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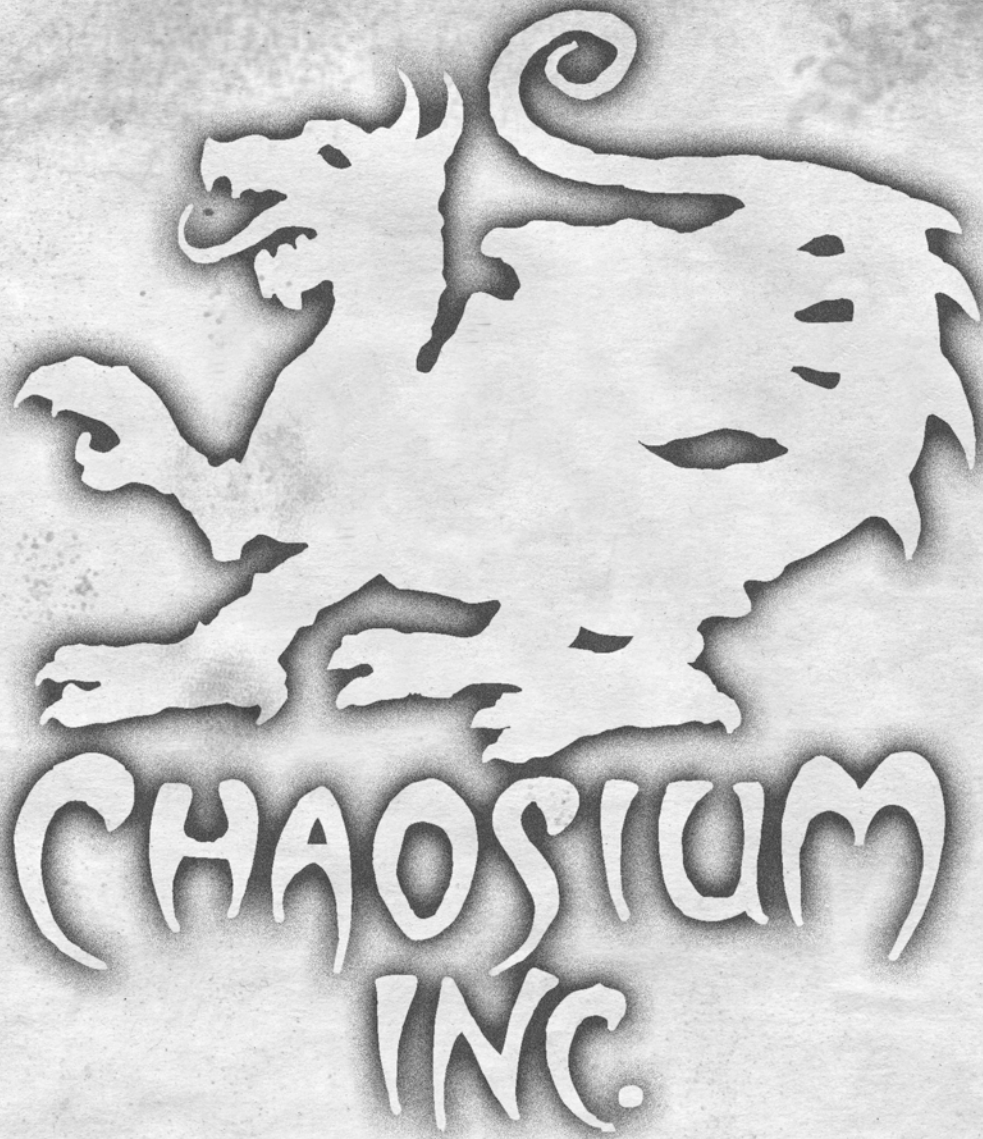


# KINGDOM OF THE BLIND



**A Guide to the United Kingdom  
in the 1920s and 1930s**





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“YET WHEN WE ACHIEVED, AND THE NEW WORLD DAWNED, THE OLD MEN CAME OUT AGAIN AND TOOK OUR VICTORY TO REMAKE IT IN THE LIKENESS OF THE FORMER WORLD THEY KNEW. YOUTH COULD WIN, BUT HAD NOT LEARNED TO KEEP: AND WAS PITIABLY WEAK AGAINST AGE. WE STAMMERED THAT WE HAD WORKED FOR A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH, AND THEY THANKED US KINDLY AND MADE THEIR PEACE.”

~ T.E. LAWRENCE



“THE TIME WOULD BE EASY TO KNOW, FOR THEN MANKIND WOULD HAVE BECOME AS THE GREAT OLD ONES; FREE AND WILD AND BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL, WITH LAWS AND MORALS THROWN ASIDE AND ALL MEN SHOUTING AND KILLING AND REVELLING IN JOY. THEN THE LIBERATED OLD ONES WOULD TEACH THEM NEW WAYS TO SHOUT AND KILL AND REVEL AND ENJOY THEMSELVES, AND ALL THE EARTH WOULD FLAME WITH A HOLOCAUST OF ECSTASY AND FREEDOM.”

~ H.P LOVECRAFT

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# KINGDOM OF THE BLIND

1921: the Empire upon which the sun never sets. From east to west, Dominions and colonies, from far-flung Hong Kong to Jamaica, India to Canada, stretch to encompass a quarter of the world’s land and a quarter of its population. Upon every ocean a ship hoisting the Union Jack and armed with sixteen-inch guns, able to blow any other navy out of the water, slips through cold grey surf. An empire’s laws and language, economics, sports and culture have diffused across a malleable globe. *Pax Britannica* holds sway.



But the veneer is beginning to crack. A lost generation lies under the killing fields of Ypres and Passchendale, the survivors scarred, lost, and forgotten. Ireland burns with fury and fire as the war for independence rages. Up north, trade unions threaten to bring down the government, while communist sympathisers foment paranoia in Fleet Street's newspapers. From across the channel European fascism whispers sweet nothings to middle and working-class disillusioned. And beneath it all something dark twists; something immeasurably old and unfathomable. Its eldritch pulse beats through a society of Bright Young Things and dole-queue miners. This is the time of spiritualism, esoterica and occultism; of wild abandon and lost morals; of dark sects and darker arts. After the mechanical horrors of the War to End All Wars, man no longer fears the primordial nature of the universe—and there are those who will use this to their gain: for a price.

Welcome to the fall of Empire.

Welcome to the End Times.

*Kingdom of the Blind* is a guidebook for the United Kingdom between 1920 and 1930. While the majority of Lovecraft's stories take place in the rural seclusion of American New England, players with a more international bent may prefer to investigate the mysteries of the Old Country. Beyond the horrors of Goatswood, one can:

- Canvass the quaint charms of Borley Rectory and Exham Priory;
- Enjoy London's Limehouse, with its Oriental population and unique ethnic cuisine;
- Up stumps and retire to the pavilion after a pleasant game of amateur cricket;
- Dance till dawn at London's nightclubs, famed for their royal clientele and liberal drug policies;
- Rub shoulders with the likes of Aleister Crowley and other members of the 'wickedest men in all Europe' club;
- Sunday drive to the best picnicking spots in Yorkshire;
- Hunt Black Shuck across the East Anglian fens, or beyond;
- Plumb the depths of Ahu-Y'hloa, lying serene off the Cornwall coast;

- Holiday in Eire's quiet, reclusive Kraitthen, with its novel locale and fauna unknown to normative sciences;
- Explore the fissures and tunnels that remain untouched 'neath England's green and pleasant pastures;
- Converse among charming pastoral folk with their quaint dialogue and agreeable linguistics;
- Peruse historical texts at Britain's world-famous universities;
- Die screaming in insane, blood-soaked terror;
- And much, much more.

Keepers will find a wealth of information for running a campaign in the British Isles, with guides on day-to-day life, politics, law and order, and the military, along with a selection of unique cults, beasts, and mythos entities. If that doesn't suffice, GMs can toss their players into two ready-made scenarios.

So, to leave you with a bit of advice, squire: stick to the roads, keep clear of the moors and beware the moon...

***Best of British to you!***

## PART I: DISUNITED KINGDOM

Formed by union of four distinct nations in 1801, and with a history of alliances, conflict and control stretching back to time immemorial, the British Isles is steeped in myth and legend. From smog-shrouded London to the peaks of Scotland's Grampian Mountains, travellers will find a country as breathtaking and varied as any other. But Mother England, as Lovecraft put it himself, has changed much. If Europe had been torn apart by revolution and softening of the classes, Britain did the opposite. Class hardened, and though wealth may have spread, it never moved downward. The gulf between rich and poor, haves and have-nots, was set in stone—and would remain so for a long time to come.

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## WHERE WE STAND TO- DAY: BRITAIN FROM 1900

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### From Peace...

The decade before the Great War (1914-1918) was the culmination of a century of industrialisation and political reform. Queen Victoria had reined for just shy of sixty-four years when she died in 1901. With her passed the old ways, ushering a new epoch of transformation, modernity and liberalism. As if to prove it so, the long ruling Conservative government lost the 1906 general election to the progressive and socially reformative Liberal Party. It would have a profound effect on the years to come.

Britain in the 1900s could argue itself the richest nation in the world, even if America and parts of Europe were catching up. A quarter of all ships on the world's seas were built in British shipyards, the economy was strong, and the Empire was the largest in history. Yet while the population's overall quality of life was better than any other European nation and surpassed only by America and Australia, at least 25% of London's East End lived in abject poverty, with similar percentages in other inner-cities. Charles Booth and Benjamin Rowntree's research into paucity appalled the nation, and came at the same time socialism found an outlet in the minting of the Labour Party.

1906 to 1914 was the time of Liberal Reform. Building on the bones of bills passed years before, acts regulating children's welfare, working hours and old age pensions became law. Pioneered by Chancellor of the Exchequer Lloyd George, the laws sowed much dissent among the House of Lords, especially when the so-called People's Budget of 1909 threatened to heavily tax the rich. For the first time in 200 years the Lords refused to pass a budget. The showdown ended with the Liberals, backed by the King, removing much of the Lords' power. The cost: diminished parliamentary majority, and a need to listen to nationalist Irish MPs in order to fend off a reinvigorated Conservative Party.

### ... To Strife...

1910 and King Edward VII died. Succeeded by son George V the next few years were characterised by social upheaval unseen since the 1880s. In 1910-11 much of Wales and Northern England was beset by rioting and union strikes, necessitating military intervention after fears it could be the beginning of revolution. Suffragettes, seeking the vote for women, reached a peak of activity: burning hotels and critics' homes, breaking windows and assaulting policemen. They would continue their attacks in the name of the vote until the opening of the Great War.

With House of Lords defanged, the Liberals forced the third Home Rule Bill for Ireland into law, in hop of keeping the Irish voting their way. Irish Protestants, fearing a majority Catholic population would turn Home Rule into 'Rome Rule,' formed the Ulster Volunteer Force and armed themselves for an upcoming civil war. Even the British Army rebelled. In March officers in Ireland resigned *en masse* in the 'Curragh Mutiny.'

Across the UK the public and the army steeled itself for the threat of war over Irish Home Rule. But fate, it seemed, had other designs...

### ... To War...

The assassination of Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1914, rippled across the globe. For a time Britain might have stayed clear, having side-stepped such trifles often before. But the web of alliances she had entangled herself in at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century put paid to any thought of neutrality. Germany's sabre-rattling and naval construction threatened Britain's 'splendid isolation,' and the UK had sided with her old enemies, Russia and France, to protect against German threats. Since 1901 a British alliance to police the Pacific had also been made with the Japanese Empire.



When the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary, Germany and the Ottoman Empire) declared war on Russia, France was dragged in by way of its Russo-French Alliance. Planning to deal a knock-out blow to the French before taking on the Russian Bear, Germany's *Schlieffen Plan* swept through Belgium to take Paris in a lightning fast strike. Belgian neutrality, guaranteed since 1839 and to which Britain was party, was broken. On 4<sup>th</sup> of August 1914 Britain declared war on Germany and, by proxy, its allies.

After forcing a stalemate with the first battles of the Western Front, hostilities stagnated into trench warfare. Zig-zags cut across the countryside from English Channel to Switzerland. Advances in defensive technology without significant growth in offensive tactics led to campaigns that measured success in *yards*, not miles, taken. Poisoned gas, aircraft and artillery slaughtered indiscriminately. In Britain, people faced the privations of total war—rationing, siege and aerial bombing.

Until 1916 British troops were career soldiers or volunteers. Groups of friends, sports teams or schoolyard chums enlisted to serve together with the promise they would not be separated on the

battlefield. The casualties these 'Pals battalions' suffered decimated entire towns of their youth.

The Gallipoli campaign of 1915, hoping to take the Ottoman capital of Istanbul and open up the German rear by landing thousands of British Imperial troops on contested beaches, was an all-but unmitigated disaster. First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, firebrand politician and planner, took responsibility, resigning from the government to serve on the Western Front.

Around the world the Empire was thrust into conflict. In Africa, British and German troops clashed in the brush, while in China the Japanese helped to capture Germany's Tsingtao colony.

In 1916, Lloyd George, having become popular as Minister of Munitions, manoeuvred himself to successfully replace Prime Minister Asquith—partly by guile, partly by his superior's lack of statesmanship. His coup weakened the Liberals, so he quickly formed a union with the Conservatives, ruling as part of a 'Coalition government.' The same year saw the tank roll onto the Somme battlefields and the introduction of conscription. In Ireland, where almost quarter of a million Irishmen volunteered to serve in Britain's time of need, on Easter Sunday 1916 nationalists seized Dublin's General Post Office and declared an Irish Republic. British troops, awaiting posting to the frontlines, found themselves fighting an armed insurrection in the heartland of Eire. Within a week the Rising was put down. The ringleaders were executed, creating martyrs for the nationalist cause.

By 1918, with America now on the side of the Allies, the writing was on the wall for the Central Powers. Blockaded to starvation, faced with an overwhelming and rapidly mechanising enemy, they agreed to an armistice. German troops turned and marched back to German soil, battered but armed and seemingly unbeaten. The Ottomans bowed out in October, to be occupied by Britain, France and Italy; while the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed through nationalist uprisings and internal decay. On the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month at the 11:00am, 1918, Germany signed an armistice with the victorious allies. For near three days Britain revelled in an orgy of parties and wild abandon. In London, despite the rain, a crowd a million strong marched to Buckingham



Palace praising the King and calling for the vanquished Kaiser to be hanged.

Still, all was not glorious—with 1918 came the Spanish Flu epidemic. Troop movements and years of war hastened its effects, killing almost the same amount of people as the Great War itself. In Britain alone nearly a quarter of a million men, women and children died. It would not completely fade out until late-1919.

Armistice signed, the Coalition government passed its last few acts before calling a general election. The Coupon Election of 1918, named for the split in the Liberal Party between those supporting a Coalition headed by Lloyd George and those who supported the Liberal Asquith, was the first to allow select women the vote. The Coalition of Conservatives, new Liberals and independent candidates won. Lloyd George remained prime minister.

In this heady post-war atmosphere, the Versailles Treaty sought to right the wrongs of the War by blaming the losers. While Lloyd George was falsely quoted as planning to ‘squeeze the Germans till the pips squeaked’ (he wanted nothing of the sort, seeing an aggrieved Germany as a future danger) it was France that sought to wipe Germany from the earth. The League of Nations, proposed by the Americans and joined by all but the USA itself, acted as a talking shop for international problems. Its failures would haunt it until the next war.

### ... To-Day

War created troubles at home as well as on the battlefield.

Working hours had been raised without wage increases. Across the country landlords hiked up their rent, knowing women with husbands away could be evicted easily. The situation came to a head in Glasgow in 1919 when protesters marched on George Square. A riot began, and the Red Flag was raised over the town hall. In response to the ‘Bolshevik revolt’ soldiers and



tanks flooded the city until tensions subsided.

Fear of Bolshevism was widespread. Russia’s fall to Communism in 1917 sent British troops to Vladivostok, the Crimea and Archangel in support of the anti-Bolshevik White Russians. Many would not return home until 1921, if at all.

But 1919 was also the year of British exploits. Alcock and Brown made the first flight across the Atlantic in a modified Vickers Vimy, while the R34 dirigible landed in New York, shepherding in what many assumed to be the age of the dirigible.

Now to-day: the Golden Twenties...

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## ***THE GAZETTEER OF HIS MAJESTY'S UNITED KINGDOM***

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While a small nation, Britain contains some of the most varied scenery in Europe. Though every part of the nation is at most only a hundred miles from the sea and its combined size in square miles is only slightly larger than that of the US state of Minnesota, foreign investigators would do well to remember that Britain is still the powerhouse of Europe and holds near a third of the globe within its grasp. While calling Britain ‘England’ or mistaking its people is generally considered a particularly grave insult today, up until the 1950s, the name ‘England’ was used by Englishman and foreigner alike to encompass the entirety of the

Empire and the Mother country. Few Scots, Welsh or Irish allowed anyone to take such liberty more than once...

It is not the task of this gazetteer to provide a complete Ordnance Survey of the United Kingdom; geographical information can be found easily in history books, internet sites or travel guides. Instead, the aim is to paint a picture of Britain and industry in the aftermath of the Great War.



## ENGLAND

### *LONDON*

London: the capital of the United Kingdom and centre of the British Empire. Founded in AD43 as *Londinium* by the Roman legions, London was the world's most populated city until New York stole its crown in 1925. It is a microcosm of the world, within which one can find any nationality or object. From the garden suburbs of Upminster to the seedy slums of Bethnal Green and Whitechapel; from Kingston-upon-Thames to Wimbledon, London encompasses every class and quality.

Like all cities of the time, even the nicest areas are grimy and soot-stained. Coal-fires still heat homes and London's nickname is "The Smoke," for the thick fog that hovers overhead on colder days and nights. The Thames is lumpy and dirty grey, unfit for fishing or swimming due to decades of industrial and human waste. Victorian slums are being cleared, but the East End shall remain filled with the unwanted of society until after the next war. London's smog or 'pea-souper,' so loved by Hollywood, crawls from the river between the months of May and November, and kills thousands by pneumonia and hypoxia. London is a very dangerous place...

### *THE SOUTH EAST*

The southeast encompasses the counties of Berkshire (pronounced 'Bark-sheer'), Buckinghamshire, Sussex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Middlesex, Kent, Surrey and the offshore (but still Hampshire governed) Isle of Wight.

Gateway of the Romans, Julius Caesar's armies advanced the development of iron-working here, turning the southeast into the country's first 'industrial' centre. It would remain the metallurgists' home until the industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when—lacking the coal to drive the wave of mechanisation—industry moved north. In response, the area turned to fruit and hops: 'The Garden of England' born in its place.

For the 1920s, much of the south is still agriculturally driven. Apple orchards line the roads, and woodland (speckled with wide clearings from centuries of forestry and the need

for timber during the Great War) exists in the likes of New Forest, Ashdown and Parkhurst. Country estates and well-tended gardens mingle with quaint thatched cottages. The Isle of Wight, famed for flying-boats and its distinctive chalk stacks, called the Needles, serves as a holiday destination. The south east is also a major site for civilian and military navies with Southampton, Portsmouth and Dover all located on the coast.

### *EAST ANGLIA*

East Anglia encompasses the counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Huntingdonshire, the Isle of Ely, and the Soke of Peterborough.

Named for the Angles, the tribe that conquered much of the British Isles (and later the origin of the name 'England'), East Anglia is stereotyped by its flat fenland (such as the waterways of the Norfolk Broads), though much is rolling plains and farmland. Major urban areas include the cities of Norwich, Cambridge and Peterborough, and the towns of Ipswich, Colchester and Huntingdon. While Essex's proximity to London makes it popular for commuters, the east coast is trendy as a holiday site: thousands of families head for Yarmouth and Felixstowe every Bank Holiday. Unwary travellers will find East Anglia's brogues quite unintelligible.

### *EAST MIDLANDS*

The East Midlands encompasses the counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, and the three parts of Lincolnshire (Lindsey, Holland and Kesteven).

A region famous for its engineering expertise, especially with cars and aeroplanes, alongside its slower, sparsely populated agricultural locales, the East Midlands embodies a curious mixture of cultures. Coal mines dot the landscape near Nottingham and Leicester, the major conurbations, although much of the area is strongly pastoral. The Peak District, covering the north and melding into the Pennine Mountains, is characterised by lush plateaus and heather-swept moors. Mechanised agriculture is slowly gaining ground here, but villages and hamlets remain separated by vast swathes of countryside, linked by dirt tracks and well-managed railways.

## WEST MIDLANDS

The West Midlands encompasses the counties of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

Birmingham (England's second city) and Coventry are the largest urban areas in this region, and the Black Country (as much of the West Midlands are known) is a major industrial centre. The term Black Country has long been attributed to the abundance of iron ore and coal and choking clouds of ash from heavy industry that darkens the landscape. A fierce rivalry between the city of Birmingham and the surrounding areas continues to assert itself, with neither wishing to be associated with the other. Much of this stems from the language of the Black Country, which like Birmingham to a lesser extent, preserves archaic Middle English (a common greeting, for example, is "Ow B'ist?" from "How be'ist thou?"); serving to greatly confuse outsiders (that is, anyone from the next village). Herefordshire, on the Welsh border, and right on the cusp of the Severn Valley, is one of the least populated counties in the entirety of the UK and is known for its apples and cider.

## SOUTH WEST

The South west encompasses the counties of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset.

Largest of the regions and one of the most populated, the northernmost part of Gloucestershire is as close to the Scottish border as it is to the tip of Cornwall. Geologically, Cornwall and Devon are rocky with high, desolate moors. The east is made up of rolling valleys and chalk downs. Cornwall's tin mining is legendary: until its 1921 closure the Dolcoath mine was the deepest in the world. Devon too is known for its tin and copper collieries. Slate and chalk are

excavated further east and north, with vast vales carved into the landscape from such action. Cornwall's retaining of language and culture make it an interesting visit. Brichester, and its university, lay in Gloucestershire's Severn Valley.

## YORKSHIRE AND THE NORTH EAST

Yorkshire and the North East region encompass the counties of East Riding of Yorkshire, West Riding of Yorkshire, Northumberland, County Durham, Tyneside, Newcastle upon Tyne, Gateshead and the City of Sunderland.

Yorkshire, powerhouse of the British Isles, is the mining and industrial centre—with textiles, coal and steel all major sources of labour. Newcastle-upon-Tyne (just called Newcastle) is one of the most varied in manufacture. Ships, locomotives, glass, armaments and (during the 1920s) a lucrative pottery trade, make Newcastle one of the most important British cities.

The northeast also has the beautiful North York Moors, which by the '20s were popular with 'ramblers,' who spent weekends walking this relatively untouched land.

## THE NORTH WEST

The North West encompasses the counties of Cheshire, Westmoreland, and Lancashire, along with the Isle of Man (a self-governing Crown Dependency).

Bordering the Irish Sea, the northwest is a wealth of contrast, with its mountainous central (made up of the Pennine Mountains, the backbone of England), lake lands, and many rolling hills to the south. Manchester, 9<sup>th</sup> most populous city in the world, is a key textiles and shipbuilding city, producing Ford automobiles and Westinghouse Electric domestic supplies. Liverpool remains



vibrant, with almost a quarter of its population Irish and a slightly smaller percentage of other immigrants. During the 1920s, its slums were slowly demolished, the inhabitants moved to better, council run abodes. Nevertheless, sectarian violence and increasing unemployment gave Liverpool a name for being hard on the unprepared.

The Pennine mountains run from east midlands' Derbyshire to the Scotch border; and feature vast underground networks called 'pots'—hence the term 'potholing' for those who explore these fissures and caverns.

Off the coast the Isle of Man, considered one of the oldest parliaments in the world, features its own government, language and culture. While foreign policy and certain local laws are directed from London, much of the Isle is self-governing.

## WALES

### *SOUTH WALES*

The main industrial and population centres (including the capital, Cardiff, and second city, Swansea, both on the Bristol Channel's coast) are in south Wales. When the great seams of coal and iron smelting works needed more labour than the local population could provide, immigration from the rest of Britain and Europe led to the decline of the native Welsh language. It is now all but extinct in this region. Rhondda Valley is one of the largest mining sites, with a population in excess of a quarter million. Most men work the coal 'pits' (mines).

South Wales is all rivers and valleys, with a complex system of railways that rivals England's. The Brecon Beacons, beginning south of the town of Brecon, is a serene, if desolate, wilderness, famed for its challenging weather (on a good day it only snows or rains for 12 hours). Dangerous in summer, it is frequently lethal in winter.

### *NORTH WALES*

North Wales is mountainous, with peaks, waterfalls and valleys that highlight its rural quality. Sheep farming and agriculture makes up the bulk of its economy, and most of the population lives in the eastern areas near the English border. Mediaeval castles dating back a

thousand years are dotted around the peaks and vales.

Far more culturally homogenous than the south; the Welsh language remains spoken in preference to English, and it is a regular joke amongst outsiders about the insular and sometimes suspicious nature of the population. One mocking account of Wales's defeat and union with England says the Welsh hated outsiders so much they refused to help each other fight a worse one. The 'Green Desert' just north of the Brecon Beacons makes up much of the centre of the country, and is a beautiful but empty expanse of lush greenery, with high rainfall and few permanent settlements. A breathtaking sight, practically untouched by human hands, legends steep it in wizards, dragons and old Welsh folklore.

## SCOTLAND

### *SOUTHERN UPLANDS*

The lowermost third of Scotland, bordering northern England, is known as the Southern Uplands. Historically agricultural—being generally fertile—the hills and valleys that separate the majority of Scotland from England mean modern methods are unsuited for much of the area.

While not as large as the mountains of the Highlands, the Upland's forest shrouded hills are remote and dangerous. Many have lost their lives attempting to cross them unaided.

### *CENTRAL LOWLANDS*

Featuring the major conurbations of Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh the belt of the Central Lowlands also features much of the Scotch population. Formed from long-dormant volcanoes and rich in the coal and iron that forged Scotland's own industrial revolution, the area is set within a valley created by prehistoric tectonic drift. During the late-17<sup>th</sup> century many Scots were driven out of their homes by English and Scottish landlords as part of new economic policies (in what became known as "Clearances"), that have soured Anglo-Scots relations ever since. Unlike the Highlands, most Lowlands Scots are Protestant, having been converted and hard-lined by the Scottish Religious Revival which swept the nation some decades previously.

The east coast is colder and drier than the west, which—being on the Atlantic and with warm air brought over by the Gulf Stream—ranges between mild to surprisingly humid. In certain areas tropical plants can be cultivated.

### *HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS*

Both a cultural and geographical creation, the Highlands is sparsely populated, with great mountain ranges that include the tallest mountain in the British Isles: Ben Nevis. The average population density per mile of the Scottish Highlands is less than nearly any other European nation. Unlike the Protestant lowlands, the Highlands are rife with Gaelic speakers (some as their only language) and most are strongly Catholic. Snowfall is not uncommon, and when it does fall it can block travel for days, and sometimes weeks, at a time. The Clearances of the Highlands were more brutal than their lowland counterparts, with villages burnt and people chased from their homes by vindictive landlords. Wounds remain open even today.

The islands of Scotland are secluded and accessible only by boat or float-plane, with weekly postal deliveries one of the few regular means of travel. Most islands are unwaveringly Calvinist. *Faux pas* against the religion (including such infractions as trying to travel on a Sunday) can result in social exclusion or worse. The Royal Navy's Atlantic Fleet is stationed at Scapa Flow in Scotland's Orkney Islands, an interesting archipelago due to its temperate weather and long, nightless summers—where one can even read at midnight.

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## **WAR ON THE DOORSTEP: THE GAZETTEER OF IRELAND**

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For more than 800 years Ireland had been subject to Britain and controlled by English and Scottish colonists. Bread-basket to Britain, the native Catholic population was usurped as Protestant plantations and landlords removed Catholic-Irish rights to vote and own land. By the 1830s Ireland had been so badly governed by its Anglo-Irish landlords that she was rapidly starving. The

population increased, with 3/4 of its men unemployed, and housing and living standards some of the worst in Europe.

In 1845 the potato famine struck. Though not atypical, its timing could not have been worse. Mishandled, it quickly ran out of control. One million died. Another million emigrated. Almost a quarter of the Irish population was gone at one swoop. The next sixty years would see both British and Irish politicians try to reform the island as a viable country. The Gaelic language resurged, and laws were implemented to right various wrongs. The Fenian Rising of 1867 failed to create serious nationalist sentiment, but helped reform British government policy. Between 1868 and 1914, barring a few violent radical outbursts, Ireland was relatively peaceful.

The British government attempted to solve the Irish Question once and for all by granting Ireland independence. The success of the third attempt was welcomed by many, but plans were temporarily halted by the Great War. Between 1914 and 1918 more than 200,000 Irishmen signed up to fight for the Crown. All kinds joined: loyalist, republican and politically ambivalent.

On Easter Sunday 1916, Irish Republicans from various semi-affiliated groups seized parts of Dublin as part of the Easter Rising, declaring Ireland a republic. Astonishingly, Dublin Castle (seat of British control over Ireland) was taken unawares. While the Rising failed, and much of Dublin devastated by the resultant fighting to crush the insurrection, Britain's heavy-handed response put the ring-leaders to death (although around 100 other volunteers were acquitted or had their sentences commuted). Opinion was split: some saw the Rising as a betrayal of the nation while it was at war; others considered the volunteers martyrs of a free Ireland.

In the 1918 General Election, the Republican *Sinn Féin* political party won 78 of the 105 seats, beating the less militant Irish Parliamentary Party for the first time. The Sinn Féin MPs formed themselves into the *Dáil* or Republican government and refused to take their seats in London, instead making a declaration of Irish independence at a meeting in Dublin. While violence was not part of their agenda, on the other side of the country the first shots of the Anglo-Irish War were fired. Two Royal Irish

Constabulary (RIC) officers, refusing to turn over the explosives they were guarding to Irish Republican Army (IRA) volunteers, were shot dead. The War of Independence had begun...

### *SOUTHERN IRELAND*

From 1900 life in Ireland had grown better. Education and living standards remained poorer than in Britain, but the populace no longer starved and the predominantly English absentee landlords had been forced to display some concern towards their tenants. Outside the cities, especially in the west of the country, life harked back to an almost Victorian existence. The revival of Gaelic sports and language, along with nationalist sentiment, soon meant greater friction between the poorer, majority Catholic population and the usually better-off Protestants.

By the end of 1919 the Anglo-Irish War was already in full swing. Irish Republican Army (IRA) volunteers were raised across the counties, and raiding government forces, emulating the violent ambushes and lightning raids of the Boer commandos during the South African War (1899-1902). RIC barracks were looted and burned, government officials were shot and policemen were specifically targeted under the orders of IRA officer Michael Collins (Minister of Finance and head of the IRA's intelligence network). Most Irish were unsympathetic to the IRA's aims, especially their shooting of Irish policemen; at least until Britain's response changed their minds.

At the start of 1920, the RIC and government were forced from much of the countryside, leaving it to the control of the Republicans. IRA

courts and police were formed, and taxes were reaped to prolong the fight. More than 400 RIC barracks were burnt down by mid-1920. In response the British government sent in its newly-formed Reserve and Auxiliary forces. Unwilling to admit Ireland was becoming a warzone Britain became intent on fixing it via 'civilian' measures. The Black and Tans, as these reserve police came to be known, filled a bloody niche within the legal system. Reprisals and tit-for-tat violence became the norm. The IRA ordered the populace to boycott the police and their families. Many did so willingly. Some refused. An undertaker in County Cork had his hearse burnt after he used it to transport the body of an RIC constable to burial, and a woman who gave food to policemen had pig-rings inserted into her backside. When assizes failed and trial by jury was stopped due to fears of intimidation and murder, police resigned *en masse* (though most were Black and Tans, not regular constables). Those who remained formed an "us-or-them" mentality that drove for greater violence.

Nonetheless, life went on. In the westernmost counties the war was left mostly to newspapers, as the terrain was unsympathetic for ambushes and volunteers were less keen for a stand-up fight than their comrades to the east and south. County Cork and Dublin were the serious sites of conflict, with both sides throwing their forces heavily. Fighting even occurred on the British mainland. With many captured IRA men imprisoned in England and Wales, prison-breaks and other attacks took place. In Scotland, on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1921, the 'Battle of Rottenrow' saw a prison van ambushed by IRA volunteers. One guard was shot dead, the others wounded. After rescuing IRA leader Frank Carty, the group slipped away, leading to numerous raids on nearby houses and a mass riot across Glasgow. No one was ever charged with the incident. More than 600 Irishmen and supposed sympathisers were arrested or detained on the mainland alone, and the IRA made habit of burning down the homes of those whose family were fighting in Ireland proper.

Against the guerrillas, British forces took to using motorcars, armoured-cars and—in some extreme cases—tanks (the latter usually as armoured personnel carriers). On November 21<sup>st</sup> 1920, the IRA's *Twelve Apostles* assassination squad wiped out nine of Britain's top intelligence agents: the *Cairo*



*Gang*. Later that afternoon, in response, police officers went to Croke Park football grounds and opened fire on the match's crowd. Fourteen people died. It would be known as Bloody Sunday. Such brutalities were all-too common: the IRA rarely took prisoners, targeted off-duty troops, and shot supposed 'traitors;' the British responded in kind, burning towns suspected of being 'sympathetic' to the enemy and indiscriminately firing on and arresting civilians.

The most protected place in Ireland was Dublin Castle, which historian Louis Paul-Dubois described as: 'a world in itself. A city within a city. The palace of the Viceroy, a military barrack, the seat of administration and the office of the secret police ... omnipotent and omnipresent.' It was from this nerve centre crouched over Dublin city that the British war-effort was run. It was also the only safe place trials could be held when things grew too dangerous outside.

Republican volunteers were a mixed bag: intellectuals, farmers, communists, proto-fascists, and nationalists—often with fierce internal rivalries. Some revelled in violence, while others had served with distinction with the British armed forces during the Great War. Some Irish hoped to create a communist state, while others sought only limited separation. In the countryside, the Republican cause was often threatened by British raids and encroachments. Their increasing boldness made some volunteers and *Dail* politicians push for set-piece battles, which were trusted to give international legitimacy to their war against the Crown. Instead, a continuation of the guerrilla war won out, with the burning down of country estates (signs of landlord control) and government records offices. Civilians were pressed for taxes and to help the cause, and those who didn't toe the line (especially Protestants) suffered. Traitors to the Republic and women who fraternised with police had their heads shaved, were tarred-and-feathered, exiled or even executed. There was no system for appeal, and rare was the day bodies weren't dumped at the side of the road with IRA warnings affixed. Vagrants, gypsies and unknown travellers were popular targets for IRA action, both as a public service and fear of their being British spies.

In London, the government had attempted a last ditch effort: the creation of separate Northern and Southern Irish parliaments (not to be mistaken for

the Republican *Dáil* which considered itself the legitimate government over all of Ireland). As the Republicans refused to acknowledge the British-created Southern parliament existed, the plan failed miserably. The bloodbath grew worse. On 25<sup>th</sup> May 1921, the IRA launched its last great offensive, burning the Dublin Custom House with its vintage records. More than 100 volunteers were captured. A propaganda coup it may have been but the loss was a terrible blow to the IRA. The war of attrition was slowly being lost, and if the conflict continued any longer it was likely the British would win.

But truce came from an unexpected quarter. The King—increasingly disgusted by the actions taken in his name—called for reconciliation. Travelling against the wishes of England's parliament to Northern Ireland to appoint its first Prime Minister, he made a speech for negotiation. The British government called for talks in June 1921. If the Republicans refused it would only make them look worse and allow stricter measures. Plans for complete martial law and flooding the country with the British Army were drawn up.

Even while negotiations took place, the violence did not abate. Fighting continued after the cease-fire of 11<sup>th</sup> July. Finally, on 6<sup>th</sup> December 1921, the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed. Southern Ireland would become the Irish Free State, a Dominion with complete internal control, but still under British allegiance, swearing fealty to the Crown. The six counties of Northern Ireland, being predominantly Protestant, would remain British.

Tempers flared. While many in the IRA command saw peace as better than independence, the politicians wanted a totally separate Irish Republic. Éamon de Valera, President of the *Dáil* during the war, refused to accept the Treaty—famously walking out of the Irish parliament. With him went any hope for reconciliation. Pro- and anti-Treaty armies formed and the British supplied the pro-Treaty forces with arms and uniforms. Both sides claimed they were the legitimate government. For another year Ireland would be wracked by a devastating civil war.

In 1923 the pro-Treaty government won, forcing the Republicans to concede defeat. The Irish Free State would remain part of the British Empire for the next 14 years.

## *NORTHERN IRELAND (ULSTER)*

Since the introduction of colonists from Britain, the northern nine counties of Ireland (often, though incorrectly, termed Ulster) had been largely Protestant. It was Ulster that had forced successive Home Rule bills to fail in parliament, through fear that a Catholic Ireland would be ruled by Papal decree (hence the oft-used phrase “Home Rule is Rome Rule”). In 1912 the Ulster Volunteers (UVF) was formed in response to such worries. They gained great sympathy and support from Unionist (Conservative) MPs, and when it became apparent that even the British Army would not support the imposition of Home Rule, the UVF began smuggling guns from Imperial Germany to force the point. By 1914, more than 30,000 guns and 3 millions of rounds of ammunition had been transferred to their forces. In response, pro-Republic groups were formed in the south, including the Irish Volunteers that would lead the Easter Rising in 1916. Many of the UVF would enlist with the British Army during the Great War.

With the outbreak of hostilities in 1919 between the British government and Irish nationalists, Ulster remained relatively peaceful. Lacking the backing of the population, IRA units were unable to take and hold land like further south, and RIC units backed by the Ulster Special Constabulary (USC) policed the nine counties more thoroughly. The B-Specials of the USC, civilian-dressed part-time constables, would remain controversially in service right up until the 1970s.

The 1920 Government of Ireland Act separated north and south into separate parliaments. With Ireland in a bloody revolution, it was hard to get anyone to acknowledge the bill’s legitimacy, and while elections were held, the Republican *Dáil* made enforcement impossible (although four of the MPs for Dublin University did turn up for their inauguration). Ulster’s vote appointed Baronet James Craig as the northern government’s Prime Minister. It was at Craig’s inauguration that the King, backed by South African Prime Minister Jan Smuts, recommended negotiation between the Crown and the *Dail*.

Though a ceasefire was declared, violence did not stop entirely. IRA Volunteers continued to assail Ulster with bombings and raids. Riots between

Catholic and Protestant Ulstermen flowed across the northern counties. In Belfast the sectarian violence that had sporadically hit the city over the last few years got worse, especially at the docks, which rapidly became no-go zones for Catholics.

With the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921, it seemed that Ulster’s troubles were past. Only six of the counties would remain British and three were turned over to the Free State. But threat of southern Civil War and dispute over borders reignited violence. The next year saw IRA volunteers launch a series of attacks on Belfast and border towns. Hundreds of shops in Belfast alone were burnt or bombed. The town of Pettigo was occupied by the IRA and British soldiers retook it with artillery and assault. Internment was introduced again, with suspected Republicans held without trial until 1924.

Free State forces also fought the British. Arguments over borders resulted in gun battles, and houses and estates were requisitioned by Irish and British government troops in order to hold land. The Civil War and the subsequent victory of the Free State forces stayed the IRA’s hand. By the end of 1923, the majority of the volunteers had been forced out of Ulster. Britain would remain in control of Northern Ireland; and the IRA left a minor, if irritating, threat until the next world war.

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## ***THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND BAD: POLITICS AND LAW***

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### ***POLITICS:***

The United Kingdom has long considered itself a cradle of modern democracy. While a limited monarchy, Britain nevertheless lacks the fixed constitution of its European and American peers. Law is based on precedent, custom and legal statute. This flexibility is both a benefit and a hindrance: there is no such thing as an ‘unconstitutional’ law in the British Isles.

### ***PARLIAMENT***

The parliament of the United Kingdom meets at the Palace of Westminster, euphemistically known as the Houses of Parliament. The nation’s most iconic symbol is the clock tower at the north-



western side of the palace (incorrectly known as Big Ben—which is really the name of its bell).

The government of the United Kingdom is a two-tier parliament. The upper-house is known as the House of Lords, and is made up of two unelected groups: the Lords Spiritual (26 senior Church of England bishops) and Lords Temporal (Peers of the Realm: Dukes, Marquesses, Earls, Viscounts and Barons, along with the seven Law Lords, the highest judges in the UK). Any English and Welsh peer can sit in the House of Lords. Scottish and Irish lords voted amongst themselves for who took the limited number of available seats. Until 1958, no woman could sit in the House of Lords.

The lower house is elected by constituency, and is known as the House of Commons. Those elected are known as Members of Parliament (MPs). From 1918-1922 there were 707 MPs in the Commons. After 1922, with the Irish Free State leaving the Union, the number dropped to 615. Minors, members of the House of Lords, those serving prison sentences and the insane are unable to be MPs, although a lord may revoke their title for a time if made Prime Minister (PM).

Each government (or ministry) is voted into power for a maximum of five years—although another general election is usually called before that has elapsed in an attempt to gain another five years. There were three main political parties, with various minor and independent parties on the fringes. After a general election, the party with the majority of seats gains power, with its head as Prime Minister. The Prime Minister appoints heads of ministries, such as Minister of Health, Minister of Transport etc. The chief among these is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who controls the finances of the nation and is *de facto* second to the Prime Minister himself. The Deputy Prime Minister, unlike in other nations, is mostly ceremonial.

In the event of a ‘hung parliament’ (one lacking overall control by a single party), a coalition may be formed between the minority government and another party or parties. Most of the governments during the interwar year were like this due to the precarious nature of party politics.

Bills for changes of law etc. are proposed in the House of Commons with a vote held by all MPs managing to make it to the session. If passed, it is voted on by the Lords. The Lords were only

allowed to delay a bill. On a third ‘no’ vote, it passed automatically.

A bill was ratified by the regent, King George V (or, to give his full title, By the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, George V). Once given Royal Assent it passed into statute, becoming law.

### *LIBERAL PARTY*

Originally politics teetered on the knife-edge of Liberal and Conservative seats, but the 1920s saw the rapid decay of the Liberal Party as a serious contender for power. Moving from a Victorian *laissez-faire* policy to progressive reform, the Liberal Party (and its leader Lloyd George) became popular heroes of the working classes, until being replaced by the socialist Labour Party.

H.H. Asquith’s Liberal government proved itself unable to handle the Great War properly. In 1916 Lloyd George moved to replace his superior as PM and set up a coalition government. A wily politician, Lloyd George stirred up emotions and impressed with short-term fixes, but rarely stuck a straight course. He became known as ‘the man who won the war.’

In 1918 the Liberal Party split into pro-Coalition/pro-Lloyd George, and anti-Coalition/pro-Asquith groups. Lloyd George won, but only with considerable, and overshadowing, Conservative support. It would be the last ‘Liberal’ government. Upset by Lloyd George’s sabre rattling in Turkey, his nepotism, and the bloody and upsetting end to Ireland’s union with Great Britain, the Conservatives defeated Lloyd George in the 1922 general election.

Labour, holding the next highest number of seats, became the official opposition party to the Conservatives, and made plain their intention to wipe the Liberals from the face of politics. While the Liberals could have won in the 1924 election, Asquith—who had returned as head of the party in lieu of a disgraced Lloyd George—allowed the Labour Party power in hopes it would show itself as bungling and unprepared. Though somewhat true, it did not turn to the Liberal Party’s benefit. Voters now split for the realistically socialist Labour Party or the rejuvenated Conservative Party, leaving the Liberals on the sidelines yet again.



The death-knell had been sounded. Asquith died in 1928, and Lloyd George tried—painfully and graspingly—to wrench victory from the other two parties in the 1929 general election. It was an unmitigated disaster. The decade ended with the final nails in the Liberal coffin.

### CONSERVATIVE PARTY

*Note: The Conservative Party was officially the Unionist Party until 1922, so named for their stance on keeping Ireland part of the Union.*

Historically the party of the landed-gentry and the countryside, the Conservatives found something of a niche with Victorian working class city-folk. In 1906, after a winning streak of many years, the party lost to the Liberals—who won over the workforce with reforms and progressive laws.

The Great War was the first steps to Conservative return. After Liberal mismanagement at its beginning, a coalition of Liberal, Conservative and Labour MPs was formed, with the Conservatives, under Andrew Bonar Law, forcing the hand of the new Liberal Prime Minister, Lloyd George, for the rest of the conflict.

In 1918, the Liberal-Conservative alliance threatened to become a new party, but fell apart over foreign policy. Bonar Law would step down as head of the Conservatives due to ill-health in 1921, and his ineffectual replacement, Austen Chamberlain, proved absurdly incapable. In 1922, the Conservatives once again split from the Liberal Party and Bonar Law was brought out of retirement to head the party once again.

The 1922 election returned a recharged Conservative Party to power for the first time in 16 years, though it would last barely another year.

Bonar Law retired due to throat-cancer in 1923, and was replaced by the unknown quantity of Sir Stanley Baldwin. Disliked for his peerage and personality, and unwilling to break a promise to his predecessor by introducing tariffs and saving the economy, Baldwin was forced to resign in 1924, turning the government over to the first Labour ministry. Even for his faults he remained head of the Conservatives in opposition—biding his time.

In late 1924 the Labour government collapsed—pricked by Baldwin’s aggressive opposition—and the Conservatives strolled back with a landslide majority. Baldwin and the Conservative

government retained power from 1924 to 1929, managing to weather political storms such as the General Strike of 1926, and remained relatively popular throughout their tenure. In 1929 the party was finally ousted—replaced by the second Labour government of the decade...

### LABOUR PARTY

The Labour Party was the newest of the big three players in British politics. Its formation at the turn of the century by Scottish socialist Keir Hardie had strengthened it from grass-roots, working-class conglomeration to the party of the left.

Labour considered radical change a necessity in the downtrodden Welsh and Northern English mining and industrial communities. Much of its support came from middle-class radicals more drastic than the working-classes. During the Great War the Labour Party divided between pro- and anti-war factions. Anti-war groups sought to stop mobilisation, pressuring unions to strike and slow production in response to the ‘class war’ that was sending working men to fight.

<p style="text-align:center"><b>GENERAL ELECTIONS AND WHO WON THEM...</b></p> <p style="text-align:center">1918 “Coupon” Election – <i>Lloyd George (Liberal leading coalition Conservative government)</i></p> <p style="text-align:center">1922 Election – <i>Andrew Bonar Law (Conservative)</i></p> <p style="text-align:center">1923 Election – <i>Ramsey MacDonald (Labour government with Liberal support)</i></p> <p style="text-align:center">1924 Election – <i>Stanley Baldwin (Conservative)</i></p> <p style="text-align:center">1929 Election – <i>Ramsey MacDonald (Labour)</i></p>
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In the immediate aftermath of the war the Liberal Party split between Asquith and Lloyd George, pushing many previously Liberal supporters into the arms of Labour. Co-operatives, working men's clubs and other establishments sprouted across Labour areas, giving a sense of camaraderie that had been lost to the Liberals (but retained by the 'appeals to Imperialism' of the Conservatives).

In January 1924 the Conservative government, while winning a majority in the general election, was unable to stay in power. Asquith, the Liberal chairman, allowed Ramsey MacDonald's Labour Party to take power—much to their later shame.

MacDonald was staunchly left-leaning and his first plans were to 'sort out' the Versailles Treaty by making it fairer; recognise the Soviet Union; and attain European disarmament.

With a limited majority his internal policy remained hamstrung, and though proud of his achievements, MacDonald was viewed with distrust by rival parties. Labour's willingness to acknowledge, and give loans to, the Soviet Union was considered dangerous. Similarly, the government's aversion to charge Communist rabble-rousers and agitators made them appear as if they were in cahoots.

The Zinoviev Letter, a forgery by MI6 and White-Russian émigrés, supposedly from the Comintern and telling the Communist Party of Great Britain to work with the Labour Party in the coming armed revolution, has long been blamed for the First Labour Government's demise in late-1924. In reality the government lost the country's support through feeble national policy and civil unrest. One should note that Labour's votes actually *increased* on the previous election results!

MacDonald continued to run the Labour Party until 1929, when the Conservatives were ousted by a second Labour victory. This time MacDonald fixated on domestic issues—solving many of the ills of the previous 9 years; at a price. The party split in 1931, forcing the government's resignation, and the formation of another coalition—led again by MacDonald. For his treachery in leading a non-Labour government he would be thrown out of the party—an ignoble and damning end to a staunch Labourite politician.

## THE COMMUNISTS

The Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) was formed in 1920 by the amalgamation of smaller socialist and communist parties. It would continue to add factions to its roster over the next few years, including more radical and hard-line groups.

Formation of the CPGB had not been hard. Anti-war Labour members had played up the benefits of Communism during the Great War, and supported Russia's 1917 October Revolution. In 1919 British military officers found things so dire in the transit camps where troops waited to go home that a number had formed their own Soviets. While most were talked out of their politics, a shooting battle, with some deaths, occurred when Canadians demanded their place on the first troopships out of France and marched on the dock.

In Glasgow, 1919's Battle of George Square began as a response to high wages and issues over rent, but the Government fast decided it was a Bolshevik uprising. Fearing Scottish troops might prove disloyal if asked to put down a Scotch revolution, they were locked in their barracks as dozens of tanks and hundreds of raw army recruits flooded the city. Tense as it was, the situation passed off peacefully a week or so later.

Still the Communists were unable to win seats. Only three MPs made it into parliament during the 1920s, and their radicalism was too scholarly for most of the working-class, who considered the Labour Party a more effective means of righting society's ills than the overthrow of democracy.

Bogeyman of Liberals and Conservatives alike, the CPGB became a spectre haunting the British Isles. They supported strike action, published virulent anti-government propaganda, and engaged in street-fights with fascists (and the police, by proxy). Districts of Wales and north-country towns became known as 'Little Moscows'—and outsiders could find themselves rapidly out-of-their-depth if displaying right-leaning tendencies.

The General Strike of 1926 became the main arena for the CPGB to cut their teeth. Attempting to court the strikers, they converted a number of pit-towns and collieries into communist bastions—

at least until 1929 and the Great Depression's bread-lines made communism unfeasible.

Investigators will find Communists revered and hated in equal measures. Declared traitors, spies and Russians by non-industrial workers and Conservative and Liberal supporters, the majority of sympathisers were poor miners and mill-workers who found life unremittingly harsh.

Unlike their working-class 'comrades,' middle and upper-class communists are far more prone to the radical philosophising and theories of the Comintern. It is these groups that plan and enact the spasmodic violence that wracks one area or another—be it vandalism of churches, fights at rival political meetings (many carried coshes, knuckle-dusters and assorted other weapons), cutting telephone cables, or worse.

### FASCISTS

While the corporate state, imperialism and the gauntlet of authoritarianism had been facts of politics for centuries, in Italy it would be given a name and purpose. Fascism spread to the rest of Europe after Mussolini's March on Rome in late 1922, taking up the mantle of strong-arm rival to the oft violent Communism that sought to undermine fading democracy.

In Britain the first fascist party was the British Fascisti of 1923, formed by middle class gentlemen (and no few ladies) backed by young toughs. Their first few years would be spent in admiration for Mussolini and stewarding and canvassing for Conservative Party candidates. Serious fascists found themselves pushed to the fringes of the party until 1926 and the General Strike.

Having been treated as little more than a particularly over-the-top offshoot of the Boy Scout movement, the British Fascists (having changed their name after complaints it was too Italian) offered to join the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (see pg.40). Refused entry unless they changed their name to something other than 'fascist,' the party viewed their being ignored as a personal snub and sign Communism held sway over government.

By 1927 the party manifesto called for a stronger House of Lords, stringent anti-socialism and fewer taxes for the poor (so more servants could

be hired, thereby lowering unemployment). That same year they introduced their uniform of blue military tunic and peaked cap. Members could be found handing out anti-socialist and pro-empire pamphlets in town squares.



In 1924 a splinter faction of the British Fascists—the National Fascisti sprouted. In black uniform and aping Mussolini, the National Fascisti never posed a serious threat. Their only claim to fame would be hijacking and crashing a lorry full of socialist *Daily Herald* newspapers. After a name change to the British National Fascisti, they faded into the cold of 1925.

The final fascist party was the Imperial Fascist League (IFL) of 1928. Formed as a party of action rather than words, and also wearing a black uniform, they trained in street-fighting and other violence. The IFL became increasingly anti-Semitic over the next few years under the leadership of Arnold Leese, an expert on camel diseases and subscriber to Nazi newspaper *Der Sturmer*. If ever a group came close to Nazism in Britain, the IFL would be it. Much time was spent physically and verbally harassing communists, Jews and anyone else who took their fancy.

Unlike in Europe, fascism never caught on as a mass-movement—at least until 1932 with the more gentlemanly face of Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists. There was something distinctly 'un-British' about it, with its foreign roots and adherence to uniforms. A few thousand officially signed up to the various parties, with some thousands more acting as advocates, but they remained a sideshow rather than a serious front.

One turn that drove the public to consider fascists a lost cause was the publicity surrounding the trial of Valerie Arkell-Smith (more commonly known Colonel Sir Victor Barker). Though born a



woman, after her first marriage broke down in 1920 Colonel Barker took to being a man—complete with false history as a British officer wounded in the war. She married one Elfrida Haward in 1922 and, after a number of jobs, in 1927 became boxing instructor for the British Fascisti. Barker was finally arrested in 1929 for bankruptcy and passing bad cheques, and subsequently charged with perjury when found not really a man. Anti-fascists, newspapers and comedians never let them live it down.

### *TRADE UNIONS*

Trade Unionism had been a mainstay of blue-collar life since the mid-1800s, and being a member of a union job and not being a member of the union was practically unknown. The biggest and most powerful of trade-union federations was the Trade Union Congress (TUC), an umbrella for dozens of unions across various different labour types. The biggest of these was the Miner's Federation of Great Britain (MFGB), which made up almost a quarter of all trade unionists in the UK.

In 1914 the three biggest trade unions, representing miners, railwaymen and transport workers, formed an association called the Triple Alliance as a reaction to government action in the lead up to the Great War. While the Triple Alliance pressed for more rights and better hours, its first test would come in 1921, when—with the return of mines to private ownership—wages were reduced due to cheap European coal. To stop a strike the government ordered mine owners to freeze wages. The other TUC members grumbled that the MFGB was unwilling to involve them in negotiations, and so refused to strike. In the end, the miners were forced to strike alone. 15<sup>th</sup> April 1921 became known as Black Friday. Those miners who declined to work were locked out.

By 1925 the tables had turned. On Red Friday the Triple Alliance, in a reversal of the breakdown four years previous, agreed to strike in support of pegging miners' wages. The threat of railways, sympathetic to the miners, going on strike forced the government to negotiate and, in the end, submit.

But the crowning grace of the unions is frequently cited as the General Strike of 1926. For nine days the United Kingdom came to a standstill, with the TUC and various other unions upholding a strike

across almost every industry in Britain. Though it was unsuccessful in its goals, the General Strike was a very real and very public showdown between owners and workers (see pg.40).

Across the decade, trade union influence dwindled. Though actively supporting Labour and the Communist Party, trade unionism became increasingly bureaucratic, losing much of its old impetus. In 1921 almost 86million working days were lost to strike action in the UK—a record for 8 years. In 1922 this had dropped to 19million. In 1924 it was 8million. The nine days of the General Strike in 1926 lost 162million working days, but the future of unions was uncertain.

Union bosses and stewards are a mixed breed. Some are honestly looking out for their workmates; others are in it for political power or prestige. Making enemies with a union steward can be one of the worst mistakes an investigator makes, especially in close-knit mining towns or collieries. On the flip-side of the coin, working class investigators rarely fail to be card-carrying union members. A gang of union-men with cudgels can be more than welcome when the chips are down and the cult you're facing has almost completed their unwholesome ceremony...

### *THE LEGAL SYSTEM*

Crime and punishment are the lynchpin of civilisation, and the United Kingdom considers itself the most civilised of nations. As players are likely to wind up on the wrong side of the judiciary at some point, the basics of the British legal system are summarised here...

### *CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COURTS*

Prior to 1900 the British legal system was composed of several different courts: civil, criminal and ecclesial, among others. From 1920, barring military courts, there remain only the criminal, civil, and admiralty courts—the latter only used in relation to maritime law.

Criminal justice in the United Kingdom is different depending upon whether it is in England and Wales, Scotland or Ireland. As all are similar, we shall only deviate where necessary.

There are two ranks of crime in the UK; those tried by magistrates (summary offences) and those

tried by jury (indictable offences). Some crimes may have the method chosen by the accused (triable either way offences).

Magistrates, sometimes called Justices of the Peace (JPs), are members of the public, assisted by a legally trained clerk. Nearly always male, always of high-standing, and with the funds to serve as part-time arbitrators of the law, they sit in groups of between 3 and 7, presiding over the court, listening to evidence and deciding upon the defendant's guilt. The trials they listen to are usually petty (assault, battery, petty theft etc.). They have the power to fine and sentence criminals for up to 18 months of penal servitude.

In inner cities, Magistrates Courts were called Police Courts and were presided over by a single Stipendiary Magistrate—a lawyer working as a judge part time. They handled perhaps five times the workload of the volunteer JPs in half the time.

Individuals charged with an offence, whether for summary or indictable crimes, were brought before a Magistrate (usually the following morning) in order to hear the defendant's plea of guilty or not guilty. If the crime was indictable, it was moved up to a High Court, to be heard by a jury and a High Court judge.

(There are two 'ranks' of lawyer in the UK: solicitor and barrister. A solicitor acts as a client's attorney—with power to draw up wills, handle assets, and instigate lawsuits—but cannot speak in court. Instead, the barrister does this, carrying out litigation on behalf of the solicitor and his client. A barrister's company is called his 'chambers' and he cannot be hired directly by a client. Most solicitors and barristers accuse the other of being superfluous, and await a day when the other is declared obsolete.)

There are ranks of High Court judge, but the only difference between them is pay and experience. Juries are chosen from thirteen tax-paying citizens on the electoral roll. The case is argued by the defence barrister (the defendant's legal counsel) and the prosecution barrister. In the 1920s it was a policeman or the chief of the constabulary that prosecuted, using a local legal counsel that offered its services to the police force (this was the case everywhere except in London, where the Home Secretary, and by proxy the Crown itself, acted as prosecution). Defendants who could not afford the often extortionate fees charged by barristers could

apply for government assistance, though most made do via friends, family or local collections.



In 1920 a morning or day for a relatively simple robbery or a week or two for murder was an average trial time. Most evidence was provided by 'good old fashioned detective work'—blood testing, fingerprinting and bullet-matching were the limit of the police's scientific methods. Psychologists and psychics were sometimes called in by 'progressive' constabularies or prosecutors, but their expertise was considered questionable.

