

# The Mythos Society Guide to New England



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By Clint Staples  
Skirmisher Publishing LLC

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**Fleur-de-Lys Studios, Providence, Rhode Island**

# Introduction

What you have before you is an expansive sourcebook that can be used as a resource for development of any role-playing game scenarios or stories that take place in New England. It will be especially useful for any such projects that include horror or the weird as themes, that are based on or inspired by the works of H.P. Lovecraft or other Cthulhu Mythos authors, and which are set during the period between the two World Wars.

This book is intended to be used as a package, as all the information it contains is internally consistent and could be used with no significant alteration and few decisions on your part. But it is not exclusive and any other information that you have already used or want to include can easily be added with a minimum of fuss. We do, however, recommend that you read the entire text of *The Mythos Society Guide to New England* before attempting to do this, as many of the events and ideas it includes are quite detailed and mixing and matching will require some careful planning in order to achieve believable results.

Much of the book is simply historical information that can help you flesh out periods of play between scenarios, and which can give you and your players a better idea of what New England was like up to and during the interwar period. These sections include important events of the era, cultural changes, technological innovations, and a timeline of potentially less significant occurrences that your characters might happen to note. These segments require no real planning as to how they should be used, but some ideas on ways that they can be introduced and how they might affect play are included.

Other sections require more careful attention in order to be used to their full potential. Much of the volume, for example, contains information about ancient artifacts and cultures that are open to considerable interpretation, and you will have to decide how the artifacts reflect the cultures and how the cultures might vary from those presented here. You will also need to determine in which ways the malevolent forces of your game interacted with these cultures. In some cases, ideas on these subjects have been provided in this book but, of course, you are the final judge of what is going to be found in your scenarios. There is nothing to keep you from picking and choosing what you want to use and how you want to present it and it just means that, in order for your choices to work together, you will have to make them fit without losing continuity.

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“Chapter 7: Mysteries of the Diverse States of New England” is ordered state, with each one’s entries in alphabetical order. The entries themselves have generally been left as free of external interpretation as possible and therefore, for the most part, you can use these occurrences in any way you see fit; they simply note what physical or cultural artifacts exist in a particular place and time.

Occasionally, there will be a boxed insert that provides a potential interpretation of events or simply expands upon the basic information provided in the entry itself. Most of these are presented as excerpts from other sources — many of which are fictitious — that are intended to illustrate one way that the entry could be used as a “scenario nugget.” These have intentionally been left fairly vague and you can use them in any way you see fit or ignore them entirely.

One source used repeatedly in the boxed segments is the *Black Book* of Cotton Mather, a fictitious book that we have ascribed to a historical personage, Cotton Mather, that is explained in more detail later. Excerpts from this dark tome are intended to be used as an optional means of linking sections of this guide or other events or information as desired. This book has, in turn, been painstakingly collected from scattered fragments over the past several decades by fellow Cthulhu Mythos investigator Dr. Michael A. Schumann.

Schumann may be introduced to your players in any way you choose and can be as active or passive as you want. He can be a valuable source of aid and information, a voice for the storyteller within the group, or an “off-camera” figure of considerable mystery in his own right. In his letter, Schumann has alluded to the fact that his activity is confined to research lately and, in order to limit his appearance in your game, you may decide that he is physically or otherwise incapable of active investigation.

*Black Book* segments should be regarded as the reminiscences of someone who has “been there” and as the words of a man who knows what the characters are going through. He was, furthermore, a man who had arcane knowledge concerning the same things. This does not necessarily mean that he was sane, rational, or kindly; open-minded in some matters, Cotton Mather was also harshly judgmental and saw the works of Satan in every aspect of life. Generally, the specifics of Mather’s arcane knowledge have been left for you to determine.

Fragments of the *Black Book* that are reprinted here are only a sampling of the full manuscript. More exist in Schumann’s files

and he has not collected every scrap that was written, so feel free to expand the information provided by Cotton Mather as much as you like.

### Item 1-A: Letter from Dr. Michael A. Schumann

To My Esteemed Colleague,

It is my most sincere wish that these words find you well. Certainly, there are innumerable perils to which we might succumb in our vocation. For some time, I have turned much of my attention to the furtherance of our shared preoccupation. It seems wise that I share the results of my labors with you unless the unthinkable should occur. Toward that end, I present you with the following document. But first, something in the way of a preamble.

Many years ago, while reading for my Master of Arts at Cambridge, I came across an uncataloged manuscript fragment in the library's storage vaults. Intrigued upon reading the cursive and rather archaic English, I went to some trouble to identify the provenance of the piece. After considerable study, I was astounded to find that I held a portion of the lost works of Cotton Mather, presumably part of his diary. The full significance of my discovery did not dawn upon me until I became aware that, although I was correct as to the author, I had misidentified the text itself. What I possessed was not the "Diary" but, in fact, the infamous "Black Book of Cotton Mather."

Born into the renowned Mather family of New England in 1662, Cotton graduated from Harvard College at the age of 16. Shortly thereafter, he was ordained a minister of North Church in Boston. He began writing two years later, and, in the 41 years until his death in February, 1728, he wrote and published at least 283 tracts, treatises, and books on a variety of subjects in numerous languages.



He also bore witness to the infamous witch trials of Salem in "Wonders of the Invisible World," a work which earned him considerable ridicule from his colleagues over the credulity with which he treated the entire affair. This scorn was to affect Mather deeply and was instrumental in the way in which he pursued the writing of what has come to be called the "Black Book."

One of the most learned, devout and open-minded men of his era, there is little wonder that, when presented with evidence that malevolent forces sought to return the world to the state in which the Outer Gods found it, he not only did not scoff but rather waged a dire and secret crusade against those powers. He was a member of an unnamed "Society" that apparently united to physically oppose the dire works and sorceries of the enemies of God's purpose. While not his most heroic, perhaps his most beneficial effort was in setting down for others his vast knowledge and experience of these arcane and perilous matters.

The Black Book was never published. Even from the scattered remnants that I have managed to collect, the reason is clear. This was not a work fit for the public of early New England. The Black Book was written for the likes of you and I; as the esteemed Reverend Mather would say, for "Those who Know." It speaks to us from across the span of centuries to reveal that this struggle has been waged with success for ages and it gives me hope that, if we may not find ultimate victory in this ageless war, at least we can take some comfort in winning occasional battles.

I know that you will make utmost use of my research. You have ever been among the most active of our number. We each must oppose the ancient enemy as our talents allow.

Yours in vigilance,

Michael A. Schumann, Ph.D., M.A.  
Associate Chair of Antiquities, Miskatonic University, Arkham



Item 2-A: Beginning of *Black Book of Cotton Mather*

*Unto Thee, O Lord, Light of Heaven and King of All the Worlds, Whom the Angels of the Light exist to Glorifie, do I present this Account of the Magnificent Struggle against Thy Most Base Enemy. I pray Thee to sprinkle the book of this History with Thy Blood, and make it acceptable and profitable to Thy works, and serve Thy Truths and Ways among Thy people. 'Tis Thou that hast prepared this account for the preservation of Thy folk in this great Deserte.*

*That which follows Being an Account of many and various Occurrences that would best remain Unknown to the multitudes of Humanity, lest harm be magnified by its wide Knowledge. God has granted unto us the Power to combat the Elder Evil that ever threatens the lives and souls of Men. But with the Power of God must also come Knowledge of the Enemy and of Its Works. These words are set down in hope of providing Aid to Those who Know, that they might better safeguard the teeming masses of Mankind. There can be nothing less than complete Devotion and utmost Vigilance in the Defiance of the Adversary, its minions, and all of its works. For tis upon this constant watchfulness that the fate of our World must needs depend.*

*What I have set down within these Black Bindings is the sum of my lifetime's researches into those dark and foreboding places which I or others of My acquaintance have delved on God's Errand. There are many who would discount the details contained herein as ravings, just as they have done before; but, be they Benighted by the Enemy or simply overly Skeptical, they behave so from the light and safety of their closeted libraries and comfortable studies. They cannot Know, for they have not Seen. Therefore, I do not seek to publish this Secret Memoir; rather, copyists of Our Order have reproduced the text, and couriers of that same worthy body will carry the Word of the Doings in the Dark Places to all those who have proven their Dedication to God's Hidden Purpose.*



# Chapter I: Land and Landscape of New England

**T**he states that make up New England — Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine — have a shared heritage. The land here was among the earliest settled by Europeans, and ones who were predominantly of a single culture, namely strict religious dissenters primarily from England. But the similarities of New England are not so easily accounted for as that. There are also similarities of geography and pre-European culture that have shaped the social structure of the Northeastern states.

Sandwiched between the mountains and the sea, the people of New England were, and continue to be, somewhat isolated from the other states of the Union. This isolation has meant that there are many common features of New England that do not extend beyond the boundaries of its member states. These things are not immediately recognizable as marks of significance, but they are subtle indicators that the visitor to New England is truly that and serve the wayward New Englander equally well as reminders that he has returned home. The dignified village greens that are a feature of nearly every town in New England, the covered wooden bridges, and the lines of unmortared stone fences that pepper the countryside also hint that this region is distinct to itself. And, in a way, they all emphasize the twin senses of oneness and isolation that are often felt by visitors to and residents of New England alike.

The singular atmosphere of New England can also be seen in its Native American culture. All the tribes of New England, bound by the same geographical and climactic features that helped define the immigrant European society, exhibited similarities of lifestyle, religion, and language that demonstrate their isolation. (*For more on the aboriginal tribes of the region, see “Chapter 4: Native Americans of New England.”*)

The root of the separation of New England from the rest of the United States is its geography. Although there are many farms and some fine land in the six states of the Northeast, most of the land is rocky and rugged, picturesque but not as fertile as the land of the Southern states or the Midwest. Vast forests also originally covered much of the better soil of the region, and in many areas still do. In

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places, the rugged features of the landscape give way to mountains. All of inland New England is crisscrossed with chains of foothills and mountains, rising high in the north and tapering to more gradual slopes that extend across Massachusetts into Connecticut and continue on toward Long Island Sound. The White Mountains begin in Maine before moving into the north of New Hampshire. There, spectacular spires make up the Presidential Range, dominated by Mount Washington, the highest peak in New England at 6,288 feet. The bald top of this great peak is wracked by weather so fierce that trees cannot sustain themselves above 4,800 feet (by comparison, the Rockies are often forested up to 11,000 feet).

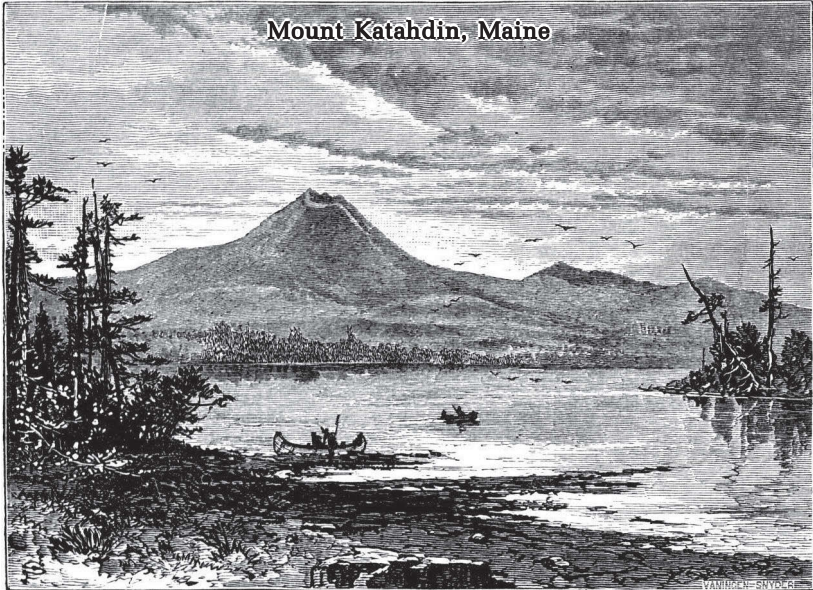
The sparse farmland of New Hampshire begins at the foot of the White Mountain range and extends to the bustling city of Manchester. West of the White Mountains, between New Hampshire and the border of Vermont, flows the longest river of New England, the Connecticut. Bounded by rocky countryside for much of its length, it broadens to water the Connecticut Valley, a fertile meadowland of farms and villages.

Western New England, from the Connecticut Valley to the New York border, is dominated by the Green Mountains of Vermont, the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts, and the Litchfield Hills of Connecticut. All these ranges have a lush but rugged greenery that may be found throughout New England. A similar uniformity can be found elsewhere; much of the twisting shoreline of Rhode Island, for example, is nearly indistinguishable from the rocky coast of Maine.

The comparatively poor farmland of so much of New England meant that the earlier settlements of the region were clustered along the coast or hugged close to one of the rivers that threaded their way inland. On the Atlantic shore, the cities and towns all looked to the sea for their livelihood in the past and many do even now. The seacoast towns center around a harbor, and sailing, fishing, whaling, and lobstering were the most common professions of old. These centers therefore tend to face the sea rather than inland, and many stretch along the coast in strips rather than expand landward.

The seaside towns and cities, the oldest in New England, have a feel different from the newer places in the west of the territory. There is a European atmosphere along the coast, and in the steep, narrow, often winding cobblestone streets and clustered two- and three-story houses near the waterfront. Some of the seaside towns — like Marblehead or Rockport in Massachusetts — with picturesque little houses crowded close together along narrow ways





leading to small docks in the harbor seem anachronistic and Colonial. The more elegant and spacious homes of Beacon Hill in Boston or those of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, cling to the heritage of the rich ship-owners, politicians, and other near-gentry of New England.

The same atmosphere of otherness is apparent in many of the older communities of New England. Many are still fairly small, especially inland. The winding backroads of southern and central New England lead to valleys with small farms or single homesteads surrounded by dry-stone fences. These are scattered between similarly-appearing villages, often still featuring a stone water-powered mill of the Colonial era at the center of town.

The more recently-settled lands of Upper Maine and northern New Hampshire do not share this almost-European atmosphere. These areas were not inhabited by non-natives until the late 19th century, and the towns of this region have none of the Old World smallness of the seacoast towns and the rural villages of the south. In fact, much of the north country around Moosehead Lake, the Rangeley Lakes, and Mount Katahdin (*shown above*) is still largely uninhabited and a traveler could walk many miles in this region without finding evidence of another human being.

North of this wilderness is a land apart from the rest of New



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England. Along the St. John River, on the Canadian border, is a world, a portion of Maine nearly the size of Massachusetts, that is anomalous in New England. The Acadian-descended inhabitants of the area speak French and have much in common with the people of Quebec. This is the land of Aroostook County, famed for its rich soil and fine potatoes. In the 1920s, this was a rich farming area, especially by the standards of the Northeast, and in 1925 the harvest and prices were so good that thousands of potato-growers were able to pay off their mortgages in a single season.

Maine, while it can boast a long, rocky, glacier-hewn coastline, has an inland area nearly as big as the territory of the other five New England states together. In upper Maine, the great industry is lumber and there were sawmills in Berwick and York as early as 1640. Most of the Maine ports and river cities grew up as lumber-shipping centers. The verdant forests of Maine have suffered under this industry, but much of the state is still shrouded by timber. Upstate New Hampshire is also logging territory and appears almost indistinguishable from much of Maine.

Vermont is also covered in forest, but its rugged, mountainous terrain makes harvesting it as difficult as farming the marginal and rocky soil had been in the past. Vermont has one of the highest percentages of mountainous land of any state in the Union. This has created an impression, not entirely false, that Vermont is apart from the other states of the Northeast. This was the last refuge of the Yankee of old, ruggedly independent, conservative, and resistant to change. Long after farming practices such as ox-powered fieldwork had been abandoned elsewhere, they were still being used in Vermont.

The uneven, rocky acreage only partially accounted for this anachronism. What were handicrafts in other parts of New England were still practiced as parts of everyday life in Vermont. Carding one's own wool to weave, making one's own milk buckets, even smithing one's own tools were all done on most rural Vermont homesteads. The industrial factories that sprang up in the 19th and early 20th centuries never found more than a foothold here. The state has more cattle, fewer cities and towns of any size, fewer hired laborers — and thus fewer foreign-born Americans — than any other part of New England.

The Green Mountains of Vermont are not the steep, intimidating rocky peaks of New Hampshire; they are softer looking, swathed in green forests and divided by lush meadows, occasionally farmland.

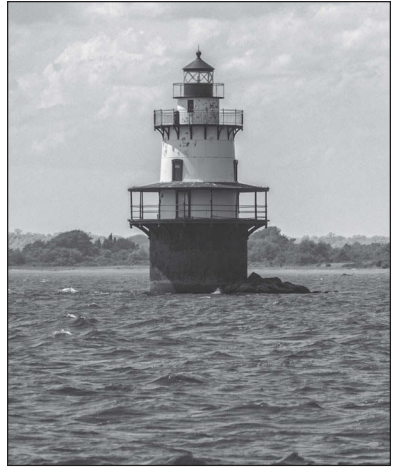
But the granite and marble beneath the trees are, along with lumber, among the most important exports of the state. The verdant slopes started to encourage visitors by the beginning of the 1920s. With developments in the automotive industry and the creation of more serviceable roads, Vermont quickly became a tourist attraction in both winter and summer. Skiing became very popular as the decade progressed.

Connecticut and Rhode Island are as alike to each other as they are different from the more rural states of Maine and Vermont. Long before the dawn of the 20th century, both states were centers of industry not only for New England but for much of the East Coast. From Colonial times, Connecticut has manufactured all sorts of industrial products, including brass fixtures, firearms, machinery, silverware, hats, clocks, textiles, and tools.

Rhode Island is nearly as heavily industrialized. By the 1920s, virtually every skyline observable in Rhode Island featured one or more factories. In fact, the first American factory — a mechanized cotton mill — was begun here by Samuel Slater in 1790. The money for the industrialization of Rhode Island came primarily from wealth garnered by merchant sailing ships. Providence, the capital, and Newport are examples of the luxurious living standards that the factories could bring to some, as well as the meager livings it provided for others.

Providence is one of the most attractive cities in the United States. Marble features in the construction of nearly all of the finer buildings, and beautiful churches, libraries, and private homes line the streets of the capital. Providence looks out to Newport and the Atlantic through the expanse of Narragansett Bay, a 28-mile stretch of water that shelters islands, coves, and beaches that have themselves sheltered generations of seafarers from the furious storms of the deeper water beyond.

East of the mouth of Narragansett Bay lie some of the best-known places in all of New England. Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket Island, and Cape Cod, renowned as vacation destinations, deserve their



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fame. The sand dunes and salt marshes of the South Shore give way to the rockbound North Shore of Cape Cod. In places, the South Shore dunes are more than 100 feet high and spectacular to behold. The sandy coastline of the South Shore is in constant flux, so much so that it can change beyond recognition in places in a matter of years, obedient to the pressures of tide and wind.

The picturesque islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard lie south of the South Shore. The town of Nantucket has preserved much of its rich Colonial heritage, and hundreds of houses and other buildings may be found fronting on narrow, winding, cobblestone lanes. And Martha's Vineyard is the home of two important Colonial-era harbors, at Vineyard Haven and Edgartown.

Massachusetts is by far the most populous of the New England states, as well the most urbanized. Less of the unmarred countryside exists here than in less hospitable northern Maine or isolated Vermont. But the Berkshire Hills of the west of Massachusetts still hold some mystery and the area abounds with unsettling disappearances and odd tales. The flatter land closer to Boston is far more closely settled.

In 1920, Massachusetts had a population only slightly smaller than that of the rest of New England together. Boston's multitudes numbered almost 750,000 in 1920, nearly as many people as inhabited all of Maine and almost double the population of New Hampshire. The people of Boston and its environs, in addition to being numerous, also often were visibly different from the populations of other cities of New England. The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw a great influx of immigrants to Boston, many of whom manned the burgeoning textile mills and shoe factories of the city.

By 1920, as much as 70 percent of the people of Boston were either immigrants or the children of immigrants. To compound matters, these immigrants were overwhelmingly from areas of Europe that had until then been virtually unrepresented in Massachusetts. Largely made up of immigrants of Northern European extraction, the older residents of Boston were being supplanted by people from southern and Mediterranean Europe. This created social pressures that affected all the citizens and, when the anti-immigration laws of the post-war period were introduced, Boston and the rest of Massachusetts was in the middle of the conflict over enforcement.

In the 19th century, New Hampshire was considered to have

some of the best of the meager farmland in New England. In the later decades of that century, however, the population began to shrink, as many farmers simply picked up their belongings to settle in the newly-opened West. This trend continued for several decades until, by 1930, less than 10 percent of the population was engaged in farming. But the other major segment of New Hampshire's economy continued to thrive into the beginning of the 20th century, and the textile mills along the Merrimack River operated at peak levels until just after the World War I, when the industry began to suffer.

### **Weather in the Northeastern States**

When the first Europeans arrived in what came to be called New England, they were unable to guess the nature of the climate that they would face. Unlike other early settlements further south, the weather was generally less hospitable than that which they left behind in England. This may seem a little surprising, given that New England is far more southerly than the original home of the settlers, but the climate is modified by the huge landmass that is the rest of America. Winters are colder, and wet, even by English standards, especially along the coasts. Moving inland and climbing in altitude, the winter temperatures drop even further. Snow, not uncommon in the coldest months even in Boston and along the coast, is found through the winter in many regions, and Maine's northern forests and Vermont's and New Hampshire's ski slopes are white for several months. In the mountainous regions, of course, snow can remain well into spring, and even year-round on some of the less-hospitable peaks.

In the other seasons rain is frequent, although less in summer than spring and fall. Summer provides New Englanders with many days of sun and fair winds, storms are uncommon, and sailing and other water sports are popular up and down the coasts.

The winter storms of both coastal and inland New England are well-known for their ferocity and can be devastating when they arrive, partly because of their unexpected nature. Indeed, in earlier days, witchcraft was blamed for many of the killer gales of the late fall and early winter. Occasionally, witchcraft was even invoked to calm the storms or to aid mariners in their passage through the wind and waves. Storms are frequent visitors to the mountainous areas inland as well, and the Berkshires of Massachusetts and the White Mountains of Maine and New Hampshire have a well-earned reputation for fast-moving snow storms.



View of Boston in the 1930s



## Chapter 2: New England Between the Wars

**T**his section is intended to give the reader an overview of the events that occurred during the period between World War I and World War II. It is specifically devoted to the kind of information that a reader will find most useful for getting a feel for the role-playing possibilities of the 1920s and 1930s. At the end of this chapter is a list of phenomena, some common and some rather esoteric, that players may come across while investigating the region.

The interwar period in the Northeast is a time that is more removed from the present than a span of less than a century would suggest. Obviously, many common conveniences were unknown but, even more remarkable, is the way in which the absence of those things and the relative novelty of other innovations affected daily life. Much has been written about the fashions, cost of transportation, and similar things in 1920s America, especially in and around Boston itself, and such information is readily available in other sourcebooks. A look at the news events and technological advances of the day, however, along with how those things affected everyday life, is worth considering. Automobiles can serve as a good example of this.

Cars were widely available by 1920 and, thanks to Henry Ford, were even reasonably affordable, but the society of the era had not had the time to adapt to the changes that the automobile would bring. While owning a car was not for everyone, people were finding it less of a luxury and more of a necessity all the time. By 1925, more than half the families in the northern United States either owned or would soon own cars under installment plans. Cars were becoming status symbols and fashion statements.

To cope with the increase in car owners, roads were improved all over the country, and were built first and foremost where they were most required. New routes were primarily urban, but they also catered to a new desire on the part of city-dwellers to live in the developing suburbs; with the greater mobility provided by the rise of the automobile, it was no longer necessary to live near one's place of work. Roads were thus built on the outskirts of cities such as Boston to accommodate these new commuters. Beyond the

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suburbs, however, there was no great need for decent roads and travel in the country was consequently much slower. In the years just after the World War I, 90 percent of all automobiles in the country were still being put away for the winter months, as it was simply too much trouble to drive then.

Things changed rapidly, however, and Congress allocated a great deal of money for road construction beginning in 1916. At the same time, automobile technology was improving every year. For short distances, whether driving in town or country, motor vehicles increasingly began to displace wagons and the like. When it came to long-distance travel, however, the train was still the mode of choice.

The location of the automobile market began to change about the same time, again thanks largely to Henry Ford. Prior to and during the war, more cars were built in New England than in Michigan, but the balance swung rapidly toward the Midwest after the end of hostilities in Europe. Many of the smaller manufacturers located along the eastern seaboard were absorbed by those growing giants that later came to be known as the “Big Three” — Ford, General Motors, and Dodge.

The trend toward large companies was not limited to the automobile industry. Local and corner stores began to disappear, bought out by large chains. By 1932, for example, Great Atlantic and Pacific had bought out more than 15,000 small groceries all over the country.

Innovations that led to the growth of the auto industry were also felt in other areas. Great factories, now commonplace, were a novelty in the 1920s, but over the following decade the same sorts of industries were advertising themselves as modern, high-technology places of employment. The assembly line, developed by Henry Ford for the manufacture of automobiles, was adopted by other sectors as well.

Technological advancements made in automobile manufacturing, for example, made possible the expansion of the aircraft industry, and after the war aircraft came into their own. Largely relegated a reconnaissance role in World War I, the airplane of the post-war period became heavier, faster, and more reliable. America was nonetheless still slow in moving ahead with commercial air traffic and the first regularly-scheduled passenger service between New York City and Boston was begun only in 1927. Over the next five years, airplanes became capable of carrying a



dozen or more passengers in comparative comfort and security.

In the 1920s, women became increasingly active in aviation and many joined the male barnstormers and trick exhibition pilots in the air. Other women saw these pioneers exemplify the new roles opening up to women all over America. In this period, women found careers in the new factories, in offices, and in many previously-male professions. The onset of World War II brought thousands more women out of their traditional places.

Many of these changes to American society can be seen as comparatively positive but others had less beneficial effects. The same decades that saw the beginnings of real social freedom for women, considerable technological improvement, and the growth of industry that made the United States a growing economic global giant globe also bore witness to political isolationism from Europe, severe immigration quotas, Prohibition and its attendant rise in organized crime, and the development of a national paranoia of communism.

Shortly after the end of the World War I, America turned its attention inward. Many people felt — especially strongly in the Northeastern states — that the Great War had been something in which America should not have become involved. Many European countries owed huge debts to the United States and it did not appear that they would be in any position to honor them. Additionally, because the war had never threatened to expand beyond Europe

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and the United States had never been directly threatened, there were those who felt that leaders in Washington had been meddling when they agreed to work with the Allies.

The tide of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe made many people nervous in the years following the Great War. Many were concerned over what this wave of people with differing mores and traditions would do to regions inhabited primarily by descendants of immigrants from northern Europe. New England, especially its urban areas, was immersed in these concerns. Maine novelist Kenneth Roberts wrote in a series of *Saturday Evening Post* articles after the war that these migrations would overwhelm the country with “human parasites” and create “... a hybrid race of good-for-nothing mongrels.” Many who believed as Roberts did, a bloc known as “hundred percenters,” put sufficient pressure on the Harding administration to get the Emergency Quota Act passed in 1921, which severely reduced immigration into the United States. This was followed by still more restrictive acts in 1924 and 1929.

Playing right into the feelings of many in America were those who orchestrated what is often referred to as the “First Red Scare.” Created largely by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, who served under Woodrow Wilson, this increased worries already heightened by the budding isolationist tendencies appearing in 1918-20. Many Americans became paranoid of the perceived communist threat, a fear that grew in the '20s, hand-in-hand with the repressive immigration policies of Wilson’s Republican successors.

In the climate of the period immediately following the war, it is not surprising that the 18th Amendment to the Constitution — making the manufacture, export, import, transportation, and distribution of alcoholic beverages illegal — was passed. Known as Prohibition, the amendment was passed in 1919 and came into effect in 1920. And yet, Americans seemed to regret Prohibition almost as soon as it began.

A new occupation, bootlegging, was born. In 10 years, the federal government made more than half a million arrests for bootlegging, securing over 300,000 convictions. Alcohol seeped into America through constantly-shifting leaks in the borders with its neighbors to the north and south. Seaports such as Boston were surrounded by fleets of ocean-going ships full of all manner of wine and liquor, and many smaller ports were even more subject to continuous smuggling. Fast motorboats ran the gauntlet of slower coastguard vessels, bringing their illegal cargo from the large ships into port



by the truckload. Here the alcohol was transferred to waiting bootleggers who would distribute it with cars and trucks. It was a lucrative if rather risky business in which all kinds of people participated. Shipments were often intercepted, not just by law enforcement but also by other criminals. Not surprisingly, with so much money to be made a career criminal class arose and organized rapidly.

“Speakeasies” sprang up overnight to replace corner bars and saloons. Almost any adult was aware of the location of a convenient bootlegger. Efforts of the government to enforce the law were severely hampered by the utter ambivalence of the majority of Americans, who accepted and encouraged the criminal activity all around them. Added to this were many active dissenters who spoke out against Prohibition, including Connecticut and Rhode Island, which refused to ratify the 18th Amendment at all. Finally, because the ownership and consumption of alcohol was not a crime, actual enforcement of the law was made even more difficult.

