami Wata generally depict her as a woman with light skin and dark flowing hair, wreathed in snakes. Anybody who made a successful Anthropology skill roll (but not those who made only the Occult skill roll) will also know that Western anthropologists commonly believe that this image was originally inspired by the figureheads of the many European trading and slave vessels that have visited Central and West African ports. After all, no leading anthropologist would expect negroes to come up with such ideas on their own, would he? (The information on what leading anthropologists believe is not a core clue and not really needed for the scenario; however, the Keeper may wish to impart this knowledge anyway so as to give the players a proper feel for contemporary scientific beliefs in the 1920s.)

If asked about the statue, Limi will identify it as depicting Mami Wata but plays down the true importance of this spirit, saying: "Mami Wata is dangerous to some, yes, but M'Bakadala, He Who Swims And Eats Without Mouth, is far more dangerous still—a huge and powerful spirit who lives deep down in the river." If asked, Limi will describe the appearance of the latter spirit: "M'Bakadala is gigantic and looks like a man, but his head resembles that of the squid, which I once saw at Matadi, ending in a mass of feelers. He uses those for feeding, but nobody knows how since has no mouth. He also has long, narrow wings at the side which he uses for swimming."





Heathen idols!

If McCoy is around, he will volunteer the following information: "I've heard of M'Bakadala. Just another jungle legend. Anyway, this ridiculous spirit was described to me as a crossbreed between a deep-sea squid and a prehistoric, great flying lizard. I guess this is merely another version of the dinosaur legend one often hears about in the Congo. The *mokele-mbembe*, you know. Some people swear that dinosaurs have survived here, hidden out in the swamps, in this very region, in fact."



Limi's hut and extended family

If any player thinks of making a Cthulhu Mythos skill roll, and succeeds, the Keeper should tell him that the description certainly reminds him of Great Cthulhu and the name M'Bakadala sounds vaguely similar to the name under which Cthulhu was known in Sanskrit, Katala. But Sanskrit was spoken in ancient India, not Africa. (Inquisitive players may no doubt make the first connection without the need of any die roll; if so, the Keeper should reward them by reminding them about the Sanskrit name right away, since they are likely to have encountered it during earlier researches on Cthulhu. There is, however, no need to remind them that the name Katala also appears in Uncle Aaron's papers.)

At this point, Limi will change the subject to that of Leopard Men. A successful Psychology skill roll will tell the investigator that now, unlike before, Limi is seriously worried. Even a casual observer of Limi will notice that this is information that he *wants* to pass on to the investigators. He wants protection. The night before the investigators arrived, Leopard Men attacked the Ngombe village, killing one villager, Kusu. They may come back to finish the job. Limi believes that the Leopard Men magically transform themselves into leopards. (The Leopard Men who attacked the Ngombe village came from a neighboring settlement and will not, in fact, come back. Nor were they magical in any way, unless the Keeper wishes to introduce this further complication in the scenario. See below for further information on Leopard Men.)

If asked, McCoy knows about the Leopard Men as a murderous cult, and shows the party a grubby book on them, K. J. Beatty's treatise *Human Leopards: An Account of the Trials of Human Leopards before the Special Commission Court; With a Note on Sierra Leone, Past and Present* (London: Hugh Rees, Ltd., 1915). McCoy says that the book shows that Leopard Men would not be as great a danger as the natives believe. Anyway, he was away during the recent attack and did not experience it personally, although he knows that the intruders killed a villager. However, McCoy claims that he has no personal fear of the Leopard Men. "They would never dare attack white men," he says.

Limi, however, will continue to talk about the dangers of an imminent Leopard Men attack until the investigators decide to post a guard at night. (This they in any case should do on their own accord whenever they camp in the Congo rainforest, or the Keeper should punish them by having the camp attacked by anything from a rampaging hippopotamus to a band of cannibals or slavers. They are engaged in a Congo expedition, not a picnic outside Arkham.)

When this has been decided, Limi will be satisfied. He knows that his fellow villagers are not really disciplined enough to maintain a vigil night after night. He also hopes that McCoy is right, and that the Leopard

Men would never dare to attack the village while white men are staying there.

K. J. Beatty, Human Leopards: An Account of the Trials of Human Leopards before the Special Commission Court; With a Note on Sierra Leone, Past and Present (London: Hugh Rees, Ltd., 1915)

If this book is properly studied, apply a check on the investigator's Occult skill. This is a real book which can be downloaded from the Internet;

unfortunately, it details only the Leopard Men of Sierra Leone, who seems to have been somewhat less powerful than the Human Leopard Society of the Congo.

Beatty's book explains that "in the Mende Mission (an American society) they possess the skin of a large leopard, with iron claws, which had once been the property of a man who, under this guise, satisfied his horrible craving." Beatty also describes the response of the government to the threat of the Leopard Men (this text also appears under Handouts):

To deal with this extraordinary class of crime the Government of the Colony of Sierra Leone decided that drastic and exceptional legislation was necessary, and a Bill entitled the Human Leopard Society Ordinance, 1895, was introduced and passed as Ordinance No. 15 of 1895. The object of the Ordinance was set out in the preamble, which read as follows:

Whereas there exists in the Imperri Country a Society known by the name of the Human Leopard Society formed for the purpose of committing murder:

And whereas many murders have been committed by men dressed so as to resemble leopards and armed with a three-pronged knife commonly known as a leopard knife or other weapon:

And whereas owing to the number of these murders, and the difficulty of detecting the perpetrators of the same, it is expedient to amend the law:

Be it therefore enacted by the Government of the Colony of Sierra Leone with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof as follows:

Then followed provisions making it penal for any person without lawful excuse to have in his possession or keeping any of the articles mentioned in the Schedule, viz.:

- (a) A leopard skin shaped so as to make a man wearing it resemble a leopard;
- (b) A three-pronged knife; and
- (c) A native medicine known as "Borfima";

and under the Ordinance the police were given powers where there was reasonable ground of suspicion to arrest and to search without a warrant, and heavy penalties were imposed for obstructing the police.

Borfima, the "medicine" referred to in the Human Leopard Ordinance. The word is a contraction of *Boreh fima*, medicine bag, and is usually, but not invariably, tightly bound up in a leather package. This package contains, amongst other things, the white of an egg, the blood, fat, and other parts of a human being, the blood of a cock, and a few grains of rice; but to make it efficacious it must occasionally be anointed with human fat and smeared with human blood. So anointed and smeared, it is an all-powerful instrument in the hands of its owner, it will make him rich and powerful, it will make people hold him in honour, it will help him in cases in the White Man's Court, and it certainly has the effect of instilling in the native mind great respect for its owner and a terrible fear lest he should use it hostilely. An oath administered by the proper person and with due ceremony upon Borfima is of the most binding nature, and it was by means of such oaths that great secrecy was obtained. But the potency of this great fetish apparently soon evaporated. Owners of the Borfima found that their riches did not increase as rapidly as they anticipated, they lost cases in the Courts, expectations were not realized with respect to adverse witnesses upon whose hearts and livers and kidneys imprecations had been showered, all this showed that the Borfima had become weak and needed resuscitation with fresh human fat and blood and to obtain this human fat and blood was the primary object of the Human Leopard Society.

McCoy Receives a Visitor—and Goes Out for a Walk

Whoever stays up at night will be surprised suddenly to see a lit torch in the native village, about 2 a.m. at night. The Ngombe do not use fire at night, and the only source of light for some time will have been the stars. Even more curiously, the torch—and the woman carrying it—appears outside McCoy's hut.

Any investigator awake cannot fail to notice that McCoy will be seen to be visited by an exceedingly beautiful woman, dressed as a native although one with a pale complexion that suggests that she might even be white. This will be unusual in itself, since McCoy did not seem to have any regular female companion in the village. And for one suddenly to turn up in the middle of the night, seemingly out of nowhere, carrying a torch, is simply astounding. As far as the investigators know, all Ngombe are asleep. Besides, the torch was visible for some time approaching the village, so it is clear that the woman did not come out of the village itself. But the investigators know of no other settlements nearby.



The Mami Wata idol

Things get even more mysterious, however, as McCoy and the attractive woman then are being seen walking out of the village, the woman still carrying the torch. The two appear to be lovers. Yet more puzzling, the investigator who sees this will be sure that he was being noticed by the beautiful woman. Somehow their eyes met, even though he will probably not have carried a light himself and by rights should not have been seen in the dark, tropical Congo night. (For suggestions on which investigator to choose, that is, who was awake at the time, see Conclusion, below.)

The investigators now have a choice. They may choose to leave McCoy to take care of what is obviously his own personal business, or they can choose to investigate. In the former case, McCoy will return to the village just before day-break, looking somewhat exhausted but with a happy grin on his face. On the following nights, he will leave his hut alone and stay out all night. There will be no woman in sight. On each successive morning, McCoy will look more worried and haggard. He has begun to realize that Mami Wata has dumped him. McCoy will adamantly refuse to discuss his nightly forays. In the unlikely case that the investigators are willing to respect McCoy's privacy under these unusual conditions, this situation will repeat itself until the last day of the investigators' stay in the village. On that final morning, McCoy will not return. He will leave all his belongings behind. Later in the day, they natives will find the remnants of his mauled corpse in the river, displaying signs that it was killed and feasted on by crocodiles.

Meanwhile, the investigator who caught the attractive woman's glance will find it hard to sleep. Late at night, on the night following the one during which he saw the beautiful woman, he will need to leave the flying boat or camp site (perhaps for a call of nature). Just outside the village, he will meet the mysterious woman, who will be happy to indulge all his wishes. For details, see under Conclusion, below. This will go on simultaneously with McCoy's nocturnal forays, but Mami Wata will no longer meet McCoy, she will meet the investigator, and that in a different location on the river. McCoy will never find out, but he will, as noted, realize that Mami Wata is no longer coming to him.

Things will quickly turn more hot if the investigators decide to follow McCoy, either on the very first occasion or during one of the following nights. The same will happen if they notice that their fellow investigator is also wandering about at night and decide to follow him.

First, assuming that the young woman Deosa has joined the group, she will quickly show up, warning the investigator or investigators who follow McCoy (or their colleague) and the mystery woman about the dangers of following a river spirit at night. She is right; it will not be a walk in the park.

Second, it is dark. Really dark. Without a light, absolutely nothing can be seen. No light from the stars will be able to filter through the dense canopies of the trees. Only the sounds of animals moving about in the undergrowth or the river can be heard. Leopards or crocodiles, or both? The investigators cannot bring lights or they will immediately be seen by McCoy (or their colleague) and the mystery woman. So they will stumble on in the rainforest, slip into mud and trip on the undergrowth. Somebody will surely grab what he or she thinks is a tree branch, but will immediately notice that it is a living, venomous snake. There will also be

venomous centipedes, smaller and less deadly but just as unpleasant surprises in the darkness. At least one of the party will fall into quicksand. And do not forget to hit the investigators with hunting crocodiles, or an angry hippopotamus or two.

It is quite possible that the party will be so bogged down with quicksand and dangerous wildlife that they will be unable to follow the hapless McCoy (or their colleague) and Mami Wata. However, on the last night in the Ngombe village, if not before, the investigators who tail McCoy or their friend will finally succeed. The party will manage to keep up with their target until they finally reach the river shore and get close enough to see what is going on. There they will see that what the casual observer believes is a beautiful woman in fact is a large and dangerous river spirit.

If this is a meeting between the bedazzled investigator and Mami Wata, the outcome will be inconclusive. She will chose to disappear into the river, and he will appear confused or even angry because of the interference of his friends. After all, they scared away the most attractive woman he ever met. Even if they take him back to camp, and leave the Ngombe village, he will continue to haunt river-banks at night, as described under Conclusion, below. If, on the other hand, the investigators witness the final meeting between McCoy and Mami Wata, they will have to fight to save the hapless McCoy. At this point, Mami Wata is out to finish him off. If the investigators choose to attack the spirit, with whatever means are at hand, McCoy may indeed be temporarily saved. Mami Wata will choose to flee rather than fight to the death. However, if so McCoy will no doubt fall pray to the vengeful spirit at some other time before he leaves the Congo. There is no escaping the enraged Mami Wata. She will be back when no outside help is available.

Conclusion

If the investigators defeat the Mami Wata, award each surviving investigator 1D8 points of Sanity. If they merely survive and manage to get out alive, award them 1D4 Sanity points. However, reduce the gain by one point for each member of the team lost (McCoy does not count for this purpose; he was already too far gone for anybody to save). This may mean that the investigators actually lose Sanity, even if the majority survives the experience.

This brings up the question on what happens to the one who catches the attention of Mami Wata. An experienced roleplayer may find it rewarding, although in the long term dangerous, to end up as the object of Mami Wata's affection. The Keeper should not impose this on an unwilling player, since this requires a certain degree of voluntary roleplaying. However, most groups of players seem to contain at

least one individual who cannot resist such an outcome and positively puts himself forward. In game terms, this means very little. The character would henceforth tend to spend much time alone at night on river banks, whether on the Congo or anywhere else where there is a continuous connection through the water with the Congo River. Even the Miskatonic River would serve for this purpose. He would never be harmed during these nocturnal excursions, although he almost certainly would look somewhat worse for wear and tired the following morning, albeit with a happy smile on his face. In return, he will literally never again be short of money. For the average joe, this will manifest itself as a curious habit of always finding a ten- or twenty-dollar bill in his pocket or wallet whenever he really needs it. For a wealthy man, the favor of Mami Wata will instead manifest itself in the way his stocks and investments constantly rise in value. While the favor of Mami Wata is not a license to waste money, the character will no longer have to be overly concerned over his regular expenses. But remember that Mami Wata is likely eventually to withdraw her favor. Then the character will either suffer a horrible fate some lonely night on the river bank, or he might fall into despair, brood over his lost lady-love, and possibly even kill himself. Treat this extreme shock as a loss of 2D8 Sanity points. If this results in indefinite insanity, so be it. He will also rapidly decline financially. However, remember that Mami Wata is, in her own manner, a force for good, not evil. The Keeper should not allow a character to fall out of Mami Wata's grace until a time when either the story or the state of the character demands that the player retires or abandons the character. The only exception to this would be if the player commits an act obviously against the implicit bargain with Mami Wata, such as by getting married, falling in love, or otherwise causing the spirit's rightful anger. Then the Keeper is within his rights to let the wrath of Mami Wata strike down the character without further ado.

As a further note, let it be known that Mami Wata has been known also to engage in love affairs with females. Mami Wata is a spirit, not a woman, so the physical aspects of her body and genitals are less important in this respect. In the late 1970s, a female witness reported that she always sees the spirit in the form of a woman, but in her opinion it must really be a man, for sometimes she dreams that they sleep together, and in the morning she feels as if she has had genuine sexual intercourse. So the Keeper should not let the gender barrier interfere with his or her ability to complicate life for the players.

Keeper Option

For those Keepers who wish to avoid too many new creatures and monsters in their *Call of Cthulhu* universe, Mami Wata can be regarded as a solitary, surviving

member of an old species from the time when Earth was young. If so, another, less developed or intelligent strand of this race is the Bunyip in Australia. In game terms, the statistics below are based on those of the Bunyip, since the two spirits indeed do display many similar characteristics.

The Legend of Mami Wata

Mami Wata (“Mummy Water”) is the pidgin English name of a spiritual force known throughout West and Central Africa under various indigenous names, including *Nwaanyi mara mma*, meaning “More Than Beautiful Woman,” and *Mamba Muntu*, signifying “Crocodile Person.” French-speaking Congolese may use the name *Madame Poisson* (“Madam Fish”).

As some of these names imply, this being is associated with rivers and streams. As a spirit, Mami Wata is usually represented, both verbally and iconically, as being partially female and partially fish or reptile. She is a powerful feminine spiritual force. In comparison to ordinary mortal women, she can be recognised as being too attractive, too fair of skin, and as having overly large and brilliant eyes and excessively long hair. Her clothes and jewellery positively shine. Glamour and sex appeal would seem to be her most obvious characteristics. Naturally she is almost irresistible to men. However, her nature is dangerous. Many men, in whom Mami Wata takes an interest, grew ill. The illness often begins with apathy and an inability to concentrate, is resistant to any cure, and will grow steadily worse if the spirit’s interest is not acknowledged and satisfied. Even then, there cannot be a complete cure. Yet, the man may well find that the blessings bestowed by the spirit are well worth the troubles.

Depending upon her mood, this spirit is capable of bestowing abundant blessings or inflicting severe mental and physical pain on those who meet her near the rivers or streams where she dwells. Mami Wata brings material wealth to her followers, but the cost of this good fortune is great, for the price of riches is often the loss of fertility. Mami Wata is notoriously demanding in her attentions. She is also fickle. The person whom she favors today may be forced to return those favors, or pay dearly for them, tomorrow. A man favored by Mami Wata may be held in sexual slavery; he will gain immense riches but must sacrifice a member of his family, or in certain cases, his male member.

Images of Mami Wata often depict her as a beautiful woman with a large snake entwined about her hips, rising up to cradle its head between her breasts. Mami Wata is typically depicted as a white woman. She is often said to have European features. While some Western scholars have emphasized the

foreignness of Mami Wata’s appearance, especially her fair skin and allegedly European features, and interpret these aspects of her as evidence that this spiritual being is a mere superstition, inspired by the figureheads of European ships, there is in West and Central Africa a long tradition of whitening the skin with chalk and other substances for ritual purposes. In addition, many spirits are commonly depicted as white-faced. The color white is associated with beauty, wealth, and the ancestral forces but also with characteristics such as transparency. As a spiritual being, Mami Wata is a transparent, transcendent, non-human being. She is white while in her own element, and that element, water, is itself regarded as white in the meaning of “clear” or “transparent.” In the Congo, the natives believed that they were people of the land, while spirits were people of the water. While men, or strictly speaking their ancestors (*bakulu*) controlled that ordered nature whose cycles and regularities are known, the spirits controlled nature in flux, such as the rivers. Besides, water symbolically represented the time of beginning, birth, and rebirth; it evoked femininity and renewal. There is thus little reason to believe that the Mami Wata cult is a Western import; the spirit certainly has an African origin.



Villagers

The Legend of the Leopard Men

The Human Leopard Society, also and perhaps better known as the Anyoto Society, was a secret cult association which flourished in Central Africa from at least the eighteenth century. The term Anyoto is believed to come from the Bafwasea verb *nyoto*, which means to scratch. However, popular legend refers to a female named Anyota who supposedly formed the society long ago.

The cult of the Leopard Men was open only to men, and the eating of human flesh formed part of the initiatory rites. To be initiated, a man first had to prove his worth by killing a family member, usually a wife or eldest daughter. Cult members regularly dressed in leopard skins or wore tunics and hoods dotted with black spots and rings to resemble leopards. Others painted their bodies to look similar to the animal's fur in order to become a leopard. However, they often used a real tail, attached to a belt holding the other implements needed to carry out their nocturnal rituals such as an earthenware pot to blow into to mimic the leopard's muffled snarl, a wooden baton shaped like the paws of a leopard with which the cult members could make "leopard tracks" on the ground around their dead victims, sharp knives to cut up corpses, and special "leopard claws," an iron bracelet with four dangling knives. When a Leopard Man's fingers were extended, these blades were concealed under his palm, but when he closed his fist they jutted out between his clenched fingers like a leopard's claws. During their rituals, members of the cult often walked on all fours and voiced cries similar to leopards.



A Leopard Man emerges out of the shadows

Killings were only performed when the cult members believed that they had magically transformed into leopards by dressing or painting their bodies in the appropriate way and were then committed through the use of the special "leopard claws" which were used to slash the throats and torsos of their victims, ripping them open. The members of the cult would then drink the blood of their victim and remove severed limbs, heads, and internal organs to consume later. Members who rebelled against the cult, and anybody who spoke out against it, were murdered

and eaten in ritualistic killings at night. Women and children were not spared, since they were easy targets. Some Leopard Men, especially their most respected witchdoctors, were rumored to be true shape-shifters, by witchcraft able to turn oneself into a leopards, and, in that form, attack an enemy. Other Leopard Men witchdoctors claimed to be able to project their own souls into a real leopard, which the witchdoctor could then direct to do his killings, in effect endowing it with his own intelligence and experiences.

Beginning in 1921, the Leopard Men of eastern Congo attacked and killed numerous other black Congolese. This caused widespread fear and social disorder and made many Congolese refuse to work the Belgian farms because they were afraid of the Leopard Men. The Belgians waged a ruthless struggle to destroy the cult, in 1925 introducing legislation to outlaw and restrict indigenous associations. By 1936 the struggle had been successful. With the non-supernatural nature of the cult's initiation rituals exposed, the cult rapidly faded away. Most cult members in any case appear to have been mere gangsters who made a comfortable living by terrorizing their neighbors. However, while the cult remained active, the belief in its magical powers led many Congolese to hire members of the cult to punish those of whom they disapproved, for instance those who broke tribal laws or failed to pay tribal taxes.

The cult never died out, however. This, at least is the verdict of those who has encountered similar killings in the years since then.

Beatty's book is a red herring. Yes, it describes a Human Leopard Society, but one in distant Sierra Leone. This may in itself suggest to the players that the Leopard Men of the Congo are something quite different. Still, Beatty's text provides color to the adventure and certainly gives the investigators a good idea of what a Leopard Man might be. If the Keeper wishes to introduce the Leopard Men in the adventure, and they indeed are ordinary men, treat their characteristics as those of the Wakiwaki (the ordinary ones, not the obvious hybrids) in the Statistics section in a later chapter. For other ideas on this topic, see Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* (2007).

Statistics (Ngombe Village)

Mami Wata

Mami Wata is a powerful feminine spiritual force who among human beings almost always looks and behaves like an extremely beautiful and attractive woman. Her natural form, however, is twelve feet (four meters) long. Her natural sound is a savage hunting cry, a paean of hunger only heard in the dead of night. Mami Wata has long claws and hugs its prey to death.

STR 45
 CON 26
 SIZ 45
 INT 24
 POW 60
 DEX 24
 Move 10/16 walk/swim
 HP 36

Damage Bonus: +5D6

Weapon:

Bite 65%, damage 1D10
 Claw 65%, damage is Grapple in first round and then 5D6 + db (that is, 10D6) in the second and later rounds

Armor: 10-point hide

Spells: Mami Wata knows a number of spells, including impersonate human and create wealth.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see; 1/1D3 Sanity points to hear her call.

Mami Wata can Bite and Claw once each per round. The only escape is to overcome her STR with personal STR on the resistance table (several people will generally be needed for this to succeed). She will under no conditions teach any spells to others.

Fred McCoy



McCoy is an American trader in his late twenties. He has been in Belgian Congo for two years.

STR 13 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 13 POW 13
 DEX 13 APP 15 EDU 12 SAN 45 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.38 Smith and Wesson Special Revolver 35%, damage 1D10
 Fist/Punch 55%, damage 1D3+1D4

Skills: Accounting 35%, Anthropology 20%, Bargain 65%, Credit Rating 20%, Dodge 40%, First Aid 40%, Hide 35%, Jungle Survival 20%, Natural History 25%, Navigate 30%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 30%.

Languages: English 60%, French 40%, Ngombe (Bantu) 40%.

Limi

Limi, the witchdoctor of the Ngombe, is in his late fifties and already an old man. In addition, Limi is severely afflicted by Elephantiasis.

STR 8 CON 6 SIZ 11 INT 17 POW 15
 DEX 10 APP 2 EDU 8 SAN 75 HP 9

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

Flintlock Musket 20%, damage 2D6+1
 Bow 50%, damage 1D6
 Thrown Short Spear 50%, damage 1D8+1
 Short Spear 55%, damage 1D8+1
 Woven Shield 50%, damage 1D3, blocks 12 points of damage
 Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Spells: Cast Out Devil, Healing, Journey to the Other Side.

Skills: Art (Blacksmith) 50%, Art (Fetishes) 50%, Art (Oral History) 70%, Climb 40%, Craft (Potions and Poisons) 70%, Cthulhu Mythos 2%, Dodge 30%, Hide 30%, Jump 20%, Jungle Survival 65%, Listen 60%, Medicine 70%, Natural History 80%, Navigate 50%, Occult 40%, Persuade 50%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 50%, Throw 50%, Track 55%.

Languages: Ngombe (Bantu) 70%, French 40%, English 20%, Kiswahili (Bantu) 25%.

Venomous Snake

Venomous snakes of the Congo basin come in a large number of varieties including the black mamba, the black-lipped cobra or forest cobra as it is also known, the seven-foot long gaboon viper, the rhinoceros viper, and several species of water snake.

There is little need for special rules for all these varieties. The Keeper will select a random member of the expedition who must attempt a Spot Hidden skill roll. In dense vegetation, this skill roll may be halved, at the Keeper's discretion. At night, this skill roll may be no higher than one-quarter of the normal percentiles. If the skill roll succeeds, that individual has barely avoided stepping onto a venomous snake. If it fails, he is bitten and poisoned. Match a poison with a POT of 1D20 versus the victim's CON. If the victim succeeds, he takes only half damage from the poison, with any fraction rounded down. The poison will take effect within 1D100 minutes.

Detailed descriptions of cobras and mambas, as well as other African wildlife, can be found in Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* (2007).

Venomous Centipede

Venomous centipedes are common as well. If encountered, they can be treated in exactly the same way as venomous snakes, although with a poison with a POT of 1D10 instead of 1D20.



Quicksand

A quicksand encounter means that 1D4 characters in the expedition need to attempt Spot Hidden skill rolls. Those who fail will have stepped unwarily into quicksand. Those who succeed noticed the treacherous pool in time, but not in time to warn the others.

Although little known in the 1920s, one can swim in quicksand. A successful Know roll is needed before a trapped individual can attempt a Swim skill roll. When somebody first steps into the quicksand, 1D6 of his SIZ is covered. For each round thereafter, unless a successful Swim skill roll takes place, another 1D6 SIZ sinks beneath the surface of the quicksand. When all SIZ has gone below the surface, then the individual begins to drown as per the asphyxiation rules. If the CON roll fails in quicksand, the victim takes 2D6 damage.

Quicksand has a STR of 4D6, and this number, whenever determined, remains constant for this particular batch of quicksand (other pools of quicksand may well have a different STR). Any individual with something to grasp can pull himself out of the quicksand by overcoming the quicksand's STR against his own STR. By doing so, the victim can 'recover' 1D3 points of his SIZ. The trapped individual can attempt both a Swim skill roll and a STR versus STR roll each round. If others help to pull the trapped individual out, each participant can try to overcome the quicksand's STR independently. Each success pulls another 1D3 of the victim's SIZ out.

Hippopotamus

Hippopotamuses live in herds. Although they are entirely vegetarian, many are aggressive, and entire herds have been known to attack at once. The bull hippopotamus is a formidable creature. It is fiercely territorial and will defend its river against any intruder, be it another bull, crocodiles, or passing river boats. A hippopotamus is a highly dangerous creature and should be avoided, even when it looks tranquil. A

hippopotamus can move surprisingly fast on land as well, and its four stubby tusks are in fact razor sharp on the sides. It attacks by slashing, moving its mouth from side to side, rather than biting, in a similar manner to a wild boar. During the day, herds of hippopotamuses are found in pools and swamps beside the river-bank. At night, they come ashore to feed on grass. Any native knows that if a hippopotamus is coming your way, the only safe recourse is to run for your life. In Africa, more people are killed by hippopotamuses than by crocodiles in any given year. In river areas where herds of hippopotamuses are found, half of native deaths resulting from wildlife are attributed to these beasts.