If the defendant was found guilty punishment was decided by historical precedent and government guidelines. Alongside fines, sentencing was divided into three categories: imprisonment, penal servitude hard labour—the only difference between the last two was that in the latter a convict was not allowed a mattress for the first fourteen days. 'Servitude' included making tables, weaving baskets, breaking rocks or other menial tasks. Punishment for prisoners within the system was usually corporal—caning with a birch or cat o' nine tails being common. Flogging and birching could also be passed in court, either alone or alongside a prison sentence. A favourite of magistrates for petty thieves and youthful over-exuberance, corporal punishment



If a murderer was found guilty (rarely more than 20 a year), the judge would put on his 'black cap' and paraphrases the infamous sentencing to death: "You have been found guilty of the offence of murder. You shall be taken from this place to a lawful prison and then to a place of execution, where you shall be hanged from the neck until dead and your body buried afterwards within the precincts of the prison. May the Lord have mercy upon your soul." Only one week was allowed to lodge an appeal. Failure meant the convict hanged the week following (in reality those sentenced to death were often given an extra few days in preparation).

For young offenders in London between the ages of 16 and 21 special 'youth courts' were held. Outside the capital, youths were tried in normal courts. Those convicted were sent to 'borstal'—juvenile prisons designed to educate and reform. Instead they were famed for their brutality. Release was only allowed upon completion of an 'exit exam.' Many lingered even after their sentences were complete. Punishment for infractions committed by those over 18 could include up to 24 strokes to the buttocks by birch.

The other major court handled by magistrates was 'Bastardy Orders'—which decided allegations of patrimony, and could instruct a father to pay up to 30/- a week for a child up to age of 16 (or to age 21 if they continued their education).

Two defences to murder (and murder only) are 'insanity' and 'diminished responsibility.' Both lower the crime to that of 'manslaughter,' a lesser sentence. For insanity a mental illness must be demonstrated; diminished responsibility needs only an 'abnormality of mind.' A cultist who sacrifices people may well be found insane, while an investigator who kills said cultist upon viewing his vile sacrifices (and presuming he was driven temporarily insane by the sight and not just by cold vengeance) may well be suffering diminished responsibility.

If accepted by the judge, the defendant will be found 'guilty by reason of [defence]' and remanded in a state asylum at His Majesty's pleasure (that is, until found sane).

Very few during this period ever made it out of state hospitals, and they became renowned for horrific experimental surgeries and drugs. Broadmoor Asylum for the Criminally Insane, 32

miles outside London on the Berkshire moors, is where most of the UK's criminally insane are placed. Other sites include Liverpool's Ashton Asylum and Scotland's Carstairs Institute.

As a side note, Lords are not tried by a jury of commoners, but have their trial held and judged by the Law Lords of the House of Lords—the highest ranking judges in the land. In the years after 1901 this only occurred once, with the charging of Lord de Clifford for vehicular manslaughter in 1935. It was never used again and was abolished in 1948. Keepers may decide to hold trials of peers *in camera* (in private), which circumvents this historical fact.

Scotland, as noted, has its own legal system. Sheriffs Courts (presided by a sheriff) act much like a Magistrate's Court, while Scottish High Courts act much like in England and Wales. Scottish juries, along with guilty and not guilty may also find crimes 'unproven'. Officially this is the same as not guilty but gives the social interpretations of either (1) you are guilty, but we can't prove it, or; (2) you were partially to blame but are not 'guilty' per se.

Ireland, from 1920-1922, was under various forms of official and unofficial martial law. Military courts interned summarily, often without trial. Whether held in Ireland or England, prisoners were well treated—some were fed and clothed better than they had been at home. Post-1922 the Irish Free State's legal system remained much as under the British, but without the use of magistrates or magistrates' courts.

## *CIVIL JUSTICE AND COURTS*

While less likely to be met in a Call of Cthulhu game, in real life the workload of the civil courts far outweighs that of the criminal.

County Courts and High Courts act with the former for lesser cases and the latter for more serious. Lesser cases involve small monetary claims, land disputes, non-payment of debts etc. whereas the High Court entertains those of tort law, contracts, commercial law and complicated cases. Some High Court cases use juries, while others use judge as arbitrator.

The highest court in the land is the Coroner's Court, presided over by a Coroner (not to be

confused with a pathologist, who handles post-mortems and dead bodies). Historically a coroner's powers were far-reaching, but today they are used only for determining cause of death when such incidents are suspicious, violent or unnatural, or when they take place in a prison or mental hospital. A coroner cannot sentence anyone, but may arbitrate guilt on an individual—police can then press charges. Coroners' courts also handle the disposition of property that has no known owner; including the infamous Treasure Trove law. This states anything deliberately concealed on land, was intended to be reclaimed by the original owner, and is made of gold or silver, is 'treasure' and must be turned over to the Crown.

### CRIME

The 20<sup>th</sup> century was, perhaps, less lawless than previous centuries—but after the era that had thrived on acknowledging man's vices at the same time as sweeping them under the rug, the Great War made crime fashionable. A wave of villainy swept the country as demobilised soldiers returned to find they lacked the skills or inclination to revert to polite society. Gangs of veteran soldiers formed mobs to fight the criminal enterprises that flourished while they were away, while old-time ruffians turned their eyes toward a new breed of gangster born from America's prohibition.

In northern England and Scotland the so-called Razor Gangs kept tight rein over their patch of the underworld. Predominantly Catholic, often pro-Irish, they ran the gambling houses and brothels that catered to industrial workers and collected protection from local entrepreneurs. With cutthroat-razors in pockets or slipped into the heels of shoes, they carved a name in an area famed for its cruelty. One of the favoured methods of leaving a message was to cut a victim from ear to ear by way of the mouth, creating an extended 'grinning' scar known as a 'Glasgow smile.'

The southern mobs of London and other English cities were considered less sadistically brutal than their northern rivals, but were just as violent, preferring to model themselves on the exploits of American gangsters, with their expensive clothes and flashy cars. Lacking prohibition and with drugs remaining mostly legal, their turf-wars never reached the extent or public attention of American legends like Al Capone or Frank Nitti.

Professional safe-crackers, getaway drivers and cat-burglars made up the balance of such mobs—and nearly all were freelancers. The most famous examples of London's gangland included the Elephant and Castle Mob (based at Walworth Road), the White family, the Yiddishers (centred at London's Jewish heartland of Whitechapel), the Hoxton gang, and the Cortesi brothers. The Brummagen Boys controlled their Birmingham stomping-grounds, and frequently pressed south in an attempt to wrestle control from London crime lords.

Probably the most famous of the southern gangs would be Charles Sabini (crowned 'king of the racecourses') and his 'Italian Mob.' Of Irish-Italian descent, he brought together a gang of Anglo-Italian mobsters and Jewish bookkeepers that opposed any who threatened his control of the gambling clubs (known as *spiels*). While he sometimes brought in foreign Sicilian mafia as muscle, he had no interest in Italy itself (apart from an aversion to fascism) and could not speak the language—famously standing mute at the dock as a judge attempted to converse with him in Italian during his trial.

Although the eastern gangs of the Orient in London's Limehouse and Liverpool's docksides (lorded over by wizened cat-eyed Chinamen replete with immeasurably cold intellects) were a thing of Sax Rohmer's imagination, they were a popular imagination nonetheless. In reality, Chinese immigrants made their living much as any other Briton, but there is something of the spirit of the 1920s in the Manchu that sits spider-like at the centre of his criminal web. Such gangs would capture European women in their seedy drug dens before forcing them into white slavery, or attempt to flood Britain with the depravity of opium (presumably both for revenge and revenue). Keepers can rule Chinese Triad foot-soldiers as fanatical, Manchu masters bitter and indefatigable, and dragon-lady daughters as beautiful as they are evil. All manner of nefarious plots and strange Oriental traps serve to remove nosy investigators.

On the other hand, if players dislike pandering to Yellow Peril paranoia, Chinese gangs still operate within Limehouse's twisted streets in the form of real-life Triads: extorting local businesses, running illegal opium dens, feuding with British



mobsters for their cut of the pie, and protecting Chinese immigrants from racist gangs.

Far from romanticised and inscrutable Asian skulduggery, the lost generation was born from survivors of the Great War. Their return found the new world a strange and, above all, *boring* place. Whether discovering their job no longer needs them, their family was killed in one of the Zeppelin raids across the south or were just bored to tears sitting in an office after dancing through the killing fields, thousands of veterans turned to a life of crime. Trained and honed in survival, with ranges of expertise and ready-made command structures, these disillusioned swept the country. Robbing banks, raiding jewellers and pulling off outrageous high-speed getaways, their violence and antics forced the creation of London's Flying Squad to tackle them. Other bored soldiers bought surplus guns or aircraft and became fly-by-night smugglers and arms dealers, bargaining with whoever was willing—be it Irish Republicans, ex-German sharecroppers in British-mandated Tanganyika, or Chinese pirates working out of Bias Bay.

### MENTAL ILLNESS

Though the Lunacy Act 1890 remained the standard for judging and attempting to resolve mental illness, it was already considered archaic before the turn of the century.

### RACE AND RACISM

Though imperial policy was marked by alternating periods of liberal-reform and iron-fisted violence, Britain's public remained far-removed from colonial enterprises. Aside from pink shading on an atlas, or New Zealand lamb on shelves, empire played little part in normal day-to-day life.

Much of Britain was lily-white. Even a traveller from a nearby county was recognised easily by the way he spoke. Cities were a different matter. In London, south Wales and Liverpool, Chinese, Africans, and West Indians made up a good percentage of immigrants. Arabs, Indians, Japanese and some American and Canadian natives also formed small communities. Most became anglicised; many married white Britons.

British racism was different to that of the USA. Paternalism, stereotypes and snide asides may have been the norm, but a person's looks were less important than their class—the way they talked, acted and dressed. Lynching and segregation were considered beastly and 'American.' While many white British treated their colonial charges badly, once either set foot in Britain there was a sea-change, as if—as one critic stated—"the very act of being *in* England *made* one English and thereby above reproach." Newspapers might rage about 'evil-smelling Chinese dens' and the jobs stolen by 'coloured sailors,' but few of the population outside the cities ever saw a person not of white British extraction. Nonetheless, racism still burst into violence. In 1919 with the return of soldiers, the hottest weather for years, and incendiary reporting, riots against immigrants sparked off. Thousands fought with pokers, firearms and knives. Shops were burnt, and a number of people killed on both sides. The violence may have been over in days, but memories lingered for years afterwards.

Foreign PCs will find that a high Credit Rating results in a relatively warm welcome. As in everything else to do with the UK, class trumps all hands...

Asylums were originally a judicial, not medical, problem. Unlike mental hospitals, which were privately run and paid for by the patient or his family, asylums were run by the Ministry of Health. Prior to 1919, and the creation of the Ministry, asylums had been run by county and borough governments with varied results. Even the nicest were little more than prisons, with strict regimes designed to keep the 'lunatic' from the public rather than effect some sort of cure. After centralised control was introduced by the Ministry, asylums could hire new staff and psychiatrists, and experiment in new methods.

While some of these psychiatrists had been on the forefront of attempting to cure shell-shock and other illnesses through Freudian (and recently translated Jungian) methods, others proved more reliant on physical means. Electroshock-therapy, drugs, trepanation, and others were used, although less commonly than their American counterparts.

There were a number of ways in which a person could find themselves put under the care of the



state. The first was to be found 'not guilty by reason of insanity' either by pleading insanity or diminished responsibility during a murder case, or by being found so by two court-appointed doctors if it was apparent the defendant was irrational during the trial.

The second way was to get an 'urgency order' from a local magistrate. This needed the request of a relative or guardian, along with evidence and recommendation from a doctor. An urgency order only lasted 7 days, but a patient could not be released before that time. For a longer period, two doctors were needed along with a relative's request to gain an 'order of petition.' The patient was then submitted to an asylum indefinitely.

Non-relatives, often policemen but sometimes other professional bodies, could also act as the instigator of an urgency order or petition, but such instances were often rare. Most mentally ill people were ignored by society until they committed a crime.

A patient can remand himself in the custody of an asylum if he so desires, although he cannot leave for the full 7 days. Asking for a self petition was considered extremely odd, as a patient could not release himself. Relatives could—if they desired.

Lunacy was also far from strictly defined. As well as encompassing schizophrenia, psychopathic tendencies and delusion, it also covered such arbitrary problems as compulsive lying, drinking or gambling; learning difficulties; epilepsy; bearing an illegitimate child to term, and more. Unlike today there was no Diagnostics and Statistics Manual to dictate what and what was not an illness of the mind, and psychiatrists found themselves with incredible powers over their charges.

Keepers should remember that the mental health system of the UK during the period was, while better than before and in some ways better than in America, still terribly flawed. There are numerous cases of people placed in asylums for trivial crimes, sometimes ones for which they were innocent, and being unable to leave—doctors and staff unwilling to even acknowledge their existence to friends or family. Fifteen year old Jean Gambell is one real-life example. Arrested and sentenced to an asylum in 1937 for the theft of 13d, she was not recovered by her family (who believed her dead) until 2007—spending almost 70

years in various institutions. Many more suffered far worse fates.

## *BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES*

Since 1837 all births, deaths and marriages in England and Wales have been recorded for future reference. Acts to cover Scotland and Ireland were passed soon after.

The entirety of the UK is divided into 'register areas' broken down into sub-districts covering a single town or cluster of villages. All births, deaths and marriages must be registered with the nearest register office within a set period of time or face severe penalties.

All originals are held at the register office, but copies of certificates are sent to the General Register Office (GRO) in London every quarter year. Even if the originals get lost or defaced, official copies can be requested from the GRO.

Birth, death and marriage certificates can be requested by any member of the public. Certificates registering still-births (introduced 1927) can only be requested by the parents of the deceased.

Unfortunately, between 1837 and 1875 birth certificates were not mandatory and many families refused to register their child. Similarly, during British rule, Ireland's records were stored at the Dublin Custom's House. After being gutted by fire in an IRA raid in 1921, thousands of Irish records dating back to the Middle Ages were lost. While individual records can still be found in churches and registers offices (the latter also targeted by the IRA during the war) records from 1921 and earlier are patchy, if not nonexistent.

Records before 1837 were collected by parish churches. Many have been lost, but lots have been lovingly restored by genealogists and rectors, or shipped to the GRO for storage.

Investigators will find the UK's record-keeping some of the best in the world. Birth certificates are free of charge for basic information and two shillings for a full copy with complete information. Death certificates must include the cause of death and be signed by a doctor (failure to register or falsifying a death certificate is a £2 fine and a prison sentence).



## POLICE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom is divided into three legal areas: England & Wales, Scotland, and Ireland (after 1922, Northern Ireland). With the passing of the County and Borough Police Act of 1856 it was mandatory for every county and borough to have its own constabulary, subject to government inspection. Until the 1960s there were hundreds of separate police forces within the UK, with each county, and many urban areas, having their own force. An exhaustive list would be impossible, but, some of the more interesting or likely to be met include the:

*City of Glasgow Police:* In 1919 the Battle of George Square saw police and union strikers face off against the backdrop of a 'Bolshevik Uprising', and throughout the interwar period the Clydeside area was famed for its crime gangs and working-class slums. Most Glasgow coppers were considered tough men.

*City of London Police:* Guardians of the square mile of at the epicentre of London proper, these officers are recognised by the gold badges on their helmets. As one of the smallest constabularies in the UK, they contend with one of the highest crime rates per officer, and frequent encroachment by greater London's Metropolitan Police.

*Metropolitan Police:* The largest constabulary in the UK, and the basis for all others. Keeping watch over London (except for the square mile at its centre which is policed by the City of London Police) the Met – as it is called – is headquartered at New Scotland Yard, which is also the HQ of London's CID.

*Oxford University Police:* While Oxford itself does have its own police, the Oxford University Police (dressed in bowler hats and suits, and nicknamed 'the Bulldogs') have the authority to arrest anyone within four miles of the university as well as act *in loco parentis* for students.

*Sharpness Dock Police:* Sharpness is a dock on the River Severn, Gloucestershire, and one of the most inland ports in the UK. It also serves the vicinity of the Goatswood area. The Dock Police patrol the river by motor launch and foot.

Each county police force was controlled by a Joint Standing Committee, appointed by the county

council and magistrates. Borough police (smaller town or city based forces) were controlled by a Watch Committee appointed by the borough council. The Metropolitan Police Force is controlled by, and answers directly to, the Home Office.

While Whitehall (the nickname for executive government) exercises control of the provincial police through grants and inspections, there is surprising leeway in how each force runs day-to-day. In the boroughs, where Watch Committees have more power, corruption and turning a blind eye can sometimes be the norm.

All police officers are constables of the law (except commissioners and above who are sworn in as magistrates) and have authority only within the limits of their constabulary's borders (however, as all citizens—except those in Scotland—have powers of citizens arrest, as long as a crime was committed by the accused *without doubt*, no policeman will never find himself without power of arrest).

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is the plainclothes detective branch of the British police. Most large police forces have a CID division and detectives stationed at Scotland Yard are often called to use their experience in crimes outside London. Recruited from uniformed police with suitable years of experience, they are not senior to uniformed officers, instead holding the same rank as their non-prefixed colleagues.

Special Branch, who also use the prefix 'detective,' handle subversion and terrorism cases and act as arresting officers for MI5 operations. The Metropolitan Police's Flying Squad, formed in 1919, were also detectives, and excited public imagination with high speed car chases, foiling of bank jobs and mingling with the criminal

underworld.



Historically the police in London had carried handguns on night patrols, and for a time after anarchist shoot-outs in 1911 most cities allowed officers to carry their own handguns with permission, day or night. Most cities had a 'rifle-' or 'riot-squad' comprised of trained riflemen. Police in the countryside were often armed, be it a revolver while patrolling at night, or shotgun if needs were dire. In Ireland most constables (except the DMP) carried a gun while on patrol or in 'bandit' country.

While cars were being introduced to the London police forces as a replacement for horse and foot patrols, the 'beat' remained the typical method of keeping the peace in larger towns and cities. In villages lacking more than one constable, the policeman usually stayed at home—although he too went out on fire-watch or midnight strolls. Uniform remains standard throughout the country: navy-blue or black tunic, covered with a greatcoat or cloak, and topped with quintessentially British 'custodian' helmet. Numbers fixed to the uniform's collar identified individual officers.

The tools of the policeman's trade included a pair of handcuffs, a wooden truncheon (*baton*), and a police-whistle. A shrill blast on the latter could be heard across multiple beats and brought constables down on the site in minutes. Another means of contacting the law was use of a police box. Made from concrete or wood, the exterior of police boxes featured a telephone directly connected to a police operator. The (locked) interior contained a miniature storeroom of materiel. Wily investigators will find axes, road signs, extra handcuffs and assorted odds-and-ends within, if they can get their hands on a key or kick in the door (STR 25). Strictly found in cities, from 1891 police boxes were found in Scotland, and

England and Wales after 1923, although London did not receive any until 1928.

While the Scottish legal system is different from the English, the powers and equipment of their police forces were, for all intents, the same.

Note that although there was no official reading of rights to a suspect upon arrest or when being booked at the station, failure to recite something at least similar to: "[Name of suspect], I am arresting you on suspicion of/for [crime]. You do not have to say anything, but anything you say will be taken down in writing and may be used as evidence at the trial" was likely to result in a mistrial.

### IRISH POLICE FORCES

There were two police forces in Ireland before 1920: the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP).

Despite accusations they were a foreign gendarmerie the majority of RIC constables were Irish; with around 2/3 of Other Ranks (*enlisted men*) Catholic. Uniforms were bottle-green, with spiked police helmet or soft-cap, and rain-smock: a cross between the mainland standard and British Army battle dress. Though living in 'barracks' and subject to stricter discipline, RIC men were much like their mainland counterparts. All were armed with .303 Lee-Enfields or pistols, with an armoury in every barracks.

Knowing that allowing them to serve in their (or their wives') native counties would limit effectiveness the government had constables serve outside their county of birth. Technically an RIC officer had powers of arrest across the entire country, but this was rarely exercised.

Under the RIC were two temporary units: the Black and Tans (officially the Royal Irish Constabulary Reserve) and the Auxiliaries (Auxiliary Division of the Royal Irish Constabulary or ADRIC). Both gained a reputation for violence and terror.

The Black and Tans were raised by the British government via adverts calling for men to 'face a rough and dangerous task.' Though considered an English unit, almost a third were Irishmen, and most were hardened former-soldiers who had survived the Great War to find civilian life pale by



comparison. Some would be recognised as having classifiable psychiatric illnesses. Well-paid at 10 shillings a day with full board and lodgings and the rank of Temporary Constable, the first to arrive in Ireland in late-March 1920 were forced to wear a mix of surplus army and RIC or British police overcoats. They became known as the 'Black and Tans'—named for the foxhounds of a local hunt. It stuck even after they acquired full RIC uniforms.

Lacking strict discipline, reprisals for IRA attacks became everyday occurrences. Aside from violent retribution, their notoriety included the sacking and burning of numerous communities, including the city of Cork on December 11<sup>th</sup> 1920. For weeks afterwards Black and Tan constables wore burnt cork pieces on their caps. Approximately 7000 officers served in the Constabulary Reserve during the Troubles, and while gaining a reputation solely as war criminals from Republicans, they served as sentries, escorts for prisoners and government officials, riot control units and counter-insurgency teams.

The 'Auxies' of ADRIC proved to be far more vicious than their Reserve counterparts. Suggested by Winston Churchill as a paramilitary police, they recruited from the ranks of British army officers made redundant in 1918. As most had been recruited from Other Ranks during the war the drop in pay and prestige found upon returning to civilian life proved to be a let-down. Of the 2200 men of ADRIC, and the 632 medals held between them (including two Victoria Crosses), it is obvious that the 'land fit for heroes' was not up to snuff for these 'amateur gentlemen.'

Wearing RIC uniforms or their old army kit with RIC insignia, Tam o'shanter perched upon heads, the Auxies operated independently of the RIC, launching raids that required police powers with military precision. It was a dangerous job, and they were well rewarded: £7 a week, with a police sergeant's benefits and retirement money, along with the rank of 'Temporary Cadet.' Much like the Black and Tan they soon became known for acts of violent disorder. Auxies were considered 'rough' even by hardened soldiers and while some were professional, others took great pleasure in their excesses. It was Dublin Police constables and Temporary Cadets who fired on the crowd at Croke Park Football Ground on Bloody Sunday, revenge for the IRA's successful assassinations of

14 British undercover agents and informants earlier that day.

Three other police forces also worked in their own areas of Ireland: the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP); Ulster Special Constabulary (USC); and Irish Republican Police (IRP).

The DMP was an unarmed force that served the Dublin metropolitan area. Near indistinguishable in uniform and rank-structure from their London counterparts, the DMP had bad working relations with other forces, including the RIC. At the opening of hostilities, for example, there were only 18 armed detectives (called G-Men) acting to investigate subversives and Republicans. By 1921, six of these detectives would be dead—mainly because four of the other G-Men were IRA agents.

The USC supplied volunteer police for the eight counties of Ulster. There were three groupings: full-time A-Specials, and part-time B and C Specials. The latter two served as non-uniformed support for the RIC. The B-Specials, the most commonly met, wore no uniforms apart from an armband marked 'USC' and helped RIC constables man roadblocks and engage in searches. They also acted as semi-legitimised vigilantes—harassing Catholics, travellers and non-Unionists. Most were taken from the loyalist Ulster Volunteers (UVF), who had an axe to grind with Republicans anyway. The British



## *THE FLOWERS HEARING AND THE NAVAL STUDIES DIVISION*

While the loss of submarines during the war had been expected, the loss of submarines in otherwise routine service during peace perplexed the Admiralty. On November 12<sup>th</sup> 1925, HMS *MI*, one of four coastal bombardment submersibles, was lost—officially with all hands. A tribunal concluded it had struck the SS *Vidar* while on manoeuvres. In reality no such collision took place. Evidence was fabricated to cover up the statements of two survivors recovered by the Coast Guard off south-east Cornwall. According to the pair the *MI* had suddenly been made immobile at a depth of 100ft. Attempts to surface failed, and after scratching and clanging resounded along the hull, the crew increased power to the engines, believing themselves caught in some sort of net. Here the crewmen's tales took a disturbing turn. Seaman Presrich reported being in the gunners' chamber of the 12" artillery-piece that jutted from the craft. According to him, *an enormous hand* ripped the gun from its mountings, flooding the interior. Air pressure blasted him out of the boat, whereupon he lost consciousness, only regaining it in a Royal Navy hospital. Lieutenant Henderson backed his subordinate. According to him, after flooding began the craft sank further, but the influx of water suddenly disappeared, as if somebody was attempting to drain it. The scratching against the hull became frenzied; and a great and inhuman cry echoed throughout the craft. Here Henderson became hesitant and, when pressed, said only that the craft had been boarded and a violent struggle occurred. In the confusion, a number of crewmen attempted to escape by flooding chambers and using the emergency escape hatch. Efforts to get more from Henderson proved fruitless. Three days later he committed suicide by drowning himself in a hospital bathtub. Presrich was posted to Singapore, but was knifed to death a year later in a barroom brawl by a man of seeming South-East Asian descent. The murderer was never caught.

In Britain, the Admiralty was both perplexed *and* worried. Talk of a foreign power boarding a Royal Navy submarine threw all theories of British naval dominance for a loop. While the official tribunal placed blame on the Swedish SS *Vidar*, another secret hearing was held by Commodore (1<sup>st</sup> class) Harold Flowers. The Flowers Hearing lasted eight months and brought together almost two thousand reports from between 1550 and 1925, all relating to unexplained or unnatural naval losses or disappearances. While the conclusion presented to the Admiralty did not expressly state anything paranormal was taking place, the Flowers Report made plain that historically the Cornish coast and surrounding channel had been known for 'irregularities of maritime travel' and that the Royal Navy should investigate further. On August 1<sup>st</sup> 1926, the Naval Studies Division was formed at HMNB Portsmouth, with a permanent staff of eight officers and fifteen clerks. Their remit: to collect, study and correlate irregularities of travel involving civilian or military vessels around the British Empire.

Over the next eight years, the NSD would index oddities and disappearances as far afield as Fiji and the Falkland Islands. Most were fragmentary, but by 1929 the department was beginning to believe that the recurring reports of 'fish-men' may hold a grain of truth. In 1930, after Lt. Michael Saunders made mention of this in his annual testimony, the department was cut back to four officers and eight clerks. In 1934, with increasing naval budget cuts, NSD closed its doors. The files it had gathered were removed to the Admiralty Building and placed in storage. During the Second World War they were moved to HMNB Davenport, and today are at Northwood Tri-service Headquarters, Hertfordshire. Saunders himself was recruited into Britain's occult research bureau MI13 after pointing out discrepancies in the sinking of HMS *Thetis* during trials in 1939. The craft was recovered, although one-hundred men lost their lives.

government was never particularly keen on using them.

The IRP was the Irish Republican government's police force. With the *Dáil* considered illegal, so too was its police arm. Many IRP constables were shot or arrested by Crown forces. With the

overlap between military and civil power during the Troubles, the IRP found itself at odds with the IRA also. Without prisons those found guilty of crimes in Republican controlled areas were exiled to islands off the coast for the duration of their term (a week to some months) or kept under

house arrest by civic-minded family. Acting without uniforms or warrant, some wore armbands with the letters 'IRP.' Most were untrained in the arts of true policing; when peace dawned many crimes committed in Republican controlled areas would remain unsolved.

After independence those RIC, DMP and IRP men in the south who wished to remain as police and did not head to British-controlled Ulster were amalgamated into the Irish Republic's *Civic Guard* of 1922, and subsequently reformed by a 1923 Act into the *Garda Síochána*, the Irish Free State's national police force.

## THE MILITARY

### *THE BRITISH ARMY*

The New Army of the Great War had created a generation of ex-soldiers. Few could see they hadn't served in some capacity, and many had fought on the frontlines.

During the interwar years the army suffered mass cuts at the hands of Geddes' Axe (a sweeping range of proposals that slashed government expenditure across the board) and a national desire for peace. The government, on the pretext there would be no war for at least ten years, converted the military into a police force to fight brush wars and insurrections across the Empire.

Only the Tank Corp (prefixed Royal in 1923) evaded the worst of budgetary hacking. When the *Tank Design Department* closed down, private companies such as Vickers-Armstrong offered their services. Seen as the new weapon of war, the tank fascinated all; but the masters of its tactics, men such as JFC Fuller, who seemed to prophesise the coming second World War and the advent of all-mechanised armies, went unheeded. Experiments into various models of tank, including the Medium C, Vickers Medium Mk.I, and the never used self-propelled artillery piece, the Birch Gun, proved their effectiveness—if used correctly. Unfortunately, they rarely were.

For the upper-classes, cavalry remained the most distinguished command for an officer, and the prestige of serving with one hadn't diminished, even after the charges



across the mud and blood of the Western Front proved the end of the horse as a viable means of war.

Nevertheless, problems or no, the army was still expected to fight. In the Palestinian Mandate infantrymen broke up riots between Jews and Arabs, while in Ireland troops in Rolls-Royce armoured-cars supported the RIC in raids and searches. On the mainland, soldiers would find themselves increasingly used to support the police during strikes.

With no major war apparent the army languished as an Empire's police. Equipment and research advanced slowly, while the best and brightest of the new wave of tacticians and officers fell out of favour to find themselves posted to India or forcibly retired.

Troops in the British Army hadn't changed much in weaponry or uniform since the Great War. The .303 rifle remained the arm of the infantryman. During the war quality of training had been so good that the Germans originally thought they were facing ranks of machine-gunners. To imitate this, characters with a skill of 25% or higher in .303 Lee-Enfield can fire three times a combat round rather than the normal two. The Lewis and Vickers machine guns continued to serve as support weapons, but now attached to companies and platoons instead of regiments as in the Great War.

Officers remained armed with the .455 Webley V, V, or VI revolvers; although they could buy an alternative sidearm with their own money as long as they were chambered for the standard .455 ammunition (this includes the underappreciated, and somewhat rare, Webley-Fosbery semi-automatic revolver).

### *THE ROYAL NAVY*

Of all the services in the world, Britain's Royal Navy reigned as the dominant force for action on the high-seas. Or so it, and its nation, believed. The sad fact was that while still strong, the

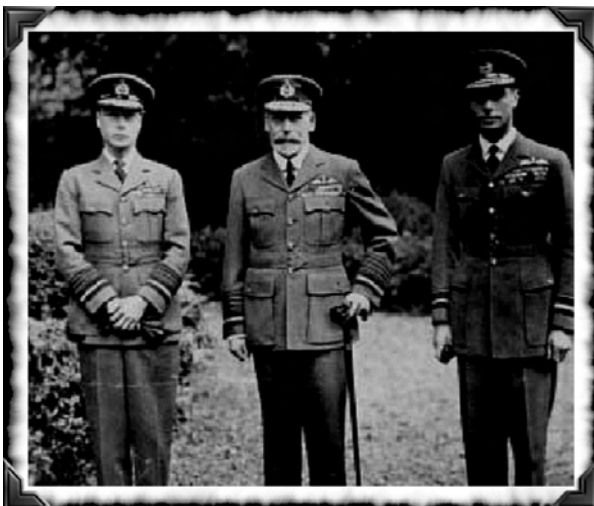
American and Japanese navies were going from strength to strength. Assuaged as a means to protect British interests, 1922's Washington Naval Treaty served only to

hamstrung the production of new flotillas, forcing the navy to scrap their planned N3 battleships and G3 battlecruisers. So bad was it that the Navy was compelled to reinforce their older ships of the line with updated engines and armour, and put on a brave face. Archaic and out of date even by the Great War, such ships were recommissioned to make up the shortfall of naval quantity and quality.

While Geddes Axe sliced the neck of the Army's budget the Royal Navy continued to get the lion's share of finances. Money was a hindrance, but problems lay more in international politics. Plans to build a reinforced naval base in Singapore were started and stopped by successive governments before finally being quashed near the end of the decade. Hong Kong had been barred from reinforcement by the Naval Treaty, and when the 1923 alliance with Japan ran out (Britain's inability to resurrect it enforced by the United States) control over the Pacific slackened. While some officers on both the British and Japanese sides held respect and admiration for their former allies, both governments moved from polite friendship to icy indifference.

The most famous warship of the 1920s was the world's largest naval vessel, the indomitable *HMS Hood*, commonly known as the *Mighty Hood*. With *HMS Repulse* and a number of light cruisers, *Hood* and company travelled the world, visiting foreign ports and drumming up support for international community as part of the Empire Cruise from September 1923 to November 1924.

Nevertheless, the Royal Navy remained a terrifying weight on the minds of those who had to stand against it, and British fleets still patrolled and guarded the throughways and byways of the oceans. It had just not yet sunk in that its days,



like those of humanity, might well be numbered...

### *THE ROYAL AIR FORCE*

Amalgamated from the British Army's Royal Flying Corp and Navy's Royal Naval Air Service, the RAF is the world's first significant military air arm. While some argued for its return to the fold, Air Marshal Hugh Trenchard, the RAF's chief-of-staff, argued that an air force could fight a war with planes, armoured-cars and the minimum of support. In 1922 this was put to the test, bombing the troublesome mandate of Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) into submission. It seemed to work, and the RAF managed to keep itself as a separate branch.

Cash-strapped Britain now accepts the maxim 'the bomber will always get through'—advocating massive bomber spending—but the woefully underequipped and underprepared RAF is no further from its Great War heyday. Until the next war in 1939 the RAF will find itself running into near twenty years of continual service in the Middle East and Africa, with little to no home-front action—barring a number of popular, but useless, fund-raisers and demonstrations. Winston Churchill admitted, for example, that the number of planes available for use in the Anglo-Irish War was barely 20. This didn't stop enterprising officers from trying, but such ventures proved less than stellar.

Aspiring aeronauts will awe to the aerobatics of the Armstrong-Whitworth Siskin and the naval Fairey Flycatcher—along with the multitude of WWI planes that remain in service. Bombers, though greater in number, never held the same appeal to plane-spotters.

### *MILITARY INTELLIGENCE 5 (MI5)*

MI5 was formed in 1909 as part of the Security Service Bureau. In 1914, the Bureau divided into internal and external groups, with the homeland security section renamed Directorate of Military Operations, section 5 (MO5). The name MI5 would not be granted until 1916 when it moved to Foreign Office control.

Headquartered at the War Office Building until 1925 and then relocated to Cromwell Road until 1937, the agency was headed by the able intellect of Vernon Kell, a staunch Christian and speaker of seven languages. Much of its staff was made of

the Old Boys Network of Oxbridge students—recruited by word of mouth and a distinct lack of background checks—something that would eventually come to haunt the agency post-Second World War when it became common knowledge many of their top men were Soviet spies. But the 1920s were the crowning period of MI5's existence with infiltration and agitation of trade unions, subversion of Communists and fringe groups, and all manner of sly and underhand derring-do. The service also ran stings on organised crime in support of Special Branch. In Ireland, MI5's intelligence ranged from the frequently disastrous to the impeccable; the IRA's methods proved hard to unravel, and treating it as a civil problem rather than a true war reduced the effectiveness of MI5's operations.

Curiously, MI5 also recruited heavily from the occult periphery of society. Maxwell Knight, later a disciple of Aleister Crowley, became a personal favourite of Kell—and was rumoured to have assisted in the running of an Occult Bureau within the organisation.

MI5 has jurisdiction within the British Empire, although there is some overlap with SIS. MI5 agents also lack legal power of arrest, and must instead use Special Branch officers to capture and charge suspects. This idiosyncrasy caused much disquiet between the two departments: many argued for them to be merged. None succeeded.

### *SECRET INTELLIGENCE SERVICE*

Much like MI5, SIS (originally known as MI6) fluctuated between military and Home Office control. Headed by former naval officer Cmdr Mansfield Smith-Cumming (known as "C" due to the manner in which he signed correspondences) SIS was Britain's foreign intelligence service, keeping tabs on friends and enemies alike.

After an admirable presentation during the Great War, infiltrating agents into Germany and Belgium and assisting the naval code-breakers of Room 40, the post-war atmosphere worried British bureaucracy. In order for SIS agents to carry out their agendas without upsetting diplomatic protocol, the Foreign Office created Passport Control Offices in its embassies, with the Chief Passport Officer an SIS agent. For much of the 1920s British intelligence slipped under the radar.

Cumming's faults lay in his fixation in the threat afforded by the USSR. While MI5 also spent much effort chasing real and imaginary Soviets, Smith-Cumming was paranoid. British agents such as Sidney Reilly and Captain George Hill were sent deep into the Soviet Union in attempts to support anti-Bolshevik White Russians and supposedly enact a plan to assassinate Lenin. More agents would be lost in these jaunts to the Soviet secret police (the *Cheka* until 1922 and the *NKVD* afterwards) than everywhere else in the world combined. In 1923 Smith-Cumming himself died and was replaced by Sir Hubert "Quex" Sinclair, a far less jocular figure. Much of Quex's skill stemmed from his ruthlessness and lust for the good-life (much of high-society knew full well he was head of SIS). This fear of Red Russia went so far as to have MI6 help forge a document to bring down its own Labour government. The Zinoviev Letter has gone down in history as one of Britain's most remarkable hoaxes.

Overall, these were sour times for SIS. Viewed as a useless political minefield by the Foreign Office, there were to be no great intelligence coups until well into the Second World War.

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## *PLANES, TRAINS AND AUTOMOBILES*

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### *AEROPLANES*

During the war aeroplanes were outlawed for most public use. Civilian aircraft (of which there were few) were interred or requisitioned by the government until 1919, when the Defence of the Realm Act was repealed. The Air Navigation Act of the same year came into force on February 27<sup>th</sup>, legally allowing civilians to start their own airlines or fly civilian aircraft. The law didn't apply to foreign services: the French airline *Grands Express Aériens* began service between Paris and London's Croyden aerodrome early February, a month before the introduction of British-run flights.

By 1921 three British airlines ran a London-Paris service: Aircraft Transport & Travel (AT&T); Daimler Air Hire, and Handley Page Transport. While foreign airlines were subsidised by their governments, British airlines weren't. In protest,



on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1921, all three airlines closed their doors for a week. AT&T did not reopen, instead being sold to Daimler.

Imperial Airways (IAL) was formed by the amalgamation of Handley Page Transport, Daimler and smaller internal companies in 1924. This time it was subsidised by the Air Ministry.

Though previous airlines had flown from Alexandra Park Aerodrome, Manchester, IAL refused to use aerodromes north of Croyden—stating anywhere north of London was ‘provincial’ and therefore unnecessary. Alexandra Park was demolished soon after. Even so the airline proved popular. Empire Services, a subsidiary that linked the British Empire began in 1928 (although passengers heading for the Orient flew to Paris, took a train to the Mediterranean, and then boarded flying boats to continue).



Travel by plane was an experience. The first planes were converted bombers—ranging from the Handley Page Type O to the Vickers Vimy (used for the first non-stop cross-Atlantic flight in 1919 by RAF pilots John Atlock and Arthur Brown). Passengers were given flight jackets and goggles, weighed (due to the careful balancing act needed to keep the airframes flying) and squeezed aboard. Introduction of purpose-built transporters by 1920 meant greater comfort and speed, with planes like the Bristol Ten-Seater or the infamous Vickers Vulcan (which exited service in 1928 after the last one crashed). By 1923 the average number of passengers able to be carried had gone from four to six. By 1930 this was around ten. Some planes even managed twenty passengers at a pinch.

Hiring a private aircraft was possible, if expensive. Both Daimler (pre-1924) and the travel agency Thomas Cook had planes available. £8.0.0 per hour per passenger is the optimal rate for a ‘modern’ aircraft, but the earlier the model the cheaper the price (though rarely less than £4.0.0 an hour).

Booking a flight is a relatively easy business in the ‘20s, with security practically non-existent and

aerodromes little more than fields and smatterings of outbuildings and hangars. A mile by air is between ¼d and ½d depending on the carrier and the amount of comfort one wishes to ride in.

## TRAINS

Britain’s rail network was the oldest in the world, and by 1920 totalled over 20,000 miles of standard gauge track. It employed more than 300,000 workers, and its profits made it *the* force of British industry. Britain survived on timetables.

The Great War had seen railways brought under the control of the government, and with the creation of the Ministry of Transport in 1919 there seemed a case for true nationalisation. However, Lloyd-George’s government saw nationalisation as a dangerous trend; instead it amalgamated Britain’s 120 separate railways into four ‘super’ companies. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1923 the 1921 Grouping Act came into force, although most of the railways had already merged by that date.

The Big Four railways were:

- London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS)
- Great Western Railway (GWR)
- London and North Eastern Railway (LNER)
- Southern Railway (SR)

Certain railways remained outside the remit of the merger, for example those of non-standard gauge, tracks that travelled up the Scottish mountains or those part of local or private lines not linked to the main branches, were rarely included. The liveries and named trains created an almost jingoistic loyalty among locals and employees.

Travelling by train was a normal occurrence for most of Britain; in 1920, for example, there were over 2,000 million passenger journeys. While a third of these travels were by commuters holding season tickets, putting an average of one train ride per person in the UK every twelve days. Most train carriages were compartmentalised, with three or four ‘booths’ within which half a dozen people could be seated. A brake (or guard) van was at the rear, where the train’s guard (*conductor*) resided. A separate female booth (or ‘snug’) was often offered, reachable only from the station platform. Unlike in the movies, guards did not check for tickets—their task was to handle train security.



Trains came in 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class seating (2<sup>nd</sup> had been phased out by 1919 except in rare cases), and most were gas-heated and electrically lit. On average a 3<sup>rd</sup> class ticket was priced at 1½d per mile and 1<sup>st</sup> class at 2½d per mile, but fares increased or decreased depending on season, location and time. Concession and holiday tickets of anything up to a ½ off the usual price were available for weekends and bank holidays. For multiple journeys, season tickets cost between 5/- and £10.0.0 depending on distance travelled (commuting from the London suburbs to the City and back would be at the low-end, while across the entire railway network would be at the pricier side). Travelling through another railway company's area nearly always meant being disallowed leaving the train, except when necessary to change tracks. No two stations across the country were more than a day apart, and it was rare for even the tiniest village to lack a station on mainland Britain. By the end of the decade most journeys were less than ten hours; sleeping carriages turned into private rooms for those rich enough to nap on their sojourns.

A railway's passenger services came second to the task of freight. 300 million tons of cargo a year was being run between railheads, and as seen in 1926, without trains running the country would come to a standstill.

In London, the Underground (colloquially known as the Tube) serves to link much of the city and its rapidly expanding suburbs. Tickets cost around ½d per station. A complete map of the Tube is beyond the bounds of this guide, but can be found easily and makes a wonderful resource for games.

## CARS

In 1902, horse-drawn vehicles numbered over a million. By 1929 this had dipped to only 50,000. The internal combustion engine had replaced the sturdy dray horse that had served for centuries.

This is not to say the horse died out as a means of transport; hansom cabs, urban and rural deliverymen, collieries and farmers continued to use them throughout the era, but the car had become the weapon of choice for even the lower-middle-class traveller.

The grim irony of the early-1920s was that, while the government and industry sought to make the public buy British-manufactured cars, the increasing low-cost of foreign vehicles (even with increasingly high import tariffs) made pre-war American cars a more lucrative offer until Morris beat Ford for the lion's share of the market in 1925. European cars remained rarer, due to nationalist sentiment and their connoisseur-like quality; German Mercedes-Benz and French Bugatti sports cars were available only to the richest of motor enthusiasts. Britain's motor industry, even if it was picking up, remained a music-hall joke for the decade.

The major British car companies of the era were: Austen (all cars built around the same 3620cc 20hp engine); Bentley; BSA (largest motorcycle producer in the world, and favourite of the King); Hillman; Humber; Lea-Francis and Vulcan (joint enterprise); Morris (makers of cheap, but high-quality, cars); Riley (famed for their sleek racing designs and motto: "As old as the industry, as modern as the hour"); Rolls-Royce; Rootes (a large commercial vehicle manufacturer); Singer; Standard Motor; Sunbeam (with their limousines); Triumph Motor Company; and Wolseley (which went into partnership with the Japanese company



Ishikawajima Ship Building and Engineering).

On average, prices went from £100 for a 1908 Ford Model-T or Hillman Ten, up to £3000 for a top of the line Mercedes-Benz. Enterprising souls could find methods of laying their hands on cheaper vehicles: many of the army's old trucks were sold off, and even de-armoured armoured-cars could be shipped back from the scrap yards of France, if one so desired.

For the driver of the 1920s, motoring was a mixed bag. Country folk hated cars and encouraged children to pelt passing motorists with stones, or laid the road with broken glass or nails. Policemen waited on open stretches of road with stopwatches in order to catch speeders (and as speed limits ranged between 10 and 20mph, the courts overflowed). Lack of parking spaces, traffic-jams and increasing accidents were the bane of the journeyman. Even the church complained, what with the increase in Sunday driving leaving religion in the dust.

Motor-sports became popular, both as professional and amateur amusement, and with some of the larger cars reaching speeds in excess of 140mph they were tense affairs. Safety came secondary to the thrill of the race. Most took place on private estates, but some were illegal races through the countryside—with blind-turns, hairpins and unwary pedestrians.

Hoardings (*billboards*) strung along roadsides became a new threat to the nation's beauty. Numerous petitions and rural sabotage groups attempted to thwart the spread of commercialism into the countryside, until finally British Petroleum and Shell stated they were going to join forces to 'preserve Britain's natural beauty' and took down most of their advertisements. Other companies followed suit.

Omnibuses (often called a bus or charabanc) had become motorised in towns and cities by 1914 and across almost the entire country by 1920. In London motorbuses had replaced horses before the war, and during the 1920s the K-type became the norm. Double-decked and open-topped, it was miserable to sit on the top deck when it rained. When roofs were introduced, people complained you couldn't smoke. Outside of London buses ranged in type and quality of service.

Other vehicles included coal-powered lorries (*trucks*), although these were slowly replaced by petrol variants, and taxis. Taxi-cabs remained a city speciality, with London famed for its black hansom-cabs. In the interwar years these had an archaic feel to them (mainly due to anachronistic laws including ground-clearance, the need for gentleman to be able to wear top-hats within, and space for a spare bale of hay, among others). Taxi prices, like bus prices, were ½d per mile or half-mile, depending on locale.

The motorcycle, having made a name as a rugged machine during the war, became favourite of the adventurous. With sidecar attached, young couples 'got away' for the weekend and even the better paid working-classes could afford a Triumph or a BSA. Bicycles stayed popular. A good quality Sunbeam or Rover being had for £5, with old or second-hand types for 6/- or such.

Note that while tax was introduced in 1920 and registration-plates were a necessity, there was no driving test until 1935.

## WATER TRAVEL

Even if planes were becoming accepted for international travel, ships remained the norm. Ferry services to Ireland, Holland, Zebrugge, France and the Channel Islands were cheaply available and run by the railway companies; barring weather, they rarely took more than three or four hours.

Boating further overseas was cheaper than by aeroplane and remained the only way to travel for the discerning gentleman. The *Cunard Line*, headquartered at Liverpool, was the main means of Atlantic travel, running a fleet from Liverpool and Southampton to New York and Halifax, Canada. While not the fastest of transporters, Cunard made a name by reason of its safety and atmosphere. For around £35 all-inclusive board, a traveller could be pampered like a king.

The *Union-Castle Line*, with lavender hulls and red-black funnels, ran between England and Cape Town, South Africa (via Southampton - Madeira - Cape Town - Port Elizabeth - Durban - Port Elizabeth - Cape Town - St.Helena - Ascension - Las Palmas - Southampton). Fortnightly runs also went round South Africa with stops at Aden, Mombasa and Tunis. Their claim to fame was their almost clockwork-like service; every



Thursday a ship at both docks would leave port, arriving at their destinations within minutes of each other—passing close enough on their journey for passengers to see an almost mirror-image of their vessel passing the other way.

Those heading for East Asia or Australasia often travel by Royal Chartered *P&O* or *Orient Steam Navigation Company* (the Orient Line). Using German transports sold at a loss after the war, and the two companies working together, weekly deliveries of mail could be made between England and Australia. Stops are made in Egypt, India, Burma, Malay, Singapore, Hong Kong (sometimes Shanghai) and Japan. From Australia one could go to San Francisco via Honolulu and Vancouver.

Travel to South America was by the *Pacific Steam Navigation Company* (Liverpool - Bordeaux - Lisbon - Cape Verde - Rio de Janeiro - Montevideo - Punta Arenas - Valparaiso - Arica - Mollendo - Callao) a subsidiary of the *Royal Mail Packet Company*. The latter also ran a Pacific service from 1921, right the way up to Los Angeles.

Travel to the Isle of Wight or the Channel Islands is done by small ferry. The *Southampton, Isle of Wight and South of England Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. Limited* is the most famous, mainly because it has the longest name in British corporate history.

Although the upkeep of the canal system has declined with the improving roads, much of the UK is cut with canals and canalised rivers. Those who work the canals often live there their entire lives, born and dying on boats passed down through generations. They are an insular sort, marrying their own kind, and with their own language, customs and communities.

### *PASSPORTS*

Before the war, British subjects were free to leave and return to the UK with no government control. Passports, made of a single sheaf of paper with a photograph and basic information were available, and aided in travel, but were mostly superfluous. The only European governments that demanded the issuing of passports for foreign travel were Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the coming of war forced the introduction of some form of management and in

1915 a two year passport (the same folded paper, but with a cardboard cover) was introduced.

In 1920 a new version, the ‘Old Blue’ (in the ‘book’ style that we recognise today) was introduced. Navy in colour and at 32 pages, it included a photograph and went into such detail as the carrier’s eye colour and occupation. All were signed by the Secretary of State himself. Two versions were produced: one for individuals (and extra detail for a spouse—with wives expected to place their maiden name), the other for families, including space for children. All of the information was handwritten, and could be easily forged or altered. Price was 10/6d.

While a passport is necessary to enter many European and western countries in the 1920s, a British citizen does *not* need a passport to leave or re-enter the UK during times of peace. Border and immigration authorities at British ports may harass and harangue, but even without proper documentation, a Briton is still British. A traveller is legally entitled to pass.

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## *THE MASSES AGAINST THE CLASSES: LIFE - CULTURE - SOCIETY*

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Society and culture of the 1920s was an evolution of pre-war norms. While the old men still controlled the government and industry, it was the young who did as they wished. Things that had been considered ‘unacceptable’ were brought over from Europe and the Americas and twisted into something new. These are heady times.

### *ALCOHOL*

Compared to alcohol laws of pre-war, the 1920s were strict. Before 1914 pubs were open from 5am to 12:30 at night. During the war beer was watered down, breweries were nationalised and pubs could only open from 11:00 to 14:40, with another opening from 17:00 to 22:30pm (an hour shorter to both on Sundays). People had viewed the laws as necessary, if Draconian, for the war but during peace it all seemed somewhat unnecessary. Nevertheless, DORA remained until 1921, when the Licensing Act of the same year upheld what had originally been emergency laws.

Ways were found around it, nevertheless. For example, as long as food was purchased with a beer after 23:00 it was still legal, and many unwanted sandwiches were paid for after the official closing time.

#### SINISTER SEED: LIBER HORRIBILUS

It's a strange job to be sure; the first time you've been asked to *get rid of* a book. But the bloke's adamant. It's dangerous, he says. It keeps coming back. And you scoffed. But now you know it's true. When he came in the following morning and put it on your desk, you thought it a practical joke. You burnt the thing in front of him. And the next morning he comes back, tears in his eyes. And you bury the damn thing. And the next day he returns it again.

And every time it comes back there's a new death. Acquaintances, close-friends, family—he says if he doesn't try to get rid of it, it tells him it'll *kill him*. The only problem is, you're getting mighty close to being a friend of his now—what with him showing up on your doorstep every day. Can books tell the difference between employer and employed?

The interwar era also saw a move towards the 'cocktail'. Previously, mixed spirits had been viewed with suspicion—and while gin and tonic was drunk to ward off malaria and Irish whiskey was considered superb with a fine cigar—spirits were rarely drunk except from a hip-flask. The mixed-drinks of the 1920s allowed respectable women to drink for the first time in public, and flappers could be found nursing cigarettes and cocktails in nightclubs and parties up and down the country.

Where nightclubs were unavailable, aspiring party-goers set up 'bottle parties.' So long as they were 'private' and all alcohol was purchased prior to the party itself, anything went. A polite enquiry was made for the type and quantity of alcohol wanted and money 'donated' to the host. 1924 brought the American 'cocktail party,' which soon seeped into upper-class consciousness with its semi-formal dress and intimate atmosphere.

Investigators should be wary, however, in assuming alcohol is available everywhere. Christian temperance societies had advocated prohibition for decades, and many Welsh and Scottish Baptists and Methodists were actively abstinent. Prime Minister Lloyd George, himself teetotal, gave speeches on the benefits of self-restraint and it was he who helped keep licensing laws so strict. Even the Royal Family swore off alcohol for the duration of the war, although leading politicians distanced themselves from such rashness. Some hotels, especially in the more Christian north and west, were 'temperance houses'—refusing to serve, or allow, alcohol on the premises. Rare are villages and towns being officially dry, but there were some, such as the Bournville district of Birmingham, built by the Cadbury chocolate company for its factory workers to live. Prohibition was never a serious threat, however. When American lawman William "Pussyfoot" Johnson visited the UK in 1919 to preach international prohibition he was manhandled so badly by a group of medical students that he ended up losing an eye. No one tried to push for nationwide prohibition so openly again.

#### BRIGHT YOUNG THINGS

The Bright Young Things of 1920s Britain were a breed-apart from earlier youth. Gay abandon had overtaken and the actions of a significant minority of affluent 20-somethings scandalised the nation. Throwing aside conventions and ignoring disapproval they took to indecent clothing, sexual promiscuity, American dance, fast cars, recreational drug use and wanton alcoholism.

Men were accused of being tasteless, anaemic, feminine and bloodless (although, as the Daily Mail stated, that is not to say "sexually depraved"). On the flipside of the coin, women took to asexuality, with masculine haircuts, hard-drinking and lewd public displays—such as smoking or driving. The more aesthetically minded called themselves "artists," rented studios in Chelsea and declared themselves Bohemian: which meant using items for irregular purposes, like spreading butter with a cutthroat razor or using a brandy-glass as a teacup.

Fancy-dress parties, paper-chases and sojourns to the countryside to race cars or picnic became daily adventures for those with money to do so.

Gentleman's clubs returned to popularity, and soon the Bertie Worcester image of the slightly gormless fop wiling away hangover tainted hours with unearned money became the model. The newspapers attacked their excesses bitterly.

For the most part the era of the Bright Young Things was not an intellectual backlash but an emotional one. The age of reason had failed them, brought on war, and destroyed nations. This new society was, for some, a drive against just that. For others it was an excuse to get very, very drunk.

### CINEMA

Known in Britain as 'pictures' or 'flicks', cinemas became entertainment for every strata of society.

The vulgar American scene drifted away with the introduction of specially filmed British shorts prior to main showings. Newsreels, travelogues of the colonies and foreign climes, history pieces and religious instructions drew crowds that had hitherto considered moving pictures decadent or sinful. German films went a long way toward removing the stigma of the war, and while American movies ruled the world they were filled with home-grown actors like Charlie Chaplin, Stan Laurel, Alec B. Francis and Peggy Hyland.

British movies remained low in quality—not necessarily of script, but definitely in production values, and in the end a government quota was needed to keep British cinema afloat. Some Brits broke through. Hitchcock made his name with sexually-charged thrillers, and thousands shivered to his 1926 silent classic *The Lodger*, with its Jack the Ripper-esque killer, innocent accused and hysterical public witch-hunt.

The draws of the era were westerns, romantic dramas and cartoons like Felix the Cat. From 1927 'Talkies' were big news, but as only inner-city cinemas could afford to wire for sound, audiences were more amused by the American accents than anything else.

### PROSTHETICS AND PLASTIC SURGERY

With new ways to kill and maim, so the horrors of war also create some medical benefit for the survivors. From the Great War came the modernisation of plastic surgery and the production of realistic prostheses. New Zealander Harold Gillespie pioneered methods of facial surgery that helped thousands replace their tin and plaster facial masks with something resembling a face. That was still a fraction of the injured; thousands more continued to wear them: symbols of war, their phantom owners turned objects of revulsion. Gillespie would continue his work throughout the peace, being knighted in 1930. For those unlucky enough to have been caught at the beginning of the conflict, or without the benefit of a plastic surgeon, ceramic jaws and vulcanised coverings became the order of the day. Prosthetics remained crude, but became more and more lifelike. Wood and tin limbs replaced hooks and pegs. Others made do with wheelchairs. Getting new appendages was not a pleasant experience; finding a leg or arm that fit without chafing was arduous, expensive and time-confusing. Few proudly bore their scars; most eked out miserable lives hidden from sight, shunned by a public they had fought for.

A single showing (as compared to 'continuous showing' that for the price of a single ticket allowed you to stay in all day) cost roughly 6d.

Pornographic movies, euphemistically known as blue, stag or 'butler' films, were immensely popular, and ranged between nudity and hardcore pornography. Even large country towns boasted places to view such titillation, at a brothel or 'after hours' at legitimate picture houses. Obscenity laws being stricter than today prosecutions and raids of such showings were all too common.

### COMMUNICATIONS

The Victorians had shepherded in the epoch of mass-communication with a complex and well-managed postal and telegraph system. A letter of 1oz could be sent pretty much anywhere in the UK for under 1½d, with Imperial and American post at roughly the same price. Parcels were 6d for 2lbs and 9d for 5lbs, or 1/- for 9lbs. Telegrams,

although falling out of favour due to telephones, cost 1/- for the first 12 words and 1d for each extra word, with a 6d surcharge on Sundays and public holidays.

In fact the postal service—handled by Royal Mail under the General Post Office (GPO) since 1660—was so good that one could post a letter from London to Glasgow early morning and receive a reply late-afternoon. Multiple deliveries during the day and mail sorted on mail trains (Travelling Post Offices) made Britain's monopolised post-service one of the best in the world.

As well as mail, telephone was also controlled by the GPO, who had a government warrant to handle any communications between a *sender* and *receiver*. In 1912 the GPO was granted power over practically all the telephone networks in Britain. The telephone did not make serious inroads, however, with only one phone per 7 people. Even in London—which contained almost half of all the telephones in the British Isles—it was the privilege of the moneyed. Home telephones being scarce, these numbers are made up through the introduction of public phone boxes in chemists and department stores, and in the street (via the quintessential red phone boxes). Costs were a few pennies for a few minutes, but getting in contact could be hard, as with telephone exchanges being manual it was necessary to directly phone the operator and give them the number needing to be reached. Unlike in America it was rare to wait in a queue for a connection to be made, but at busy times, in more rural areas, branch lines could become crowded.