Perhaps the most deleterious effect of Prohibition did not occur until its repeal in 1933. At that point the now well-established criminal element that had catered to the desire for alcohol turned its attention to other activities when the 18th Amendment was no longer on the books. Seeking for other sources of income to replace the loss, criminal organizations turned to drugs, prostitution, and gambling.



## Mythos Society Guide to New England

The Stock Market Crash of October 1929 brought an abrupt end to the alternately repressive and permissive society of comparative ease that had existed in the 1920s. Buoyed up from a post-war slump by rapid investment that led to recovery in the mid-20s, the stock market grew as more people threw greater amounts of money into circulation in hopes of getting rich. By the end of the decade, the collapse was unavoidable.

A downward spiral of prices, production, employment, and foreign trade caused the initial crash to bottom out rather than head into recovery. Every kind of business suffered. Industry discharged employees, who defaulted on payments and could not find other jobs. Factory payrolls dropped by half and roughly one-quarter of the working people of the U.S. were unemployed. Shanty towns grew up around dumps in major urban centers. Unscrupulous operators opened up garment mills and other corrupt factories where they virtually dictated whatever wages that they cared to offer. The economy continued in this condition until mid-1932.

In January of that year, the Hoover Administration drafted the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to inject money into railroads, banks, agricultural agencies, industry, and commerce. It took years for any effect to come out of this program, which left average Americans to fend for themselves. It was really only with the election of Franklin Roosevelt and the promise of the New Deal in 1933 that the economy began to turn around. And, although the stock market did not truly recover until 1938, people began to feel that the worst was behind them.

With the recovery of the economy, technological innovation, which by no means had been stagnant during the preceding years

### Populations of New England States in 1920 and 1930

	<b>1920</b>	<b>1930</b>
<b>Massachusetts</b>	3,852,356	4,249,614
<b>Connecticut</b>	1,380,631	1,606,903
<b>Maine</b>	768,014	797,423
<b>Rhode Island</b>	604,397	687,497
<b>New Hampshire</b>	443,083	465,293
<b>Vermont</b>	352,428	359,611
<b>United States Totals</b>	105,710,620	122,775,046

began to have an impact upon the average American once more. Improvements in automobiles, aviation, automation, and construction had all continued but did not have great social effects until after 1932, and much of the technology of the 1930s was derived from discoveries of the previous decade. With the retreat of the Great Depression, a sense of ease began to enter the fabric of American society. Labor-saving devices of all sorts came into vogue and leisure time became something for everyone and not merely the well-to-do. Popularity of professional sports grew as more people had both the time and the money to attend.

This increase in leisure time allowed for the pursuit of other avenues of expression. The American Communist Party, the most feared group in the United States prior to the crash of '29, grew rapidly in the '30s. This in turn inspired a renewal of the still-active revulsion felt by many Americans during and after the Red Scare. Communists changed their tactics at this time, joining existing unions and other popular organizations, rather than sticking to the strictly and publicly communist unions of the 1920s. This had the effect of heightening the paranoia already evident across the country.



## **Timeline**

What follows is a timeline of events significant to New Englanders of the 1920s, which you can use to help immerse your characters in the milieu.

You may simply want to read timely event listings to them at the beginning or end of a session. Or, you may wish to introduce the events more fully into your campaign. Imagine the confusion on the part of the players, for example, if you were to bring them in on the rescue efforts surrounding the Great Molasses Disaster. The scenario you devise might be full of action and very exciting but have nothing sinister or otherworldly about it, but the players will be constantly on edge while they explore the broken rubble of a tenement, awaiting the appearance of some crawling abomination.

Alternatively, you can use this technique as a break after a particularly harrowing session, or even as something of an uplifting segment in the character's lives. Managing to rescue trapped survivors will go a long way toward relieving the ever-present feeling of futility found in many Cthulhu Mythos campaigns. It will also help to keep the players off balance, so they will never know what to expect from a scenario. In any adventure, especially a horror one, the unexpected is crucial to maintaining mood and suspense.

### **1919**

January 15, just before noon, the Great Molasses Disaster occurs in Boston. The huge 2,300,000 gallon storage tank for the United States Alcohol Company blows catastrophically, sending molasses pouring in all directions. Near the blast, it flows with sufficient force to throw four freight rail cars off the track, and a fifth is forced right through the wall of the terminal. Thirteen people, along with dozens of horses, are known to have been killed.

January 16, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution makes the manufacture, import, export, distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages illegal. Rhode Island and Connecticut refuse to ratify.

June 2, 1919, Captain Mansell R. Jones' plane is lost somewhere over or in the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts. Jones had departed from Lee, Massachusetts, on route to Mitchell Field, Long Island. Scattered reports come in of people hearing a plane in the area, as well as over Long Island Sound. A massive search is organized, in which thousands participate, including hundreds of Boy Scouts. Both pilot and wreckage appear to have vanished and



Effects of the Great Molasses Disaster

no trace is found of either.

September 9, nearly 2,000 members of the Boston Police Department go on strike, causing panic and the formation of citizen patrols. Governor Calvin Coolidge promptly hires new patrolmen. In a statement that receives national attention, Coolidge declares: "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, anytime."

September 14, the U.S. Embassy in Russia is shut down, although the consulate in Vladivostok remains open until May 1922. The United States does not reestablish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union until 1933.

1919 also sees the end of a major strike of coal miners and steelworkers in many parts of America.

## **1920**

U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer raises the issue of the "Red Menace" in America and a furor envelops much of the United States as communists are rooted out. With no warrants or reason, Palmer authorizes raids on private homes and businesses and thousands of people are arrested. In New England, many join in the craze and hundreds are incarcerated without foundation. Palmer becomes, for a short time, famous and adored.

## Mythos Society Guide to New England



April 15, what would eventually become one of the most famous robberies and subsequent trials in American history occurred in Dedham, Massachusetts. A simple payroll heist, there is nothing outstanding about the crime itself except that the perpetrators make themselves \$16,000 richer and kill two men in the process. The air of outrage at the needless deaths creates a sense of urgency among the authorities, who cast about nervously for information on the killers. Following up on eye-witness reports, the police arrest 29-year-old shoemaker Nichola Sacco and 32-year-old fish-seller Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Both Italian immigrants, they also have the misfortune to be armed with pistols when they are apprehended. It later also comes out that the men are known political activists and anarchists.



On May 31, the trial begins and makes headlines across the country. Despite a convincing defense and a lack of any direct evidence against them, they are convicted

of first degree murder and sentenced to death. The trial judge appears obviously biased against the defendants, whom he refers to on at least one occasion as “anarchist bastards.” Despite seven motions for retrial, all of which are refused, Sacco and Vanzetti, who have since been found unquestionably innocent of the murders, are executed.

August 18, The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution makes women’s suffrage national.

With the innovation of the ski lift, rural New England becomes increasingly the destination of winter vacationers from farther south along the Eastern Seaboard.

Increasing unpopularity of Democratic President Woodrow Wilson makes way for Republican Warren G. Harding, who wins a landslide victory for the presidency.

### 1921

Playwright Karl Capek coins the term “Robot” to describe the



mechanical inhabitants of his world in the play “R.U.R.,” which stands for “Rossum’s Universal Robots.”

The American Radio League demonstrates for the first time the utility of shortwave radio for long-distance communication by transmitting across the Atlantic to Scotland.

Famous comedian Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle is acquitted of rape and murder charges stemming from a Labor Day party in San Francisco after a young actress, Virginia Rapp, becomes sick and dies in his hotel room.

American medical student John Augustus Larson invents Polygraphy lie detection.

Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach devises the inkblot test that bears his name.

Vice President Calvin Coolidge accuses the colleges and campuses of America of being hotbeds of sedition in a series of articles in *The Delineator*.

Alfred Watkins arrives at the notion of Ley lines; invisible lines of power which crisscross the world and were allegedly known to earlier cultures, who built megalithic monuments at the crossings.

## 1922

The *Boston Evening Transcript* runs the following story:

“Geneva, March 21: During a heavy snowstorm in the Alps recently thousands of exotic insects resembling spiders, caterpillars, and huge ants fell on the slopes and quickly died. Local naturalists are unable to explain the phenomenon, but one theory is that the insects were blown in on the wind from some warmer climate.”

May 17, the events of Mythos author H.P. Lovecraft’s “The Invisible Monster” take place. James Orne, captain of the *Ahna*, nets a huge one-eyed sea-monster, which is eventually displayed



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in Boston.

August 8, James Orne and others die mysteriously in Lovecraft's, "The Horror at Martin's Beach."

A major strike of textile workers takes place in the Amoskeag Manufacturing Company of Manchester, New Hampshire, the greatest textile manufacturer in the East up to this time.

Archaeologist Howard Carter, accompanied and sponsored by Lord Caernarvon, opens the tomb of King Tut Ankh-amon. Caernarvon dies soon after.

The German vampire film *Nosferatu, eine Symphonie des Grauens* is released.



### 1923

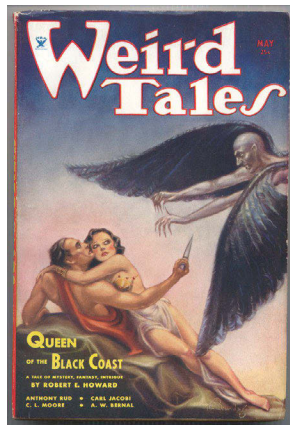
The Teapot Dome Scandal, a massive interconnection of government corruption, begins the downfall of President Warren G. Harding's administration. By August 2, President Harding is dead, and the scandal erupts onto the front pages of newspapers across the country. Harding himself is never actually found to have been active in the shady deals, but his closeness to those who profited through dishonest deals tarnishes his memory. Vermont-born Calvin Coolidge succeeds him as president.

May 4, New York state repeals its Prohibition Enforcement Act to reduce the growing power of gangsters and bootleggers and prevent poisonings from improperly-distilled alcohol, an increasing problem across the United States. This repeal means that one of the biggest markets for illicit liquor is no longer enforcing Prohibition.

First issue of *Weird Tales* magazine is published and features a story by Mythos writer Robert E. Howard.

### 1924

Zenith produces the first portable radio available to the average consumer. It weighs 14.6 pounds, costs \$230, and fits into a suitcase.



Radio waves are used for the first time to transmit still photographs from New York City to London (two years later, RCA introduces a commercial overseas photo transmission service).

Swedish psychiatrist and spiritualist Carl Wickland publishes *Thirty Years Among the Dead*. The culmination of three decades of research and spiritual investigation, the book details hundreds of conversations Wickland had with various possessing spirits that were invited to speak through the body of Anna, the author's wife and trance medium. His experiences with the "Mercy Sand," a group of sympathetic spirits, are recorded, as are his dealings with several souls who attempt to make the body of his wife a permanent residence. The Wicklands develop a form of electroshock therapy that succeeds in driving out the possessing spirits.

Fritz Haarman, "The Butcher of Hanover," is sentenced to death and beheaded for his role in the gruesome murders of at least 27 and possibly as many as 50 young men and boys. The notorious German case is well publicized and causes deep fear and revulsion throughout the western world. As early as 1919, Haarman and his partner Hans Grans would lure orphans, drifters, and others unlikely to be missed to secluded spots where the victims could be abused and murdered. The victims' flesh was sold for food on the black market, as was their clothing, and their bones and skulls dropped into the River Leine.



The first spiral-bound notebook is produced.

Kleenex is invented.

Edward Victor Appleton is the first to use Radio Ranging, a precursor to radar, to determine the distance to remote objects.

*By Rocket into Planetary Space* by Hermann Oberth is the first truly scientific account of space research methods. Among other things, it deals with the concept of escape velocity, the speed and inertia necessary to escape the gravity of a planet or other heavenly body.

Incumbent Republican Calvin Coolidge wins the presidential race against opponents Democrat John W. Davis and Progressive Robert M. La Follette Sr.

## Mythos Society Guide to New England

### 1925

July 4, 3 a.m., Boston, the Pickwick Club Disaster occurs at a popular night spot located at 12 Beach Street in downtown Boston. Just before closing time the lights die and, shortly thereafter, the ceiling of the club falls in, followed by the fourth and fifth floors. The rescue attempts quickly became an event of great spectacle, with crowds of hundreds waiting anxiously for word of survivors. More than 100 people are trapped and 44 die.

In Dayton, Ohio, the American Civil Liberties Union clashes with fundamentalists over the teaching of the theory of evolution in schools.

### 1926

Hugo Gernsback founds *Amazing Stories*, the first magazine devoted to science fiction.

Robert Goddard launches the world's first liquid-fueled rocket from his aunt's farm in Auburn, Massachusetts.

Poet Justin Geoffrey dies in an asylum in H.P. Lovecraft's "The Thing on the Doorstep."

The Percy expedition into the interior of the Brazilian Amazon disappears without a trace.

The moving picture *The Jazz Singer* heralds the arrival of talking motion pictures.

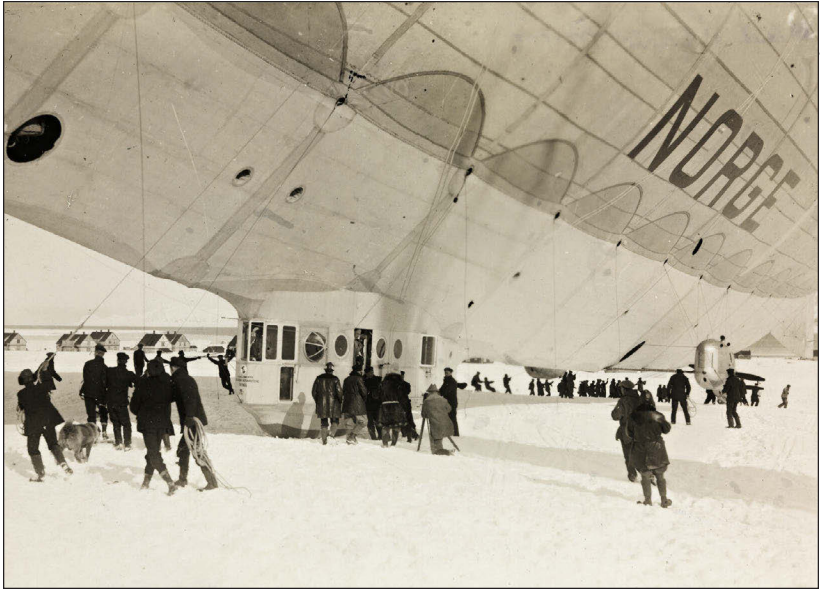
May 9, Richard E. Byrd and Floyd Bennett fly over the North Pole. Roald Amundsen's airship *Norge* follows Byrd's crossing a few days later.

October 10, a naval depot full of ammunition explodes at Lake Denmark, New Jersey, when struck by lightning. Explosions continue for days and 31 people are killed. It is the worst such disaster to date in U.S. military history.

### 1927

Vannevar Bush and co-workers at MIT develop an electromechanical analog computer, the Differential Analyzer, which is capable of solving differential equations.

21 February 1927, Mrs. Joseph Maxim of Dorchester, Massachusetts, awakes with "a start from a disturbing dream" in which she sees her son, a crewman on the *Rumchaser CG 238*, struggling for his life in the waves. Soon after her sister comes to tell her to put on mourning clothes. The next day, a messenger arrives with the news that the vessel had sunk, with all eight crew lost.



The Mississippi River captures national attention by flooding its banks catastrophically throughout April, causing \$300 million in property damage.

Rolex introduces the first waterproof watch, the Oyster.

A decline in the Wall Street stock market signals the entry into a recession. Few see the decline for what it was, the precursor to the Great Depression.

Charles A. Lindbergh makes the first nonstop solo flight across the Atlantic, May 20-21, 1927, in 33.5 hours.

The Society of Space Travel is formed in Germany to explore the concepts outlined in Hermann Oberth's 1924 book (*see above*). Its members include Wernher von Braun, later famous as the head of the Nazi rocket programs of the 1940s, and also the one to develop the first rocket to fly in outer space, and Willy Ley who later writes many books aimed at layman that heighten popular knowledge and interest in outer space.

Lizzie A. Borden, accused and acquitted of the ax-murder of her parents in 1892, dies in Fall River, Massachusetts.

May 8, Charles Nungesser, a famous World War I French fighter ace, takes off in a bid to cross the Atlantic and seize the \$25,000 prize offered for the first plane to fly from New York to France. Nungesser and his friend, Francois Coli, depart in a modified Lavassuer bi-plane called *L'Oiseau Blanc*, "The White Bird." The next night, the French newspaper, *La Presse*, runs a story of the



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flight's success, but it is incorrect. A reporter for *La Presse* in New York, hoping to beat his competition to the story, claims success when a plane matching the description of *L'Oiseau Blanc* arrives in New York Harbor on May 9. But Nungesser and Coli do not appear in New York or anywhere else. Reports of the aircraft come in from several places. A French plane was sighted at 10 a.m. on May 9 over Newfoundland. Another report from St. Pierre, an island south of Newfoundland, notes the craft flying south overhead before fog ensnares the Northeast. Over Rockland, Maine, a plane is heard and, shortly after, the keeper of the lighthouse at Segun, Maine, states much the same. Several islands in Casco Bay also note the noise of an aircraft in the area. Other than these accounts, no more is ever found of *L'Oiseau Blanc*.

August 22, Sacco and Vanzetti are executed.

November 3, bizarre floods, including unusual corpses, are seen in Vermont, as recounted in Lovecraft's "The Whisperer in the Dark."

Events of Lovecraft's "The Shadow Over Innsmouth" occur over the winter of 1927-1928. Innsmouth is investigated by the federal government as waterfront buildings explode.

### 1928

Walter Diemer invents bubble gum.

August, Wilbur Whateley is killed in the Miskatonic University library by a guard dog. His body dissolves. On September 15, three Miskatonic University professors succeed in dispelling the Dunwich Horror (as recounted in Lovecraft's "The Dunwich Horror").

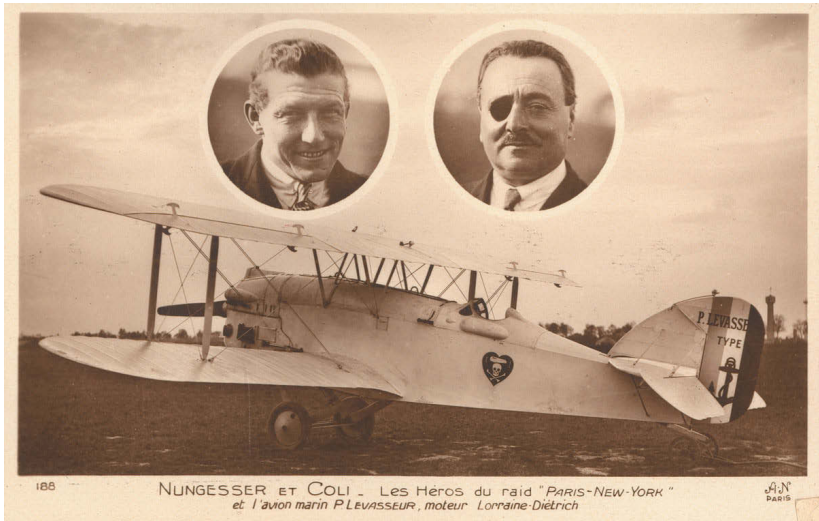
September 12, Henry Akeley flees from Albert Wilmarth of Miskatonic University, in Lovecraft's "The Whisperer in the Dark."

A short-lived radio station in New York City, WRNY, encourages and instructs listeners on how to build their own television sets. On August 21, WRNY begins to broadcast its first day of televised programming. The station goes broke and the project is abandoned in 1929.

General Electric begins television broadcasts shortly after WRNY.

"Securit," a safety glass that holds together instead of shattering upon breakage and is later installed in automobiles, is developed.

November 28, Richard E. Byrd is the first to fly over the South Pole, capturing international attention and praise. (Norwegian Roald Amundsen had already reached the South Pole on foot in 1911, followed by Englishman Robert Scott one month later. Scott and his companions died on the return journey.)



## 1929

Construction begins on the Empire State Building. It is completed in 1931.

Manfred Sakel introduces insulin shock therapy as a treatment for schizophrenia.

Hermann Oberth develops the concept of the multistage rocket.

Umberto Nobile crosses the North Pole in the airship *Italia*. It crashes shortly thereafter, but Nobile and some of the crew survive and are saved by a well-publicized multinational rescue effort.

February 14, the St. Valentine's Day Massacre takes place in Chicago as part of a gang war between Al Capone and George "Bugs" Moran. Six of Moran's men are lined up against a wall and gunned down in a public place but no murder charges are filed.

July 1, the Immigration Act of 1924 takes effect, two years to the day later than it was supposed to, and institutes a quota system restricting immigration into the United States. This has the effect of specifically keeping the numbers of non-Northern Europeans disproportionately low, a measure that is viewed favorably by many in the Northeast.

October 29, the Great Stock Market Crash occurs. It had been predicted by Walter Babson on September 5 but few listened to the doomsayer and little could have been done in any case. The first signs of the coming of "Black Tuesday," as the 29th was called, could be seen during the previous week and on the October 22 England had raised its prime interest rate, leading to significant transfers from American banks and debate among many financiers

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and economists over whether trouble is coming. The following day, the market, which has been in a steady decline since a peak in September, begins to see signs of panic. By October 24, known later as “Black Thursday,” a precursor to the great crash takes place when 13 million shares are sold as stock prices fall. The collapse is complete by the following Tuesday, when 16 million more shares are sold amid the chaos of rising panic and falling market prices. By the November 13, about \$30 billion worth of listed stocks have ceased to exist on the New York Stock Exchange.

September 24, the first blind, instruments-only flight is successfully completed by later-famous World War II pilot James Doolittle at Mitchell Field, New York.

November 19, Norah Farnario, occultist, psychic, and member of Aleister Crowley’s “Order of the Golden Dawn,” is found dead on the rugged isle of Iona, off the coast of Scotland. Spread-eagled on the heather-covered moor, naked save for the sigil-graven robe of her order and the ritual dagger clutched in her hand, no trace of her attacker is found nor is there any noticeable cause of death. Her face, however, is set in a look of absolute terror.



### 1930

January 2, unemployment in the United States reaches 4 million amid agricultural and economic collapse.

The planet Pluto is discovered.

June 10, the steamship *Fairfax* collides with the oil tanker *Panther* in heavy fog just outside of Boston Harbor. All 19 crew on *Panther* are lost, while Captain Brooks of *Fairfax* manages to get his damaged steamer into port. The 11,000 barrels of oil in the hold of *Panther* catch fire and explode, sending wreckage and flaming oil hundreds of yards into the air and lighting the ocean for miles around. A highly publicized inquiry into the disaster raises questions concerning the Coast Guard, which was slow to send rescue boats to the area of the accident.

Fritz Lang’s movie *M*, inspired by the crimes of German Fritz Haarman and the first film seriously based on the life of a serial killer, is released.

September 20, the *Arkham*, bearing the Miskatonic University expedition to Antarctica, leaves Boston, in Lovecraft's "At the Mountains of Madness."

### 1931

March 21, 1931, Germany announces the formation of a customs union with Austria, ostensibly with the intent of bolstering economic recovery in Europe. Astute observers see it as a political union first and foremost, and a sign of Germany's growing hostility toward other nations.

June 23, Wiley Post and partner Harold Gatty take off on what becomes the first single-plane, around-the-world flight, which takes eight days, 15 hours, and 51 minutes.

Australian explorer G.H. Wilkins captains the submarine *Nautilus*, navigating it under the Arctic Ocean to latitude 82 degrees, 15 minutes north.

Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herndon fly nonstop from Sabishiro, Japan, to Wenatchee, Washington, in 41 hours.

September-October, some 827 American banks are forced by circumstance out of existence.

### 1932

March 1, the 20-month-old son of aviator Charles Lindbergh is kidnapped and a ransom note for \$50,000 is found nearby. The case makes nationwide headlines and shocks the country. The money is eventually handed over but the child is not recovered until the remains are found near the Lindbergh home on May 12. An illegal German immigrant, Bruno Hauptmann, is convicted of the crime. Not everyone is convinced of his guilt.

Bennington College opens in Vermont.

The "Lame Duck" Amendment, the 20th to the Constitution, is passed, calling for Congress to convene on January 3 and for the president to be inaugurated into a new term on the 20th of the same month. It is effected to eliminate the long period that had previously existed between presidential elections and the taking of office. The amendment is formally adopted on February 6, 1933.

Amelia Earhart is the first woman to make a solo transatlantic flight from Newfoundland to Ireland, 2,026 miles in 13.5 hours.

November 8, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Democrats win the presidential election by a landslide.

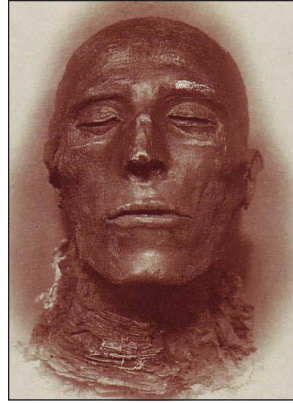
December 12, the bodies of two intruders are found in Boston's

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Cabot Museum, near the display of the “Eridanus” Mummy. The mummy is later subjected to an autopsy but the results are never revealed (Lovecraft’s “Out of the Aeons”).

*Dracula*, starring Bela Lugosi, released.

By year’s end, U.S. unemployment reaches about 13 million.



### 1933

December 5, Prohibition is repealed by the 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

January 30, Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.

February 15, an assassination attempt against president-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt ends in the death of Chicago Mayor Anton Cermak. Roosevelt is unhurt. Assassin Giuseppe Zangara is executed on March 20.

The first of President Roosevelt’s famous “fireside chats” is broadcast on March 12.

In anticipation of the repeal of Prohibition, the U.S. government passes the Beer and Wine Act, which allows the sale of such beverages under 3.2 percent alcohol, and at the same time levies a tax against liquor sales and production.

Fleeing before the growing tide of anti-Semitism and anti-intellectualism, many European Jews arrive in America. Among them is Albert Einstein, who settles in Princeton, New Jersey.

November 16: United States reinstates formal relations with the Soviet Union. The American Government had refused to recognize the Bolshevik Revolutionary administration and relations had been suspended since 1919.

### 1934

Congress passes an act forbidding loans to countries that have fallen behind in their payments to the United States. Over the course of several months it becomes known that Finland is the only borrower country not to have done so.

April, wind whistling around the highest peak in New England, Mount Washington in the White Mountains, is clocked at 231 miles an hour. This is the highest known rate of naturally occurring wind on Earth.



Congress passes the Lindbergh Act, which calls for the death penalty in any case of kidnapping that crosses state lines.

130 people die in a fire on the passenger ship *Morro Castle* off the shore of Asbury Park, New Jersey.

### 1935

Sinclair Lewis writes *It Can't Happen Here*, a novel of America's fall into fascism.

March 12, Albert Fish, a meek-looking elderly man, is brought to trial in one of the most infamous cases of the decade. Arrested after sending a letter of confession to the parents of a young girl that he murdered and partially cannibalized, Fish is found guilty and electrocuted.

DC-3 passenger flights begin.

August 14, the Social Security Act is signed, guaranteeing pensions, made up of contributions from both employees and employers, for those retiring at 65 as of 1942.

August 31, President Roosevelt signs the Neutrality Act, which forbids the shipment of arms or munitions to belligerents once the president has declared that a state of war exists. It also authorizes the president to prohibit Americans from taking passage on the ships of belligerents.

### 1936

July 17, the Spanish Civil War begins with army units in Morocco proclaiming a revolution against the government in Madrid. General Francisco Franco quickly rises to power over the various conservative elements. The United States elects not to interfere.

In the presidential election of November 3, Roosevelt defeats Alfred Landon overwhelmingly. In the electoral college votes, only Maine and Vermont go to Landon.

December 11, King Edward VIII of England abdicates his throne for his love, American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson.



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### 1937

President Roosevelt signs another Neutrality Act, proclaiming America's intention to not get involved in any foreign war.

May 6, the dirigible *Hindenburg* explodes at Lakehurst, New Jersey, killing 36 people. Passenger airship traffic rapidly becomes a thing of the past.

July, Amelia Earhart, already famous as the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic as well as the first person to fly non-stop from Hawaii to the continental United States, sets out with a navigator to fly around the world. After a few nearly indecipherable radio messages, neither craft nor crew are ever heard from again. Speculation abounds as to their fate, the most likely explanation being that the craft was forced down somewhere in the South Pacific.

Insulin first used to control diabetes.

A Japanese plane sinks the American gunboat *Panay* in Chinese waters.

### 1938

Hitler appoints himself war minister of Germany. German troops march into Austria.

May 26, Texas Democrat Martin Dies heads a committee set up by the House of Representatives to investigate "un-American activity." The avowed goal of the committee is to investigate suspect groups, whether of the right or left, Nazi or Communist, but its focus appears to be concentrated on the left.

Minimum wage is legislated at \$5.40 an hour and the maximum work week set at 44 hours. These restrictions, however, are only applied to businesses engaged in interstate commerce.