STR	39
CON	23
SIZ	39
POW	11
DEX	11
Move	10
HP	31

Damage Bonus: +4D6

Weapon: Bite 30%, damage 1D10+db

Trample 50%, damage 10D6 versus downed foe

Armor: 6-point hide

A hippopotamus can attack once per round, by either biting or trampling its foe. The last attack is only available versus a target downed on the ground.

Crocodile

Crocodiles can grow up to fifteen feet (five meters) in length. They attack on land as well as in water. On land, they will give up and retreat to water unless their prey has succumbed within 6 to 9 rounds. In the Congo, crocodiles are known to hunt in packs, which makes them yet more dangerous.

STR	26
CON	19
SIZ	26
POW	11
DEX	23
Move	6/8 swimming
HP	23

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapon: Bite 50%, damage 1D10+db

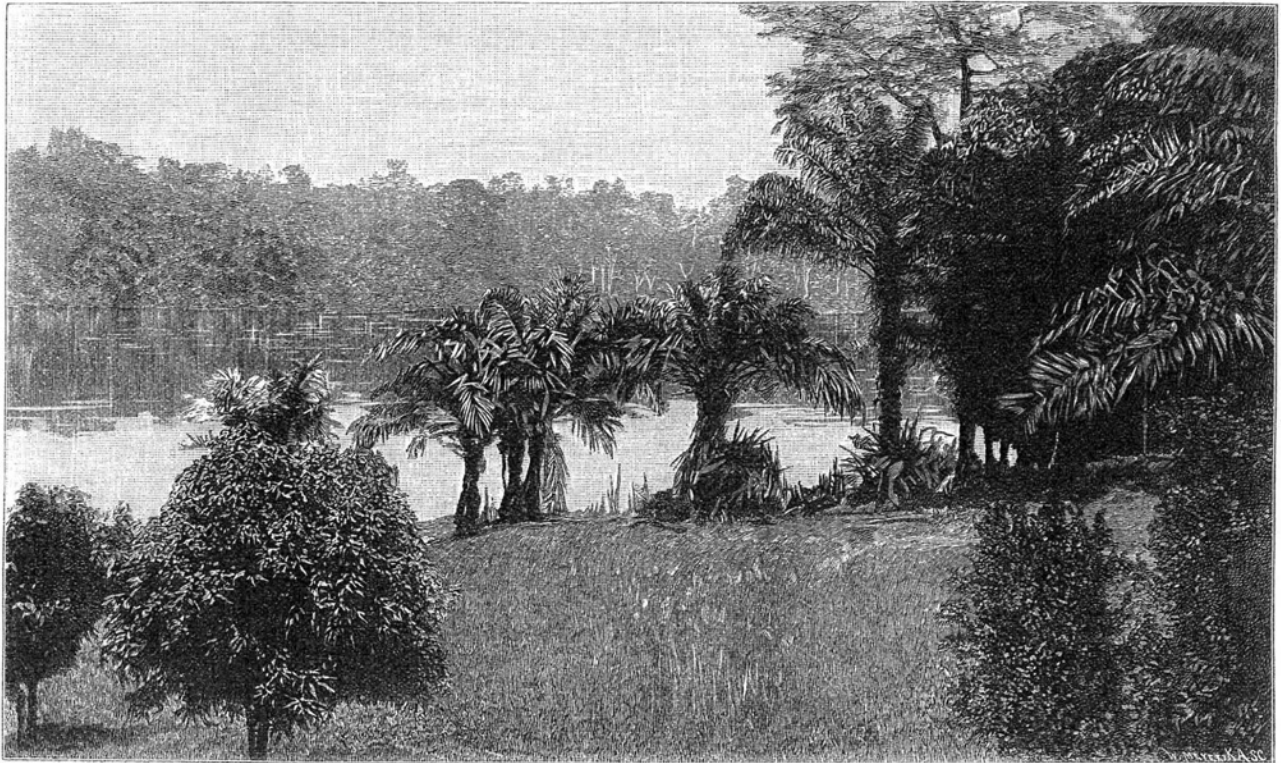
Death Roll 99%, damage 2D6 + db

Armor: 5-point hide

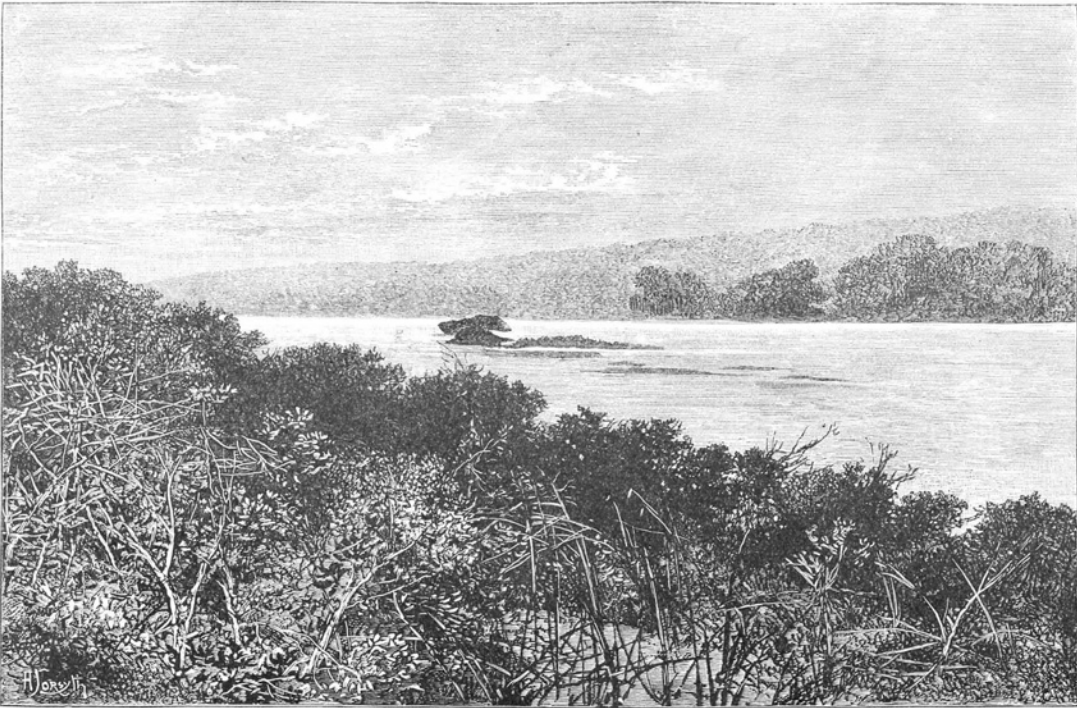
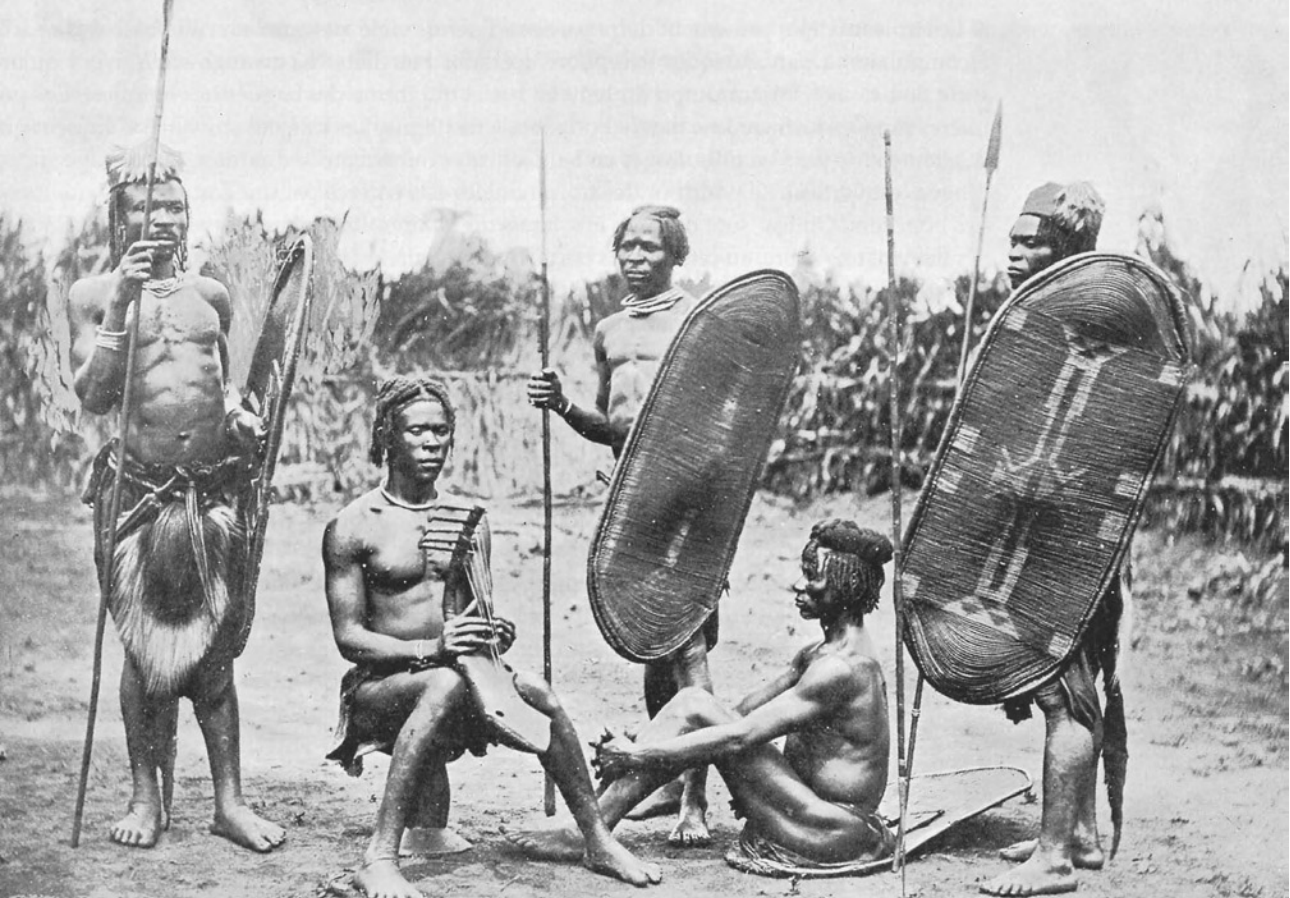
A crocodile can attack once per round. If the crocodile successfully bites a target, it can be pulled into the water to be rolled on the bottom of the river in what is called a death roll. The victim can only resist by successfully matching his STR against the crocodile's STR. If the victim is dragged into the water, the crocodile attacks with his death roll at a 99% chance of success until the



victim dies or succeeds in matching his STR against the crocodile's STR.



A small tributary of the Congo





An unexpected encounter in the Congo River

The Outpost of Progress

Summary: Having followed the river almost to its source, the investigators reach the last trading post. They hire native bearers to carry their equipment and askaris (native soldiers) to defend the expedition against wild animals, Zanzibari raiders, and hostile cannibals such as the Wakiwaki. They also learn of several legends and rumors from the region, including one suggesting that the lost uncle, Aaron, was seen at the trading post several months ago. He may still be alive.



Final Preparations at the Trading Post

The last stage of the journey begins from the most distant trading post on the Congo and Lualaba. This trading post, by the traders along the Congo in jest referred to as the “Outpost of Progress,” is a dismal place. It is in the charge of a Belgian trader named Kayerts and his small staff and technically under the control of the Belgian trading firm Société Anonyme pour le Commerce du Haut-Congo. However, the trading post is an important staging post for the expedition, since this is the last place to recruit men and amass supplies for the final stage of the journey. To do so earlier would have been possible, but this would have slowed the expedition down. To do so later would be impossible, since none would be

available. And armed men—askaris—and bearers will be required for any overland journey into cannibal territory, however short.

Arrangements have therefore been made in advance to meet a well-known big game hunter and safari guide, Baron Bror von Blixen-Finecke, also known as Blix, at the trading post. He is expected to be there with a suitable number of men and supplies for the last stage of the journey. Blix is a Swedish nobleman who has made a life on the frontier as a hunter and guide. In coming years, he will be better known as the estranged husband of the famous writer, Karen Blixen (who published her book *Out of Africa* in 1937, made into a major Hollywood movie).

Blix will be waiting for the expedition as it arrives. He speaks one of the local languages, Lingala, and has hired ten experienced askaris. In addition, he has recruited thirty locals as bearers for the expedition.

These people, and the supplies they carry, will travel by river boat to the final place where the flying boat can land, whence everybody will have to move onwards on foot.



The Belgian staff at the Outpost of Progress, Kayerts and Carlier, will be very happy to receive the expedition, which they regard as a welcome break in their normal dull routine. If the investigators ask, they will confirm that the lost uncle, Aaron, was seen at the trading post several months ago. Neither can remember exactly when, since they have grown careless in keeping a calendar. Later, Blix will inform the investigators in private that it is not unheard of for white men in distant trading posts such as this one slowly going mad due to the humid climate and horrendous living conditions. When Blix arrived with his men, Kayerts and Carlier were very edgy and seemed close to snap at any moment. Blix reckons that neither will last much longer, unless replacements arrive by river transport so that they can return to civilization. A successful Psychology skill roll will confirm the suspicions of Blix; the two Belgians have clearly stayed out in the jungle for far too long. However, the sudden contact with other civilized men, the investigators, that is, will surely do them good. Perhaps they can hang in there for another six months or so following the departure of the investigators.

The stay at the Outpost of Progress will be characterized by little if any action. Now is the time for the Keeper to give the players a chance to understand how the dismal living conditions in deepest Congo affected natives and white men alike. Consider this the lull before the storm; the Keeper's job is to use the trading post as a means for interaction between down-and-out Congo traders and the

investigators to allow for some genuine roleplaying, for instance by again dropping references to the Wakiwaki, M'Bakadala, and other sources of danger. (Any group of players who has no interest in such things can of course instead choose to stock up on supplies and men and then move onwards right away.)



Kayerts and Carlier, able Congo traders

Although the notes here will suffice for playing out this part of the scenario, it is strongly recommended that the Keeper reads Joseph Conrad's short story "An Outpost of Progress," published in his collection *Tales of Unrest* (1898), which is freely available through the web site of Project Gutenberg.

Outline of the Trading Post

Main Building

The main building is built neatly of reeds, with a verandah on all the four sides. There are three rooms in it. The one in the middle is the living-room, and has two rough tables and a few stools in it. The other two are the bedrooms for the white men. Each has a bedstead and a mosquito net but no other furniture. The plank floor is littered with the belongings of Kayerts and Carlier; open half-empty boxes, torn wearing apparel, old boots; all the things dirty, and all the things broken, that accumulate mysteriously around untidy men.

Storehouse

A small clay storehouse with a dried-grass roof is located next to the main building. It contains trade beads, cotton cloth, red kerchiefs, brass wire, and other trade goods.



Makola's Hut

A low, shed-like dwelling, inhabited by Makola and his family (see below).



A Group of Straw Huts

Several straw huts on the slope of a ravine overgrown with reedy grass, just behind the station buildings, form the living quarters of the other ten native station men employed by the trading post.

Statistics (Outpost of Progress)

Jean-Louis Kayerts

The chief of the trading post. A short and fat man, Kayerts was formerly of the Administration of Telegraphs in Brussels, Belgium. Kayerts is a somewhat stupid man with a drawn, flabby face above the rotundity of his stomach, which gave him a weird aspect. He is a widower, with a daughter, Melie, taken care of by his sister in Brussels. After almost a year at the outpost, the jungle is getting to him and if not relieved soon, his connection to reality will surely snap. (*Keeper's Note:* If Kayerts survives the adventure, and no replacement arrives, he will eventually go insane and kill his assistant Carlier in a fit of madness. For details, see Joseph Conrad's short story "An Outpost of Progress.")

STR 10 CON 8 SIZ 10 INT 10 POW 9
DEX 9 APP 8 EDU 11 SAN 15 HP 9

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 20%, damage 1D10+2

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Skills: Accounting 65%, Anthropology 10%, Bargain 45%, Credit Rating 50%, Law 35%.

Languages: French 55%, Dutch 50%, English 45%.

Alain Carlier

Carlier is the assistant of Kayerts. A tall man, with a large head and a very broad trunk perched upon a long pair of thin legs, Carlier is a former cavalry non-commissioned officer. He is quite stupid too. After almost a year at the outpost, he is hollow-eyed and irritable. The jungle has marked him as well. So has the fever.

STR 13 CON 9 SIZ 15 INT 6 POW 8
DEX 11 APP 12 EDU 8 SAN 25 HP 8

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 45%, damage 1D10+2

7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 45%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+1D4

Rapier 25%, damage 1D6+1+1D4

Skills: Anthropology 5%, Bargain 25%, Credit Rating 20%, Dodge 35%, First Aid 25%, Hide 30%, Hold Liquor 45%, Listen 30%, Sneak 25%, Spot Hidden 30%.

Languages: French 40%, English 20%.

Note. Carlier has been trained in the use of the rapier but no such weapon is actually available at the trading post.

Makola, a.k.a Henry Price



Makola always insists on using his chosen name, Henry Price, but neither Kayerts nor Carlier takes any account of this. Makola, who regards himself as "a civilized nigger" comes from distant Sierra Leone. He speaks English and French with a warbling accent, writes a beautiful hand, understands bookkeeping, and cherishes in his innermost heart the worship of pagan and probably evil spirits.



Makola's wife is an immense negress from Loanda in Portuguese Angola named Fineza, very large and very noisy. Their three children roll about in the sunshine before the door of Makola's low, shed-like dwelling. Makola, taciturn and impenetrable, despises the two white men. He knows that they would not last a day without his help. Makola has charge of the small clay storehouse with a dried-grass roof, and pretends to keep a correct account of the beads, cotton cloth, red kerchiefs, brass wire, and other trade goods it contains. Makola is very neat in his person and every morning cleans himself with the help of a tin basin of soapy water.

In case of danger to the outpost, Fineza will bring the children deep into the rainforest to hide there until the crisis has passed. Makola will join them if necessary to stay alive.

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 10 INT 14 POW 14
DEX 13 APP 11 EDU 12 SAN 80 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

Fighting Knife 25%, damage 1D4+2

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Skills: Accounting 25%, Anthropology 20%, Bargain 65%, Credit Rating 15%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Dodge 40%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Jungle Survival 30%, Listen 40%, Natural History 40%, Navigate 30%, Occult 20%, Psychology 65%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 40%.

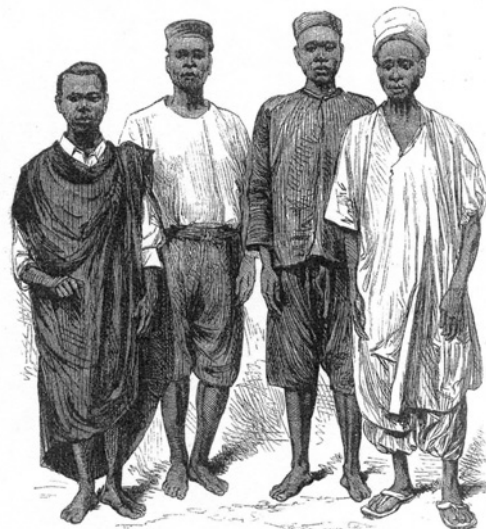
Languages: Mende (Bantu) 60%, English 60%, French 60%, Ngbandi (Bantu) 40%, Kiswahili (Bantu) 35%.

Other Staff of the Outpost

There are ten native station men at the outpost, brought in from western Congo. These fellows, having engaged themselves to the Company for six months (without having any idea of a month in particular and only a very faint notion of time in general), have by now been serving the cause of progress for upwards of two years. Belonging to the Bateke (Bantu) tribe, they (in the words of Conrad)

did not run away, naturally supposing that as wandering strangers they would be killed by the inhabitants of the country; in which they were right. They lived in straw huts on the slope of a ravine overgrown with reedy grass, just behind the station buildings. They were not happy, regretting the festive incantations, the sorceries, the human sacrifices of their own land; where they also had parents, brothers, sisters, admired chiefs, respected magicians, loved friends, and other ties supposed generally to be human.

Besides, the rice rations served out by the Company did not agree with them, being a food unknown to their land, and to which they could not get used. Consequently they were unhealthy and miserable. Had they been of any other tribe they would have made up their minds to die—for nothing is easier to certain savages than suicide—and so have escaped from the puzzling difficulties of existence. But belonging, as they did, to a warlike tribe with filed teeth, they had more grit, and went on stupidly living through disease and sorrow. They did very little work, and had lost their splendid physique. Carlier and Kayerts doctored them assiduously without being able to bring them back into condition again. They were mustered every morning and told off to different tasks—grass-cutting, fence-building, tree-felling, &c., &c., which no power on earth could induce them to execute efficiently. The two whites had practically very little control over them.



Some of the staff

Baron Bror Fredrik von Blixen-Finecke, a k.a. "Blix"

Baron Bror von Blixen-Finecke (born on 25 July 1886) is a Swedish baron and African big game hunter in his mid-thirties. One of a pair of identical twins born to an aristocratic Swedish family in Näsbyholm (his twin, Hans, died in an airplane crash in 1917), he married his Danish cousin, Karen Blixen (1885–1962; better known by her pen name, Isak Dinesen), in 1913. They moved to Africa, where they bought a coffee plantation outside Nairobi in Kenya. However, the two were separated almost at once and although they remained married until 1925, Blix was seldom at home.

His personal motto was "Life is life and fun is fun, but it's all so quiet when the goldfish die!" A friend later

described Blix in the following words: “Bror was the toughest, most durable white hunter ever to shoot a charging buffalo between the eyes while debating whether his sundowner will be gin or whiskey.” Like other big game hunters, Blix will remain cool when charged by large animals and even monsters. Sanity losses will be calculated as usual but he will not suffer any adverse effects until the incident is resolved.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 10
DEX 15 APP 16 EDU 20 SAN 50 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 75%, damage 1D10+2

7.92mm Mauser Modell 1898 Bolt-Action Rifle 75%, damage 2D6+2

.577 Nitro Express Double Rifle 75%, damage 3D6+6

Askaris

The askaris employed by Blix come from a variety of backgrounds, but most were recruited in Kenya. For this reason, they speak English in addition to whatever native language they might know. However, most are not as well-trained soldiers as real colonial troops. They have mainly been used to protect safaris against bandits and wild animals. Only Mabruki and Malimu ever received military training, but they participated in the Great War so are quite experienced. Each askari carries a Lee-Enfield rifle but none has a bayonet.

Individual	STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	DB	HP
Mabruki	16	13	17	17	9	13	10	4	45	+1D6	15
Malimu	14	13	15	14	13	12	9	10	65	+1D4	14
Kusu	15	16	12	16	15	13	7	8	75	+1D4	14
Théophile*	12	10	14	15	8	13	6	4	40	+1D4	12
Mutesa	16	16	15	14	7	16	9	9	35	+1D4	16
Louis	15	11	12	10	10	10	11	6	50	+1D4	12
Kidogo	11	12	16	12	8	16	9	6	40	+1D4	14
Kalulu	14	17	14	17	9	9	9	4	45	+1D4	16
Augustin*	12	16	13	11	12	10	12	6	60	+1D4	15
Marius*	12	15	13	15	10	15	5	6	50	+1D4	14

Mabruki and Malimu:

Weapons: .303 Lee-Enfield Bolt-Action Rifle 60%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 50%, First Aid 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Jungle Survival 60%, Listen 60%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 50%, Throw 50%, Track 50%.

Languages: Kiswahili (Bantu) 50%, English 45%

Everybody else:

Weapons: .303 Lee-Enfield Bolt-Action Rifle 50%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 40%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Jump 40%, Jungle Survival 50%, Listen 50%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Swim 40%, Throw 40%, Track 40%.

Languages: Kiswahili (Bantu) 50%, English 35%, French 35% (those marked with * only)

Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3
Fighting Knife 55%, damage 1D4+2

Skills: Anthropology 10%, Bargain 25%, Biology 5%, Credit Rating 45%, Dodge 50%, Drive Auto 30%, First Aid 60%, Geology 10%, Hide 45%, Jump 35%, Jungle Survival 45%, Listen 50%, Natural History 20%, Navigate 40%, Pharmacy 10%, Pilot Boat 25%, Ride 50%, Sneak 40%, Spot Hidden 40%, Track 60%.

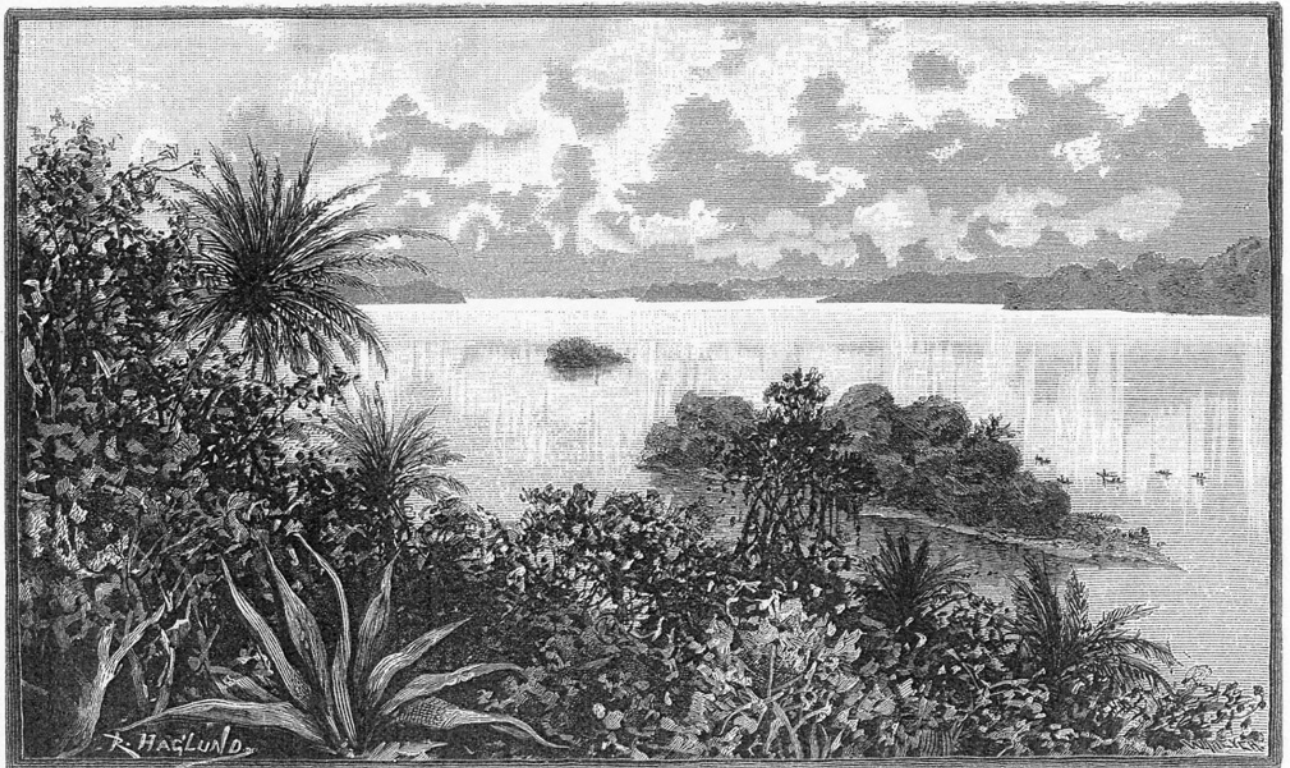
Languages: Swedish 100%, English 50%, French 45%, German 35%, Kiswahili (Bantu) 40%, Lingala (Bantu) 30%.