The wireless (rarely called radio in this era) was dominated by the GPO. Fearful of the sort of 'radio wars' that were taking place between rival broadcasters in America, with businesses jamming each other and causing a dreadful mess, the British government sought to monopolise the airwaves via a single agency. The GPO quickly managed to argue that *sending* and *receiving* did not need single locations, and so (after being forced to halt all radio tests between November 1920 and February 1922 by the military) on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1922, the various radio broadcasters of the UK amalgamated into the British Broadcasting Company (BBC). Over the next few years it would cover the entirety of Great Britain. In the early days one needed to purchase an expensive wireless-set with earphones in order to



hear anything (taking into account atmospheric and the usual problems of broadcast). Most people had more fun making their own radios using guides provided by newspapers than actually listening to broadcasts and for £2 it was cheaper than a manufactured set. In 1924 there was public interest in trying to tune their radios to hear messages from Mars. None were received.

Radio broadcasts through much of the era were stuffy affairs, with educational material, and live classical music provided by orchestras. This fell in line with the impressions of Director Lord Reith (knighted 1927), who said the BBC should be uplifting, religious, educational and impartial. The upper-class BBC accent became the norm, along with an impartiality that surprised many listeners. In late-1926 the Company was dissolved and replaced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, with what was considered one of the best news broadcast services in the entire world. The BBC also produced newsreel footage to be shown at cinemas.

By the latter quarter of the decade, 'popular music' was making in-roads. Christopher Stone, considered the first true disc-jockey, with his relaxed familiar air was completely different to the BBC's formal broadcasts. Throughout this period there was also a threat to the BBC from 'pirate radio' stationed across the Channel in the less regulated Europe or, rarely, through 'broadcasting yachts' that travelled up and down the coastline. With the BBC banned from advertising, for example, one such craft, *Radio Ceto*, publicised national newspapers.

John Logie Baird's television (known as a 'phonovision') was still in its infancy. The public rarely saw examples of it except at large displays, or—from 1928—in the form of manufactured sets that cost many hundreds of pounds. The Baird



Model C was one such example, and irregular tests were held, with viewers able to watch blurry-reddish images little bigger than a couple of inches.

A list of broadcasts, information, interviews and television tests could be found in the *Radio Times*, published Fridays, costing 2d.

## DRUGS

British society had been founded on the rights of an individual to use and abuse his body as he saw fit, and up until the Great War drugs had been licensed only prior to public sale. Under the Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) in 1916, however, article 40b made it a criminal offence for pharmacists to sell opium substances to British servicemen on leave, and placed the Home Office in charge of inspection of pharmacist's premises and records.

In 1920 DORA was tightened with the Dangerous Drugs Act. The provisions of the Act put controls on laudanum and other opium derivatives. Many of the reasons for control were based on hearsay and scaremongering. Cocaine was banned, carried by stories of 'crazed soldiers' running rampant across Europe, which—along with the death of actress and socialite Billie Carlton, supposedly of an overdose at a party in 1918—incited a wave of public anti-cocaine sentiment. Smoking opium was banned too, chiefly because it was considered a 'Chinese vice' and dangerous to white morals.

In 1921 it became illegal for non-medical practitioners to possess or deal in drugs without a prescription. Doctors (called general practitioners or GPs in the UK), unlike pharmacists, did not have to write complex records of every prescription dealt until a new Act was passed in 1926. Nevertheless, doctors could prescribe themselves drugs and there was no control over why a doctor prescribed a drug in the first place—this was at his or her discretion.

A year after the 1920 Act, police officers were given the duty of inspecting pharmacies. Few bothered and when they did it was merely cursory. As doctors could prescribe

freely, few addicts needed to turn to crime to support their habit.

Things would change slightly in 1926. Commissioned to investigate drug use in the UK, a government report came to the conclusion that drug use was a disease and not a choice. The government agreed, leaving drug policy to the Ministry of Health and individual doctors rather than strict legal punishment. Nonetheless, in 1928, cannabis—deliberately misinterpreted by bored journalists as being as strong and dangerous as opium—was made illegal to possess. Until then it had been a relatively popular smoke amongst all classes, and had been proposed by Christian groups as a preferable replacement to harder drugs.

For the 1920s, therefore, drugs were easy to come by if one's doctor was suitably sympathetic. Rarely did a GP refuse a prescription, and up until the 1950s early morning queues could be seen waiting to collect their doses from local pharmacies.

Recreational use of drugs remained relatively uncommon. Drug parties held by the upper-classes rarely descended into the orgies of sex accused by newspapers, and nightclubs were easy places to find a dealer if one so desired, but drugs for fun were very much frowned upon in the pit-and mill-towns of the working-classes. Addiction remained common, but addiction for pleasure was not.

Other hard drugs were practically unknown by the public during the period. Methamphetamine had been synthesised in Japan in 1919. Their military soon found it reduced hunger and removed fatigue, and it was marketed internationally as such. Between the turn of the decade and 1923 crystal meth was sure to have changed hands between British and Japanese servicemen during the Anglo-Japanese alliance or been dabbled in by Orientalist sects.

Barbiturates, nitrous oxide (laughing gas), mescaline, hallucinogenic mushrooms, ether and other similar substances remained legal and found niche use among avant-garde artistes, occultists and the youthful rich. A





new drug called 'liao' has a tiny but zealous following among the consorts of one Dr Whitney Mershe. Smoked and partaken of in food at the frequent parties held at his home in Kent, those addicted have found themselves becoming increasingly drawn towards Mershe's servants, the strange Oriental group he calls 'Tcho-Tcho' (see pg.95)

### FADS

For rich and poor the 1920s was the period of trends, many foreign, some home-grown.

1921 introduced the pogo-stick to the British Isles, marketed as a French curio. Newspapers ran a number of bemusing articles on the apparent benefits of it for transport and health, before realising it was a children's toy and settling down. It soon fell out of the public mind, to be replaced by Mahjong (written Mah-Jong or Mahjongg at the time). Having been imported to America from China, the game crossed the Atlantic to Britain in 1923. By Christmas stores featured editions of various qualities and values (Woolworths sold a nice wood edition for 4/-) and a number of guides on how to win had been published. Newspapers ran Zen-like instructions on the best ways to play, including nonsensical statements on life, the universe and everything. For a time even the mining communities of Wales could be heard talking about East Wind, Red and Green Dragons and the correct manner of saying Mahjong.

Crossword puzzles became the rage of 1924. Printed in Sunday newspapers, and called 'crossword squares' or 'word-crosses,' they soon spread to the dailies. Prizes were offered to the first reader to solve it, although the papers were underhand—many such puzzles contained multiple answers and papers refused to pay. Unlike their American counterparts, British crosswords became the darlings of the intelligentsia. While they petered out of popularity among the working-classes, Oxford dons and scholars created their own versions, rife with cryptic clues, puns and literary allusions. The British "cryptic crossword" had been born; wherein one first had to decipher the meaning of the actual clue before one could work out the answer to it. A sudden lust for words and general knowledge sprung forth, and they went from fad to national pastime as players sought to increase their vocabularies.

Outside of the living room, motor-scooters (popularly called Scootamotas) became chic. Though invented as far back as the 1890s, Bradshaw's 1919 design launched a new interest. For a time it seemed like the future would belong to these variations of the motorcycle, and the motorcar would be replaced with two-wheels. Sir Philip Sassoon, cousin to poet Siegfried Sassoon and one of the most eligible bachelors in Britain, took to the motor-scooter almost immediately and lauded its benefits, at least until confusing the accelerator for the brake during a public display. He subsequently took up hedge-hopping in a Curtiss JN4 aeroplane, and the scooter disappeared until after the Second World War.

From 1921 to 1925 the American-run Gordon Bennett Balloon Cup was held in Europe, and became deeply popular. While no British team ever won, people would travel from across the Empire to see the 'most prestigious event in aviation.' Another American introduction, the yo-yo, hit British shores in 1928. One could not go down a London street without seeing someone playing with one; from children to the most impeccably dressed bank-managers.

Outside of toys and playthings, other fads swept the nation. Orientalism, a lust for all things of the Far East, reached its apex. Household goods were imported or mocked-up, and kimonos, fans, parasols and cheongsams became fashionable for the ladies of society. The discovery of the relatively unrifled Tomb of Tutankhamen in Egypt in 1922 (it was reported sporadically from November 29<sup>th</sup> of that year, but people only took real interest from February 1923) created a vogue for 'Egyptology'. Copies of jewellery were worn, and hieroglyphic embroidery and scarab mosaics found themselves on clothing and upholstery. The academic world was startled, then amused, by the interest. Otherwise boring tours and lectures became sell-outs, and enterprising historians penned quick reads for the uninitiated. In London, there was serious talk of naming the new Underground railway line—which ran through both the districts of Tooting and Camden—the Tootencamden Line.

Things may have died down if not for the supposed 'Curse of the Pharaohs.' The deaths of Lord Carnarvon (who had funded and helped in the Tutankhamen expedition) and amateur American archaeologist George Jay Gould I were

quickly ascribed it to the ire of dead Egyptian kings. When queried on the subject in New York, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle replied: "An evil elemental may have caused Lord Carnarvon's fatal illness. One does not know what elementals existed in those days, nor what their powers might be. The Egyptians knew a great deal more about those things than we do." Later he admitted a belief in deadly fungus spores rather than some malevolent curse. Ever the tough, Howard Carter laughed off such talk and continued his excavations.

### SINISTER SEEDS: WAR-LOCK'D

By the time the police arrived, there was nothing to be done. The townsfolk stood in silence, watching the flames die to embers, cheeks streaked with soot, faces masks of calm. Self-defence, they said; he was armed, after all. But Old Tom had never done anything like that before – most of the time he daren't even move from his rocking-chair. But to burn him? Alive?

And this is not the beginning. A rash of brutal murders sweeps the town; perpetrators and victims fighting each other in blank, puppet-like stupors. Mass-hysteria, the papers say. Yet nothing seems to stop it. Always there are two people nearby: Jack Barnham, the butcher, and Jedediah Sweet, a young farmhand. They're different as chalk and cheese; except they're both powerful warlocks; they both hate each other; and they both use the townspeople as pawns in their hatred. Assassins and bodyguards, the populace are disposable. Why get your hands dirty when someone else can (unwittingly) do it for you?

Other fads were more destructive. A backlash against 'modernism' led to the tarring-and-feathering of many statues and artworks across the country, and there was a sudden and thankfully short craze for burning down stately homes in the latter-half of the decade.

### FASHION

Clothing underwent huge transformations during the 1920s. For women the introduction of viscose (known as rayon from 1928) reduced the weight and cost of clothing, and allowed brighter colours.

Women no longer worried about getting dirty or ruining their clothes as much as before, and the American-habit of buying cheap mass-produced items for short-term use, instead of the old British method of buying something that would last a lifetime, caught on. Each season brought a new cut or colour in as fashionable. Skirt lengths fluctuated; between 1920 and 1923 it dipped to above the ankle, whereupon in 1925 it suddenly rushed up to just below the knee. A year later it had risen again, this time to show the knee, with some women going further—leaving the barest wisp of undergarment showing. High heels, the refuge of the immoral, were now standard issue for even middle-aged women.

The shortened haircut of the Great War, needed to keep hair from getting caught in machinery, returned. For the young and adventurous, the shingle bob came in 1923, much to the establishment's chagrin, and was soon replaced by the strikingly boyish Eton crop of 1926. Yet these were mainly the purviews of the rich; while many women shortened their hair, few attempted such extremes. Makeup remained little known to the majority of women, and while eyelash dye and shadow was sometimes used, it never reached the popularity afforded it in Paris or the United States.

For men, clothing changes were far less radical. Suits and shirts with disposable collars remained the rule; the new 'soft collar' shirts were only sported by young, well-paid professionals. Everyday wear of short suit jackets and cuffed trousers replaced Victorian suits, and blazers and jumpers (in a variety of colours) slowly became acceptable. Top hats and bowlers were only worn for weddings and white-tie social functions—fashionable men made do with a Trilby or Boater, the more down-to-earth type with a flat-cap. Failing to wear a hat was the sign of the Libertine or the worst type of drudgeon. During holidays and country-retreats, flannel trousers and 'plus four' knickerbockers were considered passable. After the heat-wave of 1923, the prevalence for lighter, looser-fitting clothing dawned. Three-piece suits fell out of favour and Oxford Bags (loose-fitting trousers) became fashionable.

The beard too disappeared; the only people sporting one being His Majesty, arty-types and foreigners—the latter two cause for suspicion. Among smokers the pipe became passé, but the working-class still puffed rather than purchase

‘fag-shag’ and cigarette-paper to roll one’s own, which was viewed as the epitome of arty-farty living.

### THE GENERAL STRIKE

Though Britain had suffered through strikes before, the General Strike shaped the nation’s impression of union power, politics, class and order.



Coal-mining had reached a slump in 1925. The economy was in decline, and the Gold Standard put the £UK Sterling at an unfeasibly high rate of exchange to the US Dollar. Loosening control on Germany had allowed it to use coal instead of money to repay its war reparations to the Allies; while strip-mining of British coal for the war meant less coal to dig anyway. Mine owners cut employee wages. The Conservative government paid the difference for nine months in what was known as Red Friday, an attempt to hold off the threat of strike and to look into the matter.

In 1926 the government committee recommended removing subsidies for miners and allowing wages to drop. In response the Trade Union Congress (TUC) convened and declared strikes would begin May 3, 1926, in support of the miners. Tense negotiations between Labour (who feared the sudden reactionary element in the TUC), the Conservative government and the TUC commenced, but got nowhere.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> the strikes began. The TUC closed key industries: railways, printers, dockhands, steelworkers etc. fearing that closing more could result in revolutionary furore. But it was out of their hands. The government, with nine months

preparation, called out the army and the police, as well as civilian volunteer groups like the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies (OMS), who delivered supplies and took over strikers’ jobs. The country came to a standstill. Newspapers weren’t printed. The BBC was allowed to broadcast updates four times a day, but much to the corporation’s chagrin was forced to toe the government line.

The public were unimpressed, seeing the Strike as reactionary and undemocratic. Winston Churchill, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, edited a government newspaper called the *British Gazette*, its content better suited for the next World War, with calls for strikers to “unconditionally surrender” or “face the consequences.”

### WOMEN

What women had gained during the war, they lost immediately after. Taking over the jobs of men sent off to fight; they had worked in munitions factories, driven buses, flown planes, served as nurses, and died as indiscriminately as anyone else on the home-front. In 1918 women over the age of 30 were finally given suffrage along with all men over 21 years of age.

But by late-1920 most women found themselves without jobs. Returning soldiers, tired of war, slotted back into their previous lives. Working-class women toiled to survive, but the middle- and upper-class ladies were disillusioned. Now only filing jobs and secretarial work were open to them, alongside the old ‘pink collar’ employment of nursing or teaching. Some rebelled, becoming doctors, solicitors (the first in 1922) and adventurers of various ilk, but wages remained low and promotion nigh impossible.

Nonetheless, female investigators shouldn’t fear the odd conservative or busy-body, whose job in life is to uphold the old ways. There are more pressing matters at hand—like stopping evil cults and saving the world and whatnot...

The OMS, being mostly made of the middle-class and entirely civilian, was universally despised by the strikers. As troops and police were accepted as merely doing their job, violence towards them was rare. Instead, the strikers took their aggression out



on OMS workers, who were seen as mocking the strike-effort.

Slowly the government took the upper hand. Two unions went to court to prevent themselves being called out on strike: they won. Having lost the reins on individual unions, the TUC reversed its stance. The writing was on the wall. On the 12<sup>th</sup>, nine days after it started, the TUC officially ended the General Strike. It had lost control and paid the price. The miners continued alone for some months before accepting their employers' terms.

For the first time the country had come to a complete standstill. The somewhat incorrect image of cake-and-garden parties in the south while miners in the north starved took root in the social conscience. Travel had been made all but impossible, and for the duration of the emergency there was the palpable feeling that what had happened in 1917 in Russia might happen in England's Green and Pleasant Land. The unions licked their wounds, and the government came out looking good. Of tens of millions of strikers, only a few thousand arrests had been made.

### *HEALTH & MEDICINE*

The National Health Service not being introduced until 1948, interwar health care depended upon one's location and economic means.

In 1911 a scheme had been implemented for workers earning under £160 a year, whereby a fraction of their wages would be deducted monthly and go towards a government subsidised Medical Insurance. It did not solve everything. In the Scottish Highlands and Islands the population was so poor they couldn't afford even that, and the government gave them virtually free medical care. Not all doctors (called General Practitioners, or GPs, in the UK) were signed on to the Insurance Act and so did not need to accept government-paid insurance. People needing surgery or expensive prescriptions were also not covered. For those who still could get no help, Friendly Societies, local groups who might expect financial or other assistance, alleviated the burden as basic insurance companies. The desperate sometimes turned to loan-sharks, quacks or doctors who had been struck from the register and were acting illegally.

"Lloyd George's Ambulance Wagon," as National Insurance was called, went some way towards

helping a growing and modernising society but healthcare remained pitiable for the masses. From 1920-1924 approximately 77 out of every 1000 children in England and Wales died within a year of birth. By 1930 this had dropped to around 63 out of every 1000.

Cost aside, GPs ranged from the mediocre to the exceptional, and even the lowliest village, tucked away in a valley in the west midlands, could find itself with a superb doctor. Surgeons (always prefaced by Mr rather than Dr) were respected, and no longer considered butchers by the common man. In this time before the invention of penicillin, the best method for handling non-surgical illnesses remained bed-rest and pain-alleviating drugs.

Payment was a private matter between patient and doctor. Some were very scrupulous about being paid their full amount. Others were more than willing to waive fees if purse-strings were tight. Most, however, found a healthy middle-ground, with gratitude paid in kind—an extra couple of cuts of beef from the butcher in exchange for a prescription, for example.

Nursing in the 1920s was also an important part of country life. While hospital nurses have remained similar through the centuries, country nurses came in two forms: those who worked alone and those who worked under a doctor. The former were experts in their own right, and as good as (if not better than) many younger GPs. Those who worked under doctors were paid a stipend by the GP and acted as assistants or helped with paperwork.

Midwives were a specific practise. Some were registered, some were not. Some were official, whereas others had simply helped in so many births that they became the village's midwife. Most worked alone, but in dangerous or complex births a doctor might also be present. Since 1861 abortion has been illegal in the UK except in cases where the life of the mother was in danger, but it remained an open secret that midwives often worked a double life as abortionists. Though illegal, most people turned a blind eye to such 'necessities.' Mentally handicapped or deformed births, especially in the countryside or inner-city slums, were quite frequently disposed of and (post-1927) listed as stillbirths on the certificate.

## MUNITIONS

Before 1920, pistols were legal only with a license, while any other firearm could be bought (*sans* license) as long as a license was forthcoming when police asked. Some constabularies expected it shown immediately; others allowed a time limit to present it at the local station.

In 1920 the Firearms Act changed the rules of ownership with a precedent that would shake gun control for the rest of the century. Purchase of pistols or rifles now needed a Firearms Certificate (cost 2/6d for any previous weapon, 5/- for a new purchase, and 2/6d for recertification) to be presented at purchase. Certificates were dispensed by the local Chief Constable, who had complete discretion to refuse. A certificate lasted 3 years. Shotguns did not need a certificate and could be purchased 'off the rack'. Anyone over 14 could apply for a certificate and the fee was waived for those training cadets in rifle-shooting (and in these cases one certificate covered the entire cadet group).

Penalties for failing to register were steep: 3 months imprisonment or hard labour and/or a fine of £50, and anyone who had been imprisoned within the last 5 years were unable to apply for a certificate.

The act covered both Scotland and Ireland, although in Ireland conditions were even steeper: A firearm license lasted one year not three, and three months imprisonment for illegal possession was bumped up to two years. Only those over 16 could get a certificate, police were given powers of arrest or search on *suspicion* of possession, and prison sentences involving illegal weaponry ran consecutively rather than the normal concurrently.

Aside from members of the armed forces, postmen, veterinarians and policemen were all allowed to carry guns without certificate. Weapons were also allowed to be carried without certificate by warehouse or dock guards, common carriers (aka taxi drivers etc.), and servants, as long as their employer owned a certificate. Ships were also allowed to be armed without certification as long as the weapons were purchased outside the UK and weren't brought onto land.

Explosives, machineguns and weapons of extreme destructive power (e.g. hand grenades, flame-throwers, mortars etc.) were not covered by certification. A civilian with unique dispensation could own a machinegun, but ammunition would be scarce. Explosives were strictly regulated, but laxly controlled—ownership was nearly always illegal.

Investigators in the countryside or small towns will find that carrying a shotgun around in public is unlikely to raise stares as long as it is broken over the arm or otherwise appears safe. Such acts were unlikely to be wise in cities, where discretion is advised. A certificate may allow ownership but there are laws about causing a disturbance of the peace—which walking around openly with a handgun is sure to do. A high credit rating will allow greater flexibility in how one can go about things: few policemen below the rank of inspector were willing to search a peer's car for weapons, or arrest a military officer, without a superior present.

Players should note that the government tried very hard to remove all Great War 'souvenirs' from soldiers before they arrived in the UK. An officer might well have been able to keep his revolver (especially if he'd paid for it), and a corporal or sergeant a captured German Luger, but anything larger would have been confiscated. Those who did manage to smuggle a rifle into the country will find that the laws passed in the 1920s can result in heavy penalties if an owner is disqualified from ownership.

## MUSIC HALLS

The music hall had been a staple of Victorian life, with its mixture of music, comedy, speciality acts and other showmanship. But by the turn of the '20s the coming of cinema and cheap gramophones had taken the lustre off the enterprise. In higher end music halls, young men could take wives and sweethearts, purchase alcohol and enjoy light-hearted entertainment. In the lower types, most of the songs and jokes presented within would surprise audiences even today with their ribald humour, borderline references and *double entendre* filled lyrics. The *can-can* is considered one of the most erotic of dances available in the era, if inappropriate to be

mentioned in polite conversation.



Nonetheless, music halls remained popular throughout the decade. The Oxford, in London's Oxford Street, and the Alhambra in Leicester Square (with its Arabic design and lavish minaret towers), brought in thousands of patrons a week until finally closing their doors in 1926 and 1936 respectively. Music hall stars were household names: ukulele-playing George Formby; 4'6" tall, polydactyl comedian Little Titch; and inventor of the word 'spoof' Arthur Roberts, entertained millions. In a time when radio rarely played popular music their songs were whistled by workmen everywhere.

### NEWSPAPERS

By 1919 speed of delivery meant daily papers could reach all of mainland Britain, and local or speciality papers could be read far outside their old catchment areas. Cheap tabloids and gossip papers (of which there were many) could be purchased for ½d, while more informative broadsheets (large enough to boil a number of kettles of tea upon) cost 1d, with the imposing *Times* at 2d.

Major newspapers of the era catered to most political tastes, and one could tell the class and character of man from the paper he carried: *The Times* was the only paper suitable for serious readers, even if it remained practically indecipherable to most. Archaic spellings that would have made Lovecraft proud abounded ("oecconomy" and "aera", for example), and the first three and last three pages were advertisements; *The Morning Post* (favoured by King George V) was liberal but imperialist, forward-thinking yet oddly bigoted—sometimes even anti-Semitic—and rabidly anti-Communist; *The Daily Telegraph* modelled itself on *The*

*Times* but was more for businessmen. It also had more pages of adverts than any other broadsheet; *The Daily News* was pro-Liberal, but not outspokenly so, and very popular due to its non-news material, including book reviews, recipes and guides; *The Daily Chronicle* was also Liberal but far more sensationalist, with much of murders and other horrors; *The Daily Mail* had only just lost its more affectionate title of *The Daily Liar*, but kept up its attitude of bluff and bluster about decaying society. It was nationally famous for its 'stunts', and was the first to cater for women. Yellow-journalism of a sort somewhat less heady than across the Atlantic became its bread-and-butter.

The only true working class paper was the *Daily Herald*. Utterly socialist and pro-Labour, it was social-death for any middle-class individual to be seen with it. On the opposite end was the ultra-patriotic *John Bull* started by Horatio Bottomley—sometimes liberal MP arrested for fraud in 1922. It advocated pretty much anything short of invading Europe and making it a Crown Colony.

Sunday papers such as the *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Express* and *News of the World* ("a scandal sheet") were available and more inclined towards working class or family sales. For gossip on the upper-classes, *The Tatler* was published weekly and remained insanely popular. Many lords and ladies even wrote articles themselves and signed them with their real names!

Due to the increasing sex and violence in newspapers, from 1926 reporting on divorce cases was banned, and murder trials were limited to the judge's summing up. While this did abate some of the more lurid details, judges with a flair for the macabre or melodramatic soon summed up their cases in the most graphic of detail.

### NIGHTCLUBS

Dancing has always been a popular pastime and in the jazz-era nightclubs became a natural extension. They ranged between the highly respectable (membership in the *Night Light* included two princesses and four peers) and the downright seedy. Legally nightclubs could admit only members but few refused patrons, signing them up with the doorman and one of the house band's musicians as witnesses of character.

## HOMOSEXUALITY

Homosexuality during the 1920s never hit the novelty vogue it got in America (the so-called 'Pansy Craze') or in Weimar Germany. In 1918 Noel Pemberton Billing was sued for libel after publishing an article apparently stating that a conspiracy of homosexuality (and particularly lesbianism) was attempted to exterminate British 'manhood.' Though Billing won, the real upswing of the trial was a public reintroduced to words and ideas polite society had hidden for decades.

Male homosexuality was illegal, but the days of Oscar Wilde being sentenced to two years of hard labour for 'gross indecency' were past. Few cases went to court, and as long as the participants were consensual and was not paid for, it rarely received more than a fine. Homosexuality ran rampant in public schools and universities, where it was accepted as long as it remained experimental. The assumption that it was purvey of high-society was untrue, but gentlemen could be more obvious in their predilections than the working-classes, for whom 'sexual perversions' (as such acts were known) led to exile and violence. A complex underground grew, where men of all races and classes mixed, with their own language (known as Polari), ritual codes, and mannerisms.

The word 'gay' is known only among select circles to mean 'homosexual.' More common terms are pejoratives. 'Queer,' 'fruit' and 'bugger,' are common, though all have non-sexualised meanings and were often claimed by homosexuals themselves. Female homosexuals were known as 'lesbians' or 'Sapphics.'

Jazz of earlier 1920s Britain was far removed from the trumpets and saxophones of America. Instead it was filled with banjos, whistles, bells, tom-toms and even spoons playing—an alien noise to conservatives. Dance floors were filled with young men and women carrying themselves to such jerky routines as the 'Vampire' and 'Missouri Walk' before taking up American styles like the 'Breakaway', 'Lindy Hop' and 'Charleston' by the mid-to-late-'20s.

Nonetheless, the nightclub was not a national phenomenon. Swansea's chief of police reported that his city was free from their vice and unlike

London, which boasted hundreds, most cities were lucky to have a dozen or so at best. The need for so many in London was due to the relative frequency with which they were raided by police; usually up a drainpipe and via skylight to circumvent their bolted security doors. Club owners were fined and jailed, and clubs were closed only to reopen weeks later—often under the same name. The law made no distinction between the up-market and borderline illegal, and even the Prince of Wales was not safe, narrowly missing a raid at the fashionable *Kit-Kat Club* in London.

Jungle-music (as Black jazz was called, both kindly and otherwise) made serious inroads. Fans travelled hundreds of miles to London to awe at African-American musicians—who in turn awed at the respect afforded them by a public that was often more forgiving than in their native America.

The most famous nightclubs included: the *Café de Paris* in London's Piccadilly, with its wide ballroom and sweeping double staircase arching around the band; 1925's *Manhattan*, whose critical acclaim and hosting of the big names of American jazz both contributed to the weekly police raids; and 1927 saw the arrival of the well-known and spectacular *Silver Slipper* in Regent Street, with its expertly made glass dance floor (cracked by boisterous Romanian heir Prince Nicholas in 1929).

Perhaps the most celebrated club was the *43* – at 43 Gerrard Street in London's Soho. From 1921 well into the 1930s it was considered the premier site for 'anything goes' excitement. One night might see Liverpool millionaires arrive in a fleet of Bentleys filled with call-girls and offer to buy everyone in the club a drink, while the next might entertain a smoky meeting between gangland bosses beneath the soulful wails of New Orleans jazz virtuosos. One can rub shoulders with any class of people in the *43*—from out-of-towners hoping to see a taste of London to the occult crop tapping into the magickal scene, government agents shadowing foreign deals and slimy East End spivs wheeling and dealing. It is the perfect location for investigators to get embroiled in adventures, carry out meetings with friends and foes, and act out the fantasies of the Golden Twenties.

Drugs remained a very real problem for nightclub owners. Much like today, while seedier clubs allowed dealers to peddle as long as a cut of the

profits made it into the club's coffers, legitimate clubs viewed the illegality of drugs as a danger to their already tenuous licenses.

## OCCULTISM

Occultism had grown steadily since the late-1840s with various secret societies and new religions sprouting across Europe and the Americas. The Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a magickal society with three Orders of initiation, fragmented at the turn of the century leaving members to form often antagonistic societies based on, but unrelated to, the original's ethos. Aleister Crowley's *Argentum Astrum* (or A.:A.:) founded in 1907 became particularly infamous during the 1920s (for more information see p.72).

Mediums and spirit-communication quickly took root after the Great War, with thousands seeking to commune with dead friends and relatives. This was not limited to the social outcast—even William Mackenzie King, the Canadian Prime Minister (who was in power for two terms in the 1920s), was a secret user of mediums, Ouija boards and crystal balls.

1921 saw Dr Margaret Murray, an avowed Egyptologist, publish her book: *Witch Cults in Western Europe*. Taking liberally from Frazer's *Golden Bough* and rereading old ideas, her attempt to explain the history of European witchery, with its thirteen member covens and deliberate attempts to resist Christian expansion, proved titillating to readers. Even if witches were fans of human sacrifices and had been driven into hiding by witch-hunts, there was a certain amount of popularity for them in the so-called Deep England clique.

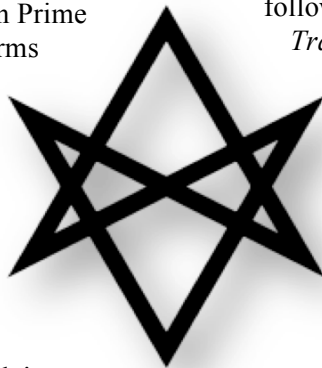
Deep England or 'ruralist' thought thrived on a return to an idealist 'Merrie England,' a pastoral time that may not have been, but could perhaps be made. A revolt against the war and the new-wave of industry that threatened to overturn an already injured society, Deep England became popular among the occult fringes.

A new breed of paranormal investigator was being born in the 1920s too: as a scientist, rational to the extreme with no interest in proving or disproving—merely interested in the facts. The Society for

Psychical Research, headquartered at 14 Deans Yard, Westminster, London, had been founded in 1882 in order to investigate all manner of paranormal phenomena. By the 1920s it had made a name for itself debunking numerous hoaxes, much to the chagrin of avowed spiritualists (like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle). The group rarely held a president for more than two years and during the decade they went through no less than six! Membership was 2 guineas per annum.

'Magickal' research, along with the newfangled Ouija board, became sources of amusement at parties, and occult artwork quickly became collector's pieces (see p.81). While it is up to the Keeper whether 'magick' in Crowley's vision of the world actually works, it is safe to assume that if it does it is surely linked in some way to the Mythos.

In 1921, amateur archaeologist Alfred Watkins brought his discovery of ley lines to the public, following it up with his book *The Old Straight Track* (1925). According to Watkins in pre-historic times, when Britain was densely wooded, straight line tracks crisscrossed the country for travel. His proof was based on the alignment of geological monuments and monoliths and how they followed seemingly set arrangements. Derided by the public, it eventually gained credence with occultists—although Watkins ascribed no paranormal ability to it himself. If they do exist, and what they signify, remains a mystery...



## RELIGION

Historically Britain has been a melting pot of faiths, but with the Church of England (a Protestant Anglican church) as the state religion, it is unsurprising that the majority of its public are Protestant.

After the Great War there was a movement from religion towards esoteric beliefs, atheism, agnosticism and eastern philosophy. Vicars and priests became increasingly upset about the lax morality of their flock and the decline in recognition of the Sabbath. The introduction of the motorcar, and the hobby of 'rambling' (sojourns out into the countryside on weekends) aided and abetted by railway companies to



increase sales—had, in some areas, more than halved Sunday services.

Taoism became popular, along with Buddhism and other non-violent and anti-war beliefs. Religious cults and evangelical Christian groups sprouted, calling the era the decline of civilisation and perhaps even the End of the World.

Within their own communities, Judaism and Catholicism flourished—sectarian and anti-Semitic violence only coming with the former during the Anglo-Irish War and the latter from the fascist movements. In the far more religiously devout areas of Scotland and Wales increasingly liberal England threatened to encroach on the old ways of life, and displays of ‘Englishness’ were sometimes met with distrust or even violence.

Throughout this, however, Protestant Christianity remained the mainstay of public life. While admitting to holding a different belief system was no real hindrance in everyday society (and had not been for almost a century), attempting to convert or advocate strange faiths was beyond the pale and a serious social *faux pas*.

## SPORTS

Britain’s national pastime, many foreign critics commented, was sport. While class and culture divided the nation, sport was one of the few things that every social group could talk about.

Rugby union was popular winter viewing for the mid-to-upper classes, and amongst everyone in Wales. Horse-racing, with the most important race being the Royal Ascot, is a mass-spectator sport. Shropshire’s own Gordon Richards is considered perhaps *the* greatest jockey in the world from 1925. Betting on horses is popular among every facet of society, and some conspiracy theorists argue that the only reason it is allowed is due to the tax money reaped.

The great sports of the UK are, however, cricket and football (*soccer*). Both are available in amateur (or gentleman) and professional formats. The former is for fun. The latter, rather vulgarly, involves being paid!

Cricket is the bastion of the middle-classes, founded on skill and good manners. County championships are common, and test-matches against other Imperial Dominions are national

events—especially when Australia, England’s cricketing nemesis, is involved. During particularly important test matches *everything* stops. Radios and newspapers will be flooded with cricketing info, to the detriment of anything else. It is not histrionic for people to say that when *Wisden Cricketers’ Almanack* is published each April it sells better than the Bible.

Football remains a working to lower-middle class sport. The introduction of the third division (separated into North and South sections in 1921) meant a greater number of teams playing at once. While the premiership matches are a time for people to wear their Sunday Best, local matches are flat-cap affairs. The quintessential image of the local football match is rain, mud, and a man with a greyhound champing at the leash standing on the sideline. Violence was uncommon and limited to noisy jostling. Investigators would do well to remember that 1920s footballs were heavy, leather spheres. Taking one to the head could well cause concussion or a nasty cut.

In Ireland, Gaelic football (alternatively called *peil*, *caid* or Gah) and hurling (*iománaíocht*) were popular since the Irish resurgence of the 1880s. Other commonly followed sports across the UK include greyhound-racing (the modern version introduced from America in the 1920s becoming wildly favoured by working-class folk) and blood-sports, including fox- and hare-hunting, grouse- and pheasant-shooting and more.

Motor-racing too found a niche. The most famous British faction was the Bentley Boys, a group of gentlemen racers who made names in and out of the driving seat. Winning the *24 Hours of Le Mans Race* five times during the decade was the least of their feats. Headquartered at south-east Grosvenor Square, London, (the locale of the American Embassy) rare was it when some wild party wasn’t taking place. Their green racing Bentleys parked hither-and-thither led the site to be known as Bentley Corner.

Sport was also one way for a working-class man to raise himself in the world. A good sportsman rode roughshod over class distinctions. In city slums, especially London’s East End, roving boxing matches would take place—some illegal, most bare-knuckle. Partakers could win good money and become house favourite, but it was rough, dirty work and sometimes lethal. The Kray Twins, future lords of the London underworld,



made their name on these circuits, using razor blades and underhand tactics to beat the opposition.

Rumours thrive about human-baiting; illegal fights between unarmed man and savage dog. While they are considered just rumours, there is some evidence they occurred—and police hinted at darker events spectators crowded to see...

### *THEATRE*

Unlike the music halls, theatre remained a strictly class affair. Best clothes were expected, and many top billings demanded dress-codes strict enough to limit them to the uppermost of society. In summer most city theatres closed, the assumption being residents would head to the coast during holidays.

With theatre controlled by the Royal Household, the Lord Chamberlain's Office had complete authority to edit or ban shows that were 'contrary to the public good.' Though attempts were made by playwrights to end such censorship, it would remain until the late 1960s.

'Theatreland' in London's West End, with its

Victorian and Edwardian neo-classical buildings, was a popular destination for weekend shows. The Apollo, Comedy Theatre, Savoy and Playhouse were some of the best in London, with Oldham Coliseum in Manchester and the King's Theatre, Glasgow also favoured. In attempting to bring high-brow culture to the masses, the New Shakespeare Company and Old Vic put on some of the finest Elizabethan plays; at least until the former's cathedral-like theatre burnt down under mysterious circumstances in 1926. Ballet at the Old Vic was also popular, with Russian dancers of the Bolshoi Ballet booked on numerous showings. Such attempts at bringing class to the hoi polloi proved surprisingly successful.

1916 pioneered *Chu Chin Chow*, an adult pantomime, setting *Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves* in Imperial China. Its appeal staggered, and by the end of the war almost 3million customers had paid to see it. Subsequently the show began touring the provinces, attracting even bigger crowds and came to hold the record for "longest running show" for almost 50 years. One of its biggest appeals was its scantily clad slave-girl chorus.

### *MASSA DI REQUIEM PER SHUGGAY VERSUS THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN*

Twice the opera *Massa Di Requiem Per Shuggay* has been proposed for play in the United Kingdom. Twice it has been thwarted. The first was in 1846, when Lord Chamberlain Frederick Spencer, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Spencer, refused its license based on personal knowledge of the piece. Son of a devout bibliophile, and his recently deceased brother having been a member of the exclusive Roxburghe Club—a society formed to collect and further the publication of curious or rare volumes—Frederick deemed the work 'unsuitable for the common man in even cursory examination.' He proceeded to turn the libretto over to Roxburghe Club member George Neville Grenville, the Honourable and Reverend Dean of Windsor. After the latter's death in 1854, the libretto fell into the hands of his daughter Harriet Grenville. With her death in 1907 the book is believed to have been lost.

The second attempt at showing *Massa Di Requiem Per Shuggay* occurred July 7<sup>th</sup> 1923. Unrelated to the previous effort, Warren McKinnan, a Brooklyn-born Scots-American playwright, introduced his surreal adaptation ("*Chughay!*") to the Aldbrech Theatre, Edinburgh. Famous for its *avant-garde* displays, the Aldbrech was also prominent for flaunting the Lord Chamberlain's censorship guidelines. A unique affair, McKinnan's version moved the story to contemporary America, replaced the score with 'symphonic' Creole-Jazz, and tapped into the period's occult craze. He also introduced his own troupe of African-American jazz musicians. During the second act of the opening night, however, Edinburgh police raided the theatre and closed it down. Deported to the USA, McKinnan subsequently disappeared. His musicians were never found. Nevertheless, his adapted version has gained something of a cult status among futurist theatre-goers. Crude hand-written editions are in circulation among critics and surrealists, with those in the know considering its playability and lyrics superior to the 1768 original. What the outcome would be if this version were run in full remains to be seen...

Bawdy theatre held a special place in the hearts of all. Even serious shows pandered to erotica (sometimes just plain pornography) introduced from more liberal German and French circuits. Closures and arrests were frequent, but much like with movies, private showings circumvented decency laws—usually.

### *UNIVERSITIES*

The universities of the 1920s were the home of the privileged classes. Oxford and Cambridge were the most prestigious in the country, if not the world, and barring the rivalry between the two those outside would be hard pressed to distinguish one as being superior to the other.

While the Oxbridge universities, as the two are known, remain the most famous, others include Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristle, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, King's College London, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and University College London—as well as Trinity College of Dublin, Ireland.

The student bodies of the time—mostly male, although women were allowed into all but Cambridge and Oxford as full students—proved to be some of the most adventurous. Oxford undergraduates placed chamber pots atop the imposing spike of the city's Martyr's Memorial (commemorating three bishops burnt for heresy in 1555), leaving police to shoot it down the following day with rook rifles. Cambridge students dressed as foreign dignitaries and tricked the university into kowtowing to their curious national whims, or masqueraded as learned professors and gave nonsensical lectures on made-up subjects. "Night-climbing" of churches, libraries, museums and other edifices was a dangerous pastime—especially if it involved planting a pennant, rival's clothing, or stolen copies of the next test on the building's flagpole. The rivalry between King's College London and University College London became legendary, particularly as it involved women. The 'rags' as they were known involved harmless kidnapping of students or mascots, mock-battles and cross-dressing. Policemen's helmets were a popular item for stealing, especially if the owner was humiliated in the process.

Each spring the Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Clubs raced each other down the Thames. This annual event remains a national institution—

hundreds of thousands turn out to watch, and the result makes headlines. 'Blues' (participants in university teams) walk away heroes—especially if they win.

Most students can be divided between the 'hearty' and the 'aesthete'—the former there to join the Boat Club and drink, the latter an intellectual and a fop. Aesthetes were expected to put up with drunken hearties wrecking their rooms, burning their books or roughing them up. Revenge was sharp and sweet, though, as in 1923 when one aesthete (famed for sideburns and pet monkey), armed with a sabre-cane, made news by lopping the thumb off one of a gang looting his room.

Aside from frivolities, investigators will find universities an excellent source of learning, and well stocked with books and experts. The collected tomes of the Ancient Universities (those founded before the 19<sup>th</sup> century) are worth more than their weight in gold for the serious investigator. Few libraries can compare to Oxford's Bodleian, second only to the British Museum in number of texts, and there is hearsay that an expurgated Necronomicon resides in Edinburgh University's collection (although some argue this is just another prank pulled by unruly students).

### *WAR AND ITS LEGACY*

Though the Great War was the accepted term for the 1914-1918 war, the idiom 'First World War' had been coined by 1920. Some historians named it, with differing levels of tongue-in-cheek, the second, third or even fourth world war, depending on what wars they considered the first. Few, if any, believed 1918 had been the year to end all wars.

In the immediate aftermath of the Versailles Treaty came a sudden flood of publications on the conflict. These disappeared within a year; a willingness to forget crept over the country. Wounds began to scab. In every city, town and village, cenotaphs appeared listing the names of the war dead. On every village green and town seafront a memorial sprouted. It is some testament to the scars of the Great War that after the Second World War, rather than building new cenotaphs, the names of that war's dead were merely added to the previous monument.

## FREEMASONS

Venturing amongst the higher echelons of society without being a member of a fraternal Freemason lodge is all but impossible in the UK. Anyone can become a freemason, and it was one of the few times a working-class man might find himself on equal footing with a lord. Masonry opens doors otherwise locked. A grip (secret-handshake) and a good word can even get a look at evidence Inspector Lestrade refuses to show normally...

Becoming a Freemason should be used as background rather than as a skill. It allows folk who otherwise wouldn't have the means to act contrary to the norm a chance to do so.

Throughout the war the tank had become a national symbol of solidarity and power; the melding of metal and flesh, emblematic of the new industrial age. During the conflict they had been used to drum up support for war bonds, transported to towns and cities by train, and demonstrated to an awestruck public. When the war ended, 265 tanks were turned into memorials of their own; parked outside town halls or on the outskirts of villages. Being silent reminders of the conflict, they were meant to be immobilised by their crews; but it's safe to assume many weren't as well as they should have been. Some even had fuel left inside their cisterns—one exploding in 1928 while being dismantled for scrap.

As the decade crept along, the feeling that war was something to be stopped at all costs increased. There was a flurry of news stories as ex-servicemen stole about at night tipping on-display artillery pieces into lakes. The war-wounded slowly became more obvious, their voices loosened by the actions of political parties across the Channel, calling for a new way. A way steeped in new uniforms... the hammer and sickle or sharpened fasces. It would be some time before people could again consider war a viable method of politics.

## MONEY, GOODS AND PRICES

Though a rich nation, the inflation of the 1920s, caused by the war and, later, the return to the debilitating gold standard (which overvalued the pound sterling internationally), meant the average Briton's income was something less than that of their American cousins. While resulting in fewer of the frivolities and entertainments afforded those living in the United States, contrary to belief it was hard to starve in the UK—even if most things grew more expensive, food got steadily cheaper.

Of particular concern to modern players (and non-British investigators) is the UK's money system. Considering the metric system an alien curio, the British Isles sticks with its pounds sterling—divided into POUNDS, SHILLINGS and PENCE (written as £/s/d or spoken aloud as LSD).

20 shillings make one pound, and 12 pence make a shilling, resulting in 240 pennies to one pound overall. Prices were written in numerous ways, but most commonly as “£8/4/-” (Eight pounds and four shillings) or “2/6” (Two shillings and six pence), for example. For ease this book writes prices with periods (£8.5.6 = Eight pounds, five shillings and sixpence) when pounds are involved, and with slashes when the price is only in shillings and pence.

Farthing.....	¼d
Halfpenny (“ha’penny”).....	½d
Penny.....	1d
Three-penny bit (“Thruppence” or “Joey”).....	3d
Sixpence (“Tanner”).....	6d
Shilling (“Bob”).....	1/-
Two Shillings (“Florin”).....	2/-
Half-crown.....	2/6
Crown (“Dollar”).....	5/-
Sovereign.....	£1.0.0
Guinea (not a coin or note).....	£1.1.0

Each coin featured the head of the monarch on one side and Britannia on the obverse (although a number of coins broke this convention). Unlike the others, which were made of copper alloys, the Sovereign was made of gold and though meant to adhere to the gold standard (£1 = \$4.8) it was actually worth quite a bit more than its legal tender. Note too that there is no Guinea coin; instead it's a name for £1/1/- and often used for

expensive items like pianos, horses and sometimes houses or rented accommodation.

Ten shilling note (introduced 1928).....	10/-
One pound note (introduced 1928).....	£1.0.0
Five pound note.....	£5.0.0
Ten pound note.....	£10.0.0

Notes (*bills in US English*) were black and white and only printed on one side, at least up until the introduction of double-sided colour notes in 1928. That year also saw the introduction of the 10/- and £1 notes. Anything larger than a £1 note is unlikely to be tendered (or get change), and even if taken users may be asked to sign the back. Within the banking system notes up to a million pounds were circulated, but these weren't released for public use. While the Bank of England has the monopoly on notes in England and Wales, prior to 1921, the Somerset bank *Fox, Fowler and Company* were entitled to print their own money under a quirk of historical law. These were technically still legal tender until used, and some may have remained uncashed well into the 1930s.



For prices of goods and services, divide \$US prices by 5 for a rough estimate in pounds. Prices fluctuated depending on area and demand. Use the guide provided for middle of the road costs of goods on an average day:

### Medical Supplies:

Aspirin (100).....	1/6
Industrial first aid kit.....	£4.10.0
Pocket first aid kit.....	2/6
Surgical glass bowls.....	1/6 to 7/-
Syringe, 1 ml.....	9/-
Syringe, 5 ml.....	16/-
Wincarnis fortifying tonic.....	5/-

### Instruments:

Box camera.....	£1.10.0
Chemical balance (accurate to .5 milligram).....	£7.15.0
Dissection kit.....	£1.15.0
Film, developing & printing.....	8d per picture
Hygrometer (charts atmospheric moisture on paper).....	£18. 5.0
Laboratory refrigerator.....	£64.0.0 – £146.0.0
Pocket compass.....	£2.5.0
Pond net.....	3/-
Portable Cine Camera.....	£25.0.0
Portable microscope.....	£47.0.0
Simple Telescope.....	£3.15.0
Stop watch (1 second accuracy).....	£1.15.0
Test tubes (144).....	6/-
Thermograph (charts thermometer on paper).....	£7.0.0
Zeiss Ikon Camera.....	£12.5.0

### Equipment for Travellers:

1 mile bus fare.....	1d
10 day Mediterranean cruise.....	£21.0.0
1st class rail fare London–Southampton.....	16/5
Bicycle.....	£5.5.0
Brandy flask.....	10/-
BSA 500cc motorbike.....	£57.10.0
Camp bed with mosquito net.....	£2.2.0
Electric torch.....	10/6
Gallon of petrol.....	1/7
Hotel breakfast.....	2/6
Hotel dinner.....	5/6
Luxury hotel room (per night).....	8/6
Portable typewriter.....	£8.15.0
Round the world cruise.....	£250.0.0
Scheduled return flight London – Paris.....	£12.0.0
Skis.....	£2.12.6
Sleeping bag.....	£4.0.0
Tent 10 ft x 8 ft.....	£14.18.9
Travelling spirit stove.....	7/-

### Clothing and other everyday items:

Ball of string.....	5d
Book: British Flora.....	12/-
Book: Natural History, per volume (of ten).....	£1.10.0
Book: Post-mortem Manual.....	10/6
Book: Textbook of Pathology.....	£1.15.0
Bowler Hat.....	£1.5.0
Chauffeur's Uniform.....	£5.15.0
Cinema ticket.....	1/- to 8/5

Cloth cap.....	10/6
Evening dress shirt.....	15/6
Evening dress suit.....	£11.11.00
Gold Watch.....	£8.10.0
Gramophone.....	£8.0.0
Home-made crystal radio.....	£2.0
Ladies shoes.....	£2.9.6
Leather driving coat.....	£15.15.0
Maid's uniform.....	12/5
Man's shoes (Oxford Brogues).....	£4.0.0
Manufactured radio w/earphones.....	£21.0.0
Overcoat.....	£5.10.0
Paperback novel.....	5/- to 10/-
Plain suit.....	£3.10.0
Plain white shirt.....	10/6
Set of six booklets (various topics).....	1/5
Silk stockings.....	8/11
Spectacles.....	6/6
<i>The Daily Mail</i> .....	1d
<i>The Times</i> .....	2d
Theatre showing.....	1/- to 8/5
Top Hat.....	£1.12.6

### Food and Drink:

½ lb. of chocolate.....	1/2
20 cigarettes.....	9d – 1/4
Bottle of Fruit Cordial.....	2/-
Bottle of port.....	£1.1.0
Bottle of scotch.....	13/6
Bottle of sherry.....	17/6
Chocolate bar.....	4d
Dozen eggs.....	2/2
Dundee Cake (2 lb).....	3/6
Jar of jam.....	11d
Loaf of bread.....	8d
Penny sweets.....	¼d to 1d
Pint of beer.....	6d
Pint of milk.....	3d
Pound of beef.....	1/9
Pound of butter.....	1/10 to 2/2
Pound of cod.....	1/2
Pound of lamb.....	2/-
Pound of mutton.....	1/2
Tin of Baked Beans.....	6d
Tin of China Tea (5 lb).....	£1.4.8

### Weaponry:

Revolvers (various).....	£2.0.0+
Shotguns (various).....	£1.10.0 – £30.1.0+
Rifles (various).....	\$5.0.0 – £40.0.0+
Shotgun cartridges (50).....	10/6
Rifle ammunition (100).....	7/-
Revolver bullets (100).....	5/-
Firearm certificate (see p.43).....	5/-

Cricket bat.....	12/10
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(Prices used taken from sources, amongst others:

- “*The What it Cost the Day Before Yesterday Book*” – Dr H Priestly
- “*Standard Catalogue of Scientific Apparatus 1927*” – Baird & Tatlock Ltd

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## *ENGLISH AS SHE IS SPOKE: A DICTIONARY OF 1920s TERMINOLOGY*

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Before television, and with radio only reporting in Received Pronunciation (BBC English), the dialects of Great Britain were enormously varied. In some cases they were wholly dissimilar vocabularies, all but unintelligible to the other. In the wilds of Scotland, Cornwall or Yorkshire a traveller may find the communication barrier so vast (especially with the elderly) as to be impossible.

The following is an attempt to sprinkle a smattering of middle to upper-class slang for use by players and keepers. Those with listed (!) are offensive even today and should be used with care.

*Algy* – A nickname for a young upper class male.

*All Out* – (see *Out for a duck*)

*Antimacassar* – A cloth placed over the back of a chair to protect it from the greased hairstyle fashionable with young men.

*Atmospherics* – Radio static.

*Away* – In prison, e.g. “Frank got put away for *nicking* that policeman’s helmet.”

*Bally-ragging* – To play tricks on someone (often shortened to ‘ragging’).

*Bananas and cream* – Invitation to sex, found in such turns of phrase as “so, my dear, are you partial to bananas and cream?”

*Bee's Knees* – The best, e.g. “This Bentley’s the bee’s knees!” (Chiefly American, but picked up in the UK by mid-20s. Other animal rhymes were popular too).

*Bint* (!) – Impolite word for woman, often a prostitute (from the Arabic for ‘girl’).

*Blag* – To steal, or gain something through lies, e.g. “He blagged the police reports from the desk-sergeant by saying he was a Scotland Yard inspector.”

*Blighty* – Quintessential term for Britain, or a Great War wound that sends one off the frontlines (from the Hindi for ‘Europe’).

*Blotto* – Drunk (as in inebriated).

*Bobby* – Policeman.

*Boche* (!) – Less than genteel euphemism for a German (also: Hun).

**SINISTER SEEDS:  
THE BURROWING DISEASE**

A hunting party returns from the fens covered with boils and suffering from missing time. As their bodies ooze bubonic pus and filth, and the doctor worries it may be contagious, the men are relegated to the isolation ward of a local hospital. It soon becomes apparent, however, that the furuncles are alive; being the bodies of some tailed and wriggling parasitic brood that can wrench themselves free in search of new hosts. What unnameable thing did the hunters stumble upon out there, and what does this hive seek to achieve by burrowing into human flesh?

*Bog-Trotter* (!) – Slang for an Irishman (also: Mick, Paddie and Fenian).

*Bollocks* (!) – can mean either something very good, or a pack of lies (a euphemism for testicles), e.g. “I say, Tarquin! These truffles are the bollocks!”

*Bounder* – A breaker of etiquette or upper class term for a criminal of any quality, e.g. “And not only did the bounder refuse to leave a forwarding address, he shot my butler too!”

*Bradshaw* – A railway timetable, named after the comprehensive Bradshaw timetables.

*Brick* – An item or person that’s just dashed good or useful, e.g. “Mavis is such a brick. If she hadn’t been there with the elephant gun we’d all be in a fine pinch and no mistake!”

*Cad* – A disreputable or dishonourable person.

*Captain Coe* – Generic term for racing tipsters, although sometimes used for an anonymous source of information.

*Char* – The fine drink known as tea (from Chinese or Japanese).

*Come down from (university)* – To graduate from a university.

*Cop one/a packet* – To be injured.

*(Aunt) Dora* – Something that is overly nannying, controlling or a killjoy (from DORA – the Defence of the Realm Act 1914-1921) e.g. “No ale in the hotel? That’s a bit Dora, isn’t it?”

*Doss* – To sleep.

*Egg* – A person of either good qualities (“good egg”) or not so good qualities (“bad egg”).

*Flap* – Excitement or chaos, e.g. “And after it ate Wilfred, there was a bit of a flap.”

*Flapper* – Modern young woman, famed for smoking, drinking and asexual haircuts (perhaps from a Northern word for prostitute).

*Flub* – An unfortunate mistake, usually in sport, but can involve anything, e.g. “Hard luck on flubbing that *googly*, Charlie.”

*Funk* – To be depressed, or fail.

*Gong* – A medal, so named for the shape.

*Googly* – Something insidiously designed to look like something else and therefore dangerous (so-named for one method of bowling a cricket ball), e.g. “And the blasted thing pulled a *googly* and went for me instead of the book!”

*Governor* – A boss or superior (sometimes *Guv*).

*Hash* – To spoil something, e.g. “You made a right hash of that car, Bertie...”

*Hawkshaw* – A generic term for a detective (from the comic-strip *Hawkshaw the Detective*).

*In his cups* – Inebriated.

*Landaulette* – A car with a roof that folds over the back seat.

*Love* – Overused stereotypical word tagged on the end of countryfolk’s phrases, e.g. “You’ve had a nasty fright, love. Sit down and I’ll put the kettle on.”

*Napoo* – No go (from Hindi, and already old during the ‘20s).

*Nick* – To steal or be arrested, e.g. “Howie nicked a bike from outside the bank, but the *Old Bill* nicked him for it.”

*Nifties* – Amusing puns, clever jokes, or smart ideas.

*The (Old) Bill* – The police (etymology debated).

*Oojah-cum-spiff* – Nonsense phrase meaning ‘everything’s fine’.

*Out for a duck* – To leave with nothing (from the cricket term), e.g. “Paranormal investigation isn’t really our thing. The last few times we’ve been out for a duck as it is.”

*Owzat!* – Used to signify a good shot or throw (from the cricket appeal to dismiss a batsman), e.g. “‘Owzat!’ cried Percy, as the Mills grenade sailed down the squamous creature’s gaping maw and into the foul recesses of its gullet...”

*(One’s) People* – A person’s social standing, e.g. “Who’s his people?”

*Pepsin* – Common term for an indigestion remedy.

*Plug* – punch, e.g. “Plug him, Jeeves! Plug him on the nose!”

*Pukka* – The real deal, or perfect (from the Hindu ‘cooked’).

*Pukka Sahib* – A fine fellow (lit. ‘cooked gentleman’ in Hindi).

*Readies* – Bank notes.

*Ripping* – Something splendid, e.g. “Ripping idea, Chalky!”

*Rum* – Something odd, e.g. “He’s been acting a touch rum since that incident in Soho with the enormous bat beastie.”

*Show* – Performance, situation, event etc. e.g. “Did you see those cultist chappies run? Jolly good show, what?”

*Skivvy* – An overworked and underpaid servant, also to do such work.

*Sling the bat* – To speak the vernacular or a, usually, foreign language, e.g. “Rupert started slinging the bat around with the Chinese down in Limehouse and you’d be amazed what he learnt!”

*The Smoke* – London (from its less than wholesome atmospheric and environmental standards).

*Smoking concert* – Amateur entertainment, e.g. “The drinks were good, but I can’t say much for the smoking concert.”

*Spiv* – A sharp-witted petty crook, stereotypically with a wide-lapelled suit, and fashionable, if unctuous, pencil moustache.

*Spunk* – The qualities of spirit, determination and perseverance, or seminal fluid (leading to numerous *double entendres*), e.g. “I like a woman who’s full of spunk.”

*(From) soup to nuts* – From beginning to end (from the first and last courses of a formal dinner).

*Tip-Top* – Splendid, superb, of the best quality

*Tommy* – British soldier.

*Toofah* – A cigar (from the fact they sold ‘two for a shilling’).