July 14, Howard Hughes sets a new world record for an around the world flight, completing it in three days, 19 hours, 14.28 minutes.

September 21, a powerful tropical hurricane swings north along the Atlantic coast of the United States and New England is especially hard hit. As many as 800 people are killed, millions of trees are downed, and damages are estimated at more than \$300 million.

September 30, the Munich Pact is signed in that city by British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and French Prime Minister Édouard Daladier. It ratifies the intended German occupation of the Sudetenland, a region of Czechoslovakia primarily inhabited by German speakers. Hitler, acting under the guise of promoting ethnic sovereignty for Germans everywhere, "champions" the Sudetenlanders, who agitate for intercession at his insistence.

Chamberlain, upon returning to England, proclaims that the pact has delivered “peace in our time.” Although later events would demonstrate the utter failure of Chamberlain’s “appeasement” policy, an October poll in the U.S. — after Hitler marched troops into the Sudetenland on the 3rd — shows that only a minority of Americans disapprove of the Munich Pact.

President Roosevelt appeals to Hitler and Mussolini to settle their complaints with other European states peacefully.

Halloween night, 1938, Orson Welles’ radio show “Invasion from Mars” terrifies millions across America into fearing that Grover’s Mill, New Jersey, has been invaded by Martians. Although Orson Welles does make an explanatory disclaimer on the nature of the program immediately before it airs, many who tune in during the broadcast panic, some even taking to the highways in flight.

December 6, Anthony Eden, who resigned as Britain’s Foreign Minister over the signing of the Munich Pact, gives a radio speech in New York City to the effect that democracies worldwide are threatened by the rise of Fascism in Europe.

Roosevelt recalls the American ambassador to Germany and Germany follows suit, recalling her ambassador to the United States a few days later.



Martians vs. Thunder Child, by Henrique Alvim Correa, 1906



A Megalithic Structure of New England

## Chapter 3: Prehistory of New England

**T**his section is intended to provide a framework on which to hang the various concepts that rule your campaign. Whether these ideas come from within these pages, are your own, or derive from other sources, you can use the information presented here to flesh out the time between scenarios, to provide background information for your characters to find while doing research, or simply to stir your own imagination.

All the information presented in this section is internally consistent and can be used as-is for the background of your game. You may have to make some choices on how certain facts are perceived, whether they are factually correct within the context of your world, and the like. If you wish, however, you can use this content straight from the book with only a few such decisions.

Note that much of what is in this section is modern information that was not available in the 1920s. It is therefore up to you as the Keeper to decide how any of it is to be used, how it will be discovered, and what is true or not within the context of your campaign. If you so wish, the boxed text on the following page may be something that your investigators stumble upon in their research. It should be noted that much of what is found in this section is highly disputed by historians and archaeologists in the real world, and thus is, at best, speculation. However, the conclusions herein are based upon interpretations of existing evidence and are presented as they are by the researchers who champion them. The sources for some of these theories can be found in the bibliography at the back of this book.

Following is an excerpt from “A Brief Introduction to Megalithic Structures of the Northeast and Beyond” in *The Arkham Journal of Archaeological Inquiry*, v. 3 (1921) p.422-3. It is a transcript of the introductory lecture to the first meeting of the Learned Fellows of the Association for Research into the Culture of the Archaic Northeast of America, at the annual conference on June 13, 1919, in Arkham, Massachusetts, by Michael A. Schumann, Ph.D.



Item 3-A: Excerpt from Dr. Michael A. Schumann Article

**I**t is not, at this time, possible to speculate meaningfully as to the nature of the culture that may have left behind so many stone structures throughout New England and beyond. Most of these artifacts may be categorized by shape and construction into one of several different types, the two most common of which are the “Dolmen,” and the “Chamber.” Examples of both types may be seen all over New England. Dolmens are found primarily in Massachusetts, while chambers are more common in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut (as well as New York, Tennessee, and further west).

A “dolmen” is comprised of a broad capstone, sometimes flat, placed horizontally upon at least two, and occasionally three or four, supporting blocks to create an open but covered space. Usually, a dolmen is a rather squat structure with very little room under the capstone, enough perhaps for someone to lie or be placed under but not enough to inhabit comfortably. They were, therefore, probably not intended for regular habitation. This factor, and the considerable effort that must have been required for their construction, suggests a ritual purpose, perhaps as icons, or as funerary monuments or tombs. There is some evidence that near identical dolmens raised in or just prior to the bronze age in Europe were partially covered by earthen mounds. It thus may be that many dolmens were originally under mounds. Many may yet be. There is some speculation that the dolmen may have originally served as a burial chamber. Based on those that are known, however, there is no evidence to confirm or refute this claim. Of course, if all such structures were originally mounded over, then it stands to reason that only those that remain so, and which are obviously thus far undiscovered, would have any evidence to surrender.

A chamber is here defined as an enclosed room or passage of considerably greater extent than a dolmen. Method of construction was similar, involving large supporting columns of either individual slabs or carefully chosen smaller unmortared stones that were capped, either by great single slabs or fitted smaller stones, to form a flat roof. Many chambers are still entirely or partially buried under the earth, often with only their square entryways apparent. Generally, each site is a single chamber with no joining passages even if other chambers are nearby, but occasional connecting halls do exist.

Less common than either the dolmen or chamber sites are those referred to as “Menhirs” or roughly phallus-shaped standing stones found singly, in rings, or in lines in several spots throughout the Northeast. Menhirs are usually not found in the same contexts as either of the previously-mentioned relics, suggesting that the functions to which the various sites were put did not correspond. One exception to this is the Menhir ring at Phallus Hill, near Woodstock, Vermont. As you may know, Woodstock is also the site of an extensive chamber constructed of massive overhead slabs supported on large vertically-aligned stones to form one of the most interesting and complex such constructs to have come to light so far. I hope that you will all attend the learned Doctor Elizabeth Penney’s lecture on last year’s excavations at Woodstock, and am told that it is one of our most significant seasons thus far.

The least-often-noted type of Neolithic stonework is referred to commonly as a “Druid’s Chair.” Rough-hewn slab seats with integral backrests, usually set dolmen-fashion upon small supports, these “chairs” are invariably isolated from any of the other styles of stonework noted above and their purpose is utterly unknown. Such a relic may be found at Sutton, just west of Boston.

This is as much information as the actual megaliths themselves can provide. As to what is said about them, it should be noted that the esteemed John Winthrop, scholar and governor of Connecticut in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, found that the aboriginal Algonquian of the area used no stone in their own constructions. Moreover, these people universally shunned the megaliths and regarded them with respect and no small amount of fear. This historical note, in addition to providing us with the useful information that the sites had a negative reputation among the native population, also lays to rest the old wives tale that suggests, rather stupidly, that the structures in question were built by the early colonists themselves as “root cellars.”

Few artifacts useful for establishing any cultural context have been found in any of the sites within New England. It is my own hope that continued conferences such as these will foster the sharing of information necessary to expand our knowledge of the cultures that have gone before our own. I believe it is only through such understanding that we can possibly hope to survive where they did not. We all know the trials and perils faced by our society. We must continue such unitary efforts as this.

## **Red Paint People**

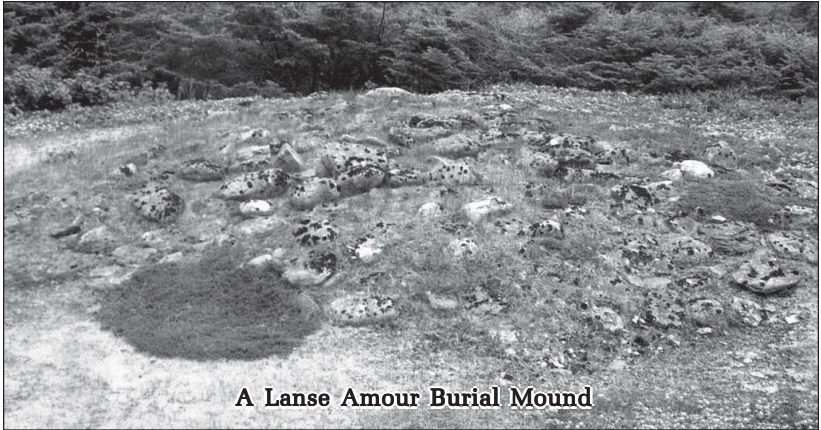
The Red Paint People, also known as the Maritime Archaic Culture, were an ancient civilization that inhabited New England, Nova Scotia, and Labrador around 4000+ B.P. Similar burials have also been found along the coasts of the most northerly reaches of Europe and Asia. That this evidence is invariably found along the seashore has led theorists to conclude that the culture was highly skilled at navigation and at extracting a livelihood from the ocean. The name “Red Paint” comes from the cultural practice of interring the dead in a tomb lined with a mineral compound known as red ochre. The pigment was also used in other, less readily-understood ceremonies and functions.

The culture left little direct evidence of its lifestyle, but was capable of building reasonably complex megalithic tombs, may have used copper tools, and derived much of its existence from the sea. The consistency of interment found over both New World and Old World sites has led archaeologists to speculate on a widespread sea-based economy that stretched from central Siberia and Scandinavia to the northeast coast of Canada and the United States. The circumpolar nature of the Red Paint culture was first proposed in the 1940s by Norwegian scholar Guttorm Gjessing.

There are many alignments of stones in Labrador and northern Quebec that are thought to have been navigational aids. A site in Quebec, formerly known as L'anse Mort and now as L'anse Amour, contained a burial mound with remains carbon dated to 7500 B.P. A similar mound, found in Ledveg, Denmark, is roughly 7,000 years old.

One of the Lanse Amour burials was quite elaborate and must have entailed considerable expense and labor. This megalithic tomb consisted of rectangular upright stones supporting a low slab ceiling. Within the chamber thus created the skeleton of a 12 or 13-year-old girl was discovered. A large flat rock lay over the burial itself and what were probably ritual fires left charcoal upon the surface of the burial slab.

In the previous century, a river mouth near Bangor, Maine, became the first-known site of the Red Paint People in Maine. In 1882, a local farmer led the mayor of Bangor, Augustus Hamlin, to a spot near the mouth of the Penobscot River where it appeared as though blood was welling up from the earth. Hamlin, who was also a doctor, amateur geologist and an antiquarian, found that the “blood” was in fact red ochre turned up by the farmer’s plow and dissolved by the rain.



**A Lanse Amour Burial Mound**

Hamlin was aware that many native tribes of the region used red ochre in their spiritual rites and first reasoned that the site was in some way related to the activities of a contemporary tribe. But when he found several smoothly-polished stones with very sharp edges he became aware that these were very different from anything he had seen among the Algonquian tribes of the region. Hamlin also suspected that the stones were far older.

Hamlin brought the tools to Harvard University, where archeologist Charles Willowby examined them. What he saw prompted him to investigate the site personally. An excavation of the area turned up a mound at the water's edge with stones and other objects buried in obviously ritual patterns. No human remains were found but Willowby's success fueled the interest of others.

What came to be viewed as a boneless cemetery then drew the attention of Warren Moorhead, an archeologist with a reputation for uncovering spectacular discoveries. His excavations found several more mounds and ritual sites along the coast of Maine. He was no more successful in finding human remains than was his predecessor. He did note, however, that the stones uncovered did not appear to have been quarried locally.

Eighty years later, the stones were found to have come originally from Ramah Bay, in Northern Labrador, 1,500 miles from the coast of Maine. Since then, several other Red Paint sites have been unearthed in New England. Then, in the 1930s, the first skeletons to be identified as belonging to a Red Paint site were found at Niven, near Blue Hill Bay, Maine. Besides the skeletons, the burial yielded bone artifacts with geometric inscriptions, toggling harpoons, and the remains of swordfish, a deep-water creature.

Another find, at Turner Farm, on North Haven Island in

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Penobscot Bay, held a great quantity of bone implements of maritime purpose, such as plummets, harpoons, and gouges, along with bones of cod and swordfish. Five graves were eventually discovered on the site and the remains were dated to 4500 B.P. Tentative skeletal analysis suggested that the people associated with this burial were, not surprisingly, of Native American stock.

A Boston newspaper reported in 1981 that a number of skeletons covered in Red Ochre were found in an unidentified site north of Boston. At least one of the bodies dates from more than 7,200 years ago. In addition, one of the skulls has been found to possess certain features that led some researchers to conclude that it is not the remains of a Native American. The shape of the cranium and jaw appear to conform more closely to the type normally seen in Caucasian populations of Northern Europe.

### **Using the Red Paint People in a Campaign**

Few things are known about the Maritime Archaic Culture besides what is printed here and there are many speculations but little concrete evidence. One rather poorly-documented theory is that, based on skull measurements from a narrow sample from a single burial site, the people were Caucasian and potentially Northern European. This view, however, can hardly be proved.

In the context of the 1920s, Maritime Archaic Culture was essentially unknown. However, the sites still existed, awaiting discovery, and they are ideal for archaeologically-inclined investigators. A widespread seafaring culture that began concurrently with the earliest European stone circles such as Stonehenge, and predates even the first Egyptian proto-pyramid by more than two millennia, beggars the imagination with role-playing possibilities.

### **Empire of Woden-Lithi**

The many megalithic sites noted above have led one researcher to believe that there was a Bronze Age empire in central and eastern North America, founded by a proto-Germanic who has signed himself as Woden-Lithi in an extensive inscription on an shelf of rock outside Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Barry Fell worked to translate the many seemingly random marks and symbols that accompanied various pictographs on monumentary rocks in Scandinavia. By chance, he noted two things. First, that the pictographs of Northern Europe



were remarkably similar to those found in megalithic sites all over North America. Second, he found that there appeared to be something systematic in the scratches previously viewed as random. The scratches seemed to be consistent between Northern Europe and North America. But his greatest revelation was yet to come.

Having determined that these marks were intentionally inscribed and associated with the pictographs they accompanied, Fell attempted to decipher the writings of the unknown scribes who left the rock carvings. It was only when he noted that there were symbols that both scripts had in common with the Tifinig letters used in rock inscriptions up to the present day by the Tuareg tribesmen of North Africa that he had the “Rosetta Stone” that he needed. He was then able to understand the messages in the stones.

The petroglyphs — Greek for “stone-writing” — found at Peterborough told of an ancient race of seafarers who spoke a Germanic tongue and travelled across the Atlantic around 3700 B.P. The king of this people, Woden-Lithi, established a trading capital in what is now central Ontario and commemorated his actions with the monument in question. How long the “empire” survived is unknown, but Fell theorizes that its extent, or at least the extent of its influence, was considerable. Inscriptions in the same “language” may be found as far away as Tennessee and British Columbia.

Fell held that Woden-Lithi could have come to America for copper. Based on remains of ancient mines and smelters on the north shore of Lake Superior, metallurgists speculate that this region may have been a center for excavation of copper in the second millennium B.C. Yet very little copper has been found in any North American archeological context and Fell claims that the majority may have been intended for export overseas.

In addition to the rock writings mentioned above, certain megalithic sites beyond the boundaries of New England contain physical evidence that Fell says corroborate his case. An archaeological excavation near Holliston Mills, Tennessee, has revealed several skulls carbon-dated to around the twenty-third century B.P. There were three types of skulls found in the Tennessee dig. The first and most common type is generally associated with Native Americans past and present, as well as with the inhabitants of north and central Asia. It is typified by a slightly out-thrust jaw that presents the teeth as a rounded projection in the side profile. The second type of skull is generally consistent with skulls found in Europe among Caucasian populations. Here the jaw and teeth

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present much nearer a straight line when viewed from the side. Finally, a much smaller skull, first thought to be that of a child, but later found to have belonged to someone of middle age, was also discovered. The braincase was roughly two-thirds that of a normal adult and also possessed teeth that projected extremely forward when seen in profile. This type of skull is generally associated with pygmies of modern Malaysia and the Philippines, but has also been found in Neolithic sites in Central Asia. The pygmies now resident in Malaysia are thought to have originated in central Asia thousands of years ago.

Skulls excavated at a site near Boston and associated with the Red Paint People (q.v.) are also thought by some to be of European origin.

From these skeletal remains, Fell reasoned that there were two indigenous races of humanity that passed into North America over the Bering Straits land bridge during the Ice Age migrations. The fact of the land bridge and its use by immigrants is not usually disputed, although the existence of the pygmies among those immigrants has not been widely considered. Many thousands of years passed while these populations expanded to cover most of both Americas.

But Fell believes that the first contact between the indigenous population and invaders from the Old World did not occur in the 15th century of the Common Era. Rather, by that time, any remains of the “Empire of Woden-Lithi” were sufficiently destroyed by the intervening centuries that no thought was given to its existence.

Fell does not link this empire with the existence of the Red Paint People and, in fact, does not mention the Maritime Archaic Culture at all. Perhaps the two cultures did not overlap in time, perhaps Woden-Lithi’s voyage was inspired by legends of an earlier culture that knew of lands across the sea, or maybe the societies coexisted — peacefully or otherwise.

### **Using the Empire of Woden-Lithi in your Campaign**

Exactly how you use the events, theories and evidence presented here is up to you as Keeper. Perhaps Woden-Lithi and his prehistoric Vikings were seeking relics lost in the waters of the Great Lakes in antediluvian times. Maybe they were in conflict with some of the Red Paint People in the Old World and pursued the war, or the treasures of the enemy, across the sea. Perhaps you decide that Woden-Lithi was in truth mining thousands of tons of ancient copper

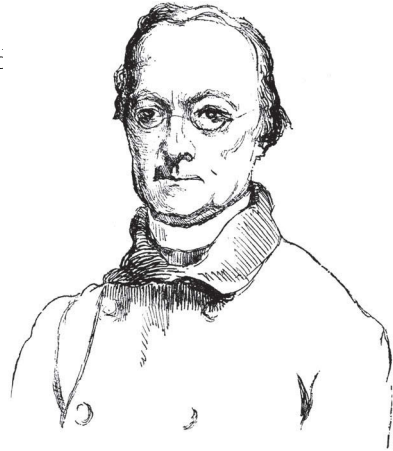
from the stony shores of Lake Superior — and, if so, to what end? Enough copper for all the smiths of the Near East in an unknown age of civilization before the Great Flood? To create a massive Elder Sign infused with the energy of 10,000 lightning strikes? Or perhaps he mined not for copper but its essence the platonic ideal of copper, the finest metal there is for conducting electricity, all in order to forge a great weapon known for thousands of years afterward — the hammer of Thor. Woden is, after all, an archaic name for Odin, father of Thor and leader of the Norse gods in Ragnarok, their war against the giants of the elder world.

The fact that Fell's work has not met with much in the way of scholarly acclaim should not keep you from using his research in your game. You are not trying for historical authenticity and rather for historical plausibility or better yet, historical weirdness. Use the ideas above or come up with your own slant on Woden-Lithi to fit your game.

### **Abbe Brasseur de Bourbourg**

Abbe Charles-Étienne Brasseur de Bourbourg is a real historical personage that Keepers can use as part of the background for a scenario or campaign. His write-up is included here because Bourbourg was a Bostonian and, originally at least, a historian and archeologist who was an expert on pre-Columbian America.

For many years in the 19th century, Bourbourg was among the most respected authorities on Mayan civilization and while living in Boston was sought by other scholars for his expertise in their language. Over several decades, he published glossaries, commentaries, and a Mayan grammar and dictionary. But suddenly, and for no known reason, the abbe was struck by a linguistic revelation and perceived a similarity between portions of the Mayan language and aspects of various archaic Germanic tongues. He discovered that many Mayan words were, as he believed, derived from Germanic roots. Eventually, he came to the conclusion that the Mayan texts were allegories without actual historical basis. What they truly contained, he believed, in common



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with the scrolls of ancient Egypt, was the previously unknown history of Atlantis, the sunken continent and precursor to all the great civilizations of the world. He equated the Egyptian god Horus with the plumed serpent deity of old Mexico, popularly known by its Aztec name of Quetzalcoatl.

Bourbourg's premise was that the Mayan culture was founded by adventurers from the Old World civilization of Phoenicia. The founder, Votan, built the Mayan city of Palenque and founded the empire of Xibalba. The Aztecs, he thought, had originated in Central Asia and embarked upon a world-spanning migration, first across Europe and then over the Atlantic to America.

Bourbourg, along with two others, Augustus le Plongeon and Jean Frederick de Waldeck, held to the unpopular notion that there were ancient contacts between the cultures of Central America and those of the Near East, and that these civilizations derived common cultural points from an at least vaguely-remembered Atlantean antecedent.

### **Using the Abbe and his Works in Your Campaign**

Without changing anything the Abbe wrote, here is what you start with:

✧ Votan, king of the proto-Mayan, founds the elder age city of Xibalba, which becomes synonymous with the Mayan concept of hell and the underworld! (Historians generally agree that the progenitors of the Mayan were the Olmecs, but anyway ... )

✧ The Aztecs as a marauding race of bloody conquerors, sweeping from the steppes of Asia, across Europe like the Huns centuries later, only to take to the sea and establish their bloody rule in Mesoamerica!

✧ Add Mythos, or other references, stir, and, *voila* — campaign!

If you want to mash things together a bit, it would not be much of a stretch to have a secret society begun in Atlantis and carried onward by the priests of Horus, Odin, and Quetzacoatl, devoted to preserving the world of men against the Elder Races. In Egypt, the priests work to preserve the power of the living in the afterlife, among the Germanics, Odin's holy men seek far and wide among the barbarian north for the heroes to fight in the last war, while the bloody hands of the priests of Quetzacoatl keep the power of the ley lines strong with regular infusions of human blood.

## **Celtic Conquest of Pre-Columbian New England**

According to Barry Fell, in the millennia that followed the dissolution of the copper empire of Woden-Lithi the land that would eventually become New England was invaded by several other groups of seafarers from over the Atlantic. In the first millennium B.C., Phoenicians, Basques, Libyans, and Celts all made forays to the New World. Inscriptions referring to all of these peoples have been found cut into rock faces, boulders, menhirs, and druid's chairs all over the northeastern United States, but all the cultures mentioned left little evidence behind — except for the Celts.

Fell's assertion is that the first Celtic settlement in the new world was at the now famous megalithic site of North Salem, New Hampshire. Here, on a branch of the Merrimack River, a vast complex of stone chambers both below and above the surface, walled enclosures, and standing stones has baffled scholars who have attempted to assign its provenance.

Other similar although less extensive sites have been found all over New England. At Quechee, Vermont, a complex of stone chambers and circles exists. One of the stones bears what may be an inscription in Ogam, a Celtic alphabet which, similar to ancient Hebrew, includes no vowels. When he first came to the site, Fell was unable to translate the inscription, which he felt was in Celtic, but could have simply been Ogam, the script used by the Celts, to carry the message of an unknown language. He later claimed, however, to have found an American "Rosetta Stone" bearing a Celtic inscription next to a direct transliteration into Phoenician, but the exact location of this stone is currently unknown.

Similar Ogam inscriptions have been discovered by Fell as far away as Crack Cave, Colorado, and Snapp's Ridge, Tennessee.

## **Second Celtic Invasion of the New World and More**

Because there is no source from the first millennium A.D. that provides evidence for Celtic kingdoms across the Atlantic, it can be assumed that if any did exist they probably had become isolated or died out by then. But, perhaps, there was some remembrance in Medieval Europe of these farthest west of the Celtic peoples. According to the life of St. Brendan the Navigator, he is reputed to have made a voyage to the west in a small hide-covered boat called a *curragh* and to have found inhabited lands in his travels. This tale has generally been assumed by scholars to be nothing more than typical hagiographical exaggeration, but there are other sources



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that suggest that there *may* have been some kernel of truth underlying the fanciful story of St. Brendan.

The Norse discovery of America in the late 10th century is now beyond dispute and therefore does not warrant a place in this volume. With the unearthing of a Viking settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows in Labrador, there is archaeological evidence to support the texts of the Icelandic sagas, the sources that first raised the issue of Scandinavian settlers in the New World. But the sagas also mention other non-aboriginal inhabitants of America. In fact, they suppose that these inhabitants are Irish, and the name attributed to America in the sagas is Great Ireland.

The Norse sources of the 13th and 14th centuries record the existence of Great Ireland near the Norse settlement of Vinland the Good in "Erik the Red's Saga," "Eyrbyggja Saga," and "Landnamabok," the book of the Norse colonization of Iceland.

Erik's saga tells of the capture of some natives by Norse settlers just after the year A.D. 1000. Natives were kept as slaves and eventually learned enough Norse to communicate with their captors. They told the Norsemen of white-robed men who were in the habit of marching in stately processions bearing banners of white cloth while chanting. The settlers, upon hearing this information, presumed that the odd processions must be comprised of the monks of what the saga calls Great Ireland.

The journey of Ari Marson, driven off course when taking ship out of Iceland, is recorded in the "Landnamabok." Ari, after several weeks at sea, eventually made land in Hvitamannaland, or "white man's land." Here Marson was held for some time and was eventually converted to Christianity and baptized. It is vaguely possible that this story refers to Greenland, as some scholars attest, but the saga itself mentions that Hvitamannaland lies west of Vinland.

Finally, the "Eyrbyggja Saga" tells the story of Bjorn Asbrandson, who fled from the murderous brother of a woman he had defiled. His ship was lost somewhere to the west and Bjorn was thought dead. Some 29 years later, a merchant named Guthleif Gunnlaugson encountered a storm after having sailed out from Dublin. His ship was forced far to the west. On reaching shore, Guthleif and the rest of the crew were all taken prisoner by speakers of Irish. They were about to be killed when they were saved by the intervention of a white-haired Norseman claiming to be Bjorn. After saving the captives, Bjorn had Guthleif carried a peace offering to



the woman he had violated so long before. The saga goes on to say that when the woman whom Bjorn had wronged received the tribute she did not doubt that it came from Bjorn.

What is perhaps most convincing about these stories is not that the people in the tale inhabit Hvitamannaland or Great Ireland but that the saga-writer assumed that the reader of his work would believe that men of the 10th century would know of these places. Similarly, he assumes that his readers are familiar with Great Ireland, at least enough that he does not need to provide a preamble to it. This suggests that Great Ireland was reasonably well known to at least the educated people of Iceland in the saga writer's own time. There is a notion of Great Ireland as a specific albeit distant location more than a century before Columbus began his voyage. Moreover, the prevailing wisdom at the time of the writing of the sagas in question held that the Irish lived in America before the arrival of the Norse.

### **Seafarers of the Ancient Near East**

The Phoenicians of the biblical Levant were among the foremost of ancient seagoers. As early as the 8th century B.C., they had established colonies on the sites that later became Carthage and Marseilles. It has also been speculated that they may have attempted to solve the tin shortage of the first millennium before Christ by travelling to the British Isles (tin and copper being the two main

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ingredients of the bronze, used universally around the Mediterranean at the time). There is some belief that the Phoenicians may have journeyed even further than Britain in search of new resources to exploit. Barry Fell believes that they came to the New World.

Ten miles off the coast of Maine lies Monhegan Island and several inscriptions have been found on the weather-beaten rocks there and one in particular has attracted Fell's attention. He determined it to be in Old Goidelic, a Celtic tongue, and written in Ogam characters. It reads: "Ships from Phoenicia, Cargo Platform." This area was apparently set aside for the loading and unloading of Phoenician trading vessels. Perhaps the inscription was intended to mark the place where the ancient Celtic peoples of New England could go to trade their goods for the luxuries of the old world.

Farther to the south, on Mount Hope Bay, near Bristol, Rhode Island, a pictograph of a high-sterned ship in a style favored by the Phoenicians has been found on a rock at the shore. An inscription below the carving proclaims the stone as belonging to the Phoenician mariners.

But the Phoenicians may have left more behind in America than the occasional rock carving and might have bequeathed a written language to the native cultures of the Northeast.

In the 18th century, many of the native tribes of northern New England are reported to have used a written language given to them by French missionary Pierre Maillard. This language was said to have been based on Egyptian hieroglyphs and developed by Maillard to better convert the natives to Christianity, but there is evidence to suggest that it predated the arrival of Maillard, who died in 1762.

Another missionary of Maillard's day, Father Eugene Vetromile, noted that the earliest French explorers among the tribes in question described them as writing strange characters on bark and stone. A form of writing was thus apparently in use in the region before the coming of the earliest Europeans.

Another argument stands against the introduction of hieroglyphs by Maillard. The "Rosetta Stone," the tri-lingual inscription used by French scholar Jean-François Champollion to translate hieroglyphs for the first time was not found until 61 years after the missionary's death. If the marks described by early French explorers were a form of Egyptian hieroglyph they could not have arrived in America in the current millennium. Perhaps the Phoenicians tired of using Celtic Ogam as the "Lingua Franca" of Prehistoric America.

## Norombega, the Missing Land

The region of Norombega appears regularly on 16th century maps of the east coast of what came to be North America. A 1569 Mercator projection map shows a tower in the approximate location of Narragansett Bay. There exists to this day a ruined citadel of ancient origin in Newport, Rhode Island, know as the Newport Tower (q.v.). At the turn of the 17th century, Samuel de Champlain attempted to find Norombega and discovered nothing and from that time on it appeared less and less on the maps of the region.