Note. The Mauser '98 is fully described in Chaosium's *The Keeper's Companion 2* (2002).





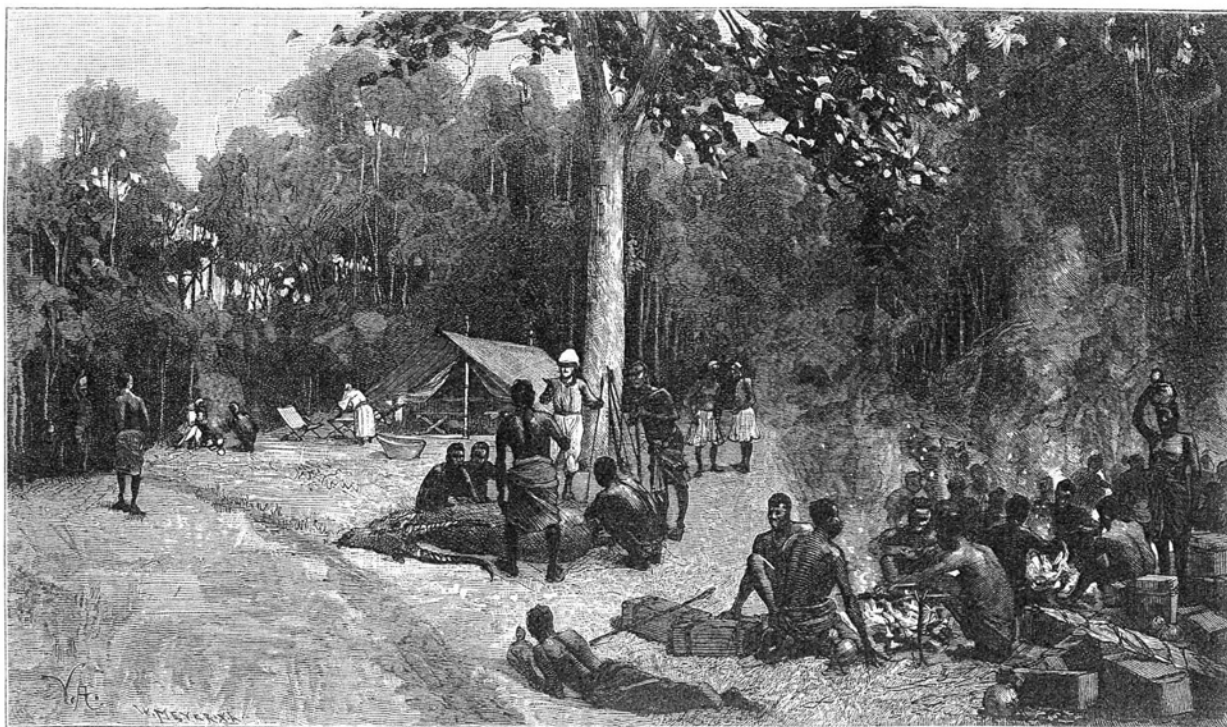
Encountering the bull elephant



View of the Congo River

The Cannibals Attack

Summary: Having reached their destination, the investigators secure the Curtiss flying boat to a prominent rock near a waterfall and set up camp. In the middle of the night, the camp is attacked by cannibals. One or more investigators are captured and brought to the cannibal village for sacrifice to ancient gods. The survivors must try to find their way through the dense, humid rainforest to rescue their friends. In the torch-lit cannibal village, the survivors realize that their captors are only semi-human, being an ancient hybrid breed of men and serpent people.



At the End of the Journey

The reaches opened before us and closed behind, as if the forest had stepped leisurely across the water to bar the way for our return. We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness. It was very quiet there. At night sometimes the roll of drums behind the curtain of trees would run up the river and remain sustained faintly, as if hovering in the air high over our heads, till the first break of day. Whether it meant war, peace, or prayer we could not tell. The dawns were heralded by the descent of a chill stillness; the woodcutters slept, their fires burned low; the snapping of a twig would make you start. We were wanderers on a prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet. We could have fancied

ourselves the first of men taking possession of an accursed inheritance, to be subdued at the cost of profound anguish and of excessive toil. But suddenly, as we struggled round a bend, there would be a glimpse of rush walls, of peaked grass-roofs, a burst of yells, a whirl of black limbs, a mass of hands clapping, of feet stamping, of bodies swaying, of eyes rolling, under the droop of heavy and motionless foliage. The steamer toiled along slowly on the edge of a black and incomprehensible frenzy. The prehistoric man was cursing us, praying to us, welcoming us—who could tell? We were cut off from the comprehension of our surroundings; we glided past like phantoms, wondering and secretly appalled, as sane men would be before an enthusiastic outbreak in a madhouse. We could not understand, because we were too far and could not remember, because we were traveling in the night of first



ages, of those ages that are gone, leaving hardly a sign—and no memories.

The dusk came gliding into it long before the sun had set. The current ran smooth and swift, but a dumb immobility sat on the banks. The living trees, lashed together by the creepers and every living bush of the undergrowth, might have been changed into stone, even to the slenderest twig, to the lightest leaf. It was not sleep—it seemed unnatural, like a state of trance. Not the faintest sound of any kind could be heard. You looked on amazed, and began to suspect yourself of being deaf—then the night came suddenly, and struck you blind as well. About three in the morning some large fish leaped, and the loud splash made me jump as though a gun had been fired. When the sun rose there was a white fog, very warm and clammy, and more blinding than the night. It did not shift or drive; it was just there, standing all round you like something solid. At eight or nine, perhaps, it lifted as a shutter lifts. We had a glimpse of the towering multitude of trees, of the immense matted jungle, with the blazing little ball of the sun hanging over it—all perfectly still—and then the white shutter came down again, smoothly, as if sliding in greased grooves.

Joseph Conrad

By following the instructions and geographical references of the Italian explorer, Count dell'Acqua, the expedition finally reaches its destination: a prominent rock near a waterfall. The ruins in which the Wakiwaki set up their settlement cannot be far away. In fact, if the flying boat makes a couple of passes over the area, a native settlement will be seen from the air which may well be the Wakiwaki village. A couple of monolithic stone ruins will be noted as well (see the map). These would seem to correspond to the description by Count dell'Acqua. However, the flying boat can of course only land on water, so its journey has reached its end. The investigators must leave the flying boat where the river turns into a small waterfall, since the upstream river is too narrow for further operations. Fortunately, the rock at the waterfall can be recognized as Count dell'Acqua's point of entry for reaching the Wakiwaki. The investigators set up camp. The following morning, they will have to proceed on foot. Professor Mathieson, if on the expedition, will remain with the flying boat, since the climate affects him badly and he is unlikely to survive further physical strain. Blix will lead the party into the swamps, through which the party must journey to reach the ruins and the Wakiwaki village.

Such is the plan. It is not to happen. In the middle of the night, the camp is suddenly attacked by the Wakiwaki. Blix will have posted guards, but they will

be quietly silenced by the intruders. Fortunately, Blix also followed another old Africa practice: in camp, he deliberately positioned the tents and fires of the bearers in a ring around the tents of the investigators. By this means, efficient in all its ruthlessness, the safari leader can ensure that any attack, from wild animals or hostile natives, will first hit the bearers, who are dispensable. When they cry out in agony and panic of death, this will alert the investigators and give them precious seconds to arm to fight off the intruders. Bearers are cheap in the Dark Continent, and while any survivors among them may then be defended by well-armed white men, the opposite would not hold true. If the men armed with firearms die first, no bearer can expect to survive except by running—and then no doubt the enemies or the jungle would take him long before he finds his way back home. Or he would be found by members of another tribe, who would enslave and possibly eat him. These are the realities of African expeditions; ruthlessness will carry the day where soft words and good intentions fail. Remember, that the thirty bearers are unarmed and will not fight. Neither would they have done so in real life. These men are bearers, not warriors or soldiers. The Keeper should forget his or her good manners and regard them as cannon-fodder, pure and simple. If any of them survive the adventure, this will be to the credit of the players, not the Keeper or the realities of African exploration.

The Keeper should emphasise the desperation of the fight. The night will be pitch black. The Wakiwaki, for reasons to be explained, do not need torches to see their enemies, and the struggle in the dark camp will be sudden, brutal, and swiftly over. Several bearers and possibly a few askaris will be killed. The investigators will most likely survive, since they carry guns and the camp practice enforced by Blix will give them a few precious seconds to get up and arm (moreover, there will be no more opportunity for any player who loses a character to put a new one into play since the party is now out of contact with civilization). However, one or more investigators and at least two askaris or bearers will be captured and brought to the cannibal village, no doubt for sacrifice to ancient gods. Nobody can, of course, know this for sure but this is the general conclusion—and the correct one. The raid will end almost as suddenly as it began.

Unless the remaining investigators wish to forego the objective of the expedition and abandon their friends to the bloodthirsty rites of the cannibals (which should be strongly discouraged and, if needed, be penalised with a loss of 1D6 SAN), the morning will see them setting off into the humid jungle in search of the Wakiwaki settlement. The flying boat is of no use here; even if armed, it could never land in the jungle so no captives can be saved by using it. The only way forward is on foot. A few non-player characters will

have to stay in the camp to guard the flying boat and the supplies. Professor Mathieson will definitely have to remain in camp due to his weak health.

The journey will be an arduous one. The Keeper should emphasise the nature of the rainforest. There will be obstacles in the form of undergrowth, rocks, and swamps, as well as dangers such as venomous snakes and other unpleasant forms of wildlife. In addition, the investigators will face the following specific encounters.

First, the party will encounter an old bull elephant of majestic appearance, followed by his two squires. Old bull elephants tend to acquire one or two younger male followers, known as squires. The approach of the elephant will be silent. Suddenly it just stands there between two huge trees. This elephant is a spectacular sight, bigger than any other elephant ever seen by the investigators in zoos or at circus. Even Blix is impressed. He first raises his rifle out of old habit, then lowers it again, being unable to fire at such amazing specimens. The investigators should follow his example and leave the elephants well alone, unless they are too trigger-happy for their own good—and such behaviour may well lead to disaster as will be explained in a later chapter of the scenario. The three elephants silently disappear among the trees.

Second, the investigators will stumble upon a crude rock carving, a petroglyph. It appears very old. Unfortunately, there is no way known to science correctly to determine the age of a petroglyph, especially not one found in a rainforest. It depicts a lizard, or possibly a man with tail. (This petroglyph was made by the ancestors of the Wakiwaki.)

Third, the party will encounter yet more elephants. These will keep their distance, moving like ghosts through the forest. Again the investigators will be struck by how silent these huge animals can move through the dense foliage.

At the Wakiwaki Village

Led by the experienced big game hunter Blix, the investigators will eventually manage to follow the Wakiwaki back to their camp—although this takes the full day because of the difficult terrain. There, in the evening (and it gets dark quickly), they observe how the Wakiwaki are preparing to sacrifice their prisoners on a sacred altar.

The village is lit by torches, and the spectacle of the tribesmen, tattooed and many covered in war paint, is eerie. The feeling is enhanced by the fact that several Wakiwaki wear hideous masks that cover their faces. (In case somebody asks, the artefacts stolen from the museum are not in sight—and hardly could be, since whoever stole them could not, as far as the investigators know, have reached this place yet;

however, several similar idols are displayed near the altar).

The one captive investigator to be sacrificed notices that the slab on which the altar stands seems to be only the top block of a ruin, built of black basalt blocks, which is almost fully hidden under the soil and vegetation. (*Keeper Option:* If the Keeper so desires, the captive may need a successful Sanity roll or lose 0/1D2 SAN due to his or her predicament, since the situation is scary and the captured investigator has no way of knowing that the rest of the party is nearby. However, there is no need to impose this Sanity roll on a character who often has been in bad spots in the past, for instance during the Great War or previous adventures.)

When they get close enough to the village, the investigators will notice that many Wakiwaki, especially those who at first seem to wear monstrous masks, in fact appear to be deformed, half-breed hybrids of men and some kind of monstrous reptile people. When seen close-up, for instance in the light from the torches that light up the village, they are loathsome and inhuman-looking, with discolored, mottled skin, flattened skulls, and sharp teeth. Individually, any one might conceivably pass for a diseased or malformed human, such as those afflicted by elephantiasis, but seen all together at once, it is obvious to the onlooker that they are the spawn of monsters. (The Wakiwaki, as will be explained below, constitute an ancient hybrid breed of men and serpent people. Upon realizing their semi-alien nature, the investigators will have to successfully make a Sanity roll or lose 0/1D6 points of SAN.)

Furthermore, the investigators will notice a white man—Uncle Aaron—in the background of the ongoing ritual. Curiously enough, the Wakiwaki do not seem to pay him any particular attention, nor does he seem to take part in the rite. Besides, his behavior appears quite baffling. He spends most of the time sitting in front of one of the basalt walls, clearly studying something there in the light of a burning torch. (He is attempting to understand how to activate the mechanism of Devapura, believing that some inscriptions and crystal decorations on the wall will assist. The Wakiwaki do not bother him, since Uncle Aaron has gained their trust by curing many of them, including their chief, Gobila, from a severe disease.)

However, it becomes clear to everybody that the savage rite of the Wakiwaki is approaching its climax. A huge Wakiwaki of repulsive appearance, obviously their chief or chief witchdoctor, approaches the captives who are then pushed down on the sacrificial slab. Then, one after the other, the two bearers or askaris are sacrificed, next to the captured investigator. The Keeper should describe the sacrifice in all its gory details, and the captured investigator will need a

successful Sanity roll to avoid serious psychological trauma (0/1D6 SAN loss) as he is being splashed with blood, gore, and brain substance from first one, then the other of the two unfortunate captives as they are being hacked into pieces and the slices are devoured raw by the Wakiwaki. And yes, the captured investigator will realize that he is next in line.

So do the other investigators. To save their friend, they must act quickly.

The History of the Wakiwaki

The Wakiwaki are a hybrid race of deformed half-breeds of men and some kind of monstrous reptile people—the serpent folk—which in its original form predated the human race. When seen close-up, they are loathsome and inhuman-looking, with discolored, mottled skin, flattened skulls, and sharp teeth. Individually, any one might conceivably pass for a diseased or malformed human, for instance a victim of elephantiasis, but seen all together, it is clear that they are the spawn of monsters.

The Wakiwaki, living in damp caves (such as the ancient ruins of Devapura) in the fungous marshes along one of the furthest tributaries of the Congo River, regularly raid their somewhat less primitive neighbors in the impenetrable, damp jungles of the steaming Congo. The Wakiwaki are known to the other tribes of the Congo as a degenerate race of cannibal marsh dwellers, prone to evil superstitions and much feared by other tribes—even other cannibals—because of their unusual form of devil-worship, horrible rituals, and human sacrifices.

They have only been contacted by white men once, in 1908 when they were sought out by the famous explorer, Dr. Schnabel, and in the successful rescue of the former by Count Vito dell'Acqua later in the same year.

The Wakiwaki worship an idol of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with a head somewhat resembling that of a squid, ending in a mass of feelers. The crude body of the idol hints of long, narrow wings at the side of the being, giving it the appearance of a strange and not entirely natural crossbreed between a deep-sea squid and what can only be compared to a prehistoric, great flying lizard. This is He Who Swims And Eats Without Mouth, M'Bakadala, one of many evil gods of the Wakiwaki.

All Wakiwaki retain some level of heat sense (IR) inherited from their ancestors, so that they can discern others in darkness. Incidentally, this also causes them to enjoy the display of emotions in the form of heat patterns on human beings, for instance the fear they display when about to be sacrificed. The Wakiwaki

also tend to live somewhat longer than ordinary humans, another quirk of their ancestry.

The language of the Wakiwaki is known as Kikiwaki and is related to the Bantu languages, even though it abounds in ancient and distinctly alien loanwords. The name Wakiwaki is probably of a later, but unknown, origin. Bantu-speakers would understand it as Wa-kiwaki or Ba-kiwaki, meaning the people of the Kiwaki. A linguist such as Professor Mathieson might conjecture that the latter form perhaps derives from Wak, the supreme god of the warlike Galla tribes of Sudan and Ethiopia, or possibly Wakonyingo, the mythical dwarf dwellers on Mount Kilimanjaro who reputedly possess heaven-reaching ladders and have heads so huge that they are said to sleep in a sitting position, because they would not be able to get up if they were to lie down. However, the term may just as well go back to the ancient language of the serpent folk.

Statistics (Wakiwaki)

Gobila



The supreme tribal chief and witchdoctor of the Wakiwaki, Gobila is around sixty years old. Like all Congolese chiefs and many Congolese witchdoctors, Gobila is also an accomplished blacksmith. An enchanted spear made by him will always hit the target if within range, whether thrown or used for stabbing. A Congolese enchanted spear has a spearhead of metal and does 1D10+1+db of damage, impales, and acts as a magical weapon against Mythos creatures unless the creature is resistant to impaling weapons.

Gobila has been on many raids, often to distant regions, and speaks a few words of Kiswahili, Arabic,

French, and English. Once, in 1890, he went as far as Vivi. Alone, he merely looks like an utterly deformed, ugly brute.

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 18 INT 19 POW 15
DEX 14 APP 2 EDU 6 SAN 75 HP 16

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Weapons:

Flintlock Musket 25%, damage 2D6+1
Bow 60%, damage 1D6+1D6
Thrown Short Spear 75%, damage 1D8+1+1D3
Short Spear 75%, damage 1D8+1+1d6
Woven Shield 60%, damage 1D3+1D6, blocks 12 points of damage
Executioner's Sword 60%, damage 1D8+1+1D6
Bite 55%, damage 1D8+1D6 (+ poison, see below)

Claw 60%, damage 1D3+1D6
Fist/Punch 70%, damage 1D3+1D6

Spells: Cast Out Devil, Enchant Spear, Healing, Journey to the Other Side.

Skills: Art (Blacksmith) 60%, Art (Fetishes) 40%, Art (Oral History) 60%, Climb 60%, Craft (Potions and Poisons) 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 5%, Dodge 75%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Jungle Survival 80%, Listen 60%, Medicine 50%, Natural History 80%, Navigate 50%, Occult 30%, Persuade 40%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 50%, Throw 75%, Track 75%.

Languages: Kikiwaki (Bantu) 70%, French 40%, Kiswahili (Bantu) 35%, English 20%, Arabic 20%.

Wakiwaki can attack with both hand-held weapon (or claw, if no weapon is at hand) and bite attacks once per round. All *true hybrid* bites (Gobila is a *true hybrid*) inject a poison with a potency equal to half the hybrid's CON rounded down (match against the victim's CON; if successful, the victim will lose as many HP as POT, if failure, the victim will lose only half-POT in HP; in either case convulsions, vomiting, violent spasms, and respiratory failure will follow after 50-POT minutes).



The mysterious petroglyph



Wakiwaki tattoos, or real scales?

The Wakiwaki

Wakiwaki come in two varieties. The true hybrids are uglier and have a more potent poison in their bites. The Wakiwaki who are less obvious hybrids look more similar to ordinary humans and while they too have poison, it is less potent. To see a true hybrid up close requires a 0/1D6 Sanity roll. Other Wakiwaki can be seen without the need for a Sanity roll.



Wakiwaki—True Hybrids (0/1D6 SAN)

Individual	STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	DB	HP
Chief	16	13	17	17	9	15	3	3	45	+1D6	15
Sub-chief	15	16	12	16	15	15	5	3	75	+1D4	14
Warrior #1	16	13	13	11	13	12	3	3	65	+1D4	13
Warrior #2	13	13	13	10	10	17	6	3	50	+1D4	13
Warrior #3	14	13	17	13	11	14	5	3	55	+1D4	15
Warrior #4	12	12	15	11	10	14	4	2	50	+1D4	14
Warrior #5	11	12	16	12	8	18	7	2	40	+1D4	14
Warrior #6	12	16	13	11	12	12	4	1	60	+1D4	15
Warrior #7	15	15	14	8	5	17	4	3	25	+1D4	15
Warrior #8	11	10	14	8	9	18	3	3	45	+0	12
Warrior #9	12	15	11	17	12	18	2	1	60	+0	13

Wakiwaki—Less Obvious Hybrids (no Sanity loss)

Individual	STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX	APP	EDU	SAN	DB	HP
Chief	14	13	15	14	13	12	9	3	65	+1D4	14
Sub-chief	15	15	13	13	12	14	15	3	60	+1D4	14
Warrior #1	15	11	12	10	10	10	11	1	50	+1D4	12
Warrior #2	14	17	14	15	9	11	12	2	45	+1D4	16
Warrior #3	12	10	14	15	8	13	6	2	40	+1D4	12
Warrior #4	16	16	15	14	7	16	9	2	35	+1D4	16
Warrior #5	12	15	13	15	10	15	5	2	50	+1D4	14
Warrior #6	14	17	14	17	9	9	9	1	45	+1D4	16
Warrior #7	12	13	11	14	8	13	10	2	40	+0	12
Warrior #8	12	12	12	9	10	16	9	3	50	+0	12
Warrior #9	12	13	11	11	8	12	12	3	40	+0	12

Chiefs:**Weapons:** Flintlock Musket 25%, damage 2D6+1

Bow 60%, damage 1D6+db

Thrown Short Spear 70%, damage 1D8+1+½db

Short Spear 70%, damage 1D8+1+db

Woven Shield 50%, damage 1D3+db, blocks 12 points of damage

Executioner's Sword 50%, damage 1D8+1+db

Bite 45%, damage 1D8+db (+ poison, see below)

Claw 50%, damage 1D3+db

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 50%, First Aid 50%, Hide 60%, Jump 50%, Jungle Survival 60%, Listen 60%, Sneak 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 50%, Throw 70%, Track 60%.**Languages:** Kikiwaki (Bantu) 50%**Sub-chiefs:****Weapons:** Flintlock Musket 20%, damage 2D6+1

Bow 50%, damage 1D6+db

Thrown Short Spear 60%, damage 1D8+1+½db

Short Spear 50%, damage 1D8+1+db

Woven Shield 50%, damage 1D3+db, blocks 12 points of damage

Executioner's Sword 50%, damage 1D8+1+db

Bite 40%, damage 1D8+db (+ poison, see below)

Claw 45%, damage 1D3+db

Fist/Punch 45%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 45%, First Aid 45%, Hide 50%, Jump 45%, Jungle Survival 55%, Listen 55%, Sneak 55%, Spot Hidden 55%, Swim 45%, Throw 60%, Track 55%.**Languages:** Kikiwaki (Bantu) 50%

Warriors:

Weapons: Bow 50%, damage 1D6+db

Thrown Short Spear 50%, damage 1D8+1+½db

Short Spear 55%, damage 1D8+1+db

Woven Shield 50%, damage 1D3+db, blocks 12 points of damage

Bite 35%, damage 1D8+db (+ poison, see below)

Claw 40%, damage 1D3+db

Fist/Punch 40%, damage 1D3+db

Skills: Dodge 40%, First Aid 40%, Hide 40%, Jump 40%, Jungle Survival 50%, Listen 50%, Sneak 50%, Spot

Hidden 50%, Swim 40%, Throw 50%, Track 50%.

Languages: Kikiwaki (Bantu) 50%

Wakiwaki can attack with both hand-held weapon (or claw, if no weapon is at hand) and bite attacks once per round. All *true hybrid* bites inject a poison with a potency equal to half the hybrid's CON rounded down (match against the victim's CON; if successful, the victim will lose as many HP as POT, if failure, the victim will lose only half-POT in HP; in either case convulsions, vomiting, violent spasms, and respiratory failure will follow after 50-POT minutes). All *less obvious hybrid* Wakiwaki bites inject a poison with a potency equal to one-quarter of the hybrid's CON only, rounded down. The effects are otherwise the same.

Note. The less obvious hybrids can also be used for other Congolese tribal warriors. If so, disregard all references to Bite, Claw, Poison, and Sanity loss.

Congolese Weapons

The following, typical Congolese weapons are used by the Wakiwaki as well as other Congo natives. Some have a number of special characteristics.

All Congolese arrows and most spears are barbed. Barbs do no extra damage, but upon penetration will be buried within the flesh of the victim. A successful Medicine skill roll must be made while removing the barbed point, or the victim will endure another 1D4 points of damage as it is pulled free.

While any knife can be thrown, a throwing blade (*kipinga*) is something fundamentally different: a special, sickle-like weapon with multiple pointed blades, made of steel and usually with a leather-bound grip to enhance throwing. It can be used as a sickle sword as well. Use the Throw skill when thrown, and the Sickle sword skill when used as a sword.

The armor point value of the shield is the same as its hit points. Shields block damage from non-firearms only. However, anyone firing at somebody carrying a shield must subtract 10 percentiles from his chance of hitting since the shield hides the outline of the target's body. A shield will protect the user from projectile weapons in this way only if the person holding the shield is facing forwards, towards the shooter.

The executioner's sword (as it was commonly called by whites; the Congolese term was *ngulu*) was notorious for its use in the *ligbeti* ceremony to execute war slaves. The victim was staked down in a seated position, facing his executioner, with his head tied to a bent sapling. The executioner would then, with all his strength, use his sword to decapitate the prisoner, the

severed head of whom would be thrown in a high trajectory by the bent sapling, suddenly released as the sword cut through the victim's neck. Blood would flow and the excited crowd would then rush forward to hack up the still-quivering corpse. Not a pleasant sight, but one which no onlooker would ever forget. In battle, this weapon is used like a sickle sword.