*Top-hole* – Something of the finest quality, e.g. “Nice shot, Quentin! Top-hole, that man! Top-hole!”

*Upped stumps (and retired to the pavilion)* – Denoting being beaten, surrendered, retreating, or that someone died (from the cricketing term meaning to be bowled out and dismissed from the game).

*Wog (!)* – Any person of darker skin than the speaker, although oft used for all foreigners as in the phrase “wogs begin at the English Channel”. (Not to be confused with its use as a term for an apprentice train engineer or a sailor who has not yet crossed the equator, by which it comes from the word ‘polywog’ meaning ‘tadpole’.)

As an addendum, swearing amongst the upper and lower classes had always been widespread, with only the staid middle-classes frowning upon its use. The 1920s were somewhat different, being a period where the extremes of war had loosened such taboos. Even the ‘f-word’ was dropped liberally by both sexes, with little concern except around children or obviously mixed company.

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## *ALMANAC OF THE 1920s*

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**1920:** Now until December 9, 1923, six amnesiacs are discovered in or around Romford, Essex – none remember their names or how they got there (14/01); League of Nations meets in London (11/02); London East-End dock-workers refuse to load *Jolly George*, a transport ship carrying munitions to Poland as part of the Russo-Polish War – the refusal to assist ripples to a number of European docks, and brings about a railway strike in Ireland (10/05); *Imperial War Museum* opened by King Edward (09/06); First Black and Tans arrive in Ireland, three months after advertising began (25/06); Communist Party of Great Britain formed by amalgamation of communist and left-wing groups (01/08); Council of Action formed from left-wing groups and unions threatening general strike if Britain continues influence in Russo-Polish War – their influence will stay the government’s hand on the matter (09/08); Restoration of Order in Ireland Act passed – abolishes coroners courts, introduces military courts over the entire population, and allows death

penalty and internment without trial (09/08); Miners go on strike over pay (16/08); First night-buses begin in London (18/08); Coal miners’ “Datum Line” Strike, with subsequent threat of railway strike – a stalemate is met between union and government one month later (15/10); Bloody Sunday: 14 British agents assassinated in Dublin – in response Dublin Metropolitan Police and Auxies open fire on the crowd at Croke Park football ground, killing fourteen (21/11).

**1921:** Road fund license put forth by 1920 Finance Act introduces ‘tax discs’ on all mechanically propelled vehicles (01/01); Royal Navy submarine *HMS K5* disappears with all hands off Isles of Scilly, Cornwall (20/01); Train crash at Abermule, Wales, kills 17 passengers (26/01); Unemployment stands at one million (16/02); Britain signs trade agreement with Bolshevik Russia (16/03); Ministry of Munitions is abolished – Ministry of Shipping closed ten days later (21/03); State of emergency after threat of another coal strike (31/03); Coal rationing begins (03/04); Black Friday: National strike announced by ‘Triple Alliance’ is called off (15/04); Japan’s Crown Prince Hirohito visits UK on official tour (07/05); Emergency Unemployment Insurance Act puts £10million towards unemployment fund, and “transitional benefits” for those ‘genuinely seeking work’ (03/06); Unemployment reaches 2 million – it will soon drop, but never below 1 million at any time for the rest of the decade (10/06); First fatality from the Hairy Hands of Dartmoor – Dr E.H. Elby of Dartmoor Prison is killed – more victims will follow (13/06); First rainfall after 100 days of drought (25/06); Ulster Unionists walk out of London three-party negotiations with Sinn Fein (18/07); Millions of small frogs shower on north-west London during a thunderstorm (17/08); Airship *ZRII* explodes over Hull, killing 43 (24/08); Shackleton-Rowett Expedition leaves for Antarctic – the voyage was beset by disaster and Shackleton died on January 4<sup>th</sup> the next year while *en route* (17/09); British and Irish sign independence for the Irish Free State (07/12).

**1922:** In Ireland, *Dáil Eireann* ratifies Anglo-Irish Treaty – Eamon de Valera resigns his presidency thereby starting Irish Civil War (07/01); National lockout of striking engineers and shipbuilders begins today – results in union defeat two months later (28/03); British Aviation Authority formed – they will handle all aviation investigations and



flight-plans (01/03); Royal Ulster Constabulary founded (01/06); British Broadcasting Company founded (18/08); Chanak Crisis: Britain threatens war on Turkey over Turkish aggression in the Dardanelles neutral zone – the Commonwealth and public are shocked and appalled at Prime Minister Lloyd George's rashness (15/09); Annual BBC radio license fee of ten shillings introduced (01/11); Tutankhamen's tomb uncovered in Egypt (04/11); BBC begins radio service in London, and over the next month it will cover the major cities and surrounding areas (14/11); General election results in Conservative majority – Andrew Bonar Law becomes Prime Minister (15/11).

**1923:** Britain's major railways grouped into four companies – Great Western, London and North-Eastern, London Midland and Scottish, and Southern (01/01); Archaeologist Howard Carter unseals Tutankhamen's tomb (16/02); Poltergeist activity at house in Gorefield, Cambridgeshire – viewed by police – causes damages of £140 – witch who attempts exorcism dies of fit – coroner refuses to hold inquest (17/02); Lord Carnarvon, opener of King Tutankhamen's tomb, dies in Egypt – at the same moment the lights go out in Cairo and his dog, at home in England, dies (05/04); Prince Albert and Lady Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon marry at Westminster Abbey (26/04); Bonar Law resigns as Prime Minister due to ill-health – is replaced by Stanley Baldwin the next day (22/05); Special Constable Act makes special constables a permanent fixture (07/06); Liquor Act makes it illegal to sell alcohol to under-18s (31/07); Anglo-Japanese Alliance officially terminates (17/08); Imperial Conference in London, lasting until November 8<sup>th</sup>, agrees Dominions can make international agreements without British intervention (01/10); Baldwin upholding Bonar Law's pledge, demands general election before imposing tariffs – Baldwin remains as Prime Minister with most Conservative seats (05/11).

**1924:** After vote of 'no confidence' forces Conservatives out of power, Liberal-Labour Coalition takes parliament – Ramsey MacDonald becomes first Labour Prime Minister of Great Britain (22/01); Great Britain recognises Soviet Union (01/02); Imperial Airway Limited formed – the next day it takes over the services of four other airlines (31/03); Harry Grindel Matthew's 'death ray' demonstration to the War Office fails to gain backing – Grindle will later attempt to sell it to

France and America (26/04); First meeting of Air Raid Precautions Committee, whose remit is to plan and prepare for an attack by air (05/05); George Mallory and Andrew Irvine disappear making ascent of Mount Everest's peak (08/06); Attorney-General withdraws prosecution of J.R. Campbell, editor of Communist newspaper, for sedition – public assumption of collusion or corruption (06/09); Daily Mail newspaper publishes *Zinoviev Letter* – purporting to be from Russia, it calls for British Communist Party to support the Labour Party in preparation for a Communist revolution (25/10); General election is won by Stanley Baldwin's Conservative Party, due to falling support for Labour Party (29/10); Train derailment at Lytham, Lancashire, kills 14 (3/11).

**1925:** Owencarrow Viaduct Disaster, Ireland – five people killed as train blown off viaduct by 120mph winds (30/01); Dominions Office separated from Colonial Office (01/02); Anthropologist LSB Leakey leaves by steamer on British Museum expedition to Tanganyika – they find little and he is recalled to Britain a year later (29/02); From this date until April 2<sup>nd</sup> the world is ravaged by "outré mental illnesses and outbreaks of group folly or mania" – dozens in England commit suicide or are incarcerated in mental hospitals – dreams of cyclopean cities are the norm (01/03); Daylight saving Summer Time, introduced during the Great War, made permanent by parliament (13/03); Last communication by Colonel Percy Fawcett, famed explorer, before he and two assistants head into the Amazon in search of a lost city – they are never seen again (29/05); Britain returns to Gold Standard – exchange rate pegged at £1=\$4.86 (03/04); *Red Friday*: government maintains miners' pay rates through subsidy in order to stave off coal transport t strike (31/07); Edale, Derbyshire, reports something 'black in colour and of enormous size' killing dozens of sheep – hunting parties fail to find it but the local population are in terror of what they consider to be a 'werewolf' (14/08); Thomas Bell, Ernest Cant and Willie Gallacher are charged with incitement to mutiny as leading communists – some hundreds mass outside Bow Street court and sing "The Red Flag" (24/10); Submarine *M1* sinks with all 69 hands after colliding with Swedish ship – some crew are believed to have tried to escape the sinking – their bodies are not found (12/11); Contributory pensions introduced (31/12).

**1926:** Storms that ravage Europe flood London and thousands of acres of England, a cyclone passes over Scotland and only a single telegraph line works out of Dublin – nearly all telegraph and telephone lines in Britain remain down for some days (11/01); Father Ronald Knox's BBC radio play simulating a workers' revolution in London causes a national panic (16/01); The Duchess of York gives birth to Elizabeth – later Queen Elizabeth II (21/04); Coal miners begin strike over pay reductions (01/05); General Strike begins in support of miners – government refuses to back down (03/05); BBC broadcasts four bulletins a day due to printers' union being on strike (04/05); Martial law declared due to strike (09/05); Negotiations between government and strikers (10/05); General Strike called off – miners continue striking (12/05); First greyhound track opens in Manchester (24/07); BBC finally manages near national coverage with long-wave radio (25/07); Britain's first automobile traffic lights introduced at Piccadilly Circus (03/08); American Gertrude Ederle becomes first woman to swim the English Channel (06/08); First British motor Grand Prix at Brooklands (07/08); Negotiations begin between government and striking miners' union (18/08); Miners' strike ends on employers' terms (12/10); Imperial Conference in London, until 23<sup>rd</sup> November, agrees each Dominion is of equal standing to Britain and other Dominions (19/10); Martial law in Britain ends (02/12); Agatha Christie vanishes for 10 days, apparently due to nervous breakdown – public unimpressed (08/12); Orgreaves Colliery rail crash – no fatalities, but injured miners walk some miles to work in order not to lose wages (13/12).

**1927:** British Broadcasting *Company* becomes British Broadcasting *Corporation* and gains Royal Charter (01/01); First transatlantic telephone call from New York City to London (07/01); First scheduled London-Delhi air service begins (08/01); First live sports broadcast on BBC radio, Rugby Union: England vs Wales – first football match broadcast a week later (15/01); Paragon rail disaster, Hull, kills 12 (14/02); Influenza outbreak sweeps world for next month; in Britain 1000 people die a week (06/03); Trades Disputes Acts makes it illegal to 'strike in support' and declares General Strike illegal (05/04); Royal and Parliamentary Title Act 1927 renames 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland' to 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'

(12/04); British police raid Soviet trade delegation (12/05); Britain severs diplomatic relations with USSR due to alleged espionage and agitation (24/05); Soviet Union executes 20 alleged British spies in response – all are Russian (09/06); Major Christopher Stone becomes UK's first disc-jockey when he begins playing records on BBC radio – his relaxed, conversational air is like nothing the BBC has done before (07/07); Total solar eclipse over Northern England and Wales (24/11); 1600 people hospitalised in London due to ice (12/12).

**1928:** Thaw and high tides cause River Thames to flood London for two days – fourteen are drowned – it will take years to repair all the damage (06/01); Moat at Tower of London, having been drained in 1843, is filled by flood-waters (07/01); Frederick Griffith indirectly proves existence of DNA while making a vaccine for Spanish Flu – his discovery will not be recognised until 1944 (20/01); Heavy hail kills eleven across England (12/02); *Flying Scotsman* steam train leaves London – arrives in Edinburgh, Scotland less than seven hours later (01/05); Darling Rail Crash: head on collision by two trains kills 25 passengers (27/06); Representation of the People Act 1928 gives men and women over the age of 21 the vote (07/05); Darlington rail crash kills twenty-five (27/06); Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin – it will not be used until 1942 (03/09); Charfield Railway Disaster, Gloucestershire – accident sparks fire that kills estimated 15 people – woman in black is said to visit scene from 1929 – ghost of two unknown child victims are also said to haunt the site (13/10).

**1929:** General election returns hung parliament between Labour and Conservatives – Liberal Party will decide who will take power (31/05); Conservatives concede power rather than form fragile majority with Liberal coalition (07/06); Ramsey MacDonald forms Labour government (08/06); Alfred Hitchcock's *Blackmail* opens – it is the first British film to have a sound version as well as a silent one (17/06); London Stock Exchange suffers sharp drop in response to American Wall Street Crash four days earlier (28/10); Britain's first 22 public telephone boxes begin service (22/12).

**1930:** *The Times* publishes its first crossword (01/02); Police clash with left-wing 'work marches' that converge on Tower Hill, London (06/03); The BBC infamously reports that today

'there is no news', setting a precedent for slow news days, and plays light music instead (18/04); The United States, Great Britain and Japan sign the London Naval Treaty, regulating submarine warfare and shipbuilding (22/04); Amy Johnson leaves for Australia as the first woman to fly from England to Australia solo, arriving in Darwin nineteen days later (05/05); Oswald Mosley resigns from government due to lack of support for his unemployment plans (21/05); Major Henry Seagrave wins world motorboat speed record on Lake Windermere, but dies in the attempt (13/06); Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes and avowed occultist, dies (07/07); British airship R101 crashes north of Paris, France en route from London to India – 48 of the 54 passengers and crew perish (05/10).

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## **PART II:** **WHEN THE SUN** **DOES SET**

The Cthulhu Mythos does not creep into the human world. It *is* the world, as intrinsic and necessary as the sciences. It permeates everything; even our very thoughts. This chapter is designed for Keepers and introduces some of the people, places and groups that Britain has to offer for the wayward adventure. Of course, nothing in here is written as gospel. Variations of the Mythos are many, and Keepers should feel free to tailor these ideas and settings to their own campaigns as they see fit...

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### ***THE INVESTIGATOR'S GAZETEER***

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#### ***BLUE JOHN GAP, DERBYSHIRE***

Blue John is a particularly rare form of purple-blue fluorite mined in England. During the 1920s it was firmly believed that its scarcity was so great it could only be found at a handful of mines in Derbyshire. This is not entirely true, but one should never let the facts get in the way of a good story.

Blue John Gap is one such mine. Founded by the Romans during their conquest of Britain, it extends deep into the Derbyshire hills, winding through the strata into miles of fluorite tunnels. By the 14<sup>th</sup> century the best Blue John had been stripped for pottery and that which remained was picked clean by thieves. Once discarded by man, the Mi-Go turned their attentions towards what lay beneath.

Mi-Go mining cares little for physical attributes, instead preferring the extra-dimensional virtues of the material. In Nevada and China the Mi-Go spent millennia picking through lower quality Blue John, which needed intense and time-consuming refinement and purification. While Britain's mountains had long been Mi-Go mining sites, it was not until the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century that England's flatter land came under Mi-Go survey. Mankind's primitive tools had barely scratched the surface of available Blue John supply, and covetously the Mi-Go moved in, setting up new tunnels tenuously linked to the mazelike originals, and introducing new and alien drilling methods. Their operations are slow and meticulous, strip-mining every available atom before refining the mineral and sending it via gate to Yuggoth and other Mi-Go outposts. Refinement is a dangerous and time-consuming process, with the breaking down of atoms into unstable and complex chains. Earth's atmosphere is perfect for refining Blue John into a pure form, and while atmospherics can be replicated away from earth, once refined it is easier transport.

Today Blue John Gap sits patiently a few miles from Bountsington, overlooking the farm-cum-bed-and-breakfast of Miss Alex, a matronly-like spinster who warns holidaymakers against entering the mines. Her reasons are mainly due to their disorientating labyrinthine structure. Other locals, however, talk of the Terror, something living in the mine that comes out to eat sheep and lone travellers on moonless nights. Strange glowing lights are also seen flitting to-and-fro, and roaring and buzzing emanates from the network of caverns at strange hours.

In reality, the Mi-Go's drillings are the source of the vast majority of the noises, but there is some truth to the Gap Terror. In order to safeguard their enterprises the Mi-Go loosed genetically-modified creatures as sentries. These alien beasts slink from the caves at night to hunt further afield. As a

second line of defence they have also turned Miss Alex into their puppet. Abducted and refashioned in a form more pleasing to Mi-Go minds, the aging old woman has been tailored to their wishes. Her body now able to turn bullets and stretch like rubber, she makes sure snoopers get no further than mild curiosity. Those who get too inquisitive will find themselves hunted across the hills by something far removed from the little old lady it resembles.

### **BRAMLEY END, WILTSHIRE**

There are three things Bramley End is known for: its quality jams, its May Day celebrations and the legend that the Devil was hanged and buried beneath a mound called 'Hobs Tum' at the crossroads outside town.

Most everyone considers Hobs Tum to be a quaint tourist-trap. The barrow itself has been included in a number of annual rituals, culminating on Midsummer with singing, bonfires and a ritual known as 'the knocking,' whereby the village beauty bangs thrice upon the mound with a carved stick wrapped in flowers. Such pagan trappings have fallen out of favour with the local reverend, who considers their frivolities with the Devil a step beyond the pale.

If the town knew what truly was buried beneath Hob's Tum they would certainly not be so playful.



In 1367 Miriam Limpert was seized at nearby Elmstae after being seen holding a Sabbath with a coven close to Bramley church. Tortured, Miriam confessed to her guilt but swore her actions were to preserve, not profane, Christianity. Her confession was duly noted by the village scribe—the rest of her statement excised. Burnt, her ashes were collected and buried in a box beneath the church's front-step so as to be stepped upon by any pious Christian entering or leaving prayer.

Today the descendants of Limpert's coven are scattered throughout the area, living quietly as 'white witches.' On certain equinoxes they hold secret rituals and read ancient rites. Most of the time, however, they protest against the town's rampant commercialism and mockery of ancient symbols. If it weren't that they were diametrically opposed, the reverend and the coven would probably get along rather well.

The coven is the guard of Hob's Tum. Sealed within it lies *Morrtilgh*, *Cloud of Knowledge*, *Devourer of Sons*. Spoken of only in obscure Norman texts, Morrtilgh exists as a glittering silver orb floating within the maelstrom of a swarm of tiny razor-sharp blades. Semi-sentient, this 'cloud' can reduce a human being to scraps of flesh in seconds or exercise the most complex and precise lacerations. Amongst its cult, Morrtilgh would be summoned to destroy its sacrifices and cut messages and spell upon the flesh of its worshippers—in effect turning the recipient into a living book. No flesh was left untouched. Eyelids, lips, tongue, even the inside of the mouth or uncovered eyes were scarred with the Scribe's lacerating kiss. Miriam Limpert's coven spent many years sealing Morrtilgh inside a specially created barrow. It is their descendants' task to keep him there.

But archaeologists have other ideas. A team of university-types have already been looking into opening the barrow, as recent discoveries across the country have unveiled intact gravesites of great worth to posterity and university tenure. The reverend is most upset, and has brought together a group of faithful to protest the dig's opening. The coven is even more distraught—and is preparing far more drastic action to stop it. If Morrtilgh is released he will quickly take his revenge upon the town before building a new cult.

### **BRICHESTER UNIVERSITY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

Brichester in the 1920s is a good-sized town, lagging only behind Gloucester and Cheltenham in size and population. While few could say it is truly off the beaten track, it is surprisingly out of the way, nestled between the woods and Severn River, and surrounded by small villages and hamlets that mark the countryside like pox scars. Though mundane in most respects, with the majority of the town going about life in complete innocence, sometimes the mask does slip...

But we are not here to talk about Brichester, with its sordid history and sometimes strange peoples; of Lower Brichester, where the late Tudor houses bend low over the road and loop into veritable mazes of interconnected byways and alleys; or Mercy Hill, with its imposing Edwardian hospital looming over the site where the old Brichester Gaol once stood (the name Mercy Hill coming, with no little dark humour, from the prison gallows set atop the selfsame hillock).

Brichester University is a lofty gothic institution, founded in 1507. Its facades are sandstone, with flying buttresses and towering spires that grow dark and imposing when it rains (and it rains often in Brichester). Most of the outbuildings remain untouched since their creation, and only a slight scattering of newer buildings—mostly Victorian and Edwardian—mar its near perfect timbre. Being squeezed between Mercy Hill and Lower Brichester, space is hard to come by, and much of the student accommodation is made up of Victorian streets near campus. Two pubs, the ‘Witchfynder General’ (dating back to 1646) and the ‘Scholars Rest’ are the favoured haunts of students: the former for being dangerous, exciting and unwelcoming, the latter because of its academic airs and graces.

While Oxford and Cambridge pride themselves on social as well as academic excellence, Brichester is considered by the more snobbish as being the ‘proletariat’ university. This may well be true; though one of the Ancient Universities, it lacks the ritual and class of its contemporaries. There is no Brichester MA, nor is there the same ‘school tie’ clique. Yet Brichester has a standard of excellence in certain areas that are second to none. Its astronomy and engineering degrees are considered some of the best internationally, and while less spoken about, its degrees in metaphysics, number theory and logic are also highly regarded.

The two most famous buildings to pick out across Brichester’s skyline are the University library and the Radio Communications Hall, otherwise known as the Ivory Tower. The library is of early-modern Renaissance type, with arches, vaults and an elegant dome that hovers over the area. Within it are some of the finest historical books outside of Britain’s better known collections. In a locked case, open only to select researchers, are a collection of particularly rare and unsavoury

tomes, including a John Dee translation of the Necronomicon, a complete set of the Revelations of Glaaki, De Vermis Mysteriis, Cthaat Aquadingen and more.

The Ivory Tower is one of the few civilian and non-commercial centres to have a Post Office licence to engage in wireless experiments. The great white painted block, soaring over the town by some storeys, is decked with antennae and other electronics. On good days, students can be seen toing-and-froing on the roof, or abseiling down from windows to play with the masts. Mercy Hill Hospital acts as the training college for Brichester’s small, but talented, medical students.

Unlike Oxford or Cambridge, Brichester actually has a non-student population of sufficient size that the entire town does not simply close down and vanish during summer holidays. Investigators will find, any time of year, come rain or shine, Brichester will offer something; be it adventure, information or a quiet and well-earned rest...

### *DYMCHURCH-BY-THE-SEA, KENT*

The fishing village of Dymchurch is nestled between the North Sea and the hundred square miles of wetlands that make Romney Marsh. Reached only by twisting, one-track roads (a railway station was not introduced until 1927), Dymchurch has a reputation among locals for ghostly happenings.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Dymchurch became a key site for smuggling cotton and alcohol across the Channel. Exorbitant duties made the work profitable, if dangerous, and groups vied against the government Excise men sent to arrest them. One of the more famous of these smuggler bands would be the Scarecrow Gang. At night a glowing figure draped in black rags and ghoulish apparel would ride across the marshes, leading an equally macabre band of foul-dressed smugglers. By skill and luck, the Royal Navy finally unmasked the Scarecrow as Dymchurch’s parson and hanged him, destroying the village’s smuggling days forever.

Today, the marshes are supposedly haunted by the ghost of The Scarecrow. Astride his pitch horse, Gehenna, he still rides—trying to lead his men to safety from the Excise ambush that caught him. Such a tale is most likely the work of imagination;

but the existence of smuggling caves within walking distance of the village are very real.

These caves were natural fissures carved into the coastline. Smugglers would use them to hide contraband and rowing boats, disguising the caves by ingenious methods. Some, like at Dymchurch, were expanded so that they could be reached from hidden trapdoors in the marshland, or linked to buildings' cellars. Today they remain practically unknown, except by the cult that uses them as a place of worship.

On certain nights, lines of masked and torch-brandishing people stalk the wetlands to their secret entrances, descending into the bowels of the earth. From their cavernous shrine, the ebbing roars and echoes of voices raised in hideous praise roll across the fens. Beneath Dymchurch Nyogtha is hailed and brought forth from cracks in the stone floors; a tide of bitter liquid darkness.

The cultists that use Dymchurch's warrens as a place to succour their vile practises hope their worship can release Nyogtha from his earthly prison. Recently they have made plans to increase their activities; the erosion of the local area is slowly but surely pushing back the coastline. In a year or two the temple will collapse into the sea, and Nyogtha's entrance will flood. A spate of tome stealing will be necessary for the sect to find the spells to release their trapped master. If they do, East Anglia, if not the world, may be plunged into a horror beyond the ken of mortal minds.

### *PEN-Y-GAREG RESERVOIR, WALES*

The Elan Valley of mid-Wales is regarded as some of the most beautiful landscape in Britain. Since being developed into a system of reservoirs, it has evolved into a national reserve, rife with animals that live in its copses of woodland and rolling vales.

The reservoirs completion at the turn of the century was a masterstroke of man overcoming nature. Using only the power of gravity, the engineers and navvies devised a complex arrangement of viaducts and dams to provide water for Birmingham, almost 73 miles away. During the construction a number of new villages were created, and others were flooded to make reservoirs for the great dams needed to block drainage and overflow. The Elan Valley became the watering hole of England's second city.

Pen-Y-Gareg Reservoir is about 4 miles from Elan Village, which sprouted from the humble lodges of the old workforce. Though only 4 miles, it can be tough going; the paths are narrow and unpaved, originally the railway cuttings used to move materiel and men between works. The dam that chokes the reservoir is named Pen-Y-Gareg Dam, a singularly impressive feat of engineering. Spanning the reservoir from one fertile green hill to another a powerful flow of water crests its lip, cascading to the river below. An observation tower, designed as a Victorian minaret, juts from its middle, reachable by a passageway within the dam itself. But beneath the foundations of Pen-Y-Gareg's splendour an ancient and unspeakable obscenity lies buried.

Recent visitors to the dam and reservoir have reported being 'mesmerised,' staring into the waters for hours without realising. A recent survey by psychics investigators has uncovered dozens of preternatural phenomenon in the area, including missing time, ball-lightning, strange explosions, and more. The effects appear to be growing. One group of investigators found a 3x3' patch of grass that displayed the properties of being 14x5,' though the effect dissipated within a few hours.

The source of these curiosities is a nest of Lloigor banished centuries ago, buried beneath what is now the Pen-Y-Gareg Reservoir. During the 5<sup>th</sup> century the Romano-British war hero Ambrosius Aurelianus launched a campaign against the being Romans and Celts knew only as *Draco*. Defeating it but unable to truly kill it, his wise-men sealed and buried it far from habitation. The *Draco* were Lloigor (six in fact), and powerful with it. For more than 1000 years they have waited, starved of the energy needed to sustain them. Then the humans came in their multitudes and built a lake atop their resting place.

The unnatural phenomena afflicting Elan are the sparks of magic points released as the *Draco* feed upon the sleeping inhabitants of nearby hamlets and homesteads. Their powers have grown so that those on the reservoir's banks can be drained, even when awake. As their powers grow so do the phenomena that occur: ghosts manifest, statues bleed, time distorts or runs backwards, and plants and trees wither and die...

Unchecked, they will begin to draw local people so as to drain them faster. Sleepwalkers crowding

the shores and dam-causeway will surely end in disaster. Many will drown seeking the *Draco*'s embrace. Soon their power will be great enough to grasp entire towns; even touch the outskirts of Birmingham itself. The energy released would be so immense that the entirety of the valley will be wracked by their power: the dead rise; black rains pour from the heavens; vast and unnatural vortices of cloud and lightning break; strange beasts walk the highways; and worse...

The Lloigor have no aims other than release from their prison. Once powerful enough they will cast off their shackles and pool their resources, coalescing once again into the *Draco* proper. The reservoir will turn to super-heated steam, for a hundred miles one last burst of psychic energy will ripple, creating phenomena like nothing before seen, and the coiled physical form of *Y Ddraig goch* shall rise like the phoenix from its tomb. Where it goes from there, no one knows.

Stopping the *Draco* from their plot would be a dangerous and convoluted campaign, spanning many adventures. Via communication with the Lloigor themselves, investigators may find a less destructive method of releasing them—but would any rational investigator take such a chance?

### *EXHAM PRIORY, SUSSEX*

Located in the town of Anchester, the ancestral home of the De la Poer family has a sordid history. Long thought abandoned and its bloodline lost, the building's purchase in 1918 by a descendent raised much disquiet among the local town. After two years reconstruction (using outside labour, due to the locals' refusal to assist) on July 16<sup>th</sup> 1923 it was reinhabited by the latest De la Poer and seven servants. It was abandoned



again on 8<sup>th</sup> August after an expedition to the building's lowest basements, with De la Poer and Alan Thornton (a noted psychic) remanded to Hanwell Asylum in London; the latter a frothing lunatic, the former for cannibalising one Captain Norriss, a friend and archaeologist.

The council quickly made a compulsory sales order on the estate and drew up plans for demolition. Before work started proper, locals stripped and set alight to the house—necessitating a police curfew of the town for some days. Demolition work finally began early-December, with dynamite bringing down the western tower. Before further work could be done, however, an injunction was placed by the Nation Trust, arguing Exham Priory was a building of particular historical and architectural importance. With money raised by Ferguson's Gang (an anonymous and enigmatic group of fund-raisers), the Priory was again renovated and rebuilt, with the western tower carefully pieced together. Work finished late-1924.

By 1926, Exham Priory was no longer considered viable as a National Trust site. Local hostility and the deaths of two groundskeepers forced the Trust to put the building on the market. Within a week it had been bought by the Havelock hotel chain, and its transformation into a 52 room hotel completed by late-1927. The Exham Priory Hotel would remain open until 1974 (barring a period from 1940 to 1942 when the hotel was hit by a *Luftwaffe* bomber which had mistaken Anchester for nearby Weybridge). Numerous investigations into customer complaints about strange noises, unsanitary animal infestations and curious deaths were never entirely explained. The hotel was abandoned in 1971, gaining a reputation among the homeless population as a bad place to spend the night. The entire complex was demolished in 1977 and rebuilt as Exham Council Estate, known locally as Rat Wall Street.

Of the two men who came out of Exham Priory sane that August 7<sup>th</sup> in 1923, only Dr William Brinton remained willing to talk of the matter. His book *Troglodytic Cannibal Cults of England, from prehistory to today* was refused publishing twelve times, but was posthumously printed in 1982 as *Man as Cattle: the Exham Priory Madness*. During the 1920s Brinton lived in Chislehurst, London (near the famous caves). Investigators will find him a valuable resource if



wishing to know more about Exham Priory's mysteries.

### *THE GORBALS, GLASGOW*

Once the leper colony of Glasgow, the area known as the Gorbals has a reputation one might politely call 'gritty.' During the 19<sup>th</sup> century its shipyards brought great prosperity to the region and for a time Glasgow was known as the Second City of the Empire. If one goes for a stroll about the area today one would find some of the most stunning period architecture in Britain, if not the entirety of Europe. Unfortunately, by the 1920s, taking a stroll around the Gorbals was considered something akin to suicide.

With the immigration of the 1900s came tenements, slums and deep rooted poverty and hardship. One of Europe's worst slums, a no-go zone, with parts even hardened Glasgow police refused to enter, most of its population was Scots-Irish, although it also had the majority of Scotland's Jewish population. Catholic churches rubbed shoulders with Synagogues, and Haredi Jews printed Hebrew newspapers on presses run by Muslim Indians. The Gorbals became a microcosm of Britain's divide—where the gap between middle- and working-class was as wide as the ocean and held with no little pride. Most residents know the average white collar-worker wouldn't last five minutes in a Gorbals' pub. Half that if it was a post-football match booze-up.

On an abandoned scrub of dockside sits Izevel Horowitz's cottage, a one-storey brick building, hidden behind thigh-high weeds and stinging nettles. Though it rests at the cross-roads between the Die-Hards and the Breaks Boys patch, where violent clashes between the two gangs leave nightly bloodstains on the pavement, it remains untroubled. People know Izevel would not stand for it.

Izevel Horowitz lives amongst the detritus of a hundred years of history, scattered heaps of junk that pile up on her floor and dressers, coated in fine layers of dust. She rarely moves from her chair these days, preferring to sit in black silence. Izevel needs no light to see and those visitors who request a candle lit usually wish they hadn't once they see her wizened, pock-marked face, and upon it the neat lines of black cord that stitch her eyelids together. She is rather proud of them. She did them herself. On weekends her granddaughter

Sara comes and tidies the place up. She also helps when visitors drop by, making sure they don't touch anything. Izevel is very fussy about her belongings.

### SINISTER SEEDS: OUR FATHER

A spate of unexplained pregnancies and an abortion carried out in order to save the life of one of the younger mothers-to-be has the investigators called in by a worried doctor. What caused these women to become pregnant at the same time? Could they all be from the same father? What sort of hideous creature could spawn such terribly deformed kin? And does it have anything to do with the band of gypsies that got run off the village green a few months back?

Even if investigators can discretely gather enough information from distraught townsfolk to track down the travellers, they will find them most possessive of their Father. Father spreads his seed. Father loves his family. And anyone who threatens that bond will face his wrath. The last thing unwary investigators might see is Father's gelatinous bulk rearing down on them from his trailer, pseudopods flailing in the night air...

Izevel is one of the Wyrd, a sibyl, a 'prophetess.' Most visit her for her cures for sickness, which are considered better than any doctor's. Few, however, go to her for her knowledge of the future anymore. Most have heard of the prices she asks and the curious will be met with sad, mute stares and the shaking of heads. For Izevel does not work with mundane payment. She works in the immaterial—in souls, years, skills and attributes. For the price of ten years of your life, Izevel can tell you—cryptically but truthfully—how you shall die...

Izevel Horowitz is not actively involved in the Mythos, although investigators may believe she is. She is a sorceress, a seer and a shaper of ways, but there is nothing about her that reeks of the taint of the inhuman. She is simply gifted or cursed with second-sight. Investigators will find her a useful informant on the occult, though some might at first be unwilling to pay the price. Not that it matters; Horowitz knows they *will* pay for it—one way or another.

## THE GREEN DESERT OF WALES

The Desert of Wales is a Victorian neologism for the immense nothingness that exists at the centre of Wales. Rolling hills, gorges, valleys and ancient oak forests, only a few hamlets, monasteries and cottages remain sprinkled here and there, with travel made only by a few dirt tracks, greatly unsuitable for automobile travel. A railway system was implemented in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century and discovered numerous abandoned ruins, like the illustrious Strata Florida Abbey. Little more than overgrown stone walls and an imposing arched doorway when rediscovered, history implies the abbey was built on the site of an ancient monolith, and that during the dissolution of the Catholic Church in the 1530s, the monks of Glastonbury Cathedral attempted to move the Holy Grail to Strata Florida. If such is true, it may well still be there.

It is said that up until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century wyvern would haunt the edges of the Desert; winged things, vast and long, that snatched shepherds and sheep in dagger-toothed mouths and swallowed them whole. Local farmers took it upon themselves to cull these beasts, hunting them down and killing them, until finally, in the 1880s, scientists heard of these strange cryptids. By the time they got there, however, they were extinct. The Welsh farmers, who rarely travelled beyond their own villages, were surprised to learn that the wyvern weren't, as they assumed, a normal blight upon the rest of the country.

Some wyverns still exist, although they are more likely to be known as Haunting Horrors to the Mythos versed. They sleep in caves or abandoned cottages, coiled in knotted curls. The largest is known as the Eater, and local legend tells of its home being long-abandoned Aberwyvern Castle, perched high atop a craggy cliff-face overlooking quiet Hay-on-Wye, the famed 'town of books.'

The Green Desert has always been known for its wizards. Though the days of Merlin are long passed, there are those who use the desert's powerful ley-lines and seclusion to commune with the Great Old Ones and their kin. Woe betide he who stumbles upon these mighty magicians' lairs without recourse, and at night—it is said—the battles between these reclusive wizards light the sky with fire and sound unknown to mortal ken.

## KRAIGHTEN, IRELAND

Forty miles from Ardrahan, one may find Kraiten, though few travellers ever do. The nearest train station is twenty miles distant at Geoghmaddy and no maps show little Kraiten on their pages. If not for the weekly supplies of beer, drawn by the village drayman from station to pub over a sunken dirt track, the place might well have disappeared entirely.

So, deep in the *Gaeltacht* (Irish-speaking) west of County Galway, Kraiten rests at the base of a low hill, surrounded by bleak and desolate countryside. Apart from her church and pub, there are no other amenities. Post is held at Geoghmaddy and collected fortnightly. During the Anglo-Irish and Civil wars the village remained untouched. No battles were fought here. No history was born here.

In a country that thrives on history, Kraiten is forgotten for a reason. In 1908 a manuscript published under the pseudonym Berreggnog came to the attention of those interested in weird tales. It told the story of two Englishmen's holidaying in Kraiten, which turned decidedly unnatural. Finding the village polite if secretive, the pair followed the nearby river to find, after passing through strange and unwholesome forestry, that it cascaded waterfall-like into a vast circular chasm. Jutting from one wall of this chasm was a projecting spur of rock upon which sat the great ruin of a house. Inside, they found the manuscript Berreggnog later published.

The document spoke of hideous things: a house bought by the original author becoming trapped in some limitless and desolate alien landscape high above a chasm, haunted by swine-things that assailed his home. Timeless aeons where day and night were replaced by strange solar bodies and luminous shapes, and some hideous unseen thing with burning green hands that emit unknown pestilence. The last words speak of some *thing* from the cellar; something too loathsome to contemplate.

The only expedition to follow up on Kraiten's apparent oddities was made in 1918 by a trio from the Society for Psychical Research; two were reported missing presumed dead, apparently while trying to walk back to Geoghmaddy. The third was found dead on the road, partially eaten by wild animals.

There are other disappearances around Kraithen. A police patrol in 1874, and two gypsy children in 1901. The IRA admitted losing two or so dozen men in the region during the Civil War. Most are written off as having got lost in the wilderness or not even been there in the first place.

In reality Kraithen lies on a malleable border between the waking and the dreaming worlds; the three parapsychologists, the owner of the house and the two holidaymakers (and maybe more) crossed into a private pocket-dimension of the Dreamlands and suffered at the hands of its inhabitants. The local population are quite open about old house and the bad reputation it had, one that stretched back to the 1690s—though no one currently alive has visited it, though an old man bought it back in 1870.

Those who follow the river and pick their way through the overgrown wood will find the old house at the centre of that glorious chasm—grand yet abandoned, as if only yesterday. But for those who survey it, the next time they sleep they will awake to that desolate arena—to find *their* home within that hideous permanent twilight landscape. Escape is not impossible but only two have ever made it out—and neither of those lived to tell the tale. Those homes transported to the pocket-dimension are also tainted, becoming doorways to the arena just as the original home did. If unchecked and allowed to spread, Kraithen's Dreamland may creep into every house in the British Isles.

### *LAMBTON, COUNTY DURHAM*

Fable tells of the Lambton Worm, a fiendish beast raised and killed by Sir John Lambton, who was cursed as a result. So –

Once upon a time, young Lambton was a rebellious youth who preferred fishing to church. Reproached that such acts would only bring the Devil, Lambton caught a strange worm, and mockingly declaring to his complainants he had caught the Devil before the Devil caught him. Disposing of the creature down a nearby well, he promptly forgot it.

As a young man, Lambton joined the Crusades in penance for his earlier unruliness. While away, however, the worm grew. Leaving its well, it bore great holes through the countryside, eating livestock and small children. The townsfolk

dismayed and searched for the perpetrator, only to find the creature asleep, wrapped around Penshaw Hill. All attempts to kill it failed, and Lambton's aged father was forced to appease it with daily rituals of food and milk. Those who attempted to slay it found its severed parts reattached when it moved back over them. No man who stood against it survived.



Tales of strange happenings near his home soon reached John, who returned from Palestine to find Lambton destitute. The worm burrowed by day and slept at night. Upon hearing the fault was his he vowed to destroy it, but first took advice from a nearby witch. She told him to make armour covered in blades and fight it while it drank at a nearby river, and upon doing, so the chunks of worm cut off by the blades were washed downstream and unable to be reattached. So, as all things do, it died. For this help, upon the worm's defeat, John was informed he had to kill the next living thing he saw. When he refused to do so, it being his own father, the Lambtons were cursed for nine generations. The last Lambton to be killed by it was supposedly Henry Lambton, who died crossing Lambton Bridge in 1761.

Since the mid-1800s story of the worm has become increasingly popular. A Parthenon-like monument was built on Penshaw Hill in commemoration of the event (though the walkway, from which one could look over the countryside, was closed in 1926 after a boy fell from it to his death), and the town features numerous theatrical retellings throughout the year.

In truth, the story is somewhat more complex. Lambton's worm was no worm at all, but a young Dhole plucked by John's hand from a gate he opened. John, it seemed, went far further than simply ignoring church, preferring instead to

dabble in things man was not meant to know. His repentance was, however, quite sincere; he returned to England only after the Battle of Arsuf. By then the Dhole had grown to some tens of feet, and was supplicated by a fearful countryside. The Dhole's regenerating flesh made it impossible to fight, and after John attempted to banish it using the forbidden books he had once raised it with, he turned to stronger magic. In exchange for the spell taught by the witch, John offered her his hand in marriage. Using her enchantment, he trapped the Dhole beyond space-time, where it would remain forever. When the witch came to collect her reward John reneged, having her chased from the estate. Before run through by John's men's swords she cursed him and his family. For generations, the Lambtons have been haunted by some invisible beast: the Laughing Bride of Lambton (a Star Vampire). It still haunts descendents of John himself (reason for the 9 generation tale is that the recent Lambton's are not *legitimate* descendents of John. The true descendent is Brian Tamlyn, the town's librarian.)

Today the Dhole remains locked in a pocket-dimension beyond the reach of mortal physics. While unaging, and at its immature size, the Dhole is awake and increasingly irate. Over the last few decades it has managed to reach the pitifully weak human minds around Lambton. The collective consciousness built about the worm has weakened the Dhole's immaterial cage. With sufficient 'push' it may well manifest itself physically again.

Lambton's population has spent the last two years preparing for the biggest Worm Festival in the town's history. Thousands from around the country shall descend upon the castle to make merry and watch a presentation of the story by some of the biggest names in theatre. The worm is being provided by a thirty-strong team of local men, wearing a long and intricate costume. They've spent the last few months training, learning how to walk in sync and move like in a snakelike fashion.

Slowly the association between Dhole and costume are becoming intertwined. While wearing it, the performers are finding themselves moving as one—even thinking as one—as if pushed along by a superior mind. No one has noticed the way the fabric seems to slick with ooze during their recitals, or the way their feet sometimes disappear

beneath the folds of cloth and not return until they stop.

When the festival comes the Dhole will use the collective minds of the audience to reform; manifesting through the snake-like costume and its human controllers. From there it shall wreak its revenge upon Lambton and its descendents.

Investigators may be called in after costume-runs become increasingly disturbing, the Dhole's mind flowing into those of the worm-costume making them act in an alien fashion, at least until stripped of their attire. Not that they wish to be removed any more. The belly of the beast has become second home to the actors now.

### *LIMEHOUSE, LONDON*

The Chinese population of London calls this place home, keeping themselves to themselves and eking out a living. As do the Tcho-Tcho and Shī-Zàng.

Limehouse itself is named for the lime kilns that historically served its docks. For centuries its location on the Thames made it prime estate for dockyards; with them came immigrants. Today Limehouse is famed as the Chinese district, although other ethnicities have made communities here too. Much of character is formed by the Isle of Dogs to the south and the massive docks and warehouses that occupy it. Catering to sailors, dockworkers and immigrant population, Limehouse became known for its tight, twisting streets and foreignness. Opium dens and Oriental brothels hide behind the facades of Chinese bars and hotels, and shops with exotically calligraphied signs sell strange Eastern spices and objects. While true, its reputation precedes it; though pocked with slums and habitat of a rough nightlife, the district has its respectable side, with restaurants, shops and homes. It is the seedier aspects, however, that most Londoners latch upon.

The Tcho-Tcho occupy an assortment of side-streets and causeways between the dock front and Bantam Row, some of which actually rear out onto the Thames in twisted pier-legged shanties. Before their arrival in the last century the area was a relatively prosperous home for Chinese Han. A minority within a minority, the Tcho-Tcho fought filed-tooth-and-iron-tipped-claw to take land from the increasingly horrified Asian population, and by 1901 they had forced the richest Chinese from

into flight. The police, always treated with suspicion by Limehouse residents, watched helplessly as this new group bent the area's population to their will. The nickname Cho Street for Bantam Row eventually came to include some five or six blocks of neighbourhood. Today the Tcho-Tcho comprise about 48% of Cho Street's population, and the site has become a slum of epic proportions. During daylight hours it is considered unwelcoming, and after dark only tramps and madmen cut through the alleys and rookeries.

Those non-Tcho who remain trapped within Cho Street are treated as little more than slaves, with no chance of recrimination. Assault, rape, murder and worse frequently take place, and locals are humiliated publicly; forced to kowtow in the street or spat upon by passing Tcho-Tcho hatchet-men. Earnest police and reformers have hit a wall of silence, enforced by the Tcho, who run the area with an iron fist. Tcho-Tcho opium dens and gambling houses are rarely frequented by other Asians, but white clientele keep them in profit. Tcho-Tcho brothels are usually staffed by kidnapped or forced women, although some Tcho women also work there—their reasons for doing so not for the faint of heart or weak of stomach. The only seemingly legitimate services they provide are a sprinkling of laundrettes and restaurants, the latter's forte being the surprisingly tasty pork with *bak bon dzhow* sauce. The fact it is really human ganglia paste on human flesh remains unknown outside the Tcho-Tcho community, and much of it is made of vagrants who unwisely nest in Cho Street's squalid alleyways.

The Shī-Zàng, a pan-Asian but predominantly Chinese group that seeks various aims (see p.85),



has also made headquarters in Limehouse's docks. They and the Tcho-Tcho eye each other warily, but neither is willing to make the first move, recognising they wield only enough power for mutual destruction. If push came to shove, however, one may be orchestrated into striking the other over some real or perceived slight. Doing so would surely cast Chinatown into a brutal and bitter riot more destructive than that of 1919.

### *LITTLE RETALLICK, CORNWALL*

Little Retallick's black-tin colliery has been beset by all manner of disasters of late. A cave-in claimed the lives of four pitmen, and a nearby subsidence left part of the local school at the bottom of a sixty foot crater. Curiously these and other events have not made the national papers; only the local rags report on Retallick's plight, only then relegating it to a comment on page 4. Even so, the last government inspection passed with flying colours and the local union seem happy with conditions, though their smiles are getting a touch frayed around the edges.

The Yardleys, identical twin brothers, worked Retallick's quarry together from their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, the same day their father walked out on them and never looked back. Today, aged 36, they own the mine (and by turns Retallick itself), having bought the pit after the last owner, Penhew Tidman, died. Where the money came from, nobody dares ask, but Tidman's son fought an expensive legal case over the Yardley's right to own the business, arguing it had been left to him as part of the family holdings. The deeds, however, were never found—and Tidman now ekes a sad existence in a dirty two-room cottage under the shadow of his family's former home; a cottage 'generously' rented him by the Yardleys.

Few respect the brothers, but all fear them. Their control of the town is unshakable: they sit on the local council, the police's Watch Committee, and as JPs in the magistrate's court. With the colliery employing near 90% of the town's workforce, any threat of being blacklisted by the Yardleys is a serious one, and a complex web ties Retallick to the Yardley's estate. Those who please the brothers are rewarded with power over their neighbours among other incentives. Even the usually proud union-stewards have accepted the brother's control; a talk with them about wages left the union men shaken and agreeing to peg rates.

The one reason the people of Retallick refuse to act against the brothers is the town has actually grown much richer since the Yardleys took control. The seams have never yielded so much tin before, and though wages remain low, they are higher than most of Britain's other mining communities. The Yardleys are only partially to thank for this, the true source of the town's wealth its other inhabitant: the one that lives coiled within a chamber at the secret heart of the mine. The creature the brothers found might well have killed them if not for the patronage they showed it. Down in the dark, the swollen flatworm-like creature that roiled and spoke within their heads was like a god. The Yugg offered them riches in exchange for food and protection, and with their newfound wealth the pair plotted their coup. Tidman's death was from cancer, but no terrestrial type. His doctor died soon afterwards, apparently in an accident. Really the sight of the mine-owner warping and shifting, skin peeling and melting as unnatural formations sprouted beneath his flesh, made the doctor kill Tidman with a morphine overdose and then take his own life. The Yugg's aberrant natural poisons, introduced by the Yardleys, had fulfilled their task.

Now the Yugg creeps between the Yardley's estate and its subterranean tunnels by means of specially dug crawl ways. The brothers feed it those who displease them and will not be missed. In exchange the Yugg provides seams and glittering riches.

If solved of its troubles Little Retillick will be destroyed. Without the Yugg its veins of tin will disappear in months. But the Yardleys are already amassing staggering wealth; soon they will be able to extend their influence wider. There will always be those swayed by riches, and the political parties clamour for their donations in exchange for their standing as MPs...

### *MEDENSTALL, NEWPORT PAGNELL*

Medenstall, on the banks of the River Ouse, is one of the largest towns in the area, with two hospitals and seventeen churches. It is also home to not one, but two separate horrors. On its west side, under the railway bridge, is the Key & Lock, a shady looking pub bordered by timber-framed shops of unsavoury character. Run by publican Enoch Whateley, only the desperate or the barred from other establishments drink there. Hushed whispers tell of a beast sealed within the attic.

Some say it is Enoch's son, born hideously deformed and kept concealed, while others speak of some creature that has lived in the pub since it was built. Enoch himself is descended from a long line of vagabonds; in 1753, for example, one of his ancestral uncles was transported to New England on pain of death for some heinous crime. At night, strange and transient lights of many hues flicker in the pub windows, and weird droning can be heard. Raised voices. A sound like the mewling of cats, but far, far larger. Recently the tiles of the pub's roof have begun to buckle. Though considered one of the many hazards of living under a bridge, the more architecturally savvy point out the roof is bulging, not concaving; as if some vast bulk were pressing at it from the inside...

On the other side of town, getting involved with Bagley Boy's College has grown increasingly unsafe. The last year has seen the private boarding school scene of numerous incidents; nervous break-downs, mysterious illnesses and crippling injuries. A select group of boys calling themselves the Aforgo Men, and led by pupil Ellis Pargenter, rule Bagley with terrifying authority. Ellis, the 15 year old son of a Blackpool businessman, gained his newfound powers through a book he discovered hidden behind a loose brick in his dorm-room. The book, *Thesaurus Ars Occulta*, taught him vile rituals, including the summoning of powerful immaterials that do his bidding. So far he has used them flauntingly, becoming increasingly power-hungry. Students not of the Aforgo Men remain terrified, and even teachers are fair game; a gym instructor who attempted to birch Ellis for truancy suddenly retired, and those who have seen him since note how like a shell-shock sufferer he acts, furtive eyed and fearful of loud noises. The only man unafraid of Ellis and his cohorts is the headmaster, Maj. Cyril Drummond (ret.), who fights a battle of wills against the young wizards. Both Ellis and his comrades fail to recognise the full price of their dabbling; their group name comes from a word found in their book. Aforgomon: an obscure avatar of Yog-Sothoth.

Due to the high staff turnover, Bagley Boy's College frequently hires experts in various fields as teachers for two or three month periods, with full offer of tenure upon completion.

## MONTPELIER HILL, DUBLIN

Above the sprawl of Tallaght, some thirteen miles southwest of Dublin City, Ireland, rise the foothills of the Dublin Mountains. Atop the peak of one of the lower hills is the Hellfire Club.

The Hellfire Club was the meeting place of the Dublin Hellfire Club, and can be seen from much of Tallaght and the surrounding area—a squat, stone ruin that stains the hills. Unlike their mainland contemporaries who played at being Satanists, the Dublin membership went one step further, much preferring the real thing to acting. Founded in 1735 its membership included such types as Richard Chapell Whaley—otherwise known as ‘Burn Chapell’ for his Sunday morning fun that involved riding around setting alight to the thatched roofs of Catholic churches. All were eccentric, hedonistic and violent.

The building itself dates from 1725, and was built from some of the stones of a nearby monolith. Soon after completion the granite roof some tons heavy was blown off by a freak storm, and was replaced. The Hellfire Club has remained sturdy and waterproof for nigh on 200 years by the 1920s.

The stories of the rituals held within the building itself are many and varied. Most involve devil dogs, insane drinking sessions, Black Masses, the sacrifice of daemonic cats, visits by the Devil himself, and the legendary Hellfire Fire. In the latter, it is said a servant tripped on prostrate drunken bodies and spilled drinks on ‘Burn Chapell’s’ coat. In turn, Whaley spilled brandy on the footman and then set him aflame. The building caught fire and a number of members were burnt alive. Another fire was started in the building in 1749, eight years after the club’s end, in celebration of Queen Victoria’s visit to Dublin.

Today, the Club building stands empty and silent, its altar near the foot of the hill. Though quaint, the stories of the Hellfire Club and their goings on are infinitely worse; their lust for fire borne from the worship of Cthugha. The Hellfire Fire is partially true: during a drunken orgy, Whaley summoned a fire vampire to chastise the clumsy servant. It was not the cleverest thing he had done.

Much of the site remains strongly linked to Cthugha worship, being astrologically aligned with Formalhaut. On certain nights the air

crackles with unrepressed heat. The founder, Richard Parsons, a dabbler in black arts, was also said to have created a dog-familiar that followed and spoke to him before vanishing after Parsons died in 1741. This Barghest (see p.95) roams the country lanes about Tallaght, and sometimes enters Dublin proper.

Investigators will find Montpelier Hill an interesting site, it being open to the public and seemingly abandoned. But care should be taken. Cthugha’s worship has left an indelible mark on this place; and his servants, human and not, flock here regularly.

## OLDMINSTER HOSPITAL, ROMFORD

Copley Laforet currently resides in Broadmoor Asylum for the Criminally Insane. Early one morning in 1913 his house was raided by Newcastle police, who found in his pantry and larder the dissected and partially eaten body parts of no less than sixteen people. He remains little known to the public: his sentencing to Broadmoor happened on June 29<sup>th</sup> 1914, the same day news of Archduke Franz Ferdinand’s death reached Britain.

Laforet, then a surgeon at the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne’s Medical School, had not acted alone, though his statement in court that he “served the whims of Quachil Uttatus with a multitude of others” did little more than have him certified insane. His protégés slunk back into the darkness and planned for how to free him.

Up until recently, Oldminster Hospital in Romford, Essex, was considered one of the best in England, featuring some of the latest technological advancements. The staff is experienced and well-trained, and it has a record for excellence in experimental techniques. But if this is the case, why do so many people keep dying here... and why is it getting worse? A man goes in for a leg operation and comes out with amputated arms. A doctor walks into the ward and shoots himself in the head before the surprised after-care patients. Something terrible is seen squirming in the attic’s water-cisterns; something that clatters the pipes as it flows through them. A nurse is restrained by orderlies, her screams turning to sobs as she tells them about the *skinned* thing that was watching the burn patients...





Something very strange is happening at Oldminster, and somebody knows what's going on, but they're not telling. The board of directors, the local council, the police, the Ministry of Health, the Home Secretary and Broadmoor's governor have all received the letters: 'release Laforet. Oldminster is only the beginning.' There hasn't been an investigation, or letters, like this since Jack the Ripper back in 1888. Some of the best minds have been brought in—anonously. There's a lot of pride at stake. Not to mention lives. Of course, nobody believes the letters are true, though those in charge have thought it prudent to bring in a few experts in the occult. Just in case...

### *WENLEY MOOR, YORKSHIRE*

Wenley Moor, some 40 square miles of the North York Moors, is considered one of the most remote, with the contours of its hills so steep and the roads so twisted that a 3 or 4 mile distance can take 10 or 11 miles to complete.

Recently much of the site was brought under the control of the army, whose presence has been an unwelcome addition to the town of Aidenmoss. The soldiers, many of them Royal Engineers and Royal Corps of Signals, have flocked to the town's pub, the only one in miles, but remain tight-lipped about their doings up on the moors. Locals attempting to investigate, and ramblers who got lost, have found themselves turned back at gunpoint. There's much talk that the place is developing some new superweapon, or even a doomsday device. The evidence seems uncanny: automobiles suddenly stall, electric charges are seen flickering in the night's sky, and metal sometimes fuses or carries a charge for no reason.

Station-014 is not developing a doomsday device, but they're beginning to wonder if they're sitting on one. Tasked with developing a new and experimental technique for spotting aeroplanes called Radio Direction Finder (RDF, or as it shall be known from 1941, RADAR), the unit has turned a section of Wenley Moor into a grid of electrical lines, metal rigging and curious apparatus. Hopefully this new technology will replace the acoustic mirrors being built at Dungeness. That is, if they can get the thing to work properly. Sporadic power-cuts, odd spikes and sudden flares have injured a number of engineers and the War Office is beginning to wonder if it's really worth the money.

The reasons for these disasters relate to the curious tunnels that honeycomb the moors. Accessible from numerous points, potholes and cavers have only explored the accessible upper levels of these warrens, which extend for miles in every direction. If one would go lower, squeezing through the narrow gaps left by collapses and centuries of tectonic movement, one would find a more complex network; complex yet somehow logical, as if manufactured by sentient intellect. Beneath even these an explorer would find water-logged corridors, hewn from the earth by expert artisans and decorated in aeons-old art.

In the underground caverns of Wenley Moor one of the few remaining outposts of the Serpent Race survives, its people kept in suspended animation within curious and technologically advanced sarcophagi. Millennia have passed and their machines continue to function, waiting for the message to be received that they can release their charges into a brave new world. Recent work on Wenley Moor involving radio waves is having a reflective effect on these ancient engines; and in turn they fight back, damaging the British Army's sensitive radio valves and blowing gaskets.

In these tunnels too, the ancient pets and guards of the Serpent People survive. In the dark, hundreds of feet underground, they have adapted—millennia of interbreeding creating new and horrible things that scuttle and bristle and feed on one another, growing to enormous size. The experiments on Wenley Moor have interested them, the buzz of electricity drawing them to it like moths to flame. Soon the more intrepid ones crawl from the cave entrances and explore the world; perhaps even growing a taste for it.



The experiments continue, and with them the horrible mutant things that live underground grow more agitated. Already small animals are being driven from the area; and a sheepdog was found badly mauled and injected with some unknown but incredibly potent venom. The military will not take kindly to investigators trying to shut down their experiments, or telling them of mythological races living under their well-shined boots...

### *WILLIAMSON'S TUNNELS, LIVERPOOL*

Dotted around Britain are numerous 'follies'; curious architectural displays that seem to serve no serious purpose. Most are built as demonstrations of wealth, such as Perrott's Folly in Birmingham; celebration, like King Alfred's Tower, Somerset; or mere amusement, as are the great assortment of odd follies at Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire.