According to cartographers operating prior to Champlain, Norombega comprised much of the then-known portion of North America — Maine, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Newfoundland. The word Norombega is of unknown origin and has no known meaning but is most often assigned provenance in the Abenaki language of East Coast natives. A similar word, “Nolunbeka,” is associated with the Penobscot River. The same part of North America is also labelled as Noruega or Nova Noruega (“Norway” and “Nova Norway,” respectively) by later cartographers, but these appear to occur later as explanations of the already-familiar Norombega.









## Chapter 4: Native Americans of New England

**N**ative Americans inhabited the area now known as New England for thousands of years before the coming of European settlers. The aboriginal way of life was markedly different from anything previously experienced by those who came to this land and the relationship they had with the land was equally alien. To the colonists it was also frightening and when they wondered at the eerie sounds issuing from the forest at night the natives they knew had a name for the source of those sounds. And when the colonists wondered at unexplained events or chilling circumstances they encountered the natives had explanations for them. That those explanations offered nothing to allay the fears of the colonists is, perhaps, a measure of the gulf of difference that separated the two cultures.

### **Northeastern Cultural Area**

The Native Americans of New England were linguistically and culturally united in belonging to the Algonquian sociolinguistic group. The Algonquian culture, however, extended far into the interior of the continent as well as far to the north and south of the colony.

To say that all those of Algonquian background were united is true to the extent that they shared basic features of language, religion, and way of life. But this is accurate only so far as it would be to say that the peoples of medieval France, Italy, and Spain are united by their once having been part of the Roman Empire and the extent to which they share descendants of its language, many of its laws, a few of its customs, and a vague sense of common cultural heritage. This was roughly the case with the Algonquian tribes of New England and beyond. Individual Algonquian tribes shared linguistic, religious, and cultural similarities but this did not in any way mean that they were a single political or cultural entity or that they were united by any common purpose.

To deal with the intricacies of the native peoples of New England would take far more space than is available here. What follows is a general discussion of the Eastern Algonquian culture as a whole, as well as an attempt to provide further basic information on the major

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tribes of New England.

The various tribes were numerous and differed in more ways than they were similar. But common environmental and geographical conditions mean that the natives of the Northeast shared certain aspects of culture. It is these similarities that have caused scholars to label the natives of New England and beyond as members of the Northeast Culture Area, also often referred to as the Northeast Woodland Area. This group includes the tribes of the modern states stretching from Minnesota to Maine and as far south as North Carolina.

Native Americans had an existence that depended on the land in a way that the Europeans could not fathom. The Colonial lifestyle was intrusive, not only in that its practitioners were immigrants to America but in how they dealt with the land. European culture required that the land undergo significant change and development to support the Colonial society. Woodland needed to be cleared, towns and eventually cities built, harbors constructed and maintained. Native culture was far less intrusive to the environment. Native tribes did not cluster in cities, nor did they impose change on the landscape to the same degree as European society. This has often been referred to as “living close to the land,” deriving a living from the environment without substantially altering its makeup. Because most of the land in this region is woodland, many of the survival strategies developed by the inhabitants of the area were similar.

The single constant over the entirety of the Northeastern Cultural region was, in fact, the presence of woodland and the terrain is otherwise immensely varied, ranging from seacoasts to mountains, hills to lakes, and river valleys to swampland. But the forests provided the mainstays of the native culture of the Northeast. Wood was abundant and used for housing, boats, fuel, clothing, roofing, bedding, and more. Animals and beneficial plants were available in the forests, while the oceans, lakes, and rivers provided fish and shellfish. Many natives of the Northeast were also farmers, planting many semi-domesticated crops to provide food and fiber for clothing and other uses. Native agriculture was, however, far less invasive of the land than its European counterpart.

There were two major linguistic groups within the Northeastern Cultural Area, Algonquian and Iroquoian. The Iroquoian group centered around the eastern edge of the Great Lakes and in Upstate New York and so will not be discussed here. All the tribes resident in New England since the coming of the Europeans were Algonquians.

## New England Algonquians

Natives of the Algonquian linguistic group exist far beyond the region defined by the Northeast Cultural Area and can be found as far away as the West Coast and scattered over the great plains of the Midwest. There are several distinct divisions within the huge Algonquian linguistic group and, in fact, speakers of Algonquian from different territories may share a basic similarity in language and yet be unable to communicate due to differences in regional dialects. The sub-group of Algonquian that is of concern here is the New England Algonquians.

New England Algonquians include many tribes, of which the major ones are the Abenaki, Massachuset, Mohegan, Narragansett, Nipmuc, Passamaquoddy, Pennacook, Penobscot, Pequot, and Wampanoag. Beyond these there are many lesser and occasionally extinct tribes. What follows is a brief synopsis of the common culture and lifestyle of the New England Algonquians, before going on to various aspects and history specific to the different tribes.

### Intertribal Structure

Socially, the tribes of New England generally formed themselves into confederacies, such as the Abenaki Confederacy. These were loose intertribal structures designed to facilitate trade and, in times of war, mutual support, quite unlike the highly-regimentalized style of the Iroquois League. An Algonquian confederacy usually came under the direction of a grand *sachem* who was paramount over the various lesser *sachem* of the individual tribes (*sachem* being the Northeastern Algonquian word for the leader of the tribe). Actual powers of the grand *sachem* varied by individual. In some instances the grand *sachem* was no more than a mediator in intertribal squabbles. Occasionally, the powers of the grand *sachem* were greater, such as those of Massasoit of the Wampanoags and his sons, called by the colonists Phillip and Alexander.

### Food

During spring, summer and fall. Algonquians lived in villages, often along a riverbank, and farmed corn, beans and squash. Wild plants supplemented this fare - berries, nuts roots, stalks and tubers. If maple trees were near, much use was made of the sweet sap.

In winter, the villages were often abandoned as the tribe scattered into small groups to hunt whatever presented itself. Deer, rabbit,

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squirrel, beaver, turkey, partridge, goose and duck. If available, moose, elk or bear would also be sought.

Prior to the appearance of the horse in North America, all hunting was, of course, done on foot. Besides spears, bows, and clubs, traps, snares, and deadfalls were used to catch game. The dog, the only domestic animal in Algonquian culture prior to contact with European society, was used in hunting and also as a beast of burden. Fishing the rivers, lakes, and coastline of New England was important to all the tribes of the region. Shellfish comprised much of the summer diet of the coastal peoples. Meat and seafood of all varieties were hung to dry or smoked when plentiful and, thus prepared, could last for several months and carry a tribe through the lean winter.

### **Shelter and Transportation**

Two basic forms of house were used by the Algonquians, the wigwam and the longhouse. The wigwam consisted of a number of saplings, curved and bent to form a semi-spherical framework, over which were laid sheets of bark from birch or other trees, or even woven mats of reeds or animal skins if necessary. Among some tribes, the saplings were not bent over but left straight, tepee-style. Swamp grass and furs were used as insulation and branches under furs and hides served as bedding. Occasionally, wigwam-shaped “sweat-houses” were used for ritual purposes.

In areas of contact with the Iroquois, some tribes made use of the longhouse, a large rectangular building built from a frame of long poles and covered with elm or other bark. Such structures might be used as meeting halls for councils or as single or even multi-family dwellings “Iroquois-style.”

Many Algonquian villages were walled with a palisade of upright logs for defence, as was the case with many Colonial towns.

The canoe is probably the best known native cultural utensil today. The Algonquians made great use of canoes of birchbark, elmbark, and even moosehide. A small canoe could carry two people, while larger craft for war and transport were capable of bearing 10 or more. Cedar was split and lashed into a frame, over which was sewn the covering material, and the craft was then caulked with pine resin. Maple was used for thwarts and paddles. Dugouts were also used. This was only out of desperation in the interior, but for the peoples of the Atlantic coast such vessels were favoured for their durability in rough seas and while hunting whales.



### **Clothing, Crafts, and Commerce**

Hide from white-tailed deer was the most common clothing material, but this was often supplemented with the hides of other large herbivores, as well as the furs of smaller ones such as rabbit, mink, and beaver. Men generally wore shirts, breechclothes, leggings and moccasins. Women customarily wore dresses, or skirts and blouses, and moccasins. Often, seams and edges on both male and female garments had a short fringe. Belts of leather or woven plant fiber might also be worn. In winter fur robes were common.

Decoration was usual on many articles of clothing. Dyed porcupine quills were worked into the buckskin to form geometric patterns, and paint, feathers, and shells were also used for ornamentation. Jewelry was generally made from stones and shells until contact with the colonists, after which glass beads began to supplant other materials. Hair was also a matter of great pride among the Algonquians and men went bareheaded as a rule to show it off.

Most of the day-to-day needs of the Algonquians were provided by the woods around them, so it is no wonder that much of their technology and many of their homecrafts derived from woodwork. Birchbark was used not just for making canoes and shelters but



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also for containers of various sorts. Bone and antler were crafted into awls and needles, arrowheads, spearheads, and many tools. After European colonization, metal came to replace many of these materials; as with the influx of glass beads, this new and readily-available substance was so completely accepted that many of the crafts in which metals came to be used changed such that the traditional methods were almost completely abandoned.

Shell was used by both inland and coastal tribes for scraping tools and appliqué decoration, but is best known in its use as “wampum.” Originally these belts of purple and white seashell beads were used for ceremonial purposes and as tribal records of special events but they also came to be exchanged as gifts or trade goods and eventually gained acceptance as currency. When glass beads became available from white traders they quickly replaced the shell currency.

### **Religion**

The Algonquian supernatural world was full of spirits, great and small. The most powerful of them all was the Great Spirit, or “Gitche Manitou,” which pervaded all things and had countless manifestations. Lesser manifestations may have individuality distinct from the Gitche Manitou, but whether they were actual representations of the great Spirit or not was neither apparent or particularly important. Thus, there were lesser spirits inhabiting rivers, rocks, plants, and greater spirits embodying such things as the sun, moon, weather, and disease.

The human world intersected that of the spirit realm through the agency of a tribal shaman who lived in both worlds simultaneously and was able to control, or at least coerce, spirits for all manner of purposes. Curing of sickness, bringing of favorable weather, or location of prey or enemies were all possible for the spirits and, by extension, the shaman.

While the shaman was usually a figure of mystery, he or she was also seen generally as one of benevolence. Just as there were good and evil spirits, however, it is abundant from Algonquian myth that there were good and evil shamans. Generally, the evil shaman was concerned with temporal and spiritual power and in this quest would often encounter a malign spirit that could either control or seduce him. Such shamans are the focus of many tales of horror among the Algonquians. Perhaps needless to say, shamans, good and evil alike, were simply looked upon by many of the European

colonists as agents of Satan.

But the shaman was not the only member of native culture that could court the powers of the otherworld. Many ceremonies were held to do so, many of which revolved around the weather and other natural phenomena, but others meant to ensure good hunting, success in war, curing of disease, and the rites of adolescent passage. Such rituals were performed through dance, drumming, and singing.

When a child came to maturity, he or she would be sent out into the wilderness to fast and pray for a vision. A fortunate child could acquire a guardian spirit in the form of an animal, which would then aid that person throughout his or her life.



## The 10 Tribes of New England

### Abenaki

Originally “Wabenaki,” “those living at the sunrise,” the Abenaki inhabited most of modern day Maine and were in reality a confederacy rather than a single tribe. The most important member tribes of the confederacy were the Passamaquoddy and the Penobscot, but lesser members included the Pennacooks of Vermont as well as the Micmacs and Malecites of New Brunswick to the north of Maine.

Life among the Abenaki was in most ways typical of that described above. They were, however, fairly unreliant upon agriculture due to the shorter growing season and rather poor soil of their homeland. The Abenaki were also in the minority among the Algonquians in that they built conical tepee-style wigwams rather than the usual domes. Their villages also sometimes had palisade walls for protection which, as with the European settlements of the region, became a necessary precaution.

During the decades of war from 1639 to 1763 between the French and the English, the Abenakis staunchly supported the French. They were especially active during the conflicts referred to as King

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William's War and Queen Anne's War. At that time they launched many raids against the settlements of New England colonists.

The Abenaki Confederacy first made common cause with the French through the marriage of the daughter of the *sachem* to Jean Vincent de l'Abadie, Baron de St. Castin. When British troops raided the trading post and home of St. Castin in 1688, the fierce Abenaki rose to his aid. Throughout the next three decades of sporadic warfare and frequent slaughter on both sides, the Abenaki and the British each visited vengeance on the other. In this time Saco in Maine, Dover and Salmon Falls in New Hampshire, and Haverhill and Deerfield in Massachusetts were all fiercely attacked.

Finally, in 1724, the British took the Abenaki stronghold of Norridgewock. Many of the defeated Abenaki made their way to Quebec while others, such as the Passamaquoddy and the Penobscot, have reservations in Maine today.

## Massachuset

The Massachuset natives were friendly and helpful to the colonists of early Boston but suffered disease, violence, and the dissolution of their culture in thanks and the English virtually eradicated them in the 17th century.

Smallpox from Europe ravaged the Massachuset from 1616 to 1620, and again from 1633 to 1635. Intermittently, other plagues, not so virulent as smallpox but devastating in their frequency, further reduced the tribe.

During these years, John Eliot was busy converting the Massachuset to Christianity. Seventeen villages were established where natives lived as much like Europeans as possible and practised Puritanism. The best known of these towns of "Praying Indians" as they were called was Natick, near Boston. Conversion to the new faith was a mixed blessing. While the towns of the Praying Indians fared better against disease, they also lost all sense of tribal identity. Many natives, unsure in which world they belonged, gave in to depression and alcohol. Others, however, took to the sea in the sailing ships of the day and were among the most able of deckhands.

The Massachuset suffered particularly in the 1675-76 revolt of the Wampanoags known as King Philip's War. Because the Massachuset were so closely associated with the English colonists, towns of Praying Indians and villages of traditional natives alike were targeted by the Wampanoags and their allies. In turn, settlers,

near hysterically fearful of any natives, often struck out at the peaceful Massachusetts in revenge for the acts of others.

## Mohegan

This tribe of Connecticut is often confused with the Mahicans, who were probably those referred to in James Fennimore Cooper's novel, *Last of the Mohicans*. To further the confusion, Cooper appears to have taken the name Uncas, son of the chief Chingachgook in the novel, from a real Mohegan chief of the 17th century.

Culturally, the Mohegans were similar to the typical Algonquians described above. They were also influenced by their neighbors, the Iriquoian peoples to the west and lived not only in wigwams but also longhouses.

The Mohegans were a subgroup of the Pequots. When Europeans arrived in Pequot lands soon after the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock in 1620, the *sachem* of the Pequots was Sassacus and the premier village of the Pequots was on the Thames River in Connecticut. But Uncas, a *sagamore* (a subordinate chief to a *sachem*) among the Pequots arose and led a group of rebels to form another village further up on the Thames. This group came to be known as the Mohegans.

When Sassacus was defeated in the Pequot War of 1637, Uncas, who had previously befriended the English, became *sachem* of both the Mohegans and the Pequots. As allies of the English, Uncas's Mohegans kept their power longer than their neighbors, the Wampanoags and the Narragansets, who were defeated in King Philip's War.

Later the English turned on the Mohegans, killed many, drove others off their lands, and enslaved yet more. Disease was also not kind to the Mohegans. As a result, neither the Pequots nor the Mohegans are numerous today.

## Narraganset

This tribe inhabited what is now Rhode Island, principally between the Providence and Pawcatuck Rivers. The Narraganset, "people of the point," lived most of the year in palisaded villages of wigwams, from which they farmed, fished, and hunted.

When the English came to the region in the early 1600s, the Narragansets lived as a confederacy of six tribes with *sagamos* who were responsible to a *sachem*. The first great smallpox outbreak in 1616 did little to the Narragansets, but the second in 1633 carried

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off more than 700 people.

Early allies of the English, some Narragansets fought for the colonists in the Pequot War of 1636-37. In 1636, the *sachem*, Canonicus, sold land to the renegade Puritan Roger Williams, who formed the Rhode Island colony. William treated the natives of the Narraganset fairly and humanely, urging other Europeans to do likewise. His message went largely unheard, however, and other settlers stole land or forced native inhabitants from it. By the last quarter of the 17th century, the Narragansets were sufficiently hostile to the English that they joined with the Wampanoags and the Nipmucs in King Philip's War of 1675-6. The grand *sachem* of the Narragansets at that time, Cachonet, was one of King Philip's greatest generals, commanding more than 3,500 warriors.

The Narragansets also suffered the most during King Philip's War. In December 1675, the Great Swamp Fight saw 1,000 settlers of the Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Plymouth Colonies and about 150 Mohegan warriors attack the Narraganset village near Kingston, Rhode Island. After a day-long standoff the settlers finally forced their way into the rear of the Narraganset stockade and fired more than 600 wigwams and killed 600 men and captured 400 more, Cachonet among them. He and many of the others were sentenced to death.

After King Philip's War, some of the surviving Narragansets settled among the Abenakis, Mahicans, and Niantics. Others remained in Rhode Island, near Charlestown.

### Nipmuc

Derived from "nip-maug," or "fresh-water fishing place," the Nipmucs inhabited the land of the rich plateau that led up to the Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts. Much like all other Algonquians in culture, the Nipmucs acquired a reputation for basketmaking, weaving, and leatherwork. Many of the Nipmucs became "Praying Indians," like their neighbors the Massachuset. But during the turmoil of King Philip's War, most of the Nipmuc fighting men joined the Wampanoags and Narragansets against the English. After the war, many Nipmuc survivors joined other Algonquians to the south or in Canada.

The Hassanamisco Reservation near the Berkshire mountains of Massachusetts was once a large reservation of 8,000 acres but shrank during the 19th century due to the cheating of tribal leaders by profiteers. Currently, it consists of only 11.9 acres.

## Passamaquoddy

The Passamaquoddies, along with the Penobscots, were part of the Abenaki Confederacy for much of early Colonial history. Their name means, “those who pursue the pollack.” While most other Algonquians relied only secondarily upon the sea for their livelihood, the Passamaquoddy strongly depended on the bounty of the Atlantic. There are two Passamaquoddy reservations, Pleasant Point and Indian Township, both near Calais, Maine.

## Pennacook

Pennacook is the name taken by a host of bands with different names and their own chiefs that lived in New Hampshire, as well as parts of Maine and northeast Massachusetts. Translated, the name means “at the bottom of the hill” and refers to the main encampment of the Pennacook, near Concord, New Hampshire. For part of their history the Pennacook were part of the Abenaki Confederacy.

During King Philip’s War, Kancamagus, *sachem* of the Pennacook and grandson of the first Pennacook *sachem* to ally with the English, decided to remain at peace with the English in spite of King Philip’s attempts to convince him otherwise. The English tricked some of the peaceful bands to come to a sporting event at Dover and many Pennacooks were among those who attended. The English attacked, killed and captured many of their guests, and sold the survivors into slavery. Kancamagus quickly entered King Philip’s camp. Years later in 1689, long after the end of the war, Kancamagus gained revenge for his slaughtered warriors, attacking Dover, the site of the earlier massacre. Gaining entry by trickery, he had many of its residents killed.

The English convinced their Mohawk allies to attack the Pennacooks from the west. Many villages were sacked, until Kancamagus finally opposed the Mohawks at a walled village at





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lake Winnisquam (now called Mohawk Point). The Mohawks attacked in great numbers until nightfall but could not gain access to the inside. Under cover of darkness, Kancamagus led his people away from the stockade, through the mountains and on to Quebec, where they joined many Abenaki refugees.

### **Penobscot**

This tribe also belonged for a time to the Abenaki Confederacy and the name Penobscot or “the rocky place” refers to the rocky falls of their homeland. Seasonally semi-nomadic, villages of the milder seasons dispersed into small foraging bands for the winter months, hunting, trapping, and gathering whatever the Great Spirit provided.

With the coming of spring the family groups would reassemble at the walled villages and prepare for planting their staple crop, corn. They also collected maple syrup and did much hunting and fishing between harvests, the first of which could come as early as July.

Penobscot Indian Island Reservation is located near Old Town, Maine.

### **Pequot**

One of the most powerful and warlike peoples of the East Coast, the Pequots, “the destroyers,” migrated from the Hudson River Valley in New York State, invading and displacing peoples of the Narragansets and the Niantics. By the arrival of the colonists, the Pequots controlled the Connecticut coastal area from the Connecticut River to Rhode Island. During the period of Pequot power, the grand *sachem* Sassacus ruled from a village on the Thames River.

When Uncas took his band of Mohegans into exile rather than fight the English, Sassacus made war upon the English nonetheless. In 1636, the Pequot War, the first major conflict in New England, began when a group of Pequots captured the trading vessel of John Oldham. The attackers were caught aboard ship and fought with another trader, John Gallop, who escaped to take word to the Colonial administrators.

The Massachusetts Bay Colony sent out a force under John Endecott. Endecott’s troops attacked several villages on Block Island and burned their villages. These villages, however, belonged to Narragansets rather than Pequots. The Army then sailed on to the mainland in search of the Pequots. Endecott attacked several local villages despite protests by local settlers, who feared reprisals.

Sassacus then took his warriors to the attack. In the winter of 1636, the Pequots laid siege to Fort Saybrook and raided isolated settlements, continuing their attacks into the spring. The colonies then assembled a large force under Captains John Mason and John Stillwell. The Narragansets, Mohegans, and the Niantics joined forces with the English against the Pequots.

At dawn, 25 May 1637, the army reached and attacked Sassacus' village. From behind their palisades the Pequots fought and repelled the first assault but the attackers managed to set the wigwams of the village afire and those who fled the flames were cut down as they emerged. Those who remained within, mostly women, children, and the elderly, were allowed to burn. Between 600 and 1,000 Pequots died in or around the village, but Sassacus was among those few who escaped. The following July, his band was attacked again in a swamp west of New Haven, but again Sassacus escaped to seek refuge in Mohawk lands. Fearing to anger the English, however, the Mohawks beheaded the *sachem*.

Many Pequots were sold into slavery or became the property of Narragansets and Mohegans. The Colonial government banned the use of Pequot names and various tribal placenames. Some Pequots resettled on Long Island and in Massachusetts. In 1655, the colonists freed the Pequot slaves and they were resettled on the Mystic River.

There are two small Pequot reservations shared with the Mohegans, in New London and Fairfield counties. Another group holds a third reservation in Litchfield county in common with the Wappingers, an Algonquian tribe of New York State.

## Wampanoag

The Wampanoag were among the first Native Americans to come into contact with European colonists. These original meetings were so positive that, by the early 17th century, the tribe became the closest ally that the English colonists had. Yet by the latter years of that century, the Wampanoag were the most bitter of enemies of the colonists to whom they were previously allied.

The early good relations between the two peoples were due mainly to a Wampanoag man, Tisquantum, sometimes called Squanto. In 1615, he was captured by an English trader and sold into slavery in Spain. After several years he managed to escape and, with the aid of another Englishman, return to the land of his youth and, by 1619, was once again among his own people.

In 1620, when the Pilgrims founded the Plymouth Colony,

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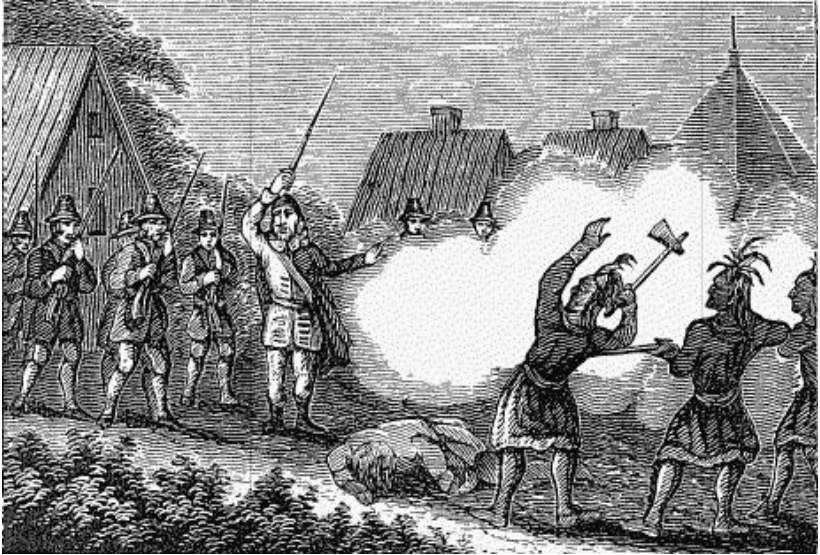
Squanto used his knowledge of English language and customs to establish good relations with the colonists. He also taught them much in the ways of wilderness living and farming the new land and the survival of Plymouth may be due almost entirely to his efforts. He died of smallpox in 1622, along with many others of his tribe.

Relations continued to be close under the *sachem* Samoset, who used his knowledge of the colonists and their tongue as had Squanto. That the numbers of the Wampanoags and many of the other tribes of the region were severely reduced by smallpox in the years just previous may have played a role and the tribes could hardly have afforded any sort of hostility toward the colonists. Perhaps with this in mind, Samoset introduced Captain Miles Standish as a representative of the Pilgrims to Massasoit, the grand *sachem* of the Wampanoag.

Massasoit became a close friend to the colonists and remained so for 40 years, until his death in 1662. Through his influence, the Wampanoags remained neutral in the Pequot War of 1636. But, time and again, the colonists abused the trust of the Wampanoags, tricking them into signing away land or simply forcing the natives from it. Thus, when Massasoit died, his sons were far less enamored of the ways of the Europeans.

Metacom and Wamsutta, called by the colonists Philip and Alexander after Alexander the Great and his father Philip of Macedon, grew up as the number of settlers was growing drastically, along with the number of incidents in which the Wampanoags were slighted and abused. The sons of Massasoit thus became strongly oriented against any friendship between their tribe and the settlers. Many other young Wampanoags believed the same. When Alexander died under suspicious circumstances, Philip succeeded him as *sachem* and swore to exact revenge for this and all other previous slights against his people.

Philip formed alliances with other tribes with much to lose should European expansion continue. His goal was to oust the New England colonies entirely. After careful preparation, but still before Philip would otherwise have wished, fighting broke out at the Wampanoag town of Mount Hope in 1675. Three Wampanoags were hanged on the suspicion that they killed a "Christian Indian." Tensions rose and shots were fired and a Wampanoag was killed in an argument over cattle. In retaliation, the Wampanoags attacked and killed 11 colonists. What became known as King Philip's War



had begun.

The Narragansets and Nipmucs joined the Wampanoags and the three tribes began a campaign of violence against the settlers. All over New England, warrior bands attacked settlements, terrorizing the colonists and fleeing before effective resistance could be brought against them. Colonial armies were mustered but, for a time, it proved difficult to find the raiding warriors. Eventually, however, the Wampanoags were forced to fight several pitched battles, at Pocasset Swamp, Bloody Brook, and Hopewell Swamp. Finally, the decisive confrontation occurred in Narraganset territory with the Great Swamp Fight of December 1675. The backbone of the Wampanoag alliance was broken and many of its warriors killed. The remaining warriors, still led by Philip, were eventually attacked near Plymouth and nearly wiped out. Philip was killed and his body was dismembered by its slayers and the parts kept as trophies. His wife and son were sold as slaves in the Caribbean. King Philip's War was over. The colonists took revenge on the remaining and now-weakened Wampanoags, claiming ever more land. European diseases also continued to take a toll upon the Wampanoags.

Some Wampanoags managed to keep their lands and their most prosperous community today is at Martha's Vineyard.

## Myths of the Native Americans

The Algonquian people had a rich mythology that is of potential interest to storytellers.

As opposed to religion, which illustrates the belief system and often the actual ritual practices of a culture, mythology can be defined as the stories which illustrate and inspire the beliefs of the religion. The difference is significant. The mythology of a religion tells us about why various rituals are observed, why a deity is associated with the numerous elements that define it, and so forth. In Christian worship, for example, Satan is commonly understood to be the personification of evil and Christian mythology, both in biblical and in later times, tells us of countless times in which Satan acted in ways we regard as evil. Each defines the other. Thus, it is possible to say that there was an Algonquian god of evil, known by different names to the different tribes, but it is the tales of the god's actions that form the mythology about him.

Instead of going into all the alternative names of the deities and their legends in great detail, here you will find a selection of some of the more formative and potentially Keeper-oriented myths of one Algonquian tribe, the Nauset Wampanoag of Cape Cod. This choice is fitting, for the Wampanoag were among the first to have contact with European colonists. Their contact and subsequent history with the settlers is also extremely varied and interesting. More information on the mythological details of the tribes not mentioned here can be found in virtually any book of Native American tales.

This section is not intended to provide an exhaustive account of all the legends of the Wampanoag people and instead attempts to give the Keeper enough to have some kind of grasp on the belief system and the mythology that spawned it. Spirits listed and the tales presented have been chosen for what they say about the actors in the myths presented, the people who knew the stories, and for the storytelling possibilities they represent to the Keeper.

### Spirits of the Wampanoag

As with the rest of the Algonquians, the Nauset Wampanoag people were polytheistic and worshipped or acknowledged the existence of many gods. Below is a list of the most significant of them, their appellation and sacred aspects, and their genders.