Execution, Congo-style



The Congolese still used flintlock weapons into the first decades of the twentieth century. These were usually old European imports and were characterized by a very low rate of fire and were, in a Congo context, not very reliable. However, a ball fired from a

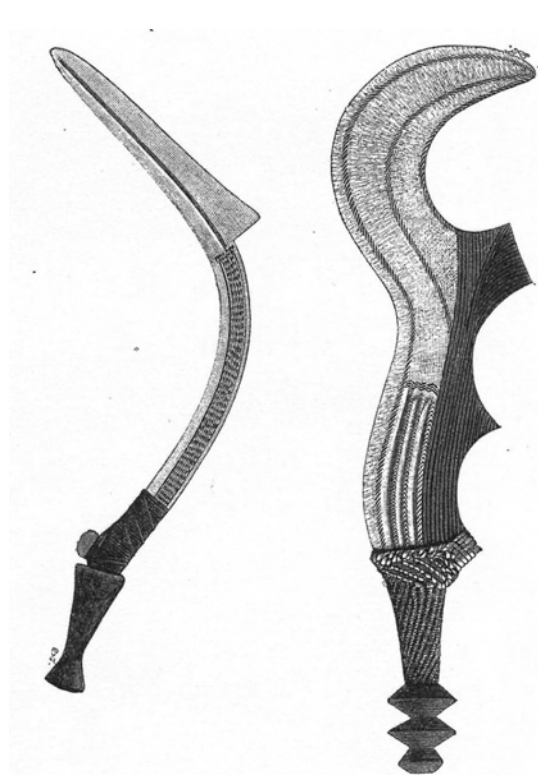
flintlock weapon can kill a man just as easily as a bullet from a modern rifle, and the flintlock ball will cause a far more dirty wound, which may well prove fatal in a rainforest even if the man shot would have survived elsewhere.

Weapon	Class	Skill Base	Damage	Range**	ROF	Ammo	HP	Mal
Bow	Bow	20%	1D6+db	STRx4*	1/2	1	8	00
Knife	Knife	20%	1D4+2+db	touch	1	n/a	15	n/a
Thrown Knife	Throw	Throw %	1D4+2+½db	STRx1.5*	1	n/a	15	n/a
Throwing Blade	Throw	Throw %	1D6+1+½db	STRx1.5*	1	n/a	15	n/a
Throwing Blade	Sickle	20%	1D6+1+db	touch	1	n/a	15	n/a
Woven Shield	Shield	20%	1D3+db	touch	1	n/a	12	n/a
Hide Shield	Shield	20%	1D4+db	touch	1	n/a	10	n/a
Wooden Shield	Shield	20%	1D6+db	touch	1	n/a	14	n/a
Thrown Short Spear	Spear	20%	1D8+1+½db	STRx2	1	n/a	15	n/a
Short Spear	Spear	20%	1D8+1+db	touch	1	n/a	15	n/a
Long Spear	Spear	20%	1D10+1+db	touch	1	n/a	20	n/a
Executioner's Sword	Sickle	15%	1D8+1+db	touch	1	n/a	15	n/a
Flintlock Musket	Rifle	15%	2D6+1	60	1/4	1	15	95

*Beyond this distance, damage is halved.

**In meters or yards.

Note. Bows in the Congo were weak but the arrows were almost always poisoned. This poison was far from instantaneous but did inflict plenty of deaths. For game purposes, these various poisons can be treated as Scorpion Poison, that is, of POT 9. The potency of the poison for obvious reasons does not depend on the bow's range. However, do not forget that each hit by a poisoned arrow will result in yet another dose of poison. The effect will be cumulative.



Executioner's swords



Congo knives

Keeper Option: Resolving Large-scale Battle Mechanics in a Congo Context

Some groups of players may wish to play out the Wakiwaki attack in detail. Generally speaking, mass combats should be avoided in roleplaying. The players should focus on the actions of their characters, not large-scale troop movements and events elsewhere. Any action must touch the investigators directly. However, this should not be interpreted as a ban on investigators taking part in large-scale battles. The key is to ensure that whatever happens, will be centered on the investigators, not on distant non-player characters or events of grand strategy.

An expedition such as the one into the Congo may be ideal to give the players some experience of jungle combat, without the need to engage in large-scale battles. The numbers of combatants would not be overly large. With several player characters, almost a dozen askaris, and plenty of bearers, a jungle battle or two can be an interesting exercise, especially for those groups that also have a penchant for wargaming with miniatures (truly excellent 28mm miniatures of African explorers, askaris, bearers, and Congo natives—Azande—are available from two British firms, Coplestone and Foundry). However, the sheer number of hostile Wakiwaki may easily overwhelm the Keeper. A tabletop battle of this kind, set in the middle of the Congo jungle, may thus easily bog down into details which detracts from the game as a whole. Most Keepers will thus probably run the battle in free form, without bothering too much about which investigator or askari is shooting at which particular Wakiwaki.

Still, the feeling of the realities of jungle warfare will be enhanced if the players notice that their individual actions in the battle actually do affect its outcome.

For this reason, the following optional rules, inspired by Chris Peers,[‡] can be used for handling a large-scale (well, for the Congo at least) jungle battle.

First position the miniatures (or whatever tokens you use) representing the investigators, askaris, and bearers on the table on which you will play out the battle. Remember that the area is pure jungle, so mark most of the table-top as dense rainforest. Visibility is very limited, so the players will at first in effect only see their own positions.

Then deploy the native enemies. There is no need to field a miniature or other token for every tribesman. Assume that several hundred tribesmen are present, but the majority of them will have no effect whatsoever on the outcome of the battle. The Keeper should instead place merely a handful of tribesman miniatures here and there in the rainforest to give a vague indication of the

location of the enemy forces. The other tribesmen will be operated by the Keeper solely by hidden map movement, without any need to represent them with miniatures at all. After all, the investigators will seldom, if ever, get a clear view of the enemy because of the dense vegetation. Their only option will be to shoot at muzzle-flashes and half-seen movement in the undergrowth. At night, such as when the Wakiwaki raid their camp, visibility will be even worse. Use ordinary combat rules for the investigators and their men, and remember that the game rules of half-seen targets (which lowers the skill by at least half) and unaimed shots (which allows twice the number of attacks per round but reduces the shooter's chance to hit to one fifth of normal) both apply. The Keeper is thus quite justified in reducing a chance to hit that under ordinary conditions would be 50% to no more than 5% in this battle. The players will roll their dice as usual, and should also be allowed to roll for the marksmanship of any remaining askaris, but the Keeper will determine if they hit anything. He or she should not tell the players exactly how much reduced their chance to hit is, only that the lack of visibility affects their chance of hitting badly. Whether their fire hits any enemies or not will be unknown to the players until, at best, their characters actually gain the position where any enemies may have fallen. If the players have no idea how many enemies there are or how many they have killed, it will add to the tension and drama and increase the possibility that they (the players, not the characters!) lose their nerve and do something foolish.

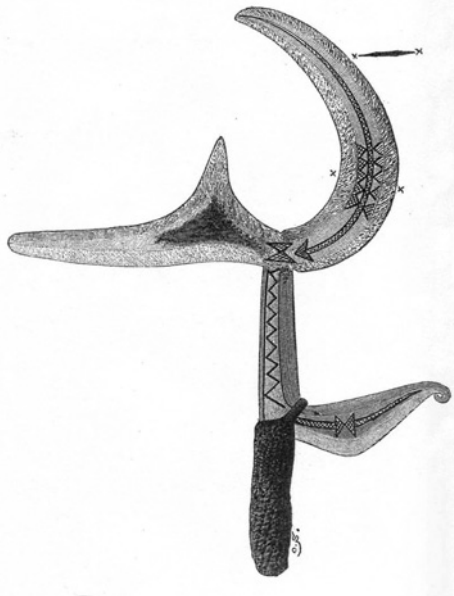
To determine if the tribesmen hit anything, a different procedure will be used. The Keeper will simply throw handfuls of D6 dice for the tribesmen with a very low probability of hitting anything. The Keeper will start by throwing 30 to 50 dice for each tribesman war party armed with muskets or bows, and throw again for each 6 scored. For any second throw that is also a 6, then a man is hit, to be chosen at random among the investigators and their non-player characters. Wounds will be determined as per the ordinary game rules, but the Keeper should ensure that investigators are not unnecessarily killed before they reach Devapura and the climax of the scenario. As noted, the Keeper will not tell the players how many casualties they have inflicted. Instead the Keeper will decrease the number of tribesman firing dice thrown. If the players want to know exactly where the enemy fire is coming from, the Keeper will merely indicate the general area of the enemy.

Congo tribesmen were not shy of charging even rifle-armed Belgian troops, so the Keeper should not limit the battle to long-range shooting at shadows in the forest. Occasionally during the battle, he or she will launch a sudden charge of some 10 to 20 tribesmen armed with hand-to-hand weapons, preferably aimed at

[‡] Chris Peers, 'An Impossible Rider Haggard Romance' *Belgians versus Arabs in the Congo, 1892-94* (Foundry Books web site).

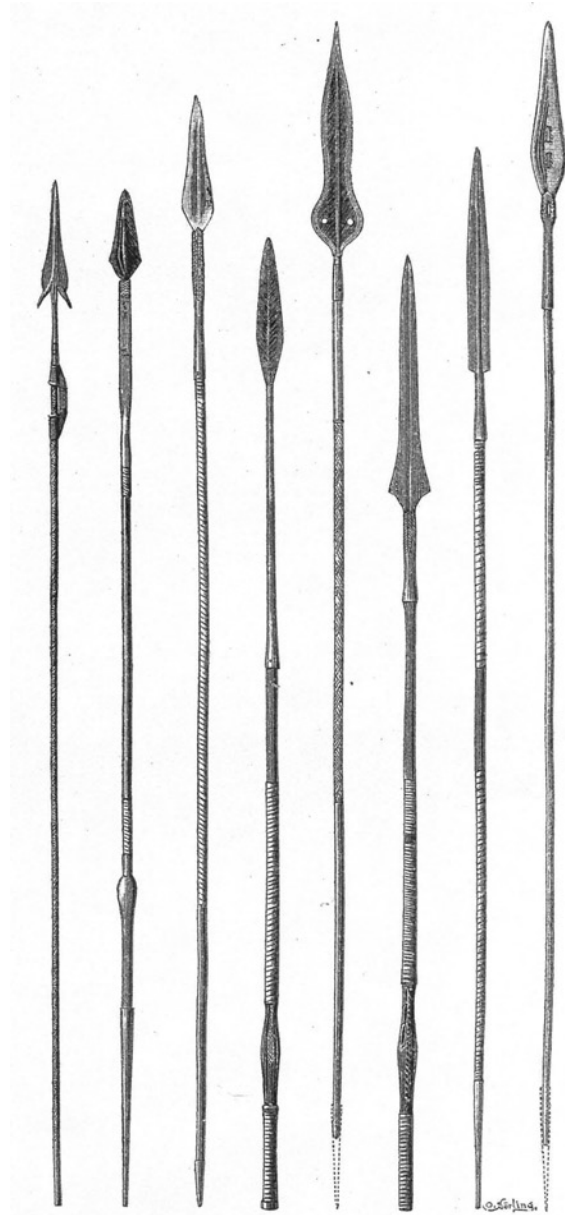
an individual investigator who might have strayed away from his friends. To maintain suspense, the Keeper will ensure that the investigator survives this onslaught (that is, as long as the battle takes place before the players reach the climax of the scenario). This should not be too difficult, since the tribesmen will then be out in the open, and normal chances to hit with firearms will apply. There should be sufficient numbers of investigators and askaris to ensure that the target of the tribesmen's charge, even if temporarily alone, should be able to save himself by a sudden dash back to this friends.

Eventually, the tribesmen will break and leave the area. As a general rule, they will do so no later than after suffering half their number in casualties (dead and wounded). If the situation warrants it, they will break earlier. This is all up to the Keeper and should be handled so as to ensure dramatic action, not scrupulous realism.



Throwing blade (kipinga)

A purist wargamer will notice that these battle mechanisms are stacked against the tribesmen. The reason is of course that the desired outcome is to create a situation of suspense, not to kill off the investigator characters. However, many players will be unnerved because of the inherent uncertainty in this kind of battle. They cannot see how many enemies they face, or their location on the table. The Keeper may well be rewarded with some amusing indecisiveness, dithering, or at times outright panic on the part of the players. Occasions have been known when the players, not their rifle-armed characters, failed their "Sanity rolls" and suddenly decided to break off and flee in pure panic in the face of just a handful of enemy tribesmen armed with spears or swords.

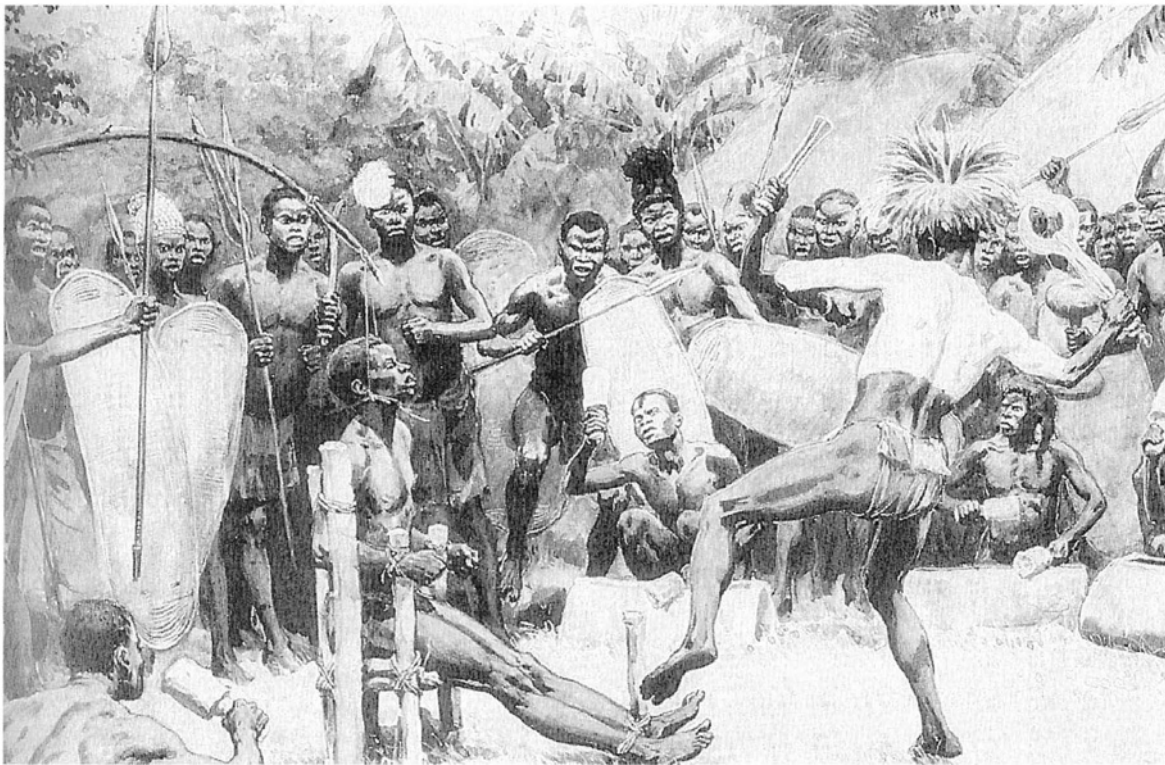


Congo spears

Devapura and M'Bolo Bakula, the Flying Eater

Summary: Escaping from the cannibals, the investigators stumble onto the ruins they are looking for, the ancient remains of Devapura. Cannibals are in hot pursuit. And the latter are assisted, it turns out, by Uncle Aaron who clearly remains alive—and on the side of the cannibals. Furthermore, he has somehow managed to unleash the magic that will make Devapura ascend into the sky again. But since the night is pitch dark, the investigators only notice that the black basalt blocks that constitute the ruined city suddenly rise into the sky, with them and the cannibals on what seems to be a series of walls or battlements. A desperate struggle with semi-human cannibals ensues. Some take a wrong step and plunge into the darkness below, and only when the sun rises do the investigators see that the mysterious ruined city has risen several thousand yards into the air and is currently hovering over the Congo rainforest. And there is no way down, except falling. Exploring the flying city, the investigators realize that they are not alone. A few cannibals remain, and they are as bewildered as the investigators. It would make sense to negotiate with them, especially so since the investigators find out that Devapura is also the home of M'Bolo Bakula, the Flying Eater, a solitary flying polyp that long ago made its home in the deep shaft that leads to the main instrument chamber and “engine room” of Devapura. The investigators will have to face this monster if they wish to understand the mechanism that keeps the city flying. And for this allies would be helpful, even if found among the cannibals, who despite their serpent people ancestry have plenty of human blood in them and are not completely alien.

The investigators will learn that Devapura can be made to descend by manipulating the huge lodestone that is the main feature of the instrument chamber, or if the keeper is amenable, they might get lucky and realize that since Devapura is such a huge complex, the Curtiss flying boat was actually secured to a rock that forms part of its outer structure—and against all odds, is still parked on the extreme edge. Of course, it would take determined investigators and a skilful pilot to push the aircraft over the precipice, jump onto it, climb inside, and then get the brick-like boat into controlled flight before it hits the ground...



To the Rescue

The earth seemed unearthly. We are accustomed to look upon the shackled form of a conquered monster, but there—there you could look at a thing monstrous and free. It was unearthly, and the men were—No, they were not inhuman. Well, you know, that was the worst of it—this suspicion of their not being inhuman. It would come slowly to one. They howled, and leaped, and spun, and made horrid faces; but what thrilled you was just the thought of their humanity—like yours—the thought of your remote kinship with this wild and passionate uproar. Ugly. Yes, it was ugly enough; but if you were man enough you would admit to yourself that there was in you just the faintest trace of a response to the terrible frankness of that noise, a dim suspicion of there being a meaning in it which you—you so remote from the night of first ages—could comprehend.

Joseph Conrad

Unless the players make a complete mess of their attempt to rescue the captive investigator, they should succeed. Their firepower should be sufficient to scare off the Wakiwaki, at least for enough time to rush in to save their friend. However, the Wakiwaki will reform and the investigators will have to defend themselves among the huts of the Wakiwaki village, which, as noted, was itself built among the ruins of the ancient city.

But the ruins contain far worse things than Wakiwaki. Suddenly a continuous, disturbing whistling noise is heard from a distance out in the darkness. The Wakiwaki look increasingly worried, and some begin to withdraw. Then, equally suddenly, a long, monstrous, and utterly alien creature (a flying polyp, known to the Wakiwaki as the M'Bolo Bakula—the Flying Eater) swoops down from the air, slaughters two Wakiwaki, and begins to pursue the others, who run away into the jungle, screaming in panic. The being, who looks somewhat like a cancerous and ever-changing, huge flying, tentacled ringworm and whose nauseating whistling never stops, came to feed and has no interest in either party. Whether the M'Bolo kills any of the investigators or not (remember that there are far more Wakiwaki, so statistically speaking the investigators will stand a good chance of survival), it will eventually, and very suddenly, rise into the air and move away in a westward direction, towards the main hill. Everybody who sees the monster will have to suffer a 1D3/1D20 Sanity loss. (The Wakiwaki know that a M'Bolo lives in the vicinity, but it emerges only very seldom, with a few years interval. The lair of the M'Bolo is in the “engine

room” below the main keep of Devapura, for which reason the Wakiwaki regard the entire hill as taboo territory and shy away from it.)



Congo swords

The situation should now be truly chaotic. The investigators have to fight off the Wakiwaki, the Wakiwaki wants to kill and eat the investigators, and both groups have reason to fear the hunger of the M'Bolo. Besides, it is pitch dark and the terrain is difficult, with crude huts and black basalt ruins scattered seemingly at random in the dense vegetation of the rainforest. Then, in the midst of the confusion, there is Uncle Aaron.

When the party reaches Uncle Aaron, he has just then, after months of study, grasped the mechanical details of how to re-launch Devapura into the sky (several crystals embedded in the rock around the inscription need to be pushed in a certain order). He does remember the incantation that is also needed, even though he left his papers with his sister. He does not necessarily remember all the other details in these documents. If he is shown the page from the old manuscript, or his translation thereof, he exclaims: “At last! You’ve kept it safe!” and then snatches the pages out of the hand of the investigator who is holding them.

Uncle Aaron executes the launching sequence. He pushes the various crystals in the correct order and in a loud voice performs the incantation (in what would sound like ancient Egyptian if anybody around knew the pronunciation of that language). Because of the dark night, nobody can really see what happens as Devapura rises into the air. Most Wakiwaki flee into

the jungle. The *apparent* effect is that the ruins suddenly start growing, rising high into the air, but presumably remain connected to the ground. In any case, soil, trees, and plants fall off and the investigators will suffer severe disorientation (Sanity loss 0/1D4), as this kind of thing should not happen even in the Congo! Without a proper light, nobody will be able to see if the ground remains where soil used to exist, or whether merely a free fall into the darkness awaits those who are unfortunate enough to trust that firm ground still remains where it used to.

Devapura Rising

The desperate battle between investigators and Wakiwaki intensifies as the Wakiwaki, but since the night is too dark presumably not the investigators, realize what is happening. The Wakiwaki who did not manage to escape from Devapura before it rose in the air again attack the party, but this time with death-defying bravery, believing that only the death of the strangers will return their home to the ground. (Due to their sense of heat, they will not be too handicapped by the lack of light and will seldom fall down into the darkness by accident.) The struggle is desperate, and at least some non-player characters will due to the lack of light take a wrong step and plunge into darkness.

Meanwhile, Uncle Aaron will attempt to explain to the party what is going on. The Keeper should play out this “explanation” in the true tradition of an arrogant villain monologuing in front of those he regards as interfering and non-comprehending ignoramuses. Besides, his words will be interspersed with gunfire and sudden attacks from Wakiwaki warriors hiding out there in the darkness. Raving in what sounds like utter madness, Uncle Aaron explains that “the ultimate weapon of the ancient Hyperboreans has risen again” (which still does not rule out what the party presumably still believes, that they remain connected to the ground) and only he alone is in full control of it. He then states his intention to “unleash the destructive powers of Devapura to enforce eternal peace on Earth. Never again will something like the Great War take place! Peace will reign for ever!”

Somebody may try to argue with him. And what will happen then, the investigator may ask? “Do not worry! When I have achieved world peace and destroyed all weapons of war, throughout the world, I will unleash the spell of destruction, thus trigger the destruction of this fortress itself! Then Mankind will finally have everlasting peace!” thunders Uncle Aaron.

Most likely, the party will at first aim to talk some sense into Uncle Aaron. They may not even believe, or understand, what he is talking about. Devapura possesses immense firepower, but the investigators may well still believe that it is no more than a ruin which has

in some mysterious way been raised high above the Congo jungle. The Keeper should not allow the investigators to forget that while they are having this one-way conversation with Uncle Aaron, bloodthirsty Wakiwaki are still sniping at them out of the darkness. If (when?) the investigators insist that Uncle Aaron quiet down, he suddenly shouts: “I will not allow anybody to prevent me from doing what is necessary!” He will then order Gobila, a huge Wakiwaki who emerges from a recess in a nearby ruined tower, to kill everybody except himself. (This order will be given in English and French, so all investigators will understand.) Uncle Aaron may well have gone utterly mad, but he remains an idealist at heart. An idealist of the most dangerous and lethal kind. He *will* enforce global peace, even if that means killing half of the planet’s population. The end justifies the means.

Uncle Aaron will then step back and disappear behind the ruined tower, while several of Gobila’s Wakiwaki warriors emerge out of it to launch themselves against the investigators. They will soon retreat, however, but by then Uncle Aaron will have disappeared.

At this point, when there is sudden lull in the fighting, the sun rises behind the central towers of Devapura and the full extent of the flying city can be seen. The Keeper should play out this scene for dramatic effect. The flying city is being bathed in light, and the jungle can be seen far below. Devapura is hovering high above the dark, green rainforest. Only now may the investigators realize how close they came to plunging into the darkness during the desperate combat at night. Devapura remains a ruin, so its walls and streets are not particularly safe. Large chunks of the city structures are missing.

Exploring Devapura

The sunshine will finally allow the investigators to undertake a proper exploration of the flying city. A description and maps will be found in *The Secret of Devapura*, below.

Exploring the city will not be an easy task. Devapura is less of a flying city than a flying ruin. Remember that Devapura has been grounded and subject to erosion for thousands of years. Any city council of the civilized world would have slated Devapura for demolition centuries ago. (The description of the flying city by Lemuel Gulliver should not be taken too literally; he knew of the city and had picked up a few facts in the old Sanskrit book that he acquired in India, but all the rest was merely a tall tale Gulliver invented to impress people and sell copies of his book. Gulliver never actually saw any of the ancient Hyperborean flying cities.) Parts of walls and embankments have eroded and either already

fallen off, or are likely to collapse and fall to the ground while the investigators explore them. There is undergrowth everywhere, and in places it seems to be the dense vegetation, not structural integrity, that holds especially the outlying parts of the construction together. The Keeper should compel the investigators to make Luck rolls from time to time. If one of them fails, the pavement under his feet will suddenly crumble, and the investigator must succeed in a Jump skill roll to reach safety, or failing that, any friend nearby must grab hold of him or her by succeeding in a second Luck roll (in this situation, the Keeper should be generous to player characters but not to non-player characters who may well end up falling to their death; the objective is to keep the players on their toes, not to kill them off by purely random means).

In addition to the problems with the structural integrity of the flying city, there are still Wakiwaki warriors in hiding here and there, and they will be hostile to the investigators as long as their chief, Gobila, remains loyal to Uncle Aaron. Then there is the issue of the M'Bolo, which is a threat to investigators and Wakiwaki alike. The Wakiwaki are as bewildered as the investigators. It would make sense to negotiate with them, especially so when the investigators realize that Devapura is also the home of M'Bolo Bakula, the Flying Eater, a solitary flying polyp that long ago made its home in the deep shaft that leads to the main instrument chamber and "engine room" of Devapura. The monster has since then emerged from time to time to harass the semi-human cannibals. The investigators will have to face this monster if they wish to understand the mechanism that keeps the city flying. And for this allies would be helpful, even if found among the cannibals, who despite their serpent people ancestry has plenty of human blood in them and are not completely alien.

Some Keepers may argue that the descendants of serpent people would never ally with mere humans, since the serpent people were always implacable enemies of humanity. However, the serpent folk were natives of Earth, not the servants of Cthulhu or his ilk, except perhaps the lone individual like any human cultist. Moreover, the Wakiwaki are not full-blooded serpent folk, they are the descendants of half-breeds produced by matings between the two species many generations ago. The Wakiwaki are vicious cannibals, and some of them are of more serpent folk blood than others, but all have plenty of human blood as well. They can be negotiated with, like any other tribal people, however hostile to strangers they may be. Such things as cooperation and alliances are not unknown concepts to the Wakiwaki. Some among them, including Gobila, have from time to time even been in contact with other Congolese tribes, of pure human ancestry, and white colonists. If the investigators play their cards well, they

can make Gobila into an ally, possibly even a friend (although one you might not wish to turn your back on for very long).

Unless the investigators are very well armed and prepared, they will probably need the assistance of the Wakiwaki to defeat the M'Bolo, which is not a pushover. Remember that Gobila might have an enchanted spear or two hidden away in the ruins of the city. The Wakiwaki are primitive compared to the investigators, but witchdoctors such as Gobila have not forgotten all the lore of their ancestors. In the light of the threat from the M'Bolo, the investigators would be wise to attempt to gain the assistance of Gobila.