Williamson's Tunnels are some of the oddest. Located in Edge Hill, Liverpool, they began construction in early 1815. Joseph Williamson, the Mole of Edge Hill, was their instigator. A notable architect and engineer, he built a number of expensive terraced houses in the Edge Hill area and proceeded to have tens of miles of tunnels dug underneath them. Most of these houses were already eccentric, featuring coal-cellars large enough to hold hundreds of tons, and curious multi-levelled foundations with hidden basements, only accessible through hidden doors. His lust for tunnel-digging lasted until his death in 1841, whereupon the thousands of men that made up his employees downed tools and left.

In the years succeeding the tunnels were used a dumping ground for all manner of waste and refuse, until in 1860—when they began to stink, Liverpool's local government concreted the majority entrances and exits to hide the stench, hiding them away from everyday eyes.

Nobody is sure how far the tunnels went, nor why they were developed. Some believe they were designed as hiding places from some cataclysm he had foreseen, others that they were made to allow travel between various sites across Liverpool only he knew about.

In truth, Williamson's Folly is the world's largest mundane entrance to the Dreamlands. William had originally designed it as a way for mass-transit between Liverpool and the port city of

Dylath-Leen. With his death the rituals needed to open the gate were never cast, and the blocking of the tunnels stopped all but the most insane explorer.

For many miles, the tunnels go, miles and miles, many more than they possibly could in our reality. It could take many years to explore them properly, maybe even an eternity, but somewhere down there is a single opening to the Dreamlands. It would be Williamson's last gift to Liverpool before he died. Sometimes it opens in Sarnath or the Enchanted Woods. Other times it is Ooth-Nargai or Kadath. One never knows. If someone could fix it; make it work as Williamson intended, they may hold a power beyond imagination... or a chaos to damn us all.

### *OTHER PLACES OF MYTHOS INTEREST*

*Borley Rectory, Essex:* The most haunted house in England did not seem to be haunted until 1927, and was not readily reported until 1929. Harry Price, famous parapsychologist and con-man, investigated for years, publishing much on the strange happenings. Now accepted as a hoax, Borley remains a good place for investigators to cut their psychical teeth.

*Leap Castle, Ireland:* Home to the O'Donnell Clan, legend says that a rivalry between two O'Donnell brothers cursed this castle. While one of the young men, a priest, held service in the castle's chapel, the other brother burst in and ran him through—the double ignomy of fratricide and priest-killing blighting the family home for generations. In 1922 it was burnt by the IRA, and in 1924 a supposed black-mass raised a terrifying, hunched sheep-man that smelt of rot and sulphur.

*The Magic Circle:* Not a place, but a group, the Magic Circle is a British organisation of magicians. Created in 1905, applicants must know 2 other members, display great aptitude, and promise never to release magical secrets. There is also an inner-circle of 300. The curious quality of the organisation is heightened with its creation by a meeting of 23 magicians (a magical number) at the Green Man pub. Conspiracy theorists may create their own suppositions as they place.

*Mornington Crescent Tube Station:* Opened in 1908, Mornington Crescent station in London remained surprisingly underused, often closed

except for Wednesdays. Some contend that this was due to something else that used the station for nefarious purposes on other days of the week.

*Peak Cavern, Derbyshire:* Otherwise known as the Devil's Arse, Peak Cavern was, until 1915, the last officially inhabited cave in Britain. Its troglodytic residents built houses on the inner mouth of the cave and made hemp-ropes.

*Stonehenge, Wiltshire:* Dating from about 2600BC, the monolith at Stonehenge remain mysterious and presumably of religious intent. During the 1920s, modern encroachment threatened the site, until—in 1929—donations allowed the purchase of surrounding land.

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## ***HIGH SOCIETIES, LOW PEOPLES: CULTS, GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS***

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Dates and ages of NPCs assume a campaign date of 1925. Keepers should feel free to alter stats, skills or spells for their campaign; as always, nothing here is gospel.

### ***ALEISTER CROWLEY***

The 'Wickedest Man in the World,' Aleister Crowley is a man of many skills: occultist, author, mountaineer, philosopher, poet, chess-master, yogi, liar, cad, cheat and magician.

It is impossible to do justice to Crowley in so small a space, but a brief summary of his life should suffice. Born Edward Alexander Crowley to fanatical Christians, Aleister's mother took to calling her rebellious offspring "The Beast"—an epithet he took to heart. After university and dabbling in occultism he joined the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, soon making enemies, and eventually being sued by Samuel MacGregor Mathers over copyright of a spell. Both claimed to fight a 'magickal war' against the other, replete with angels and demons, during the course of their little spat. With the schism of the Golden Dawn, Crowley travelled the Americas before going to Egypt with his wife in 1905.



It was here he received messages from Aiwass, minister of Hoor-paar-kraat. For some months he wrote what he was told, creating the Book of the Law. Crowley was also informed he was the prophet of a New Aeon, and that his scribe name was Ankh-af-na-khonsu. Crowley then travelled the world, continuing to convene with his godly messengers. During his travels his daughter would die, and his wife would file for divorce.

Due to his writings, Crowley was made head of the British section of the Ordo Templi Orientis (OTO) and founded his own group, the A.:A.:. 1914-1918 he lived in America, publishing vitriolic pro-German propaganda; the reasons for which remain unknown, but some say he was working for MI5 undercover.

In 1920 he set up the Temple of Thelema in Sicily, a commune-cum-magickal-school, where applicants cut themselves with razor-blades if they used personal pronouns, ate faeces and engaged in sex and drug orgies. After the death of one of its members in 1923 the Fascist Italian government finally had an excuse to expel the society. Crowley promptly faked his own death, and showed up in Berlin in 1924 during a posthumous showing of his artwork. He subsequently travelled Europe, selling 'elixir of life' tablets (the secret ingredient being his own semen), meeting, and insulting, other occultists, and instigating numerous lawsuits for slander and libel.

Crowley is a charming and slightly effete man, with the manners of an Oxford Don. He is also an alcoholic, cocaine-addict and hedonistic bisexual,

with a number of ties to the secret services. Investigators would do well not to underestimate him. Those seeking to make a patron of him should also be wary. Crowley sold himself to no man; and he has no qualms about leaving 'friends' to their fate. In 1905 he left 4 fellow mountaineers to die on Mount Kangchenjunga, and other associates attest to his keen self-protection. When the going gets tough, Aleister is known to get going.

Crowley's contacts with Aiwass and, in from 1918, LAM (a Grey-like extraterrestrial entity) within the context of the Cthulhu Mythos remains unknown. Crowley is far removed from the usual worshipper of the Mythos, leaving his relationship in the world directly up to the fiendish intrigues of the Keeper. Whatever it is, however, one thing holds true: Aleister Crowley is one of the most helpful, and also one of the dangerous, men an investigator can meet.

**Aleister Crowley, age 50, Wickedest Man Alive**  
STR 13 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 18 POW 18  
DEX 14 APP 13 EDU 16 SAN 90 HP 15

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** None

**Spells:** Auger; Contact Lam / Aiwass (*Contact Nyarlathotep*); other spells as Keeper wishes

**Skills:** Art: Chess 56%, Bargain 42%, Climb 44%, Credit Rating 55%, History 68%, Occult 70%, Persuade 59%, Psychology 45%

### *THE ANGLO-INDIAN CLUB, LONDON*

Founded in 1864 the Anglo-Indian Club serves a select group. While most colonial returnees prefer the Oriental or East India Club, for some their service in India has affected them more deeply than others might imagine. The Anglo-Indian Club caters to such member's special needs... and terrible hungers.

In 1833, Richard Crisp, son of a notable paper-magnate, joined the East India Company as a company officer. He soon discovered himself a gifted and innate linguist, and became greatly enamoured with the Raj and its peoples. His expertise did not go unnoticed. Within two years he was recruited to the newly formed Thuggee and Dacoity Department of the police.

The Thuggee were a secret fraternity, worshippers of Kali, Hindu goddess of annihilation and time. Ritual stranglers to death of travellers in the belief

that each killing brought Kali one millennium closer to awakening, the pickaxe and the knotted cord were their consecrated tools; wells filled with bodies their altars.

### SINISTER SEEDS: CHOKING BLACK HILLS

On a good day you can see the sky. Coke-ash pours from the factory chimneys, turning the town and its beach shiny black. On the dingy shore stretch miles of coke heaps, mountains of coal sitting dozens of feet high, waiting to be fed into the furnace maws of industry.

The stoker's body was discovered hideously mangled. Obviously, said the investigation, he had been caught in the gears of some of the nearby machinery. His widow was given a pittance of blood-money and then simply forgotten. But two more men have disappeared while working the heaps and a local thief known for stealing the factories' fuel has vanished also. Such hills are treacherous, with random landslips that can bury a man alive, but something worse is living within these valleys of coke – something that can move through choking piles of ash and rock like a man through water – something hungry...

Over the next few years, Crisp's skill and knowledge of Indian society netted him hundreds of arrests. By 1840 he was a vital cog in the Company's anti-Thuggee operations. Late in 1842, however, he would disappear undercover, attempting to infiltrate a closed sect in Delhi. Crisp suspected, though never spoke aloud, his belief in a further group behind the mundane facade of the Thuggee. To uncover it he was forced to go native, into untapped areas of India, where even Untouchable castes dared not tread.

Crisp returned a changed man, though associates in the force never noticed. On the surface he chased down the Thuggee cult he had for years; but behind closed doors he worshipped at the altar of something far worse: the deity known as the Small Crawler. His home, under the very noses of the government, became a church to the darkest arts, used by cultists to partake in terrible rituals. In turn he took a bride, a young priestess of the cult, and eventually retired. He returned to England in 1859, just after the Sepoy Mutiny and

the end of the East India Company. With his money, and aided by a few other European followers of the Crawler, he set up the Anglo-Indian Club in the lacquer-wood and brass furnished basement of 455 Hanton Square near Hyde Park, London.

Today the Club is considered all but unique among London's societies. For one it is open to both sexes, as long as they have lived in India for at least 25 years, or are otherwise considered to have sufficient ties to the sub-continent. Second, the club allows wives present at any time—something most unorthodox! With most of these wives being native Indian, this is even more unusual. As such, the club has gained something of a stigma amongst the older colonial hands who have kept the long held the adage 'what happens in India, stays in India' to heart. Youthful rashness are one thing but *marrying* such a girl? Because of this, the more liberal married Indian civil servants have found the Club a better choice than others when it comes to being accepted. That is of course the Club's intention. They make no disguise of this.

What they do disguise is the fact the Club is a front for the worship of the Small Crawler. There are roughly a hundred club members, not including their wives or husbands, and while a quarter of that 100 are ignorant of the true nature of the society, the rest are fervent cultists. Recent returners to the UK from the Indian sub-continent, especially those with mixed-race families, are actively targeted with invitations. What begins as a helping hand in an unsupportive home country becomes gentle pressure towards acceptance of Nyarlathotep's blessing. Individuals who refuse are left alone for the most part (although those who pry are disposed of). Those brought into the cult have their families indoctrinated too: husbands, wives, and children.

The current chairman of the Club is Nathaniel Rajpal Imani (nee Nathaniel Bishop), a retired civil servant who openly prefers his adoptive India to England (reasons for his being returned apparently relate to some unknown scandal). Though Panchal holds power in public, the cult's leader is Uma Imani, his silent and clingy wife. Imani has been raised from birth to be priestess of the sect, expected to live and die in the worship of the Small Crawler. While she acts innocent, naive

and unable to speak English in public, in private she wields absolute authority.

Rituals are held well away from the Club and are instead carried out in rented accommodation or halls under the guise of Indian get-togethers. At these meets their foul services are held, priests and priestesses dancing naked and wild as they offer sacrifices to their alien god. Hindu rites and sexual Tantra are debased. Fire-sacrifices (*yajna*) are carried out. Only in times most dire or important is the statue of the Small Crawler itself created, using assorted debris, before the bizarre facsimile is ritualistically burnt. In this way there is no physical proof of worship other than the Cthaat Kardath, a Hindi text well hidden at the Imani's opulent Upminster home.

The Anglo-Indian Club's powers may at first glance seem slight, but it wields surprising clout. Membership is vast; male and female, young and old. For those who do not take the hint, the cult knows how important family is—threatening the investigators' relations first, killing them if necessary to leave investigators heartbroken, before moving in for the kill.

**Nathaniel Rajpal Panchal, age 49, faux leader**

STR 12 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 15 POW 14  
DEX 11 APP 12 EDU 15 SAN 0 HP 16

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Garrote 55%, damage special  
Pickaxe 62%, 1D8+2+db

**Spells:** Cloud Memory; Shrivel

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 49%, Fast Talk 72%,  
Persuade 53%

**Uma Imani, age 37, Cult High Priestess**

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 18 POW 20  
DEX 14 APP 15 EDU 13 SAN 0 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Garrote 58%, damage special  
Pickaxe 48%, 1D8+2+db

**Spells:** Cloud Memory; Clutch of Nyogtha;  
Contact Small Crawler; Dream Vision;  
Nightmare; Shrivel; Summon/Bind Hunting  
Horror; Summon/Bind Star Vampire

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 67%, Pretend not to speak  
English 99%, Pretend to be delicate and lost 67%

**Mythos Tomes:** Cthaati Kardath (Sanity Loss  
1D8/2D8; Cthulhu Mythos + 13 Percent; Spells:  
Contact Small Crawler; Darkness of Kali;  
Nightmare; Summon/Bind Hunting Horror;  
Summon/Bind Star Vampire)

### Small Crawler, Great Old One

STR 50 CON 45 SIZ 05 INT 95

POW 100 HP 60 Move 12/1\*

Tentacle 90%, damage 5D6+1D3 magic points drained per hit

Lash 65%, damage 10D6

Spells: Knows all spells

Armour: 5 points, plus 5 points/round

Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D20

\* Movement rate of 1 while burrowing

## THE CLOISTER

One of the more influential sects investigators may meet is 'The Cloister,' a national Dagon-worshipping church (seemingly headed by one Vincent St Mandel. Unlike many of its ilk it is well-funded, with international ties to other 'fraternal' organisations (including the Esoteric Order of Dagon at Innsmouth, Massachusetts).

The Cloister is an acknowledged religion, protected by law. Its membership numbers in the low thousands and it revolves around ersatz Judaeo-Christian beliefs with Oriental trappings. A complex series of initiation rituals called "the Strata" grade each step of indoctrination; progress along the Strata grants the applicant more on the order's true beliefs. The majority of members are in the lowest Strata, bearing only the barest knowledge of the true nature of *Bekalam* (the lower Strata's name for Dagon). Temples are found in any major town or city, with strongholds along the coast. Its headquarters at Portsmouth is designed to resemble the Spanish El Escorial Monastery (though with more marine symbolism), replete with minarets, onion-domes and England's largest private tropical fish aquarium.

Once 'absolved' (baptised), members are expected to wear greenish-grey robes as part of their worship and community service. Most prefer to use the church's Piscean symbol as a lapel-pin while in public. Community service involves evangelising, social-work and charitable-service, mostly by lower Strata members hoping to advance through the ranks. A special group, known as the *Irin*, are the church's bodyguards. Though described as site security, their less well publicised tasks include

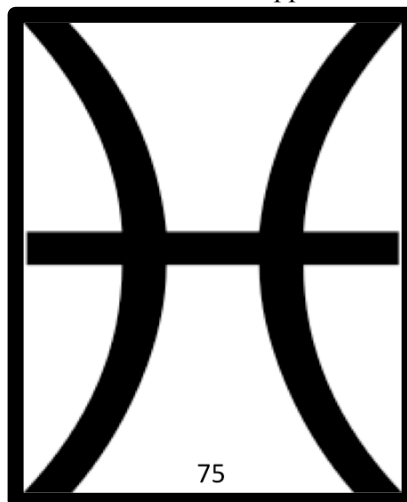
keeping a tight leash over members, bringing them before the ecclesial masters if they try to break or run, and handling those who dig too deeply into The Cloister's affairs.

A number of influential and affluent patrons have assisted the organisation, paying for a flotilla of some seven large ships (known as the *Shekhinah* Fleet). Publicly they serve as travelling lecture-sites and temples. Their true uses include indoctrination of the highest Strata through meetings with Deep Ones and other spawn, as well as for human-sacrifices and rituals best hidden from prying eyes. The largest of these craft is the *SS Yeoman*, a 6,000 ton ex-cruise ship turned recruitment station. When not out on 'missions' it can regularly be found in Portsmouth docks, swarming with crew and guests.

Who truly controls The Cloister remains a mystery. Higher-ranking members speak only of 'the Inquisitors' and someone or something going by the acronym of 'L.' Between 1920 and 1929 increasing British police investigation led to the cult hiding many of their books and material internationally for future generations, and in 1925 St Mandel spent some months visiting Innsmouth during an American recruitment drive. Nonetheless, the cult's luck finally ran out in 1927 when St Mandel was arrested with two other cultists during a 'Black Mass' at Thorpeness, Suffolk. All three were hanged. The fact Innsmouth was raided by Federal authorities at the same time may or may not be pure coincidence.

In the end, The Cloister did not last beyond 1931—with the hanging of their public leader, infighting fragmented the group. The largest offshoot of The Cloister is said to have helped form the radical Sea Shield Society in 1977, a group violently opposed to nautical encroachment by humanity.

Headquartered at Deer Harbor, WA, Sea Shield's three vessels, *RV Dagon*, *RV Aegir* and *RV Susanō* have been accused of ramming and sinking deep-sea research, mining and hunting vessels worldwide, and the society was almost closed by the FBI in 2005 after they seized a number of abandoned oil-platforms in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



**Vincent St Mandel, age 48, face of the Cloister**  
STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 16 POW 17  
DEX 14 APP 17 EDU 13 SAN 0 HP 15  
**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** None

**Spells:** Attract Fish; Bind Enemy; Breath of the Deep; Contact Deep One; Contact Star-Spawn of Cthulhu; Contact Deity: Cthulhu; Curse of the Stone; Deflect Harm; Grasp of Cthulhu; Voorish Sign

**Skills:** Bargain 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 38%, Fast Talk 51%, Persuade 74%

### CHARLES FORT

Born in 1874 in New York, Charles Fort would prove to be a unique fellow. Inventor of the world 'teleportation' (in 1931), he was also to be the world's first recognised cataloguer of paranatural, paranormal and anomalous phenomena. No curiosity was too bizarre for Fort to index: UFOs, unnatural rains of organic and inorganic materials, fantastic cryptids, perverse weather-fronts, odd disappearances, all were the root of his non-fiction books. He would argue these 'damned data' were fundamentally necessary to understand the universe, but—with science unwilling to accept them and blow apart our fragile understanding of reality—scientists had swept them under the carpet.

Though little educated scholastically, Fort was intelligent and well travelled. Walrus-like, with a moustache to match, he was also quite able with his fists—once beating a Frenchman in a duel at the age of 22. His wife, Anna, 4-years his elder, was his father's English maid. Fort was a voracious reader; Anna a cinema-fanatic. The pair made an odd couple: the asocial, if witty and carefree husband and his quirky, perfectly congenial wife.

In 1920 Fort, in a fit of despair over his books "X" and "Y" being rejected (see p.91), moved to London with his wife for six months. In 1921 they returned, living at 39A Marchmont Street, London, near the British Museum. Fort would work there daily, writing and investigating new esoterica to include in his incendiary and droll volumes, and could be regularly found at Hyde Park's Speakers' Corner, attempting to catch the ear of passersby with talk of the inevitability of space-travel and other supposed frivolities. In 1929, the couple returned to New York, where he would become ever more famous and finally die of leukaemia in 1932.

Fort was a tireless academic and a harsh critic, habitually burning work that he considered imperfect or flawed. Though lacking the manners and good-graces of his peers, he had a certain unwieldy cheerfulness when in his element (and most definitely when given the chance to talk on his favoured subjects of Forteana, as the odd cases he wrote of would come to be known).

For the investigator needing information, a helping hand and a strong fist, they can look no further than the assistance of Fort. Unlike his contemporaries, Fort neither dabbles nor takes much pleasure from the ideas of magic. Considering himself a deep-rooted sceptic, he isn't there to prove or disprove, merely to produce evidence that showed it may have been.

**Charles Fort, age 51, Forteana Collector**  
STR 14 CON 14 SIZ 16 INT 16 POW 14  
DEX 13 APP 14 EDU 12 SAN 70 HP 15  
**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Fist/Punch 62%, damage 1D3+db  
**Skills:** Credit Rating 48%, Library Use 67%, Occult 47%, Spot Hidden 43%

### "CHERNOZEM" USED AND RARE BOOK SALES

Konstantin Yarovich's bookshop *Chernozem Used and Rare Books* in the seaside resort of Felixstowe, Suffolk, is considered one of the finest in the south-east. Almost twenty-five miles of shelving packed into his tiny three-floor store, tomes and journals stacked to the ceiling, it also caters to a select market of occult buyers and sellers. While holidaymakers might shop for paperbacks or historical pieces, the esoterist knows that with enough money and time, Konstantin can lay his hands on any book—whether the public believes it real or not.

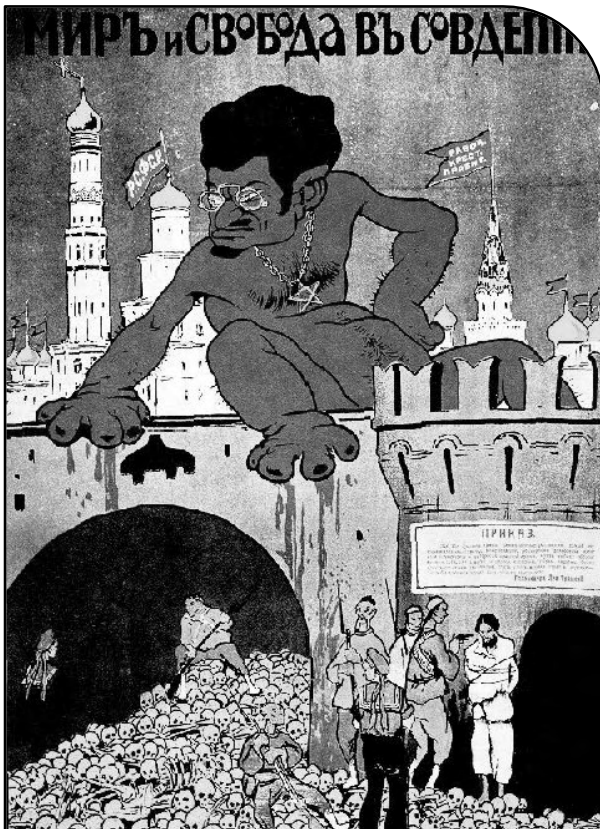
Kostich (as he prefers to be known) is a White Russian exile and former Baron, who, after the Revolution, made his way to Britain by way of India. Regularly he donates money to the *Monarchist Union of Central Russia*, an anti-Bolshevik underground organisation. Personality wise, he is a fatherly gentleman with only the barest traces of his Russian accent.

Beyond that, however, there are other layers to Yarovich. Scratch beneath the book dealer and one will find the persona of the Soviet spy. While

it is true he is on the Soviet death-list and he did seek asylum in the UK, Yarovich was not chased out of Russia by the Cheka secret police that murdered his family. Instead, he was the Chekist who executed his own family. Yarovich, with the cover of a kindly book-seller, acts as an intelligence resource for his Soviet superiors, sending information and money back to the USSR by means of books sold to communist front-companies in Europe.

Then, if things could not get more confusing, while he acts as a Soviet pretending to be a White Russian, his true personality is pro-Tsarist all the way. To sum it up, he is a Tsarist masquerading as a Soviet, whose cover is that of a White Russian

In 1918, Yarovich's real name was Klym Babia, a Ukrainian alchemist and sorcerer living outside Kiev. Already an old man, when the Cheka unit—led by Yarovich—arrived to arrest and execute him for 'advocating superstitions,' Yarovich underestimated the old man. After beating him to a pulp Yarovich led him out to a secluded patch of scrub to put a bullet in his head. Babia used the occasion to transfer his mind with the would-be killer and then, before Yarovich even realised the tables had turned, put a bullet right between his old body's eyes. In his new body, Klym returned to Moscow with no one the wiser to the original Yarovich's fate.



Babia/Yarovich absolutely despises the Bolsheviks; but they have their uses. He bolsters the piddling information he gives them with hearsay and outright lies, and in exchange they pay him well. Even if they cut him off it doesn't matter; he loses nothing. Now safe in the UK, Babia has continued his occult studies, becoming increasingly interested in laying his hands on an accurate copy of the Necronomicon. So far he hasn't found one, but has recruited two people who may be able to assist.

Christine Robins (real name, Kristina Rybins) is a Russo-Scots cat-thief. Born in Edinburgh to socialist parents, a Russian father and a Scottish mother, Kristina found herself isolated from her country of birth. Travel to Russia left her more disillusioned: while her Russian was perfect, her strong Scots accent left her a mockery. To mask it she became more Russian than Russian, which suited the Bolsheviks fine. Late in 1919 Kristina was met by a Soviet agent who offered her the chance to serve the *Rodina*. She jumped at the chance. Having changed her name to a more Anglicised form she serves as Kostich's tool for breaking-and-entering jobs. Her skills are exemplary, and though she wonders why most of them involve stealing esoteric books she questions nothing.

Parson Dailly is Kristina and Yarovich's go-between. A nervous member of the British communist party, he was actively recruited by Yarovich at a book-fair. By day he works as clerk at a large shipping firm, but otherwise serves Yarovich's various needs, backing up Kristina or acting as a messenger. He has a terrible and unrequited crush on Kristina, and would quite gladly die for her if situation warranted.

Neither Kristina nor Parson knows of the Mythos or Yarovich's true identity.

While a sorcerer of great power Yarovich much prefers bargaining with those who stand in his way to killing them. He can make a terrible ally, well versed in both the Mythos and the occult, as long as investigators are willing to overlook his sometimes bloody excesses. Those who do are standing on a slippery slope; no sane man can allow themselves to forge ties with the Mythos and not become damaged by the association. If bargaining proves impossible, he will attempt to slip away and lose himself—but not before ruining

his opponents' chances of catching him. Mind-swapping is a very likely possibility.

**Konstatin "Kostich" Yarovich, apparent age 45, occult spy master**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 10 INT 18 POW 28  
DEX 13 APP 10 EDU 13 SAN 0 HP 12

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Enchanted Blade 43%, damage 1D6

**Spells:** Contact Ghoul; Contact Nodens; Create Gate; Curse of the Stone; Enchant Sacrificial Dagger; Mind Transfer; Wrack

**Skills:** Credit Rating 55%, Cthulhu Mythos 54%, English 79%, Latin 88%, Ukrainian 83%, Polish 46%, German 72%, Occult 58%

**Kristina Rybin (aka Christine Robins), age 27, Russo-Scots Cat Thief**

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 09 INT 13 POW 12  
DEX 18 APP 18 EDU 15 SAN 60 HP 11

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Fist/punch 60% damage 1D3

Kick 63%, damage 1D4

Blackjack 55%, damage 1D4+db

**Skills:** Conceal 73%, Hide 46%, Locksmith 56%, Listen 52%, Martial Arts 54%, Sneak 68%

**Parson Dailly, age 31, Comintern pawn**

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

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .38 Revolver 26%, damage 1D10

**Skills:** Accountancy 62%, Bargain 30%, Persuade 49%

*SIR DENNIS NAYLAND-SMYTHE*

Sir Dennis' introduction to the Shī-Zàng came during his position as Police Commissioner of Rangoon in 1910. Then only a man of 29, Nayland-Smythe, armed with a roving commission and the assistance of old friend Petrie Ph.D, spent until 1919 chasing and foiling the insidious plans of the Shī-Zàng agent, the Devil Doctor (see p.85).

Today, Commissioner Sir Dennis Nayland-Smythe resides in London's fashionable Belgravia district, acting as a special-liaison to Britain's security services with regard to the Orient. His private investigative days are over; Petrie's mysterious death in Okinawa in 1918 showing him that gallivanting the world is no longer a suitable means of destroying the 'deplorable

Yellow menace.' It is much easier to assist at home, guiding others towards the dirty work of defeating the insidious Shī-Zàng or other, darker, sorts of groups. He is not above getting involved in the tracking down these other groups too; from the IRA to Palestinian nationalists, all are fair game if they threaten the British Empire.

Nayland-Smythe could prove a helpful resource. His roving commission gives him the power to demand cooperation from any British or colonial agency, and his extraordinary influence has been used to keep newspapers silent on events not conducive to national good. Nonetheless, Sir Dennis, for his uses, is a terrible John Bull. He is arrogant, xenophobic and embodies all the worst traits of the colonial era. He may even be a willing pawn of the insidious School of Night...

**Dennis Nayland-Smythe, age 44, Commissioner**

STR 14 CON 16 SIZ 15 INT 13 POW 14  
DEX 15 APP 13 EDU 13 SAN 70 HP 16

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Fist/punch 55%, damage 1D3+db

Grapple 42%, damage special

.455 Webley 53%, damage 1D10+2

**Skills:** Burmese 57%, Cantonese Chinese 51%, Mandarin Chinese 45%, Credit Rating 62%

*THE EXPERIMENTAL ROCKET GROUP*

The British Experimental Rocket Group (BERG) is one of the greater sources of amusement among 1920s Britain and a thorn in the side of those who grit their teeth at public money being cast hand over fist on follies. Originally a select group of astronomers and scientists hired by the Home Office to write memorandum on 'space travel,' the Astronautic Studies Section published their assumptions in a thick portfolio in 1915. Considered a waste of money and resources during the war, it was cut back to a skeleton crew.

That changed in 1920 during the extension of the Central Line from Shepherd's Bush to Ealing Broadway. While digging at what was to become East Acton, the work-crew uncovered a time-gate. Hundreds of gallons of water flooded through, drowning a number of men and damaging the tunnel's foundations. Rescue work eventually brought the gate to the attention of the government, who secured the area, pumped the flood-waters and began a survey of the site. What they discovered proved shocking.



The gate opened into a series of obviously man-made tunnels, some three miles in circumference. All of them had collapsed or simply stopped at a wall of packed earth. The greatest puzzle, however, was the state of the tunnels themselves. Some big enough for a double-decker bus, their dirt-encrusted walls displayed signs directing travellers to such places as 'hospital wing' and 'central communications.' While lacking power and seemingly having been abandoned and water-logged for decades, in rooms and antechambers all types of curiosities were found; from generators to entire filing-stores. The state of disarray made plain that the place had been abandoned long before its submergence, but experts remained baffled. After tentative searches by soldiers and its being made 'safe,' the British government began a thorough search of 'The Zone,' as it came to be known.

The Zone would not actually be made until 60 years later, although the 1920s team does not know this. Built beneath the Thames in the early-1950s, Q-NAU had been commissioned as an expansion of the Q-WHI command bunker citadel. With threat of the Cold War turning thermonuclear, the British government had dug massive citadels beneath the city in order to safeguard the nation's leaders and infrastructure. Q-NAU closed in 1969 and its main entrances and exits sealed from the rest of the London Underground and citadel network by Royal Engineers. Over the years a cult of ghouls moved in, taking over the warren and using it as a subterranean altar to the worship of Mordiggian. In 1984 a group of investigators launched an attack on the tunnels using explosives. In their plight the ghouls attempted to flee through a time-gate, but, in their haste, botched the spell. A three mile circle of Q-NAU was cast back to various time-zones (by some reckoning, perhaps 50 or 60 areas, the furthest back being to 127AD) and, by earth's rotation, moved through space some miles also. The paradox of having one tunnel existent in multiple separate timelines rent it apart. The roof caved in, flooding the structure with 1980s water. The fate of the investigators and ghouls remains unknown, but no one has found the remains of anything once living during their 1920 survey. Accordingly, some areas of The Zone have aged horribly (having been lost underground for almost 1000 years) while others are relatively safe. Each of the areas is divided by an unseen time-gate, which makes certain areas dangerous to travel

into: signs and barriers have been put up to stop unnecessarily wandering into these sections.

Most anything useful had been seriously damaged by the water or by sheer age of the various time-zones. Nonetheless, in a locked filing cabinet in one of the store rooms, they found something extraordinary: blueprints for the creation of a *space rocket*. Much of the plans had been torn or soiled, but specifications and equipment lists were readable (if a touch soggy). The blueprints, now secure in the 1920s, are actually a 1946 design based on captured Nazi V2 rockets. Post-war Britain had planned to launch its own space programme, but the exorbitant cost and political climate had put paid to such dreams.

Instead, in 1920, the Experimental Rocket Group has been formed from the nucleus of the old Astronautic Studies Section, and asked by His Majesty's government to expand upon the research in the blueprints and design a feasible project to put a Briton into space. Working from both The Zone and the publicly known Experimental Rocket Group headquarters that occupies a large Home Office owned building in Lambeth, London, they do just that.

The head of the project is Professor Nigel Chilton, a champion of discipline and rationality. Chilton refuses to accept the current theory that The Zone is some sort of 'future echo,' a physical representation of a non-event. He cares little for what the site is, nor how it came to be. Instead, his job is to develop a spacecraft, and until such a time as he is told otherwise, he will continue to do so. Snappish, boorish and utterly without a life outside his work (he can usually be found sleeping at his desk); Chilton is working himself quite quickly towards an early grave or a nervous breakdown. Odds have been made and wagers placed by the other team-members.

Somewhere between subordinate and superior to Chilton is Harry Lamb, the project's Home Office overseer. Though the military have made overtures of drawing The Zone and its research into their sphere, the Home Office has continued to keep everything but site security under civilian control. Lamb is a rotund figure, all straight-talk and bluff with a thick rural Lancashire accent. Beneath that exterior is the mind of a razor sharp politician. Lamb did not get where he is today,

security-clearances and all, by being played the fool.

Obviously, the government is incredibly tight-lipped about the entire project; only half a dozen outside the BERG and its associated staff know of The Zone and its subsequent research.

Unfortunately for those who work at BERG, or who spend an inordinate amount of time there, the situation is becoming increasingly dire. The time-gate was made using the magical equivalent of a wrecking ball, with no attempt to hold up the building's crumbling walls. As the seconds tick by, the spell unravels—and not solely inside Q-NAU itself. Laced with temporal debris, the BERG staff is being lost to time.

The fact of the matter is that The Zone is acting as a vast time-sink and those who enter the area have a good chance of being eventually drawn out of native temporal-synch. The Mi-Go became perplexed when they detected it across over 2000 years of time, but found it didn't actually begin until 1984. Its high-security and 'true' location under the Thames have made it impossible for them to do much more than hover around the periphery—mostly. The time-travelling Great Race have twice tried to close the sink (once in 1943, the next in 1982)—with disastrous results. Both times the Yithians agents failed to complete their mission and neither returned. After forming a tenuous and short-lived truce in 1956 with the Mi-Go, the Yithians have come to the conclusion that they will need to use non-Yithian agents to seal the breach from the inside. So far they have been loath to attempt such a dangerous task.

The sheer magnitude of temporal paradoxes running within The Zone is staggering. People sometimes leave before they arrive and equipment has a habit of suddenly aging decades in minutes. Time-travellers, Hounds of Tindalos and other chrono-wanderers are drawn to the site as if it were a giant beacon—which is exactly what it is.

The Zone is running out of time. Eventually one of two things will happen. Either it will explode; smearing two thirds of Great Britain and northern France across infinity, an ever-fluctuating, rotating time-placement, where tomorrow is yesterday is 10,000 years into the future. Or it will implode; where it will form a dense black-hole that rapidly draws in time/space and folds it like a

gate – but a gate that leads into itself infinitesimally, creating a permanent ouroboros. Even the Yithians are unsure how dense the black-hole could become and how much matter it could suck in.

Unwitting and unknowing of the nature of the destruction they face, the BERG continues to fashion tireless hours into their rocket project and research into the caverns. All its staff will be dead by 1941, having disappeared into time, been hunted by temporal horrors, died of rapid and spontaneous organ aging, or killed themselves from the stress of working in The Zone.

An unmanned test-launch of the prototype rocket is being prepared at Hereford, Herefordshire. If all goes well, piloted tests will be given the go-ahead from Woomera, Australia.

Unbeknownst to all, the Mi-Go are influencing the situation surreptitiously. With their understanding, they know that mankind should not be tampering with space-travel so early. While the Yithians seek to right the entire mess before it results in a cataclysm, the Mi-Go are satisfied to see how far human science can go with such primitive means and abilities. Chilton's workaholic attitude is mostly a by-product of the assistance rendered to him by the Mi-Go (though they are careful to make him believe all the ideas are his own). As the project grows to fever pitch, so his sanity lies increasingly in tatters. If the Shan were to ever catch wind of the Experimental Rocket Group's true abilities then the world would be plunged into even greater peril. It may be up to the investigators to find a way into the heavily guarded Zone and close it, before its paradoxes and displacements wreak irreparable destruction.

**Professor Nigel Chilton, age 64, rocket scientist**

STR 12 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 19 POW 12  
DEX 11 APP 12 EDU 18 SAN 25 HP 11

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** None

**Spells:** None

**Skills:** Conceal 52%, Credit Rating 55%,  
Electronics 64%, Listen 27%, Mathematics 79%,  
Physics 83%

**Insanity:** Insomnia; is also hardened to SAN loss from entering The Zone or its subdivisions.

**Harry Lamb, 52, Home Office supervisor**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 15 INT 15 POW 14

DEX 09 APP 10 EDU 12 SAN 60 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Fist/Punch 62%, damage 1D3+db

**Spells:** None

**Skills:** Bargain 62%, Credit Rating 65%, Fast Talk 48%, Persuade 71%

### *THE FARMERS' UNION*

On darker nights, across the countryside, the low sound of chanting may be heard, its cry drifting across fields and farms to be heard miles afar. This is the Farmers' Union, and wise folk stay clear of the fields and by-roads.

The Farmers' Union are not necessarily a cult. There is no central leader, membership or communication. Instead it is almost spontaneous; a sudden explosion of ritual and energy. Its history is shrouded in legend, and those who take part know it has been handed down for generations, if not millennia. It begins on certain nights, when farmers from miles around gather at a preordained location for the night's union.

Farmers from about Trimley St Martin in Suffolk might never have met those from Foxley, Norfolk, yet they will still begin their union—hundreds of miles from each other and unknowing of the other's similar deeds—at roughly the same time. The farmers arrive, dressed oddly, in the skins of animals, in their wives clothing, in elaborate masks or simple disguises. No one admits to knowing anyone else. And then the union begins. It is a dark and harrowing experience. What starts as raucousness and merrymaking descends into depravity; the shutters of men's minds drop, blinding them to their own actions. In stalls and barns and fields and yards, man falls upon man, falls upon beast, falls upon woman; singly, in groups; again and again. Wives, daughters, servants—all are fair game. In some quarters the union has prepared women especially; travellers, the kidnapped and those who won't be missed. The sowing of seed is a necessary art for a farmer. He rapes the land and reaps the harvest. And when it is over and the morning sun begins to trace over the horizon, the men clothe themselves and head for home—the one whose land it happened upon cleans the mess and disposes of incriminating evidence—usually to the pigs. And no one speaks of it; until a new site is picked, and the farmers' union meet again...

### *THE PEOPLE OF ACEPHALUS*

*"We renounce the manifesto of man; the creeping thing we call society! We cast off the fundamentals and petticoats of decency, to dance wild and free and infantile upon the blood-stained grass of a new era! We seek to glorify war, destruction, chaos, the breaking of boundaries, the clash of steel, of nations, of hot mechanical breath upon a cold, dead people! They shall hear our boots on the cobbles, the roar of motors in their ears, as we grasp them by their hair and shake the sleep from their eyes, forcing them to gaze headlong into a new and terrible future..."*

So opens the manifesto of Tristan Sterne and his circle: The People of Acephalus. Some call Sterne a genius, others a madman. But few can doubt his abilities. Tristan Sterne is an artist; but is it truly art?

Surrealism never made roads into Britain. Those artists who favoured it went to Europe, the remainder stayed true to the national flavour. Sterne tried hard to make it popular; he was young, an art student, and gifted. He did not realise that none of these things made people accept what he had to offer. He was about to give up if not for a chance meeting with self-proclaimed art critic and less-confessed disciple of Y'golonac, Lewis Eaton.

Eaton's interest in Sterne was not purely for his artistic skills; the boy was attractive and, as it turned out, homosexual. Though the relationship did not reach a physical stage, Eaton would have tired of the boy if it didn't for that spark within Sterne's work; just needing a push to turn it from art to something more. A late-night talk sowed the necessary seeds. The next morning Sterne showed off his latest painting. It had begun.

Sterne's artwork is shown in travelling shows around the country: involved things with the showmanship of a circus-performance—surreal, baroque and disturbing. The pieces themselves fulfil his manifesto with a skill and verve that disgusts and excites in equal parts. They as terrifying as they are beautiful: biomechanical, skinless creatures; blood-fuelled machines, the melding of steel and flesh; and the desperate, screaming death of humanity. The experience is intense. Some viewers have been known to faint.

Of local newspapers that reviewed his work most called for him to be banned. The only national paper to review called him ‘astonishing’ but ‘gut-wrenching’. Few disagree. A visiting American art-historian compared him to Bostonian unknown R. U. Pickman, though with greater emphasis on the man/machine void of the Great War. Sterne himself cares little; as long as his art’s on display he’s happy. He does not realise the effect it has on those weak of will or open to the powers of the Mythos. They find themselves drawn to Sterne’s manifesto literally; casting off human morals, glorifying decadence and pain, prostrating themselves before the terrible.

The People of Acephalus (the Greek word for ‘headless’) are an art-circle of which Sterne is *de facto* chief. Most are Bohemian art-students living his manifesto, helping with his shows and stalking people who insult his artwork. When not on tour, Sterne and his closest male friends live a shared life at a specially bought farm on the swampy Isle of Sheppey, Kent.

The group itself is not a cult in the literal sense; its members are unknowing and unwitting. Only Eaton knows the truth. Having made himself Sterne’s agent he revels in his power, and his sexual proclivities are almost (but never quite) sated by the tender flesh of those who have been touched by Sterne’s art. Male cast-offs (those that live) are given to Sterne; the rest, male or female, are used then forgotten. Some are missed. None are found.

Sterne’s art is a serious Mythos danger. Its power grows daily, the afflicted becoming increasingly obvious in their loss of humanity. Eaton has only recently begun to chew over having Sterne transpose elements of the *Revelations of Glaaki* into his work. Though an avatar of Y’gonolac, Eaton’s personal interest in keeping his perversions satisfied has made him unwilling to do something as rash as ruin his gravy-train. But Y’gonolac’s will stirs darkly in his skull. Soon the decision will not be his to make...

**Tristan Sterne, age 27, artist for Y’gonolac**

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 07  
DEX 12 APP 15 EDU 13 SAN 35 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** None

**Skills:** Art: Painting 67%, Credit Rating 24%,  
Spot Hidden 54%

**Lewis Eaton, age 45, avatar of Y’gonolac**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 17 INT 16 POW 17  
DEX 14 APP 11 EDU 11 SAN 0 HP 15

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Touch 100%, special

Devour 100%, damage 1D4 non-healing

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D20 to see Eaton become  
Y’gonolac; 1/1D10+1 to see Y’gonolac

*THE SCHOOL OF NIGHT*

In 1584 Sir Walter Raleigh was given a warrant by Queen Elizabeth I to found a British colony in the Americas in order to raid their Spanish enemy’s South American empire and recover riches from the New World. The first expedition making landfall at Roanoke Island in 1855 was a disaster. By 1857, when the second load of colonists arrived, the colony had been abandoned twice. A skeleton crew of fifteen men, left to safeguard Roanoke when the other colonists left, were never found.

The new Roanoke had more than 116 colonists when Governor John White was sent back to request greater protection for the burgeoning outpost. White’s ship barely arrived in England and upon landing he was stopped from sending relief: storms and the Spanish Armada kept all ships harboured in Britain. The continuing Anglo-Spanish War forced White from returning to Roanoke until 1590. Upon arriving, however, they found Roanoke deserted. But for the carving of CROATOAN across two trees, nothing untoward seemed to have occurred except for the colonists’ disappearance. It was a bitter blow for White and he returned to Plymouth with a Native American and some of the colony’s abandoned trinkets, including a curious stone relief featuring a naked woman rearing from the ocean. These were turned over to Raleigh, whose ownership of the colony had not expired.

During this period Sir Walter Raleigh had become increasingly close to Kit Marlowe, a playwright, atheist and man in the employ of Sir Francis Walsingham, the Queen’s ‘spy-master.’ Marlowe had in turn introduced Raleigh to an increasing number of intellectuals and politicians who displayed similarly unwelcome outlooks on religion and life. It was during one of their meetings in December of 1590 that Raleigh showed Marlowe his Roanoke collection, including the strange effigy, which surprised both

by speaking; introducing itself as the Creator. For days it conversed with the pair. She was symbolic of Britannia, the Lady of the Lake and Boudicca. Of strong women who created as they destroyed. Christianity, the usurper, had smashed the true order of the world—and the Queen’s dogmatic adherence to Protestantism could never defeat Catholicism. Only worship of the Creator would restore the world.

Marlowe instantly became a convert and took to calling the goddess Britannia. Raleigh refused to accept that the Queen, who considered him her favourite, could fail the country or treat him harshly. Marlowe took to conversing with Britannia via spells the statue taught him, and began converting his compatriots. Such luminaries as author George Chapman, scientist Thomas Harriot, spy-master Walsingham, translator John Florio, and (supposedly) astrologer John Dee met in secret and spoke of Britannia’s willingness to bring the world under Albion’s heel. They called themselves the School of Night. Raleigh himself finally realised Britannia’s prophesies were true upon marrying his wife in 1591. As she was a lady-in-waiting to the Queen, and neither had asked for permission to marry, the couple were sentenced to the Tower of London. Embittered, Raleigh and wife would not be released for another year, and by then Marlowe’s new order was a powerful clique, encompassing some of the greatest minds and politicians in Britain. Even the controversial Archbishop Whitgift was converted.

The government sensed danger; their spies spoke of something brewing, but not exactly what. With Walsingham a member of the School of Night himself, the Privy Council decided to charge Marlowe with heresy. Two weeks after the hearing the School helped fake Marlowe’s death, Archbishop Whitgift presenting the executed body of personal enemy John Perry as the playwright’s own. The School went underground, its membership hiding their true allegiances. Raleigh, egged on by Marlowe (hiding in Southwark, London), took the reins, using his status to communicate freely with other Nightmen.

Raleigh’s luck would not last however. With the death of Elizabeth I he finally cut all ties with his past and took to Britannia’s worship proper, claiming the queen’s caution had impeded the destruction of Spain. The government again caught wind the School yet lived, and Raleigh was

unjustly implicated in the Main Plot: a coup attempt to depose James I and replace him with his cousin Arabella. Raleigh was locked in the Tower of London for 13 years, though remaining head of the School he used coded messages hidden inside his poetry to communicate with those outside. In 1616 he was offered release to launch a second search for *El Dorado* (see p.103). Raleigh leapt at the chance: invoking Britannia, he was prophesied receiving just reward if he accepted the expedition. Instead it proved a disaster, the recent peace with Spain threatened when English sailors ransacked a Spanish outpost. On his return in 1618, Raleigh received his just reward: a show trial and beheading. In London, Marlowe had already begun the long process of rebuilding Britannia’s Empire. Raleigh would be the scapegoat and martyr for the cause. Marlowe would use him as the mortar of a new era.

For nearly half a millennia the School of Night has served to create the Holy Empire of Britannia. Its members seek to further the worship and control of Britannia, its mother-queen; for Britain and Britannia are inseparable. The Nightmen are politicians, artists, thinkers, radicals and atheists. They come from all walks of life, but share one ideal—a world in which Her Glory reigns supreme and undaunted.

Since 1900 the most prominent members of the School have met at the Savoy Hotel, London. In their permanently rented room (#264), annual meetings are held before a life-size statue of Britannia herself. Although the current style used to symbolise her is the classic Corinthian helmet, shield and trident, private shrines feature her in various guises—some bordering on the obscene. Today, in the 1920s, it appears their objectives are reaching fruition. With correct leaders and plans, the British Empire will finally be able to crush the upstart nations of the world (particularly America) and bring them under glorious British order as once before.

The rewards granted by Britannia are many and varied, but her gratitude is fickle. Some of the most powerful statesmen in Britain’s history were members of the School, and were brought low for some foolish mistake. But only one man has never been mistreated by her; the man who brought her this veneration. Kit Marlowe lives on. His body may be warped and diseased, a twisted gnarled mess of flesh with what passes for a mouth; but

Britannia blessed him with immortality. Without him they would surely be finished. And so Marlowe listens, and burbles and drools commands from the hole in the roiling mass of tumours they feed and care for, as blind and helpless as a babe in the womb. And in his head, the voice of Britannia whispers ceaselessly. Though his goddess has taught him many things and made him magically powerful, she has not given him the means to reshape himself into some semblance of his once human form.

The School of Night are the true controllers of Britain, the illuminated movers-and-shakers. Their membership encompasses household names, people respected and trusted by the masses. For the greater good of the Empire, nay the world, they act to increase Britannia's influence—heed her words and moving to fulfil her designs. They are powerful men, with the money and resources to keep tight leash over Britain's politics and business. Little do they realise Britannia seeks their downfall. Like the fool staring at his feet as he walks towards the precipice, the School of Night do not recognise that they dance to the whims of Nyarlathotep. The Crawling Chaos has his reasons. If the School succeeds, the whole world will be brought to heel under his worship. If the School fails, the Empire they hold so dear will be as fragments, a world made bedlam, and Britain will be left powerless—the last vestiges of *Pax Britannica* thrown into *Incompositus Mundis*.

If the School were to ever realise the reality of their 'goddess' there would surely be a terrible power-struggle as the group splits into those who believe in Empire at any cost. A lot of rich and



influential people will likely disappear, turn up dead, or go to ground as a secret war in the halls of power rages.

Attempting to fight the School of Night otherwise is an all-but impossible task. The power of a nation and the magic of Nyarlathotep behind it, no one, certainly not the investigators, have a chance of pushing the School from its irresistible march toward national-annihilation.

### Kit Marlowe, ageless, Formless Conspirator

STR 00 CON 03 SIZ 06  
INT 18 POW 47  
DEX 00 APP 00 EDU  
11 SAN 00 HP 4

**Damage Bonus:** N/A

**Weapons:** None

**Spells:** Cause Disease;  
Circle of Nausea; Contact  
Nyarlathotep (in form of  
*Britannia*) Create Self-  
Ward; Deflect Harm;  
Dread Curse of Azathoth;  
Mental Suggestion;  
Mindblast; Power Drain;  
Sekhmenkenhep's Words;  
Shrivelling; Steal Life;  
Summon/Bind Servitor of  
the Outer Gods

**Notes:** Marlowe is  
wheelchair bound and  
hideous to see; a  
putrescent lump of skin  
with one filmy eye and a  
slash of a mouth, lipless  
and quivering. His young  
nurse, Angela, sees to his  
every need and respects  
and treats him as if a god.  
Marlowe never goes  
anywhere without a group  
of at least six bodyguards,  
all versed in magic and

modern military training. Seeing Marlowe for the first time costs 0/1D3 sanity.

### SHĪ-ZÀNG (師藏)

*"You have sought me; followed me from the forests of Burma, tracked me to my palace in Henan. In Hongkong and Shanghai you shadowed me. And now, deep inside your England, you have found me. But yet, because your country made me,*

*you think that you know what I am. Is it your dream to conquer me? That my mastery of the secret sects of the East can be overpowered by the petty efficiency of the West? No, no. I shall prove a monster that neither you nor those you have created to assist you can hope to conquer. I shall restore the vanquished glories of Cathay—of Manchu China. When your mockery of a civilization has extinguished itself, bombed to destruction its edifices and governments, permitted in blind foolishness machinery to obliterate its peoples, I shall arise. I shall appraise the ashes where once England stood, the ruins of France and the charnel fields of Germany, and turn my gaze to the flame-tinged horizon that was the United States. Then shall I laugh."*

A criminal thorn in the side of colonial rule in Burma, India, Hong Kong, Singapore and other eastern European concessions, few realise the reach of this secretive and powerful faction. Using the gains made within the Chinese underworld, the Shī-Zàng faction moves closer to its goals—spreading around the world, deep into the United States and Europe, in preparation for the destruction of western society and liberation of their colonies from Occidental yoke.

To the uninitiated the Shī-Zàng appears little different from other Triads; perhaps more guarded and politically motivated. Attempts to infiltrate their ranks have met with little success. One spy recruited by the Japanese was returned to his Kempeitai handlers without hands, tongue or eyes. Even other Triad gangs fear the Shī-Zàng's grip, turning over a percentage of their ill-gotten gains as tribute.

Barely a handful of westerners know, or have at least guessed at, the full extent of this group's machinations. Few live long enough to tell. For in reality the Shī-Zàng's interests are not just in a pan-Asian alliance, but the creation of the Tsan-Chan Empire. Within a Tibetan monastery the constantly reincarnating future Empress, tended by blind, mute maids of good standing, resides, protected by the Green Men; a cabal of ancient Lamas. Or so the masters of the Shī-Zàng believe. Some say the Green Men are the chosen of Cthulhu himself, seeking means of waking him. Others say they are trapped monks of Leng trying to bring the waking world and Dreamlands

together; more paint them as servants of the Tibetan 'Gong Po; the Emerald Lama.

Whatever they are, the Shī-Zàng serves their wishes unflinchingly. Its leadership is divided between six Masters—each named for an aspect of the Chinese Phases (Water, Fire, Wood, Metal and Earth). The sixth Phase, Jade, will be taken by the Empress upon her ascension to the throne. Since the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1912, China has become a battleground of warlords, communists and nationalists, and the Masters have been forced to play each side against the other in order to protect their own vested interests.

Beneath the Masters are the agents of the Shī-Zàng proper, many hundreds if not thousands in totality, who use their wit and guile to carry out their squalid schemes. In Europe, the most prevalent is the Devil Doctor; a cat-eyed Mandarin with a brow like Shakespeare and a face like Satan, one-time administrator of Henan under the Empress Dowager, and holder of degrees from no less than four universities. His genius schemes use dacoits, Thuggees, Triads and other Eastern groups alongside strange sciences and stranger magics. Aided by his daughter Cui-fang, a mistress of disguise and villain in her own right, the Doctor prefers, however, to use more natural weapons; poisonous insects, snakes and rare diseases.

The Shī-Zàng is apathetic towards the Mythos, recognising it as little more than part of the universe's natural order. Its use can be beneficial; but magic makes one obvious. Like the nail that sticks up, it will surely get hammered...

**The Doctor, age 72, Shī-Zàng Leader**

STR 13 CON 20 SIZ 12 INT 20 POW 18  
DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 14 SAN 0 HP 16

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Fingernails 45%, damage 1D4\*

**Spells:** Elixir of Life\*\*; Mesmerise

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 59%, Hypnotism 83%,  
Medicine 45%, Occult: Chinese 67%, Spot  
Hidden 53%

\* successful attack also infects victim with a lethal and slow-acting bacilli (POT 17).

\*\* See p.93

*SOLARI ROSTRAL*

Aided by his assistant Dr Langley Moore, Solari Rostral is Britain's most able private detective, versed in esoteric arts of deduction and mental gymnastics. Born in 1880 in Rouen, France, to British consulate staff, he received a Congratulatory Double First from Oxford in classics and mathematics before setting up his private inquiry practise at 7 Pont Street, Westminster, London. Rostral's deductive powers put him with Room 40, the Royal Navy's cryptography bureau, during the war. Moore served in Mesopotamia as a British Army surgeon. The pair made each other's acquaintance during the Strange Case of the Parson's Error in 1919 and quickly became firm friends, reopening the private inquiry service and sharing Rostral's Pont Street home.

Rostral Inquiries runs as a private detective agency in the same vein as that of the fictional Sherlock Holmes. They accept only those mysteries that pique Rostral's Herculean intellect, making it a matter of pride to solve cases impossible to the normal man. Though matters of the Mythos are outside their usual purvey, the pair has had run-ins with the Mythos before: the dreaded Shī-Zàng and the disappearance of a magistrate have both been tied to the supernatural, though Rostral loathes considering the Mythos beyond the realms of explainable sciences.

Solari's nemesis is Karl Freiherr von Helfrich (Baron Karl Helfrich), ex-Imperial German spy and 'Moriarty of Crime,' who runs a Europe-wide network of thieves, fences and assassins for hire. Rumours of an agreement with an up-and-coming German Workers' Party, and thefts of occult books, remain unproven. But rest assured, if there is any such truth to it then Solari Rostral will find out.

**Solari Rostral, age 45, Master Detective**

STR 13 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 19 POW 15  
DEX 14 APP 14 EDU 18 SAN 75 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Kick 45%, damage 1D6+db

Grapple 47%, damage special

**Skills:** Credit Rating 62%, Martial Arts: Baritsu 44%, Spot Hidden 89%

**Insanity:** Refuses to believe in the Mythos

**Dr Langley Moore, age 49, Learned Sidekick**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 15 INT 15 POW 13  
DEX 13 APP 13 EDU 16 SAN 65 HP 15

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .455 Webley 43%, damage 1D10+2

**Skills:** Credit Rating 46%, Medicine 66%, Pharmacy 57%, Spot Hidden 48%

*THE TCHO-TCHO FAMILIES*

London's Tcho-Tcho are divided between three families. Civil servants who handle Limehouse's policing and community support are mixed on what this necessarily means; some are under the impression they are criminal fraternity, others they are social organisations. The truth is somewhere between.

As the Tcho-Tcho moved into the city, they came under increasing pressure from other minorities, and even with their reputation and powers, the Tcho-Tcho soon found they needed protection. In response, they coalesced under the banners of the three largest and most powerful families. Today all Tcho-Tcho swear fealty to one of the families; adding the family name to their own and upholding the unit's ideals. Rare is the Tcho-Tcho who refuses to pay fealty or is turned down; without protection, they are usually forced out of Cho Street, to be picked off in revenge.

The Bak are the largest of the families, more than twice the membership of the next largest, the Myan, and are considered brutal even amongst the bloodthirsty Tcho-Tcho. It was Bak Fong's father who carved the first enclave into London's Chinatown. After Fong ripped the still-beating heart from his father's chest and ate it, few can argue he lacks leadership credentials. Froglike at the centre of his throne, Fong is a bloated fat creature lounging on elegant divans amongst his harem. Many of the girls are non-Tcho; the wives and daughters of other ethnicities who failed to pay protection or otherwise displeased the Bak's warped sensibilities. The Bak family's criminal enterprises are base at best; initiative is unwelcome and intelligence is frowned upon. This blinkered nature has left many of the higher echelons (including Fong) unable to speak any language other than Tcho-Tcho. Meeting Bak Fong himself is a rare and unfortunate experience, done via interpreter, and often reserved for those times Fong wishes to show his displeasure in person. For his size, Fong is deceptively agile; a gifted knife-fighter, his weight has slowed him little. No man has bested him in combat so far.