**Kehtean [m]:** Great Spirit, the spirit that guides and sees all.

**Geesukquand [m]:** Sun Spirit.

**Yotannit [m]:** Fire Spirit; also the god of lightning.

**Nibah-Nahbeezik:** Water Spirit.

**Uskitom [m]:** First human.

**Netimigaho [f]:** First mother.

**Eshquaganit [f]:** Woman guiding spirit.

**Mahtahdou [m]:** Evil Sprit; called the “devil bird”

**Nanipaushat [f]:** Moon Spirit.

**Too-quah-mis-quan-it, or Squonanit [f]:** Evil Spirit of drowning, tides, and treacherous swamps.

**Weetuks (or sometimes the giant Maushop) [m]:** Mankind’s benefactor/Promethean figure.

**Maskanako [m]:** Sea Spirit, master of the deep, and the most powerful mage.

These are the gods of the Wampanoag. The predominant aspects that the spirits demonstrate in the mythology of the tribe are something of an oversimplification, as some of the deities are quite multi-dimensional. An example of this can be seen in the tales of Squonnanit told below.

In addition to the greater spirits listed above, Wampanoag myth includes many tales of lesser spirits, known collectively as the Pukwudgees, or Little Folk. These can be loosely likened to the modern folk understanding of elves, fairies, or leprechauns as beings of mischievous and sometimes malevolent intent. The Pukwudgees seem, however to have been generally hostile to mankind, rather than acting merely as the tricksters elves were in many folktales of the Old World. Physically, the Pukwudgees were similar to men but much smaller, but all are considered powerful magic-makers and were invariably scornful of men and often hateful toward them as well.

### **The Torrent That Came Upon the Lands of Men**

To rid the world of evil and ruin, Kehtean caused a great flood to come upon the lands of men. But malignant Mahtahdou escaped the trap by hiding beneath the sea with Maskanako, “the great snake.” After Kehtean reformed the world, he made Maskanako the medicine man of all the tribes.

### **Maushop the Hero**

In the days before the coming of the white men, there lived a young giant named Maushop in the narrow land (Cape Cod). He slew an



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evil and predatory man-eating eagle that lived on an island across Vineyard Sound. Shortly afterward, a sea-woman arose and approached the den of the foul bird. Her eyes were square, her head was maned with seaweed, her fingers were webbed like a shore-bird's feet, and she sang a wild song, the wolf-waves that followed her joined in, howling. She transformed herself into a beauty and Maushop lay down with her after resisting her advances for many days. Her name was Too-quah-mis-quan-it.

### Too-quah-mis-quan-it

Also known as Sqounanit, or Granny Squannit, this being lived at Cummaquid in a cave among the sand dunes at Great Neck, near Barnstable Harbor (it is also said that she inhabited the Great Marsh). She was *ki-eh-pah-wesh-hok*, a great medicine woman. She had only one great dark eye, with hair that hung long over her face to her mouth.

Too-quah-mis-quan-it stole parts of the whale song from Maushop and often called the great creatures to shore to die on the beaches as she sucked away the water. She was the kelp witch who dragged ships below to rot, the water spirit who drew the memory of Maushop's wife and family out of his mind and stole him away below the waves, the woman-fish who road ships' keel to slow their passage and driven away only by the path of the moon on the water cutting across her tail. She was the swamp hag who made quicksand and sported with bog devils amid screechy howls and ghostly lights in the marsh.

Around the turn of the century the Wampanoags practiced a remembrance of a far older and probably more peril-fraught ritual as each spring families set out before dawn to picnic and celebrate Granny Squannit's Day. The procession was led through the treacherous swamp by those most knowledgeable of the area, negotiating the dangerous trail to Squannit's lair. A meal was served before first light, the best portions set out on a rough stone altar in hopes of Granny Squannit's favor. After sunrise, brightly painted young men danced into exhaustion to further honor the bog witch. The last to still be dancing was called "Granny Squannit's son" and was given gifts by the others. Later, more young men wrestled in circles made sacred to Squannit. No part was taken in any of these contests by any woman, nor did women sing in these rituals. Granny Squannit was not pleased by the songs of women.

Sailors who feared an unfavorable voyage or whalers who

wanted Granny Squannit to guide their aim made other visits to the lonely mire. They left offerings of food and carved ships or whale's teeth, then quickly slunk away lest they catch sight of her nightmare face.

There is a tale told of a evil shaman from the northern lands who lay with Squannit for his own purposes. Maushop picked him up and threw him into the Great Marsh. There, the land swallowed him and he still lies below the stretch known as Scorton Neck. When Maushop returned to Squannit she enfolded him in her tangle of seaweed hair and dragged him beneath the waves forever. To this day, she occasionally feels the need to pull down a ship or hapless man.

Another story tells of a Mashpee man who was riding through Sarah Screecham's forest on Poponosset Road when he saw a light in the swamp. He noted the spot and headed toward it, around Witches Pond, up to a forked oak that had a luminous cloud about its base. The man stepped into the glowing circle and immediately an old woman with a watery purple eye set in the middle of her forehead appeared before him. She sat at the crotch of the bent old oak and sang as she wove a basket with her webbed fingers. Her feet stuck out from beneath her at odd angles, one huge and misshapen, the other small and delicate as a child's. The man's breath caught in his throat and the hag looked up and hissed, the hiss of a dying wave dragging back out to sea. The man headed inland and never came near the sea or any other body of water again.





Nantucket Sea Serpent, 1937

## Chapter 5: Monsters of the Lands and Seas of New England

**T**here are many tales of weird and awful creatures inhabiting the outer wilds of New England. Doubtless, many of these stories arose when the colony was still young, when the settlers were isolated from both the land they left behind and from other communities on this side of the Atlantic. The interior was virtually unknown territory, populated by a people whose religion, language, customs, and way of life were utterly alien to those of the colonists. Add to this the fact that relations were often strained between the colonists and these natives, who quickly saw that they could expect little that was good from the men in the tall boats.

Then there are the beliefs that the immigrants brought with them. Many in the Old World saw the New World as the abode of Satan and the natives were often regarded as savage and demonic creatures who served this infernal king of the land. Upon arriving in New England, the colonists might be greeted by one of the incessant skirmishes, or even the all-out wars that were all too common between the two cultures attempting to make the land their homes. It is not hard to understand the level of fear that a typical colonist felt when contemplating the new and utterly unknown land that lay beyond his field's edge.

Similarly, the seas of the New World have been populated in legend with all manner of leviathan aquatic beasts. It is little wonder that the sea figured so strongly in the imagination of a culture that made much of its living from the ocean. Thousands of ships have sailed nearly every part of the coast over the past four centuries and there have been plenty of opportunities to witness the rare, the unusual, and the deadly of its waters. If anything, the ocean has had a greater pull upon the minds and souls of New Englanders than has the land, and figures in many stories (even those set on land). Witches, elsewhere in the world endowed with many strange powers, here are also found with the talent to call up weather at need and raise fierce sea storms.

This section details the creatures that inhabit the imaginary landscape of New England. The seas are deep off the coast and only the surface is truly familiar, even to those who say they know the ocean well. The woods and hills are thick and rugged, full of caverns

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and bogs, megaliths and rock carvings, that have awaited the coming of people for thousands of years. There are still many secrets known only to the land and the waves.

But a merest glimmer of what may be there awaits herein. The Native Americans knew the nature of this land when even the bravest explorers were afraid to sail out of sight of Europe. And perhaps other, more ancient and unknowable cultures existed on these shores, ones that left behind enough of their works that we can guess at their sophistication, speculate upon the secrets they took with them into the recesses of antiquity, and maybe even uncover some previously lost fragment of knowledge that illuminates the elder world and unguessed evils that might lurk in the innocent tales of our forebears.

### **Inhabitants of the Cold Seas and Murky Lakes**

The sea off the coast of New England is the source of near endless bounty and equally relentless torment for those whose living comes from its depths. Sailors, fishermen, whalers, navy personnel, and day-trippers all pit themselves against the wiles of the sea for the rewards that are to be found there. A few of these same people have become aware that there is knowledge that the sea guards jealously — knowledge which, if it were believed by the majority of those who explore the oceans breadth and depth, would reduce the numbers of those explorers drastically. Sea serpents, kraken, devil whales, and other monsters all abound in tales older than the New England colony itself. On the following pages you will find records of such sightings that stretch over both lakes and seas for more than 300 years.

The entries in this chapter are arranged largely in reverse chronological order, as this is probably the order in which investigators will discover them. Presumably some occurrence will prompt one or more of the investigators to research the phenomena of sea monsters, and they will discover the more recent reports first and, eventually, the most removed in time will also be uncovered. Included below are several first-hand accounts of eyewitnesses to these occurrences. Keepers can use these as they are provided, either as verbal reports given by individuals encountered by the investigators, or for what they actually are — extant accounts and affidavits of now-dead individuals.

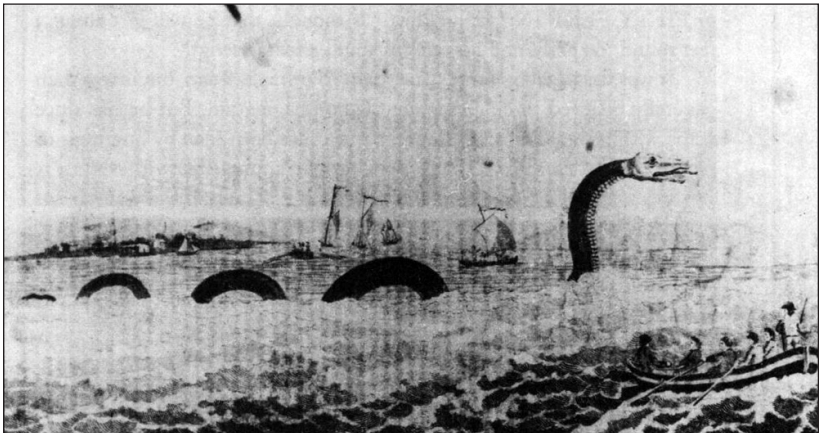
## Sea Serpents

On July 12, 1905, George Cole, a fisherman, was knocked out of his dory by a 70-foot-long sea serpent near Cohasset, Massachusetts. For several minutes he battled both the waves and the clutches of the creature until, without apparent cause, the monster gave up its attack.

Cole had first seen a wild thrashing off his bow and assumed that a whale was caught in a line of lobster traps, several of which were laid in the area. As he approached, the disturbance in the waves increased and Cole began to row quickly, attempting to bypass the struggling creature. Suddenly, the monster reared up out of the water and swam directly toward the boat; Cole described each eye as being a foot or more across and the head as big as a barrel. The sea serpent struck the boat, capsizing it and flinging the mariner into the water. He quickly scrambled up onto the upturned keel and rode out the thrashing of the serpent. Shortly thereafter, it left.

Cole managed to make his way to shore, where he later learned that three others had seen the creature that day and the next. Henry Edwin Hatch and his wife reported seeing the monster before Cole's ordeal had come out and had watched the 70-foot serpent for several minutes as it moved back and forth in the waves. They then headed for shore. Ambrose B. Mitchell, a lobsterman from Hull, also reported seeing the creature and rapidly returned to land.

All the witnesses were considered to be quite knowledgeable about the sea and unlikely to mistake a shark, whale, or other creature as a sea serpent nearly four-score feet in length. They were certain of what they had seen, His Majesty the Sea Serpent, a monster





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more than 20 yards in length with nearly 40 barrel-sized humps along its sinuous back. His Majesty enjoyed a local celebrity similar to that of the Loch Ness monster (it should be remembered, of course, that the Loch Ness Monster only rose beyond local Scottish fame in 1933).

In 1936, His Majesty was sighted once more by a South Shore resident, Robert Saltonstall Ward of North Marshfield. From the deck of a liner, Ward saw the creature from a distance of about 75 yards. In 1871, many North Shore residents reported a similar dark brown sea serpent and previous sightings along the New England coast had also occurred. On June 17, 1826, Henry Holdredge, captain of the *Silas Richards* was sailing off the shore of Nantucket Island when he saw a:

“ ... sudden perturbation of the water, and immediately an object presented itself, with its head about four feet above the level, which position it retained for nearly a minute when it returned to the surface ... Its color was a dark dingy black with protuberances; its visible length appeared about 60 feet, and its circumference 10 feet. With former accounts which have been given of such a monster, and which have never been credited, this exactly corresponds, and I have no doubt but it is one of those species called sea serpents ... ”

(E.R. Snow, *Maritime Mysteries and Dramatic Disasters*, pp. 225-6)

On August 18, 1817, the Linnean Society of Boston formed a committee to collect any information related to sightings of a large creature, referred to as a sea serpent, that was reported to have been seen near the harbor of Gloucester starting on August 10. By early October, it was reported in Long Island Sound, where it was viewed on a number of occasions by many people from distances varying from a few feet to more than a mile. Sightings were reported in Nahaunt as late as 1819.

A small pamphlet was published by the Linnean Society detailing the creature and the eyewitness reports. The serpent was between 70 and 120 feet in length, about three feet in diameter, black or dark brown in color, and with skin that appeared smooth to the majority of witnesses. The head was serpent-like with a long tongue which projected almost vertically from the mouth of the beast. No legs, fins, gills, or mane were mentioned by any of the

viewers. On one occasion the creature was observed onshore briefly and did not appear to take any note of the startled voices or gunshots of those who saw it.

The Linnean Society eventually determined that the huge creature was, in actuality, simply a larger version of a common black snake of the region. With that report, the society and



the sightings were widely regarded as a matter of embarrassment.

In spite of this rather lame conclusion by the Linnean Society, there was considerable information, often given by very trustworthy individuals under oath, that His Majesty had graced the shores of New England several times between 1817 and 1819.

In 1818 James Prince, a prominent and respected inhabitant of Boston, gave this account of his observance of His Majesty the sea serpent, with the aid of his telescope on August 16:

“I will now state that, which, in the presence of more than 200 witnesses, took place near the long beach at Nahant on Saturday morning last. I was glad to find that I had brought my famous mast-head spyglass with me as it would enable me from its form and size, to view him to advantage if I might be so fortunate as to see him. On our arrival on the beach, we associated with a considerable number of persons on foot and in chaises. And very soon an animal of the fish kind made his appearance.

His head appeared about three feet out of the water; I counted 13 hunches on his back my family thought there were 15. He passed three times at a moderate rate across the bay ... as he swam up the bay, we and the other spectators moved on, and kept nearly abreast of him. He occasionally withdrew himself under water and the idea occurred to me that his occasionally raising his head ... was to take breath, as the times he kept under water was on the average about eight minutes ... I had seven distinct views of him from the long beach, so called, and at some of them the animal was not more than an hundred yards distance ... on passing the second beach we were again gratified beyond even what

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we saw in the other bay... We had here more than a dozen different views of him, and each similar to the other; one however, so near that the coachman exclaimed, 'Oh, I see his glistening eye!'

I feel satisfied that he is 60 feet long ... I have been accustomed to see whales, sharks, grampuses, porpoises, and other large fishes, but he partook of none of the appearances of [any] of these ... The water was extremely smooth and the weather clear ... I must conclude there is a strange animal on our coast."

(E.R. Snow, *Maritime Mysteries and Dramatic Disasters*, p. 227)

There were many other personal testimonials to the same effect in the ensuing months. Reverend Cheever Felch of the man-of-war *Independence*, along with several others of the crew sighted the serpent on August 26, 1819:

"William T. Malbone, Esq., Commander of the Schooner *Science*, seeing some appearance on the water said 'There is your sea serpent ... but it proved no joke ... He rose ... within 20 yards distance of us and lay some time on the water ... His color was dark brown, with white under the throat ... From my knowledge of aquatic animals and habits of intimacy with marine appearances, I could not be deceived... That there is an aquatic animal in the form of a snake is not to be doubted. Mr. Malbone, to this day, was incredulous. No man could convince him there was not such a being. The sketch or picture of Marshall Prince is perfectly correct."

(E.R. Snow, *Maritime Mysteries and Dramatic Disasters*, p.230)

In 1751, Joseph Kent of Marshfield, Maine, observed a sea serpent at a distance of about 45 feet from the deck of his sloop, noting that it exceeded the vessel's main boom in length. The sighting was near Muscongus Island, Maine.

Other accounts and sources recount observations in 1770; in 1778, 1779, and 1785 in Penobscot Bay; 1780, in Broad Bay, Maine; in 1794 off of Fox and Long Islands; in 1803 near Sullivan, Maine; and in 1815, near Plymouth, Massachusetts. All describe a huge

snake or serpent of brown or black, sometimes with a horse-like mane, measuring between 30 and 70 feet in length, moving with vertical undulations of its lower portions.

The earliest known recorded sightings of sea serpents were at Cape Ann, Massachusetts. *Two Voyages to New England* by John Josselyn (1674) records a conversation from 1639, held with residents of the Massachusetts colony. They told him of the sighting of a sea serpent or great snake that lay coiled and sunning itself on a rock on the shore of Cape Ann.

### **The Lake Champlain Monster**

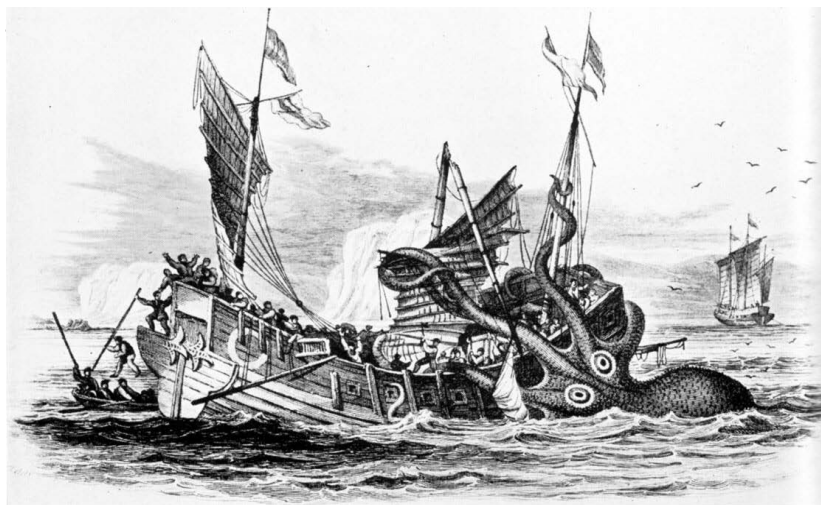
Referred to first in literature in 1609 by Samuel de Champlain, the “chaousarou” of the lake was ancient in native myth and legend in de Champlain’s time. Champlain reports having seen a 20-foot-long snakelike creature with a horselike head. In more recent times, a sighting of a great serpent was reported in 1819. During the 1880s, the appearance of the creature was a regular occurrence, until in 1886 there were virtually daily reports, some of them narrowly avoiding disaster. In 1920, Mrs. Grace Lee and many friends and relatives saw a snake-like animal between 13 and 20 feet in length. The serpent was reported as swimming both in vertical and horizontal undulations.

A composite description of the animal based on the available information reveals a dark brown, green, or black serpent between 10 and 90 feet in length and one to two-and-a-half in diameter. Its skin texture was universally reported as smooth and without any scale pattern. It had a pointed tail and no visible limbs, although folds were reported near the head and tail and may have referred to flukes or flippers of some kind.

Other than the Great Lakes, Lake Champlain is the largest body of fresh water in the United States. It is more than 400 feet deep in places and these reaches have still not been adequately explored.

### **Giant Squid**

Tales of giant squid abound all along the northeast coast, some of the most detailed from the Maritime provinces of Canada. A huge squid measuring 55 feet in length and weighing eight-and-a-half tons was captured in Tickle Bay, Newfoundland, in 1878. On October 27 the year before, the *Canadian Illustrated News* reported that a monster with 30-foot tentacles became wedged between some rocks by the retreating tide and died as the water receded, but failed to



give a locale for this awesome spectacle. In 1873, on Great Bell Island, Newfoundland, a huge squid carcass washed ashore.

## **Giant Octopi**

While the tales of giant squid are accepted by many zoologists, few are prepared to admit the existence of a species of huge octopus, and yet many whaler's tales specifically refer to such creatures rather than to squid. While no octopus carcasses have appeared in the waters of New England, there are many such stories, and there does seem to be evidence form further south in the United States.

In 1896, the corpse of what might have been a giant cephalopod was discovered washed up on the beach at St. Augustine, Florida. The state of decomposition was advanced but it soon became apparent that, although the researchers originally had thought the remains to be those of a squid, the body actually was that of an octopus that may have measured as much as 50 or 60 yards in length when alive and whole. The corpse was examined by several leading marine biologists of the day, and photographs and tissue samples were taken and are still kept in the Smithsonian Institution.

## **Demon Whales**

There are also many tales of demonic whales all along the New England coast. The infamous witch Goodie Hallet was said to roam the seas in the belly of a particular devil whale for more than a century and, when she desired, could climb forth from it to wreak her evils.

Another famous whale was the rogue sperm whale Caldera Dick.

A monstrous old bull whale, Caldera Dick roamed over hundreds of miles of the Atlantic, wrecking ships and drowning men with abandon and may have been the inspiration for Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*.

### **The Devil in New England**

Although the Devil features in many tales of early New England, his appearance varied considerably from story to story. He appeared in many different shapes throughout various accounts, including those of a dark man, a horse, a great white bird, a yellow bird, a bear, and a man with a high-crowned hat. According to the natives of New England, "Thunder rumbles in his pipe ... and when he scowls ... the sky grows black with storms."

### **The Ding-Ball**

A ferocious panther-like abomination, this beast acquired its name from its long tail, which was entirely devoid of fur or flesh and ended in a hard and heavy ball that it can whip with lethal force into a victim's skull. The creature's fondness for human flesh was legendary, and it was said that it could sing and wail in imitation of humanity to lure the unwary to fatal mishap. References to the Ding-Ball arise in folklore of the rocky woodlands of Maine and Massachusetts.

The Algonquian Indians of the eastern Great Lakes region also have a legend of the *Misshipesha*, or "Great Lynx." A sinister spirit of powerful or turbulent waters, it is described as a horned and bearded four-legged creature with a long tail which, along with its back, was covered in spikes.

### **Gougou**

Another creature was called a *gougou* by the Micmac Indians of the Canadian east coast and the "*monstre marin*" in the *Codex Canadensis*, a manuscript supposedly authored by a M. de Granville in 1701. "She has the body and tail of a fish and flippers for arms," the codex says. "Growing out of the fish-like body is a female torso and a witch-like head. Her facial features are truly distorted."

The *gougou* is also described by the explorer Samuel de Champlain as a huge and ugly woman, an eater of humans whose shriek is terror itself. The Chippewa around Lake Superior also preserve a legend of the *nibanaba*, half-human, half-fish creatures that dwell in the waters of the Great Lakes.





## Chapter 6

# Witches, Wizards, and Weather-Makers of New England

**T**he witches of New England, and in particular of Salem, Massachusetts, are famous in both legend and history. Today, there is little doubt that the reports of dire witchcraft and devil-worship were brought about by the hysteria of the supposed witnesses and the climate of the communities in which they lived rather than from any events that were thought to have transpired. Yet, the figure of the demon-inspired witch (whether male or female) continues to play upon the imagination with chilling fingers and is still a subject that has the power to inspire a deep and unreasoning fear in many. Legends of witchcraft and the Devil that abide in this region are integral to the period in which they arose. To change them would be impossible, and to ignore them would be to ignore the imaginations of those who have kept them alive down through the centuries.

This book attempts to relate the stories of witches and witchcraft as they have persisted in popular legend. It may be that many, and potentially all, of these witches were originally innocent practitioners of a pagan religion and not satanic in any way. Or, they may have been simply unfortunate enough to be branded as odd or outsiders by their contemporaries. Legends, however, require villains and many of the witches recorded in legends are consummate evil-doers.

### **Witch Trials of Salem, Massachusetts, 1692**

These events are perhaps the most infamous in early America. They also, without a doubt, are among the most misunderstood in the history of the United States as a whole. The phenomena that brought on the witchcraft cases tried in Salem were not isolated occurrences. Similar cases of what might today be referred to as poltergeist activity, speaking in tongues, and similar incidents are recorded in New England for the decades just previous to the 1690s. Of course, the witch burnings of continental Europe are well known to have taken place for centuries beforehand, and they continued during and after the time of the Salem Trials.

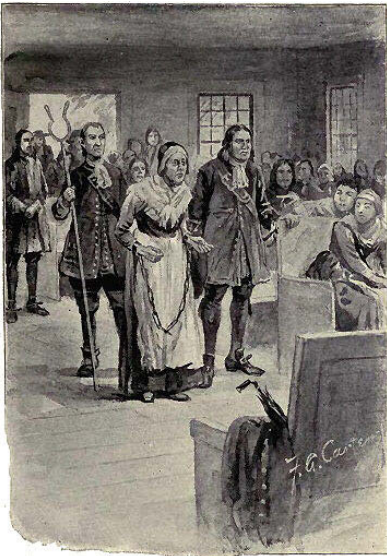
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Something changed in the perception of these cases in New England in the course of the second half of the 17th century. The same reports that in the 1670s and '80s were cause for consternation and concern were by 1692 sufficient to warrant the deaths of 20 by execution and eight more by imprisonment in the span of less than 24 months.

There was a reasonably well-established *modus operandi* for the accusations in the Salem cases. Generally, a child or adolescent would become the subject of unexplained torture from an invisible source and would become the focus of other sorts of “poltergeist” phenomena. The afflicted in these cases were believed to be the innocent victims of demonic attack, usually thought to occur because of the instigation of a witch. In the hysteria of Salem in 1692, these children were encouraged to speak out and identify their persecutors. They would often swear to seeing the spectre of some woman — or, less commonly, a man — known to the community, often someone regarded as an outsider. The accused was then required to clear herself of the charges.

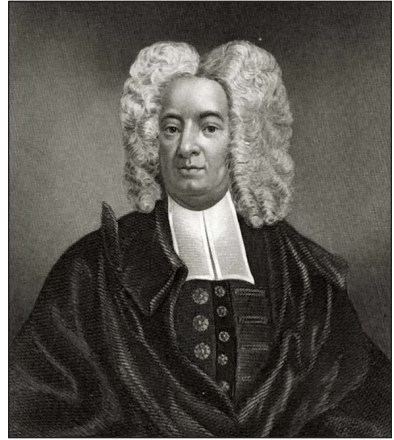
The actual trial was conducted through indirect interrogation. At no time was the accused allowed to converse with the complainant. It was necessary for the accused to prove the accusations groundless. It should be pointed out that in all the Salem trials, there was a relatively small group of afflicted that made all

the accusations; a core of four young girls were responsible for almost all the proceedings, although there were a few other children that appeared on occasion. The afflicted children were all wards or offspring of some of the prominent families of the region. It happens that these families gained greatly in both the political maneuvering instigated by the trials and in the settlements of land and possessions of those found guilty. This is certainly enough to cast severe doubt upon the sincerity of the charges. Added to this is the fact that many of those accused were without



family themselves and often in possession of considerable land or wealth. Thus they were unable to muster much in the way of social sympathy, a crucial consideration in the legal system of the day.

Cotton Mather, who had a pivotal role in relating and prosecuting the trials of 1692, also had something to report on similar events as early as 1679. Mather recounts the tribulations of the Morse family of Newberry, Massachusetts:



“Bricks, and sticks, and stones, were often, by some invisible hand, thrown at the house; and so were many pieces of wood; a cat was thrown at the women of the house, and a long staff danced up and down in the chimney.” The animate objects became increasingly violent and appeared to concentrate upon a young boy of the household: “... for he was flung about at such a rate, that they feared his brains would have been beaten out; nor did they find it possible to hold him.” Numerous times this poor unfortunate was impaled by diverse iron objects or cast into the fire by an unseen agency. On other occasions he spoke roughly in a tongue unknown to anyone else.

*(Magnalia Christi Americana, pp. 450-2)*

Near-identical events are recorded, again by Mather, concerning a May Hortado of Salman Falls and the Walton family of Portsmouth, in 1682, and more of the same occurred to a family of Hartford, Connecticut in 1683. In none of these cases did any sort of hysteria of the sort that occurred in Salem arise, and the afflicted were instead the subjects of pity and assumed to be under some form of bedevilment, likely against their will. Witches were even suspected as being the agents of the misfortunes but they were not hunted down. At no time was anyone found guilty or punished for causing these mysterious events, nor did it apparently occur to any of the family members or townspeople to do so.



## **The Nature of Witchcraft**

Certain fixtures in witch lore in New England and elsewhere allow us to create a composite image of a typical witch of legend. Usually a witch had a spectre that could go about unseen by normal folk. This was the agent of so much of the unexplained and evil doings seen by others and it was such spectres that were the cause of so much harm in the Salem situation. While it was invisible to all except the accuser, the spectre was considered to be sufficient evidence of wrongdoing.

Indeed, all such “evidence” rested entirely upon the word of the accused and, in many cases, it seemed that the making of an accusation was enough to get a conviction. Women who were too headstrong or who went about their business heedless of tradition and “proper” form were susceptible to being accused of witchcraft.