Whether the investigators realize it or not, the only way to manoeuvre Devapura is to enter the deep shaft that leads to the main instrument chamber and "engine room" of the flying city. This, however, is the M'Bolo's lair. To gain admittance will be dangerous, since the M'Bolo must first be destroyed or forced out. This will be dangerous, and not that easy.

Keeper Option

A friendly Keeper who does not mind giving the investigators a fair chance to get off Devapura even without battling the M'Bolo and assorted Wakiwaki will allow the investigators a spectacular discovery during their day-time exploration of the flying city: the flying boat remains secured to the very edge of a distant tower! This is not as strange as it might seem, since Devapura is huge and over the centuries sunk into the swamp, then was partially hidden by soil residues and vegetation. The rock formation to which the investigators secured their flying boat was no mere stone slab, it was a part of the lower substructure of Devapura. When the flying city rose into the sky, naturally the flying boat remained stuck to it, on the very edge of the rim of Devapura's outermost battlement. Eventually, the investigators will be able to escape Devapura in the flying boat.

Of course, a particularly nasty Keeper who wishes to end the campaign permanently could dispense with this escape route and simply leave the investigators stranded on Devapura, which then would remain adrift with its crew of investigators and Wakiwaki like some ghastly Flying Dutchman—unless the players figure out how to manoeuvre the flying city, that is.

The Secret of Devapura

Who actually built Devapura? This is a question that is very much up to the Keeper, since he or she is the one who must fit Devapura into the history of Earth according to the needs of his or her *Call of Cthulhu* campaign.

An easy way out is to conclude that Devapura was indeed built by the Devas, whoever they may have been, but if they came up with the original design remains unknown to outsiders. So who were the Devas? They, or rather their descendants, may well have been the early Indo-Aryans of the ancient Indian Vedic literature. They may also have been the enigmatic “dynastic race” that some believe taught the ancient Egyptians civilization and gave them a fully developed written language—hieroglyphs. They may have been the last civilized Hyperboreans, as Uncle Aaron believes, or perhaps the last surviving Atlanteans. It is all up to the Keeper. My feeling is that Uncle Aaron got it right. The last Hyperboreans built Devapura and perhaps other flying cities as well. After the fall of their empire, the survivors—known to later races as Devas, dynastic race, and so on—settled among other men and gave them what remained of Hyperborean civilization. Whether the Hyperboreans first taught the Atlanteans, or themselves served as instructors, depends on when the Keeper would say that the Hyperborean civilization fell. Either way, the true history of Devapura is inscribed on the inner walls of the flying city in Devapuran hieroglyphs, a writing system looking remarkably similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs, and indeed is their origin, but which cannot quite be read in the same way. According to the ancient Egyptians, it was the god Thoth who created writing and then bestowed it as a gift to mankind (even the word hieroglyph, from Greek, means “writing of the gods”). Indeed the hieroglyphic system was from the beginning (the earliest known inscriptions date back to the third millennium BC) a true form of writing; it was, unlike the cuneiform of Mesopotamia, not developed gradually but appeared from the outset a complete system, immediately able to record fully the spoken language as well as to deal with abstract terms in all forms and social and technical contexts.

So much for the history of the flying city. How does it work?

Devapura was built out of black basalt blocks. Its shape is exactly circular, with a diameter of about 4 miles (7 km), a height of about 1,200 yards (1,300 meters), and a theoretical surface area of about 4,000 hectares, although in reality the surface area is larger, since Devapura contains a number of hanging gardens. The lower surface is a huge circular plate of adamant, a rare diamond-hard mineral, perforated in a radial pattern to reduce weight. This sub-structure is about 200 yards (180 meters) thick. Its underside is perfectly smooth.

At the center of the immense plate is a dome-like artificial hill, constructed from layers of rocks and minerals and covered with about 12 feet (4 meters) of fertile soil. From this hill, rain-water will flow down into eight large water reservoirs. These are evenly spaced around the hill. The upper reaches of the hill merges into a castle keep.

In the center of the hill, below the keep, a deep shaft about 50 yards (45 meters) in diameter leads down to the main instrument chamber and “engine room” of Devapura. This is located about 100 yards (90 meters) within the adamantine sub-structure. The room is brilliantly lit by twenty lamps the light of which is reflected by the mirror surface of the adamantine floor and walls. In it is the propulsion system of Devapura: a horizontal, 12 yards long, hollow cylinder of 4 inches (10 cm) thick adamantine plate, 13 yards in diameter, mounted on eight columns of adamant about 6 yards high. Grooves, of a depth of a foot (30 cm), run along the internal surface of the cylinder. These support an axle running through a huge lodestone, or magnet, in the shape of a weaver’s shuttle. The magnet is 6 yards long and 3 yards at its widest point. This magnet is sustained by a very strong axle of adamant passing through its middle, upon which it plays, and is poised so exactly that the weakest hand can turn it.

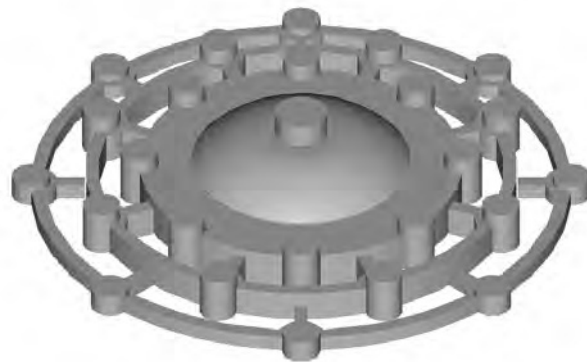
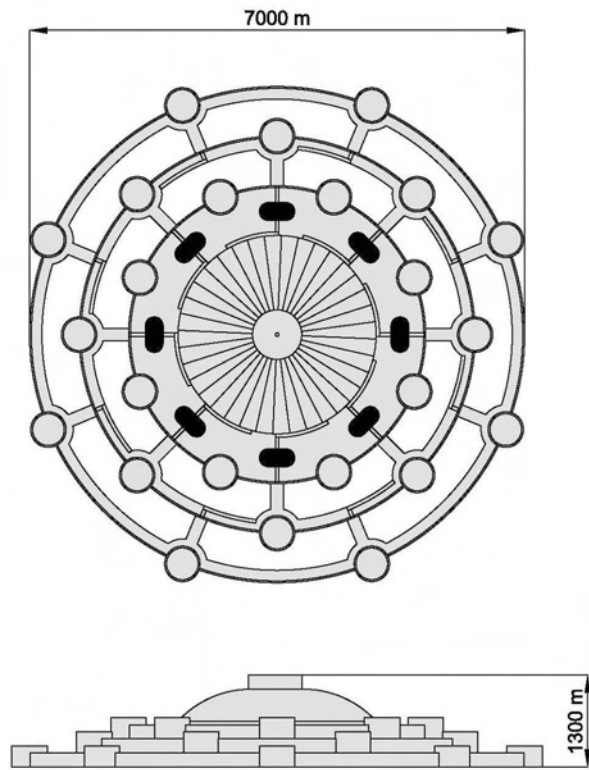
Upon placing the magnet erect, with its attracting end towards the earth, Devapura descends; but when the repelling extremity points downwards, Devapura ascends. Lateral or oblique movement is also possible by adjusting the magnet in the required manner, as well as motionless hovering when the magnet is placed parallel to the plane of the horizon.

Devapura is armed, primarily so with a weapon emitting a beam of fire from an iris valve in the center of the adamantine underside.

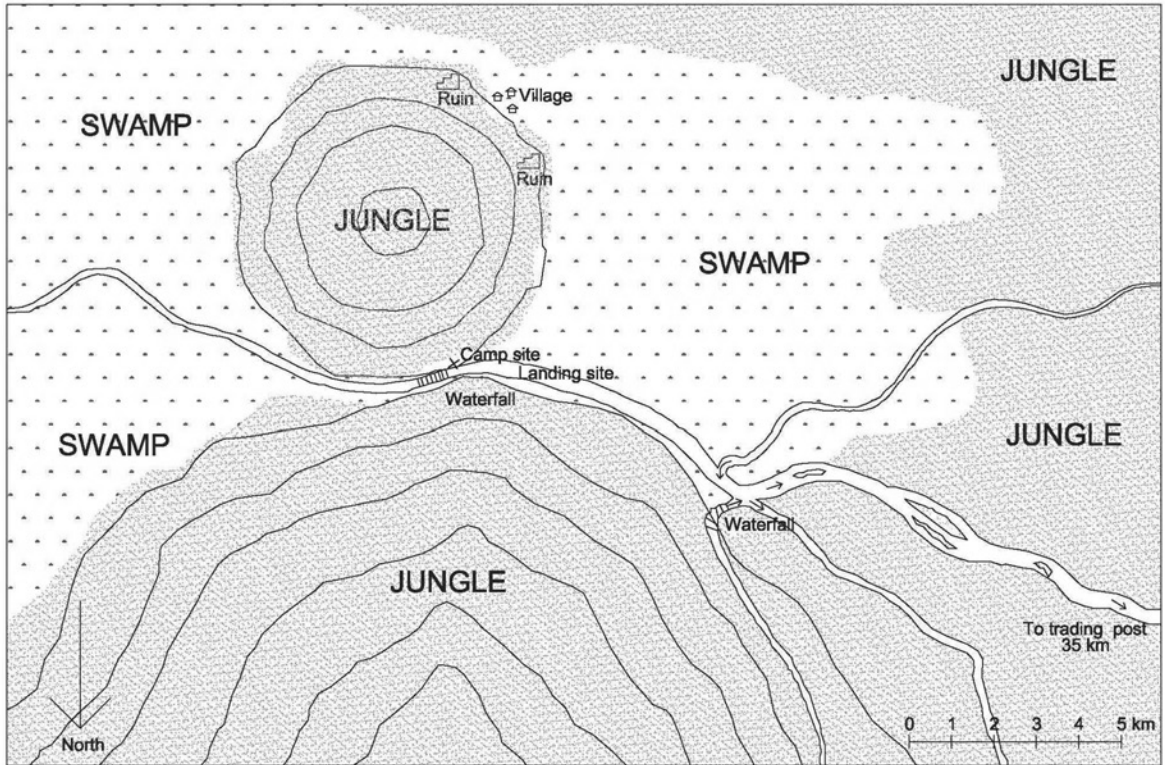
When flying, the usual altitude of flight is about 8,000 feet (2,500 meters).

The Wakiwaki altar was located above one of the outer walls of Devapura. It stood on a massive slab of rock which indeed was only the top block of one of Devapura’s outer towers, currently in a state of ruin. This slab of rock is covered in hideous petroglyphs, made by the Wakiwaki, which have obscured an earlier layer of original Devapuran hieroglyphs. The ruin, like the rest of Devapura, was built of black basalt blocks. These were almost fully hidden under soil and vegetation until Devapura was re-launched into the air.

The millennia-old erosion of this particular tower had exposed one of the auxiliary Devapura flight control instrument chambers. This takes the form of a control panel, on a basalt wall, with inscriptions in Devapuran hieroglyphs as well as a series of crystal decorations, which constitute the control mechanism. Devapura can be launched, and manoeuvred, with the help of several stones—in fact crystals—around the inscription. To operate the mechanism, these stones need to be pushed in a certain order. But this is not all. There is also need for a special incantation—the one found by Uncle Aaron.



Devapura



Map of the area surrounding the Wakiwaki village on the Luika river

(Keeper: Note the circular shape of the hill which corresponds to the Devapura ruins)



Conclusion

Assuming that the investigators manage to deal with the M'Bolo, they will still have to figure out how to maneuver the flying city. They may have read up on this in *Gulliver's Travels*, or they can experiment by way of trial and error. Either way, the investigators may learn that Devapura can be made to descend by manipulating the huge lodestone that is the main feature of the instrument chamber.

They will then have to deal with Uncle Aaron. With the luck of the insane, and the benefit of his previous studies, he will be the only one who can sneak into the main instrument chamber without triggering an attack by the M'Bolo. And he is determined to use the flying city and its mysterious armament as the ultimate weapon in his quest for global peace. Unfortunately, he is just as determined to keep the flying city out of the hands of any warmongering agents of imperial powers. In his delusion, he has reached the conclusion that the investigators came here to take control of Devapura with just such a purpose in mind. He is not sure whether they wish to enlist the use of Devapura to further the global imperialist ambitions of the United States, or of Britain, or perhaps even of Belgium, but he is quite determined that this must not happen. He also knows that by triggering a certain sequence of the crystals in the main instrument chamber while simultaneously reading the launch incantation backwards, he will initiate a self-destruct mechanism that will force the flying city, and everybody aboard it, to lose flight and crash into the ground. If it seems that the investigators are figuring out how to gain control over Devapura, Uncle Aaron will use his knowledge of the flying city and its various mechanisms to sneak into the main instrument chamber to destroy it.

Nobody said that life would be easy onboard the ultimate man-made fighting machine on the planet...

If the investigators defeat the M'Bolo, award each surviving investigator 1D10 points of Sanity. If they succeed in gaining the cooperation of the Wakiwaki, award them 1D6 Sanity points. If they merely survive and manage to get out alive, award them 1D4 Sanity points. However, reduce the total gain by one point for each member of the team lost (askaris and bearers do not count for this purpose; white non-player characters do—it is the 1920s after all). This may mean that the investigators actually lose Sanity, even if the majority survives the experience. Anybody who manages to save Uncle Aaron and return him to civilization (where he can be treated by specialists for his deluded ideas about world peace) deserves a special reward of 1D6 points of Sanity.

Keeper Option

The situation on Devapura can be ended in several different ways. If the investigators are very successful, they will gain the trust of Gobila, destroy the M'Bolo, learn to maneuver the flying city, deal with the crazed Uncle Aaron, and descend to the ground under controlled conditions. They would probably take Uncle Aaron's worries seriously and try to plant the flying city where it will, again, be lost for centuries, so that no great power would be tempted to use it for war against fellow human beings. To find such a spot in the poorly explored wilderness of the Congo is in fact not very difficult. Within weeks, the grounded Devapura will again be covered with vegetation.

Or they can get deluded ideas about using the flying city as a personal weapon against enemies of any kind, or perhaps against Mythos creatures of whatever size and shape. In the first case, the Keeper had better interfere or the campaign will change character from H. P. Lovecraft's stories of unimaginable ancient horrors to Jules Verne's novels about Captain Nemo (*Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea* (1870)) and Engineer Robur (*Robur the Conqueror* (1886); *The Master of the World* (1904)) and their wars of revenge against the tyranny of the civilized world. In the second case, well, if the players really think that they can erase Cthulhu with the help of Devapura, by all means let them try—and both investigators and flying city will disappear forever in the depths of the Pacific Ocean.

Most likely, however, the investigators will find that not everything goes their way. If so, and if the keeper is amenable in the manner already described, they will realize that since Devapura is such a huge complex, the Curtiss flying boat was actually secured to a rock that forms part of its outer structure—and against all odds, is still parked on the extreme edge. Of course, it would take determined investigators and a skilful pilot to push the aircraft over the precipice, jump onto it, climb inside, and then get the brick-like boat into controlled flight before it hits the ground.

As a final note, it will probably be difficult for the investigator who is in line to inherit Uncle Aaron to prove the uncle's death. Even if witnesses are available, what can they say? That the uncle died insane on a flying city high above the Congo?

The outcome to this scenario that brought the most satisfying result to Keeper and players alike during playtesting was the one in which the players drove off, but failed to kill, the M'Bolo, figured out how to manoeuvre the flying city, but botched it since one investigator (the gumshoe Frank Black) dabbled with explosives and accidentally disabled the lodestone so that the flying city stayed afloat in the air, moving along of its own accord but no longer under control of any navigator. The investigators and Gobila then made their escape in the flying boat, leaving the flying city

and the M'Bolo on a course into the unknown, at an altitude that for years to come would be reached only seldom by commercial aircraft. In other words, they accidentally caused a situation that would lead to a modern myth among airmen, about the flying city in the clouds that housed monsters that would strike hapless flyers from above. A satisfying conclusion for any Keeper with long-term plans.

Will the flying city remain as an elusive target for yet further investigations and explorations by aircraft? There were quite a few regions in the early 1920s in which a flying city would not be immediately detected. Air traffic was not as prevalent as it would become later, and unexplored wilderness regions included not only Central Africa, the Sahara, the Amazon, and much of the world's oceans but also vast territories of Siberia, Inner Asia and the Himalayas.

Statistics (Devapura)

Aaron Washington Carter, Militant Pacifist



Uncle Aaron, a hitherto quiet man in his early fifties, took part in the Great War, on the Western Front, as the voluntary driver of a British Commer Ambulance (CommerCar).

Having arrived as a volunteer already in early 1915, Uncle Aaron experienced the first yellowish-green mist of chlorine gas at the Second Battle of Ypres on 22 April 1915, the slaughter at Verdun from February to December 1916, and the bloody Somme in July to November 1916, where more than a million men died, and the battle of Passchendaele Ridge in July 1917. And on 13 October 1915, his fiancée (or that was at least what he thought of her), the English nurse Miss Edith Cavell, was shot as a spy by the Germans. Uncle Aaron's exploits were described in an article ("Return of a War Hero") in the local newspaper, dated 10 July 1918. However, his experiences in the war changed him. Uncle Aaron returned to Arkham quite insane, devoted to a quest for world peace.

At Devapura, Uncle Aaron has gained the trust of the Wakiwaki by curing their chief, Gobila, from a severe illness.

Uncle Aaron may well have gone utterly mad, but he remains an idealist at heart. An idealist of the most dangerous and lethal kind. He *will* enforce global peace, even if that means killing half of the planet's population. The end justifies the means. His experiences on the Western Front have turned the likeable and peaceful Uncle Aaron into a murderous fanatic.

STR 12 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 13 POW 15
DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 17 SAN 0 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.38 Smith and Wesson Special Revolver 25%,
damage 1D10

.30-30 Winchester '94 Hunting Rifle 35%, damage
2D6+1

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3+1D4

Spells: Control/Negate Devapura (see below for details).

Skills: Anthropology 55%, Archaeology 60%,
Astronomy 30%, Credit Rating 40%, Cthulhu
Mythos 10%, Dodge 30%, Drive Auto 60%,
Electric Repair 40%, First Aid 85%, History 65%,
Library Use 60%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Natural
History 20%, Occult 65%, Physics 30%, Spot
Hidden 50%.

Languages: English 100%, French 60%, Italian 50%.

Control/Negate Devapura Spell

Written in hieroglyphs, the Devapura launch spell read out loud in the regular direction allows control of Devapura's machinery. But hieroglyphs can also, without change in word order, be read in the opposite direction. If so, the result, according to the magical law of inverted influences, functions as a spell of destruction with regard to Devapura. Aaron and any member of the party will without thinking read the text from left to right, as transcribed into English, which enables control. (However, Professor Mathieson will understand that the text can be read in both ways, and he is familiar with the law of inverted influences; whether he is available or not is up to the Keeper).

The normal direction of writing for ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs was right-to-left, possibly due to the use of papyrus rolls. However, the pictorial nature of the hieroglyphs allowed them to be easily reversed. So, a text could be written in either direction, although, however, with a preference for right-to-left.

This spell costs 10 magic points to cast. It works automatically, as long as the proper incantation and



setting of the control crystals are used. In Control mode, it activates Devapura by launching it into the air. In Negate mode, it shuts down all systems, causing the flying city to fall to the ground and shatter.

M'Bolo Bakula—the Flying Eater

A solitary member of a species that came to Earth out of space about 750 million years ago, long before even the reptile ancestors of the Wakiwaki created their civilization. Most members of the species still live in subterranean caverns and do no longer venture above ground. This specimen is neither particularly powerful nor very intelligent, and knows no spells. Like all members of its species, it occasionally—although very seldom—needs certain proteins from living beings for its well-being.

The species can turn invisible, although its constant whistling sound never ends. Others then have -50% chance to hit an invisible specimen. Even under normal circumstances, the creature is constantly phasing in and out of visibility, so others always have -18% to hit this particular specimen.

STR	46
CON	25
SIZ	47
INT	9
POW	18
DEX	12
Move	8/12 flying
HP	36

Damage Bonus: +5D6, but only used for wind blast attack.

Weapon: Tentacle 85%, damage 1D10 (2D6 attacks per round).

Wind Blast 70%, damage 5D6 and the target is blown backyards for an equal number of yards (damage is reduced by 1D6 per each 20-yard distance beyond the initial 20 yards).

Fixing Attack, match the target's STR against specimen's POW at ranges of 200 yards or less each turn for fixation (this ability is less efficient at long distances; match the target's STR against half the specimen's POW at ranges from 200 up to 1000 yards).

Armor: 4 points, plus invisibility. In addition, the specimen takes only minimum damage from physical weapons. Enchanted weapons do full normal damage.

Spells: This specimen knows no spells.

Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D20 Sanity points to see.

This species can also generate a Windstorm attack, but this option can be ignored in the scenario, since the specimen is alone.



Bearers



Lemuel Gulliver and Devapura?

Rise of M'Bakadala, He Who Swims and Eats without Mouth

Summary: When the investigators return to the Outpost of Progress, believing that all is over, they are suddenly ambushed by the hired askaris of the Hubert van Damme expedition. Yes, the sinister industrialist did get there in the end, even though the investigators arrived first. However, the investigators now discover the hard way that it was not a flying city that van Damme was searching for, but some means to summon what he believes to be Great Cthulhu, of which legends abound in inner Congo. The investigators and any other survivors will make excellent sacrifices in the ensuing ritual. Well, van Damme is wrong. The only Cthulhu-like being in the Congo River is a star-spawn of Cthulhu, known to the natives as M'Bakadala, He Who Swims and Eats without Mouth. Yet, a tough adversary for the investigators to deal with, especially since they are in chains.

Back to the Outpost of Progress

The wilderness had patted him on the head, and, behold, it was like a ball—an ivory ball; it had caressed him, and—lo!—he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins, consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation.

The thing was to know what he belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. That was the reflection that made you creepy all over. It was impossible—it was not good for one either—trying to imagine. He had taken a high seat amongst the devils of the land.

You can't understand. How could you?—with solid pavement under your feet, surrounded by kind neighbors ready to cheer you or to fall on you, stepping delicately between the butcher and the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums—how can you imagine what particular region of the first ages a man's untrammled feet may take him into by the way of solitude—utter solitude without a policeman—by the way of silence, utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbor can be heard whispering of public opinion?

Joseph Conrad

Assuming that not all investigators died on Devapura, which effectively would end the scenario, or that they succeeded so spectacularly that the rival expedition of the New York industrialist Hubert van Damme pales into insignificance to such an extent that the Keeper chooses to forget all about it, the investigators will find

that having experienced the apparent climax of their Congo adventures in the flying city, worse is yet to come. Now they will have to deal with Hubert van Damme.

After leaving Devapura, by one means or another, the party returns to the trading post. This is the natural thing to do, since they have lost all their supplies. They also need fuel, and that can only be had at the trading post. Upon arriving, the investigators will notice that a river steamer has arrived and trade is going on (although—and this is not obvious—neither Kayerts, Carlier, nor Makola can be seen).

Unfortunately, things are not quite like they seem. Upon landing (or stumbling out of the jungle, if things went badly), the party will be ambushed by van Damme's men: a large, well-trained group of askaris and mercenaries under the control of Hubert van Damme and his lieutenant, Captain Arthur Hanssens. This is not a situation in which the investigators will be able to fight their way out; they are outmanned and outgunned by far. If Gobila is with the party, the Keeper may judge that he managed to dash into the foliage and disappear. The investigators should not be given this option, since they do not have Gobila's long experience with the terrain. If the investigators resist capture, they should be roughened up and one or two might possibly take a bullet in the shoulder or so. They will not be killed, however, since Hanssens has orders to take them alive. (For the statistics of these askaris, reuse the ones supplied for Colonel Strauch's men in Vivi. Statistics for Hubert van Damme and Arthur Hanssens can be found below.)

The party, together with Kayerts and Carlier, who were captured earlier (Makola seems to have escaped—or was he working for van Damme all the time?), will be tied up and chained to a huge Baobab

tree on the river-bank. The tree will be large enough; its diameter is no less than 45 feet (15 meters). There they will have to wait, under armed guard, until close to sunset, when Hubert van Damme shows up and explains: “You have no idea of the forces you are dealing with here. This river is the abode of the primeval, deadly god Katala, or Cthulhu, which I believe might be his real name. The niggers here call him M’Bakadala, He Who Swims And Eats Without Mouth. Only I, and I alone, have what it takes to deal with this perilous situation. You see, this ancient god has devoted worshippers throughout the world. I first learnt of them, and him, from a police inspector, John Legrasse, who discovered such a band in New Orleans in 1906. Later I found traces elsewhere, in many remote parts of the world such as in Greenland, Central Asia, and South America.”

Hubert van Damme is a far greater villain than the hapless Uncle Aaron, but he will start monologuing just the same. However, being chained and under armed guard, there is presumably little the investigators can do to take advantage of van Damme’s apparent need for self-glorification.

Hubert van Damme ends the conversation suddenly: “Enough said. Now I have to tend to Katala. I suspect that we will not meet again. At least you will have a good view of the proceedings.”

Hubert van Damme then moves closer to the water and gets involved in the preparation of a sacrificial ceremony. Several goats tied to a tree and a young elephant in a cage are placed not very far from the party’s Baobab tree (they are meant to be supplementary sacrificial victims, if needed; van Damme first planned to use some of his askaris but found the captives to be a more cost-efficient choice). The Wakiwaki idol stolen from the Arkham Museum of Natural History is placed on the shore, and the Congolese sword stolen at the same time is pushed into the ground next to the idol. Several askaris and Captain Hanssens line up behind the captives.

Hubert van Damme dons a weird-looking ritual garment and the African mask stolen from the museum together with the other objects. Then he begins an incantation in an unknown language. Darkness falls and the only light comes from flickering torches set in an odd pattern near the shore. Things look distinctly grim for the investigators. The players will no doubt begin to fret, wondering if the Keeper is mean enough to have them killed in the ceremony without any fair chance of using their skills?

Not so. The investigators will just have to work a bit. A successful Locksmith skill roll, for instance, will take care of the crude padlock and ensure that they get out of their chains, which in addition, like any iron chains in the Congo, are rusty due to the persistent dew. Each investigator is also free to try to roll under his STRx1 on

a 1D100 (that is, if STR is 15, then the chance of success is 15%) in an attempt to break through the chains by pure, brute strength. Remember that the ceremony will take several hours, so the Keeper can allow several attempts at each try, and several different attempts. As long as at least one investigator breaks loose, the party finds that they can quietly slip out of their chains and even withdraw into the shadows. Hubert van Damme’s askaris, scared stiff by the dark ceremony, pay them little attention, as long as they remain seated where they were chained. (If the players really are out of luck and all attempts fail, then consider allowing them the unexpected help from Makola or possibly Gobila; however, the drama will be enhanced if the players feel that it is their own efforts that succeed, without any unwanted railroading or other Keeper intervention which the players cannot influence.)