Born in Burma, Myan Chau was one of the eminent priestesses of her tribe. Though sexism is endemic, even expected, of the Tcho-Tcho, the small size of the Myan clan made her particularly worthwhile (although only after it became apparent she was willing to kill those who thought otherwise). Only Myan proper make up the nucleus of the family, and unlike the other families, its rank is based on lineage and blood rather than merit. Of the three families the Myan are also the most adherent to their native culture; preferring not to sully themselves with the day-to-day criminality of the Bak or Khin. Myan Chau herself rarely goes out in public, preferring to use her servants as intermediaries. Having suffered at the hands of men throughout her life, she is a violent misandric. Physical contact with a male is enough to send her into an insane frenzy of bloodshed, tearing and rending the offender to death with fists, teeth and magic.

Of all the families, the Khin are the weakest, but perhaps also the most adroit within today's society. Unlike the other family heads Khin Quang was born in England, and has taken to British culture and society with gusto. To most Tcho-Tcho 'going native' is something insane, even heretical, but the Khin have put themselves toe-to-toe against the Bak and Myun, and threatened to bring the whole house of cards tumbling down if either provokes a fight.

What the Khin lack in magic they make up for with networking and weapons, most of it from outside Tcho-Tcho society. Unlike the majority on Cho Street, the Khin take pride in their European clothing and speech. While the Triads may refuse to work with them, alliances with white gangs have been formed, alongside expansion into the lucrative gambling industry. Those Bak who recommended diversifying were often slaughtered and eaten for their troubles; on the contrary, the Khin recognises and respects intelligence. Quang Khin is one of but a handful of Tcho-Tcho not to live in Cho Street, preferring his apartment in Highgate, where he entertains guests and plays at being the English gentleman. In reality he is every bit as cruel and conniving as his forebears, but the appearance of civility is disarming. Investigators who threaten Quang's enterprises will find him very much open to negotiation; most unsettling when one considers he is a cannibal psychopath who worships a Great Old One. Of course, such alliances will last no longer than their expedience.

The Khin wish to emulate Britain; and nothing is more British than *perfidious Albion*.

**BAK Fong, age 63 , Bak Family Head**

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 19 INT 12 POW 15  
DEX 17 APP 08 EDU 09 SAN 0 HP 17

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Dual butterfly blades 45%, damage 1D6+2+db (dual wielded)

**Spells:** Cause/Cure Blindness; Contact Zhar; Summon/Bind Byakhee; Voorish Sign

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 63%, English 0%

**MYAN Chau, age 35, Myan Priestess**

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 16 POW 17  
DEX 13 APP 15 EDU 11 SAN 0 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** None

**Spells:** Contact Spirits of the dead; Contact Zhar; Contact Lloigor; Evil Eye; Fist of Yog-Sothoth; Implant Fear; Voorish Sign

**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 53%, English 64%

**KHIN Quang, age 46, Khin Chairman**

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

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Star M1919 Pocket 48%, damage 1D6

**Spells:** None

**Skills:** Bargain 52%, Cthulhu Mythos 36%, English 85%

*THOMAS CARNACKI*

427 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, is the humble abode of Thomas Carnacki the Ghost-Finder. In his prime Carnacki was the preeminent solver of ghostly happenings within the UK. Now pushing sixty he is long past his prime, and prefers to stay out of the limelight, leaving paranormal investigation to younger (and dare it be said, more able) men. Recently, however, his distrust of charlatans has brought him back into the investigation business. Still imperious, though now somewhat stooped and needing the use of a cane, Carnacki can be a brusque associate; proving oneself as knowledgeable in the occult as he is would be the first step towards having him recognise investigators as an equal.

**Thomas Carnacki, age 60, Ghost-Finder**

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 16  
DEX 16 APP 11 EDU 12 SAN 80 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Walking cane 42%, damage 1D6+db  
**Spells:** Electric Pentacle\*  
**Skills:** Cthulhu Mythos 11%, Occult 67%,  
Photography 56%, Repair electronics 35%  
\* See p.92

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## THE ESOTERIC LIBRARY: TRACTS AND TOMES

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### *HYMNODY OF FEY*

Written as a collection of psalms, the *Hymnody of Fey* warns readers about the unholy Fey-Folk and their place within the 'Dark Pantheon' of Satan's armies, as well as offering methods of protection.

**Prayer Book (14<sup>th</sup> Century):**

**Language:** Old French/Middle English/Latin

**Sanity Loss:** 1D6/1D8+1

**Occult Gain:** +8

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +8

**Spells:** Bless Blade, Candle Communication (*By candles talk*), Contact Spreh'Gaan (*Raise Faerie*)

**Reading Time:** 30 weeks

**Kirchenagenda (18<sup>th</sup> Century):**

**Language:** English/German

**Sanity Loss:** 1D4/1D5+1

**Occult Gain:** +4

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +5

**Spells:** Contact Spreh'Gaan (*Bind Spriggan*)

**Reading Time:** 18 weeks

**"Heresy" Edition (1908):**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D2

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +1

**Spells:** Candle Communication

**Reading Time:** 2 weeks

The *Hymnody of Fey* is part religious-tract, part occult lore, part fable. First printings circa AD1395 are *incunabula*, printed on cloth rather than paper, and formed into small 'prayer books' with leather covers. Expert opinion assumes they were printed in Brittany (due to the Latin and French) for an English market. Since 1910 the only known copies are three with minor damage and a fourth missing the entire first quarter of its pages. All are in the hands of private collectors.

Why it was written is a mystery. It is obviously heretical, laid out as a collection of psalms and sermons relating to what it calls "The Faey Children," a cruel and malicious breed of daemon that tortures, kills and kidnaps their way across the countryside. The history of the Fey is actually a simplified and devoutly Catholic attempt at explaining the actions of the Spriggan, and relates tales about heroes who fought them off with weapons of holy significance.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century a new edition (nicknamed the *Kirchenagenda*) was printed by Hektor Osterloh, a Hameln-based printer in the Holy Roman Empire. How Osterloh got his hands on a copy of the original is unknown, but his press is infamous among German occultists for printing dozens of books and tracts in the thirty years he was running it (on pain of death, it should be added, after Hameln's council discovered what he was doing beside printing Bibles). Accordingly there are no dates or names listed in the *Kirchenagenda* edition, and it has been trimmed of much material. In this version the Fey (now called *Spriggan*) are more sensual, and while still committing acts of violence seem to do so in response to human folly rather than on a whim as in the original. The *Kirchenagenda*'s problem appears to be in translation—there are obvious misprints and even a layman with a dictionary will find inaccuracies. Copies float around the open-market every so often, but most remain in Germany. Cambridge University holds one in its collection, but is unavailable for public viewing due to a brittle spine.

The final *Heresy* Edition is a joint Anglo-American endeavour by Golden Goblin Press. Rendered from the original (badly) and edited into a narrative, the *Heresy* version touts itself as the definitive rendition, with an introduction by Dr Evin Gilham, owner/provider of the translation. Unfortunately much of it is poor at best and has been heavily edited; the only spell that works is Candle Communication. Everything else is fundamentally and perhaps dangerously flawed.

### *OPERATION FILES (1914-1918)*

Produced during the war, these orders and debriefing transcripts relate to incidences between 1914 and 1918 relating to paranormal activity.

**Collected Papers and Reports (1919):**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 1D4/1D6+1  
**Cthulhu Mythos:** +6  
**Spells:** Contact Ghoul  
**Reading Time:** 16 weeks

As the Great War was fought reports of ‘occurrences’ on the battlefield began to filter back; tales of necrophagy, madness and unbelievable horrors. Ignored by higher command, officers on the line were forced to pay greater attention, improvising responses to such oddities.

The Operation Files are stacked in disordered piles of shoeboxes, tens high, in a filing room in the War Office. Most are curiously mechanical, meticulously boring, and written with deliberate lack of reference or information. Some, however, are more candid.

One relates how, in 1916, Captain Joseph Terry, a Royal Engineer aiding in the dangerous mining work under the German trenches of the Somme, was found wandering delirious and bloodied. He explained that while digging, his platoon broke into a tunnel unlike any other. From it swarmed bestial things that tore at the troops with spade-like claws and teeth. Fighting on the retreat, Terry and his men collapsed the tunnel and scattered. Only Terry was ever found.

Another account: an infantry section mopping up Turkish infantry after the Battle of Romani watched a large hulking frog-like creature with glassy black eyes picking through the dead and wounded before burrowing into the sand and vanishing. A Royal Navy merchantman’s frantic Morse-code signal to be saved from ‘the thing that is on board’ is neatly annotated, next to the newspaper clipping of the ship’s reported loss...

There are hundreds, if not thousands of pages in this collection and who collected them remains a mystery. Together they remain a striking reminder of the military’s meetings with the Mythos.

In 1939 a number of the more illuminating files were mimeographed for posterity, and then the entire collection was burnt. The mimeographs were moved to a mine in Wales along with priceless artwork, national treasures and other files. Occult parties within the government became aware of the copies’ existence in 1943 and attempted to retrieve them. All such papers

were found to be missing from their underground vault. They remain unfound even today.

### *NAVAL STUDIES DIVISION FILES*

Compiled from 1926-1934, these files are the complete annotated collections of the NSD (see p.27) relating to nautical phenomena in the British Empire.

#### **Collection of Official Files (1925-1934):**

**Language:** English  
**Sanity Loss:** 1D3/1D6  
**Cthulhu Mythos:** +4  
**Spells:** None  
**Reading Time:** 24 weeks

Taking reports from as far afield as Fiji and the Falkland Islands, the NSD files attempt to bring together ‘anomalous’ incidents involving military and marine ships. They predominantly relate to the British Empire, but by 1929 readers will find more extreme foreign files collected, some recounting tales of ‘fish-men’. Readers find it increasingly obvious that the Royal Navy is putting some credence to an aquatic race in existence, especially in the footnotes and annotations added to each report by Royal Navy staff. While the original records are held at Portsmouth, individual copies were sometimes mimeographed by officers assigned to NSD. In 1934 the records were moved to London.

### *RESISTANCES WITHIN WIRELESS CIRCUITRY: ROENTGEN NOTES AND CELESTIAL TELEGRAPHY - A PRIMER IN METHODOLOGY*

Penned by amateur radio engineer Henry Annesley, this neatly typed piece gives a glance at a supposed ‘higher-sphere’ of radio-waves, along with the deities that exist there.

#### **Hand-Typed Sheets (1920?):**

**Language:** English  
**Sanity Loss:** 1D4/1D6+2  
**Cthulhu Mythos:** +9  
**Spells:** Contact Hound of Tindalos; Call Daoloth; Create Commune Engine  
**Reading Time:** 10 weeks

Henry Annesley, if anyone cares to search, was born 1880, in Washington DC, to Anglo-American parents. He became an electrical engineer at Marconi’s Wireless Telegraph

Company in 1901 and working at Marconi's headquarters at Chelmsford, UK, he assisted in diode valves and short-wave beam testing. In 1914, at the outbreak of war, the US Navy seized the Marconi Company in order to protect American assets. Annesley, disillusioned, took to working on his own experiments. When the company was civilianised post-war, Annesley refused to return. He had, he said, "found something more unique" than mere radio.

*Resistance within Wireless Circuitry* was mailed to about three dozen prominent electric and wireless experts across the world through the first half of 1920. Presumed to be a crank, it became apparent that the neatly type-written pages were actually the work of someone well versed in radio technology—someone who had seemingly lost their mind.

The twenty-page letter begins with a brief overview of communication via wireless, and then gets into technical details about wave-forms and valves. By page three it has begun to ramble about 'positive-space,' 'stasis within fields' and the problems of communication with other worlds. On page five the writing becomes a frenzy of equations and sojourns about 'the Communicator Beyond,' a celestial overmind of souls that bonds reality together using radio. It also talks about the 'OtherSide,' a world of waves that are sentient and can be visited using specific tools.

The letter 'E' appears to be broken on the typewriter used. Annesley has carefully gone and used a pen to put a neat 'e' in the appropriate places.

Unlike other tomes, *Resistance within Wireless Circuitry* is only readable by those with more than 50% in electrical repair and 40% in physics or mathematics. Anybody else finds it merely odd. SAN loss is only afforded if a player of sufficient skill also makes an IDEA roll. Such readers can make an IDEA roll every time they read it, until SAN loss finally occurs. Only then can a reader attempt to recreate Annesley's experiment.

Annesley has created a machine which he calls a "Commune Engine," a machine that stimulates the human pineal gland so allowing the recipient to see into overlapping dimensions. In turn those overlapping dimensions can see humans. People who move while realities are exposed draw the attention of alien inhabitant that hunt and devour

their prey effortlessly (see Lovecraft's *From Beyond*).

Creating an engine takes about three months and costs about £2,500 using some rather obscure electrical material (some of which will catch the attention of MI5). Once turned on, the field covers a room sized area, within which one can see alien dimensions overlaid. Anyone travelling more than a few steps will attract a creature that consumes them in seconds.

This machine can also be used to communicate with 'OtherSiders.' Annesley provides two 'broadcast keys.' These keys are ranges of wavelength outside the normal spectrum; complex measurements and guidelines are provided, including specific times of day to attempt them. In reality, these 'keys' are spells cast via wireless. He doesn't give either key a name, only listing them as Key One and Key Two. Key One is actually Call Daoloth; Key Two is Contact Hound of Tindalos. Doing so is not in the interests of rational men. It can only be presumed that Annesley's disappearance after mailing his manifesto is in relation to his research...

### *THE SCREAMING SKIN: MANIFESTO IN TRILOGY*

Labours of love, these pamphlets are produced by futurist artist Tristan Sterne for his art shows.

#### **Short-Run Printings (1920s)**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D3 (if all three read)

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +1 (if all three read)

**Spells:** None

**Reading Time:** 20 minutess

At every art show, the People of Acephalus print a trilogy of pamphlets for their audience. Each is different, and while individual in its own right, there is an underlying and disturbing pattern.

The *Screaming Skin* is Tristan Sterne's artistic manifesto; a headlong rush of words and phrases, surrealist denunciations of pragmatism and sexually-charged artwork. Alone the manifestos are harmless, but if all three are read together the effect is much more malignant. The words, the ideas, the pictures... all come together like a jigsaw in the reader's mind. Like an itch they cannot scratch, those with Mythos knowledge will be left wondering whether what they've read is

truly such a tract, or a mere unconscious–Sterne’s disturbing text somehow unwittingly tapping into the same inhuman vibe. Those ignorant sops who read all three can find their perception of art subtly shifted; tastes once refined turn towards the dark and macabre of Sterne’s clique.

### *THE WITCH FINDER’S DAUGHTER*

An obscure novella written in response to the witch-craze of the 1640s, this curious fiction goes into great detail on witch-cults, esoteric symbols and fertility rites.

**First Edition (1651):**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1D2

**Occult Gain:** +8%

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +4

**Spells:** The Familiar’s Dance (*Curse of the Rat Thing*)

**Reading Time:** 1 week

**250 Copy Reprint (1895):**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 0/1

**Occult Gain:** +4%

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +0

**Spells:** None

**Reading Time:** 2 days

This lewd tale was first published in 1651, in response to the recent death of England’s own witch-finder general Matthew Hopkins. It follows the journey of Captain Tobias Norton, a conniving and ruthless witch-hunter who tricks townsfolk into killing their elders so he can reap the financial benefits. Unbeknownst to him, however, his daughter is a witch and engaging in all manner of naughty goings-on with men, women and even animals, behind his back. When he realises this, but before he can repent, his daughter kills him and revives him as her familiar, forever removing him from Godly salvation. Although a dark comedy the last third’s turn towards the macabre is truly disturbing. Only a handful of copies survive in private libraries, many expurgated by amateur censors and professional prudes.

To the uninitiated, the spell recounted in turning the Norton into a ‘familiar’ appears fanciful. In reality, it is a fully functioning version of *Curse of the Rat Thing*.

A short-run reprint in luxurious leather-binding was released by an unnamed Scottish publisher in 1895. Limited to 250 copies, it removes some of the saucier scenes and the means to learn the spell.

### “X” AND “Y”

Both books are non-fiction books written by Charles Fort, famed collector of anomalous material, around 1915. Ford supposedly burnt them, however neat manuscripts of both currently exist. Both posit shocking, and surprisingly prurient, evidence of alien intelligence and their machinations towards earth...

**Manuscripts (approx.1915):**

**Language:** English

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D4

**Occult Gain:** +6%

**Cthulhu Mythos:** +5

**Spells:** Contact Elder Thing; Contact Mi-Go (*badly flawed*); Create Elder Sign

**Reading Time:** 3 weeks each

Fort wrote vociferously throughout his lifetime, penning no less than ten novels and some seven non-fiction books. In 1915 he presented both to a friend of his, Dreiser, who declared them both forceful and beautiful.

“X” is a curious amalgamation of ideas, half-twisted and quite warped, detailing the history of humankind being controlled by malevolent forces from a bright-red planet he equates with Mars. He talks of these Martians as the true malignancy of earth, having travelled many systems merely to pluck at mankind’s strings as if it is simply some magnificent harp, a tool that can be played and made to sing and make noise for the player’s own ends. Well versed investigators will recognise the incorrigible Mi-Go as the evil race, and Mars as the journeying Great Old One, Ghroth. An inaccurate (and possibly dangerous) spell to summon the unnamed Mi-Go is present as part of a ritual carried out by prehistoric man.

Compared to its counterpart, “Y” lacks the poetic verbosity of Fort’s other works. Instead it goes straight for the jugular. The manuscript tells of a terrible civilisation that lurks, unceasing and omnipotent, at the southernmost pole. There is no oblique writing here; instead Fort catalogues their history, their society and their wars, particularly against the “Martians” of book “X”. The Elder Things, as these unnamed creatures are, remain

unnamed, but are described as ‘sleeping without death,’ and though currently dormant, their awakening heralded all new horrors to the reign of man. This sinister empire, Fort contends, is a far more grave threat than that of the Martians.

Both manuscripts were believed burnt after they were turned down, repeatedly, by publishers. In fact, Fort burnt only the rough drafts. His final copies went with him to England. Fort himself remains somewhat coy on whether what he wrote was deliberate or simply the closeness of pure accident.

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## ***SORATORIUS ALBION: NEW SPELLS***

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**CONTACT SPREH’GAAN:** the spell costs 8 Magic points to cast and 1D3 Sanity points. The spell automatically fails, unless carried out at a site historically known to be a gateway for Spreh’Gaan or is a site otherwise known for ‘negative’ energy (battlefields, murder sites, etc.) It must be carried out at dusk or nightfall. Within minutes Spreh’Gaan will pour into our world in numbers anything between a dozen and several hundred. They will then begin terrorising and killing anything that gets in their way. Spreh’Gaan usually return to their world before daybreak, but some will remain on earth, continuing to haunt individual houses or areas after nightfall. There is no known way of forcing them to return except through use of magic.

**CURSED TERROR OF ATTICUS:** a vile means of immortality using foul magic. The caster places their soul and all POW into their heart and suffers complete and total Sanity loss, bringing them immediately to 0 Sanity. Once extracted by means of a silver blade, the heart becomes the only permanent fixture of the caster’s body—everything else is interchangeable. As long as the heart remains safe, the caster’s soul cannot be destroyed. Due to the body’s rapid decay, spell-casters need to ‘cannibalise’ the body parts of others. With little effort, a sorcerer using *Cursed Terror of Atticus* can mix-and-match any and all parts of his body, from toes to head. Time-consuming though it may be, a caster can technically recreate an entirely new form. One of the drawbacks of the spell is that, with POW locked in the heart, a sorcerer is left at 0 POW with no ability to regain magic points except via

magical means. In the event that the current body is completely destroyed, by immolation or otherwise, the next living being to touch the remains can be possessed if the caster wins a contested POW roll (using their heart’s POW). Powerful and rare, the spell is found only in a single scroll published by a Greek rhetorician from Taygetus, circa 300 BC. Only three known copies exist; one is in Beirut, one is lost, and the last is currently wallpapering a squat (see p.110).

**CALL/DISMISS SNAKES:** Costing 2 magic points and 1/1D2 Sanity points, the spell calls or dismisses any snakes within the area. Within minutes of being called, the entire area becomes alive with snakes of various types and dangers. The dismiss spell works similarly but repels them.

**CALL/DISMISS RATS:** With 2 magic points and 1D3 Sanity loss, the area suddenly becomes inundated with thousands of rats. Best cast in cities, the rats are relatively harmless although may carry infections or other hazards.

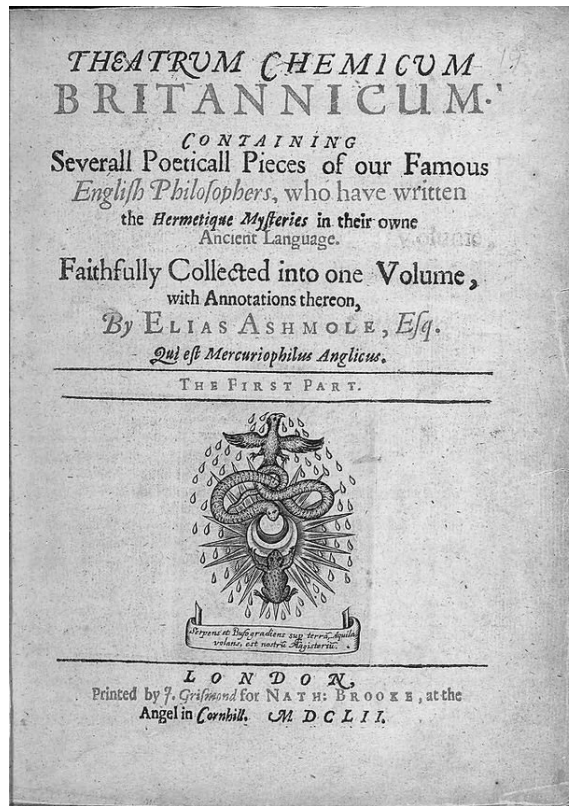
**THE ELECTRIC PENTACLE:** both a spell and a mechanical device. The device consists of a series of valves and vacuum tubes, wires and glowing diodes, and is designed as a second line of defence against malign supernatural interference. Prior to use, complicated rituals need to be carried out. The area must be swept with a ‘broom of hyssop,’ whereupon a circle is drawn in salt. A pentacle is subsequently drawn and specific motions are made using holy water and lighted candles. The electric pentacle is then tuned to the correct variations of the pentacle so drawn. Though offering superior protection, the machine is not fool-proof; more powerful entities can pass through, and if an entity manifests within the pentacle, the safety afforded is naturally lost. The complexities and nuances of the device are known only to Thomas Carnacki, its inventor, and the Keeper.

**ELIXIR OF LIFE:** a legendary liquid that grants the imbiber eternal youth. Creation of the drug needs numerous rare chemicals and plants, many of which are lethal if taken incorrectly or mixed imperfectly. The resultant concoction must be left to ferment and separate into ‘pure’ and ‘inferior’ parts, a process that takes some months. Once separated, a Luck roll is needed to distil the ‘pure’ vinegar-like concoction without mixing it with the ‘inferior.’ If failed, the entire batch is worthless (and utterly lethal). If successful, the ‘pure’ elixir

may be drunk. The effects are painful, costing the drinker 2D6 points of damage and 3D6+3 Sanity. Violent, alien hallucinations occur, causing 1D3+1 days of complete inability to do anything except gibber and wail. Each day costs another 1/1D3 Sanity. Sane or not, if the drinker survives they find themselves unable to die of old age, being—in essence—eternally youthful, though they may still die by unnatural means. The ‘inferior’ part of the liquid is lethal if drunk. Many alchemists would kill for the secrets of the Elixir, and those who claim to have it do so at their own risk, for they threaten to bring entire societies of madmen down upon their heads.

**ENCHANT CODICES:** aids in the casting of spells by enchanting any book used to store and subsequently cast spells. The caster sacrifices at least 1 POW and 1D4 sanity. For every POW point spent the chance of a spell written in the book succeeding in being cast increases by 10%. If used for the spell *Library of Daieitashakan*, the enchantment costs only 10 magic points and 1D3 Sanity...

**LIBRARY OF DAIEITASHAKAN:** copies the caster’s soul, memories and skills into a book or books. To begin, a caster must magically prepare a book using the Enchant Codices spell provided earlier. Once created, the sorcerer sacrifices 25 magic points and loses 1D4 sanity. A fugue comes over the supplicant, who copies 15 points worth of stats (caster’s choice) into the book in tight, spidery handwriting of an unknown language. In order to completely copy one’s entire spirit, a number of books will be needed with the 25 magic points and 1D4 sanity loss for each, though they need not be done at one time. Once all primary stats (STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, APP, EDU, SAN and HP) have been copied into the requisite number of books, the spell is finished. If at any time the caster of the spell is



killed, the books can be used to place the stored soul, skills, stats, sanity and all into an undamaged or otherwise soulless cadaver. The preparation and carrying out of this needs to be done by associates, and costs 1D10 Sanity to each contributor and needs 100 magic points, although there may be any number of willing participants. The resurrected soul suffers 1D20+10 Sanity loss, takes on the SIZ, STR, DEX, APP and HP of the body provided, and has only those stats, skills and Sanity he had when originally entering them into the books. Once used, the books decay into a fine dust.

**SUMMON/BIND BARGHEST:** causes a single Barghest to be cast down from the heavens in a frenzy of ball-lightning, to be bound within a presented and ritually prepared cadaver. Magic point cost varies; for each magic point sacrificed, a 10 percentile increase is made to the chance of the spell working. A result of 96-00 is always a failure. Each casting of the spell costs 1D3 Sanity. The ritual needs a body of at least SIZ 4, but although most copies of the spell dictate the need for a dog, there is no specific ruling on what animal the body must be from. It should be relatively undamaged, however. The spell may only be cast at night, during a waning moon, though there is no specific need for it to be done outdoors. If cast near power or telegraph lines or in an electrically-wired building, the chance of the spell working is increased by 10%, although there’s a 25% chance of getting electrocuted in the process for 1D6+6 damage.

**DISMISS BARGHEST:** a means of removing a Barghest from its host, the dismiss spell can also be used to move a Barghest into a new body or an object. The spell takes six hours, and must be done in the presence of the creature (trapping it is generally prurient). By sacrificing 1 Sanity point and 1 Magic point, and beating the Barghest’s magic points with the investigator’s own on the

resistance table, a Barghest may have its soul stripped and banished. For the cost of an extra Magic point, however, the Barghest may be interred in another body or into a non-conductive figurine, statuette or trinket of at least the size of a good-sized pendant. The Barghest can engage in two-way communication, but without access to electricity it becomes increasingly incensed. Some trapped Barghest, having been locked in knick-knacks for centuries, are particularly dangerous. Destroying the trinket or using the Dismiss spell releases the Barghest.

**TASTE OF RYE:** converts any liquid into an equal amount of 80proof drinking alcohol. By sacrificing 10 magic points and waving one's hand over the container (though not necessarily obviously), the caster can turn an amount of liquid up to 1/3 pint into alcohol. Superficially explained as an ancient means of cheating poison, more cynical modern-day magic users argue it as being little more than an alcoholic's party-trick.

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## **BEASTS OF ENGLAND, BEASTS OF IRELAND: THE MYTHOS IN THE UK**

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### **BARGHEST**

Legend of Black Dogs abound. To the north-west they are called *Gytrash* or *Shriker*; in East Anglia *Black Shuck*. For Wales it is *gwyllgi*, and in Cornwall *shony*. Barghest—the label used in the north of England—shall be used here, though there is no one true title for them to call their own.

No human has found out more than the barest of the Barghest's history. Even the other races of the universe consider them enigmas. Millions of years ago, we know, they shed their bodies, shunning the physical for 'transcendence' to higher forms: that of electricity. Travelling as scientist-

historians, they catalogued, filed, and stored the secrets of the universe within their limitless minds. And then they killed each other. Why, they refuse to say. But for megaannum they have wrestled, swallowing each other, draining knowledge from one another—their singular minds unable to comprehend a coexistent future. If two Barghest meet, only one may survive. No quarter is given. A defeated Barghest is subsumed into the winner, although no one knows whether this entails its death or some form of union between the two creatures. If so, it can be presumed the oldest, strongest Barghest may contain dozens of its brethren.

The Barghest itself is not a physical being, but electric current containing a lean and pure intellect. There are no physical necessities, no base drives, no logic or true self-actualisation. It does not *think*, therefore it is *not*. But outside of purely human terms it is living.

On earth, a Barghest in its normal state cannot be told apart from natural electric phenomena. Ball-lighting, a static ripple across a field, sparks off a tram or telegraph cable... all may be indications of a Barghest's presence. The electric age has been a bounty toward their lust for information; joy-riding telephone signals and wireless they tap into the data of society: sponges of man's lore.

But by alien rites a Barghest may be bound. Using an animal carcass as a host, via lightning the Barghest is cast from the heavens into its container—entombed. The first such specimens seem to have been used as sources of veneration by ancient cultures. Slowly they became apostles, acolytes, guards and occult familiars. Sorcerers and alchemists took to them as living libraries and personal servants. Some remain in that capacity for centuries, running errands for the descendants of their original masters.



On average a Barghest resembles a calf-sized dog, usually black, with voluminous glowing red eyes. Their bodies crackle with static, causing their fur to appear wild and shaggy, and they smell of singed flesh and brimstone. Their size, however, is based on the host's size—a Barghest can fill its lungs with air and force muscles into massive tightened knots, but even the largest dog cannot be made much larger. While they can be taught human languages, they speak rarely and often unintelligibly. As living catalogues they are, however, excellent recorders able to play back dialogue or information word for word and in the disconcerting timbre of the speaker's voice. Their growls and barks are truly alien; no-one could mistake it for any normal dog.

In essence, the Barghest is a living collector of information; the only reason it allows itself to be used by humans in the first place is due to the interesting information they provide. Everything humans do is new and novel and, if such a word fit a Barghest's worldview, fun. When things become routine and no longer informative, the Barghest kills its owner, sheds its host body and leaves. While the 'master' considers himself controller of the Barghest, it is usually the human being used. It is never some lackey. It contains millions of years of knowledge, untapped by human understanding.

Though few Barghest are fundamentally dangerous, all are easily provoked. They prefer to watch 'interesting' things rather than attack, but in combat a Barghest is a fearsome foe. Bodies charged with current they attack with arcs of lightning, and their electric field cook flesh and melt metal. Reduced to 0HP a Barghest sheds its host and disappears in a flash of lightning.

<i>Char.</i>	<i>Aver.</i>
STR 3D6+6	16
CON 3D6	13

SIZ Host+6 11  
 INT 5D6 18  
 POW 2D6+6 13  
 DEX 2D6+6 13  
 HP: 14-15  
 Move: 15  
 Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armour: Being a non-corporeal being in a host body surrounded by a magnetic field, Barghest's suffer only 1 point of damage from each physical attack. Attacks dependant on heat, blast, poison or fire causes no damage. Magic works normally.

Weapons: Bite 35% 1D4+db+stun\*

Electrical field 65% 2D6+stun\*\*

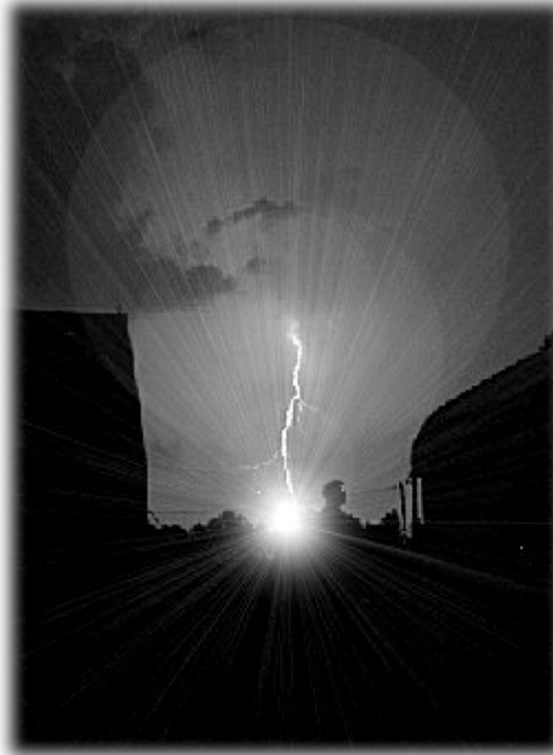
Lightning strike 80% 2D10+10+stun\*\*\*

\* If latched onto a target, the next and subsequent turn a Barghest can automatically inflict 2D6+db+stun damage on the recipient, although it cannot attack anyone else or move.

\*\* Area affect: 5 feet around the Barghest. Once discharged takes 1D6+1 rounds to recharge, unless near an electrical power-source (power-grid etc.)

\*\*\* Can only be aimed at the highest point nearby, such as a building, tree etc. Those nearby are likely to be injured by grounding charges. Once discharged takes 2D6 rounds to recharge, unless near a major source of electricity (in a lightning storm, power-station, etc.)

Sanity Loss: 1/1D4 to see



a Barghest

The spell *Summon /Bind Barghest* use a dog as a host. Technically any animal of SIZ 4 or larger can be used including horses, cows, pigs and maybe even humans. As stated in the spells section, disinterring a Barghest from its host body is possible, and such 'spirits' can be stored in any hermetically sealed jar or within some form of talisman. Such 'trapped' Barghest, unable to use their powers, eventually get rather nasty—and if released have a habit of destroying the area with bolts of lightning and electromagnetism. Otherwise they can be useful 'living libraries' or

spies, as few people assume a necklace or pendant holds an ever-vigilant and bound servitor.

### *CHTHONIANS*

The Chthonians hold a special place in some mining communities, quietly prayed to and humbled before. In the lowermost recesses of the pits dank shrines are set aside for such purposes. Even for those mines far from the Mythos it is not rare to find a few adherents of the old ways, harking back to the time when the Stannary Courts were a higher power than Westminster or the British crown. Such men pray in church on Sunday and to primeval gods each morning the pit-whistles blow.

Geologists are increasingly concerned by strange seismological activity up and down the British Isles. Mine-owners also grow increasingly worried, as government inspectors dig deeper into cases of death, injury and subsidence that have tripled in recent years. And what of the link between the trade-union troubles and these recent earthquakes? Some say they are a sign. A sign of impending doom if things are not settled now—and settled well.

Investigators may find themselves in a war between employer and employed, government and those who think they hold some rein over the forces of the Mythos.

### *CTHULHU*

No breed of seafarers or sea-linked empire could ever hope not to bring itself to the attention of Cthulhu. While the earlier mentioned religion known as The Cloister (see pg.75) pays homage to the Great Old One, other less public groups also seek his blessings.

Strange busts and facsimiles of his hideous form can be found in the private quarters of any number of ships. It is known that the coal-stokers—the black gang, as the men are called—of one of the Cunard Line's flagship chant heathen hymns, strange syllables upon their lips, as they swing shovelfuls of coal into the engine-fires. On the bows of a hundred trawlers and tugs, tentacle-laden faces and bulging alien eyes loom; their painted shapes both a form of devotion and a gargoyle against the Sleeping One's inhuman wrath...

### *DEEP ONES*

Few isolated coastal communities of Britain have not felt the slippery touch and fouler taint of the Deep Ones in their history. Anyone wandering the shorelines of England will be hard pressed not to find hints of this aquatic race's interference. Curios and coral trinkets on display in shops and museums, conchs and curiously shaped shells on desolate beaches; even the classic 'Innsmouth' look—bulbous eyes, pallid 'fish-like' skin and hunched deformities—are all too apparent to the well-versed. The two main Deep One colonies are Ahu-Y'hloa off Land's End, Cornwall, and Hoo-M'nai, somewhere in the North Sea, although minor outposts exist in the colder waters around Scotland and the Orkney Islands.

For its proximity to a major colony, Cornwall is perhaps the only place lacking in obvious signs of Deep One/human miscegenation. This is predominantly due to the county's historic links with the Norse Vikings of Denmark. Sturdy warriors versed in occult lore, the Norse ravaged much of the English coastline, looting and pillaging swathes of the eastern seaboard. The myth of the uncultured barbarian Viking, horned-helmet and all, is far removed from the reality. The Norse, with their mastery of the seas and unbreakable resolve, proved decisive in communicating with the Deep Ones through diplomacy (and no little bloodshed) in 875AD, and helped to liberate the kingdom of Cornwall in exchange for the Cornish king's yearly tithes and promises of 'purity of blood.' Though the tithes have fallen by the wayside over the centuries, the Cornish remain a tight-knit people. Some would say parochial. Those in the know would say with good reason.

Unlike in the Americas investigators will find that the Deep Ones shy from active subversion. Many may well assume that the Deep Ones of Britain have different methods. In reality such insurrection took place centuries ago. Those born on the coast can nearly always trace lineage to one of the monstrous Deep Ones; genes passed down through the generations and rippling through the population like an epidemic. And so the Deep Ones remain content to reap seeds sown aeons past—straying from their watery homes only for personal lusts or at the call of those devoted and insane few who seek solace in their clammy embrace. On solstices and foul equinoxes, more

isolated villages raise their alien forebears for rituals. Investigators will find these sacraments staged only in the bleakest spots, and rarely with entire communities involved. Most people know about Deep Ones only as things whispered about by townfolk as unsettling jokes, bogeys designed to frighten wayward children, or warnings against fishing during bad weather.

Still, when the wind lashes the waves hard into the groyne and dark shapes move along the seawall, few are the folk who don't mutter some words passed down from father or harbourmaster, and bolt their shutters tight, trying not to listen as things skitter and scamper the cobbled streets and gabled roofs.

In the Irish tongue Deep Ones are called *Daoine Domhain* ("People of the Deeps") or *Dobhar-chu* ("Water Hound"—as they appear from afar, with their loping, quadruped-like run). In Scotland they go by many names: *Merrow*, *Selkie* and *Suire* as Deep One are oft mistaken or misnamed for the mermen and women of legend.

The greatest threat to the Deep Ones is the Royal Navy's new fleet of submarines, currently being put through their paces around the Cornish coast. These primitive contraptions (according to Deep One mindset) are little more than an annoyance, but they know that all too soon these machines will advance to a point where they can pose a serious threat—as evidenced by the US Navy's ineffectual attack on Y'ha-nthlei at Insmouth. Although not allied—or even particularly inclined to assist one another—the Deep Ones' aquatic cities remain in constant communication.

The same networking cannot be said of the outposts around the Scottish Isles. These secluded, cold-water vanguards do not seem to follow the usual qualities of Deep One habitation. Rarely anything more than a few dozen Deep One, living Luddite-like existences, and appearing far more frequently on land than their city counterparts, the reason for these sites is unknown except to the Deep Ones themselves. Some believe them reconnaissance stations, military positions, or 'prisons' to which those transgressing Deep One law are sent. Others argue they are for darker and more malign purposes.

### *ELDER THINGS*

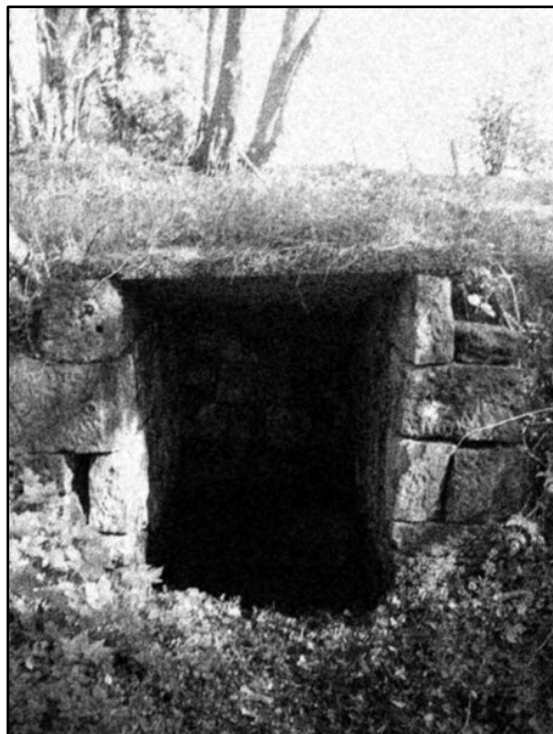
The Elder Things are extinct upon the British Isles. Their outposts have been swallowed by time, and the race has left little to be remembered by except in ritual and their shoggoth constructs. Perhaps from some peaty-bog a preserved Elder Thing specimen may be hauled, and here and there a man may find fragments of Elder Thing art and currency, broken and warped by aeons of tectonic movement. But the days of the race are long gone; and if mankind does not learn from their mistakes, it may well follow them soon.

### *GHOULS*

Unlike on continental Europe, British Ghouls have shied from the cities. During the Black Death, conurbations were prime feeding sites—but the suspicion, fire and plague pits made them dangerous to feast within. Instead ghouls formed into hierarchal gypsies, wandering from village to village, feeding on the abandoned dead and overpowering those living who refused to yield to them. Some Mythos-versed academics go further back, arguing that the origins of Robin Hood and other outlaw heroes may be found in groups of ghouls hiding in England's forests and attacking travellers. Over time these wandering groups settled to form rural enclaves. Sawney Bean and his 'family,' who cannibalised dozens in Scotland before being tracked down and killed, are also believed to be of the same ilk.

Today these ghoul-tribes are going through a cultural revolution. A century ago the major cities were empty of ghoul tribes and home only to loners who braved danger for richer pickings. Now beneath the soft clay of London, unsuitable for digging ghoul warrens, miles of unused London Underground tunnels, cellars and sewers have become the future homes of charnel clans. Their migration remains slow. The 1880s may have changed the perception of cities for the ghouls; but their sluggishness to take advantage has meant slow progress.

Ghoul society, as well as drawing closer to humanity in setting, has also drawn closer to it in coexistence. The Great War turned hundreds of trench-fighters into worshippers of Mordiggian or converts to cannibalism. Behind pale masks designed to hide war scars lurk faces now less than human, while the crippled and desperate seek ways to prolong their short, miserable lives. Ghoul society first saw these usurpers as threats to



their long-lived order and declared war upon them; most now see them as tools, much like the witch covens who served them in centuries past.

The charnel god is well pleased...

### *GLAAKI & EIHORT*

From its resting place in Severn Valley, Glaaki and his servants continues to exert a malignant presence across the globe, though its native lake just north of Brichester is off-limits to all but the most devoted. Getting to the abandoned and run-down housing built by Glaaki's cult in the 1790s needs a guide—the road and surrounding area are overgrown with a half-century of weed and scrub. Since the nearest habitation is Severnford, a dock town on the Severn River famed only for its historical inn (used by Witchfinder General Matthew Hopkins) and once-a-day bus to Brichester, few get close enough to enquire. Those that do are warned off or led elsewhere. Severnford's police are chary of travellers asking too many questions about the area's history.

Eihort, the God of the Labyrinth, lives under the feet of those who tread the Severn Valley. Recent construction work on Brichester's outskirts has uncovered a number of curious monoliths buried alongside spiderlike statues and icons. Academia presumes it to be a British offshoot of the Gaulish goddess Ariadne, herself a Celtic equivalent of

Greece's Arachna, and all further work on Brichester's suburbs has been halted as excavations take place.

### *GREAT RACE OF YITH*

The Great Race is not troubled by time or place; simply acting and reacting to the whims of fate and occasion. Yet there seems a method to their madness—almost as if they are planning for something to happen. Or not happen, as the case may be.

1921 and a naval attaché awakes in preparation for the Washington Naval Conference, only to find not only is he two weeks late, but it was with his help that limits to British ship construction were reached. Two years later an outspokenly pacifist MP stands down and flees his family on a tour of Borneo; six months later in Jesselton he comes to, remembering nothing of the last half-year. And these are only two more high-profile cases. Many more, the unmissed and the troubled, have likely fallen under the sway of this mind-swapping race. The cult that serves them has done a good job of keeping them from being noticed.

As always the Great Race are inscrutable. Those who hinder them in their great work are crushed. But what is their great plan? It seems as if they arm and disarm the country to some timetable; as if they're preparing Britain for a war. Or, perhaps, trying not to prepare her for one...

### *HASTUR THE UNSPEAKABLE*

On the continent proper, Dadaism and Surrealism may have brought artistes and decadents into his fold, but Hastur's powers have never been particularly pronounced in Britain. Instead He Who Is Not To Be Named's power has increased through the publishing of excerpts of the damnable play *The King in Yellow*, already the favourite of an unhealthy number of playwrights. Some have even included ideas and quotes from its terrible dialogue into their own works. The only large group to pay tribute to Hastur proper is the *Carcosa*, a coffeehouse and bookstore in Liverpool that manages to remain open solely due to its popularity among high-brow students. Regular readings of blasphemous poetry are made and excerpts from the *King in Yellow* are acted out with much audience participation.

## ITHAQUA

With Ithaqua only being able to travel in the snowy wastes of the most northerly mounts and islands of Scotland, his cult lacks the mass appeal of the other Great Old Ones. It continues to have some popularity in certain windswept locales and amongst explorers of the Arctic, though worship is mostly done for appeasement rather than true devotion. This is especially the case among the northern islands, where his freezing touch—though slight—holds some command.

## LLOIGOR

The Lloigor, the many-angled ones from beyond Andromeda, continue to exist. In Wales they are strongest, having been the source of the dragon legends that give the country its symbolic flag, but otherwise their numbers are slight and powers weak. Some minor townships still pay homage to these alien minds, though most Lloigor are content to simply spend their days feeding on the nearby sleeping and wait the day they too can pass on.

The greatest and most dangerous of Lloigor can be found beneath the Evan Valley's reservoirs, but others are sometimes chanced upon in the more rural thoroughfares. Rarely do they tolerate human interference and a Lloigor's revenge is swift and terrible. The only warning liable is the crackling like wax-paper in one's ears just before a magical implosion rips the transgressor asunder.

## THE MI-GO

The Mi-Go's interest in the UK may appear small compared to its influence in such other nations as China or America, but Britain is the dominant earthly power and ripe with mineable resources. In the mountains and islands the Mi-Go maintain small but important mining areas guarded by human cultists and genetically-modified creatures. Specific ritual sites, some having been used for aeons, are guarded jealously and unwary travellers who happen upon them never live to tell.

While recent atomic research has intrigued the Fungi, they remain ambivalent. Human research quickens in leaps and bounds, but it is just that: research—and the Mi-Go are far in advance of what mankind can possibly imagine. Some Mi-Go have, however, taken to Britain as an experiment;

poking, prodding and manipulating individuals and small groups in the furtherance of alien science; even walking among us in their *faux* human suits. The Empire and its intrinsically human aims pique their curiosity, for the logical Mi-Go intellect cannot comprehend why Britain does not simply turn their conquered lands into breeding camps and slave-labour; an infinitely more profitable endeavour.

Beside these ventures, the strange lights in the sky, curious buzzing, and talk of 'flying crabs' remain solely the topics of provincial types. Urban Britain considers such prattling more proof, if it were needed, of rural folk's liking for strong ale and hard cider.

## MORRTLGH

*"Though the Okhrana [Tsarist Secret Police] tell me to write otherwise, I know what it is that I saw. It was like leaves of iron. They swirled the room, reflecting the flames from the braziers. Like a snow-storm. A storm of steel. It moved with no wind. And within it a cannonball brain. A heart of burnished silver. They prostrated themselves before it; and I heard it sing. I heard it sing even as it carved into them in words of a tongue unknown to any man. I have seen these acolytes' wounds. No place is unmarred. Though I confess I was a thief before my becoming a chained dog of the Okhrana, I am no liar. I saw this thing and much, much more. God have mercy upon my soul."*

*~ Last confession of Stanislav Efimov Gromyko, of what he witnessed at the Petrograd meeting of the Khylst sect, 1848*

The Great Old One Morrtlgh resembles a single, lustrous orb floating at the centre of a whirling vortex of razor-sharp, metallic looking blades. For aeons it had been free, open to its own whims. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century it was trapped by a coven of white witches at Bramley End, Wiltshire.

Today, Morrtlgh's powers remain limited. Unable to move itself physically, it is reduced to casting itself out as a base facsimile of itself—and only for limited periods. When summoned, this Great Old One is only able to manifest this 'shade' within 2000 miles of its resting place in Bramley End and even then seriously diminished.

Much like its master, its cult has weakened over the centuries. The Russian Khylst sect prayed to

him, but rarely invoked him, and a number of western European masochistic orders entertained his blessings for perverse thrills. Only a handful worship to him today, and there are no known invokers in his semi-trapped 'shade' form.

When summoned free or not, Morrthglh must be given both a sacrifice and at least one supplicant. The sacrifice is ripped to shreds by the spinning cloud of razors, reducing them to a fine red mist. The supplicants are then written upon. Using its blades, the Great Old One turns those into living, bleeding tapestries, lacerated across their entire bodies by thousands of cuts. No inch of flesh is spared; eyeballs tongue, gums—all is written upon. A supplicant of particular favour may be able to ask for a specific spell to be written upon them, or upon a designated and willing appointee. Morrthglh is relatively proficient in most ancient languages, though he usually writes such offers in Latin.

Bringing Morrthglh's 'shade' to 0 hit points banishes it back to its sealed prison for 2D10+10 days. If the true Morrthglh is brought to 0 hit points he implodes into a burning block of alien compounds and vanishes with a sound like thunder. All stats to the right of a slash are while as a 'shade'.

### **Morrthglh, Great Old One**

STR 75/50 CON 80/40 SIZ 60 INT 80

POW 100 HP 120/50 Move 10

Razors 90%, damage 6D6, ignores all armour

Glowing Orb 45%, damage 1D3 sanity loss

Write Upon Supplicant 85%, damage 2D6+2

Spells: Knows all spells

Armour: Being a whirling morass of ever-moving and rather tiny razor-blades, physical damage is surprisingly hard to inflict. Morrthglh can therefore only be damaged by area affect weapons (blast, flame, etc.) or non physical magic

Sanity Loss: 2D6/2D20

### *NODENS*

Mortimer Wheeler was one of the 1920s most prolific archaeologists and some say his most important find was the Lydney Temple of 1928, set deep in Gloucestershire's ancient Forest of Dean, overlooking the Severn Estuary. For 200 years, Nodens worshipped by Roman and Briton alike, and in Ireland he was equated with the cognate god-king, Nuada. For 200 years the Temple had served as a place of worship to Nodens, the god of healing, hunting, dogs and the

sea. For the first time in 1500 years the old god returned truly from his Dreamland slumber.

Worship of Nodens is not unknown among various sects of druidic and pagan religious. Unlike devotion to the Old Ones, which remains predominantly secretive and esoteric, the worship of Nodens is treated with amused nostalgia, more silly than heretical. This classic interpretation of Nodens, hoary and aquatic, riding upon the backs of dolphins and clam-shells is but one of many (and is, in fact, only seriously found inside the Dreamlands).

Nodens takes many forms; not all of them mundane or reasonable, for he is the antithesis of Nyarlathotep, and not due to benevolence or good-nature. If Nyarlathotep is the messenger, Nodens is the seeker of the message. If Nyarlathotep is madness and deception, then Nodens is illumination and healing—at a price. He is primal command; the state of nature at its most frustrating; the lust for answers in a world gone insane. King of knowledge and power is Nodens—but absolute power corrupts absolutely.

The huntsman is always moving, always searching. The craven fall by the wayside to be trampled; and those who worship Nodens without understanding this are playing Russian roulette with gods. He cares nothing for mankind any more so than Nyarlathotep does. But for true seekers, for those who will put the gun to their head and damn the consequences, who push themselves to lunacy in their hunt: they are the ones who Nodens smiles upon. Through their exertion he grows stronger. Those who plunge deep into the abyss of the Mythos to touch fleeting victory are his chosen, even though they rock and gibber and drool in lunatic asylums across the globe.

Those who invoke Nodens without displaying the surety of triumph or willingness to suffer for the prize are cowards and weaklings. Nodens' displeasure towards such mortals is as terrible as it is shocking.

Avatars of Nodens the Catcher can be found in the form of the satyr Pan, the Green Man, Baphomet, Mercury, Lugus, Wotan and the head of the Wild Hunts that sweep Europe. Much like Nyarlathotep, he sometimes enjoys walking among humans, and takes pleasure in pushing seekers to greater and greater excesses.

Worshippers of him in his true guise are those whose minds have snapped searching for some elusive answer, wherein that last fleeting moment of sanity they recognise the universe for the true abomination it is. Some call him the patron saint of the Lovecraftian investigator. Others call him the adversary.

### *SERPENT PEOPLE*

Naturally prone to seclusion and cold-blooded sedentary lifestyles, this race has carved a quiet existence in the Sceptred Isles.

One of the few outposts of the Serpent People to have survived relatively intact, the tunnels and caverns that undercut Britain hold numerous revelations about the pre-history of man. Vast caverns deep underground exist, where in the pitch darkness of aeons, their technology waits on standby. The only major existing site is that under Wenley Moor, in the Dales, the wild and untamed moorland of west Yorkshire. Recent caving expeditions have not bothered to investigate too far, due to the dangerousness of travel.

Though long-lived, resurrected serpent men do not live long among the descendents of the creatures they imagined destroyed. Most turn to hedonism and self-destructive vices. It is understandable as they are terrestrial creatures with some modicum of thought understandable to humans. Much like mankind, the serpent men are a dead race living on stolen time.

### *THE SHAN*

With their aversion to sunlight and preoccupation with internal politics, the Shan have kept from wandering too far over the years. Those few dozen that did stray rarely went further than the coast—the notable exception being that which made Benvento Chieti Bordighera its host and wrote *Massa di Requiem per Shuggay* in Italy circa 1768. The creature's return to Goatswood brought with it newfound knowledge on the outside world but barring a few tentative excursions, it has only been in the last decade that Shan have truly moved beyond the Severn Valley.

These explorers, eager, willing, and with the mixed blessings of their leaders, have begun a search for anything that might help them leave Earth before the cataclysm of the End Times.

While earth's politics confused the Shan, the 1914-18 War intrigued them intensely. Humanity's orgiastic expulsion of energy and materiel into the war effort, along with its headlong rush towards self-destruction, showed the Shan just how quickly humans could invent new technologies if given the right impetus.

The delving into nuclear physics has also titillated the Insects from Shaggai, though their interest in atomic energy is not purely for fixing their disabled temple-ship. Atomic energy, that sublime reaction of composite particles and neutrons, and the resultant twisting vortices of Azathoth that it manifests, is as much religion as necessity to the Shan. For them, as like flagellants, it is both a source of comfort and masochism. Mankind's detachment from this curious religious dualism strikes the Shan as almost blasphemous. Indeed, they may well have considered mankind's experiments a heretical curio, if not for the pious fervency of Dr Reginald Crumb.

Crumb had been something of a disquieting figure in the halls of Cambridge University's Cavendish Laboratory. Unlike his contemporaries, he mixed genius with a religiosity that bordered on the insane. In 1920 his articles on perceived ultimacy to physics caught the interest of a Shan in Manchester, who travelled to Cambridge, sought out the good doctor, and promptly took control of his mind.

To the Shan's surprise, Crumb didn't seem to mind—even after being forced to kill and bury the body of the previous host. Instead, he became a willing vessel for his extraterrestrial parasite. In exchange for information and glimpses of the 'atomic god' that the Shan worship, Crumb remained more than happy to help harness the powers of the atom for their escape. However, subsequent written articles and crazed monologues during lectures have made him a pariah. While his theories *are* correct, the Shan remain unable to comprehend why Crumb's standing and perceptiveness have not forced others to acknowledge his superiority. When they work out why, they will try a more subtle approach—but only after removing Crumb and his increasingly embarrassing flare-ups.

To aid in their plan, the Shan have moved engineers and security to the University. Barely a dozen Shan take part in Cambridge operations,

with most unable to access the university at all—predominantly due to their unwillingness to go out during daylight. (Though students are notoriously lazy it is still expected of them to go to some lectures if they intend to remain on their courses.) Consequently only a quarter of Shan have ‘on campus’ hosts; night-porters, cleaning staff and reclusive academics. Unlike Crumb, none of these hosts are particularly keen and all are getting more than a touch frazzled. The problem has got so bad that some Shan have resorted to binding their host body to their beds during the day, only able to be released by another Shan when night falls. The Insects from Shaggai know that soon a host will escape, but they also hope this unfortunate situation can be stopped by regular disposal of worn-out hosts. Head of operation security, an older Shan possessing the body of a disarmingly innocent-looking octogenarian reader on Greco-Roman temples, has contemplated moving a Xiclotlan to Cambridge as a ‘guard dog.’ If people start snooping around, he just might do so. As such, the Shan managing this Cambridge spearhead use the Cavendish labs to research new methods of propulsion, although most turn out to be two or three steps ahead of man’s technological abilities.

In comparison, the race’s Dionysian hedonism has been harder to stamp out among the other Shan explorers who criss-cross Britain in hope of finding other, faster, means of planetary escape. These Shan, younger and more wilful, have displayed an alarming lack of consideration when it comes to keeping themselves secret.

Taking delight in ruining their host’s malleable minds, these Shan perpetrate base horrors upon those caught in their perverse schemes. The CID of Barnstable Borough, Devon County, and Exeter City Constabularies each unknowingly pursue separate enquiries into brutal sex-attacks on local young women. The Shan’s using different hosts every few crimes has left him liberated so far, but—likely as not—the similarities in *modus operandi* should lead to a pooling of resources between the three police forces as the trickle of newspaper reports become a deluge. Saner Shan (if ever the term can be used), loyal to the leaders back in Goatswood and trained in preternatural means, hunt brethren that display disturbing lack of self-control. Taken from the warrior castes of the species, these ‘police’ of Shan society are as

bloodthirsty and sadistic as their charges, but do a better job of hiding the bodies.

Not that all the Shan are aiming to bring out the worst in their host. One such parasite in the Midlands has found the taste of altruism quite intense. Using the body of a now horribly insane Catholic priest, the alien has become inured to the methods of Christianity, and ministers to a flock of oblivious parishioners solely for its own emotional gratification.

Though insidious, the Shan are little in the great scheme of the Mythos. Once realising their plans for advancing humanity’s atomic physics will have no noticeable effect for another decade (if they are lucky) and that their hosts’ activities are drawing too much attention, they shall return to Goatswood or look further afield, perhaps to Herman Oberth and his experiments in rocketry. Investigators are far more likely to run into the ‘exploring’ Shan, whose numbers are smaller but activities more easily stopped. If left to their own devices, the Cambridge Shan will accumulate much knowledge on human capabilities, which they will put to good use. Destroying their plans may not have the short-term benefits so desired by investigators but could well stop more serious events later.