Witches were often thought to congregate in midnight covens consisting of wild demonic revels and orgies of sex and sacrifice, as suggested by the following:

A witches Sabbath record — At the Beldames’ unholy sabbath in Cape Hollow a black sailor, an old man, or the devil himself in scarlet cloth would fiddle while the Assemblage danced riotously and engaged in all manner of Activity Hideous in the sight of God. All there would Sign the Black Book, Eat Red Bread and Drink Blood Brew. The Coven Mistress would arrive on her Nightmare steed and she and the “suitor” alone would dance the first round.

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)

In addition to their spectres, most witches also had familiars, small animals unspectacular in appearance but gifted with unusual vitality and intellect. They saw what the witch saw and knew what the witch knew, and presumably the witch could use the senses of the beast as well. The most common physical mark of a witch was a third nipple that could be located anywhere but was the source of sustenance for the familiar and occasionally the devil if he wished.

When described in legends, as well as in trial records, witches appear to have created their supernatural effects through what may be called “sympathetic magic.” This type of magic makes use of the principle that similar objects are somehow related and that things that affect one will have an effect upon the other. The system used

bears some resemblance to stereotypical “Voodoo.” Using dolls of mandrake and other roots, or even fashioned out of clothing or rags to bear some superficial resemblance to the target of a spell, the witch would cause wounds and afflictions upon the unfortunate by inflicting damage on the doll. Such effects could range from “unexplainable” itches to spontaneous fits of choking, beating, knife wounds, and even death. Those who died under such conditions were believed to be susceptible to returning as ghosts or other tormented souls.



At least some witches were supposed able to shapeshift. There are several tales of large, mangy black cats, or occasionally horses of evil appearance, following in the wake of a ship to bedevil one of its crew. The witch would invariably come aboard in the deep of the night, slip past the sentry, and cause mishap to the object of her wrath. Some witches did this by “riding” the unfortunate individuals. Although this may in fact be torment of a sexual nature this is never overtly stated in any of the tales. The poor man, for so he invariably turned out to be, was unable to resist as he was saddled and bridled. The witch then mounted the man’s back and road him over hills, through woods, and even over the waves till dawn. With the rising of the sun the spell was broken and the cursed individual was returned to his original place of rest.

Nearly all witches of New England were great weather makers and, while they usually used this power to brew up storms, were seen as being able to cause any sort of weather desired. Some of the most potent storm witches, usually men, were even seen as beneficent. It is important to note that it had long been understood that it was possible for witchcraft to produce positive effects, such as healing or good weather. Satan, the ultimate agent of these effects, was known, however, to be evil and the actions themselves were thus viewed as sacrilege, whatever their intentions and effect. Perhaps this point came to occupy a greater importance in the closing decade of the 17th century than it had previously and, if so, this may help to explain the hysteria of Europe and Salem.



## Specific Witches

Some of the numerous witches who lived throughout the region of New England are listed here. Some have extensive tales about them while others survive as little more than names and places.

### Moll Pitcher

The Seer of Lynn and granddaughter of John Dimond, Moll Pitcher was a being to be feared. She was the most famed fortuneteller in New England. Her hair had not been combed in her lifetime and thus stuck out in a horrid tangle from her head. She cut her hazel “walking stick” from a tree that hung over a brook where an unwedded mother had drowned her infant. She lived at the foot of a cliff of dull red porphyry called High Rock and there, she was consulted by all manner of folk, rich and poor alike, over matters humble and grand. She died in 1813 at the age of 75.

### John Dimond

Grandfather of Moll Pitcher, Dimond was viewed with great reverence and some fear by the inhabitants of Marblehead in the 18th century. A wizard of great power, he could foresee the weather. Many times he fared up to the Old Burying Ground, where he would stalk amid the tombstones shrieking instructions to ships far out to

**A witch trial record from Leith, Scotland, preserves the spell needed to raise a sea storm:**

“ ... baptised a cat in the Webster house ... first two of them held a finger on the one side of a chimney crook, and another finger on the other side, the two webs of the fingers meeting together, then they put the cat thrice through the links of the crook and passed it thrice underneath the chimney. Thereafter, at Beige Todd’s house, they knit to the four feet of the cat four joints of men, which being done Janet Campbell fetched it ... and at midnight she and the two linkops and the two wives called stobbeis ... cast the cat into the sea as far as they might ... ”

(Horace Palmer Beck, *Folklore of the Sea*)



sea. Many times the steersmen of those ships claim to have heard and heeded his directions.

### **Old Meg, the Witch of Gloucester**

Little is known of Old Meg, a great dealer in supernatural things, other than how she died. During the siege of Louisburg by Colonial troops in 1745, two soldiers from Gloucester noted a crow hovering over them. They threw stones and fired muskets at it but could neither harm the bird nor drive it off as it wheeled overhead, cawing and croaking ceaselessly. It finally occurred to them that this might be Old Meg terrorizing them.

With nothing else of silver, they pulled the coat buttons from their uniforms and fired them from their muskets. The first shot struck the bird in the leg and the next one killed it.

When the two soldiers returned to Gloucester they heard that Old Meg, out walking in front of the local fort on the day they had encountered the crow 500 miles away, had broken her leg. After lingering for some time in agony she died. The soldiers immediately exhumed the old witch and examined her wound and found a mangled silver button lodged in the broken bone.

### **Old Nanny Redd of Marblehead**

Old Nanny Redd of Marblehead had the “evil eye” and could stare a palsy onto anyone with it and was reputed to be able to curdle milk with a look. She could wish a bloody cleaver into a cradle as a sure sign that the infant within would soon die and could cause shipwrecks with her magic.

Old Nanny Redd was also blamed for instances of people

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walking about days after their burials and she would send these lost souls out over the water to menace others. It was whispered that she was able to draw the knowledge of drowned sailors out of the wind. She had slaves, both living and dead, as far away as Amesbury, and there was a man there who was known to walk the road thereabouts holding his head in his hand by its hair.

### **Uncle Kaler**

Of Finnish descent, Uncle Kaler lived on Louden Hill and was a great storm caller and calmer. The folk of the region held that he had great power but, while he could be surly enough, was not an evil man.

### **Old Betty Booker of Kittery, Maine**

Old Betty Booker was supposed to have lived past Carver Green on the old road from Bay to Plymouth in the Plymouth woods near Kittery, Maine, and the head of Buzzards Bay. Local spots bear names like Witches' Hollow. One tale holds that Old Betty bedded the devil and received a boon in return and that she was a wrinkled and hideous crone until she set foot on Carver's Green. Once there, she grew fiery and beautiful, young, and robust.

### **Lesser-Known Witches**

Following are brief references to a number of less-known witches that storytellers can use as seeds or inspiration.

Deborah Borden (aka Deb Burden) was said to have caused a great deal of trouble in Wareham, Rochester, and Middleboro.

A Truro witch used to ride a human steed across the countryside, silver spurs ripping into the man's sides and the red heels of her witching boots flashing.

In Hobb's Hollow, Massachusetts, near Buzzards Bay, two old maids, called by the locals, "Jenkins Hens," were the leaders of a witches' coven.

Deep in Ghost Forest lies Half Way Pond (now Mary Dunn Pond), lit with witch-fire over the enchanted waters and ringed with invisible quicksand.

Witches were believed to reside in Amesbury and Rock Village, Massachusetts.

Little is known of Goody More any more save for how she reputedly was killed. She is said to have fallen down a flight of stairs to her death at the precise moment that a great black beetle

was squashed several miles away at a party.

Goody Whitcher was a renowned weaver in life and her loom is said to have banged and clattered as if being used for days after her death and burial.

Goodman Nichols bespelled the son of a neighbor to run up the side of a house.

Susie Martin was hanged by a wreath of willow twigs because the noose danced out of the hands of her captors. When the noose could not be placed over her head, a crow cawed advice to the assemblage of villagers to make a noose of willow twigs. This method proved effective and Martin, who sang devotions to God all during her stay in the gaol, was hanged with no further trouble.

**In Eastham, Massachusetts, an old and infirm sailor sits before the hearth of the newly-rebuilt Higgin's Tavern. No longer able to go to sea, he tells tales of the ocean, stories that everyone in town has heard many times before.**

“Ah, I have one for you now, if you like ... The namesake of this very hostel figures in the yam, For that's all it is, o'course. No truth to such ramblings at all. Is there, now?

Set down ... there's your gin now.

Goodie Hallet used to dance with the devil in the moonlight, shocking and horrifying the Puritan townsfolk 'til they drove her in the Nauset dunes. Her house is in Welfleet. A hollow near the Old Eastham Cemetery is where she still walks from time to time.

Maria Hallet was an innocent girl who became the lover of the infamous pirate Samuel Black Bellamy until he betrayed her. Bellamy was a tall, handsome man, lean and dark but with a rakish air and ready charm. Some say that in return for Goodie Hallet's soul and the life of her unborn child Satan gave her her revenge on Bellamy. Others claim that she gave birth to the child but kept him hidden away in a barn out of shame. When the child died with a straw caught in its throat, Goodie Hallet was placed in Eastham prison, mad with grief. She continually escaped the prison, and so was stoned away from the village as a witch. She went to live off by the shore, where she took to weaving



cloth that people say proved by its worth her witchery.

No matter the reason, Goodie Hallet made pact with the Devil for the soul of Bellamy, and in the fullness of time she got it. Satan drew Bellamy's ship, the *Whidah*, to its doom almost on the doorstep to her hut, drowned the pirate and gave him into her care. He served her and the Devil in death until they tired of him. He was buried near her house in a stretch of stubble, rock and sand that can still to be seen.

She had for familiars a black cat and a black goat. The cat was often seen trailing in the wake of ships, its green eyes aglow. Goodie Hallett herself could ride on the backs of the porpoises to curse the ships she and her cat followed. She also had for a home a shrieking demon-whale given to her by the Devil. She rode in the belly of the beast for more than a century, deflecting harpoons and such while the great horror capsized whaleboats, stove in ships' timbers, and ate and drowned the pitiful crewmen.

There is another tale about the end of Black Bellamy's life. It is said that the justice of the town identified Bellamy's body on the shore the day after the wreck of the *Whidah*. The pirate captain was shoved into the trench grave alongside the men who died with him. The spot was not marked.

That fall, a tall stranger walked into town and took up residence at the local inn, Higgin's Tavern. His black hair was streaked white over his scarred forehead, and his eyes were dark and commanding, but sometimes their sight turned inward and he would lose himself in memories of other days. Often he seemed to be steering a ship as he sat at his chair, or to be searching the horizon of Eastham meadow for a sail. For all that, he lived well enough, although no one knew where he came by the coin. In 1720, the stranger died and was laid to rest near the Burying Acre, where he often walked as though waiting for some appointment.

A week later, mad Goodie Hallet was found dead on the rocky outcrop before her house, blank eyes staring out to sea, a stained knife in her hand, and a great wound across her throat."







## Chapter 7

# Mysteries of the Diverse States of New England

**T**he phenomena listed in this section are generally organized first by locale followed by descriptions of the incidents themselves. If they are limited to one state their entries will be given at the beginning of its information. Some events are not particularly local in nature and immediately hereafter is a series of phenomena that affected much or all of New England and thus cannot be relegated to one state or another, the so-called Dark Days of the region's past.

### Dark Days

The first Dark Day was recorded by Cotton Mather as taking place on October 21, 1716. It was noon on a Sunday and so many people all over the colonies were gathered in places of worship. Mather reports that it became so dark in places that church members could not recognize others seated across the aisles from them. A half hour later it grew light enough to continue with the service.

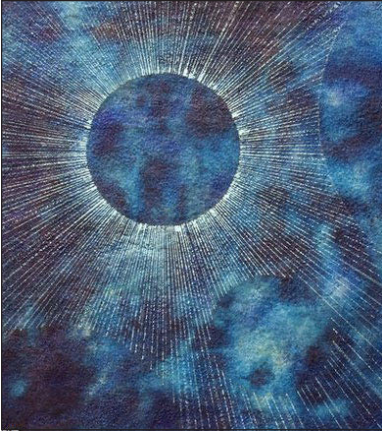
Another Dark Day was recorded on May 19, 1780. For many hours during what would normally be the brightest portion of the day it was so dark that the sun was virtually obscured and animals acted as though night had fallen.

### Yellow Day

A "Yellow Day" took place on September 6, 1881. In other ways much the same as the Dark Days of previous years, on this day everything was dimmed in an oddly-hued gloom that gave everything a brassy appearance. Those contemporary with the event who wrote of it attributed this and the Dark Days to smoke from forest fires many miles away from the sites of the occurrence.

But certainly the apparition of the Yellow Day was odd regardless of the explanation given — which was not met with wide acceptance among those who experienced the darkness. The effects of the event were noticed in regions as widespread as White River Junction, Vermont, down into Connecticut, west to Albany, New York, and some distance into Maine.

Early on the morning of the Yellow Day, the sun and sky appeared red. Near noon, with no clouds approaching, as were often



reported in regard to other Dark Days in the past, a strange sourceless yellow glow suffused the landscape. Things rapidly grew dark, although tinged with copper, such that lamps had to be lit to allow for work to continue. Schools were let out for the lack of light or candles.

Many people believed that a great hurricane or tornado was on its way, but nothing of the sort manifested itself in any of the affected areas. Others came to

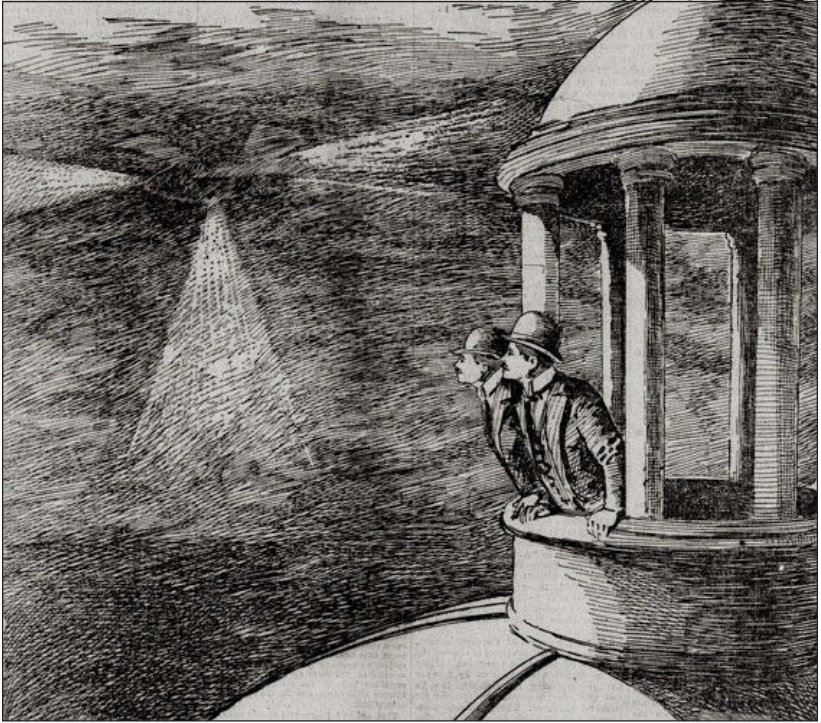
believe that the Earth was in the tail of a comet and that the yellow dark was a result of this.

### Strange Lights Witnessed by Thousands

The following phenomena cannot be limited to one or even a few locations. On the first night, reports came in from dozens of people all over New England (a storyteller could thus use this as a hook that begins anywhere in New England and be assured that there was a witness in whatever vicinity he chose).

On September 8, 1909, a bright light hovering and sometimes moving erratically across the night sky was observed by many people all over the northeastern United States. It caused considerable consternation but, as it did not occur during the eagerly-awaited evenings thereafter, the fervor caused by the initial sightings passed. Then, on December 20 of that year, another light was seen passing over Boston Harbor. This sighting did not prove to be isolated. On the 23rd, the *New-York Tribune* reported that an airship passed overhead: "... sweeping the heavens with a searchlight of tremendous power." It came from the southeast and passed overhead toward the northwest, hovering over the town in the meantime. Then, in a burst of speed, it disappeared, only to return two hours later, again hovering for some time. Thousands are said to have witnessed the event.

At 6 o'clock the next night, Boston was treated to the same show. Many witnesses nervously queried the authorities and newspapers, who appeared to be as mystified as anyone. A powerful searchlight hovered over the town for approximately a quarter of



an hour, indiscriminately illuminating its surroundings. Some observers reported being able to see a shadowed object behind the light itself. Others in Boston noticed a cluster of small, dimly-visible red lights in a halo around the searchlight. By 7:30, a similar light was seen at Willimantic, Connecticut. Lynn, Massachusetts was also visited by the mystery light, which crossed the evening sky at high speed heading north. It later came out that Marlboro, Massachusetts, was visited no less than nine times between the 14th and the 24th of that same December.

Then, after the Christmas eve sightings, no more was heard of the hovering light until the new year. But the scene of these new reports was hundreds of miles to the southeast, in Tennessee, Alabama, and West Virginia. After a similar although less extensive series of sightings there, the light vanished for good and has never been explained. In 1913, numerous reports of identical phenomena came out of Dover, England, and Cardiff, Wales. The locals had no more idea of the cause of the disturbances than had the witnesses across the Atlantic.



## Unexplained Occurrences & Strange Locales by State

### Connecticut

**Danbury:** A rectangular stone chamber with its long axis aligned east-west. A fallen lintel slab is engraved with a circle halved, one area gouged hollow, the other left raised, almost a primitive yin-yang symbol. The opening of this chamber, and thus its carved lintel as well, is known to face directly into a notch in the horizon through which the sun first appears as it rises on the spring and fall equinoxes.

**Gungywamp, near Groton:** A neolithic stone chamber that appears very natural from the outside but expands to a low-roofed rectangle within. Outside is a small ring of stones, easily overlooked in the underbrush.

**East Haddam:** Moodus Noises; the Native American word is *Makimoodus*, “place of noises.” From the earliest times, East Haddam has been plagued by phantom subterranean noises. On August 13, 1729, extremely localized “earthquakes” were reported by the Reverend Mr. Hosmer in a letter to a friend. Periodically, the tremors were noted as far off as Hartford, or even Boston and New York, and reported variously as sounding like small arms fire, explosions, or thunder. According to one source from 1915, the noises are traceable to a cave one-and-a-half miles from Haddam on Cave Hill. On the side of that high hill is a cave which burrows into the earth for more than 660 feet. The air was said to get progressively worse as one neared the innermost extent of the cave, until any firelight would fail utterly.

**Hog Rock, west of Milford:** Satan appeared in the guise of a mad and malevolent hog to scatter a quartet of young men who were occupied in gambling.

**Millington:** About a mile outside of Millington lies Chapman Falls, and a strange glen called the “Devil’s Hopyard.” Certain flat-topped rocks there are said to have served as cauldrons for sorcery.

On Witching Nights the Crones and their Spectres would gather to work their foul Arts. They stirred potions of nameless matter to call the hideous fallen one, Nyalath-Hotep, his Satanic Majesty. There They capered in the Lightning and rain to Lucifer’s fiddle. If He appeared, His customary seat was on the Cthonic Throne at the very edge

of the Precipice that drops to the maddened sea below. A Dismal glow emanated from his awful form to give grim Illumination to the Scene. In this Seat, He held his mocking Court of Malworship, allowing those who would Serve Him to sign in his Black Book, offering their Immortal Souls for his passing favor.

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)

**South Coventry:** The homestead of Revolutionary War hero Nathan Hale is said to be haunted by at least one and possibly the ghosts of several of his family members.

Nathan Hale was a young man and a promising teacher just before the war began. He came to believe fervently in the ideals of the Revolution and became a lieutenant in the Connecticut assembly just in time to participate in forcing the British troops out of Boston in 1775. Hale proved to be a daring and resourceful soldier and, as such, was rapidly promoted to captain in the elite Rangers and increasingly given more responsibility. In 1776, Hale volunteered for a dangerous mission spying on British troop movements for





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General George Washington. While returning from his mission, he was captured by the British, tried as a spy, and hanged.

At the time of the hero's death, the Hale house was home to Nathan's father, Deacon Richard Hale, and his 11 living children, as well as his new wife, the widow of Samuel Adams, and several of her unmarried daughters.

The haunting of Hale House has been documented as early as 1914. Antiquarian George Dudley Seymour idolized Nathan Hale and bought the dilapidated structure, intending to repair it as a tribute to the hero. His first impression of the house also involves his first encounter with its spectral residents:

“Isolated, dilapidated, unpainted, and vacant, the house presented a forlorn picture. Heightened on the inside by streamers of paper falling from dampened walls ... [Seymour's friend] jumped out of the buggy and ran to the window, and what should he see but Deacon Hale's ghost looking out of the [schoolroom] window to see who had arrived. As my friend put his face against the pane, the Deacon stepped back to the inner end of the room and vanished into thin air.”

(Michael Norman and Beth Scott, *Haunted America*)

Seymour was later told that there were other ghosts resident at the Hale House. The spirit of a chamber maid, Lydia Carpenter, is said to haunt the home eavesdropping on gossip and sweeping the hall, as she did in life. Another, sighting, which may be Lydia once more, is a woman in white who bustles about the kitchen in the early morning hours. The ghosts of Nathan's brother, John, and his wife, Sarah, may also yet inhabit the structure.

## Maine

**Alfred:** On a pleasant October day in 1827, Reverend Charles Sharply rode into town and held a service in the local meeting house. He was collecting funds to build a church in the nearby village of Waterboro, the next stop in his travels and Alfred's citizens added 30 dollars to the 270 the good reverend had already collected. Sharply rode on that evening for Waterboro but never arrived or was seen again.

Townfolk held different thoughts on the fate of the churchman.

The next day, the deacon of Alfred, Nathaniel Dickerman, rode into town upon a horse which some believed to be that of the missing man. But others pointed out that Sharply's horse had a white star on forehead and breast, whereas this creature was an unrelieved black. The deacon explained that he had found the horse that very morning in his pasture and that he would gladly return it to any who could but prove ownership. No one came forward and the matter soon ceased to be of concern to the people of the town. The deacon, as time went by, prospered and soon became a wealthy man by local standards. As his riches grew, however, so did his temper, and he became surly and sullen, rarely venturing out of his house.

One day, a rumor flew through the community that someone had seen a misty apparition near a tree at the turn of the road leading out of town. Some said that this phantasm had the semblance of the missing reverend. When Deacon Dickerman heard this story he grew instantly pale, muttering about fools who listened to such chatter.

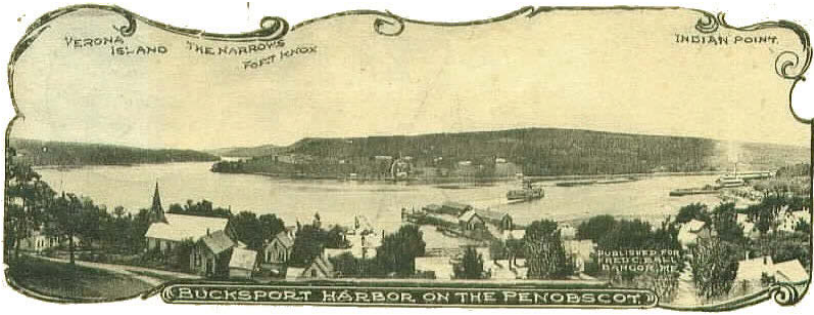
Ten years passed and the "tree at the turn of the road" was shunned by many in Alfred. Then, one afternoon, a clergyman was summoned to Dickerman's home. He found the deacon alone and frantic, his manner and clothing disheveled, and was asked by him to hear a statement he had prepared.

"My time in this world is almost ended, nor would I live longer if I could," he said. "I am haunted day and night and there is no peace, no rest for me on this earth. They say that Sharply's spirit has appeared at the owl tree. Well, his body lies there. They accused me of taking his horse. It is true. A little black dye on his head and breast was all I needed to deceive them. Pray for me, for I fear my soul is lost. I killed Sharply. I killed him for the money that he had and the devil prospered me with it. In my will I leave 2,000 dollars to his widow and 5,000 dollars to the church he was collecting for. Will there be mercy for me there? I dare not think it. Go and pray for me."

The clergyman was barely away from the house when he heard the crack of a pistol from within. Dickerman was dead. Reverend Sharply's bones were later found at the foot of the tree at the turn of the road heading out of town.

**Boon Island:** The ghost of Juan Carlos, first mate to the pirate Thomas Tew. In the last quarter of the 17th century, the ship of pirate Thomas Tew, the *Capitanas Cartaraqui*, was driven ashore

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and broken up on Boon Island. Only three of the ship's compliment survived the wreck, Tew, Juan Carlos, and a beautiful Moorish girl who was taken prisoner on the last ship the pirate captured. Marooned on the island with no food, little water, and a single treasure chest rescued from the sea, they were desperate.

Late in the night, Juan Carlos awoke to the sound of a shot and hysterical female laughter. Tew was dead, shot by the now-deranged woman. The next night, as another shot rang out, she ended her own miserable life. Juan buried the bodies and treasure as best he could and was rescued shortly thereafter.

Juan spent several years searching for the treasure chest without success. His ghost has been seen in Room 24 of the Colonial Inn at Concord, Maine, in a wing located in an old portion of the Inn built in 1716. Why the ship's mate is associated with this room, however, is unknown.

**Bucksport:** The monument erected to Jonathan Buck, a judge and founder of the town of Bucksport, is marked by the imprint of a human leg upon its surface. There are several legends surrounding Buck, but they all agree that the the imprint appeared miraculously shortly after the monument was finished in 1856. Buck, who died in 1795, was a respected man and believed to be stern but fair. Various stories involve Buck, however, in the trial of some individual whom he wrongly had convicted and executed.

According to one, a woman of the town went missing and later her dismembered body was found, missing a leg. Buck, spurred on by the outrage of the community at this horrid crime, found guilty a half-mad hermit who lived outside of Bucksport. The man predicted that the appearance of the leg of the woman would proclaim him innocent.

Other more recent versions of the story are less true to the details

known of the case but even more shocking and involve the stern judge in the trial of a witch, who cursed him as she burned at the stake. In a further embellishment, a son of the witch issued the curse after watching his mother's grisly execution. Overcome with grief and rage, the boy struck Buck with his mother's charred leg to account for the impression on the monument.

**Crow Island, near Deer Island in Penobscot Bay:** A bare stone about 12 feet across sticks out of a hillside of scree and loose rock. On it are very regular lines and dots, certainly manmade, that appear to be an inscription of some sort.

**John's Island:** A treasure of the pirate era is said to be buried nearby with a demonic horse as its guardian.

**Jonesboro:** Nell Hilton's ghost is said to haunt the area and to prophesy wars to come by appearing immediately before their start.

Born before the American Revolution, Nell was a wild and free-spirited girl who resented the restrictive lifestyle of the Puritan folk around her in her original home of Plymouth. Her family later moved to Jonesboro, where Nell found the freedom she craved in the surrounding forests. She made friends among the Passamaquoddy Indians and eventually took a lover from among them. On the occasion of one tryst, her father happened upon her and killed and scalped the young man before her eyes. He then drove her from his sight and Nell went to live among the Passamaquoddy.

Nell's talent for foretelling war was seen even in her lifetime. After the Acadians were forced out of Nova Scotia by the British in 1755, Nell predicted that war would follow, as it did. She also counseled the Passamaquoddy to remain loyal to the French, and they did.

Twenty years later, Nell reappeared in Jonesboro to warn the inhabitants of the coming Revolution. She foresaw the details of the Battle of Lexington and the eventual surrender of Yorktown. But she did not foresee her own fate and she was captured by the British and hanged as a spy in New Brunswick on March 1, 1777.

As she awaited her death, Nell made a vow to return to her "prophecy rock" on the anniversary of her death whenever war threatened America. It is told that her spirit warned of the coming of the War of 1812, of the Mexican-American War of 1846, and of the Civil War of 1861-65. Nell also warned of the Spanish-American War of 1898, and came again before World War I. Whether she appeared to presage World War II is not recorded.

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**Kennebunkport:** The Captain Lord Mansion Inn has been subject to the visitations of a pale lady clad in flowing white garments.

**Matawasakie:** In 1919, a stately-looking mansion was built in a misty valley nearby by one Emeric Belasco. Shunned by the locals, the house acquired an evil reputation in short order and soon came to be known as “Hell House.” It was vacated and its windows and doors boarded up sometime prior to 1928 but it nonetheless remained the subject of ill rumor. Investigated in 1940, the house succeeded in causing the deaths of three of the five who went in, one by her own hand. The other two were declared mad upon being retrieved from the manse three harrowing days after they went inside.

**Monhegan Island:** 15 miles from Port Clyde, the island boasts several inscriptions on a rock that was discovered in 1808. At Manana, a jagged outcrop of Monhegan approaches two more weather-washed islands to form an enclosed harbor. Over a spring is an inscription, several inches in height by two feet in length and surmounted by three shallow indentations about the size of a child’s fist and set in a triangle one foot on a side. More runes have been found 22 miles west of Monhegan Island in what is now Popham Beach State Park.