After at least an hour of incantation, suddenly all becomes very quiet. The normal cacophony of sounds from the rainforest dies, as if the primeval forest is holding its breath. A huge monstrous, dark shape slowly rises from the black water of the river. The humid, stifling air grows more heavy still, if that might be possible, as the stench of decay from the monstrous shape reaches the shore. Hubert van Damme indicates the animals, and the monster begins to move towards them. As every investigator who sees the monster is compelled to roll for Sanity loss (1D6/1D20 to see the fiend), they overhear Hubert van Damme (who will have no trouble with *his* Sanity) muttering: “Shouldn’t it be bigger than this?”

Keeper Option

It is up to the Keeper to decide exactly what Hubert van Damme wishes to achieve by summoning Great Cthulhu. That he is totally ruthless, cares nothing for human lives, and regards the investigators as suitable sacrificial victims goes without saying. But there still remains some doubt as to what he wishes to accomplish.

He may simply believe that he can control Cthulhu to gain more power and wealth; if so, he has overestimated his own powers by far. Or it may be that he in fact is fighting the Mythos, either for reasons of his own or in the service of native African supernatural beings such as the Mami Wata. If so, perhaps he reckons that he will be able to permanently banish Cthulhu from Africa or perhaps even Earth. He might then, in fact, believe that the investigators are evil agents of the Cthulhu cult instead of individuals who, just like Hubert van Damme himself, are doing their best to fight the Mythos. A devious Keeper may well decide to make life a little more miserable for the players by letting them realize, after the event, that the

master villain they just defeated actually was on the side of the angels.

Be that as it may, to give the players the chance to take action as the ceremony nears its completion, it is mandatory that they can slip out of their chains, as described above. However, depending on the mode of play and view of the Mythos preferred by the players, the Keeper may end the adventure in any one of several ways. For those bent upon a purist mode of play, in which the investigators are faced with unspeakable horrors against which Mankind has no chance of victory, by all means let the investigators turn on van Damme and the monster to see what they can accomplish. If they remain sane, that is. Hubert van Damme's askaris will cause little trouble, as they will panic and flee at the first sight of the spawn. If this option is chosen, most investigators will no doubt end up dead or insane, in a desperate flight deeper into the jungle from which they are unlikely ever to return. If they actually manage to defeat both van Damme and the monster without assistance, so much the better—but this hardly seems likely.

For a group of players which prefers a more physical struggle along the lines of most pulp fiction, the Keeper can instead go lenient on the Sanity rolls. It is a spawn after all, not Great Cthulhu himself. Blix in particular is an excellent marksman and can cause plenty of devastation if he manages to lay his hands on a Nitro Express elephant gun, and so can most likely several player characters as well. Even if the group cannot defeat van Damme and the monster, they should at least be able to rescue any innocent bystanders and make their escape into the jungle in an orderly fashion. Their return to civilization can then be yet another adventure, and theirs will be only the latest among several failed expeditions into deepest Africa.

The Keeper can also, if he or she wishes, allow a final flourish in the way the adventure ends. There may be other forces except those of the Mythos at work in Darkest Africa. Remember that the Congo is far older even than most Mythos monsters. The group has already encountered the Mami Wata, powerful and horrible but a native African supernatural being. Are there others as well? It might be that the Dark Continent itself, of which the Congo basin is its dark heart, will not allow any alien Spawn of Cthulhu to invade its territory. For those who desire such an outcome, more mysterious than metaphysical, the Keeper may bring on the following conclusion at the point when it becomes clear that the investigators are losing the struggle:

Suddenly the party gets the distinct feeling that a new presence has appeared, surrounding the clearing at the river-bank. If possible, and only if the party looks back, the darkness behind them is disturbed by several huge,

black shadows. A distinct smell of decaying vegetation can be perceived.

Then a loud, angry trumpeting sound is heard from the forest. The old bull elephant, followed by his two squires, charges into the clearing, passing within feet of the harassed investigators.

Hubert van Damme looks surprised. The monster, about to turn on the caged and chained animals, is distracted and turns towards the elephant bull, which charges into the hulking, dark shape with tusks, trunk, and stamping feet. The two squires follow the old bull into battle.

Gored by the bull's tusks, the monster bleeds. If it bleeds, it can be killed.

One after the other, the remaining members of the elephant herd then appear among the trees. The adult elephants charge into the clearing, scattering askaris and cult objects. (Unless the investigators act quickly, Hubert van Damme disappears into the jungle; the Keeper can always find further use for a major villain of his kind.)

The monster is defeated and sinks, apparently dead or dying, back into the black water. A rotten stench pervades the air. However, within minutes a violent thunderstorm moves through the rainforest, its burst of rain erasing whatever remained of the alien presence. Only the ever-present smell of rotting, humid vegetation remains.

Thus Africa took its revenge on the alien intruder.

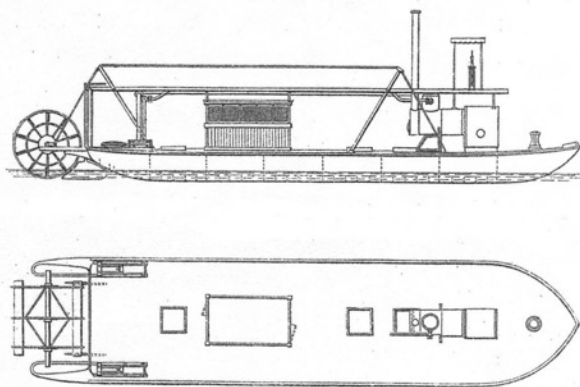
Conclusion

Particularly vicious Keepers may wish to have any surviving characters endure further privations, including a long trek through the jungle, most likely several bouts of fever and disease, and all the other types of general nastiness available in Central Africa. This would certainly be realistic but may not be exactly fulfilling in a dramatic sense for the players. Most groups of players will, if their characters survive, find a quick change of scenes more rewarding, since the climax of the series of adventures has already taken place. Simply tell them that after another 1D6 weeks, all the surviving investigators managed to stumble out of the jungle at the nearest trading post. Since they all suffer from fever at the time, it takes another 1D6 weeks before they manage to get transportation out of Central Africa. Whether they manage to catch a ship to South Africa or Europe, or perhaps end up in Nairobi (for further African adventures as described in Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya*) is obviously up to the Keeper to decide.

Although this series of adventures in no way is intended to be a party-killer, merely surviving deserves a reward. After all, anybody who has come through such a harrowing expedition with some Sanity left

must be made of pretty stern stuff. Reward each surviving investigator with 2D6 Sanity points for mere survival. If they succeed in foiling Hubert van Damme's plan, reward each with another 1D6 Sanity. If they actually manage to defeat the Star-spawn of Cthulhu on their own (that is, without the assistance of supernatural intervention as described under Keeper Option), award each survivor yet another 1D10 Sanity points since the investigators will have assisted in making not only Congo but perhaps the world a better place. However, as usual reduce the total gain by one point for each member of the team lost in this, the final episode.

Although many explorers have entered the Congo over the centuries, few ever returned and even fewer returned without mental scars derived from the tribulations of the journey. The situation might well be the same for the investigators. Marked by the jungle, none will remain unchanged after such harrowing experiences. It would be unusual if not at least one surviving member of the expedition ends up in a sanatorium, takes to the bottle to forget what he has experienced, or eventually, perhaps years later, decides to end it all with a bullet in the brain. That was ever the fate of intrepid explorers in Central Africa. But before this happens, there might well be some opportunity for fame by going on the lecture circuit or writing books about the dangers encountered and the quaint customs of the native Congolese. Besides, the Arkham Museum of Natural History will be grateful to any surviving party members if the expedition actually manages to bring back suitable objects of scientific value for the Museum's permanent exhibition. If so, reward the survivors with a 2D6 percentiles increase in Credit Rating. Any survivor who chooses to self-publicize himself by writing a book or going on the lecture circuit deserves another 2D6 percentiles increase in Credit Rating.



Congo river steamer

Statistics (Rise of M'Bakadala)

Hubert van Damme



Hubert van Damme is a New York industrialist in his mid-fifties, primarily known for being the owner of Damme Oil Company. Born in Brussels, Belgium, young Hubert van Damme spent his early years there. Then, as a young man, he in 1895 moved to the Congo Free State to assist his father, the descendant of an old but hardly wealthy noble family known as Rémy van Damme (1848–1899), in his prosperous rubber business.

After the death of his father in Africa from sleeping sickness, Hubert van Damme took over the business. Hubert van Damme soon established a presence in New York, at first to see to the marketing of his firm's substantial rubber exports to the United States. Seeing a great future for the United States, and a less than great future for the Congo Free State, he secretly moved all his assets into a U.S. holding company. Already in late 1900, Hubert van Damme bought his first small oil company in Texas. In 1905, he let the family rubber business go bankrupt. Hubert van Damme then, for the record, moved to America to start all over.

Soon Hubert van Damme was one of the fastest rising stars in American oil business. Being one of the main oil suppliers to the armed forces of the United States of America, van Damme in no small way helped secure Entente victory over Imperial Germany in the Great War.

Hubert van Damme is currently well known as an oil tycoon and a Christian philanthropist. Yet Hubert van Damme is also a meticulous student of the occult and, in particular, the Cthulhu cults. He first learnt of them, and Cthulhu, from a police inspector, John Raymond Legrasse, who discovered such a band in New Orleans in 1906. Later he found traces elsewhere, in many remote parts of the world such as in Greenland, Central Asia, and South America. Damme Oil Company has since sponsored highly secret research

expeditions to these parts of the world, in search of the ancient origins of this widespread cult. He encountered legends of myths of the same kind already as a young man in the Congo.

Hubert van Damme is a shrewd and totally ruthless operator with long-established contacts throughout the world.

STR 14 CON 16 SIZ 14 INT 17 POW 18
DEX 13 APP 15 EDU 18 SAN 75 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.45 ACP Colt Model 1911 Automatic 65%, damage 1D10+2

7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 55%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 65%, damage 1D3+1D4

Spells: Contact M'Bakadala (Star-Spawn of Cthulhu), and possibly others at the Keeper's discretion.

Skills: Accounting 75%, Anthropology 50%, Archaeology 60%, Bargain 90%, Credit Rating 99%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Dodge 55%, Geology 45%, History 60%, Jungle Survival 30%, Law 45%, Natural History 35%, Navigate 45%, Occult 50%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 55%, Spot Hidden 60%, Spot Profitable Investment 95%.

Languages: French 90%, English 75%, Spanish 50%, Lingala (Bantu) 60%, Kiswahili (Bantu) 45%.

Note. The Belgian 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 rifle was based on the German Mauser and in game terms functions exactly like the .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle.

Captain Arthur Hanssens



Captain Hanssens came to the Congo already in the years of the Congo Free State and joined the *Force Publique*. He is a trained soldier and experienced jungle fighter and hunter.

STR 16 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 13 POW 12

DEX 14 APP 12 EDU 12 SAN 50 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 65%, damage 1D10+2

7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 Bolt-Action Rifle 75%, damage 2D6+4

Fist/Punch 60%, damage 1D3+1D4

Rapier 35%, damage 1D6+1+1D4

Skills: Anthropology 15%, Bargain 35%, Credit Rating 35%, Dodge 55%, First Aid 60%, Hide 50%, Jungle Survival 50%, Listen 55%, Natural History 35%, Navigate 60%, Pilot Boat 20%, Psychology 50%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Track 40%.

Languages: Danish 60%, French 60%, German 55%, English 55%, Lingala (Bantu) 50%

Note. The Belgian 7.65mm Fusil d'Infanterie Modèle 1889 rifle was based on the German Mauser and in game terms functions exactly like the .30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle.

Star-Spawn of Cthulhu, or Xothian

This particular spawn for unknown reasons left the Atlantic and years ago began to move up the wide Congo River.

STR 70
CON 55
SIZ 110
INT 21
POW 21
DEX 11
Move 20
HP 83

Damage Bonus: +10D6

Weapon: Tentacles 80%, damage equals 1/2 db (that is, 5D6)

Claw 80%, damage equals full db (that is, 10D6)

Armor: 10-point hide & blubber; regenerates 3 HP/round

Spells: Knows 3D6 spells, at Keeper's discretion.

Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D20 Sanity points to see.

May attack with tentacles or with claw. It may use 1D4 tentacles each round, or a single claw.

African Elephants

Large Bull Elephant

STR 70
CON 34
SIZ 78
POW 18
DEX 15

Move 10
HP 56

Damage Bonus: +8D6

Weapon: Trunk 75%, damage Grapple

Rear and Plunge 40%, damage 8D6 + db

Trample 75%, damage 4D6 + db

Tusk Gore 40%, damage 6D6 + db

Armor: 8-point skin, 4-points under the belly

This experienced elephant can attack twice per round. If the trunk grapples a target, the victim can only escape by successfully matching his STR against *half* the elephant's STR. Each round following a successful grapple, any other attack by the elephant is at a 99% chance of success. (The Trunk attack will not be used against the spawn.)

Bull Squire Elephant

STR 55
CON 27
SIZ 63
POW 13
DEX 11
Move 10
HP 45

Damage Bonus: +6D6

Weapon: Trunk 50%, damage Grapple

Rear and Plunge 25%, damage 8D6 + db

Trample 50%, damage 4D6 + db

Tusk Gore 25%, damage 6D6 + db

Armor: 8-point skin, 4-points under the belly

An elephant can attack once per round. If the trunk grapples a target, the victim can only escape by successfully matching his STR against *half* the elephant's STR. Each round following a successful grapple, any other attack by the elephant is at a 99% chance of success.

Average Forest Elephant

STR 45
CON 27
SIZ 53
POW 13
DEX 11
Move 10
HP 40

Damage Bonus: +5D6

Weapon: Trunk 50%, damage Grapple

Rear and Plunge 25%, damage 8D6 + db

Trample 50%, damage 4D6 + db

Tusk Gore 25%, damage 6D6 + db

Armor: 8-point skin, 4-points under the belly

An elephant can attack once per round. If the trunk grapples a target, the victim can only escape by successfully matching his STR against *half* the elephant's STR. Each round following a successful

grapple, any other attack by the elephant is at a 99% chance of success.



Wakiwaki witchdoctor



Wakiwaki shields

Further Adventures in the Congo

The Mokele-mbembe

The *mokele-mbembe* is a large, dinosaur-like creature hidden in the rainforests and swamps of northern Congo. The name is Lingala but is used for a variety of large, monstrous animals, none of which has been identified by science. Count Vito dell'Acqua claims to have got close to one, but the enigmatic creature was never before, or since, seen by any white man. However, the natives swear to its existence in the deep, steaming forests along the great river. Besides, already in 1776 French missionaries reported finding huge, clawed footprints in the ground, three feet in circumference and spaced about seven feet apart.

The natives told the missionaries that the footprints were made by a huge herbivore, not an elephant but another, elephant-sized creature with claws on its feet. The animal is generally described as having a long neck, a long tail, and leave rounded shape tracks with three claws. The creature is reportedly somewhere between a hippopotamus and an elephant in size, although some natives claim that it is far longer than any elephant. The only people who claim to see it regularly are the pygmies. They reportedly hunt and eat the *mokele-mbembe*, killing it through the use of poisoned arrows. They also claim that the *mokele-mbembe* only lives where there are no hippopotamuses.

If the *mokele-mbembe* exists at all, most scholars believe it to be a survival from the time of the dinosaurs, or at least a very sizeable species of monitor lizard. There could of course also be a far more sinister, Mythos-related explanation. Scholars with a high level of Cthulhu Mythos knowledge would no doubt argue that any reference to the *mokele-mbembe* really indicates the presence of Iloigor. Whether dinosaur or Iloigor, an expedition in search of the *mokele-mbembe* would surely bring yet other options for adventures in the Congo.

The Mulilo

Native traditions in the Congo mention yet another apparent survival from primeval times. This is the *mulilo*, a gigantic, coal-black, slug-like beast of loathsome shape, almost six feet in length and more than one foot in width. The *mulilo* has what the natives report as a poisonous breath. It is a hunter, feeding on birds and small animals.

The *mulilo* can apparently at least be killed, because pieces of blackened flesh stated to be from dead *mulilos* are worn by some natives as fertility charms. This, moreover, makes it quite improbable that the mysterious beast in fact is a gigantic slug, since the bodies of slugs are relatively insubstantial and little more than gelatinous sacs. The *mulilo* might then be some unknown species of snake or perhaps a lizard. However, it remains inconclusive whether these reports of blackened *mulilo* flesh can be trusted. Perhaps this flesh comes from another, more mundane source of meat. Descriptions of the *mulilo* also tally with those of the giant *dingi-dingi* leeches of the Ituri (see below). Whatever the *mulilo* is, everybody agrees that it is a loathsome and dangerous creature.

The White Apes of the Grey City

Somewhere on an east-bound tributary of the Ubangi River, in the northwestern corner of Belgian Congo, can be found the ruins of the Grey City, inhabited by a violent species of white apes. As H. P. Lovecraft described this species in his *Facts Concerning the Late Arthur Jermyn and His Family* (1921), the white ape was “less hairy than any recorded variety, and infinitely nearer mankind—quite shockingly so. Detailed descriptions would be rather unpleasant.” It has been suggested that the white apes form a missing link between humanity and hominid, since they have been recorded to have successfully interbred with humans, or perhaps were related to the voormis of the northern hemisphere. White apes are known to have relied on a Stone Age culture but can certainly learn to use any weapon usable by humans.

Certain lost descriptions of statues and rock carvings in the Grey City suggest that it was a source of diamonds for the Queen of Sheba, and that the original, human inhabitants of the city bred and trained white apes to serve as guards and for the purposes of gladiatorial games. The latter then revolted, slaughtering the human inhabitants.

Some believe that this mysterious civilization in deepest Africa, centered on the Grey City, consisted of white men, and that one offshoot of this mysterious race was the kingdom of Anzicana, to which the early Kongo kings laid claim ever since the time of João I Nzinga a Nkuwu (r. c. 1470–1509). The inhabitants of this kingdom, known as Anzicos or Anziques to

European explorers, are believed by some to have been a mysterious tribe of cannibal witchdoctors of a peculiarly Caucasian appearance. H. P. Lovecraft certainly identified them (in *The Picture in the House* (1921)) as such when he read Filippo Pigafetta's account of the Congo region, the *Relatione del reame di Congo* (Report of the Kingdom of Congo), written from the notes of the sailor Duarte Lopez and first printed in 1591: "I had often heard of this work, with its curious illustrations by the brothers De Bry, hence for a moment forgot my uneasiness in my desire to turn the pages before me. The engravings were indeed interesting, drawn wholly from imagination and careless descriptions, and represented negroes with white skins and Caucasian features; nor would I soon have closed the book had not an exceedingly trivial circumstance upset my tired nerves and revived my sensation of disquiet. What annoyed me was merely the persistent way in which the volume tended to fall open of itself at Plate XII, which represented in gruesome detail a butcher's shop of the cannibal Anziques."



Plate XII

The last of the Anzicos reportedly fled into what is now Belgian Congo from French Congo in the early 1870s. However, more mundane scholars claim that the Anzicos were merely the ancestors of the present Bateke tribe, who although cannibals certainly are of black African origin.

Statistics for White Apes have been provided in Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* (2007) but are reprinted here for convenience since all explorers are unanimous in their belief that the Grey City is located in the Congo.

White Apes

Characteristic	rolls	average
STR	3D6+6	16-17
CON	3D6	10-11
SIZ	2D6+9	16
INT	1D6+6	9-10
POW	3D6	10-11
DEX	3D6+3	13-14
Move	10	HP 14
Av. Damage Bonus: +1D4 or +1D6		

Weapons: Bite 45%, damage 1D6+db
Hand 45%, damage 1D6+db
Club 50%, damage 1D6+db
Spear 30%, damage 1D8+1+db

Armor: 2-point skin

Spells: none

Sanity Loss: 0/1D3 for seeing a white ape for the first time only (then they will be recognized as natural creatures related to mankind and other hominids)

The English explorer Sir Wade Jermyn of Huntingdon wrote and published a slim volume known as *Observation on the Several Parts of Africa* in 1765, just before he went mad. The book describes the results of his three expeditions into the Congo back in the 1750s. During the second, longest expedition he claimed to have discovered the ruins of a prehistoric great white civilization in the Congo basin. He also described the ruined city and those who inhabited it. The book was printed in a quite small edition but copies are available in major reference libraries devoted to African exploration. *Sanity Loss 1/1D3; Cthulhu Mythos +1 percentile; skill checks on Anthropology and Biology; average 1 week to study and comprehend/6 hours to skim. Contains no spells.*

One of Sir Wade Jermyn's descendants, Sir Arthur Jermyn, visited the Grey City in 1912. By then, the ruins of the city were abandoned, and only one passageway that possibly led down into the catacombs and vaults with archaic carvings first reported by Sir Wade Jermyn was found. The most recent occupants had been the fierce N'Bangu tribe who reportedly had killed off the white apes. However, they had left the area as well and been forced under Belgian rule.

Another of Sir Wade Jermyn's descendants, Neville Jermyn, lives in Nairobi. For further details, see Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya*.

The Canyon of the Ituri-kendi

The deeply cut gorge of Ituri-kendi can be found on the Ituri River which itself flows into the Aruwimi River, just to the west of Lake Albert. The gorge can only be approached from the north, by allowing the waters of the Ituri River to carry one into the canyon as it flows south. Inside the high walls are the remains of an ancient civilization, yet to be identified, the inhabitants of which reportedly once worshiped Azathoth. The present inhabitants of the gorge are natives who do not like outsiders and are capable of cursing intruders with feverish dreams. Yet worse, the swamps and waterways of the gorge form the abode of vast numbers of giant blood-sucking leeches known in the language of the natives as *dingi-dingi*, skilful swimmers and large as horses, which would seem to be yet another remnant of prehistoric times that can be

found nowhere else (unless the *mulilo*, as noted above, is a land-based relative).

The odd term *kendi* in the name Ituri-kendi may be the local pronunciation of *kando*, meaning side or riverbank; however, the grammar would then be of non-Bantu origin which would indicate that the present inhabitants of the gorge may yet be the descendants of an older race.

The Cult of the Spiraling Worm and the Screaming Crawler

The cult of the Spiraling Worm is widespread in the Congo basin, having grown into a millenarian cult in the 1880s in response to the widespread abuses under Belgian rule. Priests of the cult worship Nyarlathotep in the form of Ahtu. They may summon a screaming crawler, a horrifying huge monster with elongated clawed arms, a single large eye, and a snout-like mouth of needle-like teeth. More information on the Spiraling Worm cult and the screaming crawler can be found in Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* (2007) and *Secrets of San Francisco* (2006).

The Ruins of Nyhargo

The ruins of the tall basalt-towered city of Nyhargo, believed to be one of the few surviving outposts of the serpent people, are located in the vast jungle-clad chasm on the western face of the Mountains of the Moon, an ancient name believed to indicate the Ruwenzori mountains (nowadays spelt Rwenzori) which also includes the volcanic Virunga mountains, at the edge of the Great Rift Valley, somewhat south of the Canyon of Ituri-kendi and west of Lake Albert. It was reportedly abandoned by the serpent people about 10,000 years ago, when a cataclysm changed the face of Europe and Africa. Nyhargo was later occupied by the Cult of the Spiraling Worm which built a kingdom based on slave economy centered on the city.

The name Nyhargo is of unclear origin. It is probably a corruption of the name Nyiragongo, a very active volcano in the Virunga mountains with a steep-sided cone and a crater that contains a huge, seemingly permanent lava lake. The lava emitted in eruptions at Nyiragongo is unusually fluid. Whereas most lava flows move slowly and rarely pose a danger to human life, Nyiragongo's lava flows have been known to race downhill at up to 60 miles per hour (up to 100 km/h). Nowhere else in the world does such a steep-sided volcano contain a lake of such fluid lava, which makes the volcano very dangerous. From this tentative etymology, it follows that the basalt ruins must be located somewhere near the volcano itself, which explains why the ruined city was abandoned several times.

In the vicinity live several clans of pygmies known as the Batwa. They believe that the volcano is named after a woman of the same name, whose spirit haunts the area. They also believe that damned souls will atone for their evil deeds in the eternal fire of the Nyiragongo, while the souls of the pure instead will enjoy the summit of Karisimbi, another but higher nearby volcano, which is often white from snow.

In 1879, an enigmatic, small book known as *The Nyhargo Codex* was published in London by Lord Arthur Waite, the sole survivor of an ill-fated Congo expedition. The book is believed to contain translations of charcoal rubbings, made by Lord Waite, of inscriptions he found in a vast underground chamber beneath the monolithic ruins of Nyhargo. Lord Waite fell, jumped, or was pushed in front of a moving train at a London railway station soon after publication. The book deals with the living dead in various forms, in particular zombies, but focuses on how to control and destroy such entities. The book mentions, but does not fully describe, something called "the Nyhargo code" which would seem to be a powerful spell that should be written on a wall in blue and green chalk. *Sanity loss 1D2/1D4; Cthulhu Mythos +3 percentiles, skill check in Occult; average 3 weeks to study and comprehend/6 hours to skim.* Spells: Black Binding, Create Bad-Corpse Dust, Call the Dead Walkers, Nyhargo Dirge. (The last two spells are fully described in Chaosium's *The Keeper's Companion 2* (2002) and *Secrets of Kenya* (2007).)

The Valley of the Gods

Not far off the Aruwimi River, but to the west of the Ituri River, can be found the mysterious Valley of the Gods. The valley is only accessible through a narrow tunnel around which a gigantic carving of Cthulhu's head is prominent. The cavern opens where Cthulhu's gaping maw would be.

The center of the valley holds a lake surrounded by four unusual shrines, reportedly built by the Great Race of Yith and dedicated to respectively Cthulhu, Cthugha, Hastur, and an unknown Great Old One. This was, at least, the conclusion reached by the German explorer and archaeologist Mannheim Dorffman who explored the valley back in 1907. The natives of the valley follow their own, weird religious rituals which have resulted in the valley being the home of large population of zombies. Since the reports from the Valley of the Gods would seem to conflict with what else is known of the Great Race of Yith, the explorers conceivably interpreted what they found incorrectly.

For further details, see Bob Heggie, "Valley of the Four Shrines," *Fragments of Fear* (Chaosium, 1985).



Keeper's Notes

How to Handle the Introduction of New Investigators during the Adventures

Call of Cthulhu games often result in the death or permanent insanity of investigators. Although an expedition up the Congo will be isolated from civilization, this does not preclude the Keeper from adding new investigators to the group. For this purpose, the procedure will be slightly different before and after the Devapura scenario.

Before the group reaches Devapura, a new character can be picked up at any of the small but numerous settlements on the river. Almost any type of character is, in fact, quite possible. A successful big game hunter would not be out of place, but neither would a failed would-be colonist from almost any civilized background, including those of artist, clergyman or missionary, doctor of medicine, engineer, and even accountant. Do not neglect the option to bring in one or more native African investigators, for instance of any of those types described in Chaosium's *Secrets of Kenya* book. A native warrior or medicine man might be even more motivated than Western investigators to fight the nefarious activities of the Mythos in the land of his or her birth.