## SHOGGOTHS

Aeons-old creations of the Elder Things, the predatory and territorial shoggoths have found modern society surprisingly well to their liking. While larger of the breed live out in the seas, sometimes—though not always—coexisting with Deep Ones and other aquatic races, a number of the smaller types have found life on land a more attractive prospect. Though far from intelligent, all possess a sort of alien cunning and tenacity that is typified by their ageless existence. Though their minds are no more able than a human’s, they hold grudges for years, even centuries, and while their plans may be simple a shoggoth can wait a very long time to take its revenge.

The instigators of the rebellion that brought down the Elder Things and freed the shoggoth race from a life of servitude continue to survive, growing larger, stronger and more intelligent as the years pass. Unlike their subordinates, these ‘super’ shoggoth are surprisingly bright; some moving from the worship of the Great Old Ones to



worship of themselves. Minor cults worldwide, usually of dubious Mythos knowledgeable, have taken to building venerate cults around these individual shoggoth, who though lacking in godly power make up for it in sheer and unbridled lust to continue milking their subordinates for adulation and prizes. Those acolytes who begin to realise that their 'living god' may not be all it's cracked up to be usually keep their mouths shut; those that don't all too frequently end as shoggoth food.

### *SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND EL DORADO*

In 1594, Raleigh led a fleet to South America to fight the Spanish and search for *El Dorado*, a fabled lost-city of gold. Attacking Spanish outposts, he also captured experts on the city, culminating in the kidnap of Don Antonio de Berrio during the sacking of Trinidad. The Don, having led many expeditions in search of *El Dorado*, was forced to lead Raleigh up the Orinoco River and into the dark heart of South America.

Europeans mistook *El Dorado*. Rather than a city, it was actually a ritual in which the chieftain of a tribe (the *El Dorada* or 'the Gilded One') sprinkled himself with gold and swam into isolated Lake Gutavita to be impaled by the god Kaakai. The Conquistadors finding this tribe in the 1530s incorrectly assumed they were of the Muisca Confederation. Shocked at the lasciviousness, brutality and inhuman sacrifices, the Spaniards left a small priestly mission before returning to civilisation. Neither the tribe nor the priests were ever seen again.

Raleigh's journey eventually took him to Lake Gutavita. The only sign of habitation was a tribe descended from the now-conquered Muisca, who claimed that the people of *El Dorado* had left years previously. Raleigh's survey of the Lake noted it a water-filled meteor crater and that the Spanish had attempted to drain it during their last expedition in the 1580s; apparently without success. He returned to England empty handed.

### *SHUB-NIGGURUTH*

Shub-Nigguruth's powers have always been strong in Britain, and they have grown stronger; hiding within the return to Old England and the modern love of paganism. Various dark and unwholesome groups now pay ritual to this obscene goddess and her grotesque brood.

In the provinces, recognition of the Magna Mater comes in many forms, and her worship has evolved into complex superstitions and petty rituals used to stave off bad crop seasons or draw rain. Her Dark Young too wait in twisted woodgroves and decayed churches, with some called to earth for specific reasons by those who pay her homage. The milk of Shub-Nigguruth, with its stimulant and mutagenic qualities, has also been co-opted into her cult. A local brew of ale called *Old Mother's Drizzle*, made in Gloucestershire, contains traces of this corrupting fluid. In small doses it is relatively harmless, but in the quantities drunk by the locals its effects are... *pronounced*, to say the least.

A curious spate of horse-rippings has rocked rural communities of late. Though old as time, these incidents have been marked only by the brutality of the injuries inflicted—scalping, tails lopped off near the bone, cut leg tendons, blinding with knives—alongside the seeming ritual that goes with them. In many cases, strange altars are nearby, along with other dead animals and unnatural graffiti. While equine lovers remain worried (and sometimes mistakenly shoot innocent trespassers) the police are cynical of links between the violence and fertility cults, which have long related horse hair and blood with fecundity. Some doomsayers crow that these are merely practise-runs; preparation for something *bigger*...

### *SPREH'GAAN*

Historically called 'faeries' or 'Spriggan' in England, the Spreh'Gaan once spread across the world on wild and ravenous dances, moving from village to village in orgies of destruction of chaos.

At places of high-energy or sympathetic magic, such as at ancient monoliths or certain landscapes, human reality breaks down, and through this the Spreh'Gaan move into our world. Lacking physical properties they exist as strange shadows, though needing no light—and can readily move as 2-dimensional shapes in 3-dimensional space. In appearance they emerge as fragmentary man-

shapes, with deformed limbs and heads, ever shifting and crackling like old film footage. This scratchy quality along with their two-dimensionality has given them the name ‘Shadow Men’ in late-20<sup>th</sup> century parlance.

Spreh’Gaan hunt in packs, sweeping across the landscape in a wave of preternatural horror. Their minds, like those of vile children, revel in the horror and pain they cause. While not above simple killings, they prefer hideous games: stealing children, terrifying and torturing lone victims, eating pets and worse. Even their methods of inflicting death and agony are exotic, as being shadow-like they can draw their prey *into* walls or other matter—leaving them fused with it. Once bored or recalled by some unknown sign, they return whence they came.

Nowadays most of the locations Spreh’Gaan use to manifest have been destroyed, some accidentally others deliberately, and they are rarely seen in the great hunts they did in the Dark Ages. Lone Spreh’Gaan are sometimes pulled through into our world, or are found hiding in houses or streets. Without comrades self-preservation makes them prefer idle pranks; but if riled there is no refuge. Communication with a Spreh’Gaan is impossible—their only message to humans their incomparable laughter, like knives on glass.

It is questionable whether these creatures are worshipped or, in turn, worship. Some new-age cults have unintentionally summoned them, but how they fit within the greater Mythos remains unknown. Servitor races remain vague on the Spreh’Gaan.

While 2-dimensional, parenthesised stats are unavailable.

<i>Char.</i>	<i>Aver.</i>
(STR) 3D6	10-11
(CON) 3D6	10-11
(SIZ) 3D6	10-11
INT 2D6	06
POW 2D6+3	09
DEX 3D6+3	12-15
(HP): 10-11	
Move: 09	
Damage Bonus: +0	

Armour: Spreh’Gaan are immune to physical attacks, magical or not. Weapons: Grasp 40%,

damage grappling\*

Merge 100%, damage death\*\*

\* Once grasped, Spreh’Gaan attempt to pull their victim into a nearby surface. One or two STR rolls may be allowed to break from the grasp, or hold off being drawn in.

\*\* Once grasped and drawn to a surface, the victim is merged. Death can be instantaneous or slow depending on the body-part. Sometimes Spreh’Gaan merge only limbs, which inflicts 1D6 damage, 0/1D3 sanity loss to viewers, and needs amputation to be freed.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D3+1 to see a Spreh’Gaan.

Though there is a *Contact Spreh’Gaan* there is no known means of controlling them; nor is there a spell for putting them down. Spreh’Gaan usually leave of their own design, but can be forced away using magic. One thing to note is that while Spreh’Gaan usually manifest through places of power, their actual ability to force their way through comes via the despair and anguish of a place. A Contact spell is as likely to succeed at Gettysburg, the Tower of London or a murder scene as it is to Stonehenge or a specifically prepared altar.

## TCHO-TCHO

The grotesque Tcho-Tcho number only thousands worldwide and just a few hundred exist as subcultures within London’s Limehouse.

Having spread to the treaty-ports and colonies of the Far East, the Tcho-Tcho flowed out to the European homelands. From South Africa, Tcho-Tcho masquerading as Chinese labourers and miners moved on to India and the UK. During the Great War, both sides shipped thousands of Chinese to Europe to serve as labourers behind the front-lines. How many of them were Tcho-Tcho and where they went remains to be seen...

The Tcho-Tcho’s existence in Britain is small at best. In Limehouse district they have carved a criminal empire of interlocking families, running opium dens, brothels, restaurants and gambling houses. It is these loathsome folk who create many of the troubles and rumours of the era that are heaped upon other Asian populations by ‘yellow peril’ journalism. The Tcho-Tcho have turned such publications to their own advantage, as unlike the Chinese who seek an honest living, the Tcho-Tcho seek only to pervert and ruin. The

race's thugs enforce their criminal trades with fierce violence, and demand anything. Women are a favourite target for Tcho-Tcho 'fun.' The police, who have never been particularly understanding of the Chinese population, consider 'Tcho-Tcho' to be a word for a type of Triad. Only a handful of officers have learnt what Tcho-Tcho really means—and remain ignored for their knowledge.

All Tcho-Tcho have sworn allegiance to one of the three families: Bak, Myan or Khin, and each of these 'head-families' have joined together for protection, both from outside and within. While each family pools their resources, their loyalties remain divided. Each group is likely to work with outsiders to eradicate their rivals. At least until the usefulness of the deal is over.

Beneath the crumbling edifices of the Cho Street, a troglodytic netherworld of enlarged cellars and subterranean vaults, interlinked by the sewer system, has been hewn. It is here that the shrine of Lloigor and Zhar has been placed, and where the Tcho-Tcho practice their worship.

Outside of London the Tcho-Tcho remain unknown. A handful exists in Liverpool's Chinatown, and others are perhaps dotted wherever docks pay no attention to stowaways.

Unbeknownst, another colony of Tcho-Tcho exists in Kent, under the tutelage and protection of Dr Whitley Mershe. Mershe's stately home (Brambleback House) can be found outside Arping, a collection of farmsteads that grow hops for beer-production. Brambleback House is home to twenty Tcho-Tcho that serve as staff.

Mershe travelled the Indochinese peninsula from 1896; a worn-out, middle-aged would-be anthropologist and millionaire. Using Frazer's *Golden Bough* as his bible, he searched for something to bring to the academic circles he was falling out of favour with. He discovered it in the jungle wilds of Laos.

It took many days and much money to get Laotian guides, but in the end it was the Tcho-Tcho who found him rather than vice-versa. They would perhaps have killed him or taken him into slavery, if not for his amusing looks and foreign tongue. The tribe of forty or so Tcho-Tcho decided to treat him as something of a pet.

Over the months Mershe came to learn how to communicate with his captors—and more importantly, began to be swayed to their ideals. Frazer's talk of magic was nothing after a Tcho-Tcho pulled one of the captured guide's guts up through his mouth just by staring at him. Left with his diary, Mershe wrote feverishly of his findings, learning from the tribe, and teaching them of his own land—the Empire Where the Sun Never Set. To the Tcho-Tcho, whose existence was based upon following the sun and who had travelled thousands of miles east on this mission, it sounded as paradise.

Two years after his capture, Mershe was allowed to leave, taking with him two Tcho-Tcho. Promising he would return for more he returned to England. Between 1899 and 1914, he would send his servants back and forth to Laos to collect others and exchange letters, written in the race's alien cursive, with the tribe's shaman.

War broke their covenant, and the opening of hostilities halted communications. The twenty or so Tcho-Tcho living on Mershe's estate were the last brought to England. What happened to the remainder in Indochina, Mershe doesn't know—but he assumes them dead. The Tcho-Tcho he sent back late-1918 never returned.

At Brambleback the Tcho-Tcho act as Mershe's servants and confidantes. They work as butlers, maids, chauffeurs, gardeners and more, keeping the estate and grounds maintained. In exchange for teaching Mershe to worship the Great Old Ones he gives them the freedoms they desire. On weekends they travel to nearby towns, where they get drunk and fight. Mershe has had to pay off some victims of these indiscretions. One young farm-hand who ended up being beaten so badly he was left permanently insensate remains grumbled about by local folk, but most are too afraid to stand up to Mershe's strange company.

Mershe no longer circulates among his old academic haunts. He has new friends now. Amid high-society, Brambleback House is famed, if quietly, for its "cocktail" parties—monthly exploits that degenerate into drug use and, more rarely, orgies. The Tcho-Tcho's liao drug is cultivated in well-kept greenhouses, and is smoked or eaten by anyone who wishes. Mershe is currently writing a treatise on the subject of this new 'wonder

drug.’ The Tcho-Tcho know better than to allow him to publish it.

Apart from his parties, Mershew lives a solitary existence but for his Tcho-Tcho servants. When bored he takes the females to his bed, where they teach him ways of love he could never have dreamed of, using blades, razors, needles and blood. The Tcho-Tcho know they are really in charge. They have already begun inducting party-goers, including an MP and three high-ranking civil servants, to their ways of worship, and using liao as a tool to control those addicted.

If left to their own devices, this small sect of Tcho-Tcho may realise how far people will go to keep their supply of liao coming, and things will surely go from localised to national. The situation would be even worse if their brothers in London came to know a supply of liao was available in Britain. The production in Kent and the distribution capabilities of the Limehouse families would be a nightmare to stop.

### *Y’GOLONAC*

Outside of the Severn Valley, Y’Golonac’s influence is small but potent. Wherever decadence rears, Y’Golonac can further his aims and he has found great ability in the talents of young artist Tristan Sterne.

Within Brichester Univerity a strange witch cult prospers for a while, before its members are expelled, but the sudden interest in occult matters reopens academic interest in *The Revelations of Glaaki*. One expert on Anglo-Welsh politics, Professor Harold Doherty, is already well into the seventh book and doesn’t appear to be slowing...

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## **PART III:** **SCENARIOS**

The scenario with which one has the most fun is the scenario that one makes oneself. And with that maxim, we present two.

*Heartless Things* puts players against an un-dead madman out for revenge against an equally unsavoury ‘innocent,’ and mingle the higher and lower classes of 1920s society.

*The Resurrection Men* throws the players into high-class Christian society with a little bit of humour, a little bit of Mythos, and the chance to splash about a bit of blood.

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## ***HEARTLESS THINGS***

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Pitting the investigators in the middle of a lethal feud between the bad and the worse, this scenario can take place anytime during the 1920s. It is designed for 3 to 5 players. Much of the scenario as presented is open-ended, and with a little effort can be set anywhere.

### ***Keeper’s Information***

Jonathon Brown learnt about the Mythos from his uncle’s books; by the time he was 20 he was already versed in basic spell-casting. The war, however, caught him by surprise. He hadn’t been paying much attention to the news, but whether he worshipped Yog-Sothoth or not he was an Englishman and a patriot. Using a spell he discovered amongst his uncle’s papers he removed his heart and placed it in a safe place. Immortal, he signed up as a volunteer for ‘C’ Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Loamshire Regiment.

How was he to know that he and four others were to be shot for cowardice by their own side one August dawn of 1916? Buried in a shell crater by their two-faced officer and a disinterested higher command, no one expected him to dig himself out and set off to avenge his misfortune. Brown was insane before he left for France, and those years buried, rotting slowly away, have made him crazier. His first victim was a young French baker; stealing his body-parts he made his way to Calais and then on to Dover where he killed Dr Fells, the officer who declared the men fit for courts martial. He swapped his arms for Fells and



killed General Roget, once again swapping his limbs for his victim's. This is where the investigators enter. Jonathon will continue tracking down the men who signed his death warrant and taking their bodily parts, swapping his own limbs with theirs to both throw the police off the scent and create the 'perfect' body. Perfection being impossible, Jonathon's search will continue long after killing his own murderers.

### **The Newspaper Clippings**

The following newspaper article is found in one of the investigator's newspapers one morning:

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#### **CONTROVERSIAL WAR HERO DEAD**

*Police are appealing for witnesses to the murder of General Sir Stepney Roget KSB MC DSO (ret.), whose body was discovered at his home yesterday morning. Although a coroner's inquiry is to be held into the nature of his demise, Inspector Thursday, in charge of the investigation, informed reporters Gen. Roget's body had been severely mutilated with limbs removed. He went on to say that due to evidence left at the scene, police are asking for members of the public that know someone who recently suffered traumatic amputation of the arms, to come forward and help in enquiries. General Roget shall be forever remembered as the lieutenant that turned the tide at the Battle of Mbotto Gorge in 1874. He faced criticism for his handling of affairs during the last war however, especially for the signing of a warrant of execution for local man, Charlie Broker. Police are not ruling out the events may be linked.*

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In the post the investigator also receives a letter from a doctor friend in Kent. After pleasantries the letter continues:

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*I received word from the police that my step-cousin died in most horrible circumstances last week. I wish as a doctor and member of family I could say I am saddened, but my sympathy for the man was a drought long ago. Nonetheless, it was my duty to enquire upon the circumstances, especially as he too was a practitioner of the medical arts. I have since received a number of newspaper cuttings and usual police nonsense. As*

*I know you're a follower of strange happenings, I thought you might enjoy the clipping I include...*

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The clipping itself is from the Dover Highlight, a tabloid paper that is well known for being factual, if sensationalist.

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*MURDER! The desecrated body of Dr Peter Fells MID was recovered from his home yesterday amidst a flurry of accusation. Dover Police refused to speculate on the incident, although an inside source admitted Dr Fells had been brutalised, with a number of limbs missing presumed stolen. Rumours that an arm and a leg, not from Dr Fells, were found at the scene were not rebuffed, though it was denounced as "hearsay" and "scaremongering." Dr Fells had been chairman of the South Shields Hospital Trust since 1919 after having served as Chief Medical Officer with 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, the Royal Loamshires.*

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### **Investigating the Deceased**

General Roget's house is only a few miles from the investigator's own, and is a large but not ostentatious abode in the nicer part of the community. Investigators find it guarded by two police officers who rebuff questions and bar entry.

The house, if investigators do break in (presumably later, considering the police presence), is no more exciting than its exterior. Roget lived alone and with no dependents (both his son and wife died in a train crash in 1917). He was murdered in his study, which is at the back of the house and overlooks the garden through a pair of broken French windows—presumably where the perpetrator broke in. The entire study is stained with blood (1/1D4), almost as if a bomb went off. Fingerprints found are inconclusive.

The middle-class neighbours are already annoyed reporters and sightseers. They heard nothing, saw nothing, and refuse to talk more. Roget was a quiet man with some few friends, though they admit, not from *this* town—not after what he did during the war. Any further questions will see investigators pointed towards Margo and Sissy...

The only major clue is a pair of middle-aged women dressed in black handing out leaflets opposite the house. They are Margo Broker and

Sissy White, president and treasurer respectively of the *Recognise the Dead Association*. Formed in 1917, it calls for the 300+ British men executed by their own side during the Great War to be given the same recognition as their fallen comrades. Margo Broker's husband, Ichabod (alive and well), was Roget's chauffeur before the war. In 1916, Charlie Broker, Margo and Ichabod's son, was executed for cowardice. Roget was the officer who refused his appeal. Margo has made it her life's work to make Roget repent, and his death without apology has tipped her into morbidity. The police have made a cursory examination of the association in regards to the murder, but written them off very quickly. The only members are Margo and Sissy, and they have neither the funds nor the means to kill anyone.

The pamphlets the pair hands out talk of Roget's "unremitting guilt" for the deaths of "five bright young men, ingloriously snatched by bullets made to kill Hun." Their names are listed:

- Charlie Broker
- Dennis Holland
- Leslie Watts
- John Xavier Blowm
- Aloysius Christie

(Notably, John Brown's name is misspelt as 'Blowm'. The pamphlet also states those dead were all volunteers in 'C' Company, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, of the Loamshires.)

Both Margo and Sissy know Dr Fells was medical officer for Charlie's company; he was the one who declared them fit to stand trial. If informed of Fells' death, Margo will thank the investigators, head home and hang herself later that night, under the belief that any means of bringing to justice the men who killed her son are now gone. The police don't know about Fells, but if brought to their attention they will begin working with their counterparts in Dover. Detective Inspector (DI) Bickham will lead the joint enquiry. Questions about the murder will be stonewalled as "early days." In truth the police have nothing.

If investigators go to Dover, they will find Fells' house boarded up. Once inside they discover a similar *M.O.* to Roget's death. The killer broke in through French windows and butchered the Doctor in his kitchen. Fingerprints may be found but, as they match the Frenchman Brown stole the body from, they are on no British records. If told

of Roget's similar death, police will initiate liaison with their national counterparts.

Unlikely though it may seem, investigators may believe perpetrator is in France. Keepers should dissuade them from this tangential and unnecessary course of action (perhaps by having another, unrelated, body turn up—Brown having spotted an attractive candidate for his 'perfect body' and taking it upon himself to use it). If they want to go to France, let them. The Somme was a massive battlefield, and there are no records of where the five men were buried. Enquiring about it will be met with sad mutterings and shakings of head. However, they will hear of the murder of young Salomon Melennec, the baker of Ailly-sur-Noye. His was a most horrible death. Sympathetic enquiries will get the explanation that he had been dismembered and parts 'stolen' while riding to work on his bike one morning a week or so ago. His funeral was done very quickly; closed-casket. The *Gendarme* can give little else, but if this will, hopefully, put investigators back on track. If not, IDEA rolls may be in order.

### *The Deserters Deserted*

The investigators should be able to work out that everyone dead so far was connected to the Loamshire Regiment. Being naturally suspicious, they are liable to seek more on the other four executed men.

Getting hold of info is more difficult than it sounds. Executed men are purged from the majority of records, and enquiring about them is tantamount to advocating their actions. Calls to the Army will be politely refused. An IDEA roll realises that searching newspaper records for volunteers or executions may be able to find more on the deceased.

A suitably large library with a good backlog of newspapers is needed. Each successful Library Use roll takes at least five hours and uncovers the address of one of the men. Charlie Broker's, of course, is already known.

**Dennis Holland (d. age 34):** Before signing up, Holland lived in a grimy row of terraced houses in Manchester. Investigators who knock on the front door are greeted by a bare-footed girl of perhaps 5, who tells them her name is Holly. The mother staggers downstairs soon thereafter. She will inform investigators that "the Holland woman"

moved. A bit of cajoling will manage to elicit she now lives in a nicer area with “that stuck up doctor.” A forwarding address can be pried from her; money for a pint of beer gets it faster.

Mrs Deirdre Holland is now Mrs Deirdre DeSilver. She will flatly deny ever knowing Dennis Holland, but if investigators make a scene she will agree to meet them later far from her husband’s ears. Dying was the best thing Dennis ever did for her, and although she bears no grudges against him, her new husband has no idea she was widowed—worse yet to a criminal. She takes no further part in the investigation.

**Leslie Watts (d. age 25):** Watts lived with his parents and sister in Sidcup. Mrs Watts never accepted her son’s death; she continues to believe that every time someone knocks on the door, it’s her Leslie finally coming back. Mr Watts remains aloof—he firmly believes that Leslie committed his crime (“he was always a sneak”) but is non-committal on whether he deserved his fate. Leslie’s sister, Samantha (21), lives at home. Any word of the deaths of those who killed her brother will make her happy, as will any comment on bringing them to justice.

**Aloysius Christie (d. age 17):** Aloysius Christie’s home in London is no longer there. It, along with the house next door, was flattened by a zeppelin bombing run in 1917. Only an expanse of neatly piled rubble remains. Neighbours think he lived with someone, but she moved... or died. They’re not sure. No one remembers Leslie Christie, and his existence can only be proved by what is written on paper.

After finding the above addresses, investigators discover a report on the execution: as well as naming the executed, Dr Fells and Gen. Roget, it also names the legal counsel as Cpt. Mellow, and



the bringer of the charges as Lt. Gatenby VC.

### *The Soldiers’ Ghosts*

If the investigators hit a wall or it seems pertinent to their goings on, they will be visited by the ghosts of the four men executed with Brown that fateful dawn. Being so close to Brown’s body has tainted them with his immortality, but being dead they are instead cursed to a spectral existence.

One night the investigator with the highest POW awakes to find he is surrounded by four soldiers, the ghosts of the executed men, along with the spectres of those Jonathon has killed during his revenge. All are fully formed, but stare terribly, never looking at anything, only through (SAN 0/1D3). Talking in rounds, and often finishing each other’s sentences, they demand Brown be made to pay for his sins—it is unfair, they say, that they should die and him live on.

The four soldiers also have a special mission: they demand that Lt Gatenby be brought to justice. None of the ghosts are particularly talkative, and are sometimes hard to understand, but they will inform investigators of Brown’s name, his next move, other useful information and—if necessary—a spell to kill him: *Shred Soul*. They are there to add atmosphere; if players instead depend on them instead of investigating, have the ghosts cease visiting.

### *Finding Jonathon*

Investigators will find no record of a John Blowm signing up for the Loamshires. Those with a military record will not consider this surprising; many men joined the military under false names. However, a LUCK roll finds a small article in the Manchester Guardian noting the court appearance of a Mrs M. Green and a Mr J.X. Blowm for running a ‘bawdy house’ (i.e. a brothel). The date is 1913.

Though the original address is now a shoe shop, polite investigation finds Mrs Green’s reopened bordello in an upmarket area of Manchester near Picadilly Gardens.

SANADA Midori married Captain Norris Green in Kyoto in 1905. Green had been sent to Japan to learn the language after the recent signing of the Anglo-Japanese alliance. Midori served as his teacher (which caused no small amount of

amusement as she taught him female dialect). Over time they fell in love. The marriage ruined the Sanada family and the Greens moved to England in 1906. Midori has not seen her family since.

Unknown to Norris Green before he married Midori, the Sanadas had long worshipped the Bloated Woman, known in Japan as *Kuroi Sensu no Megami* (Goddess of the Black Fan). While he continually refused to leave Anglicanism, it would surprise most to know that the fervent protestant and the worshipper of Nyarlathotep lived in matrimonial happiness for some years. Norris' surprise death from flat smallpox in British East Africa in 1909 was a terrible blow to Midori, who had remained in England waiting for him. Her request to have his pension was refused and so, lacking finances, she was forced to prostitute herself under "Sunny" Thanom, a Siamese pimp. Thanom was a poor businessman, with a streak of viciousness that frequently left those he exploited in hospital. His vanishing was no great loss, the police chalking it up to the usual turf-fighting between Liverpool's crooks, and Midori took over the business as madam, changing the name and catering to a better class of gentlemen.

Midori's brothel is more a 'hostess club' than a den of vice, and goes by the name of the *Oriental Women's Language Hostel*. Its decor is a mix of East Asian styles, and its service is deliberately discrete. The majority of the twenty-odd girls are Koreans brought from Japan and most end up marrying English businessmen. Midori is a surprisingly good madam. She never forces the girls to do anything they don't want to, gives good wages and honestly helps them learn various languages (particularly English).

In a locked backroom, to which only Midori has a key, is a small shrine to the Bloated Woman. Seeing it costs 1/1D3 SAN as one discerns the assortment of bloodied bones and incense sticks. Midori hasn't sacrificed a human since Sunny Thanom, but pays regular respect to Nyarlathotep. A few of the girls and patrons serve in Midori's small cult, which meets irregularly. Any of them would wilfully kill those who attempted to publicise their secret.

Concerning Brown, Midori has nothing to hide, since as far as she's concerned he died in France. Their first meeting was in 1912 when he was living on the streets. She took him in and they

lived together for a while (as lovers, she admits, if prodded). During the period Brown went under the name of John Blowm, presumably to hide from the law. In 1913, after the bawdy house charges were thrown out of court due to lack of evidence, Brown moved out. The last time she saw him was the day before he shipped out with the Army in 1915. Since then, she says, she's gone straight. Pointing out that she's running a brothel will be met with scorn: she runs a hostel and language school, not a cathouse.

Brown's history can only be learnt from Midori. All she remembers is that he was exiled from his home (for dabbling in his uncle's black arts, though she won't admit that) and was living on the streets with nothing but the clothes on his back (and his uncle's books, which she also won't admit to). Where he originally came from, she's not entirely sure. He rarely talked of his past and she never asked.

If she thinks the investigators are interested in the occult she will send a Byakhee to spy on them, and if they seem to be a threat, will use it to slaughter them. If it seems that they're going for Jonathon and have no interest in her, she may try to find him before the investigators do—though likely with little luck. She has a business to run, after all. If Jonathon finds himself in trouble he may seek help and protection from Midori (though if discovering she unwittingly betrayed him to the investigators, he'll surely kill her and perhaps make use of her body).

Jonathon's address is in Manchester's Old Town, a slum of the most dreadful sort on the banks of the River Irk, the black water of which stagnates rather than flows. The building, a decrepit and rotting two-storey abode squeezed into an alley, is currently home to a dozen squatters who spend their days picking detritus from the river that laps at their home's foundations and selling it for opium money. The door is unlocked, and visitors will find the floor covered with mattresses and dirty men and women insensate in opium-slumber, although one or two will be awake and question what they're doing. Once they work out the investigators aren't here to evict them, they'll talk openly. None knew Jonathon, but they kept his books—in a sense. Disturbed by the writings, they used the pages to insulate the upstairs ceilings. Though now unreadable, anyone trying will suffer SAN loss (1/1D3) for their troubles—



they are quite obviously tomes of Mythos knowledge. Jonathon may return here at a later date to collect his books (and may leave a trail of bodies in the process), but otherwise has no need for them. Anything they could teach him has already been mastered.

### *The Next Victims*

**Cpt Mellow:** served as the Loamshire's legal adjutant from 1915-1917. Already a famous barrister, his expertise was little needed: condemned men were rarely afforded counsel. The charges laid against the five were tenuous at best. No one but their officer, Lt Gatenby had seen the supposed desertion and all attested that it was Gatenby himself who had run away, not themselves. Nonetheless Gatenby held a Victoria Cross, the highest decoration in the land, and so his words stuck.

After the war Mellow returned to his wife in the country village of Finchton, Essex, from which he commutes to London and his chamber (*legal company*). Finding him is no difficulty as any legal friend or telephone directory will have him listed. His house backs onto some acres of woodland on the village outskirts.

Those asking for Mellow by knocking on his front door will meet his wife; an attractive but somewhat empty-headed woman. Though informing them that he is out, she will ask if they're with "the other gentleman" who wanted to meet him. Given sufficient reason, she will lead them to his lodge within the wooded area of the grounds. If they indicate he may be in danger, she will also phone the police.

The lodge is a two-room wooden building well into the woods. It serves as Mellow's 'getaway' from the world and a place for private meetings. When they arrive, investigators find the front door wide open. The smaller of the rooms, into which they step, is Mellow's lounge—with chairs, *chaise lounge*, coffee-tables, and a well stocked book-cabinet full of case-law. He sometimes entertains guests and clients here. Nothing seems untoward. The second room's door is closed and those entering find it to be Mellow's private study. Mrs Mellow has never been allowed entry here and with good reason—an opaque projector sits on a table in the room's centre. A lewd pornographic picture shines from it onto the wall. French pornographic slides are stacked neatly nearby. In

fact the entire room is a shrine of sorts to the art of pornography. Dirty novellas and worse line the bookshelves, and erotic prints hang from the walls. In one corner is a writing desk and bed. The latter is stained dark crimson, and beneath its covers a lumped shape can be discerned. Those who lift the covers find Mellow. His body has been hideously mutilated and decapitated. A head sits on his chest (SAN loss 1/1D3+1), the face smiling, the neck neatly severed, unlike Mellow's which seems to have been hacked off. (The head on the chest belongs to the French butcher. Jonathon much preferred Mellow's APP 18 countenance and decided to take it.) Searching the room discovers fingerprints everywhere (with Fells' being those of the perpetrator) and Mellow's diary in the writing desk. It takes at least one day to read. Though much is worthless, two entries stand out. The first reads:

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*15<sup>th</sup> September 1916:*

*General Roget asked me to look into the case of five deserters this morning. According to their Lieutenant, one Lascelles Gatenby, the men ran him during a German push on the line last week. This Gatenby strikes me as a rum type; all flaunt and no skill. But he won a Victoria Cross at Auber's Ridge so he must have some mettle, by God. The men swear blind it was him who ran, and I am led to believe they may be right, but what can I do? Accuse a national hero of cowardice? The company doctor declares them fit for courts-martial, though they look terrible. Haggard, soulless sops. Men like that deserve a hospital, not a firing squad, but I must do my duty for King and Country...*

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The second was made only this morning:

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*Damn him! Damn Gatenby! Damn them all! Roget and Fells are both dead. I know now that we have brought some terrible doom upon us. I telephoned Gatenby, but he refuses to listen. Says it's all stuff and nonsense. But I know he's running scared too, the coward! I should have had him shot rather than those other poor buggers. What is there to do now but wait?*

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At the back of the book is a list of phone numbers and addresses, including Gatenby's hotel.



If Mrs Mellow sees the pornography room, she will slip into a faint (she's a very Victorian sort of lady) and, if lucky, will not see her husband's mutilated cadaver.

Investigators who decide to sneak onto the property without Mrs Mellow's help will be able to find the lodge with little effort.

If DI Bickham is not already head of the investigation into these bizarre murders he now will be—and given everything at his disposal to solve it. His first port of call will likely be the investigators as they're sure to have been seen at all three murder-sites. If they refuse a polite talk Bickham will have them arrested on suspicion of murder. The evidence is tenuous, but if they've left fingerprints around, that'll be more than enough to threaten them with a short drop from the gallows. Bickham has no interest in talk of revived soldiers or other occult mumbo-jumbo; although if he sees it himself he will do everything within his power to stop it happening again.

**Lt Lascelles Gatenby:** won his VC at the Second Battle of Artois for successfully taking a portion of the enemy line and rescuing a wounded subordinate while taking fire. Beforehand he had been a brave and commendable soldier. Winning the Victoria Cross broke his spirit. Paranoia and fear gripped him as his medal became all that mattered. He couldn't die out here, not now he was known across the Empire.

His increasingly frayed mind snapped in 1916, and he ran as the enemy swarmed his trench. The only five men to see it were those he later charged with desertion. He remembers Watts calling for him to come back and help, but he was too afraid. Instead he hid and wept. He rarely sleeps these days, as in his dreams they call to him, asking why he did it.

Finding Gatenby is hard work. After the war he retired his commission and went on a number of speaking tours to drum up support for the British support of White Russia. When this failed he started *Gatenby Insurance*, sold it for a lot of money, and took to his fifth-floor apartment in London. With Roget and Fells' deaths, Gatenby has hidden in a hotel in Folkstone, Kent, under the name Laurence Gatesby.

(If investigating Gatenby before Mellow, Brown may already be here (having killed Mellow without the investigator's knowledge), or may instead have gone to seek help from Midori or collect his books. While it is not imperative investigators find Mellow's diary, it makes finding Gatenby's hiding place easier. If it is missed, Keepers can put sufficient clues as to his hiding in the seaside resort of Folkestone—be it a collection of postcards, one each year and all sent to himself, on the mantelpiece, or a search amongst his friends and relatives for where he might have gone. His brother knows he liked Folkestone, but is unlikely to offer it unless threatened or told his brother's life is in danger)

Gatenby's plush three-bedroom apartment is currently tended by his widowed and elderly next-door neighbour. Fearing for his life, he has told the neighbour he is holidaying in France and will return in a week's time, leaving him a key to water the plants. Brown will case the place for a few days to make sure the neighbour won't be missed, kill him and dispose of the body, then settle down in Gatenby's apartment until he returns.

Investigators who arrive at his apartment will find the door unlocked and the place in darkness; all light-bulbs removed from their sockets. Once they enter properly, Jonathon will launch his ambush. He knows Gatenby's face, but in the dark won't realise he has the wrong people until it's too late. His magic doesn't make him a better fighter, but injuries inflicted upon him—while graphic—fail to slow him down. During the fight he may well lose an arm or two, especially in order to break out of an investigator's grapple, and at some point they will realise their assailant's face is that of Mellow's (SAN loss 1/1D4). If the investigators hold their own and seem to be winning he will flee and work out how else to get Gatenby.

In Folkestone, Gatenby is making sure not to attract too much attention. If investigators turn up on his hotel doorstep, he will refuse to admit his identity. He is also insanely suspicious. Telling him Mellow is dead will only make him wonder if *they* are the killers, and he sincerely believes that someone wants to steal him away from the respect his Victoria Cross so rightly assures him, rather than kill him for revenge. Raising the subject of his cowardice will hurt him deeply; he will never

forgive such an insult and, when safety is assured, may well turn on them to protect his secret.

If the ambush failed or the investigators fought him off, Jonathon realises the ex-officer isn't coming home to his apartment anytime soon, and goes looking for him. If he ambushed the investigators he may begin following them in a different guise—in which case they are sure to lead him to Gatenby. If not, over the next few days Brown hunts the ex-officer's friends and tortures them for information. A trail of bodies will be left across the country. From Gatenby's brother, Brown will find the family holidayed in Folkstone frequently, with Lascelles always enjoying it. Finding Lascelles shouldn't be too hard after that. He will keep very close watch on where Gatenby goes next.

While killing Gatenby is Jonathon's prime aim, he is not merely interested in slaughtering him like the others. Instead Gatenby has been awarded pride of place in Brown's heart, and for that he shall be tortured for his 'sins.' A game of cat-and-mouse will take place. Using his ability to disguise himself, Brown seeks to drive the coward to true insanity before finishing him. Anyone appearing to protect Gatenby is also fair game, especially if Jonathon met them in his impromptu ambush at the apartment. Their survival offends him, especially if they stole his favourite arms.

Tactics he'll pull will include wearing the body-parts of those known to his targets; meeting them in public and taunting them, knowing they can't attack him directly; using his abilities to break into their homes or apartments and generally cause disturbing and often gory mischief. Once he has driven the target insane, or he becomes bored, he moves in for the kill. Though he usually takes parts from his victims after they are dead, he can also do it while they are alive: he would very much enjoy wrenching Gatenby's head off while he's breathing.

Gatenby is a trained soldier but peace has dulled his edge. So too has his craven attitudes. Any chance available he will flee, leaving allies to their fate. If he can't flee he'll fight until an opening shows and then take it. If the investigators look like a good bet for protection he will use them for all they're worth.

Job done, Jonathon will swap heads with Gatenby and withdraw all of the man's money. Anyone

who gets in his way is sure to be killed also. With his newfound wealth Brown will return to his occult studies, buying books, raising a cult and murdering and stealing body parts when necessary.

### **Destroying Jonathon**

*Cursed Terror of Atticus*, the spell Jonathon cast upon himself before leaving for the front, is a particularly nasty variation of *Transfer Body Part* and *Apportion-Ka*. The spell (which costs the one's entire SAN) places all POW and HP within the caster's heart, which is then cut-out. By apportioning these qualities the caster becomes immortal and invincible, as long as the heart remains safe. With POW at 0, the caster is unable to regain magic-points naturally, though may collect them via other means.

The only problem with the spell is that the body rots and decays at a faster rate. The limbs rarely last six months, and the torso a little longer. To stave this off the spell allows the caster to exchange their bodily parts, be the victim alive or dead. The caster's intellect, placed within the heart, can survive even if the entire body is replaced (although time consuming, a caster can juggle parts until wearing one entire body—allowing true impersonation). If for some reason the entire body is destroyed (fire, being put through a meat grinder, etc.) as long as the heart remains undamaged the caster's being will possess the next living creature its surviving parts touch (a contested POW roll using the heart's POW). Once possessed, the victim's mind is cast out and considered to be dead. Surviving parts can be as small as ash or blood, or even smaller.

Jonathon buried his heart on the banks of the River Irwell, which runs through Manchester. At high-tide the site is buried under six-feet of water, but finding it a low-tide would be all but impossible. A number of spells might work to combat this nefarious attempt at immortality: *Imprison Mind* traps the mind in its present body stopping it from being able to transfer to a new head, and when the body rots to nothingness the mind is trapped within the caster's heart. *Stop Heart* or *Clutch of Nyogtha*, which both attack the heart itself, would kill the afflicted entirely. Finding these would be an adventure in and of themselves.

The only other means is that provided by the soldiers' ghosts.

*Shred Soul* is a spell that tears the soul from one specific target. A regular heptadecagon (17-sided shape) of sufficient size must be drawn on the floor in pig's blood, which is then gone over in sea-salt. Any number of participants may help in the ritual, and though there is no limit to the size of the heptadecagon, it must be done inside a roofed building. Chanting is carried out over the area for some hours, with candles lit at each of the corners of the salted blood. A single target must be indicated during the chant; only the name need be necessary, but the caster must intend for that individual only. When the intended victim enters the heptadecagon the candles must be snuffed out in the order they were lit. If the victim remains within the ward during the entire snuffing of candles, they will suddenly be gripped by terrible paroxysms and their soul will be ejected via their mouth in wisps of cloying black smoke. The soul is permanently destroyed. Only the body remains, its cause of death unknown.

### Justice Found?

Those who know Gatenby had his men killed for personal pride may decide to indulge in a little bit of vendetta-style killing. Let them, but invoke SAN loss for pulling the trigger (2/1D4+1); most investigators are not executioners at heart.

A far more fitting punishment would be having the truth brought to light. There's precious little evidence, and Mellows' diary wouldn't stand up in court, but the egocentric Gatenby cannot stand being called what he truly is. If riled enough, he is sure to admit his crimes ("Of course I had them shot, you pathetic fool! They were going to take it from me! Everything! My glory!") and if so brought to the public, will end up disgraced. While a 1920 ruling means he cannot be stripped of his Victoria Cross, he would lose the pride and honour he killed for. Gatenby dies forgotten, reviled, a dark footnote in history books. The ghosts rest peacefully.

### *Sanity Bonuses*

- +1 SAN for stopping Jonathon from killing again
- +1 SAN for destroying the Byakhee
- +1 SAN for helping the ghosts find peace
- 2 SAN for failing to stop Jonathon
- 1 SAN for killing Gatenby yourself

**Jonathon Brown, age 26, body-orchard**  
STR 14 CON 14 SIZ (X) INT 15 POW (?)  
DEX 14 APP (X) EDU 14 SAN 0 HP N/A  
**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Fist/Punch 57%, damage 1D3+db  
Enchanted Butcher Knife 52%, damage 1D6+db  
(also drains POW into MP)

**Skills:** Japanese 15%, Korean 06%, Bargain 38%,  
Conceal 66%, Hide 44%, Cthulhu Mythos 42%,  
Listen 41%, Rifle 42%, Spot Hidden 34%, Track  
12%

**Spells:** Contact Spirits of the Dead; Enchant  
Cane; Power Drain

**Armour:** Only damage to Brown's heart kills him  
and that's buried somewhere safe.

**(X):** Those stats marked with an X depend upon  
the body parts taken. If unknown, roll 3D6.

**(?):** Brown's true POW is 15; however this is  
currently stored in his disembodied heart. Against  
all but magical attacks his POW is therefore 00.  
Magic points can only be gained by magical  
means as Brown cannot restore lost MP naturally.  
At the beginning of the scenario he has 17MP.

**Sanity Loss:** 1D3/1D6 to see Brown swap body-  
parts for the first time and 0/1D4 each subsequent  
time. Seeing Brown wearing the head of someone  
known to be dead is a 1/1D3 the first time.

**Midori Green, age 44, madam and sorceress**  
STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 14 POW 15  
DEX 12 APP 15 EDU 13 SAN 0 HP 12  
**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** None

**Skills:** English 75%, Japanese 95%, Korean 76%,  
Bargain 58%, Conceal 46%, Persuade 64%,  
Cthulhu Mythos 37%

**Spells:** Contact Bloated Woman; Powder of Ibn-  
Ghazi; Summon/Bind Byakhee; Wave of Oblivion

**Tome:** *Kuroi Sensu no Hon* [Book of the Black  
Fan] (in Japanese; Sanity Loss 1D6/2D6+2;  
Cthulhu Mythos + 10 Percent; Spells: Contact  
Bloated Woman; Powder of Ibn'Ghazi;  
Summon/Bind Byakhee; Wave of Oblivion)

**Lt Lascelles Gatenby, age 36, cowardly officer**  
STR 13 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 15 POW 11  
DEX 12 APP 13 EDU 14 SAN 55 HP 13  
**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .45 Automatic 51%, damage 1D10+2

**Skills:** Bargain 57%, Conceal 41%, Credit Rating  
76%, Drive 31%, Electrical Repair 31%, Hide  
61%, Listen 53%

**Insanity:** Paranoia

**Byakhee, summoned by Midori Green**  
STR 18 CON 11 SIZ 17 INT 11 POW 13  
DEX 14 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D6

**Weapons:** Claw 35%, damage 1D6+db

Bite 35%, damage 1D6+blood drain

**Armour:** 2 points of fur and hide

**Sanity Loss:** 1/1D6 to see a Byakhee

**DI Monty Bickham, age 51, police sleuth**

STR 11 CON 12 SIZ 15 INT 15 POW 14

DEX 12 APP 14 EDU 15 SAN 70 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .38 Revolver 44%, damage 1D10

Grapple 47%, damage special

**Skills:** Bargain 23%, Fast Talk 52%, Listen 65%,

Persuade 73%, Photography 49%, Spot Hidden

47%

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## *THE RESURRECTION MEN*

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This scenario can be set any time in the 1920s, is designed for a group of 2 to 5 investigators of average experience, and concerns the betrothal of an upper-class idiot and acquaintance of the investigators who begs them to help ruin his wedding. Players end up held hostage in the wilds of Scotland along with the other wedding guests in a seemingly unrelated act of cult goings-on.

Being open-ended, much of the scenario is purvey of the Keeper and the actions of the investigators. For the sake of user-friendliness, the humour of the scenario can be played up or ignored, as should the abilities of the enemies—from Machiavellian genius to pure incompetence. A relatively middle-of-the-road production is presented here.

### *Keeper's Information*

The Esselmonts of the Scottish highlands have gone from strength to strength over the last thirty years. Laird Tormand Esselmont II, current head of the family, has made a lot of money on the international steel trade, much to the respect of other entrepreneurs, who have let him enter their circle.

The main reason for Esselmont's drive for money is not personal greed. Instead it relates to the

history of the estate's family forebears and a history of apparent witchcraft.

In 1768, Tormand II's great-grandfather, also called Tormand, began to dabble in alchemy and occult lore. A few years earlier he had made to join Sir Dashwood's Hellfire Club, a seedy group of upper-class debauches who played at being Satanists. Tormand was black-balled on the pretext of being somewhat of a bore and a teetotaler; two of the most grievous of the club's sins. Snubbed, Tormand I turned fully towards his alchemical hobby. By late 1770, he had amassed a surprisingly large esoteric library, including a copy of *Cultes des Ghoules*. Using this he began his foray into necromancy.

The experiments were quite successful. After resurrecting slaughtered animals he moved to revivifying dead relatives. The outcome was an argument with his resurrected but still rabidly Puritanical uncle Randal, after which Tormand I returned him to composite salts, scattered them to the winds and renounced his studies. The Mythos books remained locked safely in a cellar hidden beneath the decaying church on the family estate.

By the year 1778, the American Revolution had ruined the family's shares in Virginian tobacco. Tormand I sold everything. The books went; half burnt to keep the house warm, the rest sold to collectors. Soon after that he sold his Lairdship and titles, and moved to Edinburgh, where he married. The family would remain in the city for the next hundred years.

Recently the Esselmonts have bought back their ancestral estate. Tormand II's son, Alan, is a *Tai-Pan* in Shanghai and a millionaire in his own right, and daughter Eustice has become an attractive, if unwaveringly Presbyterian, young lady. In order to cement the family in society a wedding between Eustice and an acquaintance of the investigators, one Charles "Tubby" Feverall, has been concocted. This is where the PCs enter the story.

At the same time, two others have eyes set on the Esselmont estate. Kenneth Brodie and Roban Davidson (going by the names Burke and Hare) are Edinburgh University medical students, who wrongly believe the church holds an accurate copy of the resurrection spell they desire. Ironically the pair already has the spell in its correct form—they've simply misinterpreted its



effects. Knowing the Esselmont library was somewhere on the grounds, they hope to raid it and take it for their own. What they don't know is that nothing Mythos related remains on the estate.

In order to carry out their plans, they have hired a gang of ex-British Army mercenaries to hold the estate hostage. No one expected Eustace and Tubby's wedding to be held the same day as their robbery...

### Getting Started

One of the investigators receives a letter from an old acquaintance: Tubby Feverall, remembered as an overweight, ignorant with more money than sense.

The letter invites the investigator to a "smashing lunch" at Tubby's home, located at the nearest major city, for the following day. It goes on how it's of the utmost importance to visit, that they should bring along as many of their chums as possible and that expenses will be paid if necessary. Psychology rolls notice the letter is written hurriedly and with underlying anxiety. If investigators don't accept, Tubby arrives on their doorstep two days later and invites himself in.

Tubby lives with his aunt Mildred (a dodder and almost blind septuagenarian who rarely leaves her bed) and under the care of his Nanny, a middle-aged and dour housemaid. Tubby himself is no longer the Tubby of yore—having shorn off the extra pounds he looks rather debonair. He will begin the meeting with over-the-top, if sincere, pleasantries and will enjoy catching up and being introduced. It is obvious that though his enthusiasm is real his understanding is superficial. Conversations about the occult experiences will interest him deeply ("Sounds dashed fun, that! You should invite me along sometime!"), as will anything involving fast cars or alcohol. Eventually he will steer the conversation to his upcoming wedding, showing a photograph of his fiancée Evelyn Esselmont, an astonishingly attractive young woman. Finally Tubby will drop his bombshell: would the invited investigator be his best-man? He is adamant they agree.

Nanny will eventually go to fetch drinks (tea, lemonade or—to a rolling of eyes—alcohol). Once she's gone Tubby's veneer suddenly cracks. "You have to help me!" he almost sobs. "You're the last people in the world who can!"

He will swiftly explain the problem. Only twice have he and Eustace met (at a cricket match and a formal ball) and the young woman took an instant and passionate liking to him. Love at first sight, in fact. So much so the pair's fathers have schemed to have them wed. If Tubby refuses, his father will cut off all inheritance and stop financing his lavish lifestyle. Tubby is not a bad person—merely shallow, heavy-drinking and a speed-freak. Eustace is under the assumption he is a good man undeservedly seduced by drink and sin. She wishes to reform him. The fact she loves him only makes her will stronger.

### THE BLACK DOG

Keepers wanting to add a dash of the Mythos can make the Black Dog rumour true. One of Tormand I's badly resurrected pets slipped the leash and has since been wandering the highlands, lonesome and rotting. It's actually completely harmless (and the fact its jawbone has rotted off makes it doubly so), but a decomposing hound chasing you in search of a hug can be more than a little disconcerting (SAN loss 0/1D3).

Of course, if the Keeper wishes it to be dangerous, stats are provided at the end of the scenario...

Tubby begs the investigators to masquerade as guests, but instead ruin the wedding (which is being held at Eustace's father's Scottish estate). He will offer an all expenses paid trip if they're willing. If this fails he has two other tricks. In the first he lets slip the chance of £100 for each investigator. Having made a bet with his drinking cronies he can be a bachelor by next year, he'll be willing to turn over any winnings. The second is that Eustace is a 'witch.' If pressed, Tubby explains (1) the Esselmonts have a history of being involved in 'witchery' and that Eustace's great-grandfather was rumoured to be a member of a coven, and; (2) he amassed a small fortune in occult books that he hid on the estate and which have never been found. Nanny will return before the conversation can get much further, giving a motherly dressing-down to anyone that raises the idea of spoiling the marriage.

Investigators should eventually agree to help Tubby, whereupon the meal starts. The wedding will be held in 4 days time. Tubby promises the

cost of train tickets and of suits will be covered once they arrive.

### Preparing

Four days is not long to prepare for a wedding; especially a 1920s white-tie wedding in the untamed and untouched wilds of the Highlands. Investigators should get themselves good (£10 at least) outfit. Failure to get one doesn't bother Tubby, who will point out that they've now got even more incentive to foil the wedding "otherwise you'll be the worst dressed chappies in the photographs." Checking a library for information on the Esselmonts may be a good idea. Each Library Use roll takes two hours and discovers one of the following per successful roll:

- The Esselmonts have held a Lairdship from around 1560, except for a period between 1779 and 1902. The current family head, Tormand II, has accumulated a lot of money on heavy iron trade and bought back the family's ancestral land.
- Tormand II's wife died during the second childbirth. The son, Alan, lives in the Orient, owns *Scotland & Shanghai Shipping*, and has personal assets in excess of £2.5million. The daughter, Eustace, a strict Calvinist, recently sued *The Tatler* magazine for libel as their commenting she was "beautiful" tarnished her reputation in God's eyes.
- A previous patriarch, Tormand I, was member of the Hellfire Club and an alchemist. It was he who lost the estate back in 1779 due to bad investments in American tobacco shares. He is also accused of driving the congregation and priest from the church that stood on his land so he could hold Black Masses.
- Recent renovation of the church at the Esselmont estate has been welcomed by the Archbishop, although there are no plans to open it to the public.
- During his time in the house, Tormand I was said to have created a Black Library, containing a number of rare and occult books. No such place has ever been found.
- Legend holds that the Esselmont estate is haunted by a Black Dog named *Cu Sith*, whose bark portends death and ruin.

Of course, those elements relating to Tormand I and the Black Dog are seriously misguided, but players shouldn't know this.

### *IMPROVISING WEAPONS*

The Esselmont estate is not a military stronghold and investigators will be made to leave firearms in their bedrooms. Otherwise, the kitchen is full of large knives (1D6+db) and five hunting shotguns are locked in the lounge's gun-cabinet (the key's with Tormand, but breaking the glass front is easy, if loud). Shells are harder to find. Only 3 are in the gun-cabinet, although another 35 are in Eustace's dresser (she will refuse quite pointedly to let any man retrieve them because to do so would mean going through her underwear drawer). A .455 revolver with two speed-loaders and 58 bullets is locked in Tormand's desk. The first shot jams the gun, however, and the pistol continues to jam every six shots thereafter.

### *Innis Heartach*

Getting to the wedding involves a train to Edinburgh (taking most of the day) and then changing to continue to the village of *Innis Heartach* (trains only stop every three hours). Visitors travelling by car from Edinburgh take a whole day, with many dirt roads and unmapped forest-tracks to circumvent.

*Innis Heartach* is barely a dozen houses, an 'inn' (with a dusty and unused double bedroom for 3/6 a night) that acts as village pub, a church, and a village shop doubling as a post office. Before 1834 the village was larger, but the successors to the Esselmonts, the Salmonds, forced out practically the entire population. While no one alive can remember the event, a thick vein of anti-English feeling persists.

Village population is only 33, most of them adult, and employment is found in surrounding villages. The malt distillery at *Dunbriga*, some ten miles away and reached by train, is the main source of employment. Most of the townsfolk are interchangeably insular, communicating with terse but polite reluctance. Key villagers are:

**Gillanders MacAffleck**, the hamlet's sole police constable works from his home/station. A staunch



Lowlands Calvinist, he's policed the village for a decade and is proud there hasn't been a crime since (barring weekly poaching and the odd case of drunkenness—on a Sunday no less!). While having heard of the family's past he refuses to talk of it with strangers unless given good reason. He's not heard of the estate's Black Dog.

**Rev Agnew** is the village's Calvinist minister. He will be marrying Tubby and Eustace, and while he doesn't know Tubby, he considers Eustace one of the finest young women he has ever met. His knowledge of Esselmont history is the finest in the village. Questions about it will be met honestly: Tormand I was reputedly a necromancer and joined the Hellfire Club. He angrily refutes any belief they may engage in such practise. He believes the Black Dog is the soul of Tormand I, forced by the Devil to take such form.

The inn/pub is run by **Mr and Mrs Ritshie**, and their eight children. Mr Ritshie is a cheerful red-cheeked publican. Mrs Ritshie is a dour, sour-faced hellion with an anger untamed by twenty years marriage. She also works as cleaner for the Esselmonts. Both are very talkative: Mr Ritshie about his philately, Mrs Ritchie about anything that's currently annoying her; present aggravation being the wedding. Neither knows much of the estate's history, but they're not above gossip about Devil Dogs and Black Masses. Mrs Ritshie laughs at the idea the current family may continue it.

The Esselmont House is six miles from the village. Getting there can involve a long and muddy walk, hiring McClune (the village drayman) for a few shillings, or using the town's only telephone (at the post office) to phone ahead for a car. Tubby and Nanny have already arrived and are living in the stable-cum-guest house.

### *The Esselmont Estate*

The estate is 5 square miles of woodland and fen, with a long road that winds up the hill to the house proper. When Tormand bought it back in the 1890s everything apart from the house had been left to rot; stables and church were all but collapsed. A lot of money has been spent on their restoration.

The house is at the centre of the estate. It's an imposing building, shaded by trees that arch over the entrance road. Spires and buttresses loom from

its stone-clad exterior, and the windows, warped with age, gape drunkenly. Major rooms include a very serviceable kitchen, ornate dining room (large enough to seat 50), smoking room, Tormand's study, two libraries (a downstairs and an upstairs, both full of very normal, if expensive, books), and numerous store-rooms filled with detritus. With only two owners and four staff currently living in the house (Mrs Ritchie goes home, and Baird lives in a cottage on the grounds) there are enough bedrooms for all the wedding guests. About 300 yards from the house are the stables. One has been renovated into a 6 room guest house with games room. The other holds two horses (Robbie and Bruce). A garage with room for 3 cars sits nearby. Due to the estate's Highland's conditions, an outhouse is provided a short walk from the backdoor. All the bedrooms contain chamberpots.

Of particular interest will be the church. Located about ¼ of a mile from the house, through a copse of trees, it had fallen into terrible disrepair over the last century. Tormand had it renovated to 15<sup>th</sup> century standards, replacing the stained-glass windows. Being Calvinist, the place lacks the frills of a Catholic church and though clean it has a disturbing atmosphere of abandonment. Beneath its foundations lies the old library where Tormand I hid his books. Reaching it is not terribly difficult; just time consuming. Moving the stone altar (STR 30) will unveil a heavy concrete-block where the cellar-door once stood. Bringing it down without explosives takes 1D3+1 hours using suitable material; sledgehammers, pickaxes, etc.

**Rooms:** Most of the rooms in the estate house are self-explanatory, but certain places of specific interest are listed here. For the most part, all doors, except for bedrooms will be unlocked. Keepers should feel free to toy with investigators and locked doors as they deem fit.

*Tormand's Private Study:* Tormand study is all oak and burgundy trim. It's also always locked. Unless Tormand himself invites investigators in, breaking in is a chore (Lockpick needs a minimum roll of 25%) although kicking it open shouldn't be too hard. There is little interesting here apart from his fake book collection (see p.121) and a .455 revolver and ammunition in his locked desk drawer.

*The Smoking Room/Parlour:* After evening meals, the Smoking Room will be open for all male



guests (female guests are led to the parlour. While the men smoke cigars and surreptitious drinks of brandy, the women can converse on life and nature for an hour or so. Being strict Calvinists, attempting to break from convention will ruffle feathers and may give more nervous guests a coronary. Naturally, this may work in Tubby's favour.

### GETTING CAPTURED

If they do get captured, investigators should expect to be dragged out to the gazebo. Unless Burke and Hare know they have the maps, or assume they do, they will interrogate them. Searches are not to be unexpected. If investigators show some occult aptitude, Burke may argue for bringing them along with them to the church (or wherever else they assume the library to be). His reasoning is that they may be able to help find the correct book in the piles of legendary tomes the pair assume are in the library. The more investigators ham up their knowledge, the more likely Burke is to open up to them. Hare isn't interested in making friends – he wants his resurrection spell. The mercenaries just want to be paid.