**Searsmont:** A massive stone with a carved face and head, occluded by low-hanging oak branches, was discovered during the excavation of a building site.

**South Windham:** Seven miles northwest of Portland, a bizarre staircase, utterly without apparent purpose, beginning and ending in unfeatured rock, has been carved into the cliffside.

A grand house on Windham Center Road in South Windham has an outbuilding with a tower rising from one corner that at one time contained a bell that was rung to warn of Indian raids. While it no longer contains a bell, the home’s residents are nonetheless sometimes wakened by phantasmal clanging coming from it. And on the second floor of the home, near the tower, footsteps have been heard on the creaking floorboards.

**Old York:** Near the mouth of the York River is located the haunt of Old Trickey, the Devil-Doomed Sandman.

**Middlemass Bay:** Harriet Beacher Stowe recorded the following legend in *The Pearl of Orr’s Island* (1862).

During one of the worst storms of the century, Lois Toothacre sat in her seaside home with several companions as the weather raged without. At the height of the tempest, she remarked nervously to her companions that she thought she heard a baby crying piteously



out in the gale. She was convinced by the others, who heard nothing, that the sound was merely the wind.

After the storm cleared, however, to her horror, an empty cradle was found in the wrack on the shore. Even after an exhaustive effort the searchers found no baby. But the cradle was a fine article and Lois put it to use. Ever after, however, when a gale blew beyond the walls of the house, the cradle would rock as if pushed evenly and carefully, as though someone sat by it and pushed it. This caused some consternation and shock in the household but, as nothing else untoward occurred, the occupants of the house soon became used to the phenomenon. So matters stood until Lois's sister, Cerenthy, came to visit.

Cerenthy had always been a sickly girl and it was said that she was born "with the Veil over her face," which is to say that she could see spirits and such. On one visit, just after the birth of Lois's second child, a gale happened upon the coast. Cerenthy was alone in the child's room when she came out and asked, "Sister, who's that woman sitting rocking the cradle?" Lois replied that no one was in the room besides Cerenthy and the baby and explained how it was the cradle's habit to rock so in foul weather.

"Well, as true as you're alive, I just saw a woman in a white silk gown with long black hair hanging over a face pale as a sheet sitting and rocking that cradle," Cerenthy said. "She looked round at me with her great black eyes all mournful and wishful. Then she stooped down over the cradle."

This was too much for Lois, who went immediately into the cradle room and took the baby out of it. The next day she had the cradle split up for kindling. That night, when the cradle wood was placed on the fire, all those in the house plainly heard a baby's



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screams echo throughout the house.

**Old York Cemetery, York:** Far in the back of this burial ground may be found the unusual resting place of Mrs. Mary Masson (d. 1774, age 29). A great boulder covers the whole length of her grave and legend tells that Mary had been executed for witchcraft and that the slab was placed to prevent her from escaping her place of rest.

### New Hampshire

**Alton:** The town hall, one of the oldest buildings in Alton, has been subject to bizarre events and eerie noises for nearly a century. For many years the town's police station was located in the basement of the building. The graveyard shift, particularly between midnight and 3 a.m., was regularly enlivened by the sounds of footsteps in the empty town hall above, doors opening and closing without apparent cause, and police dogs given to unexplained barking and howling fits. On at least one occasion, the dogs were allowed to pursue whatever had disturbed them and they raced toward the stairs to the second floor but, upon reaching the second step, they stopped and would proceed no further.

There are two entities suspected of the haunting. One is the spirit of a former city elder who died in the building's bell tower. The other may be the ghost of Sarah Glidden, a woman who was struck by lightning from a clear sky in 1825 and whose body is said to rest in the town cemetery under a large granite tombstone.

**Chester:** A cavern known throughout the region and bearing the name Devil's Den may be reached by a twisting path that is mysteriously open and unobstructed winter and summer. Invisible evil spirits are reputed to inhabit the cave and walkway, tormenting those who come near. A poem by J.G. Whittler reveals a further detail:

“Tis said this cave is an evil place, Chosen haunt of a fallen  
race ...”

Unexplained deaths in the area are often attributed to some agency at the Devil's Cave.

**East Aisted:** In 1770, Jacob Cady went missing for three days when he was three years old. He was eventually found, vigorous and healthy, in a cave, suckled and watched over by a great black hound.

**Legend of Ocean-Born Mary:** A coast guard named Don Pedro was on his rounds one night when he saw the figure of a girl looming

out of the fog and, so far from town, was surprised at this. The next night, he was on patrol on the same lonely strand when he saw her again. She was so beautiful that he fell immediately in love with her and begged that she meet him again. Smiling knowingly, she agreed that she would see him again, and then vanished in the fog.

A short time later, a Portuguese vessel was wrecked near this beach and Don Pedro was in the surf boat rowing out to the craft to aid any stranded on deck. There, a child in her arms, was the girl whom he had met in the fog, waving to him frantically! As the surf boat came alongside, at the height of the wave, she threw the child to him and then jumped. The coast guard caught the infant, but the woman missed the boat and was swept away by the churning sea, never to be seen again.

Don Pedro raised the girl as his own, giving her the name Mary Wallace for some reason lost to the past. Eventually he helped her build a house, in Hennicker, New Hampshire. He later stayed with her in his old age and was killed there by a disgruntled former shipmate and alleged to be buried under the fireplace. The house is said to be haunted by Mary, Don Pedro, and a serving girl who met a bad end. Many have seen the tall, stately figure of Mary, who appears as a lovely, smiling woman in her thirties with auburn hair, looking from the upstairs windows. Mary lies buried in the Center Cemetery of Hennicker beneath a weathered headstone, the inscription of which reads "In Memory of Widow Mary Wallace Who Died Feb. 15 A.D. 1814 in the 94th Year of Her Age." Below this on the stone is inscribed "Ocean-Born Mary."

A woman wearing Colonial-era clothing has also been seen walking the roads in the area. Some visitors brave enough to approach the home when it was abandoned in the early years of the 20th century also swore they had seen a spectral coach drawn by four horses clatter into the drive. The region just behind the house has long been subject to strange and haunting moans and cries that have terrified some of the local inhabitants and a rumor has long circulated of a treasure secreted somewhere on the grounds.

**Lake Kenosha:** A lake monster was reported here on November 11, 1891 (see *Gougou*, p. 87).

**Portsmouth:** In 1873, Celia Thaxter described an event that had happened 16 to 18 years earlier. A whale-boat full of men out of Portsmouth was headed for the shoals off Star Island with a native of the Isles of Shoals, Richard Randell, managing it.

"They had sailed about half the distance when they were

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surprised at seeing a large ball of fire, like a rising moon, rolling towards them over the sea from the south. They watched eagerly as it bore down upon them and, veering off, went east of them at some little distance and then passed astern, and there, of course, they expected to lose sight of it. But, while they were marveling and speculating, it altered its course, and suddenly began to near them, coming back upon its track, against the wind and steadily following in their wake. This was too much for the native shoals islander. He took off his jacket and turned it inside out to exorcise the fiend, and lo, the apparition disappeared.”

(B.A. Botkin, *A Treasury of New England Folklore*)

### Stone Devil of Portsmouth

Following is a brief synopsis of *Lithobolia*, literally the “stone devil,” an actual document of the 17th century. The author is unknown and extant copies of the manuscript, which is only a few pages in length, are few and is now extremely rare. It was printed in 1698 in London and purports to record the narrative of an eyewitness to the fantastic events.

The subject of the work is the harrowing experience of the household of George Walton of Portsmouth, who incurred the wrath of a local crone. He was thereafter troubled by showers of stone upon his person and those of his family and his property. The first instance was a storm of rocks upon his house so violent that he awoke to see the iron gate of his fence fly off its hinges and land a good distance away. A second volley injured several family members who came to investigate the noise. They were driven indoors, but stones came crashing down the chimney and through windows to strike at the bedeviled family, rebounding from walls and floor with great force. Several of the rocks were found to be hot as is from a fire. One maid even swore that she saw a spectral hand through a window even though the room beyond was known to be unoccupied. These attacks went on for several days, periodically and without warning, but always near George Walton himself.



**Mystery Hill, North Salem:** A pre-Columbian settlement consisting of several stone chambers, walls, drains, a dolmen and a great stone slab is located here. Long reputed to be an ancient burial site or even a Neolithic habitation, it also figures in the legends of the region as a place of odd occurrences and strange feelings. At a weight of 90 tons and dimensions of approximately eight by 12 by 20 feet, this dolmen is the largest known in North America.

A circle of stones can also be found at this location. The forest has encroached upon the circle now but in the Neolithic period the entire area within the circle probably would have been cleared of trees. There are five primary standing stones, one of which has fallen over. One stone stands due north of the circle's center, while others mark the points at which the sun rises and sets on the summer and winter solstices.

All the structures are of unmortared stone and similar in style to several sites in the Channel Islands as well as ruins at Upton, Massachusetts, and Elephant Hill Valley, Vermont. Barry Fell believes that all of these structures were raised by Celtic explorers of the first millennium B.C. (see "Empire of Woden-Lithi," pp. 48-51).

## **Rhode Island**

**Providence:** H.P. Lovecraft's (1890-1937) grave is here at Swan Point Cemetery, but is difficult to find because the name inscribed on the monument is Phillips, the maiden name of the author's mother.

**Block Island:** Block Island has long been thought of as a haven for vicious gangs of "wreckers," opportunistic looters who would fall upon the hapless ships and crews that their false lights had caused to run aground in foul weather. Many tales are told of the unnameable fates meted out to generations of seafarers along the rocky shores of that ill-featured island. One infamous wrecker, Old Chrissy, was particularly vicious and is credited in legend with clubbing to death her own son, a sailor on a foundered ship, rather than give away the secret of her dread profession.

The lighting of decoy lights was often called "mooncursing," after the practice of using the lights on moonless nights.

Another tale of Block Island concerns Matthew Lee, who decided to turn pirate while languishing in a Spanish port with neither cargo nor capital. As he was making ready to sail, a rich widow approached him seeking passage to America.

Soon the widow, along with her wealth, retainers, and family, were brought aboard. But the lady also insisted upon a bringing a special passenger, a beautiful and spirited white Arabian horse that was her favorite. Lee, by then greedy for the plunder to come, had a stall constructed below decks and the ship put out to sea with all due haste.

The voyage across the Atlantic went without incident and before long the ship reached the stretch of water between Point Judith and Block Island. Captain Lee arranged with his crew to murder all the passengers as they slept. The cutthroats made quick work of the retainers. Soon only the lady was left and, as the murderers stalked toward her cabin, she burst forth and threw herself into the waves, sinking immediately from sight. All that remained before the sharing of the bloody loot was to dispose of the white horse and the killers drove it over the side of the vessel and into the sea.

But the pirates' tempers flared over the division of the cargo. Lee spitted the heart of one mutineer but the others set fire to the ship and the pirates, regardless of their side in the mutiny, were forced to pile with their booty into the lifeboats and head for shore. The captain and crew then settled among the local population, secure with their ill-gotten wealth.

Upon the anniversary of the horrible crime, the butchers





Gov. Endicott landing on Block Island.

assembled to pass the night in a drunken debauch. A sudden flare of light lit the sea nearby and the festivities abruptly ceased as a great burning ship floated over the surface, lines and hull and sails aflame. From the waves before the ship a horse's white head rose, eyes burning brightly. The horse gained the sand and galloped over the strand to stamp on the door of Lee's home, kelp on its heaving flanks, salt spray foaming from its muzzle, red eyes fixed on the pirate master.

Lee's movements were jerky, as if he did not control his own actions, as he climbed astride the apparition. His own eyes wide, he could do nothing as the beast carried him toward and then over the cliff that overlooked the site of the previous year's massacre. The ship lay in wait below and also, beneath the water's surface, Lee could glimpse the assembled dead, lying in wait upon the sea's floor. Then the great white beast vanished and Lee was left to stare out over the ocean.

All the islanders quickly heard the tale of the pirates' crimes and Lee and the others were shunned by one and all. Lee himself, mad with grief, fear, and guilt, wandered the island aimlessly. Eventually, the harbinger horse reappeared, followed by the blazing wreck and the restless dead, to take Lee into their company. The



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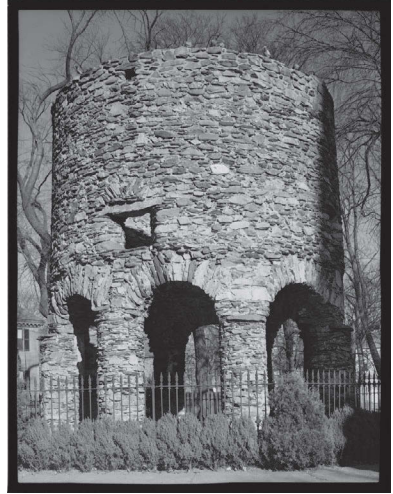
captain mounted the horse and descended into the flames. It is said that he and his ghastly steed yet wander the wave and shores of the region.

**Exeter:** In January, 1892, a young woman named Mercy Brown died of a wasting disease, probably consumption (i.e., tuberculosis), following her mother and elder sister to the grave by the same cause. Soon after Mercy's funeral at the Baptist Church in Exeter, her brother became ill with the same symptoms. Rumors began to circulate that Mercy Brown was not dead but rather undead, and risen to feed from the living. In desperation, the head of the family, George Brown, along with the sheriff, local doctor, and undertaker, decided to have the deceased Brown women exhumed. While the bodies of her mother and older sister were quite decomposed, Mercy's corpse showed no signs of the corruption that should have been present after several months in the ground. Her heart was removed and found to still be full of blood. The heart was burned and the ash mixed into a draught given to Mercy's sick brother. He nonetheless died two months later. (H.P. Lovecraft refers to these events in "The Shunned House.")

**Narragansett:** "The Lady in Black" haunts the house she occupied in the 19th century. Dona Mercedes Wedderburn, from Barbados, was the beautiful wife of wealthy sea captain Japhet Wedderburn. The Captain brought his retiring wife to the Island and built a great home for her that she almost never left. Wedderburn was away for many months and sometimes even years at a time, and the lady of the house was reported to have often wept from loneliness. Finally, the Wedderburns journeyed back to Barbados to visit Dona Mercedes's family. When the captain returned to New England the following year the lady was not with him and had stayed behind to prolong her visit. Wedderburn set sail once more to return to her but died at the helm of a heart attack during the voyage. The lady's fate is unknown but her ghost still haunts the lonely home her husband had built for her.

**Newport Tower (Newport, Rhode Island):** A ruined stone tower stands in downtown Newport. Originally said to have three levels, the top story is now partially collapsed. The base is made up of eight large pillars, which support the entire decrepit structure. The interior is uncluttered but cold, dark, and dank even in daylight. There is an ancient feeling to the place that is normally found only in megalithic burial sites or certain Old World cities. Local legend has it that the tower was built by the governor of the New England

colony, Benedict Arnold in 1675 (not *the* notorious Benedict Arnold of Revolutionary War fame), but it may actually date back beyond the earliest known European habitation in the area. It appears on a 1569 Mercatur projection map in the middle of what the map refers to as the region of Norombega, but Rhode Island was not settled by the English until 1636.



“Should you journey to a certain spot on Narragansett Bay you will find a most Dire Citadel commands the Sea thereabouts. Unmortared Cyclopean blocks of stone defy Heaven with their arcane grace. The engineers of this Primordial Babel had no place in God’s Paradise, or even in the mortal world. As I have repeated elsewhere from the Holy Scripture: “Cast the unprofitable servant into Outer Darkness.” It hath been imagined by some that the ‘Regiones exterae’ of America are the ‘Tenebrae exteriores’ which the unprofitable are there condemned into. In this respect they are correct. Eerily jointed fingers, scaled and taloned, raised up the great dark stones of that Keep. Equally Inhuman feet trod the flags and the wooden steps of the sole staircase within. No longer is there the hissing traffic with the Outer Powers. Faith, Courage, and Iron have triumphed over the Ancient Machinations of the Serpent. I beseech that God may grant His Serenity to those of our Order who fell upon those too-cold flagstones.”

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)

*Note: This passage may refer to the tower in Newport but does not match that structure in its particulars. I pray that, wherever it is, this “Dire Citadel” is quiescent.*

— Michael A. Schumman

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**Palatine Light:** In the early 1750s, the *Palatine* sailed out of Germany, laden with well-to-do immigrants bound for Philadelphia. Some misadventure befell the captain and he died on the Atlantic crossing. The remaining officers and crew starved and plundered the passengers and finally set out in the ship's boats as they neared land, leaving the immigrants to the sea's mercy. The ship eventually drifted ashore and caught fire as it wrecked, leaving no known survivors. Some tales credit the Block Islanders with decoying the ship ashore to plunder it, and it is said that the *Palatine* now rises from the waters of Block Island Sound to presage storms.

A Mr. Congdon, 90 years old at the time of his record, recounted the tale one who might have been survivor or, more likely, a bloody crewman of the doomed *Palatine*. Written in 1879, the memoir relates a remembrance of when Congdon was a boy. According to him, the *Palatine* was:

“... purposely — as some said — run on shore by her captain and crew, for sake of plunder, whilst others said that the vessel was decoyed one dark, stormy night by means of false lights arranged by the islanders with like intent. I remember hearing, when quite young, of an islander by the name of \_\_\_\_\_, who was generally in his right mind except at the season of the year when the *Palatine* ship was wrecked and, after being stripped of everything of value, was set on fire by the land pirates and burned with all crew and passengers on board. At this particular season this old man, it was said, always became madly insane, and would rave about seeing a ship all ablaze, with men falling from her burning rigging and shrouds, and ever and anon shrink in horror from the spectre of two women, whose hands he cut off or disabled by blows from a cutlass, as they sought to cling to the gunwale of the last boat that left the burning ship and all aboard to their fate, that not one might remain alive to bear witness to the terrible catastrophe and crime.”

(B.A. Botkin, *A Treasury of New England Folklore*)

Dr. Aaron Willey, writing in 1811, said:

“Its appearance is nothing different from a blaze of fire, whether it actually touched the water or merely hovers over

it is uncertain, for I am informed that no person has been near enough to decide accurately. It beams with various magnitudes and appears to bear no more analogy to the 'ignis fatuus' than it does to the aurora borealis. Sometimes it is small, resembling the light through a distant window, at others expanding to the highness of a ship with all her canvass spread. When large, it displays either a pyramidal form, or three constant streams. In the latter case, the streams are somewhat blended together at the bottom, but separate and distinct at the top, while the middle one rises rather higher than the other two ...”

(A. Kull, *New England Cemeteries: A Collector's Guide*)

The *Palatine* Cemetery on Block Island is marked by a single monument. It serves as marker for those who survived the wreck and perished in the days of sickness and exhaustion that followed. It also acts as a cenotaph for those whose bodies were never recovered from the sea.

**Point Judith:** 29 years after the wreck of the *Palatine*, the brig *Dolphin* burned in the same stretch of water when an inattentive cabin boy dropped his candle near a rum barrel. The flames spread so swiftly that a boat was only barely put over the side in time. The sailors were compelled by the heat to row to a safe distance from the blaze and many passengers, desperate to reach the lifeboat, leapt over the side of the ship. One of these was Dorothy Henry. Holding her child close, she hailed the sailors and plunged into the waves. The crew of the boat rowed frantically to her aid but neither she nor her baby were ever found and her ghost has often been sighted in the environs of the Point Judith lighthouse station.

**Wickford:** Devil's Foot Road is so named for a set of cloven hoofprints of significant size that may be found stamped into the rock at the junction of Devil's Foot Road and U.S. Route 1. The prints are supposedly those of the demon carriage horse of Peter Rugg, a hot-tempered merchant of Colonial times who was swallowed by a fierce storm when he attempted to ride home with his daughter against the wishes of those who knew better. He never made the return trip to Boston, but has been seen whipping his horses into a frenzy and driving madly before approaching storm clouds.

## Massachusetts

**Apple Island:** in the early years of the 19th century, a beautiful, popular girl of the island went missing. Weeks later, her body was found on the shore. Her sweetheart suspected a band of robbers known to frequent the island and, believing that she had succumbed to foul play, was determined to avenge her. He left to join with them to find out the truth. Several weeks later, however, his body was found hanging from a tree on a headland of the island. Since this time, occasional moans and high-pitched cries have been heard in the area.

**Berkshire Mountains:** The Hoosac Railroad tunnel runs through these mountains and has been surrounded by rumors of hauntings and worse since its construction, which began in 1851 and was completed in 1875. The tunnel took \$15 million and more than 200 lives to complete, and the dead buried within are said to be restless. Many have disappeared in or near the tunnel over the years or been found dead under sinister circumstances. In 1865, Ned Brinkman and Billy Nash, demolitions experts at work in the cave, were killed when their foreman accidentally set off some explosives. The foreman disappeared immediately following the blast and his strangled body was found precisely one year later in the exact spot that he was last seen. In 1872, a ghostly figure, moaning and carrying a lantern, caused a panic among some executives of the Boston and Maine Railroad.

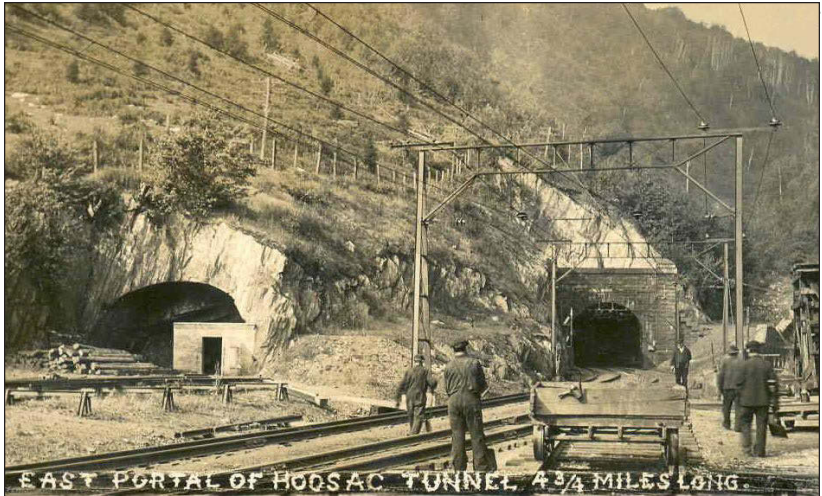
**Beverly:** In 1977, eight Roman coins of the 4th century A.D. were discovered within one square yard of beach with a metal detector. All the coins belonged to the reigns of four consecutive emperors, Constantius, Valentinian, Valens, and Gratianus, who held the throne between 337 and 383. Other Roman coins have turned up in Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina.

**Boston:** There are many who believe that King's Chapel Graveyard is the burial site of the infamous Captain Kidd, pirate and murderer, who was held in Boston jail in 1699.

A number of dolmens have been found in the region of Boston.

A Quaker woman, Mary Dyer, is said to have given birth to a hideous and malformed monster in Boston in 1637.

William H. Mumler was a Boston spirit photographer in the latter half of the 19th century. Spirit photography was in vogue at the time and Mumler was a celebrity for some time, until he was exposed as a fraud, although he still maintained a cadre of loyal followers. Spirit photography remained a fad for several years. The



process was a simple double exposure system which allowed a developer to suspend disembodied-looking persons in the photograph.

**Off the Graves Ledges in Boston Bay:** Here a tale is told of an unknown schooner in the last century. One night, a red-bearded man pulled himself over the side and onto the deck, conversed amiably with several of the crew, told a number of stories, joked with the captain, then jumped overboard to sink beneath the waves once more.

**Cape Ann:** Cotton Mather reported a number of apparitions of odd skulking men who were widely seen around town and specifically near the farm of an Ebenezer Babson in the summer of 1692. They were resistant to repeated gunshots and may have been insubstantial. They were viewed by the locals as demonic in origin and by July the whole of the local population was alarmed.

“Ebenezer Babson was not the Witless Fool that I reported Elsewhere, as many of you doubtless Know. But he was Unprepared for the Depravity of the Offences which those shadow-men chanced to perform. His Greatest Failing has always been that he attempted too much and tempted Fate by shouldering the burden of his Knowing alone. Few have payed so dearly for that Knowledge. God Rest His Soul,

It was only after the Horror was over that I chanced to come upon the Cape in that year. By then, of course, Ebenezer was reduced to so much tallow and bones. We could not help him. We did carry His Revenge to the Great Foe. Truly, it is God’s Wisdom and Mercy that allows us to



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Persevere. But God Himself Commands that we, His servants, be ever Vigilant and Prepared. Only in Knowledge of what we face can we be Vigilant. Faith and Holy Silver served His Cause on the Cape. I pray that the souls of the slaughtered children found their way to God.”

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)

Cape Ann is also renowned for a 17th-century report of a sea serpent (see “Sea Serpents,” p. 81).

**Off the coast of Cape Cod:** A tale is told of a sleepy sailor, Ansell Nickerson, who was unable to keep himself awake one night when he held the rudder off the Cape. He slumped down amid the sundries clustered near the wheel. The ship could have grounded on any of the shoals thereabouts, but it sailed through without even enough disturbance to wake Ansell. Toward dawn, the steersman awoke with a start. When he noted how long he had been asleep, he could not believe his good fortune. Then he realized that his relief should have come upon him hours ago. As he looked around the ship, none of the early morning activity disturbed the quiet of the ship. Finally, he saw the stained timbers of the deck. Where the day before it had been scrubbed vigorously, now the deck was mottled with dark smears. He cast a look about and saw that similar smears spotted the outer walls of the cabin as well. With a sickly dread, he crept up to the nearest dark blotch. It was wet with spray off the water but its nature was still apparent: it was blood, leached black by the twilight of the approaching dawn. Wherever Nickerson searched, he found only bloodstains. No man or sign of man did he find on that ship. Whether he was alive because he had slipped out of sight in the stern, or had been spared for delivering up the rest of the crew to whatever had come for them, he did not know. The ship hove into Boston Harbor as though still under knowing guidance, but the raving Nickerson neither knew nor cared that he had made port.

**Clark’s Island, south of Northfield:** On the darkest of nights, when gales howl and weather-witches are the only souls who venture outside, some are said to have seen a phantom ship sailing upstream to a sandy bank where a foul deed was done. When the pirate Captain Kidd needed to conceal any treasure, he would have himself rowed ashore with a small party of diggers. When the labor was done, the men would draw lots and the loser was shot so that his soul would defend the loot. The unfortunate’s body was left to

rot on the freshly turned earth.

From time to time the ghost ship appears to see that Kidd's wealth remains secure. Heedless of wind and shoal, the frigate sails to the treasure trove with the black-bearded pirate captain at the prow. A small boat has occasionally been seen drawing into the sand of the riverbank so that Kidd could look after his gold.

**Concord:** A subterranean chamber with a slab-linteled doorway lies under a mound of earth here.

**Dighton Rock:** Thirty miles up from the mouth of the Taunton River, at the edge of the Hockomock Swamp, there is a

waist-high sandstone block roughly seven by 11 feet. The rock stands on the riverbank across from the Grassy Island Indian Burial Grounds, a site that may date back as far as eight millennia. The face of this rock is covered in indecipherable inscriptions. Several attempts have been made to translate the stone but no one has done so with any authority, and the cryptic markings have been variously identified as Egyptian, Phoenician, Persian, Roman, Norse, Portuguese, Chinese, and Japanese characters. Others posit that the inscription is the work of the devil. The letters "M-COR" and nearby, the numbers "1511" may refer to the Portuguese explorer Miguel Corte and his expedition of 1512. The existence of the rock and its strange carvings was recorded as early as 1690 by Cotton Mather.

**Dorchester:** In 1851, an engraved metal bowl of an unknown silvery metal was thrown up out of the earth during rock blasting in the area. It measured four-and-a-half inches high, six-and-a-half inches wide at the base, two-and-a-half inches wide at the top, and approximately an eighth of an inch thick. It was described as looking like zinc in color and had an exquisite inlay of bouquets of flowers surrounding its rim.

**Essex:** A carved stone head twice the size of a man's was found in 1811, at a depth of 10 feet, while the foundations of a house were being excavated.



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**Fall River:** In 1831, a skeleton was discovered in the middle of town dressed in what could be bronze or copper armor. Longfellow recorded the event in his poem “Skeleton in Armor.” It was destroyed in the fire of 1843. Writing in 1884, Samuel Adams Drake, recorded the event of a half century earlier:

“There was exhumed at Fall River the skeleton of a man whose chest was protected by an oval plate of brass, and on whose fleshless thighs still hung a belt of curious workmanship, mad up of tubes of brass, much corroded and fitted together in the manner of bandoliers worn when firearms were in their infancy. There were also found near the skeleton some arrowheads made of the same metal. It is true that the body had been buried in a sitting position ...”

(S.A. Drake, *A Book of New England Legends and Folklore*)

The Gothic stones and statues of Oak Grove Cemetery of Fall River are dedicated almost entirely to the Bordens of the last few centuries. The most notable of them are stones engraved with “Lizbeth,” “A.J.B.,” and “A.D.B.” These markers are those of the infamous “Lizzie” Borden and her parents, Andrew Jackson Borden and Abby Durfee Borden.