A native couple

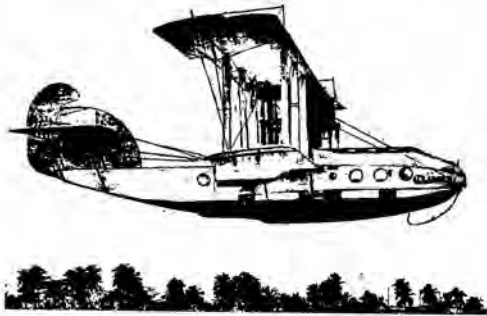
While it might be impossible to introduce a new investigator during the Devapura scenario itself (unless a player would be tempted by a Wakiwaki character, that is; well, as was explained above, an alliance between the investigators and the Wakiwaki should at this stage not be ruled out), the obvious point for a new investigator to enter the scene would be at the point when the battered investigators return to the Outpost of Progress. Any character type of those mentioned above would again be entirely feasible. The Keeper can simply assume that the new investigator arrived at the outpost for reasons of his or her own, and then was taken captive by van Damme's men. For a challenge, the player can even choose to assume the character of Makola, who unlike his white superiors is quite versatile and, if he survives, easily might be enticed to leave the outpost for more civilized climes elsewhere.

What Happens If the Pilot Dies?

The skill to pilot the Curtiss flying boat is obviously an essential skill for this series of adventures. If the pilot dies in the course of an adventure, the Keeper must accordingly arrange for the introduction of a new pilot to the group of investigators. There are several ways to accomplish this.

Easiest is of course if the group of investigators already includes one or more additional characters with the skill to pilot an aircraft. In the 1920s, formal lessons was only one way to acquire this skill. The Keeper may also allow one or more investigators to learn basic flying skills from the original pilot during the course of play. This will result in a low level of skill (perhaps 20 + 2D10%), although sufficient for the purposes of saving the expedition if the real pilot is lost. For the purposes of playing this series of adventures, the flying boat must not crash or be damaged in any way beyond what can be repaired in deepest Africa. The player acting as pilot will have to make a Pilot Aircraft skill roll each time something unusual happens, but the Keeper must not let this lead to fatal impact with the ground, since this would end the entire series of adventures in a premature manner. The Keeper must, however, maintain the pretence that anything may go wrong. The best way to handle this is to force the player acting as pilot to make several Pilot Aircraft skill rolls, with each failure leading to an incrementally more dangerous situation (from, for instance, "you

temporarily lost control over the aircraft, with passengers and equipment falling over each other” to “at the very last moment the hull skid over a floating log/sleeping crocodile/rock in the river but you luckily managed to put her down safely—although repairs will be needed for a day or two”), but allow the player to keep rolling until he or she succeeds. Then survey the damage done to aircraft and passengers, but make sure that nobody suffered more than minor bruises.



Another option, at least before the investigators reach Devapura, is to bring aboard a new investigator in the manner explained above. It would not be out of place for an experienced flier, perhaps a veteran of the Great War, to be found down on his luck in one of the settlements along the river, killing time with booze until he can find a new aircraft to fly.

If the pilot dies on Devapura, and no other trained pilot is available, simply assume that any other investigator has learnt sufficient Pilot Aircraft skill (say, 20%) merely by sitting next to and observing the pilot during the long voyage. He or she must now take the controls. Force the appropriate player to make Pilot Aircraft skill rolls as described above until he or she succeeds in (crash-) landing the flying boat in the river. All player character investigators will survive, even though badly bruised, so that they can take part in the final showdown with Hubert van Damme. Non-player characters may not be so lucky and if any still remain, can then be killed off without hesitation. At this point, the Keeper may also rule that the aircraft is damaged beyond repair, so that the investigators will have to trek back to the Outpost of Progress.



Remaining Mysteries, at the Keeper's Discretion

The following ideas might lead on to additional adventures, in Africa or elsewhere.

- Did Hubert van Damme abandon anything of value, for instance a Mythos book or two, at the site of the final struggle against the spawn?
- What other records remain in Devapura, and how to read them, if found?
- What is the significance of the other text left by Uncle Aaron with the letter to his sister? Will the references to Lanka lead the investigators onwards to Ceylon, perhaps?
- How did Lemuel Gulliver find out about Devapura? What happened to the old book in Sanskrit that Gulliver found in India and sent to Jonathan Swift?

Statistics (Optional Characters)

Professor Curtis Mathieson

Dr. Curtis Mathieson, a noted British archaeologist and anthropologist currently at the Miskatonic University, has led a number of scientific expeditions, including one into central Arabia in 1906. Currently in his mid-fifties, with grey, thinning hair, Mathieson enjoys great respect in his field of studies. His kindly manner, coupled with a vast knowledge of human behavior, soon gains the trust of the rest of the team. However, Mathieson is not in good health. He suffers from heart trouble and cannot engage in any strenuous activity. During the expedition, he will remain in camp or in the aircraft while the rest of the investigators conduct any field studies. He will not, indeed cannot, take part in strenuous adventuring, since to do so for him is to invite a possibly lethal heart attack.

Mathieson knows something of the Mythos, having encountered traces of it during his expedition into central Arabia. He will not discuss his knowledge with the uninitiated, however, since he knows from experience that this would be received very negatively by the academic community. If an investigator should approach him on the topic in front of others, he will dismiss such theories as “a hodge-podge of archaeological oddities strung together by pseudo-scientific imaginings.” He has on several occasions stated, in public, that unestablished theories about such things are no more than a childish desire to indulge in superstition and magic.

His response will be different if approached in private and convinced of the investigator’s authentic experiences or, preferably, solid evidence of the Mythos. Then he will admit that a key reason for taking up the challenge of leading the expedition was that he believes that the ruined city found by Count dell’Acqua may indeed be far older than anything yet discovered by science and might possibly even be of non-human origin.

STR 8 CON 4 SIZ 10 INT 17 POW 14
DEX 11 APP 13 EDU 20 SAN 55 HP 7

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapon:

.32 ACP 1903 Colt Hammerless Automatic 20%,
damage 1D8

Skills: Anthropology 85%, Archaeology 90%,
Astronomy 15%, Bargain 45%, Biology 10%,

Chemistry 15%, Credit Rating 75%, Cthulhu
Mythos 12%, Geology 20%, Library Use 90%,
Linguistics 40%, Persuade 85%, Psychology 65%.

Languages: English 95%, Arabic 60%, Egyptian
(Archaic) 60%, Greek 60%, Latin 60%.

Keeper’s Note

Professor Mathieson as presented here has appeared in Chaosium’s *Trail of Tsathogghua* (1984) which details an expedition to Greenland that also has Hyperborean implications. If the Keeper has already run this scenario, and the Professor survived, so much the better. If not, you may wish to consider whether to save him for future adventures. Professor Mathieson also makes a brief appearance in Chaosium’s *Secrets of Kenya* (2007).

Phillip H. Loveman, well-known Arkham writer of occult fiction

P. H. Loveman was born in Providence, Rhode Island. He was the only child of Winton Huxley Loveman, a travelling salesman, and Alice Sarah Phillips Loveman, who could trace her ancestry back to the Massachusetts Bay Company in 1630. When Loveman was three, his father suffered a nervous breakdown and spent his remaining years in the Butler Hospital in Providence. When Loveman was twenty-four, his mother was committed to a mental institution and died shortly afterwards. Loveman stayed with his aunts until he graduated from Miskatonic University in history and English literature. Some of his short stories have made their way into publications such as *Weird Tales*, and he has written a series of novels about Kregaar the Barbarian. His horror stories are gaining particular fame, however, notably “The Rats under the Floor” and “The Color from Antarctica.”

STR 10 CON 11 SIZ 12 INT 18 POW 18
DEX 10 APP 7 EDU 20 SAN 90 HP 12

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.38 Smith and Wesson Special Revolver 25%,
damage 1D10

.30-30 Winchester ‘94 Hunting Rifle 35%, damage

2D6+1

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Skills: Accounting 50%, Anthropology 50%, Archaeology 65%, Art History 75%, Astronomy 20%, Chemistry 20%, Credit Rating 65%, Drive Auto 30%, History 85%, Library Use 85%, Natural History 45%, Occult 45%, Psychoanalysis 15%, Spot Hidden 30%.

Languages: English 100%, Latin 20%, German 10%.

Frank Black, private eye

Frank Black, a former New York police officer, works as a private investigator out of a small, run-down office in downtown Arkham.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 18 POW 18
DEX 17 APP 11 EDU 17 SAN 90 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.38 Smith and Wesson Special Revolver 50%, damage 1D10

12 Gauge Remington Model 11 Shotgun (pump) 75%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

Fist/Punch 70%, damage 1D3

Skills: Conceal 25%, Credit Rating 35%, Dodge 50%, Drive Auto 50%, Fast Talk 45%, Hide 40%, History 50%, Law 15%, Library Use 50%, Listen 50%, Locksmith 40%, Natural History 20%, Occult 40%, Persuade 20%, Sneak 50%, Spot Hidden 80%, Track 50%.

Languages: English 85%, Latin 50%.

Zeb Quincy, M. D.

Dr Zeb Quincy is a successful physician and forensic surgeon originally from Boston. His main interest, as well the subject of his thesis, is the importance of hygiene and its key role in fighting epidemics. He has never before left the United States.

STR 12 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 16 POW 15
DEX 14 APP 12 EDU 20 SAN 75 HP 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

.38 Smith and Wesson Special Revolver 35%, damage 1D10

.30-30 Winchester '94 Hunting Rifle 50%, damage 2D6+1

Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3+1D4

Scalpel 35%, damage 1D3+1D4

Skills: Biology 25%, Chemistry 60%, Credit Rating 70%, Drive Auto 50%, Embalming 50%, Forensic Surgery 70%, Library Use 30%, Medicine 60%,

Natural History 20%, Persuade 25%, Pharmacy 60%, Photography 35%, Swim 35%.

Languages: English 100%, Latin 50%.

Lord Bertie Lockwood, ex-Royal Air Force

Bertram Lord Lockwood is a disgraced English nobleman. During the Great War, he served as a fighter pilot and became one of the first British aces of the war. However, his father disinherited him after a scandalous extramarital affair with a member of the Royal Family. Since the war, Lord Bertie has taken on odd jobs as a pilot in several countries, at present in the United States. He knows the Curtiss flying boat well, having flown it over the North Sea during the war.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 15 POW 14
DEX 16 APP 14 EDU 18 SAN 70 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

.455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 60%, damage 1D10+2

.303 Lee-Enfield Bolt-Action Rifle 30%, damage 2D6+4

.30 Browning M1917A1 Machine Gun (belt-fed) 25%, damage 2D6+3

Fist/Punch 70%, damage 1D3

Cavalier Saber 50%, damage 1D8+1

Cricket Bat 50%, damage 1D8

Golf Club 55%, damage 1D6

Skills: Bargain 35%, Biology 10%, Chemistry 10%, Credit Rating 65%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 60%, Fast Talk 30%, Hide 20%, Jump 35%, Law 10%, Library Use 30%, Locksmith 5%, Mechanical Repair 30%, Natural History 15%, Navigate 40%, Parachute 50%, Persuade 40%, Pharmacy 40%, Photography 15%, Pilot Aircraft 80%, Pilot Boat 20%, Psychology 20%, Ride 20%, Sneak 15%, Swim 30%.

Languages: English 90%, French 50%, Latin 20%, Greek 20%.

Note. When engaged in aerial battle in a light aircraft, of the types used in the early 1920s, the chance to hit with the machine gun equals Pilot Aircraft skill, not Machine Gun skill, since the pilot aims by aiming his aircraft.

Father William Ewan MacGregor, S.J.

Father MacGregor was born in Scotland. Wishing to serve God, he joined the Societas Jesu (S.J.)—the Jesuits—and having become ordained as a priest, served as field chaplain in the Great War. His

experiences in the war has given Father MacGregor a robust and pragmatic view of the meaning of his faith. It also made him learn the French art of self defence, savate.

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 13
DEX 11 APP 14 EDU 17 SAN 65 HP 13

Damage Bonus: +0

Weapons:

- .455 Webley Mark IV Revolver 50%, damage 1D10+2
- .303 Lee-Enfield Bolt-Action Rifle 25%, damage 2D6+4
- Fist/Punch 50%, damage 1D3

Skills: Accounting 20%, Credit Rating 45%, Dodge 35%, Drive Auto 50%, First Aid 50%, History 45%, Library Use 75%, Martial Arts 30%, Occult 55%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 35%.

Languages: English 85%, Latin 60%, Arabic 40%.

John North, Arkham businessman

John North was born in New York. The son of an unknown father and an alcoholic mother of Irish descent, he grew up on the streets. North began with minor crimes early and committed his first armed robberies already in his teens. He invested the money wisely and was able to start a small business, a bar with gambling. Later he also moved into used cars, scrap metal, and junk. He served in the Great War, during which he was promoted to lance corporal. North was wounded in early 1918 and sent home. He set up a new business as an Arkham bootlegger. However, competition has been pretty sharp recently, and right now John North would sign up for anything to get out of the country for a while.

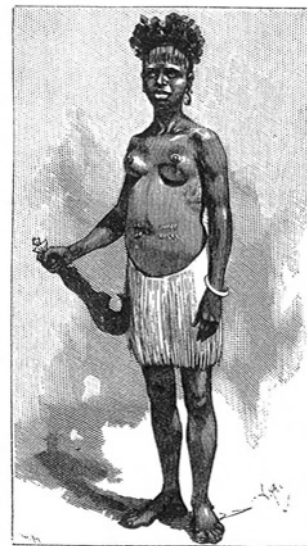
STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 13 INT 16 POW 17
DEX 13 APP 10 EDU 10 SAN 85 HP 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons:

- .32 ACP 1903 Colt Hammerless Automatic 55%, damage 1D8
- .45 ACP Colt Model 1911 Automatic 55%, damage 1D10+2
- .30-30 Winchester '94 Hunting Rifle 30%, damage 2D6+1
- .45 ACP Thompson Submachinegun 25%, damage 1D10+2
- 12 Gauge Remington Model 11 Shotgun (pump) 30%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6
- Fist/Punch 75%, damage 1D3+1D4
- Grapple 75%, damage special
- Head Butt 40%, damage 1D4+1D4
- Kick 75%, damage 1D5+1D4

- Blackjack 50%, 1D8+1D4
 - Walking Stick 50%, damage 1D6+1D4
 - Switchblade 40%, damage 1D4+1D4
- Skills:** Bargain 50%, Climb 40%, Conceal 15%, Credit Rating 75%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 60%, Electric Repair 20%, Fast Talk 55%, First Aid 35%, Mechanical Repair 35%, Operate Heavy Machine 30%, Persuade 70%, Psychology 45%, Spot Hidden 35%, Swim 30%, Throw 30%.
- Languages:** English 50%, French 10%, German 5%.



Handouts

Mysterious African Artefact Displayed in Arkham

The new African gallery in the Arkham Museum of Natural History continues to attract excited crowds, even after the first week of opening. The main displays in the exhibition are of course the two stunning, stuffed white African rhinoceroses brought to Arkham by Count Vito Dell'Acqua, the Italian hunter and explorer. Yet, no display has aroused so much curiosity, and so much idle gossip, as the mysterious and evil-looking, yet diminutive African idol on loan from Mr. Dell'Acqua's personal collection.

The idol depicts a being of vaguely anthropoid outline, but with a head somewhat resembling that of a squid, ending in a mass of feelers. The crude body of the idol hints of long, narrow wings at the side of the being, giving it the appearance of a strange and not entirely natural crossbreed between a deep-sea squid and what can only be compared to one of the great, flying lizards of the time of our Cave-Man ancestors, so eloquently described by modern anthropologists. Said to depict a cruel and most ancient cannibal deity, the artefact's utter strangeness and air of genuinely abysmal antiquity have divided Arkham's scholars on the question of the idol's utmost origin. However, there are at least no questions with regard to where, and under what circumstances, the curious artefact reached the civilized world. Mr. Dell'Acqua recovered it in 1908 from the dreaded Wakiwaki cannibals, a degenerate race of marsh dwellers, prone to evil superstitions and much feared by other tribes because of their curious form of devil-worship, at the time of his rescue of the famous explorer, Dr. Schnabel.

The Wakiwaki, living in damp caves along one of the furthest tributaries of the dreaded Congo River, regularly raided their somewhat less primitive neighbors in the impenetrable, damp jungles of the steaming Congo. Dr. Schnabel, in his zeal to convert the wayward children of the Dark Continent, had stumbled upon the Wakiwaki and, far from being recognized as a benefactor and representative of higher truths, he was cruelly captured and suffered unspeakable tortures, in monstrous rites frightfully suggestive of old and unhallowed cycles of life in which our world and our conceptions have no part. Had not Mr. Dell'Acqua chanced upon the scene, the good Doctor would surely have met his fate there and then, since the dreaded Wakiwaki are known for their horrible rituals and human sacrifices. Instead the intrepid great white hunter managed to free the Doctor and, at the same time, teach the Wakiwaki a lesson of gunpowder and cold steel not soon forgotten.

But the most curious thing of all, Mr. Dell'Acqua has related, was not the awesome idol itself, which he brought with him, but the massive slab of dark rock on which it rested, and which perforce must still remain in Wakiwaki territory due to its sheer size and mass. This slab of rock, Mr. Dell'Acqua told this correspondent, was covered in hideous petroglyphs and bestial samples of repulsive, arcane writing, glyphs in such teeming numbers that the slab must have been used for nameless rites for countless aeons, possibly since the very beginning of time.

As for Mr. Dell'Acqua, he only expressed his sincere regret that he did not, at the time, have a sufficient supply of dynamite so as to blast the evil-looking slab of rock to bits. Now it indubitably still remains among the hideous primitives of the haunted, fungous marshes of the unholy Wakiwaki.

Among the visitors to the new exhibition were several notables, including the wealthy but secretive New York oil tycoon and archaeologist, Mr. Hubert van Damme, who spent a considerable time studying the blood-stained Wakiwaki idol.

Notorious Big Game Hunter Visits Arkham

The arrival in Arkham of the notorious Italian big game hunter, Count Vito Dell'Acqua, who delivered the skins of two extremely rare, white African rhinoceroses and sundry other unusual or near-extinct beasts to the Arkham Museum of Natural History, has caused mixed feelings in Arkham polite society. On the one hand, Mr. Dell'Acqua in 1908 acquired well deserved fame as the hero of Lualaba, having rescued the famous explorer, Dr. Schnabel, from the dreaded Wakiwaki cannibals. On the other, he also has a reputation for savagery and ruthlessness, in particular with regard to the native population of the Dark Continent. This reputation in particular derives from his various semi-military expeditions, including those during the suppression of the Batetelas in 1900 on behalf of Baron Dhanis, of Belgian King Leopold's Congo State; the suppression of the great native uprising in Angola in 1902; and the opening of the railroad from Dar es-Salaam to Tabora in 1912, the then main line in German East Africa. Yet more regrettable rumors are being whispered about his unpublished exploits during the Great War.

Indeed, death and destruction would seem to have been Mr. Dell'Acqua's constant companions on his many expeditions into the Dark Continent. Indeed Mr. Dell'Acqua is widely reported to live for only one goal, and an impossible one at that. The big game hunter is reputed to be obsessed with the discovery and successful killing of the one elusive target of naturalists everywhere since the time of Dr. Darwin: a living relic of the kind the survivors of the ill-fated Professor Challenger expedition, when they returned from Brazil in the years before the Great War, told in their ludicrous stories of living dinosaurs somewhere deep into the treacherous jungles of the Amazon. Mr. Dell'Acqua has been known to relate that precisely such carnivorous monsters also inhabit the depths of the steaming Congo jungles. Once, Mr. Dell'Acqua claims, while he was still a young man and on an expedition with that other famed explorer, the late Mr. Quatermain, the two men came within thirty yards of such a beast. This was Congo's fabled *mokele-mbembe*, never before, or since, seen by a white man, although the natives swear to its existence in the deep, steaming forests of the great river that traverses the very heart of darkest Africa.

But who can tell? Mr. Quatermain and Mr. Dell'Acqua were the only two survivors of the expedition. When they finally returned to civilization after several months, having lost all men and supplies and only carrying one Martini-Henry rifle and one revolver, with no more than three rounds between the two of them, both men were delirious from exposure, and who knows what they may have encountered in the savage reaches of the treacherous Congo swamps.

The Arkham Museum of Natural History to Outfit Expedition to the Congo

Academic curiosity has been awakened by the infamous Dell'Acqua stone slab, discovered among the savage Wakiwaki but not yet studied by men of science. Is it really of prehistoric origin? Will it tell us of an unknown African civilization that ultimately influenced Western culture, as some eminent archaeologists believe? Not so, says Phillip H. Loveman, well-known Arkham writer of occult fiction. Although he has never visited Africa, Mr. Loveman disagrees strongly with those who put forward such theories, stating that it would be quite inconceivable to expect to find an ancient Negro civilization in Africa. However, the Dell'Acqua ruins hint strongly at the former existence of a white man's civilization in Central Africa. Do not forget the mines of King Salomon and the Queen of Sheba, reminds us Mr. Loveman. There may be discoveries in the Congo of utmost importance for the understanding of the history not only of Africa, but of the entire world, concludes Mr. Loveman, who has expressed a willingness to take part himself in the Great Congo Expedition of the Arkham Museum of Natural History, which is expected to set out as soon as suitable transportation can be found.

The texts of Vedic literature, the origin of which goes back in history far further in time than both its Assyrian and Egyptian counterparts, abound in references to this topic. As is well known, a war broke out between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas, identified with the early Indo-Aryans, were routed due to the better organisation and leadership of the Asuras, identified with the Dravidians. So the Devas copied the institutions of the Asuras and eventually became victorious throughout the sub-continent. After the great victory of Rama over Lanka, Vibhisana presented him with the Puspaka *vimana* which was furnished with windows, apartment, and excellent seats. It was capable of accommodating all the Vanaras besides Rama, Sita, and Laksmana (*Yuddha*, ch. 8). Whether the origin of the Puspaka *vimana* was in Lanka is nowhere stated but would seem likely. Rama flew to his capital Ayodhya pointing to Sita from above the places of encampment, the town of Kiskindha, and others on the way. Valmiki beautifully compares the city of Ayodhya to an aerial car (*Bala*, ch. 5). There is a statement in the Harsacarita that shows that the Yavanas were well acquainted with aerial machines. So it is hardly surprising that Comarius and the other philosopher-mystics of Alexandria knew of Devapura from the same source that also provided their knowledge of Katala.

The Yavanas were the Greeks. Vanaras were short, furry ape-men who fought for Rama. A Deva (from Sanskrit, meaning "bright; light"), unlike a god, is of course a celestial inhabitant subject to change and decay. But do not forget that the followers of Zoroaster regarded a Daeva as a maleficent supernatural being, a Demon. Just like a magical spell, a name can thus be read in two ways, with opposing significance and meaning. Cf. our word "devil"—a fallen angel, or some say, the offspring of the sons of Elohim (the original Hebrew god) who married mortal women. The dragon or serpent. His color may be black.

The formula is the following:
IOEL, HARI, PHTHA.

(as translated from the hieroglyphs)

Mighty Typhon, scepter-holder and ruler of the scepter-power above! God of gods! Lord!
ABERAMENTHÔOU. Shaker of darkness! Bringer of thunder! Stormy one! Night-lightener! Breather of cold and warm! Shaker of rocks! Shaker of walls! Raiser of waves! Raiser and mover of the deep sea!
IÔERBÊT AU TAUI MÊNI.

I am he who, along with you, searched the whole earth and found the great Osiris, whom I have brought before you in chains. I am he who fought at your side against the gods. I am he who shut the double folding doors of heaven and put to sleep the dragon whose sight nobody can endure. I stopped the sea, the streams, the flowing of rivers, until you became ruler of this kingdom, I, your soldier, was overcome by the gods, and because of their vain wrath I was hurled to the ground. Raise me, your friend, I beseech you, I entreat you! Do not throw me on the ground, lord of the gods. AEMINAEBAROTHEERRETHORABEANIMEA. Give me strength, I beseech you, and grant me this favor.

NAINÉ BASANAPTOU EAPTOU MÊNÔPHAESME PAPTOU MÊNÔPHI * AESIMÊ *
TRAUAPTI * PEUCHRE * TRAUARA * PTOUMEPH * MOURAI * ANCHOUCHAPHTA *
MOURSA * ARAMEI * IAÔ * ATHHARAUI * MÉNOKER * BOROPTOUMÉTH * ATTAUI
MÊNI CHARCHARA * PTOUMAU * LALAPSA * TRAUI TRAUERSE MAMÔ PHORTOUCHA *
AÊÉIO IOU * EAI AÊÉI ÔI IAÔ AÊI AI IÃO.

I conjure you by the god of the Hebrews, IESU, ATHTHOUI NTHOUTHOUI TAUANTI * LAÔ
APTATÔ, you who appear in fire, you who are in the midst of land and snow and fog, Tannetis, let your angel descend, the pitiless one, for I pray to the holy god through AMOUN AUANTAÛ LAIMOÛTAÛ
RIPTOU MANTAÛI IMANTOU LANTOU LAPTOUMI * ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI.

I conjure you AMOUN AUANTAÛ LAIMOÛTAÛ RIPTOU MANTAÛI IMANTOU LANTOU
LAPTOUMI * ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI, I conjure you by him who appeared to Osrael in a pillar of light and a cloud by night and who has saved his people from Pharaoh and has brought upon Pharaoh the ten plagues because he would not listen, I conjure you, every daemonic spirit; I conjure you by the seal that Solomon put upon the tongue of Jeremiah.

For I conjure you by him who revealed the hundred and forty tongues and distributed them according to his own command.

I conjure you by him who burned down the stiff-necked giants with his beams of fire, who praises the heaven of heavens.

I conjure you by him who put mountains around the sea, a wall of sand, and told it not to overflow, and the deep obeyed.

Thus must you also obey, every daemonic spirit, for I conjure you by him who has moved the four winds together from holy eternities, by the heavenlike, sealike, cloudlike god, the fire-bringer, the invincible.

I conjure you by him who is in Jerusalem, the pure city, for whom and near whom the unextinguishable fire burns forever and ever, with his holy name IOEL * HARI * PHTHA, before whom trembles the hellfire, and flames leap up all around, and iron explodes, and whom every mountain fears from the depth of its foundations.

I conjure you, every daemonic spirit, by him who looks down on earth and makes its foundations tremble and has created the universe from a state of non-being into a state of being.

AMOUN AUANTAÛ LAIMOÛTAÛ RIPTOU MANTAÛI IMANTOU LANTOU LAPTOUMI *
ANCHOMACH * ARAPTOUMI.