If the mercenaries have captured the investigators, this is sure sign they are losing, and now might be a good time to have Baird free them, with derring-do and shotgun blasts all the way.

*The Courtyard:* Open to the elements, the courtyard is merely grey cobblestones. While windows look down on it from the first floor and up, the ground floor only has windows along the dining hall wall. Investigators may find the courtyard a quick way to keep out of the mercenaries' sight.

*Map Room:* The map room is lined with map-holders, much like wine-racks only designed to hold rolled-up (you guessed it!) maps. Most of them are of the Americas circa 1750 or thereabouts, although there are a number of other interesting sites. Anyone making a Library Use roll (or who specifically states

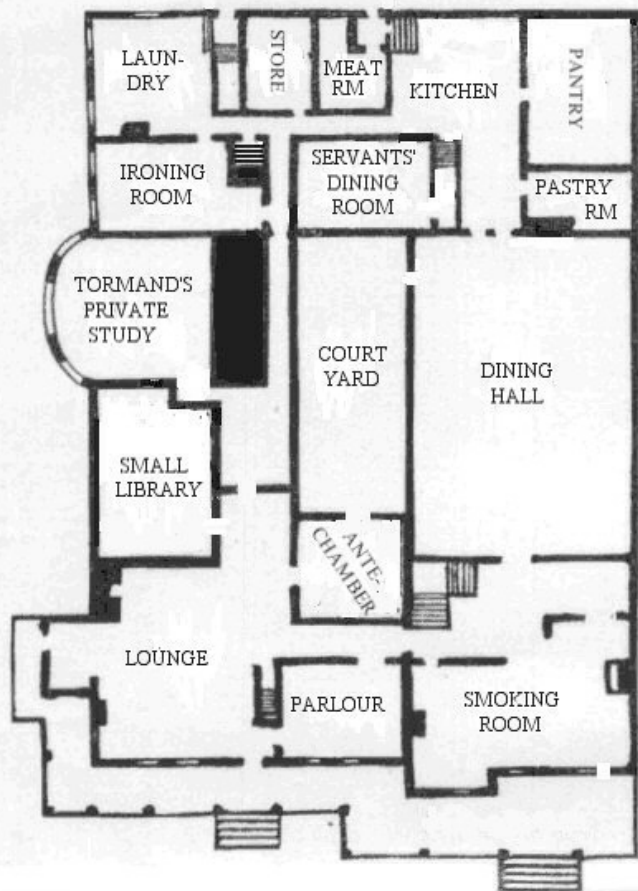
they're checking maps of the Esselmont Estate) finds a complete map of the estate from 1780, including the church and its hidden library cellar. The latter will stick out like a sore thumb and is clearly marked as 'Church Secretum.'

*Water-Logged Room:* When Tormand bought the house back, this room's ceiling had leaked so badly that the entire room was a write-off. After stripping the floor-boards and walls and patching the ceiling, he left the wood-slats open. Anyone who steps on them feels them creek ominously. If a person of SIZ 13 or higher attempts to go any serious distance into the room, the ceiling beneath them opens; disgorging them into the bedroom below for a total of 1D6 damage. If they make a luck roll, they land on the bed, suffering 1D3 damage.

*Black Room:* The Black Room is always locked, and this along with its title, may make investigators assume it is the secret location of the Black Library. It isn't. The title comes from the fact it lacks windows; an odd quirk that no one has been able to give reason for even today. During Tormand I's magical studies his resurrection spells were cast here, and over the years it has been renovated and redecorated. Up until a few years back its lack of natural light made it a photographic dark room. No one who currently lives in the house is much of a photographer so they've left it as is. Anyone who enters will find themselves in pitch darkness. A nest of bats have made home in the rafters above the ceiling – if anyone makes a loud enough noise, they will awake. Though they can't actually get into the room unless the ceiling is broken, the noise they make is shocking and deafening (SAN loss 0/1D2 with all Listen rolls failing for five minutes or so).



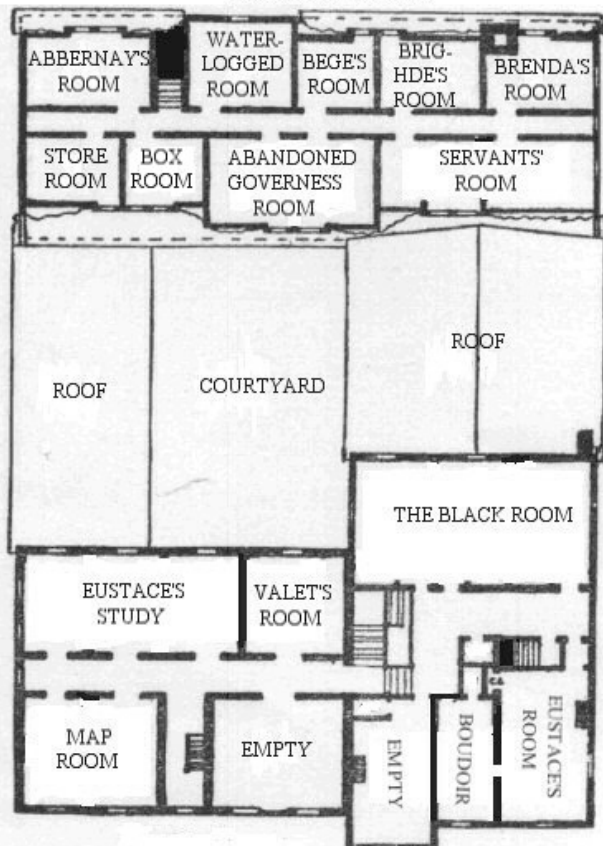
GROUND FLOOR



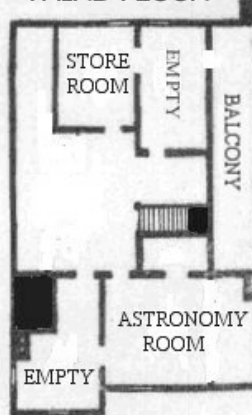
FIRST FLOOR



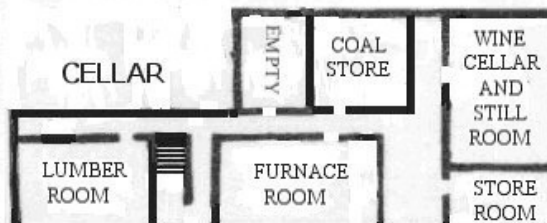
SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



CELLAR



*Astronomy Room:* Tormand I had the astronomy room built during his occult fascination. Tormand II also has a bit of a star-gazing kick, and can be found here on nights, staring at the sky. He also uses the large windows as bird-watching sites, as they give a beautiful overlook of the grounds (one can also see *Innis Heartach*, although they cannot see you). The only thing close to the odd here is a collection of oddly jotted charts that correspond to occult and Mythos star-movements (a successful Mythos or occult roll). They also correspond to when stars will be visible, which is the more mundane reason why Tormand has them. Attempting to interrogate him on this will do investigators no favours.

### *Meeting and Greeting*

Over the next few days, the household will be going through the preparations and catering to the arriving guests' needs. On average investigators are likely to arrive two days before, depending on how quick they are. Approximately 18 guests, including the investigators, will be attending. Most are family and friends of the Esselmonts. Tubby's mother and father will also be present. Investigators are here as Tubby's only friends.

Staff-wise, the estate hires six: **Martin Baird**, gruff one-eyed gamekeeper and valet; **Abbernay**, the charismatic chef; and **Mrs Ritchie**, the cleaning-lady. The three others are **Brenda**, **Brighde** and **Bege**: identical and beautiful (APP 19) blonde triplet maids. Everyone has difficulty telling them apart so they go by the collective title of **Bee**. A group of six locals are being hired for the wedding day itself to help with catering, provide music, and take photographs.

Upon arriving, the investigators will find Tubby all too pleased to see them. Trapped up in the Highlands with only Nanny and Eustace for company, and only sneaked tots from a rather large assortment of alcoholic beverages he's smuggled with him, has driven him to distraction. It is highly polite not to greet their host or the bride-to-be, and if they forget, Nanny will not so gently pressure them to do so.

Tormand is a wiry septuagenarian, looking something like a cross between Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing during their Hammer Horror period. All tweed jackets and wellington boots, he frowns upon 'gentlemanliness' as petty self-

deception. A real man is found with dirt under his nails, although rudeness to women (including failing to stand when one enters a room) is liable to have someone written up as a fool. As far as Tormand is concerned, Tubby is an idiot—but Eustace loves him and that's what matters. The wedding will take place, no matter what horrors Tubby or his friends display. Much of his days are spent writing his memoirs on bird-watching (*The Grouse Precepts*, which some investigators may mistake for an occult tome) or mingling with guests.

Eustace is somewhat socially awkward, though more by choice than anything else. Her devoutness to God has driven her to near emulation of the Puritans, much to the worry of her family. She wears high-necked black dresses and the unadorned face of an angel: Eustace could be a model. When not deep in the Bible, she can be found cooking with Abbernay or reading in the library. Her personal dislike of sin and the maid triplets in particular keeps her as far from them as possible. Around Tubby she becomes a simpering, blushing schoolgirl. The sight is embarrassing to say the least, and Spot Hidden rolls might catch a sight of her staring wistfully at her uncomfortable beau from windows or around a doorframe, before she realises she has been spotted and makes a getaway. Though unadvertised, she is actually a bit of an ace with shotgun and fists, since Tormand taught his children to defend themselves from a young age. Investigators will be treated fairly, though as something of a crowd, unless they display untoward displays of sin (drinking, smoking, lying, cheating etc.) for which they will be blamed. Tubby, who will likely instigate such actions, remains blameless always.

Martin Baird is the groundskeeper and Tormand's valet. A one-eyed and gruff fellow of 59, he can usually be found outside with a shotgun broken over one arm. He served in the Boxer Rebellion, and is ashamed of the fact he was too old to fight in the Great War too. Baird's part in the scenario can be as great or small as is necessary (see p.121 for more info).

The guests arrive randomly, although all before the big day. The major ones are presented here, although Keepers should feel free to enlarge the guest list as they see fit.

- *Thomas and Moirean Kinkaid*: Tormand's cousin and her husband



- *Arden and Hayley York*: Tormand’s bank manager and his wife.
- *Mr and Mrs Feverall*: Mr Feverall is an old army officer and believes anyone not his son, married or over 60 is a raving homosexual; Mrs Feverall is attractive, shrewd as they come and looking for a lover on the side. Bachelors beware.
- *Sir Daniel Cox*: chief solicitor for Tormand’s company. His gay lover and clerk, *Rupert Stockton*, will arrive uninvited during the scenario on the pretext of bringing deeds to read. Neither are open about their sexuality and if it is discovered it may cost both their jobs, if not criminal proceedings.
- *Trevor and Grace Rigdale*: Trevor owns Rigdale shipping, a close supporter of Tormand’s own steel business.
- *Jenny Croft*: perhaps Eustace’s only friend, Jenny is everything Eustace is not – she drinks, she smokes, she drives fast cars, and she sleeps around incessantly. Much like Tubby, Eustace views Jenny as a good heart that strays, and does her utmost to keep her safe. If Tubby meets Jenny, and they surely will, he will immediately become infatuated. Jenny prefers intelligent, soft-spoken, innocent men. Such traits may be apparent in the investigators...
- *Walter and Isabella Penfold*: another big industrialist, Walter Penfold owns much of the smaller docks in Britain. He’s also wanted for tax-evasion, and is hiding out in the Highlands until he receives a phone-call that he can head to Glasgow and get out of the country by boat. His wife hates him and doesn’t know any of this.
- *Harvey Lime and Wendy Muldoon*: fiancés themselves, the pair are high-society types who have ingratiated themselves into Tormand’s favour (which is hard work). Both are outdoorsy. Lime works as a linguist (a polyglot, actually, in half a dozen languages) and assists MI6 in translation work. If investigators display aptitude during the scenario, he may offer them his card.

What goes on in the lead up to the wedding is not set in stone. For the most part, days are spent with the staff and hosts planning for the wedding –

with a few “getting to know you” sessions with the guests. One day has been set aside for a mass grouse hunt led by Baird (it starts men only, but when Eustace wants to join in it becomes a free-for-all). If grouse are out of season, Baird replies that when an Esselmont wedding occurs, the grouse are always in season. He does not elaborate.

### *USING BAIRD*

Baird is the dark horse of the scenario. A veteran of the Boxer Rebellion and a good man in a tight spot (though he looks old enough to have fought at the Siege of Jericho), if players are outgunned by the mercenaries he arrives in the nick of time and pulls them out of the fire. He’s not invincible and only has a few shotgun shells, but he can guide them to safe ground. On the other hand, if the players are having too easy a time, make Baird the traitor in the Esselmonts’ mist. Burke and Hare got their information on the secret library from someone, didn’t they? He may even know its exact location, if things are going very badly...

Nightly pursuits are up to the guests. Late-night musical sessions in the music room or lounge are not uncommon, and sword- or Highland dancing may be put on in the Dining Hall. The libraries are open all hours, and investigators can join Tormand in the astronomy room if he finds them acceptable.

### *Foiling the Wedding*

What happens until the wedding is really up to the players. If investigators decide to help Tubby flub his own wedding, then there are numerous ways of going about it. Tubby doesn’t want anyone getting physically hurt, however (and the wedding will take place even if someone’s in a coma). Alcohol is banned, but a stock of contraband is in Tubby’s luggage, and some *Loch Lomand* Scotch lurks in Tormand’s study.

- Getting Tubby drunk and having him make a fool of himself sounds a good idea at first, but Eustace, far from being offended, puts him to bed and watches over him all night.
- Both Brenda and Birghde are good Catholic girls (they expect you to pray

before they do anything with you). Getting Tubby drunk and caught by Eustace in a compromising situation with a maid (or two!) merely has the bride-to-be assume he is being assailed against his wishes. A catfight may ensue, with much throwing around of such terms as “painted Jezebel” “Whore of Babylon” and “sanctimonious witch,” to everyone’s great enjoyment.

- Tubby is all mouth and no trousers unless drunk. Getting him to do something stupid while he’s sober ends in him fumbling his lines and leaving in a huff.
- Shooting someone before the wedding, while seemingly a good idea, only grazes. “Happens all the time,” says the village doctor as he bandages the wound.
- Any attempt by investigators to seduce Eustace (why, we shall never know) results in the character’s teeth being pushed down his neck by a firm punch.

In essence, the wedding is unstoppable until the wedding day. For those investigators who go looking for occult matters:

- The life-size painting of Tormand I that hangs over the dining hall’s fireplace looks remarkably like the current Tormand II. *Players* who say aloud that maybe the Tormands are the same person, or some similar assumption, must roll for SAN loss (0/1), thereby proving they shouldn’t think too hard.
- A *Spot Hidden* roll in Tormand’s study notices a copy of *Cthaat Aquadingen* amongst the literature on his bookshelf. Closer investigation notes the books are cardboard mock-ups to hide his bottles of whisky.
- From the woods at night one hears a terrible howling, as if some animal were baying. This is due to the fact there is a terrible howling coming from Baird’s dog, which lives with him at his cottage.
- The day before the wedding a car arrives and out step two individuals. One is a bald westerner in Chinese dress and black gloves; the other is a young Eurasian woman in similar ensemble. This is Alan Esselmont and his wife Maria. Six months ago he joined a Chinese cult, donated much of his money to charity and married

his Sino-French secretary. This is the first anyone in Britain has heard of it, and Tormand is less than amused. The strange Chinese cult is sure to worry investigators when they see the stylised spider tattoos on the pair’s necks. Nevertheless, the sect is odd but harmless (and vegan).

### *The Wedding – The Crisis*

Everyone is woken early wedding-day morning by the maids and brought out to a large gazebo set up in the back garden. Tables full of food and chairs are provided and everyone is expected to mingle.

Though everyone is supposed to be here, a *Spot Hidden* roll notes a distinct lack of two particular people: Baird, the groundskeeper, and the blushing bride herself, Eustace.

#### BUT WHERE’S MY MYTHOS?!

Some players are going to be dreadfully upset if they find that their enemies are purely human and their machinations mundane. If this is the case, one can alter the scenario a touch.

Hare becomes a worshipper of the Mythos and a relatively able magician. He has subverted Burke to his cause using the pretext of his fiancée’s death to goad him into helping in getting the resurrection spell (that and he uses *Dominate* a lot). Hare wishes to use the spell in order to bring to life his teacher, a particularly able and nefarious fellow by the name of Sable Havelock.

In this scenario, when things get hairy, Hare will use every means at his disposal to get what he wants. Bump his POW to 18 and his SAN to 0. A rough list of spells Hare has would include: *Create Gate*, *Dominate*, *Fist of Yog-Sothoth*, *Power Drain*, *Summon/Bind Dimensional Shambler*.

Once he has the resurrection spell he will create a gate and escape back to civilisation, heading off to resurrect his teacher.

It soon becomes apparent something is the matter. After a flurry of whispering between the Esselmonts and Tubby, the groom saunters over and tells the investigators in hushed, but elated, tones that Eustace has cold feet and refuses to come out of her room! Tubby is expected to make



some sort of go at getting her interested again (the superstition that a bride is not meant to see the groom has been derided by Eustace some months before as occult shim-sham), but he's not too worried about that. He asks the best man to join him in his walk back to the house. Anyone else is free to join him. The Keeper's aim is to get as many investigators away from the gazebo as possible; those that remain will end up trapped.

As Tubby and entourage head for Eustace's room, Burke, Hare and the mercenaries launch their assault. They have parked their trucks half a mile away (one man guarding them) and also cut the telephone line to the village. There are twice as many mercenaries as investigators, not including Burke, Hare and the guard with the trucks. All are armed with firearms and knives. None wear a discernable uniform, but are wearing rubber wellington boots and heavy jackets (which gives 1 armour point against melee or knife attacks). They rapidly seize the gazebo; one man with a Lewis machinegun covering the crowd. All the hostages are made to sit down, either on the ground or in their chairs. Another two guards will assist in keeping things quiet here.

The remaining mercenaries will split into pairs and search the area and house for stragglers. Motivated and well-trained, most are ex-army alongside a smattering of colonial police. Their first mission is to intimidate or trick any stray hostages into surrendering. They're not expecting serious resistance, and anything stronger than a couple of guests with knives will force them to regroup and rethink. While having agreed not to hurt anyone as part of their contract, all bets are off if one of their own gets seriously wounded or (woe betide) killed. Room-to-room clearing will become the order of the day. The only thing they are truly loath to do is set alight to the estate: any large fire would surely be seen by those in *Innis Heartach*. The mercs are also likely to remove and smash spark-plugs in any vehicle they come across (those parked in public are fair-game, but automobiles in the garage may be missed if investigators are lucky).

Most of the mercenaries are loyal to Lorimer (an honourable ex-officer on hard times). The other men look up to Blazey Keogh, a sociopath and ex-Black and Tan. Keogh is a bully and a murderer, but an expert soldier, which is what makes him so popular. If he gets the drop on anybody hiding in

the house, it will take all his willpower not to use his machete on them. He prefers to ask for forgiveness rather than ask for permission.

'Burke' Brody and 'Hare' Davidson head for the map room, taking a mercenary with them. Their aim is to find the cellar using the floor plans kept in the house. If that fails (because the investigators have taken it, or the house becomes a battleground) they will check the libraries, and will naturally, find nothing. Neither Burke nor Hare have any interest in combat and will quite gladly flee to relative safety at the first sign of trouble.

If it seems there is no chance of the thieves finding the location of the library, there are two things that can happen: (1) the investigators have 'won' – and if they survive may attempt to find it for themselves a later date, with the resultant disappointment left only to themselves, or (2) you can have someone else inform them of the church's location. Baird, or even the investigators, could serve this purpose if necessary—any mention of the church being used for Black Mass or being recently renovated will send the pair there to check it over.

Hopefully, the pair (and a mercenary guard) will head to the church and take up the task of finding the cellar. As noted earlier, Burke already has the resurrection spell they need; it being written on a piece of paper in his trouser pocket. The reason they believe it doesn't work is because they have been using human bodies from the University mortuary, all of whom are post-mortem and missing organs. Incomplete bodies do not resurrect correctly, and the hideous results have led the pair to believe their version is lacking some essential quality.

Burke has specific reason in needing this spell. Two years ago his fiancée died in a riding accident. The resultant guilt and loss has driven him towards doing anything he can to raise her, even murder. If Burke ever finds out Tubby wants to foil his marriage to Eustace, he will fly into a rage and beat the Bright Young Thing until stopped or causing some sort of serious injury.

From here on the scenario is very much up to the players. They are not supermen, and will likely end up creeping around with Tubby, Eustace and Nanny in tow, presumably trying to stay one step ahead of the mercenaries, rescue the hostages and

raise help from the village. The mercenaries are hardened soldiers but none are willing to fight to the death, and only Blazey will kill civilians indiscriminately.

When Burke and Hare finally open the cellar and find it bare, Burke falls into depression. He will immediately head back to the house to inform the mercenaries that the job is over and that no one's getting paid. The mercenaries split into those who wish to leave, and those who plan to rob the guests of their belongings. Blazey and Lorimer will likely come to blows. A shootout may occur.

If the investigators can make it back to *Innis Heartach* (a long walk, or short ride by horse or car) they can quickly inform MacAffleck and lead a posse of some 10 men armed with rifles and shotguns. Police reinforcements will arrive in 1D3+1 hours, and number another 15. The mercenaries will put up light resistance, but even Blazey will know a losing battle when he sees it. Most of the group will break and run. Some, including Lorimer, will surrender.

If the place does catch fire by some quirk of fate, within 20 minutes it is almost entirely ablaze—anyone trapped inside will need to get out quickly or suffer the consequences. A group of 5 townsfolk, plus MacAffleck will take the horse and cart up to the estate. None are armed, and depending on the situation, may end up dead at the hands of the mercenary guard posted with the trucks, or may escape to get reinforcements.

Investigators stuck with the hostages can find numerous means of escaping the marquee. The guards may be armed, but they're not expecting a group of Calvinist wedding guests to put up a fight. One or two investigators could slip under the gazebo's partition and run for the house (or church, or for town, or wherever) before they can get off a shot, not that they're likely to shoot anyway. Inciting a rising amongst the guests would be harder, but good Persuade rolls might get Tormand, Allan and Tubby's father riled up enough to strike back with wine-bottles, cutlery or other homebrew weapons.

Depending upon how things pan out, Eustace may end up marrying Tubby, the players may end up with the resurrection spell, and Burke may end up with a way of bringing his lost love back to life. Then again, everyone may end up dying in a bloodbath.

#### *Sanity Bonuses*

+1 SAN for having Burke and Hare arrested  
+1 SAN for killing/arresting most of the criminals  
+1 SAN for killing/arresting Blazey Keogh  
+1 SAN for stopping them escaping with the spell  
- 1 SAN for allowing many hostages to die  
- 1 SAN for allowing most of the criminals to flee

#### **“Tubby” Feverall, age 26, unwilling groom**

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 14 INT 10 POW 09  
DEX 16 APP 15 EDU 10 SAN 45 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Fist/punch 34%, damage 1D3  
Shotgun 35%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

**Skills:** Drive 44%, Get drunk 68%, Hide 53%

#### **Nanny, age 45, mother-figure and chaperone**

STR 11 CON 15 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 14  
DEX 12 APP 13 EDU 10 SAN 70 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Umbrella 35%, 1D4

**Skills:** Listen 36%, Spot Hidden 71%

#### **Eustace Esselmont, age 23, infatuated bride**

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 12 INT 15 POW 13  
DEX 14 APP 18 EDU 14 SAN 65 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Fist/Punch 62%, 1D3+db  
Shotgun 40%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

**Skills:** Conceal 22%, Hide 54%, Recite Bible  
back to front 75%, Track 41%

#### **Gillanders MacAffleck, age 48, local copper**

STR 13 CON 15 SIZ 16 INT 11 POW 12  
DEX 12 APP 12 EDU 11 SAN 60 HP 16

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** Truncheon 40%, damage 1D6+db  
.38 Revolver 36%, damage 1D10

Grapple 40%, damage special

**Skills:** Listen 30%, Spot Hidden 43%

#### **Martin Baird, age 59, one-eyed gamekeeper**

STR 11 CON 16 SIZ 10 INT 12 POW 15  
DEX 12 APP 07 EDU 10 SAN 75 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Shotgun 70%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6  
Garrotte 45%, damage strangle

**Skills:** One-eyed leer 45%, Hide 70%, Track 60%

#### **Ken “Burke” Brodie, age 28, accidental villain**

STR 12 CON 13 SIZ 14 INT 17 POW 14  
DEX 11 APP 16 EDU 19 SAN 20 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** None

**Skills:** Listen 14%, Medicine 55%, Pharmacy 45%

**Roban “Hare” Davidson, age 29, wants a Nobel**

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 15 POW 11  
DEX 14 APP 13 EDU 15 SAN 55 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .38 Revolver 14%, damage 1D10

**Skills:** Medicine 45%, Pharmacy 78%, Spot Hidden 31%

**Maj. Lorimer, age 42, mercenary leader**

STR 14 CON 13 SIZ 15 INT 13 POW 12  
DEX 12 APP 13 EDU 13 SAN 60 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .455 Webley 42%, damage 1D10+2

Bayonet 50%, damage 1D6+1+db

.303 Lee-Enfield 54%, damage 2D6+4

**Skills:** Credit Rating 47%, Listen 52%, Sneak 29%, Track 34%

**Blazey Keogh, age 36, cutthroat and proud**

STR 14 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 12  
DEX 17 APP 10 EDU 11 SAN 60 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .303 Lee-Enfield 50%, damage 2D6+4

Machete 70%, damage 1D8+db

**Skills:** Listen 42%, Sneak 47%, Track 53%

**Typical Mercenary, age mid-30s**

STR 13 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 12  
DEX 13 APP 12 EDU 10 SAN 60 HP 14

**Damage Bonus:** +1D4

**Weapons:** .455 revolver 35%, damage 1D10+2

.303 Lee-Enfield 40%, damage 2D6+4

Bayonet 40%, damage 1D6+1+db

Lewis Gun 45%, damage 2D6+4 (one only)

**Skills:** Climb 30%, Listen 35%, Sneak 45%, Track 40%

**Typical Wedding Guest/Townfolk**

STR 12 CON 12 SIZ 13 INT 12 POW 10  
DEX 12 APP 12 EDU 10 SAN 50 HP 13

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Offhand weapon 40%, damage 1D6

Rifle 30%, damage 2D6

Shotgun 40%, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6

**Rotting Zombie Dog of Esselmont Estate**

STR 8 CON 10 SIZ 5 POW 9 DEX 15  
MOV 12 HP 7

**Damage Bonus:** +0

**Weapons:** Bite 30%, damage 1D6

**Skills:** Listen 75%, Scent 90%

**Armour:** None, but impaling weapons do 1 point of damage, and all others do half rolled damage

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## PART IV: APPENDIX

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### ALTERNATIVE RULES: DRUG ADDICTION

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**Base Addiction Rates:**

Tobacco.....	33%
Heroin.....	23%
Cocaine.....	18%
Alcohol.....	15%
Opium.....	11%
Cannabis.....	09%

Each time a drug is taken, the user needs to roll above its base addiction rate in order not to become addicted. The following factors positively or negatively affect the percentage chance of addiction (cumulative at Keeper’s discretion):

**Moderating States:**

Taking multiple doses.....	+05%
Taking excessive doses.....	+10%
Emotional state is poor.....	+05%
Suffering from temporary insanity.....	+10%
Addictive personality.....	+05%
Was previously addicted.....	+15% to +25%
Taken it before without addiction.....	- 05%
Emotional state is elated.....	- 05%
Strong-willed.....	- 05%
Knows one’s limit.....	-05%

The Keeper should decide when and how these moderating states take effect. If a player has used opium once before and failed to become addicted, then a -05% to the base 18% is acceptable (now 13%). If the character takes a half-dozen smokes on the hookah due to depression, then the -05% benefit will be offset by the +05% of the ‘multiple doses’ and the +05% of the emotional state (bringing chance of addiction up to 23%). What constitutes ‘multiple’ or ‘massive’ dosage is Keeper’s judgement, but half a dozen is likely to be multiple, with a dozen or more being massive.



### **ALCOHOL:**

The average person can take a ‘dose’ of alcohol (a pint of beer, glass of brandy or vodka, two glasses of wine etc. depending on SIZE of the character) with no skill loss. For each dose taken after that, rolls are penalised by 5%. For every hour the character doesn’t drink, skills go back up by 5%. Characters with a 25% penalty to their skills through alcohol only suffer half normal SAN loss. Those with a 40% penalty need to make an idea roll (modified by the penalty!) to even need to take the SAN roll.

Once a 50% penalty is reached, the character blacks out and is unable remember what happened during the period of drunkenness. During black-outs SAN is not lost directly but ‘cached’. When the character sobers up the blank spot can only be recalled by a contested WILL roll against the number of drinks taken (overall) during the drunken period. If successful, the character recalls everything, and is hit with the full sanity loss in one blow. Characters may choose not to take the roll—but remember *nothing* of the events that occurred, beneficial or terrible.

At 60% impairment characters must make a CONx5 roll minus half their impairment. Failure has the character pass out, waking only when completely sober (usually some hours). Over time, alcoholics need more doses per hour to gain the same benefits (to use the term loosely).

Alcohol is one of the most common drugs to get addicted to; it’s also one of the nastiest. Addicted characters must drink at least one dose an hour. Each hour without alcohol needs a halved WILL roll to stave off needing a dose. Failure induces a 10% on all skill rolls per successive hour (to a maximum of 50%) or until alcohol is imbibed. Subsequent WILL rolls are needed per hour: a failure on one forces the character to *immediately* drink by the nearest and fastest means possible, even if it is dangerous (lighter fluid etc.).

Players wanting to kick the habit need to refrain from drinking for three days. Characters who have drunk heavily for more than a month suffer withdrawal. Random seizures, hallucinations and painful vomiting will occur. 35% of afflicted will develop delirium tremens (DT), characterised by terrible fever, hallucinations and hypertension.

During the 1920s, 35% of DT sufferers died from their affliction.

### **HEROIN AND OPIUM:**

The former is often injected; the latter smoked. Both are strong analgesics famed for the post-orgasmic like euphoria they induce, with heroin being the more potent of the two.

Unlike alcohol, which progressively affects the brain, multiple doses of heroin or opium do nothing more than increase the user’s tolerance. Both drugs impose a -20% penalty to all rolls involving concentration or energetic movement (medicine, library use, and dodge are going to suffer), and no matter how many doses are taken it will remain at -20% for the duration of the lethargy (around three hours). Every two doses of opioids cause an hour’s sleep.

Failure to take an opium or heroin dose once every twelve hours induces cravings, with the character needing to beat a contested WILL roll against half number of hours without a dose (after those twelve) in order not to go to the nearest opium den or break out the syringe. For every week the character continuously takes the drug, the amount of time allowed between doses decreases by three hours, to an overall minimum of three. Eventually players will find it hard to sleep naturally.

SAN loss while under the influence of opioids is halved, except at the Keeper’s discretion. In this case sanity loss is the MAXIMUM possible. If a character refuses to take their drug for a whole day they are going ‘cold turkey’: suffering -25% to *all* rolls until addiction is lost—taking roughly a week. WILL rolls are necessary as above; otherwise the addict must find a dose.

Heroin is a particularly potent poison; if three or more doses are taken in one sitting a POT 15 poisoning occurs, injuring for 15HP at the Keeper’s discretion.

### **COCAINE:**

Considered the ultimate high, cocaine makes you jittery, excitable, manic, and prone to mood swings. An injected dose of cocaine is enough to lower skills by 25% for the next hour. Bonuses to fast-talk and persuade may be possible at the Keeper’s discretion. Snorted cocaine causes a 20% penalty per dose. Multiple doses can be



taken to a maximum penalty of 100%. Cocaine addicts frequently binge due to the euphoric high—a WILL roll needs to be passed after each hit in order not to continue dosing; stopping is only possible with a halved WILL roll. Failure to take a dose every twenty-four hours brings on cravings that result in a -25% to *all* rolls until addiction is lost—taking roughly a week.

A cocaine-fiend trying to kick the habit needs to make two WILL rolls a day. Failure on either needs an immediate dose (and the subsequent threat of binging). Over time cocaine causes numerous physical side effects. All cocaine can increase the probability of heart-attacks, and snorted cocaine can destroy the nose’s septum.

**CANNABIS:**

Smoked, eaten or drunk in a bitter alcoholic beverage, cannabis has a psychoactive effect on the brain creating calm, peaceful and euphoric states. Talkativeness and passivity are also widespread, although paranoia and hunger can be common side-effects. One dose of cannabis induces a 5% to 15% penalty on skills, depending on its strength. Multiple doses create a penalty of up to 40%.

While under effects of cannabis, SAN loss is only 2/3 (rounding up) what it should be. Addiction to cannabis is not as debilitating as other drugs, but upon any loss of SAN a WILL roll should be made; failure induces the addict to take a dose as soon as is safe. Attempting to kick the habit completely involves two successful WILL rolls, made after a suitable period of not smoking the drug (Keeper’s discretion but about a week). Failure on either roll forces the addict to find and take a dose.

**TOBACCO:**

Tobacco is so much a part of life that the legal age of use is 12 years old.

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***ALTERNATIVE RULES:  
WAR SERVICE***

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Each of the major combatants of World War I has a percentage for its wound-rate (e.g. 25% for Britain, 50% for France, and so on). Characters that served in a nation’s armed forces roll once for

their military service. Rolling under the number means the character was wounded in the conflict.

**CASUALTY % PER COUNTRY**

Austria-Hungary, France.....	50%
Germany, Russia.....	40%
Great Britain.....	25%
Turkey, Italy.....	15%
USA.....	05%

(British Empire, German, French, Turkish and Austro-Hungarian characters can claim up to 4 years service, Russians and Italians 3, and Americans 2.)

If injured, a second percentile roll is made, divided by 4, rounding down. This is the number of INJURY POINTS inflicted on the character. These are doled out on a 1 to 1 basis as permanent minuses to CON, DEX, STR, SIZ, APP, and HP. Players may also convert 1 point of injury into 1 point of sanity loss, for up to 3/4 of the total injury points rolled.

For each year served a player gains 1 EDU point to divide among the skills in their chosen profession. A character that did not face combat but was trained (he was in the merchant navy, he was behind the lines, etc.) gets only 1 EDU for basic training and suffers 1D3 sanity loss.

**Infantryman:** Climb, Conceal, Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Listen, Rifle, Sneak, Spot Hidden

**Infantry Officer:** Bargain, Climb, Credit Rating, Dodge, Handgun, Listen, Navigate, Persuade

**Cavalryman:** Climb, Dodge, Fast Talk, Jump, Navigate, Ride, Rifle, Track, Weapon: Sabre

**Cavalry Officer:** Bargain, Climb, Dodge, Handgun, Jump, Navigate, Persuade, Ride, Track, Weapon: Sabre

**Seaman:** Climb, Conceal, Dodge, Hide, Fast Talk, Listen, Mechanical Repair, Spot Hidden, Swim

**Naval Officer:** Climb, Credit Rating, Dodge, Fast Talk, Listen, Navigate, Persuade, Spot Hidden, Swim

**Pilot Officer:** Credit Rating, Drive Auto, Fast Talk, Handgun, Jump, Mechanical Repair, Navigate, Pilot, Spot Hidden

**Signalman:** Climb, Dodge, Electric Repair, Fast Talk, Listen, Other Language, Rifle, Sneak, Spot Hidden

**First-Aider:** Bargain, Biology, Drive Auto, Dodge, Fast Talk, First Aid, Listen, Navigate, Pharmacy, Spot Hidden

**Field-Surgeon:** Bargain, Biology, Credit Rating, First Aid, Listen, Medicine, Persuade, Pharmacy, Spot Hidden

**Tank Crewman:** Drive Auto, Hide, Machine Gun, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery: Tank, Persuade, Spot Hidden

**Artilleryman:** Drive Auto, Fast Talk, Hide, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Spot Hidden, Weapon: Artillery

**Sapper:** Climb, Chemistry, Credit Rating, Electrical Repair, Listen, Mechanical Repair, Physics, Spot Hidden, Weapon: Explosives

Loss to CON can indicate wounds to the lungs from gas-attack; DEX indicates crippling injuries to arms, legs or the brain that only affect speed and mobility; loss of STR implies weakened muscles or painful war-wounds that limit the ability to lift weights; SIZ includes the loss of limbs (or digits)—these need to be decided with the Keeper; a lowered APP signifies scarring or other obvious and disfiguring ailments.

Keepers should feel free to give penalties to characters. Low SIZ and DEX, for example, could mean the character has lost their legs and is now wheelchair bound or uses prosthetics. A low CON



might mean severe mustard-gas poisoning, and frequent emphysema and breathlessness. The probabilities are limited only by imagination and the willingness to roleplay.

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## **ALTERNATIVE RULES: NEW OCCUPATIONS**

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### **ANGLICAN VICAR:**

While some of the Church of England's clergy is adherent to strict doctrine, there is a historical precedent toward liberal free-thinking. Many vicars are the younger sons of middle-class families unable to get the educations their older brothers are granted. A number spend their free time on projects and hobbies, including mythology, languages, archaeology, anthropology and other esoterica. For the longest time the only translations of ancient texts were done by bored ministers.

*EARNINGS:* Upper-lower to middle-class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Anglican Church hierarchy, congregation, local community figures, experts in hobby.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Credit Rating, Library Use, Other Language: Latin, Persuade. Plus: any two of the following as a hobby: Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Natural History, Occult, Other Language.

*SPECIAL:* Add 20 points to Credit Rating, except with otherwise hostile communities (Catholic, Cthulhu Cult etc.)

### **BARRISTER:**

A barrister (called an 'advocate' in Scotland) is one of the two branches of lawyer, the other being solicitor. Rather than acting on legal matters of attorney like a solicitor, the barrister is hired to speak in court, either in defence or prosecution of a civil or criminal matter. Most barristers work in Chambers, companies of two or more, although some work alone. All hire clerks, who serve as administrators and assist in searching through hundreds of legal tomes for statute and case law. Some barristers are hired by banks or companies as 'in-house' legal representation, and others are solely hired by local police forces or the Home Office to prosecute criminals in court. A barrister may not refuse a job, unless the filer is unable to pay or it is outside the realm of his abilities. Female barristers only appear at the end of the 1920s, although from 1922 female solicitors are

available. The most experienced barristers may be appointed King's Counsel, which grants prestige and a better class of case.

*EARNINGS:* Upper class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Other members of the legal community, high-society, criminals and defendants.

*SKILLS:* Accounting, Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Law, Library Use Persuade, Spot Hidden, Other Language: Latin, Psychoanalysis.

### **BOOKMAKER:**

Bookies make their money working out the odds and handling the proceeds of gambling. They come in both legal and illegal breeds; the former work for companies on horse or greyhound races or football pools; the latter for criminal gangs on similar, but more illegal, lines (called 'spiels'). Whatever side of the law, all bookies face the same problem: gambling debts are unenforceable by law. Most bookmakers keep in touch with bailiffs and criminal gangs in order to collect debts. At horse-races, bookmakers use a form of sign-language called 'tic-tac' to exchange odds and info with rival bookies. Tic-tac men can communicate over great distances, in the middle of crowds, using this distinctive – if complicated – system.

*EARNINGS:* Middle to upper class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Gambling companies, local punters, the sports community, local gangs or bailiffs.

*SKILLS:* Accounting, Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Persuade, Spot Hidden, Other Language: Tic-Tac Sign Language.

### **BRIGHT YOUNG THING:**

Living off the proceeds of parents or inheritance, the generation of Bright Young Things is made of twenty-something dilettantes living at the cutting edge of society. Male or female, life revolves around alcohol, drugs, parties and the need for adventure. While the stereotype of the self-supporting type is shallowness and intellectual lethargy, they run the gamut of types and abilities. The thing that links them is their lack of employment and zest for life and frivolities.

*EARNINGS:* Upper middle to upper class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Close-knit band of friends, carousing buddies, upper-class toffs, drug-dealers, nouveau society of artists and bohemians.

*SKILLS:* Credit Rating, Drive Auto, Persuade, Psychology. Plus: Any two personal skill choices as a hobby or expertise.

### **BUTLER:**

Butlers hold together the bricks of high-society, treading the line between upper-class and hired-labour; it is their duty to oversee the day-to-day running of the estate while acting as mediator with the lower strata that encroaches into the master's privileged world. A butler serves the estate, not the one who pays his wages, and having often served the household for some generations, he is given much respect. A butler's suggestion is rarely ignored. Butlers seldom have time to go off adventuring, but may follow their master if asked.

*EARNINGS:* Upper middle to lower upper class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Staff and subordinates, other households' staff, local tradesmen, local shopkeepers, previous employers.

*SKILLS:* Accounting, Bargain, Credit Rating, Drive Auto, History, Law, Library Use, Spot Hidden.

### **FLYING SQUAD DETECTIVE:**

London's Flying Squad officers hold the title of detective, though they don't worry themselves with the common-or-garden murders, thefts and crimes that CID handle. The Flying Squad is a rapid response unit for organised crime. Civilian clothes are the norm, though some of the faster drivers wear leather jackets and imagine themselves pilots. Some might have been during the war. The newspapers fill with car-chases, shootouts and early morning busts on crime kingpins—and the first in the door is always the Flying Squad, whether they really took part or not.

*EARNINGS:* Middle to upper-middle.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* An entire network of police, criminals and informants.

Flying Squad officers also have greater access to cars and specialist tools than their counterparts.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Conceal, Credit Rating, Drive, Fast Talk, Law, Listen, Persuade, Spot Hidden, Weapon: Handgun.

*SPECIAL:* Flying Squad detectives were darlings of the media and ranked high in the public conscience, an aura of awe surrounding them to some degree. Detectives should not suffer sanity loss from seeing death or graphic injury, at the Keeper's discretion.

### **GAMEKEEPER/POACHER:**

Gamekeepers and poachers are flip sides of the same coin; both are country folk, using their wiles and inclination towards nature to evade and track the other. Gamekeepers serve as watchman for an estate's game, be it deer, hare or fowl, making sure numbers are kept and protecting the land. A poacher plays his wits against the gamekeeper, hoping to catch a few animals illegally. Some do it to sell the earnings, but most do it either because there's a lack of jobs, or their skill lies entirely in the tricks of the hunt. The best of the latter often find themselves hired as gamekeepers themselves, with a steady wage and the law on their side.

*EARNINGS:* Lower to middle lower class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Local community, drinking buddies, criminal underworld.

*SKILLS:* Conceal, Dodge, Fast Talk, First Aid, Hide, Listen, Rifle, Track.

### **GENERAL PRACTITIONER:**

The General Practitioner (or GP) is the everyday physician of the United Kingdom. However, keeping healthy can be an expensive business. While a national health insurance was implemented by Lloyd George before the war, the death rate remains high among the working classes. Be it in the city or country, the GP is a respected member of the community – no matter his personality – and if money is unavailable, barter and trade can end up being the sole recourse for the seriously ill. Some GPs are more benevolent than others and may waive fees, but costs of drugs and equipment are higher than today. Nevertheless, medical treatment can be found almost anywhere in the United Kingdom. Few villages fail to have a GP of some quality.

*EARNINGS:* Upper middle to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Local community, law enforcement, medical community, sometimes criminal underworld.

*SKILLS:* Accounting, Bargain, Biology, Credit Rating, First Aid, Library Use, Medicine, Persuade, Pharmacy, Psychology.

*SPECIAL:* Add 30 points to Credit Rating. GPs are also immune to most sanity loss caused by death or injury, at the Keeper's discretion.

### **INTELLIGENCE AGENT:**

The silent services of MI5 and MI6 (and who knows how many other shadowy departments as yet unknown) worked tirelessly throughout the

1920s. For the most part they hired directly from the Old Boy's Network of school ties and Masonic-handshakes, but sometimes lower-class types, especially the smart or the patriot with certain impressive skills, might slip through. Communists were the main threat, followed hot on their heels by organised crime and foreign powers. Fascism, far from being a threat, was usually fostered by the agencies – until it became apparent all too late that the next threat would come from their quarter.

*EARNINGS:* Upper-middle.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* The military and intelligence communities, friends and family, anyone who can be hoodwinked into assuming you're on their side. There were no real attempts to cooperate with foreign intelligence services at this time (not that there were any; the USA lacked a serious example until 1942).

*SKILLS:* Conceal, Fast Talk, Law, Other language, Persuade, Spot Hidden. Plus any four of the following: Bargain, Credit Rating, Disguise, Hide, Locksmith, Psychology, Sneak, Weapon: Handgun.

### **INVENTOR:**

Seeming like something out of a science-fiction story, the inventor remains one of the key aspects of the 1920s. Be they children of electricity emulating Tesla, or designers of improved mileage for petrol engines, the inventor plies his trade. Dozens of new weapons, vehicles and machinery were patented daily across Europe, and in Britain the lust for innovation drove some to become 'professional' inventors. The inventor is nearly always the same: pioneering, committed and often a little bit odd.

*EARNINGS:* Lower class to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* While the quintessential inventor is a recluse, in reality inventors range between social pariahs and glory hounds. Contacts can include journalists, military or government officials, businessmen and corporate sponsors, and other inventors.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Chemistry, Electrical Repair, Library Use, Mechanical Repair, Operate Heavy Machinery, Persuade, Physics.

### **MAID:**

The maid is the lowest rung of domestic service. By the 1920s only the richest households could afford the number of servants that Victorians did, and this meant the number of maids was one or two at most. Most were chambermaids or house

girls, although nursery maids were not uncommon for those unable to afford nannies or governesses.

*EARNINGS:* Lower to lower middle.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Other staff, family and friends, local community.

*SKILLS:* Conceal, Fast Talk, First Aid, Hide, Persuade, Psychology, Sneak, Spot Hidden.

### **MAGISTRATE:**

Magistrates were considered the most upstanding members of the community. As Justices of the Peace they acted in the capacity of minor judges, and expected to enforce the law within their community. Most were older gentlemen, although the 1920s saw a move towards women and younger JPs. In youth courts in London, for example, one of the presiding JPs *had* to be female.

While JPs also usually held a primary job, with magistrate work a service to the community, most had enough money or standing to let the primary job handle itself.

*EARNINGS:* Upper middle to upper-class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* High-society, other magistrates, lawyers and other members of the legal profession, the local community, sometimes elect parties in the criminal underworld who they've seen repeatedly before them in court.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Library Use, Listen, Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden. Plus any two as a speciality: Anthropology, Drive Auto, Ride, Conceal.

### **MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT:**

Election to the House of Commons was once an expensive task with MPs unpaid, so before the war the government introduced wages, allowing men and women otherwise unable to do so. Only rarely did a working class individual make it into the Commons: even the Communist Party preferred to put forward its elite, recognising they would get further in the priggish world of politics. Many MPs hold down a second job or are otherwise wealthy, and most have a lot of free time, only being called away to London at the beginning of the Season (the opening of

Parliament) or when a particularly important vote is coming up.

*EARNINGS:* Upper middle to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Other Members of Parliament, significant members of constituency, union leaders, heads of lobby groups.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Law, Library Use, Persuade, Psychoanalysis.

*SPECIAL:* Add a bonus to Credit Rating of between 5 and 30 points, depending upon the MP's standing or notoriety.

### **MUSIC HALL ENTERTAINER:**

While cinema and radio may be slowly relegating them to a bygone era, the music hall remains in the public's heart. Entertainers range from the unknown to the instantly famous, with various shticks. While many stay with a single music hall or troupe, roving artists tour the country. Getting increasingly rare as the 1930s draw in, some entertain much like minstrels of yore, stopping in at towns or villages and putting on shows for money or lodgings. Some entertainers are rich enough through royalties that, while lacking cash in hand, their weekly or monthly stipend allows them to stay off work for weeks at a time.

*EARNINGS:* Lower to upper middle.

*CONTACTS AND*

*CONNECTIONS:* Agents and music hall proprietors, other entertainers, BBC staff, cinema actors, nightclub owners, criminal underworld.

*SKILLS:* Accounting, Bargain, Art: Singing, dancing, comedy etc., Disguise, Fast Talk, Listen,

### **PARAPSYCHOLOGIST:**

Parapsychology is an unlikely, if not unknown, source of employment. While some men, like Harry Price, manage to make parapsychology into a professional existence, the majority do it as a hobby. Most are members of one (or more) organisations or clubs. Only the most unscrupulous would fabricate paranormal activity, but gullible people *are* easy money. Thankfully



the more conscientious try to put-paid to such underhand tactics.

*EARNINGS:* Middle to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:*

Parapsychology groups, fringe scientists, reporters and journalists, police forces,

*SKILLS:* Anthropology, Chemistry, Electrical Repair, Library Use, Occult, Photography, Psychoanalysis, Psychology, Physics, Spot Hidden.

### **PITWORKER**

Employing some 700,000, mine work was rough, tough work. Pay was low, shifts were long and much of the job was dangerous (though not as much as 20 years prior). Explosions, cave-ins, flooding and disease were all threats. A good miner was both physically and mentally fit; what they may lack in academic education, they make up with common sense. Most have worked the pits for generations, living in the same terraced houses their fathers and grandfathers lived in. Though inarguably working class, their skills may prove invaluable to the well-rounded group.

*EARNINGS:* Lower-end of lower class.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Other miners, union stewards, tight-knit local community, ability to mingle with other working-class types without sticking out like a sore thumb.  
*SKILLS:* Bargain, Climb, Dodge, Fast Talk, Geology, Listen, Natural History, Navigate: Underground, Operate Heavy Machinery, Spot Hidden.

*SPECIAL:* +1 to strength and +1 constitution.

Cannot have an education higher than 13. Miners are also immune to claustrophobia and fear of the dark. They should also have knowledge of mine building, engineering, basic architecture and other examples of years spent underground.

### **POTHOLER:**

The potholing craze caught its stride in the 1920s. Caving, sometimes known as potholing (not spelunking – an American word created in the 1950s), is a popular source of exercise alongside rambling. While cavers explore the already mapped network of tunnels cut into mountains and hillsides, potholers are explorers in the classic sense. Travelling into the recesses of the earth, with only rope, warm clothes and miners' lamps, they brave treacherous environments to explore difficult sites, sometimes hundreds of feet down. While hobnailed boots and ice cleats are popular, the introduction of rubber soled boots in the

middle of the 1920s made caving easier and more accessible to the amateur enthusiast.

*EARNINGS:* Lower-class to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Rival potholers, drinking buddies, academics, geologists, government surveyors, miners, local landowners.

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Climb, Dodge, First Aid, Geology, Jump, Natural History, Photography, Spot Hidden, Swim, Track.

*SPECIAL:* Potholers should be immune to claustrophobia or a fear of the dark, except as a result of game play.

### **RACING CAR DRIVER:**

The motorcar had been around for more than two decades, but its uses were never acknowledged until the '20s. After the first demonstrations in France, motor racing became a popular pastime for the higher classes. Soon it spread to every country in Europe. Motor racing is a dangerous and high-stakes sport; there is little safety and a crash is liable to be lethal. More than a few drivers are decapitated when their cars roll, or burnt alive in high-speed crashes. But for the winners the prestige and acclaim is second to none. Some drivers own their cars; others use 'team' cars – signing on to a manufacturer and racing in theirs. British Racing Green is the only colour for racers, although red and blue are also popular. Silver and white, being German, are often frowned upon.

*EARNINGS:* Upper-middle to wealthy.

*CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:* Other drivers, motorsport companies, car-manufacturers, sponsors, mechanics, inventors, bookmakers (both legal and illegal).

*SKILLS:* Bargain, Dodge, Credit Rating, Drive Auto, Electrical Repair, Mechanical Repair, Psychology, Spot Hidden.

### **SAFECRACKER:**

The safecracker (or safebreaker) is the more romantic criminal enterprise of the 1920s. Having been around as long as there have been safes, the safebreaker came into his own at the height of mob crime. The more 'professional' a cracker the less brute force is necessary – explosives being the fastest but the most 'amateur' method of opening. Safecrackers make their money working freelance, although some are permanent fixtures to a criminal organisation.

*EARNINGS:* Middle to wealthy.

**CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:** Criminal underworld, law enforcement, explosives dealers, locksmiths, drinking buddies

**SKILLS:** Accounting, Bargain, Chemistry, Fast Talk, First Aid, Listen, Locksmith, Mech. Repair, Physics, Weapon: Explosives.

### **SOLICITOR:**

One of the two lawyer types of the British legal system. The solicitor is what might be called in other countries an ‘attorney.’ It is he who handles the day to day legal problems of clients: drawing up wills, handling contracts, sifting through boilerplate and more. In the event of a client going to court, it is the solicitor who acts as intermediary to hire a barrister (the client may pick a specific barrister – but it is usually the solicitor who approaches them). Usually the solicitor briefs a barrister weeks ahead of a trial, but sometimes it can be days – or rarely even hours. Compared to barristers, solicitors have more time to go on investigations. In 1922 the first female barrister was allowed into the legal profession.

**EARNINGS:** Middle to upper class.

**CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:** Other members of the legal profession, anyone who needs legal representation or assistance, the local community, etc.

**SKILLS:** Accounting, Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Law, Library Use, Other Language: Latin, Persuade, Spot Hidden. Plus any one other skill as a speciality.

### **SPIV:**

The spiv is a characteristically British criminal. Young, weasel-like, with slick hair and oiled moustache, he’s part conman, part wheeler-dealer. His trade is not in the illegal, but in the necessities one can’t get legitimately. They work in the grey-market, as rogues rather than crooks. If you need fake passports, cheap explosives or somebody who can translate Ancient Aramaic, then the spiv knows someone who can help.

**EARNINGS:** Working to upper-middle.

**CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:** The spiv knows someone who can help, and if he doesn’t, he knows someone who knows someone who *may* be able to get you in touch with someone; for a price.

**SKILLS:** Accounting, Bargain, Conceal, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Hide, Law, Persuade, Sneak.

### **UNION STEWARD:**

A union’s shop steward comes in many flavours. Most are liberal, socialist, and reformist. Some are communist, militant, or even anarchist. Whatever the case, his workmates have voted him as their voice, and it’s him who speaks to the Boss on their behalf. Most of the time the union steward bows to the whims of the central authority, but there are a few who have the popularity and rebellious streak to do keep themselves in power and stay an individual too. A number are merely bullies, or have ridden in on platitudes and popularity and are solely there to milk as much of the proceeds as possible.

**EARNINGS:** Working-class.

**CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:** Union stewards have the backing of their union superiors and have been voted into power by the local union. They have good standing in the community, both among the legal and illegal, but must be seen to act in the best interests of the union as a whole.

**SKILLS:** Bargain, Credit Rating, Fast Talk, Law, Listen, Persuade, Psychology, Spot Hidden. Plus any two as a speciality: Conceal, First aid, Geology, Sneak, Weapon (knife, cosh etc.)

### **VALET:**

If the butler is employed by the estate, the valet is the personal assistant to the employee. Be it chauffeuring, packing bags, fixing drinks or changing light bulbs, the valet is jack-of-all-trades. Most were married (or pretended to be in order to get their job) and many were previously batman to their employer during the Great War. At a pinch the valet is there with the skills and bull-headedness to save the day.

**EARNINGS:** Middle to upper middle.

**CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS:** Other staff, local tradesmen, old war chums, a few friends on the wrong side of the tracks, drinking buddies.

**SKILLS:** Bargain, Drive Auto, Electrical Repair, Fast Talk, Mechanical Repair, Persuade, Throw. Plus, two of the following: Law, Locksmith, Martial arts, Navigate, Weapon (knife, cosh, etc).

### **PEERAGES AND KNIGHTHOODS:**

Although a peerage can be modelled as a background story with a suitably high Credit Rating, Keepers may include PEERAGE as a new skill, starting at 0%. The ranks are, in order lowest to highest, as follows:



60% is a Baron or Baroness  
70% is a Viscount or Viscountess  
80% is an Earl or Countess  
90% is a Marquess or Marchioness  
100% is a Duke or Duchess

With the Keeper's permission, a peerage may be paid for directly at the start of the game and costs THREE TIMES its percentage value. It must be bought either via EDU or INT skill points. After character creation, a peerage can only be granted by the monarch. Naturally, this doesn't happen to every Tom, Dick and Harry who asks for one.

A baronetcy or knighthood is somewhat more complicated. Neither holds a seat in the House of Lords, and may take up seats in the commons. As there are some twelve or so Knightly Orders, each with between one and five ranks, all are best left as character background, with a high Credit Rating in lieu of a specific skill.

What does a peerage mean in game-terms? The quick answer is, for the cost, very little. A peer of the realm generally has a seat in the House of Lords (and thereby loses the right to vote in general elections), has the privilege of trial by other peers, has the privilege of access to the sovereign (unused for centuries), and is free from civil arrest (in other words, they cannot be forced to turn up for civil court cases). Most have a country house and some few servants, which, though nice, serve little purpose in most adventures. All that and the buying of the peerage in the first place likely dropped all useful skills down to the bare bones of ability.

In real terms, however, a peerage gives the character awesome leeway. A high credit rating can be earned by anyone, but a peerage is granted only by the power of Royalty. For example, a high credit rating usually only works within a certain sphere of influence; a police constable holds little sway over criminals and a Yorkshire mill town's union steward wields no power in London or amongst high-society. A lord, however, is looked upon with a certain respect. Though the old days of bobbing and tugging of forelocks have passed out of fashion, rarely is a lord not given his due. Police rarely interfere in a peer's actions as long as they're not dangerous (and even if they are, it will usually just result in a polite request to carry it out somewhere else). Credit is near unlimited, banks are welcoming, the ear of newspapermen

and journalists are forthcoming and, especially in Europe and America, a travelling baron or viscount is afforded every courtesy. A peerage roll is a catch-all social roll, used in place of any number of other skills as necessary. Not everyone will pay heed, but most will.

Of course, a peerage comes with its downsides. A lord can expect reporters from *Tatler* magazine to stalk them or write exposés on their travels. Enterprising young bachelors or ladies need to keep up with social functions or risk losing their prestige and rating. And while the police and local councils will attempt to keep a lord's name from the civic eye, if one gets involved in too many scrapes or becomes known as a chaser of the occult, they may well lost much public respect.

On the other hand, a peered ghost-hunter would raise many sponsors, as long as he can keep his evidence (im)plausible enough to appease...

Keepers should feel free to veto a player wishing to make their character a peer of the realm. Unless the campaign is based around a mixed group of lords running around the country and fending off the Mythos, even a single peer handled wrongly can unbalance an otherwise perfectly playable game. As the legendary sage once said, 'with great power comes great responsibility.' A lordly title may be too much for many to swallow.

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With sincerest apologies to Sax Rohmer and William Hope Hodgson! I hope you'll forgive the indiscretions.

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