Lizzie was accused and acquitted of the double ax-murder of her parents on August 4, 1892. After her acquittal, she moved out of the house at 92 Second Street in Fall River where the deaths had occurred. She purchased a grand home that she styled “Maplecroft” on fashionable French Street and died there in 1927.



**Gay Head, Martha’s Vineyard:** Lights have been reported from the heights here for centuries. Folklore attributes them to Maushop, the promethean giant of the Narraganset Indians. The lights are reputed to be his cookfires, where he broils up his catch of whales. They are also said to guide ships around the shoals nearby.

A small dolmen also exists on a hillside here.

**Gloucester:** The Moving Rock of Squam Common, a huge mass of granite, so precisely balanced that the slightest pressure is enough to move it back and forth, can be found here.

In 1881, the crew of the *Bellerophon* out of Gloucester saw and smelled a hideous ghost aboardship. After a detailed search of the craft, the captain turned up a dead rat in the locale frequented by the ghost and immediately tossed it overboard. On January 23, 1882, the ship sailed out of Gloucester and was never heard from again.

**Gosnold:** The Elizabeth Islands are said to be the mounds raised over the five sons of maushop, Giants who were blinded and killed by the Pukwudgees, Native American spirit beings antagonistic to man, god, or giant.

**Grand Island:** This island was once known as Screecham's Island, after the ghost of Hannah Screecham. She and her sister, Sarah, once lived together as the sole inhabitants of the island. One day they quarrelled and Sarah moved to South Mashpee and built herself a hut in the forest by the place known afterward as Witches Pond. Both sisters were evil creatures: Sarah became a foul witch and Hannah took up with the pirates that often sailed the coast thereabouts.

Hannah was feared by such cruel and powerful men as Captain Kidd and Black Bellamy, and yet these same men trusted her with their treasure hoards. Each ship that visited the island would send a boat ashore with no one but the ship's captain and one oarsman aboard. Hannah would walk up the strand with the sailor following and carrying the load of bullion or loot. At a spot on the island known only to Hannah lay a pit. The sailor was directed to deposit the gold at the edge of the pit. Then, Hannah would let forth a screech like dying seabirds and killing gales and the earth would open up and swallow both gold and witless crewman. The sands quickly ran over him and sealed him below with God only knows how many other wretches who had suffered the same fate. At Hannah's cry, the captain knew that his treasure was safe and that he could put out to sea. But Hannah Screecham could never dig for the gold she hoarded, for the curse of her power was that all the corpse-gray hands of the sand-drowned seamen would take her below herself should she try.

Sarah Screecham could take the form of a goat or a great black horse and was much feared, both during her lifetime and for many years after. Arrows and bullets had no effect upon her, although silver pained her in any shape she took. Her wretched hut on the pond's edge was said to be the site of foul rituals to dark powers, and only the foolish ventured close by at any time of day or night.

**Georges Banks:** The ghost schooner *Charles Haskell*, utterly devoid of crew, wanders the waves near here.

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**George's Island, Fort Warren:** According to a legend of the Civil War, a group of Confederate prisoners, captured by Maj. Gen. Ambrose Burnside at Roanoke Island, were incarcerated at Fort Warren. Among their number was a young lieutenant recently married and somehow he was able to get a letter to his wife giving directions on how he could be found.

The nameless bride obtained passage on a sloop and landed in Hull a number of weeks after receiving the letter. On a stormy night, the lady rowed out to George's Island, crept past the sentries, and reached the ditch under the Corridor of Dungeons. She was reunited with her lieutenant shortly thereafter.

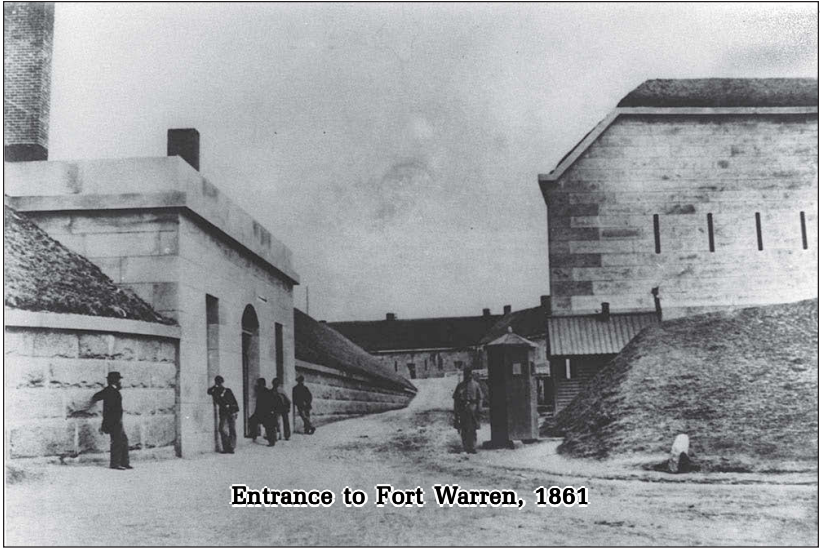
Hastily-made plans for escape went awry and the soldiers on guard caught wind of the conspiracy. The brave young lady shot at the colonel of the fort, but her firearm fouled and exploded and, while she was unharmed, her husband had been standing closeby and was struck dead by flying metal from the blast. The lady was taken and sentenced to be hanged as a spy and, since then, her ghost has haunted the fort.

Once, a group of soldiers found five women's shoeprints in fresh snow, originating and ending out of nowhere. Later, a sergeant of the fort, while climbing to the top of the ladder heading into the Corridor of Dungeons, heard a female voice cry out, "Don't come in here." Several courts-martial are on record for firearms discharged at a black-clad woman. One soldier deserted his post fleeing from the dark specter of the Lady.

Edward Rowe Snow preserved the words of Colonel F.J. Parker, commander of Fort Warren, as he described the site:

"To one who thoroughly explored the island, there will recur vivid reminiscences of the mysterious castles of romance and history. He will find there a sally port, a postern, a drawbridge, and a portcullis. Here too, are passages underground and in the walls, turret staircases, huge vaulted apartments, and safe and dark dungeons, the ways to and through which may be set upon the plans of the engineer corps, but are familiar to no man. One can easily become bewildered among the crooks and turns, the ups and downs of the corridors, and it needs only a dark and stormy night ..."

(Edward Rowe Snow, *Maritime Mysteries and Dramatic Disasters of New England*)



**Entrance to Fort Warren, 1861**

**Haley's Isle:** Near the home of Captain Haley are the graves of 16 Spanish sailors from the wreck of the *Sagunto* in 1813. John Greenleaf Whittier said of old Triton in the 1867 poem "The Tent of the Beach":

"Strange tales he told of wreck and storm,  
Had seen the sea-snake's awful form,  
And heard the ghosts on Haley's Isle complain  
Speak him off shore, and beg a passage back to Spain."

**Isle of Shoals:** The White Lady of Haley's Isle is said to be an abandoned wife of Blackbeard the pirate, marooned upon the Isle of Shoals to die. She haunts the strand when storms rise.

**Hampton:** A small dolmen can be found here.

**Hockomock Swamp:** an area within the swamp has been the source of many legends of hauntings and odd occurrences. The area covers the towns of Abingdon, Freetown, Rehoboth, Brockton, Taunton, the Bridgewaters, Raynhorn, Mansfield, Norton and Easton. The Grassy Island Indian Burial Grounds, which may date back as much as 8,000 years, are located in the area. They are considered sacred by many and evil by some.

As early as Colonial times, the swampland had a foul reputation. On what came to be known as the Yellow Day, the entire mire shone with an sourceless sulphurous light for a whole day. Closer to the present, each January odd balls of luminescence called "spook



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lights” flared up in the bogs at night.

In addition to unexplained lights, weird beasts have been known to frequent the area and huge birds have occasionally been sighted, specifically in the region surrounding Bird Hill.

A large hairy bipedal creature that has been explained away as a bear has been spotted and suspected in livestock killings throughout the countryside and 18-inch tracks have been attributed to this monster. Other sightings of black dogs and panthers and even lions have long plagued the territory.

**Hogg Island:** A pirate treasure is said to be hidden somewhere in the sands of the sea cliff here. It is also reported to be guarded by the ghost of the pirate slain for that purpose.

**Ipswich:** The Ghost of Harry Main haunts this area. A local man, Harry was a foul rogue, a pirate, smuggler, and, finally, a wrecker. It is said that he was doomed upon his death for these and other unspeakable crimes to perform endlessly an impossible task, his reward for years of faithful service to the dark powers that he venerated. He is eternally set to coil a cable of sand on Ipswich bar, the scene of so many of his murderous deeds. When the unstable rope breaks in rough weather, Harry’s demonic curses and frustrated rage can be heard for miles around over the winds of the coming storm.

In an unknown hillside just outside of Ipswich, a fortune in pirate gold awaits discovery. The treasure is said to have been the demon-warded loot of Harry Main. There is a tale that one man dreamed of the actual location of the treasure and resolved to find it. Awaking from his third identical dream in as many nights, he took lantern and shovel and set out without a word to anyone. Not far from his home he sighted the hill of his dreams and began to dig. In the moonless night, with his only illumination coming from the fitful flame of the weak tallow of his lamp, the man could see little within the hole he dug. But he recognized the scrape of his shovel upon something made of metal and immediately bent down to examine his find. He discovered a heavy steel prybar, covered in rust and laying upon a stone slab of some size. With rising excitement, the man set the tool against the edge of the slab and heaved. Just as the great rock slowly began to shift, the digger chanced to look up at the mouth of the hole in which he labored. He shivered uncontrollably as his light flicked out in a gust of wind and left him in the dark. Motionless, ringing the pit in which he huddled in darkness, were six great black cats, their eyes aglow,



although what light there was for those eyes to reflect from that blackened hole is not known. The treasure-hunter, wealth forgotten, swung wildly about with the iron bar and the black beasts vanished as silently as they had come. In their place, icy water rushed into the pit, cascading over the man and rapidly filling the deep. The man scrambled up the side of the excavation, tearing loose fingernails and patches of skin as he struggled to escape the water. He succeeded in averting his doom, but the pit and the great panthers still abide there.

Harry Main is also sometimes sighted walking the sand-hills of Plum Island on stormy nights.

**Devil's Hoofprint:** The First Congregational Church in Ipswich, one of the earliest buildings in the town, was beset by the Devil on numerous occasions shortly after its founding. During its construction, Satan secreted himself within the foundations to work mischief. A holy force is said to have propelled him from the steeple top and where he first struck the earth his burning hoofprint scored itself into the stone.

**Lake Onota:** This area is know for the legend of the white deer. Centuries ago, the Housatonic Indians had a legend of a white deer, harbinger of good fortune, and believed that as long as the sacred animal drank from Lake Onota they need not fear blight, war, famine, or disease.

After many years of peace and plenty, the white doe arrived with a white fawn and that year was particularly abundant. Then

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came hostilities between the French and the Americans. A French officer, Montalbert, was dispatched to the Housatonic to engage their loyalty and, upon hearing of the white deer, was immediately overcome by a lust to take its marvelous hide to the king of France. With help from a native called Wando, Montalbert caught and skinned the white deer and then fled. Wando later confessed to the crime and was executed by his people. Years of famine, war, and pestilence followed and, finally, the Housatonic on Lake Onota were no more.

**Long Island:** When the British evacuated Boston in March 1776 during the Revolutionary War, only 12 ships of the 170 that were loaded with evacuees were able to escape the blockade. When the American fleet arrived, it began a general bombardment of the remainder of the British ships and one cannonball mortally wounded Mary Burton, a refugee on one of the vessels. While still conscious, Mary pleaded that she not be buried at sea and her husband, William, managed to secure a truce long enough for a boat to bear his wife's remains to the shore of Long Island so he could bury her.

Sewn into a red blanket, Mary's body was taken across in a small boat by William to Long Island Head. There he met with the American gunners and explained his task. Mary was interred and William and his crew returned to their ship. Shortly afterward, that ship made for Halifax, Nova Scotia.

It was always in William Burton's mind to return to his wife's grave, but many years passed and he died without having made the journey. Meanwhile, the soldiers in Boston had erected a cairn in her memory.

As the story goes, in 1804 a group of fishermen seeking shelter in poor weather heard a bitter moaning over the wind and then saw a woman in a scarlet cloak, blood streaming from beneath its hood, coming over the hill in their direction. She continued to walk and eventually disappeared over the next hill.

She was seen again during the War of 1812 and then again in 1891.

**Tunnel of Lovell's Island:** What follows is Edward Rowe Snow's report of his own exploration of the tunnel:

"... to the left of the steps leading up to the top of the hill. Opening the old studded door, we flash our lights into the darkness of the passageway to find that the archaic tunnel takes a sharp turn to the right. Stumbling over mouldy



journals and decayed newspapers, we walk for some time before coming to the next turn, where a shelf is built into the wall, looking as if it were made for a telephone. We again turn to the right, and continue down the passageway. Some 20 feet beyond, the corridor opens into a large, arched room having a rectangular hole in the floor. Anyone who did not bring a flashlight is surely in danger here.

Turning our lights down into the opening, we see that the hole is about five feet in depth; we jump down and find another surprise. The wall of the pit farthest away from the tunnel has another opening, and when we flash our lights down we find another passageway which seems to be endless. At this point in our adventure quite a few of those who had declared their bravery in the sunlight decide they have had enough excitement for the time being, and telling us that they will wait outside, beat a hasty retreat.

The only way we can travel through this new opening is on our hands and knees, as it is no higher than the space under the average office table. Crawling down the tunnel, we find we are gradually getting lower and lower. The end is reached at a point where the top of the passageway is caved in. Here we join the elect by scraping our names on the damp walls before starting the long journey back to the sunset. No one now on the island knows the history of this tunnel which once led out under the harbor.

Perhaps the old tunnel was originally connected with

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the mysterious fort which is indicated as having been at Lovell's Island in 1700, although not a bit of evidence has ever been found concerning this strange, four-bastioned fortification."

(Edward Rowe Snow, *Maritime Mysteries and Dramatic Disasters of New England*)

**Lynn:** Cotton Mather recorded a dark amorphous cloud that was witnessed by several people here in 1682. Near dusk, a man by the name of Handford came out of his home to see if the moon was up yet and was later joined by others of his family. Instead, they saw a great, black cloud of unusual size and density appear to swallow the emerging moon. It took on many shapes, first that of an armored man with a pike, then of a huge shadow ship with sails set, before disappearing near midnight.

A large dolmen with a 40-ton capstone also exists just outside of town.

**Marblehead:** In the 17th century, Marblehead was a haven for foul men, pirates and worse. For a long time, it was the custom among this company that no woman who came among them could ever leave and, if she tried, her death would follow. Toward the end of that century, a Spanish ship full of plate and rich merchandise was taken and its passengers massacred or ordered overboard, except for one beautiful English noblewoman, who was saved for the pirates' rude sport. She was carried ashore, abused horrifically, and then killed. Her screams of terror echoed throughout the town, but no one there had the courage to save her. Her body was buried upon the spot of her torment and death and for well more than a century afterward her screams could be heard upon the anniversary of that foul deed.

**Marshfield:** Isolated two miles south of Marshfield, Winslow Burial Ground holds the grave of Daniel Webster. It is also the scene from the beginning of "The Devil and Daniel Webster," a short story by Stephen Vincent Benét. Webster is said to haunt the cemetery and to appear during thunderstorms.

**Monomoy:** Dozens of wrecks have grounded here over the centuries on a spit of land extending seven miles out of the landward cliff of Chatham. The Mooncurser's Stallion, a gleaming bone-white horse with a star blazing on its forehead, is said to be the cause of many of them and to have led many ships to their doom on that

sandspit. A spidery man is the stallion's master and both are said to have drowned one night when the tide swallowed the whole of the spit.

**Mount Sinai:** There is a tale that during the final quarter of the 18th century, a group of spiritualists chased the Devil through Mount Sinai, Massachusetts. In the early hours of a summer morning, they caught, killed, and buried him there. These spiritualists are said to have believed that their number had been joined by the distinguished dead, among whom were counted George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, Tamerlane, and Pocahontas. Other famous figures are apparently, to this day, charged with the guardianship of this cursed spot and are sworn in hallowed rite to ward the burial astride fine white steeds, lest Satan rise and begin his career of evil once more.

**Pahwah Pond, near Namequoit at South Orlean:** The doomed chief of the Potonamequoit Indians, Pahwah, was drowned here, and given a cruel form of half-life beneath the surface by Niba-Nahbeezihk the water god.

**Pelham:** Just outside the small town of Pelham, Massachusetts, is a strange beehive-shaped cave, faced with stone and accessible only through an aperture in its ceiling. The reason for the construction of this underground chamber remains a mystery, as does the identity of its builder. There are those who have suggested that it is a Neolithic granary, while others claim that it is all that remains of a now-abandoned and looted tomb of the same era. Another structure, virtually identical to this one, is located 12 miles north of Pelham.

“Be You Aware of the worth of the ancient places. In such Barrows and Haunts, although perilous and dire, there is much to discover. I have conversed in detail with the Satan-Loving spiritmen of the Savages Hereabouts, and they have told me much of the Old bargains made by the tomb-dwellers with the Prince of Chaos. Others in that aeon-distant age opposed the Evil One, even as do we ourselves. The ability to discern the grave of one from the other is worth the life of any Delver into them. The barrows of the enemies of the Enemy are often repositories of Knowledge and Power. A Great Vault lies underground beyond the bounds of the village. Its secrets are now known to Our Order.”

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)



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**Plymouth:** There is said to be located a few miles outside of town a demon tree that has been fed the blood of worshippers and innocents alike for hundreds of years. It usually appears to be a normal tree but, at certain times and for certain dread purposes, will reveal its true nature. No living soul can say what that nature is but there are many among the dead who could, if only they could be persuaded to converse ...

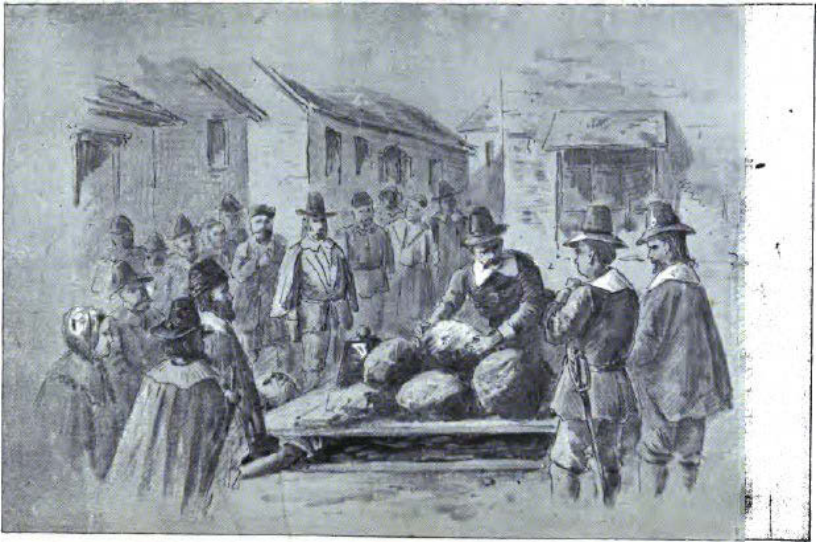
**Point of Pines:** Legend tells of a treasure trove of Captain Kidd nearby that is guarded by a demon horse with flaming mouth and nostrils. The tale tells that Kidd would bury a bible at each place that he hid loot, thus invoking the Devil to guard it.

**Quabbin Reservoir, near Amherst:** On August 13, 1819, a great flash of light and a loud explosion were noted in the sky above Quabbin Reservoir. Shortly thereafter, a small bowl-shaped object, that was eight inches across, covered by a velvety dun coating, and filled with a stinking mass that quickly liquefied upon exposure to the air, was found on the property of an Amherst professor. Soon, several more of the dishes — termed “Whatsis” by the locals — were discovered throughout the region. The slimy contents of the bowls were dismissed as colonies of a blue-green algae known as nostoc despite being the wrong color for this. In addition, nostoc does not stink, nor does it turn to liquid. The flashes and booms that presaged these discoveries went unexplained.

**Rainsford Island:** While digging postholes in 1826, a boy found a human skull in a fairly well-preserved state. Several sunken pits were later found nearby and, while they were thought by some to be graves, no more remains were turned up. A more complete excavation of the original find, however, led to the discovery of an ancient-looking sword hilt.

**Salem:** The ghost of Giles Corey, a man pressed to death while under interrogation for witchcraft during the Salem witch trials, is said to haunt the town to the present.

Samuel Stover was a druggist in Salem a quarter century after the witch trials. He was reputed to be an excellent chemist and compounds and vials containing curious drafts were constantly being sent to him from Boston. Some folk began to think that Stover acquired far more ingredients than he could ever use in his rather humble practice and rumors spread that he was something other than a simple druggist. There were also reports of shadows seen other than that of the lone occupant of the house which, when glimpsed in the lighted windows of the tower room, appeared only



vaguely to conform to human shape. Occasionally, hammers could be heard clanking, or great hisses as of gouts of steam from a cauldron. Samuel Stover soon came to be known as an alchemist.

Stover, however, sought not to render gold from base metal but rather to isolate the stuff of life, hoping to secure some potion to divert the attentions of the ages. With this purpose, he added to his purchases from Boston by stalking the fens and woods of the area around Salem, searching for those substances which his other suppliers could not provide.

Finally, Stover had collected all of the implements and ingredients he would need in his bid for immortality and all that remained was the exhausting four-day process necessary to render the unguent from the assembled components. The now frail old alchemist made his final preparations, lit the crucibles, and began.

It was necessary that Stover go without sleep throughout the experiment, lest the heat on the crucibles slacken and the precious mixture begin to putrefy. Thus, for four days he stoked the furnace and tended the bubbling pots and alembics, adding new ingredients and combining the contents of different crucibles at crucial times. These continuous operations took a terrible toll and the gaunt old man grew cadaverous from exhaustion and the noxious fumes of his life's work.

The last day was the most trying, with many minute calculations and careful measurements. The strain became unbearable and Stover slipped into a deep and dreamless sleep, his furnace slowly cooling

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and his arcane mixture beginning to spoil.

With a start of horror, the alchemist sprang awake gasping. He leapt for the crucible and, with shaking hands, peered at its contents. The elixir showed signs of putrefaction, but Stover knew he had not the strength for another distillation. Having wagered all upon this attempt, he downed the contents in desperation, his body spent from his four-day ordeal. A shock of agony wracked him, however, and he fell to the floor as his heart fell silent within him. His elixir, wrought in great pain and suffering, gave him everlasting death.

“On Essex Street in Salem, more than a score of years after the scourging of Satan’s Broodmares in that very towne, a man, himself well acquainted with the Master of Lies, delved into Blasphemous Pursuit. Samuel Stover sought a Great Secret and dealt with His Satanic Majesty to achieve it. But the Crawling Chaos did not honor his bargain. Stover wished for the secret of Life Eternal and sought it in this present Wasteland, and from the Prince of Desolation no less. Satan granted the alchemist knowledge of this Dark Sorcerie, which Samuel Stover hoped would bestow prolonged life. The Elixer was not that of Life, merely a Damned Awareness. His body dead, bloated, and putrifying, Stover’s Benighted spirit exempted itself from the Grace of death that God Grants to All things.

News of these events reached the ears of certain of our Most Blessed Order. Faith, Fire, and Steel accompanied several of us to sever Stover’s overlong tenure upon this world. Many of Our Dear Friends found their way into the grace of the lord of Heaven and for naught. Samuel Stover, his body Steeped in His brew of Wickedness, defied all our attempts at retribution. When we who survived later returned in Greater Preparedness, Stover was gone, as were ghastly portions of our former comrades, the alchemist’s victims. It is to Our Order’s Eternal Shame thar Samuel Stover has never, to our knowledge, been sent to join his Leige in Hell.

(Cotton Mather, *Black Book*)

**Singing Beach:** The sands of this lonely strand are said to keen and moan as they are trod upon.



**Upton:** A megalithic structure of dry-stone construction. A low rock-lined passage opens somewhat into a chamber. The roof is slightly vaulted and built up out of many small rocks, carefully fitted together without mortar. This form of roof construction is rather unusual. Most other megalithic structures in New England have large slabs of stone that extend entirely across the width of the chamber.

**Near Ware:** Crocodiles between six and eight feet in length were sighted in Dismal Swamp in 1922, and three are said to have been found since.

**Westford:** A rock-carved inscription exists that was long thought to be Native American in origin and has been there as long as anyone can remember. It was partially obscured by vegetation and, perhaps due to the unremarkable nature of the design, had never become the subject of much curiosity. In 1954, however, the moss and other matter were cleared away and a much larger and more startling discovery was made. This was a roughly life-sized glyph of a medieval knight, complete with the armor, shield, sword, and voluminous surcoat of the style worn in the 14th century. The shield had a heraldic device that was tentatively identified with the crest of the Sinclair family of Scotland. The inscription may thus well refer to Henry Sinclair, Lord of Roslyn and Earl of Orkney.

This coincides with the troublesome *Zeno Narrative*, an Italian document of the 16th century that purports to transcribe the journeys

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of a late 14th-century merchant and explorer, Nicholo Zeno, who supposedly travelled with Sinclair to an island called Estotiland. The natives of this land, located far to the west of Ireland and south of Greenland, were said to have been skilled in many crafts, live in cities, and had Latin books that they apparently could not read. The explorers are said to have found Estotiland and Sinclair determined to settle there. His crew nearly rebelled at this notion, however, and so he sent most of them back to the Orkneys under Zeno. There the manuscript ends and nothing further is known of the colony. Sinclair must have returned to the Old World shortly thereafter, however, for his death is recorded as being in the year 1400.

**Westport:** A cluster of three dolmen are to be found here.

**Wilbraham:** An isolated home close to the mountainside beyond is the site of many hauntings. The house was built in 1831, and many have died in it over the intervening decades. Several of the resident spirits have been seen as glimpses of motion out of the corner of the eye, or as subtle noises from just around a corner. The most commonly-seen entity is that of a young boy, who sometimes appears nearly whole and lifelike, while at other times only his upper half is visible as a wan, half-visible shade. This child may be Alfie Morgan, who died in the house in the last years of the 19th century. He had been born there on June 15, 1888, precisely when an old woman, Mary Morgan died. Since then, each June 15, glowing lights bob about the ceilings of the upper floor and the disembodied voice of a boy at play is heard.

A number of seances have been performed in the house and participants have each come away from them with a sense of peace and happiness.

**White Mountains:** Between 1851 and 1938, 18 people in nearly as many separate incidents lost their lives to the ferocious winter storms of the region.

## Vermont

**Quechee:** Just off the Connecticut River there is a complex of stone chambers and circles of standing stones with script carved into the building stones. Barry Fell has determined these inscriptions to be in Ogham, an ancient Celtic alphabet (see "Empire of Woden-Lithi," pp. 48-51).

**South Woodstock:** A Neolithic chamber roofed over by huge slab capping-stones, supported by monolithic stone columns, can

be found near South Woodstock. The whole structure is covered over by a mound of earth, such that only the entrance and the supporting stones are visible from the outside. Within, the slabs of the roof are just out of reach, and are easily six feet wide and stretch across the 15-foot chamber. Each weighs several tons and there are several slatted together to enclose the top of the rectangular chamber. On one a cruciform figure that may represent a human can be seen. Regular scratches in the rock nearby could be writing.

Outside of the mound itself several animal carvings have also been found. A stone slab that rests on edge appears to have been shaped into a crude animalistic shape that some have said is a boar. Nearby is another such stone that may be a representation of a bull or cow in repose. Finally, the rough-hewn but distinct shape of a reclining female torso may also be found.

A ring of menhirs also exists beyond the mound. Many of the stones have fallen but some few are still upright. Several of those not standing have regular engravings across their lengths (or heights if they are upright). Barry Fell has found these markings to be ancient Celtic Ogham and translates the numerous inscriptions as praise of the mother goddess, called in this case Byanu (see “Empire of Woden-Lithi,” pp. 48-51).

Another almost identical ring of menhirs exists on a hilltop in central New Hampshire.

**Stowe:** Outside of town, an old covered bridge is haunted by a woman awaiting her lover. The woman, known only by the name Emily, was spurned at the altar in the early 1800s. Leaving the church in her wedding finery, she mounted a horse and rode out in pursuit of her betrothed. As she galloped over the bridge outside of town her horse shied and she fell to her death on the rocks below (in those days the bridge was uncovered).

Another story tells of Emily as a pregnant young woman in the 1920s, spurned by the man responsible and who, inconsolable, jumped to her death below the bridge. People have reported hearing the screams of an enraged young woman and seeing a white-garbed figure chasing men across the bridge.

**White River:** Nearby, a stone chamber with an inscription in a strange alphabet on its lintel stone has existed since before European colonization. Researcher Barry Fell maintains that he has translated the inscription as a dedicatory announcement to the Celtic sun god, Bel (see “Celtic Conquest of pre-Columbian New England,” pp. 53-56).



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