Come here, god. Listen to me, for he who wants this and commands this is ACHCHÔRACHCHÔR *
ACHACHACH PTOUMI CHACHCHÔ CHARACHÔCH * CHAPTOUMÉ * CHÔRACHARACHOCH *
APTOUMI * MÉCHÔCHAPTOU * CHARAPTOU * CHACHCHÔ * CHARACHÔ *
PTENACHÔCHEU.

Daring Burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History

Last night, a daring burglary occurred at the Arkham Museum of Natural History. The unknown burglars apparently broke in through the roof of the building and entered the collections by way of the Director's office, which they seemingly left untouched, despite or perhaps because of the existence of a modern safe there for the Museum's valuables and cash.

Among the objects stolen are four highly important sacral bronze vessels from ancient China, along with a few other, lesser objects such as the curious African idol on loan from Mr. Vito Dell'Acqua and a well-preserved but hardly unique *Boa Constrictor* cranium. The Arkham Police Department believes that the theft of the lesser objects was incidental only, as the real value, both to science and in monetary terms, lay in the Chinese objects.

Dearest Sister,

In my life-long and seemingly eternal search for the ancient Hyperboreans, of which I have told you so much during the years, I have finally found some good news! When I recently, for reasons of health, had to stay for several months in a private institution, I was recommended some light reading to ease my recurrent anxieties. The local library had a substantial selection of popular literature, in several world languages, and for reasons which I, unless I knew better, would be tempted to call pure chance, I picked up the Italian book about that explorer fellow, Dell'Acqua. This biography, which in no ways can be described as of high literary value, recounted a number of the adventures of the explorer in more or less credible detail. However, I found the chapter about Dell'Acqua's tribulations among the Waki-Waki, a Negro tribe of darkest Congo, to be of considerable interest. I realized that, unbeknownst to Dell'Acqua, the savages had actually settled in Devapura, one of the million-year old, abandoned forts of the Hyperboreans! You will recall, that I have many times told you of the primordial, global network of Hyperborean forts, from which this ancient race of eternal light, joyousness, peace, perpetual health, sunshine, and youth sallied forth to conquer Earth, multiply in peace and freedom, cleanse our noble planet from lesser races, etc. How the present, savage cannibals came to end up in such a place of Light and Knowledge is beyond my, or indeed anybody's, understanding, but I expect to find out. In other words, I have resolved to go there, regardless of expenses and other costs, to retrieve whatever I can find of the wisdom of our Hyperborean ancestors.

Although I expect the journey to be somewhat dangerous, do not worry, since it cannot be much worse than when I was a voluntary ambulance-driver, with my old Commer, you remember? Besides, to solve the enigma of this Hyperborean fortress is, I am sure, the only way to save Mankind from utter horrors and eternal bloodshed. Although I may be, and probably is, the only living soul on the planet who fully realizes what odds Mankind is up against, at least I know what I am doing.

I only regret one thing. I wish that I had taken a greater interest in my close relatives. As you know, I never married and my estate is good for a considerable amount of money. In case I die during my travels, I wish to bequeath it all to the next generation of our family, whom I never had the time to meet.

By the way, I enclose a few pages from an old Egyptian ms. which I recently secured. The ms. is but a trifle of no monetary value, although a curiosity for collectors like myself. Please keep these pages safe and do not show them to anybody who might come making inquiries. Dark forces are again attempting to steal all my discoveries, as they have indeed been trying ever since we were small children. Ever and ever again.

Warm embraces,

Your loving brother,

Aaron

The Arkham Advertiser, July 10th, 1918

Return of a War Hero

A great American has returned home. At a time when most of our countrymen shied away from taking up the noble cause of fighting despotism and cruelty on a distant continent, a few heroes went, on their own, to take part in the eternal fight for peace and freedom that constitutes the Great War of our times. One of them was Mr. Aaron W. Carter, of a distinguished Arkham family and the heir to a substantial estate. And what made Mr. Carter unique was that he was neither young nor particularly fit for the struggle that he, in the absence of his government, took upon himself. Mr. Carter, an outspoken pacifist, went alone to aid our close cousins on the other side of the sea. As early as in the beginning of 1915, he signed on as voluntary ambulance driver with the Royal British Army. From this date until just weeks ago, he served, with valour, distinction, and integrity, on the Western Front in the demanding and difficult role of an unarmed ambulance driver and medic, helping thousands if not tens of thousands of his fellow human beings back to their own lines, and back to life and health, instead of perishing in the monstrous No Man's Land that separated the two warring sides in France. Who at home can fully grasp the total extent of Mr. Carter's achievement? He experienced, without shrinking from the duty that he so nobly had taken upon himself, the first yellowish-green mist of chlorine gas at the Second Battle of Ypres in April 1915, the horrifying slaughter at Verdun from February to December 1916, and the bloody Somme in July to November 1916, where more than a million men died, as well as the gruesome battle of Passchendaele Ridge in July 1917. And yet a cruel fate compelled the valiant Mr. Carter, himself always willing, nay aspiring, to the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of his fellow human beings, instead to watch, forced into inaction by the needs of the many as opposed to those of the few, the death, on October 13th, 1915, of his beloved fiancée, the English nurse Miss Edith Cavell, who was cruelly and without procedure or guilt shot as a spy by the despicable Huns. Mr. Carter has done his duty. Mr. Carter, we salute you as a noble benefactor of Mankind and an American patriot.

1. The burglary occurred at night, between 1.30 and 2 a.m. A night watchman, Mr. Edward Harrison, was patrolling the building, but he heard nothing unusual since he was on the ground floor at the time of the break-in. He only discovered the burglary when he returned to the top floor, going his customary rounds. Then the intruders had already left. This indicates that the intruders knew the habits of the guard.
2. The unknown burglars broke in through the roof of the building and entered the collections by way of the Director's office. They left the same way. Fresh but rough footprints in the dust in the attic prove that this way was being used.
3. They left the Director's office untouched. They did not attempt to force the safe there, which is quite modern and is being used for the Museum's valuables and cash. Despite a very thorough search, there is no indication whatsoever that the burglars even searched the Director's office. They presumably did not have the time.
4. A total of eight objects were stolen: four highly valuable sacrificial bronze vessels from ancient China; a well-preserved but hardly unique *Boa Constrictor* cranium; the African idol known from the *Arkham Advertiser*; a sickle-shaped executioner's sword of Congolese origin; and an African wooden mask. The last three objects were on loan from Count Vito Dell'Acqua.
5. The real value, both to science and in monetary terms, lay in the Chinese objects. The others have no substantial monetary value, although it was embarrassing for the Museum to lose several objects on loan from a private individual. All objects were fully insured.

To Lemuel Gulliver, Esq.

SIR,

As I am credibly inform'd you intend to oblige the Publick with a Second Volume of The Travels, and are now actually collecting authentick Matter; I was of Opinion, that the sending you this Letter would be no unacceptable Office; and I hope, you will not take the following Remarks in ill Part. I think the Publication of a Second Volume of The Travels will do you both Honour and Justice, and therefore shall make no Apology, but come to the Point. I examined very thoroughly the Hindoostani Volume you sent. I know not its Origin. Having consulted with Captain Bonnerman, formerly of the East-India Company, we have thought fit to render the Volume into English as The Secrets of Gravitation. But the Words are in no Hindoostani Captain Bonnerman knows, and I cannot find what these Words can refer to. I am of Opinion, that the Volume you sent me cannot be rendered into English without considerable Effort; it would be a just Regard to the publick Good, and I would not have you deterr'd from vigorously pursuing it; but Circumstances are now such, that I cannot fulfil your Commission.

JONATHAN SWIFT

Mr. Lemuel Gulliver was a merchant adventurer of the early eighteenth century, with business interests in primarily Persia and India. He was the author of "Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World," published by Jonathan Swift in 1727. Lemuel Gulliver reportedly visited the city in July 1707.

The book Swift refers to in his letter is one of the books generally believed to be lost from the Secret Society of the Nine Unknown Men as formed by the ancient Indian Emperor Ashoka. This was a body of great Indian scientists who were tasked with the duty to record the sciences and document all discoveries. Ashoka kept their work secret because he was afraid that the advanced science catalogued by these men, gathered from ancient Indian sources such as the Vedic literature, would be used for the evil purpose of war, which Ashoka, a fervent Buddhist, feared greatly. He had been converted to Buddhism after defeating a rival army in a bloody battle, which had convinced him of the virtues of pacifism. The Nine Unknown Men wrote a total of nine books in Sanskrit, presumably one each. One was "The Secrets of Gravitation." This book, known to historians but not actually seen by them in modern times, dealt chiefly with gravity control. What did Swift do with the book? Did Sir Isaac Newton study it?



The flying or floating island is exactly circular, its diameter 7837 yards, or about four miles and a half, and consequently contains ten thousand acres. It is three hundred yards thick. The bottom, or under surface, which appears to those who view it below, is one even regular plate of adamant, shooting up to the height of about two hundred yards. Above it lie the several minerals in their usual order, and over all is a coat of rich mould, ten or twelve feet deep. The declivity of the upper surface, from the circumference to the centre, is the natural cause why all the dews and rains, which fall upon the island, are conveyed in small rivulets toward the middle, where they are emptied into four large basins, each of about half a mile in circuit, and two hundred yards distant from the centre. From these basins the water is continually exhaled by the sun in the daytime, which effectually prevents their overflowing. Besides, as it is in the power of the monarch to raise the island above the region of clouds and vapours, he can prevent the falling of dews and rain whenever he pleases. For the highest clouds cannot rise above two miles, as naturalists agree, at least they were never known to do so in that country.

At the centre of the island there is a chasm about fifty yards in diameter, whence the astronomers descend into a large dome, which is therefore called *flandona gagnole*, or the astronomer's cave, situated at the depth of a hundred yards beneath the upper surface of the adamant. In this cave are twenty lamps continually burning, which, from the reflection of the adamant, cast a strong light into every part. The place is stored with great variety of sextants, quadrants, telescopes, astrolabes, and other astronomical instruments. But the greatest curiosity, upon which the fate of the island depends, is a loadstone of a prodigious size, in shape resembling a weaver's shuttle. It is in length six yards, and in the thickest part at least three yards over. This magnet is sustained by a very strong axle of adamant passing through its middle, upon which it plays, and is poised so exactly that the weakest hand can turn it. It is hooped round with a hollow cylinder of adamant, four feet in thickness and twelve yards in diameter, placed horizontally, and supported by eight adamantine feet, each six yards high. In the middle of the concave side, there is a groove twelve inches deep, in which the extremities of the axle are lodged, and turned round as there is occasion.

The stone cannot be removed from its place by any force, because the hoop and its feet are one continued piece with that body of adamant which constitutes the bottom of the island.

By means of this loadstone, the island is made to rise and fall, and move from one place to another. For, with respect to that part of the earth over which the monarch presides, the stone is endued at one of its sides with an attractive power, and at the other with a repulsive. Upon placing the magnet erect, with its attracting end towards the earth, the island descends; but when the repelling extremity points downwards, the island mounts directly upwards. When the position of the stone is oblique, the motion of the island is so too: for in this magnet, the forces always act in lines parallel to its direction.

New York Times

Hubert van Damme, Oil Tycoon and Philanthropist

Not much is known about Mr. Hubert van Damme, the Belgian-born American success story. Originating from an old Belgian noble family, he started his business career in the service of his father, who was prospering in the rubber business in the Congo Free State. After the death of his father in darkest Africa late last century, the family rubber business went bankrupt and Mr. van Damme moved to America to start all over.

After buying his first small oil company in Texas, one thing quickly led to another and at the turn of the century, Mr. van Damme was one of the fastest rising stars in American oil business. Being the main oil contributor to the armed forces of the United States of America, van Damme in no small way helped secure Entente victory over Imperial Germany in the Great War.

As a resident for over twenty years in this greatest of cities, Mr. van Damme has frequently contributed to Catholic churches and several hospitals in New York. Yet he is arguably even better known for his interest in the occult and anything relating to the prehistory of our planet. His private collection of antiquities in this field is said to rival that of several major museums, and Mr. van Damme, who otherwise stays out of the public eye, often shows up during auctions of curious antiques.

Arkham Advertiser

Two Rival Congo Expeditions to the Cannibals! Who Will Secure the Dell'Acqua Stone Slab, Arkham or New York?

The sensation caused by the intrepid burglary at the Arkham Museum of Natural History has excited the academic as well as the popular mind. While notables such as Arkham's own Mr. Phillip H. Loveman have come out in favor of the Arkham Museum of Natural History endeavour, Arkham has found itself in danger of losing the contest to gain the infamous Wakiwaki stone slab to outsiders. No less a personage than Mr. Hubert van Damme, the celebrated oil tycoon of New York, has announced that he will fund his own Congo expedition, with the stated task to recover the very same stone slab! Mr. van Damme has in recent years funded several private scientific expeditions, to Greenland, Central Asia, and South America. Although the secretive Van Damme expeditions seldom publish their findings, they are believed to have excavated several very remarkable archaeological sites in recent years. The New York academic community is reported to be extremely excited by this great chance to acquire, and learn more about, the artefacts of the infamous cannibals, and in particular cult items relating to their horrifying form of devil worship.

The Van Damme Congo Expedition will depart by ocean liner in just two weeks' time, so it now seems certain that the New Yorkers will gain the infamous and much coveted stone slab. That is, unless the bold decision of the Arkham Museum of Natural History to gain time and beat the New Yorkers at their own game by employing the renowned flying firm Arkham Aeromarine, which generously has volunteered to fly the expedition team members to the Congo, pays off. The race to the Congo is on!

*Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton.*

The Creator at which all Things in Heaven, on Earth, and beneath the Earth tremble.

*Ely * Sother * Adonay * Sabaoth * Alpha * Omega.*

I conjure thee by the Sun and Moon; the Heavens and Earth; all Animals; Creeping Things; and Flying Things, whether Bipedes, Tripeds, or Quadrupeds; the Wounds of Christ and the Crown of Thorns; all the Characters of Solomon and the magical Acta of Virgilius; all the Things which hath power to terrify and constrain thee. Devolvere ad naturam rerum ad omnes partes.

*Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton * Tetragrammaton.*

From Beatty's book on the Human Leopard Society:

To deal with this extraordinary class of crime the Government of the Colony of Sierra Leone decided that drastic and exceptional legislation was necessary, and a Bill entitled the Human Leopard Society Ordinance, 1895, was introduced and passed as Ordinance No. 15 of 1895. The object of the Ordinance was set out in the preamble, which read as follows:

Whereas there exists in the Imperri Country a Society known by the name of the Human Leopard Society formed for the purpose of committing murder:

And whereas many murders have been committed by men dressed so as to resemble leopards and armed with a three-pronged knife commonly known as a leopard knife or other weapon:

And whereas owing to the number of these murders, and the difficulty of detecting the perpetrators of the same, it is expedient to amend the law:

Be it therefore enacted by the Government of the Colony of Sierra Leone with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof as follows:

Then followed provisions making it penal for any person without lawful excuse to have in his possession or keeping any of the articles mentioned in the Schedule, viz.:

- (a) A leopard skin shaped so as to make a man wearing it resemble a leopard;
- (b) A three-pronged knife; and
- (c) A native medicine known as "Borfima";

and under the Ordinance the police were given powers where there was reasonable ground of suspicion to arrest and to search without a warrant, and heavy penalties were imposed for obstructing the police.

Borfima, the "medicine" referred to in the Human Leopard Ordinance. The word is a contraction of *Boreh fima*, medicine bag, and is usually, but not invariably, tightly bound up in a leather package. This package contains, amongst other things, the white of an egg, the blood, fat, and other parts of a human being, the blood of a cock, and a few grains of rice; but to make it efficacious it must occasionally be anointed with human fat and smeared with human blood. So anointed and smeared, it is an all-powerful instrument in the hands of its owner, it will make him rich and powerful, it will make people hold him in honour, it will help him in cases in the White Man's Court, and it certainly has the effect of instilling in the native mind great respect for its owner and a terrible fear lest he should use it hostilely. An oath administered by the proper person and with due ceremony upon Borfima is of the most binding nature, and it was by means of such oaths that great secrecy was obtained. But the potency of this great fetish apparently soon evaporated. Owners of the Borfima found that their riches did not increase as rapidly as they anticipated, they lost cases in the Courts, expectations were not realized with respect to adverse witnesses upon whose hearts and livers and kidneys imprecations had been showered, all this showed that the Borfima had become weak and needed resuscitation with fresh human fat and blood and to obtain this human fat and blood was the primary object of the Human Leopard Society.

Commercial Airline Operations in the 1920s

It is uncertain when the first scheduled passenger flight service in the United States began. In 1913, a certain Silas Christofferson carried the occasional passenger by seaplane between San Francisco and Oakland harbors. The first daily scheduled commercial flight service was inaugurated in Florida on 1 January 1914, when the newly established St. Petersburg and Tampa Airboat Line made its first flight, using a flying boat, carrying Mayor Pheil of St. Petersburg as the only passenger to Tampa. The flight took 23 minutes and since the flying boat used by the pilot, Tony Jannus, was a Benoist Type XIV, a two-seater, only one passenger could be carried at a time. The fare was \$5, provided that the passenger weighed no more than 200 lb (91 kg). The service ran for only four months, making two or sometimes more round trips per day.

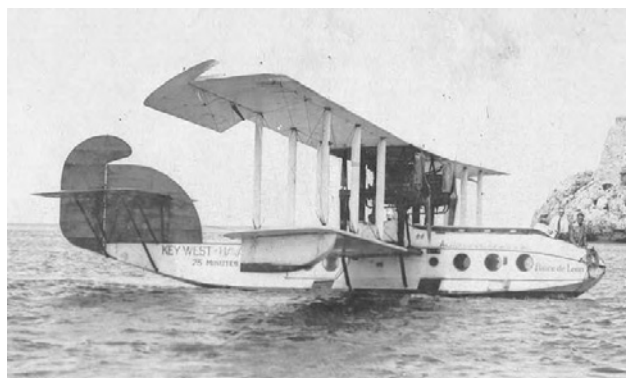
By the early 1920s, aircraft were still more commonly regarded as private machines for sporting purposes than serious means of transportation. There was no federal regulation or pilot's license requirements in the United States before 1926. The first serious commercial use of aircraft began with the U.S. Postal Service, which introduced an air mail service with regular flights between New York and Washington, D.C. This service was in 1920 expanded to include flights between New York and San Francisco. The latter service, relying on ex-military pilots who were flying in shifts, took 32 hours to cross the North American continent. By 1925, only seven years after the first official air mail flight, U.S. Postal Service aircraft carried 14 million letters and packages a year. Air mail was particularly used by bankers and businessmen since the rapid delivery of checks and financial documents reduced the length of time that funds were idle and unavailable for use.

The U.S. Postal Service operated air mail flights to these and other destinations until 1926, when it sold its routes to 32 private contractors, which henceforth carried not only mail but express freight and passengers as well. These companies would later develop into air transportation leaders such as Pan American Airways, American Airlines, and Transcontinental and Western Air (TWA). But they were not the first. Other commercial freight and passengers routes had already opened elsewhere in the United States.

The decision to sell the air mail routes to private contractors necessitated the introduction of numerous laws and regulations including the Air Commerce Act

of 1926. The new legislation introduced pilot's license requirements, the certification of flying instructors, mandatory aircraft inspection, mandatory aircraft insurance, and minimum standards for airfields.

Although the novelty value of air travel brought some interest, the savings in travel time compared to travel in somewhat slower but far more comfortable trains and liners caused serious problems for most early commercial airlines. Passengers usually did not find the shorter travel time sufficient to compensate for the lack of comforts in the confined and noisy aircraft used at the time. There was, however, a considerable interest in flying boats. They were somewhat more spacious, and they were deemed safer since they generally flew only over water, so that the aircraft could land anywhere in case of poor weather or other problems. One early airline offering flying boats was Aeromarine Airways, funded by Florida yachtsman and entrepreneur Inglis Moore Uppercu.



From 1919, an early incarnation of this firm offered passenger flights from New York to Atlantic City. The airline expanded into offering flights from Miami to Nassau, Bahamas, as well, taking advantage of the need for wealthy drinkers to escape Prohibition. This flight took two and a half hours. Flights were in November 1920 also offered to Havana, Cuba. The flight from Key West to Havana took only 60 minutes. The desire to escape Prohibition caused the flying boat used by Aeromarine Airways to be known as the Highball Express. By 1921, the domestic network of Aeromarine Airways connected a number of East Coast cities including New York, Boston, Newport, Albany, Atlantic City, Long Island, and several New Jersey coast resorts. Its southern routes connected Key

West, Havana, Palm Beach, St. Petersburg, Miami, Bimini, Nassau, and Tampa. By 1922, a route between Detroit and Cleveland was added as well. The Detroit-Cleveland route took ninety minutes and cost \$25 one-way or \$45 round-trip. The firm offered white and gold-painted Curtiss flying boats that it described as flying cruisers, each furnished with a "mahogany cabin with comfortable reclining chairs trimmed with silk and leather." Each took eleven passengers.

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Time		Time
Mins.	Rate	Mins.
Long Beach	22 \$20.00	Southampton ...
Patchogue	60 40.00	East Hampton ..
East Port	70 45.00	

AEROMARINE ROUTE NO. 4

Time		Time
Mins.	Rate	Mins.
Red Bank, N. J. ...	20 \$20.00	Asbury Park
Long Branch	22 20.00	(Landing in
(Landing in		Shark River)
Shrewsbury River)		Island Heights..
		Barneget
		Atlantic City ...

NOTE—For the convenience of passengers we have moored the Aeromarine yacht "Wadena" off the 82nd Street landing. There is a luxuriously furnished cabin exclusively for use as a Ladies Rest Room. Tea is served without extra charge. Every afternoon. Steward in attendance. A private motor launch direct to yacht.

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Flying Boat Service



"TAKING TO THE AIR LIKE A HUGE BIRD"

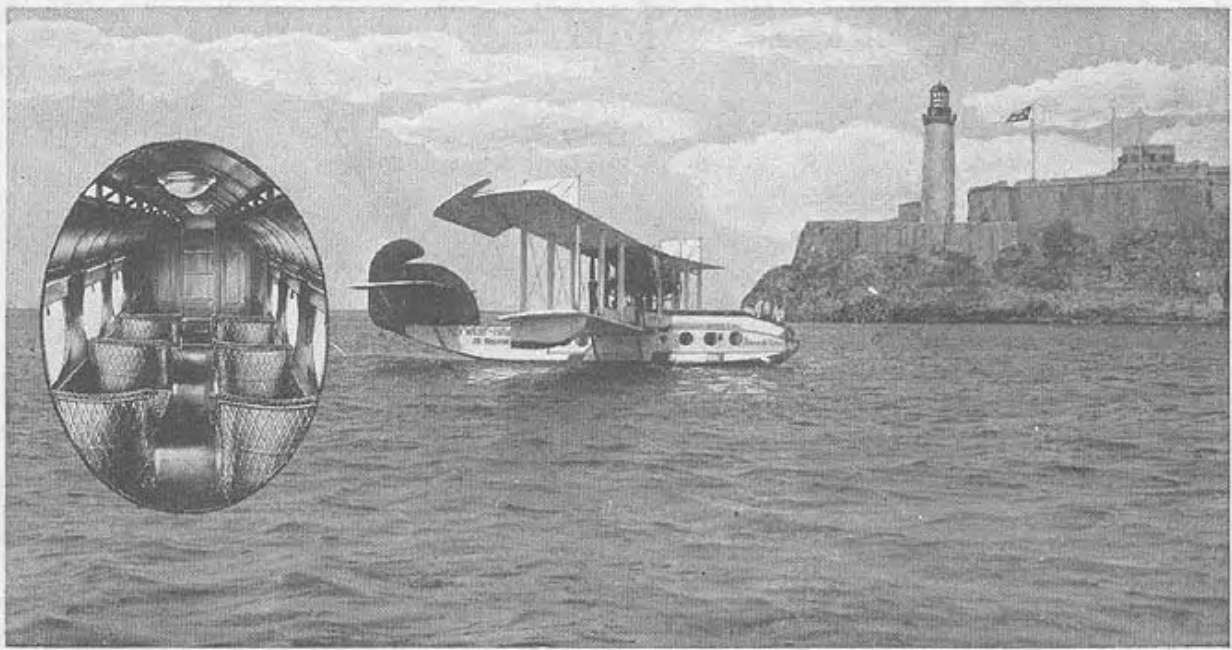
However, in January 1923 one of the Aeromarine Airways aircraft crashed off the coast of Florida. Four passengers drowned. The firm left the passenger flight business in early 1924. Others emerged in its stead. In 1925, the newly founded Ryan Airlines began to offer regular flights throughout the year. Most earlier airlines in the United States had only run seasonal operations. Aeromarine Airways, for instance, only offered all year services between Key West and Havana. Ryan Airlines carried passengers between, among other destinations, San Diego and Los Angeles. Tickets cost \$17.50 one-way or \$26.50 round-trip, including ground transportation to and from the airfield. Ryan Airlines ceased operations already in 1926, but by then several other airlines had gone into business as well. With the introduction of bigger and more comfortable aircraft, aircraft travel became steadily more popular—although it would take several decades before air travel eventually began to push railroads and sea liners out of business.

By the end of the 1920s, most travellers could still travel faster, and in far greater comfort, by train than

by air. Airplanes had to land frequently to refuel, could not operate safely at night, and had to fly around mountains and spots of bad weather. Reliable instrument navigation was first seriously tested only in 1929. The airplanes were not insulated, generally consisted of thin sheets of metal that rattled in the wind, and many passengers stuck cotton in their ears to escape the constant noise. Since cabins were not pressurized, many passengers chewed gum to equalize the air pressure. Yet, more and more people travelled by air. The number of airline passengers in the United States grew from less than 6,000 in 1926 to approximately

173,000 in 1929. Like the old air mail service, air passenger flights were mainly used by businessmen. An increasing number of companies accepted, or even encouraged, that their employees travelled by air. Business travel led to further investments in air transportation. Between 1927 and 1929, the value of aviation stocks tripled. However, the profits remained in air mail and express cargo services. Airlines that promoted passenger-only routes, while often successful for a while, never made sustained profits before the 1930s.

Viewing Florida, the West Indies and the Bahamas from an Aeromarine Flying Boat



Aeromarine Eleven Passenger Air Cruiser arriving in Havana from Key West in 75 minutes (steamer time 8 hours). Insert shows interior of forward cabin seating six—luxurious and comfortable. Morro Castle, the old Spanish fortress, is in the background.

Aeromarine Airways, Inc. - New York - Miami - Nassau - Key West - Havana



SECRETS OF THE CONGO

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There are still-wild regions of the Dark Continent, Africa. Darkest of all is the wilderness of Belgian Congo, at the very center of the continent.

Belgian colonial rule is harsh, and traditional practices such as slavery and witchcraft are widely practiced. Superstitions rule the vast number of tribes that live on or near the river.

The greed of the Belgian colonial administration, for ivory, rubber, and copper, surpasses even that of the Zanzibari slavers, feared for their raids among the Congo natives.

But the Dark Continent hides secrets as well. In deepest Congo, a treasure-house from primeval times awaits those who dare seek it out—and survive the search.